

January 11, 2013

Dear Friends,

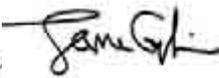
We deeply appreciate your gifts in response to the appeal letter from Medea Benjamin. We are honored by your enthusiastic backing of our work for nonviolent action.

If you haven't yet given, it's never too late. Your support is welcome at any time of year!

The Muste Institute has rung in 2013 by joining the Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign, a partnership between the Onondaga Nation and allies to educate New York state residents about ecological stewardship and mutual commitment to peace between peoples. Learn more at honorthetworum.org.

What does this year hold for our building? We are actively weighing options and hope to choose a direction very soon. Meanwhile, read on page 3 about the sheltering grants which benefit our wonderful tenant groups.

Thanks again for your generous support of courageous grassroots efforts for social transformation. Best wishes for the New Year!



 Jeanne Strole Jane Guskin
 Co-Director Co-Director



VOL. 20, NUMBER 2

Winter 2013

Building Community Power, Fighting Deportation

In June 2012 the Muste Institute made Social Justice Fund grants to two grassroots groups working in different states to halt "ICE Holds," in which local law enforcement officials detain people they suspect may be immigrants, then hand them over to the federal government for deportation. In December, we interviewed Victoria Ruiz (VR) of the Olneyville Neighborhood Association in Rhode Island and Esther Reyes (ER) of the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition in Texas about their work on this issue.

How long has your organization been around, and how did it start?

VR: Olneyville Neighborhood Association (ONA) has been around for about six years. There was a lot of gentrification going on in an area of Providence that's home to a lot of immigrants. People got together to fight for the neighborhood, and ended up forming a grassroots organization where the members decide what issues to work on. That membership base began to confront the rising criminalization of immigrants and people of color in our communities.

ER: Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition (AIRC) was also founded six years ago, when organizations in Austin came together to push back against national anti-immigrant bill HR4437. As more immigrant community members got involved, AIRC became a membership organization and adopted a human rights framework.

Can you describe your organizing and leadership development models?

ER: AIRC trains immigrant community members to become human rights promoters. They learn about the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the history of immigration and immigrants in this country. The promoters then form human rights

committees of about 10 people, and they train the committee members. That's the organizing mechanism.

Members involved in committees have a voice in the organization and cast their votes for priorities. Some members become regional team coordinators and support the formation of new committees.

VR: The model we use at ONA is similar to the Zapatista model of organizing, which seeks to collectively identify people who are interested in becoming leaders. Our model is like a wheel: the organization is in the center, and the spokes of individuals are in the community, bringing the folks around them into wider grassroots struggles for dignity, respect and justice.

Each member-leader becomes part of the rotating coordination team for six months to a year. They receive training and support on how to manage the daily work of the organization, and how to widen opportunities for the members.

What led to your campaign against local law enforcement collaboration with ICE, the federal immigration enforcement agency?

VR: The passage of SB1070 in Arizona, and heavy lobbying by the prison-industrial complex to pass that racist anti-immigrant law, sparked nationwide grassroots resistance. We heard there was going to be an Arizona "copycat" law in Rhode Island, so we started a "We are all Arizona" coalition, and our members went out and got other organizations, churches, and labor groups to join. ONA leads the coalition.

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AIRC members at the Austin Human Rights Convention, organized by AIRC.

PHOTO BY AIRC

Fighting Deportation *(continued from page 1)*

We have a “big picture” analysis of why we confront collaboration between local law enforcement and ICE. We did lots of political education and identified how we were going to choose targets and tactics.

Simultaneously, we were seeing our members and their family members arrested for driving without a license, or harassed by police because of the color of their skin, or because they “look” undocumented. People were being deported. So that individual pain and loss lit the fire for the campaign.

ER: The federal government’s “Secure Communities” program (S-Comm) was piloted in Texas in 2008, and Travis County, where we’re located, introduced it in the county jails. Soon we had one of the highest rates of deportation of community members who had not even committed a crime, or only a minor infraction. So we saw increasing deportations and diminishing trust in local law enforcement. Members brought it up as an issue. We work to improve the community’s relationship with local law enforcement, by putting stories out there of how people are impacted by the program.

Mass incarceration and the criminalization of immigrants are a major human rights crisis in this country. This campaign is really important for human dignity, and keeping our families together, and because of how criminalization impacts our futures.

What have you accomplished so far?

ER: At the state level, working with community organizations statewide last year we were able to defeat a proposed bill to make S-Comm mandatory under

PHOTO BY AIRC



Texas law. Participation is mandatory across the country right now but local officials have discretion. We were also able to defeat Arizona copycat laws that gave local enforcement officers authority to investigate a person’s immigration status.

On the local level, we were able to get a resolution through two city commissions condemning the way S-Comm is implemented. We also have raised attention and media awareness around this issue.

VR: At ONA we’ve been able to bring in new member-leaders and create a grassroots-led campaign and a space for political education. We won public support through press conferences, and letters from law enforcement officials and local politicians criticizing S-Comm and ICE holds. Rhode Island became the first state to revoke an agreement with ICE which had allowed state police to enforce immigration law. We also won the rescinding of an executive order which would have forced the state’s employers to verify the immigration status of their workers.



PHOTO BY ONA

Above: A wheel chart at ONA’s office shows their organizing model. Left: “Texas Can Do Better” march and rally against anti-immigrant bills in Texas.

Led by ONA, our coalition presented on cooperation between local law enforcement and immigration to every police chief in Rhode Island. So now when we know of someone in an immigration hold, we have direct communication with the head of Corrections, and people who are ready to run delegations. We could not have done this without our community defense network, where people call to let us know that a family member has been detained.

What goals do you have for the next year?

VR: To stop the submission to ICE holds in Rhode Island, and fight for access to driver’s licenses in our state.

ER: Because Texas is such a large state, we’re focusing on a county ordinance that limits the sheriff’s authority to honor ICE holds.

[Note: The online edition of Muste Notes includes a more complete version of this interview.]

Justice for Bedouin Refugees

The Jahalin Association (Al Khan al Ahmar) is an organization of Bedouin refugees resisting forced displacement by the Israeli military, using grassroots activism with Palestinian, Israeli and international partners, legal petitions, and advocacy in a campaign for justice led by the community. The Jahalin Tribe was forced off their land in the Negev desert in 1951, following creation of the Israeli state. Their homes have been demolished numerous times, and they live under complete Israeli military control in the West Bank. The Association became a sponsored project of the Muste Institute in 2012. www.jahalin.org

PHOTO BY RYAN RODRICK BEILER



A Palestinian Jahalin Bedouin girl studies an Arabic textbook in Al Khan Al Ahmar, east of Jerusalem. Her home, like all structures in the community, is under threat of demolition by Israeli authorities.

A.J. Muste Memorial Institute

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Sheltering the Movement

In January 2011 the Muste Institute began a new grant fund to support the educational and organizing work of our grassroots movement tenants. Grants covering the 30-month period from January 2011 through June 2013 total \$77,100:

Deep Dish TV: \$11,025 for interactive video programs including "Uprooted: A Grassroots Examination of the Politics of Migration."

Granny Peace Brigade: \$1,012.50 to educate the public about redirecting taxpayer money away from the military and toward social needs.

Met Council on Housing: \$9,450 to educate and inform New York City tenants about their rights, and to organize and mobilize members around affordable housing and related issues.

National Committee to Reopen the Rosenberg Case: \$337.50 to educate the public about the injustice involved in the execution of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, and the ongoing need to protect civil liberties and constitutional rights.

New York State Youth Leadership Council: \$3,375 for the "Education Not Deportation" campaign and other efforts by this undocumented-youth-led organization to challenge the broken immigration system through leadership



PHOTO BY KATIE MOORE

Left: April 1, 2012: Granny Peace Brigade leads an Occupy Wall Street march across the Brooklyn Bridge.

Below: Members of the New York State Youth Leadership Council at their office, preparing banners for the May Day 2012 march.



PHOTO BY JANE GUSKIN

development, organizing, education and a safe space for self-expression.

Paper Tiger TV: \$13,500 to expose and challenge corporate control of the media and promote alternatives; recent projects include a public spaces show, a "Little Mermaid Singalong," a credit card debt opera, and an online video blog.

Socialist Party USA: \$5,400 for educational work, organizing and mobilizing against militarism and racism and in favor of labor rights, immigrant rights and access to health care.

War Resisters League: \$33,000 for distributing *WIN Magazine* and other educational materials on nonviolence

and against war, and for speaking events including those organized with Afghan activist and writer Malalai Joya and playwright Eve Ensler.

Social Justice Fund Grants, September 2012

American Civil Liberties Union of Idaho Foundation, Boise, Idaho: \$2,000 for Bridging Common Voices Against the Death Penalty in Idaho, a campaign

to educate, organize and mobilize Idaho residents to challenge the use of the death penalty.

housing rights in Haiti.



PHOTO BY ALEXIS ERKERT

FRAKKA executive secretary Sanon Reynold speaks at a press conference about Hurricane Sandy's impact on displacement camps, and the need for a long-term government response to Haiti's housing crisis.

Fòs Refleksyon Ak Aksyon sou Koze Kay (Force for Reflection and Action for Housing, FRAKKA), Port-au-Prince, Haiti: \$2,000 (via International Development Exchange/Other Worlds) for stipends for community organizers of the "Under Tents" campaign for

Tri-Valley Communities Against a Radioactive Environment, Livermore, CA: \$1,500 for education and organizing in local communities to build public pressure against a National Nuclear Security Administration plan to transport plutonium bomb cores between facilities in Los Alamos, New Mexico and Livermore, California.



Umi Hagitani of the No Nukes Action Committee speaks at an August 5, 2012 event organized by Tri-Valley CAREs across from the Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab. "Foreclose on the Bomb, Not the People" marked the 67th Anniversary of the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

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#2: Barbara Deming – the feminist connection to nonviolence – *On Revolution and Equilibrium*

#3: Henry David Thoreau – the original architect of resistance – *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*

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#5: Emma Goldman – fiery orator, anarchist, agitator for peace and liberation – *Preparedness: The Road to Universal Slaughter; The Individual, Society and the State*

#6: Rosa Luxemburg – courageous leader of Germany’s democratic socialist movement – *Prison Letters*



#7: A. J. Muste – foremost 20th Century Pacifist theoretician and activist, minister, socialist – *Who Has the Spiritual Atom Bomb?*

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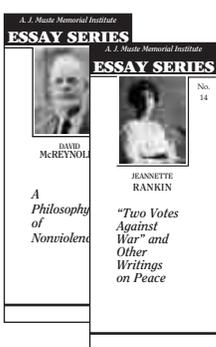
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#13: (Spanish) Martin Luther King, Jr. – Spanish language translation of *Loving Your Enemies*



#14: Jeannette Rankin – first woman in Congress, suffragist, pacifist – *“Two Votes Against War” and Other Writings on Peace*

#15: David McReynolds – longtime activist with the War Resisters League, Socialist Party presidential candidate – *A Philosophy of Nonviolence*

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Peace Agitator: The Story of A.J. Muste. by Nat Hentoff. A 250-page biography with many photos, profiling the ‘grandfather’ of the U.S. peace movement – minister, labor activist, pacifist and resister. Introduction by Larry Gara.

Wear Your Peace Shirt. Muste Institute t-shirts are black cotton with a four-color geometric design and the words: *“There is no way to peace, peace is the way – A.J. Muste”* Available in large and extra large. Shirts are made in the U.S.A.



The Essays of A.J. Muste
Edited by Nat Hentoff, preface by Jo Ann O. Robinson. Originally issued in 1967, this 500-page edition includes Muste’s “Notes for an Autobiography,” plus essays on pacifism, civil rights, trade unionism and foreign policy, written between 1905 and 1966.

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