

29th Annual Earth Day Festival

WATER IS LIFE

Stockton and San Joaquin County will celebrate its 29th Earth Day Festival on Sunday, April 23, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Victory Park behind Haggin Museum. "Water is Life" is the theme of this area's premier environmental event and will focus on educating local residents in taking care of our environment. Over 80 vendors will participate, including some great healthy food fare. It is a fun day for kids and families, and admission is free.

Through an array of informative, interactive booths, demos, displays and exhibits, this annual Festival is a chance for local area schools, environmental

organizations, community agencies and green businesses to come together to share ideas and discuss important environmental issues with area residents. Local area schools will teach about how to better take care of our Earth with a variety of hands-on activities, and environmental organizations will provide education about important green issues and how we can make a difference. Community agencies will help us live a healthier, more positive life, and green businesses will assist attendees in making changes to their home and workplace.

Warm-up for the day

with stretching during a relaxing hour of yoga on the park green starting at 10 a.m. Join other local cyclists, young and old, and peddle to the Festival and secure your bicycles in a safe bike corral staffed by the San Joaquin Bike Coalition as you enjoy the activities at the Festival.

Great entertainment will be featured at the Festival. A variety of local area bands and cultural groups will be there to captivate and delight attendees. This year's music lineup includes: UOP's The Brubeck Institute Jazz Quartet, blues group Shad and the Groovinators, rock band Project 58, New Age electronica group Yellow Dot Project, and the Washboard Monkeys performing bluegrass and swing. Stockton Bukkyo Taiko Drummers will open the Festival at 11 a.m. and an organic drum circle will close the day at 4 p.m. on a percussive note.

The day before the Festival on the official national Earth Day, Saturday, April 22, local scientists and concerned citizens will "March for Science" at 9 a.m. at Victory Park. This walk will focus on the responsible application of science to government. The marchers will be advocating to prevent changes to existing environmental policies that could cause negative effects to our planet such as climate change.

The Earth Day Festival is brought to you by the collaboration, cooperation and dedicated work of the Peace & Justice Network, City of Stockton, San Joaquin County Office of Education, Mayaco

2017

EARTH DAY

FESTIVAL

WATER IS LIFE

FREE

ADMISSION

LIVEGREENSANJOAQUIN.ORG

APRIL 23, 2017

VICTORY PARK STOCKTON

LIVE LOCAL MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT

DELICIOUS HEALTHY LOCAL FOOD

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL EVENT

BIKE-FRIENDLY EVENT

Marketing/Internet and Stockton Area Water Suppliers. Companies and organizations are encouraged to participate and support this important environmental event by becoming a sponsor. All sponsors will be recognized before and at the event.

This Festival is made possible with the help of wonderful volunteers from the community. If you would like to volunteer, there are many ways to help on the day of the event. Join others who care about our environment and help make this year's Earth Day Festival a success.



For more information,
visit our website at
[www.
livegreensanjoaquin.org](http://www.livegreensanjoaquin.org)

or email us at
[stocktonearthday@
gmail.com](mailto:stocktonearthday@gmail.com).

Peace & Justice Network
of San Joaquin County
P.O. Box 4123
Stockton, CA 95204
209/467-4455

Nonprofit Org. U.S.
Postage
PAID
Permit No. 488
Stockton, CA

SAVE THE DATES		CONTENTS	
April 22 March for Science		Health Plan Options	P3, 5
Apr 23 Earth Day Festival Stockton		Tunnel Decision 2017	P4
Apr 23 Earth Day Celebration Angels Camp		War Spending on steroids P9	
		Puentes garden tips	P12
		Cabinet rot	P14
		Europe on wrong track	P15
		Media threats	P16



Editors Letter

BRUCE GIUDICI

The daily torrent of bizarre claims, counter-claims and proposals coming from our "leadership" can take its toll on the casual political observer. In the same way that torture breaks down the human spirit, a constant barrage of mis-information and lies can cause people

to tune out the annoying, and ignore the importance of what is happening to this nation. For at least the next few years, it is vital that we do not tune out or ignore what is happening. - for the shape of Dystopian Donald's vision for our collective future is beginning to become more clear.

Unsurprisingly for

The art of distraction

a billionaire real estate developer born into money, Trump's vision is short-term with little to offer the poor or disadvantaged. Consistent with his campaign promises, the President sees environmental and labor laws as obstructions to profit; consequently, he will destroy regulations that hurt the corporate bottom line in any way. Consistent with "conservative" Republican administrations since Reagan's, taxes will

be cut for the rich with no regard for resultant deficits - to be cleaned up (mostly unnoticed) by subsequent Democratic administrations. And consistent with the pay-to-play US political process, the gluttonous military-industrial complex will gorge, both to keep our politically most profitable businesses bloated and to starve the programs that make life bearable for those who make less than the median \$50,000.

The true art of this administration has been to disparage and distract

the media, while the true damage is being done to our common environmental and financial future. In the months and years ahead, we must stand for true peace and lasting justice - by speaking with a clear voice when called upon. Stay informed.

Earth Day is, of course, every day - but to celebrate, please come to the San Joaquin and/or Calaveras Earth Day celebrations on April 23. Learning something new never felt so good. Have a meaningful spring!

Frustrated at our local situation

Friend,

For the past five years, we have been able to cultivate relationships with our local schools in a way that is making San Joaquin County a national leader in supporting LGBT+ youth and addressing LGBT+ bullying on campus. Unfortunately, thanks in no part to the new national political climate, local critics are becoming louder with their opposition to our work.

I normally don't ask our entire movement to get engaged but the

seriousness of this situation demands that I ask each of you to make your presence known. Just last week I learned that a PE teacher in Lodi outed and mocked a middle school student in front of the class for being transgender. We need to send a loud and clear message that this type of behavior is against the law and will not be tolerated.

If you fought for marriage equality. If you fought to serve in our military. If you fought for equal health care. All of these laws and policies are now at risk. We need you

with us to declare we will not go back into the closet!

In solidarity,

NICHOLAS HATTEN
San Joaquin Pride Center

<http://www.sjpridecenter.org/>

San Joaquin Pride Center
· 115 N Sutter St, Second Floor, Stockton, CA 95202



Meet The Press

Delta Tunnels interview with new Stockton mayor

Transcript from the March 3 interview:

CHUCK TODD: So there's a lot of talk of infrastructure spending coming out of the federal government, the Trump administration talks it up, you hear a lot of rhetoric about it. When you hear that, what are you hoping that means, bottom-line, to Stockton, CA?

MICHAEL TUBBS: I hope it doesn't mean money for the Twin Tunnels, which will employ some folks short-term, but shift all our water away from the Delta and have lasting impact on our economy. I hope it doesn't mean a bunch of people building walls to push people out. But if it means a Works Progress Administration sort of initiative for putting Stocktonians and the rest of America back to work on fixing our existing roads, and dams, and building the transportation infrastructure we need in this century, that sounds like a good idea.

CT: It's interesting, you just talked about something that sounds very local, and it might be that some people don't know about this, it sounds like you are getting ready for a water war in the state. Is that what you are concerned with about the Twin Tunnels you just talked about?

MT: I wouldn't call it a water war, Chuck, it has been something of a discussion for a long time

CT: About moving Northern California water south, right?

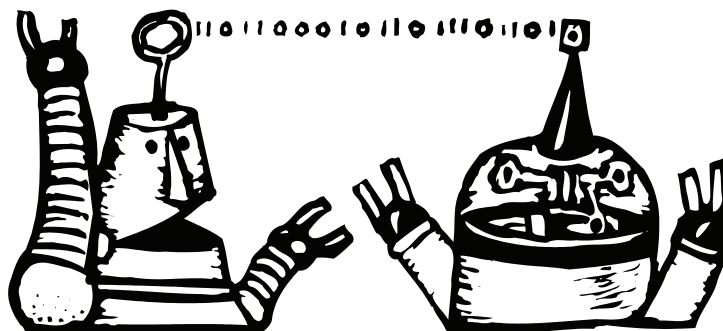
MT: Yeah, moving water south and what's the best way to do that, and are there existing things we can do that won't unduly harm some parts of the state to help with some of the needs in others. One of the things we have been battling locally is, and we have local advocates who have been engaged for a long time, is this Twin Tunnels plan. Which is number one, super expensive, and number two, doesn't get at some of the root causes of issues in terms of water storage and cleaning that creates some of the water scarcity in other parts of the state. So for me, an infrastructure bill makes sense as long as it is employing people to do good things that benefit communities and

not cause undue harm, whether it's building walls or building super-expensive tunnels that don't increase the ability to get water.

CT: Are you just concerned that if the Tunnels are built and the water is moved then basically, you then have an Ag problem on your hands?

MT: Ag problem, but also just economies of scale. You have farmers and fishermen, there are people who rely on the Delta for their well-being in the San Joaquin Valley area and once their Delta is gone, once the salination levels rise, or once the environment is harmed, there's no going back from that. There would be all types of residuals, impacts, and economic effects for this region and that doesn't do the state any good, actually.

Source: Restore the Delta 3/3/17 restorethedelta.org



CONNECTIONS

Editor: Bruce Giudici, 786-3109; bgiudici@caltel.com

Layout: Luis Gonzalez, lrg.lxxxvii@gmail.com

Proofreader: Debbie Cousyn

Ad Rep: Ava Simpson
ava.simpson.as@gmail.com
916-320-2672

Distribution Coordinators:
Deane and Marcia Savage,
209-242-2254

Distribution Site: Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton

Distributors: Suzy Arnett, Vic Berncorff, Richard Blackstone, Antoinette Celle, Cally Chin, Lee Christensen, Daniel Fong, Christie Kelley, Jeanne Kerr, Catherine Mathis, John Minnehan, Heather Ryan, Jeff Ryan, Deane and Marcia Savage, Richard Slezak, Julie Vaughn, Patrick Wall, Juanda Jones

Deadline:

Circulation: 8,000

CONNECTIONS is a monthly publication of the Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County. The views expressed in CONNECTIONS are those of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the Network. News, articles, letters and calendar items should be sent to the Peace & Justice Network, P.O. Box 4123, Stockton, CA 95204. The editor reserves the right of final decision on copy. Call (209) 467-4455 for more information. PJN is on the internet: <http://www.pjnsjc.org>



Peace & Justice Network Board of Directors

Chair: Richard Blackston

Vice-Chair:

Christie Kelley

Treasurer: Deane Savage

Secretary: Cathy Mathis

Members—at large:

Daniel Fong, Bruce Giudici, Jeanne Kerr

Organizational members:

Puentes (Richard Blackston), Single Payer San Joaquin (Suzy Arnett), CARA (Jerry Bailey), The Voice of Stockton (Gov. Don), Israel/Palestine Task Force CA/NV United Methodist Church (Gloria Fearn), Friends for Peace (Joy Hope)

"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."



How the GOP's healthcare plan makes case for Medicare-for-All

DEIRDRE FULTON

The GOP's new plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA) with something much worse merely supports the argument that the only way to achieve true healthcare reform is to enact a single-payer, Medicare-for-All system, advocates said this week. "Instead of fixing the very real holes in the ACA—and moving forward to a permanent solution for our broken healthcare system, as could be done by expanding Medicare to cover everyone, at lower cost—the Republican plan moves us back, far back, to the worst vestiges of a profit-focused system based on ability to pay and widespread health disparities," said National Nurses United (NNU) co-president and registered nurse Jean Ross. To make matters worse, "the architects of the new bill have exploited the repeal and replace meme with paybacks to some of their wealthiest friends and donors," Ross added.

There is another way, as Ross' colleague and California Nurses Association co-president Deborah Burger argued in an op-ed on Monday. She pointed to the effort in her home state to "create a genuinely universal system for all Californians, with comprehensive covered services, no insurance networks that restrict patient choice of doctor, hospital or other provider, and no more copays, deductibles, or surprise medical bills." That effort, the Healthy California Act or Senate Bill 562 (SB562), would declare it the "intent of the Legislature" to enact a law that would establish a comprehensive, single-payer healthcare program for all state residents. According to Burger, the system would do so "[b]y pooling what the state already pays for healthcare services, using the power of a single-payer system to negotiate bulk discounts, and eliminating the waste and profiteering of the insurers."

The American Healthcare Act (AHCA) proposal put forth Monday by House Republicans only underscores the necessity of the California bill. "Speaker Paul Ryan's plan to shred the Affordable Care Act is a hard-right wish list that will cover fewer people and cost more, and a huge step backward from our goal of universal healthcare," said California state Sen. Ricardo Lara, who introduced SB562 last month along with state Sen. Toni G. Atkins. "We need a way to cover the millions of Californians who will lose insurance or pay more under Republicans' plan, and that's what the Healthy California Act will do." Indeed, NNU's executive director RoseAnn DeMoro added Tuesday, SB562 "could become the national model as an alternative to both the ACA and the fraudulently named GOP American Health Care Act."

Previous single-payer salvos have failed, in California and elsewhere. But, writing last week at the */Los Angeles Times/*, reporter David Lazarus suggested: "Thanks to [President Donald] Trump and the

Republican-controlled Congress, things are now very different." He explained: "We should give our great state governors the resources and flexibility they need with Medicaid to make sure no one is left out," Trump said in his speech to Congress this week. What he and Republican leaders mean by that is giving states a fixed amount of Medicaid money in the form of block grants to cover low-income people. States currently are guaranteed at least \$1 in federal funds for every \$1 in state spending. The Republicans' goal is for the federal government to pay less for Medicaid annually. But what they're also unintentionally doing is removing perhaps the biggest obstacle to California and other states establishing their own single-payer systems. With block grants, states wouldn't need congressional approval to use Medicaid money for a broader insurance program."

"If Republicans abandon California and Congress moves to cut Medicaid, we will insist that the federal government treat us like any other state and give us the flexibility and freedom to address the health needs of our entire population through a universal healthcare system," Lara told the */Times/* last week. Medicaid would indeed be dismantled under the GOP's AHCA plan. A single-payer effort is also underway in New York, as journalist Michelle Chen wrote last week, "where State Assembly Member Richard Gottfried has reintroduced a comprehensive single-payer model reform plan." She reported: "The bill passed the assembly in 2015 and 2016 by overwhelming majorities, but died in the Republican-dominated Senate. The bill builds on the coverage expansions of the ACA, draws from other federal and state funding streams like Medicaid, and moves toward a fully public consolidated medical system overseen by an appointed board of providers and government stakeholders, with all funds consolidated under the brand 'New York Health.'" Though it could use multiple state and federal funding sources for patients and providers, services would come directly from the state, not private insurers, and New Yorkers would all essentially be cared for by one "seamless" government authority. Gottfried's proposal would be funded by an estimated progressive annual income tax surcharge ranging from 0 percent for poor families up to 16 percent for household incomes exceeding \$200,000. By improving cost-effectiveness in every aspect of care, the plan aims to save nearly \$2,200 per person in the first year, while generating some 200,000 jobs for the state."

Chen posits that "[t]he Trump-induced health crisis could become an unforeseen opportunity for single-payer advocates: The combined trauma of Obamacare's bureaucratic dysfunction, along with fear of the Republican agenda's privatization assault, just might spur a mass movement for a comprehensive government-run plan liberated from insurance markets: a

single payer providing free, equal access, regardless of health or economic status."

Added Harvard Medical School instructor Adam Gaffney, a national board member of Physicians for a National Health Program and a practicing pulmonologist at Cambridge Health Alliance, on Tuesday: "The long-awaited House Republican Obamacare replacement law, released Monday, would be terrible for America. While the well-off would benefit from tax cuts, the sick and the poor would suffer from cutbacks in Medicaid and insurance

subsidies. GOP Care would therefore take us farther, not closer, to universal healthcare, a goal that is achievable only through single-payer reform."

Source: Common Dreams 3/7/17 <http://www.commondreams.org/>

Californians for a Healthy California Act seeks one plan, more choice for residents

Mid-February, Sen. Ricardo Lara (D-Bell Gardens) and Sen. Toni G. Atkins (D-San Diego) introduced the Californians for a Healthy California Act (SB 562). "Healthy California gives everyone insurance, because everyone has a right to health care. Trump and the Republicans don't get to pick the health care winners and losers, and we'll never get to 100 % health care in California unless we lead," said Senator Lara. "Access to affordable and quality health care is not only critical, it should be a right for everyone in California. In light of threats to the Affordable Care Act, it's important that we look at all options to maintain and expand access to health care. The Healthy California Act is an essential part of that conversation," added Senator Atkins.

BACKGROUND

Under the Affordable Care Act and Covered California, the number of uninsured in our state is at a historic low, and we've slowed rising health care costs. Last year Governor Brown signed Senator Lara's Health4All Kids (SB 4), and the 2017-18 budget proposal includes \$279.5 million to cover 185,000 children regardless of their immigration status. But lack of insurance still affects immigrant communities, rural California, working families and young people. President Trump and Republicans in Congress have pledged to repeal the Affordable Care Act. But after six years, they had not proposed a plan to replace it. President Trump's executive order on repealing the Affordable Care Act states that the federal government should "provide greater flexibility to States and cooperate with them in implementing healthcare programs."

HEALTHY CALIFORNIA HIGHLIGHTS

- Every California resident has one plan and more choice. No more plan-switching or guesswork when insurance rates or plans change.
- You pick your doctor, not health insurers
- Clinicians make decisions about care, not computers
- By pooling health care funds in a publicly-run fund we get the bargaining power of the seventh largest economy.
- We cut out insurance company waste and duplication
- No more out of control co-pays and high deductibles
- Public oversight on costs and care, not decisions made in secret
- Managing prescription drug costs

TIMELINE

Californians for a Healthy California Act (SB 562) was introduced on February 17, 2017. Senator Lara and Sen. Atkins will be talking about the details in the weeks ahead with the people of California. The bill is sponsored by the California Nurses Association. "We need to have this conversation now while hundreds of thousands of people are speaking out in support of health care," said Lara. "With Republicans on the brink of rolling back health care it's time for California to lead. I look forward to bringing a bill that Californians can support and the governor will sign."

Source: CA Sen. Ricardo Lara release 2/17/17 <http://sd33.senate.ca.gov/>



Water issue

Tunnel decision 2017

WHAT'S THE DELTA?

The Delta is the largest and most unique estuary on the Pacific Coast of the Americas. Its waters support the largest nursery for California fisheries, the largest Pacific Coast fly over stop for migrating waterfowl, over 500,000 acres of California prime farmland, and an urban community that is home to over 4 million people. Learn more about the Delta by visiting: <http://restorethedelta.org/more-about-the-delta/>

WHAT TUNNELS?

Gov. Brown's proposed massive underground water export tunnels would secure the current over-pumping of the Delta and create the largest transfer of public wealth to private resources in the history of California. Under a plan called the California Water Fix (formerly known as BDCP), a pair of twin tunnels, 40 feet in diameter, will be constructed 150 feet underneath the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The tunnels would run about 30 miles, from south of Sacramento to north of Tracy.

FOR WHAT?

The tunnels could grab up to 2/3 of the flow of the Sacramento River, which is where the main supply of fresh water in the Delta comes from. Right now, about 30% of water exported from the Delta goes to cities in the Bay Area, the South Coast, and Southern California. In contrast, Big Ag on the west and south side of the San Joaquin Valley, down to Bakersfield, get about 70% of Delta water, which often goes to grow water intensive almonds, cotton, and pistachios on unsustainable 'desert' farmland for lucrative overseas exports. In addition, these agricultural users contribute only 0.3% to California's economy, despite using 70% of Delta water.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DIVERT THE MAJORITY OF FRESH WATER AWAY FROM THE DELTA?

Water quality and quantity will deteriorate. The SF Bay-Delta estuary ecosystem and environment will collapse. Fresh water flows are critical to stopping the intrusion of saltwater from the Bay and in flushing out the hundreds of thousands of tons of pollutants and salts that accumulate in the Delta.

DEVASTATING IMPACTS

- *Hundreds of wildlife & plant species:*
Without adequate amounts of water, there will be no habitat. Consequently the population of hundreds of species such as the endangered Chinook Salmon and the Greater Sandhill Cranes will become decimated or extinct due to a diminishing food-web. Wildlife, such as the South Pacific Puget Sound Orca Whales, that depend on migrating Delta species will also face near extinction.
- *Delta & Coastal fisheries:*
Fisheries are dependent on thriving wildlife. This historic industry is worth billions annually, with the salmon industry worth \$1.5 billion annually alone. Thousands of jobs and livelihoods are tied to these industries. Environmental justice communities who depend on subsistence fishing will also face food and health insecurities as a result of increased contaminants and loss in fish and wildlife populations.
- *Tourism in San Francisco Bay:*
No analysis has been done on how the lack of fresh water flows will impact San Francisco's coastal and Pier tourism and recreation. These industries depend on Delta fresh water flows for their crab and salmon fisheries, wildlife sighting, boating, and their restaurant economy. This industry is worth billions annually.
- *Delta's \$5.2 billion agricultural economy:*
Farmers cannot irrigate crops with salt water and they



certainly cannot plant crops in contaminated soils, which will happen as a result of salinity intrusion. The Delta Ag economy, which consists of generations of family farms and farm workers, will be out of work.

- *Delta's \$750 million recreation & tourism economy:*
The operation and construction of the tunnels will obstruct and disable navigable water ways for boating, marinas and other types of leisure activities, in addition to creating conditions of low water flow that will foster invasive aquatic species, such as water hyacinth. Poor water quality also creates unsafe recreation.
- *Public health of cities & communities in the Delta:*
Tunnels will cause increased contamination of municipal water, discharge systems and wells for the millions of rural and urban residents living in the five Delta counties. Contra Costa County Water District stated that BDCP failed to model for potential increases of carcinogens and other formation of byproducts that would cause cancer and other serious health effects. Rural towns such as Hood and Byron will have to relocate due to exposure to cancer causing contaminants during construction.

WHO WILL PAY?

If you live in an area that relies on export water, such as in large metropolitan cities such as Los Angeles and San Jose, your water rates or property taxes will go up, but you will get no new water. Rates will rise more for urban ratepayers than for Big Ag because Big Ag does not want to pay as much per unit of water, given the amount of water they need. Government officials say the CA Water Fix tunnels will cost \$17 billion for construction, but as with big public infrastructure projects such as the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and Seattle's Bertha project (the largest tunnel-boring machine); initial cost estimates always rise enormously. CA Water Fix tunnels cost estimates don't include bond interest or cost overruns. A more realistic estimate is \$60 billion when interest, administration, research, operation, and maintenance fees are taken into account. If you are a California taxpayer, you will be paying for this project through water bonds. Water exporters do not have to pay for the environmental damage that will result from operation of the tunnels. The State plans to use the 2014 Water Bond (Prop 1) to fund the CA Eco Restore plan to make urban users pay to mitigate damage caused by water exporters.

But doesn't the Delta have problems that need fixing? The Delta has problems, but the "CA Water Fix" tunnels are a 20th century idea that won't fix them. It won't produce more water, more reliable supplies, or improved conditions for the environment in the

Delta. To see our better solution, check out: <http://restorethedelta.org/blog>.

What can you do?

- 1) Get involved with our campaign by visiting <http://restorethedelta.org/support-take-action/>
- 2) Write letters to the editor, make calls to the Governor and your state and federal elected officials, sign up for e-mail alerts from our website, and follow us on social media.
- 3) You could also make a donation by sending a check to 42 N. Sutter Street, Suite 506, Stockton, CA 95202.
- 4) Get more informed or detailed/technical reports on the tunnels plan by checking out our FAQs & Research at <http://restorethedelta.org/so-what-is-your-solution/>.

Source: Restore the Delta <http://www.restorethedelta.org/>

Become a PEACE PAL!

Please consider giving to PJN month by month. It will give us stable, predictable funding to continue providing our services. It's easy for you and cost—effective for us. Our website online donation is recommended for ease and convenience. Your monthly donation can be automatically withdrawn from your bank account.

Monthly Giving Enrollment Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Yes, I accept your invitation to become a charter member of Peace Pals.
Here is my monthly pledge contribution of:
☐ \$10 ☐ \$15 ☐ \$20 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$(Other) _____

I prefer to donate by one of the following methods:
☐ U.S. mail; please send me envelopes
☐ Online donation through PJN website: www.pjnsjc.org (click on donation button)
☐ Automatic Bank Transfer
☐ I've enclosed a check for my first contribution. Arrangements will be made by me with my bank for future pledges.

Mail checks to:
**Peace and Justice Network,
P.O. Box 4123, Stockton CA 95204**

*The Peace and Justice Network is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational corporation.
Contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.*



The Republican house of horrors offers a terrifying healthcare vision

ROSEANN DEMORO

Halloween arrived early this year featuring the Republican house of horrors seeking to fulfill their long lust for repeal of the Affordable Care Act. While there are legitimate criticisms of the ACA—notably the 28 million still uninsured and its abject failure to limit escalating out of pocket costs—the coverage gains made through the ACA, through Medicaid expansion and the crackdown on insurance abuses, are largely eviscerated by the GOP plan. Instead we have a plan that again fetishizes a market-based healthcare fundamentalism that saw the U.S. plummet in a wide array of health care barometers, including infant mortality and life expectancy rates and people skipping needed care due to cost compared to the rest of the developed world, especially before the ACA.

With the hodgepodge plan hurriedly released Monday night, the House majority attempts to straddle growing public support for a government role in establishing health security for the American people and the Tea Party crowd that views any fingerprints of public protection as akin to Satanism. The bill fails on both counts, while also betraying promises made by then candidate Donald Trump that “we’re going to have healthcare for everybody” that is “far less expensive and far better.”

Pretending to retain popular components of the ACA, the bill offers refundable tax credits to replace the ACA subsidies to buy private insurance, temporary continuation of the ACA Medicaid expansion, and requiring insurers to sell insurance to people with pre-existing conditions. But it’s like fools gold, each component sabotaged by the not-so-fine print. The principal effect of the new bill will be the loss of existing health coverage for tens of millions of people, without any restraints on healthcare industry pricing practices that add up to massive health insecurity for the American people.

SOME LOW LIGHTS:

- Medicaid expansion, the mechanism of most of the ACA expanded coverage, is temporarily retained, but open ended federal funding would be ultimately replaced by a cap on federal payments that would encourage financially strapped states to slash eligibility of those covered and sharply cut covered services.
- Refundable tax credits would provide less financial support than the current ACA subsidies, and by most initial analyses provide far less help for low and moderate-income people.
- A 30 percent premium penalty surcharge on people who allow their “continuous coverage” requirement to lapse completely undermines the false promise that the bill retains the ban on insurers denying coverage for people with pre-existing health conditions. Even through the ACA health exchanges, insurers routinely change plan designs yearly in ways to increase out of pocket costs and limit patient choice through narrower networks. The surcharge will increase insurer incentives to engage in these practices.
- Cuts in minimum covered health benefits, services now required by the ACA. Those would expire in 2020.
- Elimination of funding for Planned Parenthood is a significant attack on women’s overall healthcare. Planned Parenthood clinics provide a wide array of needed health services.
- Reduced funding for public health. Elimination of the ACA’s Prevention and Public Health Fund will disproportionately harm low-income people and patients with chronic illnesses like diabetes and heart disease that will worsen the health of communities and facilitate the spread of infectious diseases. As reported today by /Vox/, affected programs include the federal vaccines program, and programs to reduce

heart disease and hospital acquired infections.

And, the architects of the new bill have exploited the repeal and replace meme with paybacks to some of their wealthiest friends and donors. The draft bill includes a roll back of most corporate and high income taxes used to pay for the ACA, and, “as Rep. Keith Ellison has noted, a tax cut for wealthy people’s investment income and tax deduction for healthcare CEOs making more than \$500,000 a year.” If you follow the rhetoric of the repeal and replace crowd, they pay a lot of lip service to restoring “freedom” and “liberty.” But their approach to healthcare restricts freedom in the most personal aspect of our lives: healthcare.

Freedom to choose junk insurance has nothing to do with getting the care we need. In fact, it is the false choice of a faux freedom. This bill lets insurance shape what procedures doctors do, what drugs we take, and even which doctors we can see. Nurses know there is only one real fix to our broken, dysfunctional, profit-focused healthcare system – an improved Medicare for all system, much as the rest of the developed world assures healthcare for its people. NNU’s California affiliate, the California Nurses Association, is sponsoring a bill in California that could become the national model as an alternative to both the ACA and the fraudulently named GOP American Health Care Act.

ROSEANN DEMORO IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE 185,000-MEMBER NATIONAL NURSES UNITED, THE NATION’S LARGEST UNION AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NURSES, AND A NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT OF THE AFL-CIO.

Source: Common Dreams 3/7/17 <http://www.commondreams.org/>

Trump's broken promises show with 'devastating' CBO report

DEIRDRE FULTON

The worse-than-expected healthcare analysis released by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has Republicans on the defensive, the White House dodging campaign promises, and the resistance movement reenergized to fight back. According to the CBO, the GOP’s healthcare plan would cause 24 million Americans to lose health coverage over the next 10 years, raise premiums for millions more, and afford a massive tax cut to the rich. ‘The plan, the CBO concludes, would take more than \$1 trillion away from programs targeting poor and middle-class families, to fund an \$883 billion tax cut targeted at the wealthy,’ Dylan Matthews wrote at Vox. ‘It is upward income redistribution of a truly massive scale.’

House Speaker Paul Ryan

(R-Wis.) tried to put a positive spin on the CBO’s ‘devastating’ report even as interest groups, Senate Republicans, and right-wing conservatives voiced increasing skepticism over the American Healthcare Act (AHCA), recently dubbed ‘TrumpCare.’ *The Hill* reported: ‘Ryan went on Fox News soon after the report was released and said he was ‘encouraged’ by the findings. He pointed to items like the deficit reduction and decrease in premiums that the report found, while seeking to downplay the coverage losses. Much of the change in the uninsured rate, Ryan said, would simply be due to people choosing not to buy coverage once the mandate for having coverage is repealed. ‘What I’m encouraged [by] is, once our reforms kick in, what the CBO is telling us is, it’s going to lower premiums—it will lower

premiums 10 percent. It stabilizes the market. It’s a \$1.2 trillion spending cut, an \$883 billion tax cut, and \$337 billion in deficit reduction,’ Ryan said. “So of course the CBO is going to say if you’re not going to force people to buy something they don’t want to buy, they won’t buy it.”

However, as the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities explained: “The drop in average premiums occurs partly because older adults are likelier to lose coverage because they can no longer afford it, removing them from the average. Average premiums would rise 20 to 25 percent for 64-year-olds, while dropping 20 to 25 percent for 21-year-olds, CBO estimates. Unsurprisingly, older people would be the most likely to find individual market coverage unaffordable. ‘A larger share of enrollees in the non-group

market,’ CBO concludes, ‘would be younger people and a smaller share would be older people.’ That fact alone will reduce average premiums because older people have higher health costs and premiums than younger people. In other words, if a 64-year-old drops out of the market altogether because he can’t afford to pay for insurance, that lowers the average premium in the individual market since he no longer appears in the calculations”

Many others will go without coverage due to sweeping cuts to Medicaid. President Donald Trump vowed multiple times on the campaign trail not to cut the program, but the CBO analysis shows AHCA would see Trump ‘break his promise—by a mile,’ as *NBC News* put it. TrumpCare would slash \$880 billion in federal funds from Medicaid in the

next 10 years, leaving 14 million fewer people without coverage by 2026. (It’s worth noting that Seema Verma, Trump’s ‘extremist’ nominee to head the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services, was confirmed by the Senate on Monday. As a healthcare consultant, Verma was instrumental in multiple state efforts to restrict Medicaid coverage.)

Source: Common Dreams 3/14/17 <http://www.commondreams.org/>





Help! My representatives never agree with me: how to communicate



CHRIS LETTS

It can be frustrating when your members of Congress disagree with you on many or even most issues. But with persistence, organizing, and strategy, you can move your members of Congress toward peace and justice. Have you ever thought "My representative never agrees with me, so why bother talking to her at all?" or "The candidate I supported lost, so I guess I'm stuck with someone terrible."

Don't give up yet! Here's the secret: Most members of Congress have some wiggle room in their positions. They likely campaigned on a few key issues, but no member of Congress can spend 100 percent of their energy on every issue. Your work after Election Day will help determine their stances in office. Just like people in many jobs, they have to set priorities. You can help shape those priorities by building momentum in your community and making clear asks for change. While you may not make them a champion, you can give them a fuller picture of the issue and reduce their leadership in the other direction.

FIRST BUILD MOMENTUM ON THE ISSUE

Your representative and senators need to represent their entire district or state – not just you. Find a few friends in your area who agree with you, and work together. Most members of Congress are responsive to their constituents; it's about building enough momentum that the members of Congress have to pay attention.

SPEAK OUT IN THE MEDIA

When your member of Congress takes a position you disagree with, write a letter to the editor expressing your disappointment. This isn't just a way to share your opinion with your community; when members of Congress are mentioned by name in local newspapers, they pay attention. Several letters on the same issue – written by you and your friends – will definitely get noticed.

TELL YOUR STORY

What leads you to care about this issue? Sharing a personal experience or a perspective from your faith can help change the mind of your member of Congress. There are a few ways to tell your

story:

- Have a meeting with the staff member working on the issue (lobby visit)
- Send an email, letter, or postcard. Include a photo if the story is about you personally.
- Include your story (briefly!) in your letter to the editor.
- Tell your story at the beginning of a town hall question.

DEMONSTRATE COMMUNITY SUPPORT

For some members of Congress, it's all about the numbers. First, save the phone numbers of your local congressional offices in your phone so you can call often. Then, get your community involved! Share action alerts (like FCNL's) on social media. Encourage friends, neighbors, and members of your meeting to sign up for FCNL's action alerts. Starting an FCNL advocacy Team is a great way to build a network of activists in your area.

NEXT: ASK FOR CHANGE

Schedule a meeting with your member of Congress or their staff working on the issue. A small group of four to six people may increase the likelihood of meeting directly with the member of Congress.

Bring with you letters to the editor, effects their position would have on your community, and other community support you know about. Tell your story of why the issue matters to you. Then make your ask.

This is the tricky part. It's difficult to get a member of Congress to completely reverse their position overnight. Instead, ask them to move toward •neutral• action – not cosponsoring that dangerous legislation, voting present instead of yes, or asking their party leadership not to bring the legislation to a vote. Once they're in a more neutral position, continue encouraging them to move toward positive action.

FINALLY: REPEAT

Changing a member of Congress' position takes time. Build momentum in your community, then come back to your member of Congress and ask for change. Make sure to keep in touch with the congressional staff member working on the issue – flag any new letters to the editor or local media that they might not have seen. Treat the staffer like a human being, and work to build a relationship with them based on integrity and trust.

FCNL Advocacy Teams foster congressional champions for peace and justice. Find or start an Advocacy Team near you to get personalized training, advice from our expert staff, and access to a community of advocates working across the country for change.

Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation
<https://www.fcnl.org> FCNL, 245 Second St. NE, Washington, DC 20002 800-630-1330

Resist

Sanders: keep showing up

NADIA PRUPIS

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) recorded a response to President Donald Trump's first address to Congress on Tuesday night, breaking down the speech's biggest takeaways—or lack thereof—and calling on viewers to keep up the resistance. "Sometimes, what is more important is what somebody does not say, as opposed to what they actually say," Sanders said in a Facebook live video recorded immediately after the speech. "Some examples: at a time when over half of older Americans have no retirement savings, I did not hear President Trump say one word, not one word, about Social Security or Medicare," despite it being a cornerstone of his election campaign. "Furthermore," Sanders continued, "not only did President Trump

not mention the issue of voter suppression, what Republican governors are doing all over this country to make it harder for people to participate in our democracy, but the truth of the matter is, his administration is now working overtime with Republican governors to make it harder for young people, low-income people, senior citizens, and people of color to vote." He also slammed Trump's failure to mention climate change, mass incarceration, student debt, and the U.S. Supreme Court's /Citizens United/ ruling, among other issues.

All this means people resisting the president's agenda will be crucial in the coming months, he said, praising those who have gotten involved with various efforts—such as packing town hall meetings and asking hard questions of their representatives—

and urging those who have not yet joined to do so. "Those of you who attended rallies or town hall meetings: Keep showing up, keep calling Congress, and continue to fight," he said. "If you haven't taken action yet, we need your voice. Only together when millions of people stand up for economic justice, for social justice, for racial justice, for environmental justice, only then can we create a political revolution that will turn this country around."

Source: Common Dreams 3/1/17
<http://www.commondreams.org/>

Cuts to the State Department will damage U.S. security

THEO SITTHER

The Trump administration's plan to increase Pentagon spending by \$54 billion while reducing spending for the State Department and EPA will diminish American leadership in the world and damage U.S. security. "At a time when the United States is facing multiple foreign policy crises, cutting the State Department budget means that there is one less tool in our foreign policy toolbox," said Theo Sittther, Legislative Secretary for Peacebuilding at the Friends Committee on National Legislation. "Diplomatic and development efforts that are fulfilled by the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development are critical in efforts to prevent and reduce violence, uphold human rights and support democratic governance. These are all critical functions that

will ultimately reduce spending, protect U.S. national security and save lives."

One-hundred and twenty-one retired military leaders couldn't agree more in a letter they sent to Congress today: "The State Department, USAID, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Peace Corps and other development agencies are critical to preventing conflict and reducing the need to put our men and women in uniform in harm's way." A bipartisan group of experts in a recent report, A Necessary Good: U.S. Leadership on Preventing Mass Atrocities, agree that funding early conflict prevention programs through the State Department "can help forestall open-ended crises that are far more damaging to American interests and power and far costlier to the American taxpayer." President Trump's budget will diminish American

leadership in the world, further entangle the military in overseas conflict as the primary foreign policy tool and ultimately increase costs to taxpayers.

The Friends Committee on National Legislation, the oldest registered religious lobby in Washington, is a nonpartisan Quaker lobby in the public interest. FCNL works with a nationwide network of tens of thousands of people from every state in the U.S. to advocate for social and economic justice, peace, and good government.

Theo Sittther directs the peacebuilding program at FCNL and oversees the work of the peacebuilding team. Theo lobbies to change and reform militarized counterterrorism policies with a particular focus on military assistance.

Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation 2/27/17
<https://www.fcnl.org> FCNL, 245 Second St. NE, Washington, DC 20002 800-630-1330



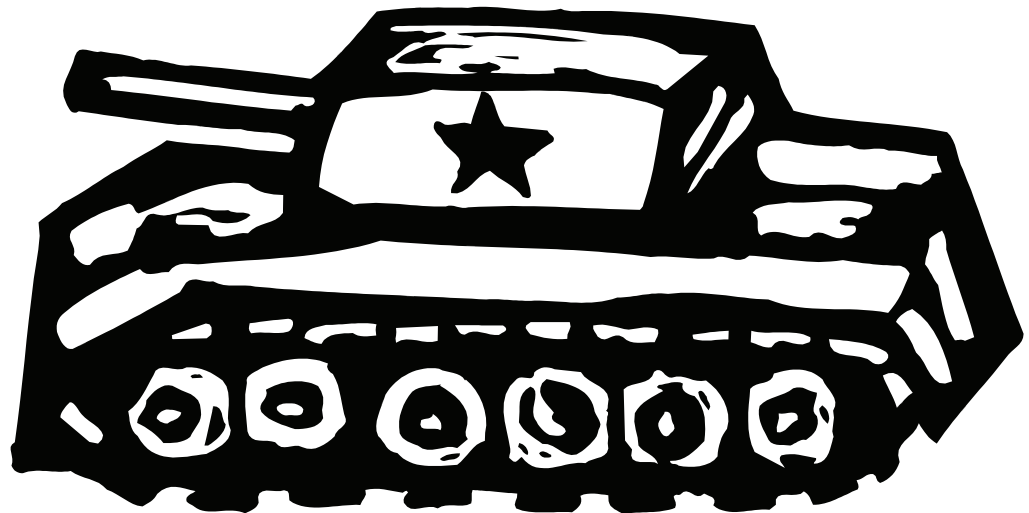
President calls for big Military spending increase

JIM CASON

President Donald Trump is proposing tens of billions of dollars in new Pentagon spending this year and next. But before the president's proposals become real they will have to be voted on by Congress and that's where you can make a difference. The \$30 billion boost in Pentagon spending the president has proposed for this year will be followed by a \$54 billion increase in core Pentagon spending next year. These funds also appear to be tied to administration plans to expand U.S. military action around the globe. "We never win wars anymore. We never fight to win. We have to start winning wars again," said President Trump in announcing the increased Pentagon spending.

As a matter of faith, we don't believe spending more money on the military and expanding wars is the right choice for our nation. As a matter of public policy, Congress needs to ask: After 15 years of failed wars strategies in Iraq, Afghanistan and now expanding into Syria, will more of the same produce a different result? These proposals will set the country on a path to new wars while cutting spending on the environment, diplomacy and other core activities that keep our communities safe.

The Pentagon already consumes nearly \$600 billion in government spending, a sum that equals to what the next 7 countries combined spend on their military forces. And although Pentagon spending has decreased since the withdrawal of over 100,000 military troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States' still at the same levels as at the height of the Cold War and Vietnam. The Pentagon has also managed to evade the public accountability and audits that every other government agency is required to complete, failing even to produce accounting that is ready to audit never mind to pass an audit. In fact, the Pentagon wastes more money in a year, than several other cabinet agencies have for their full budgets. Our own quick tally found 4 steps Congress can take to cut nearly \$40 billion in Pentagon spending –more than the



total increase proposed for fiscal year 2017.

Yet the Trump administration is proposing to offset their historic increases in core Pentagon spending with deep cuts in spending for the Environmental Protection Agency, the State Department and other parts of the federal government that contribute substantially to U.S. security and leadership in the world. Cutting State Department spending right now would be robbing Peter to pay Paul. Other proposals before Congress would cut EPA funding or change the formulas for Medicaid and Food Stamps in ways that could impact nearly 40 million people. But Congress will have to vote on all of these proposals and that's where your voice can make a difference.

Action: Contact Congress today - Congress has the power to stop the president's plans for new

spending and new wars, but they need your help. Every member of Congress will have to vote on whether to support increases in Pentagon spending. Check out our resources on Pentagon spending and, particularly, our lobby. Then contact your senators today, urge them to publicly oppose any effort to increase Pentagon spending this year.

JIM CASON IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DIRECTING THE FULL RANGE OF FCNL'S STRATEGIC ADVOCACY WORK. IN THIS CAPACITY, HE WORKS WITH PROGRAM STAFF TO DEVELOP LONG TERM CHANGE STRATEGIES THAT ACCOMPLISH OUR PARTICULAR LEGISLATIVE GOALS. HE ALSO LEADS THE LOBBYING OF THE FOREIGN POLICY TEAM.

Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation 2/28/17 <https://www.fcnl.org> FCNL, 245 Second St, NE, Washington, DC 20002 800-630-1330

Trump budget slammed for 'sacrificing working Americans to war machine'



NADIA PRUPIS

President Donald Trump will propose a federal budget that ramps up defense spending by \$54 billion and slashes "lower-priority" programs across agencies by an equal amount, the White House announced Monday. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) did not identify which agencies would be slated for cutbacks, but administration officials said almost all other discretionary programs, as well as foreign aid, would see spending reductions. In a statement, Trump called the U.S. military "depleted" and said the budget would propose "historic"

increases to expand it.

Many feared that meant that departments that have long been in conservative crosshairs, like the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), would face the biggest cuts. "[President] Trump's morally bankrupt budget will funnel more money to the Pentagon at the expense of the poor [and] our planet. This is an awful idea," tweeted Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif). It "has everything to do with rightwing ideology, nothing to do with fiscal responsibility," added /The Nation's Katrina vanden Heuvel, paraphrasing an article by William D. Hartung, director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy.

The budget will be submitted to Congress next month, where it is expected to meet resistance from Democratic lawmakers. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) said the blueprint will take "a meat ax to programs that benefit the middle-class." Friends of the Earth senior political strategist Ben Schreiber said, "Members of Congress should stamp this budget as dead on arrival. Senate Democrats must come out immediately and make it clear that sacrificing working Americans to Trump's war machine is an unacceptable trade." Michael Brune, executive director of the Sierra Club, said, "A budget is a statement of priorities, and with this proposal, Trump is telling America he doesn't care about what happens to children who are forced to drink toxic water and breath polluted air.... This is a budget rigged to boost the profits of corporate polluters at the expense of the health of our families."

Trump said the budget will put "America first,"

a common refrain from his xenophobic campaign. In addition to military spending, it will seemingly include funds to increase local law enforcement agencies' participation in the president's crackdown on undocumented immigrants. "We will fight violent crime, and we will win, and we will win that one fairly quickly once we give the local police, the local law enforcement, the right to go in and fight, and we back them monetarily and also otherwise," he said, adding that the budget "follows through on my promise of keeping America safe, keeping out terrorists, keeping out criminals, and putting violent offenders behind bars or removing them from our country altogether."

As the National Priorities Project noted on Twitter, "when it comes to military spending, America is already first. Not first for education, health outcomes, economic mobility." Reports last week outlined the OMB's "hit list" of federal programs, assembled by the office's newly-confirmed chief Mick Mulvaney, which targeted the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the Export-Import Bank, and the Corporation for National and Community Service, which funds AmeriCorps and SeniorCorps projects. "When you see these deductions you'll be able to tie it back to a speech the president gave or something the president has said previously," Mulvaney said Monday. "We are taking his words and turning them into policies and dollars."

Source: Common Dreams 2/27/17 <http://www.commondreams.org/>



PACIFIC COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE CENTER

serving Stockton since 1984

Yi—Po Anthony Wu, M.D., M.P.H.
Medical Director, Internal Medicine

Teresa M. Chen, Ph.D.
Program Coordinator

Dorel Rotar, L.Ac., MTOM
Brian Chee C. Loh, L.Ac., O.M.D.
Shu—Chuan Susan Wang, L.Ac., Ph.D., O.M.D.
Licensed Acupuncturists, Herbalists

- Internal Medicine • Acupuncture & Moxibustion •
- East & West Herbs •
- Chinese Health Exercises (Tai Chi & Qi Gong)

Shop at the Herb Store

Specializing in Traditional Chinese Herbal Remedies
wide variety of western herbs & nutritional supplements
imported teas & vitamins & minerals & health bars
essential oils & healthcare & educational books &
over—the—counter medications

Store Hours: Monday—Friday 9 a.m.—5 p.m.

645 West Harding Way • 464—4800
Visit our website @ <http://www.wuway.com>

Membership includes a subscription to *Audubon Magazine & Hoot Owl*.

Make checks payable to ... National Audubon Society.

Send to: Audubon

PO Box 7755, Stockton, CA 95207

____\$35 Individual ____\$38 Family ____\$20 Student ____\$21 Senior-

NAME _____ PH# _____

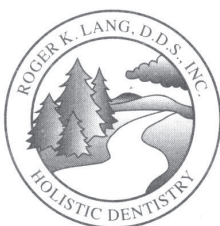
ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Questions about Audubon? Call Dave Wagner 943—6997.
www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org

Join our
LOCAL

Audubon



Roger K.Lang, D.D.S., Inc.

3031 W. March Lane, Suite 318E
(Go north on I-5, exit March Lane, go
west to "The Fountain" and turn right)
(209) 956-0601
Fax: (209) 952-8845
Email: info@drklangdds.com
Web: www.drklangdds.com

"Together, we will walk the pathway to health and wholeness."

Project censored story #1 2016

US Military Forces Deployed in Seventy Percent of World's Nations

If you throw a dart at a world map and do not hit water, Nick Turse reported for TomDispatch, the odds are that US Special Operations Forces "have been there sometime in 2015." According to a spokesperson for Special Operations Command (SOCOM), in 2015 Special Operations Forces (SOF) deployed in 147 of the world's 195 recognized nations, an increase of eighty percent since 2010. "The global growth of SOF missions has been breathtaking," Turse wrote.

As SOCOM commander General Joseph Votel told the audience of the Aspen Security Forum in July 2015, more SOF troops are deployed to more locations and are conducting more operations than at the height of the Afghan and Iraq wars. In Turse's words, "Everyday, in around 80 or more countries that Special Operations Command will not name, they undertake missions the command refuses to talk about."

Calculated in 2014 constant dollars, the SOCOM budget has more than tripled since 2001, when funding totaled three billion dollars. By 2015, SOCOM funding had risen to nearly ten billion dollars. That figure, Turse noted, did not include additional funding from specific military branches, which SOCOM estimated to amount to another eight billion dollars annually, or other undisclosed sums that were not available to the Government Accountability Office.

Every day, Turse wrote, "America's most elite troops are carrying out missions in 80 to 90 nations." The majority of these are training missions, "designed to tutor proxies and forge stronger ties with allies." Training missions focus on everything from basic rifle marksmanship and land navigation to small unit tactics and counterterrorism operations. For example, between 2012 and 2014, Special Operations Forces carried out 500 Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) missions in as many as sixty-seven countries per year. Officially, JCETs are devoted to training US forces, but according to a SOCOM official interviewed by Turse, these missions also "foster key military partnerships with foreign militaries" and "build interoperability between U.S. SOF and partner-nation forces." JCETs, Turse wrote, "are just a fraction of the story" when it comes to multinational overseas training operations. In 2014, Special Operations Forces organized seventy-five training operations in thirty countries, a figure projected to increase to ninety-eight exercises by the end of 2015, according to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense.

In addition to training, Special Operations Forces also engage in "direct action." Counterterrorism missions, including what Turse described as "low-profile drone assassinations and kill/capture raids by muscled-up, high-octane operators," are the specific domains of Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) forces, such as the Navy's SEAL Team 6 and the Army's Delta Force.

Africa has seen the greatest increase in SOCOM deployments since 2006. In that year, just 1 percent of special operators deployed overseas went to Africa. As of 2014, that figure had risen to 10 percent. In the Intercept, Turse reported on the development by US forces of the Chabelley Airfield in the east African nation of Djibouti. "Unbeknownst to most Americans and without any apparent public announcement," Turse wrote in October 2015, "the U.S. has recently taken steps to transform this tiny, out-of-the-way outpost into an 'enduring' base, a key hub for its secret war, run by the U.S. military's Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), in Africa and the Middle East." Chabelley, he reported, has become "essential" to secret US drone operations over Yemen, southwest Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and parts of Ethiopia and southern Egypt. Aerial images of Chabelley taken between April 2013 and March 2015 testify to the significant expansion of the

base and the presence of drones, though officials refused to respond to questions about the number and types of drones based there. As Turse summarized, "The startling transformation of this little-known garrison in this little-known country is in line with U.S. military activity in Africa, where, largely under the radar, the number of missions, special operations deployments, and outposts has grown rapidly and with little outside scrutiny." (For previous Project Censored coverage of US military operations in Africa, see Brian Martin Murphy, "The 'New' American Imperialism in Africa: Secret Sahara Wars and AFRICOM," in Censored 2014: Fearless Speech in Fateful Times.)

If, as Turse reported, SOCOM has "grown in every conceivable way from funding and personnel to global reach and deployments" since 9/11, has its expansion resulted in significant success? In an October 2015 report for the Nation, Turse reported skepticism from a number of experts in response to this question. According to Sean Naylor, the author of *Relentless Strike*, a history of Joint Special Operations Command, JSOC operations are "a tool in the policymaker's toolkit," not a "substitute for strategy." JSOC may have had an impact on the history of Iraq—where its forces captured Saddam Hussein, killed Uday and Qusay Hussein, and "eviscerated" Al Qaeda in Iraq—but, as Turse wrote, impacts are not the same as successes. Similarly, Andrew Bacevich, a Vietnam veteran and author of *Breach of Trust: How Americans Failed Their Soldiers and Their Country*, told Turse, "As far back as Vietnam the United States military has tended to confuse inputs with outcomes. Effort, as measured by operations conducted, bomb tonnage dropped, or bodies counted, is taken as evidence of progress made. Today, tallying up the number of countries in which Special Operations forces are present repeats this error."

Corporate media have not covered the massive expansion of Special Operations Forces around the globe, much less raised critical questions about whether these missions result in meaningful accomplishments. The increase that has taken place over the past five to ten years is not "breaking" news, and so it has gone all but completely unreported by the corporate press. Instead, the global presence of US military personnel is typically treated as the unspoken background for more dramatic reports of specific military operations or policy decisions. Thus, for example, in October 2015, Time magazine ran a graphic documenting "places with some of the most significant number" of US military personnel stationed "in over 150 countries across the world." However, the Time map of the world featured just nine points—none of which were located in Africa—and the entire graphic ran as a sidebar to the primary story, about President Obama's announcement to maintain the current number of troops in Afghanistan through most of 2016, which reversed his earlier plan to withdraw most military personnel by the end of his presidency.

Original sources: Nick Turse, "A Secret War in 135 Countries," *TomDispatch*, September 24, 2015, <http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/176048/> ;

Nick Turse, "The Stealth Expansion of a Secret US Drone Base in Africa," *Intercept*, October 21, 2015, <https://theintercept.com/2015/10/21/stealth-expansion-of-secret-us-drone-base-in-africa/> ;

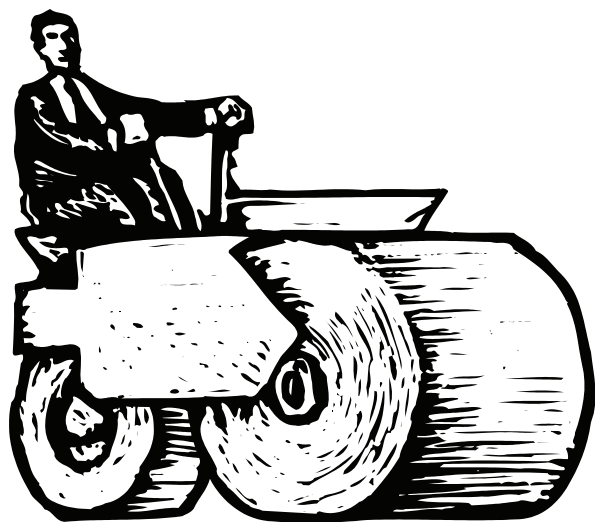
Nick Turse, "American Special Operations Forces Have a Very Funny Definition of Success," *Nation*, October 26, 2015, <http://www.thenation.com/article/american-special-operations-forces-have-a-very-funny-definition-of-success/>.

Rated by: Student Researchers: Scott Arrow (Sonoma State University) and Bri Silva (College of Marin), with Faculty Evaluators: Robert McNamara (Sonoma State University) and Susan Rahman (College of Marin)

Source: Project Censored 2015-16 10/4/16 <http://projectcensored.org>



As climate alarm bells ring, Trump poised to decimate regulations



NIKA KNIGHT

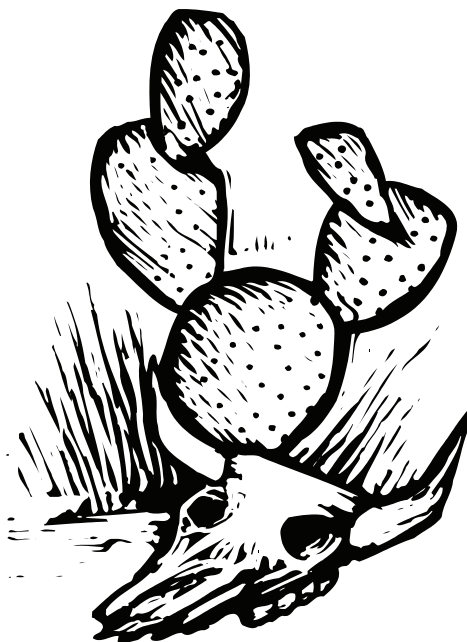
President Donald Trump is poised to unleash a sweeping anti-climate executive order to repeal major regulations enacted by the Obama administration, the *Washington Post* reported Tuesday. "The directive will instruct members of the Cabinet to rewrite regulation restricting carbon emissions from both new and existing power plants, lift a moratorium on federal coal leasing, and revise the way climate change is factored into federal decision-making—all key elements of the Obama administration's effort to address climate change," the *Post* writes.

The *Post* reports that the administration is under pressure to release the order soon, as a lawsuit challenging Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) carbon emissions limits is currently pending. The suit was launched by conservative attorneys general—including now-EPA chief Scott Pruitt, although he's no longer a plaintiff. The EPA rule was intended to cut emissions by a third by 2030. And climate change action is needed more urgently than ever, as measurements from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) show that carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere are increasing at a record-breaking pace. Carbon dioxide levels now rest at 405 parts per million (ppm). The latest measurements fulfill scientists' prediction last year that atmospheric levels of CO2 would soon permanently exceed the symbolic threshold of 400ppm.

The rapid rise in carbon levels is already transforming the planet. In various studies published only this week, scientists discovered that the Amazon rainforest is facing a "death spiral of drought and deforestation;" the Great Barrier Reef is suffering its second major bleaching event in two years; massive swaths of Australia's mangrove forests have "died of thirst;" and shrinking water levels mean the Middle East may not be habitable by humans in only a few decades.

Meanwhile, a climate-linked late-season blizzard is barreling up the East Coast of the U.S. while polar heat waves see global sea ice melt to its lowest levels in millennia. And new research shows that even if countries adhere to international climate commitments, the Arctic may soon be entirely ice-free in the summers. Humans are to blame for the rapidly changing planet, as 30 prominent climate scientists reminded Pruitt this week in response to his public denial of the fact that rising CO2 levels are linked to climate change. In the letter sent Monday, the scientists wrote: "Just as there is no escaping gravity when one steps off a cliff, there is no escaping the warming that follows when we add extra carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to the atmosphere."

Source: *Common Dreams* 3/14/17 <http://www.commondreams.org/>



To solve climate change, the passengers must now fly the plane

MARK REYNOLDS

When it comes to climate change, most Americans are like the passengers on a jetliner wanting to arrive safely at their destination but thinking there's no need to be involved with the actual flying of the plane. The "people in charge," surely, have things under control.

Lately, however, the plane has experienced a rough ride: Christmas Day, the temperature at Santa's workshop – a.k.a. the North Pole – approached the melting point of 32 degrees Fahrenheit, about 40 degrees above average for that time of year. With 2016 hitting another high mark for average global temperature, 16 of the 17 hottest years on record have occurred in the current century. Floods, like the disasters that struck Louisiana and North Carolina this year, are happening as a result of unprecedented rainfall measured in feet rather than inches. As we start the new year, 37 million people across Africa are without food because of crop failures caused by droughts and floods exacerbated by climate change.

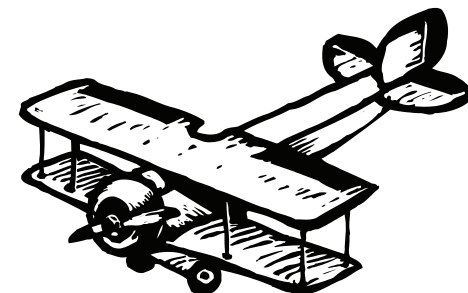
All this turbulence is prompting some of the passengers to rise from their seats, walk to the cockpit and check with the pilot. Upon opening the door, however, they are shocked to see no one seated at the controls.

For a number of years, President Obama did his best to keep the plane aloft with executive orders to address climate change, chiefly the Clean Power Plan to reduce carbon dioxide emissions at power plants. But the 44th president has donned his parachute and exited the plane, leaving the pilot's seat disturbingly empty.

So, how do we avoid crashing into a mountainside? It's time for the passengers to start flying the plane, and by passengers, we mean citizens. This entails setting aside cynicism about our government and engaging with people in Congress who represent us in Washington. Government will respond to the will of the people, provided the people tell the government what we want.

Engaging with our government also requires us to seek common ground between Republicans and Democrats. We can find that common ground by listening as much as we talk. And if we listen, we find that the greatest concern about acting on climate change – whether through regulation or carbon pricing – is the impact it will have on our economy, the fear that jobs will be lost.

We can alleviate those fears and find that common ground with a market-based solution that holds polluters accountable for the damage caused to our air, water and climate. Such a market-based solution needs to be revenue neutral, thereby preventing it from increasing the size of government. A steadily-rising



fee on carbon, with all revenue returned to households, would bring down greenhouse gas emissions while boosting the economy.

A study from the highly respected Regional Economic Models, Inc., looked at such a policy, whereby a fee on the carbon dioxide content of fuels would increase \$10 per ton each year. Border tariffs on imports from nations lacking a similar carbon price were applied to maintain a level playing field for American businesses. Within 20 years, the REMI study found that emissions would drop more than 50 percent. The study also found that the policy would add 2.8 million jobs, due primarily to recycling the carbon fee revenue back to households.

But in our highly polarized political atmosphere, is it really possible for Republicans and Democrats in Congress to work together on climate change? Hopeful signs emerged in 2016 with the creation of the bipartisan House Climate Solutions Caucus, which has equal membership from both sides of the aisle. The caucus creates a safe space for Republicans and Democrats, weary of the bickering and posturing surrounding the climate issue, to have an honest dialogue about ways to reduce the risks we face in a warming world.

In the coming year, as more and more citizens interact with their members of Congress, we can grow the ranks within the Climate Solutions Caucus and reach the critical mass necessary to introduce and pass bipartisan legislation. None of this can happen, however, unless we take control of the plane and put it back on course. As Apollo astronaut Rusty Schweickart once said, "We aren't passengers on spaceship Earth, we're the crew. We aren't residents on this planet, we're citizens. The difference in both cases is responsibility."

MARK REYNOLDS IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITIZENS' CLIMATE LOBBY.



How 90% of American households lost an average of \$17,000 in wealth to the plutocrats in 2016

PAUL BUCHHEIT

America has always been great for the richest 1%, and it's rapidly becoming greater. Confirmation comes from recent work by Thomas Piketty, Emmanuel Saez, and Gabriel Zucman; and from the 2015-2016 Credit Suisse Global Wealth Databooks (GWD). The data relevant to this report is summarized here.

RICHEST 1% EXTRACTED WEALTH FROM EVERY OTHER SEGMENT OF SOCIETY

These multi-millionaires effectively shifted nearly \$4 trillion in wealth away from the rest of the nation to themselves in 2016. While there's no need to offer condolences to the rest of the top 10%, who still have an average net worth of \$1.3 million, nearly half of the wealth transfer (\$1.94 trillion) came from the nation's poorest 90% -- the middle and lower classes, according to Piketty and Saez and Zucman. That's over \$17,000 in housing and savings per lower-to-middle-class household lost to the super-rich. Put another way, the average 1% household took an additional \$3 million of our national wealth in one year while education and infrastructure went largely unfunded.

MIDDLE-CLASS LOSSES

According to Piketty and Saez and Zucman, the true middle class is "the

group of adults with income between the median and the 90th percentile." This group of 50 million households lost \$1.76 trillion of their wealth in 2016, or over \$35,000 each. That's a \$35,000 decline in housing and financial assets, with possibly increased debt, for every middle-class household.

HOUSING WEALTH FOR THE 90% CONVERTED TO INVESTMENT WEALTH FOR THE 1%

In the 1980s, the housing wealth of the bottom 90% made up about 15 percent of total household wealth. In the 1980s, the corporate equities owned by the richest .01% made up about 1.2 percent of total household wealth. Housing was 12 times greater than super-rich stock holdings back then. Now they're nearly equal. The home values of 112,000,000 households have been reduced to just over 5 percent of total wealth, while the stocks and securities of the richest 12,000 households are approaching 5 percent of total wealth. Our homes have turned to dust, and the plutocrats have turned the dust into gold.

WAGES OF THE POOR TRANSFERRED

It's bad enough that the poorest 50% of America have no appreciable wealth, but their income has not increased in 40 years. More evidence comes from Pew Research. As Piketty, Saez, and Zucman note, the richest 1% and the poorest 50%

"have basically switched their income shares." They explain, "We observe a complete collapse of the bottom 50% income share in the US between 1978 and 2015, from 20% to 12% of total income, while the top 1% income share rose from 11% to 20%."

MAKING AMERICA GREAT FOR 1% OF US

In his book, *Glass House: The 1% Economy and the Shattering of the All-American Town*, Brian Alexander describes today's America through the lens of his hometown of Lancaster, Ohio, which had been a leading glasswares manufacturer. But the town started falling apart in the 1980s. A major glasswares company was bought up with borrowed money by private equity firms, which then cut jobs and wages, allowed manufacturing facilities to fall into disrepair, stopped contributing to pensions, moved company headquarters out of state, and demanded tax breaks to keep the glassware plant in Lancaster. Capitalism as usual. Yet 59 percent of Lancaster's county voted for Trump. Alexander explains that the people of Lancaster "remained captured by an ultra-conservative, anti-tax philosophy that prevented them from raising funds to repair the crumbling streets."

Delusions persist about the power of the market and the dangers of governing ourselves. The business media has

conditioned us to fear the words 'social' and 'public,' as if they connote evil or ineptitude or anti-Americanism. But the public good depends on cooperation. Society fosters individual accomplishment, not the other way around.

The obscene transfer of wealth and income to the plutocrats won't end until we demand a return to the Commons, where we work as a society rather than allow predatory plutocratic individuals to control us. There are 112 million households in America that are giving thousands of their hard-earned dollars to the 1%, and we have finally begun to fight back, together, as a massive force of Americans who refuse to let the theft continue.

PAUL BUCHHEIT IS A COLLEGE TEACHER, AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF US UNCUT CHICAGO. HIS LATEST BOOK IS, /DISPOSABLE AMERICANS: EXTREME CAPITALISM AND THE CASE FOR A GUARANTEED INCOME/. HE IS ALSO FOUNDER AND DEVELOPER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EDUCATIONAL WEBSITES (USAGAINSTGREED.ORG, PAYUPNOW.ORG, RAPPINGHISTORY.ORG), AND THE EDITOR AND MAIN AUTHOR OF "/>

Source: Common Dreams 3/6/17 <http://www.commondreams.org/>

Wall Street bonus pool dwarfs minimum wage earnings

Just-released figures from the New York State Comptroller show Wall Street banks handed out \$23.9 billion in bonuses to their New York City-based employees last year. According to an Institute for Policy Studies analysis of these figures:

- The total bonus pool for 177,000 Wall Street employees was 1.6 times the combined annual earnings of all 1,075,000 U.S. full-time minimum wage workers.

- The average Wall Street bonus increased by 1 percent last year to \$138,210. Since 1985, the nominal value of the average Wall Street bonus has increased 890 percent, whereas the minimum wage has risen only 116 percent.

- The much faster increase in Wall Street bonuses has contributed to racial and gender inequality, since workers at the bottom of the wage scale are predominantly people of color and female, whereas those in the financial industry's upper echelons are overwhelmingly white and male. At the five largest investment banks, the share of executives and top managers who are white ranges

from 84-87 percent, and the share who are male ranges from 66-84 percent. Only 44 percent of minimum wage workers are white and 37 percent are male.

- The 2016 bonus pool held enough dollars to lift the pay of any one of these groups of low-wage workers up to \$15 per hour:

- **all of the country's 3.1 million restaurant servers and bartenders,**

- **all 1.7 million home health and personal care aides, or**

- **all 3.2 million fast food preparation and serving workers**

INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES TURNS IDEAS INTO ACTION FOR PEACE, JUSTICE AND THE ENVIRONMENT. WE STRENGTHEN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS WITH INDEPENDENT RESEARCH, VISIONARY THINKING, AND LINKS TO THE GRASSROOTS, SCHOLARS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS. I.F. STONE ONCE CALLED IPS "THE THINK TANK FOR THE REST OF US." SINCE 1963, WE HAVE EMPOWERED PEOPLE TO BUILD HEALTHY AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES IN COMMUNITIES, THE

US, AND THE WORLD.

Source: Institute for Policy Studies 3/15/17 <http://www.ips-dc.org/>





UN aid chief urges global action as starvation, famine loom for 20 million across four countries

Just back from Kenya, Yemen, South Sudan and Somalia — countries that are facing or are at risk of famine — the top United Nations humanitarian official today urged the international community for comprehensive action to save people from simply "starving to death."

"We stand at a critical point in history. Already at the beginning of the year we are facing the largest humanitarian crisis since the creation of the UN," UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien told the Security Council today. Without collective and coordinated global efforts, he warned, people risk starving to death and succumbing to disease, stunted children and lost futures, and mass displacements and reversed development gains. "The appeal for action by the Secretary-General can thus not be understated. It was right to sound the alarm early, not wait for the pictures of emaciated dying children [] to mobilize a reaction and the funds," Mr. O'Brien underscored, calling for accelerated global efforts to support UN humanitarian action on the ground. Turning to the countries he visited, the senior UN official said that, about two-thirds of the population (more than 18 million people) in Yemen needed assistance, including more than seven

million severely food insecure, and the fighting continued to worsen the crisis. "I continue to reiterate the same message to all: only a political solution will ultimately end human suffering and bring stability to the region," he said, noting that with access and funding, humanitarians will do more, but cautioned that relief-workers were "not the long-term solution to the growing crisis."

In South Sudan, where a famine was recently declared, more than 7.5 million people are in need of assistance, including some 3.4 million displaced. The figure rose by 1.4 million since last year. "The famine in the country is man-made. Parties to the conflict are parties to the famine — as are those not intervening to make the violence stop," stressed Mr. O'Brien, calling on the South Sudanese authorities to translate their assurances of unconditional access into "action on the ground." Similarly, more than half the population of Somalia (6.2 million people) is in need of aid, 2.9 million of whom require immediate assistance. Extremely worrying is that more than one million children under the age of five are at the risk of acute malnourishment. "The current indicators mirror the tragic picture of 2011, when Somalia last suffered a famine," recalled the UN official, but

expressed hope that a famine can be averted with strong national leadership and immediate and concerted support by the international community.

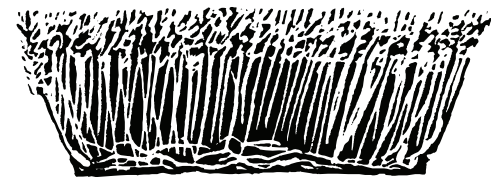
Concerning Kenya, he mentioned that more than 2.7 million people were food insecure, and that this number could reach four million by April. "In collaboration with the Government [of Kenya], the UN will soon launch an appeal of \$200 million to provide timely life-saving assistance and protection," he informed. Further in his briefing, Mr. O'Brien informed the Council of the outcomes of the Oslo Conference on the Lake Chad Basin where 14 donors pledged a total of \$672 million, of which \$458 million is for humanitarian action in 2017. "This is very good news, and I commend those who made such generous pledges," he said but noted that more was needed to fully fund the \$1.5 billion required to provide the assistance needed across the region.

On the UN response in these locations,

Mr. O'Brien highlighted that strategic, coordinated and prioritized plans are in place and dedicated teams on the ground are closely working with partners to ensure that immediate life-saving support reaches those in need. "Now we need the international community and this Council to act," he highlighted, urging prompt action to tackle the factors causing famine; committing sufficient and timely financial support; and ensuring that fighting stops. In particular, he underscored the need to ensure that humanitarians have safe, full and unimpeded access and that parties to the conflict in the affected countries respect humanitarian law and called on those with influence over the parties to the conflict to "exert that influence now."

"It is possible to avert this crisis, to avert these famines, to avert these looming human catastrophes," he concluded. "It is all preventable."

Source: United Nations News Center
3/10/17 <http://www.un.org>



Heading off Trump's cruel budget

ROBERT REICH

Donald Trump ran for president as a man of the people, who was going to fight for those who were left behind — but everything we're hearing about his forthcoming federal budget says exactly the opposite: Spending that's a great deal for big corporations that have hired armies of lobbyists, and great for the wealthiest few like himself. But leaving everyone else a lot worse off.

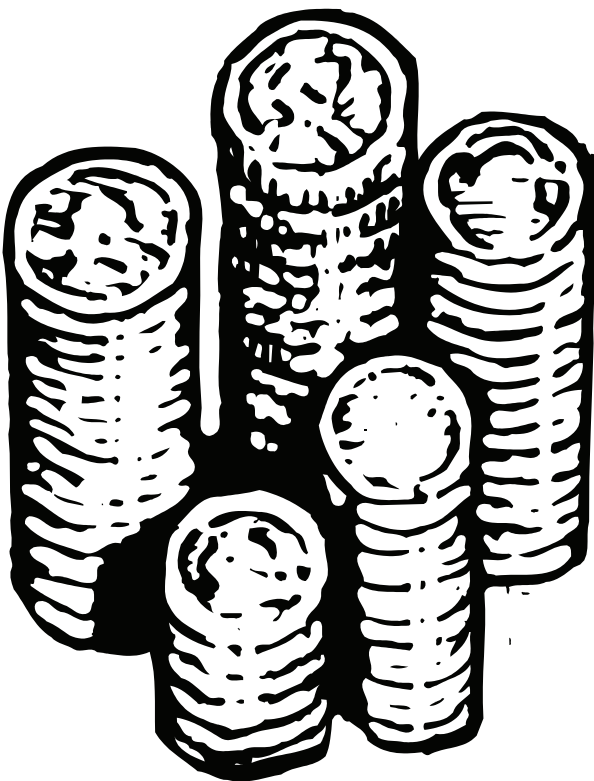
Here are four important early warning flares:

1. Trump's budget will increase military spending by 10 percent (even though U.S. military expenditures already exceed the next seven largest military budgets around the world, combined). And that's frankly scary for a lot of reasons from what it signals about his foreign policy priorities to the impact of that whopping spending hike like this on other parts of the budget.
2. Trump actually plans to cut corporate taxes (even though U.S. corporate profits are higher as a percentage of the economy than they've been since 1947).
3. He's going to pay for this — in part — by cutting billions of dollars from the Environmental Protection Agency (which would strip the EPA of almost all its capacity to enforce environmental laws and regulations, at a time when climate change threatens the future of the planet). This is precisely the opposite of what the United States ought to be doing.
4. Last — but by no means least — huge leaps in military spending plus tax cuts will also mean big cuts to programs like food stamps and Medicaid (at a time when the U.S. has the highest poverty rate among all advanced nations, including more than 1 in 5 American children).

with Republicans in control of both the House and the Senate these priorities have a good chance of being enacted, which is why we have to raise our voices — and push back — now. Republicans in Congress are likely still recovering from the last recess — dubbed appropriately "Resistance Recess." We need to take that winning spirit of resistance into the budget fight — and the time to start is right now. So, let your members of Congress know that Trump's budget is not /your /budget. Trump's spending and tax priorities are not in the best interest of most Americans. And then let's get to work to make sure we get a Congress in 2018 that reflects YOUR priorities.

ROBERT REICH, ONE OF THE NATION'S LEADING EXPERTS ON WORK AND THE ECONOMY, IS CHANCELLOR'S PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY AT THE GOLDMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY. HE HAS SERVED IN THREE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS, MOST RECENTLY AS SECRETARY OF LABOR UNDER PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON. TIME MAGAZINE HAS NAMED HIM ONE OF THE TEN MOST EFFECTIVE CABINET SECRETARIES OF THE LAST CENTURY. HE HAS WRITTEN THIRTEEN BOOKS, INCLUDING HIS LATEST BEST-SELLER, /AFTERSHOCK: THE NEXT ECONOMY AND AMERICA'S FUTURE; THE WORK OF NATIONS; LOCKED IN THE CABINET; SUPERCAPITALISM; AND HIS NEWEST, /BEYOND OUTRAGE/. HIS SYNDICATED COLUMNS, TELEVISION APPEARANCES, AND PUBLIC RADIO COMMENTARIES REACH MILLIONS OF PEOPLE EACH WEEK. HE IS ALSO A FOUNDING EDITOR OF THE AMERICAN PROSPECT MAGAZINE, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE CITIZEN'S GROUP COMMON CAUSE.

Source: RobertReich.org 3/15/17 <http://robertreich.org/>



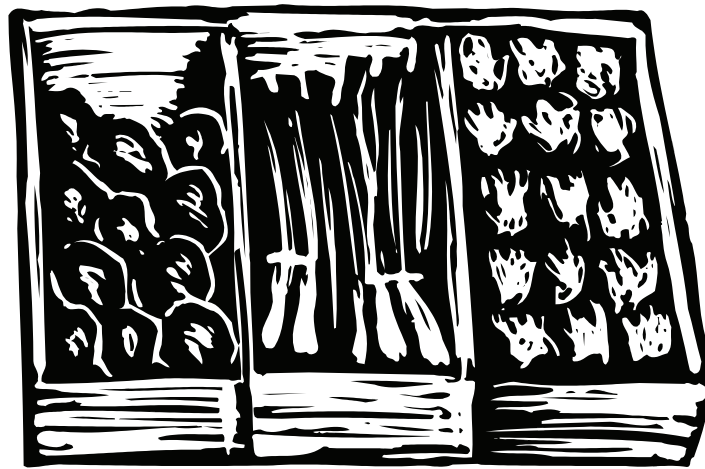
This is only the first step in the budget process, but



Planting season is here

Spring is here. The drought is over. And it's a great time to start your home garden.

SUSAN MORA LOYKO



Nowhere is gardening more an ever-present activity than at the Boggs Tract Community Farm, a non-profit, local, year-round working farm and community garden located on 6.5 acres in the Boggs Tract neighborhood. Boggs Tract Community Farm is not only about growing fresh, all-natural crops for weekly customer produce boxes but also about helping community members learn how to grow their own fruits and veggies.

Each month, Farm Educator and Farmer, Shayne Zurilgen, offers his knowledge on all things gardening in a 90-minute class held at the farm. At a recent class, Shayne shared some useful information on preparing gardens for spring planting. He advised the class to first assess their garden area with regard to area, condition of the garden, and soil to determine what can be grown. He warned against growing large plants such as artichokes or tomato plants in small areas and advised really planning a garden before planting, to ensure adequate space and sun to meet the plants' needs. "Think about what you want to grow and can grow. Create what you can manage," he said.

Shayne recommended to first determine what kind of soil you have in your garden. Is it clay, sandy or loam (a mix of clay and sand) or a combination? Test kits are available at local nurseries.

Drip irrigation is recommended, which is more efficient as it puts water directly on the plants, prevents weeds and doesn't waste water. Shayne discouraged

using a hose to water because it erodes the soil, can splash fungus up from the soil onto plants and waters weeds as well.

Inconsistent watering can cause problems as well. Shayne cautioned about over-watering plants. It's not always easy to tell if a plant is over-watered or not getting enough water. Unfortunately, plants that have been over-watered can look just like plants that are not getting enough water. A simple test: place your finger into the soil to see if it is damp or dry.

Any time after April 1st is a good time to begin planting because the frost season is over. Whether using seeds or transplants (seedlings), most summer crops will take at least three months to provide fruit. Plants that will do well during the summer season include tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants. Add a little calcium to the soil when planting tomatoes to prevent blossom-end rot and cracking. Herbs will do well before it gets too hot.

And don't forget to plant flowers. They're not only pretty to look at but they also will attract pollinators to your garden. Any daisy-looking plant will also attract predatory bugs as well, including lady beetles (commonly called lady bugs) that are natural enemies of aphids. Using pesticides will only kill bugs for a short time before they will return, and pesticides also kill good bugs as well as the harmful ones. Attracting beneficial bugs to your garden can reduce the pests in your garden.

To learn more useful gardening information from Shayne, interested community members are welcomed to attend future monthly education workshops held on the farm located at 466 So. Ventura Ave., from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Classes are free and open to the public. Upcoming classes include:

April 23	Composting
May 21	Chicken Keeping at Home
June 25	Bee Keeping
July 16	Growing and Using Herbs
August 20	Perennial Vegetables
Sept. 17	Natural Pest Management
Oct. 15	Winter Veggies
Nov. 19	Season Extension
Dec. 17	Soil Building

For more information on the Boggs Tract Community Farm, visit our website www.puentesca.org

SUSAN MORA LOYKO IS PUENTES IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT AND COORDINATED THE STOCKTON EARTH DAY FESTIVAL FOR OVER 10 YEARS.

We need winter

JEREMY DEATON

Chicago has seen nary a snowflake since before Christmas—a record in a city that averages 40 inches of snow in the winter. In Washington, D.C., the famous cherry blossoms are set to bloom two weeks ahead of schedule, marking the end of an uncommonly warm winter and the early arrival of spring. In normally cold regions, the record-setting heat — and the opportunity to wear shorts and drink iced tea in February—might seem like a blessing. But for the ecosystems we depend upon, the shortened winter threatens turmoil.

In nature, timing is everything. In a spring, flowers lend their nectar to bees, and bees pollinate those flowers. When flowers bloom too soon, however, they risk losing their petals and nectar before bees

show up.

Fewer bees mean less pollination, and so forth. But if both species resurface at the onset of spring, why would they fall out of sync? The answer is that they respond to different cues. Some plants, like Washington's cherry trees, bloom after experiencing several warm days in a row. Others respond to sunlight, blossoming only after days grow longer. Pollinators—such as birds, bees, bats, and butterflies—have evolved to take advantage of these subtle, seasonal cues.

In a normal year, these cues more or less line up as anticipated, leading the birds and the bees to discharge their vernal duties at roughly the appropriate time. But climate change is blurring the line between winter and spring—a phenomenon scientists call season creep —and many species of both flora and fauna are struggling to adapt.

Even when plants and pollinators are in sync, season creep can thwart the growth of vegetation. Seeds that take hold during a balmy stretch in February may perish in a cold snap come March. Full-grown plants sprout leaves, flowers or fruit that wilt when chilly weather returns. Experts describe a warm winter spell that spurs flora and fauna to reemerge ahead of schedule as a false spring.

A false spring can also be extremely costly to farmers and, by extension, consumers. In 2012, an especially warm winter followed by freezing temperatures ravaged fruit trees in Michigan, costing growers half a billion dollars. The problem is likely to get worse in the years to come. A 2015 study found that climate change will produce more false springs in the Midwest and elsewhere, imperiling fruit crops.

Even in the absence of a late-season frost, a warm winter can wreak havoc on agriculture. Sugar maples, for example, only produce sap in cold weather. Rising temperatures have stunted syrup production.

Warmer winters do, however, tend to make people pay closer attention to the overall trend of anthropogenic climate change. A Gallup poll conducted at the end of last winter—the warmest on record in the United States—showed an increase in the number of Americans who believed the effects of climate change had already begun. Granted, not everyone is equally persuaded by personal experience. Research suggests that those who are already concerned about climate change are more likely to perceive exceptionally warm weather as a deviation from the norm.

This year's unusually mild

winter has prompted many Americans to consider the implications of climate change. Chicago meteorologist Tom Skilling attributed the city's snowless winter to global warming. In nearby St. Paul, Minnesota, civic leaders alarmed by the unusually warm weather are working on a climate action plan. Anne Hunt, the city's environmental policy director, told the St. Paul Pioneer Press, "It's not supposed to be 65 degrees in February, or rain on Christmas." By contrast, the mild winter has done little to sway federal policymakers. From the Oval Office, President Trump has proposed gutting federal climate programs and debated pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Source: *ThinkProgress* 3/14/17
<https://thinkprogress.org>



Donald Trump’s plan for our water is just as bad as you’d imagine

ROBIN MCKIE

One in five species on Earth now faces extinction, and that will rise to 50% by the end of the century unless urgent action is taken. That is the stark view of the world’s leading biologists, ecologists and economists who will gather on Monday to determine the social and economic changes needed to save the planet’s biosphere.

“The living fabric of the world is slipping through our fingers without our showing much sign of caring,” say the organisers of the Biological Extinction conference held at the Vatican this week.

Threatened creatures such as the tiger or rhino may make occasional headlines, but little attention is paid to the eradication of most other life forms, they argue. But as the conference will hear, these animals and plants provide us with our food and medicine. They purify our water and air while also absorbing carbon emissions from our cars and factories, regenerating soil, and providing us with aesthetic inspiration.

“Rich western countries are now siphoning up the planet’s resources and destroying its ecosystems at an unprecedented rate,” said biologist Paul Ehrlich, of Stanford University in California. “We want to build highways across the Serengeti to get more rare earth minerals for our cellphones. We grab all the fish from the sea, wreck the coral reefs and put carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. We have triggered a major extinction event. The question is: how do we stop it?”

Monday’s meeting is one of a series set up by the Vatican on ecological issues – which Pope Francis has deemed an urgent issue for the Catholic church. “We need to unravel the processes that led to the ills we are now facing,” said one of the conference’s organisers, the

economist Sir Partha Dasgupta, of Cambridge University. “That is why the Vatican symposia involve natural and social scientists, as well as scholars from the humanities. That the symposia are being held at the Papal Academy is also symbolic. It shows that the ancient hostility between science and the church, at least on the issue of preserving Earth’s services, has been quelled.”

But not everyone is happy about the meeting. The involvement of Ehrlich – who believes that wider use of birth control is needed to halt the world’s spiralling population – has been denounced by many conservative Catholics. They have set up a petition calling for the pope to withdraw the invitation for him to speak on Monday. “I believe they have about 11,000 signatures,” Ehrlich told the Observer.

“The pope has not changed his mind, however.”

He remained uncompromising on population control: “If you value people, you want to have the maximum number you can support sustainably. You do not want almost 12 billion living unsustainably on Earth by the end of the century – with the result that civilisation will collapse and there are only a few hundred survivors.”

A world population of around a billion would have an overall pro-life effect, Ehrlich argued. This could be supported for many millennia and sustain many more human lives in the long term compared with our current uncontrolled growth and prospect of sudden collapse.

This point was backed by another conference organiser, biologist Professor Peter Raven, of the Missouri Botanical Garden. “By the beginning of the next century we face the prospect of losing half our wildlife. Yet we rely on the living world to sustain ourselves. It is very frightening. The extinctions we face pose an even greater threat to civilisation than climate change – for the simple

reason they are irreversible.”

UN statistics suggest that the global population will increase from the current 7.4 billion to 11.2 billion by 2100. And as Dasgupta noted, most of these extra billions will appear in Africa, where the fertility rate is still twice that of the rest of the world.

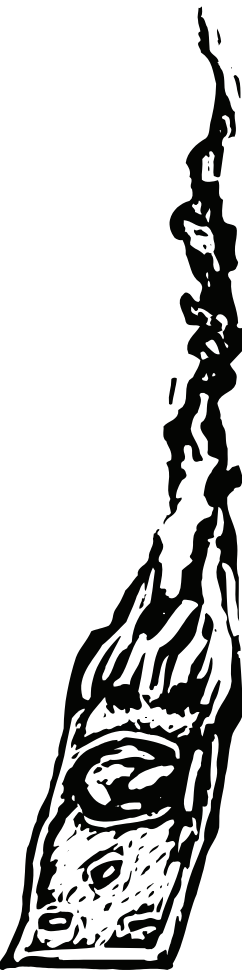
“[Africa’s] population is likely to go from roughly one billion now to around 4 billion,” said Dasgupta. “Can you imagine what tensions there are going to be there, especially with climate change coming and hitting the continent more than anywhere else? What do you think is going to happen when the arid regions spread, and a hundred million Africans try to swim across the Mediterranean? It is terrifying.”

The crucial point is to put the problem of biological extinctions in a social context, he said. “That gives us a far better opportunity of working out what we need to in the near future. We have to act quickly, however.”

Ehrlich agreed: “If you look at the figures, it is clear that to support today’s world population sustainably – and I emphasise the word sustainably – you would require another half a planet to provide us with those resources. However, if everyone consumed resources at the US level – which is what the world aspires to – you will need another four or five Earths. “We are wrecking our planet’s life support systems. We have the capacity to stop that. The trouble is that the danger does not seem obvious to most people, and that is something we must put right.”

Source: Guardian UK 3/3/17 <https://www.theguardian.com>

Trump rollback of fuel economy standards will cost Americans big time



Today, President Donald Trump called for a review of fuel economy and tailpipe pollution standards for light-duty vehicles in model years 2022 to 2025. “The White House’s campaign against clean air will make Americans sicker and poorer, and it invites catastrophic climate change in the near future. The fuel economy rules that Trump is reviewing are projected to save Americans up to \$5,700 for every car they purchase and \$8,200 for every truck. The tailpipe rules would save 53,000 lives each year and prevent millions more cardiovascular illnesses,” said David J. Arkush, managing director of Public Citizen’s Climate Program. “Trump’s zeal for axing public safeguards likely will kill more Americans and harm the U.S. economy more than war and terrorism combined during his presidency. Shame on him – and shame on the automakers egging on his

dirty-air plans with the knowledge that he’ll likely grant whatever they ask.”

Robert Weissman, Public Citizen president said, “Just a few years ago, a U.S. government bailout saved the Big Three automakers from utter collapse. The government forced massive benefit cuts on auto workers and various retrenchments at the auto companies, but the only reciprocity the government demanded was industry agreement to higher fuel efficiency standards. Now the auto industry and the Trump administration are colluding to abrogate the deal, a move in equal parts myopic and cruel.

It is myopic because it allows the industry to repeat its stupid short-termism, which involves getting rich on SUV sales when gas prices are low and then plunging into crisis when they rise, which they inevitably will. Now, competition comes not only from foreign

automakers who specialize in more fuel-efficient cars, but tech companies whose products in the not-distant future will displace the internal combustion engine – and likely the Big Three automakers, as well, if they are able to roll back the fuel efficiency standards. It is cruel because it steals money from consumer pocketbooks, with the most severe impact on those least able to pay.”

PUBLIC CITIZEN IS A NATIONAL, NONPROFIT CONSUMER ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION FOUNDED IN 1971 TO REPRESENT CONSUMER INTERESTS IN CONGRESS, THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND THE COURTS.

Source: Public Citizen 3/15/17 <http://www.citizen.org/>



BERBOWER INSURANCE AGENCY

PERSONAL, BUSINESS, MEDICARE, LIFE

MARK A BERBOWER
 MARK@BERBOWERINSURANCE.COM
 CA LIC 0044529

1330 W ROBINHOOD DR, SUITE A1
 STOCKTON, CA 95207

(209) 405-1088



LAW OFFICES OF ANN M. CERNEY SHELLIE LOTT LANGLEY KREUZE
 Attorneys at Law
 42 N. Sutter Street, Suite 40, Stockton
 104 N. School St. #205, Lodi
 948-9384 or 369-1333

- Social Security
- Wills
- Probate
- Trusts

Se Habla Espanol • Thai • Vietnamese



LELA NELSON REALTY
 2222 Pacific Ave. Stockton CA 95204

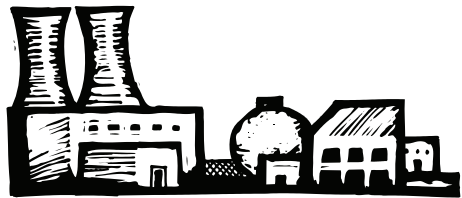
(209) 467-1200 OFFICE
 (209) 942-5673 fax
 (209) 466-6243 direct
 Lela@LelaNelsonRealty.com

E. Lela Nelson
 BROKER Lic. #00598358





6 years later ... Fukushima nuclear disaster far from over



YUKO YONEDA

Six years ago, more than 15,000 people perished and tens of thousands of people's lives changed forever. Northeastern Japan was hit by a massive earthquake, followed by an enormous tsunami that wiped out coastal towns one after another. In the days that followed came the horrifying news: the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactors went into meltdown. The disaster is still with us. Nuclear survivors continue to live with fear for their family's health and with uncertainty about their future. Women are bearing the greatest brunt. They continue to grapple with unanswered questions, unable to relieve a deeply held sense of anger and injustice.

Over the past six years, starting just two weeks after the beginning of this nuclear disaster, Greenpeace conducted radiation surveys in the contaminated region. The latest survey gathered data in and around selected houses in Iitate village, located 30-50 km from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. In some homes, residents would receive a radiation dose equivalent to getting a chest x-ray every week. And that's assuming they stay in the limited decontaminated areas, as 76 percent of the total area of Iitate has not been touched and remains highly contaminated.

Despite this, the government, headed by Shinzo Abe, intends to lift evacuation orders from the village and other areas in March and April 2017, and one year later

terminate compensation for families from those areas. It will also cancel housing support for those who evacuated outside designated zones. For those dependent on this support, it could mean being forced to return.

Women and children are the hardest hit by the nuclear disaster. They are physically more vulnerable to impacts of the disaster and radiation exposure. Evacuation broke up communities and families, depriving women and children of social networks and sources of support and protection. Together with a yawning wage gap (Japan has the third highest gender income disparity in the most recent OECD ranking), female evacuees—especially single mothers with dependent children—face far higher poverty risk than men.

Despite, or because of the adversity, women are the greatest hope for transformative change. Though women are politically and economically marginalized, they have been at the forefront of demanding change from the government and the nuclear industry. Mothers from Fukushima and elsewhere are standing up against the paternalistic government policies and decisions, to protect their children and to secure a nuclear-free future for the next generations. They are leading anti-nuclear movements by organizing sit-ins in front of the government offices, spearheading legal challenges and testifying in court, and joining together to fight for their rights.

Let's stand up with women at the forefront of anti-nuclear struggle. Let's fight for their rights and future together.

Source: Greenpeace 3/11/17 <http://www.ecowatch.com>

ANDREA GERMANOS

Royal Dutch Shell announced Thursday that it is selling off the majority of its tar sands assets, as its chief executive noted dwindling "societal acceptance of the energy system as we have it."

Of the \$7.25 billion deal with energy company Canadian Natural, Shell said in a statement that it will "sell all of its in-situ and undeveloped oil sands interests in Canada and reduce its share in the Athabasca Oil Sands Project (AOSP) from 60 percent to 10 percent." As/InsideClimate News/ noted, the sale is "one of the biggest in a series of steps by multinational companies to turn away from the tar sands, among the most expensive and carbon-intensive sources of oil." For Shell Chief Executive Officer Ben van Beurden, it marks "a significant step in re-shaping Shell's portfolio in line with our long-term strategy." The Greenpeace-led Save the Arctic campaign, meanwhile, tweeted after the announcement: "there's a lot more money in making the world better than destroying it."

/Reuters/ noted that: "Shell is trying to sell assets totaling \$30 billion to cut debt following its \$54 billion acquisition of BG Group and is under investor pressure to mitigate climate change risks. Shell also said on Thursday that 10 percent of directors' bonuses will now be tied to how well it manages greenhouse gas emissions in refining, chemical, and upstream operations." The announcement of the sale came the same day as van Beurden said that public acceptance of his industry "has been eroded to the point that it is becoming a serious issue for our long term future."

"This is the biggest challenge as we have at the moment as a company ...The fact that societal acceptance of the energy system as we have it is just disappearing,"

he said at an energy conference in Houston, /Reuters/ reported. Those comments, climate group 350.org said in a tweet, show "we're winning."

Last month, as /Bloomberg/ reported, "Exxon Mobil Corp slashed proved reserves the most in its modern history after removing the entire \$16 billion, 3.5-billion-barrel Kearl oil-sands project from its books on Wednesday. That followed ConocoPhillips announcement a day earlier that erased 1.15 billion oil-sands barrels, plunging its reserves to a 15-year low."

That "de-booking," wrote /Boing Boing/ co-editor Cory Doctorow, showed the companies "are telling investors that they don't believe the oil trapped in the sands is an asset any longer—that the prices will never rebound far enough to make it worthwhile to extract it."

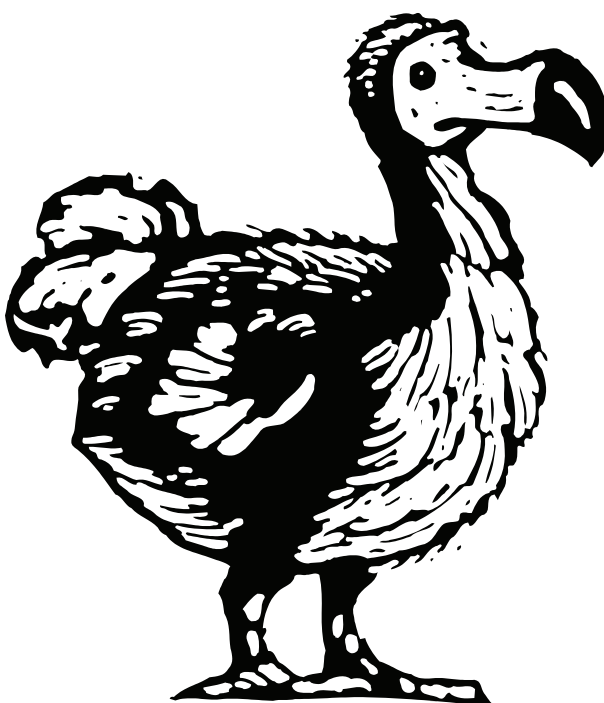
Days after his swearing in, however, President Donald Trump signed an executive order advancing the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline, which would bring crude from the Alberta tar sands to the Gulf Coast. "But as Big Oil abandons the tar sands," Doctorow continued, "there's simply no case for building pipelines to bring the oil that will never be extracted from them to ports that will never ship it." The announcement from Shell also comes on the heels of an investigation that showed that it, much like Exxon, knew for years the risks of fossil fuel extraction had on the climate, yet continued to lobby against climate legislation and push for fossil fuel development.

Source: Common Dreams 3/10/17 <http://www.commondreams.org/>


Trump's twitter distraction

GEORGE LAKOFF

The net has been drawing closer around Trump's Russian connections. His unwavering support for America's major enemy has raised a question: Is Treason the Reason? The Tax Return issue has become a treason issue. The tax returns could show if Trump is deeply in debt to Russians or if he is involved in illegal financial activity. He might clear suspicions by releasing the returns. The longer he refuses to do so, the greater the suspicion gets. Jeff Sessions' recusal made Trump furious because it meant that Sessions could no longer protect him from an independent Justice Department investigation, if there were to be one. If Sessions is forced to resign, the net gets that much tighter. Of course, in addition to releasing the tax returns, Trump should support a full and independent investigation to clear up all questions about his Russia contacts. In the midst of this, Trump created a distraction: accusing Obama of wiretapping the Trump Tower, with no evidence. Faced with the biggest scandal in American history — presidential treason — Trump, with a tweet, accuses Obama of a scandal bigger



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



FEATURE YOUR BUSINESS HERE

Advertise in **Connections** and get seen by your local community and support alternative media.

\$46	3.125"x2"
	<small>Business Card Size</small>
\$52	3.125"x3"
	<small>1/12 Page</small>
\$58	3.125"x4"
	<small>1/9 Page</small>

Contact us for more rate options. Discounts for longer terms and nonprofits available. Send camera-ready copy to:
ava.simpson.as@gmail.com or PJN, P.O. Box 4123,
 Stockton 95204



Republicans lick chops while revving up to dismantle the Endangered Species Act

JULIA TRAVERS

On February 15, 2017, the US Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) held a hearing called, "Oversight: Modernization of the Endangered Species Act." Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY), Chairman of the EPW, held this two-hour hearing to explore "the need to modernize the ESA in order to better improve recovery rates and the eventual delisting of recovered species."

Experts in species and habitat conservation have spoken out against this proposed "modernization" as a thinly cloaked attempt to dismantle an essential and publicly supported piece of environmental legislation -- while opening up ecologically "critical" lands for industrial development.

Mike Danylak, a spokesman for Barrasso and the EPW, told *EnviroNews Nature*: "Counties, wildlife managers, homebuilders, construction companies, farmers, ranchers, and other stakeholders are advocating for a number of measures to modernize the ESA, like placing an increased emphasis on fully recovering species that are listed as endangered or threatened to the point that they can be delisted, and improving the US Fish and Wildlife Service's consultation with the states regarding listing and delisting decisions."

On the other hand, Erik Molvar, Executive Director of the Western Watersheds Project, shared a conservationist's point of view with *EnviroNews*: "If Congress opens up the Endangered Species Act for tinkering, then every anti-environmental lobby group will be trying to get in and carve out the regulations that prevent their industry from driving rare wildlife extinct. This legislative effort isn't about 'reforms' or 'improvements,' it's about fundamentally gutting one of our nation's most important bedrock conservation laws and replacing science-based decision-making with political horse-trading that sells out our endangered wildlife. Corporate interests want to make it legal to drive rare plants and wildlife extinct. It's as simple as that."

ESA NOT WORKING?

Trump's twitter distraction

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

than Watergate. Trump's tweets are strategic. I analyzed the tweets on NPR's On the Media, and a diagram has been shared widely on social media and also appeared in the Washington Post. Trump's tweet is a doozy. It is an example of all four of Trump's strategies.

PRE-EMPTIVE FRAMING: He frames first. He creates a new presidential scandal -- Obama's wiretapping -- an accusation without evidence, and with all evidence against it.

DEFLECTION: He puts the onus on his squeaky-clean predecessor.

DIVERSION: The press bit and the diversion worked. It generated headlines questioning whether Obama, rather than Trump, had committed wrongdoing. The diversion worked, at least temporarily.

TRIAL BALLOON: Will the public accept it, or listen to a discussion of it long enough to distract the press and the public from the treason issue?

The media is still focused on the false accusation, not on the investigation of Trump's Russian connections

One of the main concerns Barrasso mentioned in his remarks to the committee was, "of 1,652 species of animals and plants in the US listed as either endangered or threatened since the law was passed in 1973, only 47 species have been delisted due to recovery of the species." Barrasso said for this reason, the ESA "is not working today."

But Noah Greenwald, the Center for Biological Diversity's Endangered Species Director, explained Barrasso's argument, is a flawed one. Species take decades to reach near extinction and decades of consistent conservation efforts to then be restored. The persistent issue of habitat encroachment further slows down and hinders the recovery process. "Since entering the Senate in 2008, [Barrasso] has voted against endangered species protections at nearly every chance he got." Greenwald added. He also pointed out that Barrasso has received significant

campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry. The ESA was signed into law in 1973 by President Richard Nixon and its purpose is, in part, "to provide a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved," and "to provide a program for the conservation of such endangered species and threatened species." A 2013 poll carried out by the Center for Biological Diversity found two-thirds of Americans support the ESA. WildEarth Guardians explained the ESA is essential because, "the current extinction rate is at least 1,000 times the historical rate indicated by the fossil record. This mass extinction crisis is due to habitat destruction, climate change, pollution, exploitation, proliferation of non-native species and other threats."

By saying the ESA simply doesn't work, environmentalists claim Barrasso ignores the ways in which it is fulfilling its stated mission: to conserve endangered species and their ecosystems. The ESA now protects more than 1,600 animal and plant species. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the principal federal partner responsible for administering the ESA along with the National Marine Fisheries Service, reported,

"98 percent of all species listed as either endangered or threatened under the ESA still survive."

The ESA is well-known for saving the humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) and the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) from extinction and also works to protect many less charismatic organisms, including snails, plants, fish, and mollusks that each play a vital role in maintaining diverse, thriving American ecosystems. The recovery of bird species in the continental US is another example of the ESA's success, as 85 percent of listed bird populations either increased or stabilized after receiving ESA protection.

A Center for Biological Diversity report analyzing the ESA's budget needs found the Act has been "chronically and severely underfunded." The report offers extensive evidence of this, such as that 25 percent of species protected under the ESA were allotted "less than \$10,000 in recovery funding in 2014, the last year for which data is available" and "43 species received less than \$1,000 each." The report recommends the ESA's budget rise from \$82 million in 2016 to about \$2.3 billion over 10 years and points out this is "about the same amount that's given to oil and gas companies to subsidize extraction of fossil fuels on public lands."...

National Geographic explained, "foes of the [Act] now see an opportunity to weaken it under President Donald Trump." Trump has been an opponent of the environment at every turn, cutting out protective regulations that might prevent business development, particularly in the energy arena. In his first few weeks, he reopened fossil fuel pipelines, prevented bumble bee protections, removed a rule safeguarding water from coal pollution, appointed an EPA opponent to the Agency's top post and ordered a new wall along the US-Mexico border that will directly threaten endangered species.

TIME TO STAND UP

At this critical juncture, "we need our progressive champions to start swinging to hold firm on Republican-led attempts to weaken [the ESA] in the name of 'modernization,'" Amy Atwood, Endangered Species Legal Director and Senior Attorney at the Center for Biological Diversity, told *EnviroNews Nature*. "It's in their interest to do so, given the Act's huge popularity with the public."

In 2015, the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) carried out a survey of 7,000 scientists at four federal agencies including the USFWS. The UCS asked the scientists about "scientific integrity, communications and agency effectiveness." Seventy-three percent of USFWS respondents "reported too much weight given to political interests."

"It is my perception that upper-level managers are influenced by fear of Congress dismantling the Endangered Species Act and/or otherwise interfering with the mission of the Service," one anonymous USFWS scientist said. The report recommended the USFWS "work to improve scientific integrity practices and minimize political interference in scientific decision making throughout the agency."

In 2016, the USFWS released an update to its peer review policy for ESA listings. UCS reported the new policy took significant "steps toward more robust and transparent peer-review" but could still be stronger. For example, the policy is vague about when the new peer-review process "will be necessary versus not." The White House responded but declined to provide a comment on ESA modernization. *EnviroNews* is yet to receive a response from Bishop, whose office said he was unavailable for comment.

Source: *EnviroNews* 3/4/17 <http://www.environews.tv/>

Source: George Lakoff's Website 3/10/17 <https://georgelakoff.com>



Bernie Sanders has a plan to defeat 'delusional' Trump



ANDREA GERMANOS

U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) has offered a blistering critique of President Donald Trump, calling the real estate mogul "delusional" and a "pathological liar" whose goal "to undermine American democracy" can be pushed back by engaging the segments of voters that Trump's campaign capitalized on. Speaking Thursday to /CNN's "Situation Room," Sanders addressed Trump's allegation less than a week ago (which has created an ongoing "conundrum" for the White House) that former President Barack Obama ordered Trump Tower to

But to understand how the country got to a place of having a president Trump...is to understand the failures of the Democratic Party...over the last several decades.

be wiretapped. That claim, Sanders said, "just adds to the delusional statements we hear from President Trump," referencing also the "total nonsense" from Trump that 3-5 million people voted illegally in November and that he saw people in New Jersey celebrate the destruction of the twin towers on 9/11.

It's not the first time the senator has used "delusional" to describe Trump, and in a new interview, Sanders repeats another criticism of the president: that he

frequently lies. In fact, he "lies all of the time," Sanders said to the /Guardian/, and does so "to undermine the foundations of American democracy" by doing things like "making wild attacks against the media," saying "that virtually everything that mainstream media says is a lie," making "wild accusations" like that of millions voting illegally on Election Day, and disparaging the George W. Bush-appointed judge who blocked his first Muslim ban. With acts like this, Sanders said, Trump purports to be "the only person in America who stands for the American people, the only person in America who is telling the truth, the only person in America who gets it right."

Trump's goal, Sanders said to the *Guardian*, "is to end up as leader of a nation which has moved in a significant degree toward authoritarianism where the president of the United States has extraordinary powers, far more so than our constitution has provided for or the values of the American people support." To fight back, Sanders says, "very conservative Republican colleagues who believe in democracy [...] have got to join us in resistance."

But to understand how the country got to a place of having a president Trump—as well as to strategize how to boot his CEO-profiting agenda—Sanders explains to the *Guardian* and in a new interview with the *Huffington Post*, is to

understand the failures of the Democratic Party (the party with which he caucuses) over the last several decades. *Huffington Post's* senior politics editor Sam Stein writes: "Since January, the Vermont senator has stopped in Mississippi, Kansas, and Michigan. Monday he's heading to one of the poorest counties in America, McDowell County, West Virginia, which Trump carried by a ratio of 3-to-1. Sanders views these enclaves as critical for the future of the Democratic Party and, by extension, the country. They are, he argues, the places where Democrats have shown 'an enormous amount of neglect.'"

Sanders argues "that Trump has effectively turned one set of voters (working-class whites) against another (immigrants and refugees) to the point the real culprits (bottom-line-driven CEOs) skate by without reprimand or punishment," Stein writes. It's a strategy Sanders says is employed by "demagogues"—a comparison the United Nations human rights chief has noted. To resist Trump, and bring to (and bring back to) the Democratic Party those neglected by political elites, what's necessary is "a proactive agenda that brings people together to fight for a new America," Sanders said.

Source: Common Dreams 3/10/17 <http://www.commondreams.org/>

Trump's plan to neuter the White House press corps, and neuter our democracy

ROBERT REICH

Tyrants don't allow open questioning, and they hate the free press. They want total control. That's why, according to three senior officials on the transition team, the incoming Trump administration is considering evicting the White House press corps from the press room inside the White House and moving them — and news conferences — to a conference center or to the Old Executive Office Building. This may sound like a small logistic matter. It's not. The White House "press room" contains work stations and broadcast booths, and the briefing area for presidential news conferences. Reporters have had workspace at the White House since Teddy Roosevelt was president, in 1901. But we're in a new era, the reign of King Trump.

Sean Spicer, Trump's press secretary, acknowledges "there has been some discussion about how" to move the press out of the White House. Spicer says it's because the new administration would like a larger room to allow more members of the press to attend press conferences.

Rubbish. It's because a larger room would allow the administration to fill seats with "alt-right" fringe journalists, rightwing social media, Trump supporters and paid staffers. They'd be there to ask the questions Trump wants to answer, and to jeer at reporters who ask critical questions and applaud Trump's answers. The move would allow Trump to play the crowd.

That's exactly what happened at Trump's so-called "news conference" on January 11 — the first he's held in six months. It wasn't really a press conference at all, and shouldn't have been characterized as one. It was a fake news conference that took place in a large auditorium. In the audience were paid staffers who jeered and snickered when reporters asked critical questions, and cheered every time Trump delivered one of his campaign zingers. It could easily have been one of his rallies. In this carnival atmosphere it was easy for Trump to refuse to answer questions from reporters who have run stories he doesn't like, and from news outlets that have criticized him. He slammed CNN for dispensing "fake news," called Buzzfeed "a pile of garbage," and sarcastically called the BBC "another beauty." The audience loved it. Just as he did in his rallies, Trump continued calling the press "dishonest" — part of his ongoing effort to discredit the press and to reduce public confidence in it. And he repeatedly lied. But the media in attendance weren't allowed to follow up or to question him on his lies.

For example, Trump wrongly stated that "the Democratic National Committee was totally open to be hacked. They did a very poor job. ... And they tried to hack the Republican National Committee, and they were unable to break through." Baloney. FBI Director James B. Comey said there was evidence that Republican National Committee computers were also targeted. The critical difference, according to

Comey, was that none of the information obtained from the RNC was leaked. Also, according to Comey, the Russians "got far deeper and wider into the [DNC] than the RNC," adding that "similar techniques were used in both cases." Trump further asserted at his fake news conference that "I have no deals that could happen in Russia, because we've stayed away. And I have no loans with Russia." Wrong again. Trump repeatedly sought deals in Russia. In a 2008 speech, Donald Trump Jr. said "Russians make up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of a lot of our assets," and "we see a lot of money pouring in from Russia."

Trump's statements at his fake news conference were, and are, big lies. They influence public understanding and opinion about two critically important issues: Did the Russians help Trump win the election, and, if so, why might they have done so? At the very least, they should have been followed up with questions from the White House press corps. That would have happened at a real news conference in the White House press room, holding 45 correspondents from major media outlets who are assigned full-time to report on the president. Which is the danger of evicting the press from the White House and putting press conferences into a large auditorium: Trump won't be called on his lies, and the White House press corps will lose the leverage they have by being together in one rather small room. And that's precisely why Trump wants to evict the press from the White House.

A senior official admitted the move was a reaction to hostile press coverage. The view at the highest reaches of the incoming administration is that the press is the enemy. "They are the opposition party," said the senior official. "I want 'em out of the building. We are taking back the press room." The incoming Trump administration is intent on neutering the White House press corps. If it happens it will be another step toward neutering our democracy.

***ROBERT REICH*, ONE OF THE NATION'S LEADING EXPERTS ON WORK AND THE ECONOMY, IS CHANCELLOR'S PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY AT THE GOLDMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY. HE HAS SERVED IN THREE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS, MOST RECENTLY AS SECRETARY OF LABOR UNDER PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON. HIS WIDELY-READ BLOG CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.ROBERTREICH.ORG.**

Source: RobertReich.org 1/16/17 <http://robertreich.org/>



US demands war debt from Cambodia

LINDSAY MURDOCH

Half a century after United States B-52 bombers dropped more than 500,000 tonnes of explosives on Cambodia's countryside Washington wants the country to repay a \$US500 million (\$662 million) war debt.

The demand has prompted expressions of indignation and outrage from Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh. Over 200 nights in 1973 alone, 257,456 tons of explosives fell in secret carpet-bombing sweeps – half as many as were dropped on Japan during the Second World War. The pilots flew at such great heights they were incapable of discriminating between a Cambodian village and their targets, North Vietnamese supply lines – nicknamed the "Ho Chi Minh Trail." The bombs were of such massive tonnage they blew out eardrums of anyone standing within a 1-kilometre radius. War correspondent James Pringle was two kilometres away from a B-52 strike near Cambodia's border. "It felt like the world was coming to an end," he recalls. According to one genocide researcher, up to 500,000 Cambodians were killed, many of them children.

The bombings drove hundreds of thousands of ordinary Cambodians into the arms of the Khmer Rouge, an ultra-Marxist organisation which seized power in 1975 and over the next four years presided over the deaths of more than almost two million people through starvation disease and execution.

The debt started out as a US\$274

million loan mostly for food supplies to the then US-backed Lon Nol government but has almost doubled over the years as Cambodia refused to enter into a repayment program. William Heidt, the US's ambassador in Phnom Penh, said Cambodia's failure to pay back the debt puts it in league with Sudan, Somalia and Zimbabwe. "To me, Cambodia does not look like a country that should be in arrears...buildings coming up all over the city, foreign investment coming in, government revenue is rapidly rising," Mr Heidt was quoted as saying by the /Cambodia Daily/. "I'm saying it is in Cambodia's interest not to look to the past, but to look at how to solve this because it's important to Cambodia's future," he said, adding that the US has never seriously considered cancelling the debt.

Cambodia's strongman prime minister Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge commander who defected to Vietnam, hit back, saying "The US created problems in my country and is demanding money from me."

"They dropped bombs on our heads and then ask us to repay. When we do not repay, they tell the IMF (International Monetary Fund) not to lend us money," he told an international conference in early March. "We should raise our voices to talk about the issue of the country that has invaded other (countries) and has killed children."

Mr Pringle, a former Reuters bureau chief in Ho Chi Minh City, said no-one could call him a supporter of Hun Sen,

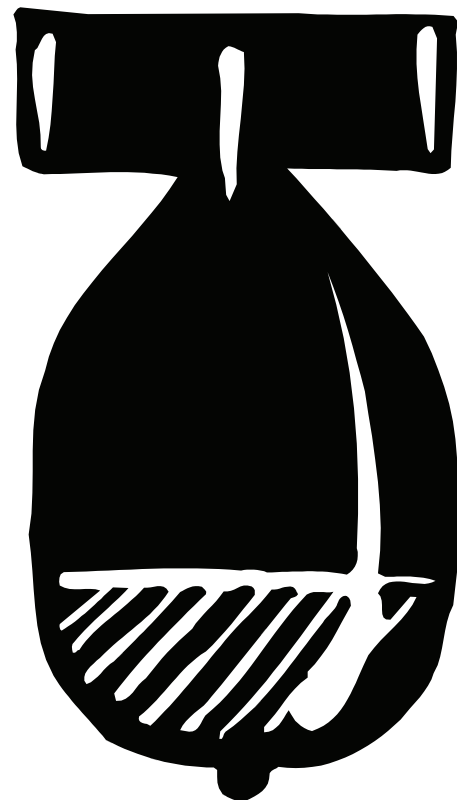
who has ruled Cambodia with an iron-fist for three decades. But he said on this matter he is "absolutely correct."

"Cambodia does not owe a brass farthing to the US for help in destroying its people, its wild animals, its rice fields and forest cover," he wrote in the /Cambodia Daily/. American Elizabeth Becker, one of the few correspondents who witnessed the Khmer Rouge's genocide, has also written that the US "owes Cambodia more in war debts that can be repaid in cash."

Mr Hun Sen pointed out that craters still dot the Cambodian countryside and villagers are still unearthing bombs, forcing mass evacuations until they can be deactivated. "There are a lot of grenades and bombs left. That's why so often Cambodian children are killed, because they don't know that they are unexploded ordnance," he said. "And who did it? It's America's bombs and grenades."

A diplomat posted in Phnom Penh between 1971 and 1974 told Fairfax Media the food the US supplied Cambodia came from excess food stocks. "I remember well that shipments of maize were made," he said. "Cambodians do not eat maize so it was fed to the animals." He pointed out that the US refused to normalise relations with Vietnam until it accepted to take on the US debt of the former southern regime.

Source: The Age 3/12/17 <http://www.theage.com.au>



President Trump's ban on Syrians goes into effect as Syrians mark tragic milestone

Six years since the descent into a brutal civil war, millions of Syrians are bearing the brunt of increasingly restrictive policies around the world and inside Syria to stop them from reaching safety. Those who have fled are seeing doors slammed in their faces as rich countries across the world enact hostile policies towards refugees. Since the end of January, the US, European Union, and United Kingdom have changed, suspended, or cancelled policies that could have offered a safe haven to tens of thousands of refugees.

Amongst the most vulnerable are the approximately 78,000 people trapped along Syria's sealed borders with Jordan, the hundreds of thousands more barred from entering Turkey, and over 640,000 people struggling to survive under military sieges in Syria. Andy Baker, who leads Oxfam's Syria Crisis Response said, "A new international consensus is emerging to stop Syrians fleeing violence, rather than stopping the violence that is causing them to flee. The result is more civilians in the firing line and living under crippling military siege, vulnerable refugees left with no resettlement options, and increasing attempts to force Syrians to return to conflict zones."

President Donald Trump's latest effort

to slam the door on refugees is yet another affront to Syrians as they mark six years since the start of the crisis. His second executive order, which was to go into effect on March 16, completely halts the refugee resettlement program for 120 days. This unprecedented action poses a direct threat to the lives of Syrians and other refugees who, given the multiple, time-sensitive medical and security screenings imposed by the process, effectively have only a two month window to travel before checks begin to expire. President Trump claims he took these measures to protect the US, but the facts simply do not bear out those claims. Stopping refugee resettlement will not make us any safer; instead it will cause massive harm to tens of thousands of people.

For those living in Syria, stopping the resettlement process could have real life and death consequences. Fatima, a Syrian living in besieged East Aleppo, said of life during the conflict: "We stay at home, hoping that we will be safe as the planes hover above us in the sky and the shelling doesn't stop. We usually wait till the bombing stops to take a chance and go out and find food. We can't find enough to eat."

In this critical time of need, not only

has the US closed its borders to Syrian refugees, but the Trump administration has proposed historic and devastating cuts to the foreign aid program. Foreign aid represents just 1% of the US budget, yet provides a critical life-line to tens of millions of women, men, and children around the world, including Syrians. It is an essential tool in the struggle to counter the violent extremism that President Trump says he wants to fight. Matthew Chastek, coordinator at the American Relief Coalition for Syria, an Oxfam partner said, "As a coalition of Syrian-American diaspora organizations providing shelter, food, and health services to displaced people in Syria and the neighboring countries, we remain frustrated by the international community's focus on the symptoms and not the causes of the crisis. Many Syrians we work with, who have been waiting for months and years to return home, are now feeling even further alienated by the increase in anti-refugee rhetoric in the US and around the world."

While the US has focused primarily on countering the very real threat from ISIS, there has not been appropriate attention to addressing the root causes of the crisis and finding a political solution for a lasting peace for Syria. Baker said, "The



international community must listen to all those affected by the crisis – including those forced to flee across borders and those within Syria, as well as the local humanitarian organizations that have helped them through this tragedy. Until there is a sustainable peace in Syria, all members of the international community have a duty to offer a safe haven to those fleeing the violence and repression."

Action: Tell President Trump: we cannot slam the door on vulnerable refugees in their hour of need.

Source: Oxfam release 3/13/17 <https://www.oxfamamerica.org>



We are a grassroots environmental organization promoting Outings, Education and Action.

We meet the 4th Monday of most months at 3700 Pacific Avenue across from UOP.

We offer interesting topics, speakers and discussions. The public is welcome! See us online at **Delta-Sierra Group**.

BEST REMODELING SERVICES

BY MASTER CRAFTSMAN DAVID BEST
Lic # 541562

Kitchen & Bathroom Remodels. Patio's built. Doors hung right...and every possible repair around your home. Free Estimates. Numerous satisfied costumers.

WE SAVE, REUSE, RESTORE (209) 368-2378

Publications

Technical Writing & Editing / Graphic Design / Web Sites

InfoWright

PO Box 162644
Sacramento 95816
916.444-5118
litman@pacbell.net



APR/MAY 2017 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.



FEB 2 - APR 2
86th annual Robert T. McKee Student Art Contest and Exhibition. The Haggin Museum is proud to feature the work of student artists from kindergarten through grade 12. All schools in San Joaquin County public, private, charter and homeschools receive invitations to submit their work. Every year we receive on average 1,000 pieces of art chosen by teachers as the best of their class. Sat-Sun 12-5 p.m., Wed-Fri 1:30-5 p.m., 1st & 3rd Thur, 1:30-9 p.m. Adult \$8, youth \$5, under 10 free with adult. Haggin Museum, Victory Park, 1201 N. Pershing Ave, Stockton, CA (209) 940-6300

MAR 18 - APR 2

Art Against Violence 2017: Our Anguish, Ours Resolve art exhibit, 10 am - 2 pm daily. Flowers and Plants Building at the San Joaquin County Fairgrounds, 1658 S. Airport Way, Stockton. (see p 18). Free admission.

SAT, MAR 25
Stockton Chorale, Master Chorale and Stockton Youth Choral features Rutter's Mass of the Children, celebrating Music in Our Schools Month. 4 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5100 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Adult \$15, student/senior \$10, children under 12 free. 954-5110.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Sierra Club Presents...

On March 27 — 7:00 to 8:30pm
First Unitarian Universalist Church
2737 Pacific Ave
Stockton, CA
Free and open to the public.

Headwinds- a story about wind energy. presented by Scott Larwood

Wind energy has become the fastest growing renewable energy source in response to global climate change and energy security. Slow, steady progress towards higher efficiency and lower cost has fueled incredible growth in the number and size of machines. Continued growth will allow for further cost reductions in the technology, expansion of the electric grid, and effective energy storage.

On April 24 — 7:00 to 8:30pm
First Unitarian Universalist Church
2737 Pacific Ave
Stockton, CA
Free and open to the public.

The Problem presented by Lee Miller

The root of nearly all of our current problems is overpopulation and this presentation will cover various aspects of the problem and offer some solutions to the problem if acted upon.



Art exhibit Our Anguish, Our Resolve - drawn out

"Our Anguish, Our Resolve" - Art Against Violence 2017 is now open in the Flowers and Plants Building at the San Joaquin County Fairgrounds, 1658 S. Airport Way, Stockton. The exhibit is free and open to the public from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays through April 2.

The theme of the exhibit arises from recent local and global events of violence and chaos. Artists created pieces exhibiting their visual expressions of, and reactions to, the pain caused by these acts, along with visual expressions of resolve and solutions. Works by local artists, including painters from the 1850 Collective, Art Expressions, and the Stockton Art League, as well as nationally-recognized photographers James Sobredo and Pete Pin, highlight the show.

Interactive art pieces include "Music as an Outlet," an upright piano painted by student artists at Weber Technical Institute, which exhibit visitors are encouraged to play. Others are a wall memorializing the recent January 21 worldwide Women's Marches, which are viewed by the artist as a response to the current chaos and threats of violence in our country, and "Dove Tree" created by Joy Neas for which visitors are asked to write their thoughts about the exhibit theme on pa-

per doves, and hang their doves on the tree.

Two free special events are included as part of the exhibit. A Spoken Word Event in the Flowers and Plants Building at the Fairgrounds on Saturday, March 18 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. spotlights the award-winning "With Our Words" slam poetry youth group with their mentor, Stockton Poet Laureate Tama Brisbane. Other local poets and spoken word artists will read and perform original works and those of others. An open mic portion is open for sign-ups at the event.

The exhibit concludes on Sunday, April 2 with an Afternoon of Music and Dance at the Fairgrounds from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. This family friendly event features more than a dozen local performing artists and groups, including individual singers, ethnic dance groups, a youth mariachi band, and an audience participation rhythm circle.

The exhibit is sponsored by Draw It Out, a program of Cleveland School Remembers, a Brady Campaign Chapter, and is partially funded by a grant from the Stockton Arts Commission. All events are free and open to the public, and volunteers are needed to assist at the exhibit and events. Email drawitout-stockton@gmail.com to volunteer.





APR/MAY 2017 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.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS

MON, MAR 27

Delta Sierra Club meeting: Headwinds - a story about wind energy. 7-8:30 pm. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442. (p 18)

TUES, MAR 28

Stockton City Council meeting, 5:30 pm. City hall, 2nd floor, Council Chamber, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton. 932-8827

THUR - SUN MAR 30 - APR 2

Pacific Opera Theatre presents Purcell's dido and Aeneas, with Intermezzi from The Fairy Queen and King Arthur. 8 pm. Sun 2 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Adult \$19, Senior \$10, Students free.

THUR, MAR 30

Take Five Jazz at the Brew featuring the Simon Rowe Latin Project with Carlos Caro on bongos. 7 pm..Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

SUN, APR 2

Afternoon of Music and Dance at the Fairgrounds - the conclusion of the Our Anguish, Our Resolve art exhibit, 3 - 5 pm. This family friendly event features more than a dozen local performing artists and groups, including individual singers, ethnic dance groups, a youth mariachi band, and an audience participation rhythm circle. Flowers and Plants Building at the San Joaquin County Fairgrounds, 1658 S. Airport Way, Stockton. (see p 18). Free admission.

THUR, APR 6

Peace & Justice Network board meeting, John Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 7 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Take Five Jazz at the Brew featuring the Joe Mazzaferro Group. 7 pm..Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

FRI, APR 7

Nearly New Sale, 10 am - 4 pm. Danner Hall, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Freshen up your wardrobe for Spring and support the San Joaquin Delta College Fashion Program. This fashion-filled event is fully stocked with: clothing, shoes, and acces-

sories for men, women, and children in a variety of sizes; prom and formal dresses; home decor, gifts, wall art, and home fragrances; face, body, and hair care products. Free, \$2 parking. 209-828-9231.

SAT, APR 8

Stockton Symphony presents Classics V Riteo of Spring featuring pianist Kevin Cole and works by Gershwin, Stravinsky and local composer Max Simoncic - Fanfare for a Grand Occasion (world premiere). 6 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$17 - 62. 954-5110

TUES, APR 11

University Concert Band, 7:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Directed by Eric Hammer. \$10 general, \$5 senior, students free.

Stockton City Council meeting,

5:30 pm. City hall, 2nd floor, Council Chamber, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton. 937-8827

WED, APR 12

Pacific Jazz Ensemble, 7:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Directed by Patrick Langham. \$10 general, \$5 senior, students free.

THURS, APR 13

Brubeck Institute presents bassist Essiet Essiet. 7 pm.. Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

Stockton Planning Commission meeting,

6 pm. City hall, 2nd floor, Council Chamber, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton. 937-8266

SAT, APR 15

Stockmarket is back & better than ever! We're expanding & exploring another area of our city: Caldwell Park. Here's what to expect on April 15th~100 Local Vendors, 5 Food Trucks, 3 Live Bands, DJ All Day, Artisan, Food Stalls, Kids Craft Stall, Game Zone, Lounge Area, Dog Friendly, FREE Admission. 10am to 4pm.

WED, APR 19

Pacific Percussion Ensemble, 7:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Directed by Jonathan Latta. Free.

THUR, APR 20

Take Five Jazz at the Brew featuring the Patrick Langham Quintet. 7 pm..Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

APR 20 - MAY 18

Delta Center for the Arts LH Horton Jr Gallery presents the 18th Annual Student Art Exhibition. Reception Apr 20, 5-7 pm. 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, APR 22

University Symphony Orchestra, 7:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Performing the Gaelic Symphony in E minor by Amy Beach and Bernstein's Symphonic Dances from West Side Story. \$10 general, \$5 senior, students free.

SUN, APR 23

Earth Day Festival San Joaquin County, 11 am - 4 pm, Victory Park, 1001 N Pershing Ave, Stockton. The theme, "Water is Life" will be the focus of the event. The Festival will have an array of informative, interactive booths, demos, displays and exhibits. Local area schools will be teaching how to better take care of our Earth with a variety of hands-on activities, and environmental organizations will provide education about the important issues and how we can make a difference. Over 100 vendors will border the oak trees and cross the grass field at Victory Park, including purveyors of some great food. Come join us for yoga in the park, local music and entertainment, delicious, healthy food and fun learning activities and exhibits like Passport Earth. It's a fun day for kids and families, and admission is free. 209-559-6279.

Ariel String Quartet Chamber Music Concert,

2:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. The Ariel continues to astonish with its performances of complete works by memory with energy, consummate technique and a remarkable esprit de corps. The American Record Guide described the Ariel Quartet as "a consummate ensemble gifted with utter musicality and remarkable interpretive power. \$25 general, students free. Earth Day Celebration, 11 am - 5 pm, Utica Park, Angels Camp. Come celebrate and learn about what we can do about the future of our earth - locally and globally. 209-559-6279

MON, APR 24

Delta Sierra Club meeting: The Problem presented by Lee Miller, 7-8:30 pm. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700

Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442. (p 18)

TUES, APR 25

Stockton City Council meeting, 5:30 pm. City hall, 2nd floor, Council Chamber, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton. 937-8827

THUR - SUN

APR 26 - MAY 13

Calendar Girls, Opening Wed 7:30, Thu 7:30 pm, Fri-Sat 7:30 pm, Sun 2:30 pm. Stockton Civic Theatre, 2312 Rosemarie Lane, Stockton. Winner! What's on Stage Award for Best New Comedy 2010 Based on the true story of WI members who posed nude for a calendar to raise money for the Leukemia Research Fund. Calendar Girls... achieves exactly what it set out to do. It makes you laugh, it makes you cry, and it leaves you feeling better about life than you did when you entered the theatre. \$15 - \$27. 473-2424. www.sctlivetheatre.com

THURS, APR 27

Take Five Jazz at the Brew featuring the Brian Kendrick Little Big Band. 7 pm..Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID. Stockton Planning Commission meeting, 6 pm. City hall, 2nd floor, Council Chamber, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton. 937-8266

FRI, APR 28

Pacific Choral Ensembles, 7:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 senior, students free.

SAT, APR 29

The Great Big Read, 11 am - 2 pm. Janet Leigh Plaza, 222 N El Dorado St, Stockton. Janet Leigh Plaza will be taken over with a wide-range of events and activities to promote not only reading, but writing and the performing arts all in a fun and playful environment. The event will be divided into zones, ranging from talk to sing and play to perform. Featuring: Children's book readings, live music, library sign up table, children's book swap, craft corner, local children performers and more. Free. 464-5246

THUR, MAY 4

Peace & Justice Network board meeting, John Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 7 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Take Five Jazz at the Brew featuring the Brubeck Institute

Jazz Quintet. 7 pm..Valley Brewing Company 157 W Adams Street Stockton. \$10 general, \$5 student w/ ID.

THUR - SUN

MAY 5 - 14

Delta Drama presents Avenue Q, Thu-Sat 7 pm, Sat-Sun 2 pm. Meet the colorful, quirky, and lovably odd characters of Avenue Q in this Tony® winning musical comedy. A cast of profane and eccentric puppets helps recent grad Princeton come to terms with life after college in this heartfelt and humorous grown-up take on Sesame Street. Recommended for ages 14 and up. Tille Lewis Theatre, SJDC, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$9 general, \$4 students/seniors. 954-5110

SAT, MAY 6

Stockton Symphony presents Pops IV: Steppin' Out with Ben Vereen. 6 pm On Broadway, Ben Vereen has starred in Wicked, Fosse, I'm Not Rappaport, Hair, Jesus Christ Superstar, Pippin (a Tony winner), Grind, Jelly's Last Jam, and A Christmas Carol. His performances are filled with song and dance, stories of his life, and a great deal of humor. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$17 - 62. 954-5110

SUN, MAY 7

Stockton Symphony presents Pops IV: Steppin' Out with Ben Vereen. 2:30 pm. (see May 6) Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$17 - 62. 954-5110

TUES, MAY 9

Stockton City Council meeting, 5:30 pm. City hall, 2nd floor, Council Chamber, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton. 937-8827

SJ Delta Chorale Finale

Concert: And All That Jazz. 7:30 pm. From blues to funk, this is our choral salute to the incredible influence of jazz on contemporary music Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5100 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Adult \$8, student/senior \$5, children under 12 free. 954-5110.

THURS, MAY 11

Delta College Jazz Band, 7:30 pm. Tillie Lewis Theater, SJ Delta College, 5100 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Adult \$8, student/senior \$5, children under 12 free. 954-5110. Stockton Planning Commission meeting, 6 pm. City hall, 2nd floor, Council Chamber, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton. 937-8266

TUES, MAY 16

Stockton Concert Band presents Star Wars and More No. 2 — The Music of John Williams. 7 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. \$8 adult; \$5 student/senior over 61. 209-954-5110

WED, MAY 17

Delta College Symphonic Band. 7 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. \$8 adult; \$5 student/senior over 61. 209-954-5110

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 THURSDAYS

Single Payer San Joaquin, 6:30 pm at the John Morearty Peace and Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton

SECOND SATURDAYS

Stockton Citizens' Climate Lobby, 9:30 am - noon at the John Morearty Peace and 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 about Sierra Nevada trees

In the Sierra Nevada especially, and throughout California, there has been a lot of talk lately about trees - between fire, drought, and bark beetle mortality, people are concerned about the health of Sierra Nevada forests. And they are right to be. The forests

of the Sierra look much different than they did 1,000, even 100 years ago. While there are many perspectives about the causes for these changes, there is no denying that ecosystems throughout the west have had their fire regimes altered

through fire suppression. Two reports are worth reading: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy, a state agency, has produced their second report on "The State of the Sierra Nevada's Forests From Bad to Worse" which compares current forest conditions

to historical data, details the benefits of healthy forest ecosystems that are being diminished, and proposes what steps could be taken next to alleviate the issue. There are some great details about carbon storage and emissions as well as so much more - visit our website and check it out.

Forests throughout the Sierra Nevada have had their fire regimes altered for centuries. Even though Smokey the Bear from two decades ago would plead "Only YOU can prevent forest fires," the USFS is shifting towards embracing fire and promoting more prescribed fire. Groups like Sierra Forest Legacy are championing the need for fire in the Sierra Nevada in a variety of ways. There is great information about California's drought and fire history, as well as some promising news about successful prescribed burns in areas of tree mortality in the southern Sierra. Our website has the link.

These two reports just touch the surface of the complex issue of forest health in Sierra Nevada forests today. Advances in research and technology improve our understanding of what a healthy forest should look like and what actions we can take to get there. For more than 25 years, CSERC has been working to improve forest health. These are just a few of the things we are doing now to improve forest health:



** Promoting science-based thinning to restore broad areas of conifer forest back to more open and park-like, with scattered trees, mixed with patches of denser stands, that represent historic conditions;*

** Engaging volunteers in stewardship projects that enhance meadow and riparian ecosystems, restoring areas damaged by illegal trails and sites with roads causing erosion and more;*

** Encouraging a greatly increased use of prescribed fire on public lands through multiple*

collaborative groups.

CSERC WILL CONTINUE TO TIRELESSLY ADVOCATE FOR BALANCED SOLUTIONS, WHICH IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT WHEN IT COMES TO THESE COMPLICATED AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES. WHILE THE FORESTS OF THE SIERRA NEVADA HAVE CHANGED, CSERC'S DESIRE TO PROTECT THEM WON'T CHANGE!

Source: Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center release 3/9/17 <http://www.cserc.org/news/>

Earth Day Celebration

This year's theme is **Protect**

Utica Park in Angels Camp

Booths,
Food by
Gourmet Road Hog
Speakers,
Free Stuff,

Music by
Clan Dyken
plus other
bands

April 23, 11-6

For more info. & booth space: fringe54@volcano.net or 209-293-4379

Free event

Sponsored By:
The Green Party of Calaveras County
& Blue Mountain Coalition For Youth & Families

STOCKTON MARCH FOR SCIENCE

WALK AROUND
VICTORY PARK
SATURDAY APRIL 22
9 - 11 AM

29TH EARTH DAY
FESTIVAL
SUNDAY APRIL 23
11 AM - 4 PM

livegreensanjoaquin.org
facebook.com/stocktonmarchforscience