

Works in Progress

Volume 29, No. 12

Serving the Olympia community and the cause of social justice since 1990.

June 2019

Homelessness is not the problem —it’s a symptom

Mary Jo Dolis

“We need to knock off this enabling business,” Commissioner Gary Edwards said, adding that “they have chosen a deviant lifestyle, and if we endorse it, and don’t hold them accountable, they will continue to come.”¹

In towns and cities across the US, sidewalks, overpasses and wooded areas are home to an ever-increasing population of people excluded from “normal” socioeconomic life. Ever-increasing is the key word here.

A generation ago there were panhandlers, people living in the street, seen more as an irritant than a problem. Maybe then the claim that these people were living on the streets of a city like Olympia because Olympia was “too welcoming” could have seemed plausible.

Not now. Olympia’s significant population of homeless people is matched and exceeded by homeless populations in cities and towns up and down the coast: Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver, Portland and on south. Whole towns’ worth of people living without stable housing.

They cannot be dismissed as vagrants who chose homelessness as a lifestyle. They are young and old, men and women, families with children, children on their own. The recently homeless and those who have become accustomed to that status as the years passed.

Many are “graduates” of foster homes. That means that their birth family for whatever reason was unable to raise them in health and security. Others have untreated chronic illnesses, including mental illness and war or workplace disabilities. Many did not complete a high school education, which means that their fate as workers is directed into service jobs that pay the federal minimum wage, a laughable \$7.25/hour for the last 18 years. Even if increased to \$15/hour—continually resisted or delayed in behalf of business interests—would do little more than prolong the day-to-day struggle.

Even with a white-collar wage, there are families and single parents who lose the struggle to maintain a stable household with children in a “home-land” where the costs of childcare would take half the paycheck. Living

in the car with the kids can be a devil’s bargain—give up the house so you can cover the rest of your expenses.

. You can’t “cure” homelessness
Seeing homelessness as the problem

established a benchmark to measure the success of their efforts to address homelessness. They set a target of reducing homelessness by 50% (to 220 people) and the homeless population in public schools by 50% (to 327 stu-



Photo by Paul Peck

has lead Olympia and other governments, as well as countless nonprofits and nice people, to spend money on police enforcement, arrests and street engagement: municipal programs; warming centers, shelters and beds; encampments, sanctioned and illegal; transition services; collections of “tiny houses;” housing and rent subsidies paid to landlords and so on. Since 2006, Thurston County has spent nearly \$35 million dollars to support projects and programs to reduce homelessness.

Yet the number of homeless people in our community continues to grow. In 2005, Thurston County leaders es-

ted) by 2015. This didn’t happen. In 2018, 835 people were counted as homeless in Thurston County. This

What’s missing here is any acknowledgement of the complete disconnect between the price of housing and the radical inequality of income across the land.

was a 56% increase, or 301 more people, than were counted in 2017. The number of homeless students in 2018 rose to 1670, more than 10% above the previous year and a 155% increase

since the 2006 baseline of 654 students.

Individual behavior vs social conditions

The most recent report (2018) on Thurston County’s count of homelessness spoke to “causes” of the huge increase in homelessness. Participants in focus groups viewed rent increases and limited housing availability as the culprit. Many also recognized the presence of addiction (drug and alcohol) as well

as mental health as major causes. Homeless people themselves, responding to a county survey, listed job loss or unemployment, eviction or other loss of housing, rejection by the family or domestic violence.

Except for rent increases and limited housing availability, these “causes” all look to individual circumstances. What’s missing here is even a whiff of acknowledgement of the complete disconnect between the price of housing and the radical inequality of income across the land. Rent increases and housing availability have a disparate impact in the reality of systemic barriers and gaps in wealth.

In my college sociology course, we read the work of Emile Durkheim

► **Symptom**, continued on page 6

25 years of Real Change

Seattle’s street paper embeds its vendors in a caring community

Tim Harris founded and is the Executive Director of *Real Change*, a weekly progressive street newspaper based in Seattle, Washington. He was interviewed by Matt Crichton this May.

Matt Crichton: Why did you start *Real Change*?

Tim Harris: I started my first newspaper in college, and was involved with alternative publications in Boston. When I saw what *Street News* was doing in New York, I thought “that’s the answer to my dilemma.” *Street News* was started in the late ‘80s and is generally regarded as the seminal paper of the modern street paper movement.

In ‘92 in Boston I started a paper called *Spare Change* organized along Alinskyist lines. I saw my role as being a facilitator and coach with decisions made by homeless people involved with the paper. That blew up in my face.

As it was the third time that happened, I got the message that I needed to adapt and rethink my role as an organizer and how power works in an organization. I aspired to a more cross-class model involving people who could bring different kinds of assets to the table. I moved to Seattle in March ‘94, and had the first issue of *Street Roots* on the street the following August.

MC: What’s the biggest change in Seattle since you started the paper?

TH: The radical change is that Seattle has gone from a working class city where poor people were comfortable to a city built around affluence. After the city lifted height restrictions for downtown residential buildings in the late 2000s, Seattle had more cranes on our skyline that any other city in America. Since then, rents have steadily risen. Poor people have been largely priced out of the city and now

middle class people are being priced out too. The disparity of wealth has created instability and the attrition of affordable housing has radically escalated homelessness.

MC: How does *Real Change* help people?

TH: Our mission is to provide opportunity and voice to homeless and low-income people, while taking action on economic, social and racial justice. At its most fundamental level, *Real Change* is a low-threshold employment opportunity, where vendors buy papers for 50 cents each, sell them for \$2 plus and keep whatever they make from that. We have 300 active vendors a month. Over the course of the year, about 700 people sell the paper.

Vendors find a voice through participation in the newspaper. We publish their stories in the paper as a means

► **Real Change**, cont. on page 13

Works In Progress

Works in Progress (WIP) is a community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington and published monthly. The paper was established by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition which published the first issue in May 1990.

Our mission. The aim of WIP is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on justice in the economic, political, environmental and social realms and across classes, races and genders.

How WIP is supported. First and foremost, WIP depends for survival on the contributions and participation of writers, activists, students, organizers, and other members of the community, broadly defined. We also receive support from the Workers' Defense Fund whose purpose is to strengthen organizations that engage in struggle against the powerful for the empowerment of the powerless.

Guidelines for writing for WIP. Our priority is to focus on stories that are ignored or misrepresented in the mainstream media, especially those that relate directly to our mission. To this end, we seek well-researched news stories, serious analyses of issues confronting our communities and accounts of personal experiences or reflections by local writers.

Informed opinion pieces are welcome, especially when accompanied by facts, examples and sources. Writing that stereotypes groups or categories of people will not be accepted for publication.

We discourage writing where a key point is stated as fact when it is unproven or in serious dispute. Once we receive a submission we may choose to publish it, or not. Articles can relate to the theme but material on other topics is important. Editing that extends beyond that needed for clarity will be reviewed with the author who always has the option to withdraw a piece. While the views expressed in the material we print are those of the author alone, WIP typically will favor material that is consistent with our mission.

Submitting your writing. Your piece should be submitted in the following manner: Send an email to **olywip@gmail.com** with the word SUBMISSION as part of the subject line. Attach your submission as a word document (formatted as indicated below). Include your name, a brief bio to run and where to contact you. Ideally, your writing will offer a unique progressive perspective and appeal to local and regional readers.

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Contact WIP. Online at **olywip@gmail.com** or via snail mail to: *Works in Progress*, P.O. Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507.

Website: **www.olywip.org**

Submission deadline next issue

Sunday, June 9

olywip@gmail.com

Proofreading Meeting

Sunday, June 19

115 Legion Way SW



Where we find a home—and why

In the current circumstances, it's hard to think of a phrase laden with more cynicism than “home is where your heart is.” Under the sugar-coated implication that the location of ‘home’ is defined by an act of love lies the concealed notion that fulfilling human needs requires no material basis.

The harshness of this seemingly well-intended proverb becomes even more evident when we consider that over 555,742 people will experience homelessness tonight, or any other night, in the US. The numbers in this “disposable” class continue to increase, drawing primarily from Black and Latino people, low income white people, people who are unemployed, and people experiencing health disabling conditions.

In 2018, Washington State had the questionable distinction of having the 4th largest homeless population in the nation with 22,304 homeless people. 67% of these people are individuals, and 33% are families with children. Of the former, 7% are veterans and people with disabilities or addictions. In Washington last year, there were at least 234,362 extremely low-income renting households. At the same time, for every 100 extremely low-income renting households, only 29 affordable rental homes were available.

Given all this, perhaps attention needs to go not where home is, but rather why in the wealthiest nation in human history, so many Americans cannot find an affordable home except in the form of a cardboard box under a freeway overpass. Why do eleven million Americans need to spend more than 50% of their income on rent, leaving very little money to cover other basic necessities of life?

Why in the US does chronic poverty engulf over 47 million people, 14.% of the population? Why, at the same time, is there so much money available for the military which has an insane budget of over seven hundred billion dollars—higher than the combined budget of the ten wealthiest nations on earth? Why, in this context, did the current administration just give a trillion-dollar tax-break to the super rich? Why is the government so servile and obsequious, willing to bail-out Wall Street but blind to the needs of the people?

A short response is that the govern-

ment has sufficient resources but lacks political will. It is not really a government of the people, and only the people can change this. For home to be more than an ideological construct, the people—that's you, dear reader,— need to organize and advocate until we get a government that responds to our needs. Anything short of concerted, focused political actions in the broadest sense enables and legitimizes a government willing to perpetuate these social disparities. We must evict these perpetrators from the homes of power they currently and nefariously occupy.—EQ

July theme—Community. Tell WIP readers about the communities you're part of; maybe how community helps individuals to express their uniqueness as part of a larger whole. We'd like to hear about how community is sustained, and maybe things that threaten to undermine it. Or..let this be a stimulus to your thinking and reflecting about this topic. Deadline June 16

August theme—Who's running things? We're interested in examples and analysis of this question as it plays out on the local, state and national level. Or even in your household or the world environment. Deadline for submissions: July 21.

About the cover

The cover photo by Paul Peck shows Michael Powers in front of his new home at #23 Plum Street Village in Olympia. The village consists of 30 tiny houses for 40 or more single adults and couples without children. Many of the Plum Street homes were built by volunteers, but men confined in the Cedar Creek Corrections Center also build tiny houses. Each is 8' x 12' and insulated, with electricity and heat, windows, and a lockable door. There is also a security house, a communal kitchen, meeting space, bathrooms, showers, laundry, a case management office, and 24/7 staff providing security and management. The Cedar Creek program is run by Centralia College in partnership with the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI). LIHI also manages the Billy Frank Jr. Place low income apartments on State Avenue in downtown Olympia the Fleetwood Apartments and Magnolia Villa Apartments in Lacey.

Then this happened...

OMJP saw the writing on the wall in 2005

In 2005, US newspapers were full of talk of the need to counter Iranian nuclear ambitions—with possible military action. At a forum created by OMJP—the Olympia Movement for Justice & Peace, Alice Zillah concluded that the Bush administration wanted to extend US sanctions to all foreign companies doing business in Iran, or to achieve “regime change” there. She pointed out that John Bolton was one calling for a “robust” military attack on Iran if it didn't stop its uranium enrichment. An outpouring of grassroots opposition followed—and the attack did not materialize. Mr. Bolton continues to pursue the goal of attacking Iran.

An article in the current *Mother Jones* details some efforts: during the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq In February 2003, Bolton told Israeli PM Ariel Sharon that “it would be necessary” for the US to “deal with” threats from Iran, Syria, and North Korea after ousting Saddam Hussein. Bolton dismissed

Obama's efforts to negotiate a nuclear deal with Iran. “The inescapable conclusion is that Iran will not negotiate away its nuclear program. Nor will sanctions block its building a broad and deep weapons infrastructure,” Bolton wrote in the *New York Times* in March 2015. In 2017 he assured an audience of Iranian opposition that they would be celebrating the successful overthrow of the Iranian government before 2019.

Despite international consensus that the “nuclear deal” with Iran was working, Trump abandoned the deal after Bolton became his National Security Advisor. Now Mr. Bolton is drawing up war plans, claiming or creating threats against “American interests,” a strategy that worked in Iraq and elsewhere. The seductive melody of “regime change” seems to be the second verse of our national anthem.

Will we sing along—or drown out that melody?

—BW

Special events

PFLAG Olympia Garage Sale

Sat, June 1, 8 am - 4 pm, 2716 68th Court SW

Annual sale to support local LGBTQ causes.

Olympia Climate Action meeting

Sun, June 2, 7 pm, Olympia Center

Discuss HR 109, Green New Deal, possibly adopt resolution in support

National Gun Violence Awareness Day

June 2-3, everywhere in the nation

Wear orange to support an end to gun violence.

“Mission Impact: Our Collective Future”

Tues, June 4, 11:30 luncheon at Lacey SPSCC campus, 4220 6th Ave SE

Part of the YWCA's Racial Justice Summit series. See announcement p. 15

Bat Walk

Fri, June 7, 7 pm. Discussion at Traditions, 9:15 pm walk around Capitol Lake;

Learn about and observe bat habitat and abilities. Thurston County Stream Team.

Garden Gala

Sat, June 8, 3-8 pm, at a Westside Garden (location with ticket purchase)

Live music by Beat Greens, drinks, hors d'oeuvres. Empowerment4Girls fundraiser, tickets \$35

Progressive Candidate Forum

Mon., June 10, 7pm., Thurston County Courthouse, Sponsored by Our Revolution and Indivisible Thurston County

Jacobin Reading Group

Wed, June 12, 6-7:30 pm, Orca Books

Meet on 2nd Wednesday every month. Discuss articles mainly from Jacobin magazine. Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). More info **jacobin@olydsa.com**.

Hispanic Roundtable Community Summit

Mon, June 17, 8 am-4 pm, ESD 113 office, 6005 Tye Drive SW

Talks, networking and conversation with people from nearby counties on Latinx support & issues

StoryOly

Tues, June 18, 7-9 pm, Rhythm and Rye, 311 Capitol Way N

Story slam - theme “Lost.” Sliding scale \$5 - \$10 at the door.

Capital City Pride Parade and Festival 2019

Sun, June 23, 11 to 5, at Heritage Park, Olympia

Annual LGBTQ event. For space in parade or booth at the fair email <https://capitalcitypride.net>

SURJ Annual Potluck

Mon, June 24, 5:30 - 8 pm, United Churches of Olympia

SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice). Get to know new people and strengthen relationships. All welcome, bring a dish if you wish. New member orientation 5:30 to 6.

IWW 114th Birthday Party

Thurs, June 27, 5-8 pm, Bigelow Park

Celebrate 114 years for the Industrial Workers of the World - potluck & kick-ball game. All welcome.

Mycorestoration/Saving the Bees

Sun, June 30, noon - 2pm, GruB, 2016 Elliott Ave NW

Talks on new use of fungi for water filtration, toxic waste breakdown, ecoforestry, pest control. Also, how mushrooms may save the bees.

For a fuller listing of events of June events, go to LocalMotive.org. For some events posted to WIP after the deadline, check out the WIP Facebook page.

Lawmakers and activists combine to ensure immigrant rights

Bob Zeigler & Lin Nelson

Washington State will have the strongest immigrant protection legislation in the country, according to ACLU Coordinator Eric Gonzales. “Keep Washington Working,” just passed by our legislature, ensures the rights and dignity of all residents and recognizes the importance of immigrants. The legislation repeals two anti-immigrant bills that have been on the books since 1925 when the Ku Klux Klan had major political influence in our state.

The new law directs state and local agencies to not participate in federal immigration efforts to arrest and deport non-criminal immigrants and to participate only in what is required by state or federal law. District 22 Thurston County legislators, Senator Sam Hunt and Representatives Beth Doglio and Laurie Dolan, joined others in sponsoring this critical human rights bill.

With this vote and Governor Inslee’s signing into law, Washington joins Oregon and California in standing against the Trump Administration policies that break up immigrant families, jail their children and deny legal asylum to the extent that is legally possible.

For the last three years, Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN), ACLU, WA State Labor Council, Northwest Immigrants’ Rights Project (NWIRP), Faith and Action Network, local CIELO and Strengthening Sanctuary have been working to press for passage of this immigrant protection legislation. Many other groups such as One America, Thurston County League of Women Voters, and others across the state have also pressed for it.

Strengthening Sanctuary members Debi Hardy and Gayle Mar-Chun, who are retired school administrators, en-

couraged the legislature to adopt an additional bill to make schools safe for immigrant students. Because we got involved too late the bill did not proceed after being sent to committee. The school administrators impressed our legislators with the school

The legislation repeals two anti-immigrant bills that have been on the books since 1925...

research and need for legislation to provide policy guidance. These inter-actions helped our District 22 legislators become much more involved as immigrant advocates in the legislature. Laurie Dolan worked on a minor amendment to save the Keep Washington Working bill when it failed in the first House Floor vote.

Activities that helped push Keep Washington Working across the finish line:

Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN) Immigrant Advocacy Day February 5. This brought 200 immigrants and supporters from around the state to meet with legislators on Keep Washington Working, Census Funding and other important immigrant bills.

The Olympia City Council on February 5, led by Jessica Bateman and Renata Rollins, unanimously adopted a resolution identifying the need and calling on the Legislature and Governor to pass immigrant protection legislation.

ACLU on Mondays and WAISN on Tuesdays had statewide noon-hour conference calls to describe where the legislation was at and actions needed each week of session.

Calls and emails to legislators from members of Strengthening Sanctuary, Thurston County League of Women Voters and other supporters around the state. Folks went to House and Senate Hearings on the bills and signed in as “pro” to be counted and reported to the Committee.

The bill will not totally stop ICE from arresting and deporting immigrants in Washington State, but it will make a real difference in the lives of immigrants. In the past ICE (and before that INS) tended not to have high visibility



Activists from across Washington rally on the Capitol steps in February. Photo Bob Ziegler

in areas where there was strong immigrant support. But with the vindictive Trump Administration, there could be increased activity as a result of the bill. To counter this, WAISN is planning deportation defense strategies. (To report ICE or other immigration activities you may call 1-844-724-3737.)

As it is much easier to kill than to pass a bill, there were disappointments this legislative session. SB 5164 would have provided assistance to immigrant victims of trafficking. It sailed through the Senate, but died in the House when it was argued that a piece of the title was unconstitutional. It will be corrected and re-introduced next year.

Strong legislative session in support of immigrant rights

Overall, it was a strong session in support of immigrant rights. Here are comments from Liezl Tomas Rebugio, Field Director for ACLU of WA:

“No matter where we come from, how we speak, or what we look like, all people have a right to be treated with dignity and respect. The Keep Washington Working Act recognizes the right to an identity that is seen and valued—not feared and ostracized. Communities across the state will benefit from this important legislation, which affirms the inherent worth of all immigrants and the important contributions immigrants make to our state’s economy and culture.”

Steffani Powell, Olympia based attorney active with the American Immigration Lawyers Association, offered these thoughts on the session:

AILA applauds the legislature of Washington State for passing the Keep Washington Working Act. The act focuses local law enforcement resources on protecting local communities, disentangling local law enforcement officers from federal immigration enforcement. Another important passage is the Workforce Education Investment Act. It provides for major investments into workforce education throughout the state.

This act will give families making around \$60,000 or less (70% of the state’s median family income) a full-tuition scholarship to college or to apprenticeship training, by dramatically expanding the State Need Grant, renamed as the Washington College Grant. The bill will also provide partial tuition scholarships to families earning up to 100% of median family income (approximately \$88,000 for a family of four). It will significantly help immigrant families. It is paid for by an increase in the B&O tax on lawyers, engineers and other professionals.

The effort to strengthen public policy in support of immigrant rights is connected to a broader movement for justice here in the region. WAISN is a key organizer among more than 100 groups, large and small, that organize around immigrant rights. WAISN is especially strong on identifying and strengthening youth leadership. In April, WAISN hosted “Youth Convening” in Yakima. Drawing 200 young advocates, the gathering celebrated the power of young organizers, deepened advocacy approaches for protecting communities, and pushed for access to higher education.

Also emerging is the LGBTQ Asylum Seeker Coalition Program. This effort pays careful attention to how, despite Washington’s relatively supportive stance toward immigrants, LGBTQ asylum seekers are ending up at the Tacoma Detention Center and in need of strong support. The Fair Fight Bond Fund helps out folks who are at risk for fast-track deportation. In 2018, WAISN efforts allowed 18 people to be bonded out of detention and reunited with their families.

The Accompaniment Program is a network of volunteers who support people through the courts, providing a dramatic presence in support of immigrant rights. The movement here is building in dramatic contrast with and resistance to the Trump xenophobia, which continues to demonize immigrants, put children at risk, and undermine community across the US.

Lin Nelson is a retired Evergreen teacher. She serves on the board of the Rachel Corrie Foundation and has been active with Strengthening Sanctuary.

Bob Zeigler is a retired biologist. As a peace and justice volunteer he worked in the 1980s Sanctuary Movement and Central America Solidarity efforts.

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How Amazon and Boeing ate Seattle

Linda Averill

When Amazon unleashed its bidding war for a second headquarters, more than 200 cities offered mind-blowing sums of money to lure the e-commerce giant. Crystal City in Virginia “won” at a cost of \$23 million in perks, on top of \$75 million more from the state.

“Loser” Long Island City in New York had offered \$3 billion in incentives. But Amazon, which is ferociously anti-union, backed out after being asked to sign a “neutrality” agreement making it possible for its warehouse workers to organize. This was seen as a victory for community members who had militantly organized against Amazon coming to town, arguing that the social costs would be too high.

Seattle offers a sobering story about just what those costs are

A city remade—In the 1990s, when Jeff Bezos was founding Amazon from his garage, Seattle was known for things like its great musicians and natural beauty. For the poor, life was hard, but the poverty rate was low compared to other large cities. For many residents, Seattle deserved its reputation as a “most livable city.” That was then. Now Seattle is famous for its multiple corporate Goliaths — Amazon, Boeing, Starbucks, etc. And with growth has come inequality on steroids. Since 2010, rents have spiked 63 percent. Many Seattleites with deep roots have been forced to move, sometimes

by being evicted. People of color are the majority of those ousted. And of those kicked out for owing \$100 or less, female single tenants are the majority. Soaring taxes on homeowners also push residents out. If those leaving find cheaper housing out of town, they often must still work in the city, with hours-long commutes.

But ever-greater numbers of people in Seattle’s King County —now more than 12,000—don’t have a home at all. Once it was shocking to see someone homeless; now people walk by with seeming indifference.

Meanwhile, as traffic snarls, neighborhood density skyrockets, and green spaces disappear, more construction cranes dot the skyline than in any other U.S. city.

South Lake Union, once a district of small businesses and warehouses, is now Amazon’s campus. With 40 buildings and 45,000 employees, Amazon has as much office space in Seattle as the next 40 biggest employers combined. To accommodate Amazonia, Seattle has sunk \$638 million into new infrastructure.

Riding a gravy train

Washington state has one of the country’s most regressive tax codes. It puts the lion’s share of taxes on those less able to pay, with huge loopholes for big tech. And titans like Boeing and Amazon continually use extortion to

get even more perks.

In 2013 Boeing demanded — and got — a record \$8.2 billion in state subsidies by threatening to take production elsewhere. At the same time, it rammed

Seattle doesn’t have to be a loser either. With the “privilege” of living amid wealth comes the opportunity of confronting it.

a concessionary contract down the throat of its blue-collar workforce. Machinists Local 751 fought valiantly but ultimately lost against a coalition that included Boeing bosses and politicians of both the Democratic and Republican parties.

After all this, Boeing still moved its headquarters to Chicago, shrunk its workforce, and sent major production to the South. The power this company wields is a huge factor in the 737 Max catastrophe, given that the Federal Aviation Administration allowed it to sign off on parts of its own flight-control software without outside inspection.

Amazon, which paid no federal taxes in 2018, also uses bully tactics. Last year, activists tried to levy a “head tax” on businesses making over \$20 million per year. An ordinance adopted unanimously by the Seattle City Council

would have charged such businesses \$275 per employee annually for three years. Its purpose was to fund services for the homeless.

The law fired the wrath of Seattle’s biggest corporations, especially Amazon, which threatened to pause construction. The labor movement quickly split, with the building trades and iron worker unions opposing the levy and service workers defending it.

Amazon’s intimidation worked. Seattle’s “progressive,” Democratic Party-controlled City Council rescinded the tax in a 7-2 vote, urged on by Mayor Jenny Durkan. Now Seattle’s wealthiest are funding efforts to defeat Kshama Sawant, one of the two council holdouts, in her bid for reelection this year.

Propagandized in Seattle

Hanging like smog over Seattle these days is a “corporatist” outlook not unlike what fascists promoted during the 1930s. Corporatism pushes the notion that workers, big business, billionaires, and politicians can unite to create prosperity for all. Unspoken is the scapegoating and disenfranchisement of those considered expendable. In Nazi Germany, that encompassed dissenters and non-Aryans.

Seattle is a far cry from Hitler’s Germany. But the city’s billionaire class is trying to mask their economic crimes by demonizing the poor and marginalized. As one example, local TV station KOMO aired a propaganda piece in March called “Seattle is Dying.” It broad-brushed homeless people as crazy, drug-addicted, and dangerous. Absent was discussion of things like poverty, obscene rents, and the role of corporate power in dislocating thousands of residents, especially Blacks.

Shake off the corporate chokehold!

Long Island City showed that a community can stand up against big business bullies. In light of the havoc Amazon has wreaked in Seattle, New York doesn’t look like much of a “loser.”

But Seattle doesn’t have to be a loser either. With the “privilege” of living amid wealth comes the opportunity of confronting it. And the Emerald City has a long tradition of rebellion it can draw upon. When labor, community, and radical activists united to shut down a meeting of the World Trade Organization in 1999, the ensuing “Battle of Seattle” inspired upsurges around the globe.

Today, the city has a new opportunity to put itself on the map by building solidarity with Amazon employees who are trying to organize for better wages and against wretched workplace practices in warehouses from Minnesota to New York and Spain. Imagine how protests in Seattle could boost their efforts and embolden local organizing!

Meanwhile, members of International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Local 751 are setting an example of solidarity by supporting their co-workers in South Carolina, where flight techs voted to join the union. But the company refuses to negotiate a first contract and recently fired three of the techs in a thinly veiled retaliatory move. Local 751 initiated a petition calling on Boeing to reinstate them.

In the end, it is labor solidarity like this, on a grand and international scale, that can defeat the corporatist mindset and shake loose the inhuman grip of the 1 percent.

Reprinted with permission from Freedom Socialist, June-July 2019. Send feedback to author Linda Averill, a lifelong Seattleite, at avlinda587@gmail.com.

Moms like me need tax relief and an economy that works for us

Cori Domschot

In my family, we shake our heads when we read about the booming economy. My husband works as a merchandiser and we have an amazing 19-month-old son. I’m a stay-at-home mom, because we can’t afford childcare. In this supposedly booming economy, we find ourselves struggling every month just to cover the basics and make ends meet.

No tax cut for us

We know the Trump administration and Congress passed a massive tax cut last year, and we hoped it would help us. With a recent raise, my husband makes just over \$16 per hour. He works 52 hours a week, but after taxes, our annual income is just under \$35,000 per year. Last month when we filed our taxes, it became clear that last year’s tax reform didn’t offer any benefit to us. It wasn’t designed for families like mine. The primary beneficiaries were the wealthy and mega-corporations.

Relying on old credits

We continue to use the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC), which are essential. We use them to cover necessities like health care, food, housing, transportation, and paying for my son’s activities. But it’s a drop in the bucket compared to what we need, especially because these tax credits don’t account for the tremendous expenses we face with a child who is so young.

A new chance at relief

That’s why we were so glad to hear about the Working Families Tax Relief Act, introduced in the US Senate, which would help moms like me. In fact, 15.3 million working moms would see an increase in their EITC or CTC from the Working Families Tax Relief Act. This legislation would boost the incomes of about 44 million

households, benefiting more than 112 million people. My family and many of my friends would be among them.

A simple fix

The bill would do this by expanding the EITC by roughly 25 percent and raising the maximum benefit for a family with two children to \$7,290, making the CTC fully refundable, and by creating a new, fully refundable Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC) for children under age 6. That is music to my ears because we’ve learned from personal experience that no matter how carefully you plan, anticipating all the expenses that come with having a young child is nearly impossible.

Coupled with state action

This bill’s impacts could be amplified by state action as well. Washington State Sen. Joe Nguyen and State Rep. Debra Entenman have introduced a proposal for a new Working Families Tax Credit. It would provide a rebate on the state’s high sales tax for low- and moderate-income families like mine and also extend the tax credit to full-time family caregivers, low-income college students, and immigrant workers.

A priority for elected officials?

The Working Families Tax Relief Act and the Washington Working Families Tax Credit would help reduce the financial strain facing millions of moms, like me, with young children. I hope the Working Families Tax Relief Act is as high a priority for Congress as it is for us, and the Washington State Legislature will make the Working Families Tax Credit the centerpiece of the 2020 legislative session. It’s time to ensure that working families share in the rewards of a strong economy, and to ease the financial stress so many moms with young kids face.

Cori Domschot is a mother living in Olympia and a member of MomsRising.

Information in this piece is from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Working Families Tax Relief Act Would Help 46 Million Households, Cut Poverty and Deep Poverty.”

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Every year in this country people are evicted from their homes not by the tens or even the hundreds of thousands but by the millions.”

Matthew Desmond, *Poverty and Profit in the American City*

I have seen the faces of homelessness

Mary Watt

Do I have a right to exist in America? Do you? Answering should be easy; of course: we do. Because we are here, we are alive, we are human. Do people who do not have decent housing have a right to exist? That answer is not always so easy, especially in a culture that has demonized our homeless folks for my entire adult life, since 1970. When I was a kid we heard about bums, said to be men who were lazy and did not want to work. This has now changed. We see women who are homeless, families with children who are homeless, veterans who are homeless, teenagers who are homeless.

No place to go

I have met many homeless folks in downtown Olympia. I served dinner many times last summer in front of City Hall. We always ran out of food. I met a young woman, 26, who sleeps at Interfaith shelter. She has a “permanent bed” for medical reasons. Great that she has a bed at the shelter, right? But everyone at the shelter has to leave at 7 a.m. and cannot return until 5 p.m. Every night at 5 p.m. homeless folks put their name in a lottery to try to get a bed for one night.

What about Providence Community Care Center on State Avenue? It is packed with people inside and in the courtyard every day that they're open, especially when it's raining or cold. Their hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. They do have showers and laundry if you can wait. If you want a meal you have to walk to the Salvation Army. As long as you are able-bodied you can walk the six blocks. If you don't have a shelter bed you probably have to carry your entire belongings everywhere you go. What about toilet facilities? Hope you can wait.

No specialists, no Medicaid

Need medical care? My estimate is that 95% of our homeless folks need medical care including psychiatric evaluation and care. Where do you go? SeaMar Clinic is where our homeless folks go. SeaMar's website says they are equivalent to an urgent care clinic for immedi-



ate medical needs, like cuts, sprains, infections. Many, if not most, of our homeless folks need care for chronic medical conditions like diabetes, heart problems, anxiety, cancer. They are told they can get a referral to a specialist. But the reality is that no specialists in our area will accept Medicaid and a lot of homeless folks don't even have Medicaid.

I learned about all these issues when I was trying to help the 26-year-old woman. She needed to see a neurologist, but specialists and apparently all primary care providers in Thurston County will not see new people covered by Medicaid or Medicare. At Providence Healthcare I was told they are not taking Medicaid patients.

CHI Franciscan in Tacoma has a huge network that takes Medicaid and Medicare -- but you have to get there. I did get the young woman into a primary care MD there and a neurologist



Above, Andrea's smile lights up her face on the day she moved into her home at Plum Street Village. left, Treyton Sulcer on the porch of his home in the Village. Photos by Paul Peck

for seizures, ADHD, and other problems. I drove her to her appointments in Tacoma. She was weaned off a seizure medicine that had bad side effects for her and given a different medicine that has helped her. As a homeless person with mental and emotional issues she would never have been able to do this on her own.

Some say the homeless can still go to a hospital Emergency Room. ER at a hospital is not set up to take chronically ill individuals. I have been told by homeless folks that Providence St. Peter Hospital tells them that there is nothing wrong with them and sends them packing. Contrast this with a retired man that I know. He went to the same ER for gastrointestinal issues and was given extensive tests and kept overnight. The difference is that he is retired from the State of Washington and has excellent insurance.

No places to rent

A rising cause of homelessness is lack of affordable housing, eviction, huge increases in rent, and refusal to pay a living wage. Folks on social security disability usually receive about \$750 a month. What about low-income housing programs? The Federal Section 8 housing program has been closed to new applicants for months or years, depending on the state. State and community programs for low-income housing have long wait times.

With 78% of Americans living paycheck to paycheck how many more will lose their housing? As more folks wind up homeless it gets worse. A one-bedroom apartment for low-income is \$700 and up. We aren't talking Seattle, it's here in Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, Belfair, Shelton. Even if you have been approved for rental assistance through programs like Sidewalk in Olympia, you often cannot find a landlord who will rent to you.

The homeless I know did not have the privilege of making good choices. They had to choose between bad choices -- and worse choices. These are women who had to escape an abuser, people who grew up in one foster home after another, some abusive. Some lost everything because of medical bills, having a bad injury or accident and then being unable to work.

Members of this community

I have seen the faces of homelessness and talked to the people experiencing it. Our homeless neighbors are members of our community. They aren't coming here in cars from other states; most of them are local to the Northwest. Most of

them are not on hardcore drugs. Their number one need is housing. Our nonprofit organizations are stretched to the limit and beyond. Well-meaning

folks do good work to help our neighbors. But we can never solve the problem without leaders in government who have the moral courage to do what is right.

Political leadership necessary

We have to change the direction the USA has been going since the Reagan years. We need a President who will take bold action to help those who are suffering the most.

We also need better leaders on the Olympia City Council; leaders who will commit to doing what is needed. Giving tax breaks, not for condos for the wealthy, as they do now, but for low income, decent housing. Olympia stopped the “sweeps” only because of a judicial ruling.

Before last year I would see homeless folks and feel sorry for them. Now it's different. Driving by Sylvester Park around 6 p.m. I saw a woman, probably in her 60s sitting on the lawn with her belongings. It hurts my heart to realize she is a person, someone's daughter. She does not have the safety and security of a home, she does not deserve a homeless life. No one deserves a homeless life.

Mary Watt was born in Olympia in 1952. She lived in Tucson, AZ for thirty years before retiring as a librarian and technical writer. She lives in Lacey with her cat, Miss Sally.

Blessed always with a safety net

I don't remember when my parents were kicked out of their apartment. I was one, my older brother was two, and a younger brother was just born. The landlord told my parents that he can't have three little kids in his apartment. We moved in with my grandparents for three years until my parents bought a small two bedroom house. Since then I've always had a house to go to that felt like home. I heard a definition once that a home is a place that when you go there they have to take you in. Maybe that's the difference between a house—a structure, and a home. I've been lucky and blessed to have had a home most of my life; a place with shared values and caring for one another, where sleep comes easily with no worry of the power being turned off or of gun fire. We can walk downtown, to shops, to schools and churches. In walking we get to know our neighbors. We didn't want to live somewhere where a car was necessary to get around. Our parents instilled in us the importance of education and being a reliable worker; and they were honorable people. I was lucky and blessed always with a safety net—a home. Not everyone is.

—MK

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Homelessness is a symptom

From page 1

and one conclusion of his stuck in my head: social phenomena have social causes. When hundreds and thousands of people experience the same situation, it's a social phenomenon. You won't be able to get to the bottom of why it's happening if you keep searching for the answer in "individual choices," "bad behavior," or even "bad luck."

Moving in tandem: poverty-housing prices-homelessness Thurston County prides itself on its healthy median household income—it was over \$66,000 in 2018 (as reported by Thurston Regional Planning (TRPC)). On the other hand, a "living wage" calculated for one adult in Thurston County at \$12.56 brings in \$24,000 - less than \$2000/month—if it is full-time. A lot of low-wage jobs in Thurston County are not. In any case, \$2000 is an amount unlikely to sustain a \$1000 monthly

rent and still have a job. The discipline required would be beyond most of us, and the slightest glitch would result in eviction.

Median income—touted in discussions of "affordability"—is completely misleading in terms of low-income ability to rent or own a home. Real estate tracking data (Sperling's Best Places) calculate that 18% of Olympia's people earn under \$20,000 per year. TRPC shows that the number of individuals living in poverty keeps increasing. According to the 2013-17 American Community Survey data, 11.6% of Thurston households lived with less than even the stringent federal poverty level. This is reflected in the possibility finding a home: "Since 2014, the [Housing Affordability Index] for first-time homebuyers in Thurston County has been considered unaffordable, and affordability continues to decrease." Af-

fordability for first-time buyers in 2018 was the least it has been since 2006.

Market forces: the problem not the solution

In 2018, staff and officials at the City of Olympia ushered in a city-wide rezone that permits builders to construct more and bigger multifamily units on close-in lots. Although the authors say the new law "supports housing affordability for households across all income levels" the regulations include nothing to achieve that. Instead, the law relies on "market forces" to produce more "affordable" housing. Market forces are determined by profit maximization, not by meeting the need for people to have a place to live.

Even taking the median household income as a guide, the definition of "affordability" leaves behind half of the population. Housing is "affordable" when a middle-income family (around \$66,000 if we use the median) can carry mortgage payments on a median-price home (\$320,000 or so)

Right now "market forces" are busy constructing luxury apartments and condominiums in downtown Olympia and Tumwater. New infill so far consists of single-family homes at or above the median price, with multi-unit structures slated to be priced in that range as well. Older, lower-priced rentals in downtown are being replaced by high end and luxury buildings. This month, the Angelus Apartment building was sold for \$1.9 million. Rents there were \$750 for a one-bedroom and "haven't been seen in Olympia for probably 15 years," according to a city official. The new owners plan to renovate and bring rents closer to market rates; the median apartment rent is currently \$1700/month.

Living in poverty means living largely in exclusion from the mainstream culture. In an economic system driven by profit—everything that can be priced is for sale: water, education, health, elections...shelter. The market works according to the amount of money and power you control. How much money determines how well it works. Even members of the middle-class recognize that their position and their possibilities are at risk. Suicide rates, domestic violence, the opioid epidemic—the increase in homelessness—testify to this.

A social solution for a socio-economic problem

Closing the wage gap—once there was not such an enormous gap between those at the lower end of the wage scale and those at the top. It's not that we don't know this: exploding income at the top, declining union membership and wages, a minimum wage stuck at \$7.25 since and restaurant workers at \$2.13. salaries ranging around \$35,000 for retail and service jobs, work in the "gig economy," part-time and on-call jobs, reliance on debt to make ends meet. It's that the corporations driving our economy have gained so much power that their leaders so far have been able to deny directly and indirectly a meaningful share of wealth to those who produce it. The result of the malaise outlined above, affecting much of society and pushing the lease-favored out the bottom and into the street.

Provide housing outside of market forces—if we will not address the wage gap, we could address the need for housing and community. Housing built by municipalities worked up through the end of WWII, but afterwards various forces combined to segregate and starve many public housing projects. Market-oriented "replacements" like rental assistance and vouchers have failed spectacularly in recent years, with long waiting lists and no guarantee of stable rates. One or two low-income projects like the Billy Frank Apartments are exceptions rather than policy. "Tiny houses" lately attract public money, but they are temporary expedients with no prospect of reducing homelessness.

Any hope of affecting the phenomenon of homelessness depends on construction of housing that is protected from market forces—or on a structural realignment of wage and income levels to meet prices shaped by market forces. The answer to the phenomenon of homelessness must be one or the other—or better, both.

1 Commissioner Gary Edwards quoted in reference to the homeless in the May 3 *Olympian*.

Mary Jo Dolis is the penname of an Olympia resident who has lived in the same house since 1986. Her family lived in more than 15 houses in 4 states before



tem, controlled rents and more. But as deindustrialization and white flight hollowed out the city's tax base, the municipal government turned to the private bond market and the federal government to cover a mounting deficit. This assistance gave an opening for enemies of labor on Wall Street and in the federal government to attack.

In 1975, Wall Street orchestrated a capital strike, blocking the city's access to bond markets and forcing it to hand over control of its budget to an Emergency Financial Control Board made up of corporate and banking elites. Implementing a "shock treatment" of austerity that echoed policies of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, the board imposed tuition at the City University of New York, laid off thousands of public servants, hiked the subway fare and attempted to do away with rent control.

Under this dictatorship of capital, backing loans to the labor movement for cooperative development was out of the question. The role of government would now be to woo the global rich with tax cuts and luxury developments. Emblematic of this shift, even as Co-op City was fighting for state support, the city granted a young Donald Trump an unprecedented 40-year tax abatement to turn the Commodore Hotel into a Hyatt. As historian Josh-

ua Freeman put it, New York City was now Trump City...

Recovering the initiative to build

The ensuing decades saw more of the same, and today a new addition to Trump City is under construction: Hudson Yards, a luxury development meant to create investment properties for the global rich. Its towers stand in stark contrast to the nearby Penn South, union-built with city support so that garment workers could walk to work. Hudson Yards has received a 19-year tax abatement and is being funded in part by up to \$3 billion in city-issued bonds. If the development is not profitable, the city has agreed to pay the interest to bondholders out of tax revenue. In other words, while the city fails to guarantee housing for the working class, it guarantees profits for the ultra-rich.

Predictably, the developers are seeking to build as much as possible with nonunion labor, provoking a showdown with New York City's building trades. Tagged as the #CountMeIn movement, a drumbeat of job actions is intensifying at Hudson Yards, with weekly pickets and the beginnings of a guerrilla war of walkouts and slowdowns. Sadly, the trades are divided. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters

► Unions, continued on next page

The incentive—and the reality—is to build to make money, not to provide homes for people.



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How unions can solve the housing crisis

Erik Foreman

Dr. James Peter Warbasse wrote in the journal *Co-operation*, "Once the people of New York City lived in their own houses, but those days have gone. ... The houses are owned by landlords who conduct them, not for the purpose of domiciling the people in health and comfort, but for the single purpose of making money out of tenants." That was in 1919.

A forgotten strategy

A century later, things have gone from bad to worse. A quarter of US households pay more than half their income in rent. In New York City, homelessness has hit record levels.

Most activists can reel off a list of demands to address the housing crisis: rent control, community land trusts, affordable housing development. But one of the most effective strategies has been forgotten. A century ago, the labor movement in New York City planned and executed a bluntly practical solution to the problem of housing: Build it.

Today, more than 100,000 New Yorkers live in apartments built by the labor movement between 1926 and 1974, mostly through an organization called the United Housing Foundation. Roughly 40,000 still-affordable cooperative housing units—Amalgamated Houses, Concourse Village and Co-op City in the Bronx; Penn South in the heart of Manhattan; 1199 Plaza in East Harlem; Rochdale Village and Electchester in Queens; Amalgamated Warbasse in Brooklyn—stand as monuments to what an organized working class can achieve. This housing provides a bulwark against gentrification and a blueprint for ending the housing crisis. Let's look at how it all got started, how it came to an end and what it would take for labor to build again...

Destroying the tax base of a city

Since World War II, New York City's labor movement had won something approaching social democracy at a municipal level. The city government sponsored a miniature welfare state, complete with free higher education at the City University of New York, an affordable and functional subway sys-

Tenant protections are needed at state and local levels

Sarah Stockholm

Whether a renter or a homeowner, we can all celebrate the increased tenant protections Washington residents gained this legislative session. Now, the people who have been most affected by weak tenant protections—people of color, women, seniors, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, veterans, low-wage workers and families—will have additional protections to remain housed.

Recently signed into law, SB 5600 provides tenants 14 days' notice, instead of 3, when served an eviction notice. This could mean one more paycheck or the necessary time to access community support services to catch up on rent and remain housed. No one should lose their housing because they experienced an emergency or fell behind on bills one month.

Thankfully, judges can now examine the full circumstances of the late or non-payment of rent and institute payment plans with tenants instead of completing an eviction. Another bill, HB 1440 requires landlords to give 60 days' notice for rent increases, which is 30 days more time than previously, now allowing more time to make budget adjustments. The dozens of people, community organizations, unions, faith networks, and service providers that testified and advocated for this legislation know that a stable home means a stable community.

Despite these incredible wins, the work to increase tenant protections continues across the state. Some legislators chose to protect the financial interests of the few over the fundamental needs of the many. Month-to-month tenants can still be sent a 20-day notice to vacate for any reason. Because landlords don't have to provide a legitimate business reason, tenants are not protected against discrimination or retaliation.

Tenants deserve to be given a cause for eviction because housing is an essential need we all share. Further, good cause eviction policy will only affect landlords who evict tenants without a cause. If landlords have cause for eviction—non-payment of rent, broken lease, damages, illegal activity, etc.—they still have the power to evict tenants. Stable Homes Federal Way is working to advance these “good cause” tenant protections by collecting over 7,000

Yet, even in the face of the region's worse housing crisis, there is incredible resistance from lawmakers to support protections like good-cause



The Washington Community Action Network team and political director celebrate as the Senate votes to pass SB5600.

eviction that keep families and communities stably housed,” said Xochitl Maykovich, campaign manager for Stable Homes Federal Way. “Given that similar legislation did not pass the legislature even with such profound need for these protections, we felt obligated to take the fight to the ballot.”

The conversations had while collecting signatures made it clear that poor and working-class families, people of color, women and immigrants are rou-

tinely taken advantage of by slumlords; experiencing a high rate of no-cause evictions. Numerous people who are now homeless due to a no-cause eviction rejoiced when they learned they could help stop that from happening to somebody else. Federal Way city council members Martin Moore (R) and Jesse Johnson (D), teachers, union members, faith leaders and activists have been knocking on doors and collecting signatures in public spaces. Local Federal Way protections will be won because black, brown and white folks have united for stable homes just as we have for other landmark legislation at state and federal levels.

This year Washington state legislators passed critical legislation in the fight for tenant protections. What wasn't won statewide can still be won at the local level and further signal to our legislators that Washington residents want common sense reforms that address our collective need for stable housing.

Cities do not need to bear the burden of legislative inaction. Rather, cities like Federal Way, Tacoma, Olympia and Tumwater can take the necessary actions to implement additional tenant protections and support advancing them statewide in the next legislative session.

Sarah Stockholm is a community organizer and popular educator working with Washington Community Action Network at the intersections of race, class, community and legislation.

What wasn't won statewide can still be won at the local level

signatures in Federal Way by June 6. Over the past several years, community members have passed strong renter protections on the local and state levels.

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Unions

From previous page

invested in the construction of one of the luxury towers, and the union does not support the protests—though increasingly rank-and-file carpenters are joining the movement.

There is deep irony in union funds building nonunion housing that most workers will be unable to afford. Labor is quite literally investing in its own destruction.

It doesn't need to be this way. Most of the necessary conditions for unions to develop housing are in place. The city is seeking affordable housing developers for parcels of land across the boroughs. Financing is available through Low Income Housing Tax Credits and union pension funds invested in the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust. And the state still grants tax abatements for affordable housing developments.

The 40,000 units of housing built by UHF are the embers of a vision that once fired the labor movement: Build for human need, not for profit. The

working class needs housing now more than ever. Labor can build it again.

Erik Forman has been active in the labor movement for over a decade as a rank-and-file organizer, at the forefront of campaigns to unionize the US fast food industry. This article is excerpted from a much longer article that appeared in In These Times September 23/October 2018 issue. It is available on line at <http://inthesetimes.com/features/unions-housing-crisis.html>

The list of tasks and bills

When I was in elementary school, my parents had a list of tasks and bills to pay on the refrigerator (sometimes they argued about it). One day, looking at the checkmarks, I was hit with amazement that it took so much to run a house. I had a nervous thought that I might not be capable of it..

I was reminded of this years later when we rented our house to four students. It turned out that none of them had the skills to live in a house. We paid utilities, but we still needed them to take care of the trash, clean the bathroom, etc. It didn't go so well—macaroni down the sink, mold growing on the bathroom tiles, a stage constructed in the living room. Another reminder when we rented our first home in Eastern Washington to a family that had always lived in an apartment. With four kids, they were excited to have a big yard. But watering, weeding, mowing, litter patrol—those were all mysteries to our tenants.

I now wonder whether the tasks and bills haven't grown beyond my capacity: separating recycling, policing water use; pruning or removing trees, maintaining the internet connection, scheduling annual furnace and chimney check-up; keeping all the appliances functional or replacing them; trouble-shooting electrical problems; now and again new paint, a new roof, more insulation. The front-loaded mortgage payment, insurance, continually rising property tax, city utilities. I wonder sometimes about someone who's lost their home because they couldn't keep up with the list of tasks and bills. Maybe it feels at first a little like freedom?

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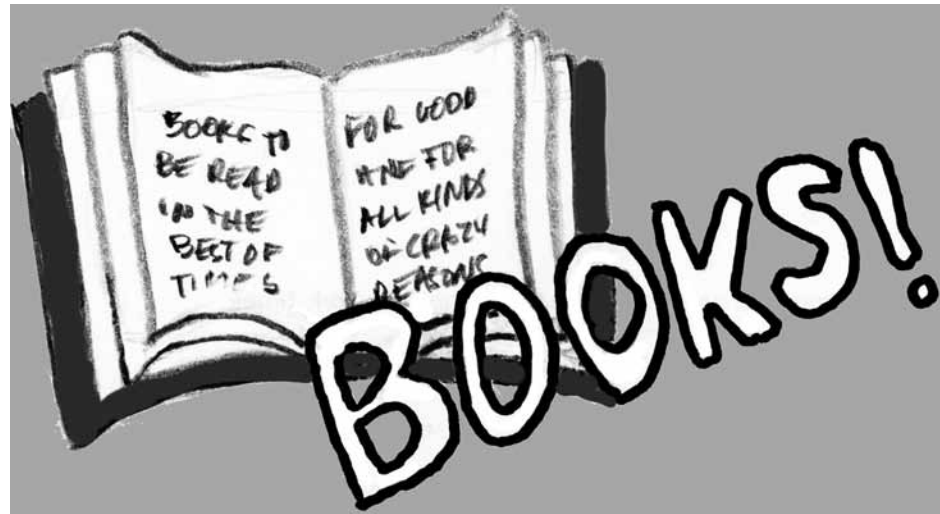
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City of Segregation

100 years of struggle for housing in Los Angeles

(Verso 2018), by Andrea Gibbons

Adam Tomes

[Ed note: Covenants preventing African-Americans, Native Americans, Filipinos and other “colored” persons from buying a home in certain areas existed in Olympia deeds until at least 1947. In the SW neighborhood, there were deeds that specified that no colored person could live in the property—with an exception for domestic servants.]

Los Angeles is a vast, sprawling, fragmented American metropolis, which has been etched into the consciousness of the modern world with the glamorous veneer of Hollywood stars alongside the stylized mean streets of South Central depicted in *Straight Outta Compton* (2015). It is a ‘check-board of desperate poverty and im-

mense wealth’ with segregation as the linchpin of racial stratification.

Some people don’t get to choose where to live

The segregation is not natural; it is not down to individual choice as to where to live, as Milton Friedman argued, but is rather a product of a ‘combination of regulation, discrimination, structural inequality and violence’. Only white Americans have the freedom to use their wealth to buy a home wherever they like, and they use that freedom to isolate themselves from others. This has led to life defining levels of inequality with more than half of black families living in the poorest quarter of neighbourhoods in consecutive generations, whilst that figure is only 7% for white families (p.2).

The nature of this book is to explore how ideology, economics, politics and space have come together in LA to ‘create this kind of segregation, to think about how these dynamics continue in new forms to the present, and above all to think about how we might do better.’ LA, despite differences from other cities, is an excellent subject for study as it is connected to other US cities through the patterns of the flow of capital and deindustrialisation at the centre with reindustrialisation in the suburbs. In the outer areas, unionised, higher skilled and higher paid work was available alongside a ‘shared history of white discrimination and violence.’ Andrea Gibbons, as a former tenant organiser in LA, is well placed to map both the history of discrimination and struggle along lines of race, class and gender.

Capital, ideology and space

Andrea Gibbons draws upon two distinct academic traditions in the writing of this book. On the one hand, there is the theory developed by authors such as Mike Davis and David Harvey that seeks to understand the ‘connections between capital, ideology and space.’ Whilst the author believes that these studies start to see where class and race intersect, she perceives them as taking capital as the starting point for analysis rather than understanding ‘that capital has been structured by race.’ This challenge to class based analysis is one that the author argues strongly throughout by drawing on the tradition of racialized geographies of poverty, power and privilege such as W. E. B. Du Bois’ *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899).

Gated communities, exclusive suburbs, gentrification

This approach throws up some deep insights such as the application of W.E.B. Du Bois’ concept of the veil.

The veil is a clear physical line of difference from whiteness and includes the idea that the veil obscures white America’s view of African Americans; this prevents them from really understanding the colour line or accepting African Americans as true Americans. This is reflected in modern America’s gated communities, exclusive suburbs and more recently the social cleansing of downtown in the waves of gentrification to create social spaces reserved for whites and white privilege. These spaces physically demarcate white America from black America and shield the wealthier white eyes from ‘any disturbing views into poverty, as well as their own complicity in its existence’.

Imagining a new future

While this intellectual challenge throws great light onto the historical oppression that shapes American cities, the arguments in the book are at their most cogent where race, gender and class are understood as interlocking oppressions. These interlocking oppressions have placed African Americans as a marginalised community, which suffers ‘brutal displacement, tragedy and death’ as a result. And the answer is one that Andrea Gibbons clearly outlines in her conclusion: ‘we need to work together to cross the color lines, imagine a new future, and theorise how we can get there as we walk.’

Adam Tomes teaches politics at York College in the UK. This is an excerpt from a review that appeared on the website of Counterfire, a socialist organisation committed to building the biggest possible movements against war, austerity and racism. Learn more at counterfire.org

A visit to Lifta

Whitney Faulkner

In 1947 my grandmother, Mamo, was 14 years old. She was in high school, in Whittier, California. 85,331 people lived in Whittier. Mamo had slumber parties with her best friends and rode her bike everywhere. She went to parties on the beach and rode horses in the hills. She worked at a little corner grocery store stocking shelves. That is the same store where she met my grandpa, papa.

In 1947, 2,550 Palestinians lived in the town of Lifta. There were coffeeshouses, shops, an elementary school, and a social club. Lifta was a suburb of Jerusalem. In 1947 the Haganah (Jewish paramilitary organization during the British Mandate) targeted Lifta and surrounding towns. In December of 1947, Mamo and her family were preparing for Christmas. She was working in the corner store stocking shelves. She was hanging out with her friends. Practicing the piano and taking dance classes.

In December of 1947, six Palestinians were killed and seven injured in a shooting at one of the coffeeshouses in Lifta. Following the shooting, Lifta was terrorized by house raids, home demolition, and the bombing of the Mukhtar’s house (the community leader). By the end of 1948, Lifta was effectively depopulated of Palestinians. David Ben-Gurion said about Lifta: “There are no strangers one hundred percent Jews.”

In 1948, Mamo was 15 years old. She lived with her family on Gregory Street in Whittier, California. She played in the streets

with her friends, riding her bike and having slumber parties. She worked in the store where she met my papa.

70 years later, 2018, I had the privilege to visit Lifta. We visited with guide Umar Al-Ghubari of Zochrot (Remembering). He opened the tour by showing the group a map of the 600 plus Palestinian villages, towns and localities ethnically cleansed during the Nakba (The Catastrophe) and subsequent years. He shared: “one goal of Zochrot is to see the unseen and to remember the Nakba.”

As we followed Umar down the road, we passed a sign from Israeli Nature

Reserves Authority. They plan to restore the “long-abandoned village “and turn it into an open-air natural history and study center that will “stress the Jewish roots of the site.”

I am able to visit Lifta, but Palestinians of Lifta are not able to come home.

Across the street there is a sign with the name Mei Naftoah in English and Hebrew. The word Lifta had been scratched off.

We continued the walk to the pools that are fed by the Wadi Al-Shami springs. Umar explained that Palestin-

ians of Lifta constructed three pools, each feeding into the other. The top pool for drinking and cooking, the second for washing, and the third to water the animals. As Umar spoke a group of young settlers played and swam in

the pool of water that was previously used for drinking and cooking.

As the walk continued, we passed homes that were falling down, and the building that was once a school. Umar stopped to point out the two houses on the top of Lifta that have been renovated and that Jewish settlers now live in. Buildings were covered in graffiti. In the Mosque, a Star of David was spray painted on the wall.



Before 1948, the village of Lifta had mosques, shops, a school, two coffeeshouses and a social club. Now, the stone houses and buildings of Lifta sit empty along the contours of the hill.

As we walk through Lifta, I think about Mamo who is 86. I know that she was raised on Gregory Street in Whittier, California. While she does not live there now, I am able to go there any time. The name of the town and street she played in as a kid is written in my language. Whittier can be found on any map of the United States.

I hold space to honor the history that we walk through, remembering that I am able to visit Lifta, but Palestinians of Lifta are not able to come home.

This is an eyewitness account by Whitney Faulkner, who was part of the Environmental Justice and Olive Harvest Delegation organized by Eyewitness Palestine. Whitney is Executive Director of the Rachel Corrie Foundation.

The Carnegie Group and how it helped guide a new era of growth

by Zena Hartung

Joining others of like mind and working on a shared goal is a hallmark of what it means to be human. In many of our pursuits, there are ready-made organizations: from Tai Chi to Rotary, we seek out others who seem to be pursuing important work, and we join in. Sometimes, if the organization does not exist, we must make it. So it was with the Carnegie Group.

The Carnegie Group grew out of some frustrations that residents of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater were experiencing at the end of the 20th century. What follows is the first of a three-part story of how this very local and spontaneous group developed and grew. We will cover successes and failures and conclude with a picture of where we are as we begin the 3rd decade of the new century.

The cast of characters

This look back begins with interviews with those who were there in the beginning; people like Jim Weber, Walt

Jorgensen, Stephen Langer, Anne Buck, Linda and Lanny Carpenter and Ken Filak. Some we could not interview were also there from the start: people like Bernie Friedman and Herb Legg, Eve Johnson, Jerry Parker and Gene Dzeidzic. This series is as much a tribute to those who have passed as to those who are still in the fight today.

Questioning growth

The Carnegie Group's origin story has several threads. According to Linda Carpenter, the Group grew out of early frustrations about being heard in opposition to plans for LOTT water utility. Jim Weber cited even earlier concerns about a large development planned in what is today protected areas at Woodland Creek. Bob Jacobs recalls success in quashing plans for a convention center in Olympia. Jerry

Parker's work showing how, in the absence of impact fees, the task of educating a growing number of students would affect school budgets, also served to motivate a change.

All the recollections share one fact: Carnegie Group began as a Monday evening meeting, and has continued as a meeting every Monday since, uninterrupted. The name comes from the earliest meetings, which were held in the Carnegie Library after it was sold and converted to a coffee shop and bookstore in the 1990s.

Minimum protocol, maximum commitment

It was a common cause that sparked this assembly every Monday, yet if you asked individuals, then as now, you'd get an array of answers. Anne Buck says it is because this group put action before protocol. To this day, there is no such thing as a "member" of Carnegie Group. All those who attend regularly are seen as equals (eventually, a board was designated, but that comes in part 2).

The meeting did ask that you put a dollar on the table—testimony to your seriousness of purpose. Jim Weber says the glue was a common belief in protecting the environment, but Bob Jacobs would say that's too narrow. Bob insists the overriding purpose is broader – good government itself. He may have a point, as most in the group have either run for office, held elected positions or worked on a campaign.

Responding to challenges

But whether the Carnegie Group is primarily a watchdog, a banner carrier, a squeaky wheel, or a whistle-blower, Carnegie Group made a name for itself, right from the beginning. Carnegie became known as a liberal response to the changes happening in Olympia and the local area. By the election of 2002, some joked that to be endorsed for local office by the Carnegie Group was the kiss of death.

Compared to today it may seem tame, but those were challenging times. Downtown Olympia had lost its way. As anticipated, new malls on the Westside and in Lacey had drawn shoppers away from downtown. JC Penney closed its downtown store. But there was a new generation of business people and they opened eateries like Crackers and Urban Onion that drew regulars to the city's center. The Voyager was new and trendy. Batdorf and Bronson moved to larger space across the street from its initial hole-in-the-wall. The newly built Washington Center began to change the feel of downtown Olympia.

Better government

Other changes were not so welcome. There was a shift in where new housing was going in, moving from inside city limits, out to the county. It seemed the developers flowed to wherever they could make money, not to where there was the greatest need. Construction of housing in a previously undeveloped area would trigger a demand for services like electric power lines, and schools and EMT. Providing those services required money from the existing tax base in support of these new developments. Such changes were the stuff of discussion at Carnegie Group, which began to draw in more people. "Growth should pay for Growth" was a rallying cry that energized the group... the bumper stickers are still to be had for \$1.00

Preserving the environment

Jim Weber points to some real Carnegie Group successes. Confronted with a large golf course and houses in 340 acres of Woodland Creek basin, the regular Monday meetings allowed opponents to track every step of the review process. Keeping up with the Environmental Impact Statement; filing timely public comments, and following up with City Manager Greg Cuio, kept pressure on to preserve the wilderness. Today that area is a County Park serving to preserve wildlife in an increasingly crowded peninsula. Steve Langer recalls that Carnegie put pressure on LOTT to develop only as quickly as population pressure, acknowledging "build it and they will come" works with more than transportation.

More to come

Who did Carnegie Group back for local office? How did they manage to put on forums and influence elections with a shifting group of followers that refused to call themselves members? And what about the Convention Center plans? Read the answers to these questions in the next installment.

Zena Hartung raised an Evergreen student and was one as well. She has long ties to Carnegie Group, Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team and League of Women Voters Thurston County.

The journey is home

For much of my life I thought that home would be found in the right place, with the right people, the right work, the right politics, the right spiritual practice, the right relationship, at the right time.

From an early age, after growing up in Los Angeles, I took to the road, traveling, working, studying, living—in Europe, the east and west coasts of the U.S., in various parts of the country, and of Vietnam, courtesy of the U.S. Army. After more than a year living and working in Central America, I stayed put for the longest spell in the Hudson River Valley of New York—long enough to raise three kids and carve out full professional and creative lives. Two years ago, kids grown, and with a surprise offer of a new life on the west coast, where it all began, I moved to Olympia.

Now, having settled in, I expected to be settled down, home in every sense of the word. But since arriving here, I've found inexhaustible challenges, discoveries, experiences, wonders, follies, new directions to explore, new paths to take. This reality, of life with its endless, unpredictable variables, has made me rethink my ideas about home being a fixed abode. For some professional wisdom on the matter, I offer the words of Matsuo Basho, Japan's greatest haiku poet, from his revered travel journal, Narrow Road to the Deep North: "The moon and sun are eternal travelers. Even the years wander on...every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home."

J O'B

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Home

At lunch in Ljubljana
Springsteen slides in softly on
the box
A rush of home

I had a home place once.
Certain—

Even though I, its loyal home-
boy, made it up

Now there is no place—home
Only the familiar warmth
of friends
And their fleeting momentary
hugs.

On this one-way ticket.

Dan Leahy
April 2013

Three simple goals: water, biomass, diversity

Paul Cereghino

Civilizations degrade ecological systems. Ours is no different (see the essay on restoration for a summary). Empowered by fossil fuels, our destructive power outpaces any potential for natural recovery. We are the global keystone species, and it isn't pretty. Our current condition is ironically both revealed and obscured by professional science and management.

On one hand, professional science is able to imagine, detect and summarize our profound modification of the surface of the earth, from our doubling of nitrogen fixation, to shifting atmospheric composition, to declining global primary productivity and biodiversity. We are surrounded by systematic detailed peer-reviewed evidence.

The language and analysis of scientific ecosystem management, on the other hand, is so arcane and inaccessible that most of our neighbors do not know the playbook, and may not even realize they are on the team. Government information workers decipher ecosystems, and weigh social and economic significance, largely in private. We do a poor job building a shared base of knowledge.

In back rooms, lawyers leverage every uncertainty in hand-to-hand combat

over risk and liability. Legalism wrestles over words and numbers. What width of forest buffer, on average over a whole landscape, lets us avoid liability for killing fish? How many cases of cancer caused by polychlorinated biphenyl ingestion can be glossed over during the next election?

Questions like these reflect the underlying pathology of our stewardship, more than reflecting the interests of people in communities. At the highest levels of leadership, we ask ourselves, “exactly how little do we have to do” or “what little more will satisfy popular demand”? A local leader does not yet need a coherent ecological platform to gain and hold power. In modern environmental management, communities are not participants in a web of life; they are “interested stakeholders.”

The truth is that we have lots of restoration projects, but very few restored watersheds. Projects are occasional, while deforestation and pollution are constant and grinding. If we do not effectively restore any one thing in particular, what are the chances of restoring the whole Salish Sea? Is ecosystem stewardship just another politicized industry and legislative product competing in the marketplace of ideas? Do we chase after symptoms while ignoring the disease?

We need some simple ways to talk about ecosystems that help us think clearly. Understanding ecosystems does not have to be complicated. The best tool does good work with the least fuss. I would propose that three measures tell us most of what we need to know about our stewardship of a watershed.

Water

What do we do with the rain? We can either capture and store rain in wetlands, vegetation and groundwater, or we can send it as a polluted flood to the sea. Water is the first fertilizer, our droughts are lengthening, and will bring more fire. We can directly observe our waste of water by walking the watershed in the rain. We could capture and store the rain and recover the functions of our cut forests with common tools, if it were not for property rights and aquatic ecosystem regulation. Learning how to protect and store the water together is our first great challenge.

Biomass

The surface of the earth is cloaked and transformed by plants and their remains. Plants create soil, and I could have just said “soil” instead of biomass, but I'd be missing the forest. Our rainforest home is among the great woody carbon reserves of the

earth, accumulating hundreds of tons per acre of mammoth tree boles and layered coarse woody debris. This biosphere is our home, and we are just little crawly things on its surface. Before we learned how to burn fossil fuels, we were already busy cutting forests, overgrazing hill-slopes, and turning soil to dust and pavement, mostly to grow food, house people, or feed smelters. Biomass mediates the water cycle and forms the structure in which diversity resides. Rebuilding biomass while feeding ourselves is our second great challenge.

Diversity

When we restore water and biomass over a large surface of the earth, we create the conditions for life. The biota around us are a legacy from a once abundant world that we either cherish or squander. Global ecological integrity is disintegrating from agricultural development, elimination of predators, over harvest of keystone species, chemical disruption, habitat destruction, and our assisted migration of diseases and pests. But evolution still works. As we destroy species, we diminish creation. As species form new communities, in search of new equilibria, in a new and changing climate, we are likely to experience millennia of instability. Whether we like it or not we are no longer in control (if we ever truly were) but we do profoundly influence the processes. Stewardship of diversity will be challenging and painful, but we can look deeply at the populations that remain and play our humble role, largely of self-restraint. Using our influence wisely to protect our evolutionary heritage is our third great challenge.

With these three goals in mind, all of us can work on our watersheds. Complexity doesn't help. Right where we live, we are either catching more rain, or less. Our biomass reserves are increasing, or decreasing. Keystone populations are expanding, or crashing. We can map our strengths and weaknesses watershed by watershed and get to work. We can see change for better or worse, outside our door, and down the street. This doesn't require scientists—it requires personal commitment. This is a simple thing. By retaining water, building biomass and protecting and restoring biodiversity at a landscape scale we can build a strong foundation for the future, whatever it brings. If we fail at these three simple tasks, than we deserve the ruin that we will have earned.

A special thanks to John Liu and his vision for the simple goals of Ecosystem Restoration Camps.

Post Script—When I say “our” watersheds, I am using the possessive primarily in the sense of our responsibility. The challenge before all others is to take responsibility for our own behaviors. Without a measure of self-discipline, all will be lost. When I ask us to consider “our watersheds” I mean ALL the watersheds from which we extract or derive our sustenance. If you buy beef from Brazil, then the Amazon is your watershed too. Once you put your hand on the balance, it cannot be undone. It's the same in our forested foothills, as disposable chopsticks, disposable packaging, and disposable housing feed the aggressive and endless clearcut in our foothill forests, reducing them to fiber factories. We cannot tend our watersheds at the expense of another, and pretend any moral foundation, nor can we adequately steward our lands where we have relinquished our sovereignty.

Marsupials

“Non-native” remarks the milky, blue-eyed lawyer whose name I don't know but who's joined our table at the pizzeria on Capitol Way, and he's sharing a story of a criminal convicted for swerving and killing a Possum.

Marsupials, the unspoken word sings round in my mouth
Possums carry babies in pouches—my unuttered thought.

“Non-native,” he continues “like grey squirrels” who weren't here when he was a kid. (a proof of belonging?) “Disgusting creatures” carrying on, unaware of my musings, “Ridiculous, he was convicted. They're not even native .” He closes his case.

So, I mention the Nutria because I know a bit about nonnative too but he's moved on, so I don't say what I know of Green English Ivy, Golden Scotch Broom, or Himalayan Blackberry, smothering the prairies and choking the woodlands, climbing the trunks of The Western Red Cedar. And brown-eyed me, and blue-eyed lawyer, and plain house sparrow we're non-native too.

I'm gone now, silently rowing names along the shore
Priest Point Park, Olympia, Mount Rainier,
and the Straits of Juan de Fuca.
Restless waters on my tongue

My mouth a pocket too full to speak
Tahoma, Squiatl, Puyallup, Nisqually, and Squaxin

O Possum

Squirrel, Salmon, Swallow

forgive me

I live here

I love you.



Kathleen Byrd

**The word Possum was borrowed from the Powhatan language (Virginia Algonquian), which became extinct in the 1790's when the speakers of the language, under duress, were forced to speak English. (Wikipedia 2018)*

A Mother’s Day call to eliminate the nuclear weapons deployed at Bangor

Leonard Eiger

Approximately thirty nuclear disarmament activists took part in a spirited rally at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor on Saturday, May 11 honoring the original antiwar message of Mothers Day, which called for the abolition of war and militarism..

Activists blocked the entrance to the Trident Submarine Base Main Gate while holding up banners that read: “Disarm Trident, Deploy Peace” and “Congress Wants \$1Trillion for Nuclear Weapons. What Will Be Left for Our Children?” Supporters stood alongside the road holding signs reading: “Abolish Nuclear Weapons” and “Our Children Deserve Better.”

State Patrol officers cited eight protesters and removed them from the roadway: Brenda McMillan of Port Townsend; Kathleen Kelly of Chicago, IL; Kit Kittredge of Quilcene; Doug Milholland of Port Townsend; Mona Lee of Seattle; Ramon Nacanaynay of Shoreline; Larry Kerschner of Centralia; and James Manista of Olympia. Bob Delastrada of Olympia was arrested by Naval Security and cited for crossing the federal (blue) line.

rested by Naval Security and cited for crossing the federal (blue) line.

Mother’s Day original purpose
In 1870, Julia Ward Howe envisioned a Mother's Day for Peace in response



to the carnage of the Civil War and other wars of her time. In that continued spirit Ground Zero Center believes that the world's children deserve better than to live under the threat of a renewed nuclear arms race and the catastrophic effects of any nuclear war. Increasing militarization and wars steal resources desperately needed to mitigate climate change and improve people's lives, while increasing the risk of nuclear annihilation.

Voices for Creative Nonviolence

follows Mother’s Day purpose
Kathy Kelly of Voices for Creative Non-violence earlier spoke at Ground Zero Center on “Deploying Love in a Permanent Warfare State.” Kelly has traveled to war zones and lived alongside the people of Afghanistan, Iraq, Gaza, Lebanon, Bosnia and Nicaragua. She was sentenced to one year in federal prison for planting corn on nuclear missile silo sites (1988-89) at Whiteman Air Force Base and spent three months in prison, in 2004, for crossing the line at Fort Benning's military

Eight of the US Navy’s fourteen Trident ballistic missile submarines are based at the Bangor Trident base, just 20 miles west of Seattle. The base is home to the largest concentration of deployed nuclear weapons in the US.

(including the new “low-yield” Trident W76-2 nuclear warhead that will be deployed on Trident submarines based at Bangor), and threatening to use nuclear weapons in potential conflicts with Russia and other nations. This is not only threatening humanity with the devastating effects of a potential nuclear war, but also diverting money and human resources from desperately needed efforts to deal with the existential threats posed by climate change. The nurturing efforts of mothers around the world would be destroyed in the brief timeframe of a nuclear war.

Largest concentration of deployed nuclear weapons near here

Eight of the US Navy’s fourteen Trident ballistic missile submarines are based at the Bangor Trident base, just 20 miles west of Seattle. The base is home to the largest concentration of deployed nuclear weapons in the US. W76-1 and W88 warheads at

Bangor are equal respectively to 100 kilotons and 455 kilotons of TNT in destructive force (dwarfing the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, which was between 13 and 18 kilotons). One submarine deployed at Bangor is equal to more than 1,400 Hiroshima sized nuclear bombs.

training school. As a war tax refuser, she has refused payment of all forms of federal income tax since 1980. Kelly and her colleagues believe the US should end all military and economic warfare and pay reparations for suffering already caused by US wars. For the past two years, Voices has helped organize vigils and forums about conflict-driven near famine conditions in Yemen and northern Africa.

Nuclear weapons modernization accelerating

Today, the US government is accelerating nuclear weapons modernization, developing new nuclear weapons

The Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action was founded in 1977. The center is on 3.8 acres adjoining the Trident base at Bangor, Washington. The Center offers the opportunity to explore the roots of violence and injustice in our world and to experience the transforming power of love through nonviolent direct action. We resist all nuclear weapons, especially the Trident ballistic missile system.



OHS students in the lead —On Friday, May 24, at 1:58, as scheduled, about ten core members of the Olympia High School Climate Action Club came out to prepare for a rally. Students across the globe have designated “Fridays for the Future” as a day to put pressure on leaders to treat climate change as the emergency it is. When school ended at 2:10, about 200 students gathered to hear seven members of the Climate Action Club give very passionate 2-minute speeches protesting inaction on climate change.



Follow Eric J Garcia at El Machete Illustrated @instagram or friend Eric J Garcia on facebook.

Summer Solstice Peace Gathering

Joining our hearts with the World Peace and Prayer Day

We come together as
All nations, all peoples, one purpose
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Come Join Us Friday, June 21st, 10am to 6:30pm

1604 Union Ave. SE Olympia
(schedule is still be created!)

10:00 – 11:00 – Opening, Blessing of the Space
12:00 – Singing Traditions
4:30 – 6:30 – Centering Prayer/Meditation
(4 – 25 minute sits)

Come for 5 minutes or all day

Grounds, gardens, shrine and meditation house open to the public Persons of all traditions – and no tradition – welcome
For more info on the World Peace and Prayer Day go to:
<https://gcnativeamericancoalition.com/wppd2019>

Sponsored by Brigid’s Well, a community devoted to contemplative practice, while mindful of the needs of our Earth, and those who are poor and marginalized.

La entrega de Assange

Nueva muestra de sumision de Moreno

Juventud Socialista
del Ecuador

Quito, 11 de abril de 2019. Ante el retiro del asilo político y posterior detención del periodista Julián Assange en Londres-Reino Unido. La juventud socialista del Ecuador expresa su total rechazo a la medida tomada por Lenin Moreno. Lo que se quiere presentar como supuesta acción soberana del estado ecuatoriano constituye a todas luces un acto de retaliación política y de indefensión en términos de los derechos humanos. Assange que recibiera la ciudadanía ecuatoriana en

diciembre pasado, ha sido expuesto y entregado por el propio estado que lo considera connacional.

El retiro del asilo no puede ser leído como un acto exclusivamente administrativo-diplomático. En el escenario global, los gestos juegan un papel preponderante y el gobierno ecuatoriano debía completar un conjunto de ellos para volver al regazo de la sumisión multilateral. No es casualidad que el boicot a UNASUR, en re conocimiento a Guaidó en Venezuela y la entrega de Assange se den en el marco del FMI as país . Esta gestualidad le costara caro

al Ecuador, y reafirma el resquebrajamiento de su frágil discurso. En el país han vuelto a gobernar la embajada americana, las cámaras de comercio, y la alta sociedad civil que han acumulado sed de venganza durante los últimos años.

Para el campo popular y de la izquierda no puede haber lugar para medias tintas y reduccionismos presos de la coyuntura. La defensa de los derechos humanos y de la resistencia ante las contemporáneas formas de imperialismo deben ser causas ineludicables de nuestra lucha; el asilo a Assange representaba ambas cosas. El gobierno ecuatoriano ha dado una nueva muestra de caminar en sentido contrario y de exponerse vergonzosamente ante la comunidad internacional. Moreno, su canciller Valencia y el entorno de

consejeros presidenciales serán responsables directos de lo que suceda con Assange en adelante.

Retumban hoy con fuerza las palabras del viejo luchador Alfaro precursor del liberalismo popular en el Ecuador, quien expresara que “ si en lugar de afrontar el peligro hubiera yo cometido la vileza de pasarme al enemigo habríamos tenido paz, mucha paz, la paz del coloniaje”. Como organización juvenil de izquierda, nos sumamos a todas las acciones que levanten la voz de protesta y evidencien la servil actuación del gobierno ecuatoriano. Hacemos, además, un llamado a las fuerzas progresistas a nivel mundial a denunciar públicamente lo sucedido y a permanecer en alerta ante posibles nuevas agresiones en este caso.

The delivery of Julian Assange

A new demonstration of Moreno’s submission

Socialist Youth of Ecuador

Quito, April 11, 2019. The Socialist Youth of Ecuador expresses its total rejection of the measure taken by Lenin Moreno in the withdrawal of political asylum from the journalist Julian Assange leading to his subsequent arrest in London. What is presented as an alleged sovereign action by the Ecuadorian state is clearly an act of political retaliation and defenselessness in terms of human rights. Assange,

who received Ecuadorian citizenship last December, has been exposed and handed over by the very state that considers him to be a national.

The withdrawal of asylum cannot be read as an exclusively administrative-diplomatic act. On the global stage, gestures play a powerful role and the Ecuadorian government had to complete a set of them in order to regain its place in the lap of multilateral submission. It is no coincidence that the boycott of UNASUR, the recognition of Guaidó

in Venezuela, and the surrender of Assange, occurred within the framework

Moreno ...will be directly responsible for what happens to Assange in the future.

of the return of the IMF to the country. This gesture will cost Ecuador dearly, and confirms the cracking of its fragile political discourse. Inside the country,

the American embassy, the chambers of commerce, and high civil society have returned to rule with an accumulated thirst for revenge.

For the popular camp and the left there can be no place for half measures and reductionisms. We must be unwavering in the defense of human rights and resistance to contemporary forms of imperialism. The grant of asylum to Assange represented both. The Ecuadorian government has given a new indication that it is walking in the opposite direction, exposing itself shamefully before the international community. Moreno, Chancellor Valencia and the group of presidential advisers will be directly responsible for what happens to Assange in the future.

The words of the old fighter Alfaro, a forerunner of popular liberalism in Ecuador, resonate powerfully today: “if instead of facing danger I had committed the vileness of switching to the enemy camp, we would have had peace, much peace, the peace of colonialism.” As a youth organization of the left, we join every action that raises the voice of protest and reveals the servile performance of the Ecuadorian government. We also call on progressive forces worldwide to publicly denounce what happened and to remain alert for possible new aggressions in this case.

National Directorate
Socialist Youth of Ecuador



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End the bombing of Yemen

President Trump's veto of a bill directing him to withdraw support for the war on Yemeni people confirms the President's willingness to make the American people accomplices in delivering death and destruction to people in a land no American gives a damn about. The phrase “worst humanitarian crisis in the world” has lost its power as it is repeated and repeated and yet we do nothing different, nothing changes in our hearts or our country's policies. A collection of disturbing photographs might still be able to convey some of the losses we are responsible for. https://www.vice.com/en_uk/article/5979p3/yemeni-photographers

As the 2020 election draws closer, US involvement in Yemen as well as the broader debate around congressional war powers will be important foreign policy litmus tests for candidates hoping to differentiate themselves from a president who has continued our role as assistants to the Saudi government in five years of dropping bombs on the people of Yemen.



Photo—Lockheed Martin's sign gets sprayed painted with truth

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Part of being a welcoming community means ensuring our newest neighbors have stable, safe, and healthy housing. By contributing to the IRC in Seattle's Welcome Home Fund, you can help refugees and survivors of trafficking maintain housing as they rebuild their lives in Washington State. For many families, just a few hundred dollars in short-term rental assistance can mean the difference between homelessness and maintaining housing stability – and that stability is key to helping people heal and achieve their goals. This flexible fund will allow IRC case managers to address families' housing needs while they transition into new jobs, undergo medical treatment, find safety from abuse or exploitation, or perhaps just need a little more time to settle into their new community.

HOW TO HELP

1. Donate

Make a tax-deductible donation at bit.ly/IRCWelcomeHome. Everyone who donates by 6/26/19 is invited to an end-of-campaign celebration!

2. Create your own fundraiser

Create a fundraising page at bit.ly/IRCWelcomeHome and encourage friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors to contribute. Find creative fundraising ideas on the site. Special thank-you gifts for those who raise \$100+ or \$500+!

3. Spread the word

We understand not everyone is in a position to donate. You can help by spreading the word about the campaign among your networks!



The International Rescue Committee provides opportunities for refugees, asylees, victims of human trafficking, survivors of torture, and other immigrants to thrive in America. The Seattle office has embarked on a special effort this spring to build a housing support fund. This will allow them to help more individuals and families to rebuild their lives, and reach the end of their journey from harm to home.

Works In Progress



This issue: where we find a home