

SYRACUSE PEACE COUNCIL'S

Peace Newsletter

Central New York Voices for Peace and Social Justice March-April 2015 #841

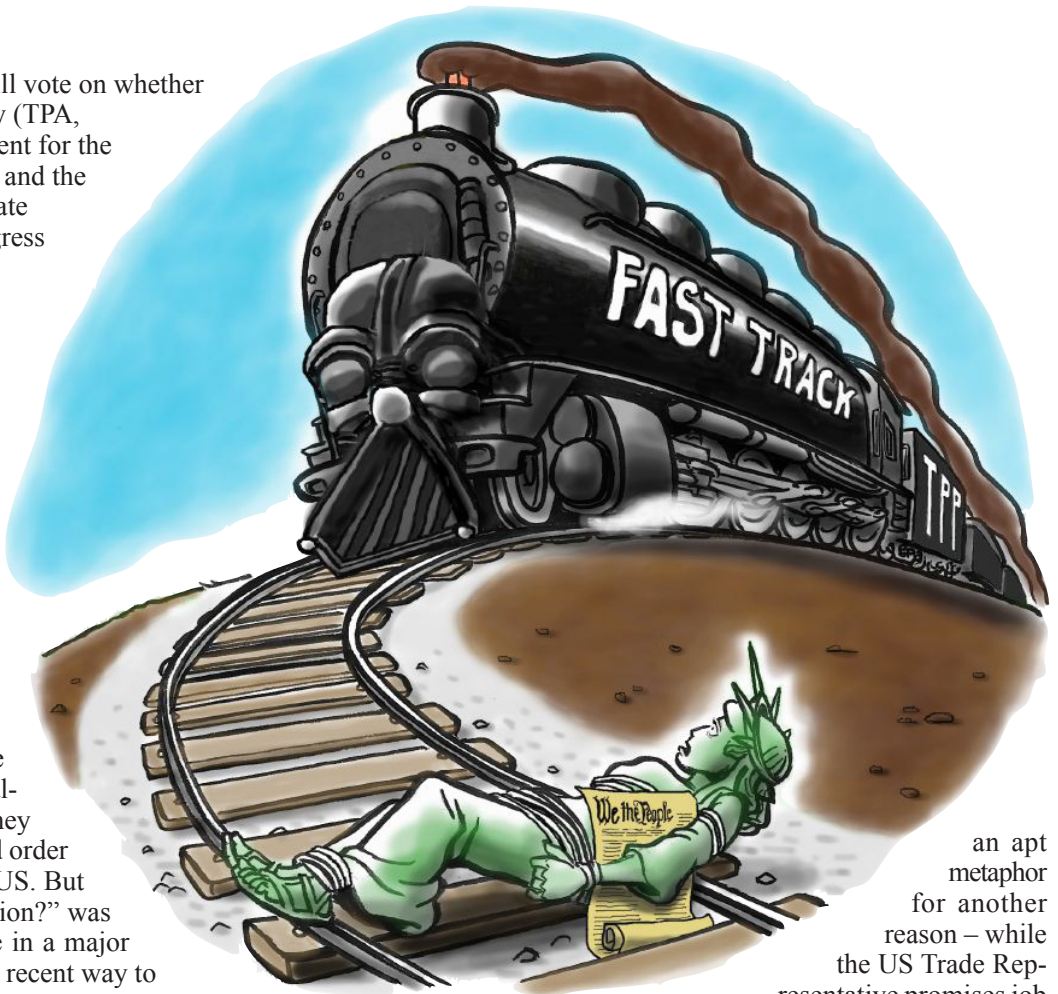
The 1% Side Step Democracy with Fast Track for the TPP

Brian Escobar

Sometime this spring, Congress will vote on whether to grant Trade Promotion Authority (TPA, known as Fast Track) to the President for the next four years. With TPA, Obama and the US trade representative can negotiate trade agreements and require Congress to circumvent its ordinary rules, by requiring a “yes” or “no” floor vote on an agreement without the possibility of amendment, within twenty hours of debate. TPA was used to pass the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and other controversial trade pacts but it expired in 2007 and wasn’t renewed. If passed, TPA would apply to multiple trade agreements currently being negotiated, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

The second half of the 20th century saw trade negotiations take a new role, that of completing the centuries-long expansion of capitalism to every corner of the world. They were central to reshaping the world order and the economic structure of the US. But the question, “Is this a good direction?” was never debated publicly or an issue in a major US election. Fast Track is the most recent way to exclude such questions.

Historically US trade agreements dealt with raising or lowering tariffs and quotas – barriers to the movements of products over borders – and Congress granted the executive branch authority to negotiate them. Trade agreements being negotiated today cover many more areas of society – extending copyrights and patents, changing Internet and medical laws as well as environmental and energy policy, and eliminating or protecting agriculture subsidies. Laws that would not pass otherwise, like 2012’s unpopular SOPA legislation restricting Internet freedoms, are inserted into these massive Trojan horses, under the guise of trade. “Trojan horse” is



an apt metaphor for another reason – while the US Trade Representative promises job gains, with Fast Track the actual text of these agreements is kept secret from all but 600 industry representatives and a few select members of Congress who participate in the negotiations until the final text is agreed upon and up for vote in Congress. Fortunately, in the case of the TPP, Wikileaks and some legislators leaked versions of the text and we know some of what it could contain.

We think of trade as the movement of products, but the “trade agreements” of today are actually more about protecting

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SPC INFO

SPC Steering Committee 2015

Carol Baum, Jack Brown, Rachel Cary, Barbara Humphrey, Ben Kuebrich, Kimberley McCoy, Michael Messina-Yauchzy, Julianne Oldfield, Amelia Lefevre, Simone Richmond, Ursula Rozum, Diane Swords, Brian Tackett, Richard Vallejo, Aly Wane.

SPC's Peace Newsletter

Editorial Coordinator: Carol Baum (filling in for Amelia Lefevre.

Layout: Ursula Rozum. **Calendar:** Michael Messina-Yauchzy.

Proofing: Simone Richmond and Susan Adair. **Web:** Simone Richmond.

PNL Distribution Coordinator: Susan Adair. **PNL Mailing Party**

Coordinator: Nancy Hallock.

peacecouncil.net

More info and resources to fight Fast Track and the TPP (see article page 1!).

SPC Committees & Projects

Bikes 4 Peace: Dave Kashmer (315) 350-7642, daveekash@gmail.com.

CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine & Israel:

Magda Bayoumi (315) 430-1374, Brent Bleier ble3bb@aol.com.

Ground the Drones: Ann Tiffany (315) 478-4571, annetiffany@verizon.net.

Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation: Sue Eiholzer (315) 492-2684 rsue@tweny.rr.com, Jack Ramsden (315) 424-1454.

Fundraising and Finances: Ursula Rozum and Carol Baum (info page 3).

Peace Newsletter: Amelia Lefevre (info page 3).

Affiliated Projects & Coalitions

Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse: faith & secular groups

United as One: working for justice in the local "justice" system

New Yorkers Against Fracking: statewide coalition opposing hydrofracking

Move to Amend: works against corporate control of the democratic system

Update Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars

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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 May PNL calendar by April 20.

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.



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Educate, Agitate, Organize: SPC IN ACTION

compiled by Ursula Rozum

No to Endless War

On February 11, President Obama sent Congress a proposed joint resolution to Authorize the Use of Military Force (AUMF), which would authorize and extend military action against ISIS for the next three years. The Syracuse Peace Council calls on Congress to reject this new AUMF, rescind the 2001 AUMF, and stop an “endless” war on the people of the Middle East.

As we go to press, Peace Council activists are encouraging community members to call on our Congressional representatives to vote “no” on Obama’s AUMF and to support diplomatic, non-military solutions to address the crisis in the Middle East. Read SPC’s statement opposing the AUMF and outlining a nonviolent effort to address the threat posed by ISIS at www.peacecouncil.net. Mark your calendar for **March 19** – beginning 5pm at Perserverance Park in Downtown Syracuse, there will be an anti-war rally and march on the 12th anniversary of the illegal invasion of Iraq to speak out against the US escalation of war in the Middle East. Check the SPC website for details or contact Ursula at the office to find out how you can help!

Benefit for Children in Gaza

About 100 people braved the snowy February weather to attend a benefit dinner hosted by SPC’s CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel. The event raised \$3,000 for aid to children and families in Gaza. Winter’s cold has led to the deaths of young children from freezing conditions and lack of basic medical care. Palestinians in Gaza have had a hard winter, particularly due to the devastation of infrastructure by the Israeli assault last summer which left over 2000 dead. For many, heat, clean water, and electricity are intermittent at best. Thank you to Ariel Gold for presenting about her family’s recent visit to



Activist Appreciation: Aziza Zahran (middle), pictured with her son Sefian and Carole Resnick, led the effort to host the February 21 benefit for humanitarian relief to Gaza. Photo: Ursula Rozum

the West Bank, and to May Memorial’s Green Sanctuary/Social Action Committee for co-sponsoring. Upcoming events include the annual commemoration of the Nakba (the 1948 removal of Palestinians from their homes), continued work on a Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) campaign, and further speakers and films, including an event with Palestinian peace activist Iyad Burnat on **April 19**.

Activist Appreciation

Last summer, Aziza Zahran leapt out of her car to join the Gaza protest on the corner of Erie Blvd and Genesee St., and, upon discovering a group devoted to peace in Palestine/Israel, she jumped in with two feet. Aziza is herself a Palestinian-American who grew up on Syracuse’s North Side. She is the mother of a five-year-old boy and a student in Human Services at Cazenovia College. Very quickly, Aziza became a strong

and passionate member of Central New York Working for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel. Most recently, she initiated and took extensive leadership in organizing a highly successful benefit for children in Gaza. Aziza did everything from cooking maktuba to creating table decorations. The Syracuse peace community is lucky that Aziza discovered us and is so willing to share her caring heart, her incredible energy and her competent advocacy skills.

United as One

SPC and the United as One Coalition are celebrating a step forward in our work to address violence in the criminal “justice” system.

After years of organizing following the tragic deaths of Chuniece Patterson and Raul Pine in the county jail, the Onondaga County Legislature has finally approved the creation of a jail oversight committee and the reinstatement of the county’s Human Rights Commission. Onondaga County is seeking individuals to serve these committees. If you are interested, contact Barbara at (315) 440-9341 or behumphrey@gmail.com for more information and to get involved.

Stop Solitary Confinement

To expose and end the inhumane practice of solitary confinement, SPC is teaming up with the ACTS Criminal Justice Task Force and the Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement to host a performance and discussion of the play *Mariposa & the Saint*. Co-written by a woman held in solitary confinement, *Mariposa* will be performed on Sunday, **March 22**, at 2pm at Temple Concord Social Hall, 910 Madison St., Syracuse. For more information, contact Zachary, (315) 472-5478.

continued on next page

2013 East Genesee St., Syracuse, NY 13210 • (315) 472-5478 • spc@peacecouncil.net

SYRACUSE
PEACE
COUNCIL

www.peacecouncil.net • OFFICE HOURS: M-F, 11 am-5 pm

STAFF ORGANIZERS

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

Amelia Lefevre: amelia@peacecouncil.net

APRIL STREET HEAT

Get back out in the streets every week speaking out against war and Reaper drones. Bring your own sign or use one of ours. Thanks to the stalwarts who joined us throughout the winter.

Every Tuesday 4:15-5 pm

April 7 Hancock Airbase (E. Molloy Rd., between Thompson & Townline Rds.)

April 14 E. Adams & Almond Sts.

April 21 Hancock Airbase

April 28 E. Adams & Almond Sts.

**Starting April
Every Saturday 9-10am**

Regional Market, Park St. entrance

**Questions? Contact Ed or Ann,
315-478-4571**

SPC in Action / from previous page

Stop the Bailout of the Ginna Nuclear Power Plant TELL THE PSC: "CLOSE THIS NUCLEAR POWER PLANT"

We have an opportunity to help close Ginna nuclear power plant near Rochester. Exelon, the owner of Ginna, is asking the Public Service Commission to raise the bills of customers of the local utility in order to keep this unsafe and uneconomical nuclear facility afloat. Without this subsidy, there is a good chance Ginna will close because it has become unprofitable. You can learn more and sign a letter by going to www.allianceforagreenconomy.org/ginna

- Linda Destefano

Thousands Weigh in on New York's Energy Future

As New York's policymakers pursue a dramatic overhaul of the state's utility regulations and clean energy programs, thousands of New Yorkers have spoken out at public hearings across the state or submitted written comments. The process is called Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) and will be ongoing throughout

2015. Through our participation in the Alliance for a Green Economy (AGREE), SPC has joined the fray to help get the word out and to pressure state leaders to pursue policies that put more control and ownership of our energy resources in the hands of local communities and individuals, rather than large multi-national utility companies. We are also advocating strong greenhouse gas reduction goals, consumer protections, and energy affordability for low-income people. Join the movement for energy democracy or find out more at www.allianceforagreenconomy.org/rev

No Drones, No Wars

SPC's Ground the Drones, End the Wars committee works locally and as part of the Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars. The focus of both groups is Hancock Air Base, just outside Syracuse, where drones which fly over Afghanistan are piloted. Hancock is also a training site for drone pilots, sensor operators and maintenance technicians.

- In early February, as part of a statewide effort, we spoke with Senator Gillibrand's regional director about drones. You can find the excellent materials created for the visits on SPC's website.

- Two activists went to Nevada to participate in a national mobilization to shut down Creech Air Force Base from March 4-6. In 2005, Creech became the first U.S. base to carry out drone assassinations.

- On March 9, we hosted the powerful play *Grounded*, a one-woman play about a fighter pilot who is reassigned to operate drones. Thanks to the May Memorial Green Sanctuary Committee for co-sponsoring.

- On Saturday, **April 18 at 2 pm** we will present a staged reading of the play *The Predator* in the Dewitt Community Library in Shoppingtown. It's free and all are welcome.

To get involved, contact Carol. Our next meeting is **Monday, March 16 from 5-6:30 pm** at SPC.

Drone Resisters in Court

Trials continue about once a month at the Town of Dewitt Courthouse related to a nonviolent civil resistance action at Hancock Air Base. In the most recent trial, Bonny Mahoney of Syracuse was convicted of trespassing, and received a fine, an order of protection and a conditional discharge. Bonny brought to the witness stand her experiences in Pakistan, where she met with

families of drone victims. Jack Gilroy, who was found guilty in the Fall and sentenced to three months in jail (which he served), three years probation, a fine, an order of protection and 1500 hours of community service, was resentenced in February. After pressure from Jack's lawyers, the judge admitted that part of the sentence was illegal. He dropped Jack's probation and community service.

We encourage people to come to court in support. Because court dates can change at the last moment, check www.upstatedroneaction.org or contact Carol.

Neighbors of the Onondaga

To stay up to date with Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation's (NOON) activities and how to get involved, join NOON Announcements, a low volume listserv with 2700 subscribers. This way you can get the monthly e-newsletter, a terrific compilation of information, resources, upcoming events and ways to get involved. View a sample e-newsletter at www.peacecouncil.net/noon/e-newsletter/february-2015; to sign up for the listserv, go to www.peacecouncil.net/stay-in-touch.

We're very excited to report that since our 80 page booklet was published, we have distributed almost 4000 copies of *Neighbor to Neighbor, Nation to Nation: Readings About the Relationship of the Onondaga Nation with Central New York, USA*. If you would like to help with distribution or receive a copy yourself, contact Carol.

SPC Steering Committee

SPC extends a hearty thank-you to outgoing steering committee members Carole Resnick, Jim Weidman, and Wendy Yost. Their participation in SPC's decision making is much appreciated. Welcome to new steering committee members Diane Swords, Michael Messina-Yauchzy, Rachel Cary, Simone Richmond, and Vani Kannan. The steering committee meets monthly to address broad policy and operational issues of the Peace Council, as well as to review and set direction for activist initiatives.

Stop the TPP!

The Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a massive "free trade" agreement that is being pushed by big corporations and



Meet the SPC interns, pictured by the SPC table at the Rally to Stop Fast Track for the TPP: (from left to right) Henry, Lindsay, Brian and Zach. SPC cosponsored the March 5 TPP rally at the Westcott Theater hosted by the Communications Workers of America (CWA). Photo: Ursula Rozum

negotiated behind closed doors by officials from the US and 11 other countries (see this PNL's cover story!). The Peace Council is coordinating TPP Tuesdays, a weekly call-in day to Congress urging representatives to oppose Fast Track. Contact CNY Congressman John Katko at (202) 225-4042. Learn more at www.peacecouncil.net/stopthetpp.

We the People, Move To Amend!

Nine activists with Move To Amend (MTA) of Syracuse and Central New York traveled to Albany on January 21 for a statewide rally to mark the fifth anniversary of the Supreme Court's Citizens United ruling, the decision that eliminated limits on election spending by corporations. SPC staff organizer and local MTA coordinator Michael Messina-Yauchzy emceed a rally and press event with over 80 people. As part of the New York for Democracy Coalition, coordinated by Syracuse resident Jonah Minkoff-Zern of Public Citizen, MTA is working toward making New York the 17th state to call for a constitutional amendment overturning Citizens United.

Syracuse MTA will hold a rally on **April 2**, at 5pm at the State Office Building, 333 E. Washington St. We will also be stepping up efforts for a resolution of support by the Syracuse Common Council. MTA meets the third Thursday of each month at the Center for Peace and Social Justice. Contact Michael at 663-5640 for more information and to get involved.

Meet the Interns!

SPC has several new interns working at our office. **Zachary Field**, of Fayetteville, continues working with CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel. **Lindsay DeMay**, from New Mexico, is a junior Food Studies major at Syracuse University. Lindsay is working on the spring Bowlathon fundraiser and GMO labeling (ask her

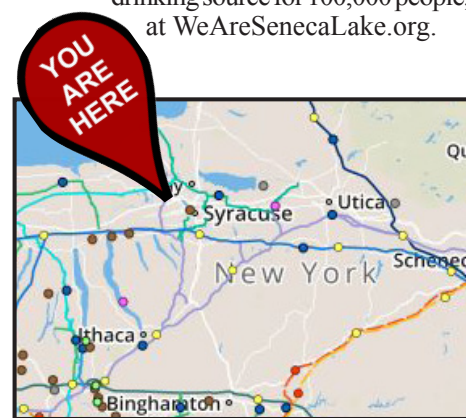
about the **April 28** rally in Albany!). **Brian Escobar**, from Liverpool, graduated from SUNY Binghamton in Anthropology and was active in Occupy Wall Street. When he isn't helping with office technology, Brian is organizing to stop Fast Track of the TPP. **Henry Nelson**, from the Boston area, has been active with THE General Body movement for transparency and diversity at Syracuse University. Henry plans to work on corporate power issues. Thank you for sharing your time and talents with SPC!

The Landscape of Fracking: What's Changed, What Hasn't?

Many are under the impression that New York is safe from fracking now that high-volume horizontal drilling will be banned. But the reality is that industry is on the attack with multiple proposals for pipelines, compressor stations, storage caverns, waste dumping and export facilities. Find out what's happening near the Syracuse area via an online mapping tool that demonstrates that New York is in fact being fracked in every way except the drilling. See the map at www.YouAreHereNYmap.org.

On February 28, SPC hosted a panel featuring local activists organizing on the front lines to protect our communities from the spread of dangerous gas infrastructure. The event was a collaboration between SPC, Shaleshock CNY, and SANE Energy Project. Mary Menapace, of Shaleshock CNY, shared her research on Northern NY injection wells, wells that accept "brine" from fracking operations ("brine" refers to

the toxic liquids that are used to drill oil and gas wells). Suzy Winkler of Concerned Citizens of Burlington spoke about the Dominion New Market Pipeline. Doug Couchon spoke about the We Are Seneca Lake campaign to protect Seneca Lake from a proposed liquefied petroleum gas storage facility. The Texas-based company Crestwood is actively constructing infrastructure for the storage of two billion cubic feet of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), with the blessing of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Over 200 activists have been arrested in a nonviolent direct action campaign to obstruct the construction of the Crestwood project. Learn more about how we can protect Seneca Lake, the drinking source for 100,000 people, at WeAreSenecaLake.org.



The You Are Here Map is an interactive tool that demonstrates the extent to which New York residents are already impacted by the fracking industry. www.YouAreHereNYmap.org

Goodbye to Michael, Welcome Back to Amelia

With sadness we say goodbye to Michael Messina-Yauchzy who joined the staff collective as Ursula's leave replacement in 2014. Michael's time was extended to mid-March, as he filled in while Amelia Lefevre was on maternity leave.

Michael worked on fundraising, volunteer and intern development; with the CNY Working for a Just Peace in Palestine and Israel Committee; and on the myriad office tasks that fall to staff. Michael is an extremely kind and committed activist, always willing to lend a hand and be the welcoming face in the Peace Council office. We are grateful that Michael has joined SPC's Steering Committee!

Amelia gave birth in January to a beautiful baby girl, Asa. She plans to bring Asa to work at the SPC office mid-March. We'll have fun holding her as we are continually reminded of why we work for peace and social justice.



Laurel J. Richie



Laurel J. Richie

THE WNBA: SHOWING THE WORLD WHAT'S POSSIBLE

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

7:30

Hendricks Chapel



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for more information:

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eegray@syr.edu

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Laurel Richie is president of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA). As president, she is responsible for setting the vision for the WNBA and overseeing the league's day-to-day business and basketball operations. Recently, she announced that the WNBA is launching a campaign to market specifically to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered community, a move that makes it the first professional league to specifically recruit LGBT fans to its games. In her presentation, Richie will discuss her experiences in her three-decade career of developing award winning campaigns that transform brands and drive business results. She was previously affiliated with Girl Scouts USA and Oglivy & Mather.

Annie Griffiths

Annie Griffiths

FROM PHOTOJOURNALIST TO PHOTO ACTIVIST: THE RIPPLE EFFECTS IMAGES PROJECT

Tuesday, Mar. 24, 2015

7:30 pm

Hendricks Chapel

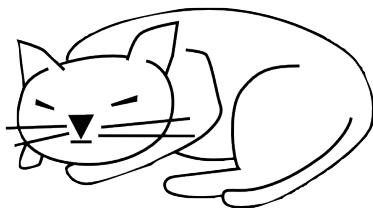
National Geographic photographer Annie Griffiths will share vignettes of her experiences photographing on six of the world's seven continents during her illustrious career. In addition to her magazine work, Griffiths is deeply committed to photographing for aid organizations around the world. She is the executive director of Ripple Effects Images, a collective of photographers who document the programs that are empowering women and girls in the developing world, especially as they deal with the devastating effects of climate change.



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Stop the TPP / from cover

transnational investors. No provision from recent trade agreements exemplifies this better than Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), a key part of both NAFTA and the leaked TPP text. ISDS allows a foreign investor to sue a government for loss of prospective profits resulting from regulations enacted by a government, even municipal governments. The suit is brought before an extra-territorial tribunal of judges, the investor and the state each selecting half. Under NAFTA, ISDS has allowed a slippery Delaware-registered, Calgary-based company to sue the Province of Quebec for \$241 million in prospective losses from Quebec's fracking moratorium. The company, Lone Pine, had not even started fracking under the St. Lawrence Seaway but based their claim on their own estimates of massive reserves of natural gas. The case is pending, but environmentalists fear a chilling effect on future regulations. ISDS puts environmental and health regulations at risk to protect investments.

Trade agreements like NAFTA and the TPP are key weapons of imperialism. This imperialism is less about the dominance of one country over other

countries but rather the ability of the tiny upper class in a few countries to shape, mostly through bureaucratic and market means, the destiny of the lower classes of the world. These agreements give protection to global investors at the expense of security for workers. Past US presidents have claimed agreements like NAFTA would create hundreds of thousands of jobs but the actual numbers always fall short. Job losses are the real result and new jobs

created are precarious Walmart-type jobs. When operations and investments can be moved around the world quickly, workers are put into a worse bargaining position, both individually and collectively. It's no surprise economic inequality increased under NAFTA. If passed, the TPP will only intensify this pattern. Organized labor, human rights groups, Internet freedom advocates, consumer groups and environmentalists all oppose agreements like the TPP. Those pushing these agreements are trying to circumvent democratic process through Fast Track, which makes real debate and public input exceedingly difficult.

We must stop Fast Track. Our opposition has prevented it from being renewed for the past seven years. We've defeated trade agreements before. We can do it again. And should Fast Track pass, we'll need to continue to work to defeat the TPP and similar agreements.

Learn more about the TPP, Fast Track and how to take action: www.peacecouncil.net/stopthetpp.



Brian is an activist and aspiring game designer from Liverpool, NY. He studied anthropology at Binghamton University and is particularly interested in economics.

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