

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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Survivors of the Parkland, Florida school shootings, and others, kick off a Vote For Our Lives movement in Colorado earlier this year.

PHOTO/DAVID ZALUBOWSKI, AP

A WAVE OF RESISTANCE



Climate crisis demands revolutionary change

EDITORIAL



A dire warning to the world to drastically change the course of our future within 12 years before irreversible climate changes are unleashed was issued in the 2018 IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report. The report assessed 6000 independent peer-reviewed scientific studies, and scientific consensus confirms that there is no longer any doubt that human activity has drastically affected the rate of climate change. There is now a shift away from “why is this happening” to “exactly what kind of disasters can we expect” and “how do governments adapt?”

We have already passed the former target of a 1 degree Celsius increase in earth’s temperature. At 1.5 degrees we can expect 6% of insects, 8% of plants, and 4% of vertebrates to lose half of their natural geographic habitat. At 2 degrees warmer, those figures increase to 18%, 16%, and 8% respectively. It’s estimated that half of coral reefs, a crucial part of the oceans’ ecosystem, have already been destroyed. At 1.5 degrees, 90% of the reefs will be gone. At 2 degrees, they will disappear. The ability for humans to live with the increasing fires, devastating storms, droughts and the rising sea levels will be severely curtailed. Of course it is the world’s poor and most vulnerable that will suffer the most.

The report lists 100 corpora-

tions responsible for 71% of the warming, with just 25 responsible for half. These are the fossil fuel industries and those tied to the military (which is the largest user of oil and the greatest polluter and producer of greenhouse gases). Their CEOs and owners have used their accumulated wealth to buy politicians and fund massive misinformation campaigns. They have been appointed to government positions putting our fate and that of the planet in the hands of the despoilers. Before the elections, over half of the members in both houses of Congress were climate change deniers.

The revolutionary impetus needed to transition to 100%

renewables which is possible and necessary will not come from above. It will not be found in market-based solutions designed to guarantee profits for a corporate ruling class that is throwing millions of us to the wind while destroying the earth as it commodifies everything for a “price.”

We must build the movement from below for systemic change, for a cooperative society and an economy that works for all. We have to fight for environmental justice that recognizes the disproportionate effects of these damages on the poor. We have to fight for “just transition” measures that deal with peoples’ legitimate concerns for stable employment, and for instance, the righteous fears

of current and retired coal miners for their jobs, their pensions, and their health care.

We cannot rely on the corporations to stop the environmental destruction, because they profit from it. In the end, we are going to have to take this society away from them so that we, the people, can make the decisions that are in the interests of society. We have the technologies that could, if they were in the hands of the people, create a sustainable future where each of us contributes to society and receives what we need to survive and thrive. Let us work to bring together all who are fighting the corporate destruction of humanity and the Earth before it is too late! The future is up to us!

The People’s Tribune dedicates this edition of the paper in memory of editorial board member Alexandra Maria Engel, age 20, who died tragically on September 4, 2018. See page 10.

COVER PHOTOS/ROB CRANDALL (SHUTTERSTOCK), JOHN RAMSPOTT, RUNNING STRONG FOR AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH, AND THE CAMPAIGNS OF JESS KING, ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ, AND BETO O’ROURKE

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.

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Six years ago, Lucy McBath was a Delta flight attendant in Marietta, Georgia. On November 23, 2012, she learned that her 17-year-old son had been shot and killed by a white man at a gas station because of the loud rap music he was playing in his car. Overnight, McBath went from being a suburban mom to an activist. In November 2018, she was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Georgia's Sixth District after campaigning as an opponent of the gun lobby and an advocate for equal education and health care for all. She will take the seat in Congress held for 20 years by former House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

In the Chicago suburbs, another newcomer won a seat once held by a Speaker of the House. Lauren Underwood beat incumbent Randy Hultgren in the Fourteenth District of Illinois, the district once represented by disgraced former House Speaker Dennis Hastert. Underwood, a nurse, will be the first woman and the first African-American to represent the district. She won by stressing her support for health care and her opponent's opposition to expanding it.

The 2018 election campaign made what is good in America better and what's bad in America worse. The vicious, racist demagoguery of the Trump forces—

particularly the slander against immigrants—had an impact. At the same time, the strong support given to McBath and Underwood, and to people such as Stacey Abrams, Andrew Gillum, Ayanna Pressley, Jess King, Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, Deb Haaland, Sharice Davids, Beto O'Rourke and others proves that many voters are willing to cross ethnic and gender lines to vote for candidates who campaign on the issues.

Voters in Idaho, Nebraska, and Utah approved ballot initiatives to expand Medicaid. Across the country, many voters supported Medicare for all and also decisively rejected candidates with a track record of opposition to the Affordable Care Act.

The election results show that the majority of voters are deeply worried about the attacks on democracy and decency. Despite efforts to suppress the vote, voters turned out at rates not seen in a mid-term election in half a century. Turn-out boomed among women, Latinos, and young people.

The real "wave" was a wave of resistance—to the status quo. It was an expression of the basic morality of the American people and a rejection of racism and xenophobia. This outrage isn't going away. While not every progressive candidate or ballot mea-



[Above] From left, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, Rashida Tlaib and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who all won election to Congress.

PHOTO/INSTAGRAM

[Right] Stacey Abrams supporters at a rally. Abrams was still fighting to become Georgia's governor at press time.

PHOTO/JOHN RAMSPOTT



sure succeeded, the battle lines have now been drawn. The fight for a new America—for universal health care, for quality public education, for a clean environment, for affordable housing, for immigrant rights—won't grind to a halt once all the votes have been counted. That struggle will continue—not just in the electoral

arena, but throughout society.

We have to build on the unity that was forged in the 2018 election campaign. Just as armies sometimes use the tactic of attacking "wave upon wave," we have to be ready for new offen-

sives. We are not simply fighting one bad man; we are fighting a bad system. We have to prepare for a protracted struggle by the majority of people to transform this country into the new America it could be.

Wins in the midterm elections

'I am woman, hear me roar!'

More than 100 women will go to Congress next year! Women understood that someone had to stand up. In part women were driven by the Trump effect, but also because of the suffering in their communities. The Women's March of 2017 galvanized hundreds to run for public office. Nevada, for example, now has the first majority women state legislature. Women candidates represented diverse backgrounds and many were first-time candidates. Many took up the issues that spoke for everyone: women's rights, Medicare for All, public education, native rights, clean water, infrastructure, the environment, and an America that cares for us all. The conditions inspired women to step forward. And, they did so with a roar!

Healthcare: The majority want major changes

Health care was a central issue in a number of races, including in ballot initiatives. Exit polls of voters showed that 70% said the health system needs "major changes."

The poor won some victories regarding Medicaid expansion, with voters in three "red states"—Utah, Nebraska, and Idaho—passing ballot measures calling for Medicaid expansion.

These measures are expected to extend Medicaid coverage to around 300,000 new recipients. The election of new governors in Wisconsin, Kansas and Maine may also clear the way for Medicaid expansion in those states, which would give coverage to another 300,000 people.

The candidates brought Medicare-for-all to the fore. This may improve the prospects for passing Medicare-for-all. This depends on the grassroots keeping up the fight.

Prop C: Taxing corporations to help the homeless

In San Francisco a ballot measure to tax companies making \$50 million or more a year to help people get out of homelessness was passed by the voters with a 60% majority. This is expected to raise hundreds of millions of dollars a year. In this city with the highest rents in the nation, the shining glass high-rise offices of financial institutions and tech giants such as Facebook, Twitter and Salesforce overlook streets where people sleep on the concrete. Clearly most people want their fellows housed, and think corporations should pay their fair share where they profit so greatly.

Voter suppression: 92 year old blocked from voting



Denying African Americans the right to vote is one of their old tricks to drive back the resistance. Here's an example from the recent mid-term election in Georgia.

"I've been voting all my life, ever since I was old enough," said Christine Jordan, age 92. "I've been voting right here. Since 1968." Granddaughter Jessica Jordan said, "She's been in this community back when they were doing sit-ins. She had civil rights meetings in her home. And today to come out and not be able to vote and no one can give you an explanation. It is extremely emotional and it bothers me to my core. There is actually no record of her voting in any election. Its ridiculous."

(From a video by Palast Investigative Fund, bit.ly/2QN0Z5G)

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Where do we go from here?



By Bill Bunting

Sitting in this beautiful meadow in the foothills of the West Virginia Appalachian Mountains always brings me peace. Watching the brown butterflies mingle with the tiger swallows as they get the last of the nectar from the purple and yellow ironweeds can take a man's thoughts to wonderful places. Just the way all the meadow life coexists as well as the many varieties of bees and insects that freely roam and feed from it... perfect unity of life.

But as I sit and gaze upon the wonders of Mother Nature in front of me I am sad. For this is no longer my home. Not because the bees and butterflies want me to leave. And the Ironweed sure loves me as well as the life force of the meadow itself. So why am I leaving?

I guess I could tell a long story of land owners using homeless people for work, or that greed or selfishness ruined a good thing. Yet simply, sometimes bad things just happen to good, regular people. And this would be my case.

Now the reason I am leaving isn't as important as the question of where will I go. Because like millions of Americans, by choice or by circumstance, choose to live either in the streets or at the mercy and kindness of land owners,

and like me are homeless. Many do not trust or "fit in" this society and system that to many of us seems hell bent on killing us instead of sustaining and caring for us. So we live day by day the best we can without being involved in that.

Our lives may seem strange and tragic to some, but to us yours seems just as strange and tragic. And where this isn't the dilemma of the homeless issue, it does cause us all to look at each other as strangers instead of brothers.

This is what I am wanting to change by going to homeless areas, talking with y'all as the homeless brother I am, in a humble attempt to bring a solution that we can live in peace yet still live the way we see fit. I have already begun with a Facebook page dedicated to communication specifically for homeless people and their families, if any, or loved ones that worry. It can also be used for valuable "street intel" for bad places as well as jobs or food... even just company. I hope that this will begin the talking part, but as for me I will be hitting the streets. I hope to cover from Big Springs, West Virginia to SF Cali via Chicago and anywhere any of you, we the people, want to talk.

I will ask the *People's Tribune* to keep doing what they are doing to help, but to also help us get through this winter without losing lives and finding solutions.

So, if you have something to say and feel you are left behind, well I want to hear you ... the *People's Tribune* wants to hear you ... so please talk to us.

It's our time and we are all we have.

Visit my Homeless Information Portal on Facebook.

Editor's note: Unfortunately Bill Bunting is currently incarcerated and asks for your help for bail. Please donate at PayPal.me/BillBunting.



'It is time to be true organizers'

By Ayat Bryant-Jalal

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — The local government needs to stop policies and ordinances that seek to shuffle around, keep out of sight or incriminate the displaced population in the Bay Area. Seniors and disabled (mostly vets), students and workers make up the majority of the homeless population today. The closing of schools/cuts in education, government's failure to balance the minimum wage with rent hikes, and failure to provide elders with Social Security and retirement protection, while bailing out banks and catering to corporations/businesses, has caused this rise in homelessness.

A lot of us who are waking up know it's time to be true organizers, to put something into society in place of its failed programs. We're working to change things, to shift the balance back. We are demanding the government rebalance social injustices and the economy they broke. We see that it's nobody's fault but the failed system's.

'Mommy, what's a Tuff Shed?'

By Peter Brown

OAKLAND, CA — With over 2,000 human beings living in our streets, the City of Oakland has started installing Tuff Sheds (prefab utility sheds) at several of the 200+ tent camps as a "temporary solution to the housing crisis." Some politicians are also touting "Tiny Homes" as a possible solution to the same housing crisis, and propose parking them in church parking lots.

Great ideas! Many people would be happy to have any kind of roof over their head rather than living outside unprotected. Also, Tiny Homes are a creative part of the "downsizing" movement; many young people interested in sustainability, engineering, design and construction are drawn to this anti-consumerism movement.

So what's wrong with this picture?

First, homelessness isn't a "housing" problem; there's no

shortage of homes in Oakland; City Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan documented 5,000 vacant housing units in Oakland. People have been evicted from homes, unable to earn enough with shrinking wages and skyrocketing rents created by artificial scarcity.

Second, Tuff Sheds are used by Oakland's government to cover up their true plan to harass, evict and export people and families who have been evicted from existing homes in Oakland to make billionaires richer. Actions speak louder than words; despite fine speeches, when the city puts up Tuff Sheds at a camp and they're filled, anyone left over gets evicted. And there are never enough for everyone. Such actions show that Sheds are used as an eviction tool, and a tool to "normalize" homelessness, making it appear morally acceptable but doing nothing to end it. An Uber driver I know delivers rid-

ers to "The Sheds," a new neighborhood in Oakland. With barbed wire, cameras and curfews.

What could the City do to house all the people living outside? Whatever the reasons homes are sitting vacant, Oakland could use eminent domain laws to make them public and make them available, even employ homeless folk to rehabilitate housing. The city could even pass ordinances against keeping housing vacant to drive rents up; then, just as Jerry Brown did with "drug dealers," the city could seize property from criminal investors who prey on the poor. Homeless leaders have already demanded the city use eminent domain; this can be fought for!

Is it likely Mayor Libby Schaaf will do either of these or take any serious steps to end this rapidly growing suffering? The Schaaf regime has shown the same loyal dedication to billionaire investors that Jerry Brown



Residents of encampments around Oakland, unable to get into the Sheds because they are full, are now being evicted from their well-organized camps. PHOTO/PETER BROWN

did as mayor, and what else would she do? Her main source of support is those investors and global corporations; they pay her way, and pave her political path; they can also ruin it. They won't reward her for cutting into corporate profits to support workers they'll never employ and have no

use for ... it will take a new force, a new kind of politics, a whole new kind of government to set this right. We the people are that new force. We can create a new kind of government where no one can be evicted from their home!

Homeless coalition builds structures to protect homeless

By Donald Richter,
co-chair of the Homeless
Construction Project

HUNTSVILLE, AL — It is a hot fall day in Northern Alabama as Hy Thurman, a member of the Young Patriots Organization, works alongside members from other progressive groups. Their task: To build a pallet platform in a wooded area off an undisclosed street for a homeless couple who've made camp there.

When Hy was working with the Young Patriots in Chicago in the 60/70s, they had partnered with other organizations such as the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Native American housing committee to form the original Rainbow Coalition. Now, almost 50 years later, he stands among a group of young volunteers to “get the band back together.”

This new coalition consists of members from the Angel Squad, local Democratic Socialist Chapters from both Madison County and students from the University Of Alabama Huntsville, Alabama Solutions (a grassroots education/service organization), United Methodist Church of Huntsville, as well as many other individuals. They came together to form what they internally call the Homeless Construction Coalition.

Their mission: to build structures to protect the homeless, their pets and their belongings from the often severe weather of Alabama. The team meets on Sunday afternoons to assemble a series of pallets and plywood into a structure such that the homeless resident is lifted out of the rain and drainage.

The team, which consists entirely of volunteers, are hoping

to branch their mission out from simple Homeless Construction projects (platforms, wheelchair ramps, etc.) into a broader reach of poverty awareness and support. And to organize the homeless into a group that would allow them to have some say about their lives.

With future programs such as: Food Security for urban development, job assistance and support for low income residents, health and welfare information, their goal is lofty, but they are well within the reach of this dedicated and driven team.

You can find more information by checking out the respective website or following the Young Patriots on Facebook. Donations to assist can be made at: www.youngpatriots-rainbowcoalition.org



Building structures to protect the homeless, their pets and their belongings from the often severe weather of Alabama.

Baltimore fight for housing moves forward



Members of the Baltimore Housing Roundtable take their fight to fund the Housing Trust to City Hall. PHOTO/MARILYN HUNTER

By Marilyn Hunter

BALTIMORE, MD — The 2015 Baltimore uprising after Freddie Gray’s death on Baltimore’s West Side got people talking about Baltimore’s poor. Under the banner of “Fair Development,” a number of groups canvassed poor communities and talked to residents across the city. Finding a desperate need for housing, they called for the creation of a Housing Trust Fund. It would safely remove unlivable vacancies and create livable, affordable housing and neighborhood green spaces. It

would employ residents of poor communities in the process.

Organizations of the homeless and in low-income communities, community land trusts, and housing advocates got enough signatures to put a Housing Trust Fund on the 2016 ballot. It got 83% of the vote! But the mayor refused to fund it. So supporters gathered enough signatures to put funding the Trust on the November 2018 ballot.

That got local politicians’ attention. In August, the Mayor committed \$20 million in funding over several years. Real estate

investors argue that the market, not people, needs to be the priority. Careful use of the Housing Trust Fund can bring some improvement to the community. The poor know they have to be organized to get their voice heard. Here are some voices from a rally at the September 27th City Council hearing:

“We’re doing this to let the poor people know they have a right to fair housing, educating poor people to stand up together to have a strong voice.”

— Ernest “Bear” Lindsey

“I think of the hurricane: that’s a catastrophic condition. Well, getting evicted and homelessness is a catastrophe, too. People should be housed until they get permanent housing.”

— Touchstone Wilkinson

“So many people are homeless or on the verge. I don’t think Baltimore is going to survive much longer. Baltimore is losing people because they don’t have jobs or homes. People don’t come to the city because even if they did find a job, they wouldn’t be able to afford a home.”

— Debra Young

“The thing about the Housing Task Force is that people need to be able to come home to their own place, to turn the

key to their own door, not having to be told what time to get up, what time to eat. I know about this because I have experienced it.”

— Sidney Bond

“We have this opportunity because people on the ground fought for it. This fight is just beginning. We started two years ago from nothing and now we have a commitment of \$20 million. But we all know the history of Baltimore: these things fail if we don’t hold our city and ourselves accountable. There are threats from the big developers who’ve been fighting us for years, who want to keep the status quo. These are the challenges we face.”

— Destiny Watford

“We are inviting people into a space where what they say will be taken seriously. It was the door knocking in neighborhoods where people feel forgotten and used, people who don’t have time to come to meetings. For a long time I felt things like this were not possible. I was a skeptic. I had to see it done. A lot of people sacrificed their time for this. This is not a sprint; it’s a marathon. It’s not just about wins in the win column. This is about changing things in the long run.”

— Terrel Askew

sweep up
from

the southern
latitudes

tides of

the human

scour this

land of blood

to be new to

share and share

what’s taken back

and fair restored

— by Sarah Menefee

Flint to the world: Water is a human right

By Bob Lee

Nakiya Wakes, a Flint, Michigan, resident, spoke calmly as she addressed a workshop during the 28th Annual Conference of the Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ) held in Flint in early October, but there was no mistaking the sadness and anger reflected in her story.

As of Oct. 6, Flint had gone more than 1600 days without access to safe tap water. In April 2014, when Flint was under the rule of a state-imposed emergency manager, the city switched from Lake Huron water to Flint River water, allegedly as a cost-saving measure. The result was water contaminated with lead and chemicals and Legionella bacteria, among other things. Flint residents warned officials for months that something was wrong with the water, but they were ignored. Though Gov. Rick Snyder and city officials earlier this year claimed that the water is now safe, people in Flint still don't trust the water or the government.

In a workshop titled, "Flint to the World: Water is a Human Right," Nakiya told a heart-rending story that she said is one of

many in Flint. The water left her two children with high levels of lead, "and their lives changed forever." Beyond this, she had two miscarriages. In both cases she was carrying twins. "Twice I felt the lives inside me end because someone else decided that Flint residents had no right to clean, safe and affordable water, so we drank what we had, which turned out to be deadly ... So when people argue that access to clean, safe, affordable water is not a human right, I ask them, what right do you have to take away one of the most basic survival requirements from someone else? Who are you to decide who gets to live or die?"

Another Flint resident in the audience, Laura MacIntyre, noted the damage done to Flint and Michigan by the emergency manager law, and said the law "needs to be eliminated in all its forms." She also said that at least 15 current or former state or city officials have been charged with crimes related to the Flint crisis and are undergoing trial, "and we need to follow those cases and make sure they're not dismissed, and we need more pressure so more people are charged. Snyder needs to be held accountable."

Nakiya pointed out that Flint residents are being forced to pay water bills that are eight times the national average, for water they can't use. The state stopped distributing free water in Flint last April, after the tap water was declared "safe" with the use of a filter. Local private help centers distribute bottled water for free, but the supply may run out while you're waiting in line, Nakiya said, and many people can't afford to buy their own bottled water or pay the high bills for tap water. The result, she said, is "your contaminated water is shut off, which can lead to foreclosure of your home, serious illness, shame, and so much more."

Nakiya continued: "I have children, I can't just give up. I will keep fighting until they get justice. I will fight until they get Gov. Snyder. If I was governor, being African American, I would have been charged. Everyone needs to be held accountable. A mayor of Detroit was locked up for 20 years for embezzlement, but there have been 13 deaths in Flint, and no one has been incarcerated. I've lost children behind this; these people should be incarcerated."

Flint still paying a price



Flint resident Jassmine McBride [seated] contracted Legionnaires' disease in 2014. It is a severe form of pneumonia caused by bacteria-infected mist, probably linked to the mismanaged water supply. She's been on oxygen and dialysis ever since. "I'm not a hateful person. I was raised to turn it over to God's hand," she says. But, "You still smell the water. It's still affecting people. ... You can't brush your teeth. You have to bathe in bottled water. They don't care because they know they can get away with it."

PHOTO/PIEN HUANG, THE GROUNDTRUTH PROJECT

Stop corporate polluters like Veolia



Dorothea Wicks speaks at a rally protesting Veolia Environmental Services appeal of an EPA requirement to monitor the toxins released into the air and soil at its incinerator in East St. Louis, IL communities. She had to quit her job because her children were sick and dying from exposure to poisons such as arsenic. See video at: fb.com/68731647857/videos/2205761189704459

Editor's note: Cathy Talbott of the People's Tribune interviewed Rev. Michael Atty of United Congregations of Metro-East (UCM), a peace and social justice organization, about efforts to unite impoverished working class communities in the metro-east area of St. Louis around poverty, environmental pollution, and social justice issues.

People's Tribune: Rev. Atty, tell us about the communities you're organizing in.

Rev. Atty: In United Congregations of Metro-East we have five clusters of churches. Our most active one is the Granite City cluster around environmental issues. [The cluster includes Alton and East St. Louis] and a couple of Superfund sites. Alton has an ash pit from the power plant there. Granite City was highly industrialized but as industries left the area, contaminants were left in the water and soil.

We're currently in a fight with Veolia (Environmental Services, Inc.), which operates three incinerators in Sauget near East St. Louis, over their permit to burn hazardous waste. They don't want to do the testing for heavy metals and ground runoff. Veolia was previously sued over the amount of arsenic they were releasing into the air.

This area of Illinois has a history of industrial contamination, environmental injustice compounded by racism and poverty. East St. Louis is majority African American and poor. Sixty percent of the residents live in public housing and don't have a lot of resources to fight with. In Granite City and Alton there are a lot of poor whites with opioid problems. When people are worrying about paying for lights, transportation and food, the last thing they want to worry about is what's in their air or water and soil.

Veolia got a provisional permit under Obama's EPA requiring they monitor the arsenic released into the air. It's up for renewal next year. But they've never made changes to test for heavy metals (like mercury and lead). They have been dragging it out for 10 to 12 years. A lot of politicians wrote letters of support for Veolia years ago. But we have a breach in our government, a chasm, a broken relationship between citizens and our government agencies that are supposed to protect and serve us. How do we make government work by the people, for the people? How do we hold industry and people in power accountable to our communities?

We're holding a meeting November 15 and bringing communities together. We're inviting elected officials to ask them to commit to repairing the breach. Our theme is "Restore, Repair, and Redeem." Restore jobs and economic viability through clean energy jobs. Repair our environment and stop polluters like Veolia. Redeem our government by putting power back in the hands of the people.

PT: What is your vision for a better world?

RA: It's a vision of the Beloved Community which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke about. We don't believe in scarcity. There's enough for every child to be fed, for everyone to have shelter, health care and access to clean energy, air and water. All these things are possible but must be done by the masses, through the people. We believe the government should be put back into the hands of the community. People should have the right to vote and everybody participate. We believe we can live in communities where everyone is cared for and be truly human.

Interview: Pipeline battle in Nebraska escalates

Editor's note: Art Tanderup, a Nebraska farmer on the frontlines of the battle to stop construction of TransCanada's Keystone XL pipeline, to protect the land and Ogallala Aquifer, spoke with Sandy Reid of the People's Tribune. As we go to print, Art commented on a new development: The Montana ruling [on November 8] against the Trump administration is a victory for the environment, the water, the land, the tribes, the farmers and the ranchers. Laws and procedures must be followed. The Nebraska Supreme Court case still moves forward. These additional delays could very well be the demise of KXL."

People's Tribune: Art, last year the Nebraska Public Service Commission rejected Trans Canada's preferred pipeline route, but agreed to a mainline alternative route. What is going on now?

Art Tanderup: We've been fighting this for 10 years, so a lot of landowners have knowledge about what this pipeline represents. Some are no longer involved because of the alternative route, but are still in this battle with us. They know it's more than a "not in my backyard" deal. TransCanada says they have 50-60% of landowners signed up on the mainline alternative route. Ever since the decision, we've been trying to work with landowners along the alternative route, educate them and help them make a decision based on facts rather than on a used car sales pitch. What is interesting is that part of the preferred route in this four-county area that this alternative route will attach to has over



Art Tanderup signs a deed returning sacred, ancestral tribal land back to the Ponca Tribe on the historic Ponca "Trail of Tears." Tribes and landowners have been working together in Nebraska to stop the Keystone XL pipeline. [Left to right: Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Chairman Larry Wright, Jr., Ponca Nation of Oklahoma Councilwoman Casey Camp-Horinek, Nebraska landowners Helen and Art Tanderup]

PHOTO/ALEX MATZKE, BOLD NEBRASKA

60% of landowners still fighting because of our sandy soil and closeness to the Aquifer.

One thing we're trying is to use the ballot box, get everyone out to vote for candidates who will reject the pipeline. We have two candidates running for the Public Service Commission. TransCanada put forth a legislator who has taken considerable money from them and who says he will vote for the pipeline. Our candidates say, "No I'm not vot-

ing for the pipeline." We've been working with the tribal communities. All the tribes in Nebraska have come together and endorsed candidates this year. I think it's the first time. So these public service races have become pipeline battles!

We're going to the Nebraska Supreme Court on November 1. A main issue is that the landowners on the new alternative route have not had due process. We should win that argument. That

means TransCanada will have to go back to the Public Service Commission to have the mainline alternative route approved. It's a seven-month process with public input. So we're hoping we can get one elected, and if the two we currently have remain, we'd have the three votes needed to reject the whole pipeline.

We held an event in Lincoln when the US State Department came for their "public hearing" on the environmental impact study for the mainline alternative route. It was a sham. It stifled our freedom of speech and right to be heard. I asked someone who was supposed to know something: do you want to risk polluting that aquifer? And, if there's a spill, will it be cleaned up immediately? He said, "Well, that all depends on the type of oil spill it is." In 2017, in Freeman, SD, they discovered a pinhole leak on the underside of the pipe. That tiny leak forced chemicals and sludge through the hole. It took years to surface. Had that happened on our farm, those chemicals would be in the aquifer polluting our water.

We held a press conference in the middle of the hearing room, walked out, went across the street, and wrote postcards for our candidates.

We recently held a 5th harvest of Ponca Sacred Corn, another success. This is the first time Ponca corn belongs to the Ponca Nation; we gifted them land last spring.

So there's lots going on. We're working hard to get this thing stopped—and we think we can.

Rise for Climate, Jobs and Justice march in San Francisco

By Peggy Elwell

SAN JOSE, CA — On September 8, in the largest climate march ever on the West Coast, 30,000 marchers chanted "Keep It In the Ground" and "Oil Money Out, People Power In." In this passionate display of will to save humanity and save the earth, the San Francisco marchers joined hundreds of thousands of protesters worldwide in more than 90 countries to demand action on climate change.

The Rise for Climate, Jobs and Justice March was the beginning of a packed week of protest in San Francisco surrounding the Global Climate Action Summit called by California Gov. Jerry Brown. The Summit, which was promoting market-based solutions, was forcefully challenged with civil disobedience by a thousand participants on opening day and teach-ins in the days preceding. Market measures like cap and trade, carbon offsets, and carbon taxes do not stop extraction nor cut emissions at the source.

Also that week, Gov. Brown signed SB 100, which mandates 100% renewable energy in California by 2045. Although passage of the bill is in one sense significant because California is the 5th largest economy in the world, it is too little too late and will not stem capitalism's push for growth and profits which drives the climate crisis. Brown wants to be known for his environmental legacy, yet during his term in office California approved 20,000 oil extraction permits and refused to ban fracking (from which his family personally benefits).

Indigenous peoples and other communities impacted by climate injustice were represented from all over the western United States, marching at the head of the demonstration. Fifty to eighty percent of carbon left in the ground lies on and in native peoples' lands. Casey Camp-Horinek of the Ponca Nation of Oklahoma described a toxic mix of refineries, injection wells and fracking by Phillips 66 and other fossil fuel extractors. Thirty injection

wells are leaking methane into the local tribal drinking water sources. Every single family has a member with cancer, and they have been averaging a funeral a week.* Tom Goldtooth from the Indigenous Environmental Network spoke of building a movement, north and south, of people in struggle, African American, Latino, Asians, poor white folks, labor, and small farmers.*

Impacted communities in California include those ravaged by heat, fire, and the drought as well as oil. Cesar G. Aguirre, an organizer with the Central California Environmental Justice Network, said, "People in California's Central Valley are forced to breathe some of the dirtiest air in the nation, and Kern County has the worst air in the U.S., because of toxic oil drilling. The climate crisis isn't just happening in our atmosphere, it's also happening in our bodies when we breathe this poisoned air."*

The understanding of many in the environmental movement has evolved in recent times. This



In the largest climate march ever on the West Coast, 30,000 marchers in San Francisco chanted "Keep It In the Ground" and "Oil Money Out, People Power In."

PHOTO/PEGGY ELWELL

includes:

Placing at the forefront the voice of the most impacted communities, frequently indigenous, low-income and people of color;

Addressing the question of jobs, with a just transition to employment in renewable energy;

Recognition that a capital-

ist economy with its emphasis on profit and growth cannot save our people and planet, and that a cooperative economy is necessary to make our survival our priority.

* From media interviews by Amy Goodman and Christopher Cook

Kavanaugh: Women and the fight for democracy

By Ethel Long-Scott,
Executive Director, Women's
Economic Agenda Project

Placing Judge Brett Kavanaugh on the Supreme Court shows how determined the rulers are to destroy democracy. His many previous rulings were anti-women, anti-labor, anti-environment and pro-corporate. The women and men who raised their voices to challenge him were belittled. Neither the Supreme Court nor the Senate majority are impartial or unbiased. They seem to believe that defenders of democracy, women and others marginalized have no rights they are bound to respect.

Challengers like #MeToo and #Timesup and others initially came together to stop an accused sexual predator from handing another accused predator a lifetime appointment on our highest court. Then the fight turned to supporting Kavanaugh's accuser, giving voice to how half the population suffers from male supremacy, at work, at home, in schools, everywhere. At each step they were ignored, lied to, belittled, treated with no respect. They

learned the system they were up against is rotten to the core. Women are fed up and enraged.

The corporations aim to more firmly control all three branches of our national government—executive, legislative, and judiciary. To achieve that much power, they crushed democracy by choking off a thorough investigation of the charges against Kavanaugh. Instead of being fair, many Judiciary Committee senators mocked Dr. Christine Blasey Ford and millions of #MeToo women. When other women made their grievances heard they were branded "a mob," suggesting that seeking justice is now a criminal offense.

The Kavanaugh hearing was a sham. Sexual assault survivors stood up, spoke out and took every opportunity to expose the routine lack of respect and dereliction of duty by the national government. Kavanaugh is the most recent battering ram used to further break down our democracy, in this case, by denying that rape and abuse of women and girls even happens. This is pure homegrown fascism, government officials ignoring the wishes of

the people, instead doing the bidding of corporations that value profits above people. Those protesting on behalf of survivors were defending democracy by siding with the women against the corporate dictators.

So what now? The situation, for women, workers, people of color, immigrants and the poor is growing grimmer by the moment. The billionaires running the Trump Administration wielded the tool of male supremacy as deftly as they have wielded the race and anti-immigrant cards throughout America's history to keep we-the-people at one another's throats. The rulers scramble to squeeze profits from a dying system of capitalism that is being destroyed by expanding digital production without human workers. Dying capitalism has nothing to offer the vast majority of workers but austerity, abuse, addiction, homelessness, jail, child theft, poverty, violence, privatizing public resources like water and education, and planet destruction. Smashing democracy shuts down dissent and is the rulers' way of ridding the system of excess workers.



Protest in Atlanta, GA prior to the appointment of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court. His many previous rulings were anti-women, anti-labor, anti-environment and pro-corporate.

PHOTO/JOHN RAMSPOTT

We need a political movement to right these wrongs. The survivors united to demand our government believe the women, and provide safety, economic security and human dignity. The protestors proceeded from what we have in common, regardless of dividing lines. What we have in common is a need for the cooperative ownership of the

basic necessities of life. We need a national movement to reconstruct a healing, supportive and cooperative society where all of us can thrive. Follow the example of the protesting women and move from this moment of resistance to a political movement for safety, economic security, and justice.

Why the violent acts against the people?

From the Editors

The violent acts against the people, whether by civilians or militarized police, seem to come faster and faster.

On October 24, a white man in Jeffersonstown, KY gunned down two black senior citizens at a grocery store just minutes after he tried to enter a black church. Three days later in Pittsburgh, another gunman entered the Tree of Life synagogue and killed 11 worshippers in cold blood.

Those outrages followed the arrest of a Trump supporter for the mass-mailing of pipe bombs to Trump opponents. They follow the ongoing demonization of immigrants and refugees by Trump, along with his ominous threats to have U.S. troops shoot asylum-seekers arriving at the southern border. An even longer list of victims and horrific events goes back years.

Trump's racist, aggressive statements have helped create a climate for violence, but Trump and the Republicans are not the only problem. A culture of violence and contempt for human life has been cultivated in our country for many years. This cul-

ture of violence rests on the ugly side of our country's history that includes slavery and the slaughter of the native population.

But the violence we see now is not only an extension of the past. Today, a fascist culture of hatred and division (like we saw in Nazi Germany) is being fostered to pave the way for a dictatorship. Hatred of others based on things like color, religion, or nationality is fomented. In 1930s Germany, the Nazis targeted Jews and communists, among others. In America today, the targets include Blacks, Muslims, immigrants, Jews and the homeless, among others. Denying their rights sets the stage for denying everyone's rights. Democracy is undermined, preparing the way for dictatorship.

Why is this happening? The root cause is a vast change in the U.S. and world economy. Increasingly, high-tech robots are replacing humans in economic production.

This has left millions of people permanently unemployed or working multiple jobs that don't pay enough to live on. The few powerful owners of big wealth know these millions of people will rebel and demand a moral

government and society that takes care of their needs. To protect their wealth and power, the few are building a dictatorship in order to stop the movement of the many.

Legislation to give teeth to a corporate dictatorship is already on the books. The Patriot Act of 2001 and the Freedom Act of 2015 vastly expanded the government's powers to spy on and jail without due process anyone in this country. The law also created the crime of "domestic terrorism," and defined it so that it could include political protests. And under the National Defense Authorization Act the president can order the arrest and indefinite detention without charge or trial of anyone labeled a suspected terrorist or belligerent. Both Democratic and Republican presidents have signed off on these laws.

But millions of people are saying no to the terror, no to the direction the country is heading, no to people living without clean water, housing or health-care, and no to children in cages. There is a growing movement to defend democracy and demand that government serve our needs. The antidote to the culture of fas-



[Top left, then clockwise] Maurice Stallard, veteran and GE retiree, was murdered inside Kroger's supermarket near Louisville, KY while shopping with his grandson. Vickie Jones, grandparent and VA retiree, was murdered minutes later in the parking lot. Rose Mallinger was the oldest of the 11 victims of the shooting at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. Dr. Jerry Rabinowitz died running to help others. PHOTOS/FACEBOOK

cism is the culture of unity, peace, democracy, sharing the abundance we have, and the love of

humanity. This is the true meaning of America.

Chicago at center of struggle for community control of police

By Gabriel Montero

CHICAGO, IL — Upon hearing the guilty verdict read for Chicago police officer Jason Van Dyke in the murder of Laquan McDonald, a crowd of nearly a thousand marched through the streets of downtown Chicago on October 5, both to celebrate and to continue the mass movement for police accountability in the nation's third largest city. Standing outside City Hall after the verdict was announced, Frank Chapman, Field Organizer of the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, declared: "This is the beginning of the changes we've needed in this city for a long, long time!"

On the night of October 20, 2014, Officer Van Dyke, who is white, was captured on a police dashcam video shooting repeatedly at Laquan McDonald. The 17-year-old Black youth would be shot a total of 16 times, almost all while he lay dying on the street. The circumstances of the brutal murder were covered-up, including through falsified police accounts from Van Dyke and his partners on the scene and through the suppression of the dashcam video by the State's Attorney and Mayor Emanuel's Office to ensure the mayor's re-election.

The work of activists and journalists forced the city to publicly release the video and indict Van Dyke—nearly 400 days after the shooting occurred. Van Dyke went on trial on September 5, 2018, the first white police officer in the history of Chicago charged with first-degree murder

of a Black youth while on duty. In true Chicago fashion, only one African-American citizen was selected to serve on the twelve-person jury. On October 5, 2018, Van Dyke was found guilty in a historic verdict—the last time a Chicago police officer had been found guilty of murder was nearly 50 years ago.

A coalition led by the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, Black Lives Matter Chicago, Black Youth Project 100, the Arab-American Action Network and others has been at the forefront of the movement to prosecute and convict Officer Van Dyke, including organizing Black Friday Boycotts on Michigan Avenue in 2016 and 2017, as well as mass rallies at the start of the Van Dyke trial and at City Hall the day the verdict was announced. In their unwavering demand for justice for Laquan, right through to the conviction of Van Dyke, the people in Chicago have shown their readiness to democratically transform a police accountability system that will not reform itself and instead continues to turn a blind eye to the false imprisonment and murder of Black and brown community members.

The thousand that marched after Van Dyke's historic conviction demanded community control of the Chicago police as the next step in this mass movement for police accountability, chanting "CPAC Now!" The Civilian Police Accountability Council (CPAC) ordinance, introduced into city council in 2016, would replace the unelected Police Board with



Chicagoans protest for a Civilian Police Accountability Council ordinance that would replace the unelected Police Board with an all-elected council of representatives from each police district.

PHOTO/BOB SIMPSON

an all-elected council of representatives from each police district. They will be accountable directly to the people and have the power to investigate and fire police officers. The movement for CPAC already counts on 55,000 supporters and was the dominant voice at community hearings on police accountability this past summer in Chicago. This February, during elections for city council, the movement for CPAC is expected to usher in a new wave of elected officials who understand it's time for community control of the police as the answer to ending police impunity and to creating racial justice in Chicago.

Activist calls for voting out city council members who helped cover-up



William Calloway

"You can never have healing or reconciliation without accountability. ... The city council that voted for these [out of court] settlements, they're still in office. We need them removed..."

"No city council people, no black elected officials showed up for us. It was just us. Our

generation showed up. But yet they're down in City Hall all the time voting on police settlements. ... Over half a billion dollars going out in policemen's settlements. ... All of them need to go.

"And Black Chicago, we have to make sure that all these elected officials are voted out in this coming 2019 election. ... Rahm has got to go. All the aldermen have got to go. Justice for Laquan!"

— William Calloway, an activist who successfully pressed the city to release the Chicago Police dashcam video of officer Jason Van Dyke executing Laquan McDonald.

Laquan McDonald's family says, 'Let us not become docile'

"Laquan McDonald represents all the victims that suffered what he suffered across the country. ... This [verdict] is not just a victory for the Hunter family. This is a victory for families all across the country..."

"I'm saying to you, Chicago and America, let us begin to heal. But let us not heal and become docile. Let us heal and become motivated and activated. We have a city council—an entire city council—that is up for re-election. We need to go in there and begin to make voting decisions that will put us in a position that no more of our black boys will die at the hands of unjust police officers."

— Rev. Martin Hunter, Laquan McDonald's great uncle, speaking to the media on behalf of the family after the verdict.



Rev. Martin Hunter

Millions flee deadly California fires

"California. Fires burned a football field a second... people trying to escape were burnt alive in their cars... Hundreds of people are missing. Hundreds... Think about that. Then try and wrap your head around a president of these United States. Threatening to cut off assistance. Around a president looking for someone to blame... and looking to make a profit. ... Around a president so petty, so small, so partisan. No words of sympathy for a state who voted against him. Those people burning to death in their cars. They were his enemy. An entire town ... Gone. In seconds. This was not "mismanagement." This was extreme drought and wind and climate change. This was horror. This is the future. Get used to it. Or do something to stop it. #climatechangeisreal"

—Patricia Azynski (excerpts)

"Natural disasters are not 'red' or 'blue'—they destroy regardless of party. Right now, families are in mourning, thousands have lost homes, and a quarter million Americans have been forced to flee. At this desperate time, we would encourage the president to offer support in word and deed, instead of recrimination and blame."

—California Professional Firefighters President, Brian K. Rice (excerpts)

In memory of Alexandra Maria Engel

July 23, 1998 – September 4, 2018



Alexandra Maria Engel.

It is with great sadness that the *People's Tribune* learned of the death of our beloved friend and colleague, Alexandra Maria Engel. Alex died of a drug overdose at age 20.

Alex was a journalism student in Florida when she joined the *People's Tribune* editorial board. She was 17 years old at the time. A gifted writer, photographer and artist, Alex sought to contribute her knowledge and talents to the fight for a world that cares for its people.

Alex said she chose to work with the *People's Tribune* because the paper expressed her political views. "I appreciate that the paper doesn't shy away from issues such as police brutality the way most others might," she said.

As a board member, Alex brought real-life experiences to discussions of poverty and homelessness (she was once homeless). She wrote cover stories, edited articles and encouraged her friends to contribute, too.

Alex's deep concern about the dire conditions youth in America face was expressed in a note to the editorial board: "I have to miss a

board meeting because a group of my friends are selling their blood plasma because they can't get jobs. It's sad to see how bad things have been allowed to get. I don't think things can continue the way they are without some form of change. The whole situation is just unsustainable."

Alex planned to visit the Chicago office of the *People's Tribune*, but her health prevented it. "I've been sick the last few months but recently it's gotten very bad," she wrote. "I don't think I will be able to come to Chicago and be away from my doctors. I look forward to getting back in touch with everyone and have been reading the *People's Tribunes* that come in the mail and sending them out to friends and family. I've really missed being a part of it!"

Alex wanted to live. She wanted to get off the drugs. The system killed her.

Illicit drugs in America are an estimated \$100 billion market, and this does not count the legal drugs. People in high places profit immensely from it, and so it continues. Government does little to help those who suffer its consequences.

Millions today are at risk of falling into despair, swallowed up by the enormity of the problems all around us. Even when we are able to see the systems that are at work destroying the world, it is hard not to feel overwhelmed.

And even when we see ourselves as revolutionaries, as agents of change, and can see that we can remake the world, we are still in danger. Depression can feel inescapable, addiction unavoidable.

The death of Alex Maria Engel calls us to redouble our effort to create a newspaper that helps the movement wage its fight for a new society. We dedicate this edition of the *People's Tribune* to Alex, and to all of the youth who are joining the urgent fight for a new world.

— The Editors

I Know Her from the Neighborhood

She is your mother and my mother too
I know her from the neighborhood

She phones her son through the jailhouse glass
I know her from the neighborhood

She lies awake 'til her daughters come home
I know her from the neighborhood

On the dawn bus with her bucket and broom
I know her from the neighborhood

When Grandpa forgets, she remembers him
I know her from the neighborhood

She filled a pinata with chocolate sweets
I know her from the neighborhood

When boys start punching she breaks up their fights
I know her from the neighborhood

She protests for clean water with 200 tribes
I know her from the neighborhood

She marches with us for immigrant rights
I know her from the neighborhood

She gave new boots to the man from Peru
I know her from the neighborhood

She's the crossing guard at our children's school
I know her from the neighborhood

She plants a poinsettia, red Christmas star
I know her from the neighborhood

I know her from Knock, Guadalupe and Lourdes
I know her from the neighborhood

When I leave here for the city of pearl
I hope she knows me from my written words
My promises kept, goods given away
"Jill Anne Charles!" I hope she'll say.
"I know you from the neighborhood."

— By Jill Charles



New Yorkers dressed in white participate in a silent procession on September 23 to focus the nation's attention on the callous neglect of U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico still struggling for survival in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. Participants walked from East Harlem to Trump Tower in silence. PHOTO/ERIK MCGREGOR

In aftermath of Maria, Puerto Rico faces ruin from colonialism

Editor's note: The People's Tribune spoke with Francisco Duprey, who returned recently from Puerto Rico where he has been working in transportation. He gave us a firsthand report on the situation there. It is improved but remains far from normal.

The idea that FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Administration) did a "helluva job" is not true. Francisco Duprey reports that the incompetence in delivering aid to the hard hit island nation resulted in needless death and misery for the people already suffering. He reports the NGOs, including the religious ones, did a superior job in delivering emergency supplies and service.

Even though electricity and potable water exists for 90% of the island, thousands have left and thousands in rural areas have been without it for over a year.

The people more and more understand why they, even as citizens of the richest country on earth, are subjected to such misery. It is because of the colonial status of Puerto Rico. Both the Mayor of San Juan, Carmen Yulin Cruz, and Gov. Ricardo Rossello have referred to the colonial relationship of Puerto Rico to the U.S. as a reason for continuing crisis.

Duprey notes the Jones Act as a principal long-term problem in that all imported products

to the island must be delivered by U.S. flagged ships, greatly increasing retail costs. Milk, for instance, costs \$5.75 a gallon on the island compared to an average \$2.50 on the mainland.

With a loss of population comes many problems but those are made worse by Puerto Rico's debt to investment bankers. They have forced Puerto Rico into cutting back schools and vital services so that the debts get paid, no matter who suffers.

Duprey warns that even as Puerto Rico welcomes aid from tycoons like Elon Musk who is establishing solar power stations, the people must be aware of the massive land grab going on. Real estate developers and banking interests are scooping up huge swaths of damaged coastal property, intent on turning the island over to the wealthy.

With Trump's disgraceful mockery of the tragedy which killed over 4000, we pretty much know what to expect. Privatization of the island dooms the vast majority of the Puerto Rican people. Charter schools are replacing public and the disaster of the hurricane won't be wasted by the speculators as the entire island is being auctioned off.

Only a broad-based people's movement that rejects corporate dictatorship in Puerto Rico and in the mainland U.S. will have a chance against these oppressive forces.

Why are caravans heading to the U.S.?

By Joseph Peery

Members of the caravan of migrants and asylum seekers from Central America are revealing why people are getting up and walking out of their countries, heading for the U.S. They're saying that they're starving in Guatemala. They are leaving Honduras because they have been run out of business, lost their jobs or land and seek a better life. They are leaving because there is mass violence and it is no longer safe for women or for raising children. They're coming up here because U.S. corporations have been down there wreaking havoc.

Each year, improved technologies make it possible for U.S. companies to produce more goods and services with fewer workers. How do corporations solve the problem of selling more when there are fewer buyers? They transfer that problem to Latin America by dumping their cheap, subsidized commodities on Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador tariff free, wiping out their local producers and ruining their economies. The corporate need for maximum profits stands in stark opposition to democracy and human rights. To enhance one is to diminish the other.

Corporations can sue whole governments under CAFTA, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, and recover bil-

ions of dollars in "lost profits," even if the corporations illegally stole land, polluted the environment and caused injury or death. To guarantee rulings in favor of corporations, these "Investor State Settlement Dispute" suits take place in secret tribunals hosted by the World Bank, unaccountable to any democratic institution. Thus, corporate private property rights are elevated above any rights Central Americans have to life or liberty.

If legal measures like CAFTA aren't enough, extralegal ones are used. According to a study by Global Witness, "Nowhere are you more likely to be killed for standing up to companies that grab land and trashed the environment than in Honduras." Anyone opposing corporations is assassinated or disappeared. If democratically elected governments attempt to intervene on behalf of their people, they are overthrown with a coup. Life has become so unbearable for human beings that they have no choice but to in mass get up and leave for fear of losing their lives. While human life attempting to survive encounters borders every step of the way, there are no borders that U.S. corporate profit is bound to respect.

When this caravan made up of women, children, and families reaches our southern border, will they again be in fear for their lives, met by bayonets and machine guns? Or shall we, as

Americans, remember that it is the corporations who have lowered our wages here, foreclosed on our homes, closed our schools, denied us healthcare, polluted our water, made us homeless, suppressed our votes, and backed it all up with police terror.

In case any of us have forgotten, let this caravan of humanity be our reminder that all human beings, as a birthright, must have access to the tree of life—and any corporation or corporate run government who denies that access must be replaced.



Documentary photographer Sean Hawkey, who shot these photos of women on the caravan, says, "Every woman I've spoken to has a horror story. It doesn't come out immediately, but if I speak with them for half an hour, it emerges, painfully. Kidnap, rape, even rape of their children. One woman wept as she told me that 'from the moment girls are born, men conspire to ruin their lives'. That was the reason she was escaping Honduras. All of these women have been walking for 11 days in ferocious heat, some carrying their children or pushing them in buggies. Are they criminals and gangsters?" PHOTO/SEAN T. HAWKEY

THE FIGHT FOR \$15 CONTINUES



Workers around the country, including this woman in Wisconsin, are standing up for their rights. An estimated 3.8 million people work in fast food restaurants. Even senior citizens are forced into this low wage work where the average hourly wage is around \$8. Servers at Taco Bell make an average of \$4.65. PHOTO/JOE BRUSKY

Let them drink LaCroix

By Eric Murphy

At Facebook, we have five different flavors of La Croix sparkling water, including Pamplemousse. We have four different flavors of Crystal Geysir sparkling water. We have seven different flavors of Hint water, and Watermelon Hint Fizz sparkling water. We have Spindrift sparkling grapefruit water. There's something called WTR MLN WTR—that's short for watermelon water. Then we have Purity Organic sparkling watermelon water. There's Dasani sparkling strawberry guava water. We have two flavors of something called Bubby: lime and mango sparkling water. We have Taste Nirvana Coconut water (both with and without pulp). We have coconut water with watermelon and aloe vera added. And today, we got brand new Topo Chico carbonated mineral water. Hundreds and hundreds of bottles on every floor of dozens of buildings spread throughout campus, all available for free, restocked every day.

On a different note, I can't afford health insurance through the company and have to rely on a federal government subsidy of more than \$200/month to be able to go to the doctor and dentist. These two things are probably an unrelated coincidence rather than a stark reminder that the comfort, lifestyle, and status of a small, privileged caste in this country is subsidized by everyone else.

Eric Murphy works at Facebook.

Celebrants at Rev. Pinkney's birthday pledge to fight on

From the Editors

BENTON HARBOR, MI — A spirited birthday celebration for Rev. Edward Pinkney, on October 27 in Benton Harbor, MI, drew family, friends, and activists from Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, California and even Denmark. Rev. Pinkney's daughter Latoya Williams sang for the gathering, commenting that she "loved everything about the party." Marvin Haywood thanked the reverend for his "support for the Benton Harbor community and concern for justice for those who have no voice." Dorothy Pinkney said her husband's "70th celebration was very successful with an amazing turn out."

The highlight of the evening was actress and activist Jane Fonda. "You are a brave man Rev. Pinkney" said the actress who spoke about low wage women and the One Fair Wage proposal on the ballot in Michigan, and the need to get out the vote. "It's unconscionable what they are doing to black voters across the country. They don't want you to vote. We need to get people into office that don't think that Whirlpool and Senior PGA is more important than the rights of people in Benton

Harbor," said Fonda.

Patrissa Cullors, co-founder of Black Lives Matter, said the One Fair Wage is about "who is deserving to feed their children, have shelter, and live a life of dignity." She honored the victims and survivors of the temple shootings in Pittsburg, adding that, "So many of us have to survive a government and vigilantes that see us as part of their sacrifice."

Benton Harbor resident Emma Kinard said, "It was an honor that Jane Fonda took the time out to come to a little town like Benton Harbor." Claire McClinton, after wishing Rev. Pinkney a very happy birthday, said, "Flint is the face of abandonment and man made disaster foisted upon the people, compromising our health and lives, and you, Rev Pinkney, are the face of resistance to the dismantling of democracy in this state."

"We must fight to keep legislators from choosing corporate interests over the interests of the workers," said Rev. Pinkney. "We must confront the legislators, along with the corporations who stand behind them, and keep up the fight after the elections."



PHOTOS/BRETT JELINEK, OLAFIMAGES.COM