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The Green Party of NJ Bulletin - March 2009

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BEQUEATHAL FROM THE ESTATE OF GPNJ CHAIR EARL GRAY

Very special financial contributions were recently received from the estate of past GPNJ Chair Earl Gray: \$15,000 to the Green Party of New Jersey and \$10,000 to the Green Party of Monmouth County. A letter of thanks from members of GPNJ is being drafted and will be sent to Earl's daughters.

Earl was one of the earliest members of GPNJ. He encountered us when a friend brought him to our founding convention in 1997. He then became active and played a significant role at every one of the conventions afterward. He served our party in many capacities: Coordinator of the Monmouth County local, Chair of the Policy Committee, GPNJ Secretary, Vice Chair, and State Chair (2005). Additionally, he was a Green Party candidate for US Congress in 2000 and for NJ State Senate in 2003.

Earl was the kind of leader who made it his personal business to do the grunt work and pay attention to the details. For every state Green Party convention after the first one, Earl was among those who arrived early to be sure that the building got opened up on time and then attended to everything that needed to be set up ... the coffee pots, the tables and banners and literature.

Earl had a Ph.D. in History from Rutgers University. Before his retirement, he was a History Professor at Monmouth College and Trenton State College. He died on May 20, 2005, at the age of 76 after a long battle with pulmonary fibrosis, specifying in his will that special contributions be made from his estate to the Green Party.

He was a beloved Green during his life and now he will also be remembered as leaving a very special legacy through this bequeathal to the Green Party.

COUNTY LOCAL REPORTS

Camden County

The Green Party of Camden County (GPCC) is expecting to run a nearly full slate of candidates next fall: two for Assembly, two or three for Freeholder, and three Council candidates in Camden City.

On March 3 Coordinator Mark Heacock attended a meeting of the Feliz for Mayor of Camden City campaign (felizformayor.com). There is a possibility that Roberto Feliz will run under the Green Party banner; alternatively, he may run as an independent with GPCC's endorsement. But at this point the viability of his campaign is in question, so GPCC will be discussing the situation at their next monthly meeting, scheduled for April 2.

Essex County

On Wednesday, March 25, at 7:30pm, the Essex County Greens will present the latest in their series of social forums, "Seeking Peace in Afghanistan: What Now?" - a slide presentation and discussion by Dr. Janet Larson, who traveled to Afghanistan in 2006. The event will be co-sponsored by NJ Peace Action. Location: Bloomfield Civic Center, 84 Broad St., Bloomfield.

The U.S. war in Afghanistan is in its eighth year with no end in sight. Nearly 1,000 U.S. and "coalition" troops and at least 18,000 Afghans have been killed. Tens of thousands of innocent people have been injured. Afghanistan is in chaos and the Obama administration recently announced plans to send at least 17,000 more troops.

Dr. Larson is Director of the English Masters Degree Program at Rutgers University/Newark and teaches women's and war literature courses. She represents NJ Peace Action on the Afghanistan Working Group of the national coalition United for Peace and Justice. In addition to the slide presentation, Dr. Larson will address the Obama administration's war policy and relate it to the Afghan people and their history.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information contact Ted Glick, 973-338-5398, [indpol\[at\]igc.org](mailto:indpol[at]igc.org).

Monmouth County

Submitted by Rich Fuller, County Coordinator

The next meeting of the Green Party of Monmouth County will be held Tuesday, March 24 at 7:00pm. Location: Highlands Community Center, Recreation Department (22 Snug Harbor Avenue, Highlands, NJ 07732; 732-872-1959).

Directions from Keyport or Middletown: Head down Route 36 toward Sandy Hook. Take the Linden Ave. jughandle and proceed down the hill. Stop at the point that Waterwitch Ave. cuts in. Then proceed down hill to stop sign at Bay Ave. intersection. Turn left and proceed for a block or two and turn right onto Snug Harbor Ave. Community Center is last building on the left.

Directions from Sandy Hook: Proceed up Route 36 toward Keyport and make a right turn at Waterwitch Ave. Proceed to Stop sign at Bay Ave. and follow directions above from there.

The Monmouth local and GPNJ will be helping Clean Ocean Action's campaign to recycle plastic bottle caps (the majority of which currently do not get recycled, ending up in landfills and on beaches, or washing into our rivers and oceans; birds and marine life mistake caps for food with tragic results). GPNJ members are encouraged to collect and save the hard type of bottle caps from common household items such as soda and water bottles, shampoo, lotion containers and detergent. Bring the caps to our next convention (tentatively slated to be held in late May) and Rich Fuller will gather them there for delivery to Clean Ocean Action.

Congrats to our Cumberland County Coordinator, Jason Grover, whose wife, Shanna, gave birth to twins - Marley Addison Grover and Rian Harlow Grover - on Feb. 27.

Art Rosen, a longtime Bergen County social activist and one of the first officers of the Green Party of New Jersey, died on March 3 after a short illness. He was a valued member of the Bergen Greens.

Those of us who knew Art will feel his absence acutely. GPNJ condolences go out to his wife, Harriet, and to all of his family.

SIX YEARS TOO MANY!

Statewide demonstration in New Brunswick - Thurs. March 19, 5:30pm

Rebuild & Renew America Now!

- . Cut the Military Budget Annually by 25% - Make it Transparent
- . End the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan
- . Create Jobs and Strengthen our Infrastructure

- . Guarantee Quality Affordable Health Care for Everyone
- . High Quality Education from Early Childhood through College
- . Regulate Wall Street and Support Main Street
- . Clean Energy and Independence From Oil
- . Reduce Poverty and Support the Social Safety Net

March and vigil
 Intersection of George St. & Albany St., New Brunswick

Co-sponsoring Organizations: Alliance for Disabled in Action . Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees . Central Jersey Coalition Against Endless War . Central New Jersey for Change . Coalition for Peace Action . CWA Local 1081 . DFA-NJ . Green Party of Monmouth County . Industrial Union Council . Lutheran office of Governmental Ministries Monmouth Democracy for America . New Jersey Citizen Action . New Jersey Labor Against the War . New Brunswick Chapter of the NAACP . New Jersey Peace Action . Next Step . Ocean County Democracy for America . Ocean Progressive Democrats of America . PDA/DFA Progressive Democracy South Jersey . People's Organization for Progress . Rutgers AAUP-AFT . Rutgers Against the War . Somerset Unitarian Universalist Social Action Committee . Somerset Voices for Peace and Justice . Tent State . Union County Peace Council

For more information contact Atif Malik:
 atif[at]njcitizenaction.org or 732-246-4772

The Montclair Peace Vigil will mark the 6th anniversary of the war in Iraq with a Thursday vigil - March 19th, 4:30-6:00pm (Thursday instead of Friday this week). Everyone is welcome to join us. The vigil takes place at the intersection of Bloomfield Avenue, So. Fullerton Avenue and Church Street in Montclair. For more information contact 973-259-1126.

The Weehawken Concerned Citizens will mark the sorry event of the sixth year since the U.S. invaded Iraq with a special vigil at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument on Boulevard East in Weehawken. The vigil will run from 5:00 to 6:00pm.

The Morristown Peace Vigil will hold a special vigil on Friday, March 20th from 6:00 until 7:00pm on the Morristown Green. The vigil will call for ALL the troops to be brought home from Iraq.

Join Bergen County military families, veterans, and local residents March 18-22 to mark the 6th anniversary of the Iraq War and demand:

- . All troops out of Iraq immediately!
- . Bring the National Guard Home immediately to take care of the people of NJ! Their deployment is illegal.
- . Take care of the troops when they get here!
- . Not one more dollar for the Iraq war! Use the money here for people's needs - for housing, health care, jobs, and education.

Please come to the following important events in Bergen County to mark the 6th anniversary of the war. Bring food and baby supplies for the Family Assistance Center for the National Guard families whose loved ones are currently deployed in Iraq.

- Thursday, March 19: Vigil 5:00-6:00pm. Lemoine Avenue and Bruce Reynolds Boulevard, Fort Lee.
- Friday, March 20: Film screening and discussion. 7:00pm. See Phil Donahue's movie, Body of War, about the impact of the war on troops and families and the role of members of Congress. Phil Donahue will appear in person to speak about his film. Puffin Cultural Center, 20 Puffin Way (off Teaneck Road near Ft. Lee Road), Teaneck.
- Saturday, March 21: 12:00 noon. Demonstration at the monument in Englewood (Palisade Ave. and Tenafly Ave.)
- Sunday, March 22: Vigil 4:30-5:00pm. Broad Avenue and Ft. Lee Road in Leonia.

Sponsoring organizations:

Military Families Speak Out, Bergen County (www.mfsobergencounty.org)

Veterans for Peace, Chapter 21 NJ

Bergen Peace and Justice Coalition (www.bergenjustice.net)

Teaneck Peace and Justice Coalition

Leonia Vigil Group

Fort Lee Vigil Group

NJ Peace Action

Courage of Conscience Speaking Tour

March 19th at 7:30pm

Sparta United Methodist Church

71 Sparta Avenue, Sparta, NJ 07871

Former Soldier Yaniv Reshef

Former Fighter Bassam Aramin

Tangible Ways to Peace in Israel and Palestine

Israeli Yaniv Rashef, whose home is in range of Gaza missiles, was a foot soldier in a sabotage unit of the Israeli Army - and chose to fight no more. Palestinian Bassam Aramin served seven years in jail for planning an attack against Israeli soldiers - and then chose no more violence. Just two years ago, Bassam lost his daughter to an Israeli soldier's rubber-coated bullet. They are members of Combatants for Peace, now over 600 former Israeli soldiers and former Palestinian fighters, working together without revenge to build justice, peace - and playgrounds.

Co-sponsors: Church and Society Committee of SUMC, Northwest New Jersey Peace Fellowship (a chapter of NJ Peace Action), Sept. 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, The Peace Abbey, and the Rebuilding Alliance.

March on the Pentagon

www.pephost.org/site/PageServer?pagename=M21_homepage

(GPNJ has endorsed this action planned for March 21)

People from all walks of life and from all cities across the United States will take part in a March on the Pentagon on March 21. We will demand: "End Colonial Occupation in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and Everywhere" and "Fund Peoples' Needs, Not Militarism and Bank Bailouts." We will insist on an end to the war threats and economic sanctions against Iran. We will say No to the illegal U.S. program of detention and torture.

Simultaneous demonstrations are taking place in San Francisco and Los Angeles. More than 1,500 organizations and individuals have now endorsed these actions. Members of the national coalition and supporters of the March on the Pentagon include: Northwest Greens, Philadelphia; Frederick (MD) Green Party; Green Party of Allegheny County, PA; Green Party of New Jersey; Portland Metro Chapter of the Pacific Green Party of Oregon; Green Change; South Bay Greens; ANSWER Coalition; Muslim American Society for Freedom; National Council of Arab Americans; Veterans For Peace - National; Iraq Veterans Against the War; Vietnam Veterans Against the War; United States Labor Against the War; Free Palestine Alliance; San Francisco Labor Council (AFL-CIO); The World Can't Wait; Code Pink; Cindy Sheehan; Ron Kovic, Vietnam Veteran; Colonel Ann Wright, US Army Reserves (Retired); Lynne Stewart; many others

Saturday, April 4, Noon

National March on Wall Street

Sponsored by United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ)

www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=4027

BEYOND WAR: A NEW ECONOMY IS POSSIBLE!

It is time to end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is time to address the economic crisis by cutting military spending. Carry on Martin Luther King's vision to replace war, racism and poverty with peace, equality and economic justice (April 4 will be the 41st anniversary of the assassination of Dr. King).

Assembly time: 11:00am. Location: Leonard, Franklin and White Streets, between Broadway and Lafayette St. (this is just south of Canal Street and close to several subway stops)

March stepoff time: 12:00 noon

March route: South on Broadway to Stone St., East on Stone to Broad St., North on Broad to Wall St. This route is a little less than 1.5 miles and takes us through the heart of the financial district, ending right in front of the NY Stock Exchange.

NEW JERSEY LABOR AGAINST WAR RAMPING UP EFFORTS

New Jersey Labor Against War (NJLAW) held a meeting at the Rutgers Labor Education Center in New Brunswick on Feb. 20. Present were about a dozen people, including members and/or staffers from the CWA, BMW, AFT, HPAE, AAUP and the USWA, representing all areas of the state.

NJLAW has existed for some years, largely through the efforts of Carol Gay of the CWA, Kevin Hussey of the BMW, and (our old friend) Gabe Gabrielsky. It is an affiliate of US Labor Against War, which is a coalition of national, regional, statewide and local labor organizations as well as individual labor officials, staffers, rank and file activists and sympathizers who oppose U.S. foreign adventure wars.

NJLAW has had a presence at large demonstrations and at the annual New Jersey Industrial Union Council conference. They will be spearheading the March 19 "Rebuild and Renew America Now!" demonstration in New Brunswick, and they will be joining United for Peace and Justice for the March on Wall Street on April 4 to demand a new economy that serves the people's needs, not Wall Street's.

NJLAW is now providing an Announce List as a vehicle to broadcast messages and important notices to members and supporters. To join the list, go to www.yahogroups.com, log in, then search for NJLAW_announce. If you encounter any problems adding yourself to the list, contact [gabegabrielsky\[at\]yahoo.com](mailto:gabegabrielsky@yahoo.com) or [CarolGay747\[at\]aol.com](mailto:CarolGay747@aol.com) (or call Carol at 732-785-1503).

KILL THE RE-LICENSING OF THE OYSTER CREEK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT BEFORE IT KILLS US!

Rally sponsored By Jersey Shore Nuclear Watch and friends

When: Saturday, March 28 (anniversary of the Three Mile Island incident) - 12:00 Noon ... rain or shine

Where: Huddy Park, Main Street and Water Street, Toms River

Come hear experts speak about why it is imperative to close this plant. 21 towns have already signed resolutions to: Close Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant Now!

This plant is at the end of its lifetime with age-related degradation and corrosion. Tons of deadly radioactive waste continue accumulating in casks on Route 9, while the National Guard has been removed from the plant, ignoring the possibility of terrorism. Evacuation is unworkable - in the event of an accident, people would be trapped in traffic jams or in their homes, schools or businesses and be subject to lethal radioactive fallout. Cancer would be caused as far as 500 miles away. Property in a wide radius would become uninhabitable according to a 1990 Sandia National Laboratories report.

Millions of fish are killed by this plant. It's a menace to the fish industry. The Mark 1 boiling water reactor design is NO LONGER LEGAL in this country. Rally against this costly and dangerous plant!

For information or to volunteer, contact Jersey Shore Nuclear Watch, P.O. Box 3085, Toms River, NJ 08756-3085; [gbur1\[at\]comcast.net](mailto:gbur1[at]comcast.net); 732-240-5107 or 732-818-0402.

Citizens turn out to Stop Insanity Island!

by Cindy Zipf of Clean Ocean Action

www.cleanoceanaction.org

Congratulations to all for a remarkable turnout at the Insanity Island public hearings on January 27 and 29 in Eatontown, NJ, and Long Beach, NY (respectively), held by the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Maritime Administration.

Well over 500 friends of the ocean attended the hearing in New Jersey and over 300 gathered in New York to blast the proposal to build three industrial port facilities for liquefied natural gas (LNG) just off the south shore of Long Island and the New Jersey shore. Facility 1) Atlantic Sea Island Group: ironically called, "Safe Harbor Energy," this insane proposal by a private investor firm seeks to build a massive manmade island for an LNG port by dumping millions upon millions of tons of unknown material in the open ocean. 2) ExxonMobil: one of the most notorious oil polluters is out to use our ocean as a lab rat with "BlueOcean Energy," a plan to build an experimental massive floating LNG terminal. A similar project was rejected by NY and CT. California Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed this type of project due to threats to air quality and marine life. 3) "Liberty Natural Gas" Project: Excalibur Energy (a new conglomerate of Canadian Superior Energy and Global LNG) proposes an LNG importation facility 15 miles off Asbury Park, NJ. The source of the LNG is drilling and extracting off Trinidad and Tobago.

Thus, supporting this facility would promote offshore drilling in a country that already has environmental problems with oil pollution on beaches.

At the Jan. 27 and 29 hearings, activists proved, once again, that grassroots organizing and the power of the people rule! Chairs were packed at both venues, so students, parents, fishermen, surfers, divers, concerned citizens, and business leaders sat on the floor or stood along the walls. In New York, the room capacity was reached and people waited 45 minutes outside to get in the doors.

At Eatontown, nearly 100 folks testified [including our Monmouth County Green Party Coordinator, Rich Fuller]. All but two flat-out opposed the project and LNG. The only outrage was the flagrant abuse of our first amendment rights: The U.S. government prohibited Clean Ocean Action's professional videographer from entering the hearing to document the event and provide visible witness to the outpouring of support for the ocean. Nor were we allowed to bring paper signs into the hearing, including several charts that we wanted to include in our testimony. All that was left were our cheers for speakers - and even those were admonished.

Only a few elected leaders attended or sent representatives. In New Jersey, a statement read by a staff member of US Representative Frank Pallone (D-6) strongly opposed the island and LNG and requested an extension of the comment period. Monmouth County Freeholder John D'Amico and Town Council members Dina Long of Sea Bright and D'Arcy Green of Bay Head spoke out opposed. Also attending in support of our position were Monmouth County Freeholder Amy Mallet and a staff member from US Representative Rush Holt's (D-12) office. In New York, Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg (D-20), Nassau County Legislators Dave Denenberg (D-Merrick) and Jeff Toback (D-Oceanside) attended and spoke at the hearing, which was also attended by council members of Long Beach. This was a meager showing, at best, so be sure to contact your elected officials.

Email Governor Corzine and tell him: Keep Us Free from LNG!

www.state.nj.us/governor/govmail.html

Sign the petition against Insanity Island and LNG at:
www.thepetitionsite.com/petition/689151878.

Read the full story, with pictures of GPNJ participants at:
www.cleanoceanaction.org/index.php?id=685

NJ SENATE APPROVES MEDICAL MARIJUANA BILL

Coalition for Medical Marijuana--New Jersey

For immediate release: February 24, 2009

On February 23, by a vote of 22-16, the New Jersey State Senate approved bill S119, the New Jersey Compassionate Use Medical Marijuana Act"
(www.njleg.state.nj.us/bills/BillView.asp?BillNumber=S119)

Many supporters of the bill attended the voting session, led by the Coalition for Medical Marijuana--New Jersey (CMMNJ). The senate vote was a significant step in the legislative process to protect patients who use marijuana on the recommendation of a physician.

The bill will next go to the New Jersey Assembly for votes in the health committee and entire assembly. Governor Jon Corzine has said on several occasions that he supports medical marijuana and that he will sign the bill when it gets to his desk. New Jersey would become the 14th state in the nation to legalize medical marijuana if it passes this legislation into law.

S119 will remove the state penalties for the possession, use and cultivation of a small amount of marijuana when a licensed physician recommends it for a debilitating medical condition. Patients will be issued ID cards in a program run by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). Patients will be permitted to grow up to six plants and possess one ounce of marijuana, but they will not be permitted to use their therapeutic marijuana in public or while operating motor vehicles. Patients may designate a caregiver or treatment center to grow the plants for them, but the caregiver/center must also register with DHSS.

CMMNJ Executive Director, Ken Wolski, RN said, "The bill is very conservative. No medical marijuana state has a smaller plant limit or possession amount. Still, it will help a tremendous number of patients here. We applaud the senators who supported this bill."

The American Nurses Association, the American College of Physicians, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, the American Public Health Association, the American Academy of HIV Medicine and many other professional healthcare organizations have endorsed medical marijuana. CMMNJ, a 501(c)(3) public charity, provides education about the benefits of safe and legal access to medical marijuana. For more info, contact: Ken Wolski, RN, MPA, Executive Director; Coalition for Medical Marijuana--New Jersey, Inc., 844 Spruce Street, Trenton, NJ 08648; 609.394.2137; www.cmmnj.org

[Ken Wolski is a member of the Mercer County Greens]

CHANGE-A-LUJAH!

For Immediate Release: March 1, 2009

"Reverend Billy" Talen Running For Mayor of New York
As Green Party Candidate

Calls For "The Revolt Of The 500 Fabulous Neighborhoods"

NEW YORK - With resounding shouts of "we ARE New York!" and "neighborhoods are hip!", performance activist Reverend Billy Talen launched his New York City mayoral campaign at a noon Union Square press conference.

Speaking outdoors in spite of the threatening winter storm, the Green Party candidate known for his work with the Church of Life After Shopping called for an "affordable and livable" New York that relies on its neighborhoods and independent businesses for sustainable and equitable prosperity.

"Mayor Bloomberg believes our city is a corporation and our Five Hundred Neighborhoods just aren't profitable enough," preached Talen, to responses of "Neighborhood-a-lujah!" from the crowd. "He gives the legal and political edge to real estate speculators. Bloomy is a mayor of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich."

Campaign spokesperson Gloria Mattera, who ran as the Green Party candidate for Brooklyn Borough President in 2005, opened the press conference by outlining why New York City needs a candidate with Talen's record of activism, and how that record expresses the Green values of grassroots democracy, nonviolence, social and economic justice, and ecological wisdom.

The press conference was bookended by the songs "Justice Ghost" and "1st Amendment Song," performed by singers from the Church of Life After Shopping Gospel Choir.

Background information

Since 1996 Reverend Billy Talen has preached for the renewal of our planet, communities, and personal experiences in opposition to the homogenizing and destructive forces of Consumerism. As founder and pastor of the Church of Life After Shopping, Reverend Billy has performed this message in contested public space, from the stage, and in international media including CNN American Morning, the New York Times, Fox News, Good Morning America, the CBS Evening News, and the Wall Street Journal.

More information at:

www.voterevbilly.org

www.revbilly.com

www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=54188482187&ref=nf

www.twitter.com/RevBillyTalen

www.youtube.com/user/reverendbillytalen

www.myspace.com/reverendbillytalen

<http://digg.com/users/revbillytalen>

FROM CYNTHIA MCKINNEY

March 2, 2009

I have read and re-read President Obama's Joint Congressional Address. All of the "acceptable punditry" have spoken and given it glowing reviews. But for those of us who refuse to swallow the pill that puts us into the Matrix, a good dose of reality is strongly called for.

Reality is not what we're getting, not even from one of the national columnists whom I've met, Maureen Dowd. On Feb. 28 she wrote a column: "Spock at the Bridge." Now, being the Trekkie that I am, that headline grabbed my attention. I nearly gagged, however, when I got to the part where Dowd depicts President Obama phoning President Bush to proclaim: "I'm ending your stupid war." And then she writes: Mission Relinquished.

Why write things like this now that it is clear that the Obama administration is continuing the Bush policies for missile strikes inside Pakistan; rendition for torture; illegal wiretaps; status of prisoners at the U.S. base in Bagram, Afghanistan; and workplace immigration raids? President Obama is also pursuing Bush policies on Iran and Israel.

Dowd concludes her "Spock" piece by imbuing the President with "a Vulcan-like logic and detachment." But I think the detachment of the "acceptable" political punditry from the real world is what is totally lamentable. In the process, they render themselves irrelevant.

I found 19 questionable Obama policies or statements in his Joint Congressional speech, which was delivered three days before his announcement that upon the end of the U.S. combat mission in Iraq, up to 50,000 U.S. troops could remain there through 2011. And while various mint operations are peddling Obama "Change" coins for purchase, complete with a certificate of authenticity, I note that the President continues the giveaway of our hard-earned coins to an economic team intent on keeping mismanagement structures in place, serving economic ends that do not constitute the common good. I would refer readers to the many statements that I issued during the final days of our Power to the People Green Party presidential campaign about re-creating an economic system truly and finally owned by the people, operating in our interest.

Obama has threatened U.S. withdrawal from the April 2009 Geneva United Nations World Conference Against Racism, dubbed Durban II. This threat is based on the same palaver we heard in 2001 from the same forces inside our country ... basically that a discussion of Zionism, in the context of such a conference, would be anti-Semitic. Therefore all the world's dispossessed and marginalized people must continue to suffer and sacrifice while muting their grievances so that no discussion of Israel would take place on the world stage in this context.

Well, in 2001, upon hearing this line of reasoning, I went to then-Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Chairwoman, Eddie Bernice Johnson, and asked if I could be appointed as the CBC Task Force Chair on Durban. The non-participation argument was also a handy "peg on the track" with the potential of derailing many other conversations, including a real discussion about the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the issue of reparations. Respectful of the excellent preparatory work that had been done, I wanted to avoid that outcome. Congresswoman Johnson made the appointment and I led a delegation of five members of Congress to Durban.

The current Chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Barbara Lee, was a member of my delegation to Durban. From my position on the International Relations Committee, we successfully argued for U.S. participation in that Conference at a hearing designed to quash our effort. We not only

met with then-United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, we also presented her with the untold story of COINTELPRO and the remaining unsolved deaths of its Black Panther Party member victims, commissioned by me and written by Kathleen Cleaver and Paul Wolf.

Our CBC Chairwoman made a beautiful statement of why it was imperative that the United States join with our Native American and Latino brothers and sisters and with oppressed peoples all over the planet to not only make our statement of solidarity, but also to institute policies that recognized their needs. It is incorrect to say that the United States was not present at Durban I. We were there, and only when the duties of Congress pressed us to return to Washington did the Bush Administration make a big deal about anti-Semitism ... and then staged its phony walkout. The United States delegation of Congressional Black Caucus members was there to support the phenomenal work of U.S. activists and the African and Caribbean delegations, in particular.

Given Israel's recent actions in Gaza that have brought upon it the world's opprobrium, I can imagine that this is the last point in time that Israel might want to revisit Durban. Israel has said that it will not attend the Conference in Geneva. Early last year a government official announced Canada's decision to not attend Durban II after deeming the conference to be anti-Israel. Shortly afterwards, France followed suit with French President Nicolas Sarkozy stating that the "excesses of 2001" transformed the Conference "into an intolerable platform against the State of Israel." I would note also that France must be particularly loath to discuss racism now with what is happening in Guadeloupe and Martinique as I write this piece; and remembering that Paris, itself, was literally on fire just a few years ago.

We shouldn't be surprised that the racism stress test is revealing cracks and fissures in human relations. But the United States and President Obama should not shield them or this country from these stresses. Durban II gives us the opportunity to get the issues out in the open and to deal with them. I implore the members of the Congressional Black Caucus to spearhead the participation of the United States in the United Nation's World Conference Against Racism.

Cynthia attended the Transpartisan Alliance convention (American Citizens' Summit) in Denver in mid-February and was selected as a member of an interim Sunshine Cabinet.

On Feb. 22 she called in to address a special event in Washington, DC co-sponsored by the DC Statehood Green Party (www.dcstatehoodgreen.org). "The Struggle for Citizenship - Globally" was the theme of the opening session of the 2009 Children's Gallery of Black History. A highlight of the event was the presentation of the "Cynthia McKinney Organizing for Human Needs Award" to Devin Walker of the People Before Profit Community Healthcare Project
<http://home.comcast.net/~peoplebeforeprofit/>

On March 14 Cynthia was the keynote speaker at the International Women's Day Banquet of the Palestinian American Women's Association of Southern California (www.pawasca.org).

ROSA CLEMENTE SPEAKING TOUR

Green Party of the United States Media Release 1/23/09

Rosa Clemente, 2008 Green candidate for Vice President, announces 'Path of Most Resistance' speaking tour

WASHINGTON, DC - Rosa Clemente, the Green Party's 2008 candidate for Vice President, has announced a national speaking tour with a focus on Hip-Hop conferences, symposiums, town hall meetings, and other public events, as well as Black History Month, Women's History Month, and Latino Heritage Month.

"The tour will be a chance to continue speaking about the important themes we raised in the McKinney-Clemente campaign," said Ms. Clemente. "While many in this country, particularly the Hip-Hop generation, have high hopes for the Obama Administration, now is not the time to be silent. The first few months are critical - we must make our voices heard, if we want to see a real change in the direction of the United States."

Rosa Alicia Clemente is a community organizer, radio journalist (WBAI 99.5 FM in New York City), Hip-Hop activist, and the first Latina in US history to run for Vice President. She was recently commissioned by the Green Institute (www.greeninstitute.net) to write four articles describing her experiences on the 2008 campaign trail. Her first piece, "Why President Elect Barack Obama is not the first Hip-Hop President," has already been posted on the site (www.greeninstitute.net/clemente_obama). She has been featured on Pacifica, BET, Air America, CNN, MSNBC, Al-jazeera, and other networks.

In 1995, Ms. Clemente developed Know Thy Self Productions, a people of color speakers' bureau. Seeing a need for young people of color to be heard and taken seriously, she began presenting workshops and lectures at universities, high schools, community centers, and prisons. She has presented at over 400 colleges, conferences, town halls, rallies, and international conferences.

In 2001, Ms. Clemente was a youth representative at the United Nations World Conference against Xenophobia, Racism and Related Intolerance in South Africa. In 2003 she co-founded and coordinated the first ever National Hip-Hop Political Convention (NHHPC), which drew over 3000 activists who created and implemented a national political agenda for the Hip-Hop generation. After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita ravaged the Gulf Coast, Rosa traveled as an independent journalist to the devastated areas; her on-the-ground reports were distributed all over the world.

PRESERVATION OF PETTY'S ISLAND

Delaware Riverkeeper press statement: January 16, 2009

The Save Petty's Island Coalition enthusiastically supports the news that the Natural Lands Trust plans to accept Citgo's donation of Petty's Island. Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, applauded the vote: "Petty's Island is a 400 acre natural jewel in the heart of the Delaware River Estuary. The Natural Land Trust vote is an important first step in protecting and restoring the Island so it can contribute to a healthier Delaware River, as well as support fish, birds and wildlife, all of which enrich our lives, communities and the economy. By preserving Petty's Island as natural open space the Governor and Pennsauken residents are creating a legacy of healthy rivers and lands that all generations can enjoy."

"The clean-up and restoration of the island will be conducted more effectively now thanks to the Global Consent Order between DEP and CITGO," said Fred Stine, Citizen Action Director with the Delaware Riverkeeper Network. The effective clean-up of the contamination of the island has been a common concern of both the Coalition members and the residents of Pennsauken. "Because the consent order will result in greater oversight by DEP, it will be a win-win for the natural resources and the community" said Stine. Transfer of ownership would not take place until the state was satisfied with the clean-up.

"CITGO's clean-up, restoration and donation of Petty's Island has set the right example and is clearly a benefit for the residents of Pennsauken and the entire Greater Philadelphia community," said Sharon Finlayson. "At a time when we are running out of funding for open space, Petty's Island will make a spectacular nature preserve for South Jersey," said Jeff Tittel, Director NJ Sierra Club. "This victory shows that perseverance and persistence pays off." Roy Jones of the South Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance, said: "Kids will be able to look over at a beautiful tree covered island with bald eagles soaring overhead instead of million dollar houses."

COMMUNITY GREEN MEETUP SERIES STARTING APRIL 1

Deadline for Registration: March 27

Join Community Green, in partnership with Schiff Natural Lands Trust, as they host "Healthy Children - Healthy Planet" provided by Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI). This seven-session course addresses: Understanding how the pervasive effects of advertising, media, and our consumer culture can influence a child's view of the world; Discovering ways to create meaningful family times and healthful environments for children; Exploring ways to develop a child's connection to nature, and to foster creativity.

7 sessions (all start at 7:00pm) include: April 1st-Cultural Pressures; April 15th-Family Rituals and Celebrations; April 29th-Advertising; May 6th-Food and Health; May 20th-Time and Creativity; June 3rd-Technology and the Media; June 17th-Exploring Nature.

The location is yet to be determined, but the group is based in the Morris-Somerset counties area. To register and order the discussion guide booklets (\$21), call 201-602-4839 or email [ariane\[at\]communitygreen.org](mailto:ariane[at]communitygreen.org). Deadline for Registration: March 27. For more information contact: Lydia Stiles, Program Coordinator, 973-543-6004.

NWEI's hallmark courses provide an enjoyable, supportive setting in which to examine personal values and habits, engage in stimulating conversation, create meaningful community, and consider ways to take action towards creating a more sustainable future. There is no outside presenter or teacher of these discussion courses; the role of facilitator rotates among participants with each meeting. These programs emphasize individual responsibility, the importance of a supportive community, and the dual need to walk lightly on and to take action on behalf of the Earth. Learn more here: www.meetup.com/nj-green/calendar/9917821/

SILENCING OF THE PALESTINE QUESTION IN US UNIVERSITIES

Academic and cultural boycott of Israel

Green candidate Joel Kovel terminated by Bard College

At the Sept. 10 forum sponsored by the Bergen County Green Party ("The Israeli-Palestine Conflict: What's Next?") Issa Mikel spoke in favor of a "BDS" movement (Boycott/Divestment/Sanctions) to make Israel change course. He said that the combination of these three strategic initiatives, applied over time, worked to transform the situation in South Africa during the 1980s and can work again now toward achieving resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

A "US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel" has now been launched. Reference: <http://usacbi.wordpress.com/>

Mission Statement:

Responding to the call of Palestinian civil society to join the Boycott, Divestment and Sanction movement against Israel, we are a U.S. campaign focused specifically on a boycott of Israeli academic and cultural institutions, as delineated by PACBI (Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel - see their statement at: www.pacbi.org).

PACBI and the entire movement for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (representing the overwhelming majority among Palestinian civil society parties, unions, networks and organizations) emphasize fundamental Palestinian rights, sanctioned by international law and universal human rights principles that ought to be respected by Israel to end the boycott.

We believe it is time to take a public, principled stance in support of equality, self-determination, human rights (including the right to education), and true democracy, especially in light of the censorship and silencing of the Palestine question in U.S. universities, as well as U.S. society at large. There can be no academic freedom in Israel/Palestine unless all academics are free and all students are free to pursue their academic desires.

This call for an academic and cultural boycott parallels the call in the non-academic world for divestment, boycott and sanctions by trade unions, churches, and other civil society organizations in countries such as the United States, Canada, Italy, Ireland, Norway, the United Kingdom, Brazil, South Africa, and New Zealand.

If you wish to endorse this call for an academic and cultural boycott, email: [uscom4acbi\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:uscom4acbi[at]gmail.com). If you are willing to indicate your support publicly, send your name and institutional/organizational affiliation (for identification purposes only).

STATEMENT OF JOEL KOVEL REGARDING HIS
TERMINATION BY BARD COLLEGE (excerpts)

(Joel Kovel was the US Senate candidate for the Green Party of New York State in 1998)

In January, 1988, I was appointed to the Alger Hiss Chair of Social Studies at Bard College. As this was a Presidential appointment outside the tenure system, I have served under a series of contracts. On

February 7, 2009, I received a letter from Michele Dominy, Dean of the College, informing me that my contract would not be renewed this July 1. She wrote that this decision was made by President Botstein, Executive Vice-President Papadimitriou and herself, in consultation with members of the Faculty Senate.

This document argues that this termination of service is prejudicial and motivated neither by intellectual nor pedagogic considerations, but by political values, principally stemming from differences between myself and the Bard administration on the issue of Zionism. This is only too reminiscent of innumerable instances in this country in which critics of Israel have been made to pay, often with their careers, for speaking out. In this instance the process culminated in a deeply flawed evaluation process which was used to justify my termination from the faculty.

In October, 2002, my article, "Zionism's Bad Conscience," appeared in Tikkun. Three or four weeks later, I was called into President Leon Botstein's office, to be told my Hiss Chair was being taken away. Botstein said that he had nothing to do with the decision, then gratuitously added that it had not been made because of what I had just published about Zionism, and hastened to tell me that his views were diametrically opposed to mine.

In January, 2003, I published a second article in Tikkun, "'Left-Anti-Semitism' and the Special Status of Israel," which argued for a one-state solution to the dilemmas posed by Zionism. A few weeks later, I received a phone call at home from Dean Dominy, who suggested, on behalf of Executive Vice-President Dimitri Papadimitriou, that perhaps it was time for me to retire from Bard. I declined. The result of this was an evaluation of my work and the inception, in 2004, of a half-time contract.

My book, *Overcoming Zionism*, was published in 2007. It sharply criticized, among others, Martin Peretz for a scurrilous op-ed piece against Rachel Corrie in the Los Angeles Times. Peretz is an official in AIPAC's foreign policy think-tank, and at the time was a Bard Trustee. In August, *Overcoming Zionism* was attacked by a watchdog Zionist group, StandWithUs/Michigan, which succeeded in pressuring the book's U.S. distributor, the University of Michigan Press, to remove it from circulation! An extraordinary outpouring of support succeeded in reversing this frank episode of book-burning. I was disturbed, however, by the fact that, with the exception of two non-tenure track faculty, there was no support from Bard in response to this egregious violation of the speech rights of a professor. When I asked President Botstein in an email why this was so, he replied that he felt I was doing quite well at taking care of myself. This was irrelevant to the obligation of a college to protect its faculty from violation of their rights of free expression - all the more so, a college such as Bard with a carefully honed reputation as a bastion of academic freedom, and which defines such freedom in its Faculty Handbook as a "right ... to search for truth and understanding without interference and to disseminate findings without intimidation."

I still strove to make my future at Bard the subject of reasonable negotiation. However, my efforts in this direction were rudely denied by Dean Dominy's curt and dismissive letter of Feb. 7 (at the urging, according to her, of Vice-President Papadimitriou), which plainly asserted that there was nothing to talk over and that I was being handed a fait accompli. In view of this I considered myself left with no other option than the release of this document.

On the responsibility of intellectuals

Bard has effectively crafted for itself an image as a bastion of progressive thought. Its efforts were crowned with being anointed in 2005 by the Princeton Review as the second-most progressive college in the United States, the journal adding that Bard "puts the 'liberal' in 'liberal arts.'" But "liberal" thought evidently has its limits; and my work against Zionism has encountered these.

A fundamental principle of mine is that the educator must criticize the injustices of the world, whether or not this involves him or her in conflict with the powers that be. The systematic failure of the academy to do so plays no small role in the perpetuation of injustice and state violence. In no sphere of political action does this principle apply more vigorously than with the question of Zionism; and in no country is this issue more strategically important than in the United States, given the fact that United States support is necessary for Israel's behavior. The worse this behavior, the more strenuous must be the suppression of criticism. I take the view, then, that Israeli human rights abuses are deeply ingrained in a culture of impunity granted chiefly, though not exclusively, in the United States - which culture arises from suppression of debate and open inquiry within those institutions, such as colleges, whose social role it is to enlighten the public.

For further information:

www.codz.org

Joel Kovel, "Overcoming Impunity," The Link, Jan-March 2009 www.ameu.org

To write the Bard administration:

President Leon Botstein:

[president\[at\]bard.edu](mailto:president@bard.edu)

Executive Vice-President Dimitri Papadimitriou

[dpapadimitriou\[at\]bard.edu](mailto:dpapadimitriou@bard.edu)

ISRAELIS ARE BEGINNING TO SEE THE POWER OF BDS

Alternative Information Center (AIC) 3/1/09

In recent years, there has been a gradual growth in the BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) movement to put economic pressure on Israel until it recognizes the rights of the occupied Palestinian people and ends the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip has given this movement a powerful reason to redouble its efforts. Dozens of BDS campaigns have gained momentum and publicity; dozens of new ones were launched during or immediately after Israel's attack on the Gaza Strip.

These campaigns range from calls to boycott goods from the illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, to calls to stop all economic contacts with Israel altogether. They include protests at sporting events, two countries cutting diplomatic ties with Israel (Bolivia and Venezuela), and many demonstrations around the world, attended by hundreds of thousands of protestors.

Read the full article:

www.alternativenews.org/content/view/1605/381/

NEWS ABOUT INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING

A county judge in Minnesota has sided with the city of Minneapolis and defendant intervenor FairVote Minnesota in a challenge against Minneapolis implementing instant runoff voting and choice voting for its elections this November. The ruling is a sweeping victory for advocates of IRV and proportional voting in Minneapolis. With a 65% mandate from voters in a 2006 measure, the city will move forward on implementing these systems for November 2009. The ruling comes in the midst of major interest in instant runoff voting in Minnesota in the wake of the controversial U.S. Senate recount. The Washington Post cited it in an editorial on Jan. 13, while several leading Minnesotans have embraced IRV for statewide elections.

North Carolina has decided to conduct a municipal-level instant runoff voting pilot program.

On March 9 the City Council in Aspen, CO finalized its procedures to hold instant runoff voting elections in May. (see: www.fairvote.org)

Voters in Burlington, VT are basking in the wake of an excellent campaign for mayor with instant runoff voting, in which 99.96% of voters cast valid ballots in a hotly contested, but positive, issue-based campaign among five candidates:

Burlington Progressives Keep Mayoralty in Exciting 5-Candidate IRV Race (report in Ballot Access News 3/5/09)

On March 3, Burlington, Vermont held a mayoral election. The candidates were Progressive Bob Kiss (the incumbent), Republican Kurt Wright, Democratic Andy Montroll, independent Dan Smith, and Green Party nominee James Simpson. Kiss was re-elected. The election had been considered impossible to predict. The independent candidate, Dan Smith, had raised more money than any other candidate. The Democratic candidate, Andy Montroll, was an incumbent member of the city council and had been endorsed by Howard Dean and the city's daily newspaper. The Republican nominee, Kurt Wright, was the incumbent president of the city council.

Burlington uses Instant Runoff Voting. Wright led in the first count but no one had a majority of first place votes. In the second count the Republican also kept the lead. But after the votes cast for the Democratic nominee had been reassigned in a further count, Kiss won by 4,313 to 4,061 to the Republican nominee. Observers felt the election had been an excellent example to show that IRV does what it is supposed to do. In particular, the candidates were very courteous and respectful to each other during the campaign, since each candidate hoped to win second-choice or third-choice votes from various rivals. Also the city was spared the expense of a run-off election several weeks after the original March 3 event.

MR. CARROLL GOES TO LITTLE ROCK

America's highest ranking Green

Arkansas Times 1/29/09

With his silver hair, sunglasses, and crisp black suit, Richard Carroll certainly looks the part of a state legislator. A resident of the Baring Cross neighborhood near Fort Roots in North Little Rock, Carroll

was elected on the Green Party ticket to represent District 39 back in November, winning more than 80 percent of the vote. Currently, he's the highest-ranking Green in the United States.

Though he cleans up well, his button-down work as a legislator is a far cry from what he really does for a living: a dirty, dangerous job as a boilermaker for the Union Pacific Railroad, Thanks to what he calls his very "civic minded" employer, Carroll has been allowed to work the night shift at the Union Pacific yards in North Little Rock part time so he can come to the legislature during the day. From 11 p.m. to around 3 in the morning, he helps rebuild locomotives that have been damaged in derailments and accidents. He catches a few catnaps before and after work, and sleeps a lot on weekends. "I get a couple hours sleep before I go in to the Capitol," he said. "I may stay until 7 o'clock, go home, get a couple more hours sleep, then go to work."

Read the full article at:

www.arktimes.com/articles/articleviewer.aspx?ArticleID=bf458f35-158e-4226-9826-1f2e1ffb209f

REMEMBERING RACHEL CORRIE

Submitted by Alvin Meyer of the Bergen Greens

In light of the recent deadly attack on International Solidarity member, and US citizen Tristan Anderson by the Israeli Defense Forces, we remember their first American victim Rachel Corrie. Here is an interview with Rachel just two days before she was crushed to death by an Israeli bulldozer:

www.commondreams.org/video/2009/03/16

Screening of Palestine/Israel documentary on March 22

NJ Peace Action and First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ are co-sponsoring a program on building peace between Palestinians and Israelis. On Sunday, March 22 they will be showing a documentary film titled "Encounter Point," a true story about everyday people, sometimes risking their lives, in nonviolent struggle to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The heroes and heroines of this documentary are both Palestinian and Israeli people who have personally suffered as a result of seemingly unending violence.

Following the film there will be a panel discussion focusing on what can be done to promote and support this peace process. Panelists will include: Mathematics professor Dr. Siham Alfred, a Catholic, raised in Palestine, a member of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee and President of Somerset Voices for Peace and Justice; Political Science Professor, author and editor, Stephen Shalom, from William Paterson University; Palestinian American Muslim and PhD candidate in Global Affairs, Mae Ramadan, who is the founder and former president of the Palestinian American Organization, Newark; Rabbi Tepperman of B'nai Keshet Reconstructionist Synagogue in Montclair who is committed to teaching, spirituality and social justice.

The 85 minute film will begin at 2 pm followed by discussion. The screening will be in the Guild Room at First Congregational Church, 40 South Fullerton Ave, Montclair. It is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. For more information contact NJPA at 973-259-1126 or email [nj_peaceaction\[at\]yahoo.com](mailto:nj_peaceaction@yahoo.com).

