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City of Sacramento Leaders and Safe Ground Visit Seattle Tent and Tiny House Communities

by Paula Lomazzi

City Leaders visited Seattle with Safe Ground members on February 26 on a fact finding mission and to experience Seattle's tent and tiny house communities run by residents and SHARE WHEEL.

Those making the journey were Sacramento City Manager John Shirey, the Assistant City Manager, City Council members Harris, Hansen, Guerra and Shenirer, the Chief of Police and two others from the Police Department, two City Attorneys, two representatives from the Mayor's office, Emily Halcon, Ryan Loofbourrow, two from the Realtor's Association, a reporter, an author,



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Nicklesville Reception

Letter from the Redding Jail

By Charles Patrick Smith

I am a middle-aged transient currently enjoying the hospitality of the Shasta County Jail while being valiantly defended by my public defender from shoplifting allegations. However, this letter isn't about the "homeless problem."

I don't have much in the way of education, so I hope I'm able to convey an opinion from an entirely unheard perspective to you (and hopefully your readers)...

Every article I've read about the "homeless problem," in my simple opinion, has been little more than VIPs pontificating about statistics, 5-year plans, the various causes of homelessness, more 5-year plans,

the unmanned continuum think tank, effective solutions in other cities, and fancy graphs made by \$30,000 a year consulting firms. In a couple of other cases the articles were just plain homeless bashing and business owners bemoaning the ugly condition of the shoreline along the Sacramento River that their tour boats are forced to glide past while their patrons sip wine and snack on \$20 salads.

So in an effort to smooth things over, I'd like to apologize on behalf of the "problem" to local river guide Shane Kolbeck who said in a July 25 interview, "it's embarrassing that his clients, who come from far cities, have to see garbage, graffiti, and drunken transients." And any one else who may

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"Speaking of
Steel" - Poem

Oak Park and the Black Panthers

By David Roddy

The late 1960's saw the radicalization of many working class and people of color in the United States. At the time, Oak Park, a predominantly black and working class Sacramento neighborhood--like similar neighborhoods across the country--suffered from the dislocation of declining jobs, racial stratification, and the constant threat posed by an oppressive police force. A decade prior, black families had been relocated to Oak Park from the West End neighborhood due to an ambitious redevelopment plan. In 1962, the Highway 99 super-freeway cut off Oak Park from the whiter and more affluent Curtis Park, and rerouted traffic away from work places within the community, leaving the community both racially and physically segregated from the rest of the city.

It was within this social environment that a chapter of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense opened an office in Oak Park in 1968. Formed in 1966, the Panthers soon gained national notoriety for an armed protest at the State Assembly Chamber in Sacramento against the Mulford Act, a law forbidding the carrying of loaded weapons in public. The Mumford Act was proposed by California Republican law-makers after Black Panther Party members organized armed patrols in Oakland in response to rampant police brutality. Soon after the protest, the Party issued a Ten-Point Program, which called for the self-determination of black people in a revolutionary struggle against the interlocking systems of white supremacy and capitalism. Along with Party Chapters across the country, Sacramento Black Panthers began a Free Breakfast for Children program in the spring of 1969, serving over 150 children every morning, and set up tutoring programs to help members of the community. In addition, their activities inspired the formation of Black Student Unions at Sacramento State and Sacramento City College.

Dale McKinney was president of the SCC BSU and volunteered for the Free Breakfast for Children program in Oak Park. He remarked on the largely forgotten legacy of the Panthers:

“The Black Panthers are being vilified as a racist group, which isn't even close to the truth. Bobby Seale said we're not against white people, we're against the system that brutalizes black people. It was a deliberate strategy of COINTELPRO, the FBI, law enforcement to cause problems within the people, to keep them divided. To prevent the formation of a coalition of poor people across racial lines. At the time the Panthers basic saying was all power to the people. Among the radicals then was a deliberate push to overcome any racial barriers to a common cause to bring benefit to the people.”

On June 16, 1969, police raided the Black Panther Party office in Oak Park after responding to reports of gunshots fired near the office, which was at the time locked and unoccupied. As unknown members of the community fired back, Party members worked to clear children off the streets, opening their office doors to give shelter to those who lived too far away to escape into their homes. The police barraged the office with tear gas and bullets, leaving the Panthers to rush the occupants of the building out a back door. Officers then broke into the office and tore it apart, confiscating guns and ammunition. Street fights continued into the night, leaving twelve cops and six teenagers wounded, a reporter stabbed after youth mistook him for an officer, and 37 people arrested.

While the Sacramento chapter, with community support, regained its footing and managed to restart their breakfast program soon after the shooting, the following year gave law enforcement another opportunity to crack down on the group after the fatal shooting of Sacramento Police Officer Bernard Bennett . Another police officer

claimed the shot came from near the Party Office-witnesses on the street disagreed. Initially seven community members, including Dale McKinney, were arrested, though only four (dubbed “The Oak Park Four” by the press) were arraigned, all either members of the Party or supporters. After an eight month trial and witnesses recanting after the use of threats of violence or further convictions by law enforcement, all charges against the Oak Park Four were dismissed.

McKinney identifies the ability of the Black Panthers to build coalitions across racial lines as the biggest threat the organization posed to the system:

“I think the coalitions were a little broader in the 60's, which caused the police to really target the Black Panthers because they had shown their ability to work with all kinds of people.”

He further details how movements for racial justice today can learn from the movement in the 60's and 70's:

“I don't know if people today have really learned from that. People aren't willing to attack the base of the problem. MLK said that ‘anytime you put material things over people's lives, you're going to have a problem.’ The capitalist system puts profit over people's lives, and this will always be a problem for poor people. Because the system makes poor people expendable for the benefit of economic gain.”

“The profit motive is behind everything. The problem is systemic, the system caters to the affluent at the expense of the poor. The capitalistic system, which has fostered problems like homelessness. People are are homeless while there are residences that are empty. They are empty because the people who own own them are waiting until people can pay for them to live them.”

Brown Berets Mobilize For The Driscoll Berry Boycott

by Cathleen Williams

On January 2, dressed crisply in brown slacks, shirts, and berets, members of the Brown Berets from Sacramento, Fresno, and Watsonville gathered in Watsonville, headquarters of Driscoll Berries, to mobilize communities to support the nationwide consumer boycott against Driscoll. Brown Berets assembled again on February 21. The boycott will also be featured as part of the Cesar Chavez march on Saturday, March 26, in Sacramento.

The boycott of Driscoll berries -- strawberries, blackberries, raspberries -- was launched three years ago and is gaining momentum from walk outs by agricultural workers in the San Quintin Valley, Mexico, and Skagit, Washington. The boycott has begun to bring to light the international labor abuses of the company and other large agricultural producers.

Last spring, thousands of agricultural workers -- some estimates put the number at 50,000 -- in the valley of San Quintin, two hundred miles south of the border in Baja California, staged a dramatic walk out affecting many farming operations including Driscoll corporation and BerryMex, its subsidiary.

As pointed out by Al Rojas, the Sacramento-based President of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement -- AFL-CIO (LCLAA), wages at the time of the walkout were about 100 pesos per day, or about \$7.00. In that area of Mexico, a carton of eggs or a gallon of milk cost the equivalent of half of a day's wages.

The independent union organization of workers in San Quintin -- La Alianza (Alianza de Organizaciones Nacional, Estatal, y Municipal Por la Justicia Social) -- fought for a wage increase to \$12 a day (300 pesos), but ultimately, after the involvement of Mexican government representatives, top wages between 180-140 pesos were imposed -- without union recognition and without any means for enforcement. With recent devaluations of the peso, wages have now shrunk by 30% to nearly the level that prevailed before the work stoppage.

driving force behind the outbreak of resistance by San Quintin's workers. A four part investigative series by the Los Angeles Times, published in December 2014, exposed their readers to the barbaric labor conditions for agricultural workers in Mexico -- including the fact that "many farm laborers are essentially trapped for months at a time in rat-infested camps, often without beds and sometimes without functioning toilets or a reliable water supply."

In Bellingham, Washington, near the Canadian border, four hundred agricultural workers in the Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ), have co-ordinated with La Alianza in their three-year struggle with Driscoll's supplier Sakuma Brothers Farms. FUJ has struck and called for a boycott because of poor wages, squalid labor camps, and the retaliatory discharge of FUJ activists.

The astonishing courage and tenacity of this international movement of agricultural workers exposes not just the systematic dehumanization of labor, but the very scale and impact of globalization itself:

- the "wealth gap" that has polarized society into international corporate "winners" and low wage "losers" on the edge of survival;
- the migration of millions in search of a "life boat" due to devastation of their farms

and villages;

- the domination of an industrialized agriculture that pitilessly exploits resources and contaminates the environment, at the same time that it exposes consumers to poisoned food as evidenced by frequent recalls of produce;
- the appeasement of the public by labor leadership connected to the Democratic Party (including, sadly, the UFW), with its promises of "reform."

The Vast, Transnational, and Highly Profitable Driscoll Operation

The company has 40,000 people involved in its berry production worldwide. "Driscoll's and its Baja partners BerryMex and MoraMex have a large share of Mexico's \$550 million annual berry harvest. Last year Mexico shipped 25 million flats of strawberries to the US. Mexican shipments of 17 million flats of raspberries and 22 million flats of blackberries were larger than US domestic production." (See, David Bacon, The Nation, 8/25/15.)

Berries in the U.S. are selling up to \$7.00 per basket. Workers in San Quintin can pick 30 or more baskets per day. In other words,

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But rage at hunger wages is not the only

Watsonville Protest February 21, 2016

Driscoll Berry Boycott

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their daily wages amount to the cost of one basket.

Displacement and Migration

Displacement has fueled the migration of Mexican agricultural workers, who migrate for work from Oaxaca and Guerrero to Baja and to fields along the Pacific coast. These workers are dependent on seasonal, low wage work in part because agriculture in Mexico – especially midsize/small farms and “ejidos” (communally owned farms) – cannot compete with subsidized American corn produced by highly automated U.S. agribusiness.

Mexico has been swamped by such exports since the passage of the 1994 NAFTA trade agreement between the U.S. and Mexico. More recently, the Mexican government has reversed the agrarian programs that had supported ejidos. These farmers ended up selling their land and moving to Mexico’s swelling cities looking for work, or migrating by the millions to the U.S.

Along the Pacific Coast, the laborers picking berries for Driscoll and other large growers and distributors have migrated largely from indigenous communities “to the agricultural valleys that line the Pacific Coast. These migrants come from the same region of southern Mexico, often from the same towns. They speak the same languages...Increasingly they talk back and forth across the border, sharing tactics and developing a common strategy.” (The Nation, 8/25/15)

Environmental Degradation

In one example of environmental degradation, it was the water that initially propelled La Alianza into action. In the town

of Santa Maria de los Pinos in San Quintin, there’s no sewer service for agricultural worker families living in cement block shacks, and although there is a water line, the water is almost unusable. Children are sickened by drinking it, and families pay for water to be delivered to fill their 55 gallon drums.

The contamination of the water in the San Quintin Valley resulted from the practices and scale of agribusiness. According to one report, since the mid-1970’s, big growers and their US partners have pumped so much water from the desert aquifer that salt has infiltrated the groundwater. The largest growers are now building desalination plants and installing drip-irrigation systems in huge greenhouse complexes.

The Role of Corporate, Governmental, and Union Labor Policies

In Mexico, governmental officials are major investors in large farms, and the labor movement is dominated by the government. Except for independent unions (Sindicato Independiente Nacional Democrático de Jornaleros Agrícolas), labor has turned its back on farmworkers fighting for survival.

In the U.S., the unions which form part of the base of the Democratic Party – including the UFW – failed to oppose the “guest worker” provisions of the inhumane, failed immigration reform bill of 2013 (S-744), even though guest workers under existing law continue to undermine organizing and break strikes, as occurred in Washington when the FUJ struck Sakuma Brothers. “It’s a bracero program,” says Al Rojas, “it’s nothing new. Workers get a temporary permit for 6 months, can’t move from employer to

employer, and have no right to organize.”

In fact, in a new initiative designed to appease the public and undermine the crucial role of unions, the UFW has joined corporate growers (including a large berry company in San Quintin, Andrew and Williamson) as well as retailers to create the Equitable Food Initiative (EFI), which represents that its “stake holders” will cooperate to reform labor standards and environmental practices.

The EFI is an anti-union alliance, eliminating collective bargaining, consumer boycotts, and opposing recent walk-outs and strikes. However, it masquerades as a “consumer social responsibility program.” One of its major

players, Andrew and Williamson, was recently involved in the poisoned cilantro and deadly cucumber recalls – possibly from the lack of sanitation in the fields – and faces public relations problems.

The March of Two Californias

The international movement against Driscoll and agribusiness is building with the “March of Two Californias.” Workers and their supporters will march south from California and north from Mexico on March 17 of this year, meeting at “Friendship Park,” or “El Parque de La Amistad,” on the U.S. border, where families and friends come to visit. In the age of globalization, the struggle continues on both sides of this heartbreaking chain link fence.

A Special Thanks to Our Homeward Underwriters:

Arturo Baiocchi
Jeanie Keltner
Eileen Schnitger
Michael Solomon

Sacramento Loaves & Fishes
Organize Sacramento
Paratransit, Inc.
Merchants National Bank

Transitions Clinic 916-452-1068

3647 40th St., Sacramento, CA 95817
Email: transitions.drflynn@gmail.com

Dr. Neil Flynn, MD; Medical Director

This is a Buprenorphine & Suboxone Clinic. We are here to help people addicted to opiates; Vicoden, Oxycontin, Norco, Herion. Call for appointment.

Letter from the Redding Jail continued from page 1

also have had to endure the humiliation of looking at homeless people, I am sorry. I am very sorry you were embarrassed by elderly vets, teenage prostitutes, abused runaways, mentally ill people of every ethnicity, age and background, and socially arrested drug addicted, alcohol dependent, domestically battered reduced to sleeping in your bushes, eating from your dumpsters, and bathing and drinking your filthy river water. (It seems not a water spout in town has a nozzle attached these days.)

STAINING THE SCENERY

Until all the imported public personalities are done fine-tuning their attack plan, I fear you'll just have to keep "turning your boat away" so as not to ruin your clients' vacations. Poverty does tend to stain good scenery.

I must point out that every single article [I've read] was belittling and insulting or empty political droning. One did supply "a quick possible idea." Having churches fan out through out the city and "check on" the homeless. Good idea, honestly. But the RFD (Redding Police Department) already came up with that one. They "check on" the street people diligently and daily with handcuffs, mag lights, Tasers, and on several occasions I've witnessed ridicule and mockery – and once a pretty bone chilling death threat.

Believe me, please, a death threat from a man in a uniform carrying a gun and wearing an "I can do unto you as I please and get away with it" badge is a very, very, scary experience. As if we are not already intimate with the horrible demoralizing feeling of helplessness as we huddle together in spider infested weeds along the train tracks or on the freezing damp ground beside the less touristy parts of the river or as we are moved from any and every place we seek rest in. No, we must also be morally and psychologically crushed by the men whose credo is "to serve and protect."

Please do not mistake me. I do not speak of all RFD officers. In fact, I've had encounters with many who were kind, considerate, empathetic, and very obviously good men who literally protect people (all people, rich and poor) and serve the public...

That said, it's as though it is a crime for us to even exist – we feloniously transient human beings. We can't sleep by the river, or in

the parks, nor under the bridge, or in alleys, or empty abandoned buildings or cars in desolate parking lots or on public or private land. There is no place we can simply BE for more than a few minutes before police or code enforcement or business and land owners or tour guides shoo us away like the vermin they see us as.

WHY THEY NEED HELP

Mr. White (of the "quick idea" article) was also considerate to point out that "not all are on drugs, alcohol, etc." This may sound ungrateful in response to his condescending support, but so what if they are? Did you not yourself remind us that all that Jesus ministered to the people right where they were. And since you brought up our Lord or Savior, did He come among the people and then say to His father, "They are not all drunkards and prostitutes." He came for the sick that they may be healed, for the sinners that they may be saved. In my limited understanding I believe drug addicts and alcoholics are sick and the very sickness you feel should exclude them from being helped is why they need help.

Did you know that if a 63-year old Vietnam vet shows up begging for food and shelter at the mission and has alcohol on his breath, he gets banned for a year? Smell like pot? Banned. Behave as though under the influence of narcotics? Banned. Did Jesus say, I would heal you, would offer you salvation, but you smell like whiskey?

HELP NEEDED

Mr. White, let me assure you that the first time your girlfriend wakes up screaming, covered in spiders and shivering in the bushes, in Caldwell Park, you might want to have a drink. You may even get the notion to smoke a joint after the first time a police officer stops you at 2:00 in the morning in a remote part of town after you've been shooed from your illegal campsite and explains that he could kill you and your girlfriend while fondling his Glock and chuckling. You may even feel the need to snort some meth so you can stay awake to keep watch over your girlfriend and maybe a couple of other street friends, a 17-year old hooker, a crazy old Vietnam vet, and an illiterate 24-year old parolee (who thinks the CIA is stalking him) so that they can all get just a few hours of restless sleep.

Or maybe not. You may be utterly unshakeable and require nothing chemical to dull the heartbreak ache of being looked at and treated like nothing by 98 per cent of the people you pass during the day – or worse, watching others live that heartbreak. Perhaps you'd be stronger than the average transient while watching – powerless – as the loveliest lady I've ever met sobs in the night because she's freezing and has never been homeless until recently getting away from her abusive husband.

Or maybe you would be unmoved by the confused terror in her eyes when she's gone a couple of days hungry and off her meds, or maybe you'd stand by in stoic dignity as a 16-year old whose parents kicked him out into the streets for using drugs adds another scar to the 30 or so others along his forearms.

I am not strong. I am a weaker sort, my heart faint and my spirit dilapidated by the hopelessness, agony and soul shattering despair my fellow "street people" exist in. I am a drug addict, a drunk, an ugly tattooed piece of poor white trash with a drunk, heartbroken, once battered Native woman as my loving companion and an army of hollow, broken, beaten, molested, raped, addicted, crazy, displaced street people as my tribe, and right now in a jail pod of 40 men I'm one of 36 who are homeless, and if I had more than a 5th grade education and a better grasp on life and reality I'd call that discrimination.

In other parts of the world, in other times, a facility packed with people of one particular race, religion or class could also be called a "concentration camp!" ...

Postscript: To all the college grads and Armani suit consultants with their 5-year plans: No one is hungry tomorrow. No one is cold, lost, afraid or sick tomorrow. These demons torment us today. Today is our only reality because (blame my lack of education and mental instability again for the following) tomorrow never comes. There is only today. Hope that doesn't ruin your plans.

Reprinted from the Redding Record Searchlight (slightly abridged) with the permission of the author.

Seattle Tent and Tiny House Communities

continued from page 1

a photographer, and three members from Safe Ground Sacramento.

The tours included Tent City 3, Tent City 5, Nicklesville in Ballard, and a lunch meeting with members of SHARE and WHEEL, Low Income Housing Institute, and residents of the three locations. Afterwards, Sacramento City leaders met with their Seattle counterparts.

Below: Tent City 5 Tour

Right: Tent City 3 Tour



Left: Nicklesville Tiny Houses



Right: Tent City 5

Left: Tent City 5 Presentation



“New Gun”

by Spencer Hoffman

They call me Bridge and Tunnel
‘cause I float in with the leaves
under eaves
sleeping

No cloak and dagger
Just a backpack and a coat of arms
ten packets of ketchup
The boredom of hunger (don’t move a muscle)
Still I stepped on a snail
and regretted when its shell gave way
I’m sure you relate

J. bought a new gun
I saw it in the motel parking lot
Gray as it touched my skin
And since I’ve been a bullet
Waiting for a hammer

They say some ephemeral tat
Binds man and woman
to be certain is to err
Only for those who can chose to ignore
But under these trees in the park
In the city shadow gun-gray dark
The brown and black leaves cake
Around the gutters to be swept
When rain finally comes

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Resources List

Night Shelters**Salvation Army:** 12th and North B St. 30 days per year: Dormitory living, C&S: Dinner, breakfast clothing for residents: Men/Women: Sign-up SA patio weekdays at 1PM. 442-0331**St. Johnis Shelter:** Women and Children. 4410 Power Inn Rd. Call between 10am & 3pm for space availability. 453-1482**Union Gospel Mission:** 400 Bannon St. Beds for Men Only, sign up 6:30pm at mission, Newcomers/Referrals have priority. 7:30pm Chapel Service with meal afterwards, 6am breakfast for residents. Showers / shaves 9-11am & 1-2:45pm. open to all homeless men: 447-3268**Next Move (formerly SAEHC)** 24 hr Family Shelter; Families, single adults with children who have no other resource: Women's Refuge; single women, no children: Call for screening/space availability 455-2160**Day Shelters****Friendship Park:** 12th St. & North C: Weekdays 7am - 2:30pm: open to anyone: Many services**Meals****Union Gospel Mission:** 400 Bannon St.: 7 days, Evening meal, Men/Women: Church service 7:00pm required, dinner following 8:30-9:15pm. Sunday 11am service, lunch at noon. 447-3268**Loaves & Fishes:** 1321 No. C St.: Lunch every day 11:30am-1pm. Tickets available 7 am- 12:30 pm at Friendship Park weekdays: at 8 am on Saturday and 10am on Sundays .**Women's Civic Improvement Center:** Seniors Only: 3555 3rd Ave. 11:30-12:30 lunch M-F 452-2866**Food-not-Bombs:** serves free food in Cesar Chavez Plaza, 9th & J St., every Sunday 1:30 pm. All Welcome.**Foundation of Faith Ministries** 2721 Dawes St. Rancho Cordova. Every 4th Sat. 3-5 pm All Welcome.**Glory Bound Street Ministry** 4527 Parker Ave. Sundays; breakfast 11:30 am after 10 am church service; dinner 6:30 pm after 5 pm church service: Fridays; dinner 7 pm after 6 pm church service. Must attend services. 452-7078**Women & Children****Maryhouse:** 1321 No. C St. suite 32: Breakfast for Women and children 8am-9am. Day shelter 8am-3pm weekdays for women and families.**Wellspring** 3414 4th St.: T&Th full breakfast: M-W-F continental breakfast for women and children. 454-9688

see Youth Services for young adults

Free Clothing**Sacramento Food Bank:** 3333 3rd Ave. (at Broadway) 10am-2pm Mon - Fri. 456-1980**Union Gospel Mission:** 400 Bannon St. Men: M-Sat 9-11am or 1-2:45pm: Women and Children: Thurs. 9 am signup, 9:30-10am bible study, 10 am - 12 pm shop. 447-3268**Glory Bound Street Ministry** 4527 Parker Ave. Clothes Closet, Sundays 11:30 am all welcome. 452-7078**Medical****Mercy Clinic:** For homeless adults, children: Nurse's office in Friendship park 7:30am & 12:30pm. 446-3345**Sacramento Dental Clinic:** 4600 Broadway (Primary Care Bldg) Walk-ins 8 am - 12:30 pm 874-8300**Mental Health****Guest House, 1400 N. A St.:** Homeless Mental Health Clinic, Tues, Wed, Thurs, 8-am only. Mental Health evaluation, medication if needed. Housing referrals for mentally ill, GA refs, SSI aps, refs to A & D counseling: 443-6972**TLCS Intake Offices:** 1400 N. A St. Bldg. A: Adults 18 yrs & up; Referrals to transitional living programs, independent living, mental health support services; SSI/SSDI application assistance; Walk-ins 8-11am M-F 440-1500**Genesis:** Professional Counseling for life problems. Referrals. 401 12th St. (DeLaney Center). 699-1536**Youth Services****Wind Youth Services:** Drop-In Center for youth (ages 12-24) experiencing homelessness: 1722 J Street, M-F 9am-6pm, S-S 10am-2pm: Emergency shelter for ages 12-17, call **1-800-339-7177**: Emergency shelter for ages 18-24, call **916-561-4900**. Services also include: street outreach, case management, mental health**Crisis Intervention****WEAVE:** Services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children. Referrals to court mandated battery intervention programs, Safe house, 24 hr. crisis line: 920-2952**AIDS / HIV****AIDS Housing Alliance** provides residential care, transitional housing & permanent housing services to homeless persons living with aids. 329-1093 weekdays.**CARES (Center for AIDS Research, Education and Service):** 1500 21st ST. Serves people with HIV and AIDS. Medical care, mental health, case mgmt, health ed and regional prevention/ed classes. 443-3299**Breaking Barriers:** Homeless Outreach Program provides direct services to people living with AIDS and HIV. Transportation to social services, medical appointments, job interviews, and housing assistance. 447-2437**Harm Reduction Services:** 40001 12 Ave.; High risk outreach; HIV, Hep-C testing; case management for HIV; free medical clinic, needle exchange. 456-4849**Alternative Test Site:** Free anonymous HIV testing, Wed /Thurs. Call for appt. 874-7720.**Legal Aid****Disability Rights, CA:** Free legal services for people with disabilities. Call for appt. toll free: TTY:(800)776-5746**Tommy Clinkenbeard Legal Clinic:** 401 12th St. (DeLaney Center) Free legal assistance and advocacy for problems related to homelessness. 446-0368**Legal Services of Northern California, Inc:** 515 12th St. (at E ST.) M-F 8:30am-12pm, 1pm-5pm. Problems with public benefits, landlord / tenant, divorce clinic. Call for appt. 551-2150**Welfare Rights:** 1901 Alhambra Blvd. (2nd floor) M-F 9am-5pm: AFDC, Food Stamps, Workfare and Medical rep at hearings. 736-0616**Social Security Disability / SSI Lawyer Free Consultation** (916) 658-1880**Veterans****VA Outreach:** 1-800-827-1000**Homeless VA Coordinator:** (916) 364-6547**About SHA**

The Sacramento Housing Alliance is a network of concerned citizens who promote decent affordable housing for low income households and homeless people through advocacy and participation in public discourse.

For more info, or if you would like to participate, please call:

(916) 455-4900<http://sachousingalliance.org>1800 21st Street Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95811*The SHA does not itself
provide or manage housing.*

Mather VA Social Works: help getting DD-214, any vet. (916) 843-7064

Sacramento Veterans Resource Center
2720 East Southgate Dr. 393-8387**Miscellaneous****Francis House Center 1422 C St.** Must get a lottery number 9am. M,Tu,Th,F for Direct Services: ID vouchers, transp. assistance; In depth resource coaching by apt.; Veteran's advocac.; Notary services Thurs. call for apt.; Job Development Center M,Tu,Th,F 9:30am - 1pm. Family Rescue motel vouchers for qualified families Mon. 1pm. **(916) 443-2646****Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services:** 3333 3rd Ave. (south of Broadway) Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 10am-1:30pm, and Wed 4pm-7pm. 456-1980.**Social Services:** 28th & R ST. M-F 7:30am-5pm. Call for asst. 874-2072**Employment Development Department (EDD):** 2901 50th St. (at Broadway) M-F 8am-5pm. Unemployment, job services. 227-0300**Medi-Cal:** 1-800-773-6467, 1-888-747-1222. Or see DHA eligibility workers 1725 28th St. 916-874-2256**Social Security Office:** 8581 Folsom Blvd (East of College Greens Lite-rail stop, past the flea market) M-F 9am-4:30pm 381-9410: Natl line 1-800-772-1213**211 Sacramento**Dial 211
for tele-info & referral service**Califorina Youth Crisis Line:**
1-800-843-5200**Health Rights Hotline:**
551-2100

Welcome to Homeward:

Please help us make a difference!



Homeward Street Journal has been publishing since 1997 as a non-profit project of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing

Committee, which is a member of the Sacramento Housing Alliance. The paper's mission is to alleviate miscommunication between communities by educating the public about housing and poverty issues, and by giving homeless people a voice in the public forum. Homeward also informs homeless persons of shelter and occupational assistance, and acts as a creative self-help opportunity for those individuals who wish to participate.

The opinions expressed in Homeward are those of the authors, and not necessarily the Sacramento Housing Alliance or SHOC or Homeward.**Submissions and Editorial Policy**

We welcome any participation or contributions: Articles, poems and other writing can be submitted at our office in Friendship Park, or mailed to the address below.

All writing submitted for publication will be edited as necessary, with due respect for the author's intent. The editors will attempt to consult with an author if changes are necessary, however, the paper will go to print with the story as edited if the author is unavailable.

All Letters to the Editor must be signed to be published. If the writer wishes to remain anonymous s/he should so state, but the letter must still be signed .

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PO Box 952
Sacramento, CA 95812The paper may be reached at:
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Speaking Of Steel

By Cathleen Williams

1.

not a fugue of passionate violence
wanton, wasted, waiting for the sound
that spells defeat like a knell
at the end
of each round, each blood mix
splashed from the ring with a bucket –

Chaotic, ferocious, blind
species that we are.
From the gutters of Paris
the commune seizes the streets,
makes its claim
on the 18th of March, 1871:

The proletarians of Paris
In the midst of the defeats and betrayals
Have come to understand
...Have realized
Their highest duty and absolute right...
[Is] to make themselves master
of their own fate...

2.

Blind to the odds
outmanned, overpowered
twenty one years later
knowing nothing of Paris
emaciated, grimy
locked out

thousands of steel workers
pour down the hills of Pittsburg
to the Homestead works
tear down Henry Clay Frick's
wooden barricades
reach and grasp for once
the black cathedrals
the dungeons of taconite ore, coke, limestone

these who wield
the gloves of god
the sapphire fire
the iron spars like frost above the boil of slag
half men half beast
slaves
in the hell of their own
forging

iron bread for a devil's breakfast

Hungarian, Polish, Irish, and
hayseeds off the farm
strikers speak as they organize
their armed commune in the town
control the press
close the taverns
seize the mill and kill the Pinkertons
First of July 1892:

It is part of the program of the strikers
That the great Carnegie plant
Be preserved intact and free...
Their labor built up this mammoth plant,
And their care must preserve it
For the future of their families
When the battle shall have been won.

blind
vision beyond dream
blind to loss and consequence
blind to exile and wandering
crushed on the roads
the scattering the spreading out
each and every striker
evicted from Carnegie's sagging tenements
where they drank the water of the Monangahela
clotted with industrial waste and sewage

that day the women stampede
through the broken fence
five hundred strong, long battered
by drunkard husbands
after twelve hour shifts crawling out and back

led by a white haired grand mother
quick and swift, lifting their skirts,
rushing along the treacherous
tracks and trestles
to take the mill.

thereafter thrust
into anonymity and shadow
but like the blind, like the deaf,
they see, they hear,
wave upon wave, complex,
objective and mysterious
for a moment they sing

so the name Allegheny
whispers through the centuries
this the land
President Lincoln could not do without
here the Union cannonballs
the tracks and bridges
of Vanderbilt and Morgan
here the gates of Panama
here the unholy igneous flow
of all war here
the sky scraper and tin can.

3.

the memory of the people
lost like the house
you were born in
eviction
from the house of memory

misshapen old man
steadies on a wall
with one hand
a place, a name, a past
appears birthed out
wingless angel of homelessness
in an L.A. doorway
sacrifice zone
where even the commonest birds are few
and the people look dumbfounded.

Like a terror filled fantasy.
the work is gone.

4.

'77 in Youngstown
five hundred men
tear out the door
to the payroll office.
It still hangs part open on its hinges.

A million tons
idle taconite ore, coke, limestone
in pits and caverns, pyramidal piles
the black debris that's left.

Open hearths
cool and crack
heat goes and steel dies
the chairman replies
the mill had become antiquated.
"They dismantled that sh-t,"
General Dogon says
at breakfast
in L.A.

5.

Since August 2015 locked out in six states
by Allegheny Technology
the faces of three steelworkers
on a back page of the New York Times

bare and patient as trees are
in November
they turn slightly from the photographer
one woman, two men
one white, one black.
Allegheny, the name
whispers through the centuries.

The new plant built on overtime
is painted a cool blue.
Strike funds running out.
They build a hut
by the gates
make a fire in an oil barrel.
Intransigence useless.
Miles of millimeter thick metal
roll out shining without them.

6.

Sarah and I were at the window of
one of those caf  s in Berkeley
winter day uncertain, uneasily
blurring the shadows
we are talking about the children
of Flint
and outside
a young man who
might as well have been Jesus
with his brown hair
swinging at the shoulder
we thought he might be searching
for cigarette butts
a sad yet respectable occupation
then realize he is simply
handling bits of trash
carefully throwing each away
into a green can on the corner
he puts aside a cylindrical battery
as if it was important
he passes in and out of sight
returning to his obsession
wearing the athletic clothes
of his generation
he who had awakened wide eyed
when a baby and lifted up.

what happened to all those people
who got spread all over the country
no job no home no peace no rest
sings Bruce Springsteen,
in the song, Youngstown.

journey to nowhere
riding the grainer
heard him call my name
blew past me
never saw him again
lost in the wind and rain

through snowy Denver
to California
like a bitter promised land

the song resounds even now
wave upon wave, complex,
objective, mysterious
like the listening of the deaf
the song swings on
to the last meadowlark in a vineyard of dew
and even after
as long as we live and die
and whether
we live
or die

processes, each wave upon wave
each leaf upon leaf unfolding.

you may disagree
but damn
let's discuss it.