

# The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

The Monthly Publication of  
**PSARA EDUCATION FUND**  
“Uniting Generations for a Secure Future”

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**PSARA at ML King Day  
Celebration**  
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## **PSARA Legislative Conference Charts Ambitious Course**

*By Mike Andrew*

**P**SARA has adopted an ambitious legislative agenda in spite of the fact that government in Olympia will continue to be divided between Democrats and Republicans in the coming session, our lobbyist, Pam Crone, explained to PSARA's November 29 Legislative Conference.

PSARA's 2017 legislative agenda is outlined on Page 7.

After presentations by Pam and State Representative Roger Goodman, PSARA members divided by legislative district to make plans for Senior Lobby Day on February 24.

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## **PSARA's Winter Membership Meeting: We Are Ready to Fight!**

*By Mike Andrew, photos by Garet Munger*

**T**he election of Donald Trump was a shock to many PSARA members, and it will make our work more difficult.

Nevertheless, we are not without resources, we're not without allies, and we're not without plans to fight for what we need and the will to do it.

That was the message of PSARA's December 15 membership meeting.

PSARA's Administrative Vice President, Bobbi Righi, who facilitated the meeting while PSARA President Robby Stern was in Cuba, said she appreciated that the 100-plus attendees showed such “a strong feeling of solidarity in such a worrisome time.”

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*Congresswoman-elect Pramila Jayapal  
addresses the meeting.*

## **Go Birding With PSARA**

**W**ant to go birdwatching? Join us as we take a field trip to the Billy Frank Jr. National Wildlife Refuge in the beautiful Nisqually Delta on Tuesday, January 24. (Rain date Friday, January 27.)

For details about the wildlife refuge, visit [https://www.fws.gov/refuge/billy\\_frank\\_jr\\_nisqually/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/billy_frank_jr_nisqually/)

Our leaders will be PSARA member Karen Richter and her friend, birding expert and naturalist Noelle Congdon.

Beginners are especially welcome as we look for all the wonderful sea ducks and other winter migrants who have finally arrived! The trail is handicapped accessible and is about three miles. Wear sturdy shoes.

We plan to carpool from Karen's house in West Seattle at 9:00 a.m., returning before dinner. Bring your lunch and a donation to PSARA. **Email Karen at [kerichter100@gmail.com](mailto:kerichter100@gmail.com) or call her at 296-679-3295 for more details.**

## **Presentation by the Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy February 4**

**P**SARA's Environmental Committee will host a slide show presentation and discussion of the recently completed policy that the Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy plans to take to the 2017 Washington State Legislature. Look for details in our Meetings and Events section on Page 12.

Stephanie Celt from the Blue Green Alliance, and representatives from the M.L. King County Labor Council Environmental Committee will present slide shows and lead a discussion about what Washington State can do to lower carbon while at the same time promoting more jobs in building infrastructure and clean energy.

The Alliance plans to take their policy to the Legislature this year to win support for a program of taxing carbon and then using the funds to provide significant investment in clean energy, healthy forests, and water infrastructure. Funds from the tax on carbon would be used to ensure that communities hardest hit by pollution and climate change receive a significant share of clean energy, forest, and water investments and to provide support to workers and communities during the transition to a clean energy economy.

The Alliance has been working on this policy for over three years and did not put forward an initiative to the public to be voted on in the last election because they did not want to compete with the Carbon WA. Initiative. They are now bringing their proposal to this legislative session and will go forward with an initiative if the legislature fails to act.

PSARA is a member of the Alliance and will work to get our representatives to make this policy into law. You may be wondering how this is different than Initiative 732 which was also a carbon tax. Come to the presentation to learn more.

## The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

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## Gene Lux Honored as He Retires from PSARA Executive Board

Veteran PSARA Executive Board member Gene Lux was honored at PSARA's December 15 membership meeting as he retired from our Board. Gene was a PSARA member even before there was a PSARA, when the organization was known as the Puget Sound Council of Senior Citizens. He also served in the Washington State Legislature, representing the 35th and 11th Legislative Districts.



Photo: Garet Munger

## Robby in Cuba



This is a picture that Cindy Domingo took of me riding an exercise bicycle at a wonderful and vibrant senior center that we visited in Habana.

The trip was very inspiring. It demonstrated what can be done by a people determined to build a better way to live. Cuba is very poor in financial resources very much because of the role of our country and the awful, inhumane embargo. But the Cuban people are very rich in spirit, determination, culture, and history. Their government is doing everything it can with its limited resources and the external threats it faces to make the lives of the people of Cuba better. It is a third world country with first world health care and education systems. We were in rural areas, small villages, and two cities (Santiago & Habana). There was poverty but there were no homeless, everyone has a roof over their heads. They are a magnificently resourceful people.

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# Overcoming the Darkness

By Bobby Righi

As this is being written, it is almost the winter solstice, the darkest day of the year for those of us in the Northern Hemisphere, and for us who live north of the 47th parallel and on the rainy coast, it is dark. So, maybe my low mood has to do with lack of sunlight. But then I read the papers (yes, on paper) and I realize there are reasons to feel depressed.

Trump's election has created a sense of doom. The election was a huge setback for those of us who support social and economic justice. For the climate it may mean we can't make the changes we need to make to avoid catastrophe. We are all depressed and angry, but let's face it, things have not been going well for most people for awhile. Growing homelessness, prisons bloated with men and women who have committed minor crimes, Black people facing extrajudicial killings daily, growing personal debt, economic inequality, and large numbers of deportations (just to make a short list) have all been happening for a while even without "The Donald." In this country the wealthiest 1% now own more than the bottom 90% combined.

The dominant story, the narrative that we are organized by, in US political culture for the last 50 years has been that a society based on free-market capitalism, unencumbered by too many regulations, will provide jobs as the rich get richer. This story goes on to say the system is inclusive; it is friendly to people from all races, genders, and sexual orientations. This story says that everyone is welcome, but the power of multinational capital must not be challenged in any serious way. Capital must be allowed to roam the world finding ways to gain more profit. As we know, though, social justice falls short if there is not economic justice, and for a long time now, things have not been getting better. The dominant story has gotten old.

Now we are faced with plain NO JUSTICE – social, economic, environmental, nothing. We will have a government that is openly and blatantly run by billionaires and for billionaires, with no pretense of supporting justice.

Bill McKibben argues in his article, "The Active Many Can Overcome The Ruthless Few" in the Dec. 19 issue of *The Nation*, that mass non-violent action was the greatest invention of the 20th century. People taking action in sufficient numbers make others question the status quo wisdom and rethink what is happening. This changes the zeitgeist – the dominant story. Examples are many and include the Occupy movement which caused millions to begin to think in terms of the 99%. Few were talking about this before the Occupy movement happened around the country. Think about the struggle for Civil Rights, and the mass actions for LGBT rights. The determination and peaceful mass action of Standing Rock changed the way we think about water – "Water is Life" not a market commodity to be bought and sold for profit.

We just held our semi-annual PSARA membership meeting and it was wonderful to see over 100 members attending! This large turnout was no doubt driven by the feeling of foreboding that came with the election of Trump and the need to be with others and talk together about how to survive the coming years. The four dynamic speakers laid out paths for moving forward: protecting and expanding Social Security, working to gain universal health care, protecting immigrants and ending homelessness, and protecting the environment. It will take all of us working together to create the change in the zeitgeist that will make achieving these things possible. Bill McKibben points out, "Once movements shift the zeitgeist, then legislative victory becomes the mopping-up phase; this is one Trump won't even attempt to turn back."



*Bobby Righi confers with Congresswoman-elect Pramila Jayapal at PSARA's Winter Membership Meeting on December 15.  
(Photo: Garet Munger)*

We will have to talk, put ourselves in uncomfortable situations, be willing to put our bodies in harm's way sometimes, and keep telling the truth about who benefits from oppression and who does not. We must reach out to people we think do not agree with us and find common ground. The idea that everyone who voted for Trump is a racist creep and we have nothing to talk about is just another way to divide us.

We are looking forward to the days beginning to lengthen after the solstice, but it takes a while for things to get brighter. PSARA members will be part of the brightening up of the country because we are staying organized and raising our voices.

*Bobby Righi is PSARA's Administrative Vice President and a member of PSARA's Environmental Committee.*

# Never Again; Eternal Vigilance

By Bob Shimabukuro

**T**he President has unlimited authority to issue an Executive Order to do anything. The President has to suspend due process. There has to be a determination that there is a military necessity or it is being done in the interests of national security ...So if you get the wrong President in, if the President decides that everybody born in Moscow, Idaho, should be put in a concentration camp, the President could do it.

What can we do? We sit back and keep our eyes and ears open and [we think about] Thomas Jefferson's expression, "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

---Justice Charles Z. Smith, 1997

The days after President-elect Trump's victory, I was angry and wondered, "What are our responsibilities now?" In the campaign for Japanese American redress, we had changed the debate about the mass incarceration from a Japanese American civil rights issue to an American issue. All are entitled to, at the very least, "due process." And partly because of that, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 (the Redress bill) passed Congress with bipartisan support. In return, all of us who had worked on redress thought we also made a commitment that we would be, as Justice Smith succinctly said, "eternally vigilant" against any kind of mass incarceration and "Never Again" would we let this happen.

President-Elect Trump and his Alt-Right, neo-Nazi followers have grabbed the words vigilant/vigilance and made them theirs. They will be "vigilantes" in monitoring Muslims, in building walls, kicking out residents, and generally terrorizing people they don't like.

## Terrorizing people

According to Southern Poverty Law Center, in the 10 days following Trump's election, 867 hate incidents were reported nationally. SPLC pointed out that because the reporting of hate

incidents is underreported, this total is probably vastly under the total number.

Despite the West Coast decisively beating Trump, the number of incidents seem rather high: Washington at 48, Oregon 33, and California 99.

One of the reported Washington incidents:

From a teacher:

*"Build a wall!" was chanted in our cafeteria Wednesday (after the election) at lunch.*

*"If you aren't born here, pack your bags!" was shouted in my own classroom.*

*"Get out, spic!" was said in our halls.*

Parents reported to me:

*Daughter is in the fourth grade. A few weeks before the election, her teacher tells the class, "If Trump wins, a lot of you will have to go back home." When Trump won, the 9-year-old was confused and afraid, even after her dad told her she wouldn't have to go because she was born in this country. She started crying because a lot of her friends would be deported.*

Yeah, terrorizing people, nine-year-old American citizens. Might be a long four-year ride. Maybe an impeachment, and firing, but the Vice-President-elect ain't so hot either.

• • •

*"When Trump supporters obliquely recall the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II and cite it as a possible precedent for monitoring Muslims in the United States, it's a profound misreading of history. But it also shows how much language matters."*

---Author Karen Ishizuka in Rewire, 2016

In the discussion about Trump's war on immigrants and refugees, mass incarceration, and deportation, Trump allies have suggested that we look at what happened to the Japanese Ameri-

cans in WWII as precedent in deciding policy about Muslims.

Even more shocking, editors of major American newspapers are carelessly printing stories about the mass incarceration as if it was a picnic in the park. Some try to justify the mass incarceration with the "everybody was inconvenienced by the war, JA's 'inconvenience' was being locked up." Ask the folks who were locked up, and you get a totally different answer.

When I came to the mainland U. S. from Hawaii, I didn't know much about the mass incarceration of JAs, but as I worked with the JA community in Portland I found out what they thought. I was helping them write personal testimony for the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians hearings in Seattle:

"What was the worst thing about being locked up?" I asked.

"Being locked up." Almost unanimously.

And later, while working on a Seattle exhibit (the Wing Luke Asian Museum's 1992 exhibition Executive Order 9066: 50 Years Before and 50 Years After) I learned how deep the psychological scars of the incarceration were. A Nisei woman who knew I had been working on it began to talk:

"You know, Bob, I'd like to see the exhibit, but I just can't. Everyone says it's a good exhibit, but it brought back the bad memories. I just don't want to go through that experience again."

About two weeks later, I got this report from her:

"Last Sunday was beautiful. I thought maybe this was a perfect time to go see the exhibit."

"And?" I asked, a bit wary.

"The beginning was okay. The immigration. The family and community things. But then the pictures, the newspaper articles, the stuff about 'Japs' started to get me. Humiliating. Again.

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# War and Peace on the Salish Sea

By Amy Davis

I remember the first time I saw a bear. A friend and I had spent the morning hiking up a trail near Sol Duc Hot Springs on the Olympic Peninsula. We had reached our destination—a mountain lake so silent we could almost hear the mist brush the water. It was August, huckleberry season. Not long after we started back, a huge mammal lumbered across the trail about 10 feet in front of us. It took us a moment to realize we had nearly collided with a black bear. We backed up a little and began rattling cans, but the bear hardly noticed. It was having a fine time feasting on berries and paid no attention to the two trembling humans beside the trail. It wasn't long before our terror transformed into wonder.

Anyone who has seen such things remembers them for a lifetime. The National Parks Conservation Association says, "The wild Olympic Peninsula is like nowhere else. Its special qualities have been recognized as a national park, wilderness area, International Biosphere Reserve, and World Heritage Site. Twenty-four species of plants and animals are found only here."

Olympic National Park is said to be the quietest place in the continental United States. But that silence has been broken—by the thunderous sound of Growler jets from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island flying overhead—and the noise may soon grow worse.

The U.S. Navy, with the help of the U.S. Forest Service, plans to use the Olympic National Forest as an electromagnetic warfare training range. On November 29, 2016, the Forest Service issued a draft decision notice announcing its plans to grant the Navy a five-year permit to conduct the training. The notice comes after sizable public outcry and a subsequent public comment period in 2014. The decision was based on the Navy's environmental impact assessment (which claims to have found no significant impacts on environment or public health) and over 3,000 public comments, almost all of which opposed the plan.



*An EA-18G Growler in flight*

The military training exercises work like this: "[T]he Navy is cleared to drive trucks out into the Olympic National Forest, armed with electromagnetic signaling technology. Then growler jets will take off from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island and fly overhead, searching for the signal trucks from the air. It's essentially a military training game of hide-and-go-seek. The trucks simulate cell towers and other communications behind enemy lines that the Navy wants to scramble." (KUOW EarthFix, November 30, 2016)

The Navy has conducted training exercises on the Olympic Peninsula since World War II, but problems escalated several years ago when it replaced its fleet of Prowler jets with the newer and much louder EA-18G Growlers.

In a December 2016 article in Seattle Met, reporter Madeline Ostrander wrote, "Nearly two years ago, San Juan County, whose jurisdiction is the San Juan Islands, launched a website to collect noise complaints [related to the Growlers]: It received more than 4,000 reports over the next 20 months. Some mention sleeplessness and ear pain. Others compare the noise to an earth-

quake. One comment claims the jets literally shook the earth... But peninsula locals also talk of extreme noise at places like Ruby Beach on the Olympic coastline, Lake Crescent, Sol Duc Hot Springs, Quinault, residential Port Townsend, and along Sequim Bay."

In a 2015 letter to the U.S. Navy regarding its environmental impact statement (EIS), Dr. Martin Pall, Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry and Basic Medical Sciences, Washington State University, and a world-renowned expert on health effects of microwave frequencies/electromagnetic radiation, said, "There are publications suggesting that migrating birds, amphibia and bees are apparently particularly sensitive to such EMF [electromagnetic field] exposures... [T]he Navy's claim that birds are not likely to be affected is probably bogus."

He goes on to say that low-intensity microwave frequency EMFs are known to produce a range of adverse effects in humans and other mammals including cancer, germ mutations, "massive damage to the nervous system," and

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## PSARA's Winter Membership Meeting: We Are Ready to Fight!

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The large turnout was driven, perhaps, by our members' feeling that we have to do *something* in the face of a new administration dominated by billionaires and determined to roll back the last century of social progress.

Newly-elected Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, who will succeed veteran progressive Jim McDermott in the Seventh District, will be a key ally for us in the other Washington, and she was our special guest speaker.

Washington D.C. will be challenging, Jayapal said, with the Presidency and both Houses of Congress controlled by Republicans. While she vowed to fight every attack on working people's standard of living, Congresswoman-elect Jayapal emphasized that grass roots organizing is key to getting what we need out of Congress.

Mary Nguyen, Co-Executive Director of PSARA's strategic partner, Washington CAN!, also stressed the need to organize in our communities.

We can no longer rely on single-issue coalitions that break up once we win something, she said. We need to bring people together in a durable coalition based on common needs, common values, and a common vision for the future.

David Loud, who represents PSARA on the Health Care is a Human Right coalition, spoke about the threats to the Affordable Care Act, Medicare, and Medicaid.

In my first time talking to PSARA's membership since coming aboard as organizer, I outlined PSARA's action plans.

We will take the lead in fighting to preserve and expand Social Security and pass it on to future generations. PSARA will also play a key supporting role in the fight to defend the gains we've made in securing health care coverage for everyone.

And we'll have to be ready to support our allies in the most at-risk communities when they face attacks from the new administration and its white supremacist supporters.



*PSARA members enjoy a delicious potluck feast as the meeting begins.*



*PSARA Executive Board member Aganita Varkentine makes a point at the meeting.*

In the coming year, we will flesh out all these plans as we discover exactly what the new administration has in store for us. Stay tuned.

At the meeting, our members elected new Executive Board members: Garry Owens, Karen Richter, and Bob Swanson (who is also stepping up to be Co-chair of our Education Committee).

We also took time to honor our retiring Executive Board member, Gene Lux, who is stepping down after many years of service to PSARA.

"Thank you to all the members of the board and other PSARA members who pitched in and helped with every aspect of our wonderful gathering," Bobby Righi said in closing. "This is a great organization!"

## PSARA Legislative Conference Charts Ambitious Course

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PSARA members who were not at the Legislative Conference, but who do want to participate in Senior Lobby Day, can get in touch with PSARA's Government Relations Committee by emailing [govrelations@psara.org](mailto:govrelations@psara.org) or phoning the PSARA office, 206-448-9646.

During this coming session, our representatives will be struggling to fund basic education as mandated by the State Supreme Court's McCleary decision, as well as restoring money to social programs cut in past sessions.

Our task will be to lobby for legislation that furthers the cause of retirement security for all generations and contributes towards a just, humane, and environmentally sustainable future.



## 2017 Legislative Agenda

PSARA opposes cuts to programs that provide vital services to seniors, children and low and moderate income families. We support efforts to pass progressive revenue measures that achieve the goal of fully funding education including McCleary while protecting the essential social service programs.

1. **Budget:** PSARA supports a more progressive revenue system and legislation to increase transparency and accountability in the budget process including, but not limited to:

- Requiring the legislature to adopt a tax expenditure budget as part of the state biennial budget process.
- The elimination of tax exemptions that do not have a demonstrated public benefit.

2. **Housing:** PSARA supports allocation of significant resources to provide a much larger stock of low income housing for the growing population of seniors who will, in great part or solely, rely on Social Security as their source of income, as well as for the many Washington residents who are unable to afford adequate housing because of the preponderance of low wage jobs and the erosion of defined benefit pensions.

- PSARA supports the allocation of \$200 million for the Washington State Housing Trust Fund.

3. **Health Care:** PSARA believes that comprehensive affordable health care is a fundamental human right. In the 2017 Washington State Legislative session, we will support all legislation that furthers the goal of universal health care coverage in Washington.

- PSARA will support efforts to pass Paid Family Leave legislation to assist families faced with challenges brought on by medical conditions or the birth/adoption of a child.

4. **Retirement Security:** PSARA supports state-based efforts to enhance retirement security including a state-based social insurance program to help defray the costs of long term care.

5. **Climate Justice:** PSARA supports legislation advanced by the Alliance for Jobs & Clean Energy that would create a carbon tax and use the revenue to promote renewable energy and provide assistance to workers impacted by the reduction in the use of fossil fuels and to the communities in Washington most hard hit by the impacts of climate change and global warming.

(PSARA will support legislation to create a state-based Social Security supplement if the legislation is introduced. Additionally, we may ask our lobbyist to sign PSARA's name to favor legislation consistent with PSARA's goals or oppose legislation that is inconsistent with PSARA's goals.)

# ***Saving Capitalism: For the Many, Not the Few*, by Robert Reich**

*A Book Review by Michael Righi*

Robert Reich, an economist who was Bill Clinton's Secretary of Labor, has been writing about inequality for a while now. His *The Work of Nations* came out in the early 1990's, blaming inequality on technological change that was creating a class of highly educated techies whose income was pulling away from the rest of us. The solution? Education for the rest of us.

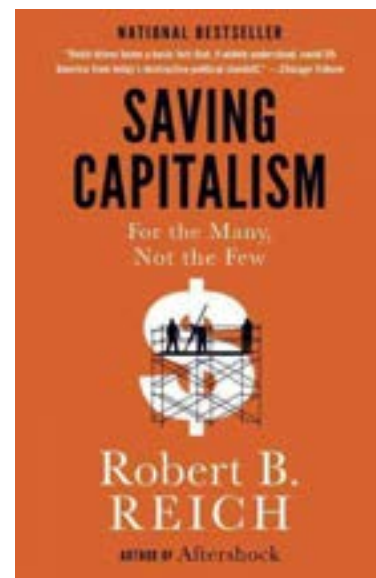
Reich seems to realize now, however, in his new book, that maybe he was wrong. Even college-educated workers' wages are falling or stagnant, and many educated young people are struggling in the "gig economy." It is the 1% who have pulled away. Reich is an excellent guide in this short, well-written (yes, he is an economist) guide to our new oligarchy.

When speaking publically after the 2008 financial crisis, Reich says it "whittled him down a bit" (he stands 5'2"). Well, yes, that has been happening to most of us since the 1970's, and he lays out in lively detail the trends in income, wealth, economic and political power.

Reich's concern is to debunk the idea that there is such a thing as a "free market." That is just a smoke screen to convince us to go along with capitalism, and blame ourselves (we get what we are "worth") when things do not go so well.

Reich seems to think if we got over this idea that markets are "free," we might be able to see that really the rules are only building a richer and wealthier oligarchy, and then we will get together and impose a different set of rules. Of course he is right about the market not being "free," but I am not sure that is the main idea holding the 99% back. What about racism and ethnocentrism and blaming immigrants and all the other divisions elite spokespeople try to get us to buy into?

Reich argues that escalating income inequality is a threat to capitalism – who is going to be buying all that gets produced? True, and it is also a threat to democracy. He outlines how the wealthy fashion compensation and financial systems that only benefit themselves and increase their political



ing rights and campaign finance laws have been eviscerated, and corporations are now persons. Jobs have been outsourced and trade agreements have been used to attack workers and public policy. Deregulation has swept through Wall Street. None of this just "happened."

Trump and his Cabinet of Deplorables seem to be promising an even more brutal form of capitalism for the vast majority. Reich comes up with a rather tepid set of reforms of "the rules," and a concluding assertion that we "must understand what is happening and where our interests lie and then join together" I am not sure this will cut it in the Trump era.

And, a final comment. How can a book about "saving capitalism" ignore climate change? Isn't pollution also baked into how a profit-oriented market system operates? Market "rules" will have to be designed so that corporations (polluters) pay for the costs they impose on all of us. An oligarchy willing to weaken democracy is one thing, but destroy the climate system? We've got some work to do.

*Michael Righi is a PSARA member and a retired economics professor.*

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## **How can a book about "saving capitalism" ignore climate change?**

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The main thrust of what he wants us to realize is that the economy is created by rules, rules that are set up by the political system, and in accordance with relative political power. And those rules have changed over the past few decades. Monopolies have grown much more powerful (think Monsanto, Wall Street, insurance companies, Amazon, hospitals, and on and on). Patent rules have been strengthened for drug and other firms. Bankruptcy rules allow giant corporations to cut costs (workers) and reduce their pensions, and now governments bail out banks and penalize homeowners and students.

power to get more and more and more. Is this even possible? Can the rich become even richer through, for example, privatizing and profiting from schools, from Medicare and Social Security, from even more prisons and detention centers? No doubt they will try, in addition to their time-tested strategies such as driving down wages and their taxes.

What Reich does remind us about (although I wish he would say it more directly and strongly) is that since the 1970's our new elites have openly worked to destroy democracy. Unions, once a strong "countervailing power" to elite rule, have been weakened. Vot-



# Losing the Presidency in Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin: What Happened?

By Mark M. McDermott

In 2008, Obama was elected along with large Democratic majorities in Congress. Eight years later we have Trump and Republican control of Congress. The Democrats have lost 935 state legislative seats since 2008. Twenty-six states are under complete control of the Republicans. It is hard putting a happy face on this disaster.

Understanding this multi-year catastrophe is critical to our movements organizing an effective long-term strategy anchored in a positive vision to reclaim our country and build a more just, equitable, and sustainable future. We must be self-critical and not merely blame the Kochs, Trump, and the Republicans. There are many factors for this disaster and I want to focus on three critical factors centered on the Democratic Party:

1. The enormous loss of support for Democrats among households making less than \$50,000 per year;

2. Major loss of support among union members particularly in the "Rust Belt;" and

3. The long-term support of both Clintons and Obama for free trade and largely ignoring its impacts and the long-term crisis of deindustrialization in the Rust Belt.

Over the past four years, I have presented my economic justice and labor education workshop 16 times in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and upstate New York as well as campaigning in western Pennsylvania for 16 days before the election. I have visited many cities, large, medium, and small, that have been devastated by plant closures, massive permanent job losses, and jobs moving to foreign countries. The intergenerational character of many tight-knit communities has been severely weakened as their younger people leave, and permanent hard times remain in many of these hard-hit communities.

The white working class was hit hard, but the black working class was hit even harder. If you doubt this, visit the many devastated black neighborhoods in Detroit, Flint, Cleveland, Toledo, and Pittsburgh. There is a deep anger about this long-term decline, and it erupted last month.

On November 8th, the American people were stunned by the election results. Questions of what happened abound. A Reuters exit poll offers important insights into voters' attitudes:

- 75% agree "America needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful."

- 72% agree: "The American economy is rigged to the advantage of the rich and powerful."

- 68% agree: "Traditional parties and politicians don't care about people like me."

This election is extraordinary as 60% of voters in exit polls disapproved of Trump and 55% disapproved of Clinton. What a choice! Eighteen percent of voters disapproved of both. These voters then gave Trump a 17% margin. Tens of millions were holding their noses when voting.

Clinton won the popular vote by 2.8 million. However, she lost by 3.1 million if California and New York are excluded. We don't have a national election, we have 50 state elections. A one-vote margin in a state is as good as a one million vote margin in deciding the Electoral College vote. Narrow victories in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin elected Donald Trump.

I offer a partial explanation of what happened. In 2008, Barack Obama crushed John McCain in Michigan (16% margin), Wisconsin (14%), and Pennsylvania (10%). Total margin: 1.7 million in these states. In 2012, he won all three again but by much smaller margins. Total Obama margin: 1.07 million. Democratic presidential candidates had won Wisconsin every election since 1988 and Michigan and Pennsylvania since 1992.

In 2016, Trump won all three states by 77,000 votes, a 1.8 million vote swing in 8 years. What accounts for this dramatic shift? It started long before alleged Russian hacking, FBI Director James Comey's intervention, Clinton's poor campaign strategy, aggressive voter suppression, and Trump's vile bigotry.

In 1993, Bill Clinton with Hillary at his side and Congressional Democrats enacted the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) over the strong opposition of organized labor. NAFTA's



hollow promises helped devastate these states with massive job losses. In the 2008 election, Obama promised to re-negotiate NAFTA. Once elected, Obama's promise disappeared. He then began pushing the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), another free trade deal, all through the 2016 election. Hillary was in favor of NAFTA and the TPP, for many years until she finally decided to oppose the TPP. In sharp contrast, Trump hammered NAFTA, the TPP and free trade across these key hard-hit states for many months.

Working class people were listening and noticed who would come to their communities and talk about these issues. Clinton never campaigned in Wisconsin and barely campaigned in Michigan after losing their primaries, and was almost completely absent in most of Pennsylvania. Meanwhile Trump toured these states. For decades, struggling working class families and communities in these states have longed for a national champion to fight hard on this issue and related job losses. A racist, sexist Republican demagogue emerged as their champion. This was a recipe for disaster.

In 2008 and 2012, Obama won voters nationally in households earning less than \$50,000 per year 60-38%. In 2016, Clinton won 53-40%. If she had won 60-38%, she would pick up an additional 3.2 million votes. Among these households in Pennsylvania, Obama won by 36% in 2012, Clinton by 12%. In Wisconsin, Obama by 25%, Clinton 2%. In Michigan, Obama by 26%; Clinton 11%. These dramatic shifts doomed Clinton.

*Continued on Page 11*

# War and Peace on the Salish Sea

*Continued from Page 5*

cardiac effects including tachycardia and potentially fatal arrhythmias.

"In this entire EIS, the Navy has produced not a single study of biological impacts of the EMFs it plans to unleash on the people, animals, and plants of the Olympic peninsula." (Accessed at WCCA, <http://westcoastactionalliance.org>)

The citizens group West Coast Action Alliance (WCAA) says the Peninsula is home to hundreds of thousands of people, including eight tribal nations. They also describe potential effects of the Growler operations on air pollution and global warming:

"...up to 153 of the loudest jets on the planet, capable of 150 decibels [hearing loss begins at 85 decibels], burning 1304 gallons per hour and producing more carbon dioxide in one hour of flying than the average Washington citizen produces in a year or a car produces in 29,000 miles of driving—flying right over Washington's spectacular and famously quiet Olympic Peninsula." (WCAA)

The new permits will allow the Growlers to fly over the Peninsula, including parts of the National Park, for 260 days per year, up to 16 hours per day. Some of the planes will fly in trios, further amplifying the sound. The Navy plans to increase its Growler fleet to 153 planes. Though its fleet has increased, the Navy says flights over the Peninsula will not increase more than 10 percent. There is a 45-day objection period to the draft decision notice (ending January 13) before the final decision is made, but the Forest Service will only consider objections from those who initially submitted comments.

## Trouble on Whidbey Island

If Growler noise has become a hazard to people and wildlife on the Peninsula, the problem is compounded on Whidbey Island, where flights are more fre-

quent and planes fly at lower altitudes. The Growlers take off from Ault Field in Oak Harbor and fly to an outlying landing field (OLF) in Coupeville. The flights train pilots to perform take-offs and landings on a (simulated) aircraft carrier. Since the Growlers arrived, flights have increased to over 6,200 per year, but the number may grow exponentially. Many residents of Coupeville have felt under siege.

Permanent hearing loss occurs with repeated or prolonged exposure to sounds of 85 decibels (db) or higher. The louder the sound, the shorter the exposure time it takes for hearing loss to occur. According to the community group Citizens of Ebey's Reserve (COER), a group that is pro-Navy but against the Navy using the OLF at Coupeville to practice touch-and-go flights, one Coupeville family measured Growler noise at 100 db inside their home and 130 db on their front porch. For comparison, the sound of a lawnmower is 85 db. High sound levels can also cause heart disease, hypertension, and insomnia.

In response to a lawsuit filed by COER, the Navy conducted an environmental impact assessment. It recently released its draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) and is now accepting public comments/objections to the plan. In response to the DEIS, COER says that the Navy's "preferred" alternative would

"Increase low-level training operations at its Outlying Field (OLF) near Coupeville from 6,250 operations a year to 35,100—almost a 600% increase.

"Increase noise footprints, and expose up to 3,446 children to greater than 65 dB DNL— which research shows to cause decreases in learning, reading, comprehension, cognitive abilities with a host of other adverse health and behavioral impacts. The noise can interrupt classroom learning up to 45 times per hour. (Navy DEIS.)" (<http://citizensofebeysreserve.com>)

COER also says that Growler noise has caused a loss of \$1,000 per day at Deception Pass State Park and that the popular National Park, Ebey's Reserve, is now the loudest National Park in the United States. Though increased Navy operations mean more jobs and increased revenue for the area, property values in parts of Coupeville have plummeted, tourism has been negatively impacted, and people have experienced devastating health impacts. Residents are asking that the Navy move these disruptive operations to a more appropriate, unpopulated site.

Further, on the day this article was submitted to the *Advocate*, the Navy notified the first two of what may be many residents of Coupeville living near the OLF that their drinking water wells have been contaminated with perfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs), toxic fire-extinguishing chemicals used by the Navy, at levels far above the EPA's warning threshold. The Navy has begun delivering bottled water to these homes and is testing other wells in the area. Independent testing found that one of Coupeville's two main water supply wells is also contaminated at concerning levels. (COER)

*To comment on the Navy's DEIS and to help restore health and well being to Coupeville, please visit the COER website, <http://citizensofebeysreserve.com>. **The deadline to respond to the DEIS is January 25, 2016.***

*To oppose the Navy's plans to expand operations over the Olympic Peninsula and to keep the area safe for its native growlers, the four-legged kind, please visit <http://westcoastactionalliance.org/about-us>.*

*Amy Davis is a PSARA member and one of the Advocate's dedicated team of proofreaders.*

## Never Again; Eternal Vigilance

Continued from Page 4

My legs were shaking. I continued and turned the corner, and there was the barrack scene you did. It was too much. I couldn't go on. I just broke down." Tears came to her eyes as she completed her report on the exhibition.

• • •

*"One day we were free citizens, residents of communities, law abiding, protective of our families, and proud. The next day we were inmates of cramped, crowded American style concentration camps, under armed guards, fed like prisoners in mess hall lines, deprived of privacy and dignity, and shorn of all our rights. In the Portland Exposition Center there were 3,600 people under one roof. The horses' stalls were made into living quarters, and in the exhibition area plywood sheets made up the four walls of family units."*

---Emi Somekawa, Sept 10, 1981, Seattle CWRIC Hearings

2017 is the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9006. When you go to the Puyallup Fairgrounds and see the animal stalls, think about living there.

As for our commitment Never Again to let mass incarceration happen?

Catch a deep, deep breath, then keep moving

Organize. With Passion.

"Writing, Redress and Social Justice: 75 years after Executive Order 9066" will feature conversations with (Dad) Bob and (Daughter) Mira Shimabukuro. Mira Shimabukuro is the author of *Relocating Authority: Japanese Americans Writing to Redress Mass Incarceration*. Bob Shimabukuro is Associate Editor of the *Retiree Advocate* and the author of *Born in Seattle: The Campaign for Japanese American Redress*.

Sunday, February 12, 2017, at 3:00 p.m. at Elliott Bay Book Company (1521 10th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98122).

## Losing the Presidency in Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin: What Happened?

Continued from Page 9

A disastrous shift in voters in union households also doomed Clinton. In 2008, voters in union households gave Obama a 20-point victory; and in 2012 18 points. Clinton only won by 9 points in 2016. If Clinton won by 18 points, she'd pick up 1.3 million votes. Consider the following: Obama won union households in Michigan in 2012 by 33%; Clinton by 13% in 2016. In Ohio, Obama won by 23% in 2012; Clinton lost by 9%.

There can be no doubt that these dramatic shifts nationally among low-wage working class voters and voters in union households doomed Clinton and many Democratic congressional candidates. These shifts were extraordinarily large in these three battleground states. Given the extremely narrow margins of defeats in these three states, there are other factors that can potentially explain those defeats, but I don't believe they explain these larger shifts among lower wage workers and their families and union households away from the Democrats.

Voter suppression undoubtedly played a role in the election results. There were significant declines in victory margins between 2012 Obama and 2016 Clinton in heavily black cities and counties like Wayne County (Detroit), Michigan; Milwaukee; and Philadelphia. These declines were critical to Clinton's defeat. How much is voter suppression and how much was lack of enthusiasm for Clinton? I don't know, but I will keep looking for clearer answers. If you have solid evidence about this issue, please send it my way.

Trump's appeals to racism, sexism, anti-immigrant bashing and much more played a role in this election. Clearly, they are morally repugnant, damaging to our country and harmful, to so many of our sisters and brothers in our diverse communities. As I stated earlier, I offer a partial explanation to what happened. Some of the data puzzles me and keeps me searching for answers. Consider the following: Despite all the racist immigrant bashing, the exit polls show that the percentage of people in the U.S. who support a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants rose from 65% in 2012 to 70% in 2016. I am delighted by this growing support but I can't explain it.

In closing, it is critical to understand this catastrophic defeat and learn from it. We will all pay a price in the years ahead. As we move into the new year, I say, "Don't agonize, organize," and "Fight forward and not just fight back." This is our country. We have a great opportunity in the next four years. The American people want change. We must listen more carefully to them and offer a clear vision of a positive future as we fight forward. It is critical for us to reach across our great divides: Race, gender, sexual orientation, union vs. non-union, urban vs. rural, native born and foreign born, age, class, and regions of our states and country. We must listen to and learn from each other, find our common ground and never, ever give up the fight for a better country and world. Our children and grandchildren and those we love are counting on us.

### To Renew or Donate

PSARA Education Fund  
2800 1st Avenue, Room 262, Seattle WA 98121  
Donations are tax deductible

- Basic contribution: \$20
- Limited income/living lightly: \$15 or whatever you can afford
- Supporting: \$50  New contributor
- Sponsoring: \$100 or more  Renewing contributor

Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

# Meetings and Events

**West Seattle Hot Topics for Seniors & Senior Wannabes:** Noon – 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, January 4, Southwest Library, 9010 35th Ave SW, Seattle. Maria Langlais, Strategic Advisor in Aging and Disability Services for the city of Seattle, will lead a discussion on making Seattle a livable city for seniors. Brown bag lunch.

**PSARA Environmental Committee:** 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Thursday, January 5, WA State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S., Seattle. All welcome.

**PSARA Government Relations Committee:** 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., Thursday, January 5, Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave., Room 226.

**PSARA Education Committee:** 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., Tuesday, January 10, PSARA office, 2800 1st Ave., Rm. 234, Seattle. All welcome as we discuss our work to expand outreach with the PSARA workshop, “Making Retirement Security Real for All Generations”.

**Green Lake Discussion Group:** Noon - 1:30 p.m., Thursday, January 12, Green Lake Branch, Seattle Public Library, 7364 E. Green Lake Dr. N., Seattle. Brown bag lunch. Topic: Standing up against Hate: What can we do now? Contact Susan at [sjlevy.01@gmail.com](mailto:sjlevy.01@gmail.com)

**PSARA Discussion of Vision for Black Lives:** 1:30 p.m. – 4 p.m., Saturday, January 14, WA State Labor Council office, 321 16 Ave. S., Seattle. We will view “13th”, A documentary by Ava DuVernay and then discuss the “Platform” a short introduction to the overall program of a Vision for Black Lives. <https://policy.m4bl.org/>

**ML King Day Celebration: Theme: “Stop the Hate: Come Together.”** 9:30 a.m. - 10:50 a.m. workshops. 11 a.m. - Rally in Gymnasium. 12:30pm – march to the Federal Building in downtown Seattle. Monday, January 16, Garfield High School, 400 23rd Ave., Seattle. PSARA will present a workshop “Making Retirement Security

Real for Everyone” and also participate in the march. Look for the PSARA banner.

**PSARA Diversity Committee:** 11 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Thursday, January 19, Seattle office Washington State Labor Council, 321 16 Ave. S., Seattle. All are welcome.

**PSARA Executive Board Meeting:** 12:30 p.m. - 3 p.m., Thursday, January 19, Seattle office Washington State Labor Council, 321 16 Ave. S., Seattle. All are welcome.

**PSARA Workshop on Retirement Security:** 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m, Tuesday, January 24, Port Townsend Community Center, 620 Tyler St., Port Townsend, WA. Mark McDermott will speak on behalf of PSARA.

**PSARA Environmental Committee Forum:** 1:30 – 3 p.m., Saturday, February 4, WA State Labor Council office, 321 16 Ave. S., Seattle. Discussion of the climate action policy proposed by the Alliance for Jobs & Clean Energy. See notice on Page 1.

