

DISASTERS: WHY ARE THE PEOPLE BEING ABANDONED?



Marta Sostre Vazquez reacts as she starts to wade into the San Lorenzo Morovis river with her family, after the bridge was swept away by Hurricane Maria, in Morovis, Puerto Rico. The family was returning home after visiting family on the other side.

PHOTO/GERALD HERBERT, ASSOCIATED PRESS



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MEDICARE FOR ALL!
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**FIGHTING TO
SAVE WATER
AND EARTH
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DACA: No human being is illegal

EDITORIAL



Protest in Los Angeles following Trump's order to rescind the DACA program which allows people brought to the U.S. without documents as children the temporary right to live, study and work in America.

PHOTO/MOLLY ADAMS

You can see the passion in the signs the Dreamers hold at demonstrations, with such slogans as “Undocumented and Unafraid” and “Keep Families Together.” One Dreamer said, “We do not want any legislation that throws our parents under the bus and results in them being criminalized, or adds more money for border enforcement.”

He was talking in the wake of Trump's Sept. 5 order rescinding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that President Obama created by executive order in 2012. Issuing the DACA order was merely a political convenience for Obama; this was proven by the fact that he became known as the Deporter in Chief because of the number of people deported by his administration.

Those protected under DACA are known as Dreamers. DACA allows people brought to the US without documents as children the temporary right to live, study and work in America. Even though 1.9 million young people were eligible to apply for DACA, only 800,000 succeeded in becoming “DACAmended” and obtaining a social security number, work authorization, and conditional protection from being deported. They have had to re-apply for DACA every two years, with an additional application fee of \$500. Until Trump promised during his campaign to deport the 11 million undocumented adults and children living in the U.S., most of the Dreamers didn't know that they were without documents in a country that they called their own since they have known no other.

Under Trump's Sept. 5 order, any Dreamer whose protection expires between Sept. 5, 2017

and March 5, 2018, must file their renewal by Oct. 5, 2017 with their \$500 fee. For anyone whose DACA protections end after March 5, unless Congress creates other options, their protections will begin expiring, and all the DACAmended will lose their protections by March 2020.

At the moment, some DACAmended are saying “no reform that doesn't include our parents.” The separation of their families is not acceptable to them and should not be acceptable to anyone.

The attack on immigrants is immoral. It disrupts lives, displaces and separates families, and strips immigrant workers of their human rights. Just keeping DACA is not enough. The human rights of all immigrants must be protected. This is the right thing to do, and it is also the defense of everyone's rights.

The claim that deporting immigrants creates jobs is a lie.

The same globalization and labor-replacing technology that causes people to migrate so they can survive is also eliminating jobs in the US. The workers are part of a global class, and we have a common enemy in the billionaires and corporations who rule this country.

Going forward means recognizing the unjust and oppressive laws that Trump is implementing to widen the divide among the workers. Trump's program of

building the wall, militarizing the southern border, deporting millions of immigrants, and undoing DACA is part of this repression. Our class interests are at stake, and if we are going to win this fight and build a world we can successfully live in we must see immigrants with and without documents as part of our class. If our families are going to have a future, it will be up to us to secure it—together.

“The world is my country, all mankind are my brethren (brothers and sisters) and to do good is my religion.”

— Thomas Paine, an immigrant revolutionary

In 1776, Thomas Paine published *Common Sense*, a hugely influential pamphlet that convinced many Americans that we didn't need a King and the time had come to break away from British rule.

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

An economic system that doesn't feed, clothe and house its people must be and will be overturned and replaced with a system that meets the needs of the people. To that end, this paper is a tribune of those struggling to create such a new economic system. It is a vehicle to bring the movement together, to create a vision of a better world and a strategy to achieve it.

Labor-replacing electronic technology is permanently eliminating jobs and destroying the foundation of the capitalist system. The people's needs can only be met by building a cooperative society where the socially necessary means of production are owned by society, not by the corporations.

We welcome articles and artwork from those who are engaged in the struggle to build a new society that is of, by and for the people. We rely on readers and contributors to fund and distribute this paper.

The *People's Tribune*, formerly published by the League of Revolutionaries for a New America, is now an independent newspaper with an editorial board based in Chicago.

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE EDITORIAL POLICY: Articles that are unsigned, such as the cover story and editorials, reflect the views of the editorial board. Bynlined articles reflect the views of the authors, and may or may not reflect the views of the editorial board.

Deadlines for articles and art: The deadline for articles, photographs and other art is the first of each month for the issue that comes out at the beginning of the following month. For example, the deadline for the June issue is May 1. Articles should be as short as possible, and no longer than 500 words. We reserve the right to edit articles to conform to space limitations.

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Disasters: Why are the people being abandoned?

COVER STORY

The damage, injuries, deaths and government abandonment of people after the recent hurricanes that slammed Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and elsewhere are just the first blow from the storms. The next blow will come when the government helps corporate vultures swoop in to profit from the destruction.

We can see what is coming based on the experience of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and of Flint, Michigan after the poisoning of that city. In Flint, once the people got the word out that there was a disaster, the government response was slow and ineffective, and Flint continues to suffer today, more than three years later.

In New Orleans after Katrina, while government help for the people was slow or non-existent, the government actively aided the corporations in making the rich richer. Troops were brought in to suppress any resistance. Undamaged public housing was torn down and replaced with new mixed income housing, creating fewer units for the poorest. Many of the poorest workers were driven out of the city and never allowed to return. Private contractors profited hugely from the rebuilding effort. Unions



People make their way through flood waters caused by Hurricane Harvey in Texas.

PHOTO/MANNIE GARCIA, GREENPEACE

were busted. Schools were privatized. The list goes on.

One woman in Houston recently wrote to a relative about “undocumented people who are living in mold infested apartments because they are afraid they will be deported if they ask for help. Many people being evicted because aid is slow in arriving for them; other people out of jobs because the business they worked for was either destroyed or so badly damaged

that they cannot re-open. There are still several thousand people in shelters—many were homeless before the storm and present problems with placement... As usual it is the poor and the underserved who are suffering the most.” (See below for information about Puerto Rico.)

Yet the very state and federal government resources that people need to prevent or get through this kind of crisis—public aid for food and housing, healthcare, environ-

mental protections, and infrastructure spending—have been cut back by politicians who then funnel the money into the military and tax cuts for the corporations.

Already, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner has named the former head of U.S. operations for oil giant Shell to lead Houston’s post-hurricane recovery effort.

This is a slap in the face to the victims, given that the fossil fuel industry is a major cause

of global warming. And Trump pointed to Hurricane Irma as a reason to speed up action on corporate tax cuts—even before the hurricane made landfall.

By contrast, look at Cuba, where the government takes responsibility for the people’s welfare and mobilizes Cuban society to prepare for hurricanes and to help people afterwards. Though Irma was a devastating hurricane, Cuba was able to mitigate the deaths and damage. People in the US are 15 times more likely to die in a hurricane than people in Cuba.

There will be more disasters, both natural and economic. Are we going to continue allowing the corporations to loot the public treasury and capitalize on disasters while the rest of us suffer? We can demand that the government provide food, housing and healthcare to all those who need it. And let’s also visualize and fight for a new America, where the government truly serves the people, where people have everything they need to thrive, and where the whole country mobilizes to respond to disaster, whatever the cause. The corporations and billionaires are in the way. The people must step by step begin imposing our will on the government at every level, to make it a people’s government that will take over the corporations and use society’s wealth to serve all of us.

Puerto Rico: Save the people not the corporations

From the Editors

For years, Puerto Rico has been hammered by capitalism’s ongoing economic hurricane, and now Hurricane Maria has devastated the island. Some 3.5 million people have been left without electricity, without phones, and with little or no food, water, housing, or medical care. As this is being written, many people are condemning the federal response to Puerto Rico’s desperate pleas for help as too slow and too little.

“The aid is too slow. They say it is coming from the United States, but who are they giving it to, because I haven’t received any at my house,” San Juan resident Joselyn Velasquez told the *Chicago Tribune*.

“After Georges hit us (in 1998) they responded quickly. But now? Nothing. We need water and food,” said Maria Rodriguez of Yabucoa.

Puerto Rico, like much of

the global economy, has been in recession since 2006. Since 2006, the number of employed persons fell 21%, and manufacturing employment fell 38%. Average incomes are only one-third the mainland average, and the unemployment rate is double that of the continental US. Puerto Rico’s poverty rate is 46%. And the island now has \$123 billion in debt—\$74 billion in public debt, and \$49 billion in pension obligations.

The Wall Street bondholders have taken steps to get their money despite the suffering of the people. Puerto Rico, essentially a US colony, is now run by a seven-member, unelected federal Financial Oversight and Management Board (FOMB) appointed by Washington under a law passed in 2016. The FOMB is similar to the emergency managers imposed on Detroit and Flint, Mich. Creation of the FOMB meant the end of democracy in

Puerto Rico—the board has broad powers to impose financial and budget decisions on the island’s people.

Even before the dictatorial FOMB was created, previous island governments imposed budget cuts. The FOMB earlier this year proposed further cuts which would increase water rates while cutting funds to schools, public-sector jobs and pensions, health care spending, and the university system. Even with such cuts, the big bondholders are suing to demand that they be paid more, no matter how much the people

must suffer. People have been fighting the austerity plans with marches and demonstrations.

Trump, who last year said he opposed any “bailout” for Puerto Rico, mentioned the island’s billions in debt “owed to Wall Street and the banks” in a Sept. 25 tweet, where he said the debt “must be dealt with” regardless of the hurricane. The mayor of San Juan replied by saying we must “put people above debt.”

In the wake of Maria, no doubt the corporate vultures will be swooping in, with the federal government’s help, to seize con-

trol of public assets like Puerto Rico’s electric utility. We can expect the bondholders will still demand payment.

Meanwhile, the people suffering from both Maria and the economic hurricane are left to fend for themselves. As a society we have the resources to provide immediate help and to restore Puerto Rico both physically and economically, and indeed to care for all our people. We must demand that the government be the people’s government; it can serve the corporations or the people, but not both.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The *People’s Tribune* welcomes your comments, especially on our covers and editorials. Your feedback helps us stay on course as a paper that points the way forward to a new cooperative society. Email info@peopletribune.org or call 800-691-6888.

— The Editors

Cities outlawing sharing food with homeless people

By Keith McHenry

SANTA CRUZ, CA — Public outcry against efforts to stop people from feeding the hungry has inspired the creation of the myth about the dangers of “street feeding,” claiming meals shared on the streets “enable the homeless” and discourage them from seeking recovery services. This theory is being adopted by cities all across the United States as justification for laws banning free meals.

Robert Marbut, a consultant hired by cities to address homelessness, is the most prominent advocate of this theory, and has been hired as a highly paid consultant by several cities. Daytona Beach renewed Marbut’s contract in January 2015 at a cost of \$7,200 per month for 14 months, plus up to \$35,000 for expenses.

NPR interviewed Marbut in 2014 after Ft. Lauderdale, Florida generated headlines about the arrest of 90-year-old Arnold Abbott and Food Not Bombs volunteers for sharing food outside the downtown library. Said Marbut, “If you give food on the street, you end up preventing people from going into 24/7 programming.”

Marbut’s “Seven Guiding Principles of Homeless Transfor-



Volunteers with CHAM Deliverance Ministry feed the hungry despite threats from city officials in San Jose, CA. PHOTO/SCOTT WAGERS

mation—Moving from Enablement to Engagement” states that, “street feeding programs without comprehensive services actually increase and promote homelessness.” [Editor’s Note: Yes, it’s not sky-high rents and lack of decent-paying jobs that drive people into homelessness: it’s the yummy free food].

Marbut’s model is the 37-acre Haven for Hope campus he opened in the summer of 2010 in San Antonio, Texas. Local media proclaimed that “comprehensive services like those at Haven for Hope are typically only available in state prisons.” The campus has 550 closed-circuit television cameras and a staff of

40 security-guards.

When Haven for Hope opened, the city made street feeding of the homeless illegal, unless it’s done by licensed kitchens. But Haven for Hope, and the law against sharing food, has failed to force the homeless out of sight. The Rivard Report recently reported “dozens of home-

less camps are hiding in plain sight throughout downtown San Antonio.”

Fort Smith, Arkansas, Placer County and Fresno, California, Daytona Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, Key West, Sarasota, St. Petersburg and Pensacola, Florida are among the cities that tried Marbut’s program, only to find hundreds of people still forced to live in the streets.

St Petersburg, Florida hired Marbut, and at his suggestion opened the Pinellas Safe Harbor facility in the old county jail. Sheriff’s department data indicated that just 7% of those leaving the facility found permanent housing, while 3% went to another shelter or to a friend or relative. Most returned to the streets within a month.

The effort to make it more difficult for people to have access to food comes at a time when the federal government is drafting legislation to cut food stamps, Meals on Wheels, and other aid to the poorest Americans, while redirecting those tax dollars to an increase in military spending and tax breaks for corporations and the 1%. There has never been a more important time to support more food and fewer bombs.

Life after the encampment

By Ron Anderson

OAKLAND, CA — One thousand four hundred sixty days of homelessness, every day crawling into a tiny tent, my only entertainment being the woman next to me singing “Oh Lord, Why Me? Why Me?”

I believed that once I moved into my apartment, my homeless life would be like last summer: gone for good. I was wrong.

The Living Nightmare had been permanently imprinted in my mind. The nightmare is everywhere, even outside my window. I am an American citizen living in a health epidemic environment—dead rats and plenty of garbage for everyone.

Life after the encampment means that in the morning I can lay in my bed and not get up to see what the encampment residents are doing. The memories are seared in of young girls

and grown women running their hands viciously through their hair to get rid of bugs. Miserably, I ask myself why am I doing this, why can’t I forget?

Is it because every night, when I tell them “Good Night,” I leave the blinds open to check on them? Is it because I became what I lived? Once a homeless person, always a homeless person, like a retired policeman is always a cop.

Being free from homelessness is like a soldier coming home forced to cope with a life that has been changed forever. Going to war and being homeless is similar. People die in both situations, both suffer from post-traumatic syndrome and help is hard to find.

Life after the encampment is the horror of total recall. I walk past a dumpster, and I remember being hungry and going through the garbage for food. Some days, I still feel like a homeless person

because I still need go to the food bank like I did when I was out there.

I feel like I am walking on eggshells, taking careful steps to make good decisions between buying food and paying for medication.

I feel alive when I go to the state capital with other poor seniors chanting “We need more money for SSI!”

Life after the encampment means going to a men’s support group to release the things that have piled up inside of me. It means seeing my caseworker once a week, plenty of Narcotics Anonymous meetings and especially sharing my story.

I would like to start a Homeless Anonymous meeting. People from both sides of homelessness, those still in it and those out of it, sharing their experience on how to overcome the homeless hurdles and then how to overcome what happens after



Homeless encampment in Oakland, CA, where a one bedroom apartment now costs \$4,000 a month. Developers are dispossessing whole communities. The city gave out 1,000 building permits in the first quarter of 2017, but not one to build affordable housing. PHOTO/AUSTIN LONG-SCOTT

you get out. An apartment isn’t always your way out of homelessness. The first step might be a hotel room, a shelter or a transitional house. But a roof and a floor is better than the sky and ground!

Life after the encamp-

ment is about unlocking the door to my home, but most of all it is about pushing upward and forward like I did when I pushed myself out of that tiny tent every day in the homeless encampment.



Tents and signs at the homeless-run Poor Tour tent community, Berkeley CA. PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

The demands of the homeless are for a new society

From the Editors

As a tsunami of dispossession breaks across society, the powers that be are moving to further criminalize what homeless people must do to survive: sitting, sleeping, eating, trying to find a place to relieve and clean themselves. Tent encampments that are springing up everywhere are being raided and destroyed. In Spokane, WA, large rocks were dumped under a highway overpass to keep people from seeking shelter there.

This is an epic and criminal fail on the part of a system that creates mass homelessness as it automates millions of job out of existence. The demands of the homeless for the right to survive and for shelter and protection, whether they can pay for them or not, shame a government that not only fails to provide these basic things but attacks its failure's victims.

If people had basic economic rights, housing would be a social priority and all would be decently housed. The demands of the homeless are part of the larger social demand for a true democracy and a government that represents us all.

A paradigm shift from the homeless to the heartless

By Eddie H.

LOS ANGELES, CA — When we talk about homelessness in Los Angeles on Skid Row, we're talking about 60 % of the individuals being of African American descent. For the last several years there has been an increase of women on Skid Row, an increase of women and children. You have a unique dynamic, with literally many different nationalities who live in this 50 sq. block, this quadrant of homelessness, which is Skid Row.

There's never been a clear articulation or a comprehensive

strategy to address homelessness, because there's never been someone that said "You know that this person is a human being as well as I." And when I say "I" I mean individuals who are really in a position to end homelessness. If they truly had the heart to do so, their hearts would be in concert with ideas that would address these issues in a substantive way.

So, when I talk about homelessness I could talk about all the things that generally get talked about, the political and the moral issues. I want to get involved with calling people out about what's in their heart. So I'm talk-

Civil disobedience at Chicago's Uptown Tent City

By Diana Zwinak and Adam Gottlieb

CHICAGO, IL — As we went to press, the homeless residents of the Wilson and Lawrence avenue viaducts were being moved, and, in some cases, having their tents and other belongings confiscated by the city. A forced eviction of Uptown Tent City was planned for September 18 in order to shorten sidewalks and create bike lanes. Multiple lawsuits are pending.

"Housing is a human right/ we won't go without a fight!" chanted Uptown Tent City residents turned activists as they erected tents and blocked traffic for over 30 minutes on the southbound lanes of Lake Shore Drive around 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 7 in the Uptown neighborhood on the city's North Side, just south of the Wilson Avenue viaduct, one of two locations where homeless Chicagoans have historically gathered and organized into a community known as Uptown Tent City.

The purpose of the protest was to send a clear and simple message: "We just want housing, like everybody else," said Keith Gini, resident of the tent city under the Wilson viaduct. "None of us want to be out here. There's nobody perfect out here in this world. We're no different from anybody else. We're human beings. There's a lot of us out here that had a good job. Unfortunately, we lost our jobs due to certain things. Some of us got health problems. ... I was actually fired from my last job because I was having too many problems with my health."

As the police arrived, Carol Aldape began singing "This Land is Your Land" from her wheelchair in the center of the Drive. Finally, four people were tak-



Tent City residents in Chicago fold and pack their belongings as they are evicted from beneath the viaducts at Lake Shore Drive and Wilson, after protests, and vowing to continue the fight.

PHOTO/KATHY POWERS

en away by police for obstructing traffic (technically only three were "arrested"). This civil disobedience action, the first of its kind led by the current residents of Uptown Tent City, came in the wake of intensifying negotiations between City Hall and the homeless movement.

Residents, activists, and neighbors of Uptown Tent City are standing up to demand in court and on the street that homeless communities and individuals be immediately housed. Another resident under the Wilson viaduct, Lewis "Abdul" Jones said, "A lot of people are struggling down there to maintain their livelihood. And what they [people hearing about this action] should strongly consider is to come and support us, because they [the city] act like that viaduct is a home for us. We don't want to be there. It's a refuge. ... But the city's jumping down on everybody, trying to get 'em outta there... harassing them, talking about they got to be here to clean every two weeks. For what?"

"Being homeless is not fun," said Gini. "None of us want to be

psalm 137

under the viaducts
by the waters of Uptown
that's where we sat down
and we remembered Zion

under the viaducts
where we pitched our tents
and our tormentors said
we had the right to die

*O my Lord,
how shall we
sing your song
in this foreign land?*

— Adam Gottlieb

in this situation, but through certain circumstances that are out of our control, we are."

On September 14, U.S. District Court Magistrate Judge Sidney Schenkier ruled against the homeless suit to obtain a place to stay, stating that the city has no obligation to house its people and that housing is not a right.

I've seen homelessness grow exponentially in Skid Row and in this state and country.

We do a great disservice when we just talk about housing. We were talking about those issues 20 years ago. We fail to talk about the heart of individuals who are in positions to create change.

Who's behind the thinking of the things we've been discussing for many years? Oftentimes those who are opposed to finding a solution to a problem are the ones who manipulate the thinking, in view for all to see. They use talking points that for all intents and purposes maintain the status quo

but do not get to the essence of the problem, which is humanity. This is a very serious problem that has not been addressed.

What should exist in talking points, what is foundational, is what we can build upon. We have to put in real work to utilize some critical thinking about the paradigm shift that I believe needs to take place. How to get to point B so we can finally move to point C. Because my thing has always been there needs to be some other avenues that we need to go down.

Eddie resides on Skid Row in Los Angeles.

Life after the storms

Editor's note: As we go to press, the humanitarian crisis in Puerto Rico is intensifying. Large parts of the island have no water or power. The U.S. government is doing very little, and slowly, for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands. Below are letters the People's Tribune received about the crisis the people face everywhere at the hands of the corporations after the storms. The first is a letter from a Katrina survivor in New Orleans to a friend in Texas, warning him about government abandonment of the people as the corporations swoop in to make profits.

From Ted Quant, New Orleans:

Hola Manuel! I am glad you are safe. We had rain and some flooding. Nothing like Texas and western parts of Louisiana.

My nephew sent me photos of the flooded houses of his elderly aunts in Raywood, TX. They will need help from the family. Also, people from New Orleans who were displaced by Katrina live in Houston. I expect I will be learning of the fate of some of them. Another friend had an apartment in Galveston. She lost everything.

This is way bigger than Katrina. The fascist privatization of everything public is about to happen. Every fascist law that couldn't be implemented before will be now. All labor laws will be suspended. The "hated" Mexicans (they are rapist and bad people, says Trump) will be imported by the major corporations like Hallibur-

ton. The corporations will be given billion dollar no bid contracts. Half the money will be taken off the top as profit, and half will be sub-contracted to the next level of capitalist. At the bottom will be the workers. They will get \$7/hr. to do the dangerous and dirty clean up. The lowliest workers will be pitted against each other for who will work for less while the corporations laugh all the way to the bank.

Plans are being made now for how the future of Houston and the country will be shaped in the interest of the most reactionary political agenda. The "all of us are in this together love and happiness" moment of volunteers and support will change and get ugly real quick. Homeland security will take over and the people will be treated not as citizens but refugees.

Before the water went down in New Orleans, there was a meeting in Baton Rouge to make plans to ensure the displaced poor could never return. They made plans to turn where I live into a "green space" and a place for flood waters to go. They told us if we tried to rebuild we wouldn't get insurance or city services—police, fire, water, etc. They privatized our school system and fired all the veteran teachers, busted the union, and brought in college students—"Teach for America"—to teach in the new charter school system.

Beware! This is the next stage of the process after the water goes down.



Undamaged public housing was torn down after Katrina in New Orleans to reduce public housing units and prevent those who lived there from returning. There is now less public housing available and new housing is mixed income, meaning there is less for the poor. See more from Katrina: soldiers pointing guns at citizens (youtu.be/ZrNYX1IDbQk) and a formerly busy street corner with lots of small businesses that never returned after Katrina (flc.kr/p/4uzAkc). PHOTO/TED QUANT

From John Moran, California:

In all my 70 plus years I have never seen this country in such a state of collapse. We are entering a very difficult time to stay alive.

The government, national or local, is systematically failing to provide safe infrastructure to meet the needs of our nation. The military is mandated to protect the American people and it doesn't. Look what is happening to our cities, where devastation

looks more like a massive bombing than a storm.

Our drinking water is unfit to drink, our highways and bridges are unsafe. We are told by the government gerrymandered, unelected politicians, that the cost of rebuilding must come from the domestic budget. We must rebuild and stop paying out billions of dollars to the military industrial complex that won't repair a thing.

The people of the Middle

East did not destroy Houston or New Orleans. But we continue to bomb them.

More weather issues are coming at us as of this writing and potential earthquakes like what just hit Mexico. Do we use the defense budget to pay for our defense against the environment and rebuilding of our infrastructure, or continue the endless War? One thing is clear—it's up to us to demand this insanity stops.



Wanda Faye Jude and her husband, Lonnie, who is disabled, had their water meter pulled in July's heat due to a dispute over the bill. Lonnie stopped drinking the water a couple of years ago when he saw notices saying the water could cause health problems; he had kidney problems. Not having running water in the home was a hardship.

PHOTO/GARY BALL, THE MOUNTAIN CITIZEN

Editor's note: The following are comments from people about the water situation in Martin County in Kentucky. Gary Ball, editor of the Mountain Citizen, stresses the importance of people who have "family members who have experienced cancer, sepsis, H. pylori or infections that could be directly related to our water, or diseases of the liver, kidney, bladder, central nervous system, thyroid, etc.," to come to the water meetings and tell their stories. Below are excerpts from those stories.

"My name is Bessie Morrison, and I live in Debord, Kentucky, and I'm here because my son asked me to. Since the 1970's, I've been getting a little card every year, that the Mountain

'All the neighbors have started dying of cancer,' says Kentucky woman

County Water District is out of compliance with May, June, July, August, September, etc. etc., and it's after the fact.

And suddenly, all the neighbors have started dying of cancer. I can name you 40 that have got cancer, and out of every 8 of them, six of them are dead. Within where I live at, go a half mile in either direction and you'll find six people that are dead from cancer.

In December, my only child in the world was diagnosed with two separate types of tumors in his thighs. They said they are unremovable, untreatable, and incurable. Even my favorite dog had a tumor of this size on her side and she died. I've got two grandchildren, 7 and 9, and I just want to know, what's going to happen to them, if they don't get the water straightened out.

I mean I've got a list, my neighbors, I have names, and they've all passed away in just the last little bit. These are my friends, my neighbors, my family, and if it's not the water, what's going on in our county? I just want to know. The youngest one was 21, and she died."

(Transcribed from a video by the Mountain Citizen of a Public Service Commission meet-

ing in Inez, Kentucky in August, 2017.)

Some Facebook posts from the community about the water:

"My grandson is getting sick in school months and just fine in the summer vacation time. No I don't think Science is just for sissy. I have documentation how it is affecting mine tho they whom are in charge may call me sissy or say I'm silly too save face."

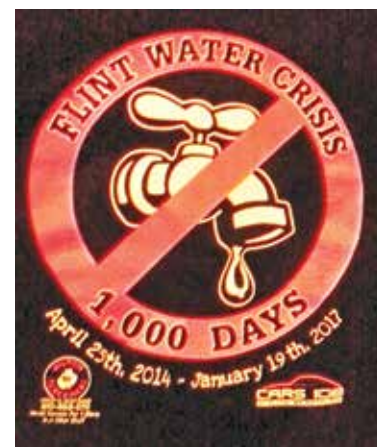
"Omg yes I have been itching like a dog with mange... should have known it was the water."

"I noticed a strong chlorine odor during the past week."

"There was something "extra" in the water Tuesday that set my face on fire and my skin is still peeling today."

"I still think they should pay us back for all the bills and pay us for all the bottled water we had to buy so we dont get sick."

Flint Water crisis alive and well – New research releases horrific findings about Flint water



Third year commemoration of the poisoning of Flint.

From People's Tribune correspondents in Flint

FLINT, MI — A new study done by assistant professors David Slutsky at Kansas University and Daniel Grossman at Virginia University released a shocking report. Study and data from 2008 - 2015, found that after April 2014 when the Flint water source was switched to the toxic Flint River, miscarriages rose 58%! Furthermore, birth rates decreased by 12% (i.e., moms who drank the water could not get pregnant). More research is being done to substantiate the findings. Nonetheless, here is yet another layer

of the depth and breadth of the living Hell known as the Flint Water Crisis!

Meanwhile, preliminary hearings have begun here in Flint District Court. Involuntary manslaughter charges have been filed against current Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Director Nick Lyon, (who is STILL on his job), among others. The charges are related to the Legionella outbreak in 2014, which Lyon had knowledge of and refused to make public. Ninety-two people contracted the disease and at least 12 died.

In another development, Virginia Tech scientist Marc Edwards,

The fight to keep water safe and publicly owned

From the Editors

Poisonous water. Water shut offs. Billions of people drinking water contaminated by plastic particles.

Why is this shameless criminal disregard for the health of the people allowed?

Government today is in the hands of corporations, water is becoming private property and sold for a profit. The fight is to keep our water public. A first step is to fight for water affordability plans where water is priced based on family income, and where the public, not corporate interests, owns the water, and where we insure safe water for all.

Our demands are: No one should be denied water! No one should have to drink poisoned water! No one should be allowed to own or profit from water!

Water shutoffs in Detroit – In midst of Midwest heat wave

From the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization

Family and friends: This is real!! Low-income people in the United States of America who cannot afford basic residential water and sewage costs are denied it, even in the midst of a Midwest heat wave!

No drinking water to stay hydrated, no water to flush your toilet, no water to wash your dishes or laundry, no water for coffee or to cook some beans.

When will we as citizens demand this great nation stop abusing our most vulnerable people and demand that water is a human right?

Sigh... and these shutoffs (the city of Detroit has shut off water to tens of thousands of low income families) take place with an accompanying armed guard threatening witnesses! Meanwhile, city officials STILL refuse to implement the low-income Water Affordability Plan for vulnerable babies and elders that would stop shutoffs. Shame.

who was instrumental in uncovering the Flint Water Crisis, now declares that the Water Crisis is over. Sadly, due to the credibility he amassed from uncovering the rampant lead levels in Flint, he now is feeding a dangerous narrative spreading like wildfire around the country that the Flint Water Crisis is over! Over?! Really?! Just use a water filter, he claims. Tell that to the hundreds and hundreds of Flint residents showing up in the emergency room and the doctors offices with rashes! Tell that to the scores of residents who continue to have mysterious and chronic health challenges as a consequence of the poisonous water.

Recently named the poorest city in the nation, along with the highest water rates in the nation, Flint is the poster child for everything wrong with this system. Yet we will not be deterred. The struggle continues...



Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II (left) speaking at the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival in Detroit in September. PHOTO/VALERIE JEAN

By Joseph Peery

DETROIT, MI — The General Baker Institute held its 4th annual General Baker, Jr., Tribute at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American history in Detroit on September 6. The Institute provides education for the community, especially youth, in the spirit of the revolutionary life and contributions of General Gordon Baker Jr., (September 6, 1941 to May 18, 2014) by making widely known the human rights struggles he

waged and his passion for putting into practice what has been learned.

This year's Tribute embraced the Poor Peoples Campaign in its organizing drive across America. The event began with excerpts from an interview of General Baker where he summed up his years of organizing in the auto plants of Detroit saying, "... all the work you've done to advance your cause inside the plant for jobs and things are now being eliminated en masse by robots and the whole struggle for equali-

Speakers at General Baker Institute call for ending poverty

ty at the workplace is transformed into a struggle for survival."

Maureen Taylor, Chair of the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, one of the panelists, spoke of housing auctions happening while homeless people stand among vacant homes with signs that read, 'will work for food.' "Well it's legal for you to be poor, hungry, live in a right to work state where it's alright for you to earn less, work harder, have no benefits and perhaps die at your job. That's legal." But if you take the house, move in, and fix it up, "and the neighbors start to like you, what you're doing is illegal."

Panelist Rev. Edward Pinkney, president of Black Autonomy Network Community Organization, spoke on the need for unity in the fight against the corporations saying, "A lot of us today don't know who the enemy is. We sit around here fighting with each other over nothing. Do you know that this divides us up? If it concerns my people—

all people—I don't care if you're Black, white, red, blue, brown, yellow, you're my people. We have to learn to come together, fight together and we can win this thing. It's more of us than it is of them."

"In the uniting of the most of us... we can change the direction of this nation," said Poor People's Campaign co-founder and panelist Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis. "We are connecting up," she continued, "with grassroots people across this country from 37 states, and saying, 'in the spring of 2018 starting on Mother's Day, May 13, and going for 40 days until the summer solstice on June 21, can we have 1,000 people in each state from 25 states and 2,500 people in Washington, D.C., engaging in moral resistance, direct action, non violent resistance? And the answer has been a resounding yes."

The final panelist, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, President of the North Carolina NAACP,

pointed out the need to change the moral agenda in this country. "Did you know," he asked, "that 250,000 people die every year from poverty? Did you know that for every one million people denied Medicaid expansion, 6,000 die? So a group of us as clergy say if anyone from our church dies for lack of health-care, we're going to ask the family to have an open casket funeral, we're going to invite the media in and say this is what murder by government looks like."

"That reality," said Maureen Taylor, "will be a guiding truth that each year on Sept 6, we validate what we believe and try to convince others that they need to organize if they plan to survive."

John Williams of the General Baker Institute said at the closing that all are welcome to attend the educational program of the General Baker Institute. Contact @GeneralBakerInstitute for information.

Trump's immigration strategy: Betting on people's misinformation

By Dave Ransom

When the Trump administration launched the most recent attack on "illegal" immigrants, particularly Mexicans, it bet on the misconceptions of many Americans to make its charges believable and frightening.

After all, somebody doing something illegal is a criminal, right?

What Trump didn't say, of course, is that U.S. immigration policy makes it almost impossible for Mexicans to migrate legally into the United States. And at the same time U.S. agribusiness has destroyed Mexican small farms and put millions of jobless people on the road.

Below we cite questions commonly asked by native-born Americans. The answers can help undermine the anti-immigrant attack and also unite the working class to which we all belong.

Why have so many Mexicans migrated to the United States?

As part of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Mexican govern-

ment dropped its protective tariffs. Imported U.S. corn flooded Mexico and wiped out that country's small farmers.

As a consequence, millions of young Mexicans left the farms and took to the road, looking for work to feed their parents and younger siblings. Many went to the maquiladoras—low-wage factories set up by foreign corporations south of the border. Many others came north, looking for whatever jobs they could find.

Why do people come illegally? Why don't they just get in line?

What many Americans learned in school was that every country had an annual quota for migration to the United States and people could actually make an application and get in line for a visa. Now, most Mexicans cannot migrate to the United States legally, and once here they cannot get papers.

Why would anybody want to keep immigrants from Mexico "illegal?"

Keeping millions of immigrants "illegal" creates a large

pool of cheap labor, living in the shadows and unable to access labor rights.

This is not so different from when Southern plantation owners used cheap slave labor before the U.S. Civil War... or when U.S. industry moved into the South after the Civil War, keeping labor cheap through legal segregation backed by vigilante violence.

Cheap slave labor and cheap segregated labor held down wages in the rest of the country, keeping the working-class poor and divided to the benefit of the wealthy and powerful.

Indeed, keeping us divided may be the fundamental benefit of "illegal" immigration to the capitalist powers today. It weakens workers in America politically as well as economically.

And that's probably the best reason for us to educate and link arms together.

Editor's note: These are excerpts from an article by Dave Ransom published in the Tribuno del Pueblo, sister publication of the People's Tribune.



Protest in New Orleans against the possible deportation of 800,000 youth in the DACA program (which allows people brought to the U.S. without documents as children the temporary right to live, study, and work in America). PHOTO/TED QUANT

What would Jesus do? *Single payer for all*

By Pastor Monica Cross

OAKLAND, CA — I am a veteran, a person of faith, a pastor in the Christian Church Disciples of Christ, transgender, and a recipient of single payer with people

in my life who live with disabilities, as well as those with mental health challenges, seniors, and folks who have been and are, in some cases, homeless. I am concerned that the failed healthcare legislation put forward in the U.S.

Congress was not healthcare at all but a means to enrich the 400 wealthiest families at the expense of the disabled, poor, needy and working families. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) 22 million people would

have lost healthcare coverage with the wealthiest families getting a \$772 million tax break. Also, according to the Annals of Internal Medicine, 28,600 people would be consigned to an early death. The legislation revealed a politics morally inept and floundering in the face of significant economic misery for many Americans. Mindful that the debate will continue behind closed doors particularly since the repeal of the Affordable Care Act was a campaign promise, pressure must be applied on Congress to ensure that millions of American voices are heard loud and clear.

As a person of faith, I look to the example of Jesus Christ as he gave free healthcare to all and did not charge any premiums. His example reminds me that the God many politicians use as a talking point to support policies detrimental to the disabled, poor, needy and working families, envisions healthcare as a divine and sacred right not to be hindered by those who see healthcare in terms of profits for shareholders.

Isaiah 10:1-4 says, “Ah you who make iniquitous decrees who write oppressive statutes to

turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right, that widows may be your spoil, and that you may make the orphans prey! What will you do on the day of punishment in the ruin that will come from afar. To who will you flee for help, and where will you leave your wealth? Nothing remains but to crouch among the prisoners or fall among the slain. For this anger has not turned away and his hand is stretched out still.”

In the final analysis those who use sacred scripture, the word of God, to further the oppression of the American people for the benefit of profit shall reap the wrath of God. There is a price to pay for a healthcare legislation unjust. In light of the example of Jesus Christ and considering a politics morally inept, those who long for a healthcare system for all, and not just a tax break for the 400 wealthiest families, must daily cultivate compassion, hope and justice, and in so doing gradually change the hearts and minds and thus the politics, making healthcare for all not only a possibility but a reality and a right in the lives of millions of Americans.



Disabled people once again lead the fight for everyone's health care, disrupting a US Senate Finance Committee hearing on the worst health care bill yet, angering Senators pushing the bill, which was later withdrawn. PHOTO/HARVEY FINKLE

What is 'socialized medicine'?

From the Editors

On Sept. 25, disabled people once again led the fight for everyone's health care when they disrupted a US Senate Finance Committee hearing on the worst bill yet, the Graham-Cassidy bill, which would repeal and replace Obamacare. The demonstrators chanted “No cuts to Medicaid! Save our liberty!” When Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC), one of the bill's sponsors, entered the room, they chanted “Shame! Shame!” When the protesters were removed, committee Chairman Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) told people in the room to be quiet or “get the heck out of here.”

The bill would hurt everyone's health care, and especially the most vulnerable—the poor, the disabled, the elderly and those with chronic and pre-existing conditions. Among other things, it would end Medicaid as we know it, a health program that serves 74 million poor and disabled people. It would cut public subsidies that help people pay for private insurance, and leave people with pre-existing conditions without coverage. Millions would lose their access to care.

Obamacare helped many of

us, but it still leaves some 26 million uninsured, and was basically set up to subsidize the health care industry. What we need is not some continuation of the privately owned health care system. We need universal health care, free at the point of service and paid for by taxing the wealthy and the corporations. We could start by improving Medicare, the public insurance program for the elderly, and expanding it to cover everyone. This would do away with the private insurance industry and give everyone coverage.

Most industrialized societies, and even some developing ones, have publicly funded health care systems that provide care for everyone, or at least some kind of insurance that covers everyone. The US has some publicly funded care, such as for veterans and the active military, and we have some publicly funded insurance for certain groups, such as Medicare and Medicaid, but every attempt to provide anything like true universal health care in this country has been attacked as “socialized medicine.”

So what does “socialized medicine” really mean? It means we don't have to worry about getting care when we're sick or injured. It means we get all the care we need



Medicare for all rally in Los Angeles. PHOTO/MOLLY ADAMS

for free, for a lifetime. It means we don't have to fear being impoverished by an illness or accident. It means we don't have to wonder if we can afford the medications we need. And it means taking one more step toward building a new society where we, the people, are in charge, instead of a handful of billionaires.

But the corporate-controlled

government doesn't want socialized medicine. One reason is there are huge profits to be made in the \$3.2 trillion health care industry. Another is that advancing technology means fewer workers are needed every day, and the corporations don't want government to spend money providing health care for laborers they don't need. A third reason the corporate

class and their politicians oppose socialized medicine is that they are terrified that we, the people, might figure out we don't need them. The reality is, either the corporations are going to own our healthcare and hand out tidbits of inferior care at unaffordable prices, or the people are going to own it and make quality care a public right for all.

Bill Bunting: ‘Uniting against those who seek to keep us slaves’



From Bill Bunting:

“We the people,
Here is your chance. Tell us your solutions to our problems keeping us from loving our brother and uniting against those who wish to keep us slaves.

No bullshit ... just straight talk and real solutions.

No rules, just one guideline. talk to your brother and sister the way you wish to be talked to.

Now ... tell us how we can be free ... tell us how we can save our planet.

Speak up

All welcome

Since communication is key to unity, what can we do to better listen to each other?”

Comments:

“We need to realize that we all have different experiences in this life and open our hearts and ears to truly listen to what others go through.”

“We have so much more in common than we don’t. Let’s build on that!”

“We need to be compassionate and objective. We need EACH OTHER! Once we realize we ALL must unite, THAT’S when we’ll all truly be free from fear!”

“Far too often we like to dismiss each other and our experiences. We can no longer do that. I think most often we do that out of fear. We need to have more empathy for each other. We are all human beings, not a race, not a color, human beings. Once we realize that, and begin to really listen. All of the other puzzle blocks as I call them will fall into place.”

“I want to know why we allow politicians to enslave us? Why aren’t they in jail?”

Editor’s note: Bill Bunting produces thought-provoking videos about issues of concern to people from all walks of life who want love and unity. View Bill Bunting’s videos at facebook.com/bill.bunting.9 or at peopletribune.org. Bill would like to hear from our readers about solutions to our problems. Here are some excerpts from Bill’s comments and from his viewers.

Police killings – Stand up for morality and decency: Take a knee

From the Editors

Last July, police cheered President Trump after he told them “please don’t be too nice,” when detaining people.

As if in response, police in St. Louis took Trump’s call to a higher level in September. They chanted “Whose streets? Our streets!” while arresting protesters after a judge acquitted officer Jason Stockley in the slaying of Anthony Lamar Smith in 2011. They also brutalized protesters of all ages at the upscale Saint Louis Galleria shopping mall.

Police murders and injustice led Colin Kaepernick of the San Francisco 49ers to take a knee during the national anthem in 2016. Professional and varsity athletes across the country followed suit.

Trump can’t stand that. In Alabama, he ranted about athletes like Kaepernick. Trump snarled that NFL owners should deal with socially conscious players like this: “Get that [s.o.b.] off the field right now! Out! He’s fired!”

Trump then disinvited Stephen Curry of the Golden State Warriors from the White House, for which LeBron James of the Cleveland Cavaliers immediately told Trump off. And the next day, about 200 NFL players on both sides of the Atlantic took a knee, sat or raised their fists in answer to Trump.

Every time the racists and fascists try to submit this country to their sick vision, the majority of Americans answer them twice as loud. We have



Anthony Lamar Smith, holding his daughter, was slain by a St. Louis police officer in 2011. A judge acquitted the cop of Smith’s murder in September.

a morality, a decency and a positive vision for our future that Trump and his kind cannot defeat if we are united.

Only by dividing this country can the rulers destroy our health care, schools, social safety nets and our rights. Every struggle of ours is connected. Let us do like the NFL players and link arms together for a new America of abundance for all.

Can we have a society organized around the needs of the people?

From the Editors

In each weather catastrophe, tens of thousands of people, some risking their own lives, reach out to help one another in the face of government inaction. A Hurricane Harvey survivor denounced the paltry help from the government’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Red Cross.

“They’re all up here lying to the people,” he said. “They’re not going to rebuild people’s homes. People need sheet rock. ... There’s an 80-year-old man over here with his roof blown off, why not give him \$5,000? Food prices, gas, are going up and people can’t get to their jobs. This is crazy. Make Home Depot and Lowe’s open the doors; donate to them and have them match every dime given. If someone needs sheet rock, let them have it. That’s how you can help people.”

This person is envisioning something new, an economic system where society’s abundance is distributed to all people, even if they don’t have money; a cooperative society where the government works for the people, not corporate profit. The reality is we can’t survive in this era of environmental catastrophes when the jobs that do exist pay so little and where robots are replacing us at the workplace.

Can we create a society where the industries that produce the sheet rock, housing stock, health care, and everything we need, are owned and run by the public? In such a society, the job of government would simply be to distribute what the robots produce to all of us based on our needs. We could work to rebuild our communities, solving everything from the destruction of the Earth, to providing homes, health-care, education, and food to everyone.

“Let me see if I have this right. Grandma becomes homeless because she lives on a fixed income and the bills get to be too much. She reaches out for help, and the agencies that are supposed to help cannot. She tries to get into a shelter, but they are full. She ends up in a doorway. Now, instead of a grandmother, she is a “drug addicted mentally disabled person who is a threat to all that is good and proper.” That is what most who see her in that doorway are thinking. Do you see the problem?”

— Mike Zint of “First they came for the Homeless” in the San Francisco Bay Area

the cart he pushes
has a full load
.
but his sad eyes
are as blue as the light
on a silvery sea

— Sarah Menefee

Oakland sweep: It's not only immoral, it's criminal

By Mike Lee

OAKLAND, CA — Today started out well enough on outreach in Oakland. Then we got a call of a sweep at 29th and MLK. As I walked up I saw a garbage truck tossing peoples meager possessions away. Deja Vu of the 17 times I experienced the same thing.

My heart broke as I saw the remains of people's shattered lives. They were forced to live in such conditions by a system which no longer has a need for them. Now instead of leaving them alone to survive together as best as they can, the powers that be terrorize them even further.

As we walked over to 30th, I had to hold back tears, as all I saw was pain and misery. To pick on 400 of our weakest members of society like this is not only immoral it is criminal.

I sat on a chair with broken heart amongst pieces of someone's shelter, discarded furniture that provided a moments rest, a filthy mattress used by someone to find just a quick bit of comfort.

My anger started to boil over, Frustration oozed out of every pore. Never Again I vowed, Never Again.

I have boots on the ground and found others who felt the same as I do. Together we are going to provide a hand up. Provide the tools and resources to help folks self-organize.

To the City of Oakland. You have lied to us enough. We will make sure that this never happens again

Cooperation

Rise above the beastly nature
Be the human that you are

The struggle of endless competition
Ends in ultimate ruin
Resources depleted
Fertile ground left sterile

Co-operation
Is the only thing that will move us forward

Cooperation
Is the only thing holding us back

We only seem to get it right
When facing a mutual foe
Lasting only as long as they do

Children do it naturally
What happens to us all

Preacher battles prophet
Left battles right
Part battles part

Rise above the beastly nature
Only then can we receive the entire message

Rise above the beastly nature
Only then can we find the way

Rise above the beastly nature
Only then can we know

The whole

— © Christopher F. Brown

Community education protectors

By Kimberly King

OAKLAND, CA — The battle lines are being drawn in Oakland, California. Corporate interests, working closely with city government, are reshaping Oakland from a diverse working-class city into one of the most expensive housing markets in the country. A grand jury recently slammed the Oakland City Council for making multimillion-dollar back room deals to sell off city property without public input. Politicians representing corporations over the people are turning Silicon Valley into "Silicon Bay," displacing longtime Oakland residents into lower-cost suburbs, or into the rapidly growing homeless encampments popping up all over the city. Students, faculty, and staff at Laney College in Oakland are at ground zero of this battle.

Laney students—as well as some part-time faculty and staff—are part of the less visible but growing homeless population, living out of their cars, or "surfing" on friends' and family members' couches. Now, the Oakland A's baseball corporation seems to be narrowing its sights on Peralta Community College District land, just a block away from Laney, to build a new stadium,

with the potential to displace the college that serves some of the poorest and most diverse students in the state.

Founded in 1953, Laney College serves over 10,000 students annually—the majority of whom are first-generation college students, from low-income backgrounds, immigrants, and students of color. The struggle around the A's stadium puts Laney in the middle of the battle over in whose interest Oakland will be remade. Currently, the power of corporate interests is overwhelming the needs of "the 99%" in our community.

As a professor at Laney College, I'm part of a group of Laney students, professors and staff coming together to protect Laney and our city for the community. We are meeting and organizing to stop the A's stadium from being built next door to our campus because of the traffic, disruption, pollution and intensified gentrification it would usher in. We are bringing resolutions to our representative bodies in the College, seeking support from our unions, speaking at the Board of Trustees, circulating petitions, and informing the community on and off campus.

The potential A's deal also reflects a national trend by pub-

lic education leaders to turn to private corporations for funds in the face of government disinvestment in public schools. Paradoxically, the disinvestment is driven by corporations who refuse to pay taxes to educate workers they no longer need. In Oakland, the A's corporation is making promises to Peralta College leaders to supply desperately needed funds to fix ceiling leaks, update old classrooms, and even add full-time faculty positions to a college where about 70% of the faculty are part-time and contingent.

Serious improvements are necessary for quality public education. But our college is not for sale, and there is no guarantee that promises will be kept by corporations whose primary goal is profit-making, not community service. Public colleges serve our communities, and should remain publicly funded. Our communities must hold our government accountable to fund public institutions. We need political power to do this. Like the Water Protectors of Standing Rock, Laney students, professors, and staff must come together to defend public education and our communities.

People's Tribune annual subscription drive starts now!

The *People's Tribune* is a revolutionary press for revolutionary times.

Here we share comments from homeless readers who are struggling every day just to stay alive. They discuss why the *People's Tribune* is so important to this fight:

"This paper tells the story of our lives." ... "The stories are as diverse as the backgrounds of the people in this circle." ... "If our stories are told, people will realize that we are not all criminals and killers." ... "How can we get these stories out to more people?" ... "When people read these stories, they see that they are not alone. When they realize that they are not alone, they will be unable to put up with the way things are going." ... "How can we use this paper to organize a bunch of angry people?"

The *People's Tribune* annual sub drive in October-November is very important for the paper's continued existence. Please subscribe, renew your subscription and also donate whatever extra you can.

A revolutionary movement is a cause and a press. Help make the *People's Tribune* the voice of the movement for a new, cooperative society



free of poverty and injustice and controlled by the people. Send us articles about your struggle, photographs, and links to things you'd like published online.

Give a *People's Tribune* subscription (\$20) as a holiday gift!

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Donate at peopletribune.org or mail to People's Tribune, P.O. Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524.

Unity of all people

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

BENTON HARBOR, MI — It has been a bad month for the people. We need a revolution now! We need a new society!

Here is a rundown of the month: Another killer cop walks free in Saint Louis, Missouri. How can we allow police to continue to kill Black people, and with no penalty? Democrats and Republicans vote overwhelmingly to pass a \$75 billion increase in the military budget when so many people go hungry. Trump plans to send every Mexican back to Mexico. Trump wants all Mexicans out. Trump threatens to destroy North Korea in his address to the United Nations.

At the center of the United States of America's strategy to maintain its oppressive dominance of this world and create disunity is the repression of Mexican immigrants in this country.

My dear friend who lived in Benton Harbor told me she

no longer wants to live in this country. She said racism is out of control. She is going home to Mexico. She said she attempted six times to get into this country and six times she was sent back. She and her family are going home on their own. She can no longer accept the oppression in the United States of America and prefers to return to her own country.

Research shows that more Mexican people in the United States are actually returning home today than arriving, because of the conditions here.

My friend said, let the truth be told. The establishment, the corporations and government, in the United States of America, are a system that operates to oppress the people.

There is a war going on—and it's against all of us. This is why I am asking the community and country to help me build a resistance movement with the capacity to check the systematic violence that we and the people of the



Rev. Edward Pinkney from Benton Harbor with fellow activist Valerie Jean from Detroit.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

world are subjected to. We need unity of all people.

We must start a revolution for a moral society that values every

human being.

E-mail Rev. Pinkney at banco9342@sbcglobal.net.

What's on the people's agenda?

Editor's note: This is an excerpt from a blog post by Arielle Maldonado, leader and founder of the Healing Corners in the Humboldt Park area and neighborhoods on the West Side of Chicago.

By Arielle Maldonado

CHICAGO, IL — As a community, we need to focus our energy on the legislative damage being perpetrated against us stemming from the whims of politicians and their governmental policies. Issues such as the Illinois state budget stalemate has forced countless social service agencies to downsize or shut their doors and serves as an excuse for further neglect of funding our public schools. Chicago has already suffered the biggest U.S. mass school closure of 54 schools in primarily low-income black and Latino areas in 2013. In 2012, the city closed 6 of the 12 Mental Health Centers in the same areas. With a governor who invests in private prisons, it's not

hard to connect the dots to where they expect the most vulnerable youth and young adults to end up.

Many people dismiss these young men and boys on the West and South sides as thugs or scum who should be locked up without even hearing their story. Now more than ever, communities themselves need to lead the push for an agenda that's powered by the people's voice and needs. We can use political action and organization to change these young men's perception and show them a different life is possible! Let's involve the young men on our corners and ask them, "What do YOU need to get off that corner?" Are any politicians meeting them at the corner and asking them that? With political elections coming up—we need to hold our elected officials responsible. They need to be accountable to us and we need to empower our people to know the power of their vote! We need to ensure that our aldermen are speaking and acting for

us. Our elected officials should not be allowed to funnel public TIF money that is designed to help our communities into tourist projects like Navy Pier or into De Paul University's new stadium. Communities are left scraping for crumbs while they lack the basic essentials that will allow them to build a better future for themselves and for generations that will come after them.

Just as Colonials divided and conquered African countries, exploiting minerals in the Congo for First World use, there is a land grab under way on the West and South sides of Chicago. Gentrification is growing at an exponential rate, while at the same time these boys are being locked up and/or killed. Time and time again our public services are being privatized for profit. Traditional public schools are doing more with less and obtain higher growth rates with their students because of the quality of teachers. We shouldn't be seduced by char-



Young men in the West Humboldt Park neighborhood of Chicago share the compassionate vision of the Healing Corner organization for their community.

PHOTO/KRYSTAL ROBLED0

ter schools. Our children's education should not be for profit.

Now more than ever, it is critical to our survival that we get organized, that we advocate

and vote for what we want, need, and believe in. Everyone has an important part to play to ensure the survival and success of our communities.

Poets United to End Homelessness Special Edition

Poets from the Chicago Revolutionary Poets Brigade formed a new project, "Poets United To End Homelessness." We are excited to announce that we are raising funds for a special 4-page pull-out in the November-December 2017 edition of the *People's Tribune* that will feature poetry from the homeless movement!

To submit or get involved, email revolutionarypoetsbrigadechi@gmail.com.

Peace over piece

The tension is depressin
Others hold the same aggression
Ain't no telling but accepted as a life lesson

They say the root of all evil is dinero
Poverty terror
Take a look at this wild weather

Not only us have been beat in a rapid pace
The Earth herself has been raped
She needs a break

I holla peace
But the beast keeps pushing the piece
How my folks gone wake when they living asleep

— David Tojin aka Astrow