

SYRACUSE

PEACE COUNCIL'S

Peace Newsletter

Central New York Voices for Peace and Social Justice

September 2013 #827

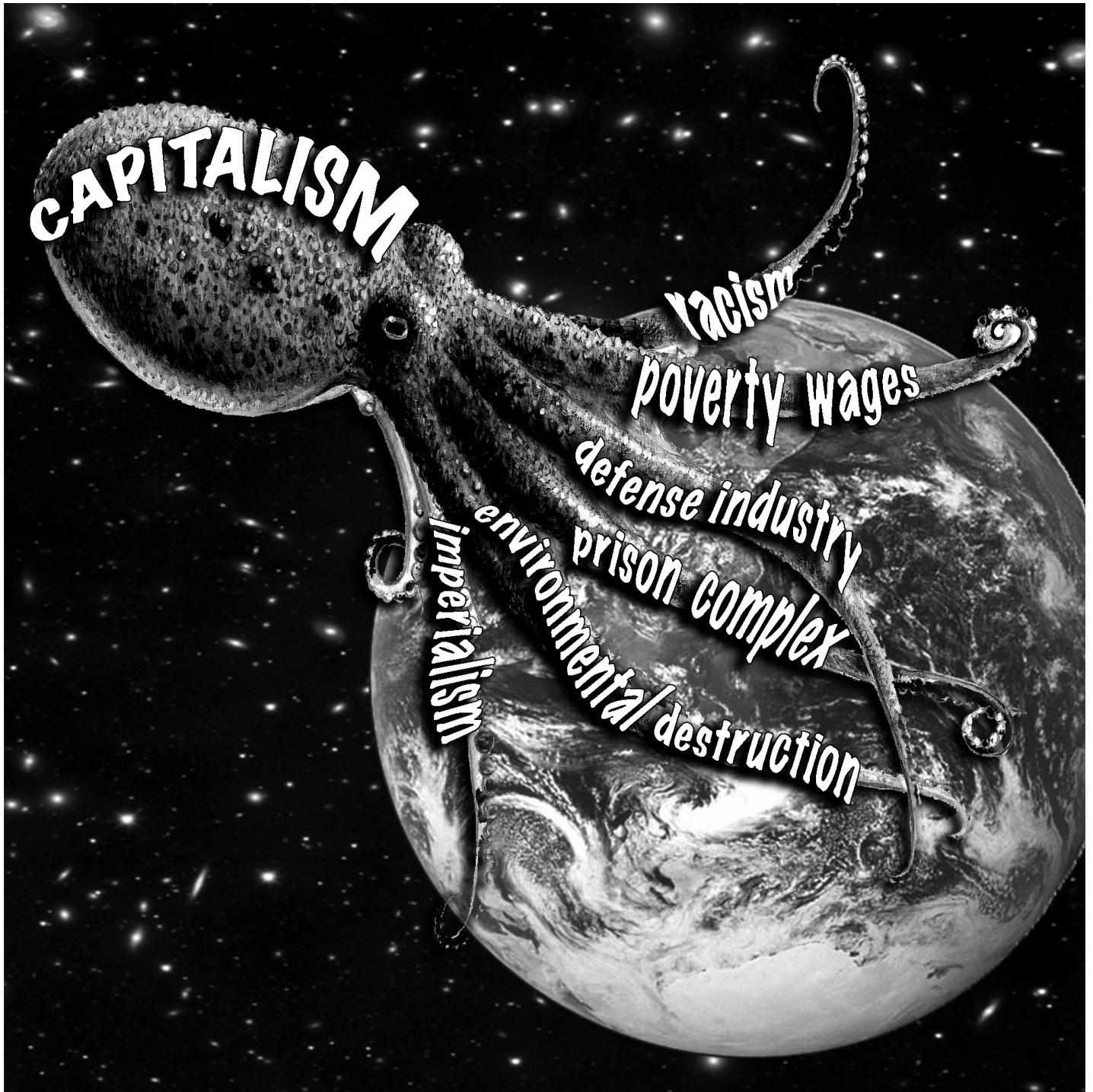


Image: Tree Florack

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SPC INFO

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SPC's Peace Newsletter

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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 & End the Wars: education, demonstrations, outreach

Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation: education, hydrofracking ban,

Two Row Wampum campaign

Military Alternatives Education Project: counter-recruitment in high schools

Youth RIOT: Resisting Imperialism & Oppression Together (youth organizing)

Fundraising: overall planning to raise funds to support SPC's work

Event Committees: Birthday, Bowlathon, Plowshares

Finance: analysis, reports, budget, general oversight

Peace Newsletter: produce SPC's monthly newsletter

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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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 September *PNL* calendar by August 16.

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

Obama Greeted by Demonstrators

Demonstrators waited for hours along Teall Ave. and Robinson St. to send President Obama environmental and antiwar messages on August 22. Obama was in town to speak about education at Henninger High School, and the activist community was out in full force to greet him.

Anti-fracking activists attended by the hundreds, calling on the President to protect clean water and air, and to prevent worsening global climate change by leaving natural gas in the ground.

Antiwar activists also called on the President to end drone warfare, stop funding the Israeli military, and end military aid

to Egypt. Activists also demanded freedom for convicted wikileaks whistleblower Chelsea (formerly Bradley) Manning, who was sentenced the day before to 35 years in prison.

SPC staffers Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre and Ursula Rozum made national news when they interrupted the President's speech inside Henninger to unfurl a banner and call for Manning's release.



Photos: Jessica Azulay (outside), Mike Groll/AP

Ground the Drones, End the Wars at the State Fair

For the sixth year, SPC will present a silent tableau outside the gate of the New York State Fair. The theme of this year's tableau is "The Two Faces of Drones," in which half of the tableau shows the death and destruction caused by weaponized drones around the world, while the other

half focuses on the effects of surveillance drones in "Our Town, U.S.A."

Looking ahead, **September 26** brings the trial of the "Ash Wednesday Drone Protesters" at the Town of Dewitt Court (public welcome – contact Carol for time). We will have a visit from Kathy Kelly – who will have recently returned from Afghanistan – **October 13-15**, and participate in a "Drones Around the Globe: Proliferation

and Resistance" Summit from **November 16-17** in Washington, DC. Work also continues on the local Anti-Surveillance Drone Resolution. We welcome your participation in any way you are able. Contact Carol.

Get Down and Support the Peace Council!

On **Thursday, September 12**, at **7:30 pm**, come out to Metro Bar and Lounge on Westcott Street for a music and dance benefit for the Peace Council. We are excited to have two excellent local acts:

continued on next page

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PEACE COUNCIL

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Carol Baum: carol@peacecouncil.net • Ursula Rozum: ursula@peacecouncil.net
Jessica Azulay: jessica@peacecouncil.net • Amelia Ramsey-Lefevre: amelia@peacecouncil.net

RootShock playing reggae/soul and Dos Equis playing latin-folk fusion, featuring Colleen Kattau and Laura Sue the Silver Nightingale, who will perform her new "Drone Song." For more information, contact Ursula.

Interns Wanted

The Syracuse Peace Council is seeking interns who are enthusiastic and PASSIONATE about stopping killer drone attacks and ending US military occupation overseas, and who are MOTIVATED to take ACTION for a world of peace, compassion and equality. By interning in our office, you'll have the opportunity to learn the basics of grassroots organizing from outreach to publicity to fundraising. To apply, contact Ursula and fill out the application at <http://www.peacecouncil.net/internships-in-activism>.

The War on Terror – Making Us All the Enemy

CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel will present a talk by Steve Downs on Tuesday, **September 17 at 7 pm** at ArtRage Gallery (505 Hawley Ave.). Steve Downs, former Chief Attorney with the NY State Commission on Judicial Conduct, was a member of the defense team for Yassin Aref, who was prosecuted and convicted of terrorism-related charges. Out of this experience he came to realize that not only had the government convicted an innocent individual, but it had done so deliberately under a program referred to as "preemptive prosecution," which is being used to arrest and convict Muslims throughout the US on contrived charges. In 2008, he became one of the founders of Project SALAM to document and protest preemptive prosecution. Contact Jessica.

They Say "Wiretap," We Say "Fight Back"

On July 27, activists took to the streets of downtown Syracuse to protest escalating surveillance by the National Security Agency and other government entities and corporations. About 40 people gathered at the Federal Building and then marched through the city, past the Syracuse Wine and Jazz Festival and the Downtown Arts and



Protesters at Restore the Fourth Rally, July 27. Photo: Ursula Rozum.

Crafts Fair. The protesters called for an end to drones and militarization of the police, indefinite detention under the NDAA, no more prosecution of whistleblowers, and no more warrantless NSA surveillance programs. The protest was organized by Defend the Fourth, a new group in CNY, with assistance from the Syracuse Peace Council. We were joined by the Syracuse Green Party, Central New York Patriots, Occupy Syracuse, and People Against the NDAA. Another protest is being planned for September 17, Constitution Day, in concert with groups all over the US. Details TBA.

"The Suffering Grasses" Film Screening

"Whenelephants fight, it is the grass that suffers." Join the Peace Council on **September 24 at 7 pm** at ArtRage Gallery (505 Hawley Ave.) for a film showing and discussion via video with director Iara Lee. *With thousands dead and counting, the ongoing conflict in Syria has become a microcosm of political tensions in the Middle East and an unsavory reflection of the world at large. Against the backdrop of the Arab Spring and the complicated politics of the region, this film seeks to explore the Syrian conflict through the humanity of the civilians who have been killed, abused, and displaced to the squalor of refugee camps.* <http://films.culturesofresistance.org/suffering-grasses>.

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SPC Garage Sale

LOTS!!! of Stuff, LOW!!! Prices
September 7-8: Saturday 9 - 4, Sunday 9 - 12, 401 Scottholm Blvd., Syracuse. Drop off your "gently used" items Wednesday-Friday, September 4-6, between 3 pm and 10 pm. Wanted: household and sporting goods, books, DVDs, games, toys, furniture, linens, tools, plants, art, jewelry, lamps, holiday items, appliances and MORE. Please NO clothing, old electronics, things that DON'T work and miscellaneous crap (oops! not-good stuff). Questions? Call Rae, 445-2840. Helpers WELCOME for set-up and sale. Food provided.

PEACE OUTREACH

Show your opposition to war and the reaper drones! Bring your own sign or use one of ours.

Tuesdays: 4:15-5 pm

Sept 3 Hancock Air Base Entrance (E. Molloy Rd., between Thompson & Townline Rds.)

Sept 10 Intersection of E. Genesee and Erie Blvd.

Sept 17 Hancock Air Base Entrance

Sept 24 E. Genesee and Erie Blvd.

Saturdays: 9-10 am

Park Street - Across from the Regional Market main entrance.

Contact Ed or Ann, 315-478-4571

Trayvon, Marissa, & Cece:

A Radical Black Marxist-Feminist's Perspective

Nikeeta Slade

My roommate and I watched the final moments of the Zimmerman trial with bated breath. "Not guilty." When I heard those words, I cupped my hand over my mouth in sheer horror and disbelief. I was mortified. Shocked. As a black woman, I am acutely aware of how racism is embedded into the very essence of American society, so the visceral reactions I had towards the verdict were not spawned by naiveté but confirmation. The verdict confirmed that in this allegedly post-racial era, Florida and the country as a whole have absolutely no regard for black humanity.

The verdict was just the final blow in an ordeal that was fraught with racism from the very beginning. Even before the actual trial began, rightwing pundits like Sean Hannity launched vilification campaigns against Trayvon Martin.

Pundits were all too willing to imply that since Martin was suspended from school and traces of marijuana were found in his blood, that somehow he was a "thug" who deserved to be killed. Nevermind the fact that George Zimmerman knew absolutely nothing about Trayvon Martin's background. More importantly, even if he had known these things about Trayvon, what kind of society do we live in when alleged marijuana use justifies the murder of a young boy armed only with snacks? While I could rehash the minutiae of the trial, the fundamental point remains that Zimmerman stalked and killed Martin as if he were nothing more than mere prey because in Zimmerman's mind, Martin had no right to be in that gated community. This is evidenced by the fact that on the 911 tapes, he referred to Trayvon as "suspicious." Had Zimmerman stayed in the car that night as the dispatcher instructed, Trayvon Martin would still be alive today.

Nikeeta is a Pan-African Studies graduate student and local activist in Syracuse.



Image: Ebony magazine.

The Response

The fact that thousands of people all over the country poured into the streets to protest the verdict illustrates the spark the case has ignited. Conversations about race and racism are always happening within the black community but the aftermath of the case opened up a space to have this conversation nationally. Unfortunately, however, much of the dialogue devolved into tangential conversations falsely claiming that black communities do not pay enough attention to "black on black" violence and the scapegoating and demonization of black families and black communities.

Considering that Barack Obama has largely failed to speak out against racism in his tenure as president, it is a testament to the power and effectiveness of mass protest that he was actually forced to address the black community's anger. Last year, when the case first broke, Obama issued the politically safe and innocuous statement: "If I had a son he would look like Trayvon." This time, raising issues of racial profiling and racial disparities in the application of the law, Obama was forced

to admit that considering the current and historical context in which racism still shapes and influences much of our society, the black community's response to the verdict was indeed legitimate.

While his post-Zimmerman speech was arguably one of the most race-conscious speeches Obama has given (which doesn't say much), it certainly left a lot to be desired on other points, specifically in terms of solutions. One of Obama's major points was how to get young black boys to feel more included and valued in society. However, he made it a point to say that the solution is probably not going to be some "grand, new federal program." Federal programs are exactly what we need to address economic disinvestment, unemployment, the prison industrial complex and other issues that push black youth to the margins of society. Furthermore, while it is certainly imperative that we address the marginalization of youth of color, it was politically deceptive to shift the conversation away from racism and the criminal injustice system to implicitly talk

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War Economics

A Look at the Underlying Motives for the Current US Imperial Strategy

Seth Rutledge

As current events show, domination of energy resources serves the US imperial agenda on multiple levels. Militarily, control of energy supplies ensures the ability to cripple Russia or China in the case of war. Economically, there is an obvious windfall for the gas companies of the dominant country, but most importantly, maintaining control of the energy industry is key to forcing all international oil sales to be denominated in dollars.¹ This makes US dollar ownership a virtual necessity for every economy and allows the US government to continually borrow and spend on military adventures and military aid to governments around the world. The predatory cycle of dominance seeks stability and self-perpetuation. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) objectives extend to Syria. Creating a client state or numerous fractured and weakened states allows for the surrounding of the gas fields in the Levant Basin and the strategic Mediterranean sphere. This would prevent or control an Iran-Iraq-Syria pipeline which could provide the EU with gas from the world's largest reserves, the South Pars field held by Qatar and Iran.²

Weakening of Egypt is also a key objective for NATO to oversee oil flowing through the Suez Canal to Europe. Foreign elements may be seeking to provoke a civil war by sniping army and protestors similar to provocateurs acting during the early stages of the Syrian revolt.³ President Obama is seeking to appoint Robert Ford as ambassador to Egypt, despite his involvement in the formation of death squads in Iraq and Syria to fuel sectarian violence.⁴ Availability of Persian Gulf energy to China is a threat to the pillars of economic and military hegemony. Pakistan has been negotiating with China for a pipeline to transport gas from Iran through Pakistan and into China.⁵ The US has been committing double-tap drone strikes to provoke violence⁶ while encouraging Balochistan province separatism.⁷ When combined with the promotion of terrorism in China, it appears that unrest will continue with the development of the pipeline.⁸

¹⁻⁸ Visit peacecouncil.net for references and additional reading. ☸

Sparky Town

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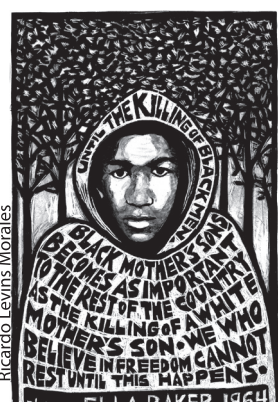
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Until the killing of black men- black mother's sons becomes as important to the rest of the country as the killing of a white mother's son- we who believe in freedom cannot rest until this happens.

- Ella Baker 1964

Trayvon Martin poster & postcard.
Syracuse Cultural Workers
STORE 400 Lodi St.
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Garment worker union leaders protesting murder of labor activist Aminul Islam in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Photo: Gazi Nafis Ahmed

Thinking Through the International Minimum Wage Conundrum

Saptarshi Lahiri

In the wake of the May 2013 Savar garment factory tragedy in Bangladesh, Mike Elk, labor journalist for the progressive publication *In These Times*, broke a story about police spying on the United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS).¹ While the story was primarily about the political issue *du jour*, i.e., encroachment on civil liberties, my attention was drawn to what the protesters were actually demanding: “United Students Against Sweatshops aimed to put pressure on retailers like Gap, Children’s Place, Wal-Mart, Target, to sign the Bangladesh accord on fire and safety [which would] set up a third-party organization to monitor safety conditions in Bangladesh, as well as allow binding arbitration by Bangladeshi courts if terms of this agreement are violated.”

It seemed startling to me because the protesters, ostensibly “against sweatshops” are merely asking for better regulation of, you guessed it: sweatshops. One would imagine that those against sweatshops would be wholly against the entire sweatshop paradigm. Not only this, Mike Elk seemed to rue the fact that the US had limited itself to hitting the Bangladeshi government with only “a small

sanction” that had cost Bangladesh a mere \$40 million annually, which had done little to reform Bangladesh’s endemic corruption. This is classic victim blaming, since the relationships of power between North American and European transnational corporations (which receive their respective countries’ formidable backing) and a small low income South Asian country battered by colonial devastation, are starkly asymmetric. It is also depressingly predictable in our neoliberal era how far to the right nominally progressive voices have swung.

Surprisingly, one finds a more progressive voice than the USAS in an unlikely figure, namely, American Apparel CEO Dov Charney. Focusing on the true villains of the Savar tragedy—i.e., predatory North American/European retailers looking to exploit unregulated factories in poor countries—in a recent interview he suggests the idea of an international minimum wage and lambasts multiple global retail giants for exploiting wage laborers in low income countries.²

So what about the International Minimum Wage? It is a neoclassical liberal economic strategy³ in which a state can solve the problem of underdevelopment (or underconsumption) by increasing the income levels of the majority of the population either through legislation concerning wage levels (minimum wage laws, legalization of unions, etc.) or through income transfers (unemployment compensation, welfare, etc.).⁴

Lest the far right cry “socialism!” at the mere mention of a universal living wage, the above solutions are actually well within the realm of capitalism. The actual Marxist solution would be to abolish imperial relations of trade and capitalist social relations of production which lead to concentrated wealth, such as in rich European or North American countries.

The Marxist way would be to break the nexus between the State’s protection of wealthy corporations, following Lenin’s dictum of imperialism being the highest form of capitalism. Even though both liberals and Marxists attempt redistribution of wealth by extracting it from the bourgeoisie, the key difference perhaps lies in the fact that liberals only selectively criticize the State for representing the capitalist interest, while this is fundamental to the Marxist critique. Savar is by no means a unique incident for Bangladesh – as recently as November last year, an even more massive fire at Tazreen Fashions killed 661 people, followed by 41 factory fires⁵ between then and the Savar incident. This trend demonstrates severe systemic problems that neither US sanctions nor well-regulated death traps will likely fix. The Marxists then, are perhaps on to something.

If the International Minimum Wage were

Saptarshi, a recent graduate of SUNY-ESF with an MS in Environmental Studies, is now a freelance writer living in Syracuse.

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Will Senate Reform Bill Pass in House?

Barrie Gewanter and Jose Perez

In June, the US Senate passed S.744, the “Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act,” a bill intended to be a comprehensive approach for immigration reform. The next step is now in the House, whose leaders have rejected a comprehensive approach in favor of piecemeal reform bills. While the fate of immigration reform will rest in the hands of a joint congressional conference committee, it is useful to examine the bill the Senate has already passed.

There are a number of positive things included within the Senate bill. First, it provides a pathway to citizenship by allowing persons who arrived in the US prior to Dec. 31, 2011 to step forward and obtain a “registered provisional immigrant” (RPI) status. Individuals who qualify for and receive RPI status could work legally, travel to another country, and return to the US. They would have to register, pay a \$500 fine, and go through a background check. The Senate bill also allows those deported before 2012 to return if they were deported for non-criminal reasons and have a spouse or child who is a US citizen or green card holder.

After ten years as an RPI, individuals could apply for a green card (permanent resident status) by paying another \$1,000 in fines and demonstrating that they meet work and English language requirements. In another three years they could apply for citizenship. There is also an expedited five-year process for agricultural workers and persons brought into the US as youth (called “Dreamers”) to apply for green cards.

The Senate bill also increases visas for workers in particular economic sectors. Available visas for workers in scientific, medical and engineering (STEM) fields would initially be increased by 45,000 a

year. More visas would be made available to immigrants who had earned advanced degrees in STEM fields from an American university.

Meanwhile, other aspects of the bill, such as changes in family and employment-based immigration categories, would go into effect gradually, giving the Department of Homeland Security the opportunity to reduce extensive backlogs that have built up. One of the key aspects of the bill, backed



by both labor and business, is a new “W” worker program that could expand over time based on workforce needs. Although W visas are for a limited duration, workers with W status may eventually be eligible to apply for lawful permanent residence, making it the first time that such less-skilled immigrant workers would be allowed to transition to permanent resident status without an employer’s sponsorship.

S.744 also addresses long-overdue shortcomings of the immigration removal, detention, and court processes, including authorizing access to counsel for certain vulnerable populations, giving immigration judges more opportunity to make case-by-case determinations on removal decisions, and streamlining the asylum program. (However, it also increases the penalties for certain criminal activities, making it more difficult or impossible to become a legal resident due to drunk-driving convictions, gang activity, domestic violence, passport fraud, and identity theft.)

One little known border provision of the Senate bill could bring some improvement to communities along New York’s northern border by reducing the jurisdiction of immigration law enforcement authorities (CBP and ICE) along the northern border. Federal law currently includes an exception to the 4th amendment prohibition against unreasonable stops, searches and seizures within 100 air miles of the US border. CBP/ICE agents can, in most cases, stop, question and search you at will within that area. However, S.744 reduces that jurisdiction to 25 air-miles inland from the northern border.

However, despite these many positive aspects to the law, some draconian policies are also contained within it, many within the Corker-Hoeven Amendment. This amendment, at the price tag of \$40 billion, mandates virtually a complete militarization of the United States/Mexico border: 20,000 more border patrol agents, mobile surveillance devices, additional fencing, electronic exit systems, and additional border patrol stations and checkpoints. This despite the fact that former CBP Commissioner David Aguilar publicly stated in 2012 that our southern border was the most secure it has been in thirty years.

There is still a difficult struggle to be pursued in the House, and a storm of high politics to weather before any final legislation is considered in a conference committee. So we will keep on educating and lobbying, and asking you to speak out with us. You, as voters, should place consistent pressure on members of Congress and urge them to support a comprehensive approach to immigration reform that includes a pathway to citizenship. Our elected officials need to hear from us and experience firsthand, through phone call, letters and drop-in visits to their offices, the overwhelming public support for solving our nation’s broken immigration system. *Si Se Puede*. Yes We Can still enact real immigration reform. ♡

Barrie works with the local chapter of the NYCLU. Jose is an immigration attorney.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The Hidden Perils of “Immigration Reform”

Aly Wane

Being undocumented, you would think that I would be ecstatic about the immigration reform deal being negotiated in Congress. I stand to benefit directly from its passing. However, I find it highly problematic. I want to specify here that this is an analysis of S.744 only, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act. The House is trying to pass individual bills which are, at press, even more conservative than the Senate framework.

In order to understand how we got to this point, we need to go back to 1996 and the passage of the infamous Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA). This Act was passed after the awful Oklahoma City bombings. At the outset of the investigation, “anti-terrorism experts,” in a predictable rush of Islamophobia, pointed fingers towards a potential “Muslim” and “foreign” suspect. The hysteria that followed convinced legislators to pass IIRIRA which, among many things, stripped due process from immigration courts, created the new legal term “aggravated felony” to make it easier to deport individuals with minor offenses, and made these changes retroactively. By the time investigators determined that the bombings were the result of domestic terrorism, it was too late: the law went into effect, and it was just the beginning of the scapegoating of immigrants in the then as-yet-unannounced “War on Terror.” 9/11 only made it official. Ever since then, politicians have merged the issue of National Security with our migration crisis, and that awful conflation has led to the passage of terrible anti-immigrant legislation. So it’s no wonder that the immigration deal currently being debated is largely a love letter to the defense and private prison lobbies, who both stand to make millions if the Senate bill passes.

Let’s talk about the path to citizenship. Many Republicans have derided S. 744 as “amnesty.” That is, of course, a lie. Most immigrants would go through a very long and arduous path to citizenship with many steps. All taken in consideration, most people are looking at a 13- to 15-year path to citizenship. All throughout this time, of course, the formerly undocumented would have no access to social services. This isn’t really fair if you consider the fact that undocumented people have been paying taxes for years for services they don’t have access to (which is why most economists see undocumented people as absolutely essential to the survival of programs like social security).

The longevity of the path to citizenship is not the real issue, however. The real problem lies with the new status for most formerly undocumented people called the “Registered Provisional Immigrant” (RPI) status, a status which is frighteningly easy to



Thousands rallied to call for comprehensive immigration reform on April 10, 2013. Source: Reuters/Larry Downing

lose. The Senate bill has a “Continuous Employment” provision which would require that people in RPI status be continuously employed for at least ten years. Being unemployed for more than 60 consecutive days could result in loss of status and deportation. To add insult to injury, there is also a minimum earnings requirement to maintain RPI status: for the first six years, an RPI would have to make at least minimum wage and the remaining four years, would have to make at least 125% of minimum wage. We are in an economy where even college graduates have a very hard time finding employment and often have to work in low wage service jobs for years before truly beginning their careers. The undocumented population is largely low income; this provision will guarantee that a tremendous number of people will lose their status for lack of work and end up being deported. This is a continuation of the assault on workers’ rights. I can only describe this future extra-exploited pool of labor as indentured servants.

This is not the end of the bad news. Border militarization is at the heart of this deal. The Senate bill proposes to devote \$46 billion to fund an electronic wall, drones, and 20,000 more border patrol agents. The defense industry is absolutely salivating over this. The sad thing is that despite the fact that we know migration from Mexico is currently at a net zero, migrant deaths at the border have increased as immigrants are seeking more desperate and more dangerous routes into the country. Economic despair is the driver of migration, not criminality. Thus, the only thing this beefed up wall will guarantee is the future deaths of migrants. This is why I was not one to cheer as Senators celebrated reaching this last compromise.

The bill is not all bad news, as it would allow many undocumented people to come out of the shadows and work legally. But we have to be clear that no matter what version of “immigration reform” we get out of DC, the struggle for migrants’ rights will continue. ♻️

Aly is an undocumented activist and a member of the Peace Newsletter’s Editorial Committee.

about wayward or delinquent black boys. This case had nothing to do with Trayvon Martin not “feeling included” in society but it had everything to do with Zimmerman and a larger system of white supremacy that is all too quick to exclude black youth from our society, even if that means murder. Though Zimmerman was only a wannabe vigilante cop, this would have been a prime time to have a national conversation about the way police kill black people with regularity and impunity.

“Endangered Black Male”

The President’s remarks about black boys and even some of the more progressive or radical conversations about racist violence, whether individual or state-sanctioned, often render black queer people, black transgender people, and black women invisible. While the Trayvon Martin case and Stand Your Ground laws received national attention (as they rightfully should have), the cases of Marissa Alexander and Cece McDonald barely received the same amount of attention. Marissa Alexander, a black woman and mother of three who also lived in Florida, fired a warning shot when her abusive husband tried to threaten her. The warning shot did not result in death or injuries for anyone involved. Alexander tried to invoke the Stand Your Ground law but the request was rejected. After deliberating for a mere 12 minutes, the jury found Alexander guilty of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and she is now serving a mandatory 20-year sentence.

Cece McDonald, a black transgender woman, is serving a

41-month sentence in prison. In 2011 McDonald was passing a local bar in Minneapolis after a group of three older white bar patrons hurled a barrage of racist and transphobic epithets at her. One of the women in the group smashed a glass into Cece’s face and other members of the group started to attack her. In an act of self-defense, Cece stabbed one of the men with a pair of scissors from her purse and it resulted in her assailant’s death. Cece was the only person arrested that night. Additionally, Cece is experiencing state-sanctioned transphobia as the state refuses to recognize and honor her gender identity and she has been forced to serve her time in a men’s prison. This is only the tip of the iceberg that illustrates how racism and transphobia intersect and impact the lives of black transgender women. These cases indicate that any conversation about racism has to be done through an intersectional lens that addresses how other forms of oppression intersect with racism to shape the marginalization and oppression of other members of the black community.

Cece McDonald, Marissa Alexander, Trayvon Martin and countless others reveal that we can no longer continue to talk about individual miscarriages of justice when black people and black communities are systematically treated unjustly and inhumanely within the criminal injustice system. Racism is at the heart, the core, the very essence of American capitalism and we have to embark upon a long-term struggle to completely eradicate this society and build something completely anew. Another world is not only possible but it is a moral, political, social and economic imperative. As the Trayvon Martin case and the cases of so many others reveal, our lives literally depend on it. ♡

War & Its Intersections: Youth RIOT Conference

This conference will bring the campus and the community together for an afternoon of workshops on the topic of “War and Its Intersections.” Throughout the day, speakers at this youth-led conference will address both the root causes and the many effects of ongoing, global US warfare. Topics include but are not limited to:

- How do racism, capitalism, colonialism, imperialism, and patriarchy contribute to war?
- What is the relationship between US war and US industry, civil liberties, budget priorities, healthcare, education, and the environment?
- By identifying the related struggles that contribute to war and the many bankrupting effects of war, how do we best build a movement to resist war?

Join us **Sunday, September 29th from 1-5 pm**

Syracuse University, exact location TBD.

Registration starts at noon. Free and open to the public.

Pre-register by e-mailing youthriotsyracuse@gmail.com.

This conference is organized by Youth RIOT (Resisting Imperialism and Oppression Together). Organizing Sponsors include Syracuse Peace Council and ANSWER Coalition (SU Youth and Student Chapter). Supporting Sponsors include Women Organized to Resist & Defend, ArtRage Gallery, Workers Rights Center, SU/ESF Fossil Fuel Divestment Campaign, Peace Action of CNY & NYS, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Upstate Drone Action, Interfaith Working, SU Dept. of Anthropology, Party for Socialism & Liberation, Green Party of Onondaga County, Interfaith Student Council.

Two Row Wampum Travels the Hudson

Andy Mager

The Two Row Wampum trek down the River Which Flows Both Ways (also called the Hudson) was a truly remarkable journey. It was the centerpiece of the year-long Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign.

Following a daylong educational and cultural festival in Troy on July 27, the main leg of our journey began from Rensselaer the following morning. (On a first leg of the journey, Haudenosaunee paddlers travelled from Onondaga to Albany, preparing the way for the larger Two Row paddle.) Departing Rensselaer, the spirits of the paddlers and other participants remained strong despite ominous skies and heavy rain showers. Following words of support from Tadodaho Sid Hill, Onondaga Faithkeeper Oren Lyons and local political leaders, over 200 paddlers formed two rows—Haudenosaunee and other native paddlers to the west and non-native allies to the east—to begin our 13-day journey. Paddlers had come from near and far to demonstrate their solidarity, forming two nearly equal rows on the water.

An Adventure on the Water

Our trip was full of good spirit, community, education, singing, laughter, reflection, good food and adventure. We camped along the river most nights. Daily educational and cultural events drew small or large groups from nearby communities to learn about the Two Row and offer support. Our lead paddlers and safety boats kept everyone safe, and we kept to our schedule with only occasional modifications due to weather. When our presentation in Cold Spring was delayed by a downpour, Onondaga Clanmother Wendy Gonyea began her remarks by noting, “We are reminded who is really in charge, and it isn’t us.”

As we paddled, camped and shared food together, a sense of connection and shared purpose deepened among the participants. People kept a sense of humor and consistently maintained the “Good Mind,” (a Haudenosaunee discipline of analyzing our thoughts before acting on them) despite the logistical challenges inevitable in such

Andy, longtime Peace Council activist and former staffperson, is the project coordinator for the Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign.

a voyage. Over 500 people joined us as paddlers or ground crew. A large enough group made the whole trip to maintain a sense of continuity while other people joined us for shorter periods of time.

Compelling Imagery

Visitors were moved by the compelling image of our massive flotilla paddling down the river in two rows and by the powerful words of Haudenosaunee leaders and allies. At the events we read our Declaration of Intent, asking people to make an individual and collective commitment to observe the Two Row. Many hundreds signed on. (Find the Declaration at honorthetworow.org/declaration.)



Paddlers and Haudenosaunee leaders gather with the Dutch Consul General on Pier 96 in New York City on August 9. Photo: Andrew Courtney

On August 9, our flotilla of kayaks and canoes landed at Pier 96 in New York City, culminating our journey down the Hudson. A crowd of nearly 2,000 people cheered as the tired paddlers emerged from the water. Tadodaho Sid Hill offered a traditional Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address to the gathered throngs. The Dutch Consul General, Rob de Vos, renewed the 400-year-old friendship between the Dutch and the Haudenosaunee. Hickory Edwards proudly displayed the replica wampum belt which he had carried from the Central Fires of the Onondaga Nation.

Going International

A spirited group of 1,000 people marched across Manhattan to the United Nations, carrying a 40-foot Two Row flag through the streets of New York. The chant, “Honor

the Treaties, Protect the Earth,” reverberated between the skyscrapers. Representatives of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues welcomed the Two Row and the Dakota Unity Riders, with whom we linked up at several points on our journey.

Later a large group entered the UN to attend its program marking the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples. At that gathering, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon welcomed the paddlers saying, “Today, we highlight the importance of honoring treaties.” He and other UN officials noted the power of the Two Row journey, as did Onondaga Faithkeeper Oren Lyons: “The Two Row is the oldest and is the grandfather of all subsequent treaties.

It set a relationship of equity and peace. This campaign is to remind people of the importance of the agreements.”

The following day, a Two Row Wampum Festival was held along the Hudson near Battery Park, featuring speakers, music, native crafts and more. The festival was a lovely close to a magnificent trek down this River we all share. As we emphasized throughout the journey, our arrival in New York City was both an end and a beginning. While we were delighted with the success of our effort and the way it moved both participants and observers, our campaign’s ambitious goals of peace, friendship and sustainability remain far from realized.

You can check out videos, lots of photos, more detailed reports and updates at honorthetworow.org, on Facebook and Twitter. ♻️



UNIVERSITY LECTURES

2013-2014

Tony Kushner

PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT,
AUTHOR OF ACADEMY AWARD-NOMINATED 2012 FILM "LINCOLN"

A CONVERSATION WITH TONY KUSHNER

Tuesday, Oct. 8, 2013

Eric Liu

CIVIC ENTREPRENEUR, AUTHOR, FOUNDER OF GUIDING LIGHTS NETWORK

THE TRUE MEANING OF PATRIOTISM

Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2013

Billy Collins

POET, UNITED STATES POET LAUREATE 2001-03

AIMLESS LOVE: NEW AND SELECTED POETRY WITH BILLY COLLINS

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2013

Sen. George J. Mitchell

FORMER U.S. SENATOR, AMERICAN STATESMAN AND FIRST UNIVERSITY LECTURES SPEAKER

PAN AM 103 AND OUR WORLD 25 YEARS LATER

Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2013

This lecture is part of the University's commemoration of the 25th anniversary of Pan Am 103

Chris Hayes

POLITICAL COMMENTATOR, HOST OF "ALL IN WITH CHRIS HAYES" ON MSNBC

TWILIGHT OF THE ELITES

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2014

Roz Chast

NEW YORKER CARTOONIST AND AUTHOR

THEORIES OF EVERYTHING, AND MUCH, MUCH MORE

Tuesday, Mar. 4, 2014

Anna Deavere Smith

ACTRESS, PLAYWRIGHT AND PROFESSOR

SNAPSHOTS: PORTRAITS OF A WORLD IN TRANSITION

Tuesday, Mar. 25, 2014

Diane Ravitch

RESEARCH PROFESSOR & HISTORIAN OF EDUCATION;
ADVOCATE FOR AMERICAN PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM; AUTHOR

THE DEATH AND LIFE OF THE GREAT AMERICAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

Tuesday, Apr. 1, 2014

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Minimum Wage / from page 7

to be yoked to even the current American minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour (considered low by many), it would be hugely unpopular—attempts at US Walmarts and McDonald's to advance unionization/collective bargaining and the trenchant, unyielding opposition to it should give you some idea why. If there were no havens south of the border for corporations to go and seek unregulated economies and unorganized, cheap labor, why, capitalism would cease to exist! It is so massively out of the realm of political reality, primarily, because governments will necessarily back the capitalist interest.

If the International Minimum Wage were realized...well, how could that even be, one could imagine hearing a blowhard pundit sputter. Things don't cost as much in those countries—they can get by on a dollar a day! So it seems. But the reason that seems true is precisely because those things are made by poorly paid labor. It's a case of the snake eating its own tail. Assuming that the true costs of labor, environmental damage and resource use were internalized into a price that corporations currently do not pay, and the social conditions were in

place for an international minimum wage to theoretically become a reality, no longer would immigrants clamor to come to North American or European countries seeking a better standard of living. No longer would there be peripheral zones of producing goods by paying laborers pennies in the Global South. If everyone was allowed access to a decent living wage where they lived, the proposed wall along the Mexico-US border would no longer have to be put up in order to keep the riff-raff out, and most pertinently, *in* places south of the border where transnational corporations locate their factories.

How opposed is the capitalist class to the idea of an International Minimum Wage? Forbes magazine (reliably assumed here to represent the capitalist class) ran an article about this in the aftermath of the Savar tragedy.⁶ Calling the basic idea “silly” (along with crediting it to Muhammad Yunus, of problematic micro-credit fame), Tim Worstall argued in the article that higher wages would actually lead to worse factory conditions. Moreover, Worstall actually peddles capitalism's deceitful, unctuous promise of pulling people into the middle class via trickle down and the gradual embourgeoisement of the labor class, when he argues: “conditions and wages [in China] have improved immeasurably in

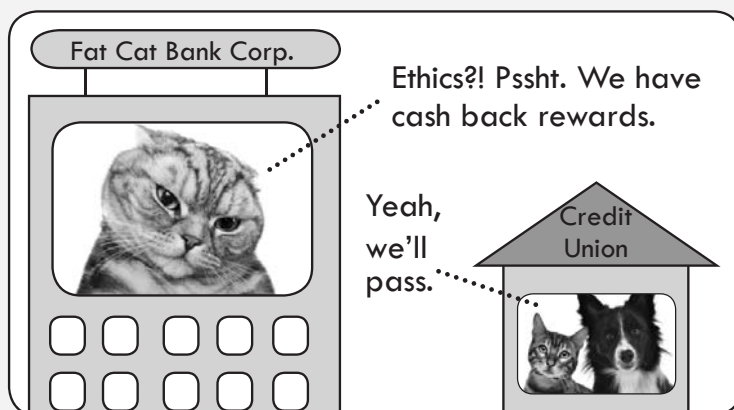
the past 15 years. Precisely because we all went and bought the products flooding out of those Chinese factories. And the solution to the problems in Bangladesh is exactly the same. We'll make poor people richer by buying the things made by poor people in poor countries.”

In other words, There Is No Alternative to the status quo of capitalism that willfully takes advantage of low wages in the post-colony. Sure, there will always have to be an underclass exploited in perpetuity, but one has to break eggs to make a profitable omelet. Capitalism's chronic inability to eventually emancipate human beings without grinding the poor into dirt with ruthless efficiency comes into sharp relief here.

The irony for the left, then, is to loosen neoliberal capitalism's hegemonic death grip on our present global social order. It has to valorize a normative vision of a fairer capitalism, so that something *approximating* an International Living Wage can one day become a plausible political alternative. So, the left has a choice when it comes to fighting for just wages and working conditions. One way is working at small reforms that steadily attempt to dismantle the death grip of neoliberal capitalism. The other, of course, is systemic radical change or: revolution. ♣

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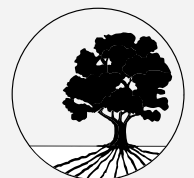
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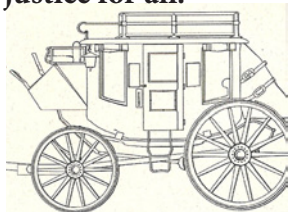




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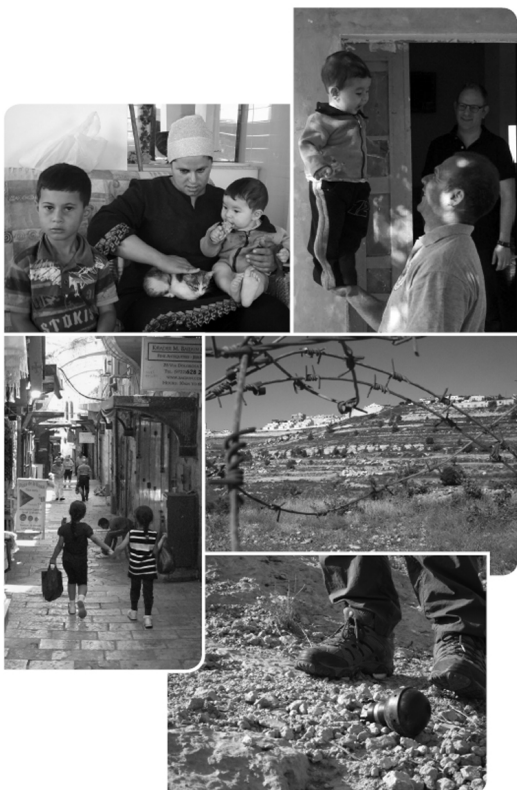
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Witness Palestine Film Series

Rochester, New York

September 8 - 23, 2013, at the Little Theatre

Sept 8 at 2.00 pm: 5 Broken Cameras

Sept 9 at 6.45 pm: The Law in These Parts

Sept 15 at 2.00 pm: Jerusalem ... The East Side Story and Follow the Money

Sept 16 at 6.45 pm: The People and the Olive

Sept 22 at 2.00 pm: Two Sided Story

Sept 23 at 12.30 pm: Going Against the Grain [at St John Fisher College]

All screenings will be followed by panel discussions.

More info at WitnessPalestineRochester.org and on Facebook

or call 585-967-4946

Activist Appreciation: Doug Igelsrud

Doug Igelsrud has been a consistent behind-the-scenes activist in Syracuse for several decades. An avid media watcher and critic, Doug was early to realize the power of the radio show, *Democracy Now!*, to spread the word about activism and social justice issues. Doug recorded the show and put together segments to air on Time Warner Cable's public access channel each week for over a decade. At the same time, he also consistently participated in efforts (thus far unsuccessful) to get *Democracy Now!* aired daily on WRVO, WAER or WCNY. We'll miss Doug's involvement with *Democracy Now!* (he's retiring from that effort and would like someone to take his place), but owe it to him and the rest of us, to keep up the struggle. Thanks, Doug.

NOON Update

Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation is about to complete some long term and very exciting projects. A new historical marker is almost ready for Onondaga Lake Park, and the revised and expanded *Neighbor to Neighbor, Nation to Nation* booklet will soon go to the printer. We plan to have community celebrations for each of these accomplishments!

How can you keep up to date with NOON's work? A great way is to sign up for our very low volume listserv. We put out an e-newsletter every few weeks on topics and projects of interest (including a calendar of events). To sign up, go to syracusepeacecouncil.org/noon or contact Carol.

And speaking of completing major projects...NOON congratulates the Two Row on the Reenactment paddle and other events. They were amazing.

Bikes4Peace

Thank you to the Brady Faith Center, the Northeast Community Center, and the

Spanish Action League for hosting our Bikes4Peace free repair clinics for youth. Our team of volunteer bike mechanics helped more than 50 kids fix bikes and learn basic repair skills. Bikes4Peace will be selling recycled bicycles at the SPC Garage Sale on **Sept. 7 and 8**. Buy or donate a bicycle to help Bikes4Peace raise the funds we need to buy supplies for next season. Contact Ursula.



Doug at the Hiroshima Day Procession in 2011. Photo: Diane Lansing

Singing Clear

Help us raise funds to reprint the popular benefit CD, *Singing Clear*, filled with superbly rendered songs for a clean planet. Proceeds go to benefit Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation/Syracuse Peace Council to support our environmental activism. This is a great way to help us spread the message and stop the destruction of our ecosystems. Donate today to get your advanced copy and no-fracking paraphernalia, and help us spread the word by visiting our Indiegogo Campaign at <http://igg.me/at/singingclear/x/414893>.

Farewell Summer Interns!

The Peace Council office hosted a talented team of interns this summer. The multi-talented Sarah Eggers helped to organize the Peace Council's Phonathon and summer outreach booths, and helped to motivate SPC's participation in the movement to support army whistleblower Private

Manning. Stephanie Joyce brought her artistic talents to give the Peace Council's print materials new flair and to update props used in the Hiroshima Day procession and the Ground the Drones tableau. A meditation devotee, Mike Smith contributed his focus and organizing skills to the Ground the Drones committee and the planning of the Youth RIOT conference. Saptarshi Lahiri supported administrative work around the office. Weston Hoy helped to update the signs used for weekly outreach and for the Ground the Drones State Fair tableau. We'll miss their daily presence and energy, and look forward to ongoing shared organizing and activism!

Resisting Imperialism and Oppression Together (RIOT!)

Youth RIOT has set the date for our conference, "War & Its Intersections," for **Sunday, September 29**, location TBA. **Panels will run from 1-5 pm; registration opens at noon.** As we go to press, the planned panels will cover such topics as: War & Religion; War & the Environment; Internal Imperialism – the Police State and Mass Incarceration; Actions, Solutions & Tactics; Media Warfare – the Language of Imperialism; War, Labor & Education; Nuclear Weapons Set the Stage; and What is Revolution?

Planning meetings for the conference are often at 5:30 pm on Mondays. Call Amelia to find out if we are meeting on a given week or to find out how you can plug in to this effort.

United as One

UaO has had a busy summer. While efforts continue to install an accountable oversight body for the county's "Justice" Center, coalition members also responded to the horrific use of a Taser on Brad Hulett, a disabled man, while he was riding a Centro bus. On August 7, SPC participated in a UaO press conference demanding justice for Brad Hulett, who suffered a broken hip, and other victims of police brutality. On August 21 we joined UaO in hosting a Speak Out Against Police Brutality at Southwest Community Center. Contact Amelia to find out more and get involved. ♻️

