

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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DEFENDING DEMOCRACY IS KEY TO ALL OUR STRUGGLES



On the 57th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, Mar. 7, 2022, marchers for democracy walked across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, AL.
PHOTO / @STEVEPAVEY, KAIROS CENTER



Protesting school closures, Oakland. P. 6
PHOTO / PETER BROWN



At a shelter in Tijuana, 2018 P. 7
PHOTO / MARGARITO DIAZ



Peace protest, San Francisco P. 6
PHOTO / DAVID BACON



Healthcare for all, California. P. 8
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The People's Tribune is Your Paper It needs your support!

Dear Friends of the *People's Tribune*,

We are excited to bring you the first print edition of the *People's Tribune* since the Pandemic. Some of our readers have asked us to resume printing, given that we're seeing protests, strikes, really all sorts of gatherings, despite the Pandemic. They want print to help get information out to new people joining the movement, to prisoners and to those who don't have reliable internet. We are also expanding our presence on social media. The print and digital editions can work together to bring new friends to our websites where we can work together.

We believe the *People's Tribune*, as a voice of the movement, can play a role in helping to unite the diverse struggles that are confronting this system that affects all of us. The

People's Tribune helps build connections among today's leaders, and the awareness that together we can create a totally new society, a true democracy, where everyone's needs are met.

To help do this, we are building a network of correspondents who report on the struggles developing in their cities and towns. We share their voices through the *People's Tribune* and by connecting up with other movement newspapers. In this way, we can help build up a national source of crucial information about our growing movement. Won't you join this effort?

Please fill out the subscription form below to order papers and to donate. We are all volunteer and do not receive grants. Thanking you in advance.

— *People's Tribune Editorial Board*



Climate protest, Lansing, MI, 2020

PHOTO / DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

People's Tribune endorses campaign of Luis J. Rodriguez for CA governor

On Dec. 20, 2021, bestselling author, poet, and community activist Luis J. Rodriguez announced he was running for governor of California, seeking to become one of the two finalists in the June 7 statewide primary and then prevail on Election Day on Nov. 8, 2022. The *People's Tribune* endorses the Luis J. Rodriguez campaign because his program reflects the needs of working-class Californians.

Rodriguez has been endorsed by the state's Green Party and Peace and Freedom Party and by the U.S. Justice Party. On March 6, a major poetry reading and live music event in support of his candidacy was held at the Medicine for Nightmares Bookstore and Gallery in San Francisco.

Rodriguez's life journey has taken him from being a troubled teen to an

organizer for social change. A former poet laureate of Los Angeles, Rodriguez once worked in Los Angeles-area mills and factories.

"It's time to align resources to meet people's needs and end poverty," Rodriguez said in a statement. "I am for single-payer universal healthcare; affordable, safe housing; a Green New Deal to confront climate change; free, quality education; arts in every neighborhood; ending mass incarceration and deadly police practices; mental health and addiction treatment on demand; fair and equal elections by proportional representation; livable wage jobs, worker rights, and universal basic income." In his statement announcing his candidacy, Rodriguez pledged to address the fact that California "continues to have an incarceration rate of 549 per 100,000



Luis J. Rodriguez

PHOTO / LUIS J. RODRIGUEZ CAMPAIGN

people (including prisons, jails, immigration detention, and juvenile justice facilities), locking up a higher percentage of its people than almost

any other developed country."

For more information about the campaign, go to: www.luis4governor.org.

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 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.

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.

Contributions of articles and art: Photographs, art and articles are due the first of each month for the issue that comes out at the beginning of the following month. Poems and articles should be as short as possible, no longer than 500 words for articles. We reserve the right to edit articles to conform to space limitations.

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Defending Democracy is Key to All Our Struggles

Democracy has become a liability for corporate America, so the corporations and their billionaire owners — and the politicians they control — have been pushing for years to eliminate it. They are close to succeeding. Whether we'll have a corporate dictatorship is now a question of how hard the people are willing to fight for democracy.

Democracy is a key weapon in the hands of the people. The right to vote, the right to assemble and make demands, the right to speak your mind, the right to control the police and to have equal justice before the law — all of these things are part of the fabric of democracy, they are all tools the people need in order to fight for change, and they are all under threat.

Central to all of these battles is the right to vote. It will be that much harder to secure democracy and wage any of these struggles and win without the right to vote. This is why the powerful are trying to take away the right to vote, and this is why the voting rights movement is surging forward. In 2021, 19 states enacted 34 laws restricting access to voting, and the voter suppression efforts are continuing. The fight for voting rights is a crucial first step that will determine whether we will have a democracy or a dictatorship.

Consider all the issues where there are fights going on around the country, including: how to spend pandemic relief funds; the rights of the disabled; peace; LGBTQ rights; women's rights; health care; education; homelessness; racism; police violence; the composition of the courts; immigration; water; pipe-



PHOTO / BLACK VOTERS MATTER FUND, FACEBOOK

lines; environmental justice; climate catastrophe; and of course, protecting the right to vote. The list goes on.

The fight is on. Many new organizations are being built to both defend voting rights and expand them, and older existing organizations are also having to take on this struggle. Many new people are stepping forward to run for office at every level, and

they're winning.

Sindy Marisol Benavides, an immigrant and chief executive officer for the League of United Latin American Citizens, said in a recent Zoom discussion, "There was a time when our community could not even report a crime because we were hanged and lynched. There was a time when our community had to fight to even get

to the polling location and even pay a poll tax. We're going to have to continue fighting to make sure that everyone who's eligible to register and to vote is able to do that, because that is what a democracy is. That is why so many immigrants come to America, because we want to experience the freedom of being able to participate without persecution."

In the same discussion, LaTosha Brown, co-founder of the Black Voters Matter Fund, said, "There's a pro-democracy movement that is needed in this country. It can't just be about this legislation or this candidate, if we

want transformational change, and I believe we're on the brink of it...We actually have to shift how we show up. We've got to have more young folks that are being trained as poll workers. We've got to keep organizing. And we also have to keep building and we've got to literally take over those processes. We've got to actually put people in office and in positions and recruit volunteers to actually be a part of this process."

Democracy itself, along with the outcomes of all our struggles, is at stake. We dare not fail.



"I've never missed a vote" said 95-year-old WWII vet. New Texas voting laws may prevent him from voting absentee for the first time, because the state doesn't have his driver's license or SS# on file.

PHOTO / TWITTER



Existential Comics

@existentialcoms

Wealth of the top 100 Russian "oligarchs" combined: \$567 billion.
Wealth of Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, and Bill Gates combined: \$594 billion.

Lucky for us our billionaires are good guys though, right?

Put Up Your Dukes (Duchesses)

By Donna Pecore

Inspired and encouraged by Kathy Powers and Janise Hurtig

Oppression is our middle name and we do not accept that, do we? NO! Women have been fighting for equality on so many levels. How long has it been since women's lib first opened doors to Women's Rights? It seems eons since I learned that a Black man could vote before any female could, and that the Suffragettes fought for that right. The door to politics opened.

The sexual revolution took us through a revolving door where we could celebrate our sexuality without being called whores. But who got pregnant? Hormones and science gave us birth control, that is if your church allowed you that option. Hormones out of control, the testosterone and estrogen fed to animals, effects both men and women. Breast cancer is asexual. History's pendulum has swung again, where sexual promiscuousness is frowned upon,

with HIV and HPV as well as unplanned pregnancy to worry about. There is a rumor that there are heavy duty condoms available.

Regardless that the choice to have sex or not is ours, a marriage license does not trump the word no, although we still fight for control of our own bodies. The idiots (forgive my name calling, but I am not taking it back) in Texas limiting Roe versus Wade haven't realized the implications of government control over our body choices, be you male or female. They can mandate anything regarding human bodies. Next, we will all be chipped, with predictive programming.

It is not all gloom and doom, women can own property, they are not property. We must remain vigilant though; human trafficking exists. Young women and children are plucked off the streets, women of color often victims; because felons know those that protect don't pay the same attention to them as they do to others. Women do not need to trade their

bodies to make a living, the glass ceiling has risen, although still not level. Education is opportunity and the trades have opened doors. We have a choice as women, but we often need to prove ourselves by being better.

I speak to you of how much has changed, so I ask, is a woman's lot fair? Not by a long shot. How do we make a difference, first vote! Write our politicians, write the newspapers, share your voice in protest, talk to your friends over coffee, educate yourself and question what's what.

Critical discourse to figure out what's right. The issue is our right to vote is in danger too. Do you want to give the government total control over your body? Next stop "soylent green." The old people will become fodder. Oh, oh don't get me started on ageism. The current political ideology in some states makes it harder for anyone to have a say, and this is the United States. If one doesn't have a vote, we are not united. Next it will be your vote, your head on the chopping block. Put up your dukes/duchesses!

Women Standing For Democracy

In celebration of Women's History Month, these are excerpts from social media comments by some of the many women leaders standing for a true democracy in America and against the step-by-step encroachment of a corporate-run dictatorship of billionaires.

"15 days ago I was shot by police with rubber bullets, mace, pepper balls paid for by Enbridge. I heard shouts, cries and gasping coughing punctuated by the sound of munitions firing and a huge drill out of a sci-fi movie boring thru the river we were there to protect." #StopLine3, August 13, 2021, tara houska @zhaabowekwe

"Today in 2022, we're seeing Jim Crow era tactics and we're seeing over 52 pieces of legislation that passed in states that are voter suppressive that are trying to take away the rights of communities of color because we're winning...We are all Americans. And if you're eligible, we should be able to access our voting poll." @SindyBenavides, CEO, LULAC

"This is not a time to be sitting on the sidelines. We need to make big demands of the system, that it be changed in a way so that in the future we're not cut to the bone in a [Pandemic], that we have a robust healthcare system. I support Medicare for all, absolutely . . . and even further measures such as nationalizing the healthcare system." Sarah Dowd, registered nurse, NYC

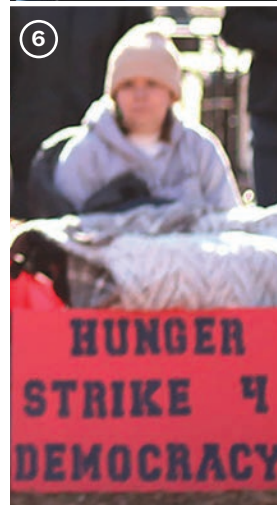
"With all due respect, Mr. President. You didn't mention saving Black lives once in this speech. All our country has done is given more funding to police. The result? 2021 set a record for fatal police shootings. Defund the police. Invest in our communities." Congresswoman Cori Bush responding to President Biden's comment that, "The answer is to fund the police. Fund them. Fund them."

"Our resistance is coming together. Patriarchy, white supremacy, work when we are just Black people, just Latinos, just women. When we are a united coalition we can start tear-

ing it down.... We can fight the fight of Georgia, show up for our sisters in Texas....it's powerful to know you're not alone, that you have sort of mass, collective power." — Amanda Brown Lierman of @supermajority

"Don't stop fighting for what's right and the rights of the people and there's more than one way to get the job done. Together we WIN!" — Bishop Bernadel Jefferson, a leader in the fight in Flint for democracy and water rights

"Even the Constitution says when government no longer serves your interest, you can replace it, shift it or even abolish it....The entire political landscape is being reshaped. We've got to radically reimagine it . . . see ourselves as founders of this new America....where collectively we are all here, centering the love of humanity....that's the real work." LaTosha Brown, Co-founder, Black Voters Matter Fund



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‘We have to keep fighting and uniting!’ says homeless leader and California candidate

By Crystal Rose Sanchez

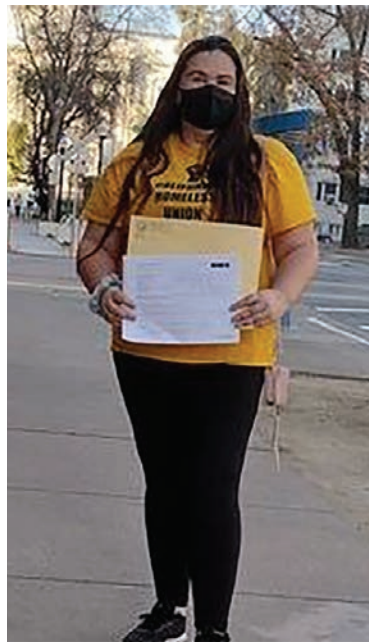
Editor’s Note: Crystal Sanchez, President of the Sacramento Homeless Union, movement leader and organizer, this February formally announced she is running for Lieutenant Governor of California. Below are excerpts from some of her writings on social media and elsewhere, on her work in the movement for homeless and poor and working people’s rights.

Stop the war on the poor. We the people need to take care of our unhoused community. Elected officials are continually perpetuating harm and state-created dangers on our people. The plan is enforcement and internment camps. Let’s talk about it for what it is.

Last year was tough. Unfortunately the conditions in California have not changed: they continue to enforce accountability on those who are unhoused but not on the government

entities that are collecting the funds for these individuals. Billions of dollars are funneling through the state yet they never make it to those on the streets — not through resourcing, not through respite, not through housing. When do we as taxpayers say enough is enough? When do we hold them accountable and dig through for some transparency? Homelessness is Big Business and as long as big business continues to collect funds on unhoused folks it will never end.

The deliberate killing of a large number of people from a particular nation or ethnic group with the aim of destroying that nation or group is genocide. If you don’t offer shelter or provide respite, especially in an emergency situation, you are culpable! Are we going to continue to say this is an individual person’s problem, or are we going to realize we are in a housing crisis? Homelessness is an after effect due to a cause.



Crystal Sanchez, after filing to run for Lieutenant Governor of California.

PHOTO / SCARLETT AMICK, CRYSTAL’S 8-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER

We have to keep fighting and uniting. We must stand and push the oppression off our backs. It is time. Movement means move. Let’s go sisters and brothers. It’s time to unify these fights before we lose control of the basic needs of our communities. It’s already happening

I am so blessed. Life has taken me places I never imagined! I work as president of two amazing groups: Sacramento Homeless Union & SAC SOUP. I’m working two amazing jobs: one in regards to Covid and equality and homeless policy for the state, the other taking care of my grandmother. Now I am running for Lieutenant Governor of California.

I’ve met thousands of people this year alone. I’ve always been what most would say is an outcast, rebel, different, based on the fact that I follow moral laws. What we have been able to pull together is moving the pendulum. We are slowly creating

change. ALL OF US WHO REFUSE TO REMAIN SILENT ON THINGS THAT MATTER ARE CREATING THAT EQUALITY THROUGH MAKING SURE IMPACTED VOICES ARE AT THE FOREFRONT OF THIS FIGHT!

Remember: believe in yourself and what you believe in! No voice, no action is ever too small! Much love and respect to all of you!

sometimes a young woman sleeps with her head on his shoulder

tucked into the niche of a doorway

— Sarah Menefee

Starbucks union drive spreads like wildfire

By Chris Mahin

These days, the workers at Starbucks are brewing more than strong coffee.

In early December 2021, the workers at a Starbucks facility in Buffalo forced the company to recognize their union drive and agree to bargain. Just three weeks later, the first store in Chicago announced plans to organize, inspiring several stores in the Chicago area and downstate Illinois to follow suit. By the middle of February, “Starbucks Workers United” organizing drives were spreading like wildfire. Workers at more than 100 different Starbucks locations in 26 states had petitioned the National Labor Relations Board for union elections.

The Seattle-based international coffee giant has responded with an aggressive anti-union campaign that has included the firing of union leaders in Memphis and Buffalo. In Chicago, union organizers report that in all the Illinois stores where union efforts are underway, the company is now promoting anti-union messaging, running captive audience meetings, and pitting workers against each other.

In response, efforts are underway to pass a resolution in the Chicago City Council supporting the effort to unionize. The resolution calls on Starbucks to “accept card check

neutrality, and allow their workforce to discuss unionization free from threats, intimidation, anti-union propaganda and lawsuits.”

The lead sponsor of the resolution, Chicago Alderwoman Sue Sadlowski Garza, stated: “I strongly support the right of Starbucks workers to form a union and demand their fair share and equitable treatment. If Starbucks can afford over (20) million a year for CEO Kevin Johnson, they can afford to pay their workers a living wage and negotiate in good faith.”

Starbucks employee Fernando Vargas-Soto added: “Our hope is that this movement and the resolution inspire workers across Chicago to have conversations about how a union can empower workers and bring democracy to the workplace.”

The resolution on Starbucks was originally slated to be introduced during the Chicago City Council’s Feb. 23 meeting, but the press of other Council business made that impossible. Union organizers expect the resolution to be introduced in the 50-member City Council soon. They are confident it will pass. (The measure has 45 co-sponsors.)

Union organizers urge sympathetic members of the public to visit the unionizing Starbucks stores and tell the workers there that they support them. (They also suggest ordering with the name “Union Strong” – and leaving a big tip!) They also call on



Congressman Jesus Garcia and Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky lend support to Starbucks workers in drive to unionize the Logan Square store in Chicago.

PHOTO DONATED

people to support the Chicago city ordinance demanding an end to union busting in Chicago, and to ask elected officials, faith leaders, campus groups and other community organizations to write Starbucks CEO Kevin Johnson and demand fair elec-

tions at Starbucks. They also suggest that people invite Starbucks workers to their meetings and organize virtual or in-person rallies with Starbucks workers to find out how you can help.

Across the country, Starbucks workers are organizing with Work-

ers United, an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union. For more information about the Starbucks campaign, follow the campaign on Twitter and Instagram — @SBWorkersUnited.

Oakland, CA Communities Rise Up Against School Closures

In February, educators Moses Olanrewaju Omolade and Andre San-Chez in Oakland, CA began a hunger strike to stop school closures. The school district plans to shutter seven schools, merge two, and decrease grades taught in two, all lower-income schools where Black and Latino students are over-represented. On Day 18 of the hunger strike, the strikers spoke at a special Board of Education Zoom meeting for the community to speak out. Below are excerpts from presentations from the strikers. See video of the full meeting at <https://bit.ly/oaklandvid>

Hunger striker Moses Olanrewaju:

Tonight is kind of like, you know, a sham . . . shame on them. Yeah. This past 18 days has been rocky. We've

laughed, felt cranky, been hungry. We've been loved on . . . but we've also had to rub shoulders with some of the people that have power in this country and city. And, we've learned that some have been bought. Some are here to do damage . . . Tonight I will be ending my hunger strike. And the way that happened was very, very slimy . . . We were hoping they would do an act of faith by putting this [community] meeting on. But they wanted us to commit to ending a hunger strike . . . Westlake [school] is a place that houses passion, love. . . we consider ourselves family. . . [until] our community was shattered, hurt . . . and to build strongly with so much love and to have these cowards sit



Left, Moses Olanrewaju Omolade, Right, Andre San-Chez

in these seats and make decisions . . . none of them ever visited Westlake. It wasn't until they put Westlake on the docket that they started to come . . . shame on y'all. No due process.

I'm gonna tell y'all. . . if they come to your schools don't let 'em in . . . We are dealing with a global pandemic, mental health issues . . . suffering . . . and they decided to make these decisions . . . So kids gave up. . . saying forget school . . . we started politicizing these babies, letting them know this is your school. That they ain't gonna make none of these choices without you. . . we got to run these folks out of this office. . . we paid for these buildings with our tax dollars. They're not taking it from us . . . we gonna

keep this fight going. It's our schools. Nothing for us without us. Cowards. **Excerpts of Presentation by Hunger Striker Andre San-Chez:**

These closures are just a small action in a plan that has its roots in state and national campaigns that go back over 20 years. Also the threat of closing Parker Elementary and Community Day School has caused unimaginable emotional harm to already vulnerable students . . . school closures are inequitably distributed and can precipitate negative consequences for students and neighborhoods. This research goes back to 1980. So telling us that small schools don't work, or that they're not sustainable, and/or that closing schools

does no damage is a flat-out lie . . . I say to the Board, to the District, to the Privatizers, we will not be divided . . . We must prevent these people who are backed by billionaire dollars. Call them out in public . . . make their meals uncomfortable, just the way that they're making our lives uncomfortable . . . We will not allow you to rape us and separate these families . . .

We will take over these schools. We will host teach-ins. We will bar ourselves to these buildings. When our schools are under attack . . . we stand up, and fight back. Not one more school!



After the Oakland School Board planned school closings, an outraged community responded in a public Zoom meeting.

PHOTO / FACEBOOK



Bay Area Protest calls for Peace in Ukraine and Yemen

Demonstrators in San Francisco and Oakland on March 22 call for diplomacy not war in Ukraine and Yemen.

PHOTO / DAVID BACON

The fight for peace today is the fight for the survival of humanity. Russia and the U.S. between them have more than enough nuclear weapons to destroy each other and to destroy the whole world. A nuclear war would probably make humanity extinct. *The People's Tribune will have more on the developing situation in Ukraine in the near future at peopletribune.org/latest-news.*

Another Border Patrol Killing, Another Possible Cover-up?

Editor's note: The following is excerpted from a press release from the Southern Border Communities Coalition (SBCC). A longer version of this story is at peopletribune.org/latest-news/

SOUTHERN BORDER, February 23, 2022 — In February, another person was killed by a border agent, and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) wasted no time in undermining the investigation, underscoring ongoing concerns about the integrity of misconduct investigations at the nation's largest law enforcement agency. The incident also raises questions about the role played by Border Patrol Critical Incident Teams (BPCITs), which may be the largest shadow police units operating in the federal government today.

On February 19, the Cochise County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) disclosed that a migrant was killed by a Border Patrol agent near Douglas, Arizona. The CCSO removed that statement in subsequent press releases, stating instead that the migrant was seriously injured and succumbed to his injuries. The medical examiner has now made clear that the migrant died of gunshots fired by the border agent.

There are multiple red flags. Instead of the CCSO processing the scene immediately, they waited a day and did not recover the body of the deceased migrant until the following day. The CCSO does not appear to have collected any forensic evidence at all until the next day, including

from the agent involved. Instead, they ceded the incident area to border agents who could have tampered with the scene. Moreover, that other migrants (possible witnesses) were taken to a Border Patrol station raises deep concerns. This is what happened in Del Rio, Texas, last year in a use of force incident involving Haitian migrants — witnesses were taken into custody by border agents and processed (deported) without ever having been questioned by independent investigators. Despite promises from the Biden administration that the incident would be fully investigated, the Office of Inspector General declined and referred it back to CBP, which rarely disciplines its agents.

Since 2010, hundreds of people have died in encounters with border agents and no one has been held accountable. And those are just the cases we know about. Those killed include U.S. citizens, migrants, and border residents, and they include men, women, and children. In the nearly 100-year history of the Border Patrol, agents have enjoyed near total impunity — no agent has ever been successfully prosecuted for killing someone while on duty. Ever.

We call on the Biden administration to turn the page on impunity once and for all, beginning with shutting down BPCITs. We also call on Congress to fully investigate the impunity enabled by BPCITs and CBP, and strengthen the integrity of investigations through legislation.



Border patrol agents welcome migrant caravan from Central America by showing their military might, 2018.

PHOTO / PEDRO RIOS

Migrants and Refugees at the U.S.-Mexico Border: Let Them In!

The United States should be a sanctuary for any human being who has been displaced or threatened and fleeing for their lives. The US has had a hand in creating the conditions

that force people to migrate, whether from war or economic crisis. Thousands are either living out of doors at the southern border in Mexico, waiting for their asylum application to be

heard, or they are forced to attempt a dangerous crossing on foot through the desert where many have died of heat and starvation.

Will U.S. Justice Dept. Bring a Case Against Jason Van Dyke?

By Allen Harris

CHICAGO — Jason Van Dyke is out.

The ex-Chicago police officer spent only three years in prison for killing 17-year-old Laquan McDonald with 16 gunshots in October 2014.

As soon as he left the Illinois prison system on February 3, hundreds of activists took to the streets and marched to the downtown federal building to demand the U.S. Justice Department bring a federal civil rights case against Van Dyke. They included William Calloway, Ja'Mal Green, the Rev. Jesse Jackson and McDonald's grandmother, Tracie Hunter, who put it plainly: "That [prison] time that man did, it wasn't enough."

Even though a jury in October 2018 found Van Dyke guilty of second-degree murder and 16 counts of aggravated battery with a firearm, the trial judge who sentenced him took the sting out by handing down the lightest possible sentence for the lesser murder conviction and no sentence at all for the 16 shots. The judge gave Van Dyke 81 months and now he is back in Chicago after only 36.

The protests at the federal building created a new group of defendants called The Laquan Nine — five women and four men. Federal marshals arrested them for occupying the federal building lobby.

They are Calloway, Green, Justin Blake of Kenosha (WI), Kina Collins, Amber Leaks, Nataki Rhodes, Cas-

sandra Greer-Ramsey and Catherine Reading.

Reading, quoted by the Chicago Tribune, told the judge: "Us in the community have been waiting more than eight years to get justice for 17-year-old Laquan McDonald and are asking for the government to intervene."

It was William Calloway and journalist Brandon Smith who filed a motion in court that eventually led to a judge in November 2015 ordering Chicago City Hall to release the police dashcam video of the murder.

Calloway and Blake were on Democracy Now after their arrest. Calloway said the Biden DOJ should bring federal charges against Van Dyke. Calloway told Amy Goodman it is



Protest demanding justice for Laquan McDonald after the early release of Police Officer Jason Van Dyke who shot Laquan 16 times, killing him.

PHOTO / VIDEO STILL, DEMOCRACY NOW!

not too late to do that. "There is no statute of limitations for this federal crime because what Jason Van Dyke did resulted in the death of Laquan McDonald, for which there is no stat-

ute of limitations."

To press that point further, Calloway launched an online petition on Change.org.

Democratic California Legislature Couldn't Pass Guaranteed Health Care for All

By Peggy Elwell

SAN JOSE, CA — On January 31, the California State Assembly, where Democrats hold a supermajority, was due to vote on AB 1400, CalCare. But when it became apparent that the bill would not pass, the bill was pulled by the author.

AB 1400 was a single payer bill to guarantee equal universal health care for all California residents regardless of income, employment, or immigration status, by eliminating profiteering in the health care industry. It provided comprehensive health care, including dental, vision, mental health, medications, and long-term care. It eliminated point-of-service costs like deductibles and co-pays, made health care not dependent on employment, and meant genuine choice of any doctor, hospital, clinic, or other provider.

Health Care Movement

AB 1400 could have been an example to other states and the nation of how Medicare for All could be done, the same way it evolved in Canada.

Polls showed that a large majority of California residents support such a system.

The health care movement has grown immensely in recent years, propelled by Bernie Sanders' advocacy of Medicare for All and the exposure by the COVID pandemic of the inequity and overall failings of the current patchwork healthcare system. Dozens of statewide and local organizations carried out a campaign of presentations, tabling, health justice events, social media, voter contact, car rallies, and demonstrations. Resolutions of support were organized at the city councils of Los Angeles, San Jose, San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento, and many others.

Corporate – Motivated Opposition

The California Chamber of Commerce led a coalition of 122 business interest groups in opposition to AB1400, including the largest health insurance companies in the state. They provided talking points to assembly members to whom they make campaign contributions. Cal-

Care was called “socialist”; corporate Democrats said it was too “disruptive” to the current system and implied that the average taxpayer would be losing money by footing the bill.

Supporters of AB 1400 pointed out that there would be no premiums, co-pays and deductibles, the current “private tax” from insurance companies, and that the vast majority of people would be paying less for more care.

Democrat Governor Gavin Newsom, who has close ties to insurance companies, endorsed single-payer in 2018, but has walked that back ever since. During the recent campaign for CalCare, he made an incremental (although positive) increase in access for the undocumented to the current complex, unequal, wasteful, expensive and incomplete system, which passes health care funds through private insurance middlemen. He then declared that there was now “universal” coverage, implying that CalCare was no longer needed.

Moving Forward

The call to pull the bill at the last



PHOTO / B. JUNG

minute was controversial. Opponents of that decision said that it was an excuse to shield colleagues from criticism for a no vote. The author said it would have a better chance when he reintroduced it next year.

All health care advocates are com-

mitted to fighting statewide and nationally for truly universal, equitable, comprehensive, single payer health care that saves money. We must continue our struggle with the profit driven corporations for our basic human right to health care until we win.

It's our generation and our lives at risk

By Varshini, Sunrise Movement

Editor's note: These are excerpts from Varshini of the Sunrise Movement writing about President Biden's State of the Union address.

We wanted Biden to be the best President on climate when young people elected him in 2020. We need him to be because it's our generation and our lives at risk. And look, we still think he can be this President, but there is a massive course correction this administration must take to get there.

It makes sense that our movement feels disillusioned. We've gone through a year of working our asses off, just for our government to disappoint. It's hard. We had really high hopes for what would happen...

A few takeaways from our state of the union:

One, we are strong.

Two, this isn't a huge surprise to us ... we knew [their] strategy of moderatism and “relationships” wouldn't work, and now we know for sure that the “adults in the room” should be listening to us, not their glass door consultants.

And the last thing I want us to hold is that we still believe in the vi-

sion we're fighting for.

Our shot at collective liberation and even just a livable planet relies on us acting, even if our government does not. It relies on our faith in the movement and the work we're doing, even if at times it can get really hard. And it relies on us leaning on our community when things get hard and bringing them into the fold as we still charge ahead.



PHOTO / SUNRISE MOVEMENT FACEBOOK PAGE

Is Benton Harbor, MI water safe to drink?

Rev. Edward Pinkney, President of the Benton Harbor Community Water Council, a group fighting since 2018 to get lead and other toxins out of the town's drinking water, said he has had a hard time getting straight answers from the EPA about the water's safety. In addition to lead, in September inspectors found major violations in the water plant's disinfection treatment. Chlorine treatment monitoring equipment was broken. Record keeping was bad on how much

treatment they used, which is added to prevent harmful bacteria from growing in the water. Rev. Pinkney asked environmental agencies: “Is the water safe from bacterial contamination?” He said, “I received no answer [and] it's the combination of bacteria and lead which is so dangerous. It can make people very ill, and can also kill them. It's a silent killer. The question is: **Is Benton Harbor water safe to drink?** The answer is, it is not.” — *People's Tribune*

Big oil is f*cking us over again

From a FB post by Cherri Antea

No, Biden is not the cause of increases at the gas pump, OPEC is largely responsible for the price of oil.

No, canceling KXL is not the cause either, it wouldn't be in production yet even if it had been approved.

No, increased drilling on federal land is not the answer, it would take years before it ever got to market.

No, more lease sales to oil companies will not help, there are 23 million

untapped acres under lease now and every single one is just a speculation that it MIGHT produce years or decades down the road. Yes, oil companies ARE making record profits...

Hmmm, now why you figure that could be? Oh yea, right! Big oil is f*cking us over for bigger profit... again.

People worried about getting “tread on,” while their a** is in the sausage grinder.