



Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

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70 Years of Nuclear Weapons: At What Cost?

**Gather at Livermore Lab
Thursday, August 6,
2015, 8:00 AM**

People of all ages who desire peace and the true security of a world without nuclear weapons will gather to raise our voices for the global abolition of nuclear weapons.

Today, after 70 years, more than 16,000

nuclear conflagration is initiated by accident, miscalculation or madness, the radiation cloud will know no boundaries. The US plans to spend a trillion dollars over the next thirty years “modernizing” its nuclear arsenal. The human cost of this is astronomical—to our health, environment, ethics, and democracy, to our prospects for global peace, and to our confidence in human survival.



SAVE THE DATE. By 8:00 AM, come to the Livermore Nuclear Weapons Laboratory’s northwest corner, at Vasco and Patterson Pass Rds. in Livermore. There will be parking at the rally site and vanpools from the Dublin-Pleasanton BART station (call 925-443-7148 to reserve a seat).

Sponsored by Tri-Valley CAREs, No Nukes Action, Livermore Conversion Project, Western States Legal Foundation, American Friends

Service Committee, and many more. Call Tri-Valley CAREs: 925-443-7148; <http://www.trivalleycares.org>

nuclear weapons in the world continue to pose an intolerable threat to humanity. And the danger of nuclear war is growing. Whether a

Solar Panels Are Part of the Pope’s Revolution — But So Is Dismantling Structural Racism

By ANTHONY GIANCATARINO

The Pope is talking about a revolution that goes way beyond simply adding renewable energy to our current extractive economy.

On Thursday, June 18, Pope Francis released his highly anticipated encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Sii (Praised Be)*. The encyclical, a letter from the Pope that addresses moral and theological issues, drives home the message that we cannot sustain a world rooted in the economy of exclusion and extraction—a world in which the poor and the Earth lose out to the “me-first” capitalist economy.

Pope Francis charges us to act in solidarity with the poor.

This message is a welcome boost for many, especially those in progressive faith communities, who have long cared for the environment and the most vulnerable in our society. For example, the Thomas Merton Center, a Catholic-based effort in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has organized around issues of environmental racism, poverty, and peace for nearly 50 years. <http://thomasmertoncenter.org/> And the Green Muslims, a national organization, provides education and technical assistance for Muslim communities innovating around environmental-justice solutions. The Pope’s message supports this work. <http://www.greenmuslims.org/>

But it also does more than that. The critical piece of the Pope’s encyclical is the elevation of a long-standing tenet of Catholic Social Teaching called the “option for the poor,” which views poor communities as the primary

agents of social change. <http://ncronline.org/blogs/road-peace/gustavo-gutierrez-and-preferential-option-poor>. Pope Francis charges us to act in solidarity with the poor by working to create policies that center their demands, needs, and innovations. And he explicitly ties the well-being of our planet with the well-being of the poor. He writes:

Today we cannot help but recognize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach, which must integrate justice in the discussions of the environment, to hear the cry of the Earth as much as the cry of the poor.

This statement is bold. To carry it out would require momentous shifts in our society.

To fully tackle climate change, as Pope Francis argues, we must rethink the fundamental structure of our economy. As Jesus says in “New Wine into Old Wineskins,” a parable that appears in three of the gospels, it’s not a good idea to pour new wine into the old container, or the wine will get ruined and the container will burst.

Communities of color have long borne the burdens of our dirty-energy economy.

Jesus was probably making a point about the power structures of religion,

alluding to the fact that the Pharisees, the spiritual leaders at that time, couldn’t hold the new vision that Jesus was creating. But something similar holds true for our economy

continued page 8

Join the Modesto Peace/Life Center’s Annual Hiroshima Remembrance and Potluck at Legion Park, Modesto on Thursday, August 6th at 6:30 PM. Bring food and drinks to share as we converse and rededicate ourselves to reversing the efforts to rebuild and proliferate nuclear weapons. The evening will conclude with a candlelight vigil on the banks of the Tuolumne River.

INSIDE CONNECTIONS	PEACEMAKING 6
LOCAL 2	HOPE IN PAKISTAN 7
STUDENT ACTIVISM 3	A GATHERING OF VOICES 9
LIVING LIGHTLY 4	DIALOGUE 10
GREEN TIPS 5	MORE NUKES! 11

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Peace Center Film Nights features drone war and union struggle

By DAN ONORATO

The unmanned U.S. drone killings we read about in the press or online may seem distant and only remotely connected to our daily lives. But beware the boomerang. Sooner than we might imagine, others may one day do to us what we are doing to them, and they'll justify their acts based on America's precedents. So to bring the far away home, on **July 15th**, the Center's third Wednesday of the month Film Night is featuring *Unmanned: America's Drone War*, a full-length feature documentary from director Robert Greenwald and his Brave New Foundation organization.

George Zornick writes in *The Nation*: "The film provides a solid overview of drone policy—it covers signature strikes, double-tap strikes, and the very vague legal framework used to justify the policy," according to an array of law professors and former policymakers. It investigates the impact drone strikes have across the globe, and reveals the realities of drone warfare—the violation of international law, the loss of life, the far-reaching implications for the communities that live under drones, and blowback the United States faces.

The documentary highlights the stories of 16 year old Tariq Aziz, killed by a **drone** in 2011; and school teacher, Rafiq ur Rehman, whose mother was killed and children hospitalized due to a drone strike in 2012. From these human stories, says Greenwald, "can come what we all want, and hope for, which is further evaluation and debate about the policy of drones." http://www.bravenewfilms.org/unmanned_frontpage

The film starts at 6:30 p.m. at the Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St. A discussion will follow.

On **August 19** we will focus on labor history in the controversial 1950's film, *The Salt of the Earth*. The film documents the 1951 strike of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers local 890 against their employer, the Empire Zinc Company. Discriminated against for years, the Mexican miners of local 890 decide to strike for equity in wages with Anglo workers and for health and safety issues. Ramón Quintero helps organize the strike but at home he treats his wife as a second class citizen. His wife, Esperanza Quintero, pregnant with their third child, is passive at first and reluctant either to take part in the strike or to assert her rights for equality at home. She changes her attitude when the men are forced to end their picketing by an injunction of the Taft-Harley Act.

Interest piqued? My lips are zipped. Show up and see for yourself. Hint: *this is one of the first films that deals with labor issues from the point of view of women.*

Here's some film background from Wikipedia: "The film was called subversive and blacklisted because the International Union of Mines, Mills and Smelters sponsored it and many blacklisted Hollywood professionals helped produce it. The union had been expelled from the CIO in 1950

for its alleged communist-dominated leadership.

"The film was denounced by the United States House of Representatives for its communist sympathies, and the FBI investigated the film's financing. The American Legion called for a nation-wide boycott of the film. Film-processing labs were told not to work on *Salt of the Earth* and unionized projectionists were instructed not to show it. After its opening night in New York City, the film languished for 10 years be-



cause all but 12 theaters in the country refused to screen it. The Hollywood establishment did not embrace the film at the time of its release, when McCarthyism was in full

force. The *Hollywood Reporter* charged at the time that it was made "under direct orders of the Kremlin."

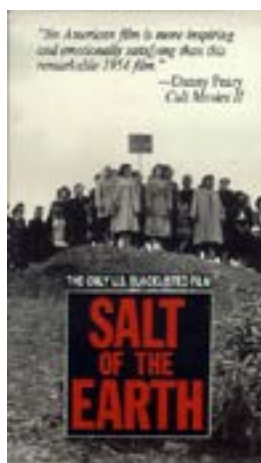
That's just some of the drama surrounding the film's history. But come and view for yourself. One thing's for sure: you'll understand better how unions work and why they're important.

The film starts at 6:30, and a discussion will follow.

More at <http://magazine.oah.org/issues/244/salt.html>

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Famed ukulele instructor, performer comes to Modesto

By LORRIE FREITAS

Funstrummers Ukulele will host Ukulele Instructor, performer and all around entertaining personality, "Lil Rev" on Tuesday, July 28, 2016 at 6 p.m. at the Telle Center of the Trinity Presbyterian Church at 1600 Carver Road, Modesto. \$25 for an evening of lessons, learning, performance and snacks.

Lil Rev comes from Wisconsin and is known for his skill at teaching songs and techniques on the ukulele. He travels the world sharing his love of Americana made music.

This workshop is open to those who like to participate in music or those who want to listen or sing along and all levels of skill and ability. www.funstrummers.com; 209-505-3216.



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Student speaks out about the importance of Outdoor Education

Sofia Johnson, a 6th Grade student from Lakewood Elementary and a K-6 representative for the LCAP (Local Control and Accountability Plan) for Modesto City Schools is a strong advocate for reinstating Foothill Horizons Outdoor School for ALL students in Modesto.



See Sofia's eloquent speech before the Modesto City School's Board at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ulU12-npMoo&feature=youtu.be>

She wrote the following poem:

Camp is place where we learn as we play
Learn as we walk, talk and learn in new ways
We were polar bears and hobbits too!
We are tightly stuck to camp like glue
We gazed at constellations one night
We oooooed and ahhhhhed at the beautiful sight
but will never forget that special place
that will always leave a smile on our face

For more reference on the importance of outdoor education, see Lynn Hansen's important article, "Nature Literacy or Nature Deprivation? Why Outdoor Education Matters"

in the June issue of Stanislaus Connections at <http://stanislausconnections.org/Connections%20JUNE15.pdf>

Be informed!

Read the Valley Citizen at
<http://thevalleycitizen.com>

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The Understanding of Autism

First Place ~ Division III Peace Essay Contest

By HAYLEE GRASS

Mark Twain Junior High School ~ Mrs. Ortiz

Disabilities don't make you. You make yourself. They're just a bump in the road. Everyone is placed as a stereotype. From prom queen and king to jocks and cheerleaders. The average students to geeks and nerds. Then the nobodies. Everyone knows where they belong, but me. I still haven't figured out. Even if I wanted to pick where I belonged, who could I tell. No one understands me.

My name is Rana Greyser. I'm fifteen and was diagnosed with autism at eight months old. My parents have home-schooled me since the first grade. Now that high school is starting, they decided to let me try for the first semester. If things go bad they're going back to homeschooling me.

The bell rung, starting class. The teacher rose from her desk. "Alright, since it's the first day of school, we are going to go over the rules, then you're free to talk." About twenty minutes later we were free to talk with one another. I could hear all of the individual sounds in the room.

"Dude, look at that freak."

"What's wrong with her?"

"She's gonna cry man."

Their words hit me like a hammer to nails. The more they talked the harder it was to stay in control.

"She's so ugly."

"She looks like a science experiment gone wrong."

"I know, right? So gross."

Then my body reacted and I lunged, hitting anything in reach.

They screamed and ran out of class. The boy who started talking about me grabbed hold of me which made me struggle and forced him to pin me to the ground.

"Please, stop struggling. I understand. Alright, please calm down." He understands?



I opened my mouth to speak, like always nothing happened. He shook his head. "Don't force yourself to speak. I know it's hard."

I opened my mouth to try again. When no sound escaped from my mouth it frustrated me until I finally blurted out, "How." My eyes widened. I spoke a word. He looked confused.

"My little brother has autism. I didn't realize that's what you have. Not until you attacked us."

That's how he understood. "If I let you up, you need to agree not to attack me or anyone else. Okay?" I nodded in agreement. He let go of me and stood. "For what its worth, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. It was wrong and I didn't know about your gift. Did you know it is just a smart development of humans?" I shook my head no. He just shrugged, "I'm Jack Fallon and I want to help you, if you can forgive me for my rudeness." I nodded and smiled, but didn't meet his gaze.

Like I said disabilities don't make you, you make yourself. Embrace them and treat them like a gift. Jack told me that. He also said when you are at a disadvantage with something, there is always another way out of it. There are just bumps in the road. All they do is slow you down, but they don't stop you.

New LGBT Center opens in Merced

In the wake of the demise of PFLAG, the Merced LGBT Community Center is the latest addition in LGBT community centers in the Central Valley. It works daily to make Merced and our surrounding communities a safer place for the LGBT community. The Center is located at 1744 G St Suite H, Merced, CA 95340, phone 209-626-5551.

The Center is open to the public Tuesday through Friday.

Tuesday from 1-6 p.m., Wednesday from 3-7 p.m., Thursday from 1-6 p.m., and Friday from 3-7 p.m.

The facility is also available 7 days a week for scheduled groups and meetings. Brochures, information, etc, can be dropped through our mail slot 24 hours a day.

If you would like to get information about volunteering visit <http://mercldgbtcenter.org/get-involved/>; Email: mercedboard@gaycentralvalley.org

The LGBT Community Center is operated by **Merced Full Spectrum** whose purpose is to promote visibility of a diverse culture in Merced, California. Its mission is to work towards a more accepting environment for all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, through education, support, social action, and advocacy. <http://www.lgbtmerced.org/>

Merced Full Spectrum meets the second Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. 1744 G St., Suite H, Merced. Merced Full Spectrum is a division of Gay Central Valley, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. <http://www.gaycentralvalley.org/>

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Thinking Outside the Feedlot

By JENIFER WEST

With all of the ‘critters’ that live at our house (dogs, cat, chickens, fish, turtle, rat, and even a gecko who’s just been ‘hired’ for pest control), it probably isn’t too surprising that we’ve taken on one more. I keep a worm bin, both for composting and as fresh food for our chickens. But a recent trip to the pet store, where we paid just under \$20 dollars for a couple pints of mealworms – *twenty dollars for bugs!* – convinced me to look into raising the little wiggles ourselves.

As a person who’s very interested in food, particularly for emergency situations, I found myself oddly fascinated by the idea.

Mealworms are an excellent food for a number of creatures. ‘The girls’, our resident egg producers, are huge fans. They’re also a great back-up food for the gecko, who’s doing such an excellent job of keeping the bugs down that we need something else for him. And they’re easy to grow. Anyone who has access to a clear plastic bin or two, a way to punch holes in the tops, a little oatmeal or other grain, and a few slices of carrot or celery, can raise mealworms. The only care they need is an occasional addition of vegetable, and the pupae removed to a separate container once they appear (so they don’t get eaten). The larvae stage, which we’re interested in, can take up to 5 months, another three spent pupating, a couple of weeks as an adult, and another month or so before the eggs hatch. The whole process takes around seven months at room temperature. The larvae can be used at any size, but generally, the bigger the better. Once the larvae hatch and have grown to size, they can be refrigerated for up to 6 months. This is how you buy them at the pet store. My goal is about 200 mealworms a week, which means I need to set aside 10 larvae each week to pupate, become adults, and lay eggs. The refrigerated larvae should be taken out once a week to feed.

In doing my research, I kept coming across the idea of mealworms (and other insects) as food for *humans*. (They are generally consumed toasted, and reportedly taste like roasted peanuts.) An excellent source of protein and fat, mealworms



Mealworms

and certain other insects are routinely eaten, enjoyed even, in other countries. As a person who’s very interested in food, particularly for emergency situations, I found myself oddly fascinated by the idea. As a former vegetarian, the idea of an alternative source of complete protein that doesn’t involve animal suffering is definitely intriguing. Although my dear husband would happily remain veggie for the rest of his life, I’ve discovered that I’m actually healthier, and definitely feel better, if I consume meat at least occasionally. (Assuming the animals are treated better, I try to buy grass-fed beef and butter, free-range chicken, and organic pork – and there’s absolutely no comparison in the quality!) Not sure if I might be able to get past the ‘ick’ factor, and no doubt others in my household wouldn’t even consider the idea. Still, a quality source of complete protein that doesn’t require animal suffering holds a certain appeal.

Despite cultural mores, and spurred, perhaps, by the reality TV programs wherein contestants often eat live insects, the concept of entomophagy (the consumption of insects) is becoming, if not necessarily commonly accepted, at least not unfamiliar. (Unlike the dramatized situations on TV, insects are typically frozen, and then cooked in some way before consumption.) There’s even a cricket-based snack bar on the market, which is reported to be delicious. And, for the DIY types, Amazon carries cricket flour.

The other aspect hugely in favor of entomophagy is environmental. Animals aren’t efficient converters of resources to

it is time that we all seriously consider the impact of our daily choices, food and water in particular, and make changes where we can.

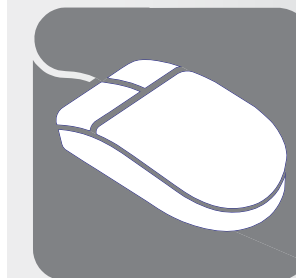
meat – and that’s without mentioning the considerable waste byproducts created along the way.

According to *Edible: An Adventure into the World of Eating Insects and the Last Great Hope to Save the Planet*, by Daniella Martin, various animals require the following to produce a pound of edible protein:

- Beef: 10 pounds of feed, 1,000 gallons of water, 200 square feet of pasture;
- Pork: 5 pounds of feed, 600 gallons of water, 175 square feet of pasture;
- Chicken: 2.5 pounds of feed, 150 gallons of water, 75 square feet of pasture;
- Fish: 1.5 pounds of fish meal (i.e., other fish), water.
- Insects: 2 pounds of feed, 1 gallon of water, and 2 cubic feet of land space.

Aside from the obvious feed conversion ratios (FCR) benefit, that insects require very little water is another – a resource that should be on all of our minds, these days. (Mealworms require no water – they get their moisture from the veggies that are put in with the grain which they live in and eat.) Unlike their warm-blooded counterparts, there is virtually no waste with insects.

While there may be few of us in a rush to whip up a batch of dry-roasted mealworms or feast on waxworm tacos, it is time that we all seriously consider the impact of our daily choices, food and water in particular, and make changes where we can.



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AGES 7-10

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AGES 10-14

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AGES 4-6

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Water, water, what a scare! Water issues everywhere!

Green Tips for a Green Planet

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

It's summer and the livin' used to be easy. These days summer and the use of water takes a heap o' thought. The intense drought has household water use front and center, and we are all conscious of the need to use much less in our gardens.

A water concern that is more evident in summer, as we spend more time enjoying outdoor sports and gatherings, is the use of disposable plastic water bottles. As we focus upon the need to reduce, reuse, and lastly recycle, the many warnings against the use of disposable plastic water bottles far outweigh the convenience, and the alternatives are many.

If your water tastes like plastic, you are drinking plastic

Most often those bottles are made of #1 PET or PETE (polyethylene terephthalate), which could possibly leach DEHA, a carcinogen, into the water. Reuse of #1 bottles is highly discouraged, which makes them wasteful. Even more dangerous are bottles numbered 3, 6, or 7 which contain Bisphenol A (BPA) which is currently considered a possible cause of neurological and behavioral problems in fetuses and children, and mimics the female estrogen hormone, which has been linked to cancers of the brain, breast, and prostate, and to detrimental effects on the



male and female reproductive and adult immune systems.

Those considered less likely to leach harmful chemicals into the water include #2 HDPE (high density polyethylene, #4 LDPE (low density polyethylene, or #5 PP polypropylene.

Bottled water vs. tap water

In the United States and many other countries around the world bottled water is as good as the local tap water. In fact, tap water in the US is under tighter regulations than bottled water. Up to 40% of bottled water, even those labeled "spring" water, comes from municipal tap water. Instead of wasting \$\$ buying bottled water, drink the water from your tap in non-plastic reusable drinking containers.

Water bottled in plastic not only wastes money, it wastes valuable resources

It has been reported that to satisfy just the US demand for plastic water bottles annually requires 1.5 million barrels of oil, enough to fuel 100,000 cars each year. (Of course, that brings up the whole picture of changing our oil/gas burning vehicles to those powered by renewable resources – "fuel" for a future Green Tips).

PET, used in most water bottles, is sourced by crude oil, then must be shipped requiring massive energy resources.

Using tap water in reusable, especially non-plastic, bottles is a sustainable alternative. There

also are reusable filtered bottles, as well as pitchers and large 3 to 5 gallon water dispensers for home use.

There is a many-layered floating island of plastic waste in the Pacific Ocean approximately the size of Texas!

The mounting visible picture of plastic water bottles and other consumer plastics that end up in landfills and waterways worldwide punctuate the question, "When we throw something 'away' where is away?" The Washington-based Container Recycling Institute claims 4 of 5 plastic bottles find their way to landfills and 86% of plastic water bottles become garbage or litter.

The bottles and other consumer plastics becomes exponentially damaging to the environment when they get to landfills, because they can take up to 1,000 years to biodegrade there, they can leak toxic chemicals, such as phthalates, into the ground water, or if incinerated, can produce toxic byproducts like chlorine gas and heavy- metal-containing ash.

In summary:

Drinks taste better in non-plastic containers.

Plastic is a non-renewable resource.

Plastic manufacturing is energy and resource intensive and can be highly toxic.

Plastic is not biodegradable.

Plastics recycling, also known as "downcycling," refers to a process by which each reuse of the materials from the original manufactured bottle is a lower quality and eventually ends up in landfills.

Polyvinyl-chloride manufacturing or incineration releases dangerous dioxins into the environment.

ACTION:

Use non-toxic refillable water bottles.

Use glass (best taste, easiest cleaned), filtered water pitchers, refrigerator filtered water, alkaline water machines, tap water or large 3 to 5 gallon refillable water bottle dispensers at home.



Save water bottle use for professional cycling or mountain climbing.

PAY IT FORWARD – The cost of one case of bottled water can help supply a person in Africa

with 5 years of clean safe drinking water! Help provide water to people worldwide who do not have easy access to clean water by donating the money you save from using tap water and reusing non-toxic refillable bottles to causes like [Living Water International](http://www.water.cc/), <http://www.water.cc/>; [The Water Project](http://thewaterproject.org/), <http://thewaterproject.org/> and [Blood: Water Mission](http://www.bloodwater.org/), <http://www.bloodwater.org/>

Climate change effects on human health

Climate change, together with other natural and human-made health stressors, influences human health and disease in numerous ways. Some existing health threats will intensify and new health threats will emerge. Not everyone is equally at risk. Important considerations include age, economic resources, and location.

In the U.S., public health can be affected by disruptions

of physical, biological, and ecological systems, including disturbances originating here and elsewhere. The health effects of these disruptions include increased respiratory and cardiovascular disease, injuries and premature deaths related to extreme weather events, changes in the prevalence and geographical distribution of food-and water-borne illnesses and other infectious diseases, and threats to mental health.

The information on health effects has been excerpted from the *Third National Climate Assessment's* Health Chapter. Additional information at <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/report/sectors/human-health>.

<http://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/effects/default.htm>

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IF NOT YOU
Then Who?

The Map on the Wall

By URI AVNERY

A FORMER cabinet minister, an intelligent person (nonetheless) asked me the other day: “Let’s assume that your plan is realized. A Palestinian state will come into being side by side with Israel. Even some kind of federation. Then, in a few years, a violently anti-Israel party will come to power there and annul all the treaties. What then?”

My simple answer was: “Israel will always be powerful enough to forestall any threat.”

That is true, but that is not the real answer. The real answer lies in the lessons of history.

History shows us that there are (at least) two kinds of peace agreements. One kind, the stupid one, is based on power. The other, the intelligent, is based on common interest.

The most notorious of the first kind is the Treaty of Versailles that followed World War I.

It was signed four years before I was born, but as a child I was an eye-witness to its results.

It was a “dictated” peace. After four years of fighting, with millions of victims, the victors wanted to inflict the maximum of damage on the vanquished.

Large parts of Germany were separated from the Fatherland and turned over to the victors East and West. Huge indemnities were levied on Germany, which was already totally exhausted by the war.

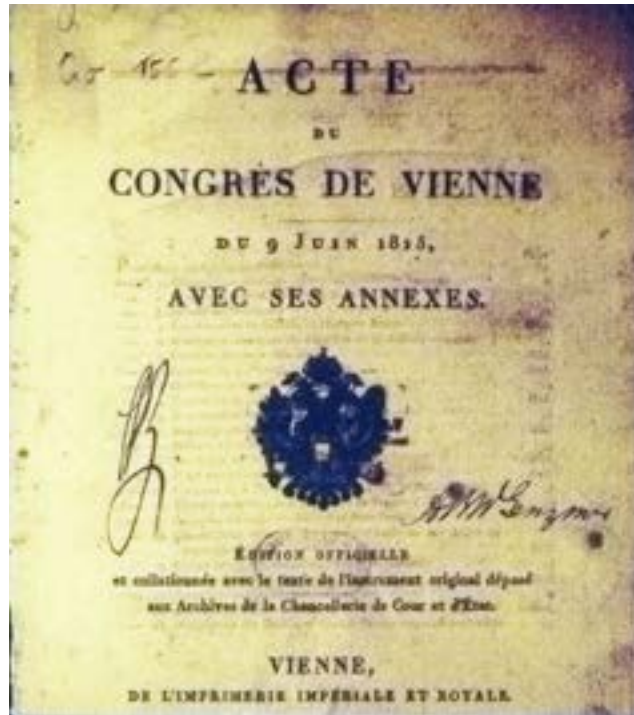
Perhaps worst of all was the “war guilt” clause. The origins of the war were manifold and complicated. A Serbian patriot killed the Austrian heir to the throne. Austria answered with a harsh ultimatum. The Russian Czarist Empire, which saw itself as the protector of all Slavs, declared a general mobilization to frighten the Austrians off. The Russians were allied with the French. To prevent an invasion from both sides, the Germans, who allied to the Austrians, invaded France. The idea was to knock the French out before the cumbersome Russian mobilization was completed. Fearing a German victory, Great Britain rushed to the aid of the French.

Complicated? Indeed. But the victors compelled the Germans to sign a clause that indicted them as solely responsible for the outbreak of the war.

WHEN I went to school in Germany, there hung before my eyes a map of Germany. It showed the present borders of the Reich (as it was still called), and around it a prominent red line that showed the prewar borders.

This map hung in every class in every school in Germany. From earliest childhood on, every German boy and girl was daily reminded of the great injustice done to the Fatherland, when large chunks were torn from it.

Worse, every German child was taught that his or her father had fought valiantly for four whole years against a vastly superior enemy and surrendered only from sheer exhaustion.



Germany had played only a minor role in the events that led to the war, yet the whole blame for the war was laid on it. So were huge “reparations” that ruined the German economy.

The humiliation of signing such an unjust treaty was a permanent sting, and became the battle-cry of Adolf Hitler’s new National-Socialist party. The politicians who had signed the document were assassinated.

History has blamed the leaders of the victorious allies for their stupidity in dictating these terms, especially after the far-sighted American president, Woodrow Wilson, had warned against it.

Probably they had no choice. The terrible war had bred intense hatred, and peoples were thirsting for revenge. They paid for it dearly when Germany, under the leadership of Hitler, started World War II.

THE OPPOSITE example is provided by the Peace of Vienna of 1815, almost a hundred years earlier.

Napoleon’s troops had overrun large parts of Europe. Unlike Hitler’s Germany, Napoleon’s France brought with it a civilizing message, but its troops also committed many atrocities. When France was exhausted and broke down, the victorious allies could easily have imposed on it the same punitive and humiliating terms imposed by their successors a century later. They did not.

Instead of treating France as a vanquished foe, they invited it to the table. Napoleon’s ex-foreign minister, Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand, was welcomed as one of the leaders to shape the future of Europe.

The leading spirit of the Congress of Vienna was Klemens von Metternich, ably assisted by the British Lord Castlereagh. France was allowed to recuperate within a short time.

One of the great admirers of Metternich and his colleagues is Henry Kissinger. Unfortunately he did the opposite when

he himself became the US Foreign Minister.

The “Concert of Nations” created by the Peace of Vienna established a solid system that kept Europe peaceful for almost a hundred years, with a few exceptions (like the Franco-Prussian war of 1870). The spirit of its founders shines today as an example of wisdom.

WORLD WAR II, the most terrible of all, could have ended with a second Versailles treaty. It did not.

After Germany’s Unconditional Surrender, no peace treaty was signed at all. After the awful atrocities of the Nazis, no generous treaty was possible. Germany was divided, but instead of paying huge indemnities, it – incredibly – received huge sums of money from the victors, so it could rebuild itself in record time. It did lose a lot of territory, but a few decades later Germany became the leading power in a united Europe. Any major war in Europe is now unthinkable.

Winston Churchill and his partners had obviously learned the lesson of Versailles. They disproved the popular saying that nobody learns anything from history.

Even the new State of Israel behaved with a lot of wisdom – as far as Germany was concerned. The chimneys of Auschwitz had hardly stopped smoking when Israel, under the leadership of David Ben-Gurion, signed a treaty with Germany. Sadly, Ben-Gurion did not display the same wisdom facing the Arab world.

There was the moment of Oslo, when everything was possible. Martin Buber once told me: “There is a right moment for a historic act.”

The moment before it is wrong. The moment after it is wrong. But for one moment it is right.” Unfortunately, Yitzhak Rabin did not recognize that. I doubt if he knew much about world history.

WHAT IS the lesson? Kissinger put it well in one of his books, before he became a war criminal.

It is this: Peace will hold only if all sides profit from it. Peace will not hold if one major side is left out.

At the moment of victory, the victor believes that his power is eternal. He can impose his terms and humiliate the enemy. But history shows that power changes, the strong of today may be the weak of tomorrow. The weak may become strong and take revenge.

That is the lesson Israel should absorb. Today we are strong, and the Arab world is in shambles. It will not always be so.

A peace treaty with Palestine and the Arab world will hold if it is wise and generous. Wise enough so the Palestinian people, or at least a great majority, will come to the conclusion that it is both worthwhile and honorable to keep it.

It is always good to have a strong army. Just in case. But history shows that it is neither strong armies nor an abundance of weapons that guarantees peace. It is the goodwill of all sides, based on self-interest.

And the wisdom of politicians – a rare ingredient, indeed.

Fear and Learning in Kabul

By KATHY KELLY

“Now let us begin. Now let us rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter, but beautiful, struggle for a new world... Shall we say the odds are too great? ... the struggle is too hard? ... and we send our deepest regrets? Or will there be another message — of longing, of hope, of solidarity... The choice is ours, and though we might prefer it otherwise, we must choose in this crucial moment of human history.” - Dr. Martin Luther King, “Beyond Vietnam”

Kabul—I’ve spent a wonderfully calm morning here in Kabul, listening to bird songs and to the call and response between mothers and their children in neighboring homes as families awaken and prepare their children for school. Maya Evans and I arrived here yesterday, and are just settling into the community quarters of our young hosts, The Afghan Peace Volunteers (APVs). Last night, they told us about the jarring and frightening events that marked the past few months of their lives in Kabul.

They described how they felt when bomb explosions, nearby, awakened them on several mornings. Some said they’d felt almost shell-shocked themselves discovering one recent day that thieves had ransacked their home. They shared their intense feelings of alarm at a notorious warlord’s statement condemning a human rights demonstration in which several community members had participated. And their horror when a few weeks later, in Kabul, a young woman, an Islamic scholar named Farkhunda, was falsely accused in a street argument of desecrating the Koran, after which, to the roared approval of a frenzied mob of perhaps two thousand men, members of the crowd, with apparent police collusion, beat her to death. Our young friends quietly sort through their emotions in the face of inescapable and often overwhelming violence.

I thought about how to incorporate their stories into a course I’ve been preparing for an international online school that intends to help raise consciousness among people, across borders and share the results. I hope the school will help develop movements dedicated to simple living, radical sharing, service and, for many, nonviolent direct action on behalf of ending wars and injustices.

Essentially, when Voices members go to Kabul, our “work” is to listen to and learn from our hosts and take back their stories of war to the relatively peaceful lands whose actions had brought that war down upon them. Before we’d even departed, the news from Afghanistan was already quite grim. Several dozen people dead in fighting between armed groups. A Kabul hotel attack on international businessmen the week before. We earnestly wrote our friends with a last minute offer to stay away, in hopes that we wouldn’t make them targets of the violence. “Please come,” our friends wrote us. So we’re here.

The western presence in Afghanistan has already caused incalculable destruction, suffering and loss. A recently released Physicians for Social Responsibility calculated that since 2001 in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. wars have killed at least 1.3 million and quite possibly more than 2 million civilians.

The report chides U.S. political elites for attributing ongoing violence in Afghanistan and Iraq to various types of

internecine conflicts “as if the resurgence and brutality of such conflicts is unrelated to the destabilization caused by decades of military intervention.”

Our young friends have survived the ravages of war, and each of them struggles with trauma, as their parents and grandparents have before them. When we have gone with them to visit refugee camps outside of Kabul, several have told of their own experiences as children, running away when their villages were attacked or occupied. We learn from them about the sorrows their mothers endured when there wasn’t enough food to feed the family or fuel to carry them through heartless winters: when they themselves nearly died from hypothermia. Several of our young friends experience terrifying flashbacks when they hear accounts in the news of Afghans killed by missiles or gunfire within the horrified sight of their own family members and loved ones. They tremble and sometimes cry, recalling similar experiences from their own lives.

The story of Afghanistan in Western accounts is that Afghanistan cannot deal with its traumas, however much we try, with our bullets, bases and token schools and clinics, to help. Yet these young people steadfastly respond to their own traumas not by seeking revenge but by finding ways to help people in Kabul whose circumstances are worse than theirs, particularly 750,000 Afghans living, with their children, in squalid refugee camps.

The APVs are running an alternative school for street kids in Kabul. Little children who are the main breadwinners for their families find no time to learn basic math or “the alphabet” when spending more than eight hours daily working in the streets of Kabul. Some are vendors, some polish shoes, and some carry scales along roadways so that people can weigh themselves. In an economy collapsing under the weight of war and corruption, their hard earned income barely buys enough food for their families.

Children of the poorest families in Kabul will have better chances in life if they become literate. Never mind rising school enrollment figures often cited by the U.S. military as the benefits of occupation. The March 2015 CIA World Fact Book reports that 17.6 % of females over age 14 are literate; overall, in the teen and adult population only 31.7% can read or write.

After getting to know about 20 families whose children work in the streets, the APVs devised a plan through which each family receives a monthly sack of rice and large container of oil to offset the family’s financial loss for sending their children to informal classes at the APV center and preparing to enroll them in school. Through continued outreach among Afghanistan’s troubled ethnicities, APV members now include 80 children in the school and hope to serve 100 children soon.

Every Friday, the children pour into the center’s courtyard and immediately line up to wash their feet and hands and brush their teeth at a communal faucet. Then they scramble up the stairs to their brightly decorated classroom and readily settle down when their teachers start the lessons. Three extraordinary young teachers, Zarghuna, Hadisa, and Farzana, feel encouraged now because many of the thirty-one street



Yet these young people steadfastly respond to their own traumas not by seeking revenge but by finding ways to help people in Kabul whose circumstances are worse than theirs.

kids who were in the school last year learned to read and write fluently within nine months. Their experimentation with different teaching methods, including individualized learning, is paying off—unlike government school systems where many seventh graders are unable to read.

While leading a demonstration of street children, Zekerullah, who was once a street kid himself, was asked if he felt any fears. Zekerullah said that he feared that the children would be harmed if a bomb exploded. But his greater fear was that impoverishment would afflict them throughout their lives.

That message of courage and compassion will not — and cannot — always prevail. But if we take note of it, and even more, if, learning from its example, we take action to exemplify it ourselves, then it offers us a path out of childish fear, out of panicked collusion in war, and out, perhaps, of war’s mad grip. We ourselves arrive in a notably better world when we determine to build it for others. Our own education, our own victory over fear, and our own arrival as equals in an adult world, can begin or begin again — now.

So let us begin.

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<http://vcnv.org/fear-and-learning-in-kabul>

Pope's Revolution

from page 1

today. If our economic system is like a wineskin that holds the institutions, policies, and practices that comprise our economy, then the Pope is calling for the creation of a new wineskin.

Pope Francis makes this point quite clearly in the new encyclical. "The economy accepts every advance in technology with a view to profit, without concern for its potentially negative impact on human beings" he writes, adding that "carbon credits are a new form of speculation" that lead to more pollution in poorer communities and more consumption in others.

Just as old wineskins burst when adding new wine, Pope Francis warns that simply adding advanced technology, new energy development, and market-based carbon schemes to the current economic system won't create justice for people or the Earth. <http://www.usccb.org/bible/luke/5>

That's because our current economic system relies on a consumer economy, which is built on exclusion and extraction. Instead, we need a new economic system—a new wineskin—that centers the well-being of people, particularly the most marginalized in society, along with the well-being of the planet.

Renewable energy powered the slave economy once—and it can do so again.

To achieve this, we must also center race. Race matters not only because black, Latino, indigenous, and many Asian communities experience more poverty and suffer from a devastating wealth gap compared to white communities, but also because communities of color have long borne the burdens of our dirty-energy economy and lack of policy interventions. Structural racism is part of the old wineskin. To build a new one, these communities must be primary agents in building the new economy. <https://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/race-matters-determining-energy-future/>; <https://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/acsbr11-17.pdf>; <http://www.demos.org/publication/racial-wealth-gap-why-policy-matters>

Therefore, we cannot simply flip a switch to renewable energy. Renewable energy powered the slave economy once—and it can do so again. Wind for the sails brought slaves to America, and the sun was the primary energy source for the crops.

We don't want to make that same mistake today. Instead, we must change how we legislate, finance, and support local community governance so that the most marginalized can participate in a new economy powered by renewable energy. At the Center for Social Inclusion (where I work), we call this idea "energy democracy," which is about positioning communities, particularly communities of color, as owners, planners, and decision-makers of accessible and clean

energy sources that address pollution and build the wealth of communities. Energy democracy can be our entryway into a sustainable, healthy environment in which everyone can thrive. <http://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/>

We do not have to look far to see energy democracy in action. For example, Interfaith Power and Light is already reshaping the economy by bringing together multiracial, interfaith communities in 43 states to implement community-owned renewable energy and efficiency projects, invest energy savings into vital services for communities, and advocate for new policies that create opportunities to participate in a renewable energy economy. <http://www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/>

To honor Pope Francis' call to action, all of us, regardless of our faith or practice, should support and replicate energy democracy models like Interfaith Power and Light so that we can all protect our common home.

Anthony Giancattarino wrote this article for *YES! Magazine*. Anthony is the director of policy and strategy at the Center for Social Inclusion. Follow him on Twitter @ [agiancattarino11](https://twitter.com/agiancattarino11).

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/planet/solar-panels-part-pope-francis-revolution-structural-racism>

'He Should Get the Nobel Peace Prize': Ellsberg Champions Snowden's Profound Impact

By NADIA PRUPIS, staff writer

"[T]he first time...this mass surveillance that's been going on is subjected to a genuine debate, it didn't stand up."

Renowned whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg spoke with *The Guardian* about the changing landscape of U.S. surveillance. (Photo: Steve Rhodes)

NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden should be credited with helping change U.S. surveillance law, Daniel Ellsberg, the man who leaked the Pentagon Papers, said Monday in an interview with *The Guardian*.



"It's interesting to see that the first time... this mass surveillance that's been going on is subjected to a genuine debate, it didn't stand up," he said.

Ellsberg was charged under the Espionage Act for disclosing secret U.S. military documents related to the Vietnam War in 1971. Snowden, who leaked a trove of classified NSA documents in 2013 and has been living in political asylum in Russia for the past three years, also faces prosecution under the Espionage Act.

Asked what should happen to Snowden, Ellsberg replied,

"He should get the Nobel peace prize and he should get asylum in a west European country."

Although "there is much more support for him month by month as people come to realise how little substance in the charges that he caused harm to us...that does not mean the intelligence community will ever forgive him for having exposed what they were doing," Ellsberg continued.

Ellsberg is currently on a week-long European speaking tour with several other renowned U.S. whistleblowers, including Thomas Drake, who helped expose fraud and abuse in the NSA's Trailblazer program; Coleen Rowley, who testified about the FBI's mishandling of information related to the September 11 attacks; and Jesselyn Radack, who disclosed ethics violations committed by the FBI and currently serves as the director of National Security & Human Rights at the Government Accountability Project.

Although the sunset of the Patriot Act on Sunday has forced the NSA to end its domestic phone records collection program, the agency will likely retain much of its surveillance power with the expected passage of the USA Freedom Act, a "compromise" bill which would renew modified versions of Section 215 and other provisions.

The Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled last month that the NSA's bulk phone records collection program "exceeds the scope of what Congress has authorized" under the Patriot Act. Referring to that decision, Ellsberg said Monday that "even the USA Freedom Act, which is better than the Patriot Act, still doesn't really reflect the full weight of the circuit court opinion that these provisions have been unconstitutional

from their beginning and what the government has been doing is illegal."

Drake also spoke to *The Guardian* on Monday, stating, "This is the first time in almost 14 years that we stopped certain provisions... The national security mindset was unable to prevail."

The USA Freedom Act, meanwhile, "effectively codifies all the secret interpretations, a lot of the other authorities they claimed were enabled by the previous legislation, including the Patriot Act," Drake continued.

In a press briefing on Monday, White House press secretary Josh Earnest said that despite the sunset of the Patriot Act, the Obama administration would not change its view that Snowden "committed very serious crimes."

But the importance of the Senate's rejection of the legislation cannot be discounted, said Ellsberg, and Snowden's influence on the changing political landscape in the U.S. deserves credit.

"This is the first time, thanks to Snowden, that the Senate really stood up and realized they have been complicit in the violation of our rights all along—unconstitutional action," Ellsberg said. "The Senate and the House have been passive up until now and derelict in their responsibilities. At last there was opposition."

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From <http://www.commondreams.org/news/2015/06/02/he-should-get-nobel-peace-prize-ellsberg-champions-snowdens-profound-impact>

Fallujah Station

I
The city floats like an island
of garbage in the heat.
The sliver moon skittish
as a bomber shivers
up from the skyline, dust
pools against the horizon.
You will not believe
this is the end of days, you vow
you see something past it.

II
Through the acetylene haze you count
the lost, bend their names
through your mouth: Juan,
whose grandmother told the papers
he was a good boy and did not say
his temper after kept her always in fear.
Andres who broke apart under it
and shot two men and himself
on the street in Ceres.
Daniel who went missing
and didn't turn up for a year,
dead in a mass grave
on the edge of the desert.

III
Newscasters stop
to tell me I've got it all wrong.
Reports just released from our affiliates
indicate there is no war, dead
people you thought you knew
live across town in rained out
bungalows, there is no world
beyond our borders, there is no pain
but God's. We will give you new realities.
Give me disregard.

IV
The sun droops like a starving dog
on the horizon. Men clot

at the ridgetops, pray. In the glare
the weapons in their hands look
for a moment like boughs
drooping with blossoms

V
Recruiters muscle through the phone lines
to all the high school kids
who have nothing planned, do
you know where you're going
with your life? Have you ever
thought about a career as a hero?
All over the country men are rising
to do their duty. Old glory
is buying new blood from the street.
I can tell you everything there is to know
about destruction.

Let me tell you about America.

VI
This is the world
ending. Not in darkness or sound
but in static. Death tolls
meaningless as lottery jackpots
between reality shows, ads
for used cars, fast food
wan blue light edging
every window in every town.
Tiny flares of grief slipping
unnoticed into the stars.

VII
Somewhere else from everywhere
kids you never thought to know
trying as hard as they can to prove
something
anything, dying alone.

Heatwave in the Valley

Come morning gunmetal mist
stands beside the trees. No rain
for three days after a flood
sky bled as dry as aged oak

the white-blue of a heatwave.
The horses twitch up their backs
blow lips at the horizon.
All around the land stretches

out flat as a photograph.
Listen close you hear the ground
drying and cracking apart.

The colts turn and run in place
swirl up a fog-thick dervish
blue-brown as a cigar's smoke.

Grandma called dense heat like this
earthquake weather. Even the crickets
are holding their breath.



Four

(from Poems For My Son)

I dream that I am teaching you. The soft
wings of your known world brushing
through dross of politeness, of fork-work
and caterpillar's dance toward butterfly,
chrysalis mind lifts toward understanding.

Sometimes you know it already, grow
impatient with my plodding
Dad, your voice shapeless but firm,
undividable even in dreams
your tiny body rapacious in the room,
drawing knowledge faster than breath,
Go On, Already.

Or also there is too much to know,
necessity and priority at odds
I have taught you elephant tusk, airplane
wing, curve of letter,
there are not numbers sufficient to list
what's next.

How in a lifetime are there enough hours to
learn what we must?

How enough to teach it again?



The Land

Old man lived up the street got pulled into a machine
couple years back. Chain caught the hem of his jeans
and twisted his leg under one wheel of the conveyor.
The belt ground across his boot until his son found him
next day and shut it down. Three toes and most of his right foot
went into the belly of it, ground into grease all night
and into the morning.

He goes on like it ain't nothing that could stay with you.
Still have you in for linguica and eggs any morning you want.
But his wife wears it, her eyes get like a hard hollow thing
in her face watching him and you know she's broken
up still about the old man at her table every day, him shifting
his boot with its piece of plastic stuck in the end of it for balance,
him gathering up his coat and shuffling out to the truck,
you know she's seeing that land he keeps
has something of him in it she can't have
and that that's no different now than it ever was.

Justin Robert Souza: Poet/writer, photographer, valley boy, and dad

Justin Robert Souza, poet, photographer and writer, grew up in Modesto, CA. He first became politically active in anti-war protests during his undergrad days at UC Berkeley, and has remained an active progressive with a focus on educating students, peers and strangers alike on the importance of income inequality and feminist theory. His poetry is inspired by a long family legacy of Central Valley farmers who give everything to the land for so little in return, as well as the by the works of Anne Sexton, Kay Ryan and Gary Snyder.

Justin Souza

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Another view: Letter to America

Following the most recent shootings and police brutality in America, teacher Jim Roberts asked a grade 11 student to write a letter to the American people. What the student wrote shocked him.

Dear America,

It would appear that your history and circumstance has played a pivotal role in your birth as a nation. Paradoxically, two of these circumstances are now responsible in what might undermine the states from ever becoming united. Guns and racism are two pathological illnesses your nation was born with, the two scary issues that 'the land of the brave' seem too afraid to deal with.

It is somewhat ironic that as your first black president's administration is in the autumn of its office, America appears more racially divided than at any other time in recent history. Many of us thought that the election of Barrack Obama would mean that you had finally reached Martin Luther King's 'promised land'. In recent years it has become obvious that this was a false dawn, today you are as far from that 'promised land' as you have perhaps ever been.

Why is it that racism is only talked about following the police shooting an unarmed black youth, or police brutality against black, bikini clad teenage girls, or when a white supremacist executes 9 black people in a church? Surely none of those actions have a place in 'the land of the free'. And that's part of the problem, it's all this 'land of the free, and home of the brave,' the huge effort you go to convince yourselves that you have created a Utopia. What kind of sick minded

people pledge their allegiance to a flag? It's nothing more than a symbolic yoke used to control the nation's citizens, an arbitrarily colored piece of cloth, I would rather pledge allegiance to my toilet paper, after all it has a far more functional purpose and I know which one I couldn't live without. The incessant patriotic pageantry has misled you into thinking that somehow you are the moral compass setting a course for the rest of the world. Sadly the rest of the world can see right through it and sees you for the wayward child you are. It's time that you wake up and acknowledge that this country that you sing about, pledge allegiance to, doesn't, and indeed has never existed. As George Carlin once said 'it's called the American Dream because you've got to be asleep to believe it'. You have to ask yourself why any country requires so many institutionalized methods of reinforcing patriotism, if the country is so great people will acknowledge it as being so without the need for all this mindless, systematic pageantry.

Put away the bunting for a while and turn off the ball game, have the courage to face up to your responsibilities. Start tackling the issues that as a nation you have ignored for far too long. Look yourself in the mirror and recognize that America's most dangerous enemy isn't Islamic extremism, Ebola or even Russians, but yourselves. It's always easy to put the blame onto someone else's shoulders, but your society is the problem, it's your mess and only you can clean it up.

People around the world are at a loss to explain your disparate responses to when foreigners kill Americans compared to when Americans kill each other. America has justified the torture and rendition of foreigners for the reason of protect-

Fortunately there are under-the-desk exercise options. I first tried a 'bike': An odd-looking metal contraption, with pedals attached to either side. But it was too tall for my desk at work. And since I hadn't been sure how it would work out, it was relatively inexpensive (read rickety). I did manage to get most of the wobble out of it with some well-placed duct tape (what did we ever do without that magic stuff – boon to homeowners and prom queens alike...). So I brought it home. Pedaling away while focused on something else (writing, paying bills, whatever), I was pleasantly surprised to realize that I tended to forget I was pedaling. And I was definitely seeing results. But since, like many folks, I spend the majority of my time at work, I was determined to find something that would fit comfortably under a standard office desk.

And, viola: An under-the-desk elliptical machine from my favorite online retailer. Wow – what a great investment! It's hefty for its size so it doesn't move around while in use, it's sturdy, and the 'ride' is way smoother than the cheap pedals-on-a-stick business. And it fits beautifully under a standard desk! You sit down, put your feet on the pedals almost without thinking about it, and get moving. And forget you're doing it, after a bit! If the gauge can be believed, I'm averaging about 10 - 15 miles a day. It has caused a bit of a buzz around the office, although I'm not sure anyone else will take the plunge anytime soon. They might, though, if the inches continue to melt away!

There are other health benefits, of course. Some under-desk

The incessant patriotic pageantry has misled you into thinking that somehow you are the moral compass setting a course for the rest of the world. Sadly the rest of the world can see right through it and sees you for the wayward child you are.

ing Americans whilst being only too happy to provide its citizens with the weapons to openly slaughter one another on a daily basis. One can only wonder, how as a country you would have reacted had the gunman been a follower of ISIS. But, because he is a white supremacist your response is markedly more restrained, more measured, you can't find anyone to invade on this one. The fact is America far prefers its citizens to kill one another than to allow foreigners to do it and your constitution's second amendment facilitates this. You have to ask yourselves some tough questions, you have to question some of the historical factors that gave birth to your nation, and to be strong enough to acknowledge some of them just might have been wrong. One thing you must be certain of though, now is not the time for ticker tape parades, apple pie, bunting and songs.

Yours sincerely

A Korean student

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exercisers report being more alert during the day, which I have experienced. It also seems to help with stress management – whenever the inevitable irritation or frustration hits, I can simply start pedaling, or pedal a bit faster, to get it out of my system. As an added bonus, the combination of trigger point therapy and exercising at work has led to a definite decrease in 'normal' aches and pains. (I keep a small trigger point therapy tool at the office. It's affectionately called 'the bird' because of its resemblance to a chicken embryo – the round 'business end', which is off-white, ends in a little point that resembles a stubby beak, and is connected to the handle on either side by what look like two very large, blue eyes. Pretty much everyone in my department uses it occasionally, and others are starting to discover it...)

The good results I'm experiencing from the elliptical have prompted me to look for ways to combat another issue that many folks face as they get older – the loss of strength in the torso, or 'core' muscles. Weak core muscles can cause or contribute to all kinds of challenges, including back problems. The solution, I'm hoping, is on its way: A disk that mimics the effects of the balls that many people use to build core strength. It should fit in a chair nicely, and adjusts to control the 'workout'.

Since so many of us need to get more movement into our sedentary lives, we're fortunate that there are ways these days to do so. It really only takes a bit of effort – the result is a real payoff in improved health!

Let's Move!

By JENIFER WEST

There's been a bit of buzz lately about the dangers of being sedentary. The human body simply wasn't designed to be sit all day, and all sorts of health issues can creep up on us because of it. Having myself noticed an increasing combination of aches & pains and a definite northward drift of the scale, I decided to do something. I've always asserted, only half-jokingly, that I'm allergic to exercise. But I realized it was literally time to get moving. So I walked to work for a week or two, and was delighted at how quickly I could see and feel results. I even rode my bike a few times, although I'm not exactly what you'd call an avid cyclist. Yet while worth doing, neither is practical year-round. My husband, a dedicated walker, would love to have me join him and our two canine friends on their daily strolls. I do accompany them sometimes, even though I don't particularly enjoy that form of exercise either. And I finally figured out why: Walking around just for the sake of walking around feels like a waste of time. It isn't, of course, but it seems that way.

There are other ways to fit some movement into one's day. But even those of us whose desk jobs allow us to be up and down during the course of the day will probably find it tough to get enough walking in to be our healthiest. At first, I simply tried to make it a point to move around while sitting at my desk. But it required as much focus as doing my work.

DOE Nuclear Weapons Budget Up 10%, Equals Cold War Record

Huge Startup for Nuclear Cruise Missile Warhead

\$4 Billion Slated for LANL Plutonium Pit Production Facilities Cleanup and Dismantlement Funding Flat

From Nuclear Watch New Mexico

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is the semi-autonomous nuclear weapons agency within the Department of Energy, and has perennially been on the Government Accountability Office's High Risk List for wasting taxpayers' money. Despite that, the Obama Administration is giving NNSA nuclear weapons programs a 10.5% jump in funding to \$8.85 billion.¹ This is statistically equal to the Cold War high point in 1985 under President Reagan's military buildup.² Moreover, with additional Defense Dept. funding the NNSA's nuclear weapons budget is slated to increase to \$9.8 billion by 2020, nearly double that of the Cold War average. All of this is the beginning of the planned one trillion dollar modernization of U.S. nuclear weapons forces over the next 30 years.

The large increases in NNSA budgets are due to 1) aggressive "Life Extension Programs" that seek to indefinitely preserve existing nuclear weapons while giving them new military capabilities; and 2) new production plants for these rebuilt nuclear weapons, expected to be operational until -2075. As an example of the former, the current \$12 billion B61 Life Extension Program will create the world's first nuclear "smart" bomb, and will soon begin production at existing facilities.

All of this is the beginning of the planned one trillion dollar modernization of U.S. nuclear weapons forces over the next 30 years.

NNSA's FY 2016 budget launches a whole new Life Extension Program for a nuclear warhead for a new air-launched cruise missile.³ Requested FY 2016 funding is \$195 million, a 20-fold increase from \$9 million for conceptual studies in FY 2015. This program is slated to rise to \$459 million in annual appropriations by FY 2020. The nuclear warhead has been scheduled before Pentagon development of the new air launched cruise missile itself, in effect putting the cart before the horse. This costly program is arguably redundant as well, given that rebuilt B61 nuclear bombs will be delivered on future super-stealthy fighters advertised as capable of penetrating any adversary's air defenses. Finally, a nuclear-armed cruise missile is destabilizing from an arms control perspective because they can fly below radar, delivering the proverbial bolt from the blue.

On the flip side of production, the Obama Administration's funding request for dismantlements is \$48 million, less than 4% of the funding for all Life Extension Programs to rebuild nuclear weapons. Obama's request itself is an improvement from last year, when the Administration asked for only \$30 million, a 45% cut compared to the year before. Congress refused to go along with that, earmarking \$50 million for dismantlements in FY 2015. Besides providing a good example to the rest of the world, nuclear weapons dismantlements give American taxpayers real savings by eliminating otherwise permanent security costs.

Concerning new production facilities, NNSA is asking for a 28% increase to \$430 million for the Uranium Processing Facility (UPF) near Oak Ridge, TN. The UPF is to produce up to 80 "secondaries" each year, the components that give weapons thermonuclear capabilities capable of killing millions. The previous "big box" design for the UPF was canceled after out-of-control costs rose as high as \$19 billion by one Pentagon estimate. UPF also had a half-billion dollar design mistake for which no one has been held accountable, in which all planned equipment could not fit within the building's footprint. Because of all this, the UPF's mission has been downscoped to production only, eliminating dismantlements, in order to help contain costs, currently capped at \$6.5 billion. Again, dismantlements seem dispensable to the Obama Administration.

NNSA also plans to begin spending \$2 billion to upgrade existing facilities for the expanded production of the plutonium pit cores of nuclear weapons at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), beginning with \$155.6 million in FY 2016. The controversial CMRR "Nuclear Facility" is formally canceled. In its place, up to \$675 million is planned to be spent on additional equipment for the already built Radiological Laboratory to quadruple the amount of plutonium that can be handled there, and up to \$1.4 billion to upgrade PF-4, LANL's existing main plutonium facility.

In addition, "The third step of the plutonium strategy extends the lifetime of PF-4 and supports increases in pit production capacity beyond 30 pits per year by proposing to build new modular facilities and move selected processes into new space ... The NNSA is planning to construct not less than two modular structures that will achieve full operating capability not later than 2027." Although still far from final design, those modular facilities will likely cost a billion dollars each. Given the usual cost overruns, eventual costs may meet or exceed the CMRR's estimated cost of \$6.5 billion when it included the Nuclear Facility.

Inflation-adjusted funding for cleanup across the nationwide nuclear weapons complex remains flat at \$5.5 billion, even though estimated cleanup costs of the massive widespread contamination continue to climb. The funding request for cleanup at Los Alamos Lab is flat at \$185 million. It includes repackaging radioactive waste drums stored at LANL that are similar to the one that ruptured and contaminated the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant. It will also fund investigation and

corrective measures for the large chromium plume above our groundwater aquifer, with an emphasis on preventing it from crossing the boundary of neighboring San Ildefonso Pueblo. Current contamination maps show the plume stopping at exactly the boundary, which is nearly impossible. *Feb. 11, 2015.*

1) As topline numbers, NNSA's budget category "Total Weapons Activities" increase from \$8.23 billion in FY 2015 to \$8.85 billion in FY 2016, or 7.5%. However, the true increase is masked by the fact that two

The current \$12 billion B61 Life Extension Program will create the world's first nuclear "smart" bomb, and will soon begin production at existing facilities.

counterproliferation programs formerly within NNSA's "Total Weapons Activities" are moved to Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation. Once that is factored in the real increase for NNSA's nuclear weapons programs is 10.5%.

2) The FY 2016 DOE nuclear weapons request is calculated as statistically equal to the Cold War record using data from *Atomic Audit*, Brookings Institute, 1998, Stephen Schwartz editor, Table A-2. It gives 5.494 billion in 1996 dollars as the cost for DOE nuclear weapons research, production and testing programs in 1985, the height of the Cold War military build up under Ronald Reagan. Adjusted for inflation that is \$8.99 billion in 2015 dollars.

3) Called the Long-Range Stand-Off weapon in the budget because heavy bombers can launch the nuclear-armed cruise missiles at a great distance from their intended targets.

The NNSA's FY 2016 Congressional Budget Request is available at

http://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2015/02/f19/FY2016BudgetVolume1%20_1.pdf

Source <http://energy.gov/cfo/downloads/fy-2016-budget-justification>. A PDF of this compilation is available for download at:

<http://nukewatch.org/economics/NukeWatch-FY16-NNSA-Budget-Analysis.pdf>

Nuclear Watch New Mexico • 903 W. Alameda #325, Santa Fe, NM 87501 • Voice and fax: 505.989.7342; info@nukewatch.org • www.nukewatch.org • <http://www.nukewatch.org/watchblog/>

<http://www.facebook.com/NukeWatch.NM>



Help keep our readers informed.
We urge people participating in an event
to write about it and send their story to
Connections.

ACTIONS FOR PEACE

Sonora - Stockton

SONORA: Contact Alice at lewisalice090@gmail.com

PEACE AND JUSTICE NETWORK OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY (<http://www.pjnsj.org>). Info: James Walsh, jwprod1956@clearwire.net

JULY

11 SAT: Citizens' Climate Lobby, Modesto Chapter, 10:30 a.m., 937 Oxford Way, Modesto. Questions: Call Kathy, 523-5907.

15 WED: Film Night at the Center presents *Unmanned: America's Drone War*. Discussion after. 6:30 pm, Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. See article, this issue.

19 SUN: The Modesto Film Society presents *Back to the Future*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/508>

28 TUES: Funstrummers Ukulele host Ukulele Instructor, performer and all around entertaining personality, "Lil Rev." 6 p.m. at the Telle Center of the Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1600 Carver Rd., Modesto. \$25 for an evening of lessons, learning, performance and snacks. www.funstrummers.com; 209-505-3216.

AUGUST

8 SAT: Citizens' Climate Lobby, Modesto Chapter, 10:30 a.m., 937 Oxford Way, Modesto. Questions: Call Kathy, 523-5907.

16 SUN: The Modesto Film Society presents *The Music Man*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/509>

19 WED: Film Night at the Center presents *The Salt of the Earth*. Discussion after. 6:30 pm, Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. See article, this issue.

LOOKING AHEAD

September: 2016 Peace Essay Contest applications available.

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Sunday 10:00 am, Kaiser CDRP, 1789 W Yosemite Ave, Manteca. LifeRing Secular Recovery: Support group for people who choose to live free of alcohol and other addictive substances. We avoid discussion of politics and religion in our meetings so each person can focus on building their personal sobriety recovery plan. (209) 591-8741, www.liferingmodesto.org

Weekly mindfulness meditation and dharma talk, 12:30-2:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC parking lot). Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <http://imcv.org/>

MONDAYS

Walk With Me, a women's primary infertility support group and Bible study. 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm the first and third Mondays of each month (September only meeting 9/15/14 due to Labor Day). Big Valley Grace Community Church. Interested? Email WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com or call 209.577.1604.

TUESDAYS

Pagan Family Social, third Tuesdays, Golden Corral, 3737 McHenry Ave, Modesto, 6:00 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

LifeRing Secular Recovery. Tuesday 6:30 pm, Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto. 591-8741.

Ukulele class/play-a-long led by Lorrie Freitas 5 p.m. Beginners Lessons 6 p.m. Play Along in songbooks provided. Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1600 Carver, Modesto. Donation accepted. Info: 505-3216. www.funstrummers.com

Weekly mindfulness meditation and dharma talk, 6:30-8:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC parking lot). Info: Contact Lori for more information at 209-343-2748 or see <http://imcv.org/>

Adult Children Of Alcoholics, Every Tuesday, 7 pm at 1320 L St., (Christ Unity Baptist Church). Info: Jeff, 527-2469.

WEDNESDAYS

Unity Tai Ji Qi Gong (A Journey Within) - First United Methodist Church Multipurpose Rm - 6 pm - Wednesdays - freewill offering. Michele, 209 602-3162.

Merced LGBT Community Center offers a variety of monthly meetings and written materials. Volunteers, on site Wed-Fri, offer support. Ph: 209-626-5551. Email: mercedboard@gaycentralvalley.org - 1744 G St. Suite H, Merced, CA. www.mercedlgbtcenter.org

Merced Full Spectrum meets the second Wednesday of every month, 6 p.m. 1744 G St., Suite H, Merced <http://www.lgbtmerced.org/> Merced Full Spectrum is a division of Gay Central Valley, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. <http://www.gaycentralvalley.org/>

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGILS: held THE FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five points), (NOTE TIME), 4:30-5:30 pm. Call the Center for info: 529-5750.

MEDIA: Listen to local Valley Community Radio KQRP 104.9 FM, <http://www.kqrp.com>

PEACE LIFE CENTER BOARD MEETING, FIRST Thursdays, 720 13th St., Modesto, 6:30 pm, 529-5750.

MEDIA COMMITTEE of Peace Life Center. Meetings TBA. Call John Lucas, 527-7634.

CONNECTIONS EDITORIAL MEETINGS: Info: 537-7818, jcostello@igc.org

PEACE/LIFE CENTER MODESTO, 720 13th St. Call 529-5750. We'll get back to you with current info on activities.

LifeRing Secular Recovery. Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. , Center for Human Services Building, 1700 McHenry Way, Room 12 Modesto.

Modesto Folk Dancers: All levels welcome. Raube Hall, Ceres (call for address), 480-0387.

GLBT Questioning Teen Support Group (14-19 years old). 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, College Ave. Congregational Church, 1341 College Ave., Modesto. 7 - 9 pm. Safe, friendly, confidential. This is a secular, non-religious group. Info: call 524-0983.

Transgender Support Group, 2nd & 4th Wed., 7:30 to 9 pm. Info: (209) 338-0855. Email info@stanpride.org , or tgsupport@stanpride.org

Mindful Meditation: Modesto Almond Blossom Sangha, 7 - 9 pm. Info: Stan, 549-7770, stanhopecunningham@yahoo.com , or Anne, 521-6977.

Compassionate Friends Groups, 2nd Wed., 252 Magnolia, Manteca.

THURSDAYS

Green Team educational meetings the 3rd Thursday of each month, 10 to 11 am, Kirk Lindsey Center, 1020 10th St. Plaza, Suite 102, Modesto. www.StanislausGreenTeam.com

Third Thursday Art Walk, Downtown Modesto, downtown art galleries open - take a walk and check out the local art scene. 5-9 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 579-9913, <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

Refuge Recovery: A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction Insight Meditation Central Valley. Jana Lynn Community Rm., 500 N. 9th St., Modesto. Thursdays 6:30-8 pm. FREE (donations accepted). Info: email RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com

Latino Community Roundtable (LCR) meets on the second Thursday of each month at Noon at Bel Piatto Italian Cucina, 1000 Kansas Ave., Modesto, CA. Info: call Maggie Mejia, (209) 303-2664, <http://lcrstan.org>

The Book Group, First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 pm. Info: mzjurkovic@gmail.com

The Compassionate Friends, Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter. 2nd Thursday of the month. Contact: Joanna Rose-Murray, 209-484-8276, jrmcompassionate@gmail.com, <http://www.tcfmodesto-riverbankarea.org>

NAACP. King-Kennedy Center, 601 S M.L. King Dr., Modesto, 7 pm, 3rd Thursdays. 549-1991.

Valley Heartland Zen Group: every Thurs 6:30 to 8:30 pm, Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2310 Woodland Ave. Meditation. Newcomers welcome. Info: 535-6750 or <http://emptynestzendo.org>

Pagan Community Meeting, 1st Thursdays, Cafe Amore, 3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm.

Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

FRIDAYS

Funstrummer Ukulele Band every Friday, from 9:15 am until noon, Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. Info: 505-3216; www.funstrummers.com

Latino Emergency Council (LEC) 3rd Fridays, 8:15 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Modesto. Info: Dale Butler, 522-8537.

Village Dancers: Dances from Balkans, Europe, USA and more. Fridays, Carnegie Arts Center, 250 N. Broadway, Turlock. 7:30-9:30 pm, \$5 (students free). Info: call Judy, 209-480-0387.

Sierra Club: Yokuts group. Regular meetings, third Friday, College Ave. Congregational Church, 7 pm. Info: 549-9155. Visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yokuts> for info on hikes and events.

Mujeres Latinas: last Friday, lunch meetings, Info: Cristina Villego, 549-1831.

Hispanic Leadership Council: 1st & 3rd Fridays at 7:00 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Other meetings at Terrace Cafe, Double Tree Hotel. Info: Yamilet Valladolid, 523-2860.

SATURDAY

Citizens' Climate Lobby, Modesto Chapter, meets every second Saturday, 10:30 a.m., 937 Oxford Way, Modesto. Questions: Call Kathy, 523-5907.

So Easy ~ So Good: Vegetarian/Vegan/Wannabee potluck/meeting every third Saturday of the month, 11:30 AM- 1:30 PM. Info: Kathy or Chris, 209-529-5360; email kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com

SERRV: Saturdays, 10 - Noon and after church Sundays or by appointment. Call Mary, 522-6497 or 523-5178. Gifts from developing countries. Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland, Rm. #4, Modesto.

For complete calendar information and regularly scheduled activities, visit <http://www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm>

DEADLINE to submit articles to CONNECTIONS: Tenth of each month. Submit peace, justice, environmental event notices to Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org Free Calendar listings subject to space and editing. For up to date information, visit www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm