

Sing Out on Labor Day

By Karen Richter

Do you want something uplifting to do on Labor Day? Join Lou Truskoff and PSARA members for a spirited Labor Day sing-along.

Monday, September 7, 3:00 p.m.

Sing Out to Honor Labor and the Labor Movement

There won't be large Labor Day picnics or mass actions that put our members at risk. But we will have a community-building virtual gathering on Zoom. We honor working people and the Labor Movement every day of the year. We do everything we can to support the struggle of working people against this greedy economic system.

On Labor Day we remember those who came before us and those who will continue the struggle in the future. Lift your voice and sing.

This event is sponsored by PSARA's Fundraising Committee. There will be a soft ask for contributions if you are so moved, but we are far more interested in holding an event that brings our community together.

Be on the lookout for PSARA emails that will provide the link to our Labor Day sing-along.

If we don't have your email, send it to us at organizer@psara.org

Karen Richter is PSARA's Membership VP and Chair of our Fundraising Committee.

Our own Lou Truskoff will lead us in song this Labor Day. Won't you join us? Zoom links will be emailed soon. Look for our email.



We Want to Hear From Our PSARA Family

By Karen Richter

It's been six months since the virus hit. We are inviting you to share some of your stories during this difficult time. Send us a few paragraphs about your COVID experiences. You can send them to membershipvp@psara.org and we will share some of them in future editions of *The Advocate*.

Three months ago, some of our PSARA Board members volunteered to call our members to check in and see how you were doing and how you were dealing with the COVID virus. Board members reported that many members were generally doing fairly well, taking care to stay at home as much as possible, going out for exercise, grocery shopping, and the pharmacy.

Members expressed appreciation for the calls and the opportunity to talk. Others said they are essential workers and had to work and commute every day. Some work from home and have to also take care of their kids. Not an easy undertaking. Some were frustrated that they could not be with loved ones because of travel restrictions. But overall members were really trying to stay in good spirits.

We are about to hit the half-year point of the pandemic in Washington. We are sure some of you have stories to tell that would interest other members and perhaps reduce the sense of isolation. Let us hear from you.

The Retiree ADVOCATE

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PSARA Is Listening

By Susan Levy

On Friday, June 25, PSARA's Government Relations Committee held a virtual coffee hour. As preparation for PSARA's 2021 Legislative Agenda, we wanted to know how the pandemic was affecting our members, seniors in general, and especially those seniors living in senior housing communities and assisted living facilities.

We learned a lot. We learned that it is difficult to get into senior housing, especially if you have limited income and/or environmental and/or chemical sensitivities. We learned that "senior housing" meant different things to different people. We learned there were federal, state, county, and city regulations regarding senior housing, and residents didn't know which ones applied to them. We learned that some communities invited – and listened to – resident input. Others did not. We learned a lot about what happened to different seniors in different situations during this pandemic.

After listening, the GRC discussed what we could propose and advocate for during the upcoming legislative session. A couple of ideas emerged. One was asking the state to create a Bill of Rights for Seniors in senior living facilities that had to be posted in every facility. Another was to create a set of "Best Practices" for senior living facilities. This, too, would be posted in every facility. While we don't yet know every detail of a Bill of Rights or Best Practices document, the idea of asking the legislature to start working on such a project seemed promising.

If you have any suggestions or information to share, please email Mike Andrew at organizer@psara.org

Save the Date!

PSARA Webinar: What can we expect after the election?

Tuesday, October 6

Noon

Confirmed speakers: Rep. Pramila Jayapal; Alex Lawson, Executive Director of Social Security Works. Also invited: April Sims, Secretary-Treasurer of Washington State Labor Council.

Zoom links will be emailed soon. If we don't have your email address, send it to organizer@psara.org and we'll get you on the list.

From Twitter:

"I too would like to be so wealthy that my only objections to the president are aesthetic..."

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: Excerpts From Her Response to Ted Yoho

About two days ago I was walking up the steps of the Capitol when Representative Yoho suddenly turned a corner...and accosted me on the steps right here in front of our nation's Capitol.

I was minding my own business, walking up the steps, and Representative Yoho put his finger in my face, he called me disgusting, he called me crazy, he called me out of my mind. And he called me dangerous...

I took a few steps ahead and I walked inside and cast my vote.

Because my constituents send me here each and every day to fight for them. And to make sure that they are able to keep a roof over their head. That they are able to feed their families. And that they are able to carry their lives with dignity.

I walked back out and there were reporters in the front of the Capitol, and in front of reporters, Rep. Yoho called me, and I quote, a f----- b-----...

And I want to be clear that Rep. Yoho's comments were not deeply hurtful or piercing to me. Because I have worked a working-class job. I have waited tables in restaurants. I have ridden the subway. I have walked the streets in New York City. And this kind of language is not new. I have encountered words uttered by Mr. Yoho and men uttering the same words as Mr. Yoho while I was being harassed in restaurants. I have tossed men out of bars that have used language like Mr. Yoho's, and I have encountered this type of harassment riding the subway in New York City. This is not new. And that is the problem.

Mr. Yoho was not alone. He was walking shoulder to shoulder with Representative Roger Williams. And that's when we start to see that this issue is not about one incident. It is cultural. It is a culture of impunity, of acceptance of violence and violent language against women, an entire structure of power that supports that...



Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

The President of the United States last year told me to 'go home' to another country with the implication that I don't even belong in America. The governor of Florida, Governor DeSantis, before I was sworn in, called me a 'whatever that is.' Dehumanizing language is not new. And what we are seeing is that incidents like these are happening in a pattern. This is a pattern of an attitude towards women and the dehumanization of others.

So, while I was not deeply hurt or offended by little comments that are made, when I was reflecting on this, I honestly thought I was going to pack it up and go home. It's just another day, right?

But then yesterday, Rep. Yoho decided to come to the floor of the House of Representatives and make excuses for his behavior. And that I could not let go. I could not allow my nieces, I could not allow the little girls that I go home to, I could not allow victims of verbal abuse and, worse, to see that — to see that excuse and to see our Congress accept it as legitimate and accept it as an

apology and to accept silence as a form of acceptance, I could not allow that to stand. Which is why I'm rising today to raise this point of personal privilege.

And I do not need representative Yoho to apologize to me... And I will not stay up late at night waiting for an apology from a man who has no remorse over calling women and using abusive language towards women. But what I do have issue with is using women, wives, and daughters as shields and excuses for poor behavior.

Mr. Yoho mentioned that he has a wife and two daughters... I am someone's daughter too... I am here because I have to show my parents that I am their daughter and that they did not raise me to accept abuse from men...

He -- in using that language, in front of the press, he gave permission to use that language against his wife, his daughters, women in his community, and I am here to stand up to say that is not acceptable.

I do not care what your views are. It does not matter how much I disagree or how much it incenses me or how much I feel that people are dehumanizing others.

I will not do that myself. I will not allow people to change and create hatred in our hearts...

Lastly, what I want to express to Mr. Yoho is gratitude. I want to thank him for showing the world that you can be a powerful man and accost women. You can have daughters and accost women without remorse. You can be married and accost women. You can take photos and project an image to the world of being a family man and accost women without remorse and with a sense of impunity. It happens every day in this country. It happened here on the steps of our nation's Capitol. It happens when individuals who hold the highest office in this land admit, admit to hurting women, and using this language against all of us.

Who Is Behind “America's Frontline Doctors”

By Mike Andrew

A dozen doctors stood in front of the US Capitol with “America's Frontline Doctors” stitched on their white lab coats.

An animated Caribbean American doctor spoke to the video cameras. COVID-19 can be cured, she said, with hydroxychloroquine, just like Donald Trump claims.

“We don’t need masks. There is a cure!” said Dr. Stella Immanuel, a licensed pediatrician from Houston, in a fiery speech.

Immanuel, who claims to have effectively treated 350 COVID-19 patients with hydroxychloroquine out of her medical clinic, declined to provide data. Instead, she denounced colleagues who refused to prescribe hydroxychloroquine as “good Nazis” and “fake doctors,” and called published research “fake science.”

Livestreamed by the far-right website Breitbart News, the video spread quickly, initially through conservative, anti-vaccination, and government conspiracy groups. Within hours, it had reached over 20 million Facebook users.

Predictably, Trump retweeted their claims. Twitter later froze his account for 12 hours as punishment for circulating medical quackery.

Later, it emerged that Dr. Immanuel also runs a faith healing YouTube channel where she says many illnesses are caused by demon semen.

The head of America’s Frontline Doctors, Dr. Simone Gold, is a “concierge immediate-needs physician,” who offers private medical consultations, according to an archive of her recently deleted professional website.

In April, she made several videos answering questions about COVID-19 while standing outside of Cedars-Sinai

Medical Center in Los Angeles, wearing a white lab coat emblazoned with “Emergency Dept.” In a tweet, Cedars-Sinai said Gold was not on its staff or affiliated in any way with the hospital.

But the performance in front of the Capitol was not mere acting out by a group of cranks. Far from it. It was a carefully orchestrated performance produced by a right-wing dark money group, Tea Party Patriots.

The group, led by *Washington Times* columnist Jenny Beth Martin, has raised over \$24 million since 2014 to support Republican causes and candidates. Martin formed the group to counter Karl Rove’s Conservative Victory Project, which she considered too mainstream.

The *Washington Times*, by the way, was founded by Korean would-be messiah Sun Myung Moon to spread his peculiar rightist views.

The Associated Press reported in May that a second right-wing group, CNP Action, discussed recruiting doctors who were willing to push narratives about reopening the economy.

CNP Action is the advocacy wing of the Council for National Policy (CNP), which advocates for big defense spending and cuts to social services. CNP Action is also part of an alliance of conservative think tanks called the Save Our Country Coalition, which previously hosted Facebook events in April, organizing rallies in states that had adopted social distancing restrictions.

PSARA Supports Our Postal Service



PSARA member Norma Kelsey and her son, Jack, at the Des Moines Post Office. Postal service is vital to all of us, and all the more so now when so many Americans will vote by mail in a crucial national election.

The Numbers of Fear, Part II: H7N9

By Garry Owens

One global menace that was predicted by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) carried the popular name “China Bird Flu,” and the scientific name “H7N9.” That was in 2013.

In 2017, *Time* magazine ran a seven-page insert with an ominous title, “Warning: We Are Not Ready for the Next Pandemic,” written by Bryan Walsh. “On a hyperconnected planet rife with hyperinfectious diseases, experts warn we aren’t ready to keep America – and the world – safe from the next pandemic,” Walsh wrote.

Who would believe that a virus would jump from chickens to humans and create a global spike of infection and death? At the time of the publication it was thought that H7N9 would not “spread easily from person to person, but experts know that could change.”

Disease has affected people of color in greater numbers since Europe “discovered” Africa and the so-called New World.

It was known that the longer it spends in humans, the better the opportunity it might mutate to become a more contagious virus. It was noted also that new diseases had broken out in “Third World” locations in Asia, Africa, and into South America, and the Middle East.

“With substantial numbers of infected people who travel all over the globe every day and the doubling of the population it is noted that any infection

can reach most major cities in a day or less,” Walsh wrote.

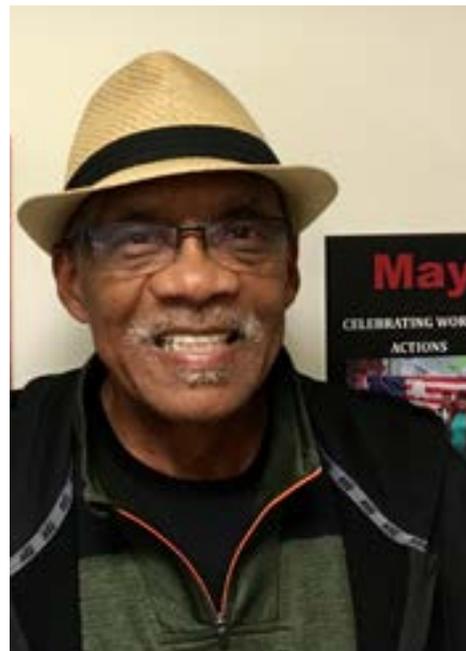
We know now that diseases spread most frequently as a result of urbanization, conflict, slow response, natural disasters, and air travel. You would think a timely and critical article like Walsh’s should have been carefully scrutinized by the Trump administration to understand the possible impact on the United States, its neighbors, and allies.

In fact, disease has affected people of color in greater numbers since Europe “discovered” Africa and the so-called New World. Today too many of us remain to be the least valued humans in terms of our status among the global population.

The historical outcome of this global phenomenon has been chronicled by many scribes in Europe and in the Americas. During the last two centuries, Joseph Conrad’s novella *The Heart of Darkness*, Rudyard Kipling’s “White Man’s Burden,” and Mark Twain’s “King Leopold’s Soliloquy,” all candidly expose the disrespect and disdain the European oligarchy and societies had for non-white nations and people.

Disease was spread by European explorers often as an intentional practice of conquest and displacement of global non-white inhabitants. On the North American continent, the European explorers presented small pox-infected blankets to the friendly Indigenous tribal chiefs as gifts – a hideous practice allowing them to kill without having to fire a single shot from their muskets! Without an antidote at the time, and no intention of seeking one for the natives, tens of thousands died.

Two-and-a-half centuries later, the American media presented their readers with Walsh’s blockbuster cover story “The World Is Not Ready for the Next Pandemic.”



Garry Owens

Walsh opined that Trump and his administration did not take any measures to protect national or global health as a priority.

In fact, Trump proposed to slash \$15 million from the budget of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which underwrites more infectious-disease research than any other agency in the world.

Trump blocked resources for potential pandemics, like the catastrophic 1918 flu pandemic that killed 50 million to 100 million people – outnumbering the deaths of both World Wars in the 20th century.

I want to repeat what I said last month: Our current situation is at a danger point that lingers in every corner of the planet, and our actions lay the foundation for our future -- good or bad.

Garry Owens is a member of PSARA's Executive Board and our Race and Gender Equity Committee.

The US Tear Gas Industry: Demonstrators Are Not the Only Victims

By Mike Andrew

I never really thought about where cops get tear gas until I read that Seattle police fired so much gas in July that they ran out of it.

Where do you go when you run out of tear gas? You can't just send someone down to Costco to buy a couple of carts full of tear gas canisters.

It turns out there's a whole industry that manufactures tear gas and other so-called "crowd-control" products. And the US controls the industry worldwide.

Two huge companies dominate the US market: Safariland, based in Jacksonville, Florida, and Combined Systems, Inc., which operates out of Jamestown, Pennsylvania.

Safariland, a \$450 million company, relies on a rotation of low-wage temporary employees, according to NBC News interviews with eight workers.

Six of the workers said that they were paid \$10 to \$12 an hour with no benefits, and sometimes were expected to work up to 12 hours a day, six days a week, to meet the company's production orders for chemical weapons.

"They were always pushing employees past their limits," said one Safariland worker who quit in June.

Workers at the plant often burn out or fail to meet performance standards and the company relies on local staffing agencies to fill positions, according to NBC.

"The turnover levels were high," said a former floor supervisor at Safariland's Jacksonville plant who was hired through a temp agency called Remedy Staffing. "Some of it was dangerous. You're dealing with chemicals, sharp edges, a lot of machinery, a lot of heat."

Between January 2015 and June 10 of this year, medical personnel were called to Safariland 31 times for incidents including fainting, lacerations, chemical exposures, and illnesses, according to the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department.

One Safariland worker hired through ManpowerGroup sued the company in 2018 after a tear gas machine that was known to malfunction smashed his fingertip, which then had to be amputated. Safariland denied the allegations, but the worker was awarded \$59,500 in damages.

Another temporary worker at the same plant, also hired through ManpowerGroup, said that beginning in May, as orders poured in from police departments across the country responding to protests, he worked 12 hour days for seven days straight, earning \$10 an hour to assemble bean bag projectiles.

While he wasn't handling chemicals directly, he said the tear gas chemicals would waft over into his area of the factory, irritating his sinuses.

"It feels like your sinuses are on fire -- runny nose, burning eyes," he said. "If you get the chemicals on your skin, it feels like your skin is burning."

The other big manufacturer, Combined Systems, received about \$1.7 billion in federal government orders for nonlethal weapons between January and June of this year, according to an NBC News analysis of federal contract data. It has also provided training and nonlethal weapons to law enforcement agencies across the country.

Combined Systems is one of the few employers in Jamestown, a borough of Pennsylvania's Mercer County, with a population of about 600 people. Residents have three main options for work: the local school district, Jamestown Coating Technologies, or Combined Systems, according to Jamestown Mayor Esther McClimans.

In 2016, Combined Systems won a \$2 million grant from the Pennsylvania Redevelopment Assistance Capital program to keep its operations in the state and expand.

In a lawsuit filed against the company in December 2014, local residents



(Photo: Verso Books)

complained about fumes and loud booms from ballistics tests, leading several to accuse the company of trespassing and private nuisance.

Eddy Howard, a retired pastor and plaintiff in the lawsuit, said that he and his wife have become accustomed to running home when they see a plume of haze accumulating at the plant, while out on their 85-acre stretch of land.

"I don't know what's in those chemicals," he said. "I'm not saying they're going to kill you. But I'm not going to breathe them in or experience them to find out."

The plant has been the site of several explosions and fires, according to the local newspaper, *The Sharon Herald*. Emergency personnel have been called to the plant seven times between June 2018 and June 2020 for fire emergencies, according to an NBC News review of emergency call logs to the Mercer County Department of Public Safety. Medical personnel were called 14 times during the same period for reports of hemorrhaging, traumatic injury, and breathing and allergic reactions, according to call logs.

In February, an explosion at the plant injured five workers, according to dispatch records and *The Meadville Tribune*. A week later, OSHA opened an inspection into the plant, according to the agency's records. The investigation is still open.

It's Time for Reparations

By Robby Stern

The issue of reparations being owed to the African-American population is finally a topic of serious discussion. H.R. 40, legislation with 142 co-sponsors, is described on the Congressional website as establishing a Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans. "The commission would examine slavery and discrimination in the colonies and the United States from 1619 to the present and recommend appropriate remedies. Among other requirements, the commission will identify (1) the role of federal and state governments in supporting the institution of slavery, (2) forms of discrimination in the public and private sectors against freed slaves and their descendants, and (3) lingering negative effects of slavery on living African-Americans and society."

My mother and father received reparations from Germany, their country of birth, from which they were forced to flee with my infant older brother. While they were alive, they received reparations monthly through Germany's Social Security system. They were entitled to reparations for the terror they experienced, including the enslavement of my father laboring in Sachsenhausen concentration camp, and the murder of my grandmother in the same camp by the German state. The effect of this horror impacted them for their entire lives, including reliving the terror in their dying days.

African-Americans have been subjected to similar horrors over many generations. For African-Americans, the crimes did not end with the abolition of slavery. The physical, emotional, and economic abuse has continued to the present through a combination of institutional racism and the infection of racism in the minds and hearts of so many Americans.

It is time for a reckoning. Perhaps we begin with a commission that counters the narrative that we are dealing with a few bad apples and that the underlying

institutions are okay. We need a new truthful understanding that exposes the damage that has been done over generations to the African-American community. We need a new narrative of how we describe our history and our present.

There must be financial reparations that will make clear that as a country we understand and accept the wrongs that have been done in our name. Financial reparations demonstrate we want to move forward with a different concept of who we are as a nation and what it is we want to become.

I hope that within a relatively brief period of time PSARA will come forward with a position paper supporting reparations. I hope we will not only support financial reparations but also the development of a truthful historical narrative that can become a dominant story of our country.



Robby in action

Robby Stern is President of the PSARA Education Fund and a member of PSARA's Executive Board.

Navy SEAL Museum's Racist "Demonstration"

The US Navy SEALs cut their ties with the National Navy SEAL Museum, a private corporation, after the museum sponsored a racist K9 display using a Colin Kaepernick stand-in.

The heavily padded man dressed in a Kaepernick jersey was attacked by SEAL K9 dogs in the display.

Photos of the incident were featured on the museum's Instagram page with the caption: "Colin Kaepernick stand in Josh gets attacked by 5 Navy SEAL dogs for not standing during the National Anthem at a Navy SEAL Museum fundraiser..."

The SEALs say they are also investigating whether any of their personnel were involved in the incident.



Art History 101: White Supremacy on Display

By Mike Andrew

For our art history lesson, I've selected two famous American monuments – Stone Mountain and Mount Rushmore.

What do they have in common?

Obviously, both are huge sculptures carved into mountainsides. But even more interesting is the fact that they were conceived by the same artist – Gutzon Borglum – and for the same purpose – to glorify the United States as a white man's country.

The Stone Mountain monument to the Confederacy was initiated by Sam Venable, who, along with his brothers, owned the mountain. He was a member of the Ku Klux Klan and one of the leaders of the Klan resurgence in the first decades of the 20th Century.

In 1915 he sponsored a cross lighting on the mountain, and in 1923 he leased the site to the Klan for the purpose of turning it into a Confederate monument.

Borglum was also an active member of the Ku Klux Klan, and this affiliation got him the job of carving the monument.

Borglum's grandiose plan called for up to 1,000 separate figures – 65 mounted officers, including Klan founder Nathan Bedford Forrest, plus marching soldiers. In addition, Borglum planned to cut a kind of temple faced with columns into the rock.

As it turned out, Borglum got involved in an internal Klan faction fight, and as a result was fired before he'd done much more than rough out the head of Robert E. Lee. The monument today only includes Lee, Confederate President Jefferson Davis, and Stonewall Jackson.

The State of Georgia bought the site in 1958, in response to the Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board* decision (1956). By design, Stone Mountain was dedicated on April 14, 1965 – 100 years to the day after Lincoln's assassination.

After being fired by the Klan, Borglum went on to work on "Mount Rushmore." I put that in quotes because



Stone Mountain: This is not art. This is propaganda.



This is propaganda too.

the place is sacred to the Lakota people who call it (in English translation) Five Grandfathers.

The original proposal was to create a tourist attraction by carving figures from Western history, including Lakota leaders Red Cloud and Crazy Horse. Borglum rejected that idea and insisted on carving white people only.

Two of the figures he chose were slave owners. Washington was notoriously harsh with his slaves, so much so that even Thomas Jefferson remarked, "George Washington is a hard master, very severe..." This is the Thomas Jefferson that raped his slave Sally Hemmings.

The figure peaking out from behind Jefferson is Theodore Roosevelt, godfa-

ther of US imperialism in Latin America.

And finally, Lincoln. Although Lincoln is enshrined in our official history as the president who freed the slaves, for Borglum he represented something much different. For him, Lincoln was the strongman who kept the US together and set the stage for its emergence as a world power.

Ironically, while Lincoln was waging the Civil War against the Confederacy Borglum wanted to honor at Stone Mountain, he was also waging war against the Lakota people whose sacred mountain was defaced by Borglum.

What a complicated history we have to sort out if we want to make things right in our present.

The Trump Attack

By Robby Stern

Medicare turned 55 on July 30. We can celebrate the enormous benefit Medicare and Medicaid have brought to the lives of millions of people. It is hard to imagine a time when there was no Medicare and Medicaid. How did seniors, low-income people, and people with disabilities manage? We know in many cases they died from lack of access to health care.

Medicare and Medicaid became law the year after the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Hospitals were only allowed to participate in Medicare and Medicaid if they complied with the Civil Rights Act. This led to the desegregation of hospitals and the improvement of the quality of care available to people of color. Overnight, hospitals that had refused to treat black people chose to reverse their racist denial of care rather than be excluded from treating Medicare and Medicaid patients. In so many ways, Medicare and Medicaid have proven their value to the people of this country.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the need for a universal health care system that is not attached to employment. Now is the time to expand Medicare to everyone and to improve Medicare to cover hearing, vision, dental and long-term care.

Unfortunately, Medicare and Social Security are under serious attack by Trump and his Republican colleagues (along with some Democrats). Mitt Romney's TRUST Act would establish a special congressional committee that would meet secretly and make proposals to Congress on the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds that Congress would have to vote up or down in a "fast track" process. This proposal is clearly designed to facilitate cuts to both Social Security and Medicare. The TRUST Act was included in the Republican proposal from Senator McConnell in the most recent Senate recovery package.

At the same time, Trump has issued an Executive Order (EO) that suspends collection of the FICA tax beginning in September. It will significantly undermine the funding of Medicare and Social Security, which is his intention. He also indicated that if he is reelected, he will eliminate the FICA tax. Unfortunately, Trump has the authority to suspend the collection of the FICA tax, but he does not have the constitutional authority to repeal the FICA tax. Only the Congress can repeal the FICA tax.

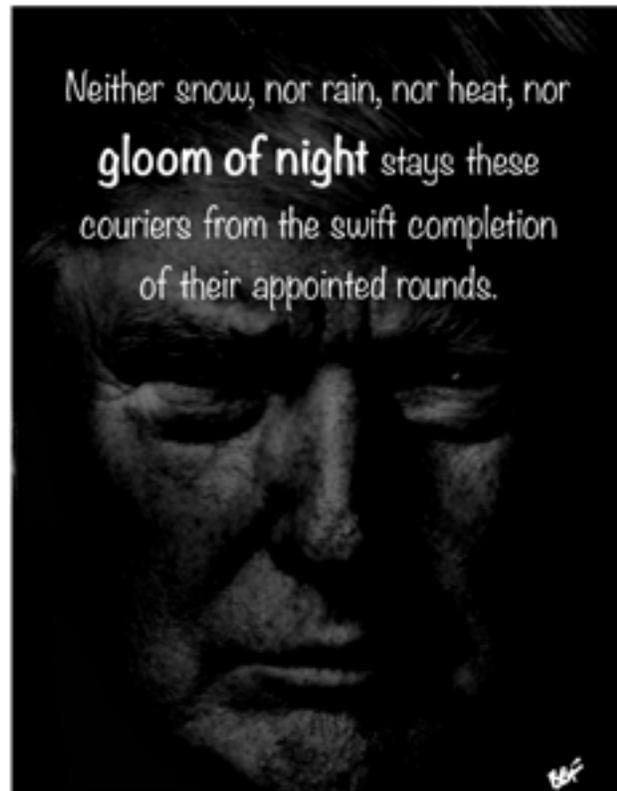
However, after the suspension of the tax, it will take political will on the part of the President and the Congress

to collect the funds that were not paid during the suspension period. Senator McConnell has given Trump his support making abundantly clear that the leadership of the Republican cabal have their sights on destroying Social Security and Medicare.

Please consider volunteering with one of the following organizations to help get out the vote: Turnout 2020, Swing Left Seattle, Indivisible Seattle, Reclaim Our Vote-Center for Common Ground, Vote Forward. Go to their websites and check out if they will work for you. This is such an important election for so many reasons!

The Barbed Wire

By Barbara Flye



Warning From Noam Chomsky

Excerpts From an Interview on NPR

Noam Chomsky: There is no precedent for this in any minimally functioning democracy. There are countries, many of them, where the military has taken over, often with U.S. support or even initiative, because we wanted to overthrow the civilian government. And nothing like this has happened since—aside from the fascist regimes and war regimes, totally different conditions. There's just no precedent.

There was, as you may recall, a couple of weeks ago press reports with headlines about how Trump is expanding his purge of the executive, which has almost been cleansed of any controls or dissident voices. He's extending this to trying to purge the military. Well, there were speculations at the time that the purge of the military might be preparation for a plan to try to bring the military in to carry out something which would amount to a military coup.

The military so far has been refusing. Pulled out the 82nd Airborne from Washington after Trump wanted it in there. They have been rejecting the proposals from the White House for more force and violence. That is why he is resorting to forces outside the official military in his current campaign to set up violent confrontations in Democratic-run cities, the plan right now. What the military would do, we don't know...

President Trump is desperate. His entire attention is—there's one issue on his mind; that's the election. He has to cover up for the fact that he is personally responsible for killing tens of thousands of Americans. It is impossible to conceal that much longer. Just compare the United States with Europe or even Canada; it's becoming a pariah state to the point where Americans aren't even permitted to travel to Europe. Europe won't accept them.

His chances of victory depend on his doing something dramatic. He was trying very hard to set up military confrontations that you mentioned, martial law. It's moving toward martial law. He



*Noam Chomsky
(Photo: Haaretz)*

might even be able to try to cancel the elections. There is no telling what he would do. He is completely desperate.

This is like the actions of some tin-pot dictator in a neo-colony somewhere, small country that has a military coup every couple of years. There is no historical precedent for anything like this in a functioning democratic society. If he could send Blackshirts out in the streets, he would be happy to do that.

Exactly how this will eventuate is very hard to say. The courts are unlikely to do anything. We may even get to a point where the military command has to decide which side they are on. The man is desperate. He is psychotic. He is in extreme danger of losing his position in the White House and will do anything he can to prevent it...

Well, there are various maneuvers that theoretically they might undertake. One might be to try to throw the election to the—to refuse to accept the vote, to make sure that the Republican governors don't authorize their own electors. This is routine and automatic, but technically, they could refuse. Could throw it into the House where there is enough Republicans in the House to essentially turn the election into the kind of farce that you find, as I said, in

some tin-pot dictatorship. That is one possibility. Another possibility is he might just try to call out the military to impose martial law.

The point is, he cannot lose. First of all, he is psychologically incapable of losing. Secondly, if he loses, if he leaves the White House, he may be facing serious legal problems. Now he has immunity, but there is a whole swamp around him. He has tried to keep it from being investigated. He fired all the inspectors general when they were beginning to investigate it. The federal attorney for the Southern District of New York, that's Wall Street and so on, the most important, started looking into it. Fired him, replaced him with a flack from the private equity industry. There is nothing he would not do to try to maintain office. Virtually nothing you can think of.

This is a major crisis. There has been one or other form of parliamentary democracy for 350 years in England, and 250 years here, and nothing like this has happened before. We are dealing with a figure who is out of the political spectrum for functioning democracies. And he has a political party behind him which by now has just turned into cowardly sycophants. They are terrified to cross His Imperial Majesty. He has got a popular base of heavily armed, angry white supremacist militias. There is no telling what he would do. I think the country, by November, may be a different country. And a different world, given U.S. power.

But that is kind of the immediate issue. The reason why this is the most important election in history has nothing to do with this. Four more years of Trump's climate policies and nuclear policies might simply doom the human species, literally. We don't have a lot of time to deal with the environmental crisis. It is very serious. Every prediction that has been made by scientists has been too conservative. Each time it comes out worse.

Statement to Seattle City Council

By Bobby Righi

Hello, I am Bobby Righi, a resident of Seattle for 40 years. I am here speaking for my racially diverse grandmother's group, Grandmothers for Race and Class Equality, and for PSARA, Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action

In 1968, I went to demonstrate in the streets of Chicago during the '68 Democratic National convention. Ten thousand young people came from around the country hoping to influence the platform and the choice of candidate in the election. We were viciously attacked by the police every day, beaten with their clubs and gassed, and since we were mostly white and it was a national convention, films of the beatings were splashed across the evening news. People were shocked. The police caused serious bodily harm with their pistols and heavy batons, not military grade weapons.

This came on the heels of massive uprisings born of frustration at ongoing injustice in cities across the country in the mid 60's. In 1968, after Martin Luther King was assassinated, cities with large Black communities erupted in anger and righteous grief, mostly destroying neighborhoods where Black people were forced to live. The news was not so sympathetic. A committee, headed by Otto Kerner, the governor of Illinois, was appointed to get to the roots of the unrest.

The Kerner report, released in 1968, said that the solutions demanded massive housing and police reform, a serious political and economic commitment to social programs, and higher taxes. It said that, "white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto, that white institutions maintain it and white society condones it." The Johnson administration and every administration since has ignored this and instead have provided the police with more and more military weapons to control people.

So now after 50 years, we have police budgets that take hundreds of millions of dollars out of needed services in cities all over the country and the police are so armored, they do not look human, but like something out of science fiction, and because they have military weapons, they use them on unarmed and peaceful protestors.

It is time to reverse this wrong direction. Reduce the SPD's budget by 50 percent and use the money for housing and social programs as was spelled out 50 years ago. It takes courage, but you can do the right thing.

Bobby Righi is Co-Chair of PSARA's Climate and Environmental Justice Committee.



Bobby Righi (right) with Mark Cook at a PSARA forum on the Black Panther Party. (Photo: Garet Munger)

Want to Get the *Advocate* by Email?

All you have to do is contact our editor, Mike Andrew, at organizer@psara.org and you'll start getting the *Advocate* emailed to you every month. If you'd like to get both hardcopy and electronic, let us know.

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Meetings and Events

For the health and safety of our members, all PSARA events will be held online. For the zoom links, email organizer@psara.org

West Seattle Hot Topics for Seniors & Senior Wannabes: Noon – 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, September 2. Topic: What reforms best respond to protests of George Floyd's death?

PSARA Climate and Environmental Justice Committee: 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Thursday, September 3.

PSARA Government Relations Committee: Noon – 1:30 p.m., Thursday, September 3.

Labor Day Sing-Along: 3 p.m., Monday, September 7. Join Lou Truskoff and sing out to honor labor and the labor movement. See Page 1 for more info.

PSARA Education Committee: 2 p.m., Tuesday, September 8.

PSARA Southend Committee: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m., Thursday, September 10.

PSARA Fundraising Committee: 11:00 a.m. - Noon, Monday, September 14.

PSARA Race and Gender Equity Committee: 11 a.m.– Noon, Thursday, September 17.

PSARA Executive Board: 12:30 p.m. – 3 p.m., Thursday, September 17.

We look forward to seeing you online until it's safe to meet in person once again.