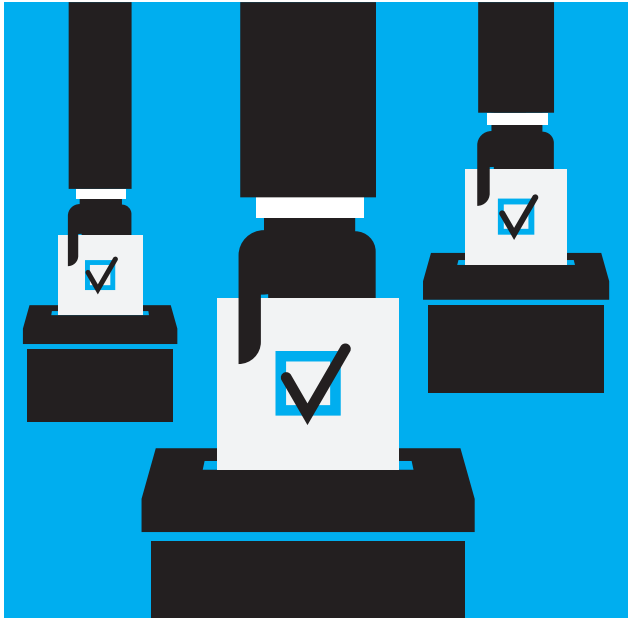


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PROPOSITION 51 - SCHOOL BONDS. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Funding for K-12 School and Community College Facilities. Initiative Statutory Amendment.

Authorizes \$9 billion in general obligation bonds: \$3 billion for new construction and \$3 billion for modernization of K-12 public school facilities; \$1 billion for charter schools and vocational education facilities; and \$2 billion for California Community Colleges facilities. Bars amendment to existing authority to levy developer fees to fund school facilities, until new construction bond proceeds are spent or December 31, 2020, whichever is earlier. Bars amendment to existing State Allocation Board process for allocating school construction funding, as to these bonds. Appropriates money from the General Fund to pay off bonds.

\$: State General Fund costs of \$17.6 billion to pay off principal (\$9 billion) and interest (\$8.6 billion) on bonds over a period of 35 years. Annual payments would average \$500 million. Annual payments would be relatively low in the initial and final few years and somewhat higher in the intervening years.

PROPOSITION 52 - STATE FEES ON HOSPITALS. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Federal Medi-Cal Matching Funds. Initiative Statutory and Constitutional Amendment.

Increases required vote to two-thirds for the Legislature to amend a certain existing law that imposes fees on hospitals (for purpose of obtaining federal Medi-Cal matching funds) and that directs those fees and federal matching funds to hospital-provided Medi-Cal health care services, to uncompensated care provided by hospitals to uninsured patients, and to children's health coverage. Eliminates law's ending date. Declares that law's fee proceeds shall not be considered revenues for purposes of applying state spending limit or determining required education funding.

\$: State savings from increased revenues that offset state costs for children's health coverage of around \$500 million beginning in 2016-17 (half-year savings) to over \$1 billion annually by 2019-20, likely growing between 5 percent to 10 percent annually thereafter. Increased revenues to support state and local public hospitals of around \$90 million beginning in 2016-17 (half-year) to \$250 million annually by 2019-20, likely growing between 5 percent to 10 percent annually thereafter.

PROPOSITION 53 - REVENUE BONDS. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE NO)

Statewide Voter Approval. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

Requires statewide voter approval before any revenue bonds can be issued or sold by the state for projects that are financed, owned, operated, or managed by the state or any joint agency created by or including the state, if the bond

amount exceeds \$2 billion. Prohibits dividing projects into multiple separate projects to avoid statewide voter approval requirement.

\$: The fiscal effect on state and local governments is unknown and would vary by project. It would depend on (1) the outcome of projects brought before voters, (2) the extent to which the state relied on alternative approaches to the projects or alternative financing methods for affected projects, and (3) whether those methods have higher or lower costs than revenue bonds.

PROPOSITION 54 - LEGISLATURE. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Legislation and Proceedings. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.

Prohibits Legislature from passing any bill unless it has been in print and published on the Internet for at least 72 hours before the vote, except in cases of public emergency. Requires the Legislature to make audiovisual recordings of all its proceedings, except closed session proceedings, and post them on the Internet. Authorizes any person to record legislative proceedings by audio or video means, except closed session proceedings. Allows recordings of legislative proceedings to be used for any legitimate purpose, without payment of any fee to the State.

\$: Increased costs to state government of potentially \$1 million to \$2 million initially and about \$1 million annually for making additional legislative proceedings available in audiovisual form on the Internet.

PROPOSITION 55 - TAXES (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Tax Extension to Fund Education and Healthcare. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

Extends by twelve years the temporary personal income tax increases enacted in 2012 on earnings over \$250,000 (for single filers; over \$500,000 for joint filers; over \$340,000 for heads of household). Allocates these tax revenues 89% to K-12 schools and 11% to California Community Colleges. Allocates up to \$2 billion per year in certain years for healthcare programs. Bars use of education revenues for administrative costs, but provides local school governing boards discretion to decide, in open meetings and subject to annual audit, how revenues are to be spent. \$: Increased state revenues annually from 2019 through 2030—likely in the \$5 billion to \$11 billion range initially—with amounts varying based on stock market and economic trends. Increased revenues would be allocated under constitutional formulas to schools and community colleges, budget reserves and debt payments, and health programs, with remaining funds available for these or other state purposes.

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Editors Letter

And now we choose our leadership - election day is upon us. As ever, we are told that this is the most important election in our lifetimes - which is always true. Each election moves us toward a new future; leaders either choose to lead or not to lead. The movement of people is what pushes our

leaders; elections become benchmarks as to how far we have progressed, rather than an endpoint to be achieved.

Because of this last year's campaign, important issues have moved in a progressive direction. Income inequality has taken center stage - incorporating a new minimum wage, the shutting down of trade

Your vote sets the starting line

deals and moving toward a public health care option. The treatment of African-Americans in police custody is getting deserved attention. And California initiatives on the ballot generally reflect progressive actions that go beyond what our Democrat-dominated government could pass. We are moving slowly forward.

And yet, it would be easy to become impatient at the pace of change. I have edited Connections for the

past 21 years and am sad to report that the issues we face today are not that different from those of the Bill Clinton era. That being said, it would be wrong to say that we have not made progress.

Through our collective perseverance, it is indisputable that we are closer to our goals today than we have been at any time in these past 21 years. Through the efforts of Wikileaks, Snowden, and Manning, we have a greater understanding

of how the world works. And through the Black Lives Matter, Occupy Wall Street and the Sanders movements, we see how we can use that information to effect change. Part of that change starts on November 8 - so, as part of our imperfect forward movement, please vote.

The hard work will continue November 9; voting will determine where we place the starting line. Happy Autumn.

Conversations that open hearts and minds

ANDREW SILVA

"We, the people, need to stop talking about them and start talking with each other. We need to start talking with each other in a concerted effort to restore that sense of "us" on which democracy depends." - Parker J. Palmer

I am sure that I am not alone in saying that I am unfamiliar and uncomfortable with the level of despair, pessimism, hurt, and anger I have experienced lately. Hateful rhetoric has been normalized by our media and each new shocking turn of events seems to deepen wounds that, sometimes, seem fatal. So, what are we to do as citizens of a country where we seem to have more problems than ever relating to one another in any way?

It is easy to discount our system of American democracy when we consider the dialogue happening in our presidential campaign, but I don't think that's where the true heart of our democracy lies. For me, it resides in the notion that every human life contains value and hope, and that, at our innermost essence, we all long for a society that is just, equal, and peaceful. I think the ideal exercise of democracy does not happen between two presidential campaigns or in the media. At its truest, I believe democracy happens when we engage in open, respectful,

but challenging conversations with our friends, families, neighbors, and elected officials.

It's in these conversations, when we open our hearts and minds to the possibility that the person who disagrees with us is not motivated by malice and we explore the tensions between our beliefs, that our society progresses. These conversations are often difficult and emotional, but they are essential as we attempt to mend our broken society and begin to address systemic inequities within our political and economic systems. Closing our eyes to those who disagree with us and pretending they do not exist is only going to result in stagnation, pain, and polarization.

I take solace and inspiration in the words of Parker J. Palmer. At Annual Meeting in 2014, he told us, "Civil discourse, rightly understood, requires the confidence that if we can hold our differences creatively, our hearts and minds will be open to new ways of seeing and solving problems together." The idea of holding differences creatively, not minimizing them or pretending they do not exist, is essential as we work to create the world we seek.

Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation release, http://fcnl.org/blog/2c/conversations_hearts_minds/

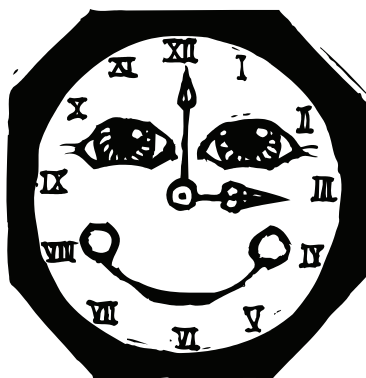
Time for real change

Here we are again, another presidential election where the mainstream debate centers around voting for the lesser of two evils. Why is it not clear that Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump are nothing more than two candidates whose difference is the mere facade with which they have donned themselves? Beneath their gilding, Donald and Hillary are no heroes of the common people; they serve the interests of the power elite while craftily manipulating the people whom they purport to help. To vote for Hillary is to vote for Donald, and to vote for Donald is to vote for Hillary. But unfortunately, one often hears the contention that we cannot afford Trump in the White House just as we could not have afforded Bush for all those eight years, and therefore, one must vote for Hillary Clinton to avoid the horror of Trump, but had Obama been wrapped in a Republican cloak while having been the same with all his policies and decisions, it would be incontrovertible that he has been an extension of Bush, and we could not

have afforded him for the previous eight years.

Like any deceptive sales pitch, it lies in the packaging, and Hillary (like Obama) is a master of disguise. Yet where is the call to cut military spending by at least 50%; to establish single payer universal health care; to democratize the Federal Reserve (a private entity which controls the U.S. money supply); to abolish student debt and corporate personhood? On these matters, the bombastic rhetoric of Donald-Hillary is mute. Only Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein calls for all these (and much more). And the power elite will see to it that Jill, the things which she advocates, and the movement for democracy will be suppressed and destroyed. Instead, they will give us a choice between two cookies: one laced with mercury and other laced with lead. It is time to say 'no, thanks,' and bake our own cookies.

VINH PHAM



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"The Peace and Justice Network is a nonprofit educational organization committed to the vision of a world in which the equality of all persons is achieved, basic needs are met, conflict is resolved nonviolently, and the earth's resources are shared responsibly for the well-being of all her inhabitants and all future generations."



NOVEMBER BALLOT MEASURES

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

PROPOSITION 56 - TAXES (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Cigarette Tax to Fund Healthcare, Tobacco Use Prevention, Research, and Law Enforcement. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.

Increases cigarette tax by \$2.00 per pack, with equivalent increase on other tobacco products and electronic cigarettes containing nicotine. Allocates revenues primarily to increase funding for existing healthcare programs; also for tobacco use prevention/control programs, tobacco-related disease research and law enforcement, University of California physician training, dental disease prevention programs, and administration. Excludes these revenues from Proposition 98 funding requirements. If tax causes decreased tobacco consumption, transfers tax revenues to offset decreases to existing tobacco-funded programs and sales tax revenues. Requires biennial audit.

\$: Net increase in excise tax revenues in the range of \$1.1 billion to \$1.6 billion annually by 2017-18, with revenues decreasing slightly in subsequent years. The majority of funds would be used for payments to health care providers. The remaining funds would be used for a variety of specified purposes, including tobacco-related prevention and cessation programs, law enforcement programs, medical research on tobacco-related diseases, and early childhood development programs.

PROPOSITION 57 - CRIMINAL SENTENCES. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Juvenile Criminal Proceedings and Sentencing. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.

Allows parole consideration for persons convicted of nonviolent felonies upon completion of full prison term for primary offense, as defined. Authorizes Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to award sentence credits for rehabilitation, good behavior, or educational achievements. Requires Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to adopt regulations to implement new parole and sentence credit provisions and certify they enhance public safety. Provides juvenile court judges shall make determination, upon prosecutor motion, whether juveniles age 14 and older should be prosecuted and sentenced as adults.

\$: Net state savings that could range from the tens of millions of dollars to the low hundreds of millions of dollars annually primarily due to a reduction in the prison population from additional paroles granted and credits earned. Net county costs that could range from the millions to tens of millions of dollars annually, declining to a few million dollars after initial implementation of the measure.

PROPOSITION 58 - EDUCATION (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Repeals Prop 227 of 1998, thus allowing for bilingual education in public schools

PROPOSITION 59 - CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND FEDERAL ISSUES (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE

WOULD BE YES)

Indicates whether voters approve of California State Legislators using what influence they have over federal issues to overturn Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission and "to make clear that corporations should not have the same constitutional rights as human beings."

PROPOSITION 60 - ADULT FILMS. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Condoms. Health Requirements. Initiative Statute.

Requires performers in adult films to use condoms during filming of sexual intercourse. Requires producers of adult films to pay for performer vaccinations, testing, and medical examinations related to sexually transmitted infections. Requires producers to obtain state health license at beginning of filming and to post condom requirement at film sites. Imposes liability on producers for violations, on certain distributors, on performers if they have a financial interest in the violating film, and on talent agents who knowingly refer performers to noncomplying producers. Permits state, performers, or any state resident to enforce violations.

\$: Potentially reduced state and local tax revenue of millions or tens of millions of dollars per year. Likely state costs of a few million dollars annually to administer the law. Possible ongoing net costs or savings for state and local health and human services programs. (15-0004.) (Full Text)

PROPOSITION 61 - STATE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PURCHASES. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Pricing Standards. Initiative Statute.

Prohibits state agencies from paying more for a prescription drug than the lowest price paid for the same drug by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Applies to any program where the state is the ultimate payer for a drug, even if the state does not purchase the drug directly. Exempts certain purchases of prescription drugs funded through Medi-Cal. Fiscal impact:

\$: It is the opinion of the Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance that the measure, if adopted, may result in a substantial net change in state or local finances.

PROPOSITION 62 - DEATH PENALTY. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Initiative Statute.

Repeals death penalty as maximum punishment for persons found guilty of murder and replaces it with life imprisonment without possibility of parole. Applies retroactively to persons already sentenced to death. States that persons found guilty of murder and sentenced to life without possibility of parole must work while in prison as prescribed by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Increases to 60% the portion of wages earned by persons sentenced to life without the possibility of parole that may be applied to any victim restitution fines or orders against them. \$: Net reduction in state and local government costs of potentially around \$150 million annually within a few years due to the elimination of

the death penalty.

PROPOSITION 63 - FIREARMS. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Ammunition Sales. Initiative Statute.

Prohibits possession of large-capacity ammunition magazines, and requires their disposal by sale to dealer, destruction, or removal from state. Requires most individuals to pass background check and obtain Department of Justice authorization to purchase ammunition. Requires most ammunition sales be made through licensed ammunition vendors and reported to Department of Justice. Requires lost or stolen firearms and ammunition be reported to law enforcement. Prohibits persons convicted of stealing a firearm from possessing firearms. Establishes new procedures for enforcing laws prohibiting firearm possession by felons and violent criminals. Requires Department of Justice to provide information about prohibited persons to federal National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

\$: Increased state costs in the tens of millions of dollars annually related to regulating ammunition sales, likely offset by various regulatory fees authorized by the measure. Increase in court and law enforcement costs, not likely to exceed the tens of millions of dollars annually, related to removing firearms from prohibited persons as part of court sentencing proceedings. These costs could be offset to some extent by fees authorized by the measure. Potential increase in state and local correctional costs, not likely to exceed the low millions of dollars annually, related to new and increased penalties.

PROPOSITION 64 - MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Initiative Statute.

Legalizes marijuana and hemp under state law. Designates state agencies to license and regulate marijuana industry. Imposes state excise tax on retail sales of marijuana equal to 15% of sales price, and state cultivation taxes on marijuana of \$9.25 per ounce of flowers and \$2.75 per ounce of leaves. Exempts medical marijuana from some taxation. Establishes packaging, labeling, advertising, and marketing standards and restrictions for marijuana products. Allows local regulation and taxation of marijuana. Prohibits marketing and advertising marijuana to minors. Authorizes resentencing and destruction of records for prior marijuana convictions.

\$: Net reduced costs ranging from tens of millions of dollars to potentially exceeding \$100 million annually to state and local governments related to enforcing certain marijuana-related offenses, handling the related criminal cases in the court system, and incarcerating and supervising certain marijuana offenders. Net additional state and local tax revenues potentially ranging from the high hundreds of millions of dollars to over \$1 billion annually related to the production and sale of marijuana. Most of these funds would be required to be spent for specific purposes such as substance use disorder education, prevention, and treatment.

PROPOSITION 65 - CARRY-OUT BAGS. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE YES)

Charges. Initiative Statute.

Redirects money collected by grocery and certain other retail stores through sale of carry-out bags, whenever any state law bans free distribution of a particular kind of carry-out bag and mandates the sale of any other kind of carry-out bag. Requires stores to deposit bag sale proceeds into a special fund administered by the Wildlife Conservation Board to support specified categories of environmental projects. Provides for Board to develop regulations implementing law.

\$: If voters uphold the state's current carryout bag law, redirected revenues from retailers to the state, potentially in the several tens of millions of dollars annually. Revenues would be used for grants for certain environmental and natural resources purposes. If voters reject the state's current carryout bag law, likely minor fiscal effects.

PROPOSITION 66 - DEATH PENALTY. (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE NO)

Procedures. Initiative Statute.

Changes procedures governing state court appeals and petitions challenging death penalty convictions and sentences. Designates superior court for initial petitions and limits successive petitions. Imposes time limits on state court death penalty review. Requires appointed attorneys who take noncapital appeals to accept death penalty appeals. Exempts prison officials from existing regulation process for developing execution methods. Authorizes death row inmate transfers among California state prisons. States death row inmates must work and pay victim restitution. States other voter approved measures related to death penalty are null and void if this measure receives more affirmative votes.

\$: Increased state costs that could be in the tens of millions of dollars annually for several years related to direct appeals and habeas corpus proceedings, with the fiscal impact on such costs being unknown in the longer run. Potential state correctional savings that could be in the tens of millions of dollars annually.

PROPOSITION 67 - PLASTIC BAGS (A PROGRESSIVE CHOICE WOULD BE NO)

Referendum to Overturn Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags.

If signed by the required number of registered voters and timely filed with the Secretary of State, this petition will place on the statewide ballot a challenge to a state law previously approved by the Legislature and the Governor. The challenged law must then be approved by a majority of voters at the next statewide election to go into effect. The law prohibits grocery and certain other retail stores from providing single-use bags but permits sale of recycled paper bags and reusable bags.

Source: Alex Padilla, California Secretary of State 1500 11th Street, Sacramento, California 95814 (916) 653-6814



Discouraging protest vote, Sanders says: elect Clinton—then mobilize



LAUREN MCCAULEY

Reiterating why he thinks it is crucial for the future of the country, as well as the planet, that Republican nominee Donald Trump not be elected U.S. president, former Democratic candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders called on his supporters Friday to "think hard" before casting a protest vote.

"Let us elect Hillary Clinton as president and that day after let us mobilize millions of people around the progressive agenda which was passed in the Democratic platform." —Sen. Bernie Sanders "Look, I was a third-party candidate. I began my career running as a third party, getting 2 percent and then 1 percent," Sanders said on /MSNBC/'s "Morning Joe." "I'm the longest serving independent in the history of the U.S. Congress, but I think that before you cast a protest vote, because [Hillary] Clinton or Trump will be president, think hard about it. This is not a governor's race. It's not a state legislative race. This is the presidency of the United States."

The remarks were made one day after new polling found that roughly a third of likely voters aged 18-29 are considering voting for a third party candidate. Sanders said that he understands that voters are "not enamored" with their choices, but emphasized

the importance of looking "at the issues."

"If you are a working person, do you really think that billionaires need a large tax break? Which is what Trump is proposing. If you are an ordinary American who listens to science, do you think it's a good idea that the President of the United States rejects science and says that climate change is a hoax?" he asked. "I think that if you look at the issues—raising minimum wage, building infrastructure, expanding healthcare—Clinton, by far, is the superior candidate."

Sanders said he hopes that, ultimately, a rejection of the bigotry that has been "the cornerstone of Trump's campaign" will deliver voters, particularly young voters, to Clinton.

"You can disagree with Clinton on this and Trump on that, but...this country has spent...hundreds of years fighting against racism and sexism," he said. "To have that debate again—young people do not want to see that, they are way beyond that. They don't want to think we're blaming Muslims and Mexicans for our problems. I think that will bring a lot of those people around."

"And I would say to those people out there who are thinking of the protest vote, think about what the country looks like and whether you're comfortable with four years of a Trump presidency," he continued. "Stay

focused on the issues that are relevant to your life."

"And I would suggest to those people, let us elect Hillary Clinton as president and that day after let us mobilize millions of people around the progressive agenda which was passed in the Democratic platform." Earlier, he appeared on/CNN/'s "New Day" and similarly emphasized that "the only way that we ever make real change in this country is when people come together at the grassroots level." And, he noted, the only way that the progressive agenda has a shot at being implemented is with Clinton at the helm and that grassroots force as her guide.

"The day after Hillary Clinton, as I hope, is elected president," he vowed, "I will do everything I can to sit down with her and say, President-elect Clinton, this is what the Democratic platform is about. We worked together. Let's start implementing. Raising the minimum wage. Public colleges and universities tuition free. Transforming our energy, creating millions of jobs rebuilding our infrastructure. Taking on Wall Street. Let's get to work representing working families."

Source: Common Dreams 9/16/16 <http://www.commondreams.org/>

League of women voters launches great new online voter guide

The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund has launched Voter's Edge California (<http://votersedge.org/ca>), a comprehensive, nonpartisan online guide to elections covering federal, state, and local races in the state of California. As the November election gets closer, check in to see exactly what will be on your ballot.

Using Voter's Edge California, voters can:

- Access their full, personalized ballot by entering their address.
- Get in-depth information on candidates, measures, and who supports them.
- View candidate biographies, top priorities, answers to questions, photos, policy videos, endorsements, and detailed information about who funds their campaigns.
- Browse unbiased explanations of ballot measures; find out who supports, opposes, and funds them.
- Check where, when, and how to vote, including information on their local polling locations.
- Keep track of their choices to make voting easier.
- Share information about the election with friends and family.
- Access a Spanish language version of the website.

How does it work?

Go to <http://votersedge.org/ca>. Enter your zip code and your street address to access your complete ballot. Your

address information is confidential. We are nonpartisan, nonprofit, and do not sell information. Privacy policy.

WHY USE VOTER'S EDGE CALIFORNIA?

We launched a prototype of the voter guide in California for the 2014 election, it received more than 725,000 visits—about 10% of the number of Californians who cast ballots in the election.



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Will debates inject ideas into election coverage? that's debatable

JANINE JACKSON

After weeks of watching media rehash Clinton and Trump campaign talking points of the day, Americans can be forgiven for wanting to see some ideas injected into coverage of the presidential election. For some, debates are a natural opportunity to possibly pull candidates off script, force them to answer questions they didn't write themselves. But, activists are saying, debates that include only the two major party candidates are far less likely to do that.

As FAIR founder Jeff Cohen notes in a recent column, the Commission for Presidential Debates that runs the show, though sometimes mistakenly described as "nonpartisan," is in fact vehemently bipartisan -- really a sort of corporation run by the two major parties, and funded by powerful interests like oil and gas, pharmaceuticals and finance. CPD rules, Cohen says, don't aim so much at eliminating "nonviable" candidates as preventing outsiders from ever becoming viable.

In charge of debates since the 1980s, the CPD makes no bones about its intent to use its role to secure a Republican/Democrat duopoly. So much so that when they took over fully in 1988, the League of Women Voters, which had been running debates, pulled its sponsorship, saying, "The demands of the two campaign organizations would perpetrate a fraud on the American voter."

Describing the deal that party chairs Frank Fahrenkopf and Paul Kirk had worked out as a "closed-door masterpiece," League President Nancy Neuman said, "It has become clear to us that the candidates' organizations aim to add debates to their list of campaign-trail charades devoid of substance, spontaneity and honest answers to

tough questions. The League has no intention of becoming an accessory to the hoodwinking of the American public."

Contrast that statement with that of Paul Kirk, now CPD chairman emeritus. Asked about broadening debates beyond the two major party candidates -- to include, perhaps, Green Party's Jill Stein and Libertarian Gary Johnson, who will be on the ballot in nearly every state -- Kirk scoffed, "It's a matter of entertainment vs. the serious question of who would you prefer to be president of the United States."

Just recently, the Commission announced that the threshold for inclusion is based on public opinion -- that's to say, public opinion polls. Candidates must get 15 percent in polls conducted by five national organizations the group names. But there again, as journalist and activist Sam Hussein pointed out, the polls themselves have a way of tamping down interest in independent and third-party candidates. The question they ask is generally a variant of "if the election were held today, for whom would you vote?" -- which is subtly, but importantly, different from asking people open-endedly who they want to be president. As it is, these polls sort of replicate the bind the voter is already in -- especially at a time when record high numbers of people call themselves "independents," and in a race in which many voters' main reason for supporting one major party candidate is that they are not the other.

Of course, debates are only as enlightening as the questions -- and the follow-ups to those questions -- from moderators. And who will those be? That, too, is for the CPD to decide. An August 24 op-ed in the Washington Post, from Fusion's Alexis Madrigal and Dodai Stewart, notes that in 2012, all four moderators were white

people over 55, and, well, that just isn't what America looks like.

"Young adults between 18 and 33 are the most racially diverse generation in American history," they write: "Forty-three percent are non-white. Large numbers...date outside their race. They believe in a gender spectrum. About 68 percent of those young, non-white people believe government should provide healthcare for all."

Young people are also less likely to vote. "Could it be because they don't see themselves as important to the electoral process? Could it be because they're not included in the important conversations?" Opening up presidential debates is by no means a solution to an electoral process that

leaves many people feeling frustrated, angry and voiceless. Keeping those debates narrow and insular -- and then pretending they reflected public concerns -- is, however, most certainly part of the problem.

Janine Jackson is FAIR's program director and and producer/host of FAIR's syndicated radio show "CounterSpin." She contributes frequently to FAIR's newsletter Extra!, and co-edited /The FAIR Reader: An Extra! Review of Press and Politics in the '90s/ (Westview Press).

Source: Truthout 9/6/16 <http://www.truth-out.org/>

It's time: broad progressive coalition launches new push for public option

DEIRDRE FULTON

In what's being described as a "2016 debate changer," a broad coalition of progressive lawmakers and organizations launched a new push for a national public health insurance option. With a congressional resolution backed by a grassroots campaign, "this is the most significant healthcare push by Democrats since the passage of Obamacare," said Stephanie Taylor, co-founder of the Progressive Change Campaign Committee (PCCC), which is leading a coalition of groups that will engage millions of Americans this week in support of the effort.

The resolution is being led in the Senate by Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), and Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), as well as 22 other original co-sponsors. It lays out a clear case for a public option--citing persistent health disparities and 31 million underinsured under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), as well as the proven cost-effectiveness of public programs like Medicare--and states:

"Resolved, that the Senate supports efforts to build on the Affordable Care Act by ensuring that, in addition to the coverage options provided by private insurers, every American has access to a public health insurance option which, when established, will strengthen competition, improve affordability for families by reducing premiums and increasing choices, and save American taxpayers billions of dollars."

A 2015 poll showed overwhelming support among 2016 likely voters for such a program, and both Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton and President Barack Obama have recently come out in

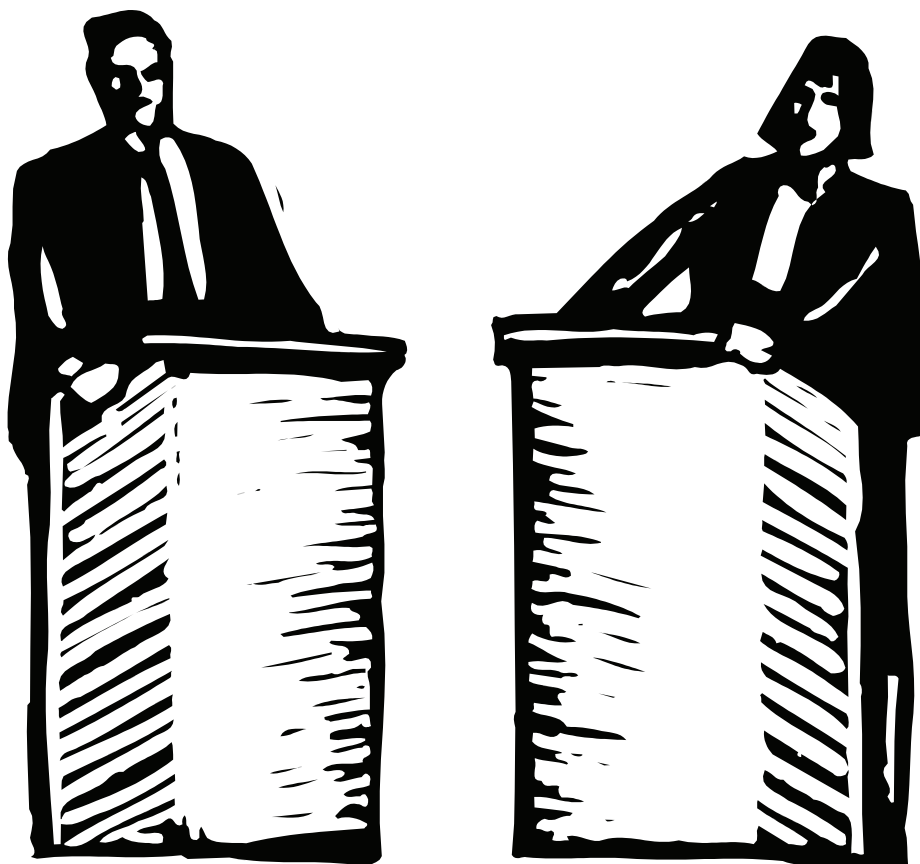
favor of a Medicare-like public plan. U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell, too, recently advocated for Congress "introducing a public option in places with limited competition."

What's more, campaigners said Thursday, Aetna's recent decision to pull out of 11 state exchanges means that in 2017, one-third of ACA healthcare exchanges will be served by a single health insurer and more than half may end up having two or fewer to choose from. This erasure of competition "has created new urgency in this moment for making a public option available to every American," as Taylor put it. "Insurance companies have shown they are more concerned with serving their shareholders than their customers," Sanders added in a statement. "Every American deserves the choice of a public option in health insurance."

And Charles Chamberlain, executive director of Democracy For America, declared: "If our leaders are serious about ensuring real competition in the health insurance market and driving down our out-of-control healthcare costs, giving every American the option to buy into a public, Medicare-like health insurance program is a no-brainer that every single Democrat should support." Or, as the "We Want A Public Option!" petition states: "Aetna attacked the public. We're attacking back."

"All Americans should have the option of health insurance like Medicare that competes with private for-profit insurers," the petition reads. "Members of Congress and candidates should embrace it in 2016 so we have momentum and can pass it under the next president."

Source: Common Dreams 9/15/16 <http://www.commondreams.org/>





Pentagon's multi-trillion-dollar accounting error - ignorable

DAVE LINDORFF

In 2014, the New York Times (10/12/14) ran a major investigative piece by reporter James Risen about several billion dollars gone missing, part of a shipment of pallets of \$12 billion–\$14 billion in C-notes that had been flown from the Federal Reserve into Iraq over a period of a year and a half in an effort to kickstart the Iraqi economy following the 2003 US invasion. Risen reported that about \$1.5 billion of the cash, somehow stolen, had been discovered in a bunker in Lebanon by a special inspector general appointed to investigate corruption in the US occupation of Iraq. The article got front-page play.

Earlier that same year, the Washington Post (4/7/14) ran a story reporting the US State Department inspector general's finding that during Hillary Clinton's years as secretary, the State Department had lost records for or misreported some \$6 billion in government contracts. (State claimed the money was not lost, just not accounted for.)

These stories are basic Journalism 101, the kind of bread-and-butter reporting on government that one expects from a major news organization. So how to explain that neither of these prestigious and influential newspapers—or practically any of the corporate media in the US, for that matter—bothered to mention it when the Pentagon's inspector general this year issued a report blasting the US Army for misreporting \$6.5 trillion (that's not a typo; it's trillion with a T) as its spending total for the 2015 fiscal year. Now, clearly that number cannot be correct, since the entire Pentagon budget for 2015 was a little over \$600 billion, or less than 10 percent of what the Army was saying it had spent.

Even if this were just an outrageous accounting error, it would certainly seem to merit a news article. But the IG's office did not see it as a laughing matter. The 63-page report, released July 26 at the direction of Principal Deputy Inspector General Glenn A. Fine (the last IG left office in January and hasn't been replaced), concludes: "The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management & Comptroller) (OASA[FM&C]) and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service Indianapolis (DFAS Indianapolis) did not adequately support \$6.5 trillion in year-end JV adjustments made to AGF data during FY 2015 financial statement compilation. The unsupported JV adjustments occurred because OASA(FM&C) and DFAS Indianapolis did not prioritize correcting the system deficiencies that caused errors resulting in JV adjustments, and did not provide sufficient guidance for supporting system-generated adjustments."...

There's a lot of jargon and a lot of use of DOD acronyms in there, but the key point that makes this story newsworthy is the last sentence (as well as the alarming bit about 16,500 missing records). If the Army is making up numbers—and that's exactly what "unsupported adjustments" means to an accountant—then nobody, not a reporter, not a congressional oversight committee, not even an inspector general, can tell what allocated funds are actually being spent on, where the money really went, whether programs are cost-effective, or even whether funds were misused or stolen. And we're talking about the single biggest department in the US government, which accounts for more than one-half of all discretionary federal spending each year.

When I called the Pentagon's public affairs office for a response to the IG's report, it was a week in coming. Finally Bridget Serchak, chief of public affairs for the DOD Office of Inspector General, emailed me this:

"For clarification, these numbers reflect changes made in Fiscal Year 2015.... These adjustments do not adjust the budget amount for the Army. The dollar amounts are possible because adjustments are made to the Army General Fund financial statement data throughout the compilation process for various reasons such as correcting errors, reclassifying amounts and reconciling balances between systems. The general ledger data that posts to a financial statement line can be adjusted for more than the actual reported value of the

line. For example, there was a net unsupported adjustment of \$99.8 billion made to the \$0.2 billion balance reported for Accounts Receivable."

Remember, this is just a report on the Army's budget. It turns out that the same kind of indecipherable, fantastical and un-auditable accounting is being done by the Navy, the Air Force and the Marines.

One news outfit that did report on this scandal is Reuters. Journalist Scot J. Paltrow first reported on the DOD's doctored ledgers and inscrutable accounting in 2013 in a series of stories that culminated in an article published on November 18, 2013, headlined "Special Report: The Pentagon's Doctored Ledgers Conceal Epic Waste." Paltrow also wrote a report on the latest IG's report, published by Reuters on August 19, headlined "US Army Fudged Its Ccounts by Trillions of Dollars, Auditor Finds."

Where the rest of the media took no notice of the Pentagon IG's scathing report, preferring to focus instead on the report of another IG over at the State Department who had investigated Democratic presidential candidate and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's improper and illegal use of a private server in her home to handle her official State Department business, Paltrow homed in on the reason this is a big story. He went to a major Defense Department critic to explain: "Where is the money going? Nobody knows," said Franklin Spinney, a retired military analyst for the Pentagon and critic of Defense Department planning.

The significance of the accounting problem goes beyond mere concern for balancing books, Spinney said. Both presidential candidates have called for increasing defense spending amid current global tension. An accurate accounting could reveal deeper problems in how the Defense Department spends its money. Its 2016 budget is \$573 billion, more than half of the annual budget appropriated by Congress.


The thing is, the Pentagon has been at this dodgy game for decades. In 1996, Congress passed a law requiring all federal agencies to comply with federal accounting standards, to produce budgets that are auditable and to submit an audit each year. At this point, two decades later, the Pentagon has yet to comply with that law, and therefore cannot be audited. It is the only federal agency that is not complying or, the IG's report suggests, even trying to comply.

One would think that would be newsworthy, but apparently for the major newsrooms of the US, not so much. Edward Herman, noted media critic and co-author with Noam Chomsky of the book *Manufacturing Consent*, says the media love to report on Pentagon waste—things like the epic cost overruns on the F-35 boondoggle that still can't fly in combat or a \$600 toilet seat. That kind of story, he says "is something the media and public grasp easily." Such reporting, he argues, "shows the Pentagon makes mistakes but not that it is massively looting the public coffers." It also "shows that the media is on the alert in protecting the public interest."

Herman says, "Repeated failure to report on a refusal by the Pentagon to allow an audit represents a major media failure, and one that is almost surely very costly to the general public." He adds: "The failure to take up this important story reflects, at a deeper level, the power of the Pentagon and the unwillingness of the media or politicians to challenge it. Only power and the derived conflicts of interest can explain this remarkable ability of the Pentagon to avoid a legally required audit."

DAVE LINDORFF IS THE AUTHOR OF *KILLING TIME* (COMMON COURAGE PRESS, 2003), AN INVESTIGATIVE BOOK ABOUT THE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL CASE. HE IS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THISCANTBEHAPPENING!, AN INDEPENDENT ONLINE ALTERNATIVE NEWSPAPER.

Source: FAIR Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting 9/2/16 <http://fair.org>



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TTIP 2.0 threats of lesser-known TISA trade deal

NIKA KNIGHT

Greenpeace Netherlands exposed the threats to democracy and climate action contained within the little-known Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) on Tuesday with new leaks divulging several chapters of the clandestine global trade agreement. "It's a sad day for democracy when ordinary people are dependent on leaks to learn about the far-reaching consequences of toxic trade deals that are being cooked up behind closed doors," said Nick Dearden, head of the U.K.-based Global Justice Now. And TISA is perhaps the least well-known and most highly protected of the imminent agreements: "Somehow TISA is also even more secret than the notoriously covert CETA, TTIP and TPP deals, with parties unable to release details of negotiations until five years after it has taken effect," Greenpeace observes.

These latest leaks "confirm what civil society groups, trade unions, and consumer

watch dogs across the world have been warning against, that TISA is a turbo-charged privatization and deregulation deal that will enormously benefit corporations at the expense of ordinary people and democracy itself," Dearden added. Indeed, the leaks from the highly secretive deal—currently being negotiated by 50 nations around the world—affirm that with the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) on the ropes, other such "democracy-wrecking" deals are looming. "The deal, a spiritual and practical sibling of the much-maligned TTIP and TPP free trade agreements, is designed to drive deregulation across the vast global services sector," observes Greenpeace, "increasing international trade in everything from banking to energy services."

In its analysis of the TISA leaks, Greenpeace explains that the deal's emphasis on deregulation presents a grave threat to countries' ability to adhere to the terms agreed upon in the Paris climate accord:

"Countries that sign up to TISA will be required to lock-in liberalization and could be prevented from rolling back failed policies due of two key clauses—the 'standstill' and 'ratchet' clauses. The standstill clause freezes the extent of liberalization in certain sectors, which means the markets of TISA state can never be less liberalized than they were at the time they signed the deal. Meanwhile the ratchet clause—which sometimes appears in other trade agreements—stops countries from reintroducing trade barriers that had been previously and unilaterally removed. Together these two clauses undermine the ability of governments to ever reverse the liberalization of services, even if elected on a mandate to do it. That means they could be stopped from testing liberalizing policies, since there would be no way to reversing them if things went awry. In order to make the objectives of the Paris Agreement a reality and in order to cut greenhouse gas emissions to the point where the worst impacts of

climate change can be avoided, governments must be allowed to interfere and use all policy tools available to them. Arbitrarily locking governments into deregulation could have hugely negative impacts on their capacity to implement the kind of climate policies we need to stay within 1.5 degrees."

Greenpeace also notes that while going "[w]idely unnoticed by the public, TISA could be finalized by the end of this year."

"We now know that TISA will undermine COP21, further deregulate the financial sector, stop failed privatizations being brought back into public hands, and undermine data privacy laws," commented Rosa Pavanelli, general secretary of Public Service International. "What else are our governments keeping secret from us?"

Source: Common Dreams 9/20/16 <http://www.commondreams.org/>

With TPP on ropes, it's corporate power vs. people power on Capitol Hill



DEIRDRE FULTON

As President Barack Obama gathered high-profile supporters of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) for a meeting at the White House on Friday, the corporate-friendly trade agreement was dealt a blow as Vietnam's parliament deferred its long-expected ratification. /Reuters/ reported from Hanoi Friday that Vietnam will not include ratification of TPP on its agenda for its next parliament session, which begins October 20.

This adds "to uncertainty over the future of...Obama's signature trade deal," the news agency wrote. "As arguably the biggest beneficiary of the deal covering 40 percent of the global economy, Vietnam was expected to be among the first to ratify the

TPP, the prospect of which helped spur record foreign investment last year in its booming manufacturing sector." According to /Reuters/, Vietnamese newspaper /Thanh Nien/ cited Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, the parliament chairwoman, as saying Vietnam's ratification would depend on the ruling Communist Party, "the global situation," and the outcome of the U.S. election.

Both major party nominees are opposed to the trade deal, along with many Democrats, some Republicans, and wide swaths of civil society. But Friday's meeting "is an effort by the White House to show that support for the agreement also crosses party lines," /The Hill/ wrote, and "the latest effort by Obama to generate support for the pact,

which would be the largest free trade deal in history and is a centerpiece of his administration's so-called 'pivot' to Asia."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell declared last month that the Senate would not vote on the current agreement this year, and House Speaker Paul Ryan has said: "As long as we don't have the votes, I see no point in bringing up an agreement." But watchdogs have warned that the TPP "is not dead, unfortunately." Indeed, Public Citizen's Lori Wallach argued earlier this month that GOP leaders are in fact "negotiating for changes to obtain even more corporate goodies—longer monopoly protections for pharmaceutical firms' high medicine prices, elimination of an exception protecting

some tobacco regulations from TPP attack, and more."

She wrote: "The GOP leaders are not only trying to pressure the White House to meet their demands, but are trying to scare the other TPP countries off of their current positions that no changes are possible. If the GOP leaders get what they want, they will be pushing hard to pass an even more damaging TPP in the lame duck session, despite their insincere political posturing over the unpopular agreement leading up to the elections."

Sure enough, news outlets reported this week that Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) "is working with the Obama administration to resolve several lingering issues that could ultimately pave the way" for lame-duck passage of the TPP,

as /The Hill/ put it. /Inside U.S. Trade/ reported Friday that Hatch "said the Obama administration has promised to satisfy his demand of including 12 years of market exclusivity for biologics in the implementing bill for the [TPP], but noted that he is waiting to receive that pledge in writing."...

In turn, environmentalists, public health advocates, and labor groups aren't going to sit idly by. "Why are we nervous? Well, we're nervous because we've been here once or twice before," Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) told reporters Wednesday on Capitol Hill. "When you have the Business Roundtable and virtually every multinational

corporation saying they want this, we understand that's real power."

Still, as *Common Dreams*/ reported Wednesday, people power was also on display this week, when a coalition of progressive organizations coordinated a national call-in day to voice their TPP opposition. "While the president is cloistered with corporate chieftains planning how to use a lame duck session to try to pass a TPP only they love," Wallach said, "Congress' phones are ringing off the hook with anti-TPP calls."

Source: Common Dreams 9/16/16 <http://www.commondreams.org/> <<http://www.commondreams.org/>>

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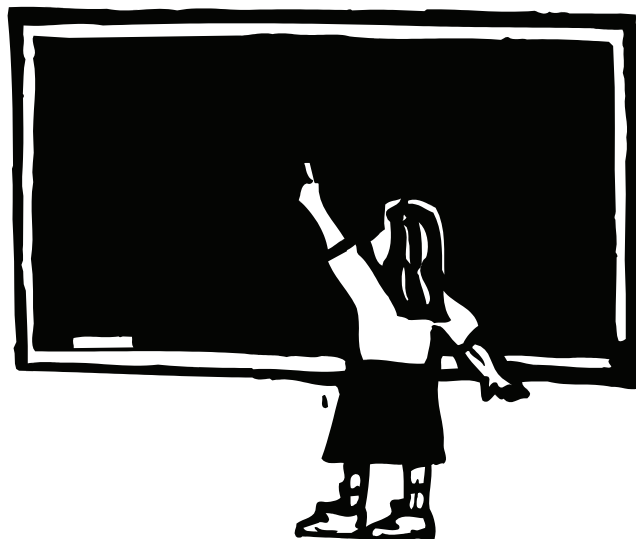
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Delta tunnels

Agencies should dump plan or start over



A coalition of conservation, public interest, and fishing groups has sent a letter to the state and federal agencies overseeing the proposed Delta Tunnels proposal asking them to either drop the plan, or develop a new Draft EIR/EIS for the project that includes newly released information.

The letter, written by Robert Wright senior counsel at Friends of the River, is addressed to the California Natural Resources Agency, the U.S. Departments of the Interior & Commerce, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the Council on Environmental Quality at the White House.

The letter focuses on new information discovered by Restore the Delta through the California Public Records Act that revealed an unreleased economic analysis showing the Tunnels would require taxpayer subsidies and would export far more water from the San

Francisco Bay-Delta than has been disclosed to the public. Without a full accounting of the projects costs, who will pay, and impacts to the environment, federal and state agencies have no legal way to move forward.

The letter concludes that approving the project as proposed, threatens to tarnish President Obama's outstanding environmental legacy.

Main points:

1. Rather than water districts covering the entire cost of the Delta Tunnels, the proposal simply doesn't pencil out without taxpayer subsidies.

"...in November of 2015, the economic consultant for the project, David Sunding of The Brattle Group, prepared a draft CalWater Fix Economic Analysis for the

California Natural Resources Agency. That Economic Analysis, purporting to justify the economic feasibility of the project, assumed that the federal government or some other entity would need to provide a subsidy of \$6.5 billion to make the Water Tunnels a breakeven proposition for agricultural users of the water."

2. The amount of water that must be exported from the San Francisco Bay-Delta to make the Tunnels viable is far larger than proponents have claimed in the draft environmental documents.

"As explained by Dr. Jeffrey Michael, Director of the Center for Business and Policy Research at the University of the Pacific the subject Analysis "assumes water yields (the difference in export water delivery with and without the tunnels) are 4 times higher than in official Water Fix documents including its RDEIR/SDEIS and petition to the State Water Resources Control Board."

3. Groups promoting the Delta Tunnels have not been truthful with the public or federal oversight agencies.

"This project reeks of misrepresentation by the proponent agencies. The public is told the beneficiary users will pay all costs of the project. In secret, the proponent public agencies have received information from their own economic consultant that a substantial public subsidy would be necessary for the project. The public is told one thing in public about water yields and corresponding impacts on the Delta and fisheries. In secret, the proponent public agencies base financial feasibility decision-making on assuming far higher water yields than disclosed to

the public."

4. Because of this new information the project is on shaky legal ground.

"That new Draft EIR/EIS must include disclosure of whether taxpayers as well as ratepayers will be paying for the project and disclosure of the true quantities of freshwater flows that will actually be diverted for the Water Tunnels. The truth needs to start. The lying needs to stop. If instead, you allow Reclamation and DWR to issue a Final EIR/EIS for this project, that will constitute failure to proceed in the manner required by law. We are confident that you will decide to honor President Obama's legacy and our laws by proceeding in the manner required by law."

5. President Obama's environmental legacy is on the line.

"President Obama has established a legacy of honesty, scientific integrity, and commitment to conservation and protection of our precious natural resources. There is no acceptable reason for you to allow the California Water Fix Project to go forward at this time staining that legacy in the process of contributing to the destruction of the San Francisco Bay Delta estuary."

Groups signing the letter are: AquAlliance, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, California Water Impact Network, Center for Biological Diversity, Environmental Justice Coalition for Water, Environmental Water Caucus, Friends of the River, Planning and Conservation League, Restore the Delta, and Sierra Club California.

Source: Restore the Delta release, www.restorethedelta.org 9/23/16

Close the Wall Street CEO bonus loophole

SARAH ANDERSON

Over 9 million American families lost their homes in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis and millions watched their retirement savings evaporate. Meanwhile, the Wall Street banks that caused the crash were

doling out executive stock options that would generate huge windfalls once bailout funds had pushed up their stock prices. Then, thanks to a perverse loophole in the tax code, the banks could write off the entire cost of these options and other bonuses, leaving ordinary taxpayers to make up the difference.

The origin of this loophole is a President Bill Clinton reform in 1993. After campaigning against the abuses of excessive CEO pay, he pushed Congress to cap the deductibility of pay at \$1 million. But he included a huge loophole for so-called "performance-based" pay. So what did companies do?

They kept salaries around \$1 million and labeled the rest "pay for performance."

This loophole applies to all companies, but it has been particularly obscene and even dangerous when it comes to the financial industry. In the run-up to the crash, the loophole helped fuel the "take the money and run" CEO pay practices on Wall Street. In the eight years before their firms collapsed, executives at Lehman Brothers and Bear Stearns cashed out a combined \$2.4 billion in bonuses and stock, most of it fully deductible "performance based" pay.

After the economic meltdown, Wall Street bailout recipients such as JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, PNC Financial and SunTrust lost the privilege of deducting lucrative executive pay and bonus plans from their corporate taxes. But these banks rushed to escape from public bailout pay controls, some

by borrowing in the private market to pay back Uncle Sam. As a result, Wall Street banks quickly returned to their profligate ways, doling out massive bonuses to top managers, while deducting the cost and leaving ordinary taxpayers to make up the difference.

According to a new Institute for Policy Studies report I co-authored, the top 20 US banks paid out more than \$2 billion in performance bonuses to their top five executives over the past four years. These payouts occurred after these banks were out from under bailout limits on deducting executive compensation. The taxpayer subsidy for these payouts was more than \$725 million, or an average annual tax subsidy for the banks of \$1.7 million per executive.

Between 2012 and 2015, Wells Fargo faced \$10.4 billion in misconduct penalties for deceptive lending and other "bankers gone wild" behavior. During these same

years, CEO John Stumpf pocketed \$155 million in fully deductible performance pay at a cost to taxpayers of \$54 million. Between 2012 and 2015, American Express CEO Kenneth I. Chenault raked in over \$123 million. The taxpayer subsidy for this payout was over \$43 million. During the same period, taxpayers subsidized over \$22 million for CEO pay at Capital One Financial and \$17 million at Goldman Sachs.

Without a public intervention, we're setting ourselves up for the next risk-infused crash, driven in part by short-term pay incentives. The Dodd-Frank financial reform legislation prohibited Wall Street bonuses that encourage reckless behavior. Regulators need to stop dragging their feet on implementing this part of the law. Eliminating the tax loophole for "performance pay" would also help discourage these risky payouts. A bill introduced in both the US House and Senate,

the "Stop Subsidizing Multimillion Dollar Corporate Bonuses Act," would do just that. This reform would also generate an estimated \$5 billion a year in revenue that could pay for urgent needs, such as affordable higher education and repairing vital infrastructure. Taxpayers should not have to subsidize massive CEO bonuses at any firm. But such subsidies are particularly troubling when they are propping up a pay system that continues to encourage the high-risk, short-termist behavior which caused one devastating national crisis -- and could cause more in the future.

SARAH ANDERSON DIRECTS THE GLOBAL ECONOMY PROJECT AT THE INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES.

Source: Truthout 9/4/16 <http://www.truth-out.org>



How corporations rig the rules to dodge the taxes they owe

FRANK CLEMENTE, HUNTER BLAIR, AND NICK TROKEL

In recent years, corporate profits have reached record highs, and so too has the amount of untaxed profits U.S. corporations have stashed offshore: \$2.4 trillion. And it is estimated corporations could owe as much as \$700 billion on those profits. In short, corporations are dodging more and more of their tax responsibilities.

While the statutory tax rate on corporate income is 35 percent, estimates of the rate corporations actually pay put the effective rate at about half the statutory rate. Driving this divergence between what corporations are supposed to pay and what they actually pay is a combination of offshore profit shifting and tax avoidance. Multinational corporations pay taxes on between just 3.0 and 6.6 percent of the profits they book in tax havens. And corporations have become increasingly adept at making their profits appear to be earned in these tax havens; the share of offshore profits booked in tax havens rose to 55 percent in 2013. Almost half of offshore profits are held by health care companies (mostly pharmaceutical companies) and information technology firms. Because of the inherent difficulty in assigning a precise price to intellectual property rights, it is relatively easy for these companies to manipulate the rules so that U.S. profits show up in tax havens.

The use of offshore profit-shifting hinges on a single corporate tax loophole: deferral. Multinational companies are allowed to defer paying taxes on profits from an offshore subsidiary until they pay them back to the U.S. parent as a dividend. Proponents of cutting the corporate tax rate refer to profits held offshore as "trapped." This characterization is patently false. Nothing prevents corporations from returning these profits to the United States except a desire to pay lower taxes. In fact, corporations overall return about two-thirds of the profits they make offshore, and pay the taxes they owe on them.

Further, there are numerous U.S. investments that these companies can undertake without triggering the tax. In short, deferral provides a mammoth incentive for multinational corporations to disguise their U.S. profits as profits earned in tax havens. And they have responded to this incentive: 82 percent of the U.S. tax revenue loss from income shifting is due to profit shifting to just seven tax-haven countries.

Firms have also become increasingly adept at manipulating the rules here in the United States to avoid taxation. Lower tax rates on "pass-through" business entities and poor regulatory responses have given firms the chance

to reorganize as "S-corporations" or opaque partnerships in order to avoid paying any corporate income tax at all.

This intentional erosion of the U.S. corporate income tax base has real consequences. Rich multinational corporations avoiding their fair share of U.S. taxes means that domestic firms and American workers have to foot the bill. It also means that corporations are not paying their fair share for our infrastructure, schools, public safety, and legal systems, despite depending on all of these services for their profitability. A chartbook with graphs at <http://www.epi.org> details the extent of corporate tax avoidance.

KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

- Corporate profits are way up, and corporate taxes are way down. In 1952, corporate profits were 5.5 percent of the economy, and corporate taxes were 5.9 percent. Today, corporate profits are 8.5 percent of the economy, and corporate taxes are just 1.9 percent of GDP.
- Corporations used to contribute \$1 out of every \$3 in federal revenue. Today, despite very high corporate profitability, it is \$1 out of every \$9.
- Many corporations pay an effective tax rate that is one-half (or less) of the official 35 percent tax rate.
- As of 2015, U.S. corporations had \$2.4 trillion in untaxed profits offshore. Another study, looking at S&P 500 companies, found they held \$2.1 trillion as of 2014. This roughly five-fold increase from \$434 billion in 2005 stems largely from anticipation of a tax holiday.
- Just two industries—high-tech and pharmaceutical/health care—hold half the untaxed offshore profits.
- Just 50 companies hold over 75 percent of untaxed offshore profits. Ten companies hold 39 percent of these profits. Just four companies—Apple, Pfizer, Microsoft, and General Electric—hold one-quarter of all untaxed offshore profits.
- About 55 percent of U.S. corporate offshore profits are in tax-haven countries. Corporations pay an average tax rate of between just 3.0 percent and 6.6 percent on profits in tax havens.
- U.S. corporations pay very low tax rates—6 percent to 10 percent, mainly to foreign governments—on all their offshore profits. A tax break known as "deferral" allows them to delay paying U.S. taxes until the profits are

repatriated to the parent corporation in the United States.

- The U.S. Treasury will lose \$1.3 trillion over 10 years—about \$126 billion a year—due to the deferral of taxes on offshore profits.
- Income shifting—making profits earned in the United States look as if they were earned offshore—erodes our corporate tax base by over \$100 billion a year. U.S. corporations increasingly manipulate transfer pricing and bilateral tax agreements to make their U.S. profits appear to be earned in tax havens.
- Corporations owe up to \$695 billion in U.S. taxes on their \$2.4 trillion in offshore profits. Having paid just 6 percent to 10 percent in taxes to foreign governments, they owe between 29 percent and 25 percent in U.S. taxes, based on a 35 percent tax rate with foreign tax credits.
- President Obama has proposed taxing the current stock of offshore profits at 14 percent (less foreign taxes paid), which could give corporations a tax cut of \$500 billion on their offshore profits. (Republicans propose an even bigger tax break.) A 14 percent tax rate would raise just \$195 billion. This is \$500 billion less than the up to \$695 billion they owe. That's a tax cut of up to 72 percent for the country's worst tax dodgers.
- Some large multinationals adept at tax dodging would receive huge tax breaks under Obama's plan. Apple would get a tax break of \$36.5 billion, Microsoft \$20.7 billion, and Citigroup \$7.1 billion (based on the profits they had stashed offshore at the end of 2015).
- U.S. corporate offshore profits are not "trapped" overseas. Companies can invest these untaxed profits in any U.S. firm, deposit them in any U.S. bank, or use them to purchase any government security as long as it is not directly invested in the U.S. parent. A congressional study found that 46 percent of the offshore profits of 27 companies were invested in the United States in 2010. And, of course, nothing stops them from simply returning profits home—except for a desire to not pay taxes.
- Corporate reorganization here in the United States likely further erodes the corporate tax base by \$100 billion a year. In the United States, the business sector has substantially reorganized as pass-through entities in search of lower tax bills.

Source: Economic Policy Institute release 9/19/16 <http://www.epi.org>

US and China to sign Paris treaty, but green groups warn of action 'gap'

NADIA PRUPIE

The U.S. and China have announced they will formally sign the Paris climate agreement as U.S. President Barack Obama met with Chinese President Xi Jinping and United Nations (U.N.) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in Hangzhou on Saturday on the eve of the Group of 20 (G20) summit. "Just as I believe the Paris agreement will ultimately prove to be a turning point for our planet, I believe that history will judge today's efforts as pivotal," Obama said. Earlier in the day,

Xi had separately vowed to "unwaveringly pursue sustainable development" as part of China's climate plan.

The U.S. and China are the world's biggest polluters, together comprising 40 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Their formal ratification of the agreement could provide the necessary push to implement the Paris accord by the end of the year.

Climate groups received the news with the hope that the treaty's signatories will actually keep their promises. The climate treaty calls for keeping global temperatures from rising 1.5°C, the

scientifically agreed-upon threshold for irreversible planetary changes. "The Paris agreement could be the next nail in the coffin of the fossil fuel industry if governments actually follow through on their commitments," said May Boeve, executive director of 350.org. "The only way to reach the 1.5° or 2°C targets is by keeping coal, oil, and gas in the ground."

The *Guardian* sums up: "If the Paris agreement comes into force this year as hoped, it means the nearly 200 governments party to it will become obliged to meet emissions-cutting pledges

made before the deal last December. For example, the E.U. has a "national determined contribution" of cutting emissions 40 percent by 2030 on 1990 levels, and the U.S. by up to 28 percent by 2025 compared with 2005." But as Boeve also noted, even if governments walk the walk on curbing emissions, there remains a "dangerous gap" between those actions and "the real ambition we need to avert the worst impacts of climate change."

"As a movement, we will continue to push governments to go well

beyond their current targets and accelerate the transition to 100 percent renewable energy," she said. Still, "While it's not everything we hoped for, the implementation of the Paris agreement will radically remake the energy sector," Boeve added. "The U.S.-China announcement serves as another warning bell for investors to take climate risk seriously and divest from fossil fuel companies."

Greenpeace East Asia's senior climate policy adviser Li Shuo said the pressure was on for Xi to "move from agreement to action."

"Political ambition must keep up with rising sea levels faced by vulnerable communities around the world," he added.

Source: Common Dreams 9/3/16 <http://www.commondreams.org/>





How much will the war on unions cost you?

RICHARD ESKOW

The decline of unions has probably cost you, or someone close to you, thousands of dollars since last Labor Day. A new study by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) found that income for nonunion workers fell substantially as union membership declined. And it hasn't fallen because of some immutable economic law. It's a casualty of war -- cultural and political war.

If union enrollment had remained as high as it was in 1979, nonunion working men in the private sector would have earned an average of \$2,704 more per year in 2013. The average non-unionized male worker without a college degree would have earned an additional \$3,016, and those with only a high school diploma or less would have earned \$3,172 more. (The differences were less striking for women because of workforce changes since the 1970s.) The decline in union membership is costing nonunion workers a total of \$133 billion per year, according to EPI. Canada resembles the US in many ways, but union membership there hasn't fallen like it has here. Why not? In a word, union-friendlier policies -- the kind our country should be embracing, but isn't.

We need unions. EPI's study confirms that they play a key role in reducing economic inequality, which is a growing crisis. The pay gap between CEOs and average workers has skyrocketed in recent decades -- from about 20:1 in 1965 to somewhere between

204:1 and 331:1 today. Unionization also narrows the racial wage gap, according to a new study from the Center for Economic and Policy Research. It's easy to understand how unions benefit their own members. How do they help nonunion workers? EPI explains that nonunion employers "may raise pay for some workers to forestall an organizing drive." They also respond to "the standards that unions help establish through politicking for labor-friendly policies," and from the fact that unions are "a cultural force arguing for a 'fairer share' for working men and women."

That "cultural force" is important. In the mid-20th century, people believed in "a fair deal for working people." Labor Day was created to honor workers.

Then something changed. Popular culture in the 1980s glamorized greedy Wall Streeters and celebrated the Gilded Age excesses of a tiny but highly visible ultrawealthy class. (Remember Gordon Gekko, and "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous"?) Then tech entrepreneurs hijacked our national mythos with an internet-fueled ideological fantasy: that anybody with a great idea could become a billionaire on the Web.

Never mind that most startups failed, or that internet wealth accelerated growing inequality, or that digital success increasingly depending on a web of incestuous relationships among Silicon Valley executives and investors. Apple's exploitation of Chinese workers didn't dent the myth. Neither did the illegal labor practices among some big-name

tech companies, including Apple, Pixar, Adobe and Google, that led to a 2011 class-action lawsuit and a \$415 million settlement in 2014. But by then, working people had lost their place in the national pantheon. How could the rights of "ordinary" men and women compete with the jet-piloting or turtleneck-wearing star power of billionaire CEOs, those temperamental tyrants whose collective passage from nerdy losers to corporate predators had forged a new Hero's Journey for our soul-sick age?

As for the political war: Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower bragged about union growth during his first term as president, but Republicans have been solidly anti-union ever since. Democratic Party leaders shifted their affections toward Wall Street in the 1990s. "New Democrats" were also quick to embrace the boyish billionaires of the tech boom. Soon these fickle Dems were treating labor like a loyal but unsophisticated uncle at some chic downtown soirée.

Today there's a new myth: the "sharing economy." Nearly half of New York City's residents live below or near the poverty line. They won't change their fate by becoming Uber drivers, any more than the residents of our blighted postindustrial wastelands will achieve middle-class prosperity by renting out their bedrooms on Airbnb. The idea that anyone can succeed on the internet is a warmed-over Horatio Alger story for the digital era. Underlying it is that age-old cynical con: If you're poor, blame your own

moral failure. Forget the "sharing economy"; get a union instead.

How much has the war on unions cost your family since last Labor Day: \$2,000? \$3,000? More? And what price has our society paid in division, despair and hate? Racism is the oldest act of cultural and political warfare in the book. We can't change the past, but we can change the future. Unions are exploring new ways to reach nonunion workers. The Fight for \$15 is gaining momentum. Progressive populism is on the rise. Working people can hope for a better life in Labor Days yet to come. Better yet, they can fight for it.

RICHARD (RJ) ESKOW IS A WRITER AND EDITOR WITH THE BERNIE 2016 CAMPAIGN, A SENIOR FELLOW WITH THE CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE AND THE HOST OF THE ZERO HOUR, A WEEKLY RADIO PROGRAM. RICHARD IS A FORMER CONSULTANT, PUBLIC POLICY ADVISOR AND SENIOR EXECUTIVE WITH WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE US AND MORE THAN 20 FOREIGN COUNTRIES. HIS WRITINGS HAVE APPEARED IN A NUMBER OF PRINT AND DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS.

Source: Campaign for America's Future 9/5/16 <https://ourfuture.org>

Labor report 2016: moderate progress in last year

DEAN BAKER

The story for workers in the United States has improved somewhat over the last year. The economy has created almost 2.5 million jobs, bringing the unemployment rate down by 0.4 percentage points. Perhaps more importantly, the percentage of the population that is employed also increased by 0.4 percentage points, meaning that unemployment is falling because people are finding jobs, not dropping out of the labor force.

Still the employment rate for prime-age workers (ages 25-54) is still down by 2.5 percentage points from its pre-recession peak, and almost 4 percentage points from its 2000 peaks. This translates into a drop in employment of more than 2 million compared to 2007 employment rates and more than 3.5 million compared to 2000 employment rates.

WAGES UP

On the plus side, real wages are growing again. The average real hourly

wage for non-supervisory workers rose by more than 2 percent during the last year. This is the second consecutive increase of this size, following seven years of virtual stagnation in wages for most workers.

Much of this increase reflects a one-time gain due to the fall in energy prices. Also, some of it reflects a shift from benefits to wages as employers cut back what they are paying for health care insurance. Still real wages are on an upward path at the moment, which is likely to continue if the Fed doesn't start jacking up interest rates to slow the economy.

In other positive developments for workers, more state and local governments are raising their minimum wages. The big actors in the last year are California and New York, both of which set a target of a \$15 minimum wage for 2022. This may press the envelope in terms of how high the minimum wage can go without having a substantial impact on employment, but both laws allow for pauses if the increases

appear to be increasing unemployment among low-paid workers. Also, the Labor Department finalized rules for modernizing overtime regulations. Starting next year, more than 4 million additional workers will receive overtime pay if they are required to work more than 40 hours a week.

In addition, more state and local governments are requiring businesses to give workers paid sick days and family leave. While the business lobby groups invariably predict disaster from these measures, study after study finds that employers can easily adapt to these requirements and that they rarely result in job loss. Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton has pledged to push these measures at the national level if she becomes president.

UNIONS DOWN

On the down side, there is little reason to believe that the long decline in union membership is turning around. The overall unionization rate was 11.1 percent in 2015, the same as

the preceding year, although the unionization rate edged down slightly to 6.6 percent in the private sector. With several states having recently banned contracts that require the workers who benefit from a union contract to pay a representation fee, unions are likely to face greater difficulty in organizing and retaining workers in the future.

This is very bad news for those hoping that ordinary workers would share in the country's prosperity. In addition to raising the wages of their members, there is a large spillover effect on the wages of other workers, as documented in a recent paper from the Economic Policy Institute. This paper estimated that the wages of non-union workers would be 5 percent higher today if unionization rates had not declined from their level of four decades ago. Unions also help to close the racial gap in pay, as documented in a new paper by Cherrie Bucknor, my colleague at the Center for Economic and Policy Research. Unions also help to reduce the pay gap between men and women. In addition

to these direct benefits, unions have also played a central role in pushing for government regulations that help large numbers of non-union workers. It is unlikely that any of the minimum wage increases, or measures requiring paid sick days and family leave would have passed, if they did not enjoy the active support of unions. The same is true of the new Labor Department regulation on overtime.

Even Federal Reserve Board policy is affected by the relative strength of unions. In the '50s and '60s, the Fed was much more willing to accommodate full employment, even at the risk of somewhat higher inflation. The Fed always gets pressure to raise interest rates, to slow inflation, from the financial industry. If there is not a countervailing force pushing for full employment, the inflation hawks are likely to get their way.

In this story it is important to remember that the decline of unions did not just happen, it was the deliberate effort by right-wingers to reduce the power

of progressives. Canada, a country with a very similar economy and culture, had no comparable decline in unionization rates. Almost 30 percent of its labor force is still represented by unions.

In short, we have had some good news for working people in the last year, but there are many clouds on the horizon. Workers have a long way to go before they get back their share of the pie and the path will not be easy.

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Source: Truthout 9/5/16 <http://www.truth-out.org/>



After 78 years of struggle, CA farmworkers win the right to overtime pay

DENNIS J BERNSTEIN

There was jubilation in farmworker country on Monday, as California governor Jerry Brown signed AB 1066, ending the 78 years of exclusion from overtime for farmworkers. United Farm Workers president Arturo S. Rodriguez was celebrating the victory with farmworkers from one end of the state to the other. "For 78 years, a Jim Crow-era law discriminated against farmworkers by denying us the same overtime rights that other workers benefit from," Rodriguez stated, directly following the signing. "Here in the U.S. today, Governor Brown corrected a historic wrong and set an example for other states to follow." I spoke with President Rodriguez directly following the passage of the landmark legislation. We spoke about the significance of the legislation, as well as the nuts and bolts of its implementation.

DENNIS BERNSTEIN: Welcome, President Rodriguez. It is very good to speak with you again. The governor of California finally signed the bill for extended overtime. Can you believe it? Farm workers finally getting extended overtime.

ARTURO RODRIGUEZ: Well, thank you very much for having us here today. We're very appreciative.

DB: It's good to have you with us. Tell us about the good news. It's few and far between days that we get to celebrate.

RODRIGUEZ: You know what, this is an exciting day for farmworkers. It's historic. For the first time in the history of the United States, farmworkers are going to be treated just like any other worker, having the right to be paid overtime after 8 hours of work. We're so thankful to the legislators, especially our author, Lorena Gonzalez, and all those other legislators who stood up to be counted in support of doing the right thing for farmworkers, and of course to Governor Jerry Brown, for his actions. And to both leaders of the House and the Senate: President Kevin de Leon, Senate president, and the Assembly speaker, Anthony Rendon. They worked hard to make this come about, and we're thankful to all of them.

DB: All right, explain the details. We know that this is implemented over over a four year period. Explain what is new and why it's significant, in specific terms.

RODRIGUEZ: Well, farmworkers, first of all, have always been excluded from overtime pay. The only state where we had some provision for overtime pay was here in California. But they had to work 10 hours a day, and a 60-hour week, before they could achieve any overtime pay. Now it will be implemented, begin to be implemented, in 2019. There will be a phase-in period for the next four years. Eventually, after eight hours they will get access to overtime pay for their work. And for smaller employers, 25 and under, they'll have an additional three years to determine how they can implement this effectively within their particular companies and operations. We tried to take into account what we heard as the needs of the employers. We heard from many legislators that this was important to them, so this legislation would not become an economic burden to employers. Phased in, in a way that they can actually deal with the issue and prepare for it. And ensure that they made whatever necessary adjustments were needed, to be able to accommodate this legislation.

DB: But Arturo, we have to make sure ... it's important not only to pass such legislation, but how will it be enforced? What are the structures that have been built into the law so that this really happens?

RODRIGUEZ: I don't know all the details of the law in terms of the enforcement mechanisms, but we always know, and we've learned throughout our history, that we have to be vigilant. We have to go straight to the workers, and we have to ask them, to make sure that they are the ones that are ... enforcing whatever laws take place, whether it's a law around heat, whether it's a law governing how much water they get, or other types of protections like bathrooms in the fields, and drinking water and things of that nature.

We're also prepared to do the same thing here, and once the law goes actually into effect we'll be going out there and visiting all the farms throughout the state, and advising workers of changes that are relevant. We'll utilize the appropriate medias as well, to make sure that people understand what their rights are. In the event that the employer is violating their rights, [we'll let them know] how to get in contact with us so that we can make sure that proper action is taken with that particular company, to ensure the workers get the overtime pay they are entitled to.

DB: Do you think this will have reverberations across the country? Will other farmworkers, other workers across the country be ... Will this be an important precedent?

RODRIGUEZ: It will be an extremely important precedent for them. I think it's going to give farmworkers throughout the nation a sense of hope. If farmworkers here in California can unite, can come together, can be passionate about something and make the sacrifices, and make these types of changes, it's going to encourage them to want to do the same thing within their respective states, to make these kinds of changes. Yesterday, I was in Texas, meeting with farmworkers there and celebrating the 50th anniversary of the United Farm Workers' activities in the state of Texas, which began back in June of 1966 with a heroic group of farmworkers who walked out on strike, in Rio Grande City in the melon fields there, and marched from Rio Grande City to Sacramento. I'm sorry, I mean to Austin, Texas, the capital of the state of Texas. People there were all excited about what we're doing here in California, and hoping that we were able to get the governor's signature, because that gives them an opportunity to look toward doing the same thing within their state.

DB: Well, I have to tell you that here at Flashpoints on Pacifica Radio, Miguel Gavilan Molina and I are really honored that we played just this little part in giving a platform and a microphone to the movement. Again, we're honored, and wow, congratulations!

RODRIGUEZ: Well, likewise. We're always very, very thankful for all the good work that ya'll do. Your listenership has always been extremely supportive of the work of the United Farm Workers, and we're humbled to be able to receive that support year after year after year. And now we're looking toward not only enforcing this legislation but going to farmworkers and asking them, "What other needs do you have?" and "What's important to you?" and "What's important to consumers about their food supply?"

DB: Yeah, how about a minimum wage?

RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, there you go.

DB: What's the wage for farmworkers?

RODRIGUEZ: Farmworkers are paid now the same minimum wage as any other worker.

DB: Oh right, oh my God.

Rodriguez: So they will also benefit from the new minimum wage laws that were passed earlier this year. And we'll combine all of these good things that farmworkers are going to be entitled to, and as time goes on, people are going to realize that farmworkers are now being treated as professionals, like every other worker here in the state. And that's extremely important.

DB: Well, Hispanic Heritage Day is today. Independence on Friday. This is good timing, huh?

Rodriguez: It's excellent timing. It really does bring light to the National Hispanic Heritage Month, which we're going to start celebrating later on this week, and to all the hard work that Latinos do within our nation. The huge contributions that they make every single day, not only in agriculture but the hospitality industry, and certainly the ones that are out there doing the construction work, and doing the yard work, and working in our homes, being nannies and taking care of the children, and cleaning the houses, and all those types of things.

DB: By the way, we only have 15 seconds – it was a double victory, they also passed the Domestic Worker's bill.

Rodriguez: That's right.

DB: It's a good day.

Rodriguez: Good times.

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Source: Reader Supported News 9/15/16 <http://readersupportednews.org>



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'Five-alarm threat to our food supply': Monsanto-Bayer merger advances

NIKA KNIGHT

Monsanto accepted Bayer's \$66 billion takeover offer—the largest all-cash deal ever—on Wednesday morning. While anti-trust agencies around the world review the proposed mega-merger, environmental and consumer advocates roundly condemned the creation of what will be the largest pesticide and GMO corporation in the world. "This new mega corporation would be the world's biggest seed maker and pesticide company, defying important antitrust protections and giving it unacceptable control over critical aspects of our food supply—undermining consumer choice and the freedom and stability of farmers worldwide," said Anne Isakowitsch, head of international corporate watchdog SumOfUs.

"The merger of Bayer and Monsanto should make

the connection between Big Pharma, Big Biotech, and Big Food all the more apparent to consumers," said Ronnie Cummins, director of the Organic Consumers Association (OCA), in an email to /Common Dreams/. "This may be a move to take pressure off the manufacturer of glyphosate, the most profitable pesticide in the world," Cummins added. "But it really doesn't matter who manufactures or sells glyphosate, or any other dangerous chemical. The damage to human health and the environment remains the same, as does our commitment to getting these chemicals out of our food system."

The merger between the two chemical behemoths has been long anticipated, and antitrust experts and environmental groups have been warning against the takeover for months.

A legal opinion by two

former Justice Department officials released in August decried the merger as "a five-alarm threat to our food supply and to farmers around the world."

"[T]he antitrust enforcers must not allow this merger to proceed," the officials said.

Thanks to widespread protests and organizing from groups such as the National Farmers Union, next week the Senate Judiciary Committee is set to review the recent spate of consolidation—including deals such as Dow-Dupont and ChemChina-Syngenta—within the biotech industry.

"We are pleased that next week the Senate Judiciary Committee will be reviewing the alarming trend of consolidation in agriculture that has led to less competition, stifled innovation, higher prices and job loss in rural America," said National Farmers Union president Andrew

Johnson. "We underscore the importance that all mergers, including this recent Bayer/Monsanto deal, be put under the magnifying glass of the committee and the U.S. Department of Justice."

"We will continue to express concern that these megadeals are being made to benefit the corporate boardrooms at the expense of family farmers, ranchers, consumers, and rural economies," Johnson said.

Meanwhile, Sydney Peace Prize-winning environmental activist Dr. Vandana Shiva recently explored Bayer and Monsanto's longstanding relationship and dark history—pointing out that they worked together as chemical weapons manufacturers and war profiteers during several of the 20th century's bloodiest conflicts:

"Monsanto and Bayer have a long history. They made explosives and

lethally poisonous gases using shared technologies and sold them to both sides in the two world wars. The same war chemicals were bought by the Allied and Axis powers, from the same manufacturers, with money borrowed from the same bank. MoBay [Monsanto and Bayer] supplied ingredients for Agent Orange in the Vietnam War. Around 20 million gallons of MoBay defoliants and herbicides were sprayed over South Vietnam. Children are still being born with birth defects, adults have chronic illnesses and cancers, due to their exposure to MoBay's chemicals. Monsanto and Bayer's cross-licensed Agent Orange resistance has also been cross-developed for decades. Wars were fought, lives lost, nations carved into holy lands—with artificial boundaries that suit colonization and resource grab—while Bayer and

Monsanto sold chemicals as bombs and poisons and their brothers provided the loans to buy those bombs."

"The Farben family chemical cartel [that includes Bayer and Monsanto] was responsible for exterminating people in concentration camps," adds Shiva. "It embodies a century of ecocide and genocide, carried out in the name of scientific experimentation and innovation."

"Today, the poison cartel is wearing [genetic engineering] clothes and citing the mantra of 'innovation' ad nauseam. Hitler's concentration camps were an 'innovation' in killing," Shiva writes, "and almost a century later, the Farben family is carrying out the same extermination—silently, globally, and efficiently."

Source: Common Dreams 9/14/16
<http://www.commondreams.org/>

Millions of honeybees killed in attempt to prevent Zika

DAN ZUKOWSKI

Aerial spraying of the pesticide naled in a South Carolina county, done in an attempt to prevent Zika-infected mosquitoes from gaining a foothold in the state, resulted instead in the massacre of millions of honeybees.

While 43 Zika cases have been reported in the state, all but one were from travelers who were infected abroad. The other was a sexually transmitted case. No one in South Carolina has been locally infected by a mosquito. Nevertheless, county officials sprayed a 15-square mile area early Sunday morning. Dorchester County officials said they announced the spraying on Friday and via a Facebook post on Saturday, but many residents said they received less than 10 hours notice.

The scenario reprises the days of DDT spraying that prompted Rachel Carson's seminal book, /Silent Spring/. The 1962 book by the former U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service writer detailed the disastrous effects on birds from the widespread use of synthetic pesticides following World War II. The leading culprit, DDT, was shown to cause reproductive failure in bald eagles, ospreys, brown pelicans and peregrine falcons. Indiscriminate aerial spraying laid a film of the pesticide where birds would pick it up.

Naled, the pesticide used in South Carolina, is an organophosphate first registered for use as a pesticide in 1959.

Organophosphates were developed in the 1940s as biological warfare agents. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) currently authorizes use of naled for mosquito control. It is currently being applied by aerial spraying to 16 million acres of the mainland U.S., including highly populated areas. The EPA says that the chemical does not pose risks to people, although it recommends staying indoors during aerial spraying.

However, the agency appears to underplay the risks to honeybees. Its website states: "Applications made between dusk and dawn, while bees are not typically foraging, can reduce exposure to honey bees. Although we do not anticipate significant exposure to bees, beekeepers can reduce exposure to bee colonies even more by covering colonies and preventing bees from exiting colonies during designated treatment periods, or if possible, relocating colonies to an untreated site. Providing clean sources of food (supplemental sugar water and protein diets) and clean drinking water to honey bee colonies during application can further reduce exposure."

Contrary to the EPA's recommendation, however, the spraying in South Carolina took place from 6:30 - 8:30 a.m. Toxipedia, the online toxicology encyclopedia, is far more circumspect on the potential dangers of naled. They call it a severe skin and eye irritant, and cite a study that showed exposure to the chemical resulted in chronic nervous system

damage in dogs and rats. Toxipedia also states that naled is "highly toxic to many bird species especially Canadian geese" and affects reproduction in Mallard ducks. They also note that its use "puts many endangered species at risk." With respect to

honeybees, they couldn't be more clear: "It is toxic to bees and stoneflies." (#EXTOXNET, 1996)

In April, EcoWatch reported that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) was silencing its own bee scientists. A Feb. 7, 2014 story documented the EPA's approval of two other pesticides known to be highly toxic to bees. The EPA's action came despite the concerns of beekeepers facing colony collapse.

On one farm in Summerville, South Carolina, 46 hives were wiped out instantly, killing 2.5 million bees. Compounding the problem was the weather: hot, 90 degree temperatures caused bees to leave their hives in order to cool down. That meant the bees were active during the widespread spraying.

As many residents became aware of the insecticide spraying, they tried to contact Dorchester County Mosquito Abatement by phone, as the notices had stated. No one answered. A resident who has started a petition on change.org wrote, "To our knowledge not one phone call was returned and no answers were given." The petition asks for the spraying to be stopped, for more information on the chemicals used and for

a public forum to discuss their concerns. By Tuesday, Dorchester County had issued an apology, but there is no word to date on whether they will compensate beekeepers for the destruction of their hives.

The honeybee genocide in South Carolina came as a study published on Monday by the National Academy of Sciences links high demand and federal subsidies for corn and soybean crops to the loss of grassland in the Great Plains that bees need to survive. The study says that expansion of these crops in the Northern Great Plains is "altering the landscape in ways that are seemingly less conducive to beekeeping." The area in the study is home to more than 40 percent of the U.S. bee colonies.

Honeybees are nature's best pollinators. Without them, important crops including almonds, blueberries, apples, asparagus and broccoli would be threatened. It is estimated that bees are responsible for some \$19 billion of U.S. crop production. The agricultural impact of the South Carolina disaster is not yet known.

Source: EcoWatch 9/3/16 <http://www.ecowatch.com>



Ten things about the new US chemicals law

ELIZABETH GROSSMAN

"This is a big deal," said President Barack Obama as he signed into law the bill that updates -- for the first time in 40 years -- the nation's main chemical safety legislation. Called the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act to honor the late senator for whom this was a special cause, the law revises the Toxic Substances Control Act that gives the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency authority to regulate chemicals used commercially in the United States.

As Obama noted at the June 22 signing ceremony, TSCA was supposed to ensure that chemicals used in the U.S. were safe for human health and the environment. But, said the president, "Even with the best of intentions, the law didn't quite work the way it should have in practice."

In fact, TSCA allowed the approximately 62,000 chemicals already on the market when it was passed in 1976 to continue being used without safety testing. It also placed enormously high hurdles for the EPA to clear before demonstrating a chemical was hazardous enough to ban. Even asbestos has failed to meet those requirements. It was widely agreed, by industry and environmental advocates alike that TSCA was badly in need of revision.

As the Lautenberg Act's lead sponsor Senator Tom Udall told Ensia by email, "Most Americans believe that if they can buy a product at the grocery store or the hardware store, the government has tested it and determined that it's safe. But that hasn't been true. There has been no cop on the beat testing chemicals to make sure they're safe -- even the ones in your home."

But exactly what the revisions should look like was a matter of considerable debate, and the new legislation was years in the making. Overall, the revised TSCA gives the EPA far more authority to act on hazardous chemicals. And while questions and reservations about the bill remain on all sides, it's largely been greeted with hope that the new law will enable the EPA to do a better job of evaluating and acting effectively on chemical safety.

EPA is already putting the new legislation into practice. But as Environmental Defense Fund lead senior scientist Richard Denison said, "It's not going to be an overnight process. The original law dug a very deep hole that we have to climb out of." As that process gets underway, here's what anyone concerned about the safety of chemicals we all encounter daily, should know about what the new TSCA will -- and won't -- do:

1. WHAT DOES TSCA REGULATE?

TSCA regulates chemicals used commercially in the United States. That said, TSCA does not regulate pesticides, chemicals used in cosmetics and personal care products, food, food packaging, or pharmaceuticals. Some chemicals, however, have multiple uses and so may be regulated concurrently by TSCA and other federal laws. For example, TSCA regulates the plastics ingredient bisphenol A when it's used as a receipt paper coating, but the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act regulates BPA when it's used in food packaging. Although TSCA does not apply to personal care products, it can have a trickle-down effect if chemicals in these products have other applications covered by the law.

2. WILL THE NEW LAW MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE EPA TO RESTRICT OR BAN USE OF HIGHLY TOXIC CHEMICALS?

Unlike the old law, the new TSCA requires EPA to review the safety of all chemicals used commercially in the U.S. "The EPA is actually required to look at existing chemicals," says Wendy Cleland-Hamnett, director of the EPA's Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics. "Under the old TSCA there was no mandate that the EPA look at existing chemicals. That's huge." The new TSCA "gives EPA sweeping new authority to prioritize and evaluate existing chemicals so it will be easier for EPA to regulate these substances, if found to pose unreasonable risks," says chemical regulation expert Lynn Bergeson, managing partner at the law firm Bergeson & Campbell.

The EPA must also review all new chemicals and decide if they present "an unreasonable risk" to human health and

the environment. If such risks are found, the EPA may restrict or ban a chemical. Under the old TSCA, chemical manufacturers had to submit certain information to the EPA before new chemicals could go on the market -- but unless the EPA raised objections within 90 days, the chemicals could be sold without further scrutiny. According to the EPA, the agency has taken action on only about 10 percent of the nearly 40,000 new chemicals submitted to the agency between 1979 and September 30, 2015. EDF's Denison says this 10 percent may be an overestimate.

What the EPA does under the Lautenberg Act will, however, also depend on available funding. The law requires the chemical industry to help pay for the program, but the EPA also depends on federal budgets as determined by Congress. Udall says he "will be fighting to make sure the EPA has the resources it needs to do its job."

3. WILL THE NEW LAW LET EPA RESTRICT OR BAN USE OF HIGHLY TOXIC CHEMICALS MORE QUICKLY?

Yes -- in theory. The new law requires the EPA to prioritize chemicals for evaluation. It also sets enforceable deadlines for the EPA's chemical reviews. By mid-December 2016 (within the bill's first 180 days) the EPA must have begun to review at least 10 chemicals. These will come from a list of existing chemicals the agency had already decided to evaluate. Within the first three-and-a-half years, the EPA must have 20 ongoing chemical evaluations. Reviews are supposed to be completed within three years, but that deadline can be extended six months. The EPA is supposed to issue any regulations within two years after that. The EPA can extend either of these deadlines but extensions for one chemical can't add up to more than two years. Given the enormous backlog, progress through the untested chemicals will still be slow -- to say the least. In fact doing the math on 62,000 chemicals shows it could take the EPA centuries to work through every substance. But given that the old TSCA had no chemical review deadlines, the Lautenberg Act aims to improve substantially on the decades-long reviews of single chemicals that occurred under its predecessor.

4. WHAT CHEMICAL HAZARDS IS THE NEW TSCA DESIGNED TO PROTECT US FROM?

The first chemicals the EPA will evaluate must come from a list the agency has already decided merit review -- chemicals that pose concerns for children's health, are carcinogenic, environmentally persistent, toxic and build up in fat or other living tissue, or are widely found in biomonitoring programs. After that, when choosing chemicals to review, the EPA must give priority to those with large exposure potential, those that are environmentally persistent and bioaccumulate, and those that are stored near important drinking water sources. The new law also tells the EPA to address chemicals that are likely to pose health and safety threats to those considered most vulnerable -- including infants, children, pregnant women, workers and the elderly. Additional criteria for chemical prioritization are due from the EPA by June 2017.

5. WHAT CHEMICAL HAZARDS WILL THE NEW TSCA LEAVE UNTOUCHED, IF ANY?

The new law authorizes the EPA to review all existing and new chemicals, to identify those that pose unreasonable risks, and to regulate or eliminate those risks. The goal is to leave no unreasonable risk untouched. The details of EPA's risk evaluations, however, have still to be worked out in a rule that must be completed by June 2017. These -- along with the additional chemical prioritization criteria -- will play a big role in determining exactly how effective the Lautenberg Act will be at reducing exposure to hazardous chemicals.

6. WILL THE NEW LAW DO A BETTER JOB OF PREVENTING DISASTROUS CHEMICAL SPILLS?

While TSCA is not intended to address or prevent chemical spills, the new law's requirements should eventually help reduce the impact of spills or other accidents. Among these is the requirement that chemical companies disclose their products' contents in emergencies rather than claim such information as trade secrets. The new TSCA may reduce

the harm chemical spills cause by requiring manufacturers to disclose product ingredients in emergency situations.

7. WILL THE NEW LAW KEEP HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OUT OF FURNITURE, CLOTHING AND PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS?

Because some chemicals used in these products (which aren't covered by TSCA) have additional uses that fall under TSCA's purview, the upgraded review process could potentially avert hazardous chemicals' use in a wide range of consumer products.

8. IS THE NEW TSCA LIKELY TO PROACTIVELY CHANGE CHEMICAL COMPANIES' PRACTICES?

Because the new TSCA requires all chemicals to be evaluated, it's expected to influence which chemicals are chosen as product ingredients, how chemicals are used in manufacturing and how chemicals are manufactured as companies try to avoid using chemicals likely to be restricted or banned. This may also create an incentive for new, safer chemicals and finished products.

9. WHAT ARE ITS IMPLICATIONS WITH RESPECT TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

The new TSCA requires the EPA to consider impacts of chemical exposures on those most "susceptible" to these effects, "such as infants, children, pregnant women, workers, or the elderly." How the EPA defines "susceptible" and "vulnerable" and how it considers impacts to these groups is yet to be determined. But already, public interest groups have asked the EPA to consider social and economic factors.

10. WHAT ASPECTS HAVE YET TO BE SETTLED, AND WHAT CAN CITIZENS DO TO INFLUENCE THEM?

Instead of hammering out chemical prioritization criteria and the details of how the EPA will evaluate chemical risks before the Lautenberg Act was passed, lawmakers decided to leave those to rules that will become part of the overall law. The rule-making process involves official public comment periods, so the EPA will be considering those as it writes these rules, along with a rule about potential chemical industry fees that will go toward covering some of the law's costs. Initial public comment periods for these rules are already closed. The law also includes public comment periods before the EPA finalizes these rules, as well as for ongoing chemical selections and evaluations.

And, points out Kathy Curtis, Clean and Healthy New York executive director, the new law leaves ample room for continued action on the part of state legislatures and citizens. This includes action on chemical uses TSCA doesn't regulate and new bills on chemical use reporting -- both of which have been instrumental in influencing which chemicals get used in consumer products.

As many have cautioned, substantive changes will take time. But according to the EPA's Cleland-Hamnett, the new law opens the potential for "a huge increase in human health and environmental protection." But this won't happen without public engagement on the part of those with a stake in the outcome -- essentially, all of us.

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Source: Truthout 9/6/16 <http://www.truth-out.org/>



Worker cooperatives is the way to go

HARRY BRILL

The well known writer, Upton Sinclair, developed a proposal during the 1930s depression that would encourage the establishment of worker cooperatives via substantial government investment to reduce unemployment and poverty. Sinclair ran for governor in 1934 as the Democratic Party candidate in California for the purpose of implementing his program, which he called End Poverty In California (EPIC). Business interests and their allies, including the leadership of the Democratic Party defeated his candidacy with a campaign filled with deception, dirty tricks, and voter fraud. In one San Francisco district, for example, just three votes were counted for Sinclair although 40 registered voters in the same district claimed they voted for him. Sounds familiar?

The business community was willing to tolerate the WPA. But it bitterly opposed supporting a program with tax dollars that promoted worker-owned cooperatives on a large scale. What history has taught us is that often in politics, particularly class politics, there are no umpires to protect against foul play. But we have also learned from history that we should never give up.

There are about 300 cooperatives with about 3,500 workers. In Berkeley there is the very successful Cheeseboard Collective, which offers us an ideal model of what a workplace should be. This business has been worker-owned and controlled for 45 years. The Cheeseboard sells a wide range of products including several hundred different cheeses, an extensive selection of freshly baked breads and pastries and a few doors down it makes and sells pizza. It is among the most successful businesses in Berkeley.

The Cheeseboard is a thoroughly democratic workplace. There are no high paid executive officers that call the shots. The more than 50 co-op owners discuss issues that concern them, and if a vote is taken, each member enjoys one vote. Second, since it does not employ high priced executives whose income and bonuses are excessive, these workers are able to earn a living wage rather than a low minimum wage. Third, there is far more job security than in the private sector. A Cheeseboard member that was interviewed claimed that the cooperative during a serious economic downturn would cut hours of work rather than lay off its members. In private establishments, whatever decision managers make on how to cope with difficult times, they are rarely guided by empathy.

The Cheeseboard has a policy of rotating jobs. So its members all earn the same wage. In many other co-ops where jobs are not rotated, the wages are determined mainly by the skill level that a particular job requires. The wage spread from the lowest to the highest wage on average ranges from three

to one up to five to one. In contrast, according to a Harvard Business School study, CEOs at major corporations make more than 350 times the earnings of the average worker.

Although belonging to a workers' co-op satisfies the employment needs of their members, their numbers are too few to impact the economy, particularly with regard to effectively addressing the unemployment problem. Although New York City, for example, looks favorably on workers co-ops, and allocated \$1.2 million two years ago to promote worker owned cooperatives, there are still only about two dozen in the City. Unlike some countries abroad, among them Italy, France, and Spain, the laws in the US are not favorable to encouraging cooperatives. Banks resist making loans to worker controlled business, and when they are willing, the collateral demanded is unreasonable.

Sinclair was right. To appreciably expand the number of these democratic institutions requires the intervention of the government. Two years ago Bernie Sanders introduced two bills in the Senate on behalf of encouraging worker ownership. One bill would have created a U.S. Employee Ownership Bank to provide loans to help workers develop cooperatives. A second bill would have established worker ownership centers that would provide training and technical support for programs promoting employee ownership. Both bills were defeated.

Meanwhile, to increase profits, many businesses have shipped millions of decent paying jobs to low wage countries. Promoting cooperatives could fill at least some of the void. Their workforce would not relocate to China or anywhere else abroad. Moreover, these cooperatives, by providing job security, are much better for the mental health of their workforce.

Had Sinclair been elected along with a progressive legislature in California, taxes on the rich would have provided the investment dollars. As governor he would have used the power of eminent domain to take over failed businesses which would be fairly compensated. He would have then turned these establishments over to the unemployed. If necessary, the California government would also provide the funds to assure that the business is properly equipped. And it would keep in touch to assist these businesses to succeed.

But that's not all. Unlike managers in the private sector, whose main interest is in maximizing profits, Sinclair envisioned instead production for use. What is best for the consumer would take priority over maximizing profits. When Sinclair was first developing his proposal in 1933 for publicly funded worker-owned and controlled cooperatives, FDR, in the same year, supported the Agricultural Adjustment Act to the disadvantage of millions of hungry and poor Americans. Farmers were paid by the federal government not

to produce, which served to maintain higher prices. Also in 1933, FDR signed into law the right of business to fix minimum prices, which was also at the expense of working people.

If production for use prevailed, the government would instead subsidize farmers to encourage production rather than perpetuate hunger. And consumer goods would have become more affordable in these lean years. What is needed is not just worker co-ops. In difficult times, we need cooperatives which favor producing products that people really need. That was certainly Sinclair's inclination.

Unemployment and poverty are not going to disappear; it is likely to increase. Since unemployment and poverty are permanent problems they require permanent solutions. Certainly one important route that should be taken is to encourage the federal, state, and local governments to heavily invest in worker owner and controlled cooperatives.

Like the experience of the 1930s, the resistance of big business to heavy public investment in cooperatives would be enormous. You can count on business to take the same unethical approach now as then. But a broad base of support can be built because this issue is not only a politically left issue. The umbrella member organizations of cooperatives (including the national United States Federation of Worker Cooperatives) can play a leadership role in organizing a vigorous campaign. There is plenty of potential support out there, particularly since so many good paying jobs are disappearing and too many workers are earning poverty wages.

Who would have predicted that the City of New York would allocate a substantial amount of money to promote worker owned and operated cooperatives? Who would have thought that Ronald Reagan believed that worker ownership is a good idea? In a presidential speech that Reagan gave at the White House on economic justice (August 3, 1987) he claimed "I can't help but believe that in the future we will see in the United States and throughout the western world an increasing trend toward the next logical step, employee ownership. It is a path that befits a free people."

The potential interest in cooperatives is much broader than many people suspect. When most members of the public realize the benefits of employee ownership, they would be inclined to agree with the radical Upton Sinclair and the conservative Ronald Reagan and many of those in-between that worker owned and controlled cooperatives is the way to go.

Source: The Berkeley Daily Planet 9/16/16



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Reagan sold your future, Trump will too

MITCHELL ZIMMERMAN

Two generations ago, many white working-class Democrats bought into Ronald Reagan's promise of a better nation. Eager for "morning in America" -- and swayed by fear that advances for black people would come at their expense -- they didn't see that the shadow of a long sunset was creeping over their lives. Because the GOP had another, darker agenda. One that didn't include them.

Reagan Democrats were left with a president who blamed and criticized people of color, while billionaires got to enjoy a president who helped them grab the lion's share of America's wealth.

Today, Donald Trump is singing the same song, promising salvation and blaming immigrants, blacks, and Muslims for America's

woes. And if enough white men join the chorus, they may doom themselves to another decade of declining economic opportunity.

Trump, like his GOP predecessors, is making a lot of people feel good about their hatred for those they don't consider "real" Americans. But indulging in enmity for people who are different comes at an economic price. If you're a typical middle-class worker today, you're probably deep in debt, with little means to plan for a brighter future for your kids, and no way to deal with an unexpected financial emergency. Meanwhile, you watch the ultra-rich grow ever-wealthier.

What you might not know is that productivity -- the value of everything America makes -- has grown by two-thirds in the decades since

Reagan's administration. But with the GOP lending a hand, giant corporations and the super-rich captured nearly all of the added wealth that American workers generated. The statistics for those growing ever-richer today are staggering.

In 1980, top CEOs made 42 times as much as the average worker. Now they make 373 times as much. And the share of household wealth owned by the top tenth of the one percent increased from 7 percent in 1980 to 22 percent today. But in the last 35 years, the wages of middle-level workers have scarcely budged. On average, they've gotten a yearly raise of one-sixth of one percent. For someone making \$40,000 a year, that's a whopping \$69 more per year. This is no coincidence. Policies launched during Reagan's

presidency and pushed forward by his successors are responsible.

First, Republicans have stymied efforts to raise the federal minimum wage for decades. When corrected for inflation, the minimum wage is actually lower than it was in 1980.

Second, they targeted unions. Strong unions help everyone, because they set a pay standard that nonunion employers follow. Both Reagan and the Bushes appointed pro-business members to the National Labor Relations Board, who ignored unlawful attacks on unions and undermined bargaining rights. Weakened unions made it easier for employers to devour all the fruits of increased productivity.

Third, their huge tax cuts favored the wealthiest.

George W. Bush added trillions to the public debt, while the top one percent received more than a third of his so-called "tax relief." During the Bush years, if your income was over \$3 million per year, you got an average tax bonus of \$520,000.

Meanwhile, services ordinary people rely on were starved, weakening our government's ability to fund schools, or protect our water, food, and drugs. These reverse-Robin Hood policies would continue under Donald -- "you're fired!" -- Trump. Take, for instance, his International Hotel, which conducts an unlawful anti-union campaign. And Trump's proposed tax cuts would give \$1.3 million each to the wealthiest tenth of the richest one percent. Meanwhile, Trump continues to waffle about whether there

should even be a federal minimum wage. Actually, he believes "wages are too high." So if you think you're overpaid, Trump's your man.

But descendants of Reagan Democrats on the fence about a President Trump should heed the warning of history before inviting another flag-waving, immigrant-blaming, black-bashing, billionaire-enriching politician to the oval office.

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Source: Truthout 9/6/16 <http://www.truth-out.org/>

Guess who's winning the argument on trade?

KATHY KIELY

Call her the Dismal Scientist who came in from the cold. When Thea Lee began what would turn out to be a career of working on trade issues, 25 years ago at the Economic Policy Institute, she was a bit of an outcast in her profession. "There really were very few respectable economists -- and I don't count myself in that group -- who could say anything critical about trade agreements," she recalled in a recent interview on the executive floor of the AFL-CIO's headquarters, a short walk from the White House. "They used to call it a no-brainer or a win-win-win, that it was just so obvious that anytime you negotiate a free trade agreement, you have to do it."

How times have changed. Today, top economists including Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz and former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers (an adversary of unions on NAFTA) are pulling back from the view that trade deals are an automatic plus for the economy. Donald Trump made opposition to trade deals a central part of his successful campaign to win the Republican presidential nomination and Bernie Sanders' trenchant criticism of the Trans-Pacific Partnership forced his successful rival for the Democratic nomination, Hillary Clinton, to pull back her support for the megatrade pact.

Lee's too diplomatic to say "I told you so." But for the AFL-CIO's deputy chief of staff and former chief international economist, this year's political drama is the inevitable outcome of "the elites in the Democratic and Republican Party" making trade policy decisions that maximized corporate profits and the expense of worker and community welfare.

NAFTA was the first of a series of trade agreements that have been "used as vehicles" to accomplish other goals, Lee said. Those goals could have included laws and regulations to raise standards of living and to improve worker and environmental safety globally. Instead, America got cheap imported goods in exchange for shuttered factories.

"For too many decades there has been a mindset amongst elected officials and the corporate sector that our place in the global economy is to import and consume and to own the means of production... somewhere cheap, whether it's China or Mexico or Bangladesh, and then importing the products and selling it to wealthy American consumers," Lee said. "The problem with that business strategy is that at some point the American consumers aren't wealthy anymore because

you've taken all the good jobs

Turning back the clock isn't an option, but Lee likes the idea of a pause. She favors a temporary moratorium on trade deals so US policymakers can focus on a "recalibration" of the US relationship with China. She accused the nation with which the US runs the biggest trade deficit of consistently undercutting American business and workers with currency manipulation and human-rights violations. "We've wasted a lot of time with these free trade agreements, but the truth is that our biggest trade challenge today is with one country: with China," she said.

IT'S NOT "NO TRADE"

Not that Lee is a proponent of Fortress America. "We're not going to stop trading and we shouldn't stop trading; that's not realistic in the year 2016 or 2017," she said. "The United States is a global player." But while Lee has made it her "life's work" to improve worker and environmental protections in trade agreements, she is the first to acknowledge "it really isn't working yet."

While the now-infamous Investor Dispute Settlement System allows companies doing business in countries covered by trade deals to take swift action against government regulations and laws they consider anti-competitive, the wheels of justice grind much more slowly, if at all, when it comes to labor and environmental protections.

In Guatemala, the AFL-CIO and local unions have been trying to win redress for what Lee calls "some pretty egregious violations" of labor protections negotiated under the Central American Free Trade Agreement. The violations include the murder of union organizers. Yet even under a "friendly Democratic administration that values labor rights," Lee said, "that case has moldered for eight years."

Unlike corporate investors, unions and environmentalists must rely on their government to bring cases under trade agreements, and governments always have other priorities. "If this is kind of a dicey moment because they're also trying to deal with a terrorism question or an arms question or a foreign policy issue, then you can bet that the labor rights issue will go to the bottom of the barrel," Lee said. It's the "worst of all possible worlds," says Lee, with corporations having "their own dedicated avenue for justice," while for unions and environmentalists, the route is "very slow and problematic." Fixing that would be key for any new trade

agreements, in Lee's book. And then there is the revolving door at the US Trade Representative's Office, where, Lee said, former corporate economic advisers and corporate economic advisers in waiting "still don't really think it's legitimate" to make labor, environmental and consumer protection part of a trade deal.

So Lee says she understands why some union members might be cynical about this year's election. They share the view she sometimes hears from the other side of the bargaining table. "I know in the business community I've heard people say, 'Oh, we don't worry because we know that every politician campaigns critical of trade and then governs just the way we've always done it.'"

After this campaign, however, Lee says she doesn't think that will happen. "I think we're going in the right direction and I feel like the debate has focused on a lot of things that we think are important, like what would it take for a trade agreement to support good jobs in the United States and in our trading partners," she said.

It may be a bit far off, but the onetime outlier economist says she can almost envision a time when trade deals and economic policy are made with a different set of priorities.

"There's maybe some point at which having products so cheap hasn't really been a boon to the American economy because people just buy junky things and they break and then you buy another junky thing and it breaks and then they all end up in the landfill," Lee said. "So you could certainly imagine a different kind of economic structure where you bought fewer things but nicer things, they lasted longer, they were better quality, your community had more resources, you had better schools, you had nicer parks, you had better roads because you're paying taxes in the community where you live and you're supporting things."

KATHY KIELY, A WASHINGTON, DC-BASED JOURNALIST AND TEACHER, HAS REPORTED AND EDITED NATIONAL POLITICS FOR A NUMBER OF NEWS ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING USA TODAY, NATIONAL JOURNAL, THE NEW YORK DAILY NEWS AND THE HOUSTON POST. SHE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE COVERAGE OF EVERY PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN SINCE 1980.

Source: Truthout 9/18/16 <http://www.truth-out.org/>



American prisons: protest dog food, go to solitary confinement

JOHN KIRIAKOU

Prisoners across America went on strike last week to protest poor wages, a lack of adequate medical care, poor food, and the utter absence of any educational or training opportunities. This doesn't sound like a big deal. But it's unprecedented. Prisoners in the United States are forbidden by law from going on strike. And, indeed, federal Bureau of Prisons regulations prohibit strikes as "interfering with the smooth running of the institution," an offense punishable by immediate transfer to solitary confinement. I had it pretty easy during the two years I spent in federal prison after blowing the whistle on the CIA's torture program. Still, I wouldn't wish prison on anybody. It's dehumanizing, depressing, and as the "greatest country in the world," we should be utterly ashamed of the prison system we have. Let's look at prisoners' demands.

***Wages*:** The Wall Street Journal reports that many prisoners earn between \$0.74 and \$3.34 per day. I have news for them. When I worked as an orderly in the prison chapel in the Federal Correctional Institution at Loretto, Pennsylvania, I earned \$0.60 per month. That's right. Per month. That's normal in prisons across the country. There are far more prisoners than there are jobs, and there's even less money to pay them.

Incidentally, for most prisoners, salaries come from commissary profits. So it's usually prisoner money paying for prisoner labor. But the matter is worse than that.

Many prisoners work full-time in something called "UNICOR," also known as Federal Prison Industries. It is in UNICOR that federal prisoners earn that dollar a day to build furniture, man call centers, and do any number of other jobs. This amounts to slave labor that somebody, somewhere, is making a profit on.

And there are even worse components to it. First, as an example, prisoners at Loretto were put to work making electronic cable for the U.S. Navy. But at a dollar a day, their hearts weren't in it. So much of the cable was deemed to be substandard that it had to be scrapped. Even without labor costs, it was a complete waste of the taxpayers' money.

Furthermore, paying prisoners subservient wages and forcing them to work in a commercial, for-profit enterprise puts other Americans out of work. How in the world can a small company compete with prison labor? It can't. And as a result, Americans are thrown out of work.

***Food*:** My first full day in prison was a Friday. That's fish day in federal prisons across the country. As I was walking to the cafeteria, a fellow prisoner warned me, "Don't eat the fish. Ever. We call it 'sewer trout.'" I stayed away from the fish. But when I got down to

the food line, I saw boxes stacked up. They were all marked, "Alaskan Cod. Product of China. Not for Human Consumption. Feed Use Only." It wasn't even human-grade food.

Just before I got to prison, a private food service company, John Soules Foods Inc., "accidentally" sold dog food to prisons to be fed to prisoners mismarked as "ground beef." There was no punishment for the company or its executives, other than a \$392,000 fine, the cost of the investigation, paid to the U.S. Treasury. Prisoners got nothing. Not even an apology. And the shame of the story is that nobody could even tell that it was dog food. It tasted the same as everything else prisoners are served.

Medical care is probably the most important of the issues strikers want to see addressed. Certainly, volumes could be written about the abysmal state of healthcare in U.S. prisons. Four people died of preventable medical problems while I was at Loretto. Nobody in the administration cared. Holly Sterling, the wife of imprisoned CIA whistleblower Jeffrey Sterling, told me recently that a prisoner near Jeffrey last week asked permission to go to sick call because he wasn't feeling well. The corrections officer denied his request. The prisoner died two hours later of a heart attack.

Prisons routinely deny basic medications, access to a doctor, and any access to outside medical professionals or tests. Many

prison officials will admit privately that, sentimentality aside, it is far cheaper for them to just let a prisoner die than to pay for expensive outside medical care.

***Educational Opportunities*:** There are none. Period. In the federal system, educated prisoners teach other prisoners how to get their GEDs. But that's it. In the "good old days," prisoners could learn a skill –

plumbing, electrical, mechanics, etc. The idea was that if they had a skill, they could find a job upon release. That, in turn, would reduce recidivism. But that was in the good old days. Now there's nothing. It's no wonder that recidivism is so high.

I refrained from encouraging prisoners to go on strike last week. I didn't want to be responsible for anybody being sent to solitary confinement, which the United Nations has deemed to be a form of torture. But I support the strike 100 percent. I hope it's successful. And if it isn't, then maybe it ought to become a more permanent action.

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<http://readersupportednews.org>

A Story: When America was great again

MILLARD FROHOCK

Note: I recently received an e-mail from an old friend with an attached blog that seemed to have originated at the BBC. The piece described the Swiss response to two Muslim boys objecting—on religious grounds—to the mandatory handshake between students and teachers when the latter were women. My friend commended the Swiss for strongly upholding their own culture. It brought to mind some similar issues in this country and prompted the writing of the following story.

Sometime in the mid 1930's an extended family of German Jews managed to emigrate to Virginia. They were quite poor because, as a condition of being allowed to leave, all of their property—real and personal—was confiscated by the Nazis. It was not their choice as to where they were resettled. The charitable woman who paid for their passage and arranged for their shelter was from Smitfield and so that is where they were sent. Within the family were two teenage cousins, Eugene Eder and Noah Mulstein.

Now the town of Smitfield, while suffering economically, like much of the world during the Depression, had one thing going for it. They had trademarked the term "Smitfield Hams" which were sold exclusively through the local farmer's co-op. For this reason, the local farmers were able to advertise and sell their products at well-above market price for ordinary ham. Moreover, the co-op was closely connected to town government (including the school system) and helped support the school lunch program. It had long been the custom that, during Homecoming Week, the co-op supplied the meat, gratis, to the high school lunch program. (It is also noteworthy that the Smitfield High sports teams were known as The Hogs.)

Virginia probably lags behind Texas in its enthusiasm for high school football—but not too far behind. In 1937, The Hogs were one of the better teams in the county and there was a great deal of enthusiasm about the Homecoming Game. The co-op had taken an ad in the local paper reminding the readers that the high school students were being served the "finest ham in the world." The school administration had responded that the student body was highly appreciative and loyal to the "economic engine" that supported the community. Moreover on the Thursday before the big game, the football team would have a ham-eating contest.

Now Noah and Eugene who had arrived in Virginia two years before, had taken to American football. Eugene was a second-string end but Noah was first-string lineman, punter and kicker. On hearing the Principal's announcement Eugene immediately sought him out and said that neither he nor Noah could participate.

The Principal, Dr. Lee, whose brother was General Manager of the co-op, said, "If you are going to be on the football team you must participate. This town depends on ham. This school depends on ham and if you are going to represent this school, you will eat ham. Now get out of my office."

Eugene and Noah went together to the football coach. He was a religious man who led the team in silent prayer before and after each game. "Coach," Eugene said, "We are being kicked off the team because we can't eat ham. We're sorry but for three thousand years our ancestors have been ostracized, tortured and murdered for a faith that prohibits eating pork."

"Hey, that's tough," said Coach Murphy. "I knew a couple of Jewish guys in college and they used to eat ham. Are you sure you can't get some special dispensation?"

"Coach, I know some Jews don't obey all the old laws

but the Mulstein and Eder families do. I don't think I want to even mention this to my uncle. He's got a lot of problems with his business and keeping kosher food on the table for his wife and kids and me and my sister."

"Okay, Noah. Let me work on this. Come to practice today and see me during lunch hour tomorrow."

Assistant Coach Dunn ran the practice that afternoon while Murphy went to see his long time friend "Doc" Lee. "Doc, I hear you gave those Jewish kids an ultimatum. I can sure understand that but, you know, Mulstein is really important to the team. Eder's not a bad kid but he can't stand up against some of those big lineman from Madison. But Noah! He's really an athlete. Not only does he anchor the line but he gets twenty more yards on his punts and he's sure as hell with extra points."

"I hear you, Pat, but there's nothing I can do now. I'm sure not going to back down. I'm damn sick and tired of these kikes coming here and wanting to bring their ancient superstitions with them. This is Christian America and if they won't play by our rules, they can pack up and go somewhere else. You know what I heard yesterday? The bank is going to hire a new teller and its going to be some Jew kid that just graduated from U.V.A Business School."

The next day Coach Murphy announced to the team that Noah and Eugene had resigned. Three years later they were among the first caught by the Selective Service Act. After basic, Eugene was sent to Quartermaster School and Noah to Field Artillery training at Ft. Sill. Eugene spent the next five years at various supply depots, stateside and Europe. In the Fall of 1941, Noah was sent as a replacement to the artillery battery on Corregedor. He didn't come home but there's a plaque with his name on it at Smitfield High School.



Get to know your prison system

CHRISTIE KELLEY

The state of our prison system is under attack for many good reasons. As a country we are focused on revenge/punishment for crimes committed or imagined rather than working with the systems and issues that create conditions that lead to crimes against society. There is little or no thought put to restoring the balance in communities, providing health and mental health services to people in need, or support to those who are desperate; much less righting the injustices that create that desperation. For 30 years Connections has addressed these issues. Friends Outside, Fathers and Families are two of the local organizations that work with people affected by the vast numbers of our society who are arrested and placed in prisons throughout our county. Many books have been written about the systems that create a huge national prison population and the private companies that make huge profits. Angels with Dirty Faces by Walidah Imarisha is a new book that puts a very personal face on a clearly laid-out analytical discussion of the effects of prison on both those inside and outside.

BOOK REVIEW: ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES
BY WALIDA IMARISHA

The following is an excerpt from a book review by Peter Shaw in the Portland Occupier (<http://www.portlandoccupier.org/2016/03/14/walidah-imarisha>).

Whether writing about Kakamia, (her brother) or Mac, a hitman for the vicious Irish Hell's Kitchen gang, the Westies, or her own experiences with an absentee father and a former boyfriend who assaulted her; Imarisha is always searching and finding. What she finds never stands in isolation. The personal is political, writ large, small, and all points in between. But because she is constantly questioning, reflecting, finding conclusion, and then doing it all over again,

she must always be missing things. When she finds them, she also finds more that she has missed.

Such is intellectual restlessness. And such is the foundation of this book that makes a cogent and persuasive argument for abolishing prisons. Not just because of how they destroy the lives of the people behind their walls and the lives of those friends and family left outside, but also because they reflect and augment the deep ills of a society that so often is an inversion of the values of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness it claims to represent.

The book is divided into three sections, each telling distinct stories that overlap and create a kind of feedback loop that demonstrates that intellect and compassion. It also invites readers to engage in the same rigorous questioning and reflection. Two of those portions center around prisoners—the aforementioned Kakamia and Mac—and the other, sandwiched between, on Imarisha. All involve a search for self: if not a fully defined or redeemed one based in a nurturing and loving community, then one that grasps for the fruits of that community while standing on its shoulders.

Imarisha writes, "Prisons are not about safety, but about control and containment of potentially rebellious populations." At least in the United States of America, that has long been the case. As she notes, the current prison system's disproportionate concentration of Black people began with the end of legal slavery (contrary to popular opinion, the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution did not completely outlaw slavery, allowing for the exception "as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted"). "It's not what you do," she notes, "but who you are that lands you in prison."

We spend billions of dollars to put people in prison, but have a very tight purse when it comes to making sure people have health care, education, wages, child care, food, housing and other social goods that ultimately

help keep people from committing crimes. Imarisha encourages her readers to consider what her, Kakamia's, and Mac's lives—and ostensibly their own lives—would have been like had our society been organized around principles which promote those goods instead of punishing those who—so often lacking those goods—end up in prison.

Angels with Dirty Faces covers a wide array of issues, both individual and collective, ranging from prison abolition to accountability measures offering redemption, and perhaps, forgiveness, with many points in between. In exploring these through Kakamia, Mac, and herself, Imarisha not only sees things big and small, but also how those things work together. She has invited us to consider a world where we would create new systems that focus not solely on truly just outcomes, but on achieving the just conditions that would likely keep people like Kakamia and Mac out of prison.

CONNECTIONS OUTREACH

Connections newspaper goes out to nineteen incarcerated individuals in 10 different prisons in California and Illinois. Often an individual will send in a change of address as he/she is transferred from one place to another. Each person is receiving, reading and probably sharing their issue of Connections, they are connected to you. It is important we are aware of this connectedness and do what we can to acknowledge this. If you want to get involved contact Fathers and Families of San Joaquin: 338 E Market St, Stockton, CA 95202, (209) 941-0701 www.ffa.org or Friends Outside www.friendsoutside.com/contact.htm. Please let us know what you are doing to change this broken system.

Distribution of Connections to prisons is as follows:

- 6 individuals - Pleasant Valley State Prison. This is a 640-acre minimum-to-maximum security state prison in Coalinga, Fresno County, CA.

- 2 individuals - Pelican Bay State Prison is the only supermax state prison in California. The 275 acre prison is located in Del Norte County, CA.
- 3 individuals — Lone, Ca.; Mule Creek State Prison is a California State Prison. It was opened in June 1987 and covers 866 acres located in Lone, CA. The current population is 3,065 or 180.3 percent of its designed capacity of 1,700.
- 1 individual — Lancaster, CA; California State Prison, Los Angeles County is a male-only state prison located in the city of Lancaster, in Los Angeles County
- 1 individual — Susanville, Ca; High Desert State Prison is a maximum security state prison that houses level IV inmates located in Susanville, Lassen County, CA. Opened in 1995, it has a capacity of 2,324 persons; in December 2012 it held 3,442 inmates.
- 1 individual — Tehachapi CA.; California Correctional Institution is a state prison located in Cummings Valley, west of the city of Tehachapi in southern California. It is a supermax. CCI is sometimes referred to as "Tehachapi prison" or "Tehachapi".
- 2 individuals — Tracy, Ca; Deuel Vocational Institution is a state prison located in unincorporated San Joaquin County, CA, near Tracy.
- 1 individual — Galesburg, Ill.; The Hill Correctional Center is a medium-security adult male prison of the Illinois Department of Corrections in Galesburg, Illinois. The prison was opened in October 1986 and has an operational capacity of 1,867 prisoners.
- 2 individuals — Chester, Ill.; Menard Correctional Center, known prior to 1970 as Southern Illinois Penitentiary, is an Illinois state prison located in the town of Chester in Randolph County, Illinois, 50 miles southeast of St. Louis.

Prison dollar trade-offs

For the Federal Prison System, taxpayers in the United States are paying \$7.48 billion. Here's what those tax dollars could have paid for instead:

- 92,536 elementary school teachers for 1 year, or
- 100,966 clean energy jobs created for 1 year, or
- 134,621 infrastructure jobs created for 1 year, or
- 74,790 jobs with supports created in high poverty communities for 1 year, or
- 839,331 Head Start slots for children for 1 year, or
- 723,885 military veterans receiving VA medical care for 1 year, or
- 225,171 scholarships for university students for 4 years, or
- 321,539 students receiving Pell Grants of \$5,815 for 4 years, or
- 3.15 million children receiving low-income healthcare for 1 year, or
- 8.42 million households with wind power for 1 year, or
- 2.1 million adults receiving low income healthcare for 1 year, or
- 5.2 million households with solar electricity for 1 year

Lodi Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

FREE EVENT

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

SATURDAY OCT. 29TH

3 P.M. UNTIL 9 P.M.

FOOD ALTARS ART SHOW

LIVE MUSIC DANCING

HUTCHINS STREET SQUARE

125 S. Hutchins Street, Lodi 209.333-6735 www.lodi.gov/PRCS

WM WASTE MANAGEMENT

LODI PARKS RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

MEXICAN HERITAGE CENTER & GALLERY

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

ALTAR BLESSINGS & RECEPTION OCT. 14 @ 5:30

LIVE MUSIC LATIN SOUL BAND

STEN 2016

FREE COMMUNITY STREET FIESTA

MARIACHI MUSIC - CATRINA PAGEANT - FOLKLORIC DANCES - VENDORS

KIDS CORNER - GAMES - FOOD - FACE PAINTING - ARTS & CRAFTS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2016 2-6pm

MARKET ST. STOCKTON CALIFORNIA



Draw it out

Call for artists: Our Anguish, Our Resolve

The Call For Artists is out for the "Our Anguish, Our Resolve" Art Against Violence exhibit in March 2017. Artists of all ages, cultures and viewpoints are invited to submit original artwork in any media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, video, garden art, banners, and fabric art.

The "Our Anguish, Our Resolve" theme of the 2017 art show arises from recent events of global and local violence. Artists are invited to submit pieces exhibiting their visual expressions of, and reactions to, the pain caused by these acts, along with visual expressions of resolve and solutions. The Call for Artists asks them to examine how we can move as a community to end the violence in our city or what we can do as a people to stop the global perpetuation of

violence and intolerance, and the extreme positions that encourage them.

The Call For Artists is available online at <http://tiny.cc/dbpie>. The "Our Anguish, Our Resolve" exhibit is sponsored by Draw It Out, a program of Cleveland School Remembers, a Brady Group non-profit organization.

The exhibit venue is the Plants and Flowers Building at the San Joaquin County Fairgrounds. An Artists Reception at the venue on Sunday, March 5, 2017 from 3-5 p.m. will kick off the art show.

Draw It Out will offer free daily admission, and free guided tours on request for the exhibit during the entire month of March 2017. Artists with questions not answered in the Call For Artists may contact the exhibit information line at (209) 910-3461.

Nov 28 / Dec 12

Sierra club gatherings - planning and a party

Meetings are held in the Fireside Room at the Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, across from the UOP Tower. These meetings are open to everyone whether you are a Sierra Club member or not.

Stockton's General Land Use Plan: issues of environmental justice and smart growth
Monday, November 28 @ 7 pm
Presenters: Eric Parfrey and Katelyn Roedner Sutter

The City of Stockton is in the process of revising its General Land Use Plan. Stockton's current Land Use Plan encouraged sprawl away from the City's core and contributed substantially to a host of environmental and economic

problems. How the City decides to grow will profoundly affect the environment, the City's finances, and the habitability, health and safety of local residents.

In this presentation we will learn:

- * How poor land use management is a leading cause of environmental injustice
- * How land use management affects the economic viability of Stockton as well as individual health, safety and habitability
- * What is "smart growth" and why is it so important
- * What the Sierra Club has done to influence Stockton's General Plan

* What an ideal Stockton General Plan should look like

* What you can do to have an influence on the General Plan

Third Annual Environmental Holiday Gathering
Monday, December 12 @ 6:30 pm

Join us for this holiday event. We'll again enjoy the fun music of Mom's Chili Boys. We'll share ideas and updates from the past year with special highlights from the Salmonids in the Classroom and DELTA Studies curriculum centered around the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta, a K-12 program coordinated by Sierra Club member Conni Bock.

Sunday, Oct 15th

Stockton 2016 Arts Awards - Stars Shine Again

The City of Stockton Arts Commission and the Stockton Arts Foundation announce the 38th Arts Award Celebration, "Stars Shine Again," recognizing the achievements of local artists, arts organizations, and arts supporters. The Gala event is scheduled for October 15, 2016, at the Stockton Civic Theater, 2312 Rosemarie Lane. The celebration begins at 5:30 p.m. with wine and hors d'oeuvres, with the program following at 6:30 p.m. The Commission and the Arts Foundation are proud to honor the following:

Career Achievement: Carlos Perez
Volunteer Award (In Memoriam): Cecil P. Rendon
Founders Award: Michael L. Oliva
Comet Award: Garrett Daniells
Comet Award: Chris Jones
City Award: Brian Batuga
Business of the Arts Award: Bill's *Music Sales*

Star Award (Visual Arts): Mary Ann Poletti
Star Award (Performing Arts): Joni Morris

The public is cordially invited to attend this event. Individual tickets are available for \$25.00 per person. Paid

Sunday, Oct 9

La Catrina Quartet balances Latin and Classical

The La Catrina String Quartet, recognized as the new vanguard for contemporary Latin American string quartet repertoire, will thrill us with their artistry on Sunday, October 9, at 2:30 pm in the Faye Spanos Concert Hall. The quartet are all endearing people as well as wonderful musicians. Their infectious personalities infuse their playing, creating truly compelling performances that are intoxicating, playful and downright irresistible. Hailed by Yo-Yo Ma as "wonderful ambassadors for Latin American music," The La Catrina Quartet members are from Mexico (Daniel Vega-Albela, Jorge Martinez-Ríos), Venezuela (Simón Gollo) and Chile (Jorge Espinoza). They are the string quartet-in-residence at New Mexico State University, in Las Cruces. The high level of their commitment to musical excellence was illustrated when the La Catrina String Quartet was awarded the 2012 Latin Grammy for Best Classical Recording. Their mission is three-fold: a deep commitment to the cultivation of new works by living U.S. composers and throughout the Americas; the programming of existing Latin American works rarely performed in the U.S. and abroad; bringing fresh interpretations to classical, romantic and twentieth century masterpieces.

Tickets are \$25 and are available in the lobby of Faye Spanos Concert Hall at UOP starting at 2:00 pm, 30 minutes before the concert. Students of any age are admitted free. The audience is invited to meet the musicians at a reception following the concert. Friends of Chamber Music concerts are presented in cooperation with Pacific and its Conservatory of Music. For a brochure or more information about the FOCM annual series, please call 209-956-2868 or visit www.chambermusicfriends.org.

Thursday, Nov 6

Hermitage Piano Trio plays Russian composers



These spectacular artists will provide a performance that is both classical and represents the greatest of Russian composers on Sunday, November 6, at 2:30 pm in the Faye Spanos Concert Hall. Descending from the great Russian musical tradition, the Hermitage Piano Trio is distinguished by its exuberant musicality, interpretative range, and sumptuous sound. The Washington Post raved that "three of Russia's most spectacular young soloists turned in a performance of such power and sweeping passion that it left you nearly out of breath."

Based in the United States, the Trio excels at performing an enormous variety of music and will offer us a program featuring a wide repertoire from Shostakovich and Glinka, to Mendelssohn and Suk. This elite trio of three musicians are noted soloists in their own right. In a career already spanning forty-five countries, violinist Misha Keylin is attracting particular attention with his world-premiere CD series of the seven Henri Vieuxtemps violin concertos that have already sold over 150,000 copies.

Hailed as "a brilliant cellist" by the legendary Mstislav Rostropovich, Sergey Antonov went on to become one of the youngest cellists ever awarded the gold medal at the world's premier musical contest, the quadrennial International Tchaikovsky Competition. This has placed him on stages

at world-renowned venues from Russia's Great Hall at the Moscow Conservatory to Suntory Hall in Tokyo. Sergey Antonov is also the artistic director of the concert series for the Chamber Music Foundation of New England.

Pianist Ilya Kazantsev, a fresh and exciting presence on the international music scene and a passionate interpreter of his native Russian repertoire—hailed by The Washington Post as "virtually flawless"—has performed with orchestras in Russia, Canada, Europe, and the United States. He made his U.S. solo debut at Carnegie Hall as a winner of the Nadia Reisenberg Piano Award at Mannes College.

The Hermitage Trio will provide one of the most interesting and varied classical chamber music concerts presented by Stockton's Friends of Chamber Music. Come enjoy the concert. Tickets are \$25 and are available in the lobby of Faye Spanos Concert Hall at UOP starting at 2:00 pm, 30 minutes before the concert. Students of any age are admitted free. The audience is invited to meet the musicians at a reception following the concert. Friends of Chamber Music concerts are presented in cooperation with Pacific and its Conservatory of Music. For a brochure or more information about the FOCM annual series, please call 209-956-2868 or visit www.chambermusicfriends.org.

reservations can also be sent directly to the Stockton Arts Foundation, P.O. Box 272, Stockton, CA 95201. Please send a list of names for the reservations, as names will be listed at the Will Call table. Sponsor and/or Advertising Reservation forms can be obtained from any member of the Stockton Arts Commission or using the "Arts Awards" link at www.stocktonca.gov/arts. Please submit completed forms to the Stockton Arts Foundation with checks or money orders. For additional information about tickets, sponsorship, and advertising, please contact Nelson Cortez at 209-937-8837 or nelson.cortez@stocktonca.gov



OCT/NOV 2016 CALENDAR

Editor’s note: if your event isn’t listed, let us know. Send all copy to: bgiudici@caltel.com by the 10th of every month.

FRI, SEPT 29
Fully Booked: a benefit for Tuleburg Press, 6-10 pm. St. Basil's Greek Orthodox Church, Community Hall, 920 W. March Lane, Stockton. Single - \$75, couple - \$135. 209-662-4335

SAT, OCT 1
University Concert Band, 7:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Schubert's 9th Symphony and Beethoven's Triple Concerto featuring Trio 180. \$10 general, \$5 senior/UOP staff, students free with ID.

Scott Kelby World Wide Photo Walk 2016: Stockton, 9-11 am, Stockton Rural Cemetary, 2350 Cemetery Ln., Stockton. Scott Kelby is a world renowned photographer. Each year he holds his annual Scott Kelby world wide photo walk. People all over the world join in on the assigned date and he invites people to lead what are called photo walks. I'm Carrie Walker and I've had the privilege of leading a few here in Stockton. On October 1st I will be leading one at the Stockton Rural Cemetary. Free. 209-451-3008

MON, OCT 3
Dance Around the World, 4 pm Escalon Library; 6 pm Tracy Library. Dedicated to teaching kids and adults the many ways cultures interpret and share dance. This interactive program offers patrons of all abilities the chance to move and groove. Free. 209-937-8221

TUES, OCT 4
Dance Around the World, 4 pm Chavez Central Library, 6 pm Lodi Library. Dedicated to teaching kids and adults the many ways cultures interpret and share dance. This interactive program offers patrons of all abilities the chance to move and groove. Free. 209-937-8221

WED, OCT 5
Dance Around the World, 4:30 pm Stribley Library, Dedicated to teaching kids and adults the many ways cultures interpret and share dance. This interactive program offers patrons of all abilities the chance to move and groove. Free. 209-937-8221

THURS, OCT 6
Peace & Justice Network board meeting, John Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 6:30 pm. All welcome. 467-4455
Brubeck Institute presents Bennie Maupin , 7 pm. Maupin was a saxophonist with the great Herbie Hancock. Joining Maupin will be the Joe Mazzaferro Group. Join us for an evening

sure to delight!
Take Five Jazz at the Brew. 10 pm. Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

OCT 6 - 28
Delta Center for the Arts LH Horton Jr Gallery presents Social Constructs An Exhibition on Identity and Perception. SJDC, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. T 11am–4pm, W–Th 11am–6:30pm, F 11am–1pm. Free and open to the public. 209-954-5507.

SAT, OCT 8
First annual Banner Island Ballpark BrewFest, 11 am - 5 pm, Banner Island Ballpark, 404 W Fremont St., Stockton. With a portion of the proceeds benefiting United Way, for \$25 in advance, \$30 day of, beer connoisseurs can purchase a ticket for the event, which includes a commemorative mini beer stein and 8 drink tickets. In addition to over 25 beer suppliers set up on the field, the ballpark will also have food vendors and live music! Designated drivers get all-you-can-drink soda for \$10. Tickets at stocktonports.com or at the Ports' Box Office. The Box Office is open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm. 209-644-1900

SUN, OCT 9
Friends of Chamber Music present La Catrina String Quartet , 2:30pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall 3511 Pacific Ave, Program includes: Eduardo Gamboa, Cañambú; Javier Álvarez, Metro Chabacano; Ástor Piazzolla, Suite del Ángel and more. \$25 general; \$15 UOP faculty/staff. FT students free with student ID.

TUES, OCT 11
Delta Fall Festival of Bands, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. Featuring Delta College Symphonic and Stockton Concert Bands \$8 adult; \$5 student/ senior over 61, children 12 & under free with admission ticket. 209-954-5209

FRI-SUN OCT 14 - 23
Delta Drama presents "SubUrbia.", by Eric Bogosian, directed by Greg Foro. 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. The play depicts the bitter rage and frustration of a group of lonely young people living in a suburban community desperately searching for a meaning to their lives. Alred H. Muller Studio Theater, SJDC, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10/\$12.

FRI, OCT 14

The Pacific Jazz Ensemble with vocalist Carmen Bradford and saxophonist Everette Harp , 7:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 UOP staff/ seniors over 64.

Free Movies at Weber Point, enjoy Hotel Transylvania 2 under the stars at Weber Point Events Center, 221 Center St, Stockton. 6:30 - 10pm. Concession foods available for purchase; no alcohol permitted

Take Five Jazz at the Brew. 10 pm. Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

SAT, OCT 15
Stockton 2016 Arts Awards - "Stars Shine Again" pays tribute to Stockton artists. 5:30 - 8:30 pm. Stockton Civic Theater, 2312 Rosemarie Lane, Stockton. \$25. 209-937-8837. (see p 18)

Brubeck Festival Jazz on the Green, 12-5 pm. University of the Pacific Knoles Lawn, 3601 Pacific Ave. Join us for an afternoon of live jazz, interactive cultural arts and educational activities, an instrument petting zoo, an SUSD students– art showcase, great food and much, much more! Fun for the whole family! Free.

SUN, OCT 16
Stockton Walk to End Alzheimers, 8 am - 1 pm. Victory Park, 1001 N Pershing Ave., Stockton.

All funds raised through Walk to End Alzheimer's further the care, support and research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association. The Alzheimer's Association is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. If interested in participating in the walk, please register! There is no registration fee for Walk. However, we ask every walker to make a personal donation and commit to raising funds in the fight against Alzheimer's. Free. 209-248-0948

WED, OCT 19
SJDC Fall Festival of Choirs, Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. Still only \$8; \$5 for students and seniors over 61, children under 12 free. 209-951-5110.

THURS, OCT 20
SJDC Jazz Ensembles featuring Larry Lunetta, trumpet. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. Still only \$8; \$5 for students and seniors over 61. Dia de los Muertos Culture Program, 3:30 - 5 pm, Maya An-

gelou Library, 2324 Pock Lane, Stockton. Local artists and educator Raoul Mora will share traditions and arts of the Day of the Dead festivities in Mexico. Participants can make several crafts at this program and will be able to view Mr. Mora's art exhibit. Free. 209-937-8221.

SAT, OCT 22
Changing Faces Theater presents - 24 Hour Theater De Los Muertos III, 8-10 pm. Hutchins Street Square - Thomas Theatre, 125 S. Hutchins St., Lodi. Audiences will see six short plays that were all written and rehearsed in the previous 24 hours. Its raw, it's crazy, and anything can happen! All of the plays will have a horror theme to get you in the Halloween spirit! This show is not intended for young audiences (under 10). There will be beer and concessions available for purchase. Very limited seating– don't miss out! \$15. 209-333-5550

THURS, OCT 27
Take Five Jazz at the Brew featuring the Brian Kendrick Little Big Band. 10 pm. Join us for some swinging music as San Joaquin Delta College Jazz Professor Brian Kendrick brings his big band sound to Thursday nights. Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

FRI - SUN OCT 28-30
Pacific Opera Theatre presents "Opera Follies," 7:30 pm. Alex and Jeri Vereschagin Alumni House

1022 Dave Brubeck Way, UOP, Stockton. Stage direction by James Haffner; musical direction by Burr Cochran Phillips \$19 general, \$10 students/seniors.

SAT, OCT 29
Dia De Los Muertos, 3 - 9 pm, Hutchins Street Square, 125 S Hutchins, Lodi. Live music, dancing, food, kid activities, altars and an art show. There will also be a showing of the movie The Book of Life in English and Spanish. Free. 209-333-6735.

SUN, OCT 30
Stockton Dia De Los Muertos Street Fiesta brings downtown Stockton street to life, 1:30 - 6 pm. Mexican Heritage Center, 111 S Sutter Street., Stockton. ive bands, Mariachis, Folkloric Dancers, Arts & Crafts, Artist vendors, and Kids' Corner with face painting, art, and games. Event is free and everyone is invited to join in on the festivities. Dress up and stay for the "CATRINA PAGEANT". There will also be an art and altar exhibit within the Mexican Heritage Center & Gallery for the community to view. If you are interested in reserving a altar space to dedicate to a loved one, please contact Gracie Madrid, president of

the Mexican Heritage Center at (209) 944-4522. An altar blessing is a short prayer which is said by a priest at each altar. After that there is music, food & entertainment. Free. 209-944-4522.

THURS, NOV 3
Peace & Justice Network board meeting, John Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 6:30 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Take 5 Jazz at the Brew featuring the Simon Rowe Latin Project, Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

SAT, NOV 6
Hermitage Piano Trio Chamber Music Concert, 2:30 - 4:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3601 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$25, students free. 209-956-2868. (see p 18)

THURS, NOV 10
Brubeck Institute presents Gilbert Castellanos , 7 pm. Trumpeter Castellanos will be the Patrick Langham Quintet. Take Five Jazz at the Brew. 10 pm. Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

NOV 10 - DEC 9
Delta Center for the Arts LH Horton Jr Gallery presents On Reading in the San Joaquin presenting works from Raising Literacy: A Photographic Survey of Libraries and Literacy in Stockton and San Joaquin County . SJDC, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. T 11am–4pm, W–Th 11am–6:30pm, F 11am–1pm. Free and open to the public. 209-954-5507.

SUN, NOV 13
University Concert Band and Symphonic Wind Ensemble, 2:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Eric Hammer, director. \$10 general, \$5 senior/UOP staff, students free with ID.

WED, NOV 16
Pacific Jazz Ensemble, 7:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 senior/UOP staff, students free with ID.

FRI - SUN NOV 16 - DEC 11
Disney's Mary Poppins. Thu 7:30 pm, Fri-Sat 7:30 pm, Sun 2:30 pm (Dec 5, 12 1 pm). Stockton Civic Theatre, 2312 Rosemarie Lane, Stockton. \$15 - \$25. 473-242

FRI, NOV 18
Family Movie Night! Hutchins Street Square Presents- Free Birds! 6 - 8 pm. Hutchins Street Square, 125 S Hutchins St, Lodi. \$.75. 209-333-5550

SAT, NOV 19
Stockton Symphony Classics II concert: Ode to Joy. 6

pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$25-63 209-954-5110

MON, NOV 28
Delta Sierra Club meeting: Stockton's General Land Use Plan, 7 pm. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442. (p 18)

FRI, DEC 2
30th annual Peaceful Holiday Gift Fair, featuring peace gifts. 4 - 9 pm. Entertainment, refreshments and a good cause. Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free admission. 462-3489.

SAT, DEC 3
30th annual Peaceful Holiday Gift Fair, featuring peace gifts. 10 am - 2 pm. Entertainment, refreshments and a good cause. Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free admission. 462-3489.

MON, DEC 12
Delta Sierra Club Third Annual Environmental Holiday Gathering , 6:30 pm. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442. (p 18)

FIRST SATURDAYS
Free Yoga. Victory Park, 1201 N. Pershing Ave, Stockton, 9 - 10 am. Yoga in the Park is every first Saturday of the month until November. Free admission.

SECOND FRIDAYS
Movies at the Point, Weber Point Events Center, 221 N Center St, Stockton. 6:30 - 10 pm. Free admission.

SECOND SATURDAYS
Stockton Citizens' Climate Lobby, 9:30am -12 pm, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton

FOURTH MONDAYS
Delta Sierra Club meeting, 7 pm. Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 7 pm program with social time following. All welcome.

LAST FRIDAYS
Waterfront Fridays, Brick & Mortar, 125 Bridge Place, Stockton - on the first floor of historic B&M building - will be transformed into a well-curated specialty food and craft event. Local entrepreneurs will have a chance to test their product and artist to display their works. Every last Friday of the month, the outdoor deck will become a stage for live entertainment from local performers. The event is free and will also feature kids art projects.

Talking with Strangers: A Journey to the Heart of the Right



CHUCK COLLINS

There are many theories and explanations for the rise of Donald Trump and the current incarnation of white right-wing populism. A deeper understanding—and an invitation to scale the “empathy wall”—comes from veteran sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild in her new book, *Strangers In Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*. The book is, as its second subtitle suggests, “A Journey to the Heart of Our Political Divide.”

In *Strangers*, Hochschild spends over five years embedded with Louisiana Tea Party activists, including families that have suffered from environmental disasters at the hands of chemical and petroleum companies. As she builds relationships with her subjects, Hochschild goes to meetings, shares meals, goes on local driving tours, attends church, samples food at Cajun cook-offs, and goes to a Trump rally. Her intention is to build the “scaffolding of an empathy bridge.” As Hochschild writes, “An empathy wall is an obstacle to deep understanding of another person, one that can make us feel indifferent or even hostile to those who hold different beliefs or whose childhood is rooted in different circumstances.”

Hochschild focuses on what she calls the “Great Paradox:” Why is it that people whose communities have been devastated by greedy and unregulated chemical and oil companies enthusiastically support politicians who advocate for further corporate deregulation? In Hochschild’s words, why is there both “great pollution and great resistance to regulating polluters.” The quick explanation is that people’s concerns about unresponsive government, high taxes, disrespect for religious and cultural alienation override environmental concerns, even when a sinkhole caused by corporate pillage literally sinks your neighborhood. And the “rift between deserving taxpayers and undeserving tax

money takers, those in a class below them” continues to fester. Two decades after welfare reform reduced the number of aid recipients by 80 percent, Hochschild hears the timeless resentments about mothers having children out of wedlock and driving fancy cars to drop their kids at Head Start.

Hochschild formulates a “deep story” to explain the worldview of her tea party neighbors. Imagine that you are standing in a line of people that rises up over a hillside. On the other side of the hill is the American Dream. You work hard, sometimes in dangerous work. You lead a moral life, honoring family, country, community and God and make sacrifices, such as serving in the military. You are waiting patiently, but the line is stalling, even moving backward at times. When you look forward, you see people cutting in line. Some of them are new immigrants and people of color.

At the head of line, waving in the line-cutters, is Barack Obama and the liberal coastal elites. While calling you a racist, they side with the line-cutters. Heck, they even appear to value the lives of pelicans higher than your life and livelihood in the name of abstract environmentalism.

You are not a racist—you have worked all your life along side African-Americans and Latinos. But you resent it when people cut in line. And you don’t like it when liberals insult you because of your Christianity, commitment to marriage, and Southern culture. All this makes you feel like you are a stranger in your own land.

What the Tea Party and Donald Trump have to offer is they at least see you. You are not invisible. And they invoke memories of a time when you weren’t a stranger in your own land. They don’t dismiss you as racists and rednecks.

When Hillary Clinton calls you a “deplorable,” you know that’s what the liberal elites secretly say behind closed doors. As Joe Bageant wrote in his marvelous book, *Deer Hunting with Jesus: Dispatches from America’s Class War*, most liberals don’t have a clue how to engage with white working class communities. They presume people are too racist, dumb or manipulated by the Koch brothers to vote for their real economic class interests, rather than understand the economic, cultural and identity reasons why people might distrust the Democratic party establishment and liberal agenda.

Over three decades of stagnant wages and sluggish growth in rural and small town America have fueled the regressive populist moment. One solution is to get the stalled-out line moving again by raising wages, expanding opportunities, savings, wealth creation, and homeownership.

ON MOVING FORWARD

Change will require building progressive populist coalitions between rural and urban workers to press for investment and fair trade policies that don’t further undercut wage growth. But the Tea Party folks need to see that they aren’t the only ones waiting in line. There are millions of

Black, Latino and Native American workers who have also waiting patiently for the line to move (some for centuries) who share their values and aspirations, but have been similarly betrayed by three decades of neoliberal economic policies that have inflated the wealth of the 1 percent and undercut wages.

The resentments about “line-cutters” won’t entirely disappear, but most will evaporate if prosperity is better shared. Racist attitudes are part of the equation, fueled by immigration and cultural changes that will not go away. But as long as people rightfully feel the economy is a rigged game and they are the losers, the scapegoating will continue to focus on the “line cutters” instead of the rule riggers in the powerful 1 percent.

A missing piece of the work is empathy, of listening and building relationships, and affirming that everyone is valued in this country, including those who are white working class and Christian. Coastal liberals need to leave their smug bubbles and make friends across the empathy wall.

For decades, Hochschild has chronicled the social forces shaping our daily lived experience, such as women’s work-home imbalances (*The Second Shift: Working Families and the Revolution at Home*), the commodification of relationships (*The Outsourced Self: Intimate Life in Market Times*), and the plight of immigrant women workers (*Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy*). She is a compassionate and curious listener, probing for insight and meaning, founded on authentic relationships.

As writer Margaret Wheatley wisely said, “You can’t hate someone whose story you know.” *Strangers in their Own Land* greatly expands our stories.

CHUCK COLLINS IS A SENIOR SCHOLAR AT THE INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES WHERE HE CO-EDITS INEQUALITY.ORG, AND IS AUTHOR OF THE NEW BOOK, *BORN ON THIRD BASE: A ONE PERCENTER MAKES THE CASE FOR TACKLING INEQUALITY, BRINGING WEALTH HOME, AND COMMITTING TO THE COMMON GOOD*. HE IS COFOUNDER OF WEALTH FOR THE COMMON GOOD, RECENTLY MERGED WITH THEPATRIOTIC MILLIONAIRES. HE IS CO-AUTHOR OF *99 TO 1: THE MORAL MEASURE OF THE ECONOMY* AND, WITH BILL GATES SR., OF *WEALTH AND OUR COMMONWEALTH: WHY AMERICA SHOULD TAX ACCUMULATED FORTUNES*.

Source: Common Dreams 9/23/16 <http://www.commondreams.org/>

SEPT 30, 6-10 PM

Fully Booked: A Benefit for Tuleburg Press

Tuleburg Press will produce its first community fundraiser on Friday, September 30, 2016, 6-10 p.m. at St. Basil’s Church Community Hall, 920 West March Lane in Stockton. The event’s organizers aim to raise the funds to open a multipurpose venue in downtown Stockton, The Write Place, for children, teens, young adults and adults to learn and be mentored on the craft of writing. It will be a place for learning to write, where the product of their efforts will be published! Overall literacy and appreciation of books will be taught in workshops and cultivated through special events. “We want to engage the community in storytelling,” stated Paula Sheil, Founder

of the not-for-profit Tuleburg Press and President of its Board of Directors. “We see the space as a conduit for ideas, conversation and concerns.”

The mission of Tuleburg Press is “to publish works of literary and educational merit in any genre that address Valley life: our people, places, events and Tuleburg Press works to fulfill that mission by building literacy and writing confidence for all ages through book publishing, one-on-one mentoring, community outreach, and writing workshops. The Write Place is modeled after venues like 916 Ink in Sacramento and 826 Valencia in the Mission District of San Francisco.

The center will be walking

distance for students enrolled in many downtown schools. Creative writing and book arts workshops will be offered for writers of all ages. Writing groups and book clubs will be able to use the space in the evenings. On weekends, The Write Place will host author readings and artists who teach paper making, book binding, and paper crafts of many kinds. Fully Booked is a dinner and dance with entertainment and a silent auction. Tickets are \$75 for individuals and \$135 for couples. Persons and/or organizations wishing to purchase tickets or to sponsor the event are invited to go to TuleburgPress.com/FULLYBOOKED or call 209-662-4335.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

ALTERNATING WEDNESDAYS

Community Radio Council Meeting, 7 - 9 pm, Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

THURSDAYS

Peace demonstration, 5-6 pm, edge of Delta campus on Pacific, across from Macy’s. Free parking at mall. Weekly since 2003. We have signs, or bring your own. We get LOTS of honks! Info 464-3326. Take Five Jazz club, 7 - 9 pm, Valley Brew

FRIDAYS

Jazz jam at Whirlow’s, 7 pm, Whirlow’s Tossed & Grilled, 1926 Pacific Avenue, Stockton. Enjoy a live jazz jam session every Friday at Whirlow’s on

Stockton’s historic Miracle Mile! Bring your instruments and join the jam! Hosted by Philip Bailey. Free cover. 466-2823

Live Music at Mile Wine Company, 7 - 10:30 pm. 2113 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. 465-9463

SATURDAYS

Crosstown Freeway Farmers Market, under the freeway between El Dorado & San Joaquin, Stockton. 7 - 11, or when sold out. 943-1830

Live Music at Mile Wine Company, 7 - 10:30 pm. 2113 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. 465-9463 Live Music Rosa’s at Tower Park, 9 pm - 1 am. Classic rock & roll. \$5 cover.

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