

SYRACUSE

PEACE COUNCIL'S

Peace Newsletter

Central New York Voices for Peace and Social Justice

March 2014 #832



WOMENS' RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

Image: Melanie West

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SPC INFO

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SPC's Peace Newsletter

Editorial Committee: Ben Kuebrich, Saptarshi Lahiri, Leahann Lynagh, Amelia R. Lefevre, Nikeeta Slade, Aly Wane. **Layout Coordinator:** Jessica Azulay. **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 & 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

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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 April PNL calendar by March 17.

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.

Peace Newsletter

Central New York Voices for Peace & Social Justice

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Educate, Agitate, Organize: SPC IN ACTION

compiled by Jessica Azulay

“This Has Got to Stop.”

—Judge Gideon, Town of Dewitt

About 25 people came out for a frigid but very special “Peace Outreach” protest at Hancock Air Base on February 11. The demonstration occurred just four days after 17 fellow activists were sentenced to jail for their nonviolent symbolic blockade at the base in 2012 (see page 9). Soldiers are piloting armed drones from Hancock Air Base, which has been the focus of ongoing, nonviolent protest for seven years. The activists agreed that “This has got to stop,” but what has to stop is not the protests, but drone warfare and the mindset behind it. Contact Carol to join the movement.



Protesters at Hancock Air Base on February 11, while the Hancock 17 Drone War Crime Resisters were in Syracuse’s “Justice” Center jail. Photo: Carol Baum

Don’t Miss the Bowlathon March 30

Do you have your team organized for the annual Strike for Peace! Bowlathon? Join us **Sunday, March 30** at Bowl Mor Lanes in East Syracuse (201 Highland Ave.) with your 4-5 person team for an afternoon of fun that supports peace and justice organizing. (Individuals are welcome, too—we’ll match you with a team.) The entry fee is \$15 for adults, \$10 for kids (12 and under) and includes two games plus shoes. The alley is completely accessible, and bumpers are available.

Register by March 14 to be assured of a lane reservation. To register, visit www.peacecouncil.net/bowl or contact Amelia. Can’t make it this year? Visit the website



to make a pledge in support of a bowling team. **PLEASE NOTE:** sessions times were printed incorrectly in the February *Peace Newsletter*. The correct times are: **Session A, 2 – 4 pm and Session B, 4:30 – 6:30 pm.**

“Triple Divide” Film

Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation will join New Yorkers Against Fracking in co-sponsoring a screening of the new documentary *Triple Divide*. The film exposes the impacts of hydrofracking in Pennsylvania. The filmmakers talk to Pennsylvanians as well as industry representatives and experts in an attempt to answer the question: “How are state regulations and industry handling impacts from fracking?” The film reveals how water contamination is being covered up by the industry and the state. Join us **Monday, March 3** at All Saints Church (112 Lancaster Place, Syracuse). Doors open at **6 pm** and the film will start at **6:30**, followed by a discussion with the directors, journalists Joshua Pribanic and Melissa Troutman.

Monsanto/GMO labeling

Foods containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have been sold in the United States since 1996. Unlike 64 other countries around the world, the United States does not require that foods containing GMO ingredients be labeled. Food justice activists around the country, concerned about potential health risks associated with the consumption of GMOs, are demanding that GMO foods be labeled. In New York State, there are bills in the Assembly and Senate that would require all food sold in New York containing GMOs be labeled as such. Activists with GMO Free CNY are excited to report that the following local businesses have signed on in support of the NY GMO Labeling campaign: the Syracuse Real Food Coop, Natur-Tyme, Green Planet Grocery and Lombardi’s.

Please take action in support of GMO labeling by contacting Senators Valesky (315-478-8745) and DeFrancisco (315-428-7632). On **March 23 at 6 pm**, GMO Free CNY will be hosting a screening of the film *Genetic Roulette* at ArtRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave. A suggested donation of \$5 benefits the Syracuse Peace Council. *Genetic Roulette* is a new documentary that exposes the connections between companies like Monsanto and the federal

continued on next page

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government, and the potential risks associated with eating genetically modified foods. The next GMO Free CNY meeting will be on **Thursday, March 6 at 5:30 pm** at 2013 E. Genesee St. Contact Ursula.

Pledge for Peace!

If we want peace, why are we *still* paying for war? The average Onondaga County resident pays \$100 each month for war, thanks to the way those in Washington spend our tax dollars. But what if your hard earned dollars could be used for peace? Well, they can!

If you're fortunate enough to have gainful employment in today's economy, join our "Work for Peace at Your Day Job" campaign." Pledge an hour's wage to the Peace Council each month, and for that hour, wherever you are, you'll be working for an end to oil wars, an end to drone strikes, a ban on hydrofracking, justice for native people... you'll be working for peace at your day job!

Peace Council pledgers are a lifeline for our organization. Visit www.peacecouncil.net/dayjob to join the campaign today.

Palestinian Land Day

On **Monday, March 31**, CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel will host our annual commemoration of Palestinian Land Day. The event will take place at ArtRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave., Syracuse at **7 pm**. There will be an interesting program, and of course, refreshments will be served to welcome all who wish to remember or learn about this important day. In 1976, thousands of Palestinians living within Israel protested the appropriation of their land planned by the Israeli government at that time. This was the first act of mass resistance by the Palestinian minority within Israel and was harshly responded to by the Israeli police with six Palestinian demonstrators killed and hundreds wounded and jailed. Commemoration of this day honors the history of Palestinian resistance within Israel and the continuing efforts of the Palestinian people for justice. Contact Jessica.

Win Ani Tickets!

Singer/songwriter Ani DiFranco will be playing in Syracuse on April 29 at the Palace Theatre – and you could win tickets! Righteous Babe Records, the record label Ani helped found, has given SPC a pair of tickets to raffle off to one lucky music fan. Raffle prices are \$5 for one ticket or \$10 for three tickets, with proceeds to benefit SPC. Raffle tickets will be on sale at the Peace Council office, 2013 E. Genesee St., beginning on March 3. The drawing for tickets will take place on April 17. Get yours today!

Speak Up on New York's Energy Plan

In January, the New York Energy Planning Board released the long-awaited draft State Energy Plan. The draft plan sets a goal for 80% greenhouse-gas reductions by 2050 but has very few details on how state policy-makers plan to achieve that goal. The draft plan also promotes the increased use of fracked gas from neighboring states and more natural gas infrastructure. Environmental groups around the state are calling for ambitious greenhouse-gas reduction goals before 2050; for the phase-out of all dirty energy sources including gas, coal, oil and nuclear power; and for the state to proactively plan for a transition that takes care of low-income people, workers and communities.

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Activist Appreciation Jean Doering

Jean Doering first connected with the Peace Council in our 75th anniversary year. Jean is a talented and energetic event organizer and she is also a reliable *Peace Newsletter* distributor. Jean has contributed many creative ideas and community connections in her role on the Fundraising Committee. Jean helps solicit donations for the Silent Auction at Plowshares each year and helps make our fundraising events ambitious and professional. Thank you, Jean, for your fun, positive attitude and the hours of work you put in to keep the funds flowing to SPC.



Jean Doering (center) at the registration table for Noam Chomsky's talk in 2011. Photo: Ray Trudell

PEACE OUTREACH

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

**First Tuesdays
December - March
4:15 - 5:00 pm**

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

Contact Ed or Ann, 315-478-4571

A Better Government is Possible: Women Leading the Way in Left Electoral Success

Ursula Rozum

As the planet burns, inequality accelerates and political elites slash public budgets, it should be no surprise that new political forces are emerging to challenge the status quo and provide solutions to today's largest crises. Activists often disagree on whether participating in elections is a worthy use of our limited resources and energy. Regardless of your attitude towards elections, the recent, high profile electoral success of women who clearly identify with the political left can give us hope that a different kind of politics is possible.

Camila Vallejo and Karol Cariola: Young Communists Rock Chile's Elections

In November 2013, Camila Vallejo, one of the most recognizable faces of Chile's 2011 student uprising, was elected to the Chilean Congress alongside three other former university leaders. The 25-year-old member of Chile's Communist Party ran and won alongside fellow Young Communist Karol Cariola. Cariola, a midwife by trade, was also a former student leader. Both women ran on a platform seeking free and improved education in a country plagued with severe income inequality. Both criticize the economic model imposed on Chile during the Pinochet dictatorship that treats education as a commodity which, according to Vallejo, "immediately distorts the principal objective, which is to educate not earn profits." The strategy to reach political power through elections by these high profile members of the Communist Youth and former leaders of the student mobilizations has been bitterly questioned by some student factions who consider it a betrayal of the student movement. However, Cariola and Vallejo maintain that the election of student leaders to Congress "will not only demonstrate that social movements can and should have their own representatives in congress, but also make it possible ...to build political spaces that allow us to

make the structural changes our society demands." Karol Cariola and Camila Vallejo will take their seats in Congress in March 2014. Their agenda includes replacing Chile's current Constitution, which was adopted during the Pinochet dictatorship, and increasing corporate taxes in order to provide fully-funded public education to all Chilean students.



Kshama Sawant, running on a platform that includes a \$15/hour minimum wage, is the first openly socialist candidate to win a seat on the Seattle City Council in 97 years. Image: thestranger.com

Kshama Sawant: A Socialist Wins in Seattle

Kshama Sawant of the Socialist Alternative party is the first openly socialist candidate to win a seat on the Seattle City Council in 97 years. In November 2013, she unseated a four-term incumbent Democrat. Sawant ran on a platform that includes a \$15 per hour minimum wage, expanded public transportation, and increased funding for public housing. As a city councilor, she pledges to use her position to unite and give political voice to the struggles of low-paid workers, youth, people of color, and all those who are shut out by the political machine run on behalf of a wealthy elite. The previous year, Sawant gained recognition in a State Assembly race, building momentum for the seriously well-organized 2013 City Council campaign.

For her campaign, Socialist Alternative raised \$141,000, over half of what their opponent raised. Donations came from 1,400 donors with a median donation of only \$40.00. The campaign inspired 450 volunteers and earned around 150 media articles. Sawant's campaign demonstrated that with an articulate spokesperson and a disciplined organizing strategy, activists can achieve victories that break the two-party chokehold on US politics.

Gayle McLaughlin: What an Activist Mayor Looks Like

Gayle McLaughlin, the Green Party mayor of Richmond, California, was elected in 2007 and since, has demonstrated what an activist in political office can achieve. Under McLaughlin's leadership, Richmond has approved a business tax increase and defeated a casino development scheme; opposed Immigration & Customs Enforcement raids in the city and created a municipal ID card to aid the undocumented; sought fair property taxation of the city's infamous Chevron oil refinery; and sued the giant oil company over the damage done by a huge refinery fire and explosion last year. Most recently, McLaughlin has gained national attention for advancing a plan to use the city's eminent domain

power to acquire troubled loans, so as to stop a new wave of foreclosures. When asked if it helps her to be a member of the Green Party, McLaughlin responds, "It's the independent thinking that makes the difference. One party is moving us into a brick wall at 100 mph. The other is moving us there at 50 mph. We're still going in the wrong direction." Like all Green candidates, McLaughlin did not accept any corporate contributions during her campaigns.

What these women have in common is that they have used elections to mount a viable challenge to a political status quo that has for too long neglected the rights of workers, young people, and the poor. They are unapologetic in their fight for the better world that's possible and the better government that's necessary. ♻️

Ursula Rozum is on staff at the Peace Council.



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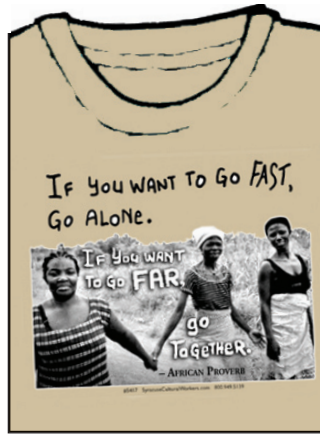


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The SPC Community Remembers Pete Seeger

Editor's Note: Pete Seeger, the legendary singer, activist and organizer, passed away on January 27 of this year at the age of 94. His impact cannot be overstated and many of us were lucky enough to have spent some time with him during his journey. Here are, in no particular order, a few testimonials from the Syracuse Peace Council community.

Andy Mager:

Pete Seeger was among the first people to join the Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign's Honorary Advisory Committee, sending us a brief handwritten note with a drawing of a banjo. A good friend of Oren Lyons, Pete looked for ways to actively support the campaign despite his flagging energy. He welcomed us at the Beacon Sloop Club, taught the crowd a Seneca paddling song at the New York City Two Row kickoff event and spoke eloquently at the Two Row Festival in his hometown of Beacon during our trek down the Hudson.

Pete appeared on *Democracy Now!* with Oren and I on August 9, 2013, the morning the Two Row flotilla landed in New York City. Had Pete been just a little younger, he certainly would have paddled with us at least part of the down the river he loved so deeply. Despite his fame, he remained a humble person who liked to get his hands dirty. I could feel his discomfort as the staff at *Democracy Now!* crowded around him after our the show, seeking autographs and photos. His shining example of creativity, passionate commitment to justice, peace and the Earth is now passed on to us. Let us carry on the work that he did so much to support in his long and full life.

Bryce Hand:

The first time I heard Pete Seeger was in the fall of 1953, when I was a freshman

Andy Mager was a long time staff member of SPC. His latest stint was from 2002 to 2012. Bryce Hand is Emeritus professor of Geology at Syracuse University. Gary Weinstein was a staff member with SPC from 1979 to 1984.



Caption: Pete Seeger speaking at the Two Row Campaign Renewal kickoff event in March of 2013. Source: Eric Weiss Photography

at Antioch College. Dorm-mates on their way out the door asked if I was going to hear Pete Seeger. “Who’s he?” I asked. “A really great folk-singer!”

Antioch was a hotbed of liberalism and deep into folk music — as was I — so I followed the crowd to the gym. The concert was free, covered by student fees. We sat around on the gym floor, while Seeger’s “platform” was a pile of mats normally used for tumbling.

As seniors in spring ‘58 (Antioch being a five-year undergrad institution because of its work-study program), a friend and I engineered a return visit by Seeger. I made arrangements for the concert to be held in the auditorium of a local school.

The day before the concert, I received a call from the superintendent: “I’m calling to tell you you won’t be able to use the auditorium.” A Mrs. Pruitt, president of the American Legion’s Ladies Auxiliary in nearby Xenia, upset by Seeger’s left-wing activities, had demanded the concert be cancelled. I was outraged and blew up at the superintendent. He backed down and the concert went on as scheduled. Seeger dedicated his opening song to Mrs. Pruitt... to the tune of *Oh Clean O Clean-O*:

“Oh the Ladies’ Auxiliary is a good Auxiliary; It’s the best Auxiliary that you ever did see. If you need an Auxiliary, get the Ladies’ Auxiliary; It’s the Ladies Auxiliary!”

The next day I was named in a short piece in the middle of the front page of the *Dayton Daily News* describing the previous night’s nefarious activities. (Visit www.peacecouncil.net/pnl to see the article.)

Gary Weinstein:

Folk singer in Manhattan coffee houses, study groups and to young Reds throughout New York City like Marvin Weinstein in the 1930s; classmate to John F Kennedy at Harvard; writer or co-writer of timeless folk gems *Where have All the Flowers Gone*, *Turn, Turn, Turn*, and *If I Had a Hammer*; an early interpreter of *Winoweh*; a rebel member of the Weavers at the frenetic height of the McCarthy scare; early influence on Bob Dylan; one-man desegregationist movement; traveling brother to Woody; a man of unshakeable faith and principle and insurrection; a protester of singular courage who told HUAC to go to hell...
... a singular national treasure, has died. ♻️

Reasserting Sovereignty: Onondaga Lake

Joe Heath

If you've been reading the newspaper headlines these days, everything seems rosy at Onondaga Lake. Some of the mercury and other hazardous chemicals are being dredged from the Lake; the Loop the Lake trail is moving forward (often right on top of industrial wastes); and an ambitious City-led Inner Harbor revitalization project has now been joined by an even more ambitious State-funded amphitheater project.

Honeywell's "Clean-up" is No Clean-up

But the truth of the Lake's condition is quite different. When Honeywell finishes the dredging of Onondaga Lake, more than 80% of the toxic, mercury-contaminated sediments will remain on the lake bottom, extending in depth from less than an inch to over 25 feet. Additionally, the lake sediments contain a toxic combination of 25 other chemicals, including BTEX, PCBs, dioxins/furans, heavy metals, and polyaromatic hydrocarbons, especially naphthalene. Sediment from the mudboils in the Tully Valley, caused by Allied's salt mining, is expected to "naturally" drift down Onondaga Creek and cover over exposed mercury and other chemicals on the lake bottom.

The mudboils deposit 30 tons of sediment into the Creek daily, just upstream of the Onondaga Nation's territory; this ruins the Creek for the Nation's citizens, who can no longer utilize the only body of water they have direct access to. Covering up lake-bottom mercury and other toxic chemicals with this sediment will not "restore" the ecosystem and is unacceptable.

A pump and treat facility, behind an artificial steel barrier wall on the west shore, will continue to remove some of the large amount of chlorobenzene from the solvent plume under I-690. The acres of



A Solvay waste alluvial washout on the west shore of Onondaga Lake in May, 2001. Photo: Onondaga Environmental Institute

wetlands—which are essential to a healthy lake ecosystem—once located at Destiny, the unlined Salina landfill, Ninemile Creek and Murphy's Island, will not be restored.

Solvent odors, containing BTEX, phenol and naphthalene, will still waft out from the industrial waste left in place underneath Honeywell's "temporary" Visitors Center at the Inner Harbor and the newly proposed amphitheater. All of the Lake tributaries will remain in their artificially constructed and straightened patterns. In the summer, when lake levels are low, 60% of the Lake's volume will still be discharged from the Metropolitan Sewage Treatment Plant.

The fish will continue to be unhealthy for people and wildlife to eat. Turtle eggs will continue to be destroyed by the Solvay waste beds, and very few of the native birds and animals that once lived by the Lake will be able to survive.

Healing the Land and Its Peoples

In March of 2005, the Onondaga Nation brought its Land Rights Action asking for the federal court to affirm the Nation's title to its aboriginal territory, including sacred Onondaga Lake. A few short weeks later the United States Supreme Court's ruling in the case of *City of Sherrill v. Oneida Indian Nation of NY* dramatically changed the law, which resulted in the US courts' summary dismissal of the Nation's Land Rights Action. The merits of the Onondaga Nation's Land Rights Action will never be considered by a US Court.

The Nation will continue its efforts to regain its stolen lands and waters and is working to file a Petition in either the Organization of American States or the United Nations to challenge the treaty and human rights violations, which the US courts have simply ignored.

If the Onondaga Nation were able to exercise its sovereignty over Onondaga Lake, what would that mean for us in Central New York?

The Land Rights Action is not only about title to the land—it is more fundamentally about the stewardship of the environment and healing the land (see box on page 9).

So far the true story at Onondaga Lake shows little evidence of "healing," either

Joe has been the general counsel for the Onondaga Nation since the early 1980s. He is also a Tully resident who has become very active in the fossil fuel resistance movement, speaking out and organizing against fracking, pipelines, storage of fossil fuels in communities and dangerous crude oil trains, as well as helping land owners end their gas leases.

between the people of the Onondaga Nation and all others who live in this region or of this severely damaged environment. There have been limited steps toward healing, of course: for example, Don Leopold of SUNY-ESF and his students have worked with Honeywell to grow native plants on the wastebeds and in the small, newly constructed wetlands created in the scars where some waste has been removed or concealed. However, invasive non-native plant mixes are still used in the substantial “green” infrastructure plantings.

The Onondaga Nation has received numerous documents and its representatives have spent countless hours discussing the steps being taken at Onondaga Lake. The Nation has a seat at the table, for sure, but its voice is still not heard. The Department of Environmental Conservation continues to appease Honeywell by privately agreeing to more and more ineffective “remediation” plans, and then ignoring the input from the rest of us.

The Onondaga Nation wants to see all waste removed from Onondaga Lake. In managing the Lake, the Nation would find a balance of uses that serve human needs, while still ensuring native plants, birds and animals can thrive, rather than at best survive. The corporations who polluted the Lake, along with some politicians, would like us all to give up the Nation’s vision for a truly clean Onondaga Lake.

A Call to Action

It’s time for the people of Central New York to stand up and insist on a Lake that is truly clean. It’s time to work toward healing together. We should not celebrate until the job is done correctly, as it is irresponsible to leave the industrial pollutants in place – in the Lake bottom, in the acres of wastebeds, in the filled-in wetlands, behind the barrier wall and beneath the “engineered caps.” After the current plans are completely implemented, the Lake and surrounding areas will remain a hazardous waste burial site.

We are told that we must accept the perpetual presence of massive areas of industrial wastes and the hiding of tons of toxic chemicals that will haunt the generations yet to come. This is unacceptable. We need to slow down the rush to sell out the future, and not be so eager to have Honeywell close its corporate books on yet another of its 128 Superfund sites.

Onondaga Lake is a sacred lake and it is the birthplace of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and western democracy. Let us continue to put our good minds together and work towards a truly restored Lake. Onondaga Lake and the people of our communities deserve better. We should not settle for less. ♣

First Paragraph of the Onondaga Nation’s Land Rights Action

The Onondaga People wish to bring about a healing between themselves and all others who live in this region that has been the homeland of the Onondaga Nation since the dawn of time. The Nation and its people have a unique spiritual, cultural, and historic relationship with the land, which is embodied in Gayanashagowa, the Great Law of Peace. This relationship goes far beyond federal and state legal concepts of ownership, possession or legal rights. The people are one with the land, and consider themselves stewards of it. It is the duty of the Nation’s leaders to work for a healing of this land, to protect it, and to pass it on to future generations. The Onondaga Nation brings this action on behalf of its people in the hope that it may hasten the process of reconciliation and bring lasting justice, peace, and respect among all who inhabit the area.

Drone Warfare Must Stop, Not the Resistance

On Friday, February 14 the twelve sentenced members of the Hancock 17 Drone War Crime Resisters were released from Syracuse’s “Justice” Center Jail. This closed a week in which the National Security Administration’s role in the assassinations of drone victims was revealed, Pakistani anti-drone activist Kareem Khan was freed after having been abducted from his home and President Obama considered a drone assassination of yet another US citizen.

On February 7, after five evenings of court over five weeks, Town of DeWitt Court Judge David Gideon had found the Hancock 17 guilty of disorderly conduct for their nonviolent civil resistance action at Hancock Air Base in 2012. They had symbolically blocked Hancock’s gates and called for an end to drone warfare.

Saying, “At some point this has to stop,” the judge gave the defendants the maximum sentence – 15 days in jail and fines of \$325 per person. He also imposed a two-year Order of Protection, prohibiting the defendants from going to the home, school, business or place of employment of the Commander of Hancock’s mission support group. Considering that the resisters had never met or knew of him before their arrest, it is clear the intent is to keep people away from his place of employment – the base.

As resister Rae Kramer stated, “No person on the base was intimidated by us, that is clear. But the end result is to deprive me of my 1st Amendment Rights.” The group will be challenging the Order.

The resisters had been prepared for whatever sentence the judge gave. In the words of Ed Kinane, “Any penalty this court can impose on me is trivial compared to the death sentences imposed on the drone victims.”

It is drone warfare that must stop, not the resistance to it.

Of the five resisters not sentenced, one is to be sentenced later. Two others had their cases dismissed on technical grounds and the remaining two had pled guilty earlier. The resisters are part of the Upstate NY Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars, which seeks to educate the public and Hancock Air Base personnel about the war crimes perpetrated in Afghanistan with the MQ-9 Reaper Drone piloted from Hancock.

Watch the video of the sentencing at vimeo.com/86277951. More video will be uploaded Check peacecouncil.net for updates and names of the resisters. Contact Carol Baum at SPC to get involved.

– Carol Baum



ROZ CHAST



Since she sold her first cartoon to *The New Yorker* in 1978, Roz Chast has established herself as one of our greatest artistic chroniclers of the anxieties, superstitions, furies, insecurities and surreal imaginings of modern life. Her cartoons address the universal topics of guilt, anxiety, aging, families, friends, money, real estate and, as she would say, “much, much more!” Nine collections have been published of Chast’s work, most recently, “Theories of Everything,” (Bloomsbury), a 25-year retrospective. Chast is known for her cast of recurring characters—generally hapless but relatively cheerful “everyfolk.” She is currently working on a book that chronicles her relationship with her aging parents as they shift from independence to dependence. In her University Lectures presentation, Chast will talk about her ideas, where they come from, the connection between anxiety and hilarity, and the unique creativity she finds in all people.

Roz Chast

NEW YORKER CARTOONIST AND AUTHOR

THEORIES OF EVERYTHING, AND MUCH, MUCH MORE

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

This lecture is sponsored in cooperation with the College of Visual and Performing Arts

Free and open to the public.

Contact the Office of Academic Affairs
for more information:

315-443-2941
eegray@syr.edu
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Syria at Geneva II: The Missing Proxy

by Paul Rogers

Editors' note: Given the impossibility of printing a completely up-to-date piece about Syria, we chose this piece in which Paul Rogers assesses the likelihood of success of the Geneva II talks on the opening day. Find the original piece at <http://www.opendemocracy.net/paul-rogers/syria-at-geneva-ii-missing-proxy>.

The most that can be hoped for [at Geneva II] is that aid channels may be improved, maybe even to the extent of allowing temporary ceasefires. Yet in such a bitter civil war as this, moves such as these can be utilised by either or both sides to regroup and resupply. In any case, this is not really the crux of the Syrian situation. Two quite different aspects are far more significant.

A Double Proxy War

The first and most obvious is the conspicuous absence of Iran. Syria is, as several columns in this series have argued, a “double proxy” war in which two pairs of rival forces - Iran-Saudi Arabia most immediately, and the United States-Russia at a higher level - are proxy actors. The latter two are at Geneva, and show some evidence of determination to make progress; but Iran is missing.

Moreover, who else *is* present will rile Tehran - for the cast-list includes almost every Arab country across the middle east and north Africa (including Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, the UAE, and of course Saudi Arabia). Beyond the Arab world, Turkey is there and even the Vatican, but not Iran!

Whatever the politics of the omission it makes nonsense of the talks - given Iran's support for the Syrian regime, its links to Hizbollah, and the presence of Iranian paramilitaries inside Syria. Moreover, Rowhani appears keen to work more closely with the US and there are signs that he wants to see a scaling down of the war, not least because of the risk that Syria becomes another seat of radical *Sunni* paramilitaries.

The second, linked element relates to Saudi Arabia's involvement in the war,

Paul is the international security editor for openDemocracy.net and writes a weekly column on global security.

which appears to have undergone significant changes in recent months. Though accurate and relevant information is not easily available, reasonably competent analysis indicates that inside Syria there are three quite distinct Islamist entities.

The first is the ISIL. This has the closest identity with al-Qaida's vision, strong connections with *Sunni* paramilitaries opposing the Nouri al-Maliki government in Iraq, and the most significant involvement of foreigners from across the region and beyond.

The ISIL is competent and disciplined. It seeks clear-cut Islamist governance in

focuses on providing aid to the groups acting under the aegis of the Islamic Council. It is, furthermore, doing so in a systematic manner that seeks to ensure that the Islamic Council becomes the dominant voice of opposition to Bashar al-Assad.

Saudi Arabia may have formally agreed to support the notion of a post-Assad transitional government, but it plans to ensure that this itself becomes no more than a transition to a far more Islamist Syria. Riyadh's success in that objective would curb the influence that Iran has gained since the Americans terminated the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq in 2003,



US Secretary of State John Kerry, UN negotiator Lakhdar Brahimi, and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov at the opening of the Geneva II talks. Conspicuously not present at the talks were Iran and many factions of the Syrian opposition. Image: Reuters

territories it controls. It may bring order with relatively low levels of corruption to towns, villages and city districts it takes over but the rigidity of its rule loses it popularity with a Syrian population that has - despite the authoritarianism of the Assad regime before the present war started - been more cosmopolitan in culture than many other Arab states.

The second entity is the Al-Nusra Front. This also follows the al-Qaida idea, but is rather less strict in its governance and has a smaller proportion of foreigners in its ranks.


The third entity is the Islamic Council. This is composed of a cluster of Islamist paramilitary groups that came together in late 2013.

What makes this mapping important is Saudi Arabia's shifting approach. In the past Riyadh appears to have provided support for ISIL and Al-Nusra, but it now

inadvertently boosting Tehran's influence in Baghdad in the process.

A Slim Chance

The core reality is that Saudi Arabia is set on seeing the regime in Damascus fall, and Iran is equally adamant that it should survive. But Saudi Arabia is at Geneva II and Iran is not, thereby negating any possibility of substantive progress, even under Lakhdar Brahimi's skilled guidance. All else is little more than window-dressing.

Meanwhile this disastrous conflict claims more lives and further wrecks Syria. Can Russia work behind the scenes to bring Iran into the frame in some guise? Perhaps it can, with Sergey Lavrov's personal warmth towards John Kerry one of the very positive aspects of a wretched situation. If not, then whatever fine words are spoken at Geneva, any progress will be meagre at best. 



ANNA DEAVERE SMITH



Using Walt Whitman's idea "to absorb America" as an inspiration, Anna Deavere Smith has been listening to people across the country from all walks of life for the last several years. To illustrate her goal of bringing "people across the chasm" of what she calls the "complex identity of America," Smith slips in and out of character during the course of her presentation, recreating a diversity of emotions and points of view on controversial issues. Newsweek declared her "the most exciting individual in American theatre." Smith is perhaps best known as the author and performer of one-woman, multi-character plays that deal with social issues in America. The MacArthur Foundation awarded Smith the "Genius" Fellowship for creating "a new form of theatre — a blend of theatrical art, social commentary, journalism and intimate reverie." In 2013, Smith won the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize.

Anna Deavere Smith

ACTRESS, PLAYWRIGHT, PROFESSOR

SNAPSHOTS: PORTRAITS OF A WORLD IN TRANSITION

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

5 pm, Hendricks Chapel

This lecture is sponsored in cooperation with the LGBT Resource Center and the College of Visual and Performing Arts

Free and open to the public.

Contact the Office of Academic Affairs
for more information:

315-443-2941
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A War Economy Perpetuates Poverty

Ursula Rozum

Fifty years ago, Lyndon Johnson declared a “War on Poverty,” ambitiously proclaiming that “the richest nation on Earth can afford to win it.” Johnson’s Great Society programs transformed the United States for the better, bringing billions of dollars to low-income schools, building infrastructure in forgotten places, training doctors and social workers, expanding access to healthcare and empowering low-income students to attend college. In the first 10 years of the Great Society, America’s official poverty rate dropped from 19 to 11.2%. The expansion of food stamps and other nutritional programs such as free and reduced school breakfasts and lunches, led to enormous drops in hunger and malnutrition. And expanded Social Security reduced the population of elderly Americans living below the poverty line from 44% to 9%.

In Syracuse, about a third of our city lives in poverty and for children, the level is more than 50%. This is worse than the national average (16% and 20% respectively). This is the result of three decades of a failed conservative approach to fighting poverty – tax breaks and incentives to the rich to encourage “investment,” aka trickle down economics, from the Reagan “enterprise zones” to Clinton’s “empowerment zones” and now Obama’s “promise zones,” and Cuomo’s tax-free zones. These neoliberal policies that encourage concentration of wealth at the expense of the working class are a recipe for poverty.

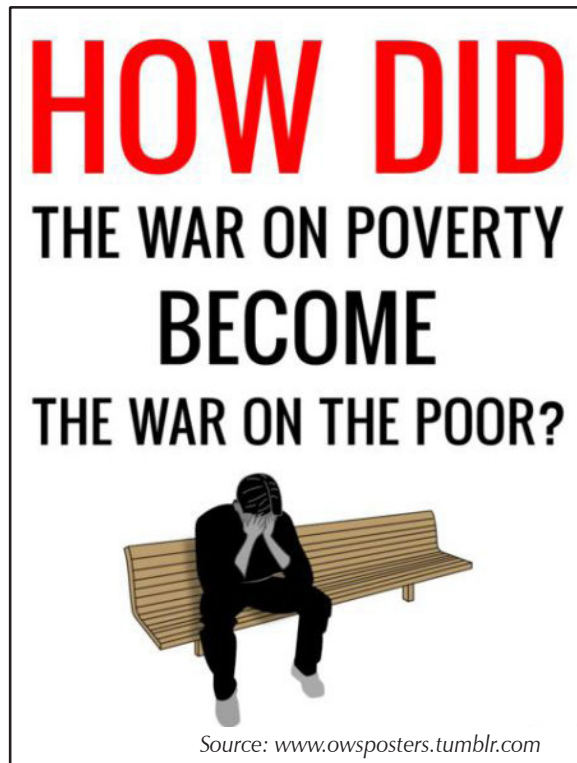
Low Wages

Low wages keep corporate profits high and workers living below the poverty line. Had the federal minimum wage just kept pace with inflation since 1968, it would stand today at \$10.67 per hour, not \$7.25. Regressive taxes and corporate tax giveaways squeeze public budgets, creating doubt

in our ability to fund basic public needs.

Corporate Tax Breaks

The corporate tax rate peaked in 1969 at 52%, generating a third of federal tax revenues. Today, the rate on the highest bracket is 35% and generates only about 10% of government revenue. The effective rate paid by US corporations is actually 12.6% after corporate welfare loopholes, credits, and subsidies are exploited.



“Free” Trade

Another ingredient in the neoliberal poverty recipe is the outsourcing of US jobs through free trade agreements like the 20-year old NAFTA and the pending Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. These agreements encourage a race to the bottom as companies relocate to seek lower wages and laxer regulations. In Syracuse, NAFTA caused the loss of at least 2630 jobs in its first six years alone.

As the income gap between the wealthy elites and the working poor widens, billions of taxpayer dollars pour into the coffers of the Department of Defense every year. Estimated to be around \$716 billion in 2013, the US defense budget is greater than the defense budgets of the next ten highest

spending nations combined. Endless war ensures that profits continue to flow to the armaments industry, especially its CEOs. The current CEO of Lockheed Martin, Marilyn Hewson, made \$5,983,961 last year – according to Forbes, she spends significant time on Capital Hill, advocating against defense cuts.

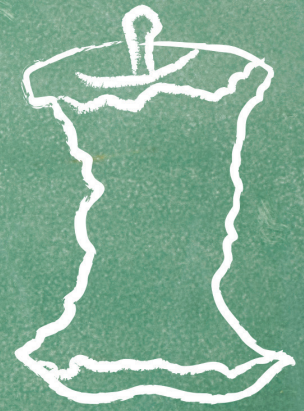
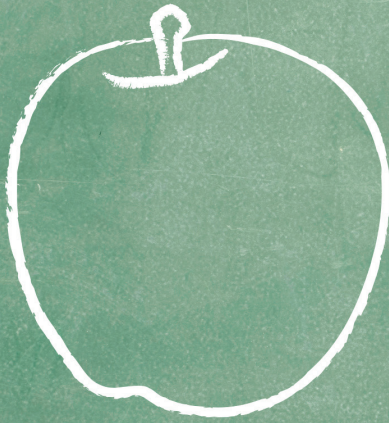
Instead of addressing poverty and inequality, the US is pursuing a counter-productive War on Terror. Spending on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will end up costing the US at least \$4 trillion. And in January, the United States sent “advisors” to Somalia, a country where the US has already been waging a secret war through the CIA’s use of drone strikes. This expansion of the War on Terror bears eerie similarities to the Vietnam War where the US government was also intervening in a civil war where neither side was democratic.

Most US citizens support cutting military spending. In May 2012, a survey of US public opinion by the Stimson Center found that 76% of respondents favored slashing US military expenditures. This included 80% of respondents in districts represented by Democrats and 74% in districts represented by Republicans. The US could implement significant “defense” cuts (25-50%) by shifting military spending to actual defense, rather than world policing. These cuts could come in the form of reducing our nuclear arsenal, bringing troops home from Europe and Japan, and cutting our foreign military operations at hundreds of foreign military bases.

The Freedom Budget

The same year that Johnson declared the War on Poverty, his historical counterparts A. Phillip Randolph, Bayard Rustin and Martin Luther King Jr. published the “Freedom Budget for All Americans,” a political and economic proposal whose basic objective was to address what they recognized as the root causes of poverty. Its aims included full employment, the fulfillment of basic economic needs (healthcare, education, housing, adequate wages), and a healthy environment. As we continue to confront poverty and inequality today, it would be useful for political leaders and community activists to recommit to the Freedom Budget as a baseline of demands for what winning the War on Poverty would mean. ♻️

Ursula Rozum is on staff at the Peace Council.



DIANE RAVITCH



Diane Ravitch is an internationally acclaimed expert on past and present education, and in her most recent book, she makes the case that public education today is in peril. Drawing on her more than 40 years of research and experience, Ravitch critiques today's most popular ideas for restructuring schools, including privatization, standardized testing, punitive accountability and the multiplication of charter schools, and offers a prescription for improving American public schools. Ravitch was assistant secretary of education and counselor to Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander from 1991-93. In that role, she led the federal effort to promote the creation of voluntary state and national academic standards. Her most recent book, "Reign of Error: The Hoax of the Privatization Movement and the Danger to America's Public Schools," was released in September 2013.

Diane Ravitch

ADVOCATE FOR AMERICAN PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, AUTHOR
THE DEATH AND LIFE OF THE GREAT AMERICAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

7:30 pm, Hendricks Chapel

This lecture is sponsored in cooperation with the School of Education

Free and open to the public.

Contact the Office of Academic Affairs
for more information:

315-443-2941

eegray@syr.edu

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**Reduced-rate parking for this event is available in the Irving Avenue parking garage.*

We need people like you to comment on the draft plan and demand New York abandon its “all of the above” energy policy. Written comments are due by **April 30, 2014**. The last of the public hearings will be held on **March 6** in Syracuse. Join the Syracuse Peace Council, Alliance for a Green Economy, New Yorkers Against Fracking, Sierra Club and Citizen Action at the hearing. The hearing is currently planned for 11 am in the Gateway Building at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), but groups are pushing for the time to be changed to evening so that more people can participate. Keep an eye on the Peace Council website for details. Contact Jessica.

A Black Panther’s Memoir: Aaron Dixon Speaks

SPC partnered with the Syracuse Greens, Pan-African Community of CNY and Fountain of Life Church to host a speaking event with former Black Panther Party Captain Aaron Dixon. The community came together in song before Dixon spoke about his personal history and the history of the Black Panther Party. Dixon spoke about the choice to take up arms; the services the Black Panthers provided to communities in need (programs which were later mimicked by federal programs); the murders and persecution of members of the Black Panther Party; and the need for people today to embrace community over individualism and competition.

Contact the Peace Council to purchase Dixon’s new memoir, *My People Are Rising: Memoir of a Black Panther Party Captain*. Find video of Dixon’s talk on our website. Special thanks to Pastor J. Stephens Jr., Rev. J. Thompson, and Howie Hawkins for making this event possible.

Fracking On Hold

Another year has passed, and New York State is still holding off on fracking! At the Environmental Budget Hearing on January 29, NYS legislators determined that



Aaron Dixon with SPC staffer Amelia Lefevre at Fountain of Life Church on Feb 23. Photo: Ursula Rozum

for this fiscal year, there is no funding in the state’s budget for moving forward on hydrofracking regulations, which means that the legislature cannot move forward to approve fracking. At the February 3rd Budget Hearing, Health Commissioner Dr. Nirav Shah testified that he is “in no hurry to play with any potential risks to the health and safety of the people of New York.” We cannot rest, though, as New York energy policy is still pointing toward an increase in the use of fracked gas in New York. See page 4 for information on how to comment on New York’s draft Energy Plan.

Interns

The SPC staff collective is excited to welcome three interns to our office this Spring – David Oster, Brian Tackett and Brianna Shetler. David, a student at SU, has been active in the student climate justice movement and is currently organizing students to participate in demonstrations against the Keystone XL pipeline. At SPC, he’ll be working on anti-war organizing and supporting the *Peace Newsletter* Committee. Brian will be learning about data systems by helping SPC update our database – you may have met Brian at mailing parties or at SPC outreach tables as he’s been active in many aspects of the Peace Council’s work in recent years. Brianna, also from SU, is working alongside the Ground the Drones and GMO Free CNY committees as well as interning for the Alliance for a Green Economy (AGREE) a coalition for

a carbon-free, nuclear-free New York that SPC is involved in. Stop in and say “Hi!” If you or someone you know would like to intern at SPC, contact Ursula.

Cornel West in Syracuse

To listen to Dr. Cornel West is to have your heart and mind expanded. Cornel doesn’t just connect the dots, he passionately uncovers the web of connections among militarism, race, class and more. He was the keynote speaker at the Drone Summit in Washington D.C. last November, and members of the Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars (a group the Syracuse Peace Council is very active in) barraged him with requests to speak in Syracuse. He

has agreed to come in April. We have not yet confirmed a date; we will broadcast through the SPC website, Facebook and email as soon as we know. Contact Carol.

“Dirty Wars” Available

Dirty Wars is a game-changing, mind-blowing film... Dirty Wars assumes the tantalizing shape of a mystery thriller as compelling as any feature film. - Erica Abeel, The Huffington Post

SPC’s Ground the Drones, End the Wars Committee recently screened *Dirty Wars* to a full house at ArtRage and all were transfixed. What the reviewers said was true. The film is a masterful merger of political exposé, art film, and detective story. Nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary, *Dirty Wars* follows investigative reporter Jeremy Scahill, author of *Blackwater* and *Dirty Wars*, into the heart of America’s covert wars, from Afghanistan to Yemen, Somalia and beyond. What begins as an investigation of a US night raid gone terribly wrong in a remote corner of Afghanistan, quickly turns into a global investigation of the secretive and powerful Joint Special Operations Command.

We have the DVD and ask for your help showing it widely. Do you belong to an organization or faith community, or have a group of friends who would be interested in seeing it? We will loan you the DVD and are happy to provide a speaker/ discussion facilitator. Contact Carol. ♻️

