



OUR YOUTH DEMAND: STOP THE KILLING

The recent killing of Florida high school students has shocked the country's conscience and galvanized young people especially. Students are planning a national march and school walkouts. America's youth are demanding real change, and we the people must rally behind them ...

Read on page 3

America's youth are demanding that something be done about the rash of school killings.

PHOTO/JOSEPH GRUBER, SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH –

POLITICS UNUSUAL: Women disrupt the 2018 election cycle



(Left) Women's March in Michigan, 2017. (Right) Women's March in Washington, D.C., 2017.

PHOTOS/(LEFT) DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM (RIGHT) ADRIAN GARCIA

Read on page 3

Keep water public

EDITORIAL

World Water Day, March 22

“The last world war will be fought over water. ... You can't eat or drink your money.”

— *Kylo Prince, American Indian Movement*

Water. There is no life without it. Despite covering about 70% of the Earth's surface, only 3% of it is fresh and suitable for drinking. Over one billion people lack access to water and another 2.7 billion find it scarce for at least one month of the year. According to UN projections, global demand for fresh water will exceed supply by 40% in 2030, thanks to a combination of climate change, human action and population growth.

In this light, Goldman Sachs declared water a “critical commodity” in 2008, referring to it as “the petroleum of the 21st century.” In the U.S., water is a \$425 billion industry. Investment banks such as Goldman Sachs, J.P. Morgan Chase, Citigroup, UBS, and other elite banks are gobbling up the rights to groundwater, aquifers, and rivers, land with water on it or under, desalination projects, irrigation and well-drilling technologies, utilities, water infrastructure maintenance and construction, and more. They have amassed billions of dollars to buy up infrastructure around the world.

Furthermore, investment bank Citigroup urges water-rights owners to sell water to fracking companies. Fresh clean water is necessary for fracking which makes it a premium investment. Water for fracking can be sold



by water companies for \$3,000 per acre-foot instead of only \$50 per acre-foot to farmers. Each fracked well requires 3 to 5 million gallons of water. Eighty percent of this water cannot be reused. Selling water to “frackers” has left communities high and dry in Texas and California, also profiting bottled water corporations such as Nestlé as entire communities purchase bottled water for everyday use.

The privatization of public water systems is moving rapidly. In Kern County, CA, the Kern Water Bank (a large underground aquifer) was turned over to two giant agribusinesses while taps ran dry in nearby communities, forcing workers to buy bottled water. Adam Keats, attorney with the Center for Biological Diversity, predicts the private ownership of that much water will lead to speculation, and profitmaking.

Water and infrastructure-privatization is accelerating as many local and state governments, suffering from revenue shortfalls and under financial

and budgetary strains can no longer maintain and upgrade their own utilities. They are vulnerable to corporate pitch-men who promise privatization increases efficiency and saves money. As Mary Grant from Food and Water Watch points out, often when they refer to efficiency, it's cutting corners and cutting back water system jobs. It's not actually making systems work more effectively. Water quality declines and price increases. Private companies, on average, charge 59% more than local governments do for water service. What privatization means for communities is rate hikes. It means loss of local control over a

service essential for public health and wellbeing.

In communities across the nation, from Bakersfield, CA, to Atlantic City, NJ (where the people recently stopped privatization efforts there), from Flint and Detroit to New Orleans, the people are standing up to the corporate take over of water. They are demanding government guarantee water as a human right and protect water as a common good. As corporations turn to speculation as a means to stay profitable, we, the people must demand government nationalize these corporations and run them in our interests.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The *People's Tribune* welcomes your comments. 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*

SUBSCRIBE TO THE PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE! ORDER BUNDLES

- Please send me a one-year individual subscription [\$20]
- Please send me a one-year institutional subscription [\$25]
- Please send me a bundle of _____ PTs [at 50 cents per paper]

Enclosed is my donation of:

- \$20 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$Other _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

My check or money order made payable to "People's Tribune" is enclosed. Mail this coupon to: People's Tribune, P.O. Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524. You can also order your subscription online at peopletribune.org.

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. Bylined 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.

People's Tribune Editor: Bob Lee

Editorial Staff: Ran Dibble, Brett Jelinek, Sarah Menefee, Joseph Peery, Sandra Reid, Cathy Talbott

Photo Editor: Daymon Hartley

National Office: People's Tribune, P.O. Box 3524 Chicago, Illinois, 60654 e-mail: info@peopletribune.org Phone: 773-486-3551 Toll Free: 800-691-6888 Web: www.peopletribune.org Facebook: fb.com/peopletrib

Publisher: People's Tribune ISSN# 1081-4787

Reach us locally at:
Chicago, IL: 773-486-3551 peopletribunechicago@gmail.com
Ann Arbor, MI: zettir@gmail.com
Atlanta, GA: atlanta@peopletribune.org
Carbondale, IL: carbondale@peopletribune.org
Denver, CO: info@peopletribune.org
Detroit, MI: 248-629-0897
Houston, TX: P O Box 231281, Houston, TX 77223-1281
Los Angeles, CA: 310-548-6491
Merced, CA: TPPT2017SJVC@gmail.com
Oakland, CA: oakland@peopletribune.org
Washington, DC: pt_in_dmv@yahoo.com

Our youth demand: Stop the killing

COVER STORY

The recent killing of Florida high school students has shocked the country's conscience and galvanized young people especially. Students are planning a national march and school walkouts. America's youth are demanding real change, and we the people must rally behind them.

In a televised interview, Emma Gonzalez, a survivor of the Florida shooting, called out politicians who take "blood money" from the National Rifle Association. And to the NRA, she said: "Disband, dismantle... Don't you dare come back here... The fact that you had so much influence for so long in America just goes to show how much time and effort we still need to spend on fixing our country, and gun control is just the first thing right now."

The government is in the grip of an utterly corrupt group of billionaires and corporations and the politicians who serve them. There are roughly 11,000 corporate lobbyists based in Washington, D.C. The NRA is one example of such lobbyists. From 2010 through mid-February 2018, the NRA donated \$111 million to political campaigns of federal candidates. The NRA speaks for a US firearms industry with annual revenue of \$11 billion.

And the domestic gun industry is just one element of the \$1 trillion a year military-industrial complex. In the world of harnessing government to protect profits, the gun industry is a small player compared to the big military contractors, or the financial, pharmaceutical, and energy industries. We are practically governed directly by the corporations.

Having our country at the mercy of these corporate giants is the root of the violence prob-

lem. Since colonial times, America has been ruled by a wealthy elite that relied on violence to accomplish its political and economic goals. They used violence to rob the Native Americans of their land. They used violence to keep the slaves in bondage. And they have cultivated a culture of militarism and the glorification of violence to serve their purposes. Our rulers have proscribed peace, and sanctified mass murder. It's no wonder the violence spills into our daily lives and threatens even our children.

To stop the slaughter, we must end the culture of violence. To do this, we must push the corporations aside and put the people in charge. We must join with the youth to build a powerful movement that demands that the government act in the interests of the people, not the corporations. Save our children! Save our country! Stop the killing!



Protest against discriminatory practices at a Chicago bank. Some protesters carried signs about school shootings.

PHOTO/CHARLES EDWARD MILLER

Politics *unusual*: Women disrupt 2018 election cycle

Women's History Month

Women's History Month finds women vowing to be a *tour de force* at the polls this year.

When Donald Trump won the election in 2016, Teresa Shook of Hawaii (retired and a first-time activist) shared a Facebook post with a few friends, inviting them to march on Washington. The request exploded into an international phenomenon and led to the gigantic Women's March of Jan. 21, 2017. When asked what drove her, Shook responded, "Something happened in me with this administration that woke up my love for people and humanity."

The Women's Marches in 2017 and 2018 were among the largest demonstrations on record. The issues of a woman's right to choose; the #MeToo movement exposing sexual assault and harassment; and the fight for equal pay were on full display. The call for the marches created a perfect storm of resistance to the dismantling of health care; the inhumane assault on undocumented populations, including the DACA "Dreamers"; the Mus-

lim ban; the failure to denounce white supremacists, while giving aid and comfort to senseless killings by the police; the government's failure to address the environmental crisis that is killing people and decimating Mother Earth, and instead doing the bidding of corporate interests; the gouging of the public treasury by the same corporate interests threatening Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

Women are taking these causes to the polls. A former Navy pilot from Kentucky is running for Congress to save health care. A member of the Green Party is running for governor in Michigan to bring resolution to the Flint water crisis. A coal miner's daughter in West Virginia is running for the U.S. Senate to bring environmental justice to her state. In Alabama, the African American women, in particular, were the driving force that won a Senate seat against the morally challenged Roy Moore—something unthinkable just weeks before. There are thousands more women running in local races around the country.

All this is a reflection both of the historical oppression of women—the oldest form of oppression—and the new economic situation faced by women. Women constitute the numerical majority in the United States. They are also a majority among low-wage workers—at a time when the economic foundation of society has been altered irrevocably. The destruction of the old industrial economy, the decimation of social programs, and the open rule by a tiny corporate class of billionaires has thrust women into the forefront of the struggle for economic survival being waged by *all* workers. We are witnessing the emergence of a profound new social movement that is being led by women. It is morally based and humanitarian-based. It defies "politics as usual."

Today's far-reaching social movement includes street protests and electoral campaigns, candidates running as independents and those running inside the old parties' electoral structures. While the establishment parties are scrambling to channel the movement in their direction, the impulse for the motion comes from the grassroots. Many wom-



Women's March in Chicago in 2017. Women are at the forefront of the struggle for economic survival and for a moral society that cares for us all.

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK, OLAFIMAGES.COM

en running for office are doing so to highlight the issues of society, not to express blind or eternal loyalty to one party. They stepped forward on their own. And there is no turning back.

Today, the fight of millions

of women—and men—for the basic necessities of life and for a humane society can only culminate in the ending of rule by the 1 percent. Today, a woman's place is in this revolution.



Monica Perez begins to move her few possessions from the homeless encampment known as Googleville in San Jose, CA. She has lived and worked in San Jose for over thirty years, but now has no place to go. PHOTO/SANDY PERRY

Evicted in Googleville

By Sandy Perry

SAN JOSE, CA — CalTrans recently evicted residents of San Jose’s largest homeless encampment since the “Jungle” in a massive sweep on the morning of February 5. Community supporters rallied to protest the action, faulting local and state officials for failing to address the root causes of the homelessness crisis, despite the area’s enormous wealth held by tech companies like Google.

Some named the Felipe Road encampment “Googleville” in order to highlight the tech industry’s irresponsibility in the face of Silicon Valley’s ongoing humanitarian emergency. A system that increases homelessness while its corporations grow radically richer is unsustainable, and must be resisted not only by those directly affected, but by all people of conscience and good will.

The United Nations Special Rapporteur, Leilani Farha, recently visited the Bay Area and called California’s criminalization of the homeless and repeated forced removals a form of “systemic

cruelty”, worse than what she has witnessed in cities like Jakarta, Manila, and Mexico City.

“UNBELIEVABLE,” wrote Pastor Scott Wagers a few days later. “After church service, I got a couple of urgent calls and texts that the people who were displaced from the Googleville encampment are now literally living on the sidewalk along the fence that separates state property from city property. So, after hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent to remove our friends from the camp and remove (or destroy) their belongings, most of the people have moved about 20 feet from where they were before. This is true madness and I’ve been watching it for too long. Sorry, too many people are watching and too many people are on the streets... NO ONE is being fooled anymore.”

America could easily end homelessness tomorrow. The government needs to turn over some of the hundreds of thousands of government-owned and corporate-owned vacant homes for people to live in.

Homeless show how true community works

From the Editors

In Richmond, VA, homeless people sit up all night on torturous wooden seats in a dank basement courtroom, or freeze outside; this is what passes for ‘shelter’ there. Others simply die of exposure outside. This country has had almost four decades to solve homelessness, but every year it gets worse, growing by leaps and bounds while more people get pushed out of an automating economy.

Instead of making sure people are housed, as a fundamental social necessity and priority, towns and cities—from San Jose to Santa Ana in California, and all across the country—move to raze tent communities where people band together for shelter, privacy and mutual support. These at their best, like ones in the San Francisco Bay Area that have also been raided recently, could be a model for how true community works. Instead they are smashed and people scattered to the streets and the elements. The rest of our class, working and no longer working, understand the immorality of this and are stepping forward to help and to protest.

An economic and political system that causes mass homelessness is bankrupt and needs to be replaced. This is the vision of an increasing number of people as they watch the sad spectacle of people being attacked simply for being the victims of this failing system. The demands of the homeless for housing and for all they need to survive and thrive are revolutionary: a demand for a transformed system based on cooperation and the fulfilling of human needs.

Letters to the Editor: Homeless coverage in the People’s Tribune’s

Editor’s note: We welcome your thoughts! Please keep sending. Go to peopletribune.org or email info@peopletribune.org.

On “The uncanny hatred towards the homeless endangers the homeless community,” February, 2018.

“Yes! There is too much hatred out there! I was homeless many different times in my life, and been called all kinds of names! You don’t want to be homeless in San Clements, CA. City passed a no camping ban, after a homeowner went around filming homeless campsites with a drone and presented it to the City Council. Now the sheriff’s deputies are writing out illegal camping tickets. I can’t believe how we treat the homeless! They’re just down on their luck, and of course are human beings just like everyone. Thank you—you do a great cause and I enjoyed your Facebook page.”

— Danny Scharton

On “Housing for all or death in the killing cold,” February, 2018

“I am a senior citizen working multiple jobs and I have two disabilities. Recently approved for Section 8 housing, I am now told there are no apartments and to look elsewhere. I am relegated to either living in my car or rent a room from a stranger. So far, I have been sexually assaulted, subject to mentally ill landlord’s crazy behavior, heat set at 60 when its 7 degrees outside, and theft of

items. To add insult, I am forced to pay top dollar to keep a roof over my head. Why isn’t Eminent Domain used to take abandoned property and convert to affordable housing? Shopping centers are in receivership and would make ideal micro-housing but instead they remain blighted and vacant. I am scared because I am on my own and nobody cares.”

— Susan

On “The real plight of the homeless told by the homeless,” April, 2017

I spent a dozen years homeless, ‘til 3/20/17. The last 6+ years I camped at the same spot, & during that time lost all my stuff 3 times. Every single time I lost it to the County of Orange Public Works during one of their sweeps. By law, found property must be stored safely & securely for 90 days. Never happened, they threw my stuff into a compactor trash truck & destroyed it. How would you feel if someone had the power to decide if you got to keep your personal property or not? SURPRISE!! You too, are subject to this type of thing, just look up “Kelo vs. New London”, SCOTUS (U.S. Supreme Court) ruled that govt can take private property for another private party to develop for private use. So you no longer own your property, your house, your land. So I guess I’ll say to you, “Welcome to the Katella bridge, we don’t allow no thieving or drama here. If that is a problem for you, I suggest you kick rocks to someplace else.”

— E. K. Carson

Now let’s go
But we can’t go
Backwards

— Kendrick Lamar
from his song “Kendrick Lamar”

'All we have is an idea'

By Mike Zint

Editor's note: in the predawn hours of February 8, police and city workers descended on the peaceful Poor Tour tent community at Berkeley Old City Hall, taking tents and belongings, destroying the place where many houseless people had found protection, community and a place to call home. This is a description by 'First they came for the homeless' co-founder Mike Zint of the raid, and what was displaced. Other sites are still standing and a smaller protest has continued nearby, with more determination than ever.

BERKELEY, CA — Today, at 5 am, the police raided our city hall location. They did it with less than 24 hours notice. They displaced over 40 people. Those displaced were seniors, disabled, and addicts fresh into recovery. They removed months of stability. They put some people into a much worse situation. They destroyed recovery progress, and put some addicts in the impos-

sible position of staying clean on the streets. They destroyed a community that was making a difference.

'First They Came for The Homeless' has helped get over 50 people off the streets. With the help of the Dare 2 Change community, we finally had a working solution for getting addicted clean and into our sober community. They graduate from Dare 2 Change community, and enter into the 'First They Came for The Homeless' camp as drug and alcohol free. Once in the 'First They Came for The Homeless' camp, the new people must go through probation, just like any other new resident. Dare 2 Change graduated 23 people. In the same period of time, the HUB [Berkeley's central entry point for homeless services] got two housed out of camp. We have used no tax payer dollars. The HUB has around 1.7 million dollars budgeted.

When you do the math, we have gotten 50 off the streets. Before the raid, we had around 60 sheltered in tents. Including sheltering those 60, we are also pro-



Mike Zint (right) of 'First they came for the homeless' meets with Poor Tour tent community residents Jim, Clark and Tim. PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

viding stability, storage of gear, security, personal space, privacy, and community. With Dare 2 Change's 23 graduated, that brings us to around 120 people that were not fighting for a mat on the floor. They are no longer in doorways. They are no longer on drugs, wandering around town.

We are the homeless. We don't get funded. All we have is

an idea on what is needed. We have proven over the last 13 months that this community-based solution, with rules and camp consensus policy making, is the best way to save lives, and get people off the streets. The fact that the city would rather spend millions on things that don't work than listen to the homeless suggests to me the city has no desire

to really help. They would rather chase the homeless, or move them out of town.

I just want to be able to shelter myself if it's ever needed. To have that removed is a clear demonstration that those in power need to be removed. When those in charge deny a life-sustaining necessity from the people, the people need to rebel or die.



"Momma" Crystal McKinney and her daughter, Star, at the "Dare 2 Change" tent community, with Xavier, another resident. PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

'We just reach out and help'

By 'Momma' Crystal McKinney

Editor's note: On January 21, 2018, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Leilani Farha, visited the tent community organized by "First They Came for the Homeless" at Berkeley Old City Hall. There, she met with residents, including street minister "Momma" Crystal McKinney of "Dare 2 Change," who lived there with her two teenage daughters, helping people with recovery and healing, until a recent police raid displaced everyone to another site. Her son organizes a nearby tent community for street youth. This is a transcription of her testimony to Ms. Farha during the visit in Berkeley, CA.

Lailani Farha: I just wanted to meet you.

Crystal McKinney: It is wonderful to meet you. You are talking to Momma, Crystal McKinney. This is my daughter Star. I am a street minister but I don't use the Rever-

end because it's intimidating. [To her daughter] How many people do we have here now?

Daughter: It varies.

Crystal: I think 'bout 13.

The best things about what we have now is that these are not people who are choosing to be here cuz they need a place to stay, they're tenting up here because they've decided to make a change, completely 100%, from what we were to what you can become, without judgement, without having to get out a dollar you don't have. We have family night, we do game night, movie night, we do artwork. We cook together as a family. We don't separate one person with an issue from another person, we just reach out and help that person where they are at the moment.

My 15 year-old daughter's high school graduation was the most beautiful day that ever happened. She is literally in the library all day long so she ended up actually jumping a grade and gradu-

ating by herself before her class. What am I going to do? The homeless people got together, not a joke, people who don't get along, they're not the best of friends, they've stolen from each other—they all got together and gave this girl a graduation. They all dressed up, wore beautiful gowns. And the purpose of me telling you this story is that homeless people got together in one area without an argument, for a positive purpose.

We don't want to see people in tents, we want to see these educated, these bright futures, these talented young people. Omi-god, the things that I've seen, they have so much to offer, and all we want you guys to know is that sometimes when something bad happens out here, like drugs start out here, because of the way they're treated, the way they're made to feel. And all I'm saying is, can we just stop making people feel that way, and deal with them on this level?

manifesto

he writes his manifesto on a scrap of cardboard: 'share the love'

— Sarah Menefee

Donate to the People's Tribune!

We are reader supported. We get no corporate funding. We have an all-volunteer staff. Won't you subscribe, order bundles or donate today? The future is up to all of us.

— The Editors

Mayor says 'no' to water testing in town where people are sick



Deanna Berry and her community in South Carolina are fighting for their water to be tested as many people in the town are sick with cancer and other health issues, but the mayor says no.

Edwards, who helped expose the lead in Flint's water, said it is possible residents are drinking sewage water.

"There's hundreds of people here who say they're always sick and can't find out why. A lot of people have kidney failure, cancers, other illnesses that may be attributed to the water. The Department of Health and Environmental Control recently shared water samples, and Dr. Marc Edwards found contaminants in what was sent. He offered to find out where the contamination starts, whether from the wells or piping, which is almost 80 years old. But a few days before Edwards was coming, he got a phone call from the mayor's office, saying don't come back to test the water.

"When the mayor was asked

why not test, why not find out why people are getting sick and poisoned and whether it is coming from our water source, he just says because he can't.

"We have reached out to the governor's office twice. We were told they don't get into local affairs with municipalities—they step in with big issues. Well, this is a pretty big issue! Lead in the water, high levels of manganese, e-coli, along with other bacteria. And, we found an illegal dumping site where raw sewage was running into a river where people fish.

"Councilmen and representatives are concerned.

"The water has been an issue for years. In 2009, citizens started fighting the city and then the tax increased—first 20% and then 40%, so we're still paying a 60% tax rate increase on our water

Women's History Month

From the Editors

Within these pages of the *People's Tribune* are strong articles by women, in honor of Women's History Month. While women are increasingly represented in the elite corporate circles, the women presented here represent the great majority. They are those who are struggling even harder than ever to keep a roof over their heads, fight sexual harassment, keep their faucets running, and feed and clothe their children. They are, out of necessity, in the forefront of the fight for a just society—one that provides for us all.

Technology is producing a world of plenty. No one need go without anything today. But that technology, and the wealth it produces, is owned by corporations who own our government. Will the government enthrone the corporations or will it provide for the needs of *all* people? This is the battleground, and women are leading the way.

Editor's note: The People's Tribune interviewed Deanna Berry from Denmark, South Carolina about the town's water struggle. Residents say water runs brown, stains the laundry and tastes bad. Virginia Tech Scientist Marc

bill.

"Our poverty rate is 33% below poverty level. There are no jobs and there isn't any industry. People cannot afford the water. We have elderly citizens with water bills of \$1,000 a month. They are getting water turned off with no notice. Nobody cares

about us poor people.

"We are trying to educate the public. If we stand together—the bigger the numbers—they will listen. If we have 3,000 people saying bring Virginia Tech in, we can win. People are getting bolder.

Lupe, a Skid Row activist, speaks about women's lives

By Silvia Hernandez

LOS ANGELES, CA — I came from Wilmington to Skid Row, to the 38th and Broadway Shelter in Los Angeles. Because the shelter kicks you out during the day, they brought me to Skid Row. Somebody told me about the Downtown Women's Center. I started learning more about Skid Row by talking with the people. One of those women was Lupe.

"Ta' carbon," she said. "It's hard. Tomorrow is a cleaning day on the streets. It's like a punishment to make us move, it's a tactic. The other day, Channel 54 interviewed me. The reporter asked me if I agree and if I was happy about the sixty trailers rooms program, that it will open for the people that live on the streets by the Placita Olvera Street? I told him no, because I believe that it was a waste of money."

Lupe went in that moment to take a medication because she got bitten by a spider last Friday. She had to go to the hospital that night. "Before, the hospitals used to let the people stay inside, but now when the people are sleeping, the security slams their chairs to wake them up, they don't respect. It is not the fact of living on the streets, but the consistent attack."

"I went to a meeting," Lupe says, "to talk about the issues of the people living on the streets with an organization that goes to the churches to talk about the issues that the people that live on the streets face. Mayor Garcetti got there twenty minutes after we were there."

I asked to Lupe if Skid Row was represented in that meeting. She said no, that nobody was there. "What concerned me," Lupe says, "is that at this meeting a person that coordinates



Lupe, an activist on Skid Row, fights for the homeless women who are without shelter or programs. PHOTO/SILVIA HERNANDEZ

the confirmations at church was the voice of the people that live on the encampment, when he has never been on the streets. He was saying that the people agreed to be removed from the street, and that we want the parking lots, and that we agreed with the three months trailers program. They will help sixty persons with sixty rooms on the condition that if they decide to go back to the street they will go six months to jail."

Lupe said that the situation will worsen for the people that live on the streets. She said that the women witness and experience violence, especially the elder ones, pregnant, and women with children. "They are the most vulnerable. There is no shelter for those women, I mean no programs. They are given no hope."

Dear Welfare Queens

Editor's note: Below are excerpts from a letter by Cheri Honkala of the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign

I'm a Queen myself so it's easy for me to identify with other Queens. I live in a little apartment on the second floor of a house with my son who is 15 and has two disabilities. I make deliveries during the day for Postmates when I can and work the night shift at UPS. I can barely pay my bills and have been on and off welfare for most of my life. No, I don't enjoy this life, nor do I wish it on anyone.

We Queens have always been hated, distrusted, and told that we will never amount to anything because we have a poor work ethic.

Our children's fathers have been called deadbeat dads. To get the little welfare or food stamps we have, we've had to cut fathers out of our children's lives and applaud when they are sent to jail for not paying child support. It's called the prison industrial complex.

Welfare Queens, listen up: Things are about to get even harder for you now! ... Now you have to deal with the social control from the non-profit industrial complex.

My sisters, you must educate yourselves. We need you to follow the money of every organization and person you meet. "Progressive Foundations" are funding the disunity of our class. These foundations are linking government and corporations in order to create the social control necessary to prevent us from building a movement led by the poor, independent of the two corporate-controlled political parties.

They are trying to cut off your voice and mine. We must stand strong in the tradition of Fannie Lou Hamer, Annie Smart, Dottie Stevens, Rev. Annie Chambers, Rosa Clemente, and many other sisters who dared to speak truth to power. Women who were and are brave enough to speak out against the Democratic and Republican parties and understand the poor need more than pity. They need political power!

My dear Welfare Queens, you can choose which road to take. Our road might be hard, but it leads to political independence, freedom, dignity, and self-respect.

We need you on this road and hope you will join your fellow Welfare Queens and America's hated poor on the March for Our Lives on June 2 in Philadelphia when we will march to Washington to reconstruct Resurrection City. You can begin to join other Queens and build a cooperative economy and society. You can help us build the movement to end poverty, hunger, and homelessness, in this country and around the world.

Sign up now to walk this road together and support our efforts by donating just \$10 today at <http://economichumanrights.org/>!

Candidate dragged out of WV House Chambers for exposing delegates' campaign donors

By Lissa Lucas,
interviewed by Sandy Reid

Editor's note: Lissa Lucas is fighting for jobs and a clean environment, challenging the destruction of West Virginia by the energy industry.

"As I tried to give my remarks on HB4268 in defense of our constitutional property rights, I got dragged out of the West Virginia House chambers," said Lissa Lucas, a candidate for West Virginia House of Delegates. "Why? Because I was listing out who has been donating to Delegates on the Judiciary Committee [from the energy industry]. This is, of course, public information."

The video of Lissa's removal from the podium at the public hearing went viral. Inundated with calls and interview requests about the incident, Lissa told the *People's Tribune*, "I'm so excited people are paying attention. But I'm sad it took John Shott—Chairman of the House Judiciary Com-

mittee—having me removed.

"I think the campaign finance data itself should be enough to outrage people. But it goes beyond these corporations just getting the bad guys elected with their money. They also stack the deck in the relevant committees by making big donations to the legislative leaders who seat the bought legislators on the committees, and ease passage of bills that hand our rights to corporations.

"I am hoping that people all over the US start looking up information [about who is donating to whom] and bring it into the chambers and read off names. When their legislature pushes these corporate bills and spends hours with corporate lobbyists, and gives you a few measly seconds to make an argument which they promptly ignore, call them out and vote them out. I don't care what party they are. Bad guys get elected because of money, and this should not be in a democracy. Whether there is actual impropriety or even the appear-



Lissa Lucas was dragged out of the West Virginia House of Delegates after listing the delegates on the Judiciary Committee who took donations from the energy industry.

STILL FRAME FROM WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

ance of it, that is breaking our democracy.

"People are out here trying to keep their kids fed and afford their Epinephrine. If they want to stimulate the economy, why not

make sure workers have money to spend? If I had it, I would be spending. I have a room with a floor caving in. People aren't able to keep up. Our teachers and public employees have had their insur-

ance go up every year, and haven't gotten raises that keep up with inflation. Why can't we pay our teachers and public employees?"

"I want the people to win."

'You have been our voice'

Editor's note: Maru Mora Villalpando is a mother and leader of the immigrant rights movement. She has been targeted for deportation because of her activities defending undocumented immigrants held in inhumane private deportation prisons. Here are some comments from Maru after attending the president's State of the Union address in Washington, D.C.



Maru Mora Villalpando, targeted for deportation, refuses to be intimidated. She continues to fight for the people.

PHOTO/ENRIQUE CERNA, CROSSCUT

"When Senator Cantwell's office called me and invited me to join the State of the Union address in Washington, DC, I felt it was my opportunity to show Trump himself that we are not going to get intimidated, we are going to continue working. People in detention called me throughout the day and told me, "We cannot be there. But you have been the voice. We have selected you."

"[At the address] it was easy to see how he [Trump] was pitting people against each other, low-income workers of either brown, Black communities, white communities, but also scapegoating my community, immigrant communities. It was really shocking to me to see how he utilized people's tragedies to blame my community, my immigrant community, for those tragedies.

"Even though the majority of people there were clapping for him, I knew that people outside would not agree with them."

(Some material for this statement is from *Democracy, Now!*)

'It's time to go outside, to organize'

By Lourdes E. Hernández-Rivera

PUERTO RICO — I live my life promoting social justice through healing. Every week, for almost three years, I have offered auricular therapy clinics for communities in Puerto Rico. Health and Acupuncture for the People (abbreviated SAPP in Spanish) is the name of the initiative in which I have participated since its inception. I am dedicated to providing everyone who arrives, without cost, detoxification protocols to overcome traumas and addictions.

So far, the SAPP project, which aims to rescue the legacy of the Young Lords and Black Panthers, has offered more than 300 clinics, attended more than 2,500 people and trained almost a hundred therapists between Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Haiti. Currently SAPP has five fixed clinics. Establishing spaces of healing and wellbeing in the communities, I assure that my people have access to this therapy that is so beneficial in so many aspects, and cost effective.

I want a healthy Caribbean, that loves Life and where everyone works in something that



Lourdes E. Hernández-Rivera in her community, helping Puerto Ricans heal after Hurricane Maria.

brings them happiness. This kind of movement can help a lot, and this is my way of contributing to change.

After hurricane Maria, I, in addition to offering sessions of auricular therapy, am dedicated to assisting in the process of the organization of a group of women who rescued an abandoned school and started a Mutual Support Center there, a space which offers for the community food, water, auricular therapy sessions, workshops

and sowing activities—such is the agenda. The neighborhood is called Las Carolinas, in the town of Caguas, and by the time you read these lines, all of its inhabitants remain without power since September 20, 2017.

It's time to go outside, to organize ourselves and turn this deep crisis into the engine of decolonization. Without a doubt, we have already begun to take concrete steps towards liberation.

The life-and-death fight for publicly owned, safe, clean, affordable water

Reading scores plummet since Flint water crisis began

Literacy drops 75% for third graders

By People's Tribune
Correspondent in Flint

FLINT, MI — Giving his last State of the State address in Michigan, Governor Rick Snyder gave deafening silence to yet another consequence of the Flint Water Crisis. Third grade literacy fell from 41.8% (a crisis unto itself) to a shocking 10.7% — nearly a 75% drop!

Why is reading by the end of third grade so important? Research has demonstrated that students not reading proficiently at the end of third grade are four times more likely to not finish high school.

Dismissing the lead effect, the devastating literacy results were handled the same way the Lead laden Water Crisis was first handled: ignore the issue and pretend it does not exist. Even today,

the state is promoting experts to tell it what it wants to hear: that the water is fine with a water filter.

A recent study from the University of Michigan School of Public Health took the governor to task for its role in perpetrating the Flint Water Crisis, particularly for his lack of oversight of State Agencies charged with protecting public health and clean water. Some of these State actors face criminal charges today. The Emergency Manager system, the Federal Environment Protection Agency, and Flint Department of Public Works were also called to task in the report.

The governor's hear no evil, speak no evil, State of the Union address has human consequences: consequences that we will not accept.

CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS



‘Get the lead out rally’ at Milwaukee City Hall

By Gina Marie Jorgensen

MILWAUKEE, WI — Youth Rising Up, a student union and activist group at North Division High School in Milwaukee, works with local organizations on issues plaguing the city and local schools. Youth members have been present at Board Meetings, Nutrition Services meetings, and local events addressing concerns about lead water and food justice.

The youth held a rally last year demanding filtered water fountains accessible for all students. One filtering system was installed in the school soon after and another this year. Not much has changed in the city since the lead issue surfaced in 2016. [More than 76,000 homes have lead water pipes in Milwaukee.]

Recently, groups from all over collaborated in a “Get the Lead Out Rally” that the youth took part in at City Hall. Their speeches follow:

“We are Youth Rising Up. We are students organizing students to cultivate pride in our school by improving the quality of life and learning at school and in the surrounding community. Our group gives youth the appropriate tools to make change in a positive manner. We collaborate with other youth groups and activists in the city of Milwaukee to address social justice issues for our peers and the citizens of the City of Milwaukee. We are here today to work collaboratively with others to make sure every person has access to clean drinking water. It is our human right.

“Kids been drinking this poison water for their entire lives at home. How is this okay? Do any of you wonder why kids in Milwaukee have more problems than other cities? How much has this con-

tributed to educational success? We need every citizen to rise up and take a stand. It is a human right to have clean water.”

— *Ammishaddai Jackson*

“A dose of lead has little effect on an adult but can have a huge effect on a child. Lead in our bodies is distributed to our brain, liver, kidney and bones. It is stored in our teeth and bones. Our mothers who have drunk this water their entire lives also release lead into their own bloodstream during our pregnancies and this affects us as a developing fetus. Children who survive severe lead poisoning can be left with cognitive disabilities and behavioral disorders. So why are some students struggling in school? We can prevent this! We need every citizen to rise up and take a stand. It is a human right to have clean water.”

— *Elijah Helm*

“It’s already a battle for youth in Milwaukee to trust authority and our local government. How are we supposed to trust the same people that are supposed to serve and protect us? Who are the city officials more worried about protecting? The image of the health department or the well-being of the people and the future? Don’t we have enough battles to overcome like poverty, lack of jobs, and mass incarceration in areas of Milwaukee as it is and then to find out we have been drinking this poisonous water our entire lives? We need every citizen to rise up and take a stand. It is a human right to have clean water.

— *Isaiah Lavender*

Gina is the Youth Rising Up Advisor.



North Division High School Students Speak at “Get the Lead Out of Our Water” Press Conference at Milwaukee City Hall in February. (Left to right: Elijah Helm, Chris Smith, Isaiah Lavender, and Ammishaddai Jackson)

PHOTO/GINA MARIE JORGENSEN

**Is the *People's Tribune* valuable to your work?
Become a distributor!**

Order bundles of papers at 50¢ donation each.
Call 800-691-6888 or order and subscribe
on our website at peopletribune.org.

Will Minnesota stop pipeline from invading Native lands?

By Diana Zwinak

Minnesota stands in a position to protect one fifth of the nation's water supply by refusing to let Enbridge Inc. finalize construction on a "replacement" for its aging Line 3 pipeline. Line 3 transports diluted tar sands from Alberta province, Canada, to Superior, Wisconsin. Oil from this pipeline connects with another contested and degrading pipeline called Line 5 that carries its load under the Great Lakes to refineries in other parts of the United States.

Water Protectors in the #MakwaInitiative educate the public and ensure that Minnesota rejects this plan by protesting, taking direct action, participating in hearings, and holding cultural events. On January 12, three Water Protectors from #MakwaInitiative were arrested and held for six hours after locking themselves to the gates and doors of a Wells Fargo Bank in Duluth, Minnesota to heighten awareness of Line 3's threat and the fact that Wells Fargo has still not divested from Enbridge and its projects.

The pipeline threatens Minnesota's natural resources which include three of North America's major watersheds, penetrates the heart of Ojibwe treaty lands, and endangers lakes and wild rice



Water Protectors from around the country converged on Minneapolis before the Super Bowl to demand US Bank keep their promise and divest from fossil fuel companies and pipeline projects.

PHOTO/ROB WILSON PHOTOGRAPHY

beds sacred to the Anishinabeg.

It also will create an influx of large numbers of workers, often from out of state, who will descend on towns along the pipeline route creating "man camps." With no connection to the community, workers get paid large

sums of money and have little to do in their free time which attracts the drug trade and sex trafficking. Indigenous women are disproportionately at risk of being abducted, murdered, and trafficked in these situations.

The "replacement" pipe-

line is, in reality, a NEW pipeline, larger than the original and running through a corridor that is many miles from its original corridor at some points. Enbridge plans to increase pipe diameter from 34 to 36 inches and pump twice the volume of oil through it,

making it one of the largest crude oil pipelines on the continent, destined to carry up to 760,000 barrels per day. With a cost of \$7.5 billion, Line 3 is the largest project in Enbridge's history.

At this time, Enbridge estimates Line 3 currently has over 900 "integrity anomalies" leaking oil into the soil along its route. These will most likely go unaddressed if it is allowed to abandon Line 3. The original Line 3 is responsible for the largest inland oil spill in Grand Rapids, Michigan in March 1991, pumping 17 million gallons of oil into the Prairie River, a tributary of the Mississippi. This could have poisoned the drinking water of millions downstream if not for the frozen condition of the water. Line 3 was also the source of the Kalamazoo River Oil Spill in 2010, another one of the nation's worst inland oil spills, pouring 1.1 million gallons of tar sands crude oil into that river. Despite Enbridge's \$1.2 billion attempt to mitigate it, damage still remains.

In April 2018, Minnesota will hear Enbridge's case. This *private* corporation transporting oil for *privately owned* oil companies cannot get the right of eminent domain to violate treaties and take over property without owner consent while being treated as a *public* utility providing a *public* benefit.

Kentucky: 'They're raising the cost of water 49%'

Editor's note: In Martin County, Kentucky, cancer and other illnesses are on the rise. People are demanding safe, clean water. Without solving anything, a 49% increase in the cost of water is now proposed by the water department.

By Pamela Blevins

MARTIN COUNTY, KY — I didn't go to the water department meeting about the rate hike because no one was allowed to ask questions. It was at 8 a.m. in the morning. I'm not going to drag myself out at 8 in the morning and you can't say anything. There's always deputies there, too. A Kentucky State Trooper grabbed Gary Hunt [who was angry about his water shut off] by the throat at the emergency fiscal court/water meeting, trying to choke him down. The sheriff was sitting right by and never attempt-

ed to restrain Gary. Nobody said a word. All he had to do was sit between them.

They're raising the cost of water now, supposedly to fix the water system. They want to raise it 49%. My bill, which is for 2,000 gallons, will go to \$39.47 from \$26.50. They're putting a band-aid on something. You can't get one part fixed and put a band-aid on the other.

Where did all the money go? Grants were given. It was up to our county judge to distribute it, but instead of working on the infrastructure or water with the \$3 million grant, they did something totally different with the water. We've asked where the money went. We understand you have to pay workers but what about the rest?

People will have to do something. We can't keep letting it go. The original water plan was to serve 600 people. Now it



Pamela Blevins

has 3,500 customers with few upgrades. They had leaks, made a joke, fixed leaks with quick glue, but did not have maintenance for years. You're supposed to do maintenance on tanks often, and there's no engineer coming in and making sure everything is running. Then they throw those chemicals in and have no chemist. People are complaining of rashes and burning areas. It's chemical burns. It happened to me as a child and I know.

'Nobody should have to beg for clean water, clean air, and prosperity'

By Lisa Wagner

West Virginia native and coal miner's daughter, Paula Jean Swearingin, has pledged a fight for the rights of all people in West Virginia. Working class and working against corruption at the state and national level, Paula is running for the U.S. Senate, alongside many others who see the needs of the many and hope to be the voice of those left behind.

Paula, who speaks of universal health care, water rights as human rights, the need for education as an avenue to prosperity, has been fighting for over ten years to forward a progressive movement challenging status quo politics and corruption not only in West Virginia, but throughout the U.S. As Paula states, "West Virginia is rising, and the whole nation needs to, too." She adds an impassioned, "Don't mess with our young!" as the women's rally cry for a grassroots movement that is quickly gaining ground.

Paula believes that, "In the wealthiest nation in the world, nobody should have to beg for clean water, clean air and prosperity."

Paula is taking on the energy industry backed Democrat Joe Manchin on May 8, 2018.

Read the full interview with Paula next month in the People's Tribune, and follow Paula at paulajeans2018.com.

A Dreamer breaks her silence

It takes one person to be brave for others to take a stand

By Luz Cortes

Everyone has a shadow—even when it is dark, it's still there. But what happens when instead of letting your shadow follow you, you become your own shadow?

That's what being undocumented in the United States is like. It's easier to just blend in with everyone else and not speak a word because if you do, there might be consequences.

I was brought to the USA when I was just seven years old. Growing up I had no idea that not having papers was going to cause a lot of problems for my future. In 8th grade my mother was forced to tell me I didn't have a social security number when my class was planning a trip to visit Washington, DC.

Ever since, I decided to blend in and never talk about my situation. I felt like a burden—who was going to sympathize with me? Would anyone see me differently if I told them my situation? Throughout high school, I saw my friends working, getting their license and traveling. I felt so useless, but I did a good job at blending in. No one would have ever guessed that I didn't have papers.

My senior year, I was sitting in class pretending to fill out my



Low-wage workers in Detroit protesting for \$15 an hour and a union. PHOTO/JIMWESTPHOTO.COM

FAFSA form [for federal student aid] until I heard a girl tell the teacher, "I wasn't born here so I can't fill this out." I turned and it was a girl who I sat next to every day for the past four years and who happened to be my friend. To my surprise—another girl spoke up and said the same thing. I couldn't believe it! I wasn't alone. I never was.

After class I talked to my friend and told her that she and I were in the same position. Our eyes teared up because we couldn't believe how during these past four years we had been friends and never knew that we shared the same secret. And it was a secret until it wasn't. I was done feeling embarrassed because it wasn't

Immigrants point to a society where everyone's dreams can be realized

From the Editors

The burning issues in the immigrant rights movement are: "Trump's wall," chain immigration (where relatives of immigrants can join their families in the U.S.), the rising border patrol budget, and the fate of the Dreamers—the 800,000 young people who are threatened with deportation. Dreamers want to stay and they want their parents to stay, too.

Neither Democrats or Republicans, nor their corporate masters who rule this country, those who own the giant industry and banks, care about the fate of the immigrants or any other worker. The immigration issue being battered around in Congress is a political smokescreen. The "wall" is really about using government funds to line the pockets of the corporations that build the wall. Further, it is a means to beef up a police state that eventually will be used to terrorize any of us that stand up for our rights. The truth is: the majority of us face a growing poverty today as the jobs go by the wayside. We can only survive by joining together and protecting one another, not by fighting separately. First, we must fight for immigration laws that protect both the Dreamers and all immigrants. Families should not be separated. This will be a step toward creating a moral society where everyone's dreams can be realized.

my fault I wasn't born in this country.

I decided to make the best out of my situation and speak up for those who still hide in their shadows. The best thing to do is to use your voice for what you believe in—that is the most powerful weapon a human being can have. For years I was terri-

fied to speak up because I didn't want to draw attention to myself. But drawing attention for what you stand for is revolutionary. It takes *one* person to be brave for others to take a stand. That is the best chain reaction there could be.

Medicaid rule shifts money to fat cats, pits us against each other

From the Editors

The Trump administration on Jan. 11 announced it will allow states to apply for federal waivers allowing them to impose work requirements on "able-bodied" adult Medicaid recipients. Kentucky had already submitted such a request, and on Jan. 12 became the first state to require many of its Medicaid recipients to work or face losing their benefits. More than a dozen other states have applied for such waivers or plan to. (It's worth noting that about 60% of working age, non-disabled Medicaid recipients nationally are already working.)

The Kentucky plan calls for most non-disabled Medicaid recipients aged 19 to 64 to work at least 20 hours a week. Kentucky predicts the work rule will result in about 100,000 fewer Medicaid recipients in the state after five years and save about

\$2.4 billion. And that's part of the point, of course—the billionaires who run the government want to kick more people off of public aid programs of all kinds. The billionaires want that government money for themselves—that big tax cut they just got has to be paid for, after all—and they also want more money for the military. And they don't want to support labor they don't need.

The other agenda here is to pit us against each other. There is a certain level of support in America's working class for blaming the poor for the economic system's failure. Going back to the colonial period, the ruling class has made a distinction between the "deserving" and the "undeserving" poor. This outlook has been taught to the people, and it persists to this day. In a 2016 survey, the LA Times found that even among blue-collar workers, many view the poor "as a class set apart from the rest of society,"

permanently trapped in poverty. And the Times found that most Americans "do not believe that the government bears the main burden of taking care of the poor."

If not the government, then who? It has never really been possible for everyone to "make it" in America, and this is even more true today, with robots and computers eliminating more and more jobs and driving down wages for those still working. The jobs aren't coming back, and making slave labor out of people getting public assistance is not going to help any of us. We, the people, have a right to food, education, water, housing, health care and all other basic necessities, and the government is obligated to guarantee these things when the failing economic system won't. What we really need is an economy where the abundance of necessities produced today is provided to everyone.



Protests at Congressman Dave Trott's office in Troy, Michigan to denounce the Republican tax plans. PHOTO/JIMWESTPHOTO.COM

People's
Tribune

RADIO
PODCAST

People's Tribune Radio podcasts are available at peopletribune.org. Hear from people at the forefront of the struggles for a new America.

WV teachers strike to defend themselves, the children

Teachers and school service personnel throughout West Virginia walked off the job Feb. 22. The strike had entered its third day as this is being written. This is only the second teachers strike in the state's history, and the first to involve all 55 West Virginia counties. Thousands came to the state capitol at Charleston Feb. 22, 23 and 26 to demand that legislators act in the people's interest.

The teachers, along with school service workers such as bus drivers and cooks, struck to protest continued low wages, rising health insurance premiums and poor working conditions that are hurting students. They are also protesting bills the Legislature has been considering that would weaken seniority rules for teachers and complicate the process of deducting union dues from paychecks, among other things.

"As far as teachers' pay, we're 48th in the nation," teacher Annette Lester told the People's Tribune. She added: "Our bus drivers make \$20,000 and work all year, and they make \$7,000 less than our senators, who only work three months." She said

that, for her family, if the projected rise in health insurance costs goes through, "Our premium will increase dramatically. I will lose an entire paycheck. I have a daughter with a heart condition, and going without insurance is not an option."

She also noted the economic impact of the coal industry's decline, the rise of opioid addiction in the state, and the direct connections between legislators and the pharmaceutical and energy industries. "People in our area are starving. The children rely on food banks and the schools to feed them, and our senators are bought and paid for," she said.

Another teacher told the People's Tribune that legislators "don't care about education. They're paying their political buddies, giving them all these breaks at the expense of our people, teachers, police officers, medical personnel, and our children, ultimately. They don't care about us as long as they're getting their kickbacks."

She said legislators know that "if they don't educate us, then we won't be able to stand up when they do things not in our best interests. We don't have a



Striking teachers and supporters gather at the West Virginia State Capitol to demand legislators do the right thing. DEDICATED TEACHERS/FACEBOOK

democracy; our businesses are ruining our country."

She added, "We need to invest more in our education, not less, and find ways to diversify our economy so that people do have jobs and means to support themselves. We can't be dedicated to the same sorts of things. I

don't know the final answer, but we are smart enough in this country to find the ways, and the only way we can find the ways is to educate our people."

Though the teachers are unionized, neither they nor other public employees in West Vir-

ginia have collective bargaining rights, so they are potentially facing the loss of their jobs for striking and even jail. That they are taking this kind of risk shows their devotion to the children. Their stance means something for the whole country.

Cicada Season – Revolution coming up from underground

By Adam Gottlieb

CHICAGO, IL — "Cicada Season," our debut EP, is meant to announce our presence as a band onto the scene after three years of steadily growing underground. And because we are dedicated to playing music that expresses the growing movement for justice and a new society that values humanity and life over corporate profits, we see the album's release as a microcosm of that movement.

In these times, when our society is crumbling around us, and it seems all of humanity and maybe even life on earth could be lost, we have to trust that those of us who bring a new vision of the world to the people we struggle beside are part of a larger process of change unfolding. This is what the album is about: revolution as an expression of nature's laws.

The songs speak to both the ills of society as well as the new world that we are struggling for. The second song, "Revolution Blues," addresses many issues: attacks on public education, homelessness, our failed healthcare sys-

tem, police terrorism, developing fascism, the threat of world war, etc.; and connects all of these to each other as part of a larger process of globalization and social revolution that we are living through.

Overall, the album is not meant to depress, but to inspire listeners to take on the historical task of organizing, learning, educating, and taking action to transform our cruel, corporatist system to a humane, moral, cooperative one.

The title has a lot of meanings. The cicadas represent us—the people struggling to improve our conditions and change our society—emerging right on time to make our voices heard! They also symbolize stages in nature, as a metaphor for stages in history. Finally, "Cicada Season" represents a time of superabundance: during actual cicada season, many kinds of animals and plant life are effortlessly fed and nourished, symbolizing the promise of a world in which we can all share in the natural abundance of our earth. This is what we are fighting for, with action and song.

The Zapatistas, a movement led by indigenous Mexicans, who today carry on the legacy of a 500 year-old struggle against colonialism and genocide, use the snail as a metaphor for the slow but steady progress of the revolutionary movement, and as inspiration for the patience it takes to fight this life-long struggle. "Lento, pero avanzo," says the snail. "Slow, but I move forward."

Expressing a similar notion, the American union organizer and Socialist leader Eugene Debs declared in a famous speech that got him jailed in 1918, on the subject of socialism: "It is as vain to resist it as it would be to arrest the sunrise on the morrow."

I believe this. And I hope our music offers you inspiration and encouragement in your daily struggle to build the new world that is coming.

Adam Gottlieb & OneLove's debut EP "Cicada Season" is available at adamgottliebandonelove.com and on all major digital music distributors.



PHOTO/ADRIAN GARCIA

SPEAKERS FOR A NEW AMERICA BOOK SPEAKERS NOW!

"Her visit was truly amazing, our community was truly inspired by her," said a professor about a Flint water warrior who spoke at a college campus.

Speakers for a New America promotes leaders in the forefront of the fight for a new society. Speakers' topics include the fight for clean affordable water, women's rights, saving the Earth, in defense of immigrants, for housing for all, and healthcare for all.

Our speakers bring us together around our common needs and point to the new society that is possible today. Speakers are also available for observances such as Black History Month, Latino Heritage Month, Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week, and more.

Call us today at 800-691-6888 or email info@speakersforanewamerica.com. Visit us on the web at speakersforanewamerica.com

We have to learn to work together

Editor's note: The following are excerpts from a speech by Rev. Edward Pinkney at California State University in February, 2018.

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

There are 400 families in America who make an average of \$97,000 per hour and the people [are fighting just to] make \$15 and the majority of us don't say nothing. Fifty-three cents out of every federal dollar goes to the military. And yet they won't provide money for education of the children. As a minister, as a teacher, as a preacher, it is imperative that we lean on the Bible and teach what is really going on.

My struggle was to bring justice to my community. They had practically destroyed the city. Their plan was to wipe out anybody who stood up. We fought Michigan's Public Act 72, the [corporate] financial manager

law. Then they came up with Public Act 4, the emergency manager law, which gave them absolute power. First thing they did was to take the mayor's desk and put it in the basement. Then they changed the locks on the commissioner's office. Then took away their cell phones, and anybody knows you don't take away a Black man's cell phone! Now the commissioners wanted to join with us.

Whirlpool was financing James Hightower, the puppet mayor, and we got enough signatures to recall him. They claimed there were five signatures altered out of 700, which wouldn't have made a difference, but they cancelled the election and charged me with election fraud. Fortunately, I knew they didn't have any evidence. Immediately, at the opening of the trial, the prosecutor said we don't really need evidence to convict Rev. Pinkney. I had never heard of that before. He said circumstantial evidence

is enough to convict. They found me guilty and sent me to prison for 30 months to ten years.

When I got there, they were waiting. They wanted me to die there. First was putting me where mold was eating me up. I lost 30 pounds and became very sick. Then they accused me of making a three-way call and suspended my phone for 180 days. I was 500 miles from home. Then a visitor of mine was stopped on his way out and they wanted his notes. They put me in shackles and took me to the hole, accusing me of trying to smuggle something out, his notes. A group from Northern University picketed outside in my defense. They came back with not guilty. The whole place was cheering.

[Rev. Pinkney then discusses the many successful efforts of unifying prisoners inside the prison through education and organizing.]

The point is we need to take things to a whole different lev-



Rev. Edward Pinkney and others from the community protest for justice in front of the Berrien County Courthouse. PHOTO/PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

el. You have to tell people what is right and wrong. Tell the truth. They got us so divided up. Now they are trying to take food stamps and give you a box, nobody talking. We have to learn how to get this stuff together. It don't matter if you are Black, white, brown,

red yellow, you have to learn to work together, you have to start organizing and educating and start mobilizing to change the way this system has got us fighting one another. They have us so divided up we don't know which way to go. I know we can do this.

Campaign against poverty kicks off nat'l tour

By Marian Kramer

MEMPHIS, TN — Leaders of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival marched with hundreds of striking fast-food workers here Feb. 12 on the 50th anniversary of the historic Memphis sanitation worker strike.

The Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis, co-chair of the campaign, and the Rev. Traci Blackmon, a member of the national steering committee, met with McDonald's workers on a lunchtime strike line in Memphis, hearing about workers' struggles to get by on minimum wage pay and their fight for \$15 and union rights. The action kicked off a two-month national tour by the campaign to shine a light on the harshest poverty in the nation and lift up the leadership of poor and disenfranchised people who are organizing for change.

The tour by the Rev. Dr. William Barber, campaign co-chair, and Rev. Dr. Theoharis will stretch from Appalachia to the Rust Belt to the Central Valley of California, reaching more than a half-dozen cities nationwide. It began one week after thousands of poor people, clergy and activists announced they are joining the campaign, flooding state capitol buildings in 30 states and the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., to serve notice on state and federal legislative leaders that their failure to address the enmeshed evils of



The Poor People's Campaign is shining a light on the harshest poverty in the nation as it joins with others nationwide to organize for change. PHOTO/GINA MARIE JORGENSEN

systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, ecological devastation and America's distorted national morality will be met this spring with six weeks of direct action—including one of the largest waves of nonviolent civil disobedience in U.S. history.

"Moral agents in places forgotten and dismissed by those in power are standing up to demand change, and by standing with them, we will help save the soul of our nation," said the Rev. Dr. Barber.

"We are traveling the nation, meeting up with poor and marginalized people who are uniting and organizing to end systemic racism, poverty, militarism and the war

economy and ecological devastation," said the Rev. Dr. Theoharis. "Grassroots leaders are coming together across lines of division to become a powerful force for change in this nation."

The organizers say the campaign will intensify starting Mother's Day, leading up to a mass mobilization at the U.S. Capitol June 21, and combine direct action with grassroots organizing, voter registration, power building and nonviolent civil disobedience.

Editor's note: Information for this article was taken from kairoscenter.org.

Be strong, stay woke

By an Oakland, CA, reader

I'm full of promise but I need help! Confused! Misguided! Mentally disturbed child with nothing to go back home to except drugs, danger and the streets. Emotionally drained from depressing personal situations. My mind is on overload. I can't count on the corporate world, where is my government?

Brought out from home across the country to play football, you would think that the head coach would love and take care of me. But instead, it all turned out to be lies housing us out-of-state players with holes in the wall, rats, and even warehouses. Imagine sleeping shivering, seeing your breath slowly exhaling feelings of hatred. Being treated like an animal because of who we are. It makes me wonder why they would want someone to become homeless? A coach should take on the responsibilities of each and every one of the young men who are sacrificing their lives every day.

One kid's story really stood out for me. A very athletic kid who's battling in the streets as we speak, giving up on his dream because he refused to continue to sleep in cars, on hotel lobby floors, and going from house to house. Another kid, who prays for the team before every game, a very nice kid, then becomes homeless with depression like his best friend. Taking care of his mom financially with the help from his sister who is battling breast cancer.

We talk about the youth and how they're the next to change society. But none of that will ever matter if we never change and help the ones who actually are trying to keep from being another African American statistic of poverty and incarceration.

What happened to all of our brothers and sisters dreams of uniting as one and walking together Black, Powerful, and Proud? I am Dr. King, I am Rosa Parks, I am Lamar Smith, I am Trayvon Martin, I am Huey P. Newton, I am Harriet Tubman, I am James Baldwin, I am Angela Davis, I am Andrew Young. We have let this system deconstruct our brains to what we think we deserve instead of thinking we are royalty. We shouldn't let our brothers and sisters continue to struggle when we can make a change. "One voice can be a child's inspiration to be successful." Let's take time out to think about those we lost. May you rest in paradise. Be strong, stay woke, Power to the people!