

February 5, 2018



Speak Out Now

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Super Bowl – Wealth and Hypocrisy on Display

This past weekend was Super Bowl Sunday and many of us got together with friends and family to watch the game, if we were fortunate enough to have some time off. This was a great chance to blow off some steam after a long week of work, and a chance to spend time with the people we care about. Regardless of who we were rooting for, the Philadelphia Eagles' 41-33 victory over the New England Patriots was a tremendous game with two talented and hard-working teams on display.

As usual, the Super Bowl was more than just about football, it was a huge money-generating event. This started with the preparation for the game, where the city of Minneapolis rolled out the red-carpet for wealthy fans coming to town to see the Super Bowl, with a week's worth of parties, concerts, and events organized. For working class people of Minneapolis who couldn't imagine buying a ticket that cost an average of \$2500, the experience was much different.

For a week leading up to the game, the 6-block area around the stadium was transformed into a "no-go" zone for people without tickets. For the whole week, the local transit authority closed stops and rerouted 38 different bus lines travelling through the city center. On game day, only ticket holders could use the efficient light-rail service with everyone else forced to take special busses. Additionally, access to the Hennepin County Medical Center across the street from the stadium was restricted. This is the largest health-care center in the state serving the uninsured and poor patients.

Could it have been any clearer? When the rich came to town, the needs of the people of Minneapolis were kicked out of the way.

The hypocrisy of the event was further demonstrated when corporate sponsors of the Super Bowl such as Anheuser-Busch InBev tried to paint themselves as humanitarians making great contributions to society. Their subsidiary Budweiser had an ad showing how they briefly stopped beer production in some plants this year. Instead of putting beer in their cans, they used the plant to

produce cans of water to send to Houston, Florida, and Puerto Rico after the devastating hurricanes. Another one of their brands Stella Artois was used to talk about how buying a Stella glass could raise money to help provide clean water to underdeveloped parts of Africa.

The owners of these corporations clearly demonstrated an awareness of water crises that their system has created. They said that the solutions to these problems exist if there was enough money available.

There is enough money! In 2016, Anheuser-Busch InBev made \$4.85 billion dollars in profits globally. That's more money than the individual economies of almost 20% of the countries in Africa. The problem is not that there isn't enough money or that we aren't giving enough to charity, it is that we are not in control of the economy and what gets produced. Under this system of capitalism, those decisions are controlled by a tiny elite and made for one purpose only: to produce more wealth for them.

This Super Bowl not only served as a massive demonstration of wealth and power of the elites that run this society, but also showed how the resources of society like transportation and distribution of water could be organized to meet the needs of the majority of people in society.

Imagine how we and people like us across the world could organize society to meet our needs if we took control of the wealth we produce.

Come to a Speak Out Forum: "Report from Palestine" When Ahed Tamimi, was jailed for slapping an Israeli soldier, her village, Nabi Saleh, came to the attention of the world. Come to a video recorded by Palestinians from Nabi Salah, followed by a live question and answer exchange over Skype.

Saturday, February 10, 7 pm (doors open at 6:30)

South Berkeley Senior Center, 2939 Ellis St.

(Near Ashby BART) \$5.00 cash donation

(No one turned away for lack of funds)