

No Walls, No Deportations, No Borders, No Nations!

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Commercial goods aren't the only things that move freely across borders. The U.S. military carries out operations all over the world with such regularity that it's not even considered newsworthy in the United States.

It's bitterly ironic that Trump constantly describes migrants in the Central American Exodus as an "invasion," when the United States has carried out so many actual invasions of that region — operations which bear great responsibility for destabilizing those societies and pushing so many people to come north in the first place.

The right to movement

Systems and governments that invest tremendously in perfecting the movement of commerce and violence across borders, while investing at similar scale to stop the movement of people, aren't being simply hypocritical. They're also violating a fundamental human right.

People have the right to move freely. Human migration, and migration particular to the Americas, predates the United States or its borders. Indeed, many of the people coming north from Central America are Indigenous, belonging to groups of people whose histories stretch far before that of the U.S. nation-state.

The right to freedom of movement becomes only more important as growing numbers of people become uprooted and displaced. Conflicts over control of the planet's resources, economic policies that devastate people the world over, and climate change — which creates more disasters and makes parts of the world uninhabitable for everyday life—are all increasing.

With those dynamics, the responsibility of governments to honor people's freedom to move only grows, too—as does that of ordinary people to defend that right.

New political possibilities

We are living in a time, not only of darkness and repression, but also political possibility.

Medicare for All, previously a marginalized demand in the United States (though existing in practice throughout much of the world) is now a central demand of mainstream liberal politics.

The slogan "Abolish ICE"—first raised by grassroots migrant justice activists and lifted up by the Democratic Socialists of America—has been brought into official U.S. politics and even carried onto Capitol Hill by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. The slogan has become so potent that the president and vice president have had to go out of their way to denounce it—something Trump did again in the most recent State of the Union.

Meanwhile, the majority of people in the United States oppose Trump's wall. And three-quarters of Americans recently told pollsters they think immigration is "a good thing."

These facts — evidence of a complicated political terrain, but one that has much promise for progressives and the left — show why supporting "border security" rather than centering the rights of migrants in the conversation about migration is not only wrong. It's also out of step with the progressive trend in U.S. politics.

While demanding open borders may seem like a marginal position in U.S. politics now, keep in mind that "build the wall" was on the fringe until recently.

The right wing has been audacious in upsetting mainstream sensibilities regarding the treatment of asylum seekers, calling for—and enacting through the White House—the separation of migrant families and mass detention of migrants, all in highly public ways. It has also flouted U.S. law in using Mexico as a holding cell for asylum seekers, rather than honoring their right to enter the U.S. and to due process for asylum applications once here. And Trump has even called for the end of birthright citizenship, targeting rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment, won by Black people in the U.S. following the Civil War.

We should match—and go beyond—their boldness, in defending the right to migrate as fundamental to humanity. We should be calling for open the borders, without apology.

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HUFFMAN'S TOOTHLESS COMMITTEE FRONTS FOR CORPORATE PELOSI WHO NEEDS SOME SUNSHINE

Jared Huffman, the member of Congress who represents most of the North Bay, says that climate change is "*the greatest moral, economic and environmental imperative of our time.*" That's the kind of language we use when we feel compelled to take bold action because what we want to achieve is **critically important**.

What bold action, then, should we expect Rep. Huffman to take?

Huffman laudibly signed on to Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's far-reaching Green New Deal resolution. But then he accepted House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's appointment to the **new House Select Committee on Climate Crisis**—which she has **rendered virtually toothless**.

Pelosi, who recently referred to the Green New Deal as "the green dream, or whatever they call it," **hamstrung the committee** by depriving it of the powers routinely given to congressional committees: the power to issue subpoenas and write legislation. Without subpoena power, the committee can't force cabinet members or agency heads appointed by the Trump administration to testify on economic and environmental issues. **Nor can it compel fossil-fuel industry officials to provide documents or testify at hearings.**

The first obvious question is, if Pelosi believes climate change is a real threat, why would she create **such a weak committee**? The next question is, if we are truly facing "the greatest moral, economic and environmental imperative of our time"—and we certainly are—why hasn't Huffman spoken up about the **powerlessness** of this committee?

Huffman's appointment to the select committee would have been a perfect opportunity for him to challenge those severe restrictions that make it more of a façade than a functional legislative panel.

Under the circumstances, **Huffman's silence on this crucial matter has been deafening**, and deeply disappointing. Why hasn't he publicly and emphatically asserted that the Select Committee on Climate Crisis should have real teeth—including subpoena and bill-drafting powers—so that it can actually **make a difference as we all face this greatest moral, economic and environmental imperative of our time**?

Is staying in Speaker Pelosi's good graces more "imperative" than really fighting for a Green New Deal to address the climate crisis?

Alice Chan

10th Assembly District Delegate to the California Democratic Party.

Lawrence Ferlinghetti

b. 1919, d. not yet!

The **City of San Francisco** celebrated the 100th birthday of one of its favorite sons- **Lawrence Ferlinghetti**, longtime proprietor of the "**City Lights**" bookstore" on Columbus and Broadway, a place where you could find the works of Miller, Bukowski, Fuller, Cleaver, Baldwin and Leary peering back at you from a makeshift shelf as if they never left the public consciousness. Lawrence has operated the store for over 50 years, a shining beacon, in the literary world, City Lights, single handedly keeping North Beach vibrant for many decades of avid readers. Lawrence runs the best book store in the city, some people think, the best in the world.

In an era bereft of heroes, he stands out as an example of how to succeed without being a bastard. He didn't cheat anyone, kill anyone, rob anyone, or humiliate anyone. He helped form one of the first anti-war movements in 1962, before Vietnam was on the radar, wrote "**A Coney Island of the Mind**," published Allen Ginsburg's "**Howl**" which still cannot be read on the airwaves in its entirety, due to obscenity, and was arrested for this crime. Everyone has a voice in this bookstore. The upstairs rooms are available spots, where struggling poets and adventurous publishers can strut their stuff.

This week we celebrated the milestone with several days of poetry readings, in venues ranging from libraries to dive bars. Among the dignitaries, Michael McClure, Armistad Maupin, Jack Hirschman, Neeli Chernovski, and many more. The streets outside the store were packed with men wearing stingy brim hats and women sporting flowing veils. Indeed, a different crowd from the usual North Beach denizens but there were enough elders, sporting colorful costumes, silver ringed fingers and a drunken demeanor to give it an old school flavor.

The "**after party**" was held at Specs, a venerable joint, located in an alley across the street from the "Lights." Lucy, the sweetest, kindest bartender in the city, saw that no one went thirsty and dollar store cracker jacks, jelly beans, stale miniature biscotti's and chocolate covered coffee beans were dispersed liberally to the crowd, which was packed in like sardines.

More poetry, more liquor, a wonderful combination, saved the best for last, booming voices putting emotion together with words, shaking loose the dust from decades old barroom artifacts, gleaned from questionable sources, followed by raucous applause.

We thank you Lawrence for bringing the joy of expression into our lives and providing the platform to display it. **Happy Birthday**

- **MUIRWALKER**

THE WORLD IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE

The world is a beautiful place
to be born into
if you don't mind happiness
not always being
so very much fun
if you don't mind a touch of hell
now and then
just when everything is fine
because even in heaven
they don't sing
all the time

The world is a beautiful place
to be born into
if you don't mind some people dying
all the time
or maybe only starving
some of the time
which isn't half bad
if it isn't you

Oh the world is a beautiful place
to be born into
if you don't much mind
a few dead minds
in the higher places
or a bomb or two
now and then
in your upturned faces
or such other improprieties
as our Name Brand society
is prey to
with its men of distinction
and its men of extinction
and its priests
and other patrolmen

and its various segregations
and congressional investigations
and other constipations
that our fool flesh
is heir to

Yes the world is the best place of all
for a lot of such things as
making the fun scene
and making the love scene
and making the sad scene
and singing low songs and having inspirations
and walking around
looking at everything
and smelling flowers
and goosing statues
and even thinking
and kissing people and
making babies and wearing pants
and waving hats and
dancing
and going swimming in rivers
on picnics
in the middle of the summer
and just generally
'living it up'
Yes
but then right in the middle of it
comes the smiling

mortician

LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI

