Report from Gaza

Gary Doupe

The 1.6 million people of Gaza have come through November's bombings, unbowed. I was in Gaza earlier that month, with a delegation of 21 Americans sent by Interfaith Peace-Builders. Among the many groups of people we met from diverse sectors of Gazan society was the family of Ahmed Abu Dakka, a 13 year old boy shot and killed a day earlier by Israeli fire while he was playing soccer with friends. His killing was not only tragic for one family, but challenging for all who call Gaza their home. As one event in a long series of violent episodes, it will be merely a historical footnote for the militarily dominant Israeli society. For Palestinians, who do not forget martyrs in their liberation struggle, Ahmed will take his place on the calendar of those marked for remembrance and honor.

The stakes are simply not the same for Israel and for the citizens of Gaza. There is nothing remotely equal about the struggle. Confined within 145 sq. miles of territory, two-thirds of the residents of Gaza trace their lineage to villages taken over by Israel in 1948. Israel does not permit Gazans to travel freely. The majority have never left their tiny reserve where

most seek simple dignity through education and work, hoping as we all do for justice and opportunity. The international airport near Rafah was completed in 1998, with funds and services donated by several foreign governments. Three years later, the modern

facility was bombed and bulldozed into uselessness by Israeli forces. Those who seek to travel abroad, most often to pursue graduate studies, face a year's worth of paperwork to meet Israel's requirements. The only functioning point of departure is the Rafah gate into Egypt.

Four years ago this month, Gaza was invaded by Israeli tanks and troops, bringing about enormous damage and the loss of 1400 Palestinian lives. Since that operation, known as "Cast Lead," an economic siege has continued, imposing onerous restrictions on commerce. Among them is a rule limiting Gazan fishermen to a shallow three-mile band of polluted water near the coast. Shipping into and out of Gaza's one port has been prohibited. Israel enforces its rules strictly, including a free-fire zone of 300 meters parallel to Gaza's northern and eastern borders with Israel, which removes a significant quantity

Cover concept: M. Ryder

SPC INFO

SPC Steering Committee 2013

Jessica Azulay, Claire Bach, Carol Baum, Jack Brown, Rachel Cary, Ben Keubrich, Saptarshi Lahiri, Andy Mager, Kimberley McCoy, Julienne Oldfield, Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre, Carole Resnick, Ursula Rozum, Richard Vallejo, Aly Wane, Jim Weidman, Wendy Yost.

SPC's Peace Newsletter

Editorial Committee: Teresa Florack, Ben Kuebrich, Saptarshi Lahiri, Mitch Lucas, Leahann Lynagh, Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre, Aly Wane. Calendar: Nick Cavanaugh. Layout: Jessica Maxwell. Proofing: Rae Kramer, Andy Molloy.

peacecouncil.net

Read the PNL online (issues dating to 1936!). See all our projects and events.

SPC Committees & Projects

Bikes 4 Peace: fixing bikes and working cooperatively with youth **Radical Reading**: reads & discusses timely books

CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine & Israel: education, action Ground the Drones: education, demonstrations, outreach

Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation: education, hydrofracking ban, Two Row Wampum campaign

Youth & Militarism: counter-recruitment and youth empowerment **Fundraising**: overall planning to raise funds to support SPC's work

Event Committees: Birthday, Bowlathon, Plowshares Finance: analysis, reports, budget, general oversight

Affiliated Projects & Coalitions

Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse: faith & secular groups Caribbean Latin America Coalition: sister communities, solidarity, SOA United as One: working for justice in the local justice system We Are NY: labor and community activists working for the common good

Peace Newsletter
Central New York Voices for Peace & Social Justice

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Dear Plowshares Committee

(Barb Floch, Lanny Freshman, Karen Kerney, Rae Kramer, Andy Molloy, Beth Mosley, Marie Summerwood, and Mardea Warner):



Thank you for creating a beautiful celebration of art, music and community again this year. Without the Plowshares Craftsfair and Peace Festival in December, the Syracuse Peace Council would not have the funds to do much of our organizing work throughout the year. Plowshares represents a wonderful example of the world in which we wish to live, and its spirit buoys us through the dark winter. We appreciate the huge amount of work you all do throughout the year to make Plowshares happen, and we are so grateful.

—SPC staff (Jessica, Amelia, Ursula and Carol)

Peace Newsletter

Sponsored by the Syracuse Center for Peace & Social Justice Article submission criteria: Contact pnl@peacecouncil.net or 472-5478. Advertising: Call 472-5478 or visit our website for rates and sizes. Calendar: Submit items for the February *PNL* calendar by January 15.

The Syracuse Peace Council (SPC),

founded in 1936, is an antiwar/social justice organization. We are community-based, autonomous and funded by the contributions of our supporters.

SPC educates, agitates and organizes for a world where war, violence and exploitation in any form will no longer exist. We challenge the existing unjust power relationships among nations, among people and between ourselves and the environment. As members, we work to replace inequality, hierarchy, domination and powerlessness with mutual respect, personal empowerment, cooperation and a sense of community.

Present social injustices cannot be understood in isolation from each other nor can they be overcome without recognizing their economic and militaristic roots. SPC stresses a strategy that makes these connections clear. We initiate and support activities that help build this sense of community and help tear down the walls of oppression. A fundamental basis for peace and justice is an economic system that places human need above monetary profit. We establish relationships among people based on cooperation rather than competition or the threat of destruction.

Our political values and personal lives shape and reflect each other. In both we are committed to nonviolent means of conflict resolution and to a process of decision-making that responds to the needs of us all.

Educate, Agitate, Organize: SPC IN ACTION

compiled by Jessica Azulay



Jim Weidman, Jessica Maxwell, Rose Viviano, Carole Resnick (from left to right) at the SPC info table at the 2012 Plowshares Craftsfair. Photo: Carol Baum

Stop Hydrofracking—Get on the Ban Wagon to Albany!

On January 9th, as Gov. Cuomo gives his annual State of the State address, fracktivists from across New York will descend upon Albany to make our collective voices heard in support of a permanent statewide hydrofracking ban. The Peace Council and Alliance for a Green Economy are organizing a bus from Central New York, at a cost of \$25 for a seat. If you can't go yourself, please consider donating so that we can offer some reduced cost seats. Contact Jessica.

While Cuomo has not yet made a decision about whether to permit or prohibit fracking in NYS, on November 29, the DEC quietly issued a set of revised rules that would govern how fracking would be practiced, were it to be permitted. The Peace Council is among the many local groups that support a full hydrofracking ban – and

we ask that if you decide to comment on the regulations, you also insist that there is no such thing as safe or responsible hydrofracking. Dr. Sandra Steingraber has created an excellent, plainspoken English resource to help us all participate in the public comment period (which ends January 11). Visit www.thirtydaysoffrackingregs.com to learn how to submit your comments.

Resist the Drones Here and Abroad

Drones around town. CNY drone resisters have been busy at work again this month educating, agitating and organizing. At Plowshares we displayed our model drone and gathered over 400 signatures petitioning the Common Council to ban surveillance drones in Syracuse. As our city gains prominence as a hot spot of anti-drone activity, our actions and vigils at Hancock Airbase increasingly garner

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STAFF ORGANIZERS

Carol Baum: carol@peacecouncil.net • Ursula Rozum: ursula@peacecouncil.net

Jessica Azulay: jessica@peacecouncil.net • Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre: amelia@peacecouncil.net

Andy Mager (Two Row staff): tworow@peacecouncil.net

press attention from journalists in Syracuse, Oswego, NYC and elsewhere.

On December 9, about 25 members of the Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars gathered near Rochester to strategize and plan for the next six months. Mark your calendars for a rally in Syracuse to ground the drones during the weekend of **April 27-28**.

Drones on trial. On December 13, Judge Robert Jokl found eleven activists guilty of trespass for their June 2012 action at Hancock Airbase. These members of the Upstate Coalition were arrested while attempting to deliver a citizens' indictment for war crimes to personnel at the base. Defendants acted as their own lawvers and argued that they were not breaking the law but were in fact upholding it. Multiple defendants pointed to the testimony of former Attorney General Ramsey Clark in the same courtroom in November 2011. He explained that the Nuremburg Principles require citizens to do everything in their power to prevent their government from committing war crimes.

Six defendants received a one-year conditional discharge and 25 hours of community service; five defendants were sentenced to 15 days in Jamesville Prison plus fines. Ed Kinane and James Ricks elected to start their sentences immediately and are serving sentences as we go to print. Claire Grady, Ellen Grady, and Rae Kramer will commence their sentences on January 11.

Additionally, activists are preparing for pretrial and motions hearings on **January 10 & 16** for two October attempts to deliver the indictment. Contact Amelia for details.

Interns Wanted!

SPC is seeking interns to work with us on a number of projects, including: Carbon-Free, Nuclear-Free Organizing; Anti-War Organizing; Outreach & Community Engagement; and Fundraising and Development. Internships are flexible and we guarantee plenty of practical hands on experience (and fun, too.) See full descriptions of internships available at http://www.peacecouncil.net/intern or contact Ursula to learn more!

Big thanks to last semester's interns whose contributions helped out big time as

continued on page 7

War Update

Seth Rutledge

Gaza: Israel initiated Operation Pillar of Cloud (Nov. 14-21) by killing Hamas military second-in-command and peace negotiator Ahmed Jabari. He had just received a draft of a truce agreement between Hamas and Israel brokered by Egypt.¹

Israel bombed 1,500 sites; killing 166 Palestinians (33% civilians); wounding 1,235 (97% civilians); demolished 242 buildings; and damaged over 8,000 buildings totaling \$1.2 billion in damages.² Hamas fired 1,400 unguided missiles into Israel (400 were intercepted) killing four Israeli civilians and two soldiers; and causing \$50 million in damages.³

On November 30 Netanyahu ordered the construction of 3,000 new homes and planning for thousands more in the occupied West Bank and East al-Quds

(Jerusalem). The US will increase its \$3.1 billion annual military aid to Israel by \$210-\$470 million.4

Syria: 3,111 women and 33,574 men have died since March 18, 2011. Terrorist attacks have sharply increased in 2012.

Spokesmen from the opposition have met with US, British, French, and Turkish officials in Qatar to form the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary Opposition Forces; now recognized by France, UK, US, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, UAE, Kuwait and Oman; and supported by some opposition groups. Other opposition groups are engaged in dialog with the Syrian government. 8

NATO will deploy Patriot missiles and 400 soldiers in Turkey on the border of Syria. 10,000 US troops have been deployed off the coast of Syria. The US has provided \$25 million in aid to the rebels; the CIA maintains an FSA command center in Turkey; and the US has facilitated arms supplies including a shipment of surface to air missiles. The supplies including a shipment of surface to air missiles.

Anonymous Pentagon sources claim the Syrian government plans to use chemical weapons of mass destruction. Pentagon officials say there is no evidence for this accusation. ¹³ Israeli commandos are in Syria purportedly to monitor this possibility. ¹⁴

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Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): On November 20 the M23 rebels (with support from US-backed Rwanda and Uganda^{15,16}) seized the city of Goma in eastern DRC. 390,000 refugees have fled the fighting since April.¹⁷ The war for the DRC's mineral wealth has killed 5.4 million since 1998.¹⁸

Sudan: Israel bombed an ammunition factory in Sudan. ¹⁹ Rebels (supported by US backed^{20,21} S. Sudan²² continue to shell an airport and combat the army. ²³ Iranian warships visited N. Sudan in a show of support. Sudan has been under US sanctions since 1997 ²⁴

Pakistan: Four drone strikes killed11-23 people and injured 7-13

from November 29-December 9.25

Afghanistan: In the period between August 1 and October 31 there have been 75 US soldier and 967 Afghan civilian deaths; and more than 568 US soldier and 1,590 Afghan civilian injuries. 26,27

1-27 Visit www.peacecouncil.net for references and additional reading.



Report from Gaza / from cover

of desirable farmland from production.

Gaza is unwilling to accept the Occupation. Its military capability is akin to that of David facing Goliath, but Gazans circumvent Israel's blockade with as many as 600 to 800 tunnels into Egypt, through which building supplies, cars, and all sorts of other goods flow into Gaza in defiance of Israeli restrictions. Some Gazan factions fire rockets into Israel, terrorizing their neighbors. Few of the rockets hit targets, but some do; every instance of death and destruction is tragic, fueling rage. To Israel, both rocks thrown at soldiers by Palestinian children in the West Bank, and rocket attacks from Gaza reinforce a narrative of fear that demands response. To Palestinians, on the other hand, rocks and rockets symbolize the defense

of honor among victims of Occupation,

in a struggle where non-violent resistance is actually more common. Reacting to violent resistance with much greater force, Israel defeats itself in the court of world opinion.

Many of Israel's sharpest critics see themselves as its best friends. Among them are conscientious Jews living

in Israel, the United States, and Europe, who yearn for an Israel which visibly embodies the call of Hebrew prophets for justice, letting "the oppressed go free." They are joined by activists from

Gary Doupe is a retired United Methodist pastor, residing in Bainbridge, NY.

numerous other faith traditions and philosophies who support democratic rights for all people, believing that only through mutually respectful negotiations can a livable and fair set of arrangements be shaped to bring genuine peace for both Jews and Palestinians. Until that happens, fear and resentment will reign.

Both peoples love the land. Can they learn to love sharing

it? It's clear that segments of both societies yearn to drive "the intruder" away. Fortunately, there are also many Israelis and Palestinians who believe co-existence is possible, so long as the terms of peace recognize the dignity, equality, and right to security of both peoples.

As US citizens, our investment has been almost exclusively on one side. The bulk of our foreign aid, decade after decade, has gone to the Israeli military, a force that has become one of the world's most powerful and sophisticated. As we come to appreciate the deep devotion both cultures

harbor for this land, I believe most of us will follow our prevailing instinct toward fairness and equal opportunity. Rather than send more weapons for Israel's arsenal, our government must cultivate a future of peace for both communities, applying economic and political pressure to assure that both peoples may live quietly under their vines and fig trees, no longer afraid.



2012: A Year in Peace Work

From a local to global scale, 2012 was a year of trials and tribulations. We saw military escalations in Afghanistan, Syria, Egypt, Libya, El Salvador, between Israel and Palestine, and here at home where a series of high-profile shootings have brought counter-terrorism efforts to our front door like never before. Many activists and organizations are aware that this is 'crunchtime' to work for peace.

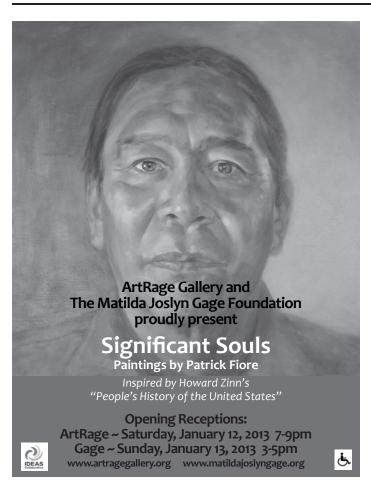
As we begin a new year in peace work, we at SPC would like to highlight some of our successes from the past year. We started our 76th year carrying the momentum of a record-breaking Plowshares, and the excitement just kept coming as the year unfolded. We maintained organizing energy around myriad crucial issues; organized a successful Bowlathon, birthday dinner and Plowshares; and published ten *PNLs*. On top of all that, the following efforts led by volunteers, interns and staff were unique to 2012:

- Organized and hosted PeaceSongsCNY release party
- Hosted Medea Benjamin & a weekend of anti-drone organizing including a march and rally
- Supported six separate arrest occasions at Hancock Airbase and one trial for drone resistors
- Laid groundwork & built momentum for Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign

- Hosted Rabbi Brian Walt to teach us about the Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions campaign to end Israel's occupation of Palestine
- Supported Aly Wane in his Coming Out of the Shadows party, and by extension lent support to the Undocumented and Unafraid movement
- Partnered with Peace Action of CNY to host the Peace Picnic, a family-oriented event promoting abolition of nuclear weapons
- Partnered with the Onondaga Nation for Water is Life festival
- Facilitated a new youth anti-war effort that led a work-in at SU's ROTC office, protested drones at the NYS Fair, and did CIA counter-recruitment on SU campus
- Organized and led the Drone Country Tour, a tour of local facilities contributing to global drone warfare
- In the midst of all this great organizing SPC said goodbye to longtime staff members Jessica Maxwell and Andy Mager, and welcomed Steering Committee members Jessica Azulay and Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre to the staff collective

Thanks to each and every one of you who contributed to and participated in all of this work. We look forward to another active and inspired year in solidarity for peace.

-Jack Brown and Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre







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Syracuse Northeast Community Center is a nonprofit serving the community since 1978. Our Community Health Advocate offers answers and services only - no sales!

SPC in Action / from page 3

our staff collective underwent some transitions. They took on a diversity of work including - Hyun Gi Kim (SU) assisted with the Move to Amend campaign, Mitch Lucas (LeMoyne) worked on the Peace Newsletter Committee, and Lindsay Rexer (LeMoyne) staffed counter recruitment outreach tables in Syracuse High Schools. Interns, you're awesome!

Peace is Priceless...

As another year comes to a close, we're reflecting on the many ways, large and small, that the Peace Council worked for peace and social justice this year. Please make a year-end contribution to the Syracuse Peace Council to catapult us into next year. We've had a fantastic year of organizing but our fundraising efforts need a boost. We make every dollar count, so please contribute as generously as you can. More information at www. peacecouncil.net/donate.

Jobs Not Wars!

SPC has joined a national campaign led by US Labor Against the War urging the President and Congress to abandon austerity solutions to the deficit and instead end the war, cut military spending, and tax the super-rich. Tell Congress to redirect resources to restore and protect the social safety net, create jobs, deal with climate change and meet other urgent social needs. We all lose when the US spends 57% of our discretionary funds on war and preparations for war. Sign and share the petition on the web at http://bit.ly/jobs-not-wars-spc, or come into the SPC office for a paper copy. Contact Ursula.

Carbon-Free, Nuclear-Free Postcards

Together with the Alliance for a Green Economy, SPC is asking the New York State Legislature to fund a study that will show whether and how New York could switch to a carbon-free, nuclear-free energy supply. We need your help to show public support for this. Sign one of our postcards. If you're a Syracuse PNL subscriber, there is one included inside this newsletter. Otherwise, you can come by the Peace Council to sign one. Or, you can also sign one virtually at www.agreenewyork.org.

Working for a Just Peace

If you missed it, you can read our statement on Israel's overwhelming use of force against Gaza in November at www.peacecouncil. net/statements/Gaza2012.htm. The Peace Council's committee, Central New York Working for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel, had a busy December. On December 12, we showed the film "Where Should the Birds Fly," by Palestinian film-maker Fida Oishta, created during the 2008/2009 Israeli assault on Gaza. On December 15, we vigiled on Erie Blvd in protest against Israeli expansion of settlements. We continue to gather signatures of people who pledge not to buy goods manufactured in Israeli settlements, and we are planning some actions supporting the international boycott in early 2013.



December 15, 2012 demonstration on Erie Blvd against expansion of Israeli settlements. Banner by Weston Hoy. Photo: Jessica Azulay

Welcome New Steering Committee!

The SPC Steering Committee is responsible for the organizational health of the Peace Council. In January 2013, we welcome Ben Kuebrich, Aly Wane, Claire Bach. Rachel Cary, and Jim Weidman to the Steering Committee (SC). SC members are also engaged in the Peace Council's activism in an ongoing way. They serve two-year terms on the SC where decisions on topics ranging from our annual budget to program priorities are made by consensus. Thank you for stepping up and caring about the future of SPC.

400th Anniversary of Two Row is Here!

The 400th anniversary of the Two Row Wampum Treaty is upon us. The Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign has been

PEACE OUTREACH

1st Tuesday monthly 4:15-5 pm

Hancock Air Base Entrance (E. Molloy Rd., between Thompson & Townline Rd.)

JAN. 8, FEB. 4, MAR. 5 Contact Ed or Ann, 315-478-4571

organizing for a year and a half to prepare a year-long campaign to Honor Native Treaties and Protect the Earth. Support from around the state continues to grow with over 60 organizational co-sponsors and lots of enthusiasm from hundreds of

people around the state.

Mark your calendars for the opening event: Sharing the River of Life, at 7 pm on Monday, February 11 at Syracuse Stage. In the meantime, check out our redesigned website (www.honorthetworow.org), consider applying to join us for the symbolic enactment paddling trip down the Hudson (July 28-August 9), and make a donation to our online fundraising campaign (www.indiegogo.com/HonorTheTwoRow).

We've just set up a new office adjacent to SPC's main offices. We need lots of help to make this effort a game changer for Haudenosaunee-New York State relations. Contact Andy at 701-1592 or tworow@

peacecouncil.net.

Another Great Plowshares

We had another successful Plowshares Craftsfair and Peace Festival in December, We couldn't have done it without the many hands of craftspeople, volunteers, cooks. performers, prize donors and shoppers. We believe we had the second highest attendance on record. Special thanks to the Plowshares Committee, the SPC Marketplace Committee (Stephanie Leeds, Kim McCov, Wendy Yost), the Mission Restaurant, Nottingham High School, Jessica Maxwell (program and publicity), the entertainers, and the many people who volunteered to staff the greeting stations, the cash registers, the crafts table, the raffle, the SPC info table. and the silent auction. Thanks to the setup and cleanup crew. And most of all, thanks to everyone who attended Plowshares and enjoyed the weekend with us.