



2020 Elections: WHAT IS AT STAKE?

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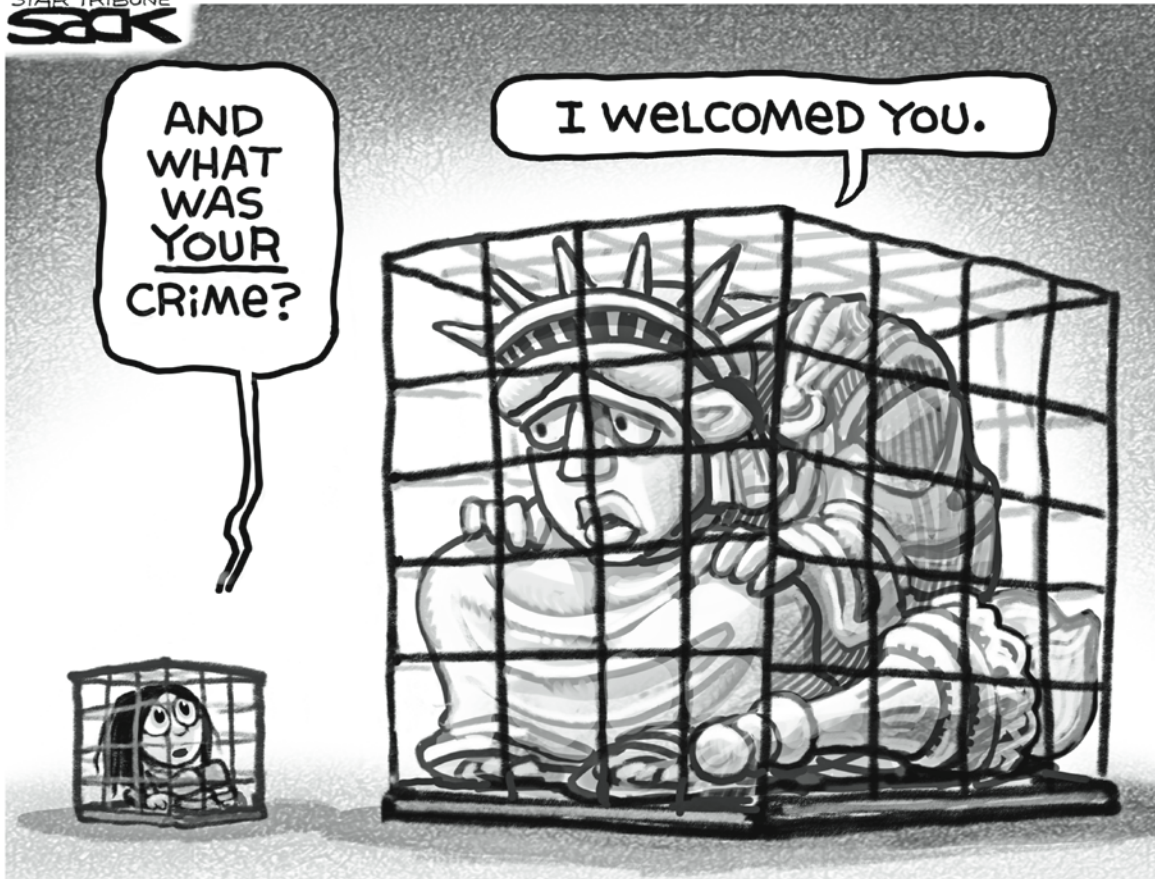
50th Anniversary of Earth Day

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Resistance mounts as Trump orders border patrol units to sanctuary cities

EDITORIAL

STAR TRIBUNE
SACK



In an action reminiscent of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, President Trump has ordered that the elite tactical ICE unit BORTAC be deployed to Sanctuary cities throughout the country during the months of February through May 2020. Because Sanctuary cities protect immigrants, subpoenas are being issued to sheriffs to protect them from repercussions for obstructing their city or state's Sanctuary policies.

Trump has also granted U.S. Customs and Border Protection special privileges of secrecy and exemptions that further exacerbate the agency's lack of transparency and its culture of abuse and impunity.

The Fugitive Slave Act required that slaves be returned to their owners, even if they were in a free state. The act also made the federal government responsible for finding, returning, and trying escaped slaves. Today's modern-day "slave catchers" are a border patrol version of SWAT paramilitary units who normally confront smugglers on the border. Deploying BORTAC to Sanctuary cities is not only a heightened assault on immigrants and a slap at all who oppose Trump; the increased militarization of our streets it represents marks a further threat to everyone's liberties.

Given the highly polarized Presidential election and the seeming imperial power Trump thinks he commands coming out of the impeachment trial, Trump has settled on a strategy which he feels will propel him to re-

election. And Trump's corporate backers know that if the people are focused on fighting each other, they won't be fighting corporate rule in America.

Putting children in cages and the ramped-up immigration raids set the conditions for the other attacks on our lives and our democratic freedoms, including suppressing the right to vote and to protest; heightened police surveillance and violence; proposed federal budget cuts that would increase suffering for millions; and threatened concentration camps for homeless people.

It won't stop with Trump's effort to abolish Sanctuary cities. Think back to what happened to the Germans, let alone the rest

of the world, when they went along with Hitler. The Nazis in Germany (also backed by large corporations) rallied one section of the German people to attack certain groups, and the result was a corporate dictatorship imposed on all of Germany. It's divide-and-conquer.

The people's growing response to the spreading poverty and destitution in the country makes the rest of us a threat to the wealthy who run the country. They must feed us or crush us, and it seems clear they don't plan to feed us.

The antidote to division is solidarity. The defense of immigrants and refugees, as of the homeless, is the defense of all

of us. We must take our country away from the corporations and billionaires if we are going to live, and our solidarity as a people is key to doing this.

That solidarity is growing under the banner of "Sanctuary for All." It is based on the notion that we, the people, are one people, one race, one humanity, regardless of color or religion or national origin, and this includes the immigrants and refugees who have come to our borders in desperate need. And that we do not separate families and lock children in cages, or treat people as if they were slaves. And that we demand and expect a government and a society that will provide for everyone's needs.

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

The *People's Tribune* is devoted to the understanding that an economic system that doesn't feed, clothe, house, or care for its people must be and will be replaced with a system that meets the needs of the people. To that end, this paper is a tribune of the people. It is the voice of millions of everyday people who are fighting to survive in an America in crisis. It helps build connections among these fighters and the awareness that together, we can create a whole new society and world.

Today, technology is permanently eliminating jobs. Our needs can only be met by building a cooperative society where we the people, not the corporations, own the technology and the abundance it produces. Then, everyone's needs will be provided for.

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.

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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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Publisher: People's Tribune
ISSN# 1081-4787

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2020 ELECTIONS: What is at stake?

COVER STORY

Across the country, outrage is driving millions of people to the polls. From New Hampshire to California, vast numbers of voters are using their ballots to send a message: We want and need a different America.

This wave of discontent includes students and seniors, men and women, and people of all ethnicities. It ranges from laid-off former industrial workers in the North to black elected officials in the South who have publicly demanded that all the can-

didates declare precisely what they will do to address the country's gravest problems. It encompasses the young people who've worked energetically for candidates pledged to protecting the environment, the families of the victims of gun violence confronting the gun manufacturers. It's pulled in teachers and health care workers who've rallied support for candidates advocating quality free public education and universal health care. It's even drawn in workers fortunate enough to have good health coverage who've gone to the polls to support candidates demanding Medicare For All precisely because they want

others to have health care too.

This movement has not just helped candidates who advocate change; it has also confronted those who oppose change. The young people in the Sunrise Movement have exposed and denounced candidates who take hush money from the fossil fuel industry while downplaying the danger of climate change. In some cases, union members have defied the instructions of their leaders and voted for progressive candidates as a matter of conscience. Across the country, voters in the primaries have emphatically rejected those presidential candidates who are notorious for having

encouraged police brutality when they were local elected officials. No matter how glib those candidates have been in debates or how many millions they've poured into advertising, the stench of the police violence they've condoned still clings to their candidacies. It can never be washed out.

This level of mass outrage is new. This election is different. Today, this system, that cares only about the profits of the few, is collapsing and we are fighting for life itself. No matter what unfolds in the next several weeks and months, this movement cannot stop. Like the Sunrise Movement, we must challenge any can-

didate who refuses to fight for our demands such as: climate justice, healthcare, housing, education, immigrant rights, social, racial and gender equality, and for a government that serves all of us, not the corporations.

We must stay on the offensive. Now isn't the time for half-measures. We will accept nothing less than the election of leaders committed to wresting control of this country from the one percent and putting it in the hands of the vast majority.

It's time to mobilize everyone for the fight at the polls, and to prepare to continue that fight even after Election Day!

Beloved America: Let us have our dreams

By Elena Herrada

DETROIT, MI — Beloved America. This is a rotting empire. Weren't many of us happy to see Obama win after the reign of Bushes? My father donated to that [Obama] campaign. It was the only political campaign he ever donated to, not even to Kennedy's. I didn't expect Revolution. But I remember seeing very elderly Black people whose lives touched slavery say that they

could die happy. Even if the whole voting scam is a complete hoax on us, we do not have another government. We do not have another country. This is all we have.

That being said, I am really happy that even the idea of Medicare-For-All is on the radar. There should never have been student debt. There should never be an opioid crisis. There should never be people in detention for seeking better lives. These are things that must be confronted.

And they are being confronted by Bernie Sanders. And people are hopeful and they vote for him because of the promises of the possibilities.

To even raise these things in public discourse is a huge step forward. This means that social media, word-of-mouth and people in the streets are more powerful than *MSNBC*, *CNN* and even *Fox News*.

Let us have our dreams. Another world is possible.



PHOTO/TED QUANT

Coronavirus: For-profit healthcare threatens lives

By Karel Riley

Now is the time for Medicare for All. On top of being threatened with illness, people who are sickened by coronavirus Covid-19 and don't have health insurance or are under insured face the prospect of getting large medical bills. How do we slow the spread of the virus with a for profit health care system when the first question is always, "Who is going to pay?" If a vaccine is developed, and if the government doesn't pay for it, many won't receive it, threatening the health of millions. And, what will happen to the millions of homeless, including many who are undocumented, and also those who have had their water shut off, when they have symptoms of the virus? Will the Trump Administration use the fear of the virus as a tool to more aggressively attack them? Will they be blamed for spreading the virus? We must demand our government take care of its people. This election is an opportunity: Elect candidates who support universal healthcare!

We already have socialism, but it's for the rich

From the Editors

Trump says America will never be a socialist country, but Bernie Sanders pointed out recently that it already is. He said the problem is, it's just socialism for the rich.

Here are just a few examples of the subsidies provided to corporations by the federal government:

- According to economist Robert Reich, in 2018, the country's largest banks saved \$21 billion thanks to Trump's tax cuts.
- The government subsidizes the pharmaceutical industry in various ways, including by covering about one-third of the \$100 billion annual cost of biomedical research, an American Medical Association study found.
- And according to Taxpayers for Common Sense, tax breaks, weak regulations and other subsidies to the oil and gas industry have added more than \$100 billion to the industry's profits over the last several decades. The industry has racked up \$2.4 trillion in profits (in 2019 dollars) since 1990.

Maybe if those on the bottom could get at least as much socialism as those on the top, we could lift everyone out of poverty. And, maybe we could take a step toward getting rid of the corporations altogether while we're at it?

The city of Los Angeles sentences you to death

Three homeless deaths a day

By General Dogon

LOS ANGELES — Homelessness is the biggest issue. They just cut the HUD budget again. Sold public housing, sold Jordan Downs, it is now mixed use, market rate housing. Public housing was originally built for returning WWII soldiers. There was a severe lack of housing and workers were needed for industry, which was producing for the world following the destruction of WWII. Things have changed.

Today there are more police in Los Angeles and the result is more people sentenced to death. There's more shelters and the results are more deaths on the street. More than 1,000 died while experiencing homelessness. That's nearly double from six years ago. More than a third were the result of being hit by a car or truck. Nearly one in four of these deaths were from traumatic injury. (L.A. County Department of Public Health).

What is the response of the Police Commission? Issue more tickets for sleeping on the street! These tickets are a barrier to end-

ing homelessness because these tickets turn into warrants.

"We're out here today with our partners across the city of Los Angeles saying 'no' to three deaths per day," Los Angeles Community Action Coalition (LACAN) spokesperson Pete White said. "We're saying the City has other options. Instead of aggressive policing, put that money into housing."

Three A Day Campaign. As a response, LACAN is proposing a campaign called *Three-a-Day*. The campaign objectives are to establish:

1. That the actual number of deaths is seven to eight folks a day.
2. Create videos that ask: "Who's next? Is it me? Is It You?"
3. Create a map of the 15 city council districts that establish where the deaths have occurred, telling the story of each, including street name, date of death and identity of the murdered individual.
4. Create a culture of resistance.

After four years of the city's measures, Proposition HHH and Measure H, where the people of Los Angeles City and L.A.



Memorial for homeless people who recently died on Skid Row in downtown Los Angeles, hosted by the organizations LACAN and Services Not Sweeps. PHOTO/PAUL FREEDMAN

County voted to tax themselves to provide several billion dollars of housing aid, only 45 housing units have been completed. Forty percent of this money is going to people who are talking about housing.

Due to a 2006 court case, *Jones vs the City of Los Angeles*, Judge Wardlaw ordered the District Court to stop enforcement of an L.A. city code allowing

police to arrest people for sleeping on the street when there are no available shelter beds. Today the police are like Nazi Storm Troopers ... everyone is suspect. They come in, attack us, killing three to four houseless residents a day. If this was a hurricane, the government would fly in emergency supplies. The city wants us to believe it's the Taliban, Al Qaeda, that is terrorizing us. It's not. It's the city

of L.A.

Together we stand, divided we fall. We say to L.A. City officials, if you can't offer us housing, get out of our encampments. This is a housing crisis. The City is on the offensive. Our Three A Day campaign is creating a culture of resistance, love of community and all human beings. Housing is a human right.

Must everyone 'earn a living?' asks futurist

"We must do away with the notion that everybody has to earn a living. It is a fact today that one in ten thousand of us can make a technological breakthrough capable of supporting all the rest. The youth of today are absolutely right in recognizing this nonsense of earning a living. We keep inventing jobs because of this false idea that everybody has to be employed at some kind of drudgery because ... he must justify his right to exist. ... The true business of people should be to go back to school and think about whatever it was they were thinking about before somebody came along and told them they had to earn a living."

— Buckminster Fuller, American architect, author, inventor, and futurist (1895-1983), in *New York Magazine*, March 30, 1970

I'm tired

he said — I'm tired, old and black
but not necessarily in that order
seen more blues than the indigo sky
and royal sea put together
but they've never got the better of me
been struck by white lightning
been beat up more than once
by the system, by daily living
by a policeman's club
been stoned by hail
and burned by the sun
done lost more time

than you ever could believe
and all that I've won
is a temporary reprieve
a moment to rest and catch my breath
before the winter's breeze
tries to steal this flimsy cardboard
that provides my only shield
covering me for one more night
as I try my best to survive
these cold and homeless streets

— Gregory Pond

Remembering Wayne Warren, unhoused vet who froze to death

CHICAGO, IL — Wayne Warren, 73, froze to death in his tent at the Roosevelt and Desplaines Tent City in Chicago, Illinois in the early morning of February 15. He was an army veteran. He is remembered below by Bonnie, a friend and fellow resident who lived in the same encampment with him. Wayne's friends have been unable to find a photo of him.

— Adam Gottlieb for the *People's Tribune*



Bonnie, a friend and fellow resident who lived in the same encampment with Wayne Warren. PHOTO/ADAM GOTTLIEB

Wayne was a beautiful person. He taught me so much about life by showing how to survive through a war, how to survive being homeless, and just how to live and love life as it is, and not be judgmental. That's who Wayne was to me, a very non-judgmental man, and very kind in opening up himself. ... Even though he passed away in such a sad way, he will always be remembered. ... He was a war hero.

They used him to shield people from bullets, but now that he's not in war, what is he now, a piece of trash? No! He was great when he was fighting for the country — Yay, America! — but now that he ain't doing nothing for "America," screw you! That's wrong. He still

was a human, he's still that same human. He may have fell down on his luck, but he still was a human, and he had a heart of gold.

We are worthy of being here. And it bothers me, because he [Wayne] felt that nobody cared. ... Two weeks before he died, his brother had died of a drug overdose ... and he was so hurt. I stood there and I prayed with him, he stood there and said, "You know what, nobody ever did that for me before."

We are human, just like you are. We're just houseless. That's it, that's all.

Make homelessness an issue during and after elections

Why with all its power and wealth doesn't the U.S. house its people? As millions of housing units stand empty, people die in the streets, and our schools are full of homeless children.

Trump threatens to round homeless people up and put them into camps. On the other hand, Bernie Sanders says "Homelessness isn't a crime, it's a symptom of the greed that is destroying America." He pledged that if elected, "We will stop the criminalization of homelessness and spend nearly \$32 billion to end it once and for all." Sanders has said there has to be a movement, that he "can't do it alone."

We must insure the movement continues after the election.

– The Editors

#LivesOverLuxury march at Democratic National Convention

By Galen Tyler

PHILADELPHIA, PA — The Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign (PPEHRC) and the Poor People's Army are organizing the #LivesOverLuxury March on the opening day of the Democratic National Convention in Milwaukee, WI, on July 13, 2020 at 4pm. This is an opportunity for your voice to be heard. If you need help joining us for the march please reach out and we would love to help you. Our website is economichumanrights.org.

Since 2000, PPEHRC has had the largest marches outside both the Democratic and Republican National Conventions each election year. This year, at a time so crucial for the future of humanity and the planet, PPEHRC will amass the largest Poor People's Army this country has ever seen outside the DNC to take back the 67 cents of every government dollar spent on war and occupation, to end poverty and all forms of violence at home and abroad.

PPEHRC is dedicated to organizing and educating around issues of education, food justice, health care, student debt, community and police violence, climate crises, lack of living wage jobs, and homelessness. We believe that money should be put toward America's people here at home and be used for these issues.

PPEHRC is dedicated to building a movement that unites the poor across color lines. Poverty afflicts people of all colors. Everyday more and more people are downsized and impoverished. Millions of Americans are in poverty, and millions more working and middle-class people are just paychecks away or medical bankruptcies away from homelessness and poverty. This is not a new kind of organization, rather it is a nonviolent army of the poor, similar to peasant armies in other parts of the world. With the world's press and attention on the theatrics at the Democratic and Republican conventions, the Poor People's Army will put poor people front and center in a historic march that will demand a different kind of world where the world's resources are protected and used to meet the basic needs of all people.

The global elite have deprived the masses of a living wage, access to stable housing, healthy food, and quality healthcare. We are at a tipping point. Millions are cast out of their communities, discon-



July 12: National civil disobedience or witness trainings and Poor People's Army signup. July 13: March on the DNC at 4pm. POSTER/ANDY WILLIS

nected from one another and social institutions. With so many adrift in media noise, drugs, and violence it is vital that we focus, organize, and begin to restore authentic connections and systems of mutual aid to prepare for what is to come.

This future is not preordained; it can and will be contested. We will fight inhumanity with relationships. Our clarity is an antidote for corporate propaganda. Together we will channel our creativity and expose these sickening schemes while making provisions to care for one another with shared resources.

Because we know you know the seriousness of all this, we are asking for your assistance. We intend to go to Milwaukee, WI, July 13, 2020, and demand that both political parties begin to prioritize #LivesOverLuxury. We are #coming2getour-67cents of every tax dollar that is spent on war and occupation, to put towards the poor, the planet, and to preserve humanity.

'Never Quit!' R.I.P. Mike Zint, homeless rights warrior and visionary

Mike Zint, longtime homeless activist, died at age 53 on Valentine's Day, 2020, from severe lung disease and pneumonia. After some years of homelessness, he found his mission and passion organizing in the movement for homeless rights and self-reliance in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. He wrote frequently for the *People's Tribune*, and was widely respected and loved in the tent communities he organized, in various actions he strategized, and far beyond.



Mike Zint. PHOTO/JAMES CARTMILL

For more about this visionary leader, see "Latest News" on the *Peoples Tribune's* website. Below are two of his latest writings, the bottom one the last thing he wrote.

– Sarah Menefee, co-founder with Mike Zint of 'First they came for the homeless'

Family

Winter is here. So is the cold and the rain. I shared 13 winters with my homeless family. 13 rainy seasons. Each year there were less of us, and more of us. The familiar faces were replaced by new faces with the same story. Nothing is changing quickly.

We are dying. This is known by everyone who is homeless, and by everyone who helps the homeless. This year, I'm thankful to have met all those people who are no longer living. You all live on in every action this group takes. Every victory we enjoy is because the fallen motivated us to fight for the falling. Never quit. I know we can change things because we have. Thank you, family.

The richest stand on the backs of the poorest. When the poorest can no longer support them, the rich fall.

Money cannot buy intelligence.

– Mike Zint

Donate to the People's Tribune!

On these pages we continue our monthly coverage of voices of, by, and for the homeless. Today, so many in this nation of plenty face rising poverty, evictions, and homelessness.

Donate to a revolutionary paper that helps bring our movement for a new America together, at peopletribune.org or send to People's Tribune, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524.

Vote like your life depends on it

By Amara Kassam and Larissa Campaña

OAKLAND, CA — On February 25, the Laney College Teach-In on “The Power Of Your Vote” sought to inform an audience of around 250 students of serious threats to our democracy. We featured key speakers such as Moms 4 Housing, Oakland Public Education Network and other advocates for housing, education and voters’ rights.

We began our Teach-In with a reminder that the foundation of American capitalism was built on and by black slave laborers. As Ethel Long-Scott, activist and leader at the Laney chapter of the Poor People’s Campaign stated, “As the billionaire class accumulates more and more wealth, more working people fall into insecurity, poverty, and homelessness.”

As the concerns against capitalism start to spark national interest in the American public,

we must ask why the only appropriate time for democratic socialist policy seems to be when big banks and big money need bailouts, and not every-day working people.

Looking forward to the 2020 elections, we must be wary of the disinformation that will plague our fair election process. A common strategy for illiberal leaders globally is not to shut down voices of dissent, but to drown them out entirely. This is called censorship through noise, and with the constant flurry of meaningless headlines meant to distract from the drastic violations of human rights.

While hundreds of thousands of people go unhoused, and big corporations sit on hundreds of

thousands of square feet of empty housing, our media is turned to clickbait headlines about the president’s tweets.

Our Teach-In aimed to do more than just inform people about the problems facing our democracy. It was aimed to empower a younger generation of students to have their voices heard through their votes. Disinformation is used to suppress our votes and control political dissent.

The best way to combat these threats to our democracy is with protest, education, and with our votes.

Editor’s note: The writers are members of the Laney College Chapter of the Poor People’s Campaign, and sponsors of the event.

[Above right] Prof. Kimberly King, Moms4Housing leaders Misty Cross and Dominique Walker, and Ethel Long-Scott of Laney Poor People’s Campaign, address the teach-in. [Right] Laney College student Amara Kassam (R) presented at the teach-in on “The Billion Dollar Disinformation Campaign to Reelect the President.” PHOTOS/AUSTIN LONG-SCOTT



Voter suppression demands defense of voting rights

By Rita Valenti

ATLANTA, GA — We head into election season with a complex and multilayered shroud of voter suppression engulfing the country. Once concentrated primarily in Southern states, vote suppression is now becoming widespread. The gutting of the Voting Rights Act in 2013 is a political response to an increasingly restive working class seeking relief from economic and social turmoil.

Georgia’s midterm gubernatorial election in 2018 brought voter suppression center stage. Brian Kemp, then secretary of state, oversaw his own gubernatorial election while running against Stacy Abrams, a black woman and former Georgia state representative with a real possibility of winning.

Kemp employed a myriad of tactics to suppress the black and Latinx vote. “Exact match” was used to withhold 58,000 newly registered voters from the rolls for even minor discrepancies with state databases like misplaced hyphens or spelling. “Use it or lose it” was employed in July of 2017 to purge 534,000 voters from the rolls for not voting or

contacting election offices from 2012-2015, the largest single voter purge in U.S. history. Additionally, 214 voting polls were closed and another 40% were relocated. These actions and other acts were proven to result in culling voters especially in Georgia’s rural Black Belt. In Texas, 750 polling places have closed since 2012, largely in the Black and Latinx communities. Many Super Tuesday voters stood in long lines to vote in Texas, some waiting seven hours.

Nationally, 1,688 voting polls have been closed. The Brennan Center for Justice reported that almost 16 million voters were purged from the rolls between 2014 and 2016, a 33% increase from previous removals.

No doubt many were dropped from the rolls for reasons such as change of address or death, but the Center also found that, “in the past five years, four states have engaged in illegal purges and another four states have implemented unlawful purge rules.” Not only states that were previously covered by the now struck-down preclearance provision of the Voting Rights Act, but also other states have been emboldened and are engaged in aggressive, faulty purges. The Supreme



Court recently ruled in an Ohio case that the federal courts could not interfere with state lawmakers who draw political maps to entrench partisan advantage! Wisconsin, site of this year’s Democratic Party Convention, had passed a strict voter ID law before the 2016 election that resulted in a correlation between lower vote turn-out in counties with higher populations of people of color.

It is no accident that voting rights are under assault. With wages falling and jobs disappearing because of technology, the powerful can’t allow the rest

of us to have a say in what goes on. Defense of voting rights is a part of the social motion that’s moving on the offensive for distribution of housing and health-



A voting advocate in New Orleans. PHOTO/TED QUANT

care, public education, food, and climate justice based on human necessity and not the corporate ownership of wealth.

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Chicago primary election March 17: What's at stake?

By Lew Rosenbaum

CHICAGO, IL — The March 17, 2020 Illinois presidential primary election promises to be a close one. Bernie Sanders' support reflects a grassroots dissatisfaction with same-old non-solutions. An enthusiastic crowd of thousands at a March 7 Chicago rally cheered as Sanders addressed the fight for basic survival needs like health care, housing, and poverty and attacked the influence of big donors. Significant down-ballot races exhibit the same characteristics.

Overshadowing all local Chicago elections in this primary season is the campaign for Cook County State's Attorney. In 2016, Kim Foxx ousted incumbent Anita Alvarez in the primary. Alvarez colluded in covering up the horrific killing of Laquan McDonald, along with other police murders. Spurred by Black Lives Matter and police accountability activists, Foxx won. She was immediately targeted by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) for attempts to reform cash bail and support for a consent decree restraining the police. Her main opponent this year, Bill Conway, is supported by the FOP and has a war chest of over \$5 million, mostly contributed from his billionaire father. At stake in this campaign is the mass incarceration of people for months without coming to trial.

In another high-profile race,

Marie Newman is challenging incumbent Rep. Dan Lipinski. Lipinski "inherited" his seat from his father in 2004. He is prominent among Democrats in opposing abortion rights, and he is the only Illinois House Democrat to vote against the Affordable Care Act. Newman, who came close to beating Lipinski in 2018, has endorsed Medicare for All. Lipinski has said that the Democratic Party should be a "big tent" to encompass all views. As New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has pointed out, some of these views are so antagonistic, they cannot exist in the same party.

Teacher Anthony Clark, running on a program of healthcare and housing as a right, is challenging "old guard" incumbent Rep. Danny Davis, who has endorsed Joe Biden in the presidential primary. Clark, running against Davis for the second time, has said (*Chicago Tribune*): "I know the issues plaguing my district are deeply rooted and systemic, and must be addressed at a national level." Also running against Davis is Kina Collins, who favors single-payer, Medicare for All, and a Green New Deal.

Working class people are demanding an end to bankruptcy-by-illness; people are declaring that housing is a right, so the practicality of socialism is under review. The "Big Tent" cannot for much longer contain both advocates and foes of corporate rule.



Stacy Davis Gates, vice president of the Chicago Teachers Union, addresses thousands gathered in Chicago to see Bernie Sanders speak. PHOTO/SARAH JANE RHEE

After Super Tuesday: The battle for a new society marches on

By People's Tribune contributors

Super Tuesday results have created what will now be a seesaw battle for the Democratic nomination for president. The Bernie Sanders campaign has given a voice to people left out of the economy by automation, especially the young, who are disproportionately facing housing and food insecurity, burdened with debt, and preyed upon by police violence. They are marginalized and enraged. Their demand that the government meet their basic needs is powering the Sanders surge. They hold the power to transform society, and are leading the battle for democracy and against corporate dictatorship in the country as a whole.

Sanders has repeatedly

said that his campaign is not about him, but the "multi-generational, multi-racial coalition" that is building the movement. Each one of your votes, your words, and your actions will impact the narrative and the outcome of not only the election, but everything we are fighting for. Sanders can win only if he holds the majority of pledged delegates sent to the Convention. The Democratic super-delegates have already said they will steal it from him if they can. The bigger the victories in remaining primaries, the greater the chance of a Sanders nomination.

Your vote is necessary but not sufficient. The entire American system of democratic elections—which has always been marred by Jim Crow—is now in danger of being shredded

altogether by voter suppression and wholesale disinformation. Trump and the pro-corporate Democratic candidates have vowed that "America will never be a socialist country".

What they mean by that is not some label that Bernie Sanders calls himself. They intend to stop by any means necessary the Sanders program: improved and expanded Medicare for All, decent housing, decent education without debt, meaningful work, a path to citizenship for all, an end to mass incarceration, and a Green New Deal.

The abundance created by modern technology makes all these things easily possible and practical. But to get them we have to expand our movement, educate ourselves, and continue fighting for political power both before and after the elections.

Insurance is not healthcare: Remove profiteering from the system

Editor's note: The following are excerpts from a speech by Maureen Cruise, RN, Director, Health Care for All, (L.A.) at the California Progressive Alliance in Berkeley in January.

Our current dysfunctional health insurance system is not just broken—it is destructive, dangerous and deadly.

Insurance is not health care. It is a predatory business of exploitation and extraction of profit, siphoning our money away from delivery of our care. The primary beneficiary is Wall Street. This is disaster capitalism in its most successful disguise.

The U.S. is #1 in preventable deaths, 47th in the world for quality and access, 76th in maternal health. Life expectancy is diminishing. Deep disparities are systemic. People go without necessary treatments and lifesaving medicines due to cost. Over 50% of Go-Fund-Me pleas are people begging



RN Maureen Cruise [right] speaks about the need to eliminate the profit motive from health care. She appears here with her fellow advocates in Health Care for All, L.A.

PHOTO/HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

strangers for money online, so they don't die.

Single payer health care for all now is the only real solution. We have serious opposition. We know our obvious opposition are insurance, hospitals, Pharma, medical device corporations and the banks, real estate, credit and debt industries.

But our most insidious and effective opponents are our false friends, funded by corporate donations to undermine real reform.

Money to obstruct single payer efforts flows to foundations, universities, non-profits, think tanks, media, government commissions, research institutes and of course to political parties and politicians. Front groups tasked with maintaining the status quo of profit extraction, confuse the public and divert our advocacy away from single payer. We are awash in these groups. Foundations funded by Wall Street industries award grants to doctor organizations, nurse groups, ethnic identities groups, social justice non-profits, anti-poverty champions claiming to be with us. Single payer may be on their website ... but these groups sabotage it with strategies of disinformation, delay and diversion.

Posing as "compassionate" and "ethical"

allies, they are subtle critics seeking to control the narrative with "concerns." "We need more details! Isn't this too complicated? Is this too massive a shift? People really like their insurance! How will we ever pay for it? We cannot do this all at once." Conceding power to the status quo, they avoid a genuine examination of solutions. The financial benefits of single payer are disappeared from the conversation as if they don't exist.

Our current situation is an emergency. We must remove insurance. We must eliminate the profit motive. Every dime should be spent on our needs. Legislation is the first step, not the end of a convoluted road map. The elements necessary for a successful system are based on establishing health care as a human right: for all lives to be valued and protected equally.

#1. The insurance industry must be eliminated. Remove profiteering from the system.

Wet'suwet'en's decade of pipeline resistance escalates

By Diana Berek

A decade-long battle between the Wet'suwet'en First Nation and a company planning to build a natural gas pipeline through their territory in British Columbia (B.C.) exploded in early February with cross-country protests. More than 150 freight trains have been halted. Protestors' blockades in Ontario and northwestern B.C. caused over 160 passenger train cancellations affecting 25,000 passengers on routes between Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa. By Feb. 7, 2020, Indigenous solidarity groups and environmental groups were blocking west coast ports and rail lines, and marching in massive demonstrations across Canada and the U.S.

Underlying this conflict is a dispute over sovereignty. The Wet'suwet'en have never ceded or surrendered their ancestral land. Since 2010, the hereditary chiefs have said they will not allow a pipeline through Wet'suwet'en territory, even if that means

opposing the B.C. Supreme Court.

The first injunction sought by Coastal GasLink (CGL) was a temporary injunction against a blockade mounted by the Wet'suwet'en's Unistot'en Camp. On Jan. 7, 2019, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) moved in heavily armed officers and arrested 14, including elders and a hereditary chief. This ignited protests by a broad network of Indigenous youth throughout 2019.

The second B.C. Supreme Court injunction was granted December 31, 2019. "Canadian Courts do not have any jurisdiction on Wet'suwet'en Territory. The Wet'suwet'en chiefs have full jurisdiction. We have for thousands of years since time immemorial. We have never ceded or surrendered that jurisdiction," said Molly Wickam, Gidmit'en clan.

The RCMP again invaded Wet'suwet'en territory on Feb. 6, 2020. Videos of snipers armed with AR-15s pointed at the

Wet'suwet'en, helicopter surveillance, and the arrest of 28 Wet'suwet'en Land Protectors went viral, galvanizing climate activists to join with other First Nations supporters.

The Tyendinaga Mohawk Nation (Ontario) immediately set up an encampment of Land Protectors in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en. The encampment is where the railroad passes through sovereign Tyendinaga Territory. CN Rail immediately sought an injunction which the Tyendinaga said was based on false claims of trespass and rail line obstruction. The Tyendinaga insisted their encampment is on their own land and there was no physical interference or obstruction of the railway tracks. Mohawk organizer Kanenhariyo said they would not end their protest until the RCMP leave Wet'suwet'en Territory. By the Feb. 23 midnight injunction deadline, with the Wet'suwet'en still being patrolled by RCMP, the Tyendinaga would not de-camp. The Ontario Provisional Police



Wet'suwet'en Solidarity march, Toronto, Ontario on Feb. 22, 2020.

PHOTO/@JASONHARGROVE

(OPP) moved in and violently arrested six Tyendinaga Land Protectors. Within two hours, the Kanehsatake Mohawk People (Montreal) mounted a slow moving traffic jam at the Mercier Bridge to demonstrate their solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en and the Tyendinaga.

Indigenous Land defenders and non-Indigenous support-

ers have linked this ongoing crisis to 150 years of colonial and capitalist villainy resulting in the crisis of climate change. Smogelgem, head of the Likhts'amisyu clan of the Wet'suwet'en, said this has been a long time coming. "This has already become a global movement to reclaim our planet, and reclaim it so it does not kill us. Because it will."

Dangerous anti-protest bill in WV legislature



This photo is of the 2017 Hands Across the Potomac protest on a bridge between West Virginia and Maryland against a fracked gas pipeline that would cross the Potomac River, and the Rockwell plant the pipeline would serve.

A dangerous anti-protest bill, HB 4615 passed the WV House in mid-February and was scheduled for a Senate committee hearing March 4. The bill would make pipeline and industrial site protests illegal. Activists were able to get amendments to the bill taking out some penalties that would lead to imprisonment, but the bill, not yet signed by the governor, is still dangerous.

"Silencing those of us who are trying to protect our water and air and to preserve our quality of life for the future is not in anyone's best interest," said Mary Matlage at the hearing.

"They want a cancer alley on the Ohio River because they're aware Cancer (Death) Alley along the Mississippi River could be underwater in some years. So it would be a Death Alley 2," said Tracy Cannon who led a coalition of citizens against the Mountaineer gas pipeline that cuts through the Eastern Panhandle.

A Facebook post on the Appalachians Against Pipelines page states, "When the permitting agencies are in the pockets of industry, and the laws are written by the industry, sometimes the only effective way to protect our homes is to put our bodies on the line. This very dangerous bill needs to be stopped."

PHOTO/ANNE MEADOR

Oil drilling in Apalachicola Bay will be catastrophic

Editor's note: April 20 marks the tenth anniversary of the BP Horizon oil rig disaster which dumped millions of barrels of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico leaving death and devastation along the coastal communities, including Florida. Sources at the National Institutes of Health estimated that 170,000 residents would die of spill-related illnesses by 2022. Trisha Springstead, a nurse residing on the Apalachicola Bay in Panacea, FL, who works with residents affected with these illnesses, and featured in the documentary "The Cost of Silence," says thousands have already died and many more are sick and dying. Trisha and others affected by the contamination are now speaking out about the planned drilling of Apalachicola Bay off the Florida coast. They are appealing to Florida Governor Desantis, who touts himself as the environment governor and stopped drilling in the Everglades only to allow a Texas oil company to drill exploratory wells in the Florida panhandle.

Dear Editor:

I have spent the last nine years of my 40-year career in health care working with the people who are suffering from the impacts of the Deep water horizon Oil Disaster.

As of this writing, tens of thousands of people have been impacted by the use of chemical dispersants and oil from the Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill in 2010. The use of those dispersants made the oil 52 times more toxic and more bio available to the human body. What we are still seeing are horrific lesions, neurological damage, respiratory illnesses, adult childhood, soft tissue and blood borne cancers.

The soon to be released movie, "The Cost of Silence" by Mark Manning, director and producer of "Road to Fallujah," has just premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in Utah. This film validates what



Trisha Springstead, RN.

I am saying about these illnesses. BP hired paramilitary groups to patrol the beaches, threatening people with jail, trolled people who were impacted on Facebook; paid off the press, have denied that these illnesses existed with the massive PR campaigns by Olgivy and Mather Public relations firm. BP paid some claims and not others turning brother against brother even though all they were all equally affected.

Corexit [a dispersant] continues to be on the National Contingency Spill Plan along with Corraling Oil and in situ burning. When the spill occurs in Apalachicola Bay it will create an unmitigated disaster on the entire estuary, her inhabitants and our residents.

Governor DeSantis and the Legislature must stop this recklessness and pervasive experiment on humans, fish and wildlife.

Sincerely,

Trisha R Springstead RN

View this short film for more information on Trisha's Second Wind Project documenting the ill health of Gulf residents in the fight for justice at <http://bit.ly/2windvideo/> Contact Trisha on Facebook at [fb.com/TheSecondWindProject](https://www.facebook.com/TheSecondWindProject); by email at 2ndwindproject@gmail.com; or call 352-212-2217.

'Make Earth Day the biggest climate strike in U.S. history,' says Sunrise Movement



On these pages are stories of the fight to save our Earth from the scourge of dirty fossil fuel corporations and secure clean water as a human right for millions of people.

March 22 is World Water Day, and we remember the words of a Flint water warrior who said, "We need to get J.P. Morgan, Chase Bank, Veolia and Wall Street out of our water, along with the toxins." And, on April 22 we need a huge showing at the 50th anniversary of the original Earth Day, says the youth-led Sunrise movement. "The movement for the Green New Deal doesn't start,

The Sunrise climate movement goes after candidates who don't support the Green New Deal.

PHOTO/SUNRISE MOVEMENT

or stop, at the ballot box . . . we are going to show the politicians in power that we are not letting up by making this Earth Day the biggest climate strike in U.S. history!"

Corporations have trillions of dollars to buy elections and influence politicians to implement laws in their favor, to guarantee their profits and power, and to divide the world among themselves. We, the people, are fighting to forge unity around our survival and for a government that uses our vast resources to take care of the Earth and its inhabitants.

We need to take the power away from these giant corporations that control our lives and destroy the planet for profit.

— The Editors

"We've got to bring China and Russia and Brazil and Pakistan and India and every major country on Earth into the fight against climate change, and here is my dream—maybe it's a radical dream, but maybe just maybe, given the crisis of climate change, the world can understand that instead of spending \$1.8 trillion a year collectively on weapons of destruction designed to kill each other, maybe we pool our resources and fight our common enemy, which is climate change."

— Bernie Sanders



PHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Save our Students County negligence of special needs Flint kids draws fire

By Flint, MI correspondents

FLINT, MI — For the past several months, parents and community activists, including pastors, have packed the Genesee County Intermediate School District (GISD) meetings demanding equal funds for special education students in Flint.

Special Education needs skyrocketed since the Flint water disaster which began in 2014. Exposure to lead and other toxins resulted in negative education and behavioral outcomes. Last year, only 10% of 3rd graders in Flint passed the statewide reading test, a whopping 56% decrease since the crisis began.

A county millage passed some 20 years ago still uses a formula that now ignores the impact of the Flint disaster on Flint kids. "You are fueling the school to prison pipeline," charged one advocate at the school district meeting. And, "maintaining a system of educational gerrymandering," said another during public comments. The growing community outrage has prompted the Flint Community School Superintendent Dr. Derrick Lopez to file a complaint challenging the formula with the state of Michigan. The hearing is scheduled for April 14 of this year.

Many residents believe the GISD board's negligence is a path to the outright destruction of Flint public schools through regionalization and/or privatization. Conversely, the fight for a fair special education formula is a step toward saving Flint's public education system altogether. The struggle continues.

Water shutoffs are public health crisis

Editor's note: As we go to press, Michigan Gov. Whitmer has declared a moratorium on shutoffs and will restore water service in response to Covid-19. This article is from a press release issued earlier by the People's Water Board and from an interview with Sylvia Orduño at NBC25 News. Contact Kim Hunter at kim@engagemichigan.org or 313-287-2992.

Hundreds of thousands of people in low-income families across Michigan have borne the brunt of the record rise in the cost of water services and the unaffordable water bills that have resulted from that rise. The unconscionable act of depriving anyone of water because the cost is more than they can afford has resulted in a health crisis, that, with the advent of coronavirus, has the serious potential to be magnified and spread due to thousands not having access to water.

The ultimate solution is to implement income-based water bills based on the Water Affordability Plan. The immediate, short term solution must be a moratorium on water shutoffs and the immediate restoration of service where it's been disconnected.

Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued a statement to the effect that water service is not a necessity in preventing illness. Yet the number one effective preventive is frequent hand washing according to the Centers for Disease Control.



U.S. Rep. Rashida Tlaib joins the global youth climate strike in Detroit.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

This has prompted the People's Water Board along, with nearly 40 organizations or individuals, to demand Gov. Gretchen Whitmer use her executive power to end water shut offs. The organization has said access to water is a human right, and Sylvia Orduño, organizer for Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, said it is a matter of public health.

"When we don't recognize how the impacts affect all of us, then this is really when we're all at risk for experiencing all kinds of problems when people don't have water to properly wash," she said.

Those shutoff from water are

more likely to be infants or children, elders, and/or people living with chronic illness—the same factors that predispose people to a more serious course of illness or death if they catch the virus.

"What's been happening across Detroit and Flint in particular, and lots of other cities is that the rates are outpacing what people's incomes are, especially when they have to pay for so many other bills." Orduño said if local and states governments do not resolve the matter of water shut offs, there may be a need for federal action.

DACA in the Supreme Court: The impact on undocumented youth

Editor's note: Below are excerpts from a longer article from the Tribuna del Pueblo. See the full version at <http://bit.ly/DACAsupremecourt>.

By Ada Marys Lorenzana

Trump's decision to rescind DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) has left recipients of the program questioning their future in the country more than ever. For many, the program opened doors to new opportunities ... and the feeling of belonging...

Now the debate over the legality of the program has finally made its way to the Supreme Court. Families, employers, universities and various organizations all rely on DACA's existence and that just might be what saves the program.

When DACA was implemented in 2012, Luis was one of the first people eligible to apply. He started working as a dishwasher. ... Today, he is a sous-

chef in one of Chicago's best restaurants. The possible termination of DACA threatens his career and puts his family in financial risk.

Prior to DACA, finding a job with a stable income was not accessible to undocumented immigrants. For many, it still isn't. Armando, however, was hired as a UPS driver and has since been able to maintain a job with great pay and benefits. ... DACA was [also] able to create a sense of belonging for him. Growing up undocumented meant fearing his parents might be taken away in a police encounter.

Karen, a recent college transfer student, spoke of feeling disheartened because of her status. After years of studying, working, and training, Karen was finally able to secure a scholarship to attend a four-year university. Now ... she worries if her degree will even be worth anything after graduation.

Why is the government doing this? It is cruel to give hope to more than 700,000 people only

to later threaten them with losing everything. DACA recipients are worthy of a pathway to citizenship ... because of their humanity. They are our neighbors and part of our communities. [And] they are only a micro group in the population of immigrants. Parents of DACA recipients, youth ineligible for DACA, and undocumented immigrants of all backgrounds are all worthy of living fearlessly.

In choosing to not pass a comprehensive immigration reform, politicians have shown that they do not care that the lives of millions remain uncertain. The Trump administration has used undocumented youth as a bargaining chip, but they are not the first administration to keep undocumented immigrants waiting for a stable future.

Immigration reform is long overdue and until something permanent happens, individuals like Luis, Armando, and Karen will continue to live by deadlines and uncertainty.



Immigrant rights protest, Detroit, MI. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

Solidarity as UCSC fires students on wildcat strike for living wage

Editor's note: The People's Tribune's Sandy Reid interviewed Yulia Gilchinskaya, an organizer of the wildcat strike of grad student employees at UCSC for a COLA increase to afford Santa Cruz rents averaging \$2,600 a month for one-bedroom apartments. Up to 80 students have been fired or sanctioned; international students could face deportation. But the strike continues and support is growing across the UC system, nationally and even abroad. Meanwhile, 500 UCSC students have pledged not to accept jobs made available by the dismissals. See full interview at bit.ly/UCSCstudentstrike

"In the past five years, rents went up in Santa Cruz over 50%. We are asking for an increase in our wages so we don't pay more than 30% in rent. We found that a lot of students are or have been homeless. Some live in substandard housing infested with rats, mold. Most of us are one crisis, one paycheck away from being homeless. So, we came up with the amount of \$1412 a month increase and grad students all responded with, 'Yes! Why continue to provide labor for an employer who doesn't provide a



Graduate student employees at the UCSC are on a wildcat strike for a cost of living wage increase so that they can afford housing in this high-rent community. PHOTO/@PAYUSOREUCSC

living wage?"

"So, on December 8, we went on strike and since then we are withholding thousands of fall grades. The chancellor offered a \$2,500 a year needs-based housing supplement, a fraction of what we asked for, and only to some grad students. As of Feb 10, we have been on a full strike. We are withholding our teaching and research labor until we get the COLA increase we demand.

"On the first day [of our blocking entrances to the university] I saw with my own eyes the police being very violent. Several people have bruises on their chest and stomach as a result. On day

2, we had a standoff with police in riot gear. On day 3, police arrested 17 people, using pain compliance techniques. That was heartbreaking and really intense. The university employs police forces from out of town, paying \$300,000 a day for that.

"Support is incredible. We are building community. ... Students are beginning to imagine a different university, one that is not abusive to us, that doesn't see them as a source of capital, that sees them as individuals and human beings and invested in their learning and well-being. I would hope that this campaign is part of a broader movement and will continue to grow."

Assault on immigrants: 'What are we becoming as a country?'

Editor's note: Outrage continues to grow at the cruel separation of children, even infants, from parents at the U.S. border, and now, at Trump's policy to deploy elite tactical ICE units to sanctuary cities to round up immigrants. Below are comments left on



PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY

media that illustrate broader awareness of what this assault means for immigrants, and for all of us. We want to hear your thoughts. Leave comments on our website at peopletribune.org

"The child separation policy is a stain on this country that will resonate for a generation or more. It's truly hard to conceive of what type of people it takes to separate [a] 4-month old [baby] from his parents. While we rightfully blame Trump and his lackeys, let's also place bipartisan blame on Congress who have never had the courage to pass comprehensive immigration reform."

"Good grief. Now he's going to use the military in our cities. Are these tactical units really prepared to shoot down unarmed immigrants ... who are trying to cross the border? ... And what of American citizens? Are we next?"

"What are we becoming as a country?"

"Three years ago, I would have dismissed the [above comments] as ... overly alarming. Now, not so much: Are we witnessing the birth of a Schutzstaffel (SS)-kind [of] organization? one that would grow from a narrow mission (border patrol) into one tasked with guaranteeing "security," performing surveillance and instilling terror among ever larger sections of the population? in order to keep everyone in check? That could happen here, and it's our duty to prevent it. Vote for Democracy in November!"

Women's suffrage: 100 years on and the struggle continues

Editor's note: The year 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of women winning the right to vote, one of the greatest political battles in United States history. To commemorate that victory, the People's Tribune will be printing articles this year about different aspects of the movement of women workers for equality that continued through the 1965 Voting Rights Act to today. Send your articles to info@peopletribune.org.



Some of the millions who have attended the U.S. Women's Marches. Women are leaders in the struggle for a better world. PHOTOS/CATHERINE OTTARSON [LEFT] AND DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM [RIGHT]



In honor of the 100th anniversary, the Smithsonian opens a major exhibition on the history of women's suffrage: "Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence." The exhibition introduces us to more than 60 suffragists. On view will be portraits of the movement's pioneers, notably Susan B. Anthony and abolitionist Sojourner Truth, and 1848 Seneca Falls participants, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucy Stone.

As it delves into the complexity of the movement, the exhibit pays special attention to African-American suffragists and other women of color who worked on all fronts of the movement, but who were excluded from many leading suffrage organizations. What follows

are excerpts of a conversation between Kate Clarke Lemay, historian and curator of the exhibit, and Martha S. Jones, historian and author.

Kate Clarke Lemay: When you think of African-American women activists, many people know about Rosa Parks or Ida B. Wells. But I didn't know about Sarah Remond, a free African-American who in 1853 was forcibly ejected from her seat at the opera in Boston. She

was an abolitionist and was used to fighting for citizenship rights. When she was ejected, she sued and was awarded \$500. ... I was really moved by her courage and her activism, which didn't stop—it just kept growing.

Martha S. Jones: Visitors are re-introduced to a figure like Sojourner Truth. ... Here, we have the opportunity to situate her as a historical figure rather than a mythical figure

and set her alongside peers like Lucy Stone, [an early advocate of anti-slavery and women's rights] who we more ordinarily associate with the history of women's suffrage. For example, in a Sojourner Truth portrait taken in 1870, she made sure to be portrayed as someone who wasn't formerly enslaved. Being portrayed as such would have garnered her much more profit as the image would have been considered a more "collectible" item. Instead,

she manifested dignity in the way that she dressed and posed. ... She insisted on portraying herself as a free woman.

Lemay: All of the suffragists showed persistence, but two that come to mind are Zitkála-Šá and Susette LaFlesche Tibbles—both remarkable Native-American women leaders. Their activism for voting rights ultimately helped to achieve the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, which granted citizenship to all Native-Americans born in the U.S. But their legacy stretched well beyond. ... Some states excluded Native-Americans from voting rights through the early 1960s, and even today, North Dakota disenfranchises Native-Americans by insisting that they have a physical address rather than a P.O. box. More than a century ago, these two women started a movement that remains essential.

Today, women continue to use the vote as a weapon in the fight for women's equality and social justice for all in this country.

Read the full article from which the above is excerpted at bit.ly/womensuffragecolor

Missing and murdered indigenous women are not forgotten



Indigenous women lift up names of their missing and murdered Indigenous relatives, Washington, D.C. at the Indigenous Peoples March in 2019. PHOTO/DIANA BEREK

By **SISTRchi collective (Supporting Indigenous sovereignty and treaty rights)**

Lifting up the names of loved ones lost to violence, Indigenous women are leading a powerful international coalition to stop violence against Indigenous women. The numbers are staggering.

Although many cases go unreported or ignored by U.S. and Canadian Federal, state, provincial or local law enforcement, still the estimates in Canada are that indigenous women are murdered at a rate 10 times higher than women in any other demographic. In the U.S., Indigenous women are more than twice as likely to experience violence. Lisa Brunner, Executive Director of Sacred Spirits First Nations Coalition states, "What's happening through U.S. Federal law and policy is they've created lands of impunity where there is like a playground for serial rapists, batterers killers. And our children aren't protected at all."

In 2019, the Democratic controlled House passed H.R. 1585 (Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019) to increase and strengthen prosecutorial rights for the tribes, but the Republican Senate has stalled the bill.

The murders and sex trafficking are linked to "man camps," which are the labor camps of men without families, that are installed by corporations doing the logging, mining, and pipeline construction. Corine Fairbanks, Oglala Lakota and AIM activ-

ist, says that an historical track of violence against Indigenous women goes all the way back to the beginning of colonizing and settling the Americas; a history which treated Indigenous people, especially women, as less than human. But Fairbanks says that women are the link between the past, present and future. It is the responsibility of society to stop corporations that enable the violence by putting their interest in profit over the rights and welfare of people. "We are connected to the earth, the moon, and the water. Our bodies are affected by the moon, our bodies are affected by the water. We are connected to Mother Earth spiritually, physically, emotionally. We should be protected."

Indigenous women are leading the way through the powerful coalitions demanding that the silenced voices of loved sisters, mothers, and daughters be heard, that their names be known, and their lives be honored. No More Stolen Sisters, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, REDress Project, Sisters in Spirit and others are marching with red dresses, with faces painted with red handprints and turquoise tears to bring to the attention of the world the necessity of protecting women from all forms of violence.

"The abuse of women is well known in history and tells you a lot about what is happening to our Earth." – LaDonna Brave Bull Allard, *Standing Rock*

Watch video of the People's Tribune interview with Corine Fairbanks at bit.ly/corineinterview

Jessica Gray is missing

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

BENTON HARBOR, MI — Jessica Gray is a 30-year-old loving mother of two beautiful children, and has two brothers. Jessica Gray is missing.

Some people believe Jessica may have been shot at Willie Lark Jr.'s house, which is in the family's neighborhood. There was a puddle of blood in the front of the house and lots of blood on the front door. Whose blood was it?

Willie Lark, Jr., 48-years-old, was arrested in Columbus, Ohio for a warrant out of the State of Michigan on charges unrelated to Jessica Gray's disappearance. Lark has been returned to Michigan to face a parole violation. He is not talking about what happened at his house.

Jessica Gray's family—a Benton Township family—is reminding the world that this 30-year-old beautiful young lady is still missing. Jessica Gray went missing on December 1, 2019. She has not been seen or heard from. There have been no calls

or texts, no contact at all.

Jessica's mother, Caroline Gray, the family, and Rev. Pinkney, held a rally in front of the Benton Township Police Department on Feb 11, 2020. The family wants answers about the DNA from the blood found in front of Willie Lark Jr.'s house and on the door of the home. There was so much blood that we know somebody was shot, and several spindle rounds were found at the scene. The blood found may be linked to the disappearance of Jessica Gray. The family wants answers. The Benton Township Police refused to search for Jessica or send out the police drones that look for bodies or their cadaver dogs that pick up the scent of the person. She is just another Black person missing.

But the family is fighting back and standing up for Jessica. "We want answers now, not knowing anything or what is going on I think that has been the hardest part—where is my baby?" said Caroline Gray. "I have been strong for my daugh-

ter. I have got to be strong. That is the only way I see it. Jessica Gray is a fighter . . . I just want her to come home. Her favorite meal is chicken and I know she is ready for that chicken. She's got her family and friends right here waiting on her. Everybody just wants her home safe."

Benton Township Police Department refused to provide any information to the family. The police have done nothing. Law enforcement has also refused to go looking for some of the many people who were at Willie Lark Jr.'s house that night.

It only takes DNA less than 40 days to come back.

On Feb 18, 2020, a second rally was held by the group, "Justice for Jessica." This time we spoke to board members of the Benton Township council. From there, we spoke to the police chief who said he would start informing the family of every step of this investigation.

We will continue to confront this evil system until we get justice for Jessica.



Jessica Gray and her children. Family and supporters are demanding answers and that law enforcement investigate.

PHOTO/CONTRIBUTED BY FAMILY

Support delegation to U.S.-Mexico border communities to help lift immigrant voices

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Your support is requested to help send a People to People Fact-Finding Delegation to the U.S.-Mexico Border. Activists from different parts of the country will come together to drive the entire border from Brownsville/Matamoros to San Diego/Tijuana. The delegation, which will include correspondents from the *People's Tribune* and our sister bilingual publication, the *Tribuno del Pueblo*, will visit a number of communities on both sides of the border, contribute to the ongoing work of building connections among people along the border, and will highlight the injustices facing immigrants and border communities on both sides of the frontier. The delegation will publish a report after the journey, and the *People's Tribune* and *Tribuno del Pueblo* will also help bring the voices of the immigrants and border communities to the rest of America.

We are moved to action by the following facts. These issues must be front and center in the upcoming elections:

More than 5,400 children have been separated from their families under Trump, and a record 69,550 migrant children were in government custody in 2019.

The Return to Mexico policy has placed migrants at risk of injury and death.

Since 2010, more than 100 people have died in Border Patrol custody and there is no accountability for abusive practices.

Border wall policies continue to destroy sensitive borderland habitats, separate communities, dishonor sacred lands, and push migrants to cross harsh landscapes where many of them die.

Under Boy Scouts of the Border Patrol programs, youth are brainwashed with public funds and trained to arrest undocumented immigrants.

Immigrant detention has become a big business, and ICE has terrorized our communities since 2003. Just last year we reached a historical high with over 50,000 detentions in the country. The extreme cruelty the current regime has inflicted on children came on the heels of daily torture of adults in over 200 detention centers. We call for an end to all detentions and deportations.

During the 12-day journey that will begin April 22, a core team will drive from Texas to the southern tip of California. Other activists will be joining at points along the way to bear witness to the realities at the border. Leno Rose-Ávila, a longtime activist, will be the lead coordinator of the delegation.

The delegation needs to raise a minimum of \$15,000 to \$20,000 for car rental, gas, lodging and food for this journey. We ask for your financial support for this delegation. No amount is too small.

To make your donation, please go to the tribunodelpueblo.org donation page. Or send your checks to:

Tribuno del Pueblo
P.O. Box 3524
Chicago, IL 60654-3524

Please specify that the donation is for the People to People Fact-Finding Delegation to the U.S.-Mexico Border. For a list of endorsers and sponsors to date, visit tribunodelpueblo.org.

Thank you.



Migrants fleeing violence and poverty huddle together in makeshift tents in Mexico awaiting asylum hearings.

PHOTO/FLOC