

SONOMA COUNTY

peace press

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HISTORY IN THE MAKING! SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS FOR BLACK LIVES AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

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Deadline: March 10, 2021

Email articles in MSWord to peacentr@sonic.net

Word limit up to 700 words – space is limited.

Shorter pieces under 400 words welcome about local activism and events.

Authors are encouraged to delineate fact from opinion and wherever possible to substantiate their facts with references.

Poems are limited to 30 lines.

EDITING POLICY

The Editorial Collective selects articles that serve the movement for peace and justice in a positive way. 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 peacentr@sonic.net

Include CALENDAR (in caps) on subject line.

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We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.

– Cesar Chavez

GETTING CENTERED

Celebrating Black Lives and Women's Rights

Shekeyna Black

*"We've seen a force that would shatter our nation
rather than share it,
Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy.
And this effort very nearly succeeded.
But while democracy can be periodically delayed,
It can never be permanently defeated..."*

—Excerpt from the 2021 Presidential Inaugural Poem, "The Hill We Climb"

by Amanda Gorman, National Youth Poet Laureate.

The work of the Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County continues in regard to advocacy as well as being a community resource. The PJC Board of Directors unanimously approved having issues around homelessness be the top priority of 2021. Board Members Audrianna Jones and Rebel Fagin continue to distribute donated items to the houseless folks living on the streets of Santa

dent Office of Law Enforcement Review & Outreach, "Measure P grants IOLERO increased authority to do the work of law enforcement oversight including: subpoena power, direct access to the Sheriff's records including body-worn camera (BWC) videos, posting of BWC videos to IOLERO's website, discipline recommendations and IOLERO acting as a receiving and investigating agency for whistleblower complaints. Measure P also sets IOLERO's budget at 1% of the Sheriff's budget." There are concerns that IOLERO Director Karlene Navarro is biased towards law enforcement, thus creating a conflict of interest in her position as a community representative.

February is Black History Month and in that spirit, let us honor people like Black Lives Matter co-founders, Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi. The three women founded BLM "in 2013 in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer," according to blacklivesmatter.com. Patrisse Cullors was featured in a 12-part series on YouTube in November 2020 called "Resist." Cullors speaks about the documentary saying, "Resist recognizes those who have worked tirelessly to bring transparency, accountability and necessary alternatives to LA County's criminal legal system," according to www.blackfilm.com. Alicia Garza is quoted as saying, "Black Lives Matter was created as a response to state violence and anti-black racism and a call to action for those who want to fight it and build a world where black lives do, in fact, matter." Opal Tometi is quoted as saying, "Racism should be a core concern for all Americans in every area of our lives."

The newly appointed, Director of the United States Domestic Policy Council, Susan Rice, spoke at a White House Press Briefing on January 26, 2021. Her department is tasked with putting equity on the foreground of policy. Ms. Rice, whose family roots are descended from Jamaican immigrants and enslaved peoples says, "We'll hold the federal government accountable for advancing equity for families across America.

I have the support of every White House office and every agency in this work because as President Biden has made clear, advancing equity is everybody's job." Despite some controversy with Ms. Rice's past political career, she is in a new current position of power and therefore needs to be held answerable for her efforts as the Director of the Domestic Policy Council. Now is the time to move beyond Martin Luther King's Dream to a lived reality. Humanity has had more than enough of systemic racism, police brutality and racial injustice. We can and must do better for both the present and future generations.

March is Women's History Month and March 8 is International Women's Day, thus we celebrate young Swedish activist, Greta Thunberg, who has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. She delivered her 2021 message to the World Economic Forum in Davos a few days after her 18th birthday stating, "We are not telling you to 'offset your emissions' by just paying someone else to plant trees in places like Africa while at the same time forests like the Amazon are being slaughtered at an infinitely higher rate. Planting trees is good, of course, but it's nowhere near enough of what needs to be done, and it cannot replace real mitigation or rewilding nature." 🌿



PHOTO: BEN BAKER - REDUX

Honoring the founders of the Black Lives Matter movement for carrying on the struggle for Black Liberation. L to R: Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi.

Rosa. Donated items such as flashlights, backpacks, tents, eye-glass cases, small-sized toiletries and pre-packaged healthy snacks and bottled water can be dropped off at the PJC on Tuesdays between 3 & 5:00 pm. Additionally, Audrianna has implemented a hot meal delivery once-a-month to bring a bit of joy to those less fortunate people in our community experiencing chronic homelessness. Designated financial donations can be made to PJC's "Helping the Houseless" project.

Some local issues of importance include holding the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors accountable for the implementation of the policies regarding Measures O and P, which voters approved in the November 3, 2020 election. The Sonoma County Department of Health Services website states "Measure O funding will support Behavioral Health Facilities, Emergency Psychiatric Services, Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Outpatient Services, Behavioral Health and Homelessness Care Coordination, and Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing." Currently applications are being reviewed for the Measure O Citizen's Oversight Committee position.

According to the January 7, 2021 news update by the Indepen-

Keep Sonoma County Tenants Housed... through the pandemic, wildfires, and beyond!

Jeremy Hill, Rachel Marcus,
and Rio Molina

Do you know that there is a union in Sonoma County fighting for aggressive regulation of landlords, strong anti-eviction protections, and the promotion of decommodified housing alternatives? Much like a labor union founded on shared experiences of exploitative working conditions, the Sonoma County Tenants Union (SCTU) organizes renters from a diverse range of housing conditions to confront the political and financial power of landlords, corporate property management companies, and real estate speculators. The foundational principle of our union is that safe, secure, and affordable housing is a basic human right that should be enjoyed by all people. We strive for transformative change around housing rights, practices, and policies, and thus elevate the experiences, knowledge, and needs of those most affected by our current systems: low-income people, people of color, people with disabilities, trans and queer people, undocumented people, and unhoused people. These are the communities that have been hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and the deepening crisis of unaffordable housing.

Renters are in a crisis. Before the pandemic, more than 50% of renter households in Sonoma County were paying more than 1/3 of their income in rent. A disproportionate number of these households are Black, Indigenous, and/or Latinx. Workers in the service industry, farm work, domestic work, and other high risk jobs have lost income due to the pandemic and are also at higher risk of COVID exposure. Many are navigating the uncertainty of unemployment relief, and many of the roughly 37,000 undocumented residents in Sonoma County are not eligible for unemployment benefits. In So-

nomia County, unpaid rent is \$10.2 million each month. As of this writing, most of the rental assistance funding has been depleted. Yet, some politicians think that households struggling to pay rent before the pandemic can make up this debt in 60 days after protections end. The gaslighting continues in mainstream media, where the need to remain housed during the pandemic is repeatedly overshadowed by a narrative prioritizing the concern of ‘mom and pop’ landlords. In reality, most renters live in units owned by large investment companies or wealthy individuals who own multiple properties. In essence, the focus on landlords is the ‘All Lives Matter’ response to calls for racial justice, only in this case we’re talking housing justice.

In September, Gov. Newsom replaced the CA Judicial Council’s comprehensive eviction moratorium with AB 3088, a watered-down, temporary bill that, while providing protections for tenants, also contains a variety of loopholes and allows sixteen “no-fault” reasons that landlords can use to evict tenants during a pandemic. Since the stronger protections were removed, eviction filings in Sonoma County have more than doubled in almost half the time.

Evictions are traumatic. In a pandemic, they are deadly. Nationally, in states where eviction protections had lapsed, researchers found that more than 433,000 COVID-19 cases and almost 11,000 deaths were a direct result of evictions. In Sonoma County, 11,400 families are at risk of eviction when the California protections expire. This is a public health emergency for the entire community.

As renters ourselves, we know that the laws about tenants rights can be confusing. In August, SCTU started a Tenant Counseling Hotline where we support people in

knowing their rights and advocating for themselves and their neighbors. If you or anyone you know is facing eviction, rent increases, habitability issues in their home, or difficulty with their landlord, please give us a call at 707-387-1968. We take calls in both Spanish and English seven days a week.

Tenants cannot live from temporary measure to temporary measure. We need meaningful debt relief, eviction protections, and housing that is truly affordable and divested from the speculative real estate market. If you support our work and want to get involved with SCTU, check us out at <https://www.sonomatenants.org> to join a meeting, sign up as a member, outreach to other tenants, contact your elected officials, and/or sign up to volunteer on our hotline.

Sources:

1. Bay Area Equity Atlas and North Bay Organizing Project. The Coming Wave of COVID-19 Evictions. <http://www.northbayop.org/news/2020/12/3/update-from-policy-link-on-numbers-of-expected-sonoma-county-evictions>
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3. <https://www.tenants-together.org/updates/newsom-unveils-loophole-riddled-eviction-deal-state-legislature>
4. Case Filing Statistics Report from the Sonoma County Clerk
5. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/27/evictions-have-led-to-hundreds-of-thousands-of-extra-covid-cases.html>
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Jeremy Hill, Rachel Marcus, and Rio Molina: Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Tenants Union and counselors with the Tenants’ Rights Hotline 🏠



IT'S UP TO US!

REPORT FROM THE SONOMA COUNTY CLIMATE SUMMIT



On January 10, 2021, almost 300 people gathered together for It's Up To Us! Sonoma County Climate Activists Community Summit (Climate Summit) held on Zoom. In the minutes before the Climate Summit, participants were inspired by Alice Mayne-Ashworth's renderings of Sunrise Movement songs. The Climate Summit Master of Ceremonies, Doron Amiran, EV Program Manager at the Climate Center, introduced us and kept us on track. Presenters excelled in bringing us together to connect,

When we come together we can hold wealthy exploiters accountable and put an end to destructive projects. Even during the pandemic, we can gather, sit in virtual circles inspired by art, wisdom and nature and find strength in sharing.

to pay attention, to transform through action – and to keep to the time provided!

Our first presenter, Dr. Brenda Flyswith-hawks, spoke eloquently about the much-needed intersection of indigenous traditional practices and western science. Elizabeth Kaiser spoke about the value of regenerative agriculture practiced on small farms, their sheer productivity and positive impacts on soil health. Cory O'Gorman elaborated on his studies of fire, cultural burns and the great value of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) systems, shared writing about his experiences, and commented on the use of TEK for industrial-scale logging as an example of cultural appropriation. Writer and biologist Maya Khosla spoke of the value of natural wildfire in unlogged forests that regenerate naturally and beautifully. Wildfires are most misunderstood in areas of heavy logging. The dangerous

emissions associated with biomass emit more carbon dioxide than burning coal (for an equal amount of power generated). There is a misguided notion that biomass is renewable energy. Using forest-based products for generating energy is at least 1.5 times worse than coal.

Environmental educators Fabiola Maya and Vincent Tavani shared their poem, inspired by their recent travels through forests and other wild places and reached out to reconnect us with what we love about

our relationship with nature. Sunrise Movement youth members Christine Byrne and Janina Turner shared the origins and the power of the new Youth Movement working toward stopping climate change, securing a Green New Deal and creating a liv-

able future for all. Greenbelt Alliance Advocacy Director, Teri Shore explained how Greenbelts protect our communities and create climate resilience. Jenny Blaker and Woody Hastings explained CONGAS (Coalition Opposing New Gas Stations), a powerful new movement aimed at stopping the construction of new gas stations in Sonoma County. David Warrender discussed CCL (Citizens' Climate Lobby) and ways that people in our community can bring about a bold new climate policy. June Brashares and Woody Hastings described a prospective Sonoma County ballot proposition to establish a Progressive Wealth Tax for Climate Action – given the massive amount of wealth and the associated carbon footprint in the hands of the few who have the most.

Frequent chats and questions indicated that participants were inspired by the strong messages of activism. Participants established a

strong common ground. Themes included a sense of faith in wild lands that regenerate on their own terms or in response to traditional fire treatments, the importance of producing local foods, of gathering to oppose large-scale projects that exacerbate climate change, the importance of being in conversation with our leaders. These prevailing themes were nurtured throughout the summit.

Indigenous peoples kept ancient traditions that fostered balance and harmony between humans and nature. Green spaces are a vital part of that balance. Careful planning can limit urban growth, chemicals, monocrops, toxins and concrete. Growing food can be part of the balance when we build the soil instead of deplete it. A system that ignores people of color and over-extracts for profit ignores the wisdom that kept our land healthy for thousands of years. Wildfires can grow worse with large-scale logging projects. Biomass is decimating our forests while taking necessary funds away from real renewable energy like wind, solar and geothermal.

It's Up To Us! to preserve our ecosystem, locally and globally. When we come together we can hold wealthy exploiters accountable and put an end to destructive projects. Even during the pandemic, we can gather, sit in virtual circles inspired by art, wisdom and nature and find strength in sharing.

Perhaps it was fortunate our March 2020 Summit was cancelled. Our event rose like a phoenix at the beginning of 2021. Long-standing activism combined with digital technology brought our event to life – and a short film served as a follow-up. 🙌

The Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCo-CAN!) is a strong and active network of 50+ local climate change groups and over 200 individuals working together to address and reverse climate change. We meet in months with a 5th Monday, 7-9 PM. Currently meet on Zoom. Next meeting is March 29. Join our listserv for discussion and information sharing. Your group is welcome to join the network. Network support is available for all local climate activism. Contact us at SonomaCountyCAN@gmail.com

Essential DA Forum Coming Up in March

Jim Duffy

In March, the Sonoma County Chapter of the ACLU, along with the Peace and Justice Center of Sonoma County and several other organizations, will be sponsoring an educational forum focused on the Sonoma County District Attorney's office. The final details of the forum are being set after the deadline for this issue of the Peace Press. The forum will be open to the public and

Being as educated as we can be for this race will be critical to our ongoing efforts for justice in our county.

will be advertised widely, including in the Peace and Justice Center's Weekly E-mail Calendar.

Sonoma County's current District Attorney, Jill Ravitch, has announced that she will not be seeking a fourth term. Her announcement will likely open up the field for a crowded and highly contested race that is likely to be issue-driven at a time when criminal justice reform, racial justice and police accountability have been central to our public discourse. Being as educated as we can be for this race will be critical to our ongoing efforts for justice in our county.

The Sonoma County District Attorney has tremendous power to impact our lives. If we are accused of committing a crime, it is not the police but the District Attorney who has the sole power to decide if criminal charges are filed and the severity of those charges. For community members who are indicted, our District Attorney sets the pre-trial detention policy that determines when bail will be demanded.

They alone decide who is deserving of a jail or prison sentence and who will instead either be routed into a diversion program to help rebuild their life or have charges dismissed. Diversion opportunities are particularly important for parents of minor children, mentally ill persons, homeless persons and addicted persons. Sonoma County jails currently have very large numbers of individuals who are mentally ill, homeless and/or addicted who were not offered diversion opportunities.

Many District Attorney's offices have Conviction Integrity Units. A review of the organizational chart of the Sonoma County District Attorney's office reveals that we do not have such a unit. These units can review claims of innocence, agree to permit defense access to evidence for re-testing, and use information gleaned from the unit's investigations to adopt policies that will minimize or eliminate wrongful convictions.

Our District Attorney has a responsibility to help root out corrupt policing. They can choose to investigate or not investigate police shootings, police and correctional deputy sexual assault and other serious use-of-force incidents. They can choose to prosecute or not to prosecute law enforcement personnel who are found to have committed criminal acts.

The District Attorney can make it easier or harder for community members to expunge criminal records. They make the decisions regarding prosecuting or not prosecuting domestic violence and sexual assault charges. They determine whether juve-

niles get charged as adults, the applications of gang related charges and enhancements, 3-strike charges and make death penalty decisions.

Our District Attorney determines when we prosecute environmental violations, violations that frequently disproportionately impact our lower-income neighbors.

Often we fail to appreciate how impactful our votes for District Attorney are. After a summer of massive Black Lives Matter protests in our county, a fall election defined by an overwhelming 2/3 vote for increased law enforcement accountability and transparency for our Sheriff's Office (Measure P), and a new year with a fresh set of newly elected majorities in many of our cities indicating they are going to continue to bring long overdue civilian oversight to our other policing agencies, Sonoma County voters are encouraged to attend this important forum in March (exact date to be announced) and become better educated voters on our important and powerful District Attorney's office. 🙏

Jim Duffy is a Sonoma County Chapter of the ACLU Board Member who focuses on Police Practices.



Donation Drive for the Houseless

The following items can be dropped off at the Peace & Justice Center every Tuesday, 3-5 PM
Please store clean items in large plastic bags.
Do not drop off items during non drop off hours.

Tents, Sleeping Bags, Blankets, Backpacks, Gloves, Flashlights, Jackets, Socks, Eyeglass Cases, Bottled Water, Packaged Healthy Snacks, Small-sized Toiletries



All items will be given to local nonprofits to distribute to the houseless. Members of the PJC Board will also be distributing items

Peace & Justice Center
467 Sebastopol Ave, Santa Rosa
(off Santa Rosa Ave, south of Juilliard Park)

For questions please contact peacentr@sonic.net

Positive Outcome for Memorial Hospital Workers' Strike

*Taylor Davison and
The North Bay Jobs with Justice team*

I am an Emergency Room Registrar at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital and the newest member of the Executive Board for North Bay Jobs with Justice. Today, I am asking you to join me in standing up for essential workers in the North Bay.

I work with some of the most dedicated people in Sonoma County. We show up for the community and each other, through fires, flood and a pandemic. I have spent the better part of my adult life working at this hospital. I was once proud of the company that I worked for, but over the last decade, I have seen the core values become just talking points and my co-workers' morale has been slowly eaten away. We are struggling as frontline workers.

Recently, though, we have come together to stand up for ourselves and our whole community. This past fall, after over a year of struggle and a 5-day strike, North Bay Jobs with Justice held a Workers' Rights Board Hearing for us. We were given the opportunity to tell our stories about what was really happening inside the walls of the hospital. My co-workers and I felt so empowered to speak our truths and finally actually be listened to. Usually, when North Bay Jobs with Justice has announced the release of a Workers' Rights Board report, there is also an invitation to join the workers' next action. But this time is different! I am proud to announce that even before we released the report, my co-workers and I won our contract! I couldn't be prouder.

Inspired by the way that the coalition really showed up for us with boundless enthusiasm, I decided to step up by joining the Executive Board of North Bay Jobs with Justice. This is all new for me, but I believe in what we are doing. I love the work I get to do with JwJ. It is work that comes from the heart. As the pandemic carries on and season after season of devastating fires roll through, our mission of advocating for all workers has become even more urgent. Join us!

Over the past 6 years, North Bay Jobs with Justice has held 7 Workers' Rights Boards, and every time, the workers have come out victorious. I don't know who the



Taylor Davison standing in front of Memorial Hospital during the NUHW Strike

next group of workers will be that will need our support, but I know that I will be there in solidarity with them. None of this work could be done without the support of our partners.

I invite you to the frontline of a growing movement of workers for economic, racial, and climate justice. You can view the video of the full hearing, and download the newly released Workers' Rights Report at <https://www.northbayjobswithjustice.org/workers-rights-reports-and-findings.php>

In Solidarity! ✊

Over the past 6 years, North Bay Jobs with Justice has held 7 Workers' Rights Boards, and every time, the workers have come out victorious. I don't know who the next group of workers will be that will need our support, but I know that I will be there in solidarity with them.

COVID Pandemic in Palestine

Rebel Fagin

One thing I know, no matter how bad it is here, it's worse in Palestine. Such is the case with COVID.

In August there were just over 1,000 reported cases of COVID in Palestine. By mid-November it was 2,738. As of December 25 there were 147,234 reported cases with 1,385 deaths and 3,000 new cases per day.

For individuals to protect themselves we need to maintain social distances, wash our hands frequently and wear masks. Most of this is difficult to impossible within Palestine, certainly in Gaza.

Nearly 2 million people live within the 140 square mile area that is Gaza. Social distancing is difficult to impossible. Water is at a premium. Electricity averages 4 hours a day. Hospitals in Gaza cannot meet the challenge. They have increased their bed capacity from 100 to 150 beds. This is woefully inadequate.

Another problem is housing. With limited housing and massive unemployment, people are forced to move in together, increasing the spread of the disease. "Every single person in my family is infected, our neighbors too. There is hardly a street where someone isn't infected," stated Ahmed Alnajjar, an infected young man.

"The Gaza Strip lacks oxygen-generating machines, ventilators, protective gear and hygiene materials," said Dr. Basim Naim of the Ministry of Health. In December health officials announced that they could no longer conduct COVID testing in Gaza due to a lack of testing kits. The only lab in Gaza has been shut down. Only about 30% of the population has been tested.

People in the West Bank are also struggling to survive. The Palestinian Authority has closed the entire West Bank. Christmas in Bethlehem was cancelled. Many living in the West Bank had traveled to Israel daily for work. All travel in and out of Israel for work is currently banned. Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh stated, "We know that the lockdown has a negative effect on the economy. When we're given the choice between the lives of you and your loved ones, and financial profits generated by economic activities, we chose the former."

Unemployment has shot up to a staggering 82% of the work force. Ahmed Al-Bana, a former carpenter who now sells masks on the street stated, "To me, hunger is more

dangerous than the virus." \$13 million has been budgeted to help people through this crisis. This is not nearly enough for the 2.5 million people living in the West Bank. The Palestinian Authority hopes that the World Health Organization will help. The West Bank has one refrigeration unit adequate for the Pfizer vaccine. Israel refuses to help the Palestinians and is not providing any vaccine or medical help. In January the Palestinian Authority bought 150,000 doses of the vaccine, enough for 75,000 people, from Astra-Zeneca. Inoculations will begin in February. Gaza's portion of the vaccine will come out of the allotment sent to the West Bank.

In Israel, inoculations have begun. They are using Moderna and Pfizer vaccines. They also have mobile vaccination units, complete with refrigeration. By the end of January they expect to have inoculated 25% of their population. This campaign includes settlers living in the illegal, segregated settlements, but not their indigenous neighbors.

Israel's government has committed an international crime by refusing all aid to the Palestinians and preventing others from helping them. "Israel actually is violating

international law because it is denying its responsibility as an occupying power," said Dr. Mustafa Barghouti, Head of the Palestine Relief Society.

Many people in Palestine had relied on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) money to survive. Trump ended this thin lifeline. Biden says he'll resume it. We'll have to wait and see if Zionist forces will allow him to do so.

Even if the aid resumes, the Palestinians will still need help. What aid Palestine gets is dependent on what Israel allows in, and what they can pay for. Some of the groups providing COVID specific aid to Palestine include www.globalgiving.org, www.unicef.org, www.irusa.org (Islamic Relief, USA) and www.unrwa.org. These groups are providing much needed PPE, masks, food, ventilator training and washing stations. There are many other grassroots organizations that help the Palestinians regularly, such as MECA, SABEEL and Code Pink. They, too, can always use your help in this struggle for peace through justice.

Sources: DW.com, 11/28/20; Al Jazeera, 11/23/20 & 12/7/20; Times of Israel, 12/17/20; <https://www.pbs.org>, 12/17/20; Mondoweiss.net, 12/25/20; NPR, 1/03/21. 🐦

Christian Zionism and Facebook

Rabbi Alissa Wise

Right now, Facebook is weighing a change to its hate speech policy – but not one that would make anyone safer. The social media giant is considering labeling "Zionist" a proxy for "Jew" or "Israeli," making it a protected category. Under this policy, attempts to hold the state of Israel accountable could be labeled as hate speech and removed from the platform.

This change would deprive Palestinians of a critical venue for expressing their political viewpoints to the world, chill efforts to hold the Israeli government accountable, and undermine the fight to dismantle antisemitism.

Today, together with 23 partner organizations, we're launching an international campaign to tell Facebook that we need the freedom to talk about Zionists and Zionism – as Jews, as Palestinians, and as anyone joining the struggle for justice

and equality for all in Palestine/Israel. Initial signers come from across the globe and include politicians and poets, human rights defenders and movie stars. From Hanan Ashrawi to Karol Cariola, from Wallace Shawn and Peter Gabriel to Noam Chomsky and Judith Butler, from Miriam Margolyes to Dr. Cornel West, the list is growing fast.

Facebook shouldn't deprive Palestinians of a critical venue for talking about their daily lives, experiences and political viewpoints. Tell Mark Zuckerberg and Sheryl Sandberg that we need to talk: Adding the word "Zionist" as a protected category in Facebook's hate speech policy only serves to build more walls to keep us apart. Restricting the use of the word "Zionist" is the wrong solution to a real problem.

Just a few weeks ago, we watched in horror as white nationalists bearing antisemitic *Christian Zionism and Facebook...see page 7*

Chocolate's Scary Secret

lauren Ornelas

Look at the small print on most chocolate candy wrappers and you'll read a familiar list. Cocoa, of course. And sugar. Perhaps cocoa butter. Maybe a little vanilla and a few other ingredients. Some may make your mouth water and others you may not even be able to pronounce.

What you won't find is where the chocolate came from. I am not referring to the location of the company that made the confection, but to the country of origin for the cocoa – the place where it was planted, grown and harvested. Of course, not many food labels tell you where the ingredients came from, but chocolate is among the products with an insidious history since it is very often the product of the worst forms of

child labor, including slavery.

For this reason, many companies keep the country of origin for their chocolate hidden. Even companies that claim to be transparent, such as Clif Bar, can be stubbornly mum about where they source their cocoa.

Just Five Years Old

While some non-profit third-party certification groups claim that the companies they certify source their cocoa ethically, any chocolate that is sourced from areas where the worst forms of child labor are known to take place is potentially tainted by slavery. In an in-depth investigation by The Washington Post in 2019, the newspaper concluded that third-party certification “has been weakened by a lack of rigorous enforcement of child labor rules. Typically, the

third-party inspectors are required to visit fewer than 10% of cocoa farms.”

How could any chocolate company be satisfied with that? Chocolate comes from cocoa beans, which grow on trees in large pods and must be cut down with machetes, mainly in the tropical climates of Western Africa, Asia and Latin America. Most chocolate, about 70%, comes from Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Walk down the candy aisle of nearly any market and the odds are the chocolate you see came from these countries. And consequently, chances are that chocolate was produced using child labor.

Chocolate is a US \$103-billion industry, yet cocoa farmers typically earn less than US \$2.00 a day, which is well below the poverty line. To stay in business, they often resort to using children on the farms. Indeed, there are now an estimated 2 million children engaged in dangerous work on the cocoa farms of Ghana and the Ivory Coast – an 11% increase over the last decade. And some of these machete-toting kids are just five years old. Whatever the age, they are generally covered in scars from the heavy blades they use.

These children are not there by choice – some end up there while trying to escape from poverty or they are trafficked into Western Africa and forced to work without pay. Some have been duped into thinking they will be working for good pay; some are sold to traffickers or farm owners by their own relatives, who are unaware of the hazardous work they will be coerced into doing; others are abducted from small villages in nearby impoverished countries, such as Burkina Faso and Mali. These enslaved children work up to 100 hours a week and are beaten if they try to escape.

We Can Do Better

Consumers play an essential role in lessening the food industry's injustices. To help everyone do better, Food Empowerment Project has created a list of vegan chocolates that we do and do not recommend, based on the sourcing of the cocoa. The list is available on our website along with free downloadable apps for the iPhone and Android. Fortunately, we all have the power to make a difference with every purchase we make.

lauren Ornelas is the founder and president of Food Empowerment Project foodispower.org – a vegan food justice nonprofit located in Petaluma, California.



PHOTO: ISSOUF SANOGO/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Child labor is widespread on cocoa farms in West Africa.

Christian Zionism and Facebook... from page 6

slogans overran the US Capitol. Antisemitism is real, and we are committed to dismantling it, along with the entire machinery of division and fear used to keep us isolated and alone. But Facebook's proposed policy would entrench antisemitism, not dismantle it. In falsely equating all Jewish people with the state of Israel, Facebook plays into dangerous stereotypes – and obscures the mechanics of real antisemitism.

As Judith Butler wrote in December, this move by Facebook is part of a global effort by the Israeli government and its supporters “to silence legitimate speech and prevent Palestinians and their allies from holding the Israeli government accountable for its

unjust policies of dispossession, occupation, disenfranchisement and incarceration.” Social media companies should give us a platform to hold governments accountable, not shield state power from legitimate critique.

Anti-Palestinian activists want to control the use of the word “Zionist” because they want to keep us isolated and apart. Their fear is a testament to the power of movement building, communication, and connection. But we won't let them silence us. Let's keep this conversation going.

Onward! ✨

Rabbi Alissa Wise is Deputy Director at Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) and co-founder of JVP's Rabbinical Council. She is a contributor to *On Antisemitism: Solidarity and the Struggle for Justice*.

THE BLANKET OF HOPE

ChoQosh

This is the Blanket of Hope. Prophecy is woven in its threads. It is an ancient design that speaks of a time when the world is in despair and famine because TRUTH has not been spoken. It speaks of a time of great suffering and injustice because our world is out of balance.

Our civilizations have been like a great bird. As in all things created, there must be a balance so the bird has two wings. One wing is strong. The other has been kept tightly bound. In this condition, it will flap around knocking things over, going in circles, creating chaos, but will never get off the ground. The strong wing is masculine consciousness, enforcing its vision and will. It has been writing history and making all the decisions that have affected us and will continue to affect us for a long time.

The other wing is feminine consciousness. It has not been allowed equal place and the seats of power. The treacherous and sorry imbalance has brought about our histories of war, subjugation, mighty armies and poor schools. Our societies are rushing headlong into complete annihilation because only masculine voice is being heard. If we are to survive, women everywhere and the Sacred Feminine that is in every man must be freed and allowed to step forward to affect the general welfare of the Earth's population.

The blanket shows three corn maidens standing and holding arrows of truth. If we are to survive, they must choose to act by stepping forward now, and if those arrows find their mark, the blanket shows the corn growing. This corn growing promises abundance for all people of the Earth. We will have abundance because finally there will be peace. There will only be peace because finally there is justice. There will finally be justice only because TRUTH has been spoken. We will survive only because of the return of this balance -- MASCULINE and the FEMININE side by side as equal strengths. Our societies, our priorities have been masculinized for too long. We are truly out of balance. The men cannot do it by themselves. Feminine TRUTH must step forward now. There is a story of wisdom that goes with the border. It was explained to me by a Maori Elder (New Zealand, 1990).

It goes like this: The Border of the Blan-



ket is the story of our lives, our purpose and the roadmap or book of instructions that, in fact, is clearly in the laws/sacred ways of nature. Those are the spirals that emanate from the Earthline (dark red/black border-line) around the blanket. Then notice the stairway that is supported by the spiral. This she called the "staircase to heaven." She said that this represents the obstacles in our lives. We must change our attitude about the obstacles in our path and understand that the obstacle is the path. As each obstacle presents itself, we are to say THANK YOU and take another step, and another, and another until it's done. It is then we will have our completion and our peace.

It is said by the Elders that, "It is not the events in our lives which cause pain, it is our resistance."

It is my prayer and deepest hope that the knowledge of the existence of this blanket and its meaning will inspire and give us a new place to stand as we transform this terrible rush to vengeance and inevitable world destruction.

I remain as always, your friend and partner in a better world. ChoQosh says of her friend, Suzanne McLellan, who made a posterboard honoring The Blanket of Hope; which was donated to the Peace & Justice Center, "She is finally home from the hospital, healing from a stroke." She appreciates The San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of Code Pink featuring The Blanket of Hope at, <http://codepinkgoldengate.org/501/> 🌸

ChoQosh Auh'Ho'Oh is a Californian Coastal Native. Visit her website at: www.mendingthesacredhoop.net. Her email address is mendingthesacred101@sonic.net. Suzanne McLellan, who created The Blanket of Hope poster that was donated to the Peace & Justice Center, is finally home from the hospital and is healing from a stroke.

Again a Darkened Night

Barry Barnett

"If wars can be started by lies, peace can be started by truth." - Julian Assange

I read your mental scars
For an image of my face.
Is it there in the music of your tears?
My psyche walks night streets
Passing under lamplights misty with despair.
God has given up on mankind
Bent on its own demise.
Society seemed secure.
But the bent of history
Wanders beyond our knowing
Crashing, crushing all democracy.
Free will has turned into
Free markets.
Dollars shrink like scabs
Falling and funneling
Into offshore accounts
And highland hilltop havens
Overlooking poverty
Of one's own brethren.
Birds and butterflies flee and die
As our species fouls our only nest.
Can we focus on one dream together
And laser through the lies
Of politicians' propaganda
Long enough to join
And lift ourselves
To a common purpose?
Can we move forward,
Not backward
Into a movement that might save us?

Dedicated to Chelsea Manning

15 Days in January

enid pickett

Living Daymares.
Living Nightmares.
Day and Nightmares.

Waking Sleep.
Semi-consciousness.

Half Alive.
Half Dead.
Half Gone.
Half Left.

You find yourself
Juggling with hands
Jealous of touch.
Chasing PTSD.
Slowly
Symptomatic Stains
Skin forever.

Days later...
Double Down.
Doubled Dare Dipped
In 8 Angry
Arrogant ounces
Of Old Fashion
Raw Oppression.

Seasoned with
Jim Crow's Secret Sauce.
Topped off with
2 Toxic Tablespoons of PTSS.
Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome.
Dr. Joy Degruy Leary's
Personal pubic recipe.

Time...
Ticks.
Tocks.
Ticks.
Tocks.
Daily.
Waiting...Waiting...Waiting.

Drowning in
Ones own oxygen,
Drizzled in
Deadly Diseased Droplets
Of COVID-19.
Medical Mysteries.

Sensational Senses
Used Social Media
To Mutiny in
Washington, DC.

Mutiny
In Washington DC.
Car loads of Cartoon Patriots
Pulled off
The Red.
The White.
The Blue Molded
Festering
Band aids

Leaving
Naked
Putrid
Exposed
Collective scars of Truth.
For The World to Smell.

Inside
Intestines moan
Intimate
Intersectional Irony.

Broken Promises.
Postponements.
Cancelations.
Mistrusts.
Mistakes.
Murders...
4 minutes and 400
Years ago.

Sounding
Silent alarms
Calling all confused converts of false reality.
To IMplode
To EXPLODE
On CNN.

Mutiny in
Washington, DC
Ripped off
Lenses of lies,
Calloused Cataract Conventions.

Leaving
Bloodied
New Visions
Some Still
Refuse...
To See.

Remember ?
100 years ago ?
100 hours ago ?
100 minutes ago ?

Mutiny in
Washington DC.
Reeking Shadows of
Lynchings &
Sunday Picnics.

Remember ?
100 years ago ?
100 hours ago ?
100 minutes ago ?

Our Ancestor's Daymares?
Nightmares ?
Daymares and Nightmares ?

They Sang.
They Sang To Them.
They sang
Secret coded songs of
January's
New Beginnings.

To Reflect,
Rebirth,
Rewind,
Refresh,
Recollect,
Remember,
To Rejoice.

To Remember.
Remember.
Who We Are.
What We Are.
Where We Are.
When We Are.
Why We Are.

Past Tense
Present Tense
Future Tense.

Healdsburg Jazz, the nonprofit behind the popular Healdsburg Jazz Festival, has appointed Windsor jazz enthusiast, poet and former Sonoma County educator Enid Pickett as the organization's first poet laureate.

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In Memoriam

Arnie Schwartz

July 25, 1922 – December 25, 2020

Arnold David Schwartz, doctor, psychiatrist and professor, was an activist in the Sonoma County peace and justice community. He died at the Yountville Veteran's Home on Christmas morning at the age of 98. He was pre-deceased in 1999 by his wife, Woody Schwartz (Elaine Wood Schwartz), his partner in their activism. Since coming to Sonoma County in 1980, they were involved with the Peace & Justice Center and the War Tax Resistance movement and for 10 years did a route collecting and distributing bread and bakery items to those in need. He is survived by 4 children, 2 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

Arnie grew up in Boston where he attended the Boston Public Latin School. It was hard for him to get into medical school because most schools either did not accept Jews or had a quota. His solution was to go to Washington University in St. Louis and then when his money ran out he migrated to California where he became a California resident to get into UC Berkeley. He was in the Navy while going to UC Berkeley, attending classes during the day while he worked as a pharmacist's mate on Treasure Island at night.

He then went to UCSF to get his medical degree, the Menninger Clinic in Topeka Kansas to specialize in Psychiatry, and then, because of his belief in preventive mental health, Karl Menninger suggested he go to Harvard to get a Masters in Public Health.

The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki led him to the conclusion that the practice of public health had to include the abolition of war and nuclear weapons, thus causing his commitment to peace activism.

Arnie was an avid sailor and kayaker and at the age of 86, he was rated the 3rd best ping pong player in his age group in the US. He was always the most proud of his granddaughters. 🌿

ENGAGE YOUR GOV.

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District 2 - David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org
District 3 - Chris.Coursey@sonoma-county.org
District 4 - James.Gore@sonoma-county.org
District 5 - Linda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org

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Senator.McGuire@sen.ca.gov

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a spectator sport!*

Sonoma County Social Justice Groups

ALL PHONE AREA CODES ARE (707)
UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

350 Sonoma County – Engaging our community in the work of 350.org to solve the climate crisis. 350sonomacounty.org

ACLU Sonoma Co., working to preserve individual working rights and liberties. Meets each second Monday. Contact patriciamorandi@sbcglobal.net, or davhen@sonic.net.

Allies Safety Network – compiling a phone chain/helpline to build a safety network for those at risk of harassment to provide a supportive presence in situations of hateful threats. Join the Network Call List: 583-9168

Alternatives to Violence – Presents experiential workshops in personal growth in the community and prisons. 545-1798

Comité VIDA – Defends the human and civil rights of immigrants. 523-1740, cirsc@yahoo.com,

Daily Acts – Offers sustainable solutions rooted in the power of inspired daily actions. 789-9664, dailyacts.org

Fukushima Response – works to inform about the Fukushima melt downs, monitor the consequences, advocate for the shut down of Diablo Canyon. fukushimaresponse.org. 823-9203

Green Party of Sonoma County – sonomagreenparty.org

Green Sangha – Spiritually engaged environmental action. info@greensangha.org

HPEACE – Health Professionals for Equality and Community Empowerment. hpeacesonomacounty.wordpress.com

Healdsburg Peace Project – Peace and social justice action group, Healdsburg. 431-1129, healdsburgpeaceproject.org

Hate Free Petaluma Progressive organization. www.facebook.com/hatefreepetaluma/

Homeless Action – Advocating for people without shelter. 795-2890

Indivisible Goups – All the groups are on Facebook.

Indivisible Sonoma County: indivisiblesoco.com
Indivisible Petaluma: indivisiblepetaluma@gmail.com, or follow on Twitter at @IndivisibleLuma

Indivisible Sebastopol: indivisible.wsc@gmail.com

Indivisible Healdsburg

Indivisible Windsor

LezResist! was formed to be a visible and unified Lesbian presence in support of each other, and to stand in solidarity with the many communities, causes, and policies under attack by the current U.S. administration. Info @ at LezResist@gmail.com.

Listening for a Change – Programs support listening and oral history to create a caring community. 578-5420, listeningforachange.org

MEChA de Sonoma – Student group that focuses on issues affecting the Chicano/Latino community. info@mechadesonoma.org

Metta Center for Nonviolence – Works to promote non-violence worldwide and to build a nonviolent culture. 774-6299

MOVES-Minimizing Occurrences of Violence in Everyday Society – Stresses nonviolence as the answer to society's violence. 524-1900

NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – Seeks to eliminate racial hatred, racial profiling and discrimination. 332-1573

National Women's History Project – coordinates observances of Women's History month around the country. 636-2888, nwhp@aol.com

North Bay Jobs with Justice – organized for better conditions and a living wage for workers. Email: northbayjobswithjustice@gmail.com, Website: northbayjobswithjustice.org, Facebook, North Bay Jobs With Justice Ph: 346-1187

North Bay Organizing Project – a regional faith and values based peoples' organization. 318-2818

North Coast Coalition for Palestine – Brings greater awareness to the plight of the Palestinian people and works to end US military support for Israel. 575-8902. www.nccpal.org or find us on Facebook.

NOW of Sonoma County – local chapter of the National Organization for Women. 545-5036

Occupy Sonoma County – Embraces the egalitarian, deep democracy principles of the Occupy Movement with a regional strategy for effectively organizing county-wide social justice campaigns that are globally relevant. 877-6650, OccupySonomaCounty.org

Organizing for Action: Progressive organizing project. Contact Linda Hemenway: whatisworking@gmail.com or 707-843-6110 and Facebook

Peace Alliance – Mission is to campaign for a cabinet-level US Department of Peace. 838-8647, maggik3@sonic.net, thepeacealliance.org

Peace Roots Alliance – We seek to create a peaceful, just and sustainable world for future generations. 765-0196, Linda@peaceroots.org

Petaluma Blacks for Community Development – facebook.com/pb4cd

Petaluma Progressives – Grassroots, political education and action group. Producers of the Progressive Festival. 763-8134, info@progressivefestival.org

Praxis Peace Institute – Peace Education organization, 939-2973, praxispeace.org

Progressive Sonoma – Peaceful Resistance Network. An umbrella association to network Sonoma's local progressive action groups. peacefulresistance9.wixsite.com/progressivesonoma. Facebook at Peaceful Resistance Sonoma

Project Censored/Media Freedom Foundation – Publishes the top 25 most censored news stories each year. 874-2695, Peter@projectcensored.org, Mickey@projectcensored.org. projectcensored.org.

Racial Justice Allies – Developing anti-racist practices among white social justice activists. 795-2890 racialjusticeallies@gmail.com, www.racialjusticeallies.org

Sonoma County Chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP). In support of single payer health insurance. 763-1925. sngold@juno.com. www.pnhpca.org.

Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCo CAN!) Groups and individuals working address and reverse climate change. Meet in months with a 5th Monday, 7-9 PM at the PJC. Info: 595-0320 or SonomaCounty-CAN@gmail.com (email preferred).

Sonoma County Coastal Hills: gardens@mcn.org

Sonoma County Nonviolence Training Collective offers free trainings in methods and principles for progressive social change and peace. soconvtc@gmail.com.

Sonoma County Resistance via change.org

Sonoma Solidarity with Standing Rock – Supporting indigenous rights and fossil fuel resistance. SonomaSolidarity.org, Facebook: Sonoma Solidarity with Standing Rock. 792-4422.

Sonoma Valley Peace & Justice – Peace and social justice group for Sonoma Valley. audreyvh@sbcglobal.net

Sonoma County Black Forum: Our mission is to lead, serve, and thrive, by promoting positive community and youth engagement events. Monthly meetings. sonomacounty-blackforum@gmail.com

SURJ (Showing Up For Racial Justice, Sonoma County) – facebook.com/SURJSonomaCounty

United Farm Workers – 1700 Corby Ave., Santa Rosa 528-3039

United Nations Association – Builds public understanding and support for the United Nations. Facebook

Veterans for Peace – Organization of vets working together for peace and justice through nonviolence. 536-6002

Women in Black – Women who stand in silent vigil to protest war and human rights abuses.

Women's Justice Center – Advocacy for victims of rape, domestic violence, and child abuse, particularly in the Latina community. 575-3150, justicewomen.com

*Please email zenekar@comcast.net
for additions or changes to this list.*

No meetings will be held
at the Peace & Justice Center
until further notice.

To receive the
PJC weekly
email calendar,
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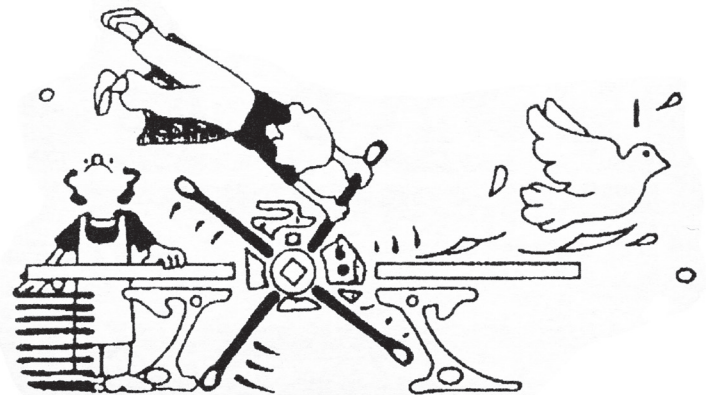
Please call (707) 575-8902 or visit PJCso.co.org

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