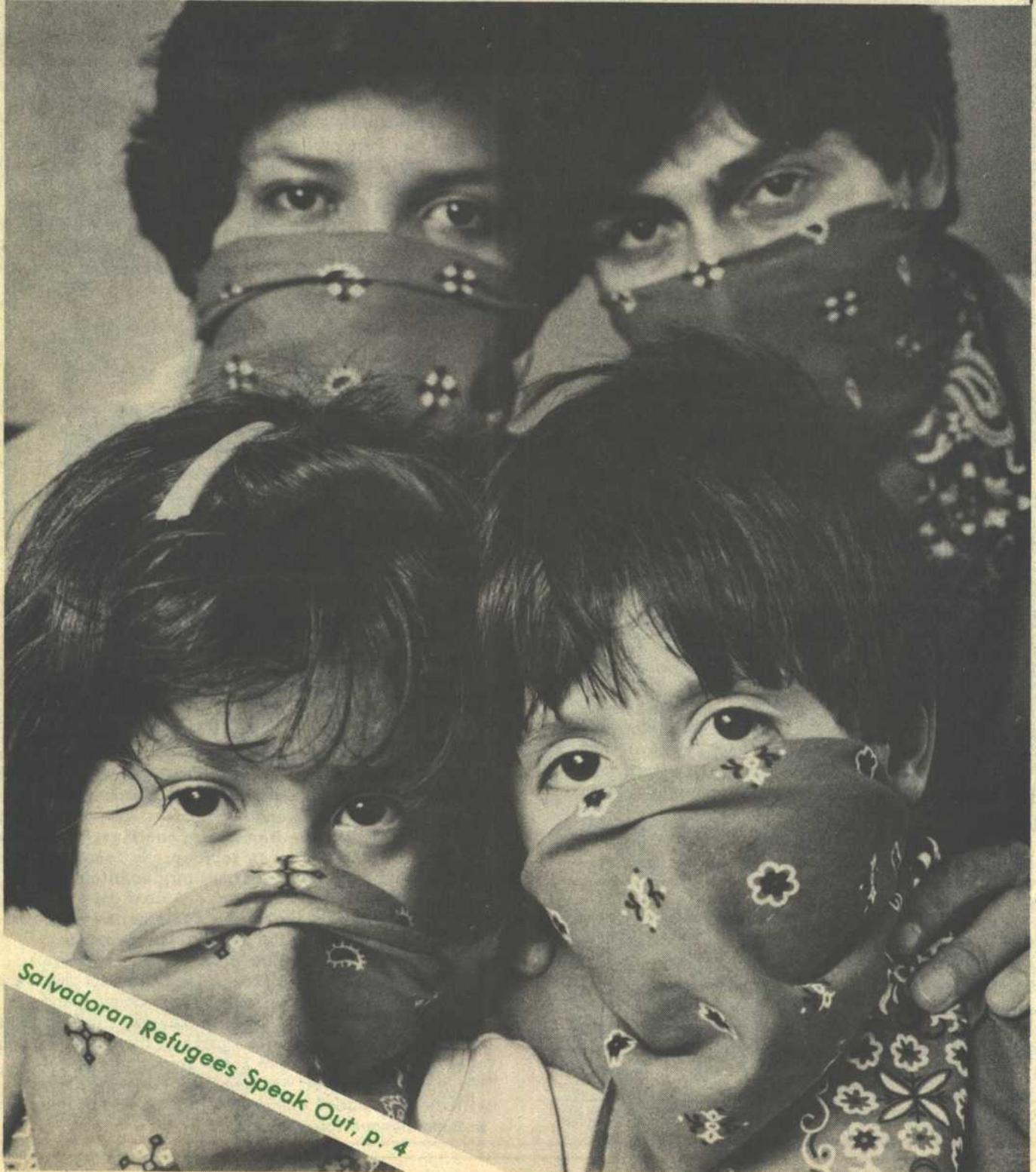


Peace Newsletter

A Central New York Voice for Peace and Social Justice August 1987 PNL 540

Photo: Paul Pearce



Salvadoran Refugees Speak Out, p. 4

Reflagging: More U.S. Intervention

by Steve Rosenberg

The question of placing Kuwaiti oil shipping vessels under the flag of the United States--"reflagging"--is not a simple one. The facts are complicated and confusing. The first task is determining the facts, and the second is judging if those facts make it in the 'interest' of the United States to reflag Kuwaiti vessels.

According to George Ball (Under Secretary of State in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations), writing in the June 18, 1987 New York Times,

...tiny Kuwait...caught in the middle of the Iran-Iraq 'tanker war,' approached the United States Coast Guard in January with a request to transfer its tankers to American registry.

Then, a month later--after, and only after, our Coast Guard had ignored that request with bureaucratic indifference--Kuwait asked Moscow to place the Soviet flag on Kuwaiti tankers. Although the Soviet Union professed unfamiliarity with the practice of reflagging, it did lease three tankers to Kuwait and agreed to provide them with small armed escorts.

Oddly enough, the White House took little notice of these events until after an Iraqi plane attacked the United States frigate Stark on May 17. Immediately the President, without prior consultation with Congress or any adequate military planning, abruptly announced that the United States would transfer its flag to all Kuwaiti tankers and provide them with armed escorts.

Justifying the Risks

This straightforward recitation of the facts provides a basis for judging what U.S. "interest" is at stake in this admittedly risky venture thousands of miles from our shores. Two justifications have been offered for reflagging: protecting oil shipments to our allies and containing the Soviet "threat" to Persian Gulf oil shipping.

As to the first justification, the purported objects of U. S. concern seem to be less worried than U. S. administration officials. Although "[m]ost of the oil goes to West Germany, Italy, and Japan, [t]hese countries maintain generally workable relationships with both Iran and Iraq.... They are unwilling to go beyond symbolic statements of public support." (Village Voice, 6/30/87)

What about the Soviet "threat"? That concern was expressed in the usual Reaganesque alarm on May 29th:

...the endless, demoralizing gas lines, the shortages, the rationing, the escalating energy prices, double-digit inflation and the enormous dislocation that shook our economy to its foundations during the 1970's could happen again if Iran and the Soviet Union were able to impose their will upon the friendly Arab states of the Persian Gulf, and Iran was allowed to block the free passage of neutral shipping. (Guardian, June 24, 1987)

The realities, of course, are much more complicated. George Ball points out that "the Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister states reassuringly that, regardless of Washington's announced plan to build up its fleet in the Gulf, the Kremlin had no intention of augmenting its tiny

three-ship flotilla... as well as assuring that the presence of the vessels of the superpowers would not provoke incidents." Indeed, the Arab News of July 5, 1987 noted "the Soviets call for removal of all foreign warships from the Gulf unless the vessels are from that region."

The unpersuasiveness of the justifications offered do not mean, however, that concern with the Soviet Union is irrelevant to the reflagging initiative. In the Village Voice of June 30, 1987, James Ridgeway cites Brown University Middle East expert William Beeman in stating that "the real game here is to lay the groundwork for gaining a land base in the Gulf region and eventually counter Soviet influence. The immediate danger lies in the possibility that Washington may actually be trying to draw Iranian fire in order to convince the Arabs to let the U.S. move in on a permanent basis...the U.S. is establishing an arena for superpower confrontation where no such arena existed before."



**"Iranians to the right of me... Iraqis to the left of me.
— Thank God the American people are behind me."**

When Will They Ever Learn...

Thus, President Reagan's twin preoccupations with the Soviet Union as an "evil empire" and with employing military solutions to his perception of global geopolitics raise their ugly heads once again. As with the machinations disclosed by the Iran-contra hearings, the further ingredient in the picture is secrecy. In Lebanon, the U.S. should have found that military solutions in volatile regions do not always work. A confrontational attitude with the Soviet Union only fuels military expenditures without bringing the world closer to peace.

One is left with the conclusion that the Reagan Administration seems unable to learn from its own experiences. Unfortunately, people in this country and abroad--U.S. soldiers, U.S. taxpayers, civilian victims of U.S. firepower in various parts of the world--are the ones who will continue to suffer from these policies. We only have to wait and see how many people get killed--for no good reason--in this latest misadventure in Reaganesque foreign policy.

Steve is a long-term activist (still angry about Vietnam, who likes to write articles and letters to the editor.

the peace council page

Hiroshima/Nagasaki Days

In the past, Syracuse Peace Council has participated in and helped to put together a variety of events to commemorate the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This year is the 42nd anniversary of the bombings, and in conjunction with a variety of other groups, we are sponsoring two events in the first week of August.

Join us on August 6th at Columbus Circle at 12:00 noon for a ceremony to commemorate the lives of those who died as a result of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. From 12:00-12:30, there will be poetry readings, music and a brief commentary from veteran John Brule. At 12:30, we will begin a half hour silent vigil for reflection. At 1:00, we will have a balloon launch to symbolize our hope for the future.

On Sunday, August 9th, we will be having a community Interfaith Peace Commemoration, at United Universalist Methodist Church (1085 East Genesee St., Syracuse) at 7:30 pm. The four themes of the service, which will bring together a diverse group of Central New Yorkers, are commemoration, concern, compassion, and commitment.

As a final effort to reach out to the religious community, we recently sent a letter to approximately 800 churches in the county and surrounding areas. We've asked if they would support our efforts by giving a sermon to their congregation and putting something in their weekly bulletins. Please ask your priest, rabbi, reverend, etc. if they plan on joining other area religious leaders in their efforts to achieve peace.

-Lisa Labeille

Going to the Fair?

Last year the Peace Council sponsored a successful booth at the New York State Fair. A combination of the lack of people to coordinate the project, and questions about its effectiveness resulted in SPC's decision not to have a booth this year. However, not having a booth doesn't mean that we can't have some presence at the fair. Several ideas have been tossed around, including street theater at the military exhibits and mobile human billboards. The possibilities are endless. If you would like to be involved, or simply have ideas to pass on, call me at SPC, 472-5478.

-Andy Mager

Volunteer Night Returns

We wish to thank those of you who were able to make our volunteer orientation night on Tuesday July 7th. It was great seeing so many enthusiastic people. For those of you who don't know, we've set up a regular volunteer night every Thursday at 7:00 pm. If you can't make it at this time we invite you to come in whenever you're free and have energy to help out.

-Lisa Labeille

Educational Supplies Campaign

The MADRE-SPC project is planning a school supplies campaign to start in late August and run into the Fall. Nicaraguan schools are in great need of basic materials such as pencils, paper, scissors, paste, notebooks and the like. Friends who have visited Nicaragua report continual shortages of these "taken for granted" school supplies throughout the country. Our government exports death to the Nicaraguan people, we can counter that and take part in a nationwide grass roots movement to send genuine aid to the people of Nicaragua.

The school supplies campaign is currently in the planning stages and we would welcome input and help. We are planning a cultural-information event about Nicaragua for September which will be a highlight of the campaign and will help meet our goal of educating and politicizing Central New Yorkers about the issues underlying U.S. intervention in Central America.

We wish to extend a heartfelt thanks to the many people who generously participated in the Mother's Day Campaign. The money raised for milk and diapers will make a positive difference.

The MADRE-SPC project meets regularly and always accepts donations. Want more details? Call the SPC house (472-5478) and a project member will call you back

-Peter Scheibe



Is This the War Memorial?

During an after dinner walk through downtown one evening, a friend and I found ourselves in front of the War Memorial. One of its marquees displayed the Volunteer Center's name and phone. I wondered whether other non profit organizations--in fact, whether SPC--could have a message there also.

I wrote to the manager of the War Memorial. He asked me to put a request in writing, which I did. They consented.

Note: While the Volunteer Center's message was up for six weeks, our's lasted barely a week.

-Gary Weinstein

Combining Personal & Political Change

An Interview with Juana and Carlos

Interview by Kip Hargrave

The following interview with Juana and Carlos was conducted by Kip Hargrave, a lay missionary in the Syracuse Catholic Diocese. Juana and Carlos came to Syracuse in June as part of the nationwide Sanctuary Movement. They are living here with their three children and Juana's sister Jesus. You can contact Syracuse Covenant Sanctuary through Ann Tiffany, 471-4672 or Paul Weichselbaum, 478-1592.



Why did you leave El Salvador?

Juana: Although we didn't leave the country until 1984, the problems began much earlier. In 1979, my brother disappeared. He was a member of the popular political movement. Before that the priest in our parish was accused of being a communist and expelled from the country. The priest who took his place was assassinated in 1979. He was killed along with four students on a retreat at the parish house.

Carlos: Our parish was very well organized, not only as a church community, but also as a community very involved in the popular political movement. This also caused us to be afraid. For example, one evening at about 6:00, soldiers came into our neighborhood looking for eight young men. Evidently someone had squealed on them. The soldiers ripped them out of their houses, tied them up and shot them in the head. They did it at the main intersection of the area. We all heard the shots but no one, not even their folks, left their houses until the next morning.

Were the men armed?
No.

Why did they do this to them?

The eight were members of the popular political movement and the parish based Christian communities.

What did they do as members of the church communities?

They led Bible study. Some of them sang in the choir. They visited the sick and helped one another when one of them didn't have any money. That is what we all did in a Christian community.

What was their work in the popular political organization?

They painted signs on walls, gave out pamphlets...By that time, anyone active in the popular organizations was given military training. I don't know whether they had actually done any fighting.

Why do people in the popular political organizations feel they have to use violence?

Because the government sends troops to attack us. The young people in these groups must defend themselves and their people. I can remember participating in peaceful strikes and demonstrations when the soldiers attacked us for no good reason. In 1975 they attacked a group of university students and killed hundreds. It was at that point that the popular organizations began to arm themselves.

Did Archbishop Romero criticize the popular movement for using violence?

Carlos: No! He said that we had to defend ourselves.

Juana: But at times he did criticize the movement for using excessive violence.

He told the rich people that they came to mass and prayed, but did not live like Christians... They lied. But worst of all they cheated the poor.

What do you think of the current Archbishop, Mons. Rivera y Damas?

At first he didn't agree with the people. But then he began to change. They said he went to Morazan Province once, where there is so much fighting. The people showed him bodies of those who had been hacked to death by the soldiers. Now he criticizes the government in much stronger terms. Still he is between yes and no. I think that he would like to be neutral, talking one day to the government and the next day to the left.

Let's talk again about base Christian communities. How did yours function?

Our parish was divided into communities according to streets. There were weekly meetings for adults, young men, young women, and for the children.

Juana: In our young women's group, there were ten of us. We always began with a reading from the Bible. Then we would try to draw something out of the reading which would give direction to our lives. For example, when the Gospel says that the followers of Jesus pooled all of their money and shared everything evenly, we asked ourselves if we shouldn't do the same.

Carlos: Or when Jesus spoke of the Pharisees, who were part of the ruling class of his day, we speak with the same criticism of our government. It does not protect the poor. It perpetrates injustice.

Has the church always worked this way?

Juana: No, just since 1971. Before the priest was the owner of the Bible. He read it all by himself and shared only what he wanted us to know. He would tell us don't steal, don't commit adultery, keep your mouth shut and give your money to the church. Our role was to sit in the pews, listen to him and bless ourselves.

Carlos: Not all of us sat in the pews. Rich people who had contributed to the construction of the church building put their names on the pews. Only they got to sit in them while we had to stand.

What happened in 1971?

A new priest came. He told the rich people that they came to mass and prayed, but did not live like Christians. They fought among themselves. They lied. But worst of all they cheated the poor.

The other thing that they didn't like was that the priest celebrated mass in our homes; in the homes of the poor. He began to teach us that the Gospel asked us to transform our reality not just suffer with it until we died.

He was part of the community, not above the community like so many others. When there was a difference of opinion between one of the communities and the priest, he would sit down and talk about it.

Carlos: For me the biggest difference was that he would eat with the little people. I remember one time when we invited him to our house. Everybody was served Kool-aid in plastic cups, but for him we bought a bottle of Coke and found a real glass. He said, "No. I am just like you folks. I'll take Kool-aid."



Despite the continued repression, the people of El Salvador continue to organize. On May Day, 1986, thousands rallied in San Salvador. (photo: Impact Visuals)

Would you say that the work of the church, the church of the base Christian communities, is the same as the work of the popular political organizations?

They are very similar. Both recognize the importance of changing unjust structures. But there is a difference. The church used to tell us that personal change was the only goal of a Christian. Now we also know that Jesus was asking us to give our lives so that all people, especially the poor, could live better, could have enough to eat, enough land, a house. That means structural change.

The difference between ourselves in the Christian communities and those that are just in the political movements is that they do not consider personal conversion important. They think that if the structure changes things will automatically get better. I think that individuals must change or we will make the same mess of the old structures.

After leaving El Salvador in 1984, you lived for two years in Mexico where some of your family still live today. Why did you choose to come to the United States as part of the Sanctuary movement?

In Mexico we were working with other Salvadorans to raise the consciousness of the Mexican people to the conditions in El Salvador. But they are very poor people, just like ourselves. They don't have the time or the energy to be worried about our problems.

The bigger the obstacle, though, was the church. It was like the conservative church back home. All it wanted to do was to put us to sleep; to talk about how it was in the time of Jesus.

When we heard about Sanctuary, through a friend, we got in touch.

But in order to have that they need Americans who can go to El Salvador and accompany them. The government won't kill you but it will us.

In speaking to the people of Central New York, what are you asking of us?

We want protection for our people. I don't mean just for those of us who make it to the United States. We especially would like you to help in the protection of those who are leaving the refugee camps in Honduras. They are returning to their homes in El Salvador where all they want is a piece of land, a little house, a school and to live in peace. But in order to have that they need Americans who can form commissions to go to El Salvador and accompany them. The government won't kill you but it will kill us.

Is there anything we, who can't go to El Salvador or Honduras, can do?

Write President Duarte. Although he is no more than a puppet, putting pressure on him will say to those behind him that the world has not forgotten.

Does the FMLN-FDR, the group that encompasses the popular political organizations, still have support among the people?

They still did when we left. And from what we have heard from our friends, they still do today.

How do most Salvadorans feel about the people of the United States?

Sometimes we get angry with the people of your country. Then we think of our own government. It doesn't represent what we want so why should we think that yours represents what you want.

One thing that helps the relationship between our people and yours are groups like Sanctuary. Salvadorans send letters home that tell how people here are trying to stop the injustice there. It is appreciated.

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Hunger in Onondaga County

"Stores' new policy threatens food pantries for poor." This headline appeared over a story by Adelle M. Banks in the July 9 Syracuse Herald-Journal.

From the article it appeared that the major source of food for the food pantries run by PEACE Inc and by the Salvation Army was damaged food from Wegmans stores. Since the stores could not sell the damaged food, a way of disposing of it was to allow PEACE Inc and the Salvation Army to pick up the damaged items and redistribute it as emergency food to the poor.

On June 29 Wegmans set up a single reclamation center in Rochester, NY where the corporation's headquarters are located. The new system "helps us to take advantage of the manufacturers' damage policies more so than we were under the older program," said Mary Ellen Burris, Wegman's director of consumer affairs. Now the goods which formerly went to PEACE and the Salvation Army in Syracuse will go to a food bank in Rochester.

The article quoted Roberta Schofield, executive director for professional and community services at the Salvation Army in Syracuse:

"What it means to us is we've lost a tremendous resource for salvaged goods that we used in our pantry." (Her agency was receiving 30 cardboard cartons of products a week from Wegman's stores.) "We're trying to find other stores that will allow us to come and pick up

(their damaged) merchandise. ... Reclamation centers are indeed the most cost-effective way for them to work. It's just unfortunate for us."

The article quoted Linda Boyd, coordinator of community food and nutrition for PEACE Inc as saying that her organization will decide between now and the end of summer if as many as three pantries will close.

The agency has nine pantries, eight in community centers in Onondaga County and one in its main office at 100 New Street, which have served people needing emergency food. Said Ms. Boyd, "Without Wegmans what we don't have is a major source of food. What we are left with is two small purchasing grants." The only other donations come from bakeries, which donate bread products, she said. I asked Ms. Boyd what groups of people come to PEACE for emergency food, and how many. As examples, she cited young low-income families which just can't make ends meet; public assistance recipients whose food dollars stretch to only about 26 days of each month, leaving them without food for 4-5 days per month; elderly people whose food dollars go for rent, transportation and \$200-per-month medical costs. She estimated that about 22,000 people come to PEACE for food from three to twelve times a year.

-Angus MacDonald

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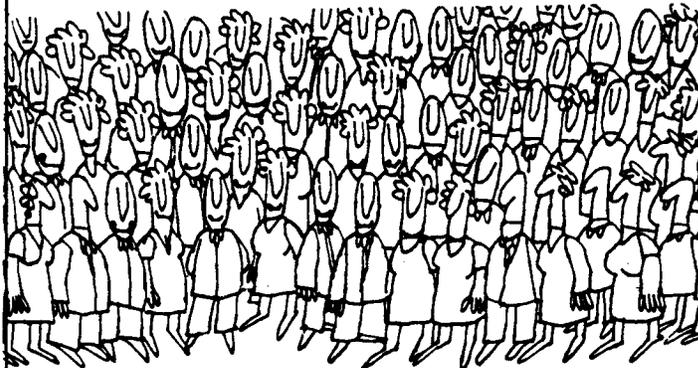
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Hiroshima Now We Know

by Corinne Kinane

On August 6, 1945, at 8:14 a.m., Hiroshima, Japan was a city of 245,000 people and 90,000 buildings. One minute later, at least 100,000 of those people were dead or would die shortly because of the atomic bomb the U.S. dropped on Hiroshima. Also because of our dropping the bomb, 62,000 buildings collapsed, caught fire or would catch fire in the next couple days.

We Didn't Know Then

It can be said that at 8:14 a.m. on August 6, 1945, we did not know what the dropping of one atomic bomb could cause. Even the U.S. project director did not know if the bomb would explode and what it would do. Although, we did not know, this in no way lessens our responsibility

We did not know it would cause the death of 95% of the people within one-half mile of where the bomb was dropped. We did not know it would cause the deaths of approximately twice the number of people as U.S. soldiers killed in our Vietnam war. We did not know that approximately one-half of the population of Hiroshima would be killed. We did not know that many thousands of people would continue to suffer from the debilitating effects of radiation sickness and would die from them months and years later.

We did not know it would cause 10,000 of those hurt to come to Hiroshima's largest hospital, which had only 8 doctors left to care for them and 600 beds. We did not know it would cause people to exclaim when they saw someone who wasn't hurt "Look, there is one who is not wounded!"

We did not know it would cause a 30-room hospital to topple into the river. We did not know it would cause all the X-ray plates in hospitals to be exposed.

We did not know it would cause trees to topple. We did not know it would cause 70,000 leaks in plumbing lines.

We did not know that the heat from the bomb would be 6,000 degrees. We did not know that people, buildings, trees and gas storage tanks would ignite.

We did not know that people, parts of buildings and flying debris would fall on hot stoves and live wires. We did not know that fires would start all over the city.

We did not know that our dropping the bomb would cause the electrical power to be knocked out. We did not know that it would cause a dust cloud that would make the day grow darker and darker. We did not know

Corinne is a former staff person. She encourages everyone to read or re-read John Hersey's Hiroshima.

that nurses and doctors would have to work by the light of the city's fires.

We Do Know Now

Now we do know what can be caused by one atomic bomb. And the U.S. has over 10,000 bombs that each has much more explosive power than the one we dropped on Hiroshima.

We may not know the exact capabilities of these bombs, but we do know that each one will wreak even more death and damage than the Hiroshima bomb. We do know.

Part of our knowing is letting the reality of this bombing "hit home". Before I read John Hersey's Hiroshima, I was sure that "Something like that couldn't happen.", "Our leaders wouldn't let something like that happen." and "Surely, the people would be warned if something of that magnitude were going to happen."

I was wrong on all three counts. Obviously, something like that could happen and it did. And our leaders gave the orders for it to happen.

In one sense, the people of Hiroshima did have warning. They did think, since theirs was one of the few cities that had not yet been bombed, that "something special" was being planned for them by the U.S. They assumed it would be the standard B-52 bombings and were preparing for them by tearing down buildings to clear paths for air-raid defense fire lanes. On the morning of August 6, the people of Hiroshima received the same one-minute air alert blast that they received every morning when the U.S. weather plane flew over.

I do not have confidence that we have learned from the bombing of Hiroshima. Our leaders today have the benefit of the knowledge of that horrible and valuable lesson, yet they continue to talk about using bombs and even direct the production of more of them.

If the lessons of Hiroshima are not real to our leaders, we need to make them real to them. We can't say, and we can't let our leaders say "We don't know." We do know.

Central New York Hiroshima/Nagasaki Commemoration Activities Include:

- * An Open Hand Theatre Parade and Vigil at Columbus Circle at noon on Thursday, August 6,
- * A Candle-light Vigil at the Q-Zone at Seneca Army Depot from 8 pm to midnight on Saturday, August 8,
- * A Community Interfaith Peace Commemoration at University Methodist Church, 1085 E. Genesee St. at 7:30 pm on Sunday, August 9.

For further information, see page 13.



Getting Involved in Electoral Politics

by Andrew Seltzer

Long before I had a bumper to put it on, I proudly displayed the sticker, "Don't Vote--it only encourages them." Of course, this is logical in a system which so effectively filters candidates so as to yield such similar opponents. Still, there are benefits to members of peace organizations taking stands in the game of electoral politics.

What is Effective?

Activists are often accused of overestimating what can be gained from involvement in the electoral game. Their valuable time and energy is eaten up, their more important work on the outside which really shapes a politician's opinion and that of the society is cut back, etc. To be honest with this, we need to ask the often unasked question: how valuably do we spend our time and energy doing what we do "outside" the electoral game? How much effect do we really have with our ritualistic media events? Did the marches end the Viet Nam conflict, or did Nixon pull the troops out when he wanted to? Are we effectively altering what is really going on in Central America with our strategy of peaceful educating and occasional organizing in the streets? If it was clear that an effective movement was underway swaying public and politician's opinions and that every drop of energy was vital to the success of the campaign, then by all means Presidential politicking would be a foolish sideline. I'm not sure, however, that this can be claimed to be our current situation.

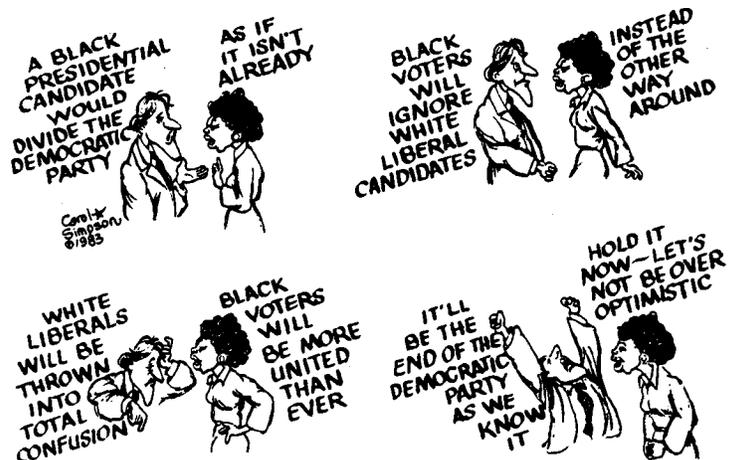
*how valuably do we spend
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"outside" the electoral game*

By not getting involved in the game we diminish our own voice greatly. We have become so conscious of the media...we rush around with press releases and stage media events all because we have to get our message to the people. Once every four years the people and the media gear up to focus on politics, and the Peace Council has nothing to say about this, we've got nothing to say about that. So the people and the press turn to another channel. The war in Central America, for the

Andrew is currently on a leave of absence from SPC Press.

most part, has no personality, no face to look at... Jesse Jackson, for example, is against Contra Aid and U.S. intervention in Central America. To support him because of his position brings this out and furthers our goals. (To say nothing of the potential coalition building between ourselves and progressive black groups which could also result from such an effort.) The game of electoral politics attracts attention and generates excitement that a million events at Columbus Circle, unfortunately, could not yield.

When Jackson showed 17% in a recent CBS News/ New York Times poll, the other candidates all received 5% or less. CBS reported that there was no frontrunner and showed face shots of all the candidates, with interviews, except Jackson. His name was mentioned once in passing. It is our duty to balance out, in whatever feeble way we can, this propaganda.



The Template Theory

It is unlikely that the Peace Council could agree on one candidate to support. We could however drop a template around the candidates and see how they shape up around issues of peace and justice, and by disseminating that information we will in essence, be taking stands in the game. In this case we cannot be silent along the two year trail to the White House. Nor do we need to be so "excessively fair" that we publish George Wortley's views alongside Rosemary Pooler's; Bush's next to Jackson's. The networks of information distribution are keeping the reality of the situation from the public with their slanted reports, and thus shaping their own political reality. All we can do is get deeply involved in exposing that and supporting candidates, if there are any, who are out there trying to do what we're trying to do.



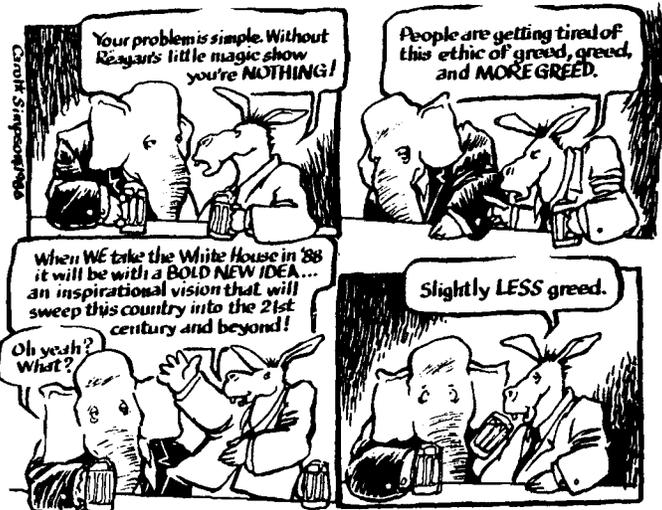
Electoral Politics: Progress or Pitfall ?

by Rick Jahnkow

The dilemma we face as peace and social justice activists is one of deciding whether it is best at times to abandon our role as agents of change and work within the mainstream institutions we are trying to influence, or continue to pull from the outside to counter any tendency towards stagnation or backsliding.

When it comes to devoting resources to electoral politics, my own view is that activists far too often overestimate what can be gained by it, especially in the area of campaigns for national office. When asked to aid a candidate who happens to have taken a progressive stand on a few issues, they drop their other activities and jump in to work on the campaign, forgetting that the dynamics which are responsible for leading that person to take those stands in the first place necessitate people willing to make demands from the outside.

Holder of political office, whether Democrat or Republican, do not lead us in the direction of change, but are instead led by movements which create a power base that makes it "safe" for them to institute changes. If the social change activists who are crucial to building and sustaining such movements divert themselves to work for politicians, the power base will wither or shift in another direction and threaten any gains. It is a continuous process which demands the perpetual attention of those seeking progress.



Past Mistakes

It was their failure to recognize these dynamics of social change and take seriously their role as change agents which led many progressives to support Lyndon Johnson as a "peace" candidate in 1964. Out of fear that Goldwater would start a war, the left jumped into the pocket of the Democratic Party and helped create a temporary consensus which facilitated Johnson's escalation

Rick works with the Committee Opposed to Militarism and the Draft in San Diego. This article is reprinted from the Non-Violent Activist, available for \$15/year from War Resisters League, 339 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10012.

of the Vietnam war. His eventual support for civil rights reforms had to be won through the struggle led by agitators outside the electoral process.

In 1968, had Eugene McCarthy not siphoned off energy from the student antiwar movement, Nixon probably would not have been able to lengthen the war as he did. McGovern's campaign siphoned away even more of the vitality of the grassroots antiwar movement -- people who could have organized the mass actions we needed when Nixon was reluctant to sign a peace treaty were too busy doing precinct work.

With regard to the peace movement's love affair with the Democratic Party, it is important to remember that there was relatively little dissent from the left during the Carter years, and he eventually brought us the rapid deployment force, the neutron bomb and draft registration (an act ostensibly intended as a threat to the Soviets). More recently, it was Democrats in Congress who helped make possible contra aid, and who backed down (prior to Reykjavik) on a resolution urging a nuclear testing moratorium.

The mire that the Reagan Administration is now caught in could have some of the same effects on national politics that Watergate had in the 70's. As Reagan's teflon skin begins to crack and shed, expectations will develop that future elections will produce a windfall for the Democrats, including the presidency in 1988. As this anticipation grows, an interest in electoral politics that is much more intense than it otherwise would have been will develop within the peace and social justice movements. Many on the left, not wanting to lose out on this opportunity to help swing the pendulum back the other way, will want to shift their resources to assist Democratic campaigns.

With this development on the horizon, there should be some serious discussion on the question of how electoral politics relate to our goals of peace and social justice. It seems particularly appropriate to raise this issue now ahead of the next elections.

First, I should say that my own perspective comes in part from having been personally involved in several political campaigns, including Gene McCarthy's in '68 and George McGovern's in '72.

How to Relate to Elections?

There are lots of views on the question of how peace activists should relate to electoral politics: work within the Democratic Party to move it leftwards; work for moderate candidates who can win and hope we can influence their appointments or that they'll modify their politics in return for our support; support progressive candidates so we can bring some of our issues into the public's eye; don't work directly for officeholders, but support them on specific issues or legislation when there are common objectives; work only for radical candidates or third party efforts; only become involved in local elections or referenda, where the degree of responsiveness by the system

Continued on next page

Elections/continued from page 11

is greater; work on the "outside" and make casting a vote our only contribution to electoral politics; "don't vote, it only encourages them"; etc.

Regardless of where one's views fit in, it's important to realize that, ultimately, the result of most political action is expressed through the political system, i.e., it is designed to produce legislative action of some sort.

The important question I think members of the peace and social justice movements should ask themselves is how is it that change occurs in this society, and therefore how should members of progressive causes put their limited resources to use?

Change From the Bottom

In a society such as ours, where political power and policy-making is concentrated in large, well-established institutions, change has historically come in response to pressure from movements which began outside the mainstream and were usually considered "radical."

As Frederick Douglass once said, "Power concedes nothing without a demand; it never has and it never will." Initially, however, the full demand is rarely granted, and what occurs is gradual compromise brought about by pressures from the more extreme position held by those who are the agents of change. As the process of demand, education and negotiation takes place, a shifting of viewpoints occurs among those who are concerned. Often some of the positions previously perceived as radical become adopted by the mainstream, and as the character of the power base shifts, institutions are compelled to change.

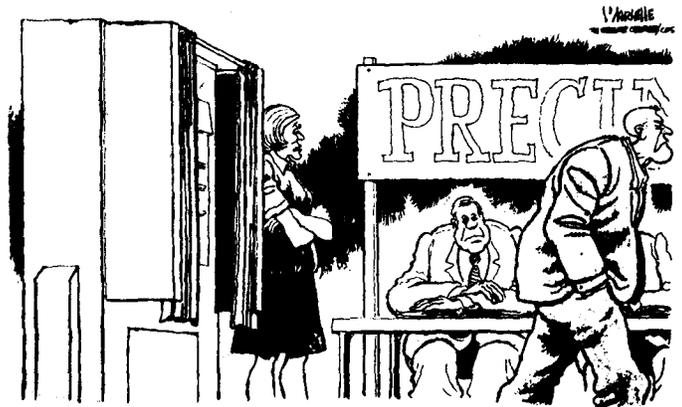
Electoral politics has a dynamic that sucks up activists willy nilly, till they are...no longer particularly good or disposed toward any other kinds of political activism and organizing.

Involvement in local Congressional campaigns has also been a problem for the peace movement. For example in San Diego, numerous peace activists diverted their energy in 1984 to work for Democrat Bob Simmons, who wanted to challenge Rep. Bill Lowery. The temptation to give him support arose because Simmons was strongly in favor of a nuclear freeze, which led people to overlook his other weaknesses, including a questionable position on Central America. Then a major controversy erupted among some of his supporters when it was learned that he supported draft registration. (In fact, after he lost the election, which was expected, Simmons argued in favor of an actual draft!) Still, some people who should have recognized the danger of supporting such an individual opted to waste valuable time and money on his campaign.

There are those who would say that in order to get people into office who will be responsive to our demands for peace and social justice we must be willing to direct some of our energy and other resources into their campaigns. In some cases, they would say, the margin of

victory would be so slim that our support could be the key factor in determining an election outcome.

The problem is that in such a close election there would be tremendous pressure on the candidate to move to the right in order to win and stay in office. The power base has to be shifted to allow him or her to move to the left, and that is best accomplished through the process of demands, education and negotiation, i.e. non-electoral movement building.



"FUNNY, WHEN THEY'RE THROUGH THEY KEEP ASKING HOW TO FLUSH IT!"

Getting Sucked In

The belief many activists have that they must do electoral work is answered well in an essay by Michael Albert in the booklet Where Do We Go From Here-- Tactics and Strategies for the Peace Movement (A.J. Muste Memorial Institute, NY, 1984):

"...[E]lectoral politics has a dynamic that sucks up activists willy nilly, till they become very good at elections and no longer particularly good or disposed toward any other kinds of political activism and organizing....[I]t has always seemed to me that there is never any want of people to run for office, work for candidates, etc. I therefore wonder why people with the most political experience should step rightwards to seek office when so many others are available to move leftwards toward the same electoral stances?

Moreover, whether candidates will...accomplish good once in office has always seemed to me to depend on extra-electoral movements forcing them to do so. It follows that electoral gains can be promoted most effectively as by-products of more general consciousness raising, demonstrating, direct actions, organization building, etc. rather than by making them our primary focus."

I personally would not rule out some types of electoral activity as an effective way to promote change in our present system, like citizen-initiated referenda or some local elections. And I do believe in casting votes for national offices. But if given the choice between donating time and resources on behalf of a candidate for national office, or handing out leaflets to the public on the arms buildup, I believe peace activists should do the leafletting and leave the electoral politics for those who don't understand the essential role of agitation and movement building in bringing about change.



International Cesarean Convention

The Third International Convention of the Cesarean Prevention Movement will be held at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, August 21-23.

The convention will feature internationally prominent professionals and activists in the field of birth and pregnancy, with lectures and workshops for members and the public. Costs vary depending on how much of the convention you will attend. Founded in 1982 under the leadership of Syracuse resident Esther Booth Zorn, CPM, Inc., claims over 48 chapters in the U.S. alone, with members in a dozen countries as well.

CPM/CNY meets on second Wednesdays at 960 Salt Springs Road in the YWCA Administration Bldg. at 7 P.M. to provide information and support on cesarean prevention, vaginal birth after cesarean, and other birth-related topics. Meetings are free and open to the public. For information call 479-6076 or 424-1942.

-Ardean Orr

Women Harvest Time

Women Harvest, a weekend of workshops and celebration, will be held for the 12th time at Camp Whitman on Seneca Lake, September 18-20. The gathering is sponsored by the Women's Information in Syracuse. Space is limited this year, so please register soon (the deadline is September 4). The cost is \$50-\$75 for the weekend. Contact INFO for full information, or to register, 601 Allen Street, Syracuse, NY 13210, (315) 478-4636.

-INFC

Another Whole Grain Uprising

On Friday August 21, On The Rise Bakery (109 Water St.) will host the 10th ANNUAL COLLECTIVE WHOLE GRAIN BAKER'S BAKE OFF and SALE. Bakers from across the country will be gathering in Syracuse for our annual conference. The BAKE OFF is an opportunity for us to share recipes and techniques as well as promote our politics along with our products! Proceeds from this SALE will go towards the work of our Cooperative Whole Grain Educational Association. CWGEA was organized to provide a network of support and education to cooperatively run whole grain bakeries across North and South America, Canada and Europe. Our food system now functions globally. We feel it's especially important to share across national boundaries -- increasing our knowledge of techniques and of grains other than wheat, and bringing to all people the consciousness of whole foods, self reliance and working cooperatively. The SALE starts at noon.

Save room for Wildflour's DREAM COOKIES (Ann Arbor, MI), SCONES from Uprising's in Berkeley, and CAROB CREAM PIE from Rising Star in Canada. Join us in this celebration of survival and growth as a whole world community bakery... on the rise! Call 475-7190 for more information about the Baker's Conference (Aug. 20-23).

-Karen Kerney

Commemorating Hiroshima & Nagasaki

In the past, Syracuse Peace Council has participated in and helped to put together a variety of events to commemorate the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This year is the 42nd anniversary of the bombings, and in conjunction with a variety of other groups, we are sponsoring two events in the first week of August.

Join us on August 6th at Columbus Circle at 12:00 noon for a ceremony to commemorate the lives of those who died as a result of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. From 12:00-12:30, there will be poetry readings, music, and a brief commentary from veteran John Brule. At 12:30, we will begin a half hour silent vigil for reflection. At 1:00, we will have a balloon launch to symbolize our hope for the future.

On Sunday, August 9th, we will be having a Community Interfaith Peace Commemoration, at United Universalist Methodist Church (1085 East Genesee St., Syracuse) at 7:30 pm. The four themes of the service, which will bring together a diverse group of Central New Yorkers, are commemoration, concern, compassion, and commitment.

As a final effort to reach out to the religious community, we recently sent a letter to approximately 800 churches in the county and surrounding areas. We've asked if they would support our efforts by giving a sermon to their congregations and putting something in their weekly bulletins. Please ask your priest, rabbi, reverend, etc. if they plan on joining other area religious leaders in their efforts to achieve peace.

Also on Saturday and Sunday, August 8 and 9, Finger Lakes Peace Alliance (FLPA) will hold a commemoration of Hiroshima/Nagasaki at Seneca Army Depot. On Saturday there will be an 8 pm to midnight candlelight vigil at the Q-zone, followed at midnight by a short ceremony. People may stay throughout the night and end the commemoration with a sunrise service on Sunday.

-Lisa Labeille

Bike Tour for Peace

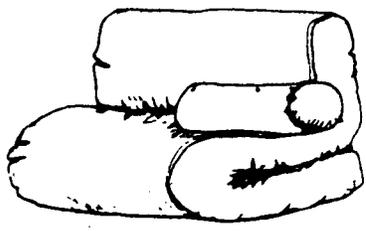
The second annual Leatherstocking Bike Tour for World Peace will be held on Saturday, September 19. The Bikathon, which includes rides of 25, 50, or 100 miles, begins in Norwich, NY. Cyclists will enjoy scenic landscapes, while raising money to benefit the "Chenango County United Effort for Peace." Riders are encouraged to sign up sponsors and ride for pledges per mile. The \$10 registration will be refunded to every rider who raises more than \$25. The three organizations which make up the "United Effort" are The Citizen's Exchange Fund of Central New York, the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign of Chenango County, and Peace Associates, Inc. For further information, contact Bike Tour, 70 West St., New Berlin, NY 13411, (607) 847-6228.

-Claudia Hendricks



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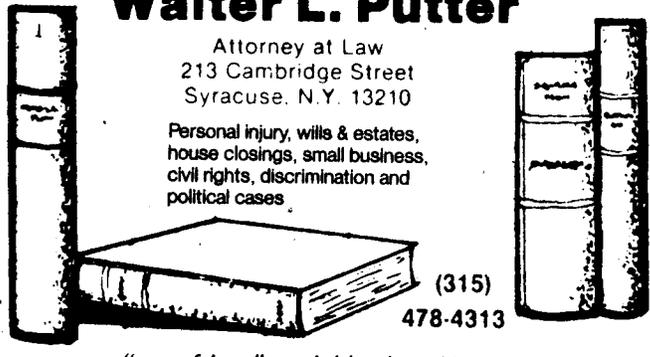
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PEACES

Join the Vigil

Let's be up front. This short article is a pitch for more sustained participation in the weekly Thursday morning vigil at the Federal Building in Syracuse.

Vigils similar to ours are being held every Thursday throughout the nation. They are held in support of the people of Nicaragua, in support of the weekly vigil every Thursday morning in Managua, Nicaragua, by Northamericans, and in protest of our government's policies in Central America.

When the front entrance (Clinton St.) was closed several weeks for repairs, we moved to the Franklin Street entrance. Now the main entrance is open again. Why not cover both, or let's dream a little, surround the building!

Even if you can only give one Thursday a month, or just a few weeks left in the summer, join us. The vigil begins at 7:30 A.M. and ends at 8. But if there are those who can only make it at 7 or 8 for a half-hour, let me know (662-7080 day, 662-7180 eve.). Others will stand with you. See you Thursday mornings. Bring your own sign or cross or not, but stand and be counted.

-Win Skeele

A Penny for our Safety

Federal legislation severely limiting nuclear accident insurance is up for renewal this summer. Environmentalists are pressuring Congress to remove the \$700 million liability cap on the Price-Anderson Act. They argue that government reports show damages from a nuclear accident could actually cost tens of billions of dollars.

Congress is considering a compromise bill that would raise this cap to only \$6.8 billion. However, a government report has shown that the worst possible accident at Nine Mile Point 2 near Syracuse could cost up to \$134 billion. Since no insurance company will sell nuclear accident insurance to the public, this means that individuals would receive only pennies for every dollar of damage.

Send a penny to your federal legislators and urge them to vote against any liability limit in Price-Anderson. For more information, contact the Price-Anderson Campaign, Box 15391, Washington, DC 20003, (202) 546-3972. In Syracuse, call Amy Hubbard at 471-6447.

-Amy Hubbard

Irradiation Equals Adulteration

Over a year ago, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved irradiation of food as a legal method of preservation. This decision has been opposed by environmental activists, consumers, some in the scientific community, and others.

We in New York State now have an opportunity to prevent irradiated foods from being sold here. Bills in both the State Assembly and State Senate would declare

irradiated foods to be "adulterated," thus making them ineligible for sale. Assembly bill #5442 (sponsored by Assemblywoman Weinstein) and Senate bill #5433 (sponsored by Tarky Lombardi) are both stuck in their respective Consumer Protection Committees. Please contact your state representatives asking their support to pass this legislation. For further information, contact your local NYPIRG chapter, or the Environmental Planning Lobby, 196 Morton Ave., Albany, NY 12202, (518) 462-5526.

-Andy Mager



Oppose Bork

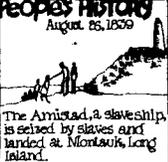
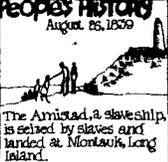
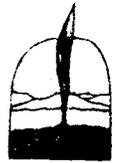
Supreme Court Justice Lewis Powell's resignation in June has given the Reagan administration an unequalled opportunity in its last years to push through its repressive social agenda. The confirmation of Robert Bork to the highest court would set back rights for women, blacks, the poor, gays and lesbians, and trade unionists well beyond the term of the Reagan presidency.

Bork's view on sexual harassment in the workplace is only one reason why the National Organization for Women has targeted his defeat as one of their main priorities. In 1985, Bork was willing to admit evidence that a woman harassed on the job by her supervisor wore "provocative clothing" or acted in a suggestive manner. As a declared opponent of abortion, Bork held that a chemical company's policy of refusing to allow women of child-bearing age to work where they would be exposed to lead was permissible. He also struck a blow against gay rights by upholding the Navy's automatic discharge for gay conduct.

Bork's views on civil rights for blacks and other people of color are equally abhorrent. In 1963, in response to the proposed Civil Rights Act, Bork wrote an article calling the act "a departure from freedom of the individual to decide with whom he will deal."

In short, Bork's reactionary views should cause all of us to join with Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director of the NAACP, to "ask the Senate to reject Judge Bork's nomination...until hell freezes over."

-Mairead Connor

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
August '87			29 Modern Times NVS Films, 7 & 9pm, SU Watson Aud, \$2.00 "Does every woman have a Secret Garden" discus- sion, noon, Planned Par- enthood, 475-5525	30 SPC Volunteer Nir Every Thurs: 7pm, Please come and do your bit, 472-5478 Death Penalty Vigil, noon, Columbus Circle Every Thurs: Central Am. Vigil, 7:30am, Federal Bldg, see p. 15	31 Every Fri: Country Dancing, 8- 10pm, Grace Episcopal Ch, \$2 Barb Dunn, Harvard Arts, 9pm, \$3, 478-6229 Lee Lesbian Support Grp, 7-9pm, Women's INFO, 601 Allen St, 478-4636	1 Barb Dunn (children's show) 3:30pm, Harvard Arts, \$1 Cathy George Art Show Closing: music & refreshments, 9pm, Harvard Arts, free
2 Peace Run arrives at Columbus Circle at 6am, 478-1004 Fri & Sat: Arabic Festival, 1- 9pm, St. Elias Orthodox Ch, 4988 Onondaga Rd, free Renaissance Faire, Sterling NY Sat & Sun through Aug. 16	3 PEOPLES HISTORY August 4, 1755 The trial of Peter Zenger legally establishes the freedom of the press. 	4 No Nukes NVS Films, Tues & Wed 7 & 9pm, SU Watson Aud, 2.00, 474-1132 Nuclear Freeze Mtg, 7:30 pm, May Memorial Ch Beth, 445-1714 Women's Political Caucus mtg, 7:30pm, Grace Epis- copal Ch, 422-3426	5 "Is everyone part of a couple" discussion, noon Planned Parenthood, free	6 Hiroshima Vigil noon, Columbus Circle, Come one, come all, 472-5478 1,000 Cranes (film) 1pm. No Nukes (film) and Tom Stelling, 7:30 pm, all at Skaneateles Methodist Church, \$2 The Refusal (film) & dis- cussion, 7:30pm, Unity Kitchen, 385 W. Onon. St, Ann 475-6761	7 8/6-8/9 Nevada Desert Experi- ence (witness at Nuclear Test site), Mike (716) 223-3262 Diana "Fou-Fou" Trifoso, Har- vard Arts, 9pm, \$3	8 Seneca Demo Evening vigil at this nuclear weapons storage facility, (716) 544-6954 for info SEUNA Summerfest at Barry Pk, 12-5, Katie, 475-4039 Bread & Puppet Theatre peace festival, Bennington, VT, (716) 244-9727
9 Inter-Faith Peace Service 7:30pm, University Methodist Church, 1035 E. Genesee St, 472-5478 Women Harvest Mtg, 7:30pm, Women's INFO, 601 Allen St. To Die Dreaming: Photographs of Nicaragua 'til 8/30 Everson Museum	10 Disabled in Action, 7pm ECHO, 446-6602 Every Mon: visual Disa- bility Support Grp, 501 E. Fayette, 10-11:30, 472-3171	11 Socialist Forum: "Meet Vice-Presidential Candi- date Ron Ehrenreich" Har- vard Arts, 7pm People for Animal Rights Mtg, Linda, 475-0062 Thornden Park Assoc Mtg 7:30pm, 478-5164	12 8/12-8/13 Michigan Womyn's Music Fest 425-1438 or 478-2875 "Is sexuality always a part of us" discussion, noon, Planned Parenthood 1120 E. Genesee St. Cesarean Prevention Mvmt mtg, 7pm, Elmcrest Children's Ctr, 475-7101	13 Cordovan Green (blue- grass), 9pm, Harvard Arts, \$2.50, 478-6229	14 8/13-8/17 War Resisters League Nat'l Conf, N. Carolina, (212) 228-0450 for info Lesbian Support Grp, 7-9pm, INFO, 601 Allen St.	15 Sat. & Sun. Women's INFO Garage Sale, 10-5, 601 Allen Annual Summer Gathering at Common Place Land Coop, Trux- ton, NY, noon to noon next, Andy, 472-5478 for info
16 Every Sun: Friends of Mental Patients Alliance, 3pm, 735 S. Beech St. Every Sun: Metropolitan Commu- nity Ch. worship, 5pm, Grace Episcopal Ch, 471-6618	17 Every Mon: Syracuse Birth Grp, 7pm, 471-6399	18 Sanctuary Mtg 7:30pm May Memorial Ch, Ann 471-4672 Gr. Syracuse NOW, 8pm May Memorial Ch, 446- 2229	19 Every Wed: Open Women's Support Grp, 7-9pm, INFO 478-4636, 601 Allen St. Every Wed: Mothers' Sup- port Grp, 1-2:30, Womens INFO, 601 Allen St.	20 Nat'l Council of Negro Women mtg, 7pm, Dunbar Ctr. Cordovan Green (blue- grass) Harvard Arts, 9pm \$2.50, 478-6229	21 Whole Grain Bake-Off & Sale, On the Rise, 109 Walton St., Armory Square, see p. 13 8/21 & 22 Regional Sanctuary Mtg, Albany, Ann 471-4672 8/21-23 Intnt'l Cesarean Conf. LeMoyné, 479-6076, see p. 13	22 Urban League Family Day, 12:30-6, Thornden Park, 472- 6955 "Adults Going Back to School with Free Childcare" 11am, INFO, 601 Allen St., free
23 PEOPLES HISTORY August 23, 1850 The Amistad, a slaveship is seized by slaves and landed at Montauk, Long Island. 	24 PNL Production Mon- Wed, Come Help, 472-5478	25 Mass at Seneca Army Depot, meet 6pm, Corpus Christi Ch parking lot If groups listed change regular mtg time or place, call SPC, 472-5478	26 PEOPLES HISTORY August 23, 1850 The Amistad, a slaveship is seized by slaves and landed at Montauk, Long Island. 	27 Death Penalty Vigil, noon, Columbus Circle Moving? Please save us 30. and let us know ahead of time	28 	29 PNL Mailing Party 10am-4pm, SPC, 924 Burnet Ave, Come Join the Fun, 472- 5478 Benefit Dance for Metropolitan Community Ch & CNY AIDS Task Force, 9pm, Grace Epis Ch, \$4-8, 471-6618

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