

# Commonwealth



March, 2018  
 Montgomery County  
 for the Many  
 Not the Few

## A WARNING FROM SEATTLE:

### "STOP AMAZON HQ2"



By the  
 Transmetropolitan Review  
 - February 26, 2018

The following editorial from The Transmetropolitan Review discusses the role of Amazon in Seattle, and its connection to gentrification, displacement, and political repression. No one really saw it coming. There were more immediate issues to face. The federal government had forcibly gentrified the Central District through its Weed and Seed program, pushing out black residents and installing childless Microsoft employees with high salaries. These mostly white colonizers caused the schools to shut down for lack of students and altered the neighborhood beyond recognition. No one suspected that Amazon was an even greater threat lurking at the northern edge of Beacon Hill.

company moved into four shiny new buildings in the ex-industrial South Lake Union neighborhood that would eventually become HQ1. By this point, the first changes had become visible in Seattle. Entire blocks were torn down for high-end apartments that none of us could afford. The "alternative press" began to make very overt and public alliances with "new business owners" who arrived to set up their high-end shops. Our familiar dive-bars, storefronts, cultural institutions, and meeting places began to disappear, replaced with terrible and expensive boutique shit that no one could afford. A hybrid "yuppie/creative/techie" began to appear in the lobbies of luxury apartments or the tables of expensive restaurants. They were young, hip, plugged in, and ready to colonize.

out in the streets, police cars got smashed, cops were assaulted, banks were trashed, newsstands were torched, and rebellion spread through the city. All this energy kept building throughout 2011 and into the Occupy Movement. The port was shut down with barricades, banks were vandalized and set aflame, houses were publicly squatted, the streets were taken from the police, and a massive demonstration was set for May Day, 2012. Everyone built towards this goal relentlessly, although no one knew what was going on behind the scenes.

the city was placed under a "state of emergency." This was simply too much for Jeff Bezos. He threatened to relocate Amazon from Seattle if the local authorities didn't suppress this growing rebellion. In less than two months, the federal government and local police conducted armed raids on houses in Seattle, Portland, and Olympia, after which they issued multiple subpoenas for a Grand Jury investigating the smashing of the federal courthouse. That was feeble their excuse, at least, although it was nothing short of a witch hunt.

In 2007, Jeff Bezos announced that Amazon had signed a new lease with Paul Allen, the local tech-baron of the Microsoft empire, and would move from its perch above Elliot Bay. In 2010, the

Meanwhile, the local police went on a murder rampage. In 2010 alone, the cops executed six people in the Puget Sound region. It was only natural that luxury housing started to get vandalized, riots broke

Jeff Bezos and Paul Allen were in secret negotiations for Amazon to purchase the South Lake Union campus and solidify the HQ1. Since he signed the lease in 2007, Jeff Bezos had witnessed a massive rebellion overtake Seattle and come within blocks of his shiny new buildings. On May 1st, 2012, thousands of people filled the streets, corporate property was attacked indiscriminately, a federal courthouse was smashed, the police were physically assaulted, and

(continued on opposite)

### PROTESTERS CALL ON LEGGETT TO 'REVEAL THE DEAL'

February 6, 2018  
 MyMCMedia.org

Protesters at a budget forum Tuesday night demanded County Executive Ike Leggett "reveal the deal" – the details of what Amazon is being offered to move to Montgomery County.

### THESE MONTGOMERY COUNTY STATE DELEGATES WANT YOU TO SUBSIZE PRIVATE GOLF COURSES AND COUNTRY CLUBS FOR THE RICH

While Montgomery County faces a \$120 million budget shortfall, the rich will play golf on tax-free land.

country clubs in the county pay a sweetheart deal on their property taxes. An overwhelming majority are inside the Beltway in the richest areas of the county.

Del. David Moon (District 20) tried to repeal the state tax law this session, only to have his bill voted down before it even reached the House of Delegates in Annapolis.

The following Montgomery County State Delegates voted to kill Del. Moon's bill:

"Corporate tax breaks just won't cut it. What we need is the people's budget," the protesters chanted at a meeting to collect citizen input on what Leggett will propose in his fiscal 2019 budget.

The protesters, from the Democratic Socialists of America, opposed the non-disclosure agreement the county signed with the Seattle-based company. Montgomery County is one of 20 possible communities vying for Amazon's new "HQ2," which would bring 50,000 jobs with salaries averaging \$100,000 a year.

(continued on opposite)

Names in bold also voted for 2014 estate tax cuts (thank you to our reader Bagel Boy)

District	Representative	Twitter handle	Phone	Email
14	<b>Kaiser, Anne R.</b>	@DelegateKaiser	301-858-3469/410-841-3469	anne.kaiser@house.state.md.us
14	Luedtke, Eric	@EricLuedtke	301-858-3110 / 410-841-3110	eric.luedtke@house.state.md.us
14	Queen, Pam	@DelPamQueen	301-858-3380 / 410-841-3380	pam.queen@house.state.md.us
15	<b>Dumais, Kathleen M.</b>	@KathleenDumais1	301-858-3052 / 410-841-3052	kathleen.dumais@house.state.md.us
15	Fraser-Hidalgo, David V.	@fraserfor15	301-858-3186 / 410-841-3186	david.fraser.hidalgo@house.state.md.us
16	<b>Frick, Bill</b>	@billfrick	301-858-3454 / 410-841-3454	bill.frick@house.state.md.us
16	<b>Kelly, Ariana</b>	@DelArianaKelly	301-858-3642 / 410-841-3642	ariana.kelly@house.state.md.us
16	Korman, Marc	@mkorman	301-858-3649 / 410-841-3639	marc.korman@house.state.md.us
17	Barve, Kumar	@KumarBarve	301-858-3464 / 410-841-3464	kumar.barve@house.state.md.us
17	<b>Gilchrist, James W.</b>		301-858-3744 / 410-841-3744	jim.gilchrist@house.state.md.us
18	Carr, Alfred C., Jr.		301-858-3638 / 410-841-3638	alfred.carr@house.state.md.us
19	<b>Cullison, Bonnie</b>	@Del_Cullison	301-858-3883 / 410-841-3883	bonnie.cullison@house.state.md.us
19	<b>Kramer, Benjamin F.</b>		301-858-3485 / 410-841-3485	benjamin.kramer@house.state.md.us
19	Morales, Maricé	@Marice_Morales	301-920-7842	marice@maricemorales.com
20	Hixson, Sheila E.		301-858-3469 / 410-841-3469	sheila.hixson@house.state.md.us
39	Barkley, Charles		301-858-3001 / 410-841-3001	charles.barkley@house.state.md.us
39	<b>Reznik, Kirill</b>	@DelegateReznik	301-858-3039/410-841-3039	kirill.reznik@house.state.md.us

("A Warning", cont.)

Like in the burning times, the authorities forced people into their halls and compelled them to testify against the accused witches and sorcerers. If they refused to answer the questions of the Grand Jury, these people were thrown into the dungeon until they spoke. Just days after Jeff Bezos announced he'd purchase the South Lake Union property, the first anarchists were imprisoned at the federal detention center in Seatac.

By the spring of 2013, the witch hunt had ended but the local rebellion was crushed. Then the real changes hit Seattle. What we experienced in 2010 was nothing by comparison. Cranes filled the air, thousands of "Amazon-bies" moved to the city, and rent began its long climb beyond our reach. Everything we loved began to vanish. There was no opposition to this blitzkrieg of construction and

displacement. No more building takeovers, no more beating the police, no more fires. This is how capital restructures a city. It crushes the opposition, forcibly if necessary.

SEATTLE RENT

In 2010, the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment was around 1,000 dollars in Seattle. In 2000, it was around nine hundred dollars. Little changed in those years, even during the first tech-bubble. However, between the years 2010 and 2018, the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment rose to over 2,000 dollars, if one is lucky to find something that cheap. Many luxury apartments are currently listed for 4,000 dollars a month, with some over 10,000. Renting a four-bedroom house is still possible for normal people in Seattle, with each resident paying around 700 dollars a month, although purchasing a house is impossible

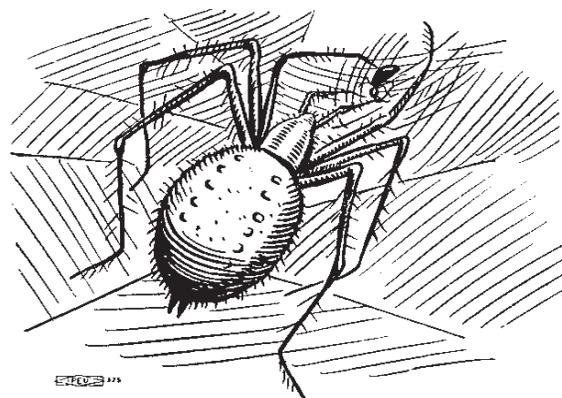
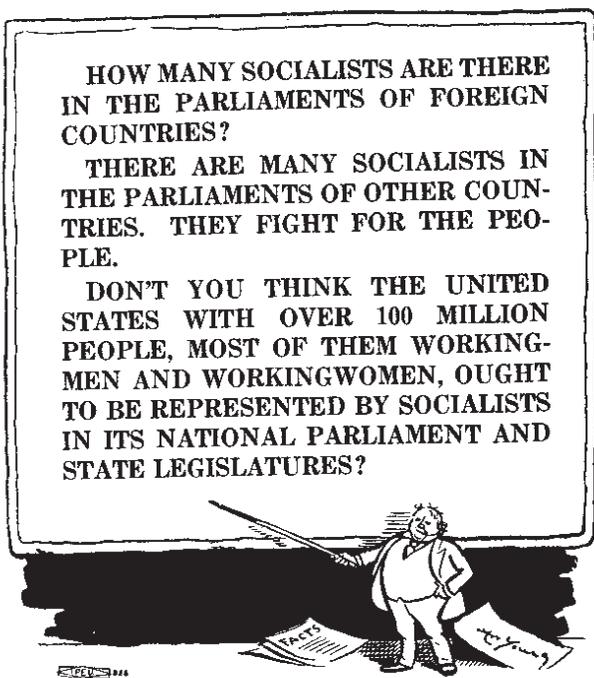
for all but the rich, with the average home price now at 720,000 dollars. Seattle is on track to join San Francisco and Vancouver in being the most unaffordable luxury shit-holes on the West Coast. Meanwhile, the homeless populations keeps increasing. Between 2012 and 2017, the number of unhoused individuals living on the streets of Seattle doubled from around 2,000 people to almost 5,000, with another 6,000 living in shelters. The problem will only get worse.

SEATTLE HOMELESS

As you can see, Amazon wanted the rebellion crushed before it bought its own HQ1. Once the deed was done, the local capitalists enacted their pathetic orgy of short-sighted greed and pointless gluttony. Now the city is covered in their luxury boutique shit, everyone is a techie, traffic is horrible, money is everything, and everyone is a fucking hypocrite. Jenny Durkan

(the federal prosecutor who presided over the Grand Jury) is now the Mayor of Seattle, Jeff Bezos is the richest man on earth, and this nightmare won't end until we destroy Amazon and end capitalism forever. We wish there was better news for Seattle, but at least you have a chance. If Amazon is moving into your city with its new HQ2, do everything you can to stop it. We did our best before their future took over. Now that it's here, don't let them do it to another city. Stop them before it's too late. Without exaggeration, this is your only chance. Don't waste it. Learn from our mistakes and try not to make any of your own. Together, we can do this.

With love,  
Your friends in Seattle



IS THIS A SPIDER? IT IS. WHAT IS ITS OTHER NAME? THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM. HAS HE GOT AN ANT IN HIS WEB? HE HAS. WHAT IS THE ANT'S OTHER NAME? WORKINGMAN. DOES THE SPIDER LIKE TO HAVE THE ANTS ORGANIZE? NO, HE PREFERENCES TO DEAL WITH THEM "INDIVIDUALLY."

From "A Socialist Primer" by Art Young, 1920

("Protestors" cont.)

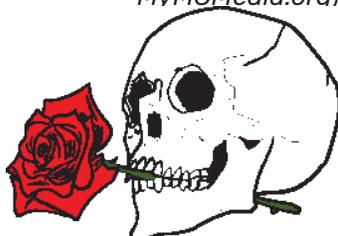
County officials, including Leggett, have been tight-lipped about what the county is offering because of the non-disclosure agreement.

Leggett said he would meet with the people who oppose the deal to bring Amazon to the county.

"Amazon already knows where it's going – and it's playing cities off each other to extract as much public money as possible. Let's not fall for it," a flier from the protesters reads.

The meeting, at the Bethesda Chevy-Chase Regional Services Center at 4805 Edgemoor Lane, received a big turnout. It had been scheduled to be part of Leggett's efforts to talk to residents about what they want in next year's budget, which would be the last the county[...]

(Read more at MyMCMedia.org)



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**Each week we publish a "Weekly Agitator" of notable Maryland and Montgomery County current events and news as well as essays and analysis from a radical socialist perspective.**

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