

October  
2022  
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Newsletter of **LEPOCO**  
Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

## Mounting Danger in Ukraine

Except when, as in World War II, one side demands "unconditional surrender" as the price for laying down arms, wars usually end in a negotiated peace settlement. This surely is how the current war in Ukraine should end. The war has produced thousands of casualties on both sides, displaced nearly half Ukraine's civilian population and devastated its infrastructure. The war has contributed to a mounting food emergency in the developing world and to the curtailment of carbon-cutting policies and the heightening of inflation everywhere. Yet peace negotiations are nowhere in sight. In fact, a dangerous escalation of the war has begun.

One thing about the war is clear. On the Ukrainian side, the war is a proxy war. Ukraine provides the manpower, but to continue the war it requires on-going and massive infusions of NATO (especially U.S.) military support. The form this aid takes shows it is in pursuit of two policy objectives. NATO regards the government of Ukraine as an advocate for western values and interests and is willing to provide sufficient weaponry, training, and intelligence to make sure that Ukraine is not defeated. At the same time, this military assistance is not of a kind to inflict severe damage on Russia itself - the U.S. excludes aircraft and long-range weapons systems from the aid. The likely upshot is a protracted, enormously destructive war of attrition in which Kiev is not defeated and Putin is not humiliated.

Such a war is, of course, of enormous profitability to the U.S. armaments industry. At the end of August, to mark Ukraine's Independence Day, the U.S. announced it was sending Kiev \$3 billion in security assistance. This was the single largest aid package thus far and brought the total of U.S. military aid to nearly \$16 billion (exact numbers are hard to come by, given the complexities of Pentagon accounting).

Late last spring, an optimistic view suggested that an end to the war was possible. Jeffrey Sachs urged that the outlines of a peace agreement were discernable in the Russo-Ukrainian talks mediated by Turkey: in exchange for Russia withdrawing its army, Ukraine would receive western security guarantees, but pledge not to join NATO; both sides would agree to hold talks on the political future of eastern Ukraine.

These proposals have now evaporated. Mounting evidence of Russian war crimes ended the peace talks. With Ukraine's recent military advances in the east and south, it now seeks to recover all its occupied territory including Crimea, which Russian annexed in 2014.

Russia has responded to Ukraine's offensives with a major escalation. It has called up 300,000 reservists; it is holding "sham" referendums for Russian annexation in the four territories it occupies; and - most disturbingly - it threatens to use all its weapons systems, including nuclear weapons, to defend its territory. Perhaps mounting opposition to the war within Russia will force Putin from office; perhaps NATO's unified support of Ukraine will collapse; perhaps the U.S. electorate will reject continued military aid. All seem unlikely. However, a negotiated end to the war is still possible. Recent agreements between Russia and Ukraine to allow grain shipments through the Black Sea and to exchange prisoners of war offer a ray of hope. But unless these agreements can be built upon, the prospects for peace soon are grim.

- Mick Baylor



## Defuse Nuclear War: Marking the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis

Nearly 100 peace organizations, including LEPOCO, are sponsoring a call for multi-day actions throughout the United States to bring attention to the urgency of ending the threat of nuclear warfare. The campaign, called Defuse Nuclear War, is scheduled to occur as the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis is observed. Events are scheduled for October 14, the last weekday before the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and October 16.

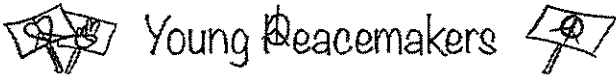
The sponsoring organizations note that there has been little discussion in the House or Senate about de-escalating tensions between nuclear powers and engaging in negotiations instead of threats.

Defuse Nuclear War is calling for picket lines on Friday, October 14. LEPOCO will hold a peace vigil in front of the Federal Building, at 5<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Streets, Allentown, at noon on that date. In addition walkers and riders in the LEPOCO Bike/Walk-a-thon, on Saturday, October 15, will be invited to wear signs calling for diplomacy not nuclear threats.

Defuse Nuclear War also encourages local groups to conduct educational events on October 16. LEPOCO is planning an event later in October (pages 3 & 6).

For additional information, see [www.defusenuclearwar.org](http://www.defusenuclearwar.org). There, you will find a recording of the October 2<sup>nd</sup> Live Stream, featuring speakers offering information and analysis on nuclear weapons.

- Janet Ney



# Young Peacemakers

We had a bit of downtime in the Yellow Group at Peace Camp this summer. It happened close to the end of the week. Our group had been talking about cooperation. (I was one of the leaders of the Yellow Group.) I had dominoes in my bag of tricks with no specific plan on what to do with them. So I spilled them out on the table and asked the campers to place them upright in a line so that they could be knocked over at the end. It took several tries for them to do it without anybody bumping the table or bumping the dominoes, but they got it and they understood that everybody had to cooperate in order for the project to work. Of course, the payoff for these 9- and 10-year-olds was that they got to watch the dominoes fall at the end of the activity.

Peace through cooperation is a great lesson for young people.

- Marcie Lightwood

Moratorium March brought half a million people to Washington, DC, in November 1969. LEPOCO sent five busloads of protestors to the second March.

On that day, a rally included Pete Seeger, Peter, Paul, and Mary, Leonard Bernstein, Arlo Guthrie and many others. LEPOCO continued its protests and demonstrations through the course of the war.

LEPOCO took on "official" status with the adoption of a constitution and bylaws in February 1971. Anna Hunt was hired as coordinator and the organization moved into its first office on the second floor at 14 W. Broad St., Bethlehem.

Anna Hunt, a graduate of Mount Holyoke College, a Marine during WW II, and an early opponent of the war in Vietnam, was working as a librarian at Moravian College when students were murdered at Kent State. She joined the campus strikes in protest and lost her librarian position. Anna was a beloved local peace activist celebrity. Anna Hunt continued working for LEPOCO until October 1974; Nancy Tate was hired to succeed Anna.

- Janet Ney

## ROOTS of LEPOCO

The initial incentive to resist the war in Vietnam occupied much of the time of the members in the early days of the organization. Other concerns arose as well but the primary consideration was the war.

LEPOCO members participated in many demonstrations, protests, and bus trips during those years.

The first bus trip took a group of people to the March on Washington in November 1965. After the march, 35 pioneers formed the organization.

LEPOCO was well represented at the largest national demonstration against the war in Vietnam. Following an October 1969 march on Washington for a Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam, a second

Check out the LEPOCO website at [www.lepoco.org](http://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](mailto:lepoco@fast.net).

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

### Support LEPOCO!

\_\_\_ Enclosed is a donation to LEPOCO of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_ I would like to support LEPOCO's work with a \_\_\_ monthly/ \_\_\_ quarterly pledge of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_ I'm especially interested in the following issues:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # e-mail

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/Town Zip

Send to: LEPOCO Peace Center, 1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem, PA 18018, or donate through PayPal at [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org).

### Newsletter of LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

1705 West Broad Street

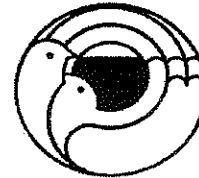
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The LEPOCO Newsletter is published eight times a year by the Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern, a nonviolent, non-profit organization dedicated to peace in all forms.

#### Annual dues are:

- Regular Member ..... \$35
- Limited Income Member ..... \$10
- Household Membership ..... \$45
- Supporting Member ..... \$75

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: Pam Brubaker, Sharlee DiMenichi, Margot Hillman, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Mary Lang, Monica McAghon, Janet Ney, Tom Pietrzak, Susie Ravitz, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), Jeff Vitelli, and Amanda Zaniesienko (ex-officio).

## Bike/Walk for Peace: October 15

Peace is the reason! Ride your bicycle or take a walk with us on Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at LEPOCO's Bike/Walk-a-thon.

Starting at the LEPOCO Peace Center (1705 W. Broad St, Bethlehem) with a light breakfast, tai chi warm-up and bike checks, riders will cruise neighborhood streets before making our way to the Southside Bethlehem Greenway and Saucon Rail Trail for a total of 23 miles with a rest stop halfway.

Walkers will flow through town and head down to the D&L Trail for options of a 4.5- or 6.5-mile walk. The bike ride and the walk will both be supported and will encourage you to complete the route at your own pace, while staying together as a group. This way, we can get moving while meeting new people and enjoying the scenery and the autumn weather. Bring a friend!

The Bike/Walk-a-thon is a fundraiser for LEPOCO where fund-raisers can win fun and useful prizes. This event is especially timely as we build momentum that Bethlehem is a great city for biking, where neighborhoods connect to downtown and local trails. Yes, there is work to be done to make things better, so let's show up and show the city that we are here with our wheels and our feet!

For more details contact LEPOCO or see the event flyer enclosed with this newsletter.

- Scott Slingerland

## Giving Attention to the Philippines

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, the Northeast Coalition to Advance Genuine Democracy in the Philippines organized a protest at the United Nations as the General Assembly convened. The protest was in commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ferdinand Marcos' declaration of martial law in the Philippines. Martial law lasted 14 years. His son, Marcos Jr., (referred to as Bongbong Marcos) was elected president of the Philippines this year and was speaking at the UNGA on September 20<sup>th</sup>.

Although the U.S. government stated that the election of Marcos Jr. was free and fair, there was widespread concern of massive fraud, cheating, and violence. Election observers from the U.S. and other countries issued a report documenting many of these charges. Yet Marcos Jr. was given diplomatic immunity by the U.S. to come to the UN, despite a contempt of court case against him.

"Reject U.S. Support of the Marcos Dynasty - the atrocities, human rights violations, theft, and erosion of democracy that the Marcos family committed against the Filipino people" was the call of the protest. We started at the Philippine Consulate in NYC and then marched to the UN. Speakers testified about these claims, and we sang and chanted. Targeting and killing Filipino activists continued under the Duterte regime

(2016-2022) and now under Marcos Jr. social justice leaders, including people of faith, are being charged in court for the work they do. Several have been unjustly imprisoned.

I went to the protest as a member of ICHRP-US (International Campaign for Human Rights in the Philippines-US). ICHRP asked the U.S. government to halt U.S. tax dollars going to military aid and arm sells in the Philippines until measures are taken to investigate human rights abuses by the police and punish those responsible. Susan Wild, our local representative, introduced legislation on this in the U.S. House in 2018. In July of this year, the House of Representatives voted to add Wild's proposal to the National Defense Authorization Act. It has yet to be voted on in the Senate.

- Pamela Brubaker

## Are You Ready for Some Discussion?

A small committee recently met on zoom to discuss what LEPOCO should do to bring back speaker- and film-led programming since our former format is no longer feasible. For many years LEPOCO members and friends gathered to hear presentations by outstanding speakers (mostly local folks) and view movies of interest. Lively discussions followed both speakers and movies. The programs were discontinued because of COVID. As they are brought back, these programs will not include serving food.

An enthusiastic committee has developed a list of subjects to be addressed that may include current attacks on voting, women's choice, immigration, the WTO, local Black Lives Matter, climate, draft resistance, the nuclear agreement with Iran, and more. The programs are expected to return on either the third Friday or the third Sunday of the months of October, November, January, February, April, May, June, and September.

Can you help with planning and presenting these programs? Call the LEPOCO office at 610-691-8730, to offer assistance.

Finally, we need a new name for these programs that will not include the words potluck or popcorn. Perhaps, "something" and Politics? What are your thoughts? Call the office with your suggestions.

- Janet Ney

### JCPOA: What's Next?

Presentation & Discussion: Faramarz Farbod

4 pm, Sunday, October 23

LEPOCO Peace Center

1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem (enter at back)

Part of Defuse Nuclear War October Campaign

# Bits & Pieces

☮ Brandywine Peace Community is inviting peace activists to join a **Ban Killer Drones** demonstration at the Horsham PA Air Guard Station on Saturday, **October 22, 1-3 pm**. The remote killer drone command center in Horsham remains in operation. Protests will be taking place at drone war training and command sites across the U.S. between October 15 & 22, in support of the Shut Down Creech encampment at Creech Air Force Base, a key killer drone control base near Las Vegas. For more information see [brandywinepeace.com](http://brandywinepeace.com).

☮ **Faramarz Farbod** will be the first presenter for our new speaker- and film-led programming (see page 3). In this 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis October, he will talk about the status of the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) also known as the Iran Nuclear Agreement. The Agreement was signed under President Obama, abandoned by President Trump, and now lan-

guishes without renewal almost two years into the Biden Administration. Faramarz Farbod will help us understand "What's Next for the JCPOA."

The program will be Sunday, **October 16, at 4 pm**, at the LEPOCO Peace Center, 1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem (enter in back).

Faramarz Farbod is a member of the political science faculty at Moravian University. He also leads a weekly film discussion group online, edits the "Left Turn" publication for the Alliance for Sustainable Communities and produces a program on peace issues for Berks Community Television.

☮ August and September have been busy months for LEPOCO volunteers staffing tables and booths at **local fairs and festivals**. We led off with the booth at the PRIDE Festival in Allentown, on **August 21**, involving the most volunteers. Thank you to Monica McAghon, My Lien Nguyen, Bill Thomas, Renate Brosky, Susie Ravitz, Kathryn Hoffman, Carol Baylor, Diane Dilendik, Chris Klump, Margot Hillman, Amy Frey, Ella Frey, Rick Dow, Tom Pietrzak, Nancy Tate, and Tom Stinnett.

Then came the Lehigh University Community Expo on **August 25** (thank you to staffers Margot Hillman

and Amanda Zaniesienko). They also staffed the LEPOCO table at the Bethlehem Co-op Block Party on **August 27**. On **September 6**, Amanda was joined by Jeff Vitelli for a table at the NCC Community Outreach Fair.

On **September 17**, Dalton Young, Rick Dow, Tom Stinnett, and Nancy Tate set up a LEPOCO booth for the annual, very fun, Peace Fair at the Buckingham Friends Meeting and School. Then we took a table to the Peace Pilgrimage Community Peace Celebration on **September 24**, at L.V. Friends Meeting, staffed by Monica McAghon, Nancy Tate, and Tom Stinnett. Thank you to Rick Dow, Joey Hartmann-Dow, the Pilgrimage Planning Committee and many "Friends" who organized and provided excellent food for the Pilgrimage fundraiser.

☮ UN Secretary-General António Guterres visited Pakistan on Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>, after the devastating floods that left one-third of the country under water. He said, *"Emissions are rising as people die in floods and famines. And this is insanity. This is collective suicide. From Pakistan, I am issuing a global appeal: Stop the madness; end the war with nature; invest in renewable energy now."*

☮ A Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> article by Jeffrey D. Sachs included references to the actions of President John F. Kennedy, *"He defused that crisis (the Cuban missile crisis) not by force of will or U.S. military might, but by diplomacy and compromise, removing U.S. nuclear missiles in Turkey in exchange for the Soviet Union removing its nuclear missiles in Cuba..."*

*In June 1963, Kennedy uttered the essential truth that can keep us alive today: 'Above all, while defending our own vital interests, nuclear powers must avert those confrontations which bring an adversary to a choice of either a humiliating retreat or a nuclear war. To adopt that kind of course in the nuclear age would be evidence only of the bankruptcy of our policy -- or of a collective death-wish for the world.'"*

- source: [commondreams.org](http://commondreams.org).

## MEETINGS...MEETINGS...MEETINGS...MEETINGS...ETC.

**Tuesdays, October 4 & November 1, 6 pm:** First Tuesday LEPOCO Book Group Meetings, LEPOCO Peace Center, 1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem. Contact LEPOCO (610-691-8730) for more information. In October the group will discuss, "Begin Again: James Baldwin's America & Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own," by Eddie S. Glaude Jr., and in November the group will discuss, "The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life & Freedom on Death Row," by Anthony Ray Hinton with Lara Love Hardin & Bryan Stevenson.

**Thursday, October 6, 3 pm:** LEPOCO Annual Gathering Planning Committee Meeting on zoom. Call 610-691-8730 for more info. and to get the link for the meeting.

**Friday, October 7, 2 pm:** Stop the Wars Committee Meeting on zoom. Call 610-691-8730 for more info. and to get the link for the meeting.

**Mondays, October 10 & November 14, 7 pm:** LEPOCO Monthly Action Meetings, LEPOCO Peace Center, 1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem (18018). All members & friends are welcome at this monthly business meeting where the organization's activities are discussed. Call 610-691-8730 for more information.

*Please join in the work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information about the meetings of the Newsletter Planning Group, the Peace Camp Planning Committee, the Annual Gathering Planning Committee or any other committees, please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. For a regularly updated calendar of events, see [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org) or read LEPOCO Email Updates.*

# The Struggle Shared

*"It is the story of all life that is holy and is good to tell, and of us two-leggeds sharing in it with the four-leggeds and the wings of the air and all green things; for these are children of one mother and their father is one Spirit."*

- Black Elk from the introduction to "Black Elk Speaks."

## RADIATION EXPOSURE

COMPENSATION ACT - The United States dropped the first and only atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki 77 years ago this past August, launching the nuclear age, and perhaps the most serious threat to human health in the history of the world. Between 1945 and 1962, the U.S. conducted nearly 200 atmospheric tests. Essential to the development of nuclear weapons was the mining and processing of uranium, which exposed tens of thousands of workers.

Over the years following, multiple lawsuits were filed against the government for failing to warn people of the known hazards of radiation exposure. These suits were always dismissed by appellate courts, but eventually the U.S. Congress was forced to take action. On October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1990, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) was passed to allow for partial restitution for those who developed serious symptoms traceable to radiation exposure during atmospheric tests or uranium mining. For over thirty years, RECA has provided healthcare and compensation to people, especially in Native American communities who suffer disproportionately.

There are currently bills in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to extend the benefits provided by RECA. Win Without War, and the Union of Concerned Scientists are organizing activists and meeting with a bipartisan slate of legislators to ensure that communities who were exposed to toxic levels of radiation remain compensated. Contact your elected officials and urge them to cosponsor the Radiation Exposure and Compensation

Act. You can find a petition to sign at [www.winwithoutwar.org](http://www.winwithoutwar.org).

## SOLIDARITY WITH RAILROAD

WORKERS - The agreement that President Biden helped to negotiate on September 15<sup>th</sup> between major freight operators and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and SMART Transportation Division averted a strike which threatened to cripple the nation's supply chain and have a devastating impact on the economy, in the approach to the busy holiday season. To the business community and corporate America it sent a signal about the potential power of Unions.

The issues for railroad workers leading up to negotiations, were the fact that they had not had a raise in over three years, had no paid sick leave, were often on-call 24/7 year-round and were allotted time off only after being called to multiple consecutive on-call shifts. Unplanned issues like doctor visits sometimes resulted in disciplinary actions and/or dismissal. Trains that were once staffed by five workers are now run with just two.

And, while workers were suffering during the COVID-19 pandemic, the railroad companies were amassing profits for CEOs, shareholders and investors. BNSF, the nation's largest rail carrier, owned by Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc., just posted their best financial year in the past two decades, while the percentage of revenue spent on labor fell to its lowest.

In the tentative contract, workers will receive voluntary assigned days off, and one additional paid day off, guaranteed time away for medical visits, no disruptions to current health care plans, a 24% wage increase and \$5,000 in bonus payments

over the next five years. Union members will need to vote to approve the contract by mid-October.

As the September page in my Syracuse Cultural Worker's Calendar is reminding me these days, "The only effective answer to organized greed is organized labor."

NAZARETH TOGETHER - Even as communities like Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts are receiving unexpected planeloads of migrants from states where they are not welcome, some people in our own Lehigh Valley are opening arms to people of every homeland, race and color, and gender preference.

In September, apparently in response to an undercurrent of racism and homophobia in the Borough of Nazareth, April Gabriel-Ferretti, a Nazareth resident, printed colorful signs that said simply, "You Belong. You Matter." and distributed them to local businesses. When the signs were displayed, another group calling themselves Parents for Choice Nazareth, distributed a letter to businesses saying that the signs were "a front for a dark and sinister campaign to normalize and support pushing LGBTQ and transgender ideology on our children." And they were threatening to boycott businesses that displayed the "You Belong." signs. About half of the businesses removed their signs.

April responded, "You Belong signs are exactly what they say: you belong, you matter. Plain and simple, no hidden agenda. It's literally about kindness and inclusion."

April and others organized a rally on September 10<sup>th</sup> to support kindness and inclusivity. The rally was attended by people from around the Lehigh Valley and featured speakers from Lehigh Valley Stands Up and the Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center.

"We want people in Nazareth to know that they are our neighbors," said United Church of Christ Pastor, Jeff Briggs.

- Jeff Vitelli



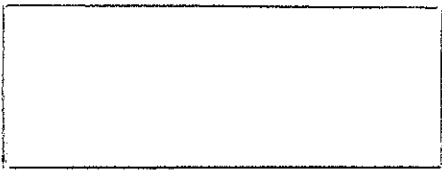
# LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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## Monthly Peace Vigil

(Second Thursdays)

October 13, 4:30 - 5:30 pm

November 10, 4 - 5 pm

*End the wars. Witness for peace.*

3<sup>rd</sup> & Wyandotte Sts.,  
(south) Bethlehem

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

## Defuse Nuclear War Peace Vigil

On 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Cuban Missile Crisis,  
Help reduce the risks of nuclear war.

*Friday, October 14*

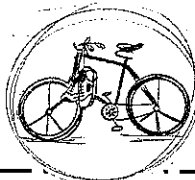
*Noon-1 pm*

Outside the Federal Building,  
5<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Sts., Allentown

(For more information see page 1.)

## LEPOCO's October Bike/Walk-a-thon Saturday, October 15

(For more info,  
see insert &  
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## JCPOA: What's Next?

Presentation & Discussion:

Faramarz Farbod

4 pm, Sunday, October 23

LEPOCO Peace Center

1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem (enter at back)

Part of Defuse Nuclear War October Campaign