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***WWFOR** seeks to replace violence, war, racism and economic injustice with nonviolence, equality, peace and justice. It links and strengthens FOR members and chapters throughout Western Washington in promoting activities consistent with the national FOR statement of purpose. WWFOR helps members and chapters accomplish together what we could not accomplish alone.*

WWFOR Spring Assembly online Saturday April 30, 2022 9am to 12 noon

Defending & Extending Democracy Using Nonviolence

9:00 Introduction and Welcome.

9:15-9:45: Mike Yarrow Peace Fellows share their individual projects along with Q & A.

9:50-10:05: WA. State Poor People's Campaign Representative announcement and call for volunteers for the June 18th. Mobilization March.

10:10- 10:50: Professor Michael Honey introduces his film **Love & Solidarity**.

10:50-11:00 Break.

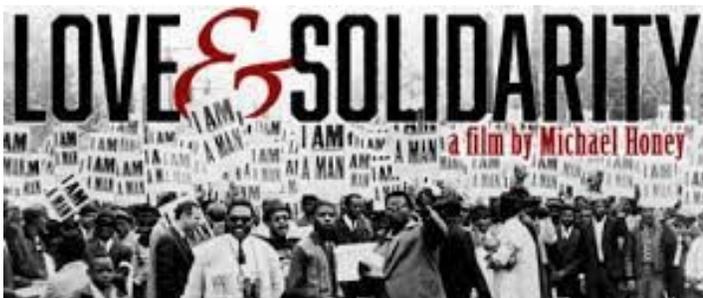
11:00-11:30 Keynote talk: Professor Michael Honey.

11:30-12:50: Small sharing about film and the Keynote talk.

11:50-12:00 Wrap up and Evaluation.

12:00-1:00 Post Assembly informal sharing for those wanting to stay.

Check wwfor.org for the Zoom link to the 2022 Spring Assembly



We recommend reading James M. Lawson Jr.'s Revolutionary Nonviolence before the Spring Assembly. This book is available through national FOR, University of California Press (also as eBook), and other booksellers. See websites below.

<https://forusa.org/product-category/books-pamphlets/>

<https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520387843/revolutionary-nonviolence>

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The world stands with independent, democratic Ukraine. We call for an immediate ceasefire.

There is no planet B

Review of Kim Stanley Robinson. The Ministry of the Future (New York: Orbit Books, 2020)

by John M Repp

This sprawling novel with 106 chapters starts with a deadly heat wave in India. A heat dome combines with high humidity that is beyond human survival. Millions die. We have been hearing for years about sea level rise, and indeed we could lose all our beaches in a few years. However, we have barely heard about high humidity and heat combined to a level that could kill millions in some areas of the world, including the American southeast. Bill McKibben, a leader of the environmental group 350.org, wrote in his review of Robinson’s book in New York Review of Books that such deadly heat wave/high humidity events are virtually certain in our future. Few people really comprehend how desperate our situation is. There is too much denial.

In the first chapter, an American named Frank, working for an NGO in India during the heat wave, is the only person who survives in the area where he is working. He is very severely traumatized and believes he must do something to stop the coming world-wide extinction. The main character is Mary, an Irish woman, who leads the Ministry of the Future, an organization started by the 2025 United Nation’s Council of Parties (COP) meeting. The Ministry’s purpose is to represent the people not yet born; a concept that challenges our legal system.

Kim Stanley Robinson is a writer of science fiction who is exceptionally well informed about the latest science. One of his best-selling trilogies featured a human colony on Mars. Today, scientists are sure that the idea of moving to other planets, much less other solar systems, is not feasible. We now know the soil on Mars is extremely toxic and the distance to other solar systems is too far. Only rich men like Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk think getting off the earth is an option. So, Robinson recognizing the changed science now looks to our future on earth to practice his “utopian science fiction” trade. The Ministry of the Future is set in the 30 years beyond 2025.

Robinson is an optimist. By the end of the book, carbon dioxide emissions start to go down as does human population. The book is full of very creative ideas of how mitigate climate change, and that is the great contribution Robinson makes with this book. There is violence on both sides of the struggle to deal

with this existential threat. Mary’s office in Zurich is bombed one night and Swiss authorities help her hide. Ecoterrorists bring down private and commercial airplanes full of business executives with pebble-mob drones. Container ships plying international trade are torpedoed.

One of the turning points in the drama happens when Mary convinces the chairmen of the central banks of the largest countries of the world to support a new international currency, the carbon coin or *carboni*. It is based on carbon sequestration and backed by 100-year bonds. A ton of carbon dioxide sequestered equals one unit of the new currency. It is a way to keep oil, gas, and coal in the ground. This is the carrot that motivates the financial system to change. It will pay the fossil fuel companies, their investors, and petrol-nation states to keep their reserves in the ground. Robinson calls this proposal “carbon quantitative easing”. Another positive effect of the coin is explained in one chapter: scientists measure the carbon in the soil of a farmer who farms regeneratively. Two years later, when his soil is measured again and contains more carbon, the farmer earns *carboni*.

Scientists and engineers also work on preventing the big glaciers in Antarctica from sliding into the sea. They try drilling into the glaciers all the way to their bottom which rests on rock, where melting water helps them slide faster. The water is pumped out, so they slide into the sea slower. The Indians put sulfur dioxide into the atmosphere high above the ground to try and shut out a very small percentage of sunlight to attempt to cool their country. These things and more are done despite a general hesitancy to use geoengineering.

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Continued from page 2

There are several world-wide uprisings, one triggered by students in the United States, who stop paying their student debts. He describes the feeling of solidarity that happens in the streets during a revolution as the “most intense and important feeling” (p.246) anyone could ever have in this life. At the same time, the African Union countries stop paying their debts and several of the Wall Street banks collapse triggering a massive economic depression. Five million people go to Tiananmen Square in China and force the Chinese Communist Party to make changes. There is a chapter on Mondragon, the most successful group of producer cooperatives in the world, located in the Basque area of Spain. (Ruth Yarrow is the person who told me about this wonderful book because of the chapter on Mondragon which we visited in 2013 with Ruth and Mike.)

There is a discussion of the one to eight pay scale of the U.S. Navy. If the Admirals only get eight times what the sailors get but they manage to pilot huge aircraft carriers, why can't corporate chiefs run their companies with the same pay differential. There is a chapter where a small dying town in Montana is dismantled and moved as part of an effort to rewild half the world. There is a description of open-source software that mimic the functions of all the popular social media sites. There is a chapter on Sikkim state in India that practices fully organic agriculture, inspired and aided by Vandana Shiva, and a description of the direct democracy of Kerala state, also in India. There is a chapter on MMT, modern monetary theory. This book is a delightful embarrassment of riches and gives me hope in these dark times.

Finally, not too far into the book, Robinson explains that we all need an ideology, a worldview, a philosophy, or a religion. The world is so complex and so big, and humans collectively now know so much, that we all need a filter and an organizing system to make sense of it all, or we are overwhelmed. He admits that even “science” is an ideology, but it is different, in part because thousands of people all over the world are perpetually cross-checking it and communicating their results to each other.



Page 3 **Sikkim state in India is 100% organic now!**

No More Profit-seeking Middlemen in Our Medicare

by John M Repp

Medicare was passed in 1965 as a program to provide health care for seniors and disabled people. In the U.S. most people get their medical insurance from their employer as a benefit. But after retirement, or for those people who cannot work, the Medicare program has been a life saver. It was simple and efficient. 98% of its budget went to patient care.

There were gaps from the very beginning. It did not provide for nursing home care, hearing aids, glasses, and dental care. In 1997, Medicare Advantage plans were allowed to be set up by traditional for-profit insurance companies to plug some of the gaps. Many of the Medicare Advantage plans are low-cost or no cost to seniors as they enroll, but when the policy is used, enrollees must pay some of the cost of their own care, with a limit at say \$6000. The real cost is paid by the government. The [for-profit insurance company receives \\$1000 each month for each enrollee from the government.](#) Today, 42% of seniors are enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans.

During the Trump Administration a new for-profit middle-man scheme was developed to grab the 58% of seniors and disabled not covered by Medicare Advantage plans. Called Direct Contracting Entities or DCE's, the program will run from 2020 to 2026. Few people know about this. The DCE's only need spend 60% on the care of their enrollees. The rest will be profit. We don't know what the monthly cost to the government will be. Obviously, as with any for-profit plan for health care, there will be an incentive to restrict seniors care.

This is a pilot program, and the Biden Administration can stop it. At the same time as Representative Pramila Jayapal is organizing for a Medicare-for-All program, [she has written a letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra to stop the DCE program immediately.](#) Citizens, senior or otherwise should visit [Physicians for a National Health Program website and sign their petition](#) to demand that Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra stop this program.



The Four Horsemen Have a New Recruit

An editorial by John M Repp, Pacific Call editor
February 15, 2022

Mark Twain once said “a lie will fly around the whole world while the truth is getting its boots on”. He said that in the era of newspapers, books, and the telegraph. In those days, not everyone could publish a newspaper, write a book or even send a telegram. But today with the Internet, anyone who has a computer can post or pass on lies on sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. These are some of the sites used to spread misinformation/disinformation now, and they make it easy for bad actors, even foreign governments, to intervene in our political system. There are even bots (robots) that can spread false information faster than a human can. And there are the dozens of right-wing talk shows a la Rush Limbaugh and TV channels like FOX, OAN and Newsmax that have been guilty of passing on falsehoods.

We can start with definitions. **Misinformation** is just a falsehood caused by a mistake. It is an error. However, if someone has not done enough critical thinking and due diligence in their research, they can be an accomplice in passing on misinformation. But **disinformation is intentionally created for a political reason.** The CIA used disinformation to overthrow many governments which did not side with the U.S. and international corporations during the Cold War.

Trump’s lie that the 2020 election was stolen is an example of disinformation. The former President wants to be installed again in the White House as a permanent President. This lie was spread by the social media sites like Parler, which many people have never even heard of.

The Jan 6, 2020 attack on Congress was the result of Trump’s disinformation. We now know there was a plan directed from the White House to create fake slates of Electoral College electors from seven states so the election would be thrown into the House of Representatives where each state would have one vote. This was one of many schemes hatched to allow

Trump to steal the election, which is what he is accusing Biden of doing.

A high percentage of ordinary Republican voters now believe Trump’s lie (in February 2022). This lie undermines faith in elections and is dangerous in a society that aspires to be a democracy. Posted on the website “Political Violence at a Glance”, Barbara F. Walter, has told us that 2006 was the year democratization peaked around the world and the decline after that, led by the



United States, that was the result of misinformation and disinformation spread by social media.

Is the Justice Department investigating the people, organizations, and money that organized the January 6, 2020 attempt to overthrow the government? As an organizer, I know how much work it takes to get thousands of people to show up at a particular place and time for a political event. We know the committee in Congress is investigating this, but they have no power to prosecute. There needs to be accountability to move on and strengthen democracy.

Disinformation about Covid-19 and the vaccines appears more puzzling. The United States is doing the worst among the rich nations with the pandemic, and pandemic and vaccine misinformation and disinformation is at the heart of our failure. Are the purveyors of the lies about the vaccines, like Tucker Carlson, trying to prevent us from getting over the pandemic to make Biden look bad? Why aren’t the purveyors of this disinformation, disinformation that can kill people, being held to account? I know we have a right to free speech, but this seems more like yelling fire in a crowded theater.

The University of Washington Center for an Informed Public is a 2 year old project which is working on the problem of how to deal with disinformation. They offer a short course “Calling Bullshit”.

Pacific Call will work to tell the truth. Surely there is more we can do! Can we craft a new communications bill, that will limit the non-local and concentrated ownership of newspapers, and restore the concept of **fair and balanced** to the law, instead of allowing Fox use it as a slogan? Can we make critical thinking and internet savvy a course requirement in our public high schools?

Indigenous American’s Role in the American Revolution and other provocative ideas in [The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity](#) by David Graeber and David Wengrow (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2021), 692 pages.

An abridged review by John M Repp, [the full review is at WWFOR website.](#)

Before the French and Indian War, there had been several hundred years of French colonization in the New World around the Great Lakes. Many Jesuit missionaries learned the language of the natives to try and convert them to Christianity, and the missionaries reported back to the educated public in France. Several transcribed dialogues between the Jesuits and native intellectuals became best-selling books in France. This is at the time when the whole French branch of the movement we call the Enlightenment was being born in the intellectual ferment centered around the salons of Paris, with figures like Diderot and Rousseau. It was the “age of Reason”. Yes, the breakthroughs of natural science played a big role in the Enlightenment, but the appearance of concepts like **liberty and equality** can be traced to native American intellectuals! That is the fascinating story told by Graeber and Wengrow in [The Dawn of Everything](#).

That means it was not just the idea of the Confederation of the original 13 colonies that was inspired by the native American example of the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) Confederacy as told to us by Ben Franklin. But the ideas of liberty and equality that were at the very heart of the American and French Revolutions came from Native Americans. Freedom and equality were concepts not available in late feudal Europe before contact with the New World.

The Jesuits had met their match in New France. Native American intellectuals like Kandiaronk told the French that they were too competitive, always arguing and fighting, grubbing after money and rank, totally deferent to their “captains” and acted like slaves. Kandiaronk pointed out that the French proclaimed they were Christian, but they had no mercy. The French let some of their people go hungry and without a place to live in the small settlements that were being established in the New World. The French felt they had to respond

to this criticism. They asserted that they were more “advanced” than the natives **because they had more material wealth.**

One of the common stories we all learn is that democracy is a rare form of governance, having been invented in Athens in the 5th century BCE, and then again in the New World after 1776. This book shows how wrong this most common view of our history is. Graeber and Wengrow base much of their book on new digs archaeologists have made in the last 50 years. The findings of these new digs have not gotten out to the educated public but remain in academic journals. Using archaeological evidence allows us to reach back further into time, since evidence from writing only goes back a bit more than 5000 years. It also allows us to learn about societies without writing.



Kandiaronk 1649-1701

A good example of such a dig is the Ukrainian site of Taljanky, an ancient city dated to around 4100 to 3300 BCE, with a population as much as 10,000. There were other cities around them, about 6 to 9 miles apart. Taljanky existed for 800 years in a forested area which the people protected and maintained. They did not cut the forest down. There is very little evidence of warfare or the rise of social elites.

The city’s shape was circular with a large open area in the middle for what the authors think might have been popular assemblies, ceremonies, and seasonal penning of animals. The houses were rectangular, 16 x 32 feet, of wattle and daub, with stone foundations and attached gardens. Each house was adjacent to a larger assembly house. They kept livestock, cultivated orchards, and hunted and foraged.

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There is “no evidence of central administration or communal storage facilities.” They imported salt and exported ceramics which were made in each household, each with its own style, and considered some of the best of the pre-historic era. “The logistical challenges were daunting” but they managed them “from the bottom-up, through processes of local decision-making” (p. 295). When Wengrow was asked where in the past he would have liked to live, he said in one of the Ukrainian cities like Taljanky.



Taljanky circa 4000 BCE

Almost 600 miles south of the Mackinaw Straits where the French met Kandiaronk lies the ruins of the ancient city Cahokia, now east of St. Louis. In 1050 AD Cahokia was a larger city than London. It was a religious center and later an empire that grew larger in a time of great armed conflict. At one time, Cahokia saw mass executions of captured enemy fighters on an earthen pyramid (today called Monk’s Mound in the State Park east of St. Louis), much like the limestone pyramids that were built over two thousand miles to the south in Mexico and Central America. But by 1400 CE, Cahokia and the once fertile area around it was empty of people. The natives left, disobeyed their rulers, and moved away. Maybe the land lost its fertility, or the people became tired of constant warfare and rebelled, or both. The people moving away built a new social world governed by democratic tribal councils. That is the world in which Kandiaronk grew up.

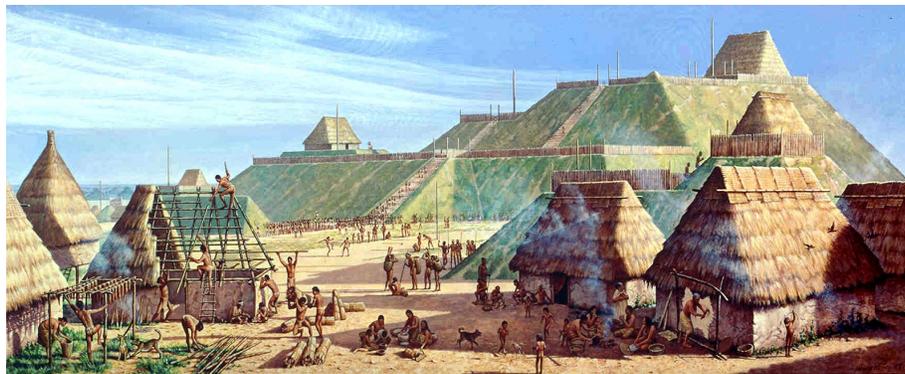
Contrary to what many people believe, native American groups were not isolated from each other. They traveled more than most people do today.

There were many spoken languages, but also a universal sign language. There were times and places where hundreds of individuals came together to be with each other, to socialize, conduct rituals, and build places where they could do this. In those societies, there was no obvious way to turn material wealth into political power. They may not have been perfectly egalitarian societies, but many of them were very democratic.

Not all pre-Columbian native American societies were societies of free individuals. Two thousand miles to the south of Mackinaw, there were Mayan societies with tyrannical leadership who sacrificed people on altars atop pyramids. There was Cahokia in its greatest years, when it also sacrificed people. There were the Pacific Northwest societies that had two hereditary classes and as many slaves percentagewise as the cotton plantations in the southern states before 1865. The slaves in the Northwest were originally women and children captured in war. They had no family and had to obey their master.

Graeber and Wengrow show us some of the amazing diversity of native American societies as well as the diversity of cultures around the world and through the long-time span since the end of the last ice age. There were many democratic cities in the long past; Athens was not alone. [The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity](#) is a book that demands much of the reader, but rewards that reader with a whole new outlook on the world. We can playfully face the future, not fearfully.

This book is meant to fire up our imaginations, so we can start thinking about how to have a livable future. It can help prepare us for a better future. Today, climate scientists are telling us we must change how we do things. The stimulating of our political and social imaginations could not have come at a better time.



Cahokia, now just east of St. Louis, was larger than London, at its height, in 1050-1250 CE.



Ukraine Maps Tell a Different Story Than Putin's Claims by **Zoltan Grossman**
abridged from **Common Dreams**

As a geographer who has studied and taught about interethnic conflict around the world, and as a U.S. citizen with family roots in East-Central Europe, I've always read the stories told in the maps.

These two maps show how Putin got it wrong, and miscalculated in launching his war against Ukraine.

In Ukraine's past presidential elections, the electoral map would almost perfectly match the language map. Pro-Russian politicians would win the red region, Ukrainian nationalists would win the yellow region, and they'd split the difference in the orange region.

But in the 2019 election, something different happened, shown on the bottom map. **Fed up with corrupt politicians of both ethnic groups, voters overwhelmingly chose Russian-speaking Jewish candidate Volodymyr Zelensky as president, in a rebuke to both Ukrainian and Russian ultranationalists.** Zelensky actually did better in the Russian-speaking region (in dark green), and his opponent only won in the immediate Lviv area (in light orange).

But here's the thing: how can Putin convince Russian-speakers to help topple a president who they voted for in larger numbers than Ukrainian-speakers did, over a candidate backed by voters in the most Ukrainian nationalist region? How does that make any sense as a way to fight Nazis? Perhaps because Zelensky doesn't adequately play the role of bogeyman, Putin has to topple him.

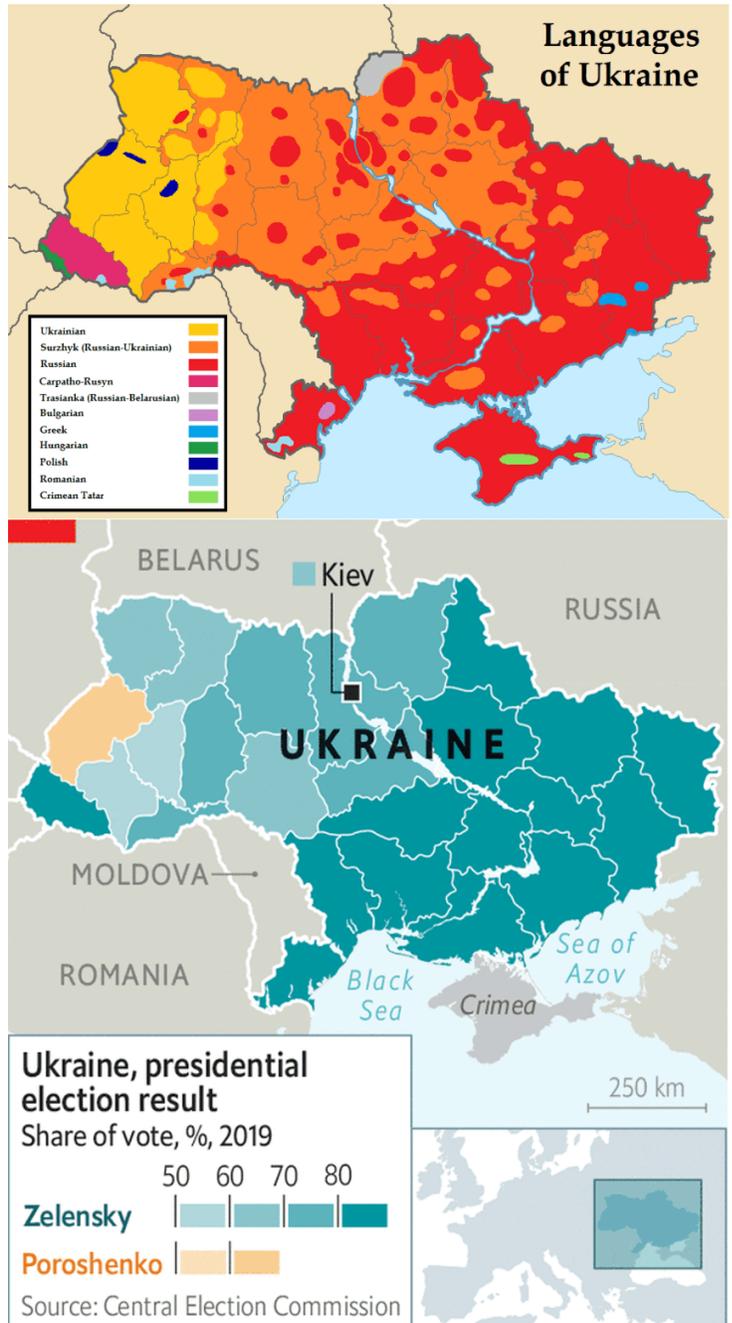
The antiwar protests in Russia are remarkable and unprecedented, but what's really notable is the lack of support for Putin's war from Ukraine's Russian-speakers, whom he's supposedly "liberating" from the fascist thugs. It's notable that even Russian state TV can't engineer a scene of ethnic Russians welcoming the army, which was so easy to show in Crimea only eight years ago.

It's actually Putin's invasion that could confirm his self-fulfilling prophecy, by elevating the far-right militias in western Ukraine, and convincing more Ukrainians that they need to join NATO. That might be exactly what Putin wants, because he can continue to use Nazis and NATO to frighten the Russian people into following his will. Just as Russian and Ukrainian ultranationalists reinforce each other's messages of hate, Putin's aggressions and NATO expansions feed off of each other's messages of military might.

This region of Eastern Europe is marked by

unresolved historical trauma, including past imperial invasions, Stalin's Holodomor (Great Famine) of 1932-33 that claimed 3.5 million Ukrainian lives, and Hitler's war of 1941-45 that claimed at least 25 million lives throughout the Soviet Union. Everyone fears a confrontation between the nuclear-armed powers of Russia and United States, which would be in nobody's interest, especially Ukraine.

Putin and his oligarchs run a shaky Russian economy, and his first goal is to stay in power. Like many western leaders, he sees the path toward xenophobia and war as the way to control his own people with fear. Yet it seems that now both Russians and Ukrainians are starting to lose their fear, and beginning to think of standing up to empire.



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WRITING
LETTERS

TO THE EDITORS OF MAINSTREAM PRESS IS A GOOD THING.

Navy on Whidbey (The Seattle Times, D2 Opinion, Sunday, Jan 2, 2022)

"Feels entitled to make its own decision"

Thank you for the editorial "Navy and Whidbey need compromise on jet noise" [Dec 28, opinion] citing the magistrate's acknowledgement of what the Growler critics have been saying for years.

The Navy simply feels entitled to make its own decisions, based on its self-serving data and information, with consistent disregard for the health, safety and well-being of the people the Growler noise impacts. The central issue for those living under the jets is that the Navy refuses to provide an honest assessment of the real-time noise citizens must endure because in so doing they would have to admit the actual harm done at on-site levels.

In apparent response, the Navy released a report on jet noise that again reinforces self-interest. Its sound studies conveniently show no harm ["Navy releases Whidbey Island jet noise monitoring study," Dec 22, Northwest]

Some compromise is warranted but given the Navy's persistent reluctance to negotiate in honesty and good faith with those impacted makes it difficult to believe the negotiations will be fair.

Tom Ewell, Clinton

If Congress had not passed tax cuts signed by Reagan, Bush, and Trump, we would not have a federal debt!
(Thom Hartmann on his radio show, 2/3/2022 about 10:24 am)

SEE WASHINGTON STATE POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN [WEBSITE](#) FOR THE LATEST NEWS

Homelessness: Tax the rich
(The Seattle Times, D2 Opinion, Sunday, Feb 27, 2022)

The wealthy and large corporations giving to a \$10 million fund for the homeless is great. We certainly need money to help with this problem that only seems to get worse.

I am also impressed that formerly homeless people will be hired to help navigate the homeless out of this difficult situation. However, I also feel that the wealthy are not paying their fair share of taxes in this state nor on the federal level. In addition, over the last 40 years, wages have not stayed up with productivity and the cost of housing due to outsourcing and wage suppression by business.

Many of these wealthy individuals and corporations pay little or nothing in taxes compared with their vast wealth. If they did, the states would have more money to direct to the homeless problem.

Cindy Cole, Bellingham



[One of the bills still not passed by the Senate is the Freedom to Vote Act.](#)

Here are some of the provisions:

- Automatic voter registration and online registration for 16-year-olds who will be 18 and thus eligible to vote in the next election
- Same day voter registration nationwide
- Ending partisan gerrymandering
- Limiting campaign contributions to a maximum of \$10,000

The Freedom to Vote Act is more urgently needed with every passing day, as multiple Republican-controlled states openly (and ironically) tear down actual "republican principles" of representative government by continuing to pass laws that suppress the vote and allow partisan legislatures to change the results.

