



# Planted by the Waters

Spring 2018

Ecumenical Peace Institute/CALC • P. O. Box 9334 • Berkeley, CA 94709 • (510) 990-0374 • www.epicalc.org

## Explosive Power

*Notes on the 2018 Good Friday Witness*

by Carolyn S. Scarr

Beautiful day at Livermore opened with music by Daniel Zwickel and lots more music from our new friend Benjamin Mertz. Rafael Jesús González let us in honoring the land and the ancestors. Daniel read from the Fatiha, the Muslim prayer offered five times every day.



Benjamin Mertz, Carla DeSola and dancers

We were given a brand new song by Benjamin, "I Dream" in which Carla DeSola led the dancers: "I dream of a new kind of equality . . . I dream of peace. . . I can see how it's meant to be." Carla led the congregation in movements to the first verse.

Scott Yundt of Tri-Valley CAREs spoke of the immense impact of the nuclear weapons lab on the people, the land, of the financial, psychological and environmental impact locally and around the world. He spoke of the new and expanding weapons work laid out in the recent Nuclear Posture Review, including plans to use nuclear weapons in response to a non-nuclear attack, even in response to challenges to our dominance. New weapons are being designed, many at Livermore, in complete violation of international treaties the U.S. has signed and treaties for which many countries are working.

We joined in a responsive reading based on Dr. Martin Luther King's *Where Do We Go From Here, Chaos or Community?*, and religious texts from many traditions, and Dr. King's *Beyond Vietnam*. Then we listened to Dr. King's recorded voice in *Beyond Vietnam*.

Benjamin Mertz sang "Wayfaring Stranger" in which the brothers and sisters he was going home to see were people of color who had been killed by police. Father

Ivan Tou read the passion story from Luke.

We were then challenged by our preacher, Rev. Ben McBride whose sermon title was "Explosive Power."

Let all the people say "Amen," he said in opening.

If you love peace say "Amen."

If you love justice say "Amen."

If you're willing to lay your life down on the line for your brother and your sister and your relatives say "Amen."

Together we said "Amen."

Rev. Ben said he is trying to determine what it means to be people of peace in the middle of a very strange time. The psalmist says when the children of Israel were told by their captors to "sing us one of those old songs of Zion." The people said "How can we sing the song of the Lord when we are in a strange land." We find ourselves in a very strange land and yet a very familiar land. How can it be both? For too long we have lived in a country that has embraced violence and hatred and power and war as a means to control and oppress. Yet in these stories the hope is always found in those who refuse to lean into that way, those who would teach us a better way.

Ben is one who follows a brown skinned Palestinian Jew

*continued on page 2*

## Hiroshima Day

Monday, August 6, 2018 at 8:00 AM

Join keynote speaker *Daniel Ellsberg* to commemorate the U.S. bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the place where scientists are creating new nuclear weapons.

**Livermore Lab**

**Corner of Vasco & Patterson Pass Roads**

*Rally & Nonviolent Action*

Join Northern California peacemakers in Livermore for a rally with wonderful speakers and musicians. Following the program will be a procession to the gates of Livermore Lab where those who choose will peaceably risk arrest to: **Protest the Trump Administration's nuclear weapons policies!**

*There will also be Peace Camp the weekend before at Lake Del Valle!*

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## Explosive Power, *continued from page 1*

who lived on the underside of the Roman empire. He was from the hood. From a hood called Nazareth. When he walked around people said, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" On this day we remember the way in which he was falsely arrested and killed and executed by the police of his day. We remember him as a rabbi, as a teacher. Another part of his life that is important to raise as we stand on this ground. He was also an exorcist. He spent his time driving out demons from people.



**Rev. Ben McBride**

America has many demons. America since its inception has been possessed by the demon of white supremacy. Since its inception it has been possessed by the demon of war and violence. Has it not been possessed when it committed genocide against the native people of this land? Has it not been possessed when it enslaved Africans and stole their bodies, and their language, their religion for free labor? Was it not possessed when it stole the land from the Mexican neighbors and said it was going to pay them a fair amount and never paid the amount, bankrupting that country from its beginning? Was it not possessed when it moved on into cultures of Jim Crow? Was it not possessed when it welcomed European immigrants at Ellis Island and denied Asian immigrants on Angel Island? Was it not possessed when it dropped bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Was this country not possessed when it continued to fuel segregation, when it continued the war on drugs, at the moment at Stonewall — continuing through the 80's? Was this country not possessed when it killed Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, when it choked out Eric Garner in New York? Was this country not possessed when Sandra Bland was killed inside a prison? Was it not possessed when they jumped out of a car and murdered a 12 year old boy named Tamir Rice?

We are living in a country that is possessed by the demons of violence, hatred and war, racial supremacy. So it beckons for us the question "What will we do?" Rev. Ben says he follows the one who in his message calling for the kingdom — he calls it the world as it should be — we can defeat the beast without becoming one. We can destroy the monster without becoming monstrous. We can pull down violence without

becoming violence. That means we are going to have to have a soul and a heart revolution. The message of the world as it should be is anti-imperial, anti notions of male power and dominance. It is a different way. A way that is going to have to drive us deep into our hearts to find the kind of love, the kind of empathy — not just the kind that causes us feel sad about the plight of others, but the one that causes us to give up our lives for those who are most at risk. We are in a country that believes that if you have the power to kill you have the right to kill. In this moment, we as people of faith, values and good will are going to have to meet this false version of power with a more ancient, historic spiritual, deep eternal universal force of power.

Everyone say "Explosive Power."

Rev. Ben told the story of Jesus meeting the young man living in a graveyard, who has been terrorizing all the community. Jesus asked the man "What is your name?" The man says "My name is Legion." Legion, the name for a thousand person regiment in the Roman army. The man says, "I am tormented because I am possessed by empire. I am possessed by war. I am possessed by violence. I am possessed by oppression." In this moment Jesus does not meet this man's violence and his possession with more violence and more oppression. Rather Jesus had compassion for the young man.

Even as we become angry and rightfully so at the demonic manifestations of violence of our country, the demonic manifestations in this lab where people are practicing the science to kill other human beings on this planet, the violence of our law enforcement apparatuses, the violence coming out of the federal administration in Washington DC — we have a right to be angry. But the question is, will we recognize the demon? In the story Jesus has compassion for the man and uses his power to free the man so the man could finally be free.

Even after three hundred years of violence and oppression and white supremacy and war in this country, Rev. Ben still has hope for America. He recognizes that this is not the first country that has chosen the weapons of war and the ideology of hate and of violence, and yet other countries have been redeemed. It is going to take a people who have an explosive power of compassion, an explosive power of love, who recognize in this moment even though we find ourselves of different hues, different genders, different faiths, different stories — if we will come together, if we will lay down our lives for one another, if we will be willing to carry the cross for one another, if we will be willing to walk even at times the bloody steps toward our own Golgothas, toward our own places of the skull, if we will be willing at times to stand on freeways as cars come flying at us at 70 miles an hour, if we will be willing to chain ourselves to gates at nuclear labs, if we will be willing to give up our bodies in the spirit of love — that explosive power will awaken the hearts and minds of those who are possessed by empire and we will be able to call them forward into a new better version of themselves. And together we will create a new story and a different version of this country.

Rev. Ben says people ask him if he really believes that love is more powerful than a nuclear bomb or the bullets inside a police officer's gun. What can love do about the tangible realities of violence? He believes that we are more than just

*continued on page 3*



## Explosive Power, *continued from page 2*

our physics. We are more than what is tangible. We are more than that which we can touch. If we will allow a soul force to move out of us into this world, there is a power that is higher than any bomb or gun or act of violence that can show up in this world. While this lab desires to create a cloud of violence, Rev. Ben reminded us that the Bible tells us we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses — there are people who have come before us who have laid down their lives and given us the opportunity to lay down our own lives.

What will we allow ourselves to be fueled by? Will it be to become a version of the thing we abhor, to become the monster and the beast as we look at the violence of the state?

Rev. Ben challenged us to allow ourselves to be fueled by the explosive power of love, to give of ourselves in ways that we never have before, that causes us to move into deeper relationship with those whom we never would have before, to become more engaged and alive to the realities of we need to do.

Friends, Rev. Ben said, believe in love. Believe in peace, believe that no matter what the state desires to do, as Jesus said as he stood in front of Pontius Pilate, "You don't have the power to take my life. I lay it down."

As the state tells us it has power over, how will we allow our explosive power of love to show them that we will wake up this country, we will wake up our relatives, our friends. We will show that love always trumps hate. Love has an explosive power to bring about a new possibility and we will be the people who join together, laying down our lives for one another until we all together create beloved community.

Rev. Ben closed with a prayer of peace and love. . . . As violence is offered as the only way forward . . . we ask for a different level of boldness. Give us the courage to do what we have not done before. Give us the explosive power to cast out the demons of violence and white supremacy, hatred and power. May the angelic touch of peace and love, tranquility and deep empathy for one another be our portion.

The offertory music was a flute and clarinet duet played by Benjamin Mertz and Tony Scarr.

Jim Haber of Jewish Voice for Peace gave us closing thoughts and a challenge to keep on keeping on.

The procession down to the lab's main gate was led by Benjamin Mertz and three children carrying the earth ball. Along the way the stations of the cross witnessed to the sufferings of the people of Syria under attack by forces supported by the U.S., of the immigrants seeking safety, of Palestinians oppressed by Israel, Haitians still striving to build their democracy, and the ongoing work to end nuclear weapons.

We joined in wonderful dance and music at the gate. The people risking arrest stood in front of the police line for quite a long time waiting for them to decide finally to act. I think they were hoping we would pack up and go home. The waiting was made more lively by songs led by Benjamin. Finally twenty-six of us were taken inside, searched, processed and released.

The community gathering at Asbury United Methodist nearby was a good time of snacks, conversation and the sharing of our concerns and work.

Video and audio recordings and photographs of this year's Good Friday witness can be found at EPI's website, <http://www.epicalc.org/>

Photos for this article by Mark Coplan.

## Fueling More Syrian War: • Nixing Iran Deal & More Israeli Attacks • Pollack and Pundit Class

*from Institute for Public Accuracy, May 10, 2018*

On Tuesday, President Donald Trump announced the "United States will withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal." Shortly after, Reuters reported: "Syrian state media says Israel attacked just after U.S. quit Iran deal" and AP reported: "Israel Attacked Syria an Hour After the Iran Deal Was Ended, Says Report." Attacks have continued between Israeli and Syrian forces since.

JANA NAKHAL, [in Beirut] [jana.nakhal@gmail.com](mailto:jana.nakhal@gmail.com)

A researcher and feminist, Nakhal said today: "In Syria, the Syrian government has been winning. In Lebanon, Hezbollah has just won big in the election. The Israeli and U.S. governments have been trying to attack Iran and their Syrian and Hezbollah allies. Like any colonial powers, it's very hard for them to accept losing. So, their logic may well be, if we're not in control, let's burn it. Such a course of action may well spread more war well beyond Syria and Lebanon." She has written for al-Akhbar (English and Arabic) as well as al-Adab and al-Nidaa magazine. Nakhal was recently in Afrin in northern Syria. See from ShadowProof: "Interview With Jana Nakhal, Lebanese Communist Party Member, On Occupation of Afrin by Turkish Forces and Takfiri Fighters" [<https://shadowproof.com/2018/03/25/Unauthorized-disclosure-jana-nakhal-afrin-occupation-syria/>]

CHARLES GLASS, [currently in England], [charlesglass-books@gmail.com](mailto:charlesglass-books@gmail.com), [@charlesmglass](http://www.charlesglass.net/), <http://www.charlesglass.net/>

Glass was ABC News Chief Middle East correspondent and has written extensively on Syria, including covering the civil war on the ground. In 2016, his book *Syria Burning* was released.

In March, Glass wrote the piece: "Think the War in Syria Is Winding Down? Think Again" for *The Nation*, which stated: "Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is raising the stakes, declaring, 'We will act if necessary not just against Iran's proxies but against Iran itself'; and some voices in the West demand not reform and reconstruction, but renewed war.

"Rather than encourage U.S.-Russian agreement to end the war, the deep thinkers in Washington and Mar-a-Lago are urging the United States to wade deeper into the swamp. Kenneth Pollack, a former CIA analyst and Bill Clinton's director for Persian Gulf affairs at the National Security Council, is one of the few commentators to admit that Syria is a means to an end. In a strongly argued series on the American Enterprise Institute's website, Pollack advocates using Syria as the most effective arena to hurt Iran. . . .

"Pollack suggests 'ramping up American covert assistance to the Syrian opposition to try to bleed the Assad regime and its Iranian backers over time, exactly the way that the United States backed the Afghan Mujahideen as they bled the Soviets in Afghanistan -- or as the Russians and Chinese did to the United States in Vietnam.' . . .

"The urge to hit Iran in Syria calls to mind an argument made, and heeded, 16 years ago, that 'the option that makes the most sense is for the United States to launch a full-scale invasion of Iraq to topple Saddam, eradicate his weapons of mass destruction, and rebuild Iraq as a prosperous and stable society for the good of the United States, Iraq's own people and the entire region.' Americans know where that advice led the country. The author? Kenneth Pollack."

For more information, contact at the Institute for Public Accuracy: Sam Hussein (202) 347-0020, or David Zupan (541) 484-9167

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## National Iranian American Council *Trump's Reckless Decision Puts US on Path to War with Iran*

May 8, 2018 Washington, DC — NIAC President Trita Parsi issued the following statement in response to reports that President Trump declared he would snap back all nuclear-related sanctions under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), or Iran nuclear deal, and impose new sanctions:

“Donald Trump has committed what will go down as one of the greatest acts of self-sabotage in America’s modern history. He has put the United States on a path towards war with Iran and may trigger a wider regional war and nuclear arms race.

“This is a crisis of choice. Trump has taken a functioning arms control deal that prevented an Iranian nuclear bomb and turned it into a crisis that can lead to war.

“This is not America first, this is Trump leasing out America’s foreign policy interests to the highest bidder. The only parties applauding this move are Benjamin Netanyahu and Mohammed Bin Salman, who have consistently chosen to undermine regional security to advance their own short-sighted political fortunes. Trump’s reckless decision is a betrayal of the national interests of the United States of America that could haunt us for generations.

“Not only has Trump opened a Pandora’s box of consequences in the region, we now know the administration hired the private Israeli intelligence firm Black Cube to target former U.S. officials who supported the agreement. This Nixonian campaign was likely an illegal attempt to discredit the Iran deal. Anything short of a full investigation by Congress and the Justice Department of Trump’s efforts with Black Cube would be an affront to our democratic system.

“Perhaps the most absurd aspect of President Trump’s Iran policy is his attempt to claim solidarity with the Iranian people, even as he bans Iranians from the U.S. and his top advisors openly support the MEK terrorist group that is universally reviled by Iranians. The Iranian people overwhelmingly supported the nuclear deal, at least until the sanctions relief that was promised failed to materialize, and will be the party most impacted by Trump’s decision.

“Many were hopeful that the nuclear deal would facilitate broader change in Iranian society over time by empowering moderate forces in their demand for social and economic justice. By diminishing the excuse of sanctions and raising expectations for economic improvement, the nuclear deal appears to have added pressure on Iran’s leaders to meet the public’s political expectations. However, a potential opening for accelerated progress in Iran has now been slammed shut by Trump, an action that will redirect attention from the Iranian government to the United States. This will not just empower hardliners, it will force Iran’s political elite to paper over fissures on key social and political issues while cracking down further on any dissent. This is potentially the biggest crime of Trump’s decision – limiting the agency of Iran’s own people to choose peaceful political evolution in order to address their grievances.

“It is our profound hope that the Europeans, Russians and Chinese are able to sustain the nuclear accord in spite of Trump’s decision – though we recognize that this is a tall task given the effect of U.S. sanctions. We also hope that Congress will shake off the politicization of Iran policy and move to

## The Poor People’s Campaign

As this issue of *Planted* goes to press the Poor People’s Campaign will be underway — a nationwide “season of nonviolent moral fusion direct action.”

In communities across America, Black, white, brown and Native people are building what Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called “a new and unsettling force in our complacent national life,” uniting tens of thousands of people across the country to challenge the evils of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy and ecological devastation.

Beginning May 14 Weekly Themes of 40 Days of Action  
WEEK ONE (May 13-19) – SOMEBODY’S HURTING OUR PEOPLE: Children, Women, and People with Disabilities in Poverty

WEEK TWO (May 20-26) – LINKING SYSTEMIC RACISM AND POVERTY: Voting Rights, Immigration, Xenophobia, Islamophobia, and the Mistreatment of Indigenous Communities

WEEK THREE (May 27-June 2) – THE WAR ECONOMY: Militarism and the Proliferation of Gun Violence

WEEK FOUR (June 3-9) – THE RIGHT TO HEALTH AND A HEALTHY PLANET: Ecological Devastation and Health Care

WEEK FIVE (June 10-16) – EVERYBODY’S GOT THE RIGHT TO LIVE: Education, Living Wage Jobs, Income, Housing

WEEK SIX (June 17-22) – A NEW AND UNSETTLING FORCE: Confronting the Distorted Moral Narrative

JUNE 23 – Global Day of Solidarity and Sending Forth Call to Action Mass Rally in Washington DC and possibly elsewhere.

Keep posted at the national website <https://www.poorpeoples-campaign.org/>, or

California facebook page <https://m.facebook.com/californiappc/>

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Iran, continued

restrict Trump’s nuclear sabotage. However, given that Senate Republicans and even a handful of Democrats voted for Iran-hawk Mike Pompeo to join John Bolton on Trump’s war cabinet, this may not be possible until a new Congress is sworn in.

“Iran has remained compliant with the nuclear deal as verified by the IAEA in 11 reports since January 2016, and its people want more economic relief – not less. Under the JCPOA, Iran’s commitment never to pursue a nuclear weapon never expires, while other far-reaching constraints stretch out for decades. After Trump’s breach of the accord, the U.S. – not Iran – is now the outlier when it comes to Iran’s nuclear program. If the deal dies as is highly likely, the U.S. will find little to no support in addressing Iran’s soon to be expanding nuclear program.

“For decades, Washington has insisted that the Iranian leadership is addicted to enmity with the United States. Now it may become fact for the world that the opposite is true and it is America that is addicted to enmity with Iran.

“For those in and outside of the Iranian-American community who worked for years to prevent war with Iran, and then succeeded in protecting the nuclear deal from sabotage until today, this move comes as a bitter blow. Unfortunately, we must now redouble our efforts to prevent Trump from leading us to war with Iran.”

from <https://www.niacouncil.org/> reprinted with permission



## Democratic Space in Adverse Times: Milestone at Haiti's University of the Aristide Foundation

by Leslie Mullin

March 18, 2018, marked exactly seven years since Haiti's former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and Mrs. Aristide returned to Haiti from forced exile in South Africa, where they lived following the 2004 coup d'état that overthrew Haiti's democratic government. On their return, they began to rebuild the University of the Aristide Foundation [UniFA] whose land and buildings had been appropriated, converted to military barracks and trashed by U.S. and Brazilian troops during the coup.

On the 7th anniversary of that historic return, UniFA held its first graduation ceremony in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. A delegation of Haiti solidarity activists from the U.S. was honored to be there representing Haiti Action Committee, Black Alliance for Just Immigration, Global Women's Strike, and the Haiti Emergency Relief Fund.

In a joyous celebration attended by over 1000 people, UniFA graduated 77 doctors, 46 nurses and 15 lawyers. The setting was beautiful, the stage decorated with flowers and banners in the blue and white colors of UniFA. The famed Philharmonic Orchestra of Sainte-Trinite played Haitian folk music as well as classical music throughout the event. Cameras were everywhere to record the occasion, which was widely and prominently reported in Haitian media. The UniFA choir, joined by the entire audience, sang Haiti's national anthem, and later the song of UniFA. Two young men carrying the flags of Haiti and UniFA proudly led the procession of Faculty at the opening of the ceremony. As a child, one of them - soon to become a UniFA graduate - lived at Lafanmi Selavi, the center for street children founded by Aristide when he was a priest. His success is an example of the university's commitment to overcome social barriers limiting access to higher education. "Education sans exclusion" - education without exclusion - is a central theme of UniFA, imprinted on its logo and manifest in every detail of this remarkable event. The exhilaration that infused the occasion spoke to UniFA's broader commitment, expressed by Mrs. Mildred Aristide, "to break down the long tradition of exclusion of the poor majority in Haiti from access to higher education."

At the podium, Dr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of UniFA, stood to address the gathering. His speech emphasized that the University's role is not only to instill academic knowledge, but to promote ethical lives and nurture students' relationship with their community. He spoke of the African philosophy of Ubuntu, which recognizes that the essence of social consciousness can be expressed as "I am because we are" - a person becomes a person through community. Dr. Aristide said that "it is not easy to eradicate evil at a macro level. But, on a micro scale, you can fight it rationally." He noted that, "on a global scale, science is advancing, consciousness is declining. May your professional conscience contribute to the awakening of social consciousness."

To highlight this point, towards the end of the ceremony, each graduating class - MDs, nurses, and lawyers - pledged their commitment to serve their people. In a country with fewer than two doctors for every 11,000

people, UniFA's graduate physicians are already practicing medicine in regions throughout Haiti where formerly there were no doctors. It is a hopeful victory in difficult times.

After all the graduates received their diplomas, there was a "passing of the torch" ritual during which graduates from each program passed a flaming torch to a student from the upcoming class. Gifts were presented to the valedictorians, and finally, the graduates celebrated with friends and family under an outdoor pavilion on the beautiful campus. Long years of effort to reach this day were visible in faces filled with grace, joy and pride.

One of UniFA's chief architects, Mildred Aristide, an attorney and Haiti's former First Lady, describes the university's broader mission to nourish democratic space within an undemocratic country: "Haiti vitally needs a safe space where young people can come together, think country and construct a future under difficult circumstances...An institution that will address national issues and seek viable solutions to national problems. Dreams of working, prospering and changing Haiti - not chasing after a foreign visa or a job with a foreign NGO. This is UniFA's commitment."

UniFA was born out of Haiti's grassroots struggle for democracy during President Aristide's second administration in 2001. It recruited medical students from poor families in each of Haiti's nine departments, equal numbers men and women. Talented young people from rural Haiti previously found it nearly impossible to attend medical school. UniFA sought them out, asking only their commitment to return to work in communities throughout Haiti after completing their training. By 2004, 247 medical students were studying medicine at UniFA. A School of Nursing was planned to open in the fall. The February 29, 2004 coup d'état brought all of this progress to a halt. The faculty and staff were forced into exile or hiding within the country. United Nations and U.S. military forces drove the students off campus, turning the site into military barracks. The campus remained under the control of foreign forces until 2007 when it was officially turned back over to the Aristide Foundation for Democracy.

The University opened with three goals: 1) to prepare doctors to care for the poorest of the poor; 2) to increase the number of doctors practicing in rural areas; 3) to break down the long tradition of exclusion of the poor majority in Haiti from access to high education. Today, UniFA has expanded its scope to offer degrees in medicine, nursing, dentistry, engineering, law, physical therapy and continuing education.

From exile in South Africa, a month before his return, President Aristide spoke about education: "Education has been a top priority since the first Lavalas government - of which I was president - was sworn into office... on 7 February 1991 (and removed a few months later). More schools were built in the 10 years between 1994, when democracy was restored, and 2004 - when Haiti's democracy was once again violated - than between 1804 to 1994: 195 new primary schools and 104 new public high schools constructed and/or refurbished." The Aristide government mandated that 20% of the national budget be directed to education. For the first time in history, Haiti began to implement a Universal Schooling Program aimed at giving every child an education.

*continued on page 6*

**Haiti**, continued from page 5

Aristide reaffirmed that, "As I have not ceased to say since 29 February 2004, from exile in Central Africa, Jamaica and now South Africa, I will return to Haiti to the field I know best and love: education. We can only agree with the words of the great Nelson Mandela, that indeed education is a powerful weapon for changing the world." UniFA's graduation is a significant step towards transforming these words into reality. It is a remarkable accomplishment to have been realized in seven years.

While UniFA flourishes, elsewhere in Haiti education is under attack. Successive neo-colonial governments imposed by the United States by means of phony elections have been plagued by widespread corruption, leaving Haiti's public sector on the brink of paralysis. According to Dr. Aristide, "Like metastatic cancer, institutionalized corruption devours our social fabric, the future of our children and Haitian youth. The exodus of our young people stems from this cancer." Nearly 1% of Haiti's population left the country last year headed for Chile, a mass exodus driven by young people, and especially the rural poor. Many young people who want to attend college leave the country. There are now 54,000 Haitian students attending universities in the Dominican Republic.

Haiti's former President Michel Martelly, who rose to power with U.S. support, made an empty promise guaranteeing free education funded by a tax on telephone calls and money transfers. Instead, many teachers haven't been paid in as many as two years. Where is that money? Teacher strikes are met with growing repression and students from college age to grade school join striking teachers to demand the government pay teachers' salaries. Everyone wonders what happened to the missing \$3.8 billion from Venezuela's Petrocaribe program. Under Petrocaribe, Haiti was supplied with oil at a favorable price with flexible credit. The benefit to Haiti, estimated at approximately \$3.8 billion, was intended to combat poverty. All reports indicate that the funds were stolen and misappropriated by the past two governments.

The State University of Haiti closed the schools of Humanities, Law and Ethnic Studies due to ongoing strikes and protests. Last fall, police attacked school children with tear gas in Les Cayes as they supported their teachers' strike. In the north, hundreds of school children marched to demand, "We don't want an army; we want education" last November. The students were saying no to the government's plan to restore the dreaded Haitian military, disbanded by Aristide, which formerly consumed 40% of the state budget. They demanded that the money instead be used to pay teachers their long overdue salaries.

UniFA speaks to the urgent need for democratic progress that has been denied Haiti during fourteen years of U.S./UN military occupation. Failed government promises contrast with the solid achievements of this people's university, highlighting its importance as a living example of democracy in practice. "I like to tell visitors that they are standing on sacred ground" says Mildred Aristide. She continues, "This is not hyperbole. The stakes and the country's needs are too high. UniFA is a national project that is slowly revealing itself to be a national institution in the service of the country."

## **Korea, hopeful signs**

The Olympic Games were in their origins in ancient Greece a time of truce even between the most desperate of enemies. If you met the murderer of your family, you were obliged to hold back and not attack. This was a religious requirement.

It was in the light of this tradition that we saw the presidents of North and South Korea open the doors of friendship. We saw the joint Korean athletic teams play and walk together. The first moves toward an end at last to the Korean War were made at the Olympic Games by the Koreans, most of whom have longed for an end to hostilities and a chance for families to reunite and maybe even for their countries to move toward unity. We hope that these moves will be continued and expanded.

Just a few days ago, April 29, the New York Times stated that "the South Korean government said on Sunday that North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, had told President Moon Jae-in that he would abandon his nuclear weapons if the United States agreed to formally end the Korean War and promise not to invade his country."

North Korea has warned the political atmosphere by releasing three American prisoners who were being held on suspicion of espionage or "hostile acts." We continue to hope that a good relationship will develop between the U.S. and North Korea in spite of unfortunately all too well based concerns regarding the durability of any agreements the U.S. may make.

Korea Policy Institute, <http://kpolicy.org/>, will be a good source of information and analysis as negotiations continue.

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## **Attica in Gaza**

We watch with horror as Palestinians who have been confined in what has been called the world's largest outdoor prison are shot down by their prison guards (erroneously called Israeli "Defense" forces). Thousands have been seriously wounded; the number of dead is approaching fifty as I write. The situation in Gaza is radically different from that at Attica prison in that no Israelis have been taken hostage and none have been injured.

Palestinians refugees who fled the violence with which the state of Israel was founded have been demonstrating nonviolently within the walls of their prison. They demonstrate to show their immense desire to return to the homes they or their parents were driven out of. Israel responds to this nonviolent witness with massive violence — snipers killing at long distance men, women, children, well labeled reporters, and even a farmer working his land.

It is time and long past time the United States ended its uncritical support of the state of Israel, and massive financial, military and political support of its activities. Let us add our voices calling for change to those of Jewish Voice for Peace, Code Pink, Churches for Middle East Peace, Friends of Sabeel and many others.

You are invited to join the Living Graveyard in Oakland to lift up in mourning the names of the dead, including the dead in Gaza.



## The Children of War

by Silvia Brandon Pérez

La Habana, Cuba, Hayward, California

Recently I participated in a mock or symbolic trial of the Sheriffs of Contra Costa and Alameda Counties. Among the speakers was a psychologist who works with PTSD in immigrant communities. She testified about the terrible effects of imprisonment and detention upon prisoners and detainees, including, of course, immigrants being held while they petition for asylum. Because I have been working both with mass imprisonment and immigration/asylum issues for more than four decades, I realized that the elephant in the room is rarely addressed: the effects of our gross immigration abuses on the children, and I venture to say the word "children" has to include all children who live with or in an immigrant community. In California, that is a very large number.

I will give two examples and then cite some scholarly research on the topic. As the mother of five, one of whom was jailed and is now self-destructive with his PTSD after serious abuse where he served time (in his case, not because he is an immigrant although he was born to parents who were both immigrants themselves, but because he is a homosexual), and the grandmother of mixed-race children living in mixed communities, the topic at once fascinates me and appalls me.

I worked on the case of a Guatemalan who was arrested for sleeping in his car (and yes, he was intoxicated, but he was not driving; he was in the passenger seat and had removed his shoes, but in California the fact that the keys were in the ignition makes this a case of driving while intoxicated). Although we filed motions and appeared at hearings and packed the courtroom with supporters, he spent over two years in immigration detention. His mother told their small son that he had gotten a job outside the area and would come home. The son was 7 or 8 when he was first arrested, the daughter perhaps 14. On the day he was finally scheduled for deportation, I drove the family to the lockup on Sansome Street in San Francisco. When the mother attempted to enter the building, the little boy, now 9, became visibly agitated and told his mother to go back into the car at once. . . . When we asked why, he looked at us and said: She could be deported too. . . . What I realized then and later, at awards events for latino children and group celebrations, is that the children in our community all know about deportation, detention, abuse. . . . It is in the very air they breathe. Every school has a story, a deported family member; even, at times, a family member who has been murdered, via Taser or gun or a lack of proper medication.

My second case involves a young Honduran girl who was arrested in Hayward for a small crack in her windshield. The crime: driving while brown and undocumented. Again, we prepared papers, spent hours in argument, and I visited her again and again. She had her infant daughter with her upon arrest; she was a nursing mother. Honduras had just had an earthquake, and the United States had granted temporary protected status to Honduras here because of the severity of the effects. . . . But for this mother and her infant child, neither the earthquake, nor the fact that she was a nursing mother with a baby born in the United States changed anything. The baby became listless and stopped eating; cried all the time; would make it difficult for the father to leave the house to go to work.

Two simple cases. As someone who left her homeland at the behest of a parent, and had no choice in the matter, I promise you that by and large NO ONE wants to leave their homeland to come to the U.S. Fifty-eight years later I still miss my homeland. This is especially true for any of us who live in the belly of the beast.

Why do I call this "war"? Because it is a war upon all people, especially of color, who have come here because the US government has trained their gangs, deported their people, and abused, humiliated and denigrated their languages, cultures, races. . . . The corporate assassination work includes dumping genetically modified foods, building warehouses that sell "native" products cheaper than the natives could ever make them, and establishing company stores that pay barely enough in wages for people to survive. . . . And so they are forced to leave. They are called "economic refugees" and thus are ineligible for asylum, but they are really war refugees. . . . The corporate bosses, an international cabal with its capital city in Washington D.C., will do anything for the next buck.

There is ample research, as stated above, as to the inevitable appearance of post-traumatic stress symptoms in children living in war conditions. See, for example, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/talking-about-trauma/201304/the-invisible-trauma-war-affected-children>  
<https://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/family/ptsd-children-adolescents.asp>  
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/.../e51d1838114b3117d0ed-4216a54437bc0527.pdf> (which looks at the effects of Palestinian children experiencing war traumas).

The issue now is whether we will have the guts to look at our immigration system and call it foul, call it genocidal, call ICE by its proper name: a war criminal. In the meantime, our children are dying, festering in the symptoms of trauma caused by our inhumane system. As Lady Macbeth says:

*Here's the smell of the blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!*

We have blood on our hands. . . .

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### The Cross

I am kind of rugged. Twenty years ago George constructed me from recycled redwood decking and salvaged lathing from demolished plaster wall. "The ugly cross," Father Bernardino called me, with a smile. Others celebrated me as modern art.	For twenty years each Good Friday I was hauled a pick-up truck jouncing my joints to be the back drop for song, sermon, for graceful dance and prayers.  Now they say I am too fragile for the travel and travail. It is finished.
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Twenty years of Good Fridays  
I looked down  
at the shrinking crowd  
gathered on the grassy corner  
to oppose  
the proliferating nuclear  
weapons  
designed behind  
the chain link fence.

I/We want to be part of the Peace and Justice work of Ecumenical Peace Institute/CALC by:

- volunteering (mailings, vigils, publicity, calling)
- connecting EPI with my religious group
- making a tax-deductible contribution:
  - \$35 annual membership (\$10 low-income subscription)
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I will pledge \$\_\_\_\_\_ monthly, \$\_\_\_\_\_ quarterly

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- You are invited to read *Planted by the Waters* online at <http://www.epicalc.org/> and download articles to share. Upcoming events which EPI is involved in planning will be found at the website.
- ==>>If you want email notification of events, send us your address. Write to [epicalc@gmail.com](mailto:epicalc@gmail.com).

## Regarding that Envelope

There is an envelope included in each issue of *Planted by the Waters*. If each person who receives *Planted* puts a check into the envelope and mails it to EPI/CALC, it will greatly improve our ability to do the work for justice and peace which we are called to do together. It doesn't have to be a lot. Every little bit counts.



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## Calendar & Announcements

**Tuesday, July 10 7 - 9 p.m.** Stop the Desecration of the Berkeley Shellmound. Update and coalition building in support of the Ohlone people protecting their sacred land. Newman Hall, 2700 Dwight Way, Berkeley. Sponsored by Newman Non-Violent Peacemaking Group and others including EPI.

**Monday, August 6,** Hiroshima/Nagasaki Day remembrance & action at Livermore Lab. See Page 1 for details.

**Saturday, October 20,** East Bay Sanctuary Covenant annual dinner, St John's Presbyterian Church, Berkeley

**We will let you know: EPI Fall Gathering is in it's planning stages.**

### Inside:

1. Explosive Power: Report on Good Friday at Livermore
1. August 6 demonstration in Livermore
3. Syria
4. Pulling Out Of Iranian Nuclear Deal (NIAC Statement)
4. The Poor People's Campaign
5. Haiti
6. Korea
6. Gaza
7. The Children of War
7. The Cross (poem)

**Spring 2018 edition of EPI's quarterly newsletter**

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## Actions

**Living Graveyard and Reading of the Names**, noon to one on 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays, Oakland Federal Building, 1301 Clay Street, two blocks from 12th Street BART.

Covered with sheets to represent the dead of the wars of occupation in Afghanistan and Iraq, some of the participants lie down on the city sidewalk in front of the Federal Building. The names of Californians in the U.S. military who have died in Iraq or Afghanistan and the names of some of the Iraqi dead are read. Flyers are handed out.

This is legal, non-violent witness. People stop, look and think. Please bring a white sheet to cover yourself with. A pad to lie on is recommended. The designated Monday may be changed due to federal holidays and other factors. Please check EPI website for changes. [www.epicalc.org](http://www.epicalc.org). May and June are changed to defer to Poor People's Campaign schedule. Check EPI website.

### Ongoing Vigils

**Thursdays, 4:30 - 5:30**, Five Flags Park, Foothill, Jackson & Mission, Hayward. Justice for Palestinians. South Alameda County Peace and Justice (SAPJC) & Tri-City Peace and Justice (TCP).

**Fridays, 12:00 - 1:00**, Telegraph & Bancroft, Berkeley  
Women in Black, for justice and peace in Palestine.

**First Saturday of each month, 11:00**, West County Detention Center, 5555 Giant Highway, Richmond.  
Witness & vigil to oppose ongoing imprisonment of ICE detainees.