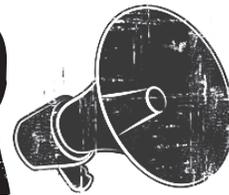


PEACE NEWSLETTER



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Artwork: Derek Singletary

UNCHAINED: INSIDE, OUTSIDE, FREEDOM SIDE

by Derek Singletary and Emily NaPier Singletary

A new abolitionist movement is underway in the US. This movement dares to envision a world without the institutions of police and prisons, which function primarily as tools of racial and economic oppression. Just as ending slavery was at one time considered unimaginable except by a minority of bold abolitionists, the idea of eliminating police and prisons seems far out of reach to most. And just as people who were themselves enslaved led the abolitionist movement by organizing rebellions and escapes, this new movement, if it is to be successful, will be led by the people most harmed by the criminal injustice system. We launched our new organization Unchained to build an organized and sustained abolitionist movement in Syracuse and across Upstate New York.

As Co-Founders and Co-Executive Directors who are married but come from what could be described as two different worlds, our goal is to bridge the gap between the streets and prison. We are a Black man in state prison teaming up with a white woman with a Master's degree, and the

combination of our perspectives is the foundation on which Unchained is built.

Derek earned his GED as a teenager at the Jamesville jail and is now pursuing his Bachelor's degree from inside Elmira state prison. He has a lifetime of experience dealing with oppression, having personally lived through the school-to-prison pipeline and various elements of the criminal injustice system. Emily has worked to dismantle systems of punishment for over 15 years as an organizer, advocate, researcher and educator. She played a lead role in the campaigns to remove the criminal history question from SUNY admissions applications and to stop automatically prosecuting 16- and 17-year-olds as adults in NYS, and now brings her experience as a prison wife to her work. Together, we are reimagining our legal and education systems to promote racial and economic justice. Our mantra for Unchained is, "We're inside. We're outside. We're on the freedom side."

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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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PLOWSHARES

Plowshares applications are available at www.peacecouncil.net/plowshares (also available at the SPC office). Please apply—there isn't a crafts fair without you.

Applications are due **Monday, June 11** (postmarked or dropped off at the office by 5pm). Late applications are placed on a waiting list.

UPCOMING NAKBA COMMEMORATION

The Justice for Palestine Committee is mobilizing for the 70th anniversary of the Palestinian *Nakba* ("catastrophe" in Arabic, referring to the mass expulsion of over 750,000 Palestinians between 1947–49). We will be commemorating the event on Tuesday, May 15—details to come via email, social media and the SPC website. Help will be needed with sign-making, phoning and more.

On Fridays, we have been demonstrating in solidarity with Gaza's Great Return March, where Palestinians are demanding their internationally recognized right of return to the villages they were displaced from in 1948 (see page 8).

On April 24, we joined Syracuse University students and organizers from



Organizers from SPC, Jewish Voice for Peace and Syracuse University protesting Israeli consul Dani Dayan's talk at SU.

Jewish Voice for Peace and the Palestine Solidarity Collective in protesting SU's decision to host a talk by Israeli Consul General Dani Dayan. Dayan is a vocal advocate for population transfers and Israeli settlements, which are illegal under international law.

—Michaela Czerkies

JOIN IN THE POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival is a continuation of the work Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. began 50 years ago, just before his death. This movement intends to be led by the poor, marginalized and moral agents to unite our country in understanding and ending systemic poverty, systemic racism, militarism and ecological devastation.

The Campaign launches on Mother's Day, with direct action in Albany on **Monday, May 14** (and in many other state capitals). The first local watch party of live-streamed speakers is **Sunday,**

May 13 at University United Methodist Church (1085 East Genesee St., Syracuse, time TBA).

This will be followed by 40 days of actions, and educational and cultural events. There are six theme weeks—the **week of May 27** is "The War Economy: militarism and the proliferation of gun violence." Check SPC social media for local organizing details.

For more information, please sign up at www.poorpeoplescampaign.org or contact the Central New York group at cnypoorpeoplescampaign@gmail.com.

—Beth DuBois

NUCLEAR FREE WORLD - YOUTH AWARD

The Nuclear Free World Committee will present the annual Youth Peace Award this **June 4**. This year we will recognize Syracuse Students for Change, a group of students from local high schools who have joined together to reach out across the community to protest gun violence. They have organized marches,

sponsored meetings and town halls, met with elected officials, and participated in voter registration drives. We invite you to join us in supporting and encouraging these young peace activists. Please visit www.peacecouncil.net for more details on timing and location.

—Margaret Diehl

continued on next page

SPC, continued from previous page



Marianna (l) with Diane Swords in front of the Syracuse Center for Peace and Social Justice.

ACTIVIST APPRECIATION: MARIANNA KAUFMAN

Marianna Kaufman seems to be everywhere—SPC Steering Committee member; activist with the Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network; weekly co-author of the Community Outreach and Defense Team's e-newsletter; and member of the Coordinating Committee of the CNY Solidarity Coalition, to name some of her efforts. Marianna was activated by Trump's election and hasn't stopped since.

She is a very kind, gentle soul, who possesses an underlying clarity of purpose and toughness. Her thoughtfulness and supportive energy help those around her be their best selves. We were thrilled when she joined the Steering Committee, and she has thrown herself into organizing in a myriad of ways, including writing our fund appeal with Diane Swords last fall and co-administering our Facebook page.

Thank you, Marianna, for bringing vision, analysis, courage and spirit to this work.

—Carol Baum

ANTI-WAR STREET HEAT IN SPRING

Street Heat is back to its twice-a-week public presence. Enjoy the weather as we call for an end to attacks by weaponized drones piloted from Hancock Air National Guard Base, and to the militarism and racism dominating US foreign and domestic policy. At the base, we want Hancock base personnel to rethink their role in that killing machine and to remind the public of all the killing in our name.

Please join us. Signs are provided or bring your own. Contact Ann or Ed, (315) 478-4571.

Tuesdays: 4:15-5pm

May 15 Hancock Air Base (6001 E. Molloy Rd)

May 22 E. Genesee and Erie Blvd. East (Dewitt)

May 29 E. Genesee and Erie Blvd. East (Dewitt)

June 5 and 19 Hancock Air Base

June 12 and 26 South end of Northern Lights, Mattydale (opposite Rt. 81 off ramp)

Every Saturday 9-9:45am: Regional Market main entrance (Park St.)



SPC SPONSORS CABLE SERIES

SPC is now the local sponsor of a cable access TV series titled *Other Voices, Other Choices*. The series is produced by videographer Wilton Vought, and airs in Syracuse on Spectrum channel 98 on Thursdays from 7:30-8:30pm. It promotes alternative, non-corporate news and commentary. For example, Wilton videotaped much of the recent Conference on US Foreign Military Bases and produced several shows on it.

"Local sponsor" means SPC has signed an agreement with Spectrum which allows Wilton, who lives outside Spectrum's Syracuse TV coverage area, to have a regularly-scheduled time slot on the cable access TV channel in Syracuse.

The show airs in several cities in NY and beyond. You can also find it on YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/yas7dmfo>.

—Wilton Vought

NEIGHBORS OF THE ONONDAGA NATION BURSTS INTO SPRING

Organizing for Indigenous Peoples Day, not Columbus Day. The Syracuse School Board held a community forum about an initiative to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day on the school calendar. Many spoke up about the need for our children to learn the truth of what happened to indigenous peoples of this land and how, despite attempted genocide, Native people are still here. Please email BoardofEducation@scsd.us now to advocate for this change—the board is expected to make a decision soon. For Cindy Squillace's powerful op-ed piece on the subject, go to www.tinyurl.com/ya4dnex3.

Offering the Witness to Injustice Program. This is an experiential group learning activity telling the story of the European invasion of the Americas. It was recently offered to 60 people in the Syracuse Community Choir as part of their preparation for the **June 9** Summer Solstice Concert (www.syracusecommunitychoir.org) at the Onondaga Nation School.

If your organization is interested in learning more about the program, contact Cindy Squillace at 315-415-5508.

Being an Ally event. NOON is offering a public event on what it means to be an ally to Native Peoples in general and specifically with the Onondaga Nation. It will be at the Skä•noñh Great Law of Peace Center on **May 22** (www.skanoñhcenter.org).

Informational tabling. We continue to have informational/educational tables at events. Please contact Paul Eiholzer at 315-243-4498 if you would like NOON to come to your event, or if you are available to help staff a table. This is a good way to volunteer for NOON if you are looking to get involved.

NOON meetings are held the **second Tuesday of the month from 7-8:30pm** at the Syracuse Center for Peace and Social Justice. Just call SPC first to make sure there are no changes.

—Cindy Squillace and Jack Manno

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JROTC, MILITARY INDOCTRINATION AND THE TRAINING OF MASS KILLERS

By Pat Elder

Nikolas Cruz, the south Florida shooter, was enrolled in the Army's Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) program as a 9th grader at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. The Army taught Cruz to shoot lethal weapons at a very young and impressionable age.

Few in America have connected the dots between military indoctrination and firearms instruction on the one hand, and the propensity for training mass killers, whether their crimes are committed as enlisted soldiers in atrocities overseas or in American high schools.

Let's examine the JROTC program and the militarization of Florida's schools as a contributing factor to the Parkland massacre. When Cruz was apprehended he was wearing his JROTC polo shirt, sending a message to the world of his affiliation with the military program.

There are 1,600 American high schools that enroll students in military-run marksmanship programs, teaching children as young as 13 to shoot lethal weapons. It's probably not the wisest public policy. The kids shoot .177 caliber lead pellets at 600 feet per second using CO₂ propelled rifles. The Daisy Avanti 887, a cousin of Ralphie's Red Ryder BB gun [from the film *A Christmas Story*, eds.], is classified as a lethal weapon by the Army. Florida, along with a dozen other states, specifically prohibits carrying pellet guns into high schools, although the prohibition does not extend to the military. Pellet rifles are extremely dangerous and some are powerful enough to kill a boar.

Good guns and bad guns?

It must be confusing to the 13-year-old mind. Broward County Schools has a strict anti-gun policy in place. The school

Pat Elder is the director of the National Coalition to Protect Student Privacy and the creator of the website Counter-Recruit.org.

system classifies pellet rifles as "Class A" weapons, along with a variety of rifles, hand guns, and shotguns.

The use of lead projectiles in the nation's high schools also threatens public health by spewing minute lead articulate matter into the air and on the floor at the muzzle end of the gun, and at the target backstops. Children track the deadly particulates throughout the building. There is a linkage between firing pellet rifles indoors and elevated blood lead levels

Many of these courses are taught by retired enlisted soldiers with no teaching credentials and little or no college education. Meanwhile, Broward schools require teachers to hold teacher certification, and most must have a Master's degree after a certain period of time.

JROTC programs in US schools are run by the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. The school shooting programs are regulated by the Civilian



Students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School practice in the school's firing range. Photo: found at www.worldbeyondwar.org

among participants.

JROTC programs in Florida and elsewhere were once plagued by low enrollment numbers, which threatened to shut down the program. The military responded with a robust lobbying effort directed at states, aiming to allow students to satisfy normal, for-credit course requirements by taking the JROTC elective. Florida is most friendly to the military in this regard. The state allows students enrolled in JROTC to satisfy the curricular requirements of physical education, biology, physical science, art, and life management. JROTC is regarded as an Advanced Placement course. Students earn six Quality Points toward their weighted GPA.

Marksmanship Program (CMP). The program was set up by Congress after the Spanish-American War to ensure that large numbers of Americans knew how to shoot guns in the event of a war. The CMP is now a private entity with \$160 million in assets. It sells discarded military rifles, pistols, and ammunition to the American public at the behest of Congress. The CMP downplays the health and safety concerns of the robust shooting program.

Each branch has its own curriculum and textbooks that teach a dangerous and reactionary version of American history. The US bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki to save a million American lives. The North Vietnamese fired on an innocent American warship in the Gulf

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JROTC, continued from page 5

of Tonkin. History is taught as a kind of American *fait accompli*. American exceptionalism and the use of force as an instrument of foreign policy are enshrined values, next to accepting one's place in the chain of command. The civics textbook has a unit entitled, "You the People" rather than "We the People." Schools exercise no curricular oversight. School districts across the country are allowing this intellectual straightjacket of a program to substitute for the arts. In addition, Broward's schools host several dozen other military programs that work with the recruiting command to provide leads for recruiters. The military has also infiltrated the social media networks of high school children.

JROTC members frequently wear their uniforms to school and receive praise from their classmates, like the American reflex to support our troops. The Stoneman Douglas High School Marksmanship Program will be advancing to the Florida State championships this spring. Marksman 1st Lieutenant Diaz took first place in the standing rifle event during the last regional competition! It's a big deal.

Military Presence in Local Schools

The US military has a presence in schools in the Syracuse area too. Last year, Fowler High School transitioned into the Public Service Leadership Academy (PSLA), a high school focused on the city school district's career and technical education programs. Among the programs at PSLA are the Navy Junior Officer Reserves Training Corps (NJROTC) and the Remotely Piloted Aircraft System, (or drone technology) program. Currently, the program works with commercial drone use, and PSLA's website notes the potential that drone training certifications have in military career fields, such as drone pilots and Border Patrol.

Elsewhere in the area, infiltration of the Armed Forces into schools starts at an even younger age. National Guard members from Syracuse's 174th Attack Wing regularly take part in Gillette Road Middle School's annual USA Day, engaging children of grades 5-7 in military technology and capabilities. This is concerning, since pilots at the 174th Attack Wing operate MQ-9 Reaper Drones in training exercises in Upstate NY, as well as drones in missions overseas.

Sources: www.syracusecityschools.com/districtpage.cfm?pageid=2980; www.tinyurl.com/ybhn54dq; www.tinyurl.com/yb8dly67

Children participate in shooting programs at tournaments hosted by the CMP and supported by the NRA.

The JROTC program is highly respected at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. All proceeds from the sale of the school's branded products at the

school's "company store" help fund the JROTC battalion. Revenues from pizza sales also finance the JROTC program. The Stoneman High JROTC Military Ball will be held on April 21st this year at the Marriot Heron Bay. Nikolas Cruz won't be there.

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THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

By Kitty Burns

For many of us in New York, our involvement in the fight against climate change started with the anti-fracking movement. There, we learned that our effort to stop an activity that endangered water, farms, health, children, country roads and even beauty was more complex than we had initially thought. It involved our economic system and the power of corporations, and the question of whether corporations or people were more important.

It certainly involved government on all levels, from town boards to the governor. It involved departments of health and transportation, and zoning laws and the DEC. It also involved taking a hard look at what really happened to communities and local economies when fracking came to town. Most importantly, it involved gas energy and its infrastructure, renewable energy vs. fracked gas, and the effect of fracking on our climate.

We formed organizations all across our state. We lobbied, knocked on doors, attended and participated in hearings, wrote letters, demonstrated wherever the governor appeared, and more. To our great frustration, our president declared natural gas as a “bridge fuel” in the fight against climate change. This added another element to our struggle. In the end, we won the ban on fracking in New York that we had worked for five years to achieve. Underlying the fracking issue, however, was the related and even more important, complex, and lethal issue: climate change. The fracking ban had not solved that issue in New York.

Action Needed

The fracking and climate movements had actually grown together, and many of us continued our activism in the climate movement. We found that the fracking victory was not as complete as we had hoped. Using the “bridge fuel” justification, our state was deluged with requests from pipeline companies for permits for

fracked gas pipelines. A large fracked gas power plant has been built, evidently with the help of bribes. A fracked gas power plant, to be located in a community of color that has already been harmed by a fossil fuel and trash burning power plant, has been proposed by the New York Power Authority to heat and cool the Empire State Plaza. This is despite Governor Cuomo’s 2017 statement that, “The state must double down by investing in the fight against dirty fossil fuels and fracked gas from neighboring states.” This is also despite studies that have determined

made three crucial demands: halt all fracking infrastructure now, make a just transition to 100 percent renewables, and make corporate polluters pay into a transition fund. The March started at the Sheridan Hollow Steam Plant, which has already harmed the people of its low-income neighborhood. As Mert Simpson, Albany County Legislator and Sheridan Hollow resident stated, “I have reason to believe that members of my family have died from cancer from their exposure to this plant.” From this poisoned place, the thousands of marchers snaked their



Syracuse area activists at the Climate March in Albany, April 23. Photo: Jessica Azulay.

fracked gas emits more greenhouse gas than coal when its methane leakage rate is taken into consideration.

Unfortunately, the election of Donald Trump, a climate denier and lover of fossil fuels, has created a perfect storm for climate change that is progressing faster than expected. When Mr. Trump declared his intention to pull out of the Paris Climate Accord, it became clear that the states needed to make the issue of climate change primary. Here in New York, our governor has spoken fine words about fighting climate change, but little progress has actually been made. At this time, only 4% of our energy comes from wind and solar. It has become obvious that Mr. Cuomo needs another loud reminder that climate change must be aggressively fought.

Climate March: “Walk the Talk” Cuomo

The Climate March in Albany on April 23, 2018 was that loud reminder. Marchers from Buffalo to the Bronx

way through the streets of Albany to the Empire State Plaza, carrying art, making music, and demanding that Governor Cuomo, “Walk the Talk”.

The rally outside the Plaza was followed by another inside at the Million Dollar Staircase. There, a speaker from PUSH (People United for Sustainable Housing) Buffalo demanded renewable energy jobs for the jobless. Children spoke of their need for clean air and water, and others spoke of being poisoned by gas compressors. Their words and the words of others rang through the State Capitol, followed by the arrest of 55 for civil disobedience in the Governor’s hallway. As each person was arrested, the marchers sang, “It feels like dawn, it feels like dawn, it feels like dawn in New York.” I hope the governor heard, and I hope the singers were right.

Please come to the Climate Solutions Summit on Saturday, May 19 at Fowler High School in Syracuse. For info see www.climatesolutionssummit.org.

Kitty is the chair of the Climate Justice Committee of CNY Solidarity Coalition.

COMMEMORATION OF PALESTINE LAND DAY AND THE GREAT RETURN MARCH

Every year on May 15, Palestinians and their allies around the world mark the Nakba, or “catastrophe” in Arabic, referring to the violent expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homeland to establish the state of Israel. Between 1947 and 1949, at least 750,000 out of 1.9 million Palestinians were forced to leave their homes in Palestine and become refugees. 2018 marks 70 years since the ongoing dispossession and ethnic cleansing of Palestine began.

On March 30, 2018, Palestinian refugees in Gaza initiated the Great March of Return along the border fence with Israel to demand their right to return to their families’ homes, as recognized by the UN General Assembly’s Resolution 194 (III), stating that “refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date...” At the time of writing, Israel had killed over 40 protesters, including two journalists who were both wearing vests with the word PRESS printed in large letters across the front, actions that have been condemned by the international Committee to Protect Journalists.

As long as the US government continues to shower Israel with \$3.8 billion annually in military aid, people of conscience must speak out against the crimes sustained with our tax dollars. To achieve peace, the Israeli state and government officials must be held accountable for their crimes. We must push Congress to implement sanctions against Israel until it ends the occupation of Palestinian lands and recognizes the full rights of Palestinians, including the rights of refugees to return to their homes.

Below is the statement of the Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM) about the Great Return March taking place during the days that commemorate Land Day and the Nakba. The PYM is a transnational, independent, grassroots movement of young Palestinians in Palestine and in exile worldwide. See www.pymusa.com.

—Editor’s note by Ursula Rozum

Statement of the Palestinian Youth Movement

(Originally circulated 3/30/18)

It has been 42 years since this day in 1976 when six Palestinians were martyred by the Zionist entity during a nationwide protest against the Zionist government’s recurrent expropriation of Palestinian land, what is now recognized by Palestinians as Land Day. On this anniversary, today Palestinians in Gaza began a 46-day tent city protest at the border between the Palestinian lands colonized by the Zionist entity in 1948 and Gaza, to bring attention to the right of return. However, the colonial Zionist government responded to the first week of popular protest with immense and indiscriminate brutal force against unarmed Palestinians. While we as the Palestinian Youth Movement recognize the legitimacy of our people’s resistance to colonization in all of its forms, such a response reveals that the issue for our colonizers is not tactics, but any form of resistance or insistence on our rightful claim to our own land and sovereignty. As Fatima

Nasser, 65, claimed according to an article in *The Guardian*, “To die with dignity is better than living a life full of humiliation. We will return to our land. We will return to our homeland,” she said. “Israel kills us anyway, whether it’s by shooting or blockade.”



SPC’s Justice for Palestine Committee organized demonstrations in DeWitt, NY for five Fridays in April and May. These were in solidarity with Gaza’s Great Return March. Photo: Lisa Cohen

As of this writing, there have been 15 confirmed Palestinian deaths at the hand of the Zionist Occupation Forces. Even as we mourn our martyrs, we remain steadfast in the support of our people in Gaza and the Great March of Return. We call on all of our youth in exile to express their support through actions of their own and by speaking truth to power through as many mediums as possible.

Most importantly, we recognize that 2018 marks the 70th anniversary of the *Nakba*, which means our people have endured 70 years of colonization, dispossession, and deprivation at the hands of a brutal settler regime. But it also means something else: 70 years of resistance. It means that, for 70 years, Zionist forces have tried—and failed—to eliminate us. Even as all of Palestine presently remains colonized and occupied, the persistence of our spirit in struggle will surely drive the total decolonization of our homeland forward. For what our people in Gaza have shown the rest of us and the world today is that, no matter how severe our dispossession, the Zionist entity will never be able to erase their/our presence, the rightfulness of our claim, and the inevitability of our return. On this Land Day, we affirm: our land and people will be free!

RESISTING ZIONISM FROM WITHIN

By Lisa Cohen

Growing up in Syracuse's Jewish community, Zionism was heavily integrated into all of my Jewish education. We were made to feel we've been part of some magical, illusive place spiritually and physically since all of time—that it is our unquestionable homeland. Any history lacked context that included Palestinians or the inception of the Jewish state. Education on the "conflict" was limited to the narrative that it was ever-present, and that Israel attempts to have dialogue and to offer peace with Palestine but ultimately claims, "We just don't know why Palestinians hate us."

Self-criticism is also an integral part of Judaism. Wanting that accountability, which is so much a part of my culture, identity and morals, I began scrutinizing Israel at a young age. To my surprise, Israel was not open for debate. It wasn't until I culminated my Jewish education with the "trip to Israel," which most temple youth went on the summer after confirmation, that I witnessed inconsistencies in the Zionist narrative firsthand: Jews travelled on separate roads near the West Bank; we were told not to speak to or buy chickens from Arab children because

the Israeli military could consider it "aiding terrorism;" and there was a bizarre silence around the topic of the conflict. I began to piece together the propaganda for young Jews to support a state that occupies another people with racist and apartheid policies. I knew there was not and could never be an excuse for such an occupation simply because we had suffered—there is no justification for the violent expulsion of people, expansion of settlements, obstruction of movement, and limitations on education, employment and housing for native Palestinians. Those weren't the values Judaism taught me.

Being part of an ethnicity perpetrating this violence and theft in its name gives Jews a unique responsibility to create awareness of the context of the state's creation and its effect on Palestinians, and to advocate for acceptance of this reality within our community. Only then may we begin to end this occupation, repair the damage inflicted, and honor indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. "The time has come to end our community's support for the occupation. We will be the generation to do it." —IfNotNow, a US Jewish activist organization opposing Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Lisa is a member of Jewish Voice for Peace-Syracuse. Contact syracuse@jewishvoiceforpeace.org to learn more.



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Derek and Emily in the visiting room at Elmira state prison in April 2018.

Unchained approaches its work with an analysis of the criminal injustice system and education system working in tandem to maintain white supremacy. When the 13th Amendment was passed in 1865, it intentionally abolished slavery, *except as punishment for being convicted of a crime*, and the country adapted to conform to the newly accepted version of white supremacy. Slavery was out, Jim Crow was in, and prison was waiting in the wings. Now commonly referred to as “the new Jim Crow,” the consequences of getting caught up in the so-called justice system have relegated millions of Black and Brown folks to a life of fighting barriers erected not explicitly because of their race, but more insidiously as part of criminalizing their very existence.

This criminalization often begins as early as preschool. Barriers to learning like over-crowded classrooms, poorly trained teachers, lack of resources, standardized testing, curricula that are not culturally relevant, punitive discipline practices, and police presence in schools are ingredients of the poison that propels the country’s reliance on incarceration as a panacea for all social problems. Instead of engaging a disinterested student with lessons in which they can see themselves and their culture portrayed in a positive light, or providing counseling to a student who is distracted by problems at home, children are labeled discipline problems and pushed out of school, often straight into the criminal injustice system.

Once they are branded criminals and subsequently denied education and employment, barred from voting, and relegated to substandard housing, children grow into adults and become resigned to a feeling of inescapable doom. This breeds resentment and desperation, and without the education and resources to effectively resist their oppression, people continue to support themselves by whatever means necessary, even if technically illegal. They may promote a subculture that makes school as they experienced it seem unattractive and unnecessary while obscuring the permanent disadvantage conferred upon them by the very systems they are shunning. This “die in the streets mentality” is a direct result of feeling like all legitimate options have been closed off to people due to their criminal records.

While everyday rhetoric would have the general public believe that poverty causes poor academic performance and illegal

activity, Unchained frames the issue differently. Poverty is not the cause of these social problems but a symptom of them. White supremacy is at the root of the failings of schools and the criminal injustice system, and concentrated poverty among Black and Brown folks is the natural byproduct of those failings.

What sets Unchained apart from other organizations is our two-pronged approach to ending incarceration by tackling the country’s penchant for punishment in its education and criminal injustice systems, and our ability to bring currently incarcerated people into the movement. In recent years, there has been growing awareness of and commitment to the importance of including formerly incarcerated people in the work, but currently, incarcerated people remain largely invisible and silenced. At Unchained, directly impacted people are not tokens or an afterthought like they so often are in other organizations. We are committed to having people impacted by the intergenerational oppression of our failed education and criminal injustice systems at the forefront of our campaigns and the larger movement, and being co-led by someone in state prison stretches our network into places previously unreachable. We invest in people these systems have harmed to chart a path toward racial and economic justice.

Unchained was also formed with the explicit purpose of bolstering the abolitionist movement in Upstate New York. While a relatively robust network of organizations in New York City has addressed these issues for many years, groups in Upstate New York working on them are few and far between and under-resourced. We hope to strengthen and link together groups already doing the work while simultaneously doing our own organizing and advocacy with folks in jails and in our communities. We will launch and support campaigns for system change at the local level and bring local groups into statewide and national campaigns.

Unchained envisions a world without police and prisons, where schools nurture children of color rather than funneling them into the criminal injustice system. This is a world without white supremacy and where economic freedom is possible for everyone. It is a world where safety is measured by the availability and quality of resources in a community, not the number of police officers patrolling its streets and schools; a world without disadvantage hiding in the fine print. We envision a world Unchained.

Derek Singletary and Emily NaPier Singletary are the Co-Founders and Co-Executive Directors of Unchained.

To Join Us or Learn More

Contact Emily at emily@weareunchained.org, 315-243-5135 or drop by the Unchained office (Syracuse Center for Peace and Social Justice second floor, 2013 E. Genesee St., Syracuse)—contact her for hours.

You can write to Derek Singletary #11B2347, Elmira Correctional Facility, PO Box 500, Elmira, NY 14902. Please keep in mind that all mail sent to Derek will be opened and read by prison staff before he receives it.

LAS NOTICIAS—NEWS FROM THE WORKERS' CENTER

By Workers' Center Staff and Volunteers

Driver's Licenses for Immigrants (Green Light NY: Driving Together)

The Green Light NY Coalition is mobilizing to Albany to say the time is NOW to pass the Drivers Licenses Bill A10273! The coalition, made up of directly affected community members, advocates, and allies, has been organizing around licenses for years. New York is behind 12 other states, and the benefits in public safety, economics and community integration are clear. The time is now to pass the bill, and we are calling on everyone from across the state to join us in Albany on May 14 and send the message to our legislators loud and clear: Our communities cannot wait, our economy cannot wait; pass the GREEN LIGHT NY BILL NOW! Please call 315-218-5708 to join us on May 14.

Slocum House Is Saved!

Thanks to community support and workers who spoke up, we are now closer to our dream of having a house in Syracuse to provide hospitality for farmworkers and immigrants. A big thanks to Michael De Salvo and Nick Orth, as well as the many people in the community who supported farmworkers in this effort. Immigrants and farmworkers are asking for your support. Please go to www.saveslocumhouse.com for more information on how you can contribute toward the \$30,000 price of the house.



Farmworkers' solidarity rally in front of Slocum House. Photo: Fabiola Ortiz

Farmworkers Speak Up for Dignified Housing and Win Back Stolen Wages

On February 20th a group of farmworkers and community members mobilized to protest in front of Melrose Farms, a dairy

The Workers' Center of Central New York, www.workerscny.org, is a grassroots organization focused on workplace and economic justice. They are located on the first floor of the Syracuse Center for Peace and Social Justice (2013 E. Genesee St., Syracuse); call them at 315-218-5708.

farm in the town of Owasco, about 30 minutes from Syracuse. We delivered a letter to the owner of the farm demanding he pay at least minimum wage and that he fix the deplorable living conditions of the employer-provided housing.

We are happy to report that due to the quick mobilization of the community and the workers, one week later the workers received \$1,600 from their employer to pay for their stolen



Rally in Batavia against the detention of women in the Batavia Detention Center. Photo: Jordan.

wages! Code Enforcement from the town of Owasco deemed the housing at Melrose Farms unfit for human habitation. It is the responsibility of the employers to pay at least minimum wage and provide safe and dignified housing. Workers and allies have organized many similar collective actions to improve the workers' living conditions and to recover thousands of dollars in stolen wages. We will continue to build worker power to organize for workplace justice.

Immigrant Women Declare: "We Will Not Be Caged!"

On March 28, roughly 50 immigrants and allies gathered outside of the Batavia Detention Center in Batavia, NY, protesting the detention center's expansion to hold immigrant women in addition to men inside their walls. More broadly, this rally called for an end to the inhumane detainment and deportation of immigrant women and mothers. Supporters also accompanied Arely Tomas, local community member and immigrants rights activist, who was asked to attend her monthly ICE check-in in Batavia on this day rather than at Syracuse's 401 S. Salina St. office. Arely was allowed to leave after her check in and will not have to report back until May. Moving forward we will continue to support Arely in her fight to stay in Syracuse with her husband and three children, and continue the struggle for the rights of all immigrants.

continued on next page

Border Patrol Off the Bus!

The Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network (IRDN) is a local group of allies supporting the Workers' Center's work with the undocumented community. Due to border patrol's increased presence at the Regional Transportation Center (RTC) and other bus stations nationwide, the IRDN is participating in a nationwide campaign to get border patrol off the bus. The IRDN is working to ensure that travelers know their rights when confronted by law enforcement, as well as contributing to an effort to pressure Greyhound to refuse to allow Customs & Border Patrol (CBP) onto their buses at "checkpoints" within the 100-mile range of the border. If you see racial profiling or harassment carried out by law enforcement at Syracuse's RTC, document the incident and contact the IRDN at 315-552-1670.

Shout-Outs

Congratulations to Dolores Bustamante, Carly Fox, and Arely Tomas, who received the "Mujeres al Poder" award for their activism and dedication to immigrant workers' rights at the Workers' Memorial Day Unit Breakfast on April 27th!

Thank you to Kayla Kelechian and Crispin Hernandes for joining the Workers' Center team!

Fair Wages for All! (One Fair Wage Campaign)

The Workers' Center of Central NY invites restaurant and other tip workers to participate in the the NYS Dept of Labor Wage Board Hearings across New York about potentially eliminating the sub-minimum wage for those who work for tips throughout the State. The proposal will not eliminate tips, but will make sure these workers receive fair wages. One of the first hearings was in Syracuse on April 30. For other dates and locations. Please go to <https://on.ny.gov/2IyvOXz>.

Stand With Workers! Support the Workers' Center!

Regular donations from individuals such as yourself are what sustain the work done by the Workers' Center of Central New York. Your support will directly benefit low-wage workers in the Central New York region in their fight for dignified working conditions. To become a monthly sustainer, go to www.workerscny.org and click "Donate." When choosing your donation amount, don't forget to click "I want to contribute this amount every month"!

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"When I look to see who I am and where I come from, I look to Barbara Smith's work. If you've ever quoted the 'Combahee River Statement,' read *Home Girls*, or even said 'Black Feminism' then I'm asking you to join the #SmithCaringCircle."

-- Charlene Carruthers, National Director, BYP100



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RACE AND THE "WAR ON TERROR"

By Aly Wane

I still remember watching the Twin Towers fall on 9/11. Emotionally, I was gutted. All I could think about was the tremendous amount of suffering and grief that the victims' family members would endure for the rest of their lives. I participated in the grief of the country as well. But intellectually I also knew that my life as a Black immigrant was about to change for the worse. I knew that this country's imperialist foreign policy was going to turn more murderous and that the recipients of that international violence would mostly be Black and Brown bodies. In addition, I knew that the forces of Islamophobia which had already been latent and weaponized in Hollywood imagery of "Middle Eastern terrorists" would be unleashed to justify such international violence. That is because race and militarism walk hand-in-hand in a country whose early dual sins of Native American genocide and chattel slavery have never been adequately dealt with.

Barbarians at the Gate: Islamophobia and the War on Terror

The "War on Terror" cannot be fully understood without reckoning with the way it particularly targets bodies of color both domestically and abroad. One example of the "War on Terror's" impact on people of color is how US leaders manipulate fear of "Muslims," which is code for brown Middle Eastern people (when was the last time you saw a picture demonizing a white member of the Muslim faith?). After 9/11, it was maddening to see how poor the level of discourse was in the mainstream media, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and NPR. Most articles

Aly is on the Steering Committees of the Syracuse Peace Council and of the Black Immigration Network.

and news outlets feigned innocence and focused on cultural issues. The early "explanations" for 9/11 mostly relayed arguments that backwards folks from the Middle East simply hated us "because of our freedom." These racist arguments obscured the foreign policy reasons why Al-Qaeda targeted this country. Anyone even remotely familiar with US foreign policy would have understood the importance of addressing topics such as the US' involvement with Israel, its positioning of troops in Saudi Arabia to

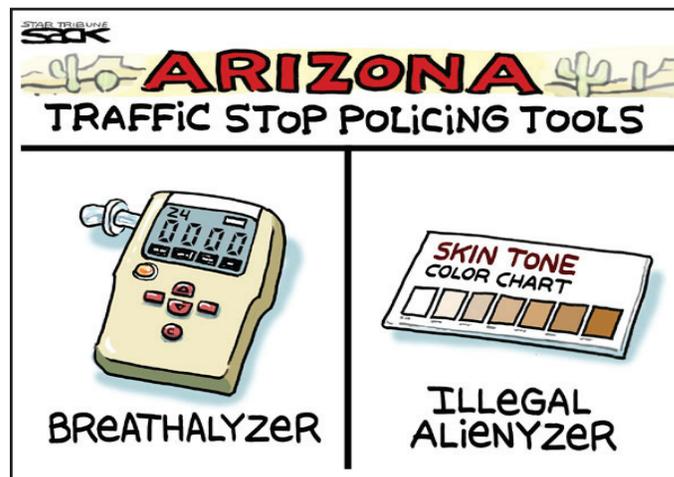
date was to "protect the country," and that the number of people willing to cause the kind of carnage committed on 9/11 was minuscule, the way to justify funding the agency and creating the illusion of keeping the country safe was to arrest and deport as many immigrants as possible. In the name of "protecting the country," Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was unleashed on low hanging fruit: undocumented workers, visa overstays, service and farm workers, nurses, and people with US citizen children and

spouses. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of the folks targeted were immigrants of color, especially Black and Brown folks. The combination of racism and xenophobia was baked into the anti-immigrant laws that were created, such as Arizona's notorious SB 1070, which mandated that local law enforcement arrest anyone who "looks illegal." Numerous police chiefs such as George Gascon (San Francisco) and Samuel Granato (Yakima, Washington) criticized the legislation, specifically stating that it would force police

officers to racially profile, with

Granato plainly stating: "I do not believe that SB 1070 can be enforced in a racially neutral manner." "Looking like a citizen" really meant "being white." In fact, so many Puerto Ricans (US citizens) were profiled and questioned during that time period that they became stronger allies to the migrants' rights movement. It didn't matter that no link was shown between the presence of undocumented immigrants and terrorism; in the end, mass incarceration and deportation of mostly immigrants of color was sold to the country as a way to keep it "safe." This rhetoric was deployed to great effect in Donald Trump's presidential campaign.

An honest analysis of the "War on Terror" requires that we look at its disproportionate impact on people of color domestically and abroad. If we ever hope to break the cycle of violence, we have to have an honest conversation about the "War on Terror's" inherent racism.



Graphic: Steve Sack, Star Tribune

protect its oil interests, and the difference between Al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein, for example. Instead, US leaders counted on the ignorance of the broader public and successfully used Islamophobic language and rhetoric to justify the new "War on Terror."

The Enemy Within: The Illegal Alien as Potential Terrorist

This "War on Terror" also emboldens racism domestically. One way is that it has become a de facto war on immigrants. Before 9/11, immigration used to be handled by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. After the attack, immigration got subsumed under the broader Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Levels of screening were added, and deportation became much more common. The term "illegal alien" became synonymous with "potential terrorist" in the mainstream political lexicon. Given that DHS' man-

FIGHTING EXCLUSION!

By Aggie Lane

In the 2015 report entitled “Architecture of Segregation,” Century Foundation fellow Paul Jargowsky reported that Syracuse leads the nation in concentrated poverty for Blacks and Latinos. His study confirmed what Syracusans living in the city’s segregated neighborhoods already knew: institutional and personal racism excludes them from decent housing, schools, health care and jobs.

Since jobs are key to the quality of life in city neighborhoods, in 2012 activists started the Urban Jobs Task Force (UJTF), an advocacy collaborative of 10 individual and 17 organizational members. (The Syracuse Peace Council is a member.) Its mission is to fight economic exclusion by creating job and training opportunities for city residents, especially on projects receiving public benefits or funding.

What have we done over the past six years?

- **We drafted a Community Benefits Agreement** for the \$350 million development of Syracuse’s Inner Harbor, demanding training, jobs and contracts for tax exemptions, but the developer, COR, refused to talk with us. Despite our protests COR eventually went around the Syracuse Industrial Development Agency to garner \$44 million in tax exemptions from the Onondaga County Industrial Development Agency.
- **We drafted the Syracuse Resident Employment Ordinance** and pushed for its passage with a petition drive. In June 2016, Mayor Miner signed the ordinance into law. It requires contractors on city projects over \$100,000 to hire 20% of their workers from Syracuse.
- **We advocated for a city residency goal** on the \$300 million school renovation project. The Joint School Construction Board which oversees the renovation changed its diversification plan to include a 20% residency goal. The Board stood firm during the Project Labor Agreement (PLA) negotiations with the trade unions, indicating there would be no PLA on the school project if the residency goal was stripped out. (A PLA typically ensures that union members work before a non-union member can be hired.)

What are we doing now?

Our current focus is on the jobs that will be created through the I-81 Viaduct Project. The original I-81 viaduct, built in the 1960s, sliced our city in half and in the process destroyed the 15th ward, a culturally thriving African American community. During its construction, this potentially multi-billion dollar I-81 Viaduct Project will impact many poor city neighborhoods. We believe it would be a travesty if these good-paying highway construction jobs enrich non-city, white male workers and exclude city residents.

Aggie Lane lives in the city’s Southwest side. She is a neighborhood activist and is one of the UJTF’s founders. Currently, she is the UJTF’s policy committee chair. Find us at www.ujtf.org or www.facebook.com/SyracuseUrbanJobs.

Our usual tactic of advocating for a residency goal will not work on this federally-funded project. A Federal Highway Administration regulation forbids the setting of geographic preferences for workers’ residences on its projects. Due to this restriction, we have created a two-pronged strategy:

1. With Legal Services of Central New York, we are creating a Racial Equity Impact Statement (REIS) to deliver to the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) during the Draft Environmental Impact Statement’s public comment period. The REIS is a tool which documents racial inequities by examining the historical record along with quantitative and qualitative data. Besides employing census data, publicly-funded construction project datasets and an asset-based survey, we



Rally and press conference at the steps of City Hall urging the passing of the Residency Employment Ordinance. Photo: David Pittman

will interview a range of stakeholders: academics, community leaders, policy makers, and knowledgeable and affected citizens. The data we collect will help expose the patterns and causes of inequities, especially in the construction trades. The REIS will also propose ways to address them. Our plan is to address the issue of exclusion before the I-81 project gets off the ground because, if nothing changes, its construction workforce will be predominately white men living outside Syracuse.

2. The UJTF has already inspected a number of Project Labor Agreement-based data sets and realizes that if the I-81 Viaduct Project is a PLA, very few city residents, minorities and women will work because they are not well-represented in the trade unions. For this reason, we are collecting signatures on a petition demanding that the NYSDOT, which is in charge of the project, not grant any PLA to the trade unions on the Viaduct Project **unless** the unions create a recruitment and retention system inclusive of city residents. This petition gives the community some bargaining power.

We haven’t launched the REIS and the petition in isolation. We have met with both the NYSDOT and the City of Syracuse to explain our two-pronged approach. Both realize workforce

continued on next page

training has to happen in advance of the I-81 Viaduct Project so city residents are ready to work on it. The NYSDOT has twice offered free Commercial Driver License training for prospective truck drivers. This summer, the city plans to launch "Syracuse Builds," as a way to create a city-based construction workforce ready for development projects, including I-81. We have sent our petition to the trades with a letter asking to meet. In the beginning of April, we had our first meeting with the head of the regional trade council where we explored our common interests and scheduled a follow-up meeting.

Just to be clear: this petition isn't anti-union.

- It is about including city residents in the trade unions, giving them access to well-paid career pathways.
- It will not undermine wages; whether the NYSDOT awards a PLA or not, the workers will be paid the prevailing wage because it is a publicly-funded project.

SPC, continued from page 4

DIRECT ACTION TRAININGS

SPC volunteers and staff led three nonviolent direct action trainings this winter/spring. The first, held for members of the Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network, was attended by about 15 people in late February. The most recent trainings, held on April 7 and May 5, were attended by about 20 people each, including many local activists interested in the nationally coordinated nonviolent moral direct actions happening as part of the Poor People's Campaign (see p. 3). Others who came are involved in mobilizing faith communities, anti-fascist organizing, calling attention to and eradicating militarism in our communities, and other issues and movements.

Many thanks to everyone who helped make these trainings happen, including the training team (Carol Baum, Ed Kinane, Jordan Krick, Rae Kramer, Andy Mager, Jessica Maxwell, Ann Tiffany) and to host organizations (Lutheran Atonement Church, University United Methodist Church, Workers Center of CNY).

— Jessica Maxwell

ANTI-WAR BILLBOARDS

World Beyond War has been putting billboards up in many places (including Syracuse, see page 16). They're now partnering with RootsAction.org to raise funds to put billboards up in Washington, D.C. To donate, go to www.worldbeyondwar.org/campaigns.



- If nothing changes, city residents will continue to watch others build Syracuse and take their pay back to their suburban or rural communities. It is time for the urban community to wield some power. It is time for an inclusive economy!

How can you help us fight exclusion?

Take the petition in this *PNL* issue (for subscribers) and collect signatures from your family, friends, neighbors and colleagues and return it to the Syracuse Peace Council or mail it to the UJTF (the address is on the petition). You can pick up more copies at SPC, or download the petition from www.ujtf.org. Even partially-filled pages help. Suburban residents can also sign. Together we can make a difference!



SPC's Birthday Dinner on March 24. Photos: Kim McCoy

SPC'S BIRTHDAY DINNER

Our Birthday Dinner on March 24 was a success! We are grateful to all volunteers who contributed their time and energy to bring us together over a delicious meal. Our featured speaker, Barbara Smith, is an author of the groundbreaking *Combahee River Collective Statement* and a cofounder of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press. She is also an organizer with the new Poor Peoples Campaign. In her presentation, Barbara discussed the ways white supremacy manifests itself, invited us to learn how the issues we focus on connect to racism, and emphasized the importance of intentionally diversifying our organizing as we look to people of color for leadership. Please visit www.peacecouncil.net to view a video of her talk, and be sure to check out photos from the event on our Facebook page.

— Michaela Czerkies

continued on next page

SPC, continued from previous page

FOUR MORE WAYS TO BE PART OF SPC

1) *Hiroshima and Nagasaki Commemoration planning and help.* This **August 6 and 9** mark the 73rd year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Over the last year, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons won the Nobel Peace Prize, and the Union of Concerned Scientists moved their Doomsday clock to two minutes to midnight. We organize a Family Peace Picnic and a procession through downtown Syracuse and need a lot of help.

2) *Help get the word out! Sign up for a PNL paper route.* We print thousands of PNLs to distribute. This is an every other month job. We specifically need the Westside and Marshall St. routes covered—we have a list of places to bring them. You can also create your own route.

3) *Summer Outreach Tabling.* With the soon-to-come nice weather, SPC will be outside doing outreach tabling. We have free literature, buttons and petitions. Beginners will be matched with experienced tablers if that is helpful. Enjoy an event and help SPC at the same time.

4) *Help edit the PNL.* If you enjoy writing, this may be for you. We're looking for second editors to help the first editors with their work. Our goal as editors is to support the writers in having the clearest, strongest voice they can have.

Contact Carol or Michaela to learn more.

– Carol Baum



Intern Sam Brown doing outreach tabling at Syracuse University.
Photo: David Wynn

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS & THANK YOU SAM!

Farewell and thank you to our Spring intern, Sam Brown! As a member of our team, Sam has helped tremendously with outreach, visual media, and data-entry. We'll miss her positivity and willingness to jump into any task, and wish her the best of luck as she continues her studies at Syracuse University!

We are seeking Summer interns who are enthusiastic and passionate about working to create a world of peace, compassion, equality, and social justice, and who are motivated to take action to end military aggression and all forms of oppression. By interning in our office, you'll have the opportunity to learn more about the important issues of our day, as well as the basics of grassroots organizing from outreach to publicity to fundraising. For more information about how to apply, visit www.peacecouncil.net/intern. If you know someone who might be interested, please pass this information on.

– Michaela Czerkies



Anti-drone billboard in Syracuse. Photo: Ann Tiffany

GO BEYOND WAR AND MILITARISM

On April 17 retired SUNY-ESF professor Jack Manno discussed militarism and the environment for the seventh installment of the Beyond War and Militarism Alternative Education series. Going far beyond listing the destructive environmental effects of military activity, Jack provided an historical analysis of people's relationship with our planet, contrasting the vision of indigenous people who see the Earth as habitat to the militaristic-industrial and colonial view of it as a resource. Rejecting the immediate commodification-based outlook, he celebrated the Seven Generations long-term perspective.

Four committee members attended the Climate Rally in Albany on April 23. As part of the bus ride teach-in, Peter Swords spoke about the military as a major producer of greenhouse gases.

Because of scheduling difficulties, including preparation for the Poor People's Campaign (see page 3), there will not be a presentation in May, but the Committee plans to resume its series in June.

– Barry Gordon

COMMUNITY GRID

After much research and discussion, the CNY Solidarity Coalition voted overwhelmingly to support the Community Grid to replace the I-81 viaduct through downtown Syracuse. Of the options being considered to replace the viaduct, the Community Grid is the least expensive, removes fewer buildings and is the most sustainable for Syracuse. The construction of I-81 decimated the predominantly African American 15th Ward and continues to limit opportunities in the neighborhoods obstructed and disrupted by the raised highway. This is an opportunity to partially right the wrong of historically racist policies in Syracuse.

With the Community Grid, more land will be available for mixed income housing and well-considered development, adding to Syracuse's tax base for schools, infrastructure and city services. The wrongs of racism can be further addressed if redevelopment is done with active involvement of affected residents.

Let's start to heal Syracuse with the Community Grid! To learn more please visit our website at www.cnysolidarity.org.

– Elaine Denton