



Planted by the Waters

Summer 2019

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

Keeping Faith in the Face of Empire Report on the Good Friday witness, 2019 by Carolyn S. Scarr

This report is necessarily replete with quotes and with ellipses. You are encouraged to go to the EPI website, www.epicalc.org, where you will find a link to the text of Rev. McGarvey's homily, still photos and videos of the service, and of the dance and action at the Lab gate.

The Good Friday witness opened with music — Daniel Zwickel singing “Morning Has Broken” as has become our custom.

Benjamin Mertz, on a traditional wooden Peruvian flute, backed Isabella Zizi as she offered the opening prayer celebrating the land and acknowledging the Ohlone people on whose land we were standing. She thanked the Creator for the day and prayed for those at the Lab and people who are damaged by the nuclear weapons cycle.



Daniel Zwickel drew on his father's tradition, singing the *Shehecheyanu*, the traditional Jewish prayer recited at Passover and other High Holy days. He briefly retold the story, speaking of the ten plagues, then naming the plagues we see today — hunger, war, homelessness, domestic violence, environmental degradation, poverty, pollution of the earth, and closing with: “Next year in Jerusalem, the city of hope, the land of promise for all, all of God's children. Next year a Jerusalem, a Yerushalayim of harmony, of shalom.

Autumn Gathering — October 27 What Happened to the “New American Century”?

Rick Sterling is a long time peace and justice activist. He is current board chair of Mt Diablo Peace & Justice Center and current board president of Task Force on the Americas. He is on the Steering Committee and a founding member of Syria Solidarity Movement.

Rick will show slides and talk about the current state of US foreign policy. Unknown to the general public, the specific goals of the neo-conservative Project for a New American Century have been largely carried out. The result is the undermining of international law, the rise of US Exceptionalism and the growing danger of catastrophic world war. While neoliberal policies of the past three decades have created hundreds of billionaires, they have impoverished billions of people including tens of millions within the US itself.

There are glimmers of hope in the rise of youthful opposition and resistance such as the Occupy Movement in the US and Yellow Vests in France. There is hope in the steadfast resistance of countries and movements in the Middle East and Latin America—and in the mass support for truly different politicians such as Bernie Sanders, Tulsi Gabbard, and Jeremy Corbyn in the UK — in the increasing influence of young, ethnically diverse women in Congress—and also in the rise of China and Russia.

US exceptionalism and global domination has not helped or been good for most Americans. It is in our direct interests to work with others to restore international law, respect and equality amongst all nations. It is vital that organizations like EPI continue and grow.

Hisham Ahmed Ph.D ¡presente!

It was with heavy hearts that we learned that Professor Hisham Ahmed, who had overcome so many obstacles in his life, lost his valiant battle with colon cancer on July 7th, 2019. Born blind in a tent, in Deheisheh Refugee Camp, Bethlehem, in 1963, Hisham's meticulous scholarship, generous courtesy, undaunted courage, and delightful sense of humor charmed students, and colleagues alike, and won him many friends and admirers where ever he went. Locally, he honored Ecumenical Peace Institute & Friends of Sabeel North America with illuminating lectures advocating for human rights for Palestinians.

for Vivian Zelaya's remembrances of Hisham visit EPI's website www.epicalc.org

continued on page 2

Good Friday Report, *continued from page 1*

Then Benjamin sang Stevie Wonder's "Love's in Need of Love Today." I took special note of the last line: "Hate's gone round breaking many hearts. Stop it please before it's gone too far." This led very appropriately into Marylia Kelley's report on how far hate has gone and on Tri-Valley CAREs' work to bring a little loving into a world being harmed by the bomb, even when the bombs are unexploded.

Marylia shared thoughts about the nuclear cross, before which she stood, and how much of our democracy has been sacrificed on the altar of secrecy because of the bomb. She thanked us for our faithful attendance over the years. She went on to describe the Lab's current major project, the warhead for the long range standoff weapon which will be an air-launched nuclear warhead, to be carried by a new missile the Pentagon is developing designed to hug the earth in flight, to evade radar and explode on an unsuspecting population anywhere in the world — a sneak nuclear attack.

Marylia also spoke of the incredible cost of nuclear weapons. She spoke of the interoperable warhead which may lead to the resumption of testing in Nevada. New and modified weapons of mass destruction are 82% of the Lab's requested budget; for science they ask not even 2% of the budget. She asked us to support seven different bills in Congress to halt or limit nuclear weapon use. Details are on the Tri-Valley CAREs website at www.trivalleycares.org.



We were led by Benjamin Mertz in a sung call and response with sacred movement led by Carla DeSola and Kathleen Robbiano.

Response: "The Lord hears the cry of the poor. Blessed be the Lord."

- Blessed are the poor, the hungry and the refugees, for they shall be satisfied; and blessed are those who are in prison, for they shall be free.
- Blessed are the children who are separated from their families, who suffer from hunger and violence, for they shall be cherished.
- Blessed are those who are victims of racism, misogyny, bigotry, oppression, for they are precious in the eyes of God; and blessed are we who live on a planet possessed by nuclear weapons, for we shall be free.
- Blessed is the earth, for she shall be clean.

- Blessed are those possessed by greed and avarice, for they shall be delivered.
- And blessed are the salt waters that birthed us, and the fresh waters that sustain us, for they shall be purified.

We then heard Benjamin's eight-year-old son Isaiah read the powerful words of Greta Thunberg in defense of the planet.

Excerpts from the wonderful reading:

"My name is Isaiah Mertz. I am eight years old. I speak on behalf of Climate Justice Now. Many people say children are small and it doesn't matter what we do, but I have learned you are never too small to make a difference . . .

. . . But to do that, we have to speak clearly, no matter how uncomfortable that may be. . . .

"Our biosphere is being sacrificed so that rich people in countries like mine can live in luxury.

. . . . It is the sufferings of the many which pay for the luxuries of the few [If] solutions within the system are so impossible to find, maybe we should change the system itself. . . .

"We have run out of excuses and we are running out of time. We have come here to let you know that change is coming, whether you like it or not. The real power belongs to the people. Thank you."

Benjamin followed his son, singing "The Canticle of the Turning," a song based on Mary's "Magnificat" celebrating God who is turning the world around, "Let the king beware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne."

Reminding us that our God is with us — with us in our suffering, and with us in our struggle — Father Ivan of Newman read from Luke the story of Jesus' crucifixion.

X X X

Rev. Will McGarvey gave us a challenging message on the theme of keeping faith in the face of Empire. Here are some excerpts:

We live in an Empire. It is both a military Empire and an economic Empire.

Our country is what has been called a "hidden Empire," with more than 900 military bases around the world. We are not a Territorial

continued on page 3



Empire, like Rome which put its armies on its borders and grew from there. Instead, ours is a country that can force smaller countries and regions in the world to agree to so-called “Free Trade Agreements” that force them to open their markets to us, at the threat of not being able to participate in our consumer-driven financial system.

For all of our President’s faults, at least he is sloppy enough to display how clumsily we have always used our levers of military and economic might against other countries. In fact, he has so openly bullied other countries that we can see through his words and lies and sanctions against China, Iran, Venezuela and others that we can see his policies for what they are — opening salvos in an economic war to get those countries to do what we want them to do — which is submit to U.S. power and to act as vassal states, or to give their petroleum industries over to the Koch Brothers or other U.S. forms of corporate domination.

We used to hide such behavior — pretending we were doing such things to preserve freedom around the world — but these days our international domination is out in the open.

For those of us who care, we know that our nation has broken every single treaty ever signed with Native Americans in the history of our nation. We haven’t kept even one. We have broken over 700 treaties with Native Nations.

How do we live as citizens of the Empire — and as a part of the religious resistance to the abuses of the Empire?

So, here we are at the Lab, once again. And, once again, we can’t pretend that making more and new Nuclear Missiles will make the so-called “nuclear deterrent” any more possible when we have ideologues such as the Liar-in-Chief in the White House. He is, after all, the first president of the Nuclear Age to threaten the use of “strategic” low-grade nuclear weapons as a part of our regular military options that can be used against any nation at any time.

Be afraid, be *very* afraid. Fear and Power seem to be the primary reasons for the creation of nuclear weapons, and the many other aspects of the buildup of our military might. Fear, itself, seems to be the real reason for the planning, construction, storage and reconstruction and even the “updating” of our nuclear weapons.

Twice a year we come here to question whether we are an altruistic Empire [Somewhere,] deep down, we know. America itself is the most powerful aggressor and oppressor in the world. Just ask the people of Venezuela, who are experiencing an open coup at the hands of our own government at the behest of the Koch brothers, whose oil refineries in Texas were created specifically to refine the dirty oil found in Venezuela. It’s not just the sanctions that get used in times like these, but the threat of our military might as well.

Here we are again — Keeping Faith in the Face of the Empire we ourselves live within. Like the Maccabean Jews within the Greek Empire. Like the Jesus movement within the Roman Empire, who would rather die in the arenas than participate in the Empire. Like the Druids who stood against the Roman troops in Anglesey. Like the Prophet Mohamed and the Muslims who traveled from Mecca to Medina to escape certain death for demanding equal rights for those oppressed in their society, only to have to reassure those in Medina that they came to make peace with the locals there as well. Religious people are often the last resistance to Empire.

Today we are here to show that we retain our humanity, to retain our faith in the Gods and Goddesses we know how to pray to, and against the powers of death, war and injustice. We are here once again to remind them — as we remind ourselves — that we were created for more than to be fodder for their wars of aggression.

Good Friday Report, *continued from page 3*

We were created to recognize the image of the Divine in one another, and therefore, we belong to each other — even in the face of the threats and abuses of Empire — and especially when we live and resist within the borders of that Empire.

We are here again to reclaim everyone's humanity, to hold up a mirror to our neighbors and family members who work inside this Imperial system of weapon making and environmental degradation. We are here to ask them and the Emperor with no clothes why they put their trust in violence and fear.

Pope Francis has argued that any country that maintains a nuclear arsenal "creates nothing but a false sense of security," saying, "that total disarmament is the only acceptable solution." (NCR, April 5, 2019, page 8, *Old Guard Looks to New Generation on Nuclear Disarmament*, by Dennis Sadowski, Catholic News Service)

Our fears of a nuclear holocaust are only rivaled these days by our genuine fear of Climate Chaos. The environmental catastrophe being created by many of these same industries has led us to the brink of dozens of tipping points seen today . . . We've known that we are transforming our climate since the 1970s, and yet in 2018 our emissions from fossil fuels use surged to a record high of 33.1 billion tons.

Given all of the systems of oppression we recognize around us and encircling those we love around the world, we have to do more than look for what is politically possible. We have to start to act as if our actions matter, because they are the difference between mass extinctions and a livable planet.

We have to keep faith. Amen?

We are here today to say, once again, that even though we live in the shadow of Empire — we are here to say we will not become the tools of Imperial economics, racism and the Empire's war machine. We have to decolonize our hearts so that when we win — and we will win, siblings of God — we have to decolonize our hearts so we don't mistakenly take the places within the Empire that others are currently playing.

Here's the key. We aren't called to be successful for the sake of success, or progress, or even for the sake of making the world a better place. We are called to be faithful — like the servants and prophets of old — even unto death. We, too, need to be faithful, leaving the success to God alone.

Our faithfulness here today is an expression of our loyal questioning of the systems of power

over others. Our allegiance to the God of Compassion questions the very foundations of White Supremacy, White Nationalism, Patriarchal misogyny, and demands an equality that exposes American Exceptionalism as the idolatry that it continues to be.

For the vocation of our loving God compels us to be all that we have been created to be — not to shrink back from our full humanity — to show that we live as equals with others around the world. It is in that solidarity that we can continue to be the people of God that challenges all that threatens our common humanity — and even the earth itself. Amen.

X X X

Following Pastor Will's sermon, we heard an invitation to the offering from Janet Gibson and Tony Scarr played a clarinet solo.

Heather Macleod of Dances of Universal Peace introduced us to the prayer, music and dance that we would participate in at the Lab gates. "Spirit of Peace, to thy cause we give our strength that love may reign and war shall cease. Mir, Miru, Mir" (Russian for peace, earth, peace)

Khalil W. Islam of the Muslim Community Center offered the benediction, reading from the Koran directing love and support for refugees. Whoever is saved from greediness and avarice in their own soul is truly successful. He read for us the story in the Koran of Moses' arrival in the land of Midian as a refugee and the story of God directing Moses to go and challenge the Pharaoh and Moses' prayer for the support of his brother, Aaron, in this task.

Sherry Larsen-Beville called us to the walk of the Stations of the Cross to the Lab gates for the closing dance and the civil disobedience action.

Six Stations of the Cross of Empire focused on homelessness, immigration, Palestine, Haiti & Latin America, Iran — sanctions, nukes & keeping promises, and U.S. nuclear weapons.

We danced the Dance of Universal Peace in front of the gate. Twenty-two people went forward to block the Lab gate where they were arrested, detained for a short time and released.

Some came to nearby Asbury United Methodist Church for a community time with very welcomed coffee and snacks and a chance to share our work.



Iran in U.S. Crosshairs

U.S. Blames Iran for Latest Tanker Attack

The Trump administration blamed Iran for an attack on two oil tankers at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, an escalation that risks provoking outright conflict between Washington and Tehran.

Early that morning, a Norwegian and a Japanese tanker carrying oil products from the Persian Gulf to Asia reported explosions while in the Gulf of Oman and burst into flames. All 44 sailors on both ships were rescued by U.S. and Iranian naval vessels. The incident came just one month after four other tankers were attacked in the same area, after Iran vowed to close the vital Strait of Hormuz to all traffic if U.S. sanctions on its oil exports intensified. U.S. officials blamed Iran for that earlier attack, though they have not yet presented evidence to back up their assertions. *ForeignPolicy.com* June 13, 2019

Accusations are not evidence —

Remember the Maine — The explosion of the U.S. ship in Havana harbor was used to start the U.S. war with Spain in 1898. In 1976, a team of American naval investigators concluded that the **Maine explosion** was likely caused by a fire that ignited its ammunition stocks, not by a Spanish mine or act of sabotage. (Google)

Remember the Gulf of Tonkin —

The Truth About Tonkin: Questions about the Gulf of Tonkin incidents have persisted for more than 40 years. But once-classified documents and tapes released in the past several years, combined with previously uncovered facts, make clear that high government officials distorted facts and deceived the American public about events that led to full U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

By Lieutenant Commander Pat Paterson, U.S. Navy February 2008 Naval History Magazine Volume 22, Number 1

From Institute for Public Accuracy *accuracy.org* Persian Gulf of Tonkin?

June 14, 2019

NYT: “One of the tankers that were attacked in the Gulf of Oman was struck by a flying object, the ship’s Japanese operator said on Friday, disputing at least part of the account of United States officials who had blamed Iran for the attack.”

During what the *Nikkei Asian Review* is reporting was the first visit to Tehran by a Japanese leader since the 1979 revolution, there was an attack on two Japan-bound tankers, near the Straits of Hormuz Thursday.

Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif tweeted: “Reported attacks on Japan-related tankers occurred while [Prime Minister Abe] @AbeShinzo was meeting

with [Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei] @khame-nei_ir for extensive and friendly talks. Suspicious doesn’t begin to describe what likely transpired this morning. Iran’s proposed Regional Dialogue Forum is imperative.”

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo — who made a statement at the State Department and refused to take questions — tweeted: “It is the assessment of the U.S. government that Iran is responsible for today’s attacks in the Gulf of Oman.” Journalist Rania Khalek, warned that national security adviser John Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo “are trying to create a Gulf of Tonkin incident with Iran,” referring to a falsified incident that the Johnson administration used in 1964 to dramatically escalate the Vietnam War.

TRITA PARSI, tparsi at gmail.com, @tparsi

Parsi founded the National Iranian American Council. He tweeted: “So literally while Japan’s Abe is meeting with Iran’s Ayatollah Khamenei, a Japanese oil tanker is attacked in the Gulf of Oman. Sounds like some are afraid Japan may succeed in starting diplomacy. The message appears to be: Don’t you dare stand in the way of my war plans.”

FRANCIS BOYLE, fboyle at illinois.edu

Professor of international law at the University of Illinois, Boyle’s books include *Destroying World Order*. He said today: “Some are claiming that the 2001 Authorization for Military Force would authorize attacking Iran. This is totally false. The AUMF is currently being stretched in a highly dubious manner and should be rescinded. To apply it to Iran would be totally absurd.

“Given the manner Bolton is pressing for war, a member of the House should put in a Bill of Impeachment against him immediately.

“It’s certainly possible that some Iranian faction, like the Revolutionary Guard, which the U.S. government designated as terrorists earlier this year (see *accuracy.org* news release), could have done this, but Pompeo provided no serious evidence. His basic reasoning, that Iran is likely guilty largely because it had the capacity to conduct such attacks, could just as easily be applied to the U.S., Saudi or Israeli governments or possibly groups they support.

“And it’s the U.S. government that has the most dramatic history of violence in this respect. The civilian Iran Air Flight 655 was downed by the USS Vincennes over the Persian Gulf in 1988. And Iran brought a suit against the U.S. at the International Court of Justice in the Oil Platforms case. The court eventually ruled that ‘the actions of the U.S. against Iranian oil platforms . . . cannot be justified as measures necessary to protect the essential security interests’ of the U.S., though the court rejected the call for reparations by Iran.”

continued on page 11

The two-state solution is dead. Let us take the obvious and humane path forward

Mike Gravel on June 19, 2019, *Mondoweiss Opinion*

One of the most obvious absurdities in the world of foreign policy is seeing what is considered serious. The people who want to continue funding massacres, genocides, and authoritarian regimes abroad frame their ideas in the sober language of realism, and earn plaudits from pundits and think tanks; those who propose the moral and obviously necessary alternatives are dismissed as unserious, among the cruelest insults in the world of foreign policy. Thus I do not expect the policy I will propose for Israel and Palestine to be taken seriously by the foreign policy establishment, which is too busy honoring Henry Kissinger to care much. But I will be frank with what I view as true seriousness on this important issue.

The very basic threshold for seriousness with regards to Israel/Palestine policy is one that no major party backs: the two-state solution is dead, and we have killed it.

The signs of its expiration are all around us. More than half a million Israeli settlers live (illegally) in Palestinian territory, and it would be politically, and logistically, impossible for them to be removed peacefully. The increasingly entrenched Israeli hard right — led by toxic figures like Ayelet Shaked and Naftali Bennett — openly advocates annexing “Area C,” which constitutes most of the West Bank. And the compromises that a two-state solution would require would not only be politically toxic for both Israeli and Palestinian leadership; they would also be disastrous in practice. It is not difficult to envision ethnic cleansing reminiscent of the massacres surrounding the partition of British India in 1947, as vast numbers of people scramble to cross arbitrary borders in short stretches of time.

With these deteriorating conditions constituting difficult obstacles, it stands to reason that if Bill Clinton and Barack Obama could not reach a working agreement, the particular charms of a Pete Buttigieg or Joe Biden won't be able to, either. It is also apparent that a two-state solution would likely not be worth the bloodshed and chaos it would cause. So why keep up the charade? Most American diplomats will, in their more candid hours, admit that the two-state idea is long dead. Prudence dictates that America acknowledge that on the world stage and begin the search for other solutions.

The most obvious and humane path forward is the creation of a secular, democratic, binational state with equal rights for all. That is the model the U.S. government, with its partners in the region, should work toward and publicly highlight as the ideal outcome. This, like any real solution, would disappoint many, both those who want an official Palestinian national homeland and those who want an official Jewish

homeland. But this is necessary. Both visions serve an abstract nationalism rather than the actual needs of Israelis and Palestinians living in the area, and a state along the lines of the idealized United States model, one with no prized ethnicity or religious character, is the solution all those seeking a humanitarian alternative should support. There would be no need for the byzantine arrangements (land swaps, dual city ownership, etc.) upon which most attempts to resolve the conflict have hinged: it would simply be the decision—an admittedly difficult one—to live together, Muslim, Jew, and Christian, in a peaceful, democratic, egalitarian society.

Of course, the sheer power of the Israel lobby in the United States is the main hurdle to such a radical departure from traditional blind support for Israel. Thus the Israel lobby should be restricted; it is time to free American policy from the shackles of AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee), ZOA (Zionist Organization of America), and other groups. AIPAC especially wields awe-inspiring power over Congress; the hysterical reaction to relatively mild criticism of the group by Rep. Ilhan Omar—criticism that stands out in large part because of the rarity of sitting federal officials criticizing that ship of fools—illustrates just how much influence it wields.

The first step should be mandating that AIPAC register as a foreign lobby under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). AIPAC manages to skirt American laws about foreign lobbying by claiming that it represents Americans who happen to support Israel. But the shockingly close ties between the governing Likud Party and AIPAC give a lie to this legal fiction; AIPAC will always stand closer to Israeli interests than American ones. (And no, despite Vice President Mike Pence's claim that Israel's “cause is our cause, her values are our values and her fight is our fight,” Israeli interests and American ones are not one and the same.) Such an arrangement would prevent AIPAC from influencing American elections, and would require it to report all of its contacts with Congress, along with details of its spending, to the Department of Justice.

Next, the U.S. should end military aid to Israel, citing the Israeli military's complicity in crimes against the Palestinian people. It should call for a gradual demilitarization of Israel and Palestine, and should be clear with the Israeli government that the days of Israel-right-or-wrong are over. Future outrages by either side will receive an even-handed response without bias. Accordingly, it should demand that Israel bring itself into compliance with international law and end the harassment of dissidents like the liberal Zionist Peter Beinart or those who support the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

And the U.S. should refuse to take unconstitutional steps to stifle BDS. Whatever one's personal thoughts on BDS, an individual or group's decision not to asso-

continued on page 11

Haiti Action Committee responds to Joint Statement

Haiti Action Committee strongly condemns the Joint Statement by nine members of the House of Representatives claiming “Violent Protests That Have Left Haiti at a Standstill.”¹ Their assertion, “*While the frustrations that have prompted the protests are justifiable, the violent acts being used to express them are indefensible*” is as backwards a statement as President Trump equating those protesting white supremacy in Charlottesville with the racist demonstrators. It harkens back to the arguments used against the Civil Rights movement in this country, and the fight against apartheid in South Africa. Their statement explains nothing about why the overwhelming majority of Haitians are demanding the removal of a hated and corrupt president, imposed on Haiti by the United States and the United Nations, except that their “frustrations” are “justifiable.”

What violent acts?... Rocks wielded in self-defense by unarmed protestors, facing the barrage of automatic gunfire of police and their civilian affiliates? No-where does this statement denounce the overwhelmingly disproportionate violence of the government against the Haitian mass movement – arbitrary arrests and police-affiliated death squad killings with impunity, such as in La Saline throughout November 2018, culminating on the 13th and 14th in a massacre of at least 71 people and probably many more. Massacres in Kafou Fey on April 24, 2019, in Village de Dieu on June 17, and on June 24 in downtown Port-au-Prince, killing an estimated 30 people trying to find shelter from the police attacks. Women raped in front of their husbands and children. Murdered bodies disappeared, or cut up and fed to pigs. Demonstrators attacked with water cannon spewing a blue foam that burns the skin . . . The atrocities go on and on, completely ignored by these representatives concerned more with burning tires and broken windows.

We agree that, “one of the key pillars of a democratic society is the freedom to stand up and speak out,” but Haiti is not a democratic society. It is a society under military occupation since 2004, led by governments put into place in 4 fraudulent and corrupt presidential election cycles, where the majority Fanmi Lavalas Party was either not allowed to run candidates or was prevented from winning through massive fraud and voter suppression. If a Haitian “stands up and speaks out,” that person is likely to be shot dead in the street, or end up in a prison for years without trial, or have death squads show up at their door in the middle of the night. Haitians risk their lives every time they go into the streets to protest.

Yes, Haiti does need international support, but support to rid the country of thieving government

Human Rights Team Finds US-Backed Haitian Government Culpable in Lasalin Massacre

Download Report at <https://haitisolidarity.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/The-Lasalin-Massacre-ONLINE-7-11-19-Nat-NLG-2.pdf>

Haiti Action Committee together with the National Lawyers Guild [NLG] is releasing a new report The Lasalin Massacre and the Human Rights Crisis in Haiti about the November 2018 massacre in the neighborhood of Lasalin, Port-au-Prince. The report provides evidence of other subsequent massacres and human rights violations facilitated and supported by the government of Jovenel Moise and his ruling PHTK party.

The report is co-authored by Judith Mirkinson, President of the San Francisco chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, and Seth Donnelly, a member of Haiti Action Committee. Other members of the team include Margaret Prescod, an investigative journalist based in Los Angeles and producer of the Sojourner Truth radio program nationally syndicated on Pacifica, as well as Ramiro Funez, assistant producer of the Sojourner Truth program.

On April 1, 2019 our team went to Lasalin and interviewed survivors and eye-witnesses of the November massacre. The report demonstrates that the Lasalin massacre — rather than simply an example of “gang violence” as portrayed by the Haitian government and some US media sources — was in fact an attack facilitated by government officials and directly conducted by Haitian National Police [HNP] officers working closely with paramilitary elements logistically supported by the PHTK. Lasalin was targeted because it is a base of protests and opposition against the Moise government. Perpetrators of the massacre destroyed homes, burned people alive, hacked people

continued on page 11

and business officials, to force return of \$4.2 billion in stolen Petrocaribe money (not to mention stolen earthquake donations), and to hold truly free and fair elections. We ask these representatives to reconsider their statement, condemn the violence of the state against those demonstrating, and support their just demands, starting with the removal of Jovenel Moise as president. The people of Haiti are struggling for freedom, justice, and equality; for dignity, sovereignty, and unity. They are working to build a country. Those who are steeped in corruption are the ones who are failing and destroying the state.

Haiti Action Committee
www.haitisolidarity.net • action.haiti@gmail.com
510-483-7481 • @HaitiAction1 • FACEBOOK

¹ <https://wilson.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/joint-statement-on-violent-protests-that-have-lefthaiti-at-a-standstill>

Economic warfare

— from siege to sanctions

materials gathered by Carolyn Scarr

Siege, the militarily imposed blocking of food and other basic necessities, has been a part of warfare for thousands of years. The Siege of **Athens** (404 BC) resulted in mass starvation forcing Athens to capitulate to Sparta in a devastating end to the Peloponnesian War. England besieged the city of Calais (1346-1347). The Burghers of Calais, to save their citizens from extinction, accepted a sentence of death in their surrender. They were spared. Today Israel holds **Gaza** in siege.

Economic warfare does not require military action.

Haiti — In 1995, bowing to U.S. pressure led by Senator Jesse Helms, the International Monetary Fund refused to disperse a loan which had been approved for the Aristide government to build a good water system and sewage treatment facilities. Helms, and President Clinton, were demanding Haiti sell off five state-owned industries, including a flour mill and a cement factory. Haiti still resists U.S. domination.

Sanctions = Terrorism

“I’ll be judge, I’ll be jury,” said cunning old Fury:
“I’ll try the whole cause and condemn you to death.” Lewis Carroll

The word “sanctions” carries the unjustifiable flavor of legitimacy — that the country being sanctioned has done some wrong for which it should be punished. Now many leaders of many countries have done wrong, stolen public funds, favored their friends, molested young girls or boys. This often does not lead to sanctions. Sometimes the crime of the leader or of the country has been to organize their internal affairs in a way which the leaders of the U.S. finds objectionable — too much public funding of public services for housing, health care, education, etc.

The economic impact of sanctions invariably falls upon the common people. The hypothesis is that if sufficiently harmed by the damage to their economy the common people will rise up and overthrow the government the U.S. is finding unsatisfactory. Thus sanctions target the civilian population in order to achieve a political end. This is the definition of terrorism.

Some relatively recent cases of economic warfare:

Chile, Latin America’s oldest democracy, was deprived of international funding from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Export-Import Bank to “make the economy scream” (Nixon). Nevertheless the people did not rise up against their elected government. It took a military coup to overturn Allende’s government, which had committed the crime of attempting to use the country’s wealth to benefit the common people.

Nicaragua was occupied by the U.S. from 1909 until 1979 when the Sandinistas lead a grassroots revolution

and established a government which served the needs of the common people. Regrettably students being financed by the National Endowment for “Democracy” who have led a violent attempt to overthrow the elected government are being widely portrayed as freedom fighters, as were the Contras before them. Even progressive members of the U.S. Congress have voted to engage in the economic attack authorized by the “NICA” act which imposes sanctions and financial restrictions on Nicaragua in an explicit effort to weaken its government. Let’s look at the target:

Transcend (<https://www.transcend.org/tms/>) writes about Nicaragua on July 2, 2018

- Crime rates were among the lowest in Latin America.
- Economic growth, between 4 and 5%, was the second highest in the region after Panama.
- It was one of the countries in Latin America with the greatest reduction in absolute and relative poverty.
- It was the only country in the region that produced 90% of the food it consumed.
- It was one of the very few countries in Latin America and the entire Third World that produced all its textbooks at all levels, from primary school to University and Adult Education.
- It had managed to stop the exodus to the United States.
- It was becoming a world-renowned tourist destination for travelers in search of peace, tranquility and healthy and environmentally friendly cultural experiences.
- It had reached levels of political participation of women that are only found in developed countries.
- It had managed to stop the drug cartels and organized crime.

Cuba Having thrown out the U.S.-supported Batista regime 1959, Cuba has been subject to U.S. embargo with varying degrees of completeness until the present. Nevertheless, Cuba maintains a world-renowned health care system. It has one of the highest literacy rates in the world. From pre-school programs to doctorates, education is free and available to all. Report by The School Superintendents Association (U.S.) May 3, 2017.

Venezuela In a letter from two medical professionals in *Lancet*, June 13, 2019, we read about “the impact of the US economic sanctions . . . Since 2014, 43 unilateral, coercive measures have been applied against Venezuela by the US Administration. . . . The impact of the US sanctions on the Venezuelan population cannot be overstated. More than 300,000 Venezuelans are at risk due to a lack of lifesaving medications and treatment.” The letter lists a range of conditions impacted, from HIV to diabetes, to hypertension to children’s vaccines and much more. “US State Department recently boasted . . . ‘US policy has and continues to prevent the Venezuelan Government from participating in the international market and has led to

continued on page 9

Sanctions *continued from page 8*

the freezing of its overseas assets.’ US National Security Advisor John Bolton stated that they are backing the illegal coup in Venezuela, as ‘it will make a big difference to the United States economically if we could have American oil companies invest in and produce the oil capabilities in Venezuela.’ . . . Pointing to the economic failures of Venezuela as justification for further economic sanctions, causing further economic failures, is a cyclical, fallacious argument and not a legitimate public health approach.”

Iran, North Korea and Syria: Trying to determine the reasons for sanctions on these countries is a challenge. **Iran** is accused of supporting terrorism. They support Hezbollah, a locally-based self-defense military group formed in response to Israel’s invasion of Lebanon. Iran also supports Hamas which, according to a local rabbi friend, was formed with Israeli support as a self-help group with a strong religious base to counter the non-sectarian Palestinian Liberation Organization. Iran’s more historical sin is throwing out the shah who had been selected by the U.S. to rule them when the democratic government of Mosadegh was overthrown — by the U.S. and Britain. Furthermore Iran held a number of U.S. citizens hostage for over a year. Iran has supported Syria’s recognized government. **North Korea’s** sin is not having been defeated and not acquiescing in the continued U.S. military presence in the peninsula. Oddly enough they consider that if mutually assured destruction (MAD) works for the U.S. and the USSR it will work for them. Not being a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, they are not in violation of its terms. (The U.S. is in violation of the treaty, being committed to refrain from upgrading or expanding our nuclear arsenal and to work for an eventual elimination of nuclear weapons altogether.) North Korea’s other sin is remaining ready to engage in the peace negotiations which were supposed to follow shortly after the signing of the armistice (1953) ending the Korean war. **Syria** is accused of using chemical weapons against civilian targets. The evidence is very shaky. Syria’s major sin is accepting the assistance of Iran and Russia in its opposition to the fundamentalist “Islamic “ State (IS) forces which are trying to depose it. IS is a client of U.S.’s major ally Saudi Arabia which is filtering U.S. aid to the rather less than moderate rebels in Syria.

The writers of the letter to *Lancet* pointed out, “The UN Human Rights Council reported that ‘the use of economic sanctions for political purposes violates human rights and the norms of international behavior. Such actions may precipitate man-made humanitarian catastrophes of unprecedented proportions. Regime change through economic measures likely to lead to the denial of basic human rights and indeed possibly to starvation, has never been an accepted practice of international relations.’ These sanctions fit the definition of collective punishment of the civilian population, as described by the Geneva (Article 33) and

Hague conventions, to which the USA is a signatory. These sanctions are also illegal under international and federal US law. Given the intentional action to destroy a people, in part or in whole, the US economic sanctions and their effect on the preventable mortality of Venezuelans fit the UN definition of genocide. “

The dialectics of economic warfare

A paper delivered to the Moscow Academic Economic Forum (MAEF) by Dr. Leo Gabriel from the Institute for Intercultural Research and Cooperation in Vienna, Austria:

It was in 2004 when the war in Iraq was at its peak, that the renown political scientist Emanuel Wallerstein announced at the World Social Forum in Mumbai, India, a public discussion under the surprising title: “Is the neoliberal transformation dead?” We, the members of the International Council of the WSF were shocked, because this announcement touched the *raison d’etre*, the roots of the whole event where for the third time more than one hundred thousand activists from all continents had come together in order to exchange alternative concepts and strategies to combat neoliberalism.

What Wallerstein really meant was, that with the war in Iraq the US-Empire had crossed its red line which consisted to gain the world’s most valuable resources through a sort of economic dictatorship, whereas now George W. Bush used direct military action in order to get hold of these resources — be it in Iraq, Iran, in Africa or Latin America.

I had to think of this anecdote when several outstanding economists were highlighting the fact that we should consider political economy as being part of a united, interdisciplinary methodology of the social sciences as a whole, including sociology, political science, social anthropology, ecology etc. It was said that we should use modern economics as only one of the tools to counteract the market fundamentalism which gave rise since the era of Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Gorbachev to neoliberal transformation. What we did not talk about was the fact that our political enemies had discovered that a long time before. By different from us they also included military strategies as a tool to implement their economic goals and vice versa.

Is neoliberalism dead — just because we are facing a period which considers increasingly military action as a legitimate means to capture oil, gas, coal, gold and other minerals? The answer is yes and no.

NO, because it is still the transnational mining companies which execute the renewed power structures in the Middle East and elsewhere; and YES, because after the failures of the war mongers in East and West it is again the armies who guarantee nowadays the multi billionaire capital flow to and from the countries who possess these valuable goods.

However what we can say is that once again wars

continued on page 10

Sanctions *continued from page 9*

are becoming the prolongation of postmodern super-power politics, as Clausewitz would say. The only difference to former times is that — thanks to facebook and google — nowadays there is a symbolic value in it capable to transport fake news within a couple of minutes around the globe. And even if the real objective of these military actions is to pursue an economic goal the overarching structure is increasingly guided by the generals and not by politicians and businessmen.

You can take any hotspots which are existing nowadays around the world, be it North Korea or Palestine, Syria or Venezuela, the Ukrainian Maidan or the Egyptian Arab Spring it is not the politicians whose role is reduced to symbolic figureheads, but the militaries and secret services who are the real directors of this bloody world circus. It's them and not the more or less democratically elected presidents who represent the real dangers for world peace.

If we ask ourselves what is the role of economy in all of this mess we are in, we will discover that the dialectics also works the other way around: because instead of acting according to the laws of offer and demand or the rules of monopoly capitalism, like we learned in the textbooks of political economies, economy itself is increasingly becoming a tool for military action. Never before in history economic sanctions be they directed against Russia, Syria, Venezuela or Nicaragua, had been used quite frequently as an arm for what Trump calls "system change" as nowadays.

What is often forgotten in this postmodern way of waging so called economic wars is that the real victims of these sanctions mostly are the people, the civil society and not the political leaders against whom the arms of sanctions are directed. It is true that this has happened many times before, like in the siege of Leningrad during World War II or at the very beginning of the war against Iraq in the so called "food for oil" campaign.

But whilst before these lethal instruments have been used before in the context of an openly declared military war-scenario, today these sanctions directed by the militaries and their political allies are being used INSTEAD of military actions under the wrong supposition that the entire population will turn against their leadership.

I have been following this cruel strategy very closely in Venezuela where the US since 2015 put heavy sanctions against the population by taking advantage of the fact that Venezuela produces very few goods on its own, because 93 percent of the national revenue still comes from the production of oil, an oil which is so heavy that it needs to be mixed with other substances that are not available in the country.

The United States and their European allies took advantage of this dependency on the outside world by blocking the access of vital goods on the one hand and the capital flow on the other, causing extreme poverty among the civilian population. As a consequence of this

continued on page 11

Bold Call to All Presidential Candidates from US Conference of Mayors

At their 87th Annual Meeting held in July 2019 in Hawaii, the US Conference of Mayors (USCM), unanimously adopted a resolution, asking 4 pledges from "all Presidential candidates of all political parties," that if elected will:

1) "Make Known Their Positions on Nuclear Weapons and to Pledge U.S. Global Leadership in Preventing Nuclear War, Returning to Diplomacy, and Negotiating the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons", and make these "priority issues in the 2020 Presidential campaign."

2) support the joint 1985 declaration by US President Reagan and Soviet President Gorbachev, that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought,' as urged by UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

3) "to lead a global effort to prevent nuclear war by renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first and by actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals."

4) "to reverse U.S. opposition to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and to embrace its humanitarian values and goals."

USCM notes the Congressional Budget Office says US "spending for nuclear warheads, delivery systems and supporting infrastructure over the 2019-2028 period is projected to cost \$494 billion, for an average of nearly \$50 billion a year". Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, President of Mayors for Peace, declared, "that money could be much more productively spent to meet the needs of cities and the people who live in them." The "...U.S. announcement, followed by Russia's, of their intention to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty effective in August 2019 are warning signs of deepening crisis among the nuclear-armed states." The resolution observes that despite the fact that "the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which entered into force in 1970, requires the US, Russia, the UK, France, and China to negotiate "in good faith" the end of the nuclear arms race "at an early date" and the elimination of their nuclear arsenals," "nuclear-armed states are engaged in nuclear weapons modernization programs."

The USCM, a nonpartisan association of 1,408 American cities with populations over 30,000, has unanimously adopted Mayors for Peace resolutions for 14 consecutive years. Mayors for Peace, founded in 1982, is led by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and has grown to 7,756 cities in 163 countries and regions, with 215 U.S. members. Their goal is "a world without nuclear weapons and safe and resilient cities as essential measures for the achievement of lasting world peace.

For more information contact: Jackie Cabasso, Mayors for Peace North American Coordinator (510) 306-0119; wslf@earthlink.net

Two-state solution, dead *continued from page 6*

ciate with another group or country is a legitimate exercise of the freedoms of speech and association guaranteed by the Constitution, and using the power of the government to influence those decisions is wrong. Senators Amy Klobuchar and Cory Booker should be ashamed of themselves for supporting federal laws to restrict BDS. (It is perhaps no coincidence that Booker and the president of AIPAC “text message back and forth like teenagers,” by Booker’s own admission.)

What I’m calling for is, in fact, a moderate and sensible proposal; it is the current policy, of unbridled fondness for a government flirting openly with ethnic cleansing, that is radical and dangerous. The current policy is the exact one that George Washington warned against in his Farewell Address: “a passionate attachment of one nation for another,” the creation of “an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists.”

It’s time for a mature relationship with Israel, free of the cloying sentimentalities and tired banalities (“Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East”) that infest our political discourse surrounding it. America’s wanton indulgence of the whims of Benjamin Netanyahu and his fellow rightists will only redound to the harm of Israelis and Palestinians years down the line. It is too late to return to the fantasies of old, and high time to begin the projects of the new age. There are two possible futures for Israel and Palestine: one close to the vision of Isaiah—“nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more”—and one reminiscent of the prophecy of the Sibyl of Virgil’s Aeneid: “wars, horrendous wars,” the Jordan “foaming with tides of blood.” It’s a simple choice. Let’s choose peace.

Sanctions *continued from page 10*

the infant mortality, which had decreased from more than 50 per 1000 babies to less than 20, all of a sudden jumped to more than 80. There is a statistic that shows that every Venezuelan has lost 8 kilos of weight in this last year because of food shortages and that 40,000 people got killed because of the lack of medicines.

If we want to find a word for this way of killing innocent people without arms just because they happen to be in a spot where an economic warfare is being waged, we need not search for a long time in the dictionaries. It is called **TERRORISM** and as any other form of terrorism it should be prosecuted as a crime against humanity.

Therefore let us get together as social scientists who we are in order to defend our professions. We should not allow any longer that economy is being used for a warfare against entire populations. In this sense we are like medical doctors who swore the Hippocratic oath that they never will use their skill to put in danger human lives.

Therefore I propose to sign a declaration which condemns very strongly the politics of economic sanctions against entire countries — as a form of resistance and a way to protect our profession against the war mongers of the world we are living in.

Iran in U.S. Crosshairs *continued from page 5*

Sam Husseini, senior analyst at *accuracy.org* noted that a Japanese ship being attacked while Japan was apparently attempting to decrease tensions was reminiscent of the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Yugoslavia by the U.S. after China had objected to the U.S. bombing there. The U.S. government claimed the bombing was accidental, but the British *Observer* would conclude “NATO bombed Chinese deliberately.”

Last month, the *Guardian* wrote regarding a previous attack in the region: “Evidence that Iran has been behind recent attacks on oil tankers and pipelines in the Gulf is likely to be presented to the UN Security Council as early as next week, John Bolton, the U.S. national security adviser, has revealed.” Early this month, *Salon* published investigative reporter Gareth Porter’s piece “Pentagon’s phony Iran ‘evidence’: New rationale for U.S. intervention?”

Meanwhile, Reuters has reported: “Twitter deletes thousands of accounts tied to Iran.” Supposedly social media has pulled this trick before. See *accuracy.org* news release from last year: “Following Assassination Attempt, Facebook Pulled Venezuela Content.”

The whole thing has the smell of yellow cake uranium. Fool us twice (or three times), shame on us.

Keeping track of what is going on in this disagreement is difficult. As of this writing Iran and the UK have each stopped and taken over one of each other’s oil tankers.

What will result from that controversy???

Haiti, Lasalin Massacre report *continued from page 7*

to death, fed body parts to pigs and dogs, and raped women. People of all ages, including a 10 month old child, were systematically butchered.

The report examines how the US government has continued to diplomatically and economically support the Moise government, despite clear evidence of its human rights violations. US support for the Moise government includes millions of US tax dollars to fund and train the HNP, despite its well-documented participation in brutality, killings of unarmed protesters, arbitrary arrests, torture, extrajudicial killings, and massacres such as the Lasalin massacre. The police and Moise government have also been politically, economically, and logistically supported by the United Nations occupation forces in Haiti, MINUJUSTH. The report concludes: “As the toll mounts from the atrocities committed in Lasalin, it is time for both the United States and the United Nations to be held to task for their continued support of the repressive and illegitimate regime now in power in Haiti. The people of Haiti deserve the right to live without the daily threat of state-directed violence.”

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)
- ___\$10.00 ___\$25.00 ___\$35.00 ___\$50.00 ___\$100.00___ (other)

I will pledge \$_____ monthly, \$_____ quarterly

Please make checks payable to E.P.I.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ email _____

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.



Ecumenical Peace Institute
of Northern California

P.O. Box 9334
Berkeley, CA 94709

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Oakland, CA
Permit # 2508

Address Service Requested

Calendar & Announcements

Saturday, October 12, Pax Christi Assembly

Saturday, October 19, East Bay Sanctuary Covenant
annual dinner

Sunday, October 27, EPI Autumn Gathering

*Thank You Marilyn Madsen
for your many years of treasuring.
You paid our bills, filed our papers with the state,
kept track of our balance, laid out our budget
and much, much more.
Ecumenical Peace Institute is very grateful and
wishes you an enjoyable retirement.*

Inside:

1. Rick Sterling at Autumn Gathering
1. Report on Good Friday witness
5. Iran in the Crosshairs
6. Senator Mike Gravel, Two State Solution is Dead
7. Haiti
8. Economic Warfare — From Siege to Sanctions
10. U.S. Conference of Mayors call to end nuclear weapons

Actions

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

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.

Sundays 1- 2 p.m. & Thursdays 12- 1 p.m., Circle of Concern vigil at the west entrance to UC Berkeley to protest the involvement of the University of California in the development of nuclear weapons

Ecumenical Peace Institute Autumn Gathering

Sunday, October 27, 2019

Dinner and Program 5:30 – 8:45 p.m.

St. John's Presbyterian Church
2727 College Ave., in Berkeley

Rick Sterling What Happened to the "New American Century"?

Long time peace & justice activist, Rick will talk about the current state of U.S. foreign policy and how the goals of the neo-conservative Project for a New American Century have been largely carried out resulting in the undermining of international law, the rise of US Exceptionalism and the growing danger of catastrophic world war. We will be shown glimmers of hope at home & around the world which we can support.

Gathering and snacks at 5:30
Dinner and program at 6:00

==>> PLEASE CALL 510-990-0374

and let us know you are coming.

Donation \$15 - \$50 benefits EPI's ongoing work; no one turned away for lack of funds.

Wheelchair accessible entrance on Garber St. and from underground parking garage. Cosponsored by St. John's Mission & Justice Commission.

Visit <http://www.epicalc.org/> for more details.