

What Could This Nation Do?

Before its summer adjournment, the United States Congress approved, with bipartisan support, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 that authorizes military expenditures at \$740 billion. An amendment introduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders called for a 10% cut in military spending; the amendment failed.

This level of financial support for the military creates, again, a dangerous imbalance between military spending and spending for other national concerns and programs. The score? \$740 billion for the Pentagon; \$666 billion for everything else. If the 10% cut had been approved, the picture would have changed for the better. The new score: \$666 billion for the Pentagon; \$734 billion for everything else.

What could this nation do with more money for making peace, fighting poverty, and saving the earth?

As helpful as such a change would be, military expenditures at \$666 billion are still egregiously inflated. If the people who are so quick to suggest cuts in food stamps, medical care, homelessness eradication, clean energy, and other important programs would take their cost-cutting knives to the Pentagon's spending,



might they not realize cuts in bloated programs, outdated equipment, and unnecessary weaponry?

Incredibly, the GOP proposal to address the pandemic of COVID 19, the HEALS Act, included an additional \$29.4 billion for the Pentagon. The non-partisan budget watchdog Taxpayers for Common Sense estimates that "at least \$18.8 billion of the proposed \$29.4 billion in spending would flow directly to the pockets of defense contractors like Boeing and

Lockheed Martin." Congress left for the summer without approving a pandemic relief bill.

LEPOCO members and friends have reflected frequently on the wisdom of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., who, in April 1967, denounced the war in Vietnam. He noted "the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism." To those we add nationalism and climate change denial. In a nation riven by violence and abuse against people of color, facing a deadly virus, witnessing the rise of nationalism, and failing to save the planet, the Rev. King's call for "a radical revolution of values" should bring forth an immediate, persistent, and vociferous outcry in favor of policies, and dollars, that support peace, people, and the earth.

- Janet Ney

Census / Postal Service / Election

The Census, the Postal Service, and the Election are unequivocal mandates of our Constitution. In the next two months, their priorities have converged to demand that we exercise our civic duty to preserve our democracy. The pandemic and an administration determined to push against our founding principles have put these mandates under enormous pressure, raising concerns of botched outcomes that will hurt our representation in government.

The Census ends on September 30, pushed up by a month, in disregard of an earlier request to extend into 2021 because of the pandemic. This abruptly imposed new deadline is to deliver population figures to President Trump while he's still in office. The question of citizenship has marred this Census, considered unconstitutional by civil rights advocates and rejected by the Supreme Court. Undeterred, the administration now seeks to subtract undocumented aliens from state totals before reapportioning representation in the House. This causes distrust and lack of participation by immigrants and the undocumented.

Undercounts of hard-to-reach populations will short-change the poor and people of color in representation and funding. The administration may resort to data manipulations and algorithms that could put validity in doubt. With the pandemic threatening both surveyed and surveyors, 38 million households are still uncounted and more than a third of census takers have quit or not shown up.

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LEPOCO Has Moved!

Despite the pandemic restrictions on gatherings and cancellation of fundraisers, WE HAVE MOVED! On June 19th, after months of preparation, packing and sorting 35 plus years of LEPOCO ephemera, the mover arrived early to start taking furniture from the 313 W. 4th St. building to 1705 W. Broad St. We have two large rooms in the basement of Rosemont Lutheran Church, which is being transformed into LEPOCO's new home. With the help of a few members, many of the smaller items were transported before the moving date, thus reducing the movers' price by almost half. Thank you to everyone who helped: Adrian Zaniesienko, Amanda Zaniesienko, Diane Dilendik, Jim Orben, Julius Iwantsch, Lee Buck, Margot Hillman, Martha Christine, Mimi Lang, Nancy Johnston, Nancy Tate, Rick Dow, Sharlee DiMenichi, Susie Ravitz, and Tom Stinnett. A special thank you goes to Steering Committee members, Carol Baylor, for organizing and cleaning out the basement, and Dan Miller for hauling so much of the full basement away.

We have been made to feel welcome by the Church and Pastor Jack. They kindly allowed us to start paying rent in July, which saved us from needing to pay rent in two places for June. One room is set up to be the Printing/Work Room, with equipment, supplies and a work space to create LEPOCO's newsletter, flyers and all other correspondence. Nancy and Tom have their desks and computers in this room. The second room, where Amanda has her desk, is the Meeting Room, where committees will meet, the LEPOCO Holiday Peace Boutique will be held, films will be shown, and Potluck & Politics presentations will take place.

FLASH - - there are men's and women's restrooms down the hall with multiple stalls in each!

We are still working on signage for the LEPOCO entrance, unpacking, office organization, and the installation of a chair lift for those needing assistance with stairs. We still have yet to share our move with press outlets and to introduce ourselves to our new local community. We are hoping to have an open house when it's deemed safer to gather in larger numbers. We look forward to members and volunteers once again being active in our new space.

- Diane Dilendik & Amanda Zaniesienko

Census / Postal Service / Election

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Ironically, the Census is racing to completion away from the limelight. If you haven't responded yet, go to 2020Census.gov. Share this link with others, challenge your friends, and encourage those who feel deterred or distrustful to respond. You can respond by phone, mail and online.

Additionally, you may want to shine a light on the flaws of this census and raise awareness, like the public

did with the Postal Service. The saga of the Postal Service has shown the far-reaching disruptions that the administration's intervention can cause, potentially disenfranchising voters whose ballots cannot be processed in time. Every vote must count.

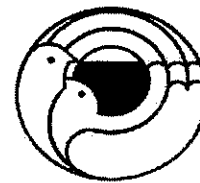
Vote and encourage others to vote in a timely manner. In this pandemic, take advantage of vote-by-mail. Go to VotesPA.com, make a plan, vote early. Track your application and ballot to ensure that you sail through without glitches.

- My Lien Nguyen

Check out the LEPOCO website at www.lepoco.org for a Calendar of Events, Newsletter Archive, & More.

Sign up for LEPOCO e-mail weekly updates by calling 610-691-8730, or by writing to lepoco@fast.net.

Follow LEPOCO on Facebook and Twitter. Please "like" and "share," often.



Newsletter of LEPOCO
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Regular Member	\$35
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Articles/news should be submitted to one of the addresses above for consideration for the next issue of the newsletter.

Newsletter Staff: Tom Stinnett, Nancy Tate, Amanda Zaniesienko, Carol Baylor, Janet Ney, Rick Dow, Jeff Vitelli.

Thanks to all the people who collate and prepare the newsletter for mailing each month.

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Carol Baylor, Mick Baylor, Diane Dilendik, Sharlee DiMenichi, Margot Hillman, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Nancy Johnston, Christine Loch, Dan Miller, Janet Ney, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), Jeff Vitelli, and Amanda Zaniesienko (ex-officio).

Support Ban on Nuclear Weapons!

This year's 75th anniversary of the U.S. bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki produced diverse responses that reflect on that event and support the ban on nuclear weapons. To name a few:

Mimi Lang's op-ed, *Why we must stop investing in nuclear weapons*, was published June 15 in The Morning Call, and talked about the coronavirus, climate change and nuclear weapons displacing focus on peace and programs of social uplift, with special attention to the Kings Bay Plowshares 7.

The Morning Call and Easton's Express-Times published several commemorative photos and articles, including one about the *hibakusha*, or survivors of the atomic bombings, who still plea for a ban on nuclear weapons.

LEPOCO's Stop the Wars Committee (Mimi Lang, Monica McAghon, Susie Ravitz, Nancy Tate, and Stefan Rogers) organized four Lehigh Valley banner events to support the ban on nuclear weapons. LEPOCO members joined these events at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. & Coretta Scott King statue in Allentown, the Easton Farmers' Market, the Emmaus Farmers Market, and the monthly Second Thursday Peace Vigil, at Third & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem.

A plethora of virtual events were engaging. BBC Radio 3 aired a Words and Music program: "The Black Sun: Marking 75 Years Since the First Atomic Bomb." (August 9)

Shiho Burke, daughter of two Hiroshima survivors, and Daniel Ellsberg, were featured speakers for a webinar that was organized by the Coalition for Peace Action, Princeton, NJ. (August 9)



Sharon Dolev of Israel and Emad Kiyaei of Iran discussed campaigning for a nuclear weapons-free Middle East zone and the formation of the Middle East Treaty Organization (METO) on a Zoom meeting initiated by the Campaign for Peace, Disarmament and Common Security, led by Joseph Gerson. (August 16)

Four historians of nuclear weapons, Gar Alperovitz, Martin Sherwin, Kai Bird, and Peter Kuznick discussed, "What Every Global Citizen Needs to Know about the Decision to Drop the A-Bomb on

Hiroshima and Nagasaki," moderated by Carolyn Forché. (To view this webinar, see link in LEPOCO Weekly Update, July 31-August 9.)

And finally, why should *you* support the ban on nuclear weapons even though the countries that have them don't? *"The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is a powerful normative tool to demonstrate that nuclear weapons are morally unacceptable. It strengthens the legal framework and legal stigma against nuclear weapons. The TPNW can put external pressure on nuclear-armed states to make further efforts on disarmament."* See: www.icanw.org.

- Monica McAghon

The Nuclear Danger at 75

75 years into the "Age of Hiroshima" something remarkable has happened. For many years, citizens in mass protests called on the world's political leaders to get rid of nuclear weapons and end the threat of total annihilation. In 1982, for example, more than 1 million people came to New York's Central Park to demand an end to the nuclear arms race. It was the single largest demonstration in U.S. history. Today, the call for a similar protest would go largely unanswered. People have come to accept stockpiles of nuclear arms as "normal."

Yet the danger of nuclear war has, if anything, increased. Most people are unaware that a new nuclear arms race has begun, one potentially more perilous than the old Cold War. The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists recently moved its famous Doomsday Clock forward. It is now less than two minutes to Nuclear Midnight. What's up?

There are several reasons for the elevated concern. Treaties limiting nuclear weapons are being set aside. President Trump recently withdrew from the Open Skies Treaty, which allowed mutual surveillance overflights. He previously reneged on the 2015 Iran nuclear treaty and the 1987 INF (Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces) agreement. He has expressed interest in resuming nuclear testing, in defiance of a 1996 treaty. The sole remaining agreement curtailing nuclear weapons is now the 2010 New Start Treaty, which limits the U.S. and Russia's deployed strategic warheads (i.e. those on long-range delivery systems) to 1,500 each. This treaty expires next February. The U.S. has not committed to extending the treaty, claiming it wants a more comprehensive treaty and one that includes China. Even though China's arsenal is less than a twentieth that of the U.S. and Russia, Beijing is rapidly expanding it. If New Start is allowed to lapse, it will be the first time in nearly half a century that no treaty limits the proliferation of nuclear weaponry. We are losing the international infrastructure to control nuclear weapons.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute now estimates that nine states -- the US,

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Peace Camp At Home

What do we do when what we have done for the past 30 + years cannot be done? We improvise, change course, collaborate and get creative.

The Peace Camp Planning Committee was faced with this problem in the spring of 2020, when we started planning for this year's Peace Camp scheduled for the last week of July. Could we hold it in person? Will the pandemic have died down enough to gather? Will First Presbyterian Church be open to us? Would parents send their children? Would volunteers (many of us retirement age or beyond) feel safe?

Before long, we had all of the answers we needed, all of them, "No," so we began to plan instead for Peace Camp at Home (PCAH). Because children have had enough screen time, we decided to have an abbreviated day with just the essential elements of Peace Camp: music, active games, stories, crafts, questions... and even snacks! Then our Tech folks, Ishaan Lal and Margot Hillman, chose a format and platform, and we assembled a team of volunteers to deliver PCAH on Zoom to more than 40 children.



Campers and families delighted in the 11 am program. A greeting and daily message started each day. On some days, that was a story -- "Malala's Magic Pencil," by education advocate, young Malala Yousafzai, was delightfully read on Monday by Sudha Bulusu. The ultimate story about cooperation, "Stone Soup," was told by Jorge Bello on Thursday. Karen Maurer presented an entertaining story, "More than a Match," that told us all about peacefully overcoming what seemed to be an intractable barrier.

Every day, Roberta Meek led us in Peace Camp songs, and no one can deny that Fred the Moose was the most popular, requested, and interactive song on our list, even though "Teaching Peace," was our official 2020 PCAH song. We could see campers singing along, although we heard them only once or twice. It was happy cacophony.

Can you imagine interactive, noncompetitive games played in front of a screen, often by a child alone in a room? It was one of the most creative and successful things we did. We did Touch Blue, Frustration Dance, and Walk on the Earth, all led by teen volunteers on Zoom.

Every camper received a thick envelope (delivered by the USPS), containing a packet for each day with activities to be done on their own time, plus a journal, which contained snack recipes and space for writing. We have heard that children returned to these activities after PCAH was over.

The feedback from families was very positive. "Abby, Wyatt and Sammie love Honk for Peace. They

made signs and went around the neighborhood. They loved it," reported their grandmother about one art activity in the packet.

"I loved all of the fun and kind energy, plus there were great people and it was just an amazing experience. I'm glad I got to do Peace Camp at Home!" - Chandler, age 9.

"Lily (age 10) said that she really enjoyed the storytelling," reported her grandma.

LEPOCO received via mail several very encouraging comments about children enjoying PCAH.

Thanks to everyone who had a hand in PCAH 2020.

- Marcie Lightwood

(The following people worked on PCAH as part of the Planning Committee and/or as a presenter on the Zoom program: Amanda Zaniesienko, Angelique Jackson, Bill Thomas, Dan Hunter, Donna Hartmann, Ishaan Lal, Jorge Bello, Karen Maurer, Kevin Smith, Leilanni Marrero-Allen, Maggie Brown, Marcie Lightwood, Margot Hillman, Mari Jaramillo, Nancy Johnston, Nancy Tate, Olivia Arena-Miller, Regina Sherrer, Roberta Meek, Suddha Bulusu.)

WEDNESDAY

A is for ACTION

Get the word out!

Make a POSTER or YARD SIGN or SIDEWALK DRAWING about ACTION: like smile, be kind, help others, vote, write to your congressperson, respect everyone.

What others can you think of? Use Peace words.

Materials:

- o Cardboard, poster board or other stiff board like foam board - 12" x 18" or larger
- o Crayons
- o Acrylic paints
- o Markers - permanent - like "Sharpies" (Ask for help or permission from a grown-up)
- o Tape
- o Sidewalk chalk - Use SIDEWALK CHALK only for sidewalk actions.
- o Stick or stake for posting in the yard.

What to do:

- o Protect your work area.
- o Think of a message about a peace action or idea that you would like everyone to do something about, or know about.
- o Use Peace words, sayings and symbols for your work. You can spell it or draw it.
- o Think and draw big and colorful so everyone can see it. Try to make it easy to read.
- o When you are finished, place the work where people can see it: in the yard, on the porch, in a window. Or carry your sign in a march.
- o Use the same ideas to draw the action message on a sidewalk. Always check to make sure that it's OK to do it in your neighborhood.



This is a reduced copy of one page from the PCAH Packet.

You can purchase a copy of the Peace Camp At Home Packet by sending a check for \$10 (to cover postage and copying) to LEPOCO, 1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem, PA 18018.

Bits & Pieces

In September the **First Tuesday Book Group of LEPOCO** discussed "Freedom and Despair: Notes from the South Hebron Hills," by David Shulman, another excellent book on the 2020 reading list for the group. All books on the list have been suggested by a member of the group and that person also leads the discussion of that book.

Addison Bross, the leader for the Shulman book discussion, provided an extra bonus. He prepared an email that listed resources related to the book and included a few words about why he chose the book: "*Freedom and Despair*" struck me (among other ways) as an insightful treatment of the inevitable problem that confronts any group of activists - or anyone who seeks even in a small way to affect our public life for the better, to bring our collective existence at least a little closer toward a just society. Given the perennial recalcitrance of long-established unjust systems that produce and maintain inequality, the problem we face is frustration, discouragement, burnout.

In his notes on the continuing, dangerous and frustrating efforts of his group, Ta'ayush, to protect Pales-

tinian farmers and herdsmen in the South Hebron hills, Shulman seems to me an exceptionally reflective sort of activist, willing to confess recurring doubts about whether the peace-&-justice work he's so deeply committed to is worthwhile, considering its quite likely futility; ready to examine and question his motives and raise doubts about the value of these efforts for justice, given their likely failure to produce results. Since LEPOCO members have had their share of this sort of frustrations over the years, I thought Shulman's way of thinking about the problem could prove interesting to us.

Addison's words have value even if you did not join the discussion and they are shared here to give a sense of the significance of the group's selections, to encourage you to consider joining the group, and to encourage you to read Shulman's book.

The LEPOCO Book Group has been meeting via zoom since April. They hope to hold an in-person meeting in October, if an appropriate outside location can be found. On Tuesday, October 6, the group will discuss, "The Food Explorer: The True Adventures of the Globe Trotting Botanist Who Transformed What America Eats," by Daniel Stone. In November the book will be "1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus," by Charles C. Mann. Please contact LEPOCO for the link to zoom or meeting location.

Copies of the latest issue of "**Nuke Watch Quarterly**" are available at LEPOCO. Contact us and we will mail you a copy.

You can read the latest issue of "**Left Turn**," published by the Alliance for Sustainable Communities-Lehigh Valley, by visiting their website, www.sustainlv.org.

Touchstone Theatre is conducting their **Festival Unbound** again this year, modified for the time of pandemic. The programming began on September 4th and will continue through October 16th with a production of "Dictators 4 Dummies...and More!" in the parking lot at the Theatre, on 4th St., south Bethlehem. The production is an election season retrospective of original political satire. You can learn more about all the Festival Unbound events at www.festivalunbound.com. Many of the events are free, though there is a charge for the theatre productions.

"**We Are Many**," is a new documentary about the February 15, 2003, protest against the Iraq War, when 30 million people in 800 cities around the world joined the historic global protests. There will be a virtual screening and benefit on Monday, September 21. You can learn more and purchase tickets at www.unitedforpeace.org.

This year marks the **75th anniversary of the United Nations**. There are many events planned from September 21st through October 2nd to advance key aims of the UN to achieve peace, disarmament, human rights, climate protection and sustainable development. Would you like to join a local vigil for the International Day for Peace on Monday, September 21st, or for the UN Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on Saturday, September 26th, or for the International Day for Nonviolence on Friday, October 2nd? Please call or email LEPOCO if your answer is in the affirmative.

- gathered by Nancy Tate

MEETINGS...MEETINGS...MEETINGS...MEETINGS... ETC.

Tuesdays, October 6 & November 3, 6 pm: First Tuesday LEPOCO Book Group, call 610-691-8730 or email lepoco@fast.net to get the zoom link or direction to the meeting. (See above for books being read for October and November.)

Thursdays, October 8, 4:30-5:30 pm, & November 12, 4-5 pm: Monthly Peace Vigils, Third & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem.

Saturday, October 10, 4:30 pm: LEPOCO Art Raffle Drawing on zoom. Call 610-691-8730 or email lepoco@fast.net to get the zoom link to participate.

Monday, October 12, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting by conference call or zoom. Call 610-691-8730 or email lepoco@fast.net to get the number or the link to participate. All members & friends are welcome at this monthly business meeting where the organization's activities are discussed & planned. These meetings are on the second Monday of the month.

Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information about these meetings or the meetings of the Americas Solidarity Group, Newsletter Planning Group, the Peace Camp Planning Committee, or any other committees, please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. For a regularly updated calendar of events, see www.lepoco.org.



The Struggle Shared

*When evil-doing comes like falling rain, nobody calls out "Stop!"
When crimes begin to pile up, they become invisible. When sufferings become
unendurable, the cries are no longer heard. The cries, too, fall like rain in
summer.*
— Bertolt Brecht

Among the most heart-wrenching aspects of the "perfect storm of global crises" that we find ourselves immersed in is the rain of terror that falls on those who are already drowning when the world's dictators use a pandemic to justify assaults on human rights. Here are just a few current examples:

HONDURAS: At 5 am, on Saturday, July 18th, five leaders of the Afro-Indigenous Garifuna community of Triunfo de la Cruz on the Caribbean coast of Honduras, were forcibly removed from their homes by heavily armed men in uniforms of the Honduran Investigative Police and the Honduran Military Police. The kidnapping and disappearance occurred on a day when Honduras was in total lockdown due to the pandemic, and only the police and military were authorized to circulate.

The community of Triunfo de la Cruz has been actively defending the rights and lands of the Garifuna people for many years, winning an important case in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 2015. The Honduran government, and the powerful economic interests who have taken the land in question, have ignored the court's order. The July abduction is the latest in a pattern of systemic repression. The Honduran Military Police have been trained and supported by the U.S.

Amy Goodman interviewed representatives of the Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras which has been fighting for the Garifuna people, in a Democracy Now! segment on August 17. Learn more about this incident at democracynow.org, then call on the US Embassy, and your elected officials to return the kidnapped leaders, and the stolen land to the Garifuna People.

(Source: SOA Watch & Democracy Now!)

EL SALVADOR: In February, El Salvador's President Bukele entered the country's legislative assembly with a military escort to enforce his plans for a loan program. Despite the international outcry over Bukele's flagrant disregard for democratic governance, Bukele has only ramped up his autocratic bent during the pandemic, by militarizing quarantine measures, detaining citizens for violating stay at home orders, and forcing them to stay in overcrowded, unsafe quarantine centers.

While the Trump administration has been critical of Venezuela's and Nicaragua's human rights records during the pandemic, an administration spokesperson referred to the constitutional crisis in El Salvador as "robust political debate." Some Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives disagreed. In July,



the House Committee on Appropriations voted to withhold Foreign Military Financing for El Salvador, as well as Guatemala and Honduras, due to concerns about authoritarian rule and human rights abuses. Let's keep the pressure on our elected officials.

(Source: Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador.)

BRAZIL: President Bolsonaro of Brazil is a COVID denier – consistently downplaying the statistics in his country and the dangers of the virus, and enforcing policies which put people in danger. Among those policies: the catastrophic deforestation

of the Amazon in pursuit of profits for huge corporations, and attacks on indigenous people who have resisted those corporate interests.

In August the Amazonas state police were pursuing a police investigation in Nova Olinda do Norte, entering homes without warrants, making death threats, and torturing civilians, all documented by Human Rights Watch and Federal prosecutors. Then, on August 5th, two brothers were shot at by police, and disappeared from their canoe on the Abacaxis river on the land of Munduruku Indigenous people. At least five other unconfirmed killings have been reported by community groups in August. Local community leaders are urging federal prosecutors to immediately investigate and protect their land and their rights. (Source: Human Rights Watch & Amnesty International.)

YEMEN: Kathy Kelly, of Voices for Creative Nonviolence says, "Cataclysmic conditions afflict Yemen as people try to cope with rampant diseases, the spread of COVID-19, flooding, literal swarms of locusts, rising displacement, destroyed infrastructure and a collapsed economy. Yet the war rages, bombs continue to fall, and desperation fuels more crimes."

August 9th, was the 2nd anniversary of a missile attack that blasted a school bus in Yemen, killing 40 children, injuring many others. In photographs of the debris was one showing a piece of a bomb with the stamp identifying Lockheed Martin as the manufacturer. And in 2019, Lockheed Martin registered their largest sales year on record, at 60 billion dollars.

As Kathy Kelly implores us, "We must learn – and quickly – to make a torrent of our mingled cries and, as the prophet Amos demanded, 'Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.'"

- Jeff Vitelli



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Insert: Art Raffle



Monthly Peace Vigil

(Second Thursdays)

October 8: 4:30-5:30 pm
& November 12: 4-5 pm

*Our wars & bombings continue.
Help witness for peace.*

3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

Call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730
for more info.

LEPOCO Art Raffle

Drawing on Zoom

Saturday, October 10
4:30 pm

Call (610-691-8730) or
email (lepoco@fast.net)
to get the link to join
the zoom gathering.

I'm an optimist. I think it's terrible, what's happening. I would not wish it on the worst of my enemies, this pandemic we're living through. But it is a chance for us to think again about what it means not to be isolated, what it means to lose a country, what it means to lose everyday life, what it means to go to the funeral of the people we love, not to be able to hug the people we love - like immigrants all over the world...

We're separated from ourselves. And yet, from that pain, I think that new things can be born. We're like phoenixes in that sense. We rise from the ashes with our imagination, with our compassion, with our ability to think and to rethink the world in a different way.

...We have to decide whether we're going towards a different sort of future, imagine the possibility of that future, or whether we're going to get in a stranglehold of a past and die in that... Death is on the ballot this November. It is a matter of life and death, what's going to happen.

- Ariel Dorfman, Chilean-American author, human rights defender, playwright & poet, who became the cultural and press adviser to Salvador Allende's chief of staff during the last months of Allende's presidency in 1973, interviewed on "Democracy Now!" on 9/4/20.