

SONOMA COUNTY

peace press

Publication of the Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County

FOR JUSTICE SO THAT ALL MAY LIVE IN PEACE

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- ▶ Workers Uniting for Union Contract
- ▶ A Brief History of Gaza
- ▶ CODEPINK: Standing for Palestine is Standing for Peace
- ▶ Responding to Climate Change
- ▶ King, The Radical! – Annual MLK Event

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SUBMITTING ARTICLES

Deadline to submit articles for the Feb/Mar 2024 issue, is Jan. 17

Email articles with title on the document, in MSWord to zenekar2@gmail.com
(put PEACE PRESS in all caps on subject line)

Word limit up to 900 words (negotiable).

Shorter pieces welcome about local actions and events.

Authors are encouraged to delineate fact from opinion and wherever possible to substantiate their facts with references. Include ways readers can engage with the movement for peace and social justice.

We welcome poems but limited to approx. 30 lines.

EDITING POLICY

The Editorial Collective selects articles that serve the movement for peace and social justice to inspire and motivate readers to positive action. Articles are edited for clarity, syntax, grammar, length and spelling. If needed, authors will be contacted to assist with editing.

Submissions must contain author's name, address, phone number, word count and a brief – one or two sentence bio. Decisions about editing fall within these guidelines and are the final judgment of the Peace Press Editorial Collective.

Articles are the opinion of the author unless otherwise noted.

CALENDAR ITEMS

Events on topics of social justice, environmental, and related items to be placed in the PJC weekly email calendar, can be sent to peacejusticesonoma@gmail.com
Include CALENDAR (in caps) on subject line.

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PJC office hours: 1-4 PM, M-F. Best to call ahead to ensure volunteers are available when you visit. To receive the weekly Social Justice e-newsletter, go to: PJCso.org

Happening at the PJC

by Peace & Justice Center Board of Directors

November was great. We kicked off the month with Christian Stalberg's presentation on life in today's Venezuela. Despite harsh, illegal sanctions, and other interference by the US and other Western powers, Venezuela's economy remains a strong model for a different way – a more equitable way for a country to divvy up its collective wealth.

Then, on November 4, there was Winterblast. This is a marvelous street party in the art district, where we reside, complete with a parade featuring floats made of sofas (south of A Street). The Peace & Justice Center jumped into this party with both feet. Many thanks to Board member Robin Latham, and our volunteer coordinator Linda Sartor, for manifesting our participation in this event. Our float was greeted with cheers as we paraded down the street. Many people returned with us to the center, where they enjoyed fellowship, food, drink and the music of the marvelous Musers. We are proud to have worked with our neighbors at Santa Rosa Urban Partnership (SRU-AP) to bring about Santa Rosa's first Green Winterblast.

We closed the month with a presentation from Zero Waste Sonoma on how we can all step up our zero-waste practices. Reducing waste is one way to reduce greenhouse gases. This was the first in a

series of teach-ins the Peace & Justice Center will present in 2024.

To learn more about what the Peace & Justice Center is doing next go to pjcsoco.org. Visit our website calendar and subscribe to our weekly e-newsletter and keep informed of events that you might want to attend in pursuit of a peaceful more just world. There is also the *Peace Press* featuring articles on issues about which members of the Peace & Justice Community care. The website pjcsoco.org also connects you to our YouTube station, our resource page and much more. Check it out and if you haven't already, become a member the Peace & Justice Center today.

More organizations are beginning to use the Center. On the first Wednesday of every month, from 6:30 – 8:30, a local Disability Rights Workshop will start meeting beginning December 6. There is an article about this group inside this issue of the *Peace Press*.

Pop by if you're interested. Also, we are proud to announce a collaborative endeavor with the Sonoma County Conservation Council (SCCC). They may be meeting here soon. You can learn more about SCCC here. If your organization would like to use the center, and you're a member of the Peace & Justice Center (easy), you too can hold events here and be a visible part of the peace and justice community of Sonoma County. 🌿

Immigrant Rights Are Human Rights

by Renee Saucedo

This past August around 700 people participated in a Three-Day Walk, from Petaluma and San Jose to San Francisco, to gain Congressional support for HR 151, the Immigration Registry Bill. It would allow approximately eight million undocumented people currently living in the country for at least seven years the opportunity to apply for legal permanent residency.

Undocumented moms, their children, youth and representatives of dozens of immigrant rights organizations from throughout the Greater Bay Area walked for three straight days in hot weather, speaking with faith leaders, elected officials and community members along the way. They were domestic workers, farm workers and service workers, all with the same goal of passing just immigration reform. Their sacrifice paid off, because they achieved the support of Congressmen Mike Thompson and Jared Huffman, of Northern California, for the Registry Bill.

We are the Northern California Coalition For Just Immigration Reform (NCCJIR). We have dozens of organizational members in counties like Sonoma, San Francisco, Alameda, Santa Clara, Marin and Humboldt. For the past two years, we have joined the Coalition For Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) in its coordination of a national campaign for Papers Through the Registry Process. And we collaborate with other national coalitions and groupings, including the Dignity Campaign, IR4All, and others. The national efforts in favor of the Registry Bill are grassroots and immigrant-led.

Some in our broader movement have told me that organizing for immigration reform at this point in time is a waste of time. With the make-up of the current Congress, and the anti-immigrant rhetoric

surrounding the 2024 Presidential elections, we would be most strategic in continuing to fight for administrative gains, like a prohibition on ICE deporting workers who file labor complaints with the Department of Labor.

These are noble goals. So why are so many migrants in this country still organizing and pushing for Papers For All, and why should we follow their lead?

We follow in the steps of our ancestors who were part of the abolitionist movement in this country and the movement for the rights of Indigenous peoples.

Undocumented communities continue to passionately organize around a legalization bill, despite the betrayals by the Democrats and the continued, anti-immigrant sentiment, because they understand that they have no choice but to continue upholding their basic human rights. Undocumented immigrants and their families continue to suffer greatly due to the lack of opportunities to adjust their legal status. Mothers and fathers are unable to see the children they were forced to leave behind in their home countries. People suffer emotional distress by not seeing their elderly parents before their parents die. They continue to suffer exploitation at work and remain

Immigrant Rights Are Human Rights...see page 21

ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION (APEC) Abuse of People and the Earth for Corporate Rule

by Christian Stalberg

Between November 13 and 17 leaders of twenty-one nations, including presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping, and CEOs of many of the world's largest multinational corporations, met in San Francisco for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. During the week, these political and corporate leaders were confronted by approximately one thousand protestors resisting globalization.

On Wednesday morning, for between two and three hours, most of the major street intersections downtown were blocked by protestors. Motorcades carrying state and corporate dignitaries from their hotels to meeting places sat idle, 'kettled' by protestors, while law enforcement debated whether or not to arrest protestors.

The No to APEC Coalition had over 150 groups registered to confront APEC leaders during the week. Apparently, not since 1945 and the founding of the United Nations, had the San Francisco Bay Area seen so many official visitors. An estimated 20,000 to 30,000 officials were in town, including over 1,000 corporate CEOs.

So, what is APEC and why are there protests against it? APEC stands for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. It is a so-called 'free trade agreement' that was orchestrated in 1989 to promote trade and economic cooperation within the Asia-Pacific region. Member countries are bound together under an international legal agreement, which eliminates barriers to trade and investment between the member states. While it is, allegedly, an agreement between nation-states, fundamentally it is in reality a Trojan horse for powerful corporate interests. Such agreements are the backbone and driving force of globalization.

Globalization is viewed by most as an unstoppable force, having evolved over five centuries. It consists of banks and corporations working to create a borderless world of production, consumption, finance and culture. The World Economic Forum (WEF) has a

stated goal of digitalizing the whole world.

As an example, Bayer has collected data on 24 million hectares of land globally. The World Trade Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and even the Conference of the Parties (COP) negotiations have perpetrated coup d'états by stealing power away from elected governments and placing it into the hands of a deregulated and unaccountable global business and finance elite.

Key features of globalization include, promotion of growth, unrestricted access to natural resources, privatization and commodification of public resources and commons, cultural and economic homogenization, promotion of consumerism, creation of export-dependent economies supported by subsidies and tax incentives, corporate deregulation, moving operations at will to locations having cheap labor, low taxes and lax social borders and supremacy clauses in treaties and agreements that supersede local and national laws.

Globalization is not a recent phenomenon, but a continuation of conquest and colonial exploitation that destroyed local economies and cultures. The most serious problems we face – economic, social, environmental and psychological – are largely the result of a globalized economy.

Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clauses embedded within free trade treaties allow corporations to sue governments for passing regulations that infringe on their expected profits. ISDS disputes are arbitrated in secret by corporation-friendly tribunals that are independent of domestic courts. Laws passed by nation-states to protect their environments and address climate change have led to an increasing number of ISDS cases globally, leading to monetary awards amounting to billions of dollars.

Learn more about people and [planet-killing globalization treaties](#).

Christian Stalberg is a PhD student in Anthropology & Social Change at the California Institute of Integral Studies.



Climate activists blocked streets and the doors at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in San Francisco. Image taken from video by Joseph DeRose.

Workers Uniting for Union Contract



by Robin Latham

As a member of the Hubbub Club Band’s second line I attended a rally for workers at the Fairmont Sonoma, Mission Inn and Spa. It was an honor and a pleasure to add some music to accompany the protesters. The band played music between speeches, and during the march.

It was a lively crowd, and the workers and supporters were happy to be there together, showing the community what was going on at the landmark hotel, as we marched from the front of the hotel out to Highway 12. There were several hundred people with signs walking, chanting and marching back and forth in downtown Boyes Hot Springs. Here is some of what the workers had to say, in their own words.

Speeches Given at the Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa Action

“Good evening. My name is Sofia Garcia. I work here at the Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn as a housekeeper. Thank you to everyone who came out to support us today. We are picketing because we want the community to know that the hotel does not have a union contract. I support the union for a better future for myself, and my colleagues as well.

I like my job, and I would like to continue working for the hotel, but I want a better job in terms of workload and salary. I think that they give us many rooms to clean and a very short time to do each room. It puts a lot of pressure on me while I try to clean the rooms at a high level. The bosses have never done our jobs. They are not putting themselves in our shoes.

Our hotel is very nice. The cheapest room is \$500 or more. I clean ten or twelve rooms per day, and I am only earning \$21 or \$22 an hour. Sonoma is one of the most expensive places, and this pay is actually not enough. I earn enough to live only day-to-day. I don’t have money to save. I know we can have a smaller workload and a better salary. That will lift up not only us, but also the entire community. Together we will win!”

“My name is Teitzah Karys. I work here at the Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn in the spa, and I’ve been here for almost 24 years as a massage therapist. We’re picketing today to raise awareness that our hotel doesn’t have a union contract with UNITE HERE Local 2.

I have been dedicated and loyal to the hotel for so many years. I come in on my days off, when help is needed. I give 110 percent, and I support the union because I know we deserve better. We live in a very expensive valley, and our wages make it difficult to afford to live here. One day I’m going to retire after working so hard for this hotel, and I don’t have a pension that can support me to live comfortably in this valley. Another issue is workload. We went from about 500 employees to just about half that, so the workload has increased, and a lot of workers are now doing more than one person’s job.

And we also deserve a safe workplace. I work in a building that is over 100 years old, and I’ve seen firsthand some hazardous conditions that still haven’t been fully addressed. Our campaign started small many years ago, but nothing like this. We have so much support from the community. And we appreciate that! It’s really clear that we need a fair process without being intimidated or bullied. We’re in it for the long run, and we are stronger than ever. Thank you.”

Robin Latham is member of the PJC Board of Directors



PHOTOS: ROBIN LATHAM

A Brief History of Gaza

by *Therese Mughannam*

That narrow coastal strip of land called Gaza has been inhabited for thousands of years and fought over by many, including Egyptian Pharaohs, Babylonians, Alexander the Great, and others. It was a thriving trade center for centuries because of its proximity to Asia and Africa. Romans, Mongols, Crusaders and later Napoleon, conquered it. Christianity spread there – today a tiny, Christian community numbering about 1,000. Their ancient church was recently bombed by Israel. Islamic armies invaded Gaza in the mid 600s AD.

In more recent times Gaza was part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire for most of the period from the sixteenth century until 1917, when it was taken by British troops during World War I. Over the last century Gaza passed from British to Egyptian to Israeli military rule. For the last 16 years, Gaza has been a fenced in enclave, with a population of 2.3 million Palestinians, most of them refugees.

Refugees from where? When British colonial rule came to an end in Palestine in 1948, violence intensified between Jews and Palestinians. This culminated in a war and eventually resulted in the United Nations dividing Palestine and giving over half of it to what became the new Jewish state. 750,000 Palestinians were then expelled from their homes or fled the violence. Thousands took refuge in Gaza.

In the Six Day War of 1967, Israel captured the Gaza Strip, as well the West Bank and East Jerusalem. More Palestinians became refugees and about 300,000 of them fled to Gaza. Throughout the “occupied territories” resentment began to build toward the Israeli occupiers until it boiled over in 1987, when the Palestinians launched their first intifada, or uprising. The trigger for the intifada happened in Gaza when an Israeli truck crashed into a vehicle carrying Palestinian workers in Jabalya refugee camp, killing four workers. Stone-throwing protests, strikes and shutdowns followed.

It may surprise many to know that it was the Israelis who initially encouraged and helped finance the creation of Hamas in order to diminish the influence and control of the secular Fatah Party in the West Bank under the Palestine Liberation Organization. The

Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood, taking advantage of the angry mood of the Gazans, also helped to create an armed branch of the party, which initially was dedicated to the restoration of a free Palestine under Islamic rule instead of an Israeli occupation.

In 1993 the Oslo Accords created what turned out to be a false hope for semi- autonomy for Palestinians. In reality, the newly formed Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank was basically assigned the dirty work of controlling the population, as well as fixing holes in the roads, picking up garbage, etc. Most importantly the PA collects taxes from the Palestinian population, which is required to be given to Israel with the hope that most of it would be returned to the PA to conduct its business.

The Oslo accords also offered hope for a Palestinian state after five years. But that never happened. Israel accused Palestinians of not carrying out security agreements, and Palestinians were angered

For the last 16 years, Gaza has been a fenced in enclave, with a population of 2.3 million Palestinians, most of them refugees.

by the resumption of settlement building in the illegally occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem.

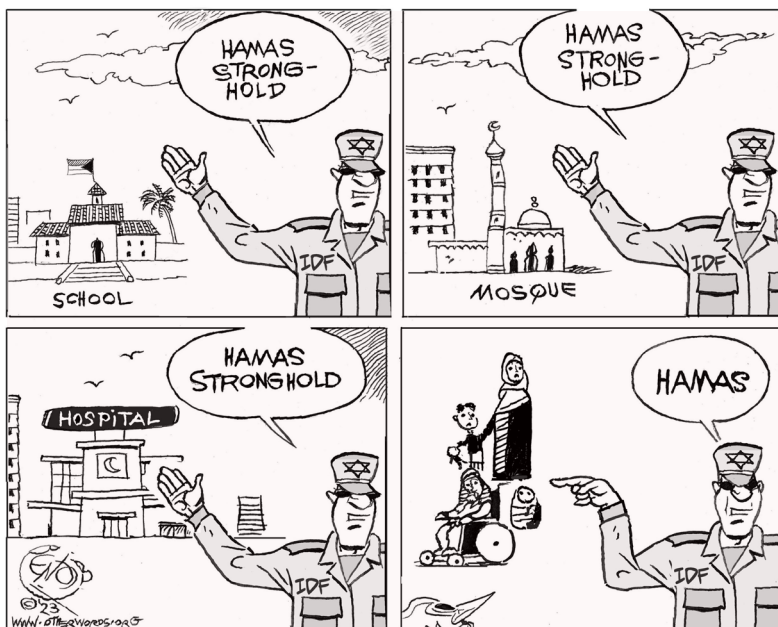
Hamas then carried out bombings in Israel to derail the so-called “peace process,” which led Israel to impose more restrictions on Gazans’ movements out of Gaza, which in turn led to another intifada. Israel then bombed Gaza’s airport, destroying its radar equipment and runways. The airport was a symbol of hope for independence for Gazans, as it was their only connection to the outside world not controlled by Israel or Egypt. Like Israel, Egypt was receiving enormous amounts of military aid from the US all this time.

Unlike the unpopular political party Fatah in the West Bank, which has often been accused of complicity with the Israeli government, Hamas in Gaza has a history of resistance against its oppressors. In 2006 Hamas won the general election in Palestine, moni-

tored by President Jimmy Carter. Israel and the US did not accept the results of the election and labeled Hamas a “terrorist” organization. Tighter restrictions on the movement of people and goods in Gaza were then put in place by Israel and Egypt. The aid to Gaza was cut, its economy destroyed, and the siege was put in place. For the next 16 years Gazans lived in what has been termed “an open air prison.” And so it has been until October 7, when Hamas broke through the siege with the explosion of events between the two sides we have witnessed since that day.

Needless to say, the devastation in Gaza of the past weeks has been horrifyingly disproportionate. The race to clear northern Gaza of all civilians is making several analysts wonder whether the discovery of vast oil fields off the shore of Gaza plays a part. Others speculate about Israel’s intention to build a canal through Gaza to compete with the Suez Canal, thus the near total destruction of northern Gaza. We will have to wait and see how this monumental conflict will unfold and resolve. 🌿

Therese Mughannam was born in Jerusalem before the partition of Palestine by the United Nations. She is a co-founder of North Coast Coalition for Palestine.



CODEPINK: Standing with Palestine is Standing for Peace

by Nour Jaghama

Israel's unrelenting attack on Gaza has made the situation more dire than ever. At the time of writing, at least 14,128 Palestinians had been murdered by Israel in Gaza, including over 5,500 children. This means one out of every 200 Gazans have been killed by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF), and the average age of those murdered is five years old. In addition to that horrific number, more than 30,000 have been injured, 75 percent of them women and children. Perhaps the most haunting statistic is the 6,000-plus Palestinians that are missing under the rubble, among them 1,770 children, dying slowly, alone and scared.

The tragic reality is that these numbers are likely already outdated, as they increase by the hour. But these are not just numbers. Please take a moment and think about all those who have been brutally murdered and injured by Israel. They are not just numbers, 14,128 universes have been wiped off this earth without a second thought. Gazans are some of the most resilient and beautiful souls on this earth. They have endured so much, and they deserve to be remembered that way, not as a statistic that distances you from the weight of this tragedy.

Internet and telecommunications in Gaza continue to be cut off by Israel, making it harder to hear news from Gazans on the ground. This is also making it harder for people to connect with their family and friends in Gaza, sending people across the globe in a panic with the uncertain status of their loved ones. I myself have not been able to reach my friend in Gaza since November 13.

Right now, Israel is targeting the Indonesian hospital, located in Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza. The hospital has been sheltering hundreds of displaced people, and is close to Jabalia refugee camp which was struck by Israel multiple times at the beginning of November. The area surrounding the hospital was also struck by Israel multiple times, as well as the second floor of the hospital itself, killing at least 14 people altogether.

According to a medical worker at the Indonesian hospital, Marwan Abdallah, Israeli tanks are operating less than 656 feet from the hospital, and Israeli snipers are set up on the rooftops of nearby buildings. Despite the targeting of the Indonesian hospital, and intimidation by Israeli tanks and snipers, medical professionals in the hospital refuse to abandon their patients. They should be regarded as nothing less than superheroes.

Israel justifies the targeting of the Indonesian hospital by claiming Hamas tunnels are underneath the building. They used the same claim to justify the bombardment and raid on al-Shifa hospital. Israel's targeting of hospitals – an unprecedented inhumane tactic – has left 21 out of Gaza's 35 hospitals out of service. Although the Israeli propaganda justifying these attacks is built on unfounded evidence, even if their claims were true, that does not justify the targeting of hospitals. It is a violation of international law. Even if the Israeli propaganda were true, it does not justify the murder of over 14,000 people, and it does not make the call for a ceasefire any less necessary.

Gaza is not the only area in Palestine under attack.

Since October 7, villages in the West Bank have been under curfew and lockdown. This means no one is allowed to enter or exit these villages, and they cannot leave their homes for any reason after a certain hour. This has had a devastating effect on the Palestinian economy, with business sales being cut to 50 percent and only 80 percent of salaries being paid. Since October 7, at least 215 Palestinians have been murdered by Israel in the West Bank, including 50 children, and 2,750 more have been injured. Additionally, over 5,000 Palestinians in the West Bank have been detained, and Palestinian boys and men are in danger of imprisonment for simply leaving their homes.

The Israeli attack on Palestine is not slowing down, which means our action is more urgent than ever. There is truly no time to waste, especially for those of us who live in the US. Our government is working to send \$14.3 billion in "aid" to Israel on top of the \$3.8 billion our government already provides the apartheid state, made possible by our tax dollars. A majority of our elected officials also fail to call for an unconditional ceasefire.

It is important that we take action—both in the US, and internationally, against the horrific genocide happening right before our eyes. Standing with Palestine is standing for peace. End of story. In addition to taking [action urging US officials to end aid to Israel and call for a ceasefire](#), CODEPINK has launched an [international campaign to send letters to the International Criminal Court \(ICC\)](#), urging prosecutor Karim Khan to investigate Israel for its war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in Palestine. Join us in this global effort to bring Israeli officials before the ICC and hold them accountable for the blood on their hands. And continue to visit [CODEPINK's Palestine page](#) to stay updated on actions for Palestine.

Finally, I ask you to never stop fighting for Palestinian liberation. They are counting on us to forget the people of Gaza, to stop posting, to stop speaking out against the genocide. But we refuse. We will never stop fighting for our brothers and sisters in Palestine. We will never stop fighting for the inevitable truth. Liberation will come soon enough. In the meantime, we need to keep the momentum going until Palestine is free, from the river to the sea. ✊

Nour is CODEPINK's Palestine Campaign Coordinator.

CODEPINK

CODEPINK.ORG/ICCGAZA1

ISRAEL IS COMMITTING
WAR CRIMES!

SEND A LETTER TO THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT



Is This Israel's Manifest Destiny?

by Oona Risling-Sholl

The events that unfolded on October 7 in Israel and Palestine culminated, for me, in a self-taught crash course on Middle Eastern history. I quickly realized how lopsided my education of the intricate and devastating history between these two nation states had been. The more I witnessed events unfolding, the more aghast I became, and the more questions I had.

The attack by Hamas on an Israeli music festival seemed horrific enough. From the information we received online, on the radio, and on television, it was being touted as an unprovoked attack by a terrorist organization. Within a couple of days, however, the violence exacted in supposed “defense” by the Israeli government nagged at me. It reminded me of something all too familiar to me and my family, members of the Hupa tribe of California: the genocide of American Indians, first by European and British settlers, and then the US government, under the guise of “manifest destiny.” While the timelines

was that a group of rebellious Indians, already outgunned and outmanned by the US government, had violently protested their land being stolen from them. As with the Hamas fighters in Israel, they were killed, but the government decided that a lesson still had to be taught, and the massacre commenced. According to the US, it was only incidental that even more land was available for the taking. A dead Indian, like a dead Palestinian, will not complain when their land is stolen from them.

As this violence against Palestinians continues, it exhibits every aspect of that unhinged American settler-colonial mindset, the type that springs from a lumbering, blind, monolithic power, whose only purpose is to grow larger. Governments like this destroy until nothing is left but the material things it hungers for: land and resources. Much like the Indigenous tribes of 1800s US, residents of Gaza and the West Bank, who once moved freely throughout Palestine, have had their land violently taken by outside forces and parceled,

divided, and parceled again, shrinking in less than a few decades to mere smudges on the map. Their freedom was tightly muzzled for decades, and now they are being murdered before our eyes. Like my ancestors, their very existence stands in the way of a power-hungry government's desire to grow unimpeded.

I see the commonalities between America's history of violence against Indigenous people and the current iteration of Israeli violence against Palestinians as taking three dominant forms. The first is dehumanization. To this day the Declaration of Independence refers to Indigenous Americans as “merciless Indian savages”; Nazi Germany referred to Jews as “racially inferior”; Golda Meir simply announced that Palestinians “do not exist” and current heads of the Israeli state refer to all Palestinians as terrorists and human



This painting illustrates perfectly the topic of the article. I don't have information about the artist. If anyone does, please send email to zenekar2@gmail.com. with Peace Press on Subject line. I would like to credit the artist in the next issue.

are not the same, the similarities between the so-called “Indian Wars” and the current violence unfolding in Gaza and the West Bank are stark, and are reminders that these things do not happen in a vacuum.

In the developing United States, what began in the 1600s as the usual commerce, political, and religion-driven violence wrought by European countries, soon evolved into campaigns by white settlers to take every speck of land and resources on the continent. By the 1830s, when westward expansion went into overdrive with the discovery of California gold, tribes were given two options in what was called the “Indian Removal Act,” dreamed up by the man on the USD \$20 bill, Andrew Jackson. They could either be herded off their ancestral lands onto reservations or be legally murdered by the military and armed settlers. This is the exact same “choice” being thrust upon Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank right now.

Ofentimes, as with the Sand Creek massacre of 1864, even treaty agreements did not protect Indigenous people from the US government's unending greed. Under the direction of Colonel John Chivington, a Methodist preacher and – ironically – an abolitionist, the First Colorado Regiment was given the go-ahead to slaughter every Indigenous man, woman, and child on sight. The excuse

animals. The second is resource and movement control. Whether instating crippling blockades or doling out life-giving resources such as water, settler-colonial governments know it's easier to break the will of a people if it's nearly impossible for them to conduct everyday business. The third is the weaponization of victimhood. As people, including Jews, begin to speak out against Israel's blatant genocide, Israel's supporters try to silence them with references to the Holocaust – an undeniable horror we have vowed never to allow again – and in this they have been successful. American governmental authorities would often portray Indian self-defense as a kind of terrorism, and levy this narrative as an excuse for mass killings in the conquest for more.

In this, the Israeli and US governments are the same to me. According to them, the Palestinians and American Indians are just the soft tissue that gets in the way of the machine. Is this Israel's manifest destiny?

Come support Palestinians, Jews, Indigenous people, and allies alike every Sunday at 2 p.m. in Santa Rosa's Courthouse Square. ☘

Oona Risling-Sholl is a Hupa/Karuk/Yurok/white writer and artist residing in Sonoma County.

No Votes for Genocide, Jared!

Community Unites with Jews and Palestinians to Speak with Representative in Congress

by Hanan and Rachel

As the Israeli airstrikes, blockades, and displacements of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank persist into their seventh week, global communities persist in protesting, disrupting regular activities and urging our elected representatives to push for an immediate ceasefire and expedited approval of substantial humanitarian assistance for Gaza.

In Sonoma County, our two Democratic Congressmen, Jared Huffman and Mike Thompson have refused to sign onto House Resolution 786, calling for a permanent ceasefire. Moreover, they have made it clear that they do not believe that Palestinian lives, including Palestinian children's lives, matter. They show no sorrow or empathy for the 14,000 Palestinian lives lost in just 7 weeks, many who were killed by weapons sent by the United States. For this war mongering and disregard for human life, they will not have our vote next November.

On Nov. 9, Sonoma County for Palestine, a coalition of Palestinians, Jews, and individuals from many backgrounds, met with Congressman Jared Huffman to urge him to call for a ceasefire.

Of Huffman and Thompson, Huffman was the only one to release a statement after October 7 that even mentioned people in Gaza. Mike Thompson's statement only mentioned Israeli deaths, omitting Palestinians entirely.

Despite the fact that Huffman has claimed that he criticizes the Netanyahu government and the Israeli occupation, he would not state that the bombing of Gaza and Israel's deprivation of food, fuel, electricity, and other essentials of life, was disproportionate and unconscionable. Nor has he been willing to decry the targeting of hospitals, schools, churches and mosques by the IDF.

Our coalition (which is comprised of Jews, Palestinians, and others) met with Congressman Huffman to request that he support a ceasefire. In our meeting, Congressman Huffman praised President Biden's response to the situation as he echoed many Israeli propaganda talking points. Perhaps this is because he is influenced by his single largest campaign donor in 2021-2022, J Street PAC, which has been lobbying Congress to approve \$3.8 billion in the pipeline plus "emergency" military funding for Israel. Interestingly, and quite possibly not by mere coincidence, he has participated as a delegate on congressional visits to Israel.

Huffman insisted that it was factually incorrect that Israel is bombing hospitals when reputable news sources such as Democracy Now, Al Jazeera, and others have been detailing the relentless assaults that the Israeli military is perpetuating against civilians receiving critical medical care and sheltering in these hospitals. Huffman, instead, repeated the unsubstantiated claim that there are Hamas tunnels below the hospitals.

Speaking of Hamas, Huffman continually pivoted the conversation back to Hamas, regardless of the points our group was bringing forward. He specifically zeroed in on one member of our coalition who is Palestinian, pressing her to denounce Hamas. At one point, a member of our coalition said, "Yes, we denounce Hamas, we deplore the killing of innocent people on both sides, now can we talk about a ceasefire?" Huffman continued to go back to the actions of Hamas, with no statement about the massive amount of Palestinian

deaths at the hands of the Israeli government and the grave humanitarian crisis that will now take many years to repair.

Local Palestinians and Muslims are increasingly vocalizing their concerns about safety within their communities following a series of hate crimes specifically targeting individuals of Palestinian and Muslim backgrounds. Sadly, these communities are also grappling with disheartening messages from their representatives, suggesting that the safety of both local constituents, and their family members residing in Gaza and the West Bank, is not being given the urgent attention it desperately requires.

After a few cycles of the conversation continuously coming back to Hamas, Huffman accused one of the members of our group of perpetuating an "All Lives Matter" narrative, when she had emphatically stated that she wanted "All people everywhere to feel safe always." Yet, he is the one focusing on Israeli deaths and failing to recognize the equal humanity of Palestinians.

Huffman was condescending and disrespectful of the knowledge and expertise we had among us. He continued this pattern in his meeting with Humboldt county groups as well. He consistently spoke over and interrupted women of color. He treated the people

Our coalition (which is comprised of Jews, Palestinians, and others) met with Congressman Huffman to request that he support a ceasefire.

in both committees as though they were uninformed. One notable incident occurred when a Palestinian woman shared her personal experience of family members who were "martyred" in Gaza, to which Huffman interjected, expressing discomfort with the term "martyr" as he associated it exclusively with Hamas. This apparent failure to distinguish between Islam, Palestinians, and the Hamas organization left many bewildered by his stance during the conversation.

In more recent days, with the announcement of a temporary truce and release of hostages, Jared Huffman has put out statements on social media stating that he is now calling for a ceasefire, and that he has "been calling for this conditional ceasefire and humanitarian pause for weeks." What is unclear is if he supports Israel continuing their bombardment after this brief pause, and if he supports a ceasefire, why is he refusing to sign House Resolution 786?

We must continue to put the pressure on Huffman and all of our representatives to pursue diplomacy, permanent ceasefire and an end to the horrific loss of life.

For 11 years, Jared Huffman has faced no opposition within the Democratic Party. Should he fail to wholeheartedly endorse a lasting and comprehensive ceasefire, it's essential for there to be a challenge to his tenure. If he cannot faithfully represent the entirety of his constituents, and yields to financial influence, he doesn't merit our votes. Genocide Jared will not get our votes.

To learn more about Sonoma County for Palestine, and to join our actions, visit [Sonoma County for Palestine](#). 🌱

Hanan and Rachel are part of Sonoma County for Palestine.

ACTION AGAINST CENSORSHIP: Bohemian Boycott

by Susan Collier Lamont

An article on the weekly Santa Rosa protests in support of Gaza was all set to be published in the *Bohemian's* November 8 issue, when, at the last minute, it was pulled.

Editor Daedalus Howell brought the article by investigative journalist Peter Byrne to the attention of Dan Pulcrano, CEO and executive editor of *Weeklys*, which owns the *Bohemian* and quite a few more publications. Pulcrano pulled the article. Normally, Pulcrano would not see articles in advance. Howell, who is much more into advertising and local venues for spending your money than he is into news, was apparently alarmed, and made the unusual move of notifying Pulcrano.

The protests, which are held every Sunday at 2:00 p.m. in Old Courthouse Square, are a response to Israel's military attacks on the civilian population of Gaza and the US support for them. The article, requested by News Editor Will Carruthers, also gave background information, which explained the reasons why the protestors are supporting Gaza and a ceasefire.

Both Byrne and Carruthers have resigned from the *Bohemian*. Since pulling the article, Pulcrano has given reasons (some to Byrne and some to the public) for doing so, that have changed with each telling. The latest iteration of his reasons appears in the current issue. You can read it [here](#).

I have taken it upon myself to organize a boycott of the *Bohemian* and I am asking you to join me. This boycott has two demands. First, that Pulcrano publish the article and, second, that he and Howell apologize for the censorship. This boycott includes reaching out to the advertisers and asking them to make the same demands. To be clear, this is not a boycott of the advertisers. We are asking them to make the same demands of the *Bohemian* that we are making.

What follows is a list of talking points, which you might use when communicating with the advertisers. Then, you'll find a list of advertisers and their contact information. The list is long. Contact a few or contact them all – whatever you're able to do. I would suggest starting with businesses you frequent. For ease, create one email and bcc all the advertisers in one fell swoop.

You can also contact Dan Pulcrano directly at dan@weeklys.com and Daedalus Howell at dhowell@weeklys.com

Because of the growing understanding in the US of the decades-long plight of Palestinians, censorship of this issue is happening all over the country, in media, in schools and in places of employment. The US and Israel have been able to keep a pretty tight lid on what is happening to Palestinians. Now that lid is being blown. We must stand up to these tactics.

Byrne's article can be read on [Counterpunch](#).

Boycott Talking Points and List of Advertisers

by Susan Collier Lamont

This was not an "investigation." It was a report on a protest and why the people were protesting. Nothing else was needed to make it a complete article.

This conflict has been reported through the lens of Israel for 75 years and now that the Palestinian situation is finally coming out, suddenly we need balance?

When there is a power imbalance as great as the one between Israel and Palestine, the call for balance becomes a bias in favor of the powerful.

Those who condemn the violence of Hamas are never asked to qualify their position by acknowledging the years of violence by Israel, but those who condemn the current Israeli violence are always asked to acknowledge October 7.

Pulcrano wanted to change the subject of the article from the protest and the reasons behind it, to an article, which listed Hamas' violence, and then change it again to an article about the fear Jews are feeling in the United States. The focus on Jewish fear, without a mention of Palestinian/Muslim fear, is bias. The focus on Jewish fear, without mentioning the Israeli violence that some Jews support, is bias. Byrne said that he would be fine with writing a story on Jewish and Palestinian fear, but only after the initial article had been published.

Byrne has written about controversial subjects which are close to the centers of power in the county (as has Carruthers) but has never had a story pulled at press time by a publisher, in defiance of a news editor, in 18 years of reporting for the *Bohemian*.

Pulcrano has now published a rebuttal online to Byrne. In it he implies that Byrne turned in his article after deadline, which was not the case. It is not possible to "run the piece the following week,

with additional reporting" when the author has refused to write such an article. The "agreement" Pulcrano mentions did not exist.

Pulcrano has objected to the protestors' chant which uses the phrase "from the river to the sea" without acknowledging that it originated with Israel and its desire to incorporate the entire region, including parts of Jordan. And, while claiming to be sympathetic with Palestinians, he employs false definitions of antisemitism.

Pulcrano also questions whether bombing people trapped in an open air prison, accompanied by horrifying language coming from people in the Israeli government, can be called genocide, and wants a "countervailing perspective." On each occasion, he gives much more detail to what he considers the crimes of Hamas than of Israel.

Pulcrano claims that a newspaper cannot commit censorship, only a government can. But humans routinely censor themselves to get along and so can a newspaper. Self-censorship is censorship and newspapers regularly leave out information from their reporting, only interview "experts" from one side of an issue or employ language that influences a reader's understanding of an issue. When accompanying Khrushchev to the United Nations in 1960, Pravda reporters commented that their government censors them, but that the US papers don't require censorship because US papers self-censor.

Pulcrano calls for an end to the bombing, but not the war on Gaza. A ground war is, apparently, acceptable. He makes no call for a ceasefire. He asks for both sides to make concessions without mentioning that Palestinians have been making concessions for 75 years. Ever conscious of readers and revenue stream, he uses just enough sympathetic language to keep people on both sides of the issue slightly off-balance. At no point does he ask the ones with

[Boycott Talking Points and List of Advertisers...see page 9](#)

Worldwide Movement for Palestine

by Sarah Soss

Now, on our third International Day to Shut It Down for Palestine, we've come to a point where there is absolutely no way for the empire to hide from the will of the people. The people of the world will no longer stand by as the US and Israel continues to commit atrocities against Palestine.

Three weeks ago, I spoke about the largest protest for Palestine in US history – one that saw over 300,000 people in Washington D.C. on November 4. I spoke about the 50 thousand people who showed up in San Francisco on the same day in solidarity. I spoke about Oakland and Tacoma blocking a boat carrying weapons headed for the Israeli military, and I spoke about the countries around the world, which are cutting ties with Israel.

Since then, the movement for Palestine only continues to become greater in strength and numbers. On November 8, over 100 US congressional staffers staged a walk out in front of the US Capitol, demanding the lawmakers they work for call for a ceasefire. On November 9th, the world first SHUT IT DOWN for Palestine.

In New York City, over 100 people occupied the Black Rock lobby, demanding that the company investing in the weapon manufacturers that arm Israel. They read the names of the over 10,000 Palestinians who have been killed by Israeli air strikes in the past month. Over at the *New York Times*, protestors occupied their headquarters, calling out the newspaper's complicity in Israel's

murder of Palestinian journalists. Around the country and around the world on the same day, university and high school students as well as teachers and professors staged major walkouts at their institutions, walking together courageously, even as they faced retaliation.

On November 17, the world again shut it down for Palestine. Palestine solidarity activists marched at the NYC News Corp. Conglomerate Headquarters to protest the lies told by Fox News,

It is these students and workers, along with artists, activists, and the global working class who win in shutting down the US war machine, not Democrats or Republicans.

The New York Post, and *The Wall Street Journal*. Students at Harvard staged a major walkout, while plenty of universities and institutions followed suit. We saw Dock Workers in Italy block the port entrance of Salerno to show they will not support Israel's genocide. And in these past few weeks, we've seen major student and worker led shut downs showing up rapidly across the globe.

This includes workers and labor unions in all different fields, such as the dock workers in Barcelona and Belgium who refused to

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Boycott Talking Points and List of Advertisers... from page 8

the power, Israel and the United States, to stop using that power – in weapons and money – to brutalize Palestinians. These are the demands of the protestors in Courthouse Square, which he has decided to pull from the Bohemian.

Whether one has taken a stand in favor of Israel or is on the sidelines, one should want to hear the other side of the story. We demand that the story be printed. The story of Palestine and Israel has been one-sided for too long.

Here is the list of advertisers (they change weekly) from the last issue and just the ones who do business in Sonoma County. Click on the email address or link to their website contact form, and let them know what you think.

- Green Music Center – gmedevel@sonoma.edu
- Western Farm Center – [contact form](#)
- Silk Moon – [contact form](#) at
- Sonoma Eyeworks – info@sonomaeyeworks.com
- Sonoma County Transit – comments@setransit.com
- Estero Café/Americana – [comment at the bottom](#)
- Next Record Store – nextrecordstore@sonic.net
- Luther Burbank Center for the Arts - no email - call 707-527-7006
- Lo Coco's – [contact form](#)
- Spreckels Theatre Company – no direct email, run by City of Rohnert Park. Contact City Manager, Marcela Piedra Gravenstein Grill – contact@gravensteingrill.com
- Petaluma Community Acupuncture – petalumacommunityacupuncture@gmail.com
- Summerfield Waldorf School – tanya@summerfieldwaldorf.org
- Milk & Honey – [contact form](#)
- Art Quest (Santa Rosa High School) – artquest@srhs.k12.ca.us
- Made Local Marketplace – info@madelocalmarketplace.com
- Rialto Cinemas – sebastopol@rialtocinemas.com
- The California – info@caltheatre.com
- Sebastiani Theatre – info@sebastianitheatre.com
- Santa Rosa Treatment Program – [contact form](#)
- Sebastopol Charter – ecortes@sebastopolcharter.org
- Sonoma County Library – ask@sonomacounty.libanswers.com
- Transcendence Theatre Company – info@TTCsonoma.org
- The Shuckery – jaz@theshuckeryca.com
- Luma Bar & Eatery – info@lumaeatery.com
- Khom Loi – info@khomloisonoma.com
- Benjamin Moore – spc_sonoma@yahoo.com
- Incredible Canine Training Center – by phone only 707-322-3272
- Bliss Organic Day Spa – owner@blissorganicdayspa.com
- Wild Birds Unlimited – wbusantarosa@gmail.com
- Black Bean BBQ – blackbeanbbqco@gmail.com
- The Chiropractic Center – [contact form](#)
- Storage Master – stormas@storagemastersr.com
- STACS: A River Dancing Memorial Clinic – this is part of Sutter Health. Good luck contacting them! Let me know of any suggestions.
- Sparc – [contact form](#)
- Oliver's – pbutler@oliversmarket.com
- El Coqui – elcoqui2eat@aol.com
- Redwood Credit Union – [contact form](#)
- Louis Thomas Fine Men's Apparel – [contact form](#)
- Sleep Solutions Unlimited – elizabeth@sleepsolutionsunlimited.com
- Jane Dispensary – [contact form](#)

Santa Rosa Solidarity for a Free Palestine



PHOTOS: A.A.NAGY

Worldwide Movement for Palestine... *from page 9*

load a ship of war materials for Israel, the trade unionists in India who resisted sending workers to Israel at the request of the Israeli Builder's Association, the global health care workers who picket against the bombing of hospitals and the Israeli apartheid that refuses medical care to Palestinians, the UK unions and activists who set up blockades to the entrances of the manufacturing units of companies BAE systems and Elbit Systems. Columbia University grads dumping their caps and gowns as their university bans pro-Palestine students and educators and Bay Area residents who shut down the Bay Bridge.

It is these students and workers, along with artists, activists, and the global working class who win in shutting down the US war

machine, not Democrats or Republicans. It is we, Sonoma County community members, who lift up the Palestinian resistance, not California senators like Alex Padilla who received nearly \$31,000 from pro-Israel lobby, or Jared Huffman and Mike Thompson who refuse to stand on the right side of history. It is we who will show up here every week until we are no longer fighting for Palestinian liberation but instead are celebrating its reality.

To do this, we have to stay united in struggle. I encourage you to connect with someone here who you've never met before, and to find someone with a clipboard to stay informed on actions for Palestine. Now repeat after me, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free." ✨

Zionism in the Land of Palestine

by *Barry Barnett*

Some say Palestinians are not a people. But indigenous Palestinians, Jews (kingdoms from 1020 BCE to 70 CE), and Christians (calling themselves Jews or “The Way” until late first century) have lived for millennia in the land. It has been called by many names – Israel-Judea; Roman province Palestina, which was derived from Greek Philistia, land of the Philistines; Ottoman Empire; British Mandate Palestine, etc.

Then in the late nineteenth century Austro-Hungarian journalist and political activist Theodore Hertzl published *Der Judenstaat* in 1896, envisioning a Jewish homeland in *Palestine* (emphasis added). In 1897, he convened the first in a series of Zionist Congresses. The first mass immigration of Jews to Palestine, then the Ottoman Empire, was in 1882.

The immediate provocation for the mass migration of European (Ashkenazi) Jews were the pogroms, sponsored by the tsar and other authorities, and the Okhrana (Russian secret police), and carried out largely by Cossacks and also antisemitic Christians led by Eastern Orthodox priests.

There was a first pogrom (“wreak havoc” in Russian) in 1821, but the one beginning in 1881 and lasting three years and the one from 1902-1906, were much more vicious and genocidal, with mobs attacking, raping, and slaughtering Jews in 166 and 690 towns and villages, respectively. Thousands of Jews were murdered, including many children and babies, and hundreds of women were raped.

In the Crusades (eight of them between 1096 and 1291), countless Jews were deliberately murdered (and Muslims, of course). Then in the European Black Death of 1347-51, when Jews followed the religious practice of washing the hands while Christians generally didn’t, Jews were blamed for poisoning the wells.

By November 2, 1917, when the British Empire had all but conquered the Ottomans, Lord Arthur Balfour issued the Balfour Declaration, stating that the British government looked favorably on the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people” in *Palestine* (emphasis added). Then we come to the six million Jewish victims (among others) of the Nazi Holocaust. No wonder so many got on the Zionist bandwagon.

However, when British Mandate Palestine became the State of Israel in 1948, resident and emigrating Jews didn’t buy land they didn’t already own from the Arabs (Palestinians), as had been the case since the 1880s, instead the Jewish military forced 750,000 Palestinians from their homes, an event termed the Nakba (“catastrophe” in Arabic) Therefore, 2023 is the seventy fifth “anniversary” of Israeli occupation of stolen Palestinian lands.

And the shrinking of Palestine continues.

I condemn the 10/7/23 massacre of 400 military personnel and 800-1000 civilians by Hamas (acronym of al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah, “Islamic Resistance Movement” in Arabic). But could this be a long-simmering reaction to previous events?

Just consider Gaza. After Israel released the Strip from a 1967 takeover in 2005, which was 38 years of occupation, the IDF (Israel “Defense” Force, emphasis added) bombed that densely packed community in 2008/2009 for 22 days, killing 1400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis. Then there were eight days of bombing in 2012, killing

160 Palestinians and 2 Israelis; seven weeks in 2014, killing between 2,200 and 2,400 Palestinians and 73 Israelis, six of them civilians. This was after Hamas kidnaped and killed three Israeli teenagers. In 2018-2019, during the weekly Gaza border wall protests, “The Great March of Return,” Israelis killed 223 and injured 9,204 peaceful protesters, with snipers shooting people’s knees for permanent crippling injury. Israel bombed Gaza for 11 days in 2021, killing 256 and injuring 2,000, after injuring hundreds of Palestinians at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. In 2022, Israel conducted 147 airstrikes in Gaza for three days, and Palestinian militants fired 1,100 homemade rockets into Israel, 20 percent of which misfired and caused 14 of the 49 Palestinian deaths.

“Israel has a right to defend itself,” many say. Yes, but according to international law, a nation that is occupied by a military power has a right to defend itself – even violently. Armed struggle is actually endorsed by the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

Again, I condemn Hamas killing mostly innocent civilians. But Israel’s reaction is overkill. Might there be a financial resources factor in this equation?

A very little-publicized fact is that ever since the 1990s, Israel, a

Jewish and rabbinic ethics for thousands of years condemn exploitation of others’ lives and resources. Going back to Abraham, a sacred Jewish precept is welcoming the neighbor.

resource-poor country, has been not only scheming to take over land for colonization, but also coveting – and exploiting – petroleum and natural gas (methane) rightfully owned by Palestine. New discoveries in the Levant Basin indicate about 3.45 trillion cubic meters (122t trillion cubic feet) of methane, while recoverable oil is estimated at 1.7 billion barrels. All together this is worth about \$524 billion. Israel has been working with British Gas and taking Palestine’s methane reserves, with nothing reserved for the Palestinians. In the West Bank, Israel has taken control of the Megeed oil and natural gas fields. Guess how much revenue goes to the colonized territories.

However, Jewish and rabbinic ethics for thousands of years condemn exploitation of others’ lives and resources. Going back to Abraham, a sacred Jewish precept is welcoming the neighbor.

Israel must not only cease hostilities, but must allow Palestinians their fair share of profits from fossil fuel recovery (and creation of clean energy industries). Both go hand in hand, and both are necessary for removing triggers for conflict and creating peace. And what can we do? As always, we organize, communicate, demonstrate, and take well-planned and coordinated actions. Which is happening all over the world, including right here in the Bay Area where protesters on November 16 blocked the Bay Bridge for three hours.

Sources: Theodore Hertzl, Wikipedia; Flashpoints with Dennis Bernstein, KPFA Radio 11/8, 11/10/23; Letters and Politics with Mitch Jezerich, KPFA 11/9/23; What Were Pogroms? Hila Ratzabi, My Jewish Learning; KPFA Evening News 11/16/23; Gaza-Israel conflict, Wikipedia; Palestine’s forgotten oil and gas resources, Mahmoud Elkhafif, Al Jazeera 6/21/21. 🐦

Barry Barnett is an activist and writer with works published at CounterPunch.org/archives, Bohemian.com/archives, and at Patreon.com/BarryBarnett.

Becoming a Part of the Anti-War Movement

by Sarah Soss

I was five years old when the United States invaded Iraq. I have vague memories of seeing massive peace protests in big cities on the news and hearing my family bring up the war in conversation in the background. I remember a few years later, when the execution of Saddam Hussein was celebrated throughout the neighborhood as if a big football game had been won, and I remember the same celebratory attitude in 2011 that “brought Americans together” after the execution of Osama Bin Laden.

Other than these events, and the typical patriotism that’s forced upon students throughout the country, there wasn’t a lot of talk in my life about the United State’s military involvement abroad, until I went to college. For many growing up inside the imperial core, unless your family is from somewhere directly affected by Western imperialism, learning even the bare minimum about the extensive history and continuation of US and Western backed coups, sanctions and dictators, is rare.

For me, Zionism and American support for Israel was hardly questioned in my upbringing. My own synagogue and Jewish community talked about Israel as “the homeland,” even though both sides of my family can trace generation upon generation back to Eastern Europe. I was taught at a young age that anyone who dared to scrutinize Israel was “antisemitic,” and that anti-Zionist Jews were simply “self-hating Jews.” Again, it wasn’t until my early twenties, when I stumbled upon books, documentaries and podcasts about Palestine, that I was exposed to the truth of the Israeli occupation, and that what was often labeled as “terrorism” throughout my life was actually Palestinian resistance towards settler colonialism.

Like most people, I think I was always sympathetic to the idea of peace, even before my knowledge of the horrors of Western imperialism, and before becoming active in the anti-war movement. My idea of peace, though, was mostly abstraction. It seemed to me that it was a thing that could only be achieved when those in charge declared it, and once declared, could only be maintained or taken away by a few ruling bodies. I felt my only meaningful contribution towards peace was what the working class is always told it is, “vote,” and specifically, “vote blue no matter who.”

This paradigm of mine shifted in 2021, after witnessing the monumental George Floyd protests, capitalist governments to a global pandemic, and most importantly, the Democrats’ response to it all. It quickly became clear to me, and to many others, around the same time that *both* the Democratic and Republican parties – even those representatives who are considered to be more “progressive,” – would sooner capitulate to corporate interests than they would to the people who they are supposed to represent.

I see both parties push imperialist propaganda and get wrapped up in the fog of war against Russia and China, while the majority of us here in the US struggle to put food on the table, can’t afford to pay rent, and barely have access to proper healthcare and education. Both parties, as always, push the pro-war agenda today, as Democratic and Republican politicians work in lockstep to send billions of dollars in aid to fund Israel’s genocide.

This disillusion with “voting blue,” and with the capitalist system, led me to want to get organized in a way where I could fight for REAL peace – peace that is struggled for, won, and created by the people, not by the crumbs of the ruling class. Searching for groups who were both revolutionary and disciplined in the move-



Sarah Soss leading a chant at a Cease Fire in Gaza Rally in Santa Rosa

PHOTOS: A.A.MAGY

ment, I found the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) in 2022 at Santa Rosa’s May Day rally.

Since getting involved and becoming a member, I’ve been fortunate to organize alongside PSL and the ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) Coalition organizers who have been in the struggle for Palestinian liberation for decades. Nationally and locally, the Palestinian Youth Movement, PSL, The People’s Forum, Arab Resource and Organizing Center, ANSWER, Students for Justice in Palestine, and many other organizations, have been bringing people together in historic protests in support of Palestine. For example, these groups mobilized 300,000 people to show up for Palestine on November 4th in Washington D.C., making this the largest pro-Palestine protest the US has ever seen. On the same day, San Francisco saw 50,000 people show up in solidarity. We continue to rally people to walk out of their schools and workplaces, to boycott and to shut it down for Palestine. We give our support to our siblings around the world who are going all out in the streets for Palestine.

Now is time to continue building an independent anti-war movement in the streets here in Sonoma County and across the country. As Israel wages its genocidal onslaught of terror on Gaza, funded by the US, Sonoma County members from two years old to 100 years old, from various religious and ethnic backgrounds, from labor unions and worker coalitions, are all showing up at local actions to say, “enough is enough, we demand for an immediate ceasefire, an end to the siege on Gaza, the freedom of all Palestinian political prisoners, and a total end to our tax dollars going to aid Israel’s genocide.” We will not stop until Palestine is free. 🌍

Sarah Soss is an organizer with the Party for Socialism and Liberation and was born and raised in Sonoma County.

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions, BDS – War Profiteers

by Rebel Fagin

Today we're going to address some of the war profiteers, the corporations who profit from the death and suffering of others and what you can do about them. This is not all of them.

The United States gives Israel \$4.3 billion a year; \$3.8 of which is military aid. Of that \$3.8 billion; 75% of it must be spent in the US. That's \$2.85 billion. Over the years US citizens have been trained to support Israel as a beleaguered victim democracy struggling to survive. This is why we agree to giving them money for "defense" when in fact it is a cynical way of boosting the providers of death with more profits. The war manufacturing industry can count on \$2.85 billion of your tax money every year. If this makes you mad, contact Congress and tell them you don't want your money going to the war machine. So, who are some of these vultures.

We start with Boeing. Boeing is a welfare company. They could not exist without government subsidies. Government spending makes up 89% of Boeing's income. In February Boeing sold 25 F-15A fighter jets to Israel. Last September the Pentagon announced that they would award contracts up to \$927 million to Boeing so they could supply Israel with 4 KC-46A air refueling aircraft. We've seen some of the results. In June 2021, Boeing's precision-guided missiles were used in Israel's assault on Gaza. This attack resulted in 253 murdered, 66 of whom were children. Unless you're in the market for a large jet or are invested in the stock market, there's little we can do to stop these merchants of death other than to inform and petition government.

This isn't the case with Hewlett-Packard, H-P. Hewlett-Packard's violations of Palestinians' human rights through their services and technology support for Israel's apartheid government has been well documented. H-P is directly involved in Israel's settler colonialism through the "Yesha database" which compiles information on Israeli citizens in the illegal settlements. The Aviv System is a population registry which is the basis of Israel's ID card system, its passbook system, like in apartheid-era South Africa. This system is a tiered system of citizenship that privileges Israeli Jews and gives inferior status to Palestinians, especially those living in East Jerusalem. H-P developed and maintains the Basel System – a biometric identification system used at the many checkpoints. This system also aids the Israeli navy in illegally enforcing the blockade of Gaza. Many groups ranging from unions to church groups to students to major cities are now actively boycotting H-P. You can too. First go to bdsmovement.net and sign the pledge to boycott H-P until they change. Then write the CEOs and tell them why you are seeking your computer needs elsewhere and then, do so.

Another tech company furthering suffering is Cisco Systems. Cisco Systems has invested tens of millions in the Israeli venture fund, JVP. Former CEO John Chambers is committed to making Israel a leader in cyber technology. Cisco is one of the most active multinational tech companies working in Israel. Cisco is the main supplier for IBC, the Israeli Electric Company's communication initiative, with a contract worth over \$150 million. They provide some of the tech used at the checkpoints as well as networking

systems, security systems, software and other tech infrastructure. There are many ways to boycott them. Many other tech companies to choose from for your tech needs.

In 2023, Dell Technologies won a \$150 million contract to provide servers, maintenance and related equipment to Israel's Ministry of Defense. This includes virtualizing systems and virtualizing platforms for all Israeli military's central server farms. Dell also provides cloud storage. These systems have expanded to Israel's police and to enforcement against Palestinians living in East Jerusalem. Dell makes computers and related tech for consumers as well. They are easy to boycott.

AM General will provide 20,000 JLTV vehicles along with 10,000 trailers to Israel through the US armed forces. These Humvees are specialized jeeps used for rapid deployment. AM General promotes their products to consumers by selling Hummer cars to civilians. Whenever you see a Hummer think apartheid and oppression. Other companies that do not market death make similar vehicles. Buy one of them when you're in the market.

Boycott these where you can and if you can't do anything else, boycott all products whose barcode begins with 729. This is the code for products coming from Israel. Boycott 729 until apartheid ends for the Palestinians.

Combined Systems Inc. is a US-based company specializing in the manufacturing of tear gas canisters, flash bangs, etc. Two of their primary markets are Israel and Egypt. They also run CTS Training Institute (CTSTI). This institute offers short-course trainings in various techniques of repression, like less lethal weapons techniques. Less lethal means you're less likely to die from these techniques, not that they are less *than* lethal. Headquartered in Pennsylvania, Combined Systems Inc. has distribution centers throughout the US. They provide the US-made tear gas used in the occupation via Combined Systems Inc, Defense Technology and Non-Lethal Technologies. In late 2011, in the village of Nabi Saleh in the West Bank, an Israeli soldier shot one of these tear gas canisters directly in the face of Mustafa Tamimi at close range. Tamimi died the next day. His death, like many others, can be laid fairly on the doorsteps of CTS. CTS is another welfare corporation, dependent on government contracts to survive and unless one is invested in the stock market, impossible to boycott.

This has been an overview of some of the war profiteers of the Palestinian occupation. There are others. Boycott these where you can and if you can't do anything else, boycott all products whose barcode begins with 729. This is the code for products coming from Israel. Boycott 729 until apartheid ends for the Palestinians.

Sources: whoprofits.org, investigate.ofsc.org, bdsmovement.net, Haaretz.com, electronicintafada.net 🌱

NAACP Armed Services and Veteran Affairs Program

Calling All Active Military and Veterans: Join the Local Chapter of the NAACP

by Danielle Garduño

On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981 establishing the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, committing the United States government to integrate the segregated military. Since then, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has worked tirelessly to advocate for and protect the rights of military members and veterans, particularly minority service members.

In recognition of the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9981, the NAACP and the US Department of Veteran Affairs, Minority Affairs, Center for Minority Affairs, signed a memorandum of agreement which sets forth a structure in which both entities will work in a mutually beneficial manner to advance and improve the quality of life for all our nation's veterans, including minority veterans. Part of this work includes the launch of the NAACP Armed Services and Veteran Affairs Program's "75 for 75 Military Membership Campaign." The goal of this campaign is for each branch to secure at least 75 memberships from active military, veterans, and members of veterans' organizations, as well as their families. The campaign kicked off on November 11, 2023 and runs until February 12, 2024.

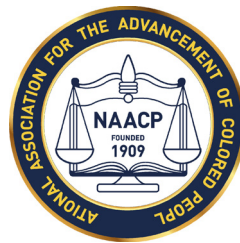
For decades, the NAACP Santa Rosa-Sonoma County NAACP branch has worked to advocate for, and protect the rights of, our local veterans through the Veteran Affairs Committee. The committee is made up of military veterans who work together to help veterans seeking employment or benefits that they are entitled to, as well as support those needing medical assistance, housing and help in filling out applications for any other needs. The committee's focus has recently been on homeless veterans – bringing clothes, toiletries, shoes, and food items to several homeless shelters and fundraising

for additional supplies and needs for homeless veterans.

As part of the "75 for 75 Military Membership Campaign," the Santa Rosa-Sonoma County NAACP invites active military members, veterans, members of veterans' organizations and military and veteran family members to join our branch. Memberships are \$30 annually for adults and there are a variety of lifetime membership options. We are also seeking membership donations for our local veterans. If you'd like to donate a membership to a veteran, please contact the [branch secretary](#).

For more information about membership, and to join the Santa Rosa-Sonoma County NAACP, please visit the [website](#).

Danielle Garduño is Secretary of NAACP Santa Rosa-Sonoma Branch.



NAACP

Santa Rosa – Sonoma County

*Become a member of the NAACP
Santa Rosa - Sonoma County Chapter*



PO BOX 3964, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Phone: 707.536.1047

Email: naacp.srsc1074b@gmail.com

Website: naacpsantarosasonomaco.org

Facebook: facebook.com/naacpsonoma

Instagram: instagram.com/naacpsonoma

Twitter: mobile.twitter.com/naacpsonoma

King, The Radical!

"We must learn to live together as community, or perish together."

Sonoma County Martin Luther King, Jr. 44th Annual Birthday Celebration

Sunday, January 14, 2024, 6:30-8:00 PM

Montgomery High School, 1250 Hahman Drive, Santa Rosa

Virtual Options: Zoom and Facebook Live / Livestream: Facebook.com/MLKcommittee

Zoom ID: 859 0770 2509, Passcode: 137256

Celebrate and Honor Dr. King's Legacy! The theme for 2024: *King: The Radical!* "We must learn to live together as a community or we will perish together." Performances include: the Sonoma County MLK Community Choir! MLK Praise Dancers! Also, Speakers, community recognitions, student awards, local artists and much more...

Each year, Sonoma County students have the opportunity to submit their creative works based on the theme for the Children's Poster Art, Teen Essay and Teen Oratory contests. The students will have their art displayed, read and heard at the event.

Presented by the Sonoma County MLK Birthday Celebration Committee

Contact: socomlcelebration@gmail.com. More info: Facebook.com/MLKcommittee



Responding to Climate Change

by Tomas Phillips

Climate change used to be something that was going to occur in the future. However, the last few years have brought climate change closer and closer! First, there were the Sonoma County fires of 2017, 2019 and 2020, and this past summer fires in Greece and Canada. Then there are the frequent reports of increases in greenhouse gas, rise in ocean temperature, earlier spring, glacier retreat, arctic melting, sea level rising, ocean acidification, and species loss.

The unrelenting facts of climate change can depress us into numbness. Yet the facts can also open us to a holistic approach called “Deep Adaptation.” It recognizes the need for profound changes in how we think, act, and organize our societies in order to address these challenges.

Deep Adaptation, coined by Professor Jem Bendell in 2018 and published in 2021, emphasizes the need to go beyond traditional mitigation and adaptation strategies to confront the existential risks associated with climate change. The approaches are known as the “4 R’s.”

Resilience: Deep Adaptation recognizes the importance of building resilient communities, and systems that can withstand and adapt to the shocks and stresses of climate change. This involves developing local food and water systems, renewable energy sources, and robust infrastructure to ensure continuity in the face of disruptions.

Relinquishment: Deep Adaptation advocates for letting go of unsustainable practices and systems that exacerbate climate change and societal vulnerabilities. This may include reducing consumption, disinvesting from fossil fuels, and abandoning growth-driven economic models.

Restoration: Restoration focuses on the regeneration of ecosystems and the mitigation of further environmental damage. Restoring forests, wetlands and other natural habitats, can help sequester carbon, support biodiversity, and improve the overall health of the planet.

Reconciliation: Reconciliation encourages individuals and communities to strengthen social bonds and find meaning in the face of adversity. Building networks of support, enhancing emotional and psychological well being and reorienting towards purposeful and fulfilling lives can enhance human resilience.

The urgency of Deep Adaptation is underscored by several critical factors. First, the accelerating pace of climate change is outpacing our efforts to mitigate its effects. Extreme weather events, sea-level rise and biodiversity loss are already affecting millions of people, and will only worsen without immediate action.

Second, the interconnectedness of global systems means that the collapse of one sector or region can trigger cascading effects, disrupting supply chains, migration patterns, and social stability. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the fragility of our complex global systems and the need for more resilient, localized alternatives.

Third, governments and institutions have been unable to address the root causes of climate change and societal collapse, often driven by short-term economic interests. This underscores the importance of community level action and leadership.

Deep Adaptation is not without its criticisms and challenges. Critics argue that it may promote fatalism and divert attention from essential mitigation efforts. However, proponents argue that Deep Adaptation is not a replacement for mitigation but a necessary complement. It seeks to address the reality that, even with ambitious mitigation, some level of climate change is already locked in and adaptation is essential to reduce suffering and protect vulnerable communities.

To implement Deep Adaptation, individuals, communities, and governments are urged to take action on multiple fronts.

Local Resilience: Communities need to invest in local food production, water sources, renewable energy, and infrastructure that can withstand climate related disruptions. This fosters self-reliance and reduces vulnerability to global supply chain disruptions.

The reality of climate change has been accompanied by mental stress, emotional challenges and the loss of cultural vision. Deep Adaptation is a holistic response to these stresses, and the accelerating of climate change.

Economic Transformation: A shift away from growth driven economic models is needed, emphasizing well-being and sustainability over profit. Transitioning to circular economies, promoting cooperatives and fostering local businesses can reduce the pressure on resources and the environment.

Policy and Regulation: Governments must implement policies that discourage such harmful practices as subsidizing fossil fuels and promoting unsustainable agriculture. Carbon pricing, conservation regulations and incentives for sustainable practices can accelerate the transition to a more resilient and equitable society.

Education and Awareness: Deep Adaptation requires a shift in societal values and priorities. Education and public awareness campaigns can foster a culture of environmental responsibility and community support. These campaigns should emphasize the importance of psychological well-being and social cohesion.

International Cooperation: Climate change is a global challenge that demands international cooperation. Countries should work together to reduce emissions, support vulnerable regions and promote the principles of deep adaptation.

The reality of climate change has been accompanied by mental stress, emotional challenges and the loss of cultural vision. Deep Adaptation is a holistic response to these stresses, and the accelerating of climate change. 🌱

Tomas Phillips is an investor, manager and board member at Burbank Housing and Sonoma Applied Village Services.

Identity, Trauma, and Healthcare

by *Shelby Wade, FT, CFPE*

“Do no harm”. In theory, it sounds nice. But this well-intended commitment is often absent from the realities of sexual trauma survivors, like me. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 25% of women experience sexual violence in their lifetime. More than 4 in 5 female rape survivors reported that they were first raped before age 25 and almost half were first raped as a minor (i.e., before age 18). Additionally, an estimated 63,000 children each year are victims of CSA with 34% of victims under the age of 12 and 82% identifying as female.

The trauma of sexual assault extends far beyond the abuse itself. For patients with a history of trauma, routine medical visits can be extremely distressing. Invasive procedures, such as gynecological exams, can be especially triggering. Because of the intimate nature of these procedures, and a lack of trust in providers to address their needs in a trauma-informed way, survivors often avoid critical routine care fearing re-traumatization.

This understandable avoidance has consequences. Survivors of sexual trauma are 8 times more likely to be diagnosed with cervical cancer, getting screened 30 percent less than non-survivors. Survivors are 1.5 times more likely to experience serious health conditions, such as pelvic inflammatory disease, ulcers, diabetes, irritable bowel syndrome, and autoimmune disorders like fibromyalgia, Crohn’s disease, and rheumatoid arthritis. They are also less likely to seek follow-up care despite higher levels of pain associated with their conditions.

Aside from the physical and mental health impact, sexual violence is also costly. [The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey](#) provided information to generate estimated costs of rape amounting to \$122,461 per victim over their lifetime. Based on the US population in 2011, and data indicating that more than 25 million US adults have been raped, costs were estimated to exceed \$3.1 trillion, with 39 percent, or \$1.2 trillion, directly attributable to medical expenses.

The US healthcare system does very little to address these problems, and for too long providers have relied on psychologists and other types of therapists to resolve their patients’ emotional needs. A [2020 study](#) found that only 20 percent of gynecological residency programs had formal, yearly training on trauma-informed care (TIC), 15.5 percent had never had any training, and respondents were largely unsatisfied with their training. Major barriers to TIC, as [reported](#) by medical providers, are time constraints, lack of availability for training, confusing information about TIC, and fear of re-traumatizing patients.

Sexual violence also disproportionately affects some groups. LG-BTQIA+ individuals, individuals with disabilities, military personnel and veterans and racial and ethnic minority groups experience a higher burden of sexual violence than the general population. According to the [Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network](#) (RAINN), the population at greatest risk is indigenous peoples, who experience sexual violence at twice the rate of any other racial group. Transgender, genderqueer, and nonconforming (TGQN) college students also experience heightened risk. Because sexual violence at its core is about power and control, fighting prejudice and bias in medical care is critical to building survivor resilience in healthcare settings. These reasons and more are why the [sixth guiding prin-](#)

[ciple](#) of TIC is cultural, historical, and gender issues.

Racism and rape have been [historically linked](#) from the chronic rape of enslaved individuals to the increased objectification of women who are Black, indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). Historically poor treatment of people of color, especially Black women in medical settings, includes [reports](#) of not being believed, pain being downplayed or dismissed, and treatment plans that are rooted in inaccurate and racist beliefs about biology. These disparities in treatment and structural biases mean that healthcare for black survivors of sexual violence is likely more difficult to navigate.

Additionally, people with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual disabilities, are often viewed as sexless, without a [need for education](#) on sexual violence and healthy relationships/sex. This causes their [sexual victimization](#) to be inextricably tied to ableism. In medical settings, many providers often lack [education on adaptations](#) and accessibility when conducting exams for people with disabilities, making healthcare utilization following an assault that much more challenging.

[Military and veterans](#) may also experience distress or obstacles in accessing proper care following assaults. Whether it’s fear of their command learning of the assault if they seek a sexual assault forensic exam (SAFE), fear of losing security clearance if they access mental health care or the fact that examinations required for

Today, trauma is all around us and some of us, like those highlighted above, bear this burden more intimately than others.

mission readiness may be triggering, military sexual trauma (MST) survivors face many barriers to care within and surrounding medical treatment. Furthermore, military members often have reduced or no choices in their healthcare providers and have no ability to sue military providers for mistreatment or malpractice.

Finally, [transgender and non-binary](#) individuals may experience added distress during an exam if the references, identification, and examination of body parts don’t align with their identity. Misgendering, outing, or other manifestations of bias can cause increased psychological and physical discomfort in LGBTQ+ patients. [These experiences](#) are heightened for those whose gender identity may have been weaponized as part of the assault as in instances of corrective rape. Therefore, gender-inclusive care is TIC.

Today, trauma is all around us and some of us, like those highlighted above, bear this burden more intimately than others. Knowing this, it is vital that we understand two fundamental notions about trauma. First, trauma is not the event that occurs that we cannot undo; rather, it is what happens inside us as a response. Second, identity and trauma are often inseparable, meaning trauma-informed care must focus on equity and accessibility, removing barriers that disproportionately affect some when possible and acknowledging and actively dismantling personal and organizational biases. When the healthcare system and practitioners embrace and effectively practice these tenets, they help victims transition to survivors. 🙌

Shelby Wade is a Field Traumatologist, Compassion Fatigue Educator/Practitioner, and founder of The Trauma Connection.

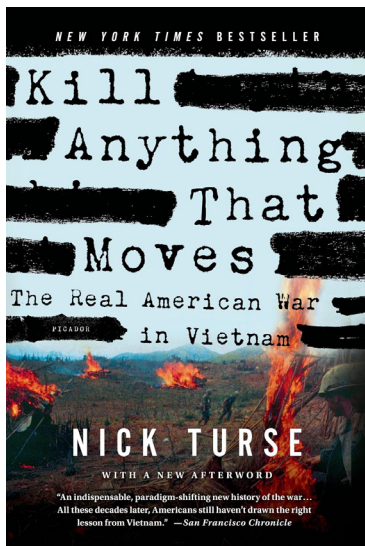
IMPORTANT READING – PART ONE

by Susan Collier Lamont

Most of us who read the Peace Press do a lot of reading. Many books have educated me about history, ideas and culture and I would like to share them with you on an ongoing basis.

To start, I want to share these three books, which have informed me on the many influences that have brought the United States to this very ugly moment in our history. I was raised with fewer American myths than the average white suburban kid in the fifties, but I still believed in a few of them. I no longer do. Believing them hasn't served us well. The people who run this country, within government and without, are soulless and brutal. Read these books to find out more.

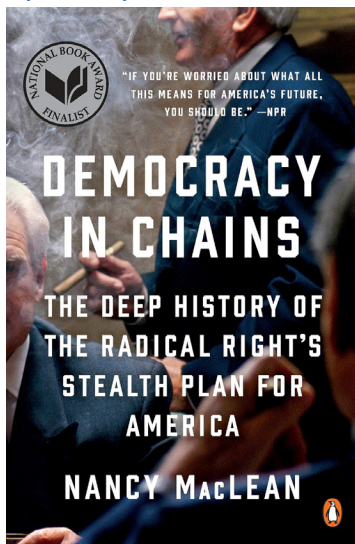
Kill Anything that Moves: The Real American War in Vietnam (pub. 2011) by Nick Turse



I was brought to the concept of peace earlier than most through LRY (Liberal Religious Youth) and Ferry Beach, a summer camp in Maine organized by the Unitarian/Universalists. The inhumanity of the war on Vietnam wove its way through my teens and twenties. I thought I knew how incredibly inhumane the US was, but I was wrong. Nothing prepared me for the brutality portrayed in this book. My Lai was not the exception, but the norm. Turse includes a trove of documentation, most of which was kept from the public. That our streets, our

public and private relations and our public policy have become more violent will come as no surprise after you've read this book.

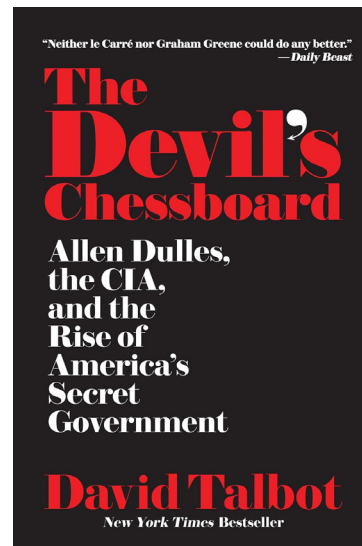
Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America (pub. 2017) by Nancy MacLean



Many of the founders of the United States believed that the common person was not fit to make decisions about their own lives. Many powerful people still do. The influence of that thinking has brought us the Citizens United Supreme Court decision and the study by Princeton that voters have virtually no influence on their "leaders" in government. This is an account of how this corporate coup was achieved. Central to MacLean's account is the work of one libertarian economist (before the word libertarian was coined),

James Buchanan. With allies, he was able to change the principles that were taught in university economics departments and law schools. He was hired by Chile's Augusto Pinochet to try out his theories, which the dictator deemed a success and from which the people are still trying to recover. The conservative Reagan was a bit of a disappointment, while the neoliberal Clinton hued much more closely to the libertarian ideal. As a result, many of Buchanan's theories are in practice in the US today, with devastating effects.

The Devil's Chessboard: Allen Dulles, the CIA and the Rise of America's Secret Government (pub. 2015) by David Talbot



I'm someone who doesn't believe much of what my government tells me about anything, particularly foreign policy, but this book sealed the deal. I now believe nothing. This book, with 40 pages of Notes, documents the creation of a CIA, which operates outside the government, sometimes without the knowledge of the president, and at the behest of corporate power. Much is currently made of Putin and the killing of his enemies. Well, hold onto your hat, because the names of members of the Italian and Jewish mafias' assassins, the names of their victims and how

the victims were disposed of are here. The callous violence is appalling. The alliance with German Nazis is well documented. Suffice it to say, I had to take this book in doses. I had to recover each time. And don't imagine that the situation is better now. As CIA Director William Casey said (many years after the period covered by this book), "We'll know our disinformation campaign is complete when everything the American public believes is wrong." 🙌



Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights

The purpose of the Commission on Human Rights is to promote better human relations among all people in Sonoma County through education, mediation, cooperation with County and community agencies, and by initiating action that fosters the recognition of and an appreciation for the cultural diversity of the community.

Monthly meetings on the 4th Tuesday. [See schedule here.](#)
Email: chr@sonoma-county.org • [Website](#)

Lessons for Young Organizers from a Lifetime Revolutionary

by Joel Eis

With an election year on the horizon and some disturbing voting trends indicated in the polls, everybody knows the political stakes are high. Progressives will need every tool in their kit to swing the tide. Fears about the coming election as well as ongoing struggles in such causes as anti-racism, feminism, LGBTQ rights, climate change, voting rights, and others, is causing all of us to examine our approach and to draw on everything we know.

Here's a new tool in your belt.

After a lifetime as a radical organizer and activist since the Vietnam War and civil rights era of the 1960s I've written a memoir, *Standin' in a Hard Rain, the Making of a Revolutionary Life*, published in January 2023 by World BEYOND War Press in Charlottesville, Virginia. The purpose of the book is to answer the question, "what does a political involvement do to your life?" This has become a question asked by many today both old and young as political involvement seems a need they never imagined.

My political activism began at the age of 13. By the 1960's, I'd become one of the people my parents warned me against. Unexpectedly I found myself everywhere with the action. On a vacation trip, I encountered the Freedom Marchers in the South and joined them. As a theatre student at S.F. State in '68, I found myself involved as an organizer in the longest, most violent student strike in American History.

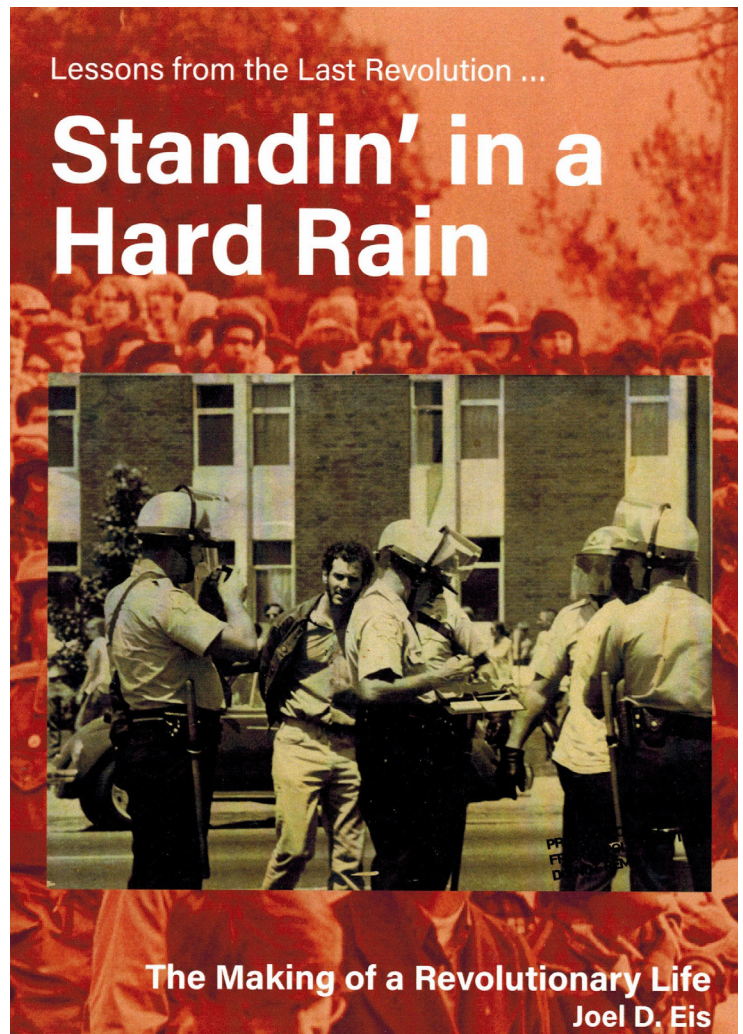
I then was involved in the Draft Resistance movement and rediscovered David Harris a friend from my childhood. The Farm Workers Strike found me a member of El Teatro Campesino with Luis Valdez, a former acquaintance from college. When I was at the People's Park demo, the bayonet at my throat was held by a National Guardsman who had been a schoolmate in Fresno. The unexpected connections continue into and beyond the Angela Davis debacle at the Marin County Courthouse from which she was railroaded to prison.

Will Durst, Columnist, S F Chronicle said, "Joel Eis' memoir reads like Forrest Gump of the 1960's only its real!"

Another reviewer describes it this way, "*Standin' in a Hard Rain* is the fast-paced, personal, 'boots-on-the-ground,' front line account of major events by a dedicated radical in the 1960s (and beyond) who found himself at the table with the planners, and out in the street running from the cops."

I could not have predicted the events around me, but I had to respond with my head and my heart. I was followed and informed on. My phone was tapped. I was shot at and did time in jail. I was black listed from work. The book ends with me burning my draft card, at the age of 73, against the war policies of the Trump era. I've seen my FBI file twice. The last time, it was as thick as a small city phone book. The FBI says it doesn't exist. I'm told the only reason they do that is if it's still active.

I am pleased to say that even without reviews in the major jour-



nals, (so far) the book has garnered significant praise and a satisfied readership.

"Joel Eis' Memoir is great to read. It's a great history lesson. He's an immediate new literary friend! (Peter Coyote Actor, author, Narrator, Ken Burns film on the Vietnam War).

"Joel Eis' *STANDIN' IN A HARD RAIN* is a useful and compelling read as the nation once again tries to find its bearings." (David Harris, organizer, National Draft Resistance during the Vietnam War, Federal prisoner for refusing the draft, 12-time book author, correspondent, *NY Time* and *Rolling Stone Magazine*). It has held a standing under #100 on Amazon.com in Memoirs and Politics for almost a year, *worldwide*.

Standin' in a Hard Rain can be found at the Mendocino Book Company in Ukiah, Gallery Books in Mendocino, Books Inc and Revolution Books in Berkeley, Bird and Beckett in San Francisco, and the Rebound Bookstore in San Rafael. It can be ordered from the comfort of your [home](#). 🙌

Joel D. Eis, MFA, is currently the co-owner (with his wife Toni) of the Rebound Bookstore in San Rafael, California and a [free lance writer](#).

Young Giants Thriving After Wildfire

by Maya Khosla

In the fall of 2023, the National Park Service (NPS) began to “re-establish” seedlings of giant sequoias, and other conifers, in groves within Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, which were intensely burned during the 2021 KNP Complex Fires. The plan faced much opposition from communities, in part because NPS evaluated the possible use of explosives to blow up snags (standing dead trees, many of which support wildlife) and later forest thinning, or selective removal of trees. Claiming that patches of burned forest were “otherwise unlikely to recover,” NPS moved ahead, equipped with nursery-grown conifer seedlings from other watersheds. Long lines of mules began carrying the seedlings down the narrow path to Redwood Mountain Grove, one of the park’s largest swaths of giant sequoias.

In light of findings in the spring and summer of 2023, preceding the planting efforts, the sight of mule trains bearing seedlings was puzzling. I hiked through Redwood Mountain Grove with an independent team of scientists who were keen on counting the seedlings. Having read the NPS accounts, I was prepared for disappointment – but was instead amazed. Redwood Mountain Grove is a canyon literally carpeted with seedlings of giant sequoias, firs, cedars, and pines, in addition to other natives, lupines, Solomon’s seals and monkey flowers, all of which have come into being since the wildfires.

The sheer abundance and vigor of seedlings, often dominated by giant sequoias, served as a solid testimony to the power of natural

regeneration. We counted seedlings in predetermined plots, spaced at regular intervals. Many of the plots supported tens of thousands of seedlings per acre. On route to our predetermined plots, we often passed patches with over 30,000 seedlings per acre, even more abundant with new growth than some of our plots. NPS conducted a similar study, and one of their 2022 plots I passed was also supporting tens of thousands of seedlings per acre, leaving little doubt that the regenerating areas were thriving.

Giant sequoia seedlings were especially abundant in patches of forest that burned intensely during the fires. The charred parents stand like proud sentinels guarding their progeny, age-old nutrients gradually cycling back into soil. The scientific literature is clear: Giant sequoia cones open up after wildfire, which marks the beginning of seedling growth. But the NPS documents stuck with their shadows of doubt, asserting that the fires of 2021 were too intense to promote enough new growth to sustain the grove of giants.

During a meeting with members of the public, NPS staff discussed their doubts that the giant sequoias would survive without the planting efforts. We were all standing in the grove, looking at the stunning regeneration, seeing different outcomes. NPS expressed doubt that the regeneration around us would survive 100 years from now, but could not be sure that the imported seedlings would survive. They sidestepped questions about dangerous pathogens that might be transported into the grove along with nursery-grown seedlings.

Two changes shifted the scene by mid-November, 2023: NPS

stopped its fall replanting efforts for the season and four environmental groups filed a lawsuit to stop further work. The lawsuit, filed by the John Muir Project, Wilderness Watch, Sequoia Forestkeeper and the Tule River Conservancy, is framed around the ground-based surveys and documentations, around the ancient ways of redwoods regenerating after wildfire and cycles of rain and snow and around the natural beginnings that have been marked by time immemorial. 🌲

Maya Khosla is a biologist and writer. She was appointed as Sonoma County Poet Laureate for a 2-year term (2018-2020).



The writer standing among two year old and younger giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) seedlings in a part of Redwood Mountain Grove that burned intensely during the 2021 KNP Complex Fire.

On the Trail of Local Stories

by Kristen Throop

Claiming Justice: On the Trail of Local Stories is a new walking trail in downtown Santa Rosa that honors the work of important activists from our community. Colorful portraits of fourteen honorees stretch from College Avenue south to Julliard Park. The round 18” markers are adhered to the sidewalk in locations significant to each honoree.

To learn about each activist, point your smart phone camera at the checked QR codes on each marker. At the top of the page that will open is an audio file, which you can listen to as you walk. Below the audio file are English and Spanish transcriptions about that person’s life and work. A great deal of research went into the biographies; they are the very heart of the project.

The narration, portraits, web design and research are all the creation of local artist Kristen Throop. The project was funded in part by Santa Rosa Art in Public Places and Creative Sonoma.

A map of the marker locations is at kristenthroop.com. The biographies for the activists are accessible only by walking the trail.

The activists honored on the trail are:

Evelyn Cheatham (1953–2019) *She brought her heart to every table.* Founder of Worth Our Weight, a cafe that taught professional culinary skills to approximately 500 young apprentices. Worked for police oversight. An accomplished chef.

Bernice Espinoza (b. 1981) *“My people struggle more than they need to.”* Poet and civil rights attorney. One of two removal defense attorneys in Sonoma County who provide free legal counsel to people in removal proceedings, particularly asylum seekers.

Magi Fedorka (b. 1958) *“Pride was what they built upon.”* Educator and early LGBTQI rights activist in Sonoma County. In 1990 proclaimed Pride Resolution before County Supervisors.

Vince Harper (1966–2021) *“I’ve always been interested in the underdog.”* An advocate for social and economic justice. Director of Community Engagement at Community Action Partnership (CAP), where he worked for 32 years.

Henry Kaku (b. 1948) *“A man committed to peace and education.”* Has spoken about his family’s internment at Tule Lake for 20 years. Educator and origami master. Judo Sensei who offered free self defense classes for Asian Americans.

Bill Kortum (1927–2014) and **Lucy Kortum** (1928–2022) *“Love that acted like rings in a pool of water.”* Preserved public access to the coast. Mentored and developed the local environmental community. Were involved with the founding of many environmental and political organizations.

Mei Takaya Nakano (1924–2017) *“Small as I was, whatever you do, has an impact.”* Inspired by the anti-war and civil rights movements to speak of her internment during WWII. An accomplished au-

thor and activist. A woman of undeniable integrity, quietly powerful.

George Ortiz (1934–2020) *“You have to have your hands in the masa.”* Co-founder of Latinos Unidos, California Human Development and many other organizations. Early organizer of Latinx community. Marched with Cesar Chavez and UFW.

John Richards (1824–1879) *“Truth crushed to earth will rise again.”* Began successful barbershop and bathhouse in Santa Rosa in 1856. Advocated for political change. Representative at Colored Citizens Conventions. Involved with two important African American newspapers: the *Pacific Appeal* and *The Elevator*. Paid for education of African American children in town.

Charlie Toledo (b. 1950) *“We can’t be afraid and hiding anymore.”* Executive Chair of Suscol Intertribal Council which is dedicated to the unity and preservation of Native American Culture and a safe place for Native Americans to gather and celebrate traditions.

Anthony Tusler (b. 1947) *“It was the moment we took power for ourselves.”* Disability rights activist who documented the 1977 504 protest at SF Federal Building – a watershed moment in history of disability rights.

Gilbert Gray (1916–1997) and **Platt Williams** (1928–2014) *“A new sense of dignity and destiny.”* Founders of local chapter of the NAACP. Leaders in the African American community. 🙌

Kristen Throop is owner of Backstreet Studios C, Art Alley off of South A Street in Santa Rosa




Evelyn Cheatham, chef, instructor, and law enforcement oversight activist, visited by Flavortown Mayor Guy Fieri

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Bearing Witness

by e.g. singer

See how we all bear witness again
as the hour grows late again
as the wounds to body and soul
seep into and stain this soil

to families cleaved—as the land—
by hatred and rage towards the other,
prisoners of history—all

to the collective screams
heard across borders
at what the heart can no longer abide
nor the senses make sense of

and as night follows day
as stagnant winds again blow wild
across desert sands
echoing off crumbled walls, once homes
as the toxic blanket settles in over the darkness

to the questions asked and still—still unanswered—
“Who is responsible,
what will be done now,
why do we suffer so,
when will all this cease,
where will we go,
how will we go on?”
and “Will the sun blocked out from the sky,
return some day dear Lord?”

and so...see how we all
bear witness again?

Cultivating a Local Peace Economy... *from page 1*

vulnerable if they complain about work conditions. And they suffer a constant fear that law enforcement will discover them and deport them, forcibly separating them from family and loved ones living with them here.

For example, Anel Aparicio, a leader of ALMAS LIBRES, has not seen her two children for over 10 years because she can't travel to her country of origin. Currently fighting a brain tumor, Anel fears that she will die before she is able to see them. Anastacia Cruz, another leader of ALMAS LIBRES, weeps and suffers severe emotional distress each time she talks about her frail mother, whom she has not seen in over 25 years.

These women's families are at the core of their humanity, so when they are denied access to their families, their human rights are violated. In order to send money to their children, both Anel and Anastacia work as house cleaners in Sonoma County, offering a vital service for meager wages. They are part of the pool of exploitable labor this country maintains by keeping workers in an undocumented status.

Many immigrant rights organizations, especially those that have grassroots constituencies, believe that we must continue to organize around passage of just legalization policies. While legislation like the Registry Bill may not pass this year, it is important to continue to build community participation in the campaign, and to create the political climate needed to push forward pro-undocumentation legislation.

Immigrant communities continue to organize, not to achieve a fast win, but to continue to build support for a just law which will offer an ongoing path to citizenship, a permanent solution to the current injustices. We follow in the steps of our ancestors who were part of the abolitionist movement in this country and the movement for the rights of Indigenous peoples. Struggle must not stop when results are not politically expedient. We must continue to take actions in order to create the next link in our longer struggle for true liberation.

Last year, Congress had various legislative options at the table, including the Renewing Immigration Provisions of the Immigration Act of 1929 (introduced in both chambers), the Dream and Promise Act (passed out of the House), Dream Act (introduced in the Senate) Farm Workforce Modernization Act (passed out of the House), Citizenship for Essential Workers (introduced in both chambers), the Dignity Act, and the US Citizenship Act (introduced in both chambers). Immigrant communities overwhelmingly supported the bill related to the changing of the registry date, because it does not include harmful policies like the expansion of temporary worker programs, more border and inland enforcement and an increase in detention centers.

We must continue to follow the leadership of undocumented migrants in their struggle for papers, peace and justice, and human rights. By doing so, we make our contribution to the historical link which will ultimately take us to communities' true liberation. ✨

Renee Saucedo coordinates the Northern California Coalition For Just Immigration Reform and works as an Organizer with ALMAS LIBRES, a program of Raizes Collective, in Sonoma County.

New Disability Rights Workshop at the PJC

by *Derek Hearthtower*

Are you a person with disabilities who is exhausted from struggling to get accommodations? Sometimes I wonder if organizations make us struggle so we will just give up and go away. Whatever their reasons, we deserve better. The truth is that inclusion is inconvenient, at least at first. But once the investment has been made it benefits everyone. To embrace inclusion we should embrace inconvenience.

My name is Derek. I'm an autistic activist and have worked in the fields of early childhood education, developmental disability caregiving and group home counseling. In my career I have seen, and been ordered to perform, many abuses. In my opinion, the problem is not just a lack of transparency and accountability. The standards themselves are too low.

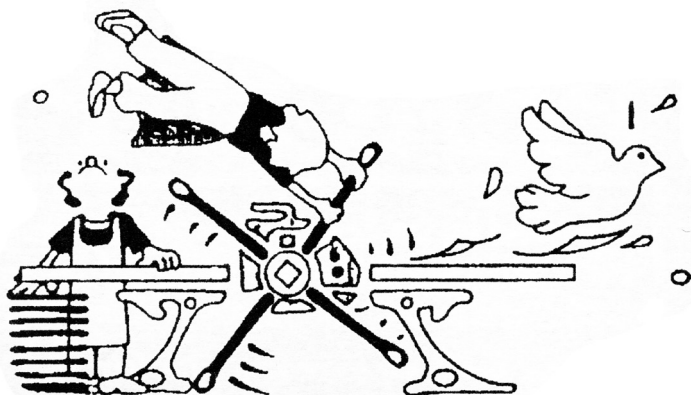
Please join me at the Disability Rights Workshop. Together we can share experiences and plan for change.

We meet every first Wednesday at the Peace & Justice Center, 467 Sebastopol Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95401, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

You may email any questions and accommodation requests to derek@empowerment.earth. The PJC is wheelchair accessible, however the restroom is not. Also, I know how impactful anxiety can be. I will work with anyone to help them feel more comfortable about participating. Any personal information shared in the workshop should remain confidential until given permission to spread it.

Change starts with acknowledging that there's a problem. Let's draw on each others' knowledge and talents to expose our hardships and motivate change through compassionate support. Rights are not granted. They are won. We get to decide what rights we have. Our struggles matter. We matter.

SONOMA COUNTY
peace press



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PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER OF SONOMA COUNTY

467 Sebastopol Ave.
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
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