



South Florida Progressive bulletin



EVENTS AND ACTIVISM CALENDAR:

- Apr 23 Deportation Rally 3 pm**
11226 NW 20th St, Miami
- Apr 24 Art Build for Climate March 6 pm**
8300 N Biscayne, Miami
- Apr 25 Workshop to stop development of pine rocklands in Everglades NP 6-8 pm**
Deering Estate 16701 SW 72nd Ave, Miami; Center for Biological Diversity
- Apr 25 Labor Community Roundtable 7 pm**
AFL-CIO: 4349 NW 36th St; MiamiSprings
- Apr 26 DEC 7 pm; 8000 NW 21st St, Miami**
- Apr 26 North Broward Democratic Club 7:30 pm**
1801 NE 6th St; Pompano Beach -
Guest - Stephen Bittel
- Apr 26 Amarna at Yeelen Gallery 7pm-12**
294 NW 54th St Miami
- Apr 29 Climate Rally/March Miami Dade 1 pm**
Jose Marti Park 351 SW 4th; Miami
- Apr 29 - Climate Rally/March Broward 2 pm.**
George English Park-1101 Bayview Dr,
Fort Lauderdale
- Apr 30 Indivisible South Florida 3-5 pm**
1480 SW 9th Ave; FortLauderdale
- Apr 30 Japanese Spring Festival 1-4 pm**
2000 Convention Str Dr, Miami Beach
- May 1 Haitian Heritage Month Reception 6:30**
770 NE 125th St, North Miami
- May 1 May Day Rally and March 5 pm**
111 NW 1st St, Miami
- May 1 March for Immigrant & Worker Justice**
5-7 pm; host SEIU and POWIR
- May 6 Justice Saturday 9am-3:45**
3970 NW 21st Ave, Oakland Park \$20
includes breakfast and lunch, Tim
Canova, Kindra Muntz speakers
- May 12 Broward PDA Meeting**
599 SW 2nd Ave; Fort Lauderdale
- May 13 Indivisible March Against Trump 10am**
3000 NW 87th Ave; Doral
- May 18 Broward Progressive Dem Caucus 6:30**
1700 NW 66th Ave #100; Plantation

April 30, 2017

From Bill Moyers and Co's Steven Harper and his **100 Days of Deconstruction Part I**: Donald Trump may be a racist, misogynist, sexual predator, liar and bully, but he is still president of the United States, and we underestimate him at the nation's peril. Viewed in isolation, his policies seem idiosyncratic and incoherent. Viewed in context, they reveal a strategy to plunder the government of what is profitable to Trump's family and minions and leave what remains smoldering in the ruins. If Trump succeeds, little of what makes America great survives. But knowledge is power, so read these essays and keep fighting in this decisive battle for our country's heart and soul. Link: <http://billmoyers.com/story/trump-100-days-of-deconstruction/#.WPip6v6OIHx.facebook>

Since the democratic party has as yet refused to acknowledge complicity in the election of Donald Trump, the subject continues to be evaluated. Jonathan Tasini, a Bernie Sanders surrogate during the primaries, says: "Democrats should be voicing clearly that the real threat to people is the power of big corporations racing across the globe, plundering the planet and exploiting people of all races. Hillary Clinton was not that voice, allowing Donald Trump, a man who has used the broken economic system to defraud thousands of regular people, to seize the populist megaphone. If the party fails to embrace a different vision of America, and a different idea about the country's place in the world, Democrats will not win – and they should not win."

The Criminal Justice Task Force Bill favored by Florida's ACLU is now in the rules committee after a favorable send-off from appropriations. Other bills which are part of this large reform such as lowering sentence requirements for first time offenders are also moving through the state legislature.



Bernie Sanders took time during his recent speaking stop to visit Little Haiti and Liberty City. He learned about efforts at gentrification that developers are attempting in these neighborhoods, and urged the people to stand for their neighborhoods against the developers seeking to profit from building condominiums for wealthy people and moving out the local residents. Sanders stressed it will take all of us to defeat the wealthy trying to buy our governments at every level. Here he is with St. James Valsin, Marlene Bastien, Kencie K. Parts, Lola Roe and Jack Lieberman.

From **VOTE Solar...** The House Commerce Committee unanimously passed Amendment 4 implementation bill HB 1351, moving forward a major opportunity to continue growing solar jobs and economic investments in the Sunshine State. For months, we've worked with House Majority Leader Ray Rodrigues, the solar industry, and other advocates to get it right -- and ensure that the families and businesses wouldn't face arbitrary barriers to choosing solar.

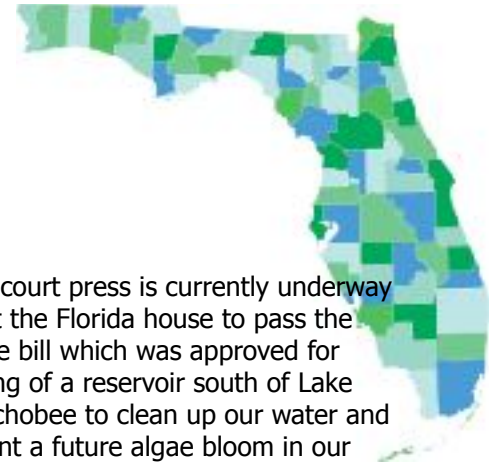
We also made headway as the Senate implementation bill SB 90 soared through the Appropriations Committee. The bill passed Appropriations unanimously.

Tim Canova, law professor and former Congressional candidate, is the chairman of Progress for All, a federally registered political action committee. Progress for All, headquartered in Hollywood Florida, accepts no corporate PAC money, and no anonymous donations.

During a recent meeting of the Broward Progressive Democratic Caucus, Canova was speaking of the 'regressive and retarded' state government in Florida, where progressive ballot initiatives are passed by overwhelming majorities and are never implemented by the legislature. He said our voters are ahead of our politicians on solar, on medical marijuana, on saving the Everglades and our water supply. Should we have a referendum on making referendums self implementing so that the people's work is accomplished? What recourse do we have?



A suggestion was made that we go to Tallahassee in carpools, buses, and shut it down until our legislature listens to us. Canova also promoted the idea that the divestment movement, which was the straw that broke apartheid in South Africa is an effective tool to break the back of corporate control in the US. For more information visit www.progressforall.org



A full court press is currently underway to get the Florida house to pass the senate bill which was approved for funding of a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee to clean up our water and prevent a future algae bloom in our rivers. "All Floridians should get behind this important effort to build a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee where waters flowing from the lake will be treated, stored and released into the Everglades. This will recharge the Biscayne Aquifer which is already suffering from salt water intrusion from climate change and rising sea levels... We now turn our energies to demanding passage of H.B. 762 in the Florida House — starting with the House Natural Resources & Public Lands Subcommittee. We need to let our public servants know that we are watching and we will remember at election time. They are either with us — we the people — or they're with the Big Sugar companies."

~Progress for All

Progress for All is providing a link on their website to contact your Florida representatives about this bill. <http://progressforall.org/2017/04/17/fight-to-stop-toxic-blue-green-algae-contamination-of-our-waterways/>

Yeelen Gallery, located in Miami's Little Haiti, is more than just a commercial art gallery, but a powerful space that nurtures political thought, social advancement, and community building. Owned and operated by Karla Ferguson-Soimaud, Yeelen Gallery boasts an impressive roster of artists rooted in exploring race, class, and gender at the intersection of visual arts. Notable painters such as Tim Okamura, Sylvia Maier, and Patrick Earle Hammie use their canvases to examine narratives centered around female empowerment, gun violence, identity and sexuality.

Racism is alive and well in Florida in 2017

With the controversy brewed by Frank Artile's racist remarks as a Florida Senator, we are tasting some success in his resignation from office. But we must remember the legacy of racism in Florida is hideous and deep. In the current legislative session a bill has passed asking Governor Scott to issue an official apology to the families of three of the 'Groveland Four.' Falsely accused in 1949 of rape, these black men were tried and found guilty by all white juries. The law officers involved killed two of the four while in custody, and shot one of the others who played dead to survive. The evidence that was introduced at trial was manufactured by a deputy, and the evidence from the doctor who examined the victim was not presented because his statement could not confirm a rape had occurred. Where is the humanity of these law enforcement officers, officers of the court, who could beat and torture and convict these young men just because of their black skin? Look at their innocent faces, see the potential that was robbed from them, from their families, from all of us. HCR 631 has passed the Florida House unanimously in April of 2017 and is expected to clear the FL Senate and go to the Scott for signing. The families are also asking for expedited posthumous pardons.

Recently elected State Attorney Aramis Ayala was removed from possible death penalty cases by Governor Scott because she would not seek the death penalty in the Markeith Lloyd murder case. Scott and his surrogates have vilified Ms. Ayala in the press in spite of her elected position, in spite of her legal discretion, and in spite of the legacy of racism in death penalty verdicts within the justice system as a whole. A noose was delivered to her office recently, following her public clash with the governor. White supremacists are feeling their oats in Trumpland; it is still shameful hatred exists among we, the people, who were all born innocents.

Why the sense of outrage about Senator Artile's comments? He slandered his fellow legislators, disgraced the public office to which he was elected, and exposed once again the hideous underbelly of racism, Racism that doesn't even fade away let alone die! Black men are dying in the street from racist cops in Florida, white legislators are using racist language in private clubs in Tallahassee. No one is looking away from Frank Artiles at this point, but what is the appropriate response? He was fairly accused of the deed, and he admitted it. But he is elected to office to represent people from his district in south Florida and also he is elected to represent *all* of the people. If he cannot acknowledge and embrace the humanity of all people, of all races, religions, ethnicities and gender orientation, he has no business assuming public office. He should be removed. The pressure has reached Mr. Artiles and he has agreed to resign from the legislature.



Three of the Groveland Four (One was already killed during apprehension and arrest.) All were innocent but were tortured and not guilty of any rape as accused.



Orange County State Attorney Aramis Ayala, who has been publicly eviscerated by Governor Scott for her refusal to seek the death penalty. Ayala received a noose from an anonymous racist at her office recently, since the public battle with Scott.



The Florida Supreme Court just approved the Voting Restoration Amendment for placement on the ballot! This is a WATERSHED moment! This moment is a direct result of the organic Grassroots effort of Floridians throughout the state that stood on grounds of fairness and public safety.
~Desmond Meade

Mr. and Mrs. Desmond Meade at FL Supreme Court

The chief purpose of the amendment is to automatically restore voting rights to felony offenders, except those convicted of murder or felony sexual offenses, upon completion of all terms of their sentence. ~Justice Fred Lewis

We Don't Need Better, More Accountable Police. We Need Less Policing

Last week, a North Miami cop was arrested and charged in the shooting of Charles Kinsey, an unarmed therapist, as he was trying to coax his severely autistic patient back the group home he'd left. A cell phone video, which we all saw, captured Kinsey, lying on his back, on the ground, arms raised, pleading with the cops not to shoot. This was just one more in a long list of questionable police shootings of unarmed Black and Brown people which have led to Black Lives Matter protests all around the country. Luckily, this time the victim survived.

Officer Jonathan Aledda is charged with attempted manslaughter and culpable negligence (a misdemeanor). He remains suspended with pay.

This is the first time an on-duty officer has been charged for a shooting by prosecutors under Miami-Dade State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle, who came into office in 1993. Aledda was one of several cops responding to a 911 call of a disturbed individual, possibly armed with a gun - which turned out to be a toy silver train. He was 152 feet away, armed with an M4 carbine, without a scope, when he shot the therapist. Two other officers who were only 20 feet away did not feel threatened and were about to approach and handcuff the autistic man when Aledda fired. They observed no behavior that would compel them to shoot.

Nevertheless, Miami-Dade police union chief John Rivera has claimed: "The law is a very simple thing ...They're never going to be able to prove that this guy acted maliciously or recklessly in any way." And Rivera is probably right.

Police are unlikely to be charged and even more likely to be convicted

Indeed, convictions of police for shooting, even killing, unarmed people of color are rare. The last police officer to be convicted of a shooting in Miami-Dade was William Lozano, who shot an unarmed black motorcyclist in 1989, leading to several days of rioting. A jury convicted Lozano of manslaughter - but the conviction was overturned on appeal, and a second jury acquitted him.

After that, no Florida police officer was arrested for an on-duty shooting until Broward Deputy Peter Peraza was arrested in December 2015 for the killing of a man walking down the street with BB-rifle. Again, there was no conviction and a judge later dismissed the case after ruling Peraza acted in self-defense.

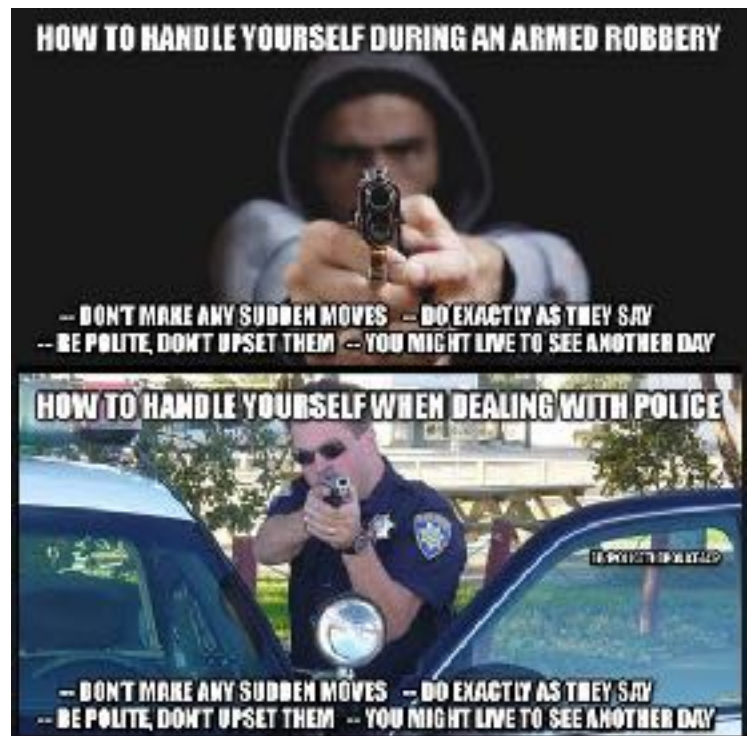
More recently, the trial of Michael Slager, the North Carolina cop whose videotaped killing of an unarmed fleeing black man shocked the nation, ended in a mistrial in December 2016. Slager, a traffic cop, who had stopped Walter Scott for a broken tail-light, started firing 8 shots at the fleeing man, from a distance of 17 feet. The jury of 11 whites and 1 black was 1 vote short of a unanimous guilty verdict.

What We Need is to De-Police

Despite decades of study and efforts to reform the police, and billions of dollars spent on the latest technology aimed at helping them do a better job, it seems that little progress has been made. What has changed is that cellphone videos - like the one used to record the North Miami shooting - keep showing us images of cops shooting and otherwise abusing unarmed people of color.

Policing doesn't need to be reformed. It needs to be minimized in poor and minority areas where it functions more to contain and control than to serve and protect. Based on the understanding that police and prisons are tools of state coercion that serve to maintain existing economic and racial inequality, groups like Critical Resistance and the National Lawyers Guild, are calling for the eventual abolition of policing and prisons as we know them, offering a different concept of policing: de-policing.

We know that 'stop and frisk' police tactics and armed cops stopping motorists for minor traffic issues, like broken taillights, enable racist state violence. Why not limit police to investigating major crimes and have other service providers - like social workers, ministers, mental health experts - be first responders to 9111 calls? Since we already have lost most of our privacy, why not have cameras recording traffic offenses and summonses mailed to people's homes? And let's stop being a country where the solution to just about every social problem is to create a law against it, send armed cops to enforce it, and punish people who break it. ~ Audrey Bomse



Bernie Sanders and Tom Perez came to Miami Florida April 19th for their 'Come Together and Fight Back' tour. This was an event planned by the democratic party and Bernie Sanders to unify the democrats in more than opposition to Trump, and to expose red state voters to the democrats' message. How curious is it that Moveon posted an invitation to the event on a different date than the actual date of the event in Miami. Some unity! Sabotage is NOT unity!

Editor's Note: I anticipate that I might be challenged for my inability to observe some of the rules of our written language. As our governmental institutions are ignored and diminished by the refusal of the republican'ts to observe the rules of our government, I am unable to exercise the rules of capitalization and some grammar. Republican't is not in our dictionary but the word republicans implies a level of civility that our current officials do not exercise. I know the difference. I am empowered to exercise language as fits our current government; at every level there is illegitimacy. The far right minority has bribed its way into majority representation, buying our institutions and then destroying what does not serve their oligarchy. I can't pretend it is legitimate.



BRAND NEW CONGRESS

Cori Bush is our first candidate for Brand New Congress! Cori is running to represent Missouri's 1st congressional district. She's the first of many BNC candidates, and we want her campaign to send a message. This is the moment we prove Brand New Congress is more than an idea. This is the moment we put the establishment on notice. Use this link to donate to her campaign and build your faith in our future: https://secure.actblue.com/contribute/page/votecoribush?utm_source=cori_bush_launch&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=bnc_prior



Rep. Joe Kennedy III



Occupy Blackboard
TR/occupyHQ

"President Trump's budget reinforces inequities in our classrooms, our courtrooms, our behavioral health centers and every community across this country. It threatens the science that makes us strong, the diplomats that keep us safe, and the local investment on which our entire economy depends.

Most painfully, but least surprisingly, it tries to codify the Trump worldview: that human need is the result of personal shortcoming, rather than systemic injustice. That those among us who need support – in housing, in health care, in aging, in the simple dignity of putting food on the table for their families – deserve a cold shoulder instead."

A new survey, by Harvard University and The Harris Poll was conducted about Bernie Sanders. "In the face of endless propaganda from Democratic establishment leaders, a new poll finds that Bernie Sanders' (I-Vermont) popularity is greater among minorities and women than among whites and men. The poll shows 55 percent of men and 52 percent of whites approve of Bernie Sanders. However, Sanders is approved by 73 percent of African Americans, 68 percent of Hispanics, 62 percent of Asian Americans, and 58 percent of women. And even though Sanders identifies as independent, 80 percent of Democrats approve of him." ~ Tom Cahill, Resistance Report

- **Indivisible Miami** is starting a golf ball campaign, using golf balls with the hash tag "balls4trump" to send messages to Trump and members of Congress. We invite every Indivisible Chapter to join us.
- Trump's expensive hobby is costing taxpayers millions and millions of dollars. We find this outrageous, particularly because he proposes care-less budget cuts that slash federal spending on the arts, healthcare, transportation, the environment and long established citizen safety nets, while giving huge tax breaks to the wealthy.
- Use plastic golf balls and mail these to the President at the White House and to your members of Congress.



Tribunal judges: Monsanto violates basic human rights to a healthy environment

An independent tribunal was held last fall in the Hague, Netherlands, on Monsanto, where evidence was presented about the company's practices and the impacts of its practices all over the world. The initial plan was for the results to be published within a month, but after the volume of testimony it was clear that more time would be needed to evaluate the findings. The results were published April 18th, 2017. This is a summary:

The five international judges for the Monsanto Tribunal presented their legal opinion Tuesday, which includes key

conclusions on the conduct of Monsanto and the need for important changes to international laws governing multinational corporations.

The judges concluded that Monsanto has engaged in practices that have impinged on the basic human right to a healthy environment, the right to food and the right to health. Additionally, Monsanto's conduct has a negative impact on the right of scientists to freely conduct indispensable research.

The judges also concluded that despite the development of regulations intended to protect the environment, a gap remains between commitments and the reality of environmental protection. International law should now precisely and clearly assert the protection of the environment and establish the crime of ecocide. The Tribunal concluded that if ecocide were formally recognized as a crime in international criminal law, the activities of Monsanto could possibly constitute a crime of ecocide.

In the third part of the advisory opinion, the Tribunal focused on the widening gap between international human rights law and corporate accountability.

It called for the need to assert the primacy of international human and environmental rights law. *A set of legal rules is in place to protect investors' rights in the frame of the World Trade Organization and in bilateral investment treaties and in clauses in free-trade agreements. These provisions tend to undermine the capacity of nations to maintain policies, laws and practices protecting human and environmental rights. United Nations bodies urgently need to take action. Otherwise, key questions of human and environmental rights violations will be resolved by private tribunals operating entirely outside the United Nations framework.*

The Tribunal also urged to hold non-state actors responsible within international human rights law. The Tribunal reiterated that multinational enterprises should be recognized as responsible actors and should be subjected to the International Criminal Court jurisdiction in case of infringement of fundamental rights. The Tribunal clearly identified and denounced a severe disparity between the rights of multinational corporations and their obligations. **Therefore, the advisory opinion encouraged authoritative bodies to protect the effectiveness of international human rights and environmental law against the conduct of multinational corporations.**

The very clear conclusions will be of interest to both the critics of Monsanto and industrial agriculture and to the shareholders of chemical companies and especially Bayer. The reputation of Monsanto – and Bayer in case of a merger – will not exactly improve with these conclusions by the judges of the Tribunal. The advisory opinion is a strong signal to those involved in international law, but also to the victims of toxic chemicals.

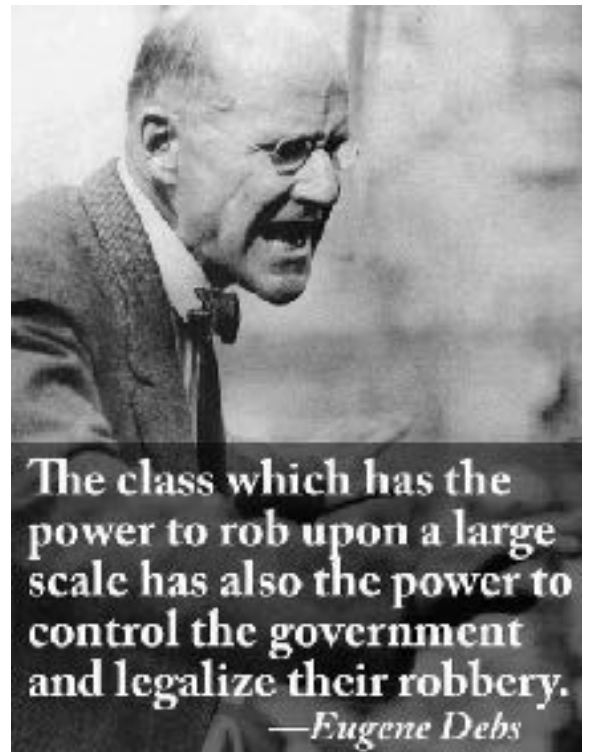
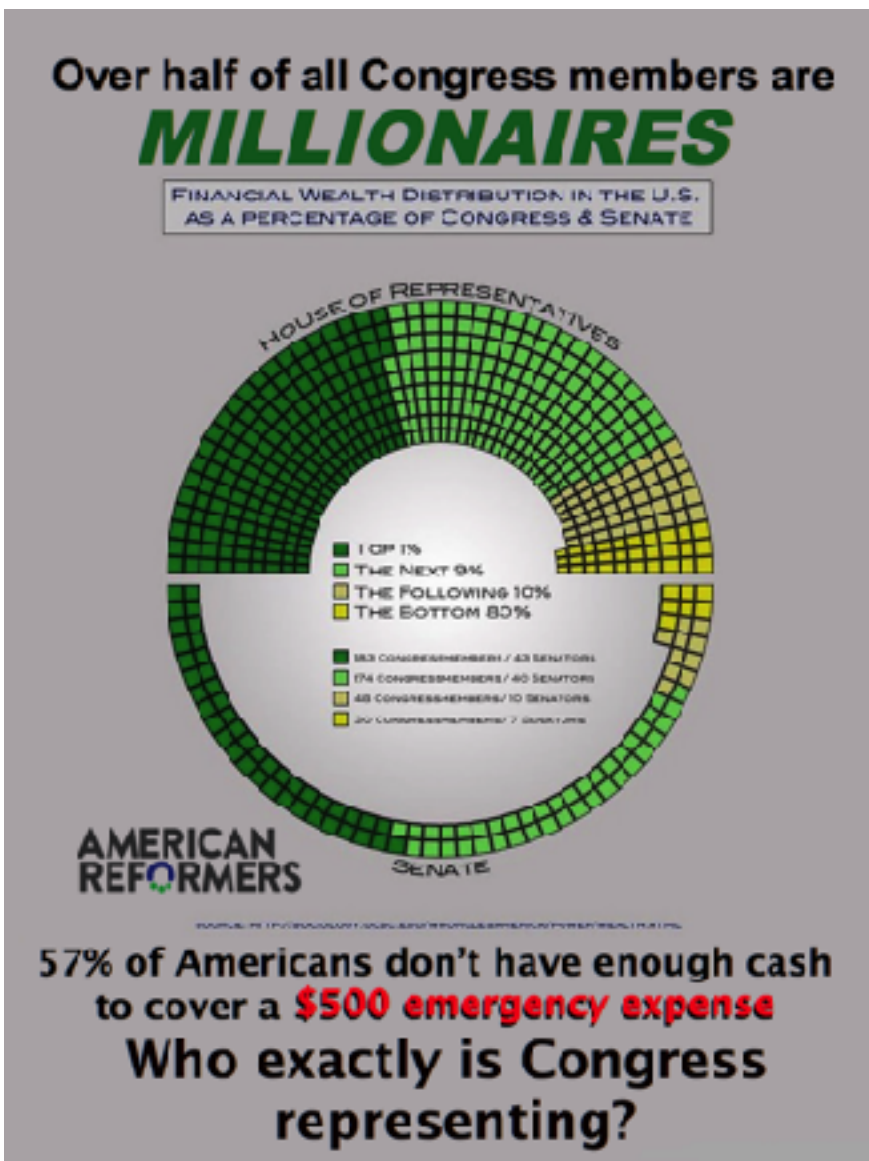
The Tribunal has created links and shared important information between lawyers and organizations that represent the victims. Therefore, it is likely that the conclusions will lead to more liability cases against Monsanto and similar companies. This will shine a light on the true cost of production and will affect Monsanto (Bayer) shareholder value in the long run. Companies that cause damage to health, food and healthy environment should and will be held accountable for their actions.

Organizing groups behind the Monsanto Tribunal include the Organic Consumers Association, Navdanya, IFOAM Organics International, Biovision Foundation and Regeneration International.





South Florida Progressive Bulletin is the work product of me, Fritzie Gaccione, with help from Lorenzo Canizares, and our Editorial Board: Lorenzo Canizares, Gayle Martin, Audrey Bomse, Sandy Davies, Kevin O'Keefe, Mary Macomber, Ed Wujciak, Elizabeth Lee Beck, and Cathy Gilbert. The Editorial Board submits ideas and articles and helps proof each issue. Lorenzo writes the People's Corner, an essay about a particular issue from the point of view of we, the people. This is essentially a full time occupation for me, and has been an ongoing endeavor for the past four years already. In the run up to the 2016 election it became more regular and more urgent, and now three times each month an issue is released. I get feedback from the community, and more as the distribution is widening. The calendar is working, but it is the most difficult part. Please place me on your distribution list of your events and I can add information and expand the calendar as much as is required. In order to expose the majority that we are, we need to drive more traffic to each event so that the republicans can no longer say that they are any kind of majority here in Florida or in our country. It isn't true. I enjoy reading and educating myself as I share information with you all in the bulletin. I welcome more participation, articles, ideas, calendar events. I welcome anyone who'd like to take some responsibility for contributing to the **SFPBulletin**. You will have autonomy and support from me. fritziethemusic@gmail.com



The People's Corner

~Lorenzo Canizares

(The letter Miami Herald would not publish!)

It is with sadness that I am reacting to Governor Scott's childish behavior regarding the elected prosecutor of Central Florida's Ninth Judicial Circuit.

As pointed out in your State budget review of (MH 4/6/17), the Governor and his fellow Republicans are cutting more than \$1.3 million from Ms. Ayala's budget plus 21 positions in the Ninth Circuit, wiping out the work being done in the issue of human trafficking.

Governor Scott and his fellow Republicans have failed to take into consideration that prosecutorial independence is crucial for the proper functioning of our legal system. They have also failed to heed the fact that Ms. Ayala's district is opposed to the death penalty by a 58-36 percent margin. They have failed to understand the human and moral significance of the University of Michigan's 2014 study on the Death Penalty. This study indicated that in a conservative estimate 120 of the roughly 3,000 inmates on death row were innocent of the crimes of which they are accused. Ms. Ayala happens to have done her undergraduate work at the University of Michigan, she also has a Masters of Science in Criminal Justice from the University of Central Florida, and Ms. Ayala is a Juris Doctor from the University of Detroit-Mercy School of Law, a Catholic/Jesuit institution. There is nothing frivolous in Ms. Ayala's background. I am sure she has spent many agonizing hours trying to decide the just way forward.

I am philosophically open to the death penalty, but the University of Michigan study has convinced me of the injustice of its application. Add to this fact the racial component of death row in the State of Florida with its over-representation of African-Americans, and Ms. Ayala's reasoning is more than justified.

Gov. Scott and Republicans should make the Ninth Judicial Circuit whole again.

Howard Zinn: "The terrorism of the suicide bomber and the terrorism of aerial bombardment are indeed morally equivalent," Howard Zinn concluded, "To say otherwise (as either side might) is to give one moral superiority over the other, and thus serve to perpetuate the horrors of our time."

Do you ever wonder how many civilians we have killed in our 'targeted' bombings in Syria? ...

excerpts from "Through the 'War on Terror' Looking Glass" by Sandy Davies link: <https://consortiumnews.com/2017/04/17/through-the-war-on-terror-looking-glass/>

...based on the fragmentary nature of passive reporting of civilian deaths and the ratios to actual deaths uncovered by more comprehensive studies in other war zones it is likely that U.S.-led air strikes killed at least 1,500 innocent civilians in just this one week, or conceivably as many as 6,000.

Airwars has been investigating reports of civilian casualties caused by U.S. and "coalition" bombing since 2014. It has investigated U.S. or allied responsibility for incidents that have killed between 8,303 and 12,208 civilians, reported by local and international media and groups like the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. At this point, it has confirmed that 3,061 to 4,943 civilians have been killed in 1,197 U.S. or allied air strikes. Airwars classifies these deaths as "confirmed." Airwars classifies the reporting as "fair" for another 454 strikes that have killed between 2,635 and 4,192 civilians, based on reporting by two or more credible sources and confirmation that an alleged U.S. or allied air strike did take place. Airwars classifies the remaining reports of a further 2,607 to 3,093 civilians as either "fair, but with no confirmed strikes," "weak," "contested," or "discounted."

Applying the 5 to 20 percent ratio of passive reporting to actual deaths found in other war zones to Airwars' minimum and maximum figures for "confirmed" and "fair" reports of civilian deaths, a reasonable estimate of total civilians killed by U.S. and allied bombing in Iraq and Syria since 2014 would be between 28,000 and 180,000....

...another critical factor in the under-reporting of these constant, daily atrocities, one that has probably been a common pattern in every war ever fought. George Orwell described it very well in an essay entitled "Notes on Nationalism" that was published in May 1945, as the allies celebrated Germany's surrender at the end of World War II.

"Actions are held to be good or bad," Orwell wrote, "not on their own merits, but according to who does them, and there is almost no kind of outrage – torture, the use of hostages, forced labour, mass deportations, imprisonment without trial, forgery, assassination, the bombing of civilians – which does not change its moral color when it is committed by "our" side... The nationalist not only does not disapprove of atrocities committed by his own side, but he has a remarkable capacity for not even hearing about them."