



Graphic Design: Kanat Bolazar, Elaine Denton

WAR AND WARMING: WE CAN'T SAVE THE PLANET WITHOUT TAKING ON THE PENTAGON

By H. Patricia Hynes

"If we are not united in peace, we cannot save the planet."

—Thich Nhat Hanh

Looking out on my audience of young climate change and older peace activists gathered by 350.org-Connecticut for a talk and discussion on "war and warming," I saw the generational difference that many peace activists perceive. Peace, war, militarism, and nuclear weapons are an agenda of another era—an earlier era—while progressive activist energy today is galvanized by climate change. One climate

activist explained that in his lifetime, no nuclear weapons had been used while climate change has worsened. Thus, our movements largely work in isolation from each other, despite the actuality that war and fossil fuels have been fatally co-dependent since the Second World War.

Oil is indispensable for war and militarism. Think of it as the lifeblood coursing through our foreign policy that is based on maintaining superpower status and confronting those whom we perceive as challenging us. The 1980 Carter Doctrine, which stated that the United States would use military force if necessary to defend its national interests in the Persian Gulf,

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SPC Statement of purpose

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

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SPC'S BIRTHDAY DINNER POSTPONED

SPC's Steering Committee in conjunction with the Birthday Dinner Committee decided to cancel SPC's 84th Birthday Dinner, originally scheduled for March 28, due to Covid-19. The current likely scenario is that we will postpone it until the fall.

Dr. Ira Helfand, a leader in the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons and the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (both Nobel Prize-winning organizations), was to have been our speaker. He was coming to promote the Back from Brink Campaign: A Call to Prevent Nuclear War (www.preventnuclearwar.org). The planned talk had been "Fighting the Growing Threats of Nuclear War and Climate Collapse." He is an excellent speaker, and we recommend that you check out some of his videos.

The Nuclear Free World Committee is actively seeking endorsements for the campaign; please contact Diane at drswords@gmail.com to participate. They are also hoping to set up virtual meetings between Ira and local political candidates, as well as with potential and current local endorsers of the campaign, and local physicians. If you would like to be part of

the virtual meeting, contact drswords@gmail.com.

The Birthday Dinner is not only a celebration and an opportunity for organizing. It is also our spring fundraising event. Please consider making a special donation to help make up for the loss of the Birthday Dinner. You may donate online at peacecouncil.net/donate.

An anonymous donor has generously volunteered to match Birthday dinner-related donations dollar for dollar up to \$2000 through May 1. To make sure your donation gets matched, please note it is for the Birthday Dinner.

Many people have already contributed much time in organizing the event. Special thanks to the Committee: Diane Swords, Margrit Diehl, Liz Spence, Wendy Yost, Donna Mühs-McCarten, Michaela Czerkies and Carol Baum. Thanks also to Elaine Denton, Simon Morrin, Latoya Ricks, Gloria Ricks, Amelia Lefevre and University United Methodist Church. We also thank those who had already promised to volunteer that day: the table hosts, cooks and musicians.

– Carol Baum

COVID-19 AND SPC'S PLANS

As of March 13, SPC is moving ahead with the plans listed in these pages in one way or another. Some of these plans may involve very small groups where social distance can easily be maintained (note that cleanliness is a priority). Some plans are evolving into webinars or conference calls. Some are scheduled for the more distant future, and we will have to see how things evolve. Some can be handled via email and phone. Like other activists, we are thinking about how to continue organizing in this environment, for the safety of everyone.

Our plans can change quickly, as the situation changes. Our plans might even have changed by the time you read this. (This has been a challenging *PNL*; articles

and SPC in Action pieces have changed many times in the last few days).

We want everyone to be safe and take care of themselves—and you know best how to do that for yourself. And we need to be sure to take care of each other too.

So do what makes sense for you to do, given the situation. We will all do our best to be responsible community members, as we continue our activism.

Information will be disseminated via SPC announcements (our listserv), our website (the homepage is broken; look at the event section) and Facebook page. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the office by phone or email.

– Carol Baum

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SPC in Action, continued from page 3

BUILDING SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation is stepping up our efforts to get the City of Syracuse to commemorate Indigenous Peoples Day rather than Columbus Day. We are re-circulating our petition for individuals and seeking organizational support for the campaign and welcome your assistance. Talk to your workplace, union, community organization or faith community about signing on. You can download the petition at www.peacecouncil.net/noon. Contact andy.mager@gmail.com.

Our plan is to turn in over 1,000 petition signatures to Mayor Walsh at the end of April.

– *Andy Mager*

ONONDAGA LAKE DESERVES BETTER



Lindsay Speer speaking at a press conference immediately before the final beach feasibility study. Photo: Julio Urrutia

A Better Future for Onondaga Lake (BFOL) supports public education and engagement, environmental justice and the stewardship values of the Onondaga Nation. Onondaga Lake and the living beings who relate to the lake deserve to live in peace, health and harmony.

Onondaga County's swimming beach proposal for Willow Bay is disrespectful of the Onondaga Nation and of the lake. We as a community must take responsibility for the harm caused by colonization and industrialization and continue to promote the healing of the lake instead of rushing to cover the still-polluted lakeshore with yet another recreational facility and partying on top of the destruction of cultures and our environment.

To that end BFOL rallied the public and organized a press conference at the final beach feasibility study meeting on February 29, when over 60 allies gathered to oppose the beach. Watch the video and read the related coverage at www.facebook.com/betterfutureforonondagalake. Then write letters to Onondaga County legislators and to the Office of the Environment. We need many letters and comments opposing the beach! **The deadline for letters is April 1.**

– *Andra Leimanis*

WEBINAR ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

On April 1, Rabbi Brian Walt of Congregation Tikun v'Or (Ithaca Reform Temple), will offer our community a webinar on combating antisemitism from a progressive perspective. Rabbi Brian, who was born in Cape Town, South Africa, during the Apartheid era, has many years of experience as a Jewish teacher, counselor and public speaker, and over 25 years experience as a congregational rabbi. He was also the founding executive director of Rabbis for Human Rights—North America. Rabbi Brian is a spiritual activist dedicated to racial and economic justice in the US and to justice and peace for all in Israel/Palestine.

At a time when antisemitism remains a very real and painful force of oppression and persecution, those of us at SPC who are not Jewish are committed to continuously learn how to act in solidarity with Jewish members, friends and neighbors, as well as people affected by other forms of oppression. If you are interested in participating, contact michaela@peacecouncil.net.

– *Michaela Czerkies*

JUSTICE FOR PALESTINE

In February, the Justice for Palestine Committee continued its film screenings with *The Wanted 18*, a 2014 film about nonviolent direct action used by Palestinians under occupation during the First Intifada. It is a clever telling of the true story about how the townspeople boycotted Israeli milk products by buying their own cows from a kibbutz and creating their own dairy cooperative.

The committee is now focusing on strategies for the continuing *No Way to Treat a Child Campaign*, educating the public about HR 2407, a proposed human rights bill in the US House, and gaining support for it through local faith communities and social justice organizations.

– *Julia Ganson*

STREET HEAT STEPS UP EVEN MORE

Starting in April, there are even more opportunities to be out in the streets to stand up for peace and social justice. Please join us—bring a sign or use one of ours. Contact Ann Tiffany or Ed Kinane at 315-478-4571.

Tuesdays: 4:15-5pm

April 7 – Hancock Air Base (6000 E. Molloy Rd.)

April 14 – Adams & Almond (Rt. 81 underpass)

April 21 – Hancock Air Base

April 28 – Adams & Almond (Rt. 81 underpass)

May 5 – Hancock Air Base

May 12 – E. Genesee St. and Erie Blvd. East

Saturdays April-November: 9-9:45am

Regional Market main entrance (Park St.)

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RESIST ROLLECKS TO BAIL REFORM IN NEW YORK

by Emily NaPier Singletary

New York State passed an historic package of pretrial justice reforms last year, eliminating cash bail for most defendants, closing loopholes that undermine the right to a speedy trial, and enhancing rules around prosecutors turning over evidence. But fewer than 90 days after the new laws took effect on January 1, they are already at risk of being rolled back as a result of racist fearmongering that continues to criminalize poverty. Bail reform has been the most controversial change, with district attorneys and other law enforcement officials doing their best to convince the public that we are all in imminent danger now that many people charged with nonviolent crimes will be released to fight their cases.

In order to dispel the lies being told about the new system, we must first understand how the system functioned prior to January 1. New York has always had one of the most progressive bail laws in the country; it did not allow judges to consider the defendant's "dangerousness" when setting bail. This framework was based on an understanding that the purpose of bail is simply to serve as incentive to ensure the person appear at their court dates. Because the US Constitution entitles us all to a presumption of innocence, a judgment about a person's dangerousness cannot be made prior to them being convicted of the crime of which they are accused.

When setting bail, judges were required to set two types, which almost always were cash and bond. If the person and their loved ones could afford to pay the full cash amount, it went directly to the court and was returned to the defendant upon the conclusion of the case (minus a 3 percent administrative fee if they were convicted). If families could not afford the full cash

Emily NaPier Singletary is the Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director of Unchained, a Syracuse-based organization that organizes and advocates to dismantle the carceral state. She leads the organization with her husband Derek who is currently serving a 20-year state prison sentence.



The logo of Unchained, the organization Emily and her husband Derek co-founded and co-direct. Graphic: Derek Singletary

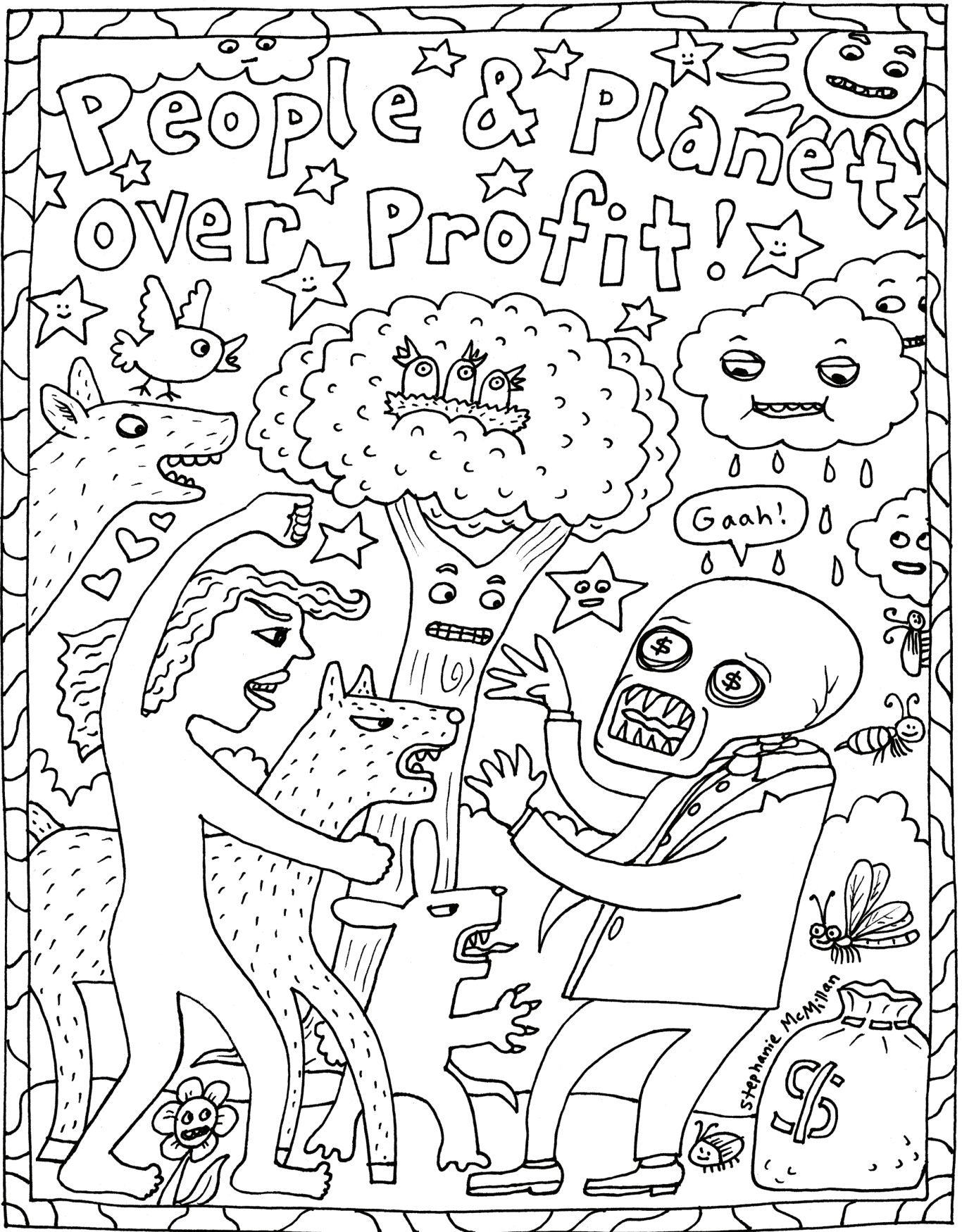
amount, they had the option of going through a third party called a "bondsman" who agreed to pay the full amount to the court after charging the defendant or their loved ones a non-refundable premium (usually 10 percent) and, in some cases, requiring additional collateral like a car or a house. For example, if bail was set at \$2,500 cash or \$5,000 bond, the defendant would have three options: 1) pay \$2,500 in cash directly to the court which would return it at the conclusion of the case minus \$75 if convicted; 2) pay a bondsman a non-refundable premium of \$500; or 3) stay in jail, potentially for several months, if both of those options were unaffordable.

It's easy in this example to see how people are punished simply for being poor. And because we know that Black and Latinx people are disproportionately poor and overrepresented in the criminal legal system, this was a practice that perpetuated both economic and racial injustice. What many people don't know is that there were actually seven other types of bail, several of them non-monetary forms, that judges could have set to alleviate these disparities but chose not to.

The new law that took effect January 1 functions exactly the same as the old law

for people charged with violent felonies. But people charged with most misdemeanors and non-violent felonies are now required to be released on their own recognizance rather than being subjected to bail. Opponents of bail reform are calling for the law to be rolled back and to restore judicial discretion in bail decisions, but judicial discretion is exactly what got us into this mess in the first place. Judges routinely used only two of the nine bail options available to them and routinely set bail at amounts that people could not reasonably afford, in direct violation of the spirit of the bail law.

District attorneys and law enforcement want you to believe that bail reform makes us less safe because people charged with nonviolent crimes are now being automatically released while their cases are pending. But the reality is that people charged even with violent crimes were always free to fight their case – if they could afford to buy their way out of jail. A poor person is no more dangerous than a wealthy person charged with the same crime. Resist these attempts to enact policies based on fear and lies. Tell Governor Cuomo and your New York State Legislators, "No rollbacks to bail reform!" 🕊️



Thanks to Stephanie McMillan for her gracious donation of this coloring page. Stephanie is a comic journalist who exposes the systems at the root of problems and encourages constructive action. To see more of her work, go to www.stephaniemcmillan.org. She can be contacted at hello@stephaniemcmillan.org.

NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION UNDER THREAT: THE CASE OF PALESTINIAN ADVOCACY

By Jonathan Brenneman

“Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr., *Beyond Vietnam*, April 4, 1967 (quoting John F Kennedy)

Oppressed people around the world are turning to nonviolent tactics to take on powerful governments and corporations in order to achieve social justice. Chilean protesters used mass demonstrations to demand a new constitution; Wet'suwet'en protectors used blockades to stop colonization; and here in Syracuse, SU students and faculty are using sit-ins and strikes to demand a more racially just campus. Even in the midst of these successes the effectiveness of nonviolence is being continually challenged by extreme repression.

Over the last year more than 300 activists were assassinated worldwide. Repressive regimes are changing laws and removing protections for activists (including in this country). Moreover, massive misinformation and smear campaigns are rampant against nonviolent movements.

As a Palestinian rights activist, I have seen how these attacks work to silence marginalized people. When Palestinians in Gaza who are starving, have run out of clean drinking water, and are held captive under Israel's military control—nonviolently protested this illegal and inhumane situation in the “Great March of Return,” they were met with extreme violence by Israeli forces. Every Friday for over a year they marched toward the border that Israel has shut down—disallowing even basic supplies from entering. Every Friday they were shot at, medics and journalists were targeted, protesters were maimed and killed. International news, if they even covered the protest, recorded headlines like, “Palestinians die during clashes with Israeli Forces.” This served to

make passive the active violence against them, hiding their nonviolent conduct, and not naming the context in which they were protesting.

These news headlines, while misleading, are but the mildest misinformation about Palestinian nonviolence. It pales in comparison to the smear campaign against the Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement for Freedom, Justice, and Equality (BDS).



The BDS Movement was started by a broad coalition of Palestinian unions, artists, and civil society organizations as a strategic alternative to violence. They had three demands: Freedom from the illegal Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza; justice (based on international law) for Palestinian refugees displaced by Israel; and equality for Palestinian citizens of Israel. In short, they insist that Palestinians be treated with the same rights as everyone else.

The movement seeks to achieve these goals through classic nonviolent, noncooperation tactics. They asked people of conscience around the world to boycott products and institutions complicit with the Israeli government; to divest from companies profiting off the oppression of Palestinians and associated with the state of Israel; and to call on their governments to sanction Israel until the Israeli government met their demands of freedom, justice and equality. These tactics of economic noncooperation have been used in almost every successful nonviolent campaign: The Civil Rights movement boycotted buses; Gandhi boycotted salt; people in Syracuse boycotted Nazi products during WWII. Most notably the BDS movement draws its inspiration from the South African anti-Apartheid movement, which successfully used international divestment as well as economic, cultural,

and academic boycotts to fight the South African regime.

Though boycotts are a key tactic of nonviolence, they have detractors. Gandhi was accused of commiserating with Axis powers; Mandela was labeled a “terrorist;” and the Montgomery Bus boycotters were accused of being “communists.” Today the BDS Movement’s call for Palestinian equal rights has been framed as “antisemitism.”

This accusation of antisemitism is growing more potent as the number of hate crimes, including those targeting Jews, is growing. Using the legitimate fear of rising antisemitism, those opposed to Palestinian rights try to paint BDS as antisemitic by ignoring what the movement’s stated goals are, and instead implying that the movement has nefarious goals of unfairly targeting Israel as a way of harming Jews. This unfounded and racist idea is perpetuated by both cynical and well-meaning critics.

The BDS Movement (bdsmovement.org) has detailed criteria for determining boycott targets and has been unequivocal that as a human rights-based movement, it is “opposed on principle to all forms of discrimination, including anti-semitism and Islamophobia.” The leaders have consistently cut ties with or denounced outright those who use the campaign to target individuals, “based on their identity or opinion.”

Despite all this care, the stereotype of Palestinians being antisemitic has proven useful to forces of repression. These lies are working. Today 28 states (including New York) have anti-boycott laws passed to oppose BDS. These laws fly in the face of the first amendment and undermine hard fought legal victories over the right to boycott won by organizations like the NAACP.

BDS is a Palestinian-led, rights-based, nonviolent movement under attack. It needs all of our support both through participating in boycotts and by fighting misinformation and legal repression. ☮

Jonathan Brenneman is a Palestinian American activist. He is the Communications Manager for FOSNA, A Christian Voice for Palestine.

THE VIOLENCE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, LAND, WATER AND AIR

by Joe Heath

The nuclear industry negatively and disproportionately impacts on indigenous peoples, nations, land and waters. Three aging Oswego nuclear reactors within the Onondaga Nation's original territory are well past their designed life spans and are a danger to all beings living in relation to Lake Ontario.

Uranium Mining Impacts on Indigenous Nations and Peoples

The entire life cycle of the nuclear power industry has huge negative impacts on indigenous nations and peoples, from the mining of uranium in Indian country and the vast amounts of nuclear waste associated with the mining and milling of uranium, to the transportation of uranium and the proposed long-term storage of nuclear wastes on Indian country. Negative impacts continue and will worsen due to the current administration's plan to resume uranium mining.

There are three stages of conventional uranium mining: first, the ore is extracted from the ground. Next, a mill grinds the ore to sand, which is processed to remove uranium from the waste rock, known as "tailings." The uranium is then concentrated and dried into "yellowcake" for commercial sale. The tailings—which are radioactive—must be secured and stored.

Uranium mining, milling and related industries destroy sacred sites, petroglyphs and ancestors' unmarked burial sites, and contaminate drinking water. Traditional lifeways are made difficult or impossible because of contamination of water and land; sacred sites have been made inaccessible or dangerous to access; and Indigenous peoples are forced to leave homelands they have occupied for centuries.

Water contamination from uranium mining and tailings is widespread and especially damaging in southwestern states where water is scarce. Surface waters and aquifers are polluted by all phases of uranium mining and production. Water contamination includes various combinations of uranium, arsenic, copper, lead, molybdenum, selenium, sulfate, thorium, vanadium and radium.

Prior to any uranium mining, extensive explorations are conducted on Indian country, such as drilling thousands of holes and cores, and construction of extensive roads and truck pads on undisturbed, pristine lands. Most of these exploratory holes are not sealed or capped and create pathways between groundwater aquifers, allowing contaminated water to pollute clean drinking water supplies.

Routine Discharges of Radioactive Water and Air

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission relies on self-reporting and computer modeling from reactor operators to track

radioactive releases and projected dispersion of radioactivity. This means that a significant portion of the environmental monitoring data is extrapolated and virtual, but not real.¹ Low-level radiation damages tissues, cells, DNA and other vital molecules in humans and all life forms; there is no safe dose.²

One of the main radioactive isotopes of concern for both water and air releases from nuclear reactors is tritium (a radioactive isotope of hydrogen), which combines with oxygen to produce tritiated water and is readily absorbed through skin, lungs and the GI tract. Tritium is impossible to remove from air or water by filters and is absorbed by trees and plants, including food crops; when consumed it can incorporate into tissue cells, becoming a dangerous human health risk.

Some radioactive fission gases from the reactor cooling water are contained in decay tanks for days before being released into the atmosphere, and some gases leak into the reactor buildings' interiors. The gases, in addition to tritium, include noble gases which rapidly decay to dangerous daughter isotopes, such as cesium-135 and strontium-90.

Additionally, some contaminated water is intentionally removed from the reactor vessel to reduce the amount of the radioactive and corrosive chemicals; the water is filtered and then either recycled back into the cooling system or released into the environment.

Radioactive Isotopes

A nuclear reactor produces hundreds of radioisotopes such as plutonium-239 (a component of spent fuel), which decays into various radioactive substances, such as thorium and radium, and must be isolated from the environment for at least 100,000 years to decay to a safe level.

Radioisotopes produced in a reactor remain extremely hazardous from a few days to hundreds of thousands of years; these radioisotopes remain in fuel assemblies and as components of the resulting spent fuel.

Risks from Accumulation of Spent Fuel Rods

When spent fuel rods are removed from a reactor, they are thermally hot and intensely radioactive; they must be immersed in deep pools of water. Once placed in a holding pool, spent fuel rods continue to decay and generate enormous amounts of heat. Cooling water must be circulated in the pools, requiring an uninterrupted source of power.

Due to cost issues, operators keep rods in pools until full capacity, meaning that only about 25% of domestic spent fuel is stored in dry casks—stainless steel or concrete containers. Spent fuel rods are being stored at an average density of four times higher than originally intended. The higher density of fuel rod storage causes degradation in the neutron-absorbing materials

Joe is the General Counsel of the Onondaga Nation.

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that are required to prevent a self-sustaining chain reaction from starting; and it creates an added stress on the cooling and cleaning systems.

Spent fuel rod storage pools have at least two potential hazards. If a leak develops it could drain enough water to expose the fuel, or the water circulation system used for cooling could fail, which would cause the hot fuel rods to boil off the water in which they are stored and catch fire at 800 degrees Celsius.

Another method of cost savings is to use fuel with higher levels of uranium, which can burn longer and increase the periods between shutdowns for refueling. This fuel is hotter and more radioactive when removed from a reactor core and the length of time it must remain in a pool is extended. The higher levels of uranium in the fuel rods can cause the cladding³ around a spent fuel rod to become brittle; it also leads to higher pressure from hydrogen and other radioactive gases inside the cladding; all this increases risk that the cladding will fail and allow the escape of radioactive materials.

According to the Government Accountability Office, the worst-case scenario for spent fuel at reactor sites is a self-sustaining fire in a spent fuel pool, which could spread to all assemblies in the pool and release massive amounts of radioactivity.

A 1997 report for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission by the Brookhaven National Laboratory found that a severe pool fire could render about 188 square miles around the nuclear reactor uninhabitable, cause as many as 28,000 cancer fatalities, and result in \$59 billion in damages.

Further, spent fuel pools are not under the same type of containment that reactor vessels are, and more likely to release radioactive material into the atmosphere in case of an accident or fire. There are several events which could cause a loss of pool water, including: leakage, evaporation, siphoning, pumping, aircraft impact, earthquake, the accidental or deliberate drop of a fuel transport cask, reactor failure or an explosion inside or outside the pool building.

Dangers of Three Aging Nuclear Power Reactors in Oswego

All three Scriba reactors (Fitzpatrick and Nine Mile Point 1 and 2) are General Electric Boiling Water Reactors (GE BWR). This is the same design as the Fukushima Daiichi reactors in Japan. For more information, see the New York Times article *Experts Had Long Criticized Potential Weakness in Design of Stricken Reactor*,⁴ which discusses the weakness in the containment vessel and pressure suppression and relief systems.

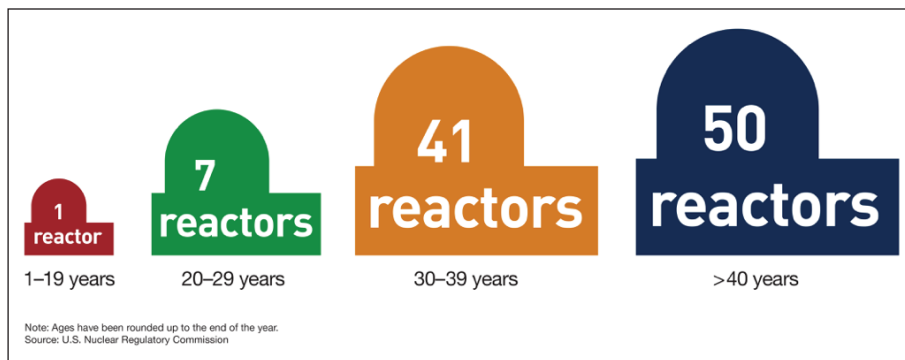
GE BWR reactors have two fundamental design flaws which increase risks to the surrounding human populations and to air, water, and land: (a) the containment vessel is not as physically robust as competing designs; and (b) the spent fuel rods are stored on upper floors and not in cooling pools at ground level.

Since 1981, there have been at least 66 incidents at US nuclear reactors with a significant loss of spent fuel cooling water. One of the major threats from the Fukushima reactor disaster was the loss of cooling water surrounding the spent fuel rods on the upper floors.

Concerns about the design escalated in the mid-1980s, when Harold Denton, an official with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, asserted that Mark 1 reactors had a 90 percent probability of bursting if fuel rods overheat and melt in an accident.

A nuclear reactor's fuel rods, pipes, tanks and valves can all leak. As a nuclear reactor ages, so does its equipment, and leaks generally increase. The three Oswego/Scriba reactors are already operating well beyond their projected life spans. Keeping these three aging reactors operational is both costly and dangerous. The state's \$12 billion payer funded bail-out could implement more solar, wind and truly renewable power generation. Renewable energy is less expensive every year, while nuclear becomes more expensive every year.

Recently, a new danger has been added to the list of nuclear risks—the ever increasing risk of flooding due to climate change. Every reactor in the US is on the shore of a water body, because the water is essential for cooling. The risks of flooding are



Nuclear reactor age in the US as of end of 2018. Graphic: US Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

increasing due to intense and more frequent rain events. Lake Ontario has reached record high levels in two of the past three years, causing massive shoreline flooding damage and coming within one foot of overflowing the Scriba reactors. Such flooding could begin the same series of catastrophic events seen at Fukushima. ☹

Footnotes:

¹ Nuclear Information and Resource Services. *Routine Radioactive Releases from Nuclear Reactors*.

² University of South Carolina. "Even Low-level Radioactivity is Damaging, Scientists Conclude." *Science Daily*, November 13, 2012.

³ "Cladding" is the outer layer of the fuel rods, situated between the coolant and the nuclear fuel.

⁴ *NY Times*, March 16, 2011, p. A14

War and Warming, continued from cover

formalized the toxic nexus between access to oil and war. Since the late 1970s, the US has spent \$8 trillion protecting oil cargoes in the Persian Gulf region through ongoing naval patrols.

Keeping oil and gas supply sea lanes in the South China Sea open, in the face of China's expansionism there, is a factor in the US pivot to Asia. This foreign policy pivot has involved engaging Australia and Southeast Asian allies in military training exercises, opening new and previously closed bases to the US military, and selling new weapons systems to counter North Korea and the rising power of China.

War for oil has come home. Militarized North Dakota police attacked non-violent water protectors protesting the Dakota Access oil pipeline with rubber bullets, tear gas, concussion grenades and water cannons in sub-freezing temperatures. One medic treating injuries described it as a "low grade war."

A thumbnail sketch of recent US spending confirms the axiom that war culture is a defining feature of US politics. Between 2010-2015, the federal government invested \$56 billion in clean energy internationally, while in 2016 it committed to \$1 trillion for modernizing nuclear weapons, their infrastructure and their delivery systems by 2030.

Militarism: An Engine of Climate Change

In 1940 the US military consumed one percent of the country's total fossil fuel energy usage; by the end of World War II the military's share rose to 29 percent. Militarism is the most oil-intensive activity on the planet, growing more so with faster, bigger, more fuel-guzzling planes, tanks, and naval vessels. At the outset of the Iraq War in March 2003, the Army estimated it would need more than 40 million gallons of gasoline for three weeks of combat, exceeding the total quantity used by all Allied forces in the four years of World War I.

The frequency and prevalence of US armed conflict since World War II is another factor in the combustible mix of war and warming. Numerous sources have documented up to 150 instances of US armed forces engaged in conflict abroad from 1945-2004. This count, though, does not include covert military missions in which US Special Operations Forces (larger in number than the active-duty militaries of many countries) operate in 135 countries. Nor do the 153 military conflicts since 1945 include US occupation forces stationed abroad since World War II, military participation in mutual security organizations such as NATO, and military base agreements for the estimated 800 US military bases across the planet.

In 2003, the Carter Doctrine was implemented with "shock and awe," in what was the most intensive and profligate use of fossil fuel the world has ever witnessed—the Iraq War. The projected full costs of that war (estimated \$3 trillion) could have covered all global investments in renewable energy needed between now and 2030 to reverse global warming trends.

Pat Hynes, a retired environmental engineer and professor of environmental health, directs the Traprock Center for Peace and Justice in western Massachusetts. <http://traprock.org>.

Between 2003 and 2007, the Iraq War generated more carbon dioxide equivalent in greenhouse gas emissions each year than 139 of the world's countries release annually. Re-building Iraqi (and Syrian and Yemeni) schools, homes, businesses, bridges, roads, and hospitals pulverized by the war will require millions of tons of cement, among the most fossil fuel intensive of all manufacturing industries.



Graphic: climateeye.org/what-do-wars-have-to-do-with-climate-change

After an unprecedented investigation into military use of fossil fuels, Barry Sander, author of *The Green Zone*, calculated that the US military consumes as much as one million barrels of oil per day and contributes five percent of current global warming emissions. Only a few dozen countries use more oil than the Pentagon, according to Dr. Neta Crawford of Boston University.

Nor do Sander's and Crawford's calculations include the fossil fuels used by civilian weapons makers. The weapon industries' greenhouse gas emissions comprise not only those from manufacturing and testing weapons but also the intensive cleanup of hazardous waste produced in the manufacturing process.

Climate Change in an Increasingly Militarized World

Climate change is inevitably an issue of peace because the Pentagon is the single largest institutional contributor of climate change emissions in the world. And as the Pentagon goes, so go the military budgets of other major powers. "We are not your enemy," a Chinese strategist told journalist John Pilger, "but if you [in the West] decide we are, we must prepare without delay."

Growing global militarization portends greater military buildup in Russia, China, NATO and the Middle East with greater climate change emissions, and it heightens the potential for nuclear war, risking another kind of climate change—nuclear winter. The US expends 37 percent of the global military budget, and its military is estimated to contribute five percent of climate change emissions. Can we not, then, assume that the rest of world's military spending, weapons manufacturing, military exercises, and conflicts combine to bring military-related fossil fuel emissions near 15 percent of global climate change pollution? Intensifying military tensions will drive it higher.

continued on next page

Climate Change, Water Shortage and Conflict: Syria

Climate change is necessarily an issue of peace. One quarter to one half of wars since 1973 have been fought over oil. Oil is both indispensable to war and heavily responsible for our climate crisis.

The worst Syrian drought on record, from 2006- 2011, caused agriculture to collapse and food prices to rise, thus aggravating poverty; and it drove more than 1.5 million farm workers and families to cities for survival. Simultaneously, hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees from the US-led war in their country fled to Syrian cities. The extreme and rapid swelling in urban population from war and climate change-related water scarcity, combined with the lack of support from the Assad government for basic needs and services, added fuel to the fire of civil conflict and the current war in Syria.

The entire Middle East inexorably faces a hotter, drier climate from climate change that will further stress competition for water resources, agriculture, food prices and existing conflicts.

Concluding Reflections

War mirrors the culture of a country. US militarism—from its training, tactics, and logistics to its reasons for going to war and its weapons of war—is distinctly shaped by core elements of American identity. These determining cultural forces are, according to military historian Victor Hanson: manifest destiny; frontier mentality; rugged individualism; unfettered market capitalism; and what he calls a “muscular independence” (power projection in Pentagon-speak). These eminently masculinist qualities converge to generate bigger, “better” and more destructive war technology. And these qualities have delivered up a bullying, white nationalist, law-breaking billionaire and sexual predator as president.

The US habit and competence for war, with its origins in the past annihilation of Native Americans, will be our society’s nemesis unless we do critical soul-searching about our cultural and personal values, and actively engage in transforming them. Let us remember and honor the plentitude of non-violent activist movements—confronting sexism, racism, environmental destruction and militarism in our society—that have profoundly

confronted the dominant patriarchal profile of our culture described by Hanson.

The challenge is how to build voice, social cohesion and public influence for our shared values of human community, our core connection with nature, our empathy with the exploited and our thirst for equality and justice for all.

In these times of overt authoritarian and corporate control, our hope for turning the tide arises from local, community-based campaigns and actions. These comprise anti-fracking ordinances, town by town; the fight for a \$15 minimum wage city by city; churches and cities providing sanctuary for undocumented workers; children suing their government for their right to clean energy and a livable future; campaigns against all forms of violence against girls and women; using community media to promote equal rights for all; and electing people to local and regional office, and hopefully national office, who champion these issues and campaigns.

Working together, we must turn the tide on the destructive forces of militarism and the climate and biodiversity crises by seeking enduring peace on earth and enduring peace with earth.

We’re thrilled to invite you to a talk by Pat Hynes:

“Can We Save the Planet Without Taking on the Pentagon?”

Sunday, April 19, at 2pm


All Saints Catholic Church
1340 Lancaster Ave., Syracuse

Free and open to all. All Saints is an accessible facility.

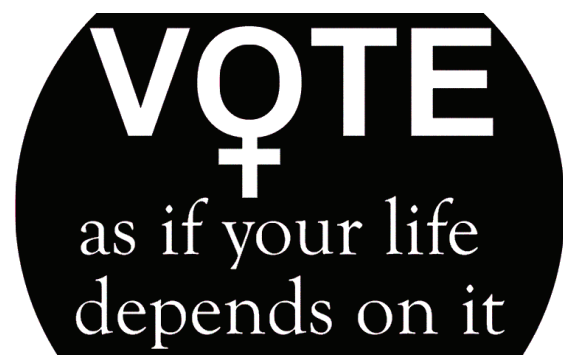
Sponsored by Beyond War and Militarism Committee, a joint committee of the Syracuse Peace Council and the CNY Solidarity Coalition

More info: 315-472-5478, spc@peacecouncil.net

Note that this could change given the circumstances when we are closer to the date.



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WORKERS' CENTER OF CNY SUPPORTS 2020 CENSUS

By Workers' Center of CNY Staff

The United States Constitution mandates that every decade, a census will be taken to count all persons living in the country. Title 13 of the United States Code orders that the confidential information gathered is to be used for statistical purposes and that no individual person can be identified.

Historically, the US Census has been a nonpartisan issue. Soon after the election, the Trump administration introduced the idea of adding a citizenship question to the Census. This action further fueled anti-immigrant vitriol and was an attempt to silence the needs of our communities by deploying the census as weaponry to be feared and avoided. The citizenship question was ultimately argued before the US Supreme Court and in June 2019 the Supreme Court ruled that the citizenship question shall not be reintroduced to the census. 2020 Census will not ask any individual or household about their citizenship status.

An accurate census is critical for the fair allotment of congressional representatives.

Census aggregates help decide the proportion of financial allocations that individual State governments and local communities like Syracuse, NY will receive from the federal government for the upcoming decade. These funds are crucial to support infrastructure, schools, healthcare and economic opportunities. Additionally, New York State and local officials use decennial census results to help redraw congressional, state, and local district boundaries to contain roughly equal numbers of people to ensure each person's voting power is closely equivalent (meeting the one-person, one-vote rule).

The Worker's Center of CNY (WCCNY), a member organization of the New York Immigration Coalition, has joined New York Counts 2020 (newyorkcounts2020.org), a broad-based, statewide alliance of diverse interest groups in a campaign to ensure a fair and accurate 2020 Census in New York State, particularly to support marginalized communities in historically undercounted and at-risk districts to fully participate in the 2020 Census. We need the help of community members to support the Census endeavor and dispel inaccurate propaganda that it is anything except a way to ensure our community gets crucial representation and funding.

Over the past two years the WCCNY has been working to assure we have a fair and accurate census here in Central New York. The WCCNY and its members participated in the Local Update of Census Addresses known as LUCA. WCCNY members representing areas that have been undercounted in past decades went to the streets of their neighborhoods to identify new addresses, or remove locations that

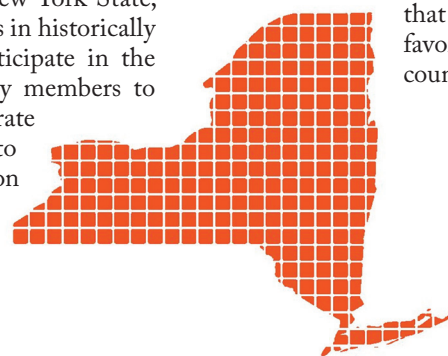
There are three chances and ways to participate in the 2020 Census (see 2020census.gov):

1. Mid-March: Online portal opens. Letters sent.
2. Mid-April: Paper questionnaires mailed.
3. May: In-person visits (students: April)

no longer existed. The project was an effort to help Onondaga County count people living in marginalized neighborhoods correctly and distinguish which areas might need more outreach. The members that took on this great responsibility came from different neighborhoods and represented many different cultures with five different native languages. Recruiting members from these neighborhoods is a victory for an equitable census and in reclaiming our count.

After the LUCA project, the WCCNY participated in Lobby days advocating for 40 million dollars to be invested in Community-Based organizations (CBO's). Community-based organizations, like the WCCNY, have been designated as centers of trust for many of the undercounted communities. This money would allow CBO's to have the capacity to promote that everyone should be counted, that the census is safe and confidential, and that being counted benefits all. On April 1st, 2019, marking the official countdown to the 2020 Census, the WCCNY held a rally in front of the Federal building in Syracuse demanding that CBOs in the area receive the money to "get out the count." We were joined by the CNY Digital Inclusion Coalition, Interfaith Works Refugee Resettlement, and a few city officials.

Since the official countdown the WCCNY has participated in activities for the Syracuse Complete Count Committee and we continue to advocate for a fair and accurate census. We ask that folks trust that the census is in their favor, and we promote the benefits in being counted. ☮



NEW YORK COUNTS 2020
*Working together for a fair
and accurate Census*



The Workers' Center of CNY is a grassroots organization focused on workplace and economic justice, through community organizing, popular education and policy advocacy, to empower marginalized, low-wage workers to combat workplace abuses and improve wages and working conditions. Online: workerscny.org and their Facebook page. Office: Syracuse Center for Peace and Social Justice, 2013 E Genesee St, first floor. Phone: (315) 218-5708.

THE COMMUNITY WRITERS' CENTER AT 20

by Carl Mellor

If we were building a model for community-based arts programs, we would begin with basic principles: affordable, accessible to participants of all ages, available at urban and suburban locations. Then we might mix in activities such as dance and poetry, education and ceramics.

It wouldn't be necessary to start from scratch. The previous paragraph pretty much describes the Arts Branch of the YMCA of Central New York. Founded in 1999, the Arts Branch coordinates multiple activities.

Indeed, the division's executive director, Phil Memmer, notes that roughly 1,000 children are served in after-school programs at Roberts, McKinley-Brighton, Salem Hyde, Syracuse Latin School, and the Oasis Academy. These are city elementary or K-8 schools. The after-school component, free of charge to all children, emphasizes education and arts. In addition, arts studios at YMCA sites in Fayetteville, Baldwinsville and other locations offer instruction in painting and ceramics, dance and music.

And the Downtown Writers Center, based at the Syracuse YMCA, 340 Montgomery St., hosts 20-25 author readings per year and a slew of workshops.

2020 Spring Creative Writing Courses & Readings

The Downtown Writers Center has plenty of creative writing courses starting in April, including courses on writing poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and more, with a variety of workshop options in each genre category for all different kinds and levels of writers. There are also several poetry and novelist readings coming up this Spring, starting in late March through early May. To register for courses and see more information on poet and novelist readings, go to <https://ycny.org/creative-writing-workshops>.

Carl Mellor is a freelance writer who often writes about the visual arts.

The authors series showcases local, regional and nationally known writers: Syracuse poets Jackie Warren Moore and Georgia Popoff; Martha Collins, author of a book-length poem reflecting on two lynchings in Cairo, Illinois in 1909; Ishion Hutchinson, whose book of poems, "Far District," draws on his experiences growing up in Jamaica. All readings are free.

Writers in grades 6-12 are served by the Young Authors Academy with its workshops in fiction, poetry, and digital storytellers. The YAA is free for Y members and students in the Syracuse City School District; need-based scholarships are available for some of the other participants. And the Writers Center presents workshops for adults encompassing poetry, fiction and nonfiction, playwriting and other disciplines. These workshops, intended to serve folks with a range of creative-writing skills, are offered free for Y members and at reasonable rates for non-members.

A new program, Out-Front, features creative-writing workshops for members of the LGBTQIA community 18-30 years old. Memmer emphasized that the range of programs offered by the Arts Branch didn't spring up overnight. At the very beginning, there were two options: piano lessons and a small after-school program. However, in 2000 the Downtown Writers Center opened its doors. This year, the center is celebrating its 20th anniversary and a track record based on almost 500 author readings and dozens of workshops. Moreover, while the Arts Branch is clearly part of the YMCA, growth has also come from long-term partnerships with the Syracuse City School District, Onondaga County and the New York Council for the Arts, all important funding sources.

Finally, Memmer says the arts division plans to keep focusing on a menu of literary, visual and performing arts available to a cross-section of the community: "We want to be as accessible as we can and to keep pushing what we're already doing."

Testimonials

In 2000, I began teaching poetry classes in the newly opened Downtown Writers Center, hopeful that we would create a home for poets and writers and serve the CNY community. Within a year, we outgrew our space and expanded to two classrooms, and we did not stop there. Our reading series has featured hundreds of writers over the years, including three poets laureate and ten Pulitzer prize winners, and we have celebrated many local and regional writers.

I now teach both poetry and creative nonfiction, including one workshop that has been convening for 6 years. In 2011, I was offered the post of Workshops Coordinator, and in 2012, I was given the privilege of launching the Young Authors Academy, serving 6th – 12th grade writers, the next generation of literary talent. We feature up to 16 adult classes a season, averaging 100 – 120 students, from introductory level courses to those that support advanced writers who have bright prospects in publishing. Our YAA averages 25 teen writers per season with room to grow.

It is my honor to be a part of this vital element of the cultural fabric of the CNY community.

- Georgia Popoff

Writers are people who write. Not talented ones who don't do it. Not just those with 8 published books. I write with others who have a writing habit—at the Y. Swimmers are people who swim—at the same Y on Montgomery Street you can build up that set of muscles and that routine. I've found myself at the DWC on Montgomery 3 and 4 times a week. An afternoon poetry workshop, the next evening at a class on the fairytale, or micro-fiction. Friday evening for a free reading by a prize-winning fiction author from, say, Rochester, or DC. Maybe a gala book award on Saturday. On those occasions schmoozing with friends I've made by showing up, doing the things I like. For me it's been 20 years at the DWC. It's a community like no other. Without it, writing's a solitary thing. Like swimming laps, keeping to your own lane.

- Elinor Cramer

EXCITING ACCESSIBILITY UPDATES AT THE CENTER

For thirteen years, The Syracuse Center for Peace and Social Justice (SCPSJ) has provided a home to many of Syracuse's progressive social justice organizations, offering rents well below market value, and encouraging collaboration among these groups. Since its inception, the SCPSJ board of directors has held two major goals for our property: 1) to make the building fully accessible, and 2) to make the building as environmentally sustainable as possible.

Recently, a very generous and anonymous friend of the Syracuse Peace Council came to SCPSJ with the proposal of adding and fully funding an elevator. Construction begins in May. The addition will house an energy-efficient elevator and a lobby space, both of which will extend to all three floors of the building. In addition, SCPSJ was awarded a grant from CNY Community Foundation to sustainably renovate all the restrooms in our building, allowing us to offer full accessibility on all three floors.

SCPSJ is grateful to the anonymous donor, CNY Community Foundation and Virginia Leasure, Esq., who donated many hours reviewing the required contracts. Many thanks also go to Fred Miller, our building manager who is overseeing the project.

— Caroline Sheffield and Shirley Novak



Attendees at the United National Antiwar Coalition's (UNAC) national conference in New York City in February demonstrating in front of the Post Authority Bus Terminal to demand that ICE (US Immigration and Customs Enforcement) get off the buses. UNAC's tradition is to have a weekend of panels and workshops followed by those attending participating in a demonstration. Three SPC activists, Ann Tiffany, Carol Baum and Ed Kinane, also attended this event. Photo: Carol Baum



BARB KIRKPATRICK, !PRESENTE!

Barb Kirkpatrick was involved in many forms of activism, including the CNY and NYS Chapters of the National Organization of Women and SPC. Even during her illness, she was often at protests and rallies, and was a "regular" at Street Heat. She is pictured here at a rally against weaponized drones at Hancock Air Base in April, 2011.

She passed away in August, 2019. Photo: Ray Trudell.

SUPPORT CITIZEN-LED NON-PARTISAN REDISTRICTING IN ONONDAGA COUNTY

The CNY Solidarity Coalition State/Local Action Team is working on several local issues of significance. One immediate issue of critical long-term importance is fair redistricting for the County Legislature. Voting districts in the County have been gerrymandered to favor the majority Republican Party. *Giving politicians control of the redistricting process is an invitation to corruption—it makes it easy for a majority party to increase and*

maintain their power, regardless of the will of the people.

There is an upcoming proposal to establish an independent County Citizens' Redistricting Commission to implement a redistricting process that will be citizen led, transparent, non-discriminatory and non-partisan. There is a nationwide movement to implement a fair redistricting process, and there are

models for doing so. The Syracuse City Council has passed an ordinance to establish this, and it's time for the County to do the same. We are working with local activists in FairMaps CNY. There is a critical opportunity to accomplish this over the next few months. Look Up Fair Maps CNY on Facebook.

— Peter McCarthy

continued on next page

SPC in Action, continued from previous page

THREE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED WITH SPC

Post flyers—SPC committees have events each month, so we have a regular need for people to post flyers promoting these events. We'll get you a stack of flyers and a list of spots to put them. (Note that public events have been curtailed, but at some point will start up again).

Website updating—SPC is in the process of transitioning to a new Wordpress site. We need folks to help us update content on the website, so that anyone visiting it has a clear picture of who we are and what we do.

Help with one of our campaigns—Currently SPC projects are working on four campaigns: *Celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day, Not Columbus Day* (Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation); *No Way to Treat a Child Campaign* promoting HR 2407, a proposed human rights bill for Palestinian children (Justice for Palestine); *Back from the Brink: A Call to Prevent Nuclear War* (Nuclear Free World); and *Reclaim Armistice Day*, as a day to be dedicated to the cause of peace (Beyond War and Militarism and Veterans for Peace).

To help out, please contact michaela@peacecouncil.net

– *Michaela Czerkies*

BWAM ACTIVITIES CONTINUE

The Beyond War and Militarism Committee (BWaM) continues our Alternative Education series at ArtRage Gallery—although the March event was canceled due to Covid-19.

On **Wednesday, April 15 from 4:15-5pm** we will hold the second annual “Burma Shave” Tax Day demo on E. Genesee Street near Westcott, across from the Syracuse Center for Peace and Justice. (2013 E. Genesee St., Syracuse). We'll stagger signs along the road, all with the message “Taxes for War OR ___” (fill in the blank with Medicare for All, Renewable Energy, Fair Housing for All, etc.).

Then on **Sunday, April 19 Pat Hynes**, a Professor of Environmental Health, will ask, “Can We Save the Planet Without Taking on the Pentagon?” (spoiler alert—the answer is “No”). Please join us at 2pm at All Saints Catholic Church (1340 Lancaster Ave., Syracuse). Note that this could be postponed.

In addition, we are planning an action for Memorial Day, and developing a questionnaire focusing on the perils of militarism for completion by the three candidates in the Democratic primary for the 24th Congressional district.

As a joint committee of SPC and the CNY Solidarity Coalition, BWaM continues to provide reports during Coalition meetings, emphasizing the connections between the resources taken from us by the War Budget and how those funds could be used at home.

– *Ron Van Norstrand*

ACTIVIST APPRECIATION: MAGDA BAYOUMI



Magda and Mohamed at SPC's Birthday Dinner in 2019. Photo: Julio Urrutia

If there is anyone who is impossible to say “No” to, it's Magda Bayoumi. Magda is soft-spoken with a powerful voice and an incomparable ability to motivate people to work together. Originally from Egypt, Magda and her family joined the Syracuse Peace Council following the September 11, 2001 attacks, knowing that community organizing and education would be needed to counter the rise of Islamophobia and the drive to war that was to come.

Magda was a frequent voice at demonstrations opposing the war with Iraq. She has served on SPC's Advisory Committee and is an active member of the Justice for Palestine Committee.

With her husband Mohamed, Magda led the effort to establish CNY's first free health clinic, the Rahma Clinic, which opened its doors in 2011 (“rahma” meaning “mercy” in Arabic). Magda's homemade stuffed grape leaves are legendary with attendees at Justice for Palestine events and with volunteers at the Rahma Clinic and Rahma Forest Garden.

Thank you Magda for your kind and generous leadership, and for always showing up for the Peace Council and our community at large.

– *Ursula Rozum*

NUCLEAR FREE WORLD COMMITTEE— HONORING YOUNG PEACE ACTIVISTS

Are you a student or do you know a student who has been involved in activities working for peace and justice to better our world? The Nuclear Free World Committee wants to recognize young peace activists. We are looking for high school students in Onondaga County who have shown a devotion to peace, justice and protecting the environment. The students should have engaged in activities—through school, place of worship or community—that demonstrate their passion to work on the underlying causes of war, violence and injustice. We would like to acknowledge their work—contact margrit.diehl@gmail.com.

– *Margrit Diehl*