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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 2022 Spring Assembly

by David Lambert

On Saturday, April 30th, WWFOR held its annual Spring Assembly; this year again by Zoom. The Theme: Defending and Extending Democracy, Using Nonviolence. The planners of this event: Susan Donaldson, John Repp, Kerri Griffis, Mary Hanson, Jean Gant Delastrada, Joshua Otto-Liljenstolpe, David Lambert and help from Marti Lambert. Rick Trombley helped during the Assembly.



During the planning process, we decided to include the showing of the film *Love & Solidarity*, a strong and compelling 38 minute documentary of Rev. Dr. James Lawson's

life and work with nonviolence in standing up to oppression and injustice. This film was directed and produced by Dr. Michael Honey, a local University of Washington, Tacoma Campus, history professor who has spent a great bulk of his career writing about the labor and freedom movement and has written five acclaimed books. He also helped with Rev. Lawson's latest book: **Revolutionary Nonviolence: Organizing For Freedom.**

Prior to the film showing, Jean Gant Delastrada introduced four Mike Yarrow Peace Fellows (MYPF) for 2021-22. Leila Chavez spoke of her social justice project of educating people about climate change and organizing an art exhibit to be shown on June 18th at the Olympia Coach House. Next, Christine Zhang's project was to establish a computer science class for 4th and 5th grade students in the Olympia School District to strengthen interest among students for computer science. Abigail Asare talked social justice issues in education, especially how they affect low income and students of color. She told

of establishing a podcast to help educate the public and school officials about this. Finally, Angela Clarke spoke of her efforts to make feminine products available for free in her school and local library. Bruce Pruitt-Hamm, Chair of WWFOR, told of consistently having extremely positive feelings over the years regarding the wonderful growth of MYPF interns into stronger peace and justice activists.

Dr. Honey introduced the film and following the showing, Ian Schaefer Lorenz from the Washington State Poor People's Campaign (PPC), gave a short talk and slide show presentation of the mission of the PPC and the current campaign leading up to the national PPC march and rally in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, June 18th. Ian stated there are plans in our state to have a number of local actions that day, including Olympia, Tacoma, Seattle, and other locations.

Dr. Michael Honey presented the keynote talk, emphasizing the four steps of Reverend Lawson in nonviolent community organizing: 1. Focus: Investigate deeply what the nature of the problem is; research, recruit, educate, and map solutions. 2. Negotiation: including engaging the opponent, presenting demands, plans for direct action, developing timelines, strategy and tactics. 3. Direct Action Campaign: Start creative and flexible actions and move from simple to complex actions, building inspiration and public support. 4. Follow-up: retrench, regroup your forces, evaluate, and see what you have learned, how you can improve it. Finally, ask "is there a next step to what's just been done." Dr. Honey talked about how these four steps were also outlined in Rev. Lawson's latest book (see review on Page 2) and encouraged participants to read this important book.

After the keynote talk, participants broke into small groups and discussed questions that Dr. Honey posed, followed by discussion within the larger group. David closed the event encouraging people to take steps to increase their social justice activity. Following the end of the formal Assembly, many folks stayed for an informal discussion, which to a significant extent, included rich comments about the Russian/Ukrainian War and related matters.

A recording of this event is planned to be available on the WWFOR Website.

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We call for an immediate ceasefire and a negotiated settlement in Ukraine.

A review of James M. Lawson Jr., with Michael K. Honey and Kent Wong. Revolutionary Nonviolence: Organizing for Freedom (Oakland: University of California Press, 2022)

by John M Repp

This book is a transcript of recent talks by Reverend James M. Lawson, Jr. with a foreword by Angela Davis, an introduction by Michael Honey and a brief biography of Lawson by Kent Wong. Lawson is 93 and still working for justice, now in Los Angeles. Lawson was the workshop trainer in nonviolence in the campaign to desegregate downtown Nashville in 1960. The main tactic used there was the sit-in at lunch counters in the downtown stores. Lawson tells us that he spent months training people in nonviolence before the actions. Some students who took part included Diane Nash, Bernard Lafayette, and John Lewis. At the time, Lawson was working for Fellowship of Reconciliation as southern secretary. Over 150 students were arrested in the Nashville campaign and Lawson was expelled from Vanderbilt University where he was enrolled as a divinity student.

Lawson had been invited to come and participate in the growing freedom movement that we call the "Civil Rights" movement by Martin Luther King, Jr. He met King in February 1957 at a meeting of the two at Oberlin College, set up by Harvey Cox who knew Lawson and MLK had similar interests.

Lawson had several experiences while very young that led him to nonviolence. When he was only four and then later when he was in the seventh grade, a student used a racial epithet in front of him and Lawson struck the offender each time. The second time, he told his mother and she reassured him that he was a good person but then said to him "There must be a better way." Lawson recounts that moment as one "where the world stood still".

Lawson was coming of age during the Korean war. He sent back his draft card. In 1950, during the fall of his senior year in college, the FBI arrested and sent him to a minimum-security prison full of conscientious objectors and moonshiners. He formed a study group there with some of the white C.O.'s. That got him labeled as a troublemaker, and he was transferred to another prison. Lawson considered his time at both facilities as a time of learning. After his release, he traveled to India to learn more about nonviolence. Gandhi was dead by then, but Lawson got to know some of Gandhi's lieutenants, and he studied writings not available in the U.S. He realized that the plight of Blacks in America was but one example of the global oppression of nonwhite people. He confirmed that idea with a six-week tour in Africa, then experiencing anticolonial liberation movements.

As a FOR secretary, Lawson visited different places in the

South. He and MLK agreed that the success of the Birmingham, Alabama bus boycott in 1958 must not be a one-of-a-kind event. Before he landed in Nashville where he had been accepted to Vanderbilt, Lawson talked to some of the Little Rock Nine who integrated Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas. He asked one student what her parents and the NAACP told her about how to behave. She said: "We were told not to fight back." She remembered that one boy was very abusive in his language toward her. Several boys were wrapping steel balls in paper and throwing them at the black students, a practice called "bombing." One day a "bomb" was thrown at her which missed and hit the wall. Taking to heart a suggestion that Lawson had made earlier, trembling, the girl picked up the "bomb" and walked over to the boy and put it back on his desk. His complexion turned bright red. The next morning when they came back to school, the boy greeted her with a smile and said "Good Morning, Carlotta."

Tennessee appeared to be less racist than the deep South, but segregation was just as much a way of life there and most Blacks lived below the poverty line. The goal of integrating downtown Nashville and the idea of a sit-in at lunch counters came from the women who were in Lawson's workshops. Lawson tells us that nonviolent direct action is difficult, demanding, and requires sacrifice. In many cases, the activists must be prepared to go to jail and even sacrifice their life. It has been the most powerful force in human history and the "best kept secret" in human history. (p.35)

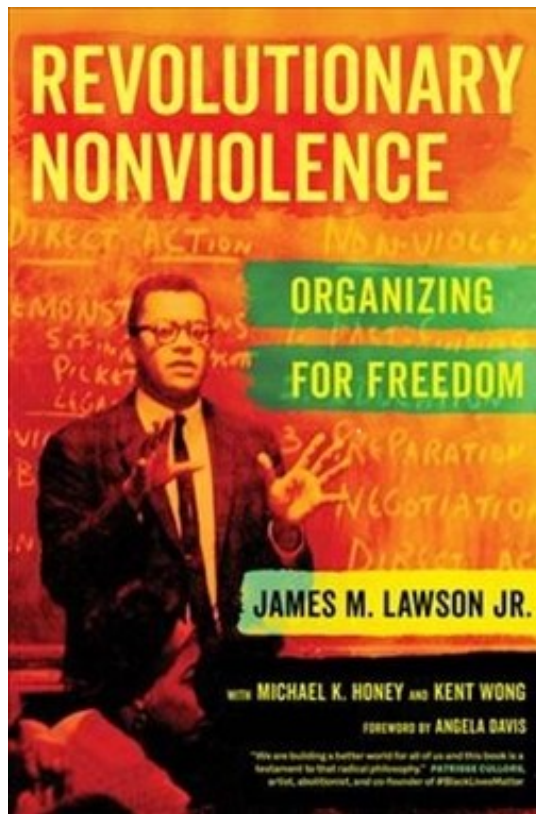
Despite the interesting stories from the past, the thrust of this book is the future. He mentions that millions of people marched in the streets after George Floyd was murdered, in 2400 locations, and in 7300 demonstrations. (p.20), mostly marches. This was just in the United States. There was more around the world.

We are witnessing the beginnings of a 21st century movement that will protect democracy politically and expand it into the economy and the culture. There are 198 methods for nonviolent action. "The march may be the weakest tactic" in the whole arsenal of methods. (p.70) We must overcome the notion that the United States is "exceptional", a most dangerous idea. And we cannot move against the owners and oligarchs as individuals but must move against the system he calls

"plantation capitalism".

It may take a while to find the best strategy and tactics, because a "direct assault" will not bring about major social change (p. 95). "You have to do the truth part first." (p.97) is Lawson's way of saying the teaching and learning of nonviolence with a deep analysis of the problem, and then the offer to negotiate with authorities before an action is taken, must not be slighted. He also thinks the idea of reparations for past harms must be considered. "In every area of the law", he points out, if there has been harm, remedies are required. (p.97).

This man is truly a nonviolent revolutionary and his book is worthy of close study.



THE POOR PEOPLE'S PANDEMIC REPORT AND WHY WE MARCH

by Dorothy Van Soest, Coordinating Committee Member, Washington Poor People's Campaign

When society puts people's lives in jeopardy so they die, it commits social murder, which is more malicious than individual murder because it is rendered invisible. It is a violence that is not seen as such.

It's only natural for us to want so badly for it to be over—this pandemic that has left so much death and destruction in its wake. Yet, if we learned one thing from the COVID-19 epidemic it is this: that *all* of our lives depend on things *not* going back to normal. The exploitative economic and social systems that created the conditions for many of the negative outcomes associated with the virus are still in place and must now be confronted and dismantled. The approximately 140 million poor and low-income people (over 40% of the population and more than half of our country's children) who were rendered invisible *before* the pandemic by the widespread unequal distribution of wealth, income and resources in our country must be made visible.

The [Poor People's Pandemic Report](#) that was released on April 4th at the National Press Club in Washington DC does just that. It exposes the glaring omissions and inconsistencies in the collection and dissemination of data on poverty, income and occupation, as they relate to COVID-19 outcomes. Since income and wealth information have not been systematically collected for people who have died or fallen ill from COVID-19 in the U.S, there is no systematic way to know the poverty status of those who died. That is why, with this report, a joint effort of the [Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival](#) in partnership with the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), is an important step toward filling this gap and overcoming a long-standing aversion to understanding the full extent of poverty and economic insecurity in the U.S.

The [Poor People's Pandemic Report](#) maps the intersections of poverty, race and COVID-19 by aggregating data from more than 3200 counties in order to connect information about COVID-19 deaths to other demographic characteristics, including income, race, health insurance status and more. Data is organized and an intersectional analysis used to uncover how poverty, age, gender, race, ethnicity, disability and class intersect with COVID-19 outcomes.

We make better possible by making the pain visible

A central [finding](#) of this study is that poverty was not tangential to the pandemic but deeply embedded in its geography. Counties with the highest death rates are both poorer than counties with lower death rates and have higher percentages of people of color. When the pandemic was broken down into six waves, it was revealed that after its first wave, COVID-19 became largely a "poor people's pandemic" as poor

communities grieved nearly two times the losses of richer communities during the second wave. After that, death rates spiraled even more in poor counties and vaccination rates did not explain the whole variation in death rates:

During the third wave (winter 2020-2021), death rates were **four-and-a-half times higher** in the counties with the lowest median income than in the counties with the highest median income.

During the fifth phase (Delta variant), death rates were **five times higher** in these low-income counties.

The sixth phase (Omicron) has had a death rate nearly **three times higher** in counties with lowest median incomes than highest median incomes.

The [Poor People's Pandemic Report](#) with its [interactive dashboard](#) offers an account of poverty, economic insecurity, race and COVID-19 by county and state that helps us to both develop our understanding of these intersections and summon the political will to implement bold policy solutions to fully address them.

A major mobilization is needed to confront and dismantle the exploitative economic and social systems that created the conditions for many of the negative outcomes associated with the virus

WHY WE MARCH

Mass Poor People's & Low-Wage Workers' Assembly & Moral March on Washington and to the Polls on June 18, 2022

—We march because the system is killing all of us and the pandemic taught us that, if we don't lift from the bottom, our whole society is at risk

—We march to declare that any nation that ignores nearly half of its citizens is in a moral, economic and political crisis

— We march to carry forward the lessons from the past two years and demand that we target the root causes of inequality such as poverty and discrimination, that the harm done must be repaired, and that no one is left behind.

— We march to declare that it is violent to deny people health care, a living wage and basic necessities

—We march to name poverty as the worst form of violence and show that it is killing people

—We march for 230,000 children in Washington state who live in poverty, more than the combined population of Bellingham, Yakima, and Wenatchee, and for at least twice that many who live in families with incomes too low to meet their basic needs.

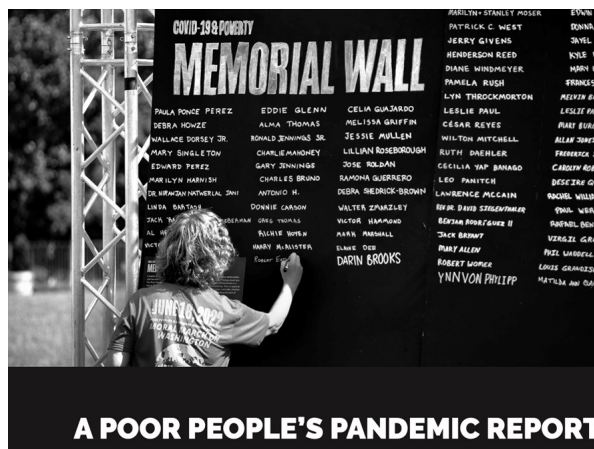
—We march to expose the inequality of the three richest billionaires in the U.S who live in Washington getting \$1 billion richer every day and yet not being required to pay the taxes we need to fund healthy communities and meet peoples' basic needs.

—We march to demonstrate our people power because for far too long, cultural wedge issues and racial fears have been used to pit poor people against one another.

WE MARCH BECAUSE WE WON'T ... WE CANNOT ... BE SILENT ANY MORE!

JOIN US!

For more information and to register/sign up, go to: www.washingtonppc.org



Biden Should Push for an International Peace Conference to End the War in Ukraine.

An editorial by Pacific Call editor John M Repp based on a [interview between Noam Chomsky and Jeremy Scahill of The Intercept](#).

There are basically two ways the war in Ukraine can end: 1) a negotiated settlement or 2) one of the two sides is destroyed or no longer able to maintain fighting. Even though reports in our mainstream media suggest that Russia is failing in its goals in the war, it is Russia that has the capacity to destroy Ukraine, so if one side is destroyed it will be Ukraine. The longer the war lasts, the more Ukraine will be physically destroyed. Usually, the shorter the war the easier it is to end with a cease-fire and peace negotiations.

The current policy of the United States under Biden is to supply massive amounts of weaponry to Ukraine and call Putin a war criminal. (Putin is a war criminal but so is George W. Bush and Dick Cheney.)

The armaments companies that make up the U.S. military-industrial complex will be making massive profits off this war.

The framework for a diplomatic settlement has three points: 1) Ukraine would become neutral in the way that Austria and Finland have been neutral during the Cold War. Those countries are not members of NATO even though they border what was once the Soviet Union. Finland now wants to join NATO. 2) A settlement could be put off on the matter of the status of the Crimean Peninsula until later, and 3) A settlement could give the Donbas region (the eastern and most Russian-speaking part of Ukraine) autonomy, possibly under a federal arrangement, again to be decided later by a neutrally managed referendum. Ukrainian President Zelensky has agreed to these three points and Putin talked about wanting Ukrainian neutrality.

The U.S. and NATO has not withdrawn the invitation to Ukraine to join NATO. There are an unknown number of U.S. advisors helping Ukrainians use the weapons we have sent them. It appears the U.S. wants to punish Putin and weaken Russia more than they want to end the war.

Russia and Ukraine have broken off peace talks for now. But what if the United States and NATO withdrew its invitation for Ukraine to join NATO and worked instead to set up an international peace summit that included the U.S. and China? We don't know if this would work. When the United States says, "all options are on the table", do they include a push for an international summit?

The U.S. intends to fight this proxy war "to the last Ukrainian!" as former U.S. Ambassador Chas Freeman has said. The wellbeing of the people of Ukraine is being sacrificed to the global political struggle between the U.S. and Russia.

With Washington (state's) nuclear targets, Putin's war feels closer to home Reprinted from the *The Seattle Times*, March 6, 2022

by [Nicholas Mele](#), who is a retired U.S. diplomat, currently coordinates the *Pax Christi USA Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament* and serves on the *Pax Christi International Working Group on Nuclear Abolition*. He lives in Bellingham.

Events in Ukraine are far from Puget Sound and, despite real-time reporting and video from the conflict, often seem like just another level of anxiety.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has brought the war much closer to home with his decision to put his nuclear forces on high alert. In fact, one reason for the cautious U.S. and European response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine is concern about triggering any use of nuclear weapons. Residents of Western Washington should be similarly concerned.

One of the world's largest stockpiles of deployable nuclear warheads sits in the U.S. Navy's submarine base, **Naval Base Kitsap**. Is it conceivable that no Russian missiles are targeted on that arsenal? Last year, some members of Congress, including several of the Washington State House delegation, tried but failed to cut funding for new nuclear weapons programs. One target of their cuts was the intercontinental ballistic missile program — hundreds of missiles in silos in three Western states and two Midwestern states that have existed for decades.

The continued possession of nuclear weapons is predicated upon the long prevailing strategy of nuclear deterrence, also known as Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD). Putin's nuclear threats and bullying behavior are an eerie echo of President Richard Nixon's "madman" strategy, which was to convince potential enemies that he was so unpredictable they could never rule out the possibility of a U.S. first strike with nuclear weapons.

If today's news from Eastern Europe does not change our thinking about nuclear weapons, consider the reality of our decades-old and threadbare imaginations when we speak of nuclear deterrence and the history of near accidents involving nuclear weapons. Many former diplomatic and military officials have been working for nuclear abolition for some time; they include President Jimmy Carter, Henry Kissinger and many others from the U.S. and other countries. Religious leaders including the Dalai Lama, the late Desmond Tutu and Pope Francis have also condemned the continued existence of nuclear weapons.

Powerful interests stand in the way of nuclear abolition, interests that President Dwight Eisenhower called the military-industrial complex. For decades, every single congressional district in the United States is home to at least one business which provides jobs by making weapons. Most Americans assume we have dismantled our nuclear arsenal but the truth is, the warheads at Naval Base Kitsap are sufficient to pose an existential threat to human life, and thousands more are deployed or stored around the country and in other countries.

If the only target in our area was the Kitsap base, that should be enough to stir us to action in favor of abolishing nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, other targets abound, from Joint Base Lewis-McChord to the industrial, intellectual and financial resources of Western Washington.

What can average citizens do? We can:

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Cont. from page 4

- Demand accountability from the overwhelming majority of elected officials who accept contributions and open their doors to the weapons' manufacturers.

- Boycott banks and investment funds that finance nuclear weapons research, development and production (dontbankonthebomb.org has lists of financial institutions that invest in nuclear weapons).

- Campaign for those corporations that are heavily involved in nuclear weapons work to disinvest. (dontbankonthebomb.org also has a list of companies that manufacture nuclear weapons and components).

- Inform ourselves and our neighbors about the way our refusal to step away from nuclear weapons is putting people around Puget Sound at risk of nuclear destruction. Several local institutions, notably the [Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action](#), which is located next to Naval Base Kitsap, offers education and opportunities to take action to abolish nuclear weapons.

The Underground Draft Resistance in Bellingham during the Vietnam War.

A summary of an article in *The Journal of the [Whatcom County Historical Society](#)* by Dan Hammill pp 38-54 entitled "Peace Underground: Quietly Helping War Resisters Reach Safety in Canada." (not yet posted on the Historical Society website at this date 4/1/2022)

by John M Repp

This article tells us about a story from Bellingham during the Vietnam War, from 1966 to 1973. There were similar efforts in many other locations around the U.S, but the proximity of Bellingham to Canada was an impetus to the efforts described here. The article contains short biographies of some of the key figures, many of whom are now dead.

Nearly 50,000 draft age men emigrated to Canada during the Vietnam war. Many had help from informal networks. Standing out is the fact that the people who played a role in the network did not talk about it to each other, nor was it reported to the public. Even an "underground" newspaper like *Northwest Passage*, circulating in Bellingham, did not report any details of the effort. There was good reason for the silence. Helping young men emigrate to Canada to avoid the draft was a Federal Crime.

There were safe houses up near the border where some draft resisters escaped through the woods at night. One common method was for a "family" with an older couple and their "younger" boy with a few other even younger children

would pose as a family driving up to Vancouver for a day trip. They all were careful to appear like a conservative family from the 1950's. Another way was to play frisbee in Peace Arch State Park and the draft resister would gradually move into the Canadian side of the park and then be picked up by someone on the other side. The border in that park was "very porous" at that time. After 9-11, that changed.

The military and the FBI had no idea what was going on. There is a memo from May 2, 1970, that has been declassified, that was sent from military intelligence to the FBI about military deserters. I will quote from the Historical Society article: "a group called THE MOVEMENT was hell-bent on destroying capitalism and replacing it with a socialist republic. It was doing so by aiding deserters 'prior to and after entering Canada to become a paramilitary part of its organization.'" The paranoia we see now in some of the right-wing groups was present in some sectors of military intelligence and the FBI during Vietnam. The young draft-resisters were fleeing a war that they opposed. They were not trying to build socialism by paramilitary action. The memo shows how out of touch the "intelligence services" were to the draft resistance going on right under their noses.

The key to the success of the underground draft resistance was the discipline manifested by the silence the participants were able to maintain. The article contrasts that silence with the gabiness so evident in the social media platforms we have today. But if the stakes were as high as they were during the Vietnam war era, I would expect people could again be disciplined and discreet.



Peace Arch Park on the border of Canada and the United States where draft resisters would play frisbee and slowly move across the border to avoid being drafted to fight in Vietnam. There would be a car waiting for them on the other side.

dir **Bernie Sanders Opening Statement to the Senate Budget Committee: April 5, 2022**

Have you heard the words below on the mainstream media? If not, why not? Bernie Sanders, still the most popular politician in the United States, is calling the United States “an oligarchy”. While millions of workers are getting paid starvation wages, over the last 45 years there has been a huge transfer of wealth, to the tune of \$50 trillion dollars, from the bottom 90% of Americans workers to the top 1%. The 1% use a little bit of their wealth to control the government through their donations to politicians which is essentially bribery and corruption. The 1% also have a control over much of the news media: newspapers, TV, radio, and web traffic. One tragic result of this is that we still have not guaranteed health care for all resulting in the death of 60,000 Americans who cannot afford to go to a doctor when they need to. Nor do we have free higher education as far as you can go and free apprenticeships, which all other rich democracies have.

Sanders: “Today in America, while the very rich are getting richer, over half of our people are living paycheck to paycheck. Millions of workers are trying to get by on \$8, \$9, or 10 bucks an hour, which, in my view, is a starvation wage.

“Today in America, income and wealth inequality is at its highest level in over 100 years. The two richest men in America now own more wealth than the bottom 42 percent – over 130 million Americans.

“During this terrible pandemic, when thousands of essential workers died doing their jobs, over 700 billionaires in America became nearly \$2 trillion richer.

“While we hear a lot of talk about the need to take on the oligarchs in Russia – something I strongly support – anyone who thinks we don’t have an oligarchy right here in our country is sorely mistaken.

“Today in America, multi-billionaires like Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson are off taking joy rides on rocket ships to outer space, [and] buying \$500 million super-yachts.

“In his budget, the President has proposed a 20% minimum tax on those who are worth at least \$100 million. That is a step forward. I would go further.

“In 2020, I introduced a 60% tax on the obscene wealth gains billionaires made during the pandemic – legislation I will soon be re-introducing, and which is enormously popular.

“Now, I understand that some of my colleagues believe this is a terrible idea because it would redistribute wealth. But the reality is that over the last 45 years there has been a massive redistribution of wealth in America. The problem is that it has gone in the wrong direction.

“According to the RAND Institute, since 1975, \$50 trillion in wealth has been redistributed from the bottom 90% to the top 1% - primarily because corporate profits and CEO compensation has grown much faster than the wages of average workers.

“But it’s not just income and wealth inequality. It is economic and political power. As we discussed at a hearing in this committee last month, three Wall Street firms control assets of over \$21 trillion which is basically the GDP of the United States, the largest economy on Earth. Three Wall Street firms.

“In terms of health care, over 72 million Americans today are either uninsured or under-insured while more than 60,000 Americans die each and every year because they cannot afford to go to a doctor when they need to.

“We remain the only major country on Earth not to guarantee health care to all people, and yet we pay the highest prices in the world for health care.”



The chart above shows the money supply in the United States compared to debt. We need a modern version of the ancient tradition of a Jubilee year, where all debts were forgiven and indebted people could get out of prison and go back to their fields and thrive...

A review of [Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America](#) (New York: Viking, 2017)

Is the U.S. a democracy?

by John M Repp

There has been a lot of talk lately about democracy in the United States. We like to think we are a democratic nation and contrast our system with the other two great powers in the world, Russia and China.

Nancy MacLean published [Democracy in Chains](#) in 2017. The main story focuses on a Nobel prize-winning economist who developed the “ideas” that the vast Koch network of organizations like ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council), (the whole stealth network is larger than the Republican party) uses to undercut the will of most of the American people, opposing popular programs Social Security, Medicare, and public schools. The basic assumption of their brand of economics is that markets should decide everything even if markets are dominated by giant for-profit organizations. It is OK with these libertarians if property owners are organized and work together in corporations but working people should not be able to cooperate in unions for example. They see democracy as the tyranny of the majority.

On page 226, MacLean quotes the work of two political scientists, Stepan and Linz, explaining that there are phrases written into the Constitution that keeps the United States from being a true democracy. The people’s collective will cannot be achieved through the legislative process in our nation, and that is unusual among advanced industrial countries. The “veto players” that block the people’s will are **four** in number: 1) “absolute veto for the Senate, 2) for the House, and 3) for the President” and 4) the fact that the Constitution itself cannot be altered without the agreement of two-thirds of the states. In effect, it is not “majority rules”, but “two-thirds rules”.

These Constitutional blocks to democracy are strengthened by the winner-takes-all Electoral College that locks in the two-party system, the Tenth Amendment that gives the states great power, and the Senate representation that clearly violates one person, one vote.

As a confirmation of Stepan and Linz thesis, we must remember that the 73rd and 74th Congresses that brought us the New Deal was more than 70 percent Democratic. Yes, there was a split between the Democrats in the north and the Democrats (or Dixiecrats) from the south based on racism, so many of the benefits of the New Deal were denied to black people. For example, Social Security was at first denied to maids and farm workers, which were the jobs most blacks in the Jim Crow south performed.

If this analysis of our Constitutional system is correct, then we are going to have to get two-thirds of both houses of Congress and a progressive President to move our country forward.



There was a unprecedented leak from the Supreme Court on May 2, 2022 of a draft version of an opinion that would overturn Roe v Wade.

Statement from Pramila Jayapal about the SCOTUS leak.

The following is a direct quote from an email from U.S. House progressive caucus chair, Pramila Jayapal, in response to the leaked Supreme Court document about abortion:

“Roe v. Wade was a 7-2 decision. It’s been a hard precedent for five decades.

So when the news broke on Monday night (May 2nd) that the Supreme Court was readying a 5-4 decision to ignore this precedent and end abortion rights as we know them in this country, it became clear to me: **SCOTUS justices lied under oath when they were testifying to Congress on this question.**

But don’t just take it from me. Here’s what Justice Neil Gorsuch had to say about Roe v. Wade during his 2017 confirmation hearing:

“It is a precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court. It was reaffirmed in Casey in 1992 and in several other cases. So a good judge will consider it as precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court worthy as treatment of precedent like any other.”

And here’s what Justice Brett Kavanaugh had to say about Roe v. Wade during his 2018 confirmation hearing:

“It is settled as a precedent of the Supreme Court, entitled the respect under principles of stare decisis. The Supreme Court has recognized the right to abortion since the 1973 Roe v. Wade case. It has reaffirmed it many times.”

Finally, here’s what Justice Samuel Alito — who drafted the presumed majority opinion on Roe v. Wade that leaked Monday — had to say during his 2006 confirmation hearing:

“Roe v. Wade is an important precedent of the Supreme Court. It was decided in 1973, so it has been on the books for a long time. It is a precedent that has now been on the books for several decades.”

If the Supreme Court strikes down Roe v. Wade, who’s to say they won’t come after other fundamental rights, like gay marriage or interracial marriage next? **This draft decision completely undermines and delegitimizes the Supreme Court as a body that can make decisions that are not just purely political.**

WRITING
LETTERS

TO THE EDITORS OF MAINSTREAM
 PRESS and *Pacific Call* IS A GOOD THING.

A letter to the *Pacific Call* April 20, 2022

I am troubled by the Academy of Motion Pictures ousting Will Smith from Oscar ceremonies for ten years. Would this have happened to a white actor? While Ukraine is being invaded by Russia and the use of chemical and nuclear weapons are threatened, and mass shootings occur almost daily in the United States, the coverage of the incident and the uproar it caused seems out of proportion. While the incident is minor in comparison to such issues as world peace, it is an example of how unconscious racism eventually damages everybody – both victims and perpetrators. It strengthens my resolve to reflect more deeply on my own words and actions so that I can treat all people with respect and dignity. Black lives matter, especially because they have not mattered to white institutions for so long. There is a direct connection to peace. Without justice, there can be no lasting peace.

Marjorie Prince, Seattle

Letter to The Seattle Times A14
 Monday, March 28, 2022

On Ukraine and Nuclear negotiations

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion of Ukraine and made a threat to use nuclear weapons if any nation came to Ukraine's defense.

We in the United States must start demanding negotiations with Russia and the other nuclear armed nations to get rid of these terrible weapons that we now see can be used to protect unjustified invasion.

John M. Repp, Bellingham

**Nuclear weapons: Eliminate all chance of
 a nuclear winter**

The Seattle Times March 7, 2022

Re: "[With Washington's nuclear targets, Putin's war feels closer to home](#)" [March 7, Opinion]:

Kudos to Nicholas Mele (see page 4) for raising the consciousness of fellow Washingtonians as to the reality of nuclear weapons disaster possibilities literally in our own back yard.

Unlike even the most powerful conventional weapons, nuclear weapons, through accident or deliberate use, could end all life on our planet through a nuclear winter. Weapons with that potential need to be totally eliminated from the face of the Earth.

Louise Lansberry, Seattle

Letter to the Editor (Cascadia Daily News, March 30, 2022, A5)

Editor,

Matthew Delorme's article, "Anglers see the growing impacts of climate change," told of the perils of climate change on our Northwest freshwater fish, shellfish beds and salmon. Having grown up in the Pacific Northwest and having enjoyed the beautiful outdoors my whole life, it is sobering to contemplate the continued degradation of our environment. What is apparent is that eventually, we will all feel the impacts. In addition, the war in Ukraine has been in the forefront of the news and the destruction of infrastructure, people's lives, and livelihoods, and the natural world is being devastated. Fossil fuels are fueling this war. The additional threat of nuclear exchange that attends this war raises the stakes considerably. The picture of Hiroshima after the dropping of the atomic bomb keeps recurring in my thoughts. Feeling powerless can sometimes overwhelm me but I believe we should write, email, show up at meetings and urge not only our nationally elected officials but also our local county and city officials to pass policies that will end our dependence on fossil fuels, mitigate climate change and end this war.

Cindy Ann Cole, Bellingham

