

# TENANTS TALK

NEWSPAPER OF THE ALL-CHICAGO TENANT ALLIANCE

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ALIANZA DE INQUILINOS DE TODO CHICAGO



ALL-CHICAGO TENANT ALLIANCE

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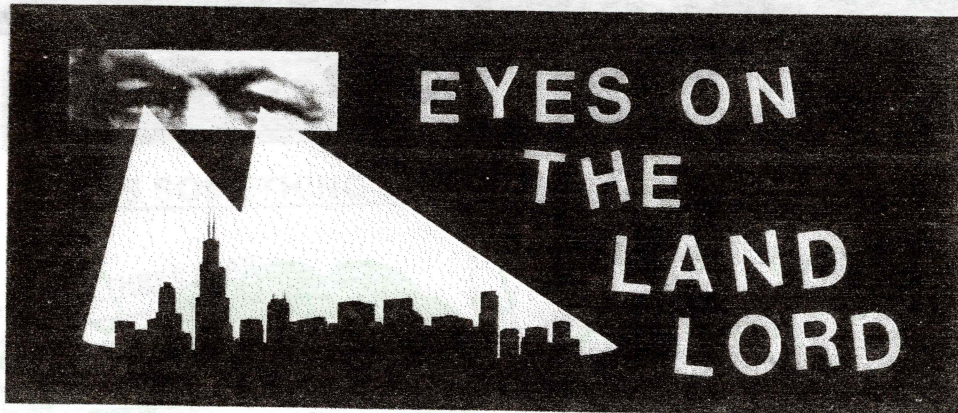


**TENANTS TALK  
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★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★



## FAD CELEBRATE MAY DAY MONTHS ON STRIKE: 7

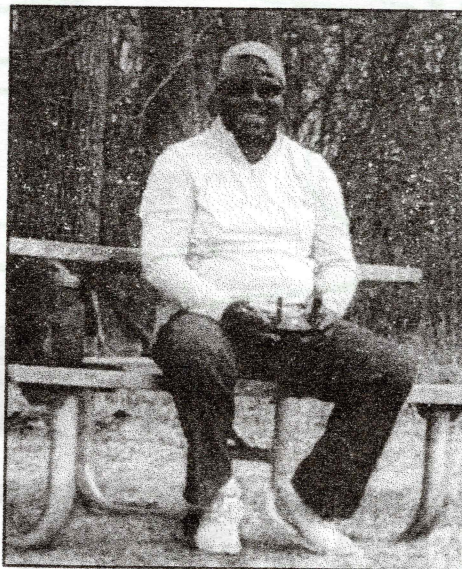
In observation of May Day, ACTA and FAD marched through Rogers Park along with People's Defense Committee, Chicago Worker's Circle and Revolutionary Student Union. This was the Fadistas first march and we hope it won't be their last now that the summer is coming around and the rent strike still marches forward. The weather is looking preeeeetty good for a visit to Trump Tower. 8 months on strike! Viva Viva!

## KHAN'S AGAINST THE WALLS

If you spent any time downtown in the shadow of Trump Tower this month, you might have seen the face of Imran Khan looking down at you from a light post. Posters with information on Imran Khan's gentrification of Rogers Park went up after Khan refused to come to the negotiating table with Fuerzas Activas de la Damen, a tenant union that has been on rent strike for 8 months. Now that the union is negotiating, posterage has stopped as a sign of good faith, but if you see Imran Khan's face on blast once again, you know the reason why.

## EAST GARFIELD PARK TENANT LEAGUE ROARS AT MONROE & ST. LOUIS

The Lionesses of East Garfield Park Tenant League have embarked on the hunt for justice. Villa Capital tenants have been meeting for weeks now. These meetings were held in one apartment of a well connected tenant in the building. Her apartment is breaking down. Floor boards have come loose, there is mold, and the furnishings are decades old. Unacceptable for a tenant that uses a wheelchair. The first tactic was a Zap against slumlord Erik Hubbard and his goon Byron Dotson. A simple action for a simple fix. The following day, Byron promised a handyman would pass by on Tuesday May 26th to conduct an estimation. The week passed with no estimation happening. The lionesses will not be deterred. EGPTL will continue to organize their neighbors against Villa Capital.



## LANDLORD PROFILE: LAWRENCE HERRON

Well folks, we're here to tell you about another landlord in town, and he's about as bad as they come. His name? Lawrence Herron. His crime? Taking his tenants' hard-earned money and being a blood sucking leech.

What does he do when tenants tell him that the locks to their buildings are broken and as a result people who don't live there are sleeping in the hallways? Only one out of four buildings get a lock. He leeches. How does he respond to tenants wanting their units to be free of cockroaches and rats? Little mesh barriers that don't solve the issue. AKA, he leeches. When tenants tell him that their radiator is so hot it's creating mold on their walls, how does he help them? He doesn't. He, you guessed it, leeches.

His social media shows him sitting on a park bench piloting a drone. Maybe instead of using his free time using a drone to check out nature he could use it to check out his apartment buildings and make sure he is providing actual livable conditions for the working class people that he is profiting (LEECHING) off of. ★

## PENALTY AND PUNISHMENT IN NYC

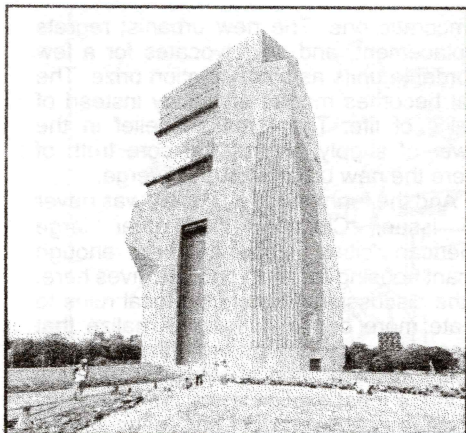
\$31 Million dollars have been taken directly from NYC slumlords' dirty pockets thanks to dedicated tenant organization. For years tenant's conditions have worsened. Whether it's broken elevators, vermin, and being without hot water, it's a familiar story many tenants throughout the world's richest country know. The latest in NYC provide a glimpse of what a city that takes on slumlords can accomplish. There is a near future where a city can place financial penalties on landlords, or even doling out criminal charges to neglectful landlords.

The Fordham Towers Tenants Association and Robert Fulton Tenant Association lived under the wretched eye of Karan Singh and Rajmattie Persaud for years. Two years ago, they opened a lawsuit against their slumlords. On May 6th, 2026 the tenants associations publicly announced a massive judgment against the slumlords alongside NYC officials excited to share in their victory. One of the penalties included in the judgement required \$900,000 of the slumlord's money, that would otherwise go to their little vacations and fine wines, go directly into immediate building repairs. The associations forced new management to implement those fixes. Due to their strength and conviction, Singh and Persaud lost ownership of the buildings- Losing their ability to suck the life out of tenants through rents.

Another slumlord, Daneil Ohebshalom, has been indicted with 13 criminal charges for the harassment of rent regulated tenants, endangering the welfare of a child, and many more offences. NYC officials allege that Ohebshalom neglected buildings in order to chase out rent regulated tenants. In order to charge higher rents. A tactic regularly seen in Chicago. NYC is lapping Chicago in using municipal power to extract penalties and criminally charge slumlords. Mayor Brandon Johnson and Cook County State's Attorney Eileen O'Neill Burke must do the same in Chicago. The question is why don't they fight landlords?

We can't wait for the spineless to find courage. ACTA is setting landlords to route already. Join the coming victories- organize your building. Be the next spark of hope to tenants everywhere. ★

★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★



## THE PROMISES OF NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

In Tenants Talk 17, we covered how the construction of the Obama Center in Jackson Park had already begun affecting tenants in the surrounding neighborhoods on the Southside. Now, with the massive obelisk on Stony Island Avenue set to open this month, we're checking back in on its gentrification warpath and how it continues to affect mostly Black, working class tenants in Chicago.

On Juneteenth, 2026, the Obama Center will officially open its doors. While the opening ceremony boasts a free launch party for Chicago residents, it also involves disruptive road closures and massive security presence by the Chicago and University of Chicago police departments, the Secret Service, and the Obama Foundation's private security. Undoubtedly the opening of the center will lead to increased police presence in the area overall.

In our prior coverage of the center construction, we dove deeper into the The South Shore Housing Preservation Ordinance, which was touted as a victory for tenants. Upon closer inspection, the ordinance only protected homeowners in a 75% tenant neighborhood, and had already left many renters out of options as their rents were raised. The ordinance also originally included tenant protections, but the final version was defanged during negotiations to only include provisions for those wealthy enough to own property.

But there are other protections in place, right? The Illinois Answers Project recently provided expansive coverage of anti-gentrification measures in Woodlawn ahead of the center opening. Let's take a look at some of the promises that have fallen short, yet again. (See table to the right)

Meanwhile, while "protective" measures have fallen short or fallen through altogether, rents have risen in the

neighborhood. Since the announcement of the center development in 2015, hundreds of tenants have been displaced from their homes. With the opening this month, things will only get worse.

Even the ordinances that have been upheld do not help tenants stay in their homes or in the neighborhood at all. For instance, while city money has gone to developers with the stipulation that they maintain affordable units, rents have still risen. Working within the city's guidelines, landlords can still charge up to \$2,000 for a two-bedroom.

The Obama Foundation has continually claimed that the development will boost the local economy—a classic euphemism for gentrification. And yet they've simultaneously held information sessions for property owners in the area about how they might rent their units out on Airbnb, and other ways to capitalize on the tourism the center will bring. Again we must ask, a boost to the economy for whom? Surely not the tenants.

Here's the pattern: The city makes promises that a huge development and influx of money into a neighborhood won't displace people. They put ordinances, programs, and all kinds of rules in place. But in the end, anger about the project dies down, and as the grand opening approaches, amid the pomp and circumstance of the launch party, we learn that **none of the measures for protecting tenants amounted to anything**. The area around the center is now a playground for wealthy investors, landlords who see the opening as an opportunity to squeeze as much rent as possible out of the spare housing they own.

This is all happening while, northwest of the new center, the 1901 Project looms. As we covered in Tenants Talk 23, Danny Wirtz is not only behind the massive United

Center development proposal in East Garfield Park, but also begun wreaking havoc by using rent-squeezing AI to displace tenants in Lakeview. At every stage, he is against tenants in this city.

Where the Southside saw an \$800 million development touted as a community project, the Westside is facing a massive, \$7 billion blatant gentrification plan. This 10-15 year project will undoubtedly push hundreds more working class tenants out of their homes. And they will likely try to claim to do the same kinds of things with the East Garfield Wirtz development as they did with the Obama Center—don't be fooled!

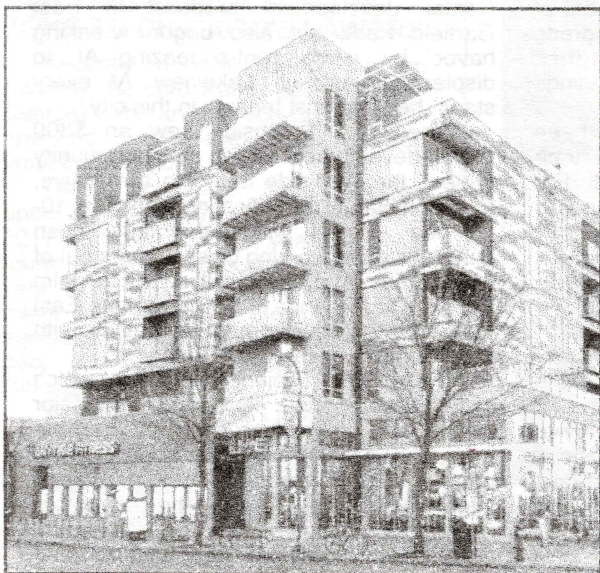
The 1901 Project website, which includes supportive quotes from Major Brandon Johnson and multiple "progressive" aldermen, has a Community page that includes deeply vague information about how the investors maintain commitments to "fostering collaboration, creating opportunities and delivering a lasting impact on the needs of the neighborhood." They make promises about creating a youth engagement program, providing jobs in construction, and a fund for affordable housing. As we've seen with the Obama Center, these are all likely to fail or provide miniscule results. It's more or less lip service to distract from the straight up displacement project they're undertaking. By definition, when investors build up these kinds of developments in a predominantly renting, working class neighborhood, gentrification occurs.

The Obama Center had the backing of nonprofits and community organizations. The face of our most beloved war criminal. What will happen when fully private funding comes to the Westside? When brazenly evil families are given free reign? Don't wait until the effects of this massive development project ripple through to your rent check. Call ACTA today. ★

### PROGRAMS TO KEEP WOODLAWN AFFORDABLE AND THEIR RESULTS:

PROMISE MADE	REALITY FOR TENANTS
52 vacant lots reserved for affordable housing developments	1 building developed
\$1.5 million in city grants to maintain affordable rent in multifamily buildings	No grant apps received
\$500,000 for nonprofit Preservation of Affordable Housing to fix up existing apartments in Woodlawn	Money not spent
\$8 million in loans to build or rehab apartments in Woodlawn	Only 40 apartment units financed so far
Developers required to propose new jobs for residents	3 local hires
Right of First Refusal for Woodlawn tenants	0 developers filed the notice required for tenants to attempt to buy their building

★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★



## URBANISM & THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY

I believe one of my life's great pleasures is walking to the park near my apartment after work and spending a few minutes on a bench taking in some sunshine. Little compares to the way the orange glow of early evening tints the petals of magnolia trees in bloom. I believe it is also something that any of my fellow Chicagoans should have the chance to do, among many other conveniences of city living. One would rightly think then, that I believe cities should be more pedestrian-friendly, less car-dependent, and more dedicated to creating new public spaces.

I know I am not alone in thinking this way. Chicago, like many large American cities, has seen a renewed interest in something called "New Urbanism" in the last decade. "New Urbanism" can be generally defined as a movement whose main interest is promoting walkability (being able to make trips to the store, park, work, etc on foot) and reducing reliance on one's car to do life's daily tasks. All of this is in service of reducing the cost of housing and improving our health, environment, and safety. As a result of this interest, there has been a significant increase in the number of advocacy groups across the country related to this movement. Though I share many of their ideals, I hesitate to identify myself with these advocacy groups. And no, it is not

because I want you to pay more for housing and not because I hate your health, safety, or the environment, dear reader. I do, however, have an issue with how these groups want to achieve their goals and who their methods benefit the most, whether they realize it or not.

It should be said first that for many new urbanists, the shining examples of good design and good living come from the major cities of Europe (and also Tokyo). When they distill what they liked about those places, a few key elements arise. The first is the density of these cities, with much attention paid to fitting more housing on smaller lots. The second is relegating cars to the periphery of urban space. This means eliminating

street parking, large car lots, and giving less space to cars on the road. Third is how daily necessities are closer to residential areas rather than strictly separate. They are not wrong in believing these things make life easier and more enjoyable for people living in cities. My issue arises specifically with the urbanist advocacy groups' approach to solving the housing crisis. This is because their solutions are, at best, temporary, bureaucratic, and serve to enrich greedy developers.

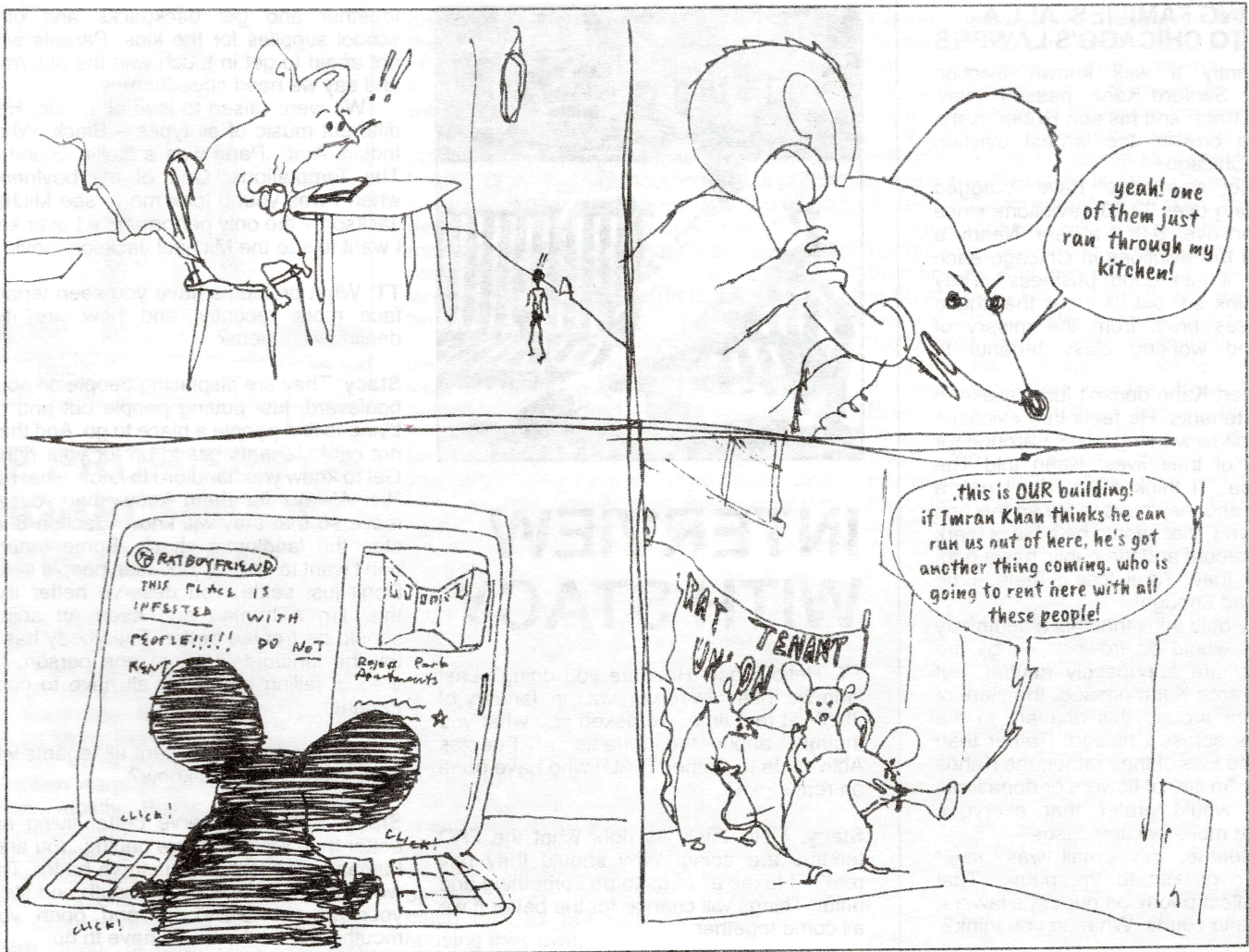
To make a concrete example, one of the primary targets of these groups is zoning regulation. Zoning regulations are the rules that govern what can be done with a piece of land. This means anything from how much of the land the building can occupy, the height of the building, how many families or individuals can live in a building, and how many parking spaces the building has. Zoning might also affect how many different departments need to give their approval for anything that would be done with a piece of empty land or building. Urbanist groups are often uncritically supportive of new rules that would make it easier to build taller, denser buildings or plans to build dense new housing developments. These rule changes that they push for are framed as a way of having more freedom in what occurs by circumventing both arcane legal restrictions like extra reviews from different departments or parking requirements, but also circumventing negative public opinion by ending public comment. The claim that is made is that the more housing there is, the more costs will go down. It does not matter to the new urbanist that the new building is a "luxury" building that's replacing existing homes. The new urbanist celebrates the rising of property values as an increase in local tax revenue. The new urbanist bemoans bureaucratic processes, but proposes a more streamlined and less

democratic one. The new urbanist regrets displacement, and so advocates for a few affordable units as a consolation prize. The goal becomes market efficiency instead of quality of life. The fanatical belief in the power of supply reveals the core truth of where the new urbanist and I diverge.

And the funny thing is, supply was never the issue. Chicago, like other large American cities, currently has enough vacant housing for everyone who lives here. In the discussion of changing local rules to create more dense housing, I realize that these advocacy groups view the issue as largely aesthetic and apolitical. It must be put in the most explicit terms, how your city is built is deeply political and, especially in the United States, cannot be separated from capitalism. The city as it is today is a space explicitly manufactured for what the capitalist class needed. Old Chicago developed with industrial production in mind by placing working class housing near factories. The segregationist housing policies of American cities and suburbs are built on the extractive logic of capitalism. Working class people of color were forced by the market to be the buffer between capitalists and polluting industrial sites. Even the development of the CTA can be linked to the need to transport workers to and from their jobs. Car dominance as well, is connected to the oil industry's ravenous need for profit. The new development that includes residential and service businesses is reflective of the turn the American capitalist economy has taken. Service workers can now live near their jobs, and the luxury units can be sold or rented to the wealthy to enjoy a more metropolitan lifestyle. Freeing the planner to be able to make more changes to zoning regulation ignores the fact that the planner still must operate under the bureaucratic systems of capitalism, and must serve the goal of property values and revenue. These quality of life improvements are allowable to the property developer because they see the new revenue potential. The old landlord benefits from this as well, as he gets to turn the building he bought with your money into a massive profit when the new zoning rules are put in place.

The answer then is not a process that strips the worker of further control over their home. The answer is the end of the landlord, and real control over what happens in our communities. Control means getting a grocery store where you live because the community decided they needed it. Control means a street that is unsafe for children to play would not have to fight against a meter company who owns the right to it. Control means the urban planner becomes an educator in design theory and a community collaborator, rather than an often maligned bureaucrat. The shift in how we think of our city should not be an aesthetic appeal to the beauty of Paris, it should be a political change in who and what the design of our city serves. ★

★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★



## WHO'S TO BLAME FOR THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS?

Affordable housing for low income households is still lacking infrastructure and funding! Almost 76% of our low income neighbors are spending over half their wages on rent!

Every year a version of this headline warns us of the affordable housing crisis. Article after article, it's clearly difficult for reporters to pin down why this problem exists. We're told that this is just the way things are, it's too complex to be solved and there couldn't possibly be something specific to do about it. Fingers point to housing costs being dictated by the market. After all, the elusive "market" is a natural phenomenon, unable to be tamed, and something we simply must be subservient to. Maybe we should just stop complaining! Well, it would be a lot easier for everyone if we did.

If we look around, I begin to wonder why is it that housing is this expensive in the first place? An affordable housing crisis

insinuates there used to be a time with enough affordable housing, which is laughable to believe for most working class folks these days. And why do we need to beg for CHA to give us more pitiful housing? Most project based housing has 25 year wait times and tenants living there dealing with extremely poor conditions.

Well, a recent article presented the most laughable excuse for all of this: the landlords have to focus on the development of new luxury housing because they can't bear the costs of creating units for less without government subsidies. Think of the poor landlords!

Their luxury housing projects are purposefully gentrifying our neighborhood, like Garfield Park, to try to catch the skyrocketing profits in the wake of the United Center development. Meanwhile, they look to CHA to subsidize this work with their funding for affordable housing... Why should we allow this to go on?

So, the market isn't so complex after all. It's our landlords, and they get to hold our housing hostage knowing they can jack up the rent and squeeze every penny out of us. They think of our housing as their investment, and my home is just another

quick cash grab to fund their mansion, vacations, and more apartment buildings that they get to extort money from. Like good tenants, we continue to pay them more and more for housing, because we feel like we have to. **What if we could do something about it?**

If you're tired of being pushed around by the whims of your landlord, you probably not the only one. **Do your neighbors feel the same way?** A collective of our neighbors, fed up with the rent that's too high, can be a forceful weapon for fighting back against our greedy landlords. Making our housing affordable is possible to do in our own way—we can reclaim our power from the system crushing us. A tenant union is the first step in lifting the weight held over us by landlords. No more waiting for the government and the nonexistent market or kindness of landlords to save us. We can count on each other to demand sustainable change. **Will you join us?**

\* "The revolution is not an apple that falls when ripe. You have to make it fall."- Che Guevara ★

★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★

## EVICTING FAMILIES: ALL A JOKE TO CHICAGO'S LAWYERS

Recently a well known eviction attorney, Sanford Kahn, passed away. Sanford Kahn and his son Robert Kahn operated one of the largest eviction firms in Chicago.

These scumbags have bragged about filing over 22,000 evictions since 2017 and over 5,000 a year. Nearly a fourth of the evictions in Chicago each year. Is it just good business? They might think so, but its clear that these businesses profit from the misery of poor and working class tenants in Chicago.

Robert Kahn doesn't just believe in evicting tenants. He feels that evictions should follow working people around for the rest of their lives. Kahn told The Real Deal, "I think if you don't pay a landlord and they have to file an eviction against you, that should be a black mark on your record and the public has a right to know that." As if losing their home wasn't bad enough!

You would think that this bloodthirsty behavior would be frowned on by the city, who are supposedly neutral, but after Sanford Kahn passed, the clerk of court sent around this obituary to the attorneys across Chicago. Rather than mourn the loss of their father, the Kahns joke that "In lieu of flowers or donations, Sanford would prefer that everyone would file more eviction cases."

Of course, this email was never meant to go out to the public. That would reflect poorly on our city's lawyers, judges, and courts. What do you think?

< [social icons] ...

worked tirelessly to build one of the largest eviction firms in the area.

In his 84 years (with over 60 years of marriage), Sandy always made time for his family and enjoyed golfing and coaching his children's sports teams.

Sanford is survived by his wife Judy, and his three children, [redacted] and Robert.

A funeral is scheduled on May 19, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. at Chicago Jewish Funerals located at 8851 Skokie Blvd. in Skokie.

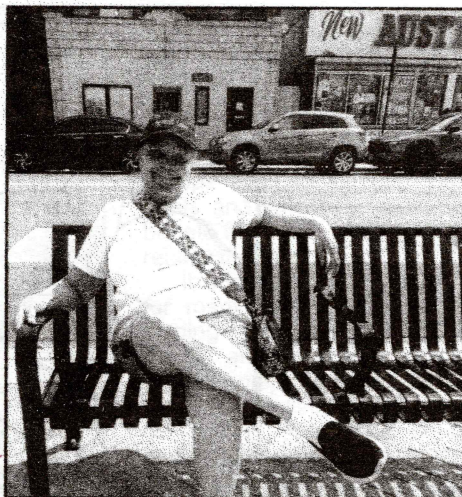
A shiva will be held on May 19, 2026 at 3:30 p.m. at Twin Orchard Country Club in Long Grove.

The second night of shiva will be held on May 20, 2026 from 5:30-9 p.m. at his home located at [redacted]

In lieu of flowers or donations, Sanford would prefer that everyone would file more eviction cases.

His leadership, laughter and love for the legal profession will be greatly missed.

Robert Kahn



## INTERVIEW WITH STACY

**TT:** Hello Stacy! How are you doing? Last time we interviewed you was in January of 2026. At that time, we asked you what you thought about the tenants of Fuerzas Activas de la Damen (FAD) who have gone on rent strike.

**Stacy:** I still think it's right what the FAD tenants are doing! Why should they pay rent? It takes all of us to do something and unite. Things will change for the better if we all come together.

**TT:** We very much agree. Can you tell us more about your experience with landlords?

**Stacy:** I've always been the type of person to stand up for my rights. My mom and dad taught me to cost the landlord their money if they don't treat you right. We've been in Chicago since 1968. My father was good with people. He said if there's a problem, take the landlord's money away from them. My mother taught me to live life to the fullest and always speak up for myself. You know what mamma I'm not an activist but I'll get my point across!

**TT:** How was it growing up in Chicago?

**Stacy:** I live in Oak Park now. I like that it's quiet and there's strict rules, like no littering. But I never forget where I came from. I still visit my old block. My friends still stay over there. I'm all about love. We have friends that are DJs. We used to have a block club too.

**TT:** What did the block club do? And what kind of music do you like?

**Stacy:** We had a beautiful neighborhood when I lived over there. We would get

together and get backpacks and other school supplies for the kids. Parents were not afraid to get in touch with the alderman and say we need speedbumps.

We were raised to love all music. Hear different music of all types – Black, White, Indian, Arab. Papa was a Rollin' Stone by The Temptations. One of my boyfriends when I was young took me to see Michael Jackson – the only performance I ever saw. I want to see the Michael Jackson movie.

**TT:** What problems have you seen tenants face more recently, and how are they dealing with them?

**Stacy:** They are displacing people on south boulevard, just putting people out and not trying to find people a place to go. And that's not right. Tenants: stand up for your rights. Get to know your landlord to know what he's like. Always let them know that you will leave so that they will know. Section 8 will stop the landlord's check. Some tenants don't want to do that, because people settle. Don't just settle, you deserve better than this. I'm a human and even an animal should be treated better. Everybody has to tell the landlord, not just one person. I'm tired of telling him – we all have to come together!

**TT:** What else do you want all tenants who read this interview to know?

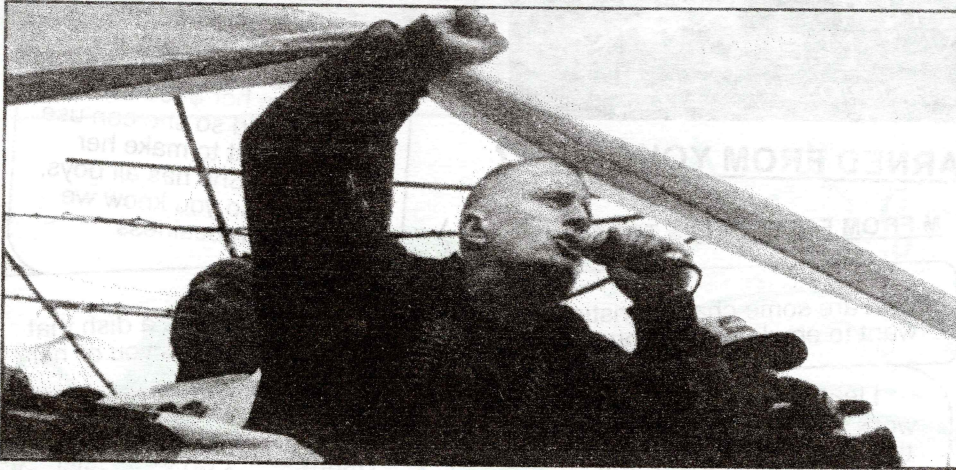
**Stacy:** Tenants deserve better living and better than what they are getting. You are a human being and you deserve better. That will lead you to open your mouth and stand your ground. Stand up and open your mouth! And that's all you have to do.

I was raised around Black people but I'm Native American but I'll fight for both of them!

**TT:** Thank you Stacy. ★



★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★



## THIS MONTH IN REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY: LESLIE FEINBERG AND LIBERATION

June is pride month, an occasion which has become associated with celebrations and parades. The origins of pride refer us back to a period of history when queer people were subject to constant harassment and abuse by police. Laws were written to bar visibly queer people from public life. Police raids would regularly result in sexual assault and physical beatings against those arrested. Reports from those jailed after raids describe police putting people through humiliation and even torture. Without anyone to stand up and fight for them, queer people were not treated with human dignity.

As local police abused their power, the FBI began compiling lists of gay, lesbian, and transgender people, treating them as threats to American society. The entire American intelligence machine, designed to snuff out any flicker of resistance, went into overdrive. All across the country people began to demand justice and dignity, and the government apparatus responded with violence and repression. This wasn't limited to queer people. In the winter of 1969, Black Panther Chairman Fred Hampton was killed by police in coordination with the FBI right here in Chicago. That very same year, in New York City, the Stonewall riots began, responding to another side of the government's violence against its own citizens.

The Stonewall riots were a series of uprisings that took place in response to a police raid on the Stonewall Inn. The upsurge of energy and resistance around these uprisings sparked a transformation. For years police violence had been

gradually intensifying, putting more and more pressure on a community without anything left to lose. Before, it had seemed like nothing would ever change and things would only continue getting worse bit by bit. All peoples have their limit, however and when that moment arrived everything was transformed in an instant. Free from the old way of suffering and surviving, people flooded into the queer liberation movement, forming organizations and fighting for justice. The Stonewall riots announced the birth of something qualitatively new. This small revolution is what pride month commemorates.

The movements that grew after Stonewall, liberation movements for gay, lesbian, and transgender liberation, were movements of working people. Few recognized this more clearly than Leslie Feinberg, a butch lesbian, a trans activist, and a member of the Workers World Party.

In her semi-autobiographical novel, *Stone Butch Blues*, Leslie Feinberg describes police violence and abuse based on what she experienced in her youth. This violence was directed at her because of her appearance (as a butch, Leslie wore men's clothing and kept her hair cropped short). Leslie's story tells another side of these experiences, things we have all gone through as workers: struggling to make rent, working long hours for low pay, worrying about getting fired or laid off for reasons outside our control. These are the realities of being working class, queer or not.

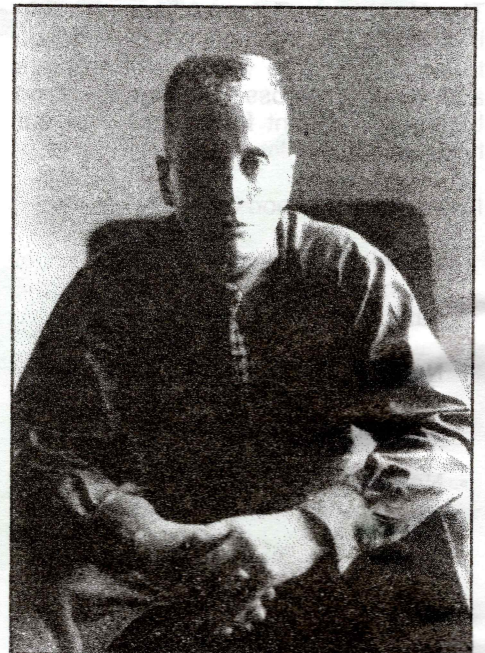
It has often been emphasized that it is impossible to understand poverty without understanding race, gender, and sexuality. Leslie shows that the opposite is equally true. Discrimination and violence can occur in isolated cases, but it is much more widespread and dangerous because it is in the interests of the capitalist class. In her novel, Feinberg describes the way bosses would play up gender distinctions between workers to tear apart the union. History shows that this is true—there are no lines that bosses won't cross to divide the workers when they begin to get organized.

Leslie Feinberg's life's work was

dedicated to bringing together these struggles. As a result she lived a principled life. She stood with the queer community in the United States, one she was a member of, but also spoke out with the oppressed peoples of the world. Leslie was a dedicated advocate for Palestinian liberation and a staunch defender of the Cuban revolution.

Today all of these causes are under threat. The Palestinian resistance is in retreat after the historic crimes of Israel. Cuba is under increasing threat of a direct invasion by the US military. In the US, we have seen intensified repression against queer people, even including the creation of lists to track transgender citizens. Is it a coincidence that all of these causes are facing low points? No. It is a sign of the gradual intensification of repression approaching its limit. The oppressive machine responsible for the killings of Fred Hampton and the suppression of resistance in the 1960s is in overdrive once again. It seems like nothing will ever change and things will continue getting worse bit by bit. But, the lesson we've learned from Stonewall and other uprisings is that gradual intensification leads to an explosive outbreak. Now more than ever before we must remain principled, standing together in preparation for a new revolutionary moment.

A union organizer in *Stone Butch Blues* says it clearly, speaking directly to those who have lost hope and turned away from the struggle: "I'm not saying we'll live to see some sort of paradise. But just fighting for change makes you stronger. Not hoping for anything will kill you for sure. Take a chance...You're already wondering if the world could change. Try imagining a world worth living in, and then ask yourself if that isn't worth fighting for." ★



★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★



## WHAT'S SOMETHING YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR MOM?

### AJ FROM THREE STAR

Everything about me is because of my mom. I'm me because of my mom.

What's a dish that reminds you of her?

Everything she makes is great, I always love it.

### M FROM FOOD, DELI & TOBACCO

What are some characteristics you want to emulate from your mom?

I learned to work and work - I come home and I'm tired and fall asleep. I wake up and I do it again. You never know if you're going to wake up. This is the test. It's always a test to keep working. After this, this test comes death then it determines heaven or hell.

### WAYNE FROM DUB J'S

Always do what my mom says. I got paid Thursday and I gave her \$100 as soon as I got paid so she can use it to use it to make her happy. [...] She has all boys, no girls so you know we mean business.

What's a dish that reminds you of her?

Ronny's steakhouse - we would always go to ronny's steakhouse. It doesn't exist anymore but she'll love any steak house. Probably somewhere downtown now.

## WHAT IS THE ALL-CHICAGO TENANT ALLIANCE?

The All-Chicago Tenant Alliance (ACTA) is a socialist organization of Chicago tenants. The time is right for workers and tenants across Chicago to stand together and fight for control over our housing and our lives.

In the neighborhoods, control means:

- **Housing Control** – Housing out of the hands of landlords and into the hands of the workers
- **No Poverty Profiteering** – No more politicians or capitalists getting rich off of people's exploitation
- **Neighborhood Self-Determination** – The people determine the future of our own neighborhoods—not corporations, out-of-state investors, or greedy slumlords

To win this, we have built a dedicated, militant group of organizers prepared to bring the fight to your landlord.

How does this work? We want to build power for tenants so we cannot do it without you. We'll come to your building and help put together a Tenant Union, an organization that can demand more from the landlord and back it up. Over the last two years this strategy has been proven. ACTA unions have carried out protests and rent strikes in response to arrogant slumlords. At the end of these struggles, tenants come out ahead—but only because they take power into their own hands.

As landlords and capitalists intensify their exploitation in our city and around the world, working people will be the first to suffer. Be a part of the movement that meets these challenges head on: contact ACTA today. ★

### CONTACT ACTA TODAY

FILL OUT OUR 'ORGANIZE WITH ACTA' FORM



## ACTA NEEDS FUNDING TO FIGHT THE WAR AGAINST SLUMLORDS!



Want to support ACTA and Tenants Talk, but don't have time? You can contribute money instead.

\$10 a month or a one time donation helps pay for operating expenses and Tenants Talk printing costs.

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# UNDERRATED HISTORIES

# Nela Martínez Espinosa

## Ecuadorian Revolutionary



DURING HER LIFE, NELA MARTÍNEZ ESPINOSA DEFIED EXPECTATIONS FOR WOMEN AT THE TIME. DURING THE MAY 1944 REVOLUTION KNOWN AS LA GLORIOSA, SHE OCCUPIED THE GOVERNMENTAL PALACE AND LED THE COUNTRY FOR THREE DAYS. SHE WAS A LEADER IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ECUADOR AND A FOUNDER OF THE ECUADORIAN WOMEN'S ALLIANCE. SHE REMAINED COMMITTED TO INDIGENOUS STRUGGLE AND INTERNATIONALISM UP UNTIL THE END OF HER LIFE, FIGHTING AGAINST U.S. AGGRESSION AND INTERVENTION ACROSS LATIN AMERICA.

When Nela was a teenager, she began reading revolutionary books. One writer that was influential for her was José Carlos Mariátegui. He was a Peruvian communist who wrote about the economic struggle of indigenous people. What book has influenced you? What would you say to convince Nela to read it?

At the age of ten or eleven, Nela partook in a protest against her father. Her father had workers on his land, who he exploited economically and racially. Do you agree with her actions? Would you have done something different? If so, how? Draw a picture of what you would have done if you were in her shoes.

NELA WAS A REVOLUTIONARY IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ECUADOR. IT ORGANIZED HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEASANTS AGAINST LANDLORDS FOR A BETTER LIFE. IMAGINE YOU WERE THE DJ FOR THE PEASANTS' AND COMMUNISTS' PROTESTS. WHAT SONGS WOULD YOU WANT TO BE PLAYED? (EX. AYER Y HOY - JULIO JARAMILLO)



# Hunting

Lenin was very fond of hunting. He would go stalking duck, wood grouse, hare and wolf.

But he also liked hunting fox.

Foxes are cunning animals. So it is all the more thrilling to hunt them.

Foxes have the habit of going to earth. But being clever they don't dig the hole themselves: once they see some ready hole that, say, a badger has dug for himself, they pop in and make themselves at home.

When badger comes along, "Well I never!" He finds someone living in his house.

Poor old badger, of course, gets the shock of his life when he sees a fox peering at him out of his own home. And he thinks there must be a mistake, and the fox will soon leave.

But not fox. She sits in the earth eyes closed as if she couldn't care less.

At that badger crawls into his house, thinking at worst he'll have to put up with this long-tailed ginger lodger and share with her.

But it's no fun living with fox: she's a thief. She steals all the food as well as taking the best place in the house. Poor old badger has to sleep with his tail sticking out of the hole. And that's no fun at all. Any big animal could come along and take a bite out of his tail. And when it rains...

So then badger troops off gloomily somewhere else and digs himself another hole, thank goodness he has a long nose.

Fox is glad and happy that badger has departed and settles down cosily in her new house.

But then along come the hounds who sniff out the earth and chase the foxes out. They start howling, digging up the soil or snow until fox darts like a shot out of the earth in fear.

Off race the hounds in pursuit, chasing her towards the huntsmen. And when they see her the huntsmen open fire, but sometimes miss their mark because fox is a slippery customer. One moment she's here, the next she's there; and when you whip round you see her brush darting behind the trees. Before you know it she's given you the slip, and the trail is cold.

One time Moscow hunters were arranging a fox hunt. It was all done very expertly. They had even put down markers in the snow of the glade to show each man's territory and who was to shoot where if the fox darted from the woods in flight from the hounds.

So the huntsmen spread out.

And Lenin was shown his shooting mark. Dressed in dufflecoat and big felt boots he stood upon a path, rifle at the ready, beside a tree.

All of a sudden, the hounds began to bay excitedly from the woods, That was the signal: they'd located the fox and would soon drive her out into the glade.

The huntsmen held their breath.

Lenin too.

He took a quick look to make sure

he'd loaded his gun properly.

All around the beauty was breathtaking. Glade. Forest. Glittering, fluffy snow on the branches. A wintry sunshine gilded the treetops.

Suddenly, from out of nowhere, the fox came bounding from the wood straight as an arrow; right at Lenin.

She was a fine ruddy-coloured beast with huge fluffy tail.

She was almost red all over with just a black bob on the very tip of her tail.

In her flight from the hounds she dashed straight into the glade where she was brought up short by the sight of a man with a gun.

For a few seconds the fox froze like a statue; only her tail bobbed nervously. From fright her round little eyes with slit pupils flashed in fright.

She could not fathom what to do or where to run. Dogs behind and a gun in front. That was why she had stopped dead in her tracks.

Lenin raised the gun to shoot.

Yet he suddenly dropped his arm and leant the gun in the snow by his legs.

With a swish of her bushy tail the fox flew off to one side and was soon out of sight beyond the trees.

Over by a tree near Lenin, was his wife, Nadezhda Konstantinovna.

"Why on earth didn't you shoot?" she asked in surprise.

With a smile Lenin said,

"I just couldn't, you know. It was such a beautiful fox. I didn't have the heart to kill it. Let it live."

Just then other huntsmen came running up and wondered too why Lenin had not fired when the fox was so close and even a sitting target.

And when they heard why he hadn't fired, the huntsmen were even more puzzled.

One huntsman spoke up.

"The more beautiful the fox, the more valuable it is. I would have had her for sure."

But Lenin said nothing at all.

