

YOUTH TO POLITICIANS: 'REPRESENT US OR GET OUT'



On March 24, the March For Our Lives took to the streets of New York City, along with protests across the country and world, to demand the lives of youth become a priority and to end gun violence in our communities and schools.

PHOTO/ERIK MCGREGOR

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One law at a time leads to fascism

EDITORIAL

On March 3, Perla Morales-Luna was walking near her home in National City, CA, a suburb of San Diego, with her three young daughters when Border Patrol agents suddenly rolled up in a van. The agents roughly pulled Morales-Luna away from her daughters and hustled her into the van. A video of the event circulated on the Internet has caused outrage.

Benjamin Prado, coordinator for the American Friends Service Committee's San Diego U.S.-Mexico Border Program, denounced the arrest, calling it "a grotesque way of detaining and enforcing immigration law. It is very quickly accelerating to a very tyrannical form of detention and arrest, snatching people up off the street."

The assault on the human rights of immigrants—which is really an assault on everyone's rights—escalated to a new stage in February. On February 27, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that immigrants, even those with permanent legal status and asylum seekers, do not have the right to periodic bond hearings (*Jennings v. Rodriguez*).

"Immigration officials are authorized to detain certain aliens in the course of immigration proceedings while they determine whether those aliens may be lawfully present in the country," the court ruled.

One dissenting voice on the court is sounding the alarm about the attack on our constitutional rights, Justice Stephen G. Breyer.

"We need only recall the words of the Declaration of Independence," Breyer said, "in particular its insistence that all men and women have 'certain unalienable Rights,' and that among them is the right to 'Liberty.'"



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

Breyer added, "No one can claim, nor since the time of slavery has anyone to my knowledge successfully claimed, that persons held within the United States are totally without constitutional protection."

The unalienable right to liberty translates to the right to a bond. With no right to bond out of custody, immigrants appealing detentions, legal permanent residents whom the government wants to deport because they allegedly committed crimes, and asylum seekers who are awaiting a court date after turning themselves in at the border could be indefinitely detained.

We should remember the famous poem written by the German Lutheran pastor Martin Niemoller about the cowardice of German intellectuals following the Nazis' rise to power. The poem begins, "First they came

for the Communists/And I did not speak out/Because I was not a Communist..." Then Niemoller lists the other groups the Nazis came for—the socialists, the trade unionists, the Jews—and he concludes: "Then they came for me/And there was no one left/To

speak out for me."

This is the danger behind this decision. It first attacks immigrants and refugee seekers. But if no one raises their voice against it, when they get around to denying bond to citizens, will there be someone there to defend us?

No democracy in Texas

In March, the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Senate Bill 4, the state of Texas' unjust Sanctuary Cities Law. The law forces elected officials, from the governor to justices of the peace, to turn immigrants over to immigration agents. Public officials (some of whom have refused to comply with the law and provided sanctuary to immigrants) will be fined, jailed, or removed from their elected positions if they don't comply. American history shows such fascist laws are used first on the most vulnerable workers. But it doesn't stop there. Now, anyone who 'looks like an immigrant' can be stopped, asked for papers, jailed and deported. Who will be next? It is urgent that we join the fight to repeal this law. There's no democracy in Texas.

— Manuel Torres

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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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Our youth step forward with a new vision



Stevenson High School students in Lincolnshire, IL walk out to protest gun violence.

PHOTO/CHARLES E. MILLER



DACA defenders at a recent Los Angeles march. See story on page 8 about immigrant youth standing with Parkland shooting survivors.

PHOTO/MOLLY ADAMS



March for Our Lives, Washington, D.C.

PHOTO/SHANTEL MITCHELL BREEN

COVER STORY

“This is not an issue of Democrats versus Republicans. It’s about human lives, student lives; it is an issue with the morality of humanity, not about a political debate between two parties. It’s about saving lives.”

These were the words of a teenage student from the Parkland, Florida high school where 17 young people were recently gunned down by another young person poisoned by hate. These students are organizing, marching, and confronting politicians who refused to reign in the National Rifle Association (NRA) and weapons merchants, joined by student walkouts across the country. They are calling for an end to the violence, the ideologies of hate and the militarization of the society they are inheriting.

Their fire and determination have shown the world a youth movement that is clear and unafraid—as did the youth of Ferguson, and all across the country, who protested and organized against the police murders of their own, taking to the streets, shutting down business as usual. They are interfacing with Black Lives Matter and the defenders of DACA, to speak truth to corrupt power. They are joining forces with teachers across the country, and with others fighting to survive.

As Henry A. Giroux wrote recently in *Truthout*: “At least for the moment, young people are refusing to live with a modern system of violence that functions as a form of domestic terrorism. Engaged in a form of productive unsettling and collective dissent, they are fighting back, holding power accountable and giving birth to a vibrant form of

political struggle.”

The young are in the forefront of many of the new organizations and mobilizations, in defiance of an old order that is killing them and stealing their future. They are not going to stand by while they and their brothers and sisters are gunned down and set up for lives of poverty, job insecurity or joblessness, and even homelessness, or a lifetime weighed down by student debt.

The ruling class can’t solve the problems of a collapsing economic system and society, as automation replaces ever more jobs. They can’t offer our young people anything but increasing inequality, violence, and lack of opportunity. This generation has known nothing but these conditions, which get ever worse, imposed by increasingly fascist police state terror. This generation is also smart, adaptable and connected, through social media and a vibrant global culture. Not tied to the decaying ideas of the past, young people are open to visionary new ideas, and are organizing to make them real. They are idealistic and also practical, and they want to heal the social system and the earth, kicking off the chains of destruction.

Humanity is on the cusp of a whole new way of being, something we have dreamed of down through the ages but never had the material means to achieve for all. The younger generations increasingly view a cooperative system in a positive way, many seeing socialism as superior to capitalism. They understand that the future, their future, is up to them and to all of us, and are stepping up to see that it is one of life, liberty and human promise, not destruction and death. We must support their struggle to make this everyone’s reality.

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

As people's needs rise, government does less



In Atlanta, GA homeless shelters are closing and some are at full capacity. Yet there are many empty apartments in Georgia that could be used for those in need. PHOTO/JOHN E. RAMSPOTT

By Gloria Slaughter

ATLANTA, GA — The Peachtree-Pine homeless shelter was officially closed on August 28, 2017. The Metro Atlanta Task Force Executive Director, Anita Beaty, was the facilitator of the shelter, which housed 700-1000 people who are homeless. Ever since it opened in 1997, neighbors and nearby organizations have complained about unsanitary conditions, loitering, drug sales and drug use, and violent crimes, but Beaty felt these were pretenses since the local government and the business community were really after the property. There were long legal battles with City Hall.

Many of the downtown homeless shelters are disappearing and some are full to capacity. On a cold winter night some of the homeless took public transporta-

tion to the Atlanta Hartsfield Jackson airport and spent the night.

Even though there have been public-private partnership efforts underway, but not much assistance federally, the city has a problem with the rising number of families who can't find affordable housing.

About one in five Georgians live in poverty. More than 60,000 children in Georgia live in low-income households. Forty-three percent of poor Georgia residents have jobs but many of the available employment opportunities don't offer enough compensation to fully provide for their families. Families, particularly single mothers, rely on food kitchens, mobile food pantries, churches and other charitable groups when their food stamps run out. Thousands in the state will lose food stamps due to the work requirement.

Now, U.S. Agricultural Sec-

retary Sonny Perdue has proposed swapping "harvest boxes" for some food stamps. This proposal was made during the budget talks in February 2018. White House Budget chief Mick Mulvaney likened these boxes of food to the "Blue Apron-type program," a high-end meal service that sends customers fresh ingredients such as fish and produce for individually apportioned meals. In comparison, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) packages contain shelf-stable milk, cereal, peanut butter, canned meat, fruits and vegetables.

There are empty apartments that could be used for people who are in need of affordable housing. The policies in this country must be changed in order to provide living wage jobs, affordable housing and equality to all who seek an affordable home.

What if there was unity?

By Benjamin Royer

BERKELEY, CA — I am a member of 'First They Came for The Homeless.' I joined this group in October 2016. When I first started with 'First They Came for The Homeless,' I was a wreck. Now, over a year later, I am setting up solar for the camps, fixing wheelchairs with John from Easy Does It, and being an activist for the homeless.



Benjamin Royer, from Berkeley, CA, sets up solar for the homeless, fixes wheelchairs, and advocates for sanctioned tent cities that supports those without homes. PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

I wish to give a little bit of history now. Over the last year, Berkeley has sent their thugs to raze and wreck our camps. During one such raid, they stole my therapy tool which is a stuffed Leopard Shark named Saber. I have since gotten a new shark. What have they done to solve homelessness, nothing at all. With our limited resources, we have housed more people than the HUB, which is Berkeley's entry program for the homeless. They have done less on over a million dollars budget than we have. They proposed the Pathways project. I say death camp based upon location. It would be placed in an industrial pollution zone.

Our model for sanctioned tent cities will not promote more homelessness. The worst model is Berkeley's Pathways project. To give a brief description of the Pathways, it is a horror show. First, they would put 8-10 people per tent with no regard to safe living. Second, the proposed site is at 2nd and Cedar. This area has the industrial zone for Berkeley. There is contamination from the cement factory, the steel mill, and other industrial waste. And last, it is prohibitively expensive.

Our model requires very little in money. For the most part, the people who come into the tent city will provide most of their needs. Our model provides a recovery environment so that people can get jobs and get housing. We need support for our model to lessen the homeless crisis.

We need tent cities. We need a government who doesn't stand for the rich. We need housing that is affordable. We need to have rights. The reason we're divided is due to the rich. If we united, the rich would lose. Division of the people. If we were united, there would be no need for war.

Ponder these questions. What if there was unity amongst all the people of this world? How would the world look? How would the society operate? What about resources? How would they be distributed? Would there be poverty? Would there be homeless? Would there be fighting? Would there be peace?

In closing, I greatly appreciate all the support. I will be back on the streets soon to continue the fight to end oppression.

A city's secret dealings laid bare

By Bruce Wright

ST. PETERSBURG, FL — A Florida appeals court ruled that the City of St. Petersburg violated Florida's Sunshine Law when it reached a decision to amend a city ordinance at a meeting that was not open to the public. The Sunshine Law protects the right of the public to be present and heard during all phases of decision-making by government boards and commissions.

The court sided with Rev. Bruce Wright, who initiated this lawsuit. Wright felt vindicated by the court's ruling, saying, "I am pleased the City's secret dealings are laid bare in this decision. The City's failure to hold a public debate about this ordinance is undemocratic to its core."

Wright was represented in this lawsuit by Southern Legal Counsel, a Florida statewide nonprofit public interest law firm. Kirsten Anderson, lead attorney for the case, said, "This decision is a great victory

for government in the sunshine. We will continue to fight to protect the public's right to government that is transparent and accountable to the people."

The First Amendment Foundation, Florida's premier Sunshine Law organization, filed an amicus brief in support of Wright's case before the appeals court.

Read a copy of the court's decision here: southernlegal.org/application/files/8015/1870/6082/Wright_Order_Sunshine_Law.pdf. Southern Legal Counsel is a Florida statewide nonprofit public interest law firm committed to the ideal of equal justice for all and the attainment of basic civil and human rights. It works to make this ideal a reality by providing legal representation to individuals and groups who would otherwise not have access to the justice system and whose cases may bring about systemic reform. Contact kirsten.anderson@southernlegal.org, 352-271-8890.

visionary

he has his precious
stash of books

out on the pavement
in the cold night

*

vision from
the bottom up

a free mind reading
in the night

— Sarah Menefee



One of many people without homes sleeping on the cold Atlanta streets. When the photographer John E. Ramspott was asked what he learned in interviewing homeless people about solving homelessness, he said, "I have seen where some cities find small apartments for people and they do better." PHOTO/ JOHN E. RAMSPOTT

Homeless families sleep in cars, instead of shelters, to stay together



Lola Cheatham, a community college student, writer, and aspiring actress, and her three daughters, 3, 5, and 12, have been living in their van in a church parking lot in San Diego, off and on for two years. The family moved when their apartment was sold and the rent was going up. Lola says it is better than a shelter. Hundreds of families are homeless in San Diego County.

PHOTO/BROOKE RUTH, KPBS

We do not belong

By Pj Damico

DENVER, CO — You do not belong here. Those are the signs strategically posted throughout my city to remind people who have nowhere to belong that we don't care about them as much as we care that their poverty remains invisible to us.

We have designed our cities and systems of care to negate responsibility for our neighbors and to blame people who have nothing for existing at all. You cannot even sleep on our dirt and when you decide to shit in the alley we will arrest you. Sorry there are no bathrooms. You do not belong here. You do not belong.

Homeless people are not a problem. The problem is us and our unwillingness to see people who are homeless as our neighbors. They are not the problem, we are! You are! I am.

Not me who prays and goes to Church and takes my children to soccer practice. Not me who donates to charity and serves

meals at soup kitchens. Not the you who argues with your friends at the bar about Trump's policies. That is the good you! I'm talking about the me and you addicted to our oblivion. I'm talking about the you and I who turns away from making eye contact less we make time to be human or maybe even Christian.

One morning I was being swept by the police not ten feet away from Snooze, a hip breakfast diner where the patrons had a front row seat to the atrocities being committed against their fellow neighbors. The police, poor people being swept systematically and you and I eating pancakes without a care in the world. As though it were entirely normal that people have their basic shelter stripped away from them when temperatures are sub-freezing.

It could easily have been me eating the pancakes or taking my girls to a baseball game or on my way to an important meeting. Oppression is domesticating. We are colonized by an entire nor-

native framework designed to keep us from disrupting our comfort and convenience. I worked hard for this warm latte and to hell with everyone else, I have a busy day ahead of me. God I wish somebody would do something. (I have no idea what to do and so I don't do anything.) Don't worry girls, the police are here to help them. (Really? What else should I be telling my eight year-old daughters.)

We have built sand castles around our profane delusions to protect ourselves from our collective complicity. Our complicity becomes duplicity when we actually believe the lies so that our neighbor can be swept away while we return to eating pancakes. Evil is no joke.

It is we, not them, who do not have the courage to be human. It is we who have lost our humanity. There is the rub. Our oblivion has a cost. It does not matter that we know it or not. The proof is in the city we have failed to create and our willful malevolence.

Seniors stand up to Chicago Housing Authority

In memory of Stephanie Hayes, a leader in the fight for seniors' rights who passed away on March 3, 2018. Stephanie spent her last winter on this earth in a freezing cold apartment vowing to fight until her last breath. She was a resident of the Caroline Hedger apartment building in Chicago, a member of the Jane Addams Senior Caucus and a member of the renovation and relocation team.

By Linda Armitage

CHICAGO, IL — For three long years, the senior residents of the Judge Fisher and Caroline Hedger Apartments suffered mental and physical trauma at the hands of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and its corporate management agents and contractors.

During extensive renovations, residents have been subjected to mistreatment and a lack of communication about the scope of renovations (including notices provided only in English). There were no individualized plans or assistance for temporary relocation to other apartments or even other buildings. Schedules for moving were not adhered to and help with packing and relocat-

ing was inconsistent. There was no assistance with utility transfers and reimbursement of transfer fees took months. Bathroom grab bars were removed but not replaced until requests were submitted en masse. During renovations, residents were subjected to environmental and health hazards: the spread of lead, dust and asbestos contamination, along with dangerous noise levels and various elevator failures.

A major health concern was proper heating. Fisher residents had to utilize space heaters for a full winter and some residents endured similar outages in December 2017. Heating losses occurred at Hedger during the deep cold spells of December 2016 and December 2017, requiring residents to sleep in winter outerwear and use space heaters. This resulted in bursting of frozen water pipes, flooding and infestations of insects into damp apartments.

These and other upheavals in the lives of senior citizens have compromised their physical and mental health, their dignity and their right to live in safe and secure communities.

Residents repeatedly attempted to bring these matters

to the attention of CHA, building management and contractors. Promises were made but not kept, and residents were publicly accused of telling lies, exaggerating and making trouble by contacting the media and utilizing other assistance to make their complaints known.

After many meetings, protests and media coverage, many issues were resolved or are being resolved due to resident leadership supported by organizers of the JASC. In an effort to avoid similar problems in the future, a team of JASC members formulated a model policy for renovation and relocation. This policy was submitted to CHA. But after a series of meetings with CHA and HUD, it is clear that they will not adopt this policy and don't care about the well-being of seniors.

Since there are a number of senior buildings scheduled to begin renovations this year, the policy and the problems it could solve must be addressed now! We must stand up for the health and dignity of senior citizens. Safe housing is a human right and must be the priority of CHA.



Stephanie Hayes, a leader in the fight for seniors' rights, speaks at one of many protests about the conditions in her Chicago Housing Authority building. Stephanie, who spent her last winter in a freezing apartment vowing to fight to her last breath, passed away on March 3, 2018.

PHOTO/JANE ADDAMS SENIOR CAUCUS



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



Pipeline construction staging area near Beckley, West Virginia. The Appalachian pipeline project will have devastating impacts on the scenic landscape of the Appalachian Trail, local drinking water, and the economy. Communities are resisting. PHOTO/T. PAIGE DALPORTO

Appalachia pipeline threatens landscape, water, and economy

Editor's note: The Mountain Valley pipeline project will have devastating impacts on the scenic landscape of the Appalachian Trail, the local drinking water, and the economy. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy says the pipeline, which will carry fracked natural gas, will run along 90 miles of the trail. A swath 200 feet wide in some cases can be expected and will be visible for up to 20 miles or more.

By T. Paige Dalporto

WEST VIRGINIA — In my opinion, all non-renewable energy resources should be equally shared by all. As a necessity for human health and life, these resources should not be made subject to market whims, pressure or the forces of cut throat no holds barred, I've got mine, fuck you, adversarial greed

'n' capitalism, so prevalent today.

The corporate structure we have today consolidates too much power in the hands of the conscience-free few, those traditionally adversarial entities that operate without a moral compass that the rest of us are endowed with.

In Alaska, each Alaskan citizen gets a royalty check each year. Why not here? Pipeline projects

Water – Will we be allowed to have any?

From the Editors

On these pages are stories from water and environmental struggles in Flint, West Virginia, St. Louis, and Baltimore. With these stories we continue to expose the increased poisoning, fracking, rising price, and privatization of our life-sustaining water by giant corporations. As corporations try to buy up everything public, destroying the Earth in the process, people are standing up, demanding that government do what it is supposed to do: keep water affordable and safe, and away from big money interests, and defend the Earth.

Water warriors are pointing to the need for a national movement that unites us all in this fight. The *People's Tribune* opens its pages to this fight. Send stories to info@peopletribune.org or via our website at peopletribune.org.

seal our doom with every breach, with gas out the ass and no water, take away rights from individual property owners; destroying the peace and tranquility of rural nearby property owners; disturbs and destroys certain species of wildlife by opening up the area, and attracting competitors to songbirds, for example.

The high probability of poor maintenance, negligence and lack of due vigilance and foresight has been the proven track record of modern corporations. Aversion to responsible behavior and a reck-

less attitude toward human needs and nature; unaccountability and exclusive focus on profit at the expense of all other points of consideration, necessitates that a project this intrusive and of such magnitude, should be met with an equal and opposite force: sanity, reason, safety, concern for the public good, and a sincere, mature desire to coexist, in harmony with nature.

T. Paige Dalporto offers his thoughts for discussion. Contact him at tpaigeme@aol.com.

St. Louis residents demand government clean up nuclear waste

The *People's Tribune* spoke with Alex Cohen, co-founder of the Earth Defense Coalition based in St. Louis, Missouri, which is involved in the fight to clean up the West Lake Landfill and remove hundreds of thousands of tons of nuclear weapons waste.



Members of Earth Defense coalition fight to have the radioactive waste removed from communities in St Louis, MO. PHOTO/ALEX COHEN

People's Tribune: What is the story of the landfill and why should everybody know about it?

Alex: St. Louis was the first secret city in the Manhattan Project. Mallinckrodt Corporation had government contracts to process uranium from the Belgian Congo [used in the first atomic bombs dropped on Japan in WWII]. This led to massive amounts of waste, and some of it was dumped on the north side of St. Louis airport and it leached into [20-mile long] Coldwater Creek that runs throughout North County neighborhoods.

In 1973 a portion of the waste was illegally dumped throughout

the landfill over three months (called midnight dumping) with no oversight. This waste sits on the surface just two miles from the Missouri River, source of drinking water for millions of people. The waste was intermixed with groundwater in a quarry for

44 years. Responsible parties know groundwater is contaminated, and if it isn't cleaned up, it will travel downstream. This could be the source of the contamination of my friend Robbin in Spanish Village, who has thorium at 1000 picocuries in her kitchen,

a thousand times above federal clean-up standards.

PT: How have the local people responded? What are the next steps in the fight?

Alex: "Just Moms-STL" are the champions on this issue. "Just Moms" was founded in early 2014. The EPA has not been the community's friend. It has worked alongside the responsible corporation, Republic Services, a multibillion dollar company that owns the landfill (Bill Gates is its biggest investor). This has been a Superfund site for 27 years and they haven't even tested the entire landfill. The law requires the polluter to pay for cleanup. So Republic has been doing hit pieces on us, using slap suits, taking us to civil court, defaming us on line.

Our friends in Spanish Village and the trailer park should be bought out. We've been asking for this for years. There was a bipar-

tisan bill to buy them out which failed. The EPA held a public hearing on March 6 to present a solutions plan. Over 1000 people attended. Their plan, in the community's opinion, is only a partial solution. The next step is to put political pressure on the EPA to remove the waste and clean up the site and finally end the WWII war legacy in our city.

We have this chance if enough people pressure the EPA. Now is the time to beat a multibillion dollar corporation and send a message to these big corporations that their tactics aren't going to work if we come together to protect our communities.

To contact Alex, email alex@earthdefensecoalition.com or visit West Lake Landfill Group: [facebook.com/groups/508327822519437](https://www.facebook.com/groups/508327822519437). See also: [fb.com/EarthDefenseCoalition](https://www.facebook.com/EarthDefenseCoalition) and stladwastelegacy.com.

Baltimore: Greed threatens fresh water

By Jim Fite

BALTIMORE, MD — The Maryland House of Delegates recently passed a bill halting the sale of homes and local businesses for failure to pay a water bill. Although this bill was effectively killed by the Maryland Senate's refusal to vote, this legislation speaks to a horrible problem facing those living in greater Baltimore. In the past few years, over 1,700 families have had their homes or rental units sold for failure to pay water bills.

Baltimore City officials took budgeted money meant for repair of the water infrastructure and gave it to local business for tax breaks. Now, the water system, which was not maintained, broke apart when temperatures dipped into single digits. There are still 500 people without water three weeks after the cold weather. The City now uses the fire depart-

ment to deliver bottled water to those whose public plumbing is still broken. This is a very costly way to provide water.

Water bills in Baltimore have quadrupled since 2000. Local activist Eddy Conway says this is modern slavery. He showed that Baltimore City paid \$50 million in loans and \$40 million in fees to New York banks for previous loans to repair the water infrastructure. People must have water and the increased prices are beyond what average income families can pay. Our personal and public assets are being sucked up by greedy capitalists who want to own all of the water.

We must have a society that takes care of its members. Water is necessary for life and should be guaranteed for all regardless of their ability to pay. It is time we put greed aside and endorsed cooperation for the common good in water and all aspects of life.



People's Climate March, New York City in 2014.

PHOTO/DIANE GREENE LENT

Earth Day: A new perspective

By Bill Bunting

April 22nd will mark the 48th anniversary of Earth Day. A day of global awareness of our planet and the impact and relationship we have with our life giving Mother Earth.

Many choose to use this marked day as a day to speak out against the energy companies that make our planet toxic, steal our fresh water and use it for fracking, dumping toxic waste into our creeks and rivers, and many even worse crimes against a defenseless planet.

And there are many more that use it as a day to reconnect with the natural realm. To show others the beauty and power of our Earth. To even show alternative ways to coexist with Her for a healthy life and lifestyle.

Well, this Earth Day, I want to show a different perspective of how this day could be a unifying media for a healthy planet as well as an end to the endless social wars and divisions we face every day. I would love to see this day recognized as a day of brotherhood and unity for this very Earth we all need to live and grow.

If we are to recognize our planet as in dire straits and needing healing, well we as humans are the ones who damage Her, make Her sick, and destroy Her ability to replenish our food, water and lives because of the society and lifestyle we are being sold by major corporations. If we are to condemn the energy companies we must also realize that We the People are the consumers of this failed industry, and therefore responsible for the planet's

health. We are responsible for our clean water and good food.

This is what should be seen on Earth Day: A united front of ALL mankind seeing the error of our ways and changing our collective social and industrial habits to better coexist with all of our ONLY life source.

We can only do this by dropping the baggage ... the hate ... and the blame that's used against us to keep us divided so we don't see them selling us a fake life.

Through unity and brotherhood we can save our planet by coming together to change how we are with Mother Earth, our brother, our family, and how we live on Her.

So think about that this Earth Day. It is the only way we can have a future on a healthy planet.

Namaste



Flint Protest.

PHOTO/FLINTH2JUSTICE

Flint water front: Don't let them silence us

Editor's note: In April of last year, Abel Delgado, 20, along with five other Water Warrior/activists, was arrested and assaulted by the Flint Police Department at a local church following a Town Hall meeting regarding the Flint water disaster. The following day, scores of people gathered in front of City Hall to demand all charges be dropped! They became known as the Town Hall 6. Abel addressed the supporters with an impassioned speech calling for unity in our quest to end the Flint Water disaster. As we enter into the fourth year, his powerful message, transcribed below, is still timely.

FLINT, MI — This is a People's Movement, and now the people are realizing that. I'm still in awe of what happened yesterday, just aside from the fact of how oppressive the system can be. But reality is what happened yesterday [when activists were arrested.] It is just another way that the city and the state and all government officials are attempting to normalize our oppression.

Now is the time that the people need to unite to overcome our oppression. We need to be talking about liberating ourselves from this oppression. We are still poisoned. We should not have to justify the fact that we have to live on bottled water everyday. We know that there is more than lead and copper in this water.

Right now we need to unite. People have the real power. Power is a neutral force and this is our time to spark a movement overcoming this oppression and create a society that works for all of us, and not just a few wealthy individuals.

This is about us, this is about the people in the city of Flint. This is about the entire nation. Water is life.

They charged me with disorderly [conduct]...

Nothing but tyranny—this is nothing but just complete fascism. It's a way for the state and the city to normalize our oppression. They are trying to silence our voice, people. We must now more than ever Unite and let our voices be heard.

Power to the people! Now is our time. We have the real power! Let's change the city. Let's Be the Change we want to see in the world.

See June, 2017 article entitled, "Flint: Six arrested at 'public' meeting" at peopletribune.org/pt-news/2017/05/flint-six-arrested-public-meeting. Also watch City of Lead video by Flint hip-hop artist Bootleg and the Dayton Family at youtu.be/qtfv2mF8pEo

Attack on 1st Amendment rights of immigrant leader

Excerpts from statement
by Latino Advocacy

“ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) is going after me and my family because they want to silence my work, which has exposed their cruel, inhumane detention and deportation policies. I will continue this fight because I am one of millions facing ICE’s abuses, and they must be stopped,” said Marú Mora-Villalpando. Marú has been served with deportation papers because of her anti-ICE organizing. At her first hearing in Seattle on March 15, she asked the immigration



Marú Mora-Villalpando.
PHOTO/ENRIQUE CERNA, CROSSCUT

judge to throw out the deportation case against her, in a court filing that cites unlawful targeting of her

protected First Amendment activity. The judge gave May 22 as the date he could give a decision on her motion. The judge gave ICE April 9 as a date to respond to Marú’s motion.

Mora-Villalpando leads Northwest Detention Center Resistance (NWDC), an organization she co-founded when immigrants held at the Northwest Detention Center began a series of hunger strikes in 2014 protesting their inhumane treatment. The group’s effective organizing brought to light the abuses faced by immigrants in the now-infamous Tacoma, WA, facility.

Immigrant rights organizers point to the attack on Mora-Villalpando as a sign that ICE has gone beyond seeking to enforce immigration laws. “By purposely targeting people such as Marú who are organizing against the Trump administration’s racially-motivated deportation agenda, ICE has officially made the leap into a political repression agency,” Tania Unzueta of Mijente, observed.

Elizabeth Simpson, a member of Mora-Villalpando’s legal team and attorney with the National Lawyers Guild, added, “By targeting Marú because of her political activism, ICE is threatening our

fundamental right to free speech and assembly.” Devin Theriot-Orr, also a member of the legal team, stated, “ICE’s actions in Marú’s case are a transparent attempt to stifle dissent by targeting specific political viewpoints for retaliatory action.”

Marú, who has lived in the U.S. for 25 years, works with NWDC Resistance and is a founding member of the national Latinx organization. Contact her at maruvillalpando@gmail.com. Donate to Marú’s defense at youcaring.com/marumoravillalpando-1071888

Standing up for the rights of us all

Editor’s note: The following are excerpts from articles about immigrants fighting for their rights, and everyone’s rights.

“I came to the U.S. when I was one year old from Mexico with my mom and brother. As we attempted to cross the desert, we were abandoned by our guide. Not only did we face the danger of being caught but we got lost and began to become dehydrated. Luckily, we all made it safely to California.

“Growing up, I felt American. I was born here but there was constant fear of being discovered. This led me to develop a fear of the police. I felt my family and I would be deported.

“When DACA was implemented, I grew the courage to not only tell my story but also to get involved and help other Dreamers like me. I joined the DREAMERS Club at my high school and became president. Today I am a DACA recipient and an avid immigrant rights activist. The only permanent solution for Dreamers is the DREAM Act. As a society we should not only fight for the DREAM Act, but for legislation that protects the millions of immigrants who keep America thriving.”

— Ada Marys

“I was at the detention center to support Laura Monterrosa, a 23-year-old asylum-seeker from El Salvador, who says she was the victim of sexual abuse in her home country. But instead of receiving medical or psychiatric help, she’s being held at the T. Don Hutto detention center, where she says she was sexually abused by a guard and subjected to escalating retaliation, including solitary confinement, for reporting that abuse. Monterrosa is an LGBT woman.

“Monterrosa’s situation is far from unique. Since she stepped forward, two more women held at Hutto have complained about sexual mistreatment ... the ACLU has documented nearly 200 reported incidents in detention facilities across the nation since 2007.”

— Karel Riley, Texas

Breaking news: As a result of Laura Monterrosa’s determination to stand up against her abuse, and the effort of supporters to publicize her case, she has been released!



Orlando, FL. PHOTO/BRIAN BECNEL PHOTOGRAPHY



Los Angeles. The sign says “no separation of families.” PHOTO/CYNTHIA CUZA

Immigrant youth stand with Parkland mass shooting survivors

By Sheridan Aguirre and Bruna Bouhid, United We Dream

“We will take to the streets together because we believe in a future where everyone can feel safe in their schools and in their homes.” — *United We Dream*

On March 24, immigrant youth will march in solidarity with the courageous survivors of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and students across the country who are calling on Congress to protect the lives of young people and communities by enacting stricter gun control laws.

Camila Duarte, high school student and immigrant youth leader at United We Dream – Florida, said: “The shooting in Parkland hit home. My friend’s brother was one of the victims and I can’t express just how much this has affected our whole community. Parents of the victims are grieving and some are so depressed that they can’t find the energy to go back to their jobs and their everyday life.

“And all the while, we, the students, have been watching as politicians say gun control laws will do nothing to prevent these tragedies or who have ignored our pain altogether. And we have just one thing to say—we are fed up.

“As youth of color and immigrants, we’ve been through so much hate, emotional abuse and violence, from the Muslim ban, to the termination of DACA, to budget cuts at our schools. We will not stay silent.

“Today, my classmates and I organized a Remembrance Walk at my school to honor the lives of those affected by this tragedy and to express our outrage at the apathy in Congress.

“We will take action again on March 24, when immigrant youth at United We Dream will follow the leadership of the courageous students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School who are organizing a national day of action, the March for Our Lives. We will take to the streets together because we believe in a future where everyone can feel safe in their schools and in their homes.”

Contact information: sheridan@unitedwedream.org, 202.793.2267; [Bruna Bouhid |bruna@unitedwedream.org](mailto:bruna@unitedwedream.org), 202.850.0812. *United We Dream* is the largest immigrant youth-led organization in the nation, a powerful network made up of over 400,000 members and 48 affiliate organizations across 26 states. Its vision is to build a multi-racial, multi-ethnic movement of young people who organize and advocate for the dignity and justice of immigrants and communities of color in the U.S. Cristina Jimenez is Director and Co-Founder. Contact cristina@unitedwedream.org or call 917 863-2040.

‘We won’t win this nation until we fight together,’ says WV candidate



Paula Jean Swarengin.
PHOTO/BRAND NEW CONGRESS

Coal miner’s daughter Paula Jean Swarengin has pledged a fight for the rights of all people in West Virginia and the nation. Her people-funded campaign is against U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, the energy industry candidate. The primary is on May 8. Paula’s campaign symbolizes the effort of leaders of the people in West Virginia and throughout the

country who are utilizing electoral politics to put the urgent needs of the people in the forefront of our fight for a new society. Paula spoke with the People’s Tribune about the significance of her campaign.

“We have volunteers in 50 counties—teachers, coal miners, waitresses, people from all walks of life who donate locally,” she said. “Ninety percent of our donations are small. Joe Manchin says he is running a grassroots campaign, but how is that possible if you are taking corporate funding? He has \$4.5 million in a bank account. We have proven you don’t need big money. We’re the poorest, sickest state, and we’re united, we’re ready for change.

“We’re seeing an uprising in West Virginia. I’m so proud of people in our state. And when I say we’re progressives, I don’t mean Democrat or Republican. Even a lot of Republicans got

behind my campaign. We want clean and safe jobs, a livable wage, we want clean water, we want clean air and opportunities for our children, and we want healthcare. It doesn’t matter what walk of life you’re from, everybody is saying we want the same things. We don’t want these corporate politicians.

“Opioids are a big issue, and feeds back to Big Pharma. We don’t have enough funding to get recovery. One drug treats another drug. My neighbor, a young woman who would love to get off this drug, says, ‘I can’t afford to go into rehab.’

“My opponent and all these ‘national leaders’ on the ballot are funded by Big Pharma or energy. Joe Manchin talks about the opioid crisis, but his second biggest funder is his daughter, who owns Mylan, the drug company accused of hiking the price of the EpiPen that treats severe allergic reactions. Don Blankenship, who is responsible for the death of 29 miners, is on the Senate ballot on the Republican side. It’s so

corrupt.

“We went out to Ritchie County, because they are one of many counties that go unnoticed, and there’s fracking there. We talked to community members and to Lissa Lucas, a progressive candidate for WV House of Delegates. A man had his well water tested and it had high levels of methane and arsenic because of fracking near his home. People ask, why go to Ritchie County? Well I said West Virginia will get their national voice. We let everybody know that if you mess with one of us you mess with all of us. Lissa lives in a conservative county, but it’s the same thing there, the people want the same basic human rights.

“West Virginia is still dealing with water pollution. This year alone I buried three of my friends to cancer. After Trump came in they got rid of the Stream Protection Rule. It wasn’t just Democrats or Republicans. All these politicians were photo opting with coal owners, calling it a coal-killing regulation. This was some

of the water protection we fought for years for, but they smiled and took it away.

“One common thing that unites all of us together across this nation is water. Let’s put together Flint and Standing Rock, and other places like Minden, WV where people are dying from toxic water and PCBs and sewage is running through their community, and North Carolina where people haven’t had clean water for five years. I can’t believe this is America.

“We have to strategize and unite. We won’t win this nation until we fight together. Nobody should fall short in prosperity and opportunity in any area of this nation.”

Donate to Paula’s campaign at secure.actblue.com/contribute/page/paulajeans2018, or mail Paula Swarengin 2018, PO Box 604, Morgantown, WV 26507. Visit paulajeans.com and paulajeans2018.com.

Why young miners are getting Black Lung

WEST VIRGINIA — Chuck Nelson, a retired 4th generation coal miner with almost 30 years underground, speaks with the People’s Tribune about the resurgence in Black Lung, the disease caused by breathing in coal mine dust. Black Lung is now striking younger workers. Chuck traces the rise in the disease to the buying off of union mines. He says a new generation of miners is working without the health safety net of unionized mines.

“The Union plays a vital role in keeping the company in check. No one is guarding the henhouse now. They do what they want. From 1994 on—drastic changes took place; union mines were shut down. Peabody sold their operation to Massey Energy, [the company where 29 miners were killed in 2010]. When Peabody sold them off, Massey threw the union off; mines are all non-union today. Now the company is responsible for inspections. The testing of air quality is not there.

“Where I worked, Massey Energy, they took down the ventilation system when we started producing the coal. This was common. In the last 6-7 years, young miners in non-union mines were



Retired coal miner Chuck Nelson stands in front of a mountaintop removal site. Massive equipment is used to mine the coal, which destroys land, water and air.

exposed to a lot more dust; the air isn’t getting to where you’re mining. The ventilation system is key to keeping miners safe. With no air, you see why young people are getting Black Lung.

“When there were unsafe conditions in union mines, we could pull ourselves out and say ‘no, we want this fixed.’ In non-union mines you wouldn’t dream of it. Before, we had the right to shut an operation down if there wasn’t

the right amount of air. In non-union mines you don’t have that right. You do what the company tells you. Miners know they can

take your job in a heartbeat.

“Young miners don’t know about Black Lung or about union. They haven’t seen that difference. They thank Massey for giving them a job. Massey brings in boys from college who’ve never been underground as supervisors. They tell you, ‘Do it this way.’ They don’t take into account our conditions. But we know because we’ve done it.

“We don’t need the company. I don’t owe those people nothing. You give your life, you made me move from where I grew up, and I’ve worked hard, but I’ve seen how little they care for you. A lot of young guys don’t know that. And, it’s almost impossible to get Black Lung benefits. Since I have 5% Black Lung, they say I don’t have it bad enough to where I deserve benefits, yet it’s a progressing disease. Some people are on their deathbed after being awarded.

“There’s corruption everywhere, the companies, government, and also in union organization. We have to weed people out. This is why the teachers are holding leadership accountable. I’m tickled to death to see the teachers strike. But I don’t trust the government taskforce that’s supposed to solve the health insurance issue. I hope the movement doesn’t die down.

“Everyone here is tied to energy. That’s why we’re always getting the shaft. Coal will still be in decline, a little opened up after the elections, but it’s so far gone. We told our legislators to diversify the economy, but they’re not willing. We’ve got the most useless politicians. Now Blankenship, former CEO of Massey, got out of prison and is running for office.

“There has to be major change.”

PEOPLE’S TRIBUNE DISCUSSION GROUPS!

Call or email us to find out if there is a *People’s Tribune* discussion group in your area.

(800) 691-6888 | info@peopletribune.org

Millionaire senator says healthcare, food, and shelter are privileges, not rights



Healthcare rally in Los Angeles. More and more Americans believe healthcare is a right and that government must insure our needs—not corporate needs. PHOTO/MOLLY ADAMS

From the Editors

A few months ago, millionaire Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) told a group of high school students near Milwaukee that healthcare, food, clothing and shelter are privileges, not rights.

A student asked Johnson, “Do you personally consider healthcare as a privilege or a right?” The senator replied: “I think it’s probably more of a privilege. Do you consider food a right? Do you consider clothing a right? Do you consider shelter a right? What we have as rights is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Past that point, we have the right to freedom. Past that point everything else is a limited resource that we have to use our opportunities given to us so we can afford those things. Sen. Rand Paul talked about this on the floor of the Senate. He’s a doctor. He said the minute you consider healthcare a right, well, who’s going to satisfy that right?”

Millionaires like Sen. Johnson define food, shelter, clothing and healthcare as privileges because if these things were rights, then our society would have to guarantee that all of us had access to them. And that would threaten the whole existing economic system, because that system can’t and won’t guarantee these necessities to anyone who cannot afford to pay for them. The economic system we have now is set up to guarantee profits for billionaires and corporations, not the necessities of life (or anything else) for the people, and this is immoral. We, the people, need a cooperative society where the people control the economy and we guarantee that everyone has what they need to both survive and thrive. In the meantime, we must build a movement that demands that the government classify food, clothing, shelter, healthcare and other necessities as rights, and guarantees that all of us have them.

The fall of a great man

By Julio Ortiz



Juan Torres

WESLACO, TX — I regret to inform you that my father Juan Torres has passed away. My father had written articles about the death march in Texas. No one knew the valley more than him. He lived, like he wrote, from the heart. He lived what he preached. The fight that my father lost was against cancer. At least that is what is being reported. The information is still sketchy as to what happened. He was sick and admitted into Knapp Medical Center and discharged on the 29th of December.

He had recently voluntarily evicted himself from his apartment. So he was homeless, again. After that, he went to a homeless shelter to escape the torturous cold weather that had ravaged the Rio Grande Valley recently. On the 3rd of January he was taken to the Calley Baptist Medical Center for shortness of breath, losing the battle on the 4th.

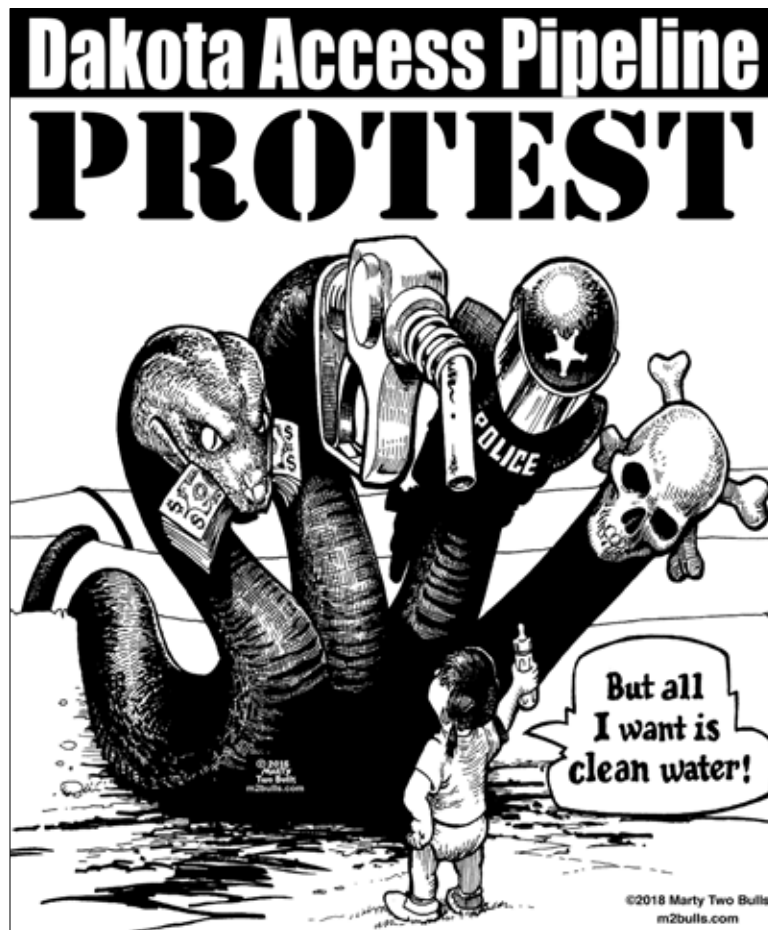
He was quick to denounce any fascist ideology and lived with the people he was trying to save. May there be more like him, a truly courageous man who did not seek reward for lifting others out of the muck of confusion and ignorance. He leaves behind four children: Raquela Lugo, P.A., Tino Torres, Franciscan friar for the renewal, Julio Ortiz, Paramedic, and Steve. He leaves behind to follow in his footsteps three grandchildren to carry the torch. May knowledge not be extinguished! He would bring the flame to all that would hear it.

EXPANDED AND IMPROVED MEDICARE FOR ALL



On February 23, the Jane Addams Senior Caucus led a march of more than 60 people to Congressman Mike Quigley’s office in Chicago, demanding that he represent the people and vote for HR 676. This bill would establish an expanded and improved Medicare for all program that would provide free health care to all, including drugs, mental health, dental, and vision care. Signs declared: “Health care is a human right” and “Everybody in! Nobody Out! Improved Medicare for all.”

PHOTO/JANE ADDAMS SENIOR CAUCUS



T-Shirt fundraiser supports the People’s Tribune

The first of a series of limited edition shirts features this image by Marty Two Bulls, a renowned Oglala Lakota artist and editorial cartoonist (indiancountrymedianetwork.com/author/marty-two-bulls).

Chicago supporters of the *People’s Tribune* and *Tribuna del Pueblo* are raising donations to expand circulation of the papers. They are offering limited edition t-shirts with striking images that speak to the issues of the movement for our very survival. All donations above the shirt costs go to the papers!

To get a t-shirt and support the paper at the same time, go to bonfire.com and then search for “People’s Tribune.”

National movement needed to save public schools



Protesting education cuts in Chicago, IL where many schools have been closed.

PHOTO/CHARLES E. MILLER

From the Editors

As the articles on this page illustrate, the attacks on public education and unions are moving ahead full force. They are part of a corporate campaign, facilitated by government at all levels, to privatize the wealth and resources of the public at the expense of our children, our teachers and society as a whole. Such attacks must be fought by a national movement to maintain and expand the power of the public.

Grad students stand for higher education

By David Johnson

URBANA-CHAMPAIGN, IL – On February 26, after 195 days without a contract, the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO) at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign voted by a 97% margin to strike, and the strike began that day. The morning of the strike one could hear the sound of drums, whistles, horns, singing and chanting from two blocks away. The University Quad area was empty of the usual large crowds of students going to and from classes. Instead, there were hundreds of graduate students picketing in front of various buildings.

The main issue was tuition waivers. The administration wanted sole discretion over who gets waivers instead of the union contract requiring it for all graduate students, as it has been since the founding of the GEO Union in 2002. Without waivers graduate students would have to pay a minimum of \$30,000 per year. The other issues were: 1) a pay increase to \$17,000 per year, slightly above the federal minimum wage; 2) more of their healthcare costs covered, since insurance premiums increased 25% last year; and 3) a supplement for childcare expenses for members with children. These demands would cost one quarter of 1% of U. of I.'s \$3.6 billion endowment for the next three years.

The administration wants a

complete transformation of how the university operates to a corporate model, putting the cost of attending the university even more out of reach for working people. It will also starve various departments out of existence that don't bring in as much revenue as others.

Since the late 1970s, there has been an attack on public education and its accessibility by the corporate ruling class. University tuition nationwide increased over 1,000% while eliminating grants and scholarships, preventing tens of millions of young people from obtaining a college degree and causing massive student debt for those not wealthy enough to afford tuition. Most of the GEO Union members are from working-class families.

On Day 10 of the strike, despite efforts to turn undergraduate students, non-tenured and tenured faculty against the GEO, 83% of undergraduate students and 93% of faculty stated support for the GEO. On the afternoon of March 6, a contingent of GEO members occupied one of the main administration buildings, stating they will not leave until they have a contract. Police sealed off the building to prevent other people from joining the occupation. The following afternoon the second largest administration building was occupied. On Day 12, the administration agreed to a tentative contract that was acceptable to the GEO rank and file bargaining team.

Janus case: A call to arms for unions

On February 26, the Supreme Court heard the Janus vs. AFSCME case. Mark Janus sued AFSCME claiming that unions do not represent his political interests and that payment of Fair Share dues is a violation of free speech. The case is supported by the National Right to Work Foundation and the Liberty Justice Center and billionaires like Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner. The ruling would give a decisive blow to public-sector unions.

Yet, the case is galvanizing unions to organize and re-examine how they can make unions even more relevant to workers. A post-Janus world could negatively impact students and the community.

The following is an interview by Dr. Jesús Estrada with Tony Johnston, president of the Cook County College Teachers Union (CCCTU), about Janus. In Chicago and suburban community colleges, the CCCTU has guaranteed decent wages and benefits for faculty, professionals, adjuncts, and para-professionals alike and excellent education for students.

Dr. Jesús Estrada: Give us a little background on Janus. Who is behind this attack on public-sector unions?

Tony Johnston: Right-wing conservative groups have funded the Right to Freeload legislation and litigation. This article gives a very concise explanation of the forces behind Janus: inthesetimes.com/features/janus_supreme_court_unions_investigation.html

JE: What is the state of Janus given the Supreme Court hearing?

TJ: As has been predicted, it looks certain that the Supreme Court will vote to overturn the Abood decision which will make fair share dues deduction unconstitutional. This ruling will allow any union member from public-sector unions to opt out of membership and dues deduction at any time.

On March 9, the rank and file voted by a 98% margin to accept the tentative contract proposal, which made tuition waivers a guaranteed part of the 5-year contract, plus a 4% pay raise for the first two years and 2% in the next years, and the U. of I. paying 87% of healthcare costs with 25% coverage for one dependent with the stipulation that elected GEO members will negotiate with Health Alliance insurance company when the insurance agreement expires.



Chicago protest against the Governor Rauner budget for Illinois.

PHOTO/CHARLES E. MILLER

JE: How should unions respond to these attacks on public-sector workers?

TJ: This decision gives us an opportunity to have a real conversation with our members on the real benefits of being in a union.

JE: Why should non-union members care about these attacks?

TJ: There is a lot of data which shows that benefits and improvements won by unions translate into increases in salaries and benefits for non-union workers. Also, this challenge provides us in the labor movement an opportunity to reach out to workers who are not unionized and organize them.

JE: A lot of organizers have been addressing the issue of unity. How can unions unite with other social movements?

TJ: It is vital that unions reach out to community-based organizations and civic groups such as Black Lives Matter so that people see unions as advocating not

just for salaries and working conditions, but for issues that have a real impact on the communities that we serve.

JE: Do you have any final thoughts regarding Janus?

TJ: Janus is a call to arms for unions. It has forced us to get back to our real job of improving the lives of our members and showing them that our actions in the workplace will lead to a more equal and just society.

The Kids Heard the Sound

The kids heard the sound
Looking all around
Suddenly blood on the ground

Time to make a change
She's only seventeen
But I'm listening

Time to make a change
Her best friend died
She was buried today
Only sixteen

All the screams
Will last her time here
She's not going anywhere

Listen to what they say
Because they were there
And will have to remember

Forever

— Rick Wood, Campbell, CA

‘Youth are the future of humanity,’ says Benton Harbor minister

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

BENTON HARBOR, MI — Let the truth be told. I was surprised and shocked in reference to the Benton Harbor school system: that a system controlled by Whirlpool Corporation would even allow the students to protest.

After the travesty of yet another mass shooting, once again a school has riveted the attention of the nation. It was not just the extent of the carnage with 17 lives lost in Florida, but also the unexpected and unstoppable response of the youth in Benton Harbor, MI, and around the country.

The students even in the sixth grade now understand. They have put the politicians all the way up to Trump on notice and called out to end the gun violence that

is rampant in America and a sick society that allows for the slaughter of innocents to preserve and increase the profitability of arms manufacturers. The National Rifle Association (NRA) dictates to the politicians and its money lobbyists. Who the politicians will support is the real test that the indignant youth are utilizing to measure if our leaders are for us or against us. It is unfortunate that they will find out the elected leaders are not for them. It is all about money.

The NRA is a very rich and powerful organization that politicians bow down to. Founded in 1871, worth more than \$433 million, headquartered in Fairfax, VA. It’s CEO is Wayne La Pierre. It was co-founded by William Conant Church and George Wood Wingate. You will not get a

politician to go against the NRA.

The protest in Benton Harbor was so important—just to see the students marching and standing up for something right across the street from my home, holding signs that said stop the NRA. The youth, the students were at the forefront of the protest. The students were saying no more disposable people, no more youth in body bags, no more deportees, no more people kicked to the curb, and no more homelessness. No more poverty.

We must stand by our youth and support them, defend them, and protect them. They are the future of humanity. We, the residents of Benton Harbor, Michigan, should be very proud of our youth, who are taking on the very powerful National Rifle Association.



Rev. Edward Pinkney at his welcome home from prison dinner. His work, whether in prison helping young inmates or out in the community, has been based on an understanding that youth are our future.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

Police violence seems out of control: What does it mean?

From the Editors

On March 12, police killed Decynthia Clements, 34, after an hour-long standoff with Elgin, IL police on Interstate 90. Those protesting her death said police had no reason to kill Clements, who weighed only 90 pounds and was allegedly armed only with a knife. On March 18, Sacramento, CA, police killed Stephon Clark, 22, in the backyard of his home. Police said they thought he had a gun. He had a cell phone. Both victims were Black.

According to mappingpoliceviolence.org, 1,147 people were killed by police in the United States in 2017. Most killings began with police responding to suspected non-violent offenses or cases where no crime was reported. Eighty-nine people were killed after police stopped them for a traffic violation. People of color are disproportionately affected by police violence; Blacks, for example, were 25% of those killed by police in 2017, though they are only 13% of the population. Forty-eight percent of the people killed by police last year were white. The US population is 63% white.

In 2014, the Tampa Bay Times asked all of the nearly 400 police agencies in Florida for reports any time an officer shot someone between 2009 and 2014. The Times reported that Florida police shot at least 827 people, 434 of them fatally, during the six-year period.

Those shot included:

- A 2-year-old boy in his mother’s car

at a Wendy’s

- A 17-year-old boy with Down syndrome who took his mom’s minivan for a low-speed joyride
- A 60-year-old man fetching cigarettes from a car in his driveway
- An autistic 18-year-old who threw four lava rocks at an officer
- A man shoplifting a can of Bud Light from a gas station

Not all of these people died from their wounds.

Whether they have controlled slaves, broken strikes, or contained the poor, the police have always been an instrument of the powerful few against the workers under capitalism. But today, police violence seems to be getting worse, and it appears no one is safe. This is because technology is eliminating our jobs permanently. This has created a section of us who have no stake in a society run by and for billionaires. We are a threat to their rule and they are creating a police state to contain us.

A new society is emerging out of our ongoing struggles to defend ourselves. It will either be a society that serves the corporations, protects their billions and keeps the people in poverty under a violent police state, or it will be a society where the abundance high technology is producing belongs to the people and there will be no need to police anyone. Which way it goes is up to us.



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

‘Voices from Berrien County, Michigan’

“I am speaking out against the justice system in Berrien County, Michigan, because no man mentally impaired or not should spend time in prison for crimes that were based from previous cases. And, there are court documents from the prosecutor admitting to coercing people into making false claims. Please visit justiceforlarry.com for information on this case.

— Mark Osborne, Stevensville, MI