

issues

A Newsletter of the Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center

Egypt and Tunisia Underscore Power of Nonviolence - Remind Us of What is Possible

How does an oppressive regime stay in place? Usually it stirs up enough propaganda, fear, violence and division that institutions and people acquiesce, cooperate, tow the line. Fear is a powerful force. As Egyptian novelist Ahdaf Soueif reflects on the toppling of Mubarak -

"I think that what happened . . . was people were rediscovering themselves and each other. It was as though everybody had been locked in solitary in a small little dark box, you know, and told to be afraid of everything else and sort of rattled from time to time. And you'd opened the box and stepped out and found that everything was great. You know, there was light. There were other people. And what happened was that almost overnight a civic space was created in Tahrir Square that was the ideal space, that one imagined, that everybody imagined, how the country should be or how any country should be."

How was such a space created? Things had been simmering in Egypt for a long time. Organizing had been underway for years. Civil society had been gaining strength with labor becoming more powerful, with the emergence of the youthful, secular Kefaya (meaning "Enough!") movement in 2003, the general strike of April 6, 2008, the online We are all Khaled Said campaign in 2010, and the energy of the youth led April 6th movement. Steadily, Egyptian activists have been chipping away at the fear, apathy, and obedience required to support the regime. The youth, in particular, creatively figured out relatively low risk ways for people to participate through online organizing, which helped cut through the regime's deceptions, demonstrate the depth and strength of the movement, thereby reducing people's fear. Tunisia's successful insurrection further emboldened and inspired Egyptians.

As Democracy Now Egyptian correspondent Sharif Abdel Kouddous said "Youth were the spark that kind of lit this fire. But it's been smoldering for so long in Egypt. And really, the backbone of it was the labor movement. They are the most radical and have been the most fierce resisters to the Mubarak government for many years." However, Egyptians of all backgrounds were present in Tahir Square and in demonstrations across Egypt- youth, elders, Christians, Muslims, doctors, lawyers, students, trade unionists and others. The pro-democracy movement stuck together. This was crucial in successfully forcing Mubarak to step down. Frequent chants in Tahrir were "Muslim, Christian We're all Egyptian."

Another important ingredient of their success was the pro-democracy movement's commitment to nonviolence in spite of infiltrators and attacks. The regime, rather than the protestors, was discredited by violence. A 2007 study published in the journal International Security, analyzed 323 major insurrections in support of self-determination and democratic rule since 1900, finding violent resistance successful 26 percent of the time, whereas nonviolent campaigns had a 53 percent rate of success.

**SPRING
2011**

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While popular struggle must continue for years for democratic, responsive governments to emerge in Egypt and Tunisia, their successful nonviolent campaigns are reverberating across the globe inspiring movements in Algeria, Yemen, Jordan, Bahrain, Iran, Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, and beyond.

Take Action: Help Move Money from the Pentagon to the People!

Upset by state, federal, and local budgets being balanced on the backs of the poor, vulnerable, and working families?

Wondering if there is a more just way to promote shared prosperity and fiscal responsibility?

Did you know that the bipartisan commissioned Sustainable Defense Task Force has identified nearly \$1 trillion dollars in cuts to the base defense budget (not including wars) that won't sacrifice security?

Did you know that we have spent over \$1 trillion on wars in Afghanistan and Iraq?

Did you know that it costs over \$1 million per individual troop on the ground in Afghanistan?

Interested in bringing the money back home to our communities?

Great! IJPC has recently joined the New Priorities Network, an initiative to fund urgently needed jobs and restore vital public services by substantially cutting military spending. We will be building bridges between peace groups and economic justice groups, gathering our collective strength to move money from the Pentagon to the people. Can you get involved?

There are plenty of ways to plug in. Are you a member of an organization, any kind of group—community, religious, union, advocacy, political, or service? You can help convince your organization to join IJPC's Fund Our Communities campaign and pass a resolution to reorder our nation's priorities. Find out more about how to get involved at IJPC's next peace committee meeting on April 20th at 7pm or give Kristen a call at 513.579.8547.

Community Victory Dinner Builds Ties

The Community Victory Dinner in February was a huge success, bringing a diverse group of over 40 labor and community activists together, building connections for the intense struggles ahead.

As Martin Luther King said, "Now, what does all of this mean in this great period of history? It means that we've got to stay together. We've got to stay together and maintain unity. You know, whenever Pharaoh wanted to prolong the period of slavery in Egypt, he had a favorite formula for doing it. What was that? He kept the slaves fighting among themselves. But whenever the slaves get together, something happens in Pharaoh's court, and he cannot hold the slaves in slavery. When the slaves get together, that's the beginning of getting out of slavery. Now let us maintain unity."



Intercommunity Justice & Peace Center

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IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION UPDATE

Almost a year ago, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer signed a harsh new immigration law known as Senate Bill 1070. Despite controversies and criticisms around this law, many other states are considering similar anti-immigrant legislations. This comes as no surprise as U.S. Congress has repeatedly failed to pass much needed comprehensive immigration reform legislation. As a consequence, state and local governments are increasingly responding and proposing immigration measures of their own, most of which can be seen as anti-immigrant and could lead to racial profiling. SB1070 and other copycat legislations, in fact, are punitive and do not address the real problem.

In Ohio, there are currently two proposed legislations: Senate Bills 42 and 98. Thanks to Senator Kearney, SB42 seeks to address the issue of racial profiling making it an unlawful and discriminatory practice for any law enforcement agency or officer to engage in racial profiling activities. But, SB98 directs the attorney general to pursue a memorandum of agreement with federal officials permitting the enforcement of federal immigration laws. This includes the apprehension, detention and investigation of the undocumented population. SB98 can easily lead to profiling and disrespect of the rights and dignities of all persons.

In February, we witnessed a victory close to home in Kentucky. Senate Bill 6 would have given law enforcement authorities the power to question and detain individuals suspected of being in the country without proper documentation, making it illegal to help immigrants or provide trans-



Many students made the trip to Frankfort, KY to make their voices heard at a lobby and rally day opposing SB 6.

portation of any kind. This bill alarmed many Kentuckians, while simultaneously encouraging many to voice their opinions and show their opposition (See Picture). The bill was defeated! However, it could be reintroduced in the 2012 Assembly. **Join us and contact your federal legislators to tell them to stop Arizona style legislations and consider comprehensive and humane immigration reform for the entire country NOW!**

BUILDING FUTURE REFORMERS!



IJPC's Immigration Student group hosted a meeting where students were able to learn more about immigration law from attorney Luis Valencia.

More and more young people are becoming involved in social justice issues, and immigration is no exception. Students, in particular, are becoming more organized and willing to stand up for their opinions. **IJPC's Immigration Student Group** was created to bring together those students who are eager to learn more about our immigration system and build a community that works towards comprehensive immigration reform.

IJPC's newest program is developing a network of future leaders from the immigrant community to work towards a more just immigration system. The uniqueness of this group is that it brings together students from different backgrounds, both immigrant and not, giving them a safe space to connect with others while sharing their opinions and concerns. Young people have the opportunity to learn from experts, access many resources, and network with other young leaders in the area! The student group develops their leadership skills, and gives the young community the knowledge and courage necessary to become future reformers!

**Contact Mayra at 513-579-8547 to join!
Find us on Facebook at:
IJPC's Immigration Student Group.**

Abolition Bill Introduced in Ohio Lobby Day at Statehouse on May 10th

On March 14th, state representatives Ted Celeste (D-Grandview Heights) and Nickie J. Antonio (D-Lakewood) along with 12 other representatives introduced a bill to abolish Ohio's death penalty in Ohio.

These representatives are not alone in calling for an end to capital punishment. The person who crafted the death penalty law approved in 1981, Ohio Supreme Court Justice Paul Pfeifer, thinks **"it's the most opportune time to seriously debate and discuss whether or not we have the death penalty"**. Pfeifer has called capital punishment a lottery.

The 154-page bill is H.B. No. 160. Ohioans to Stop Executions (OTSE) is sponsoring a lobby day to educate representatives on this legislation and the importance of it. OTSE's Lobby Day is Tuesday, May 10th from 9am-2pm at the Statehouse. OTSE will provide all the materials and information necessary as well as a brief training before the visits begin. Lunch will also be provided.

Contact Renee Berlon at [513-543-1585](tel:513-543-1585) by April 26th to register as a group or individual.

"Capital Punishment is hereby abolished. A trial court that sentenced an offender to death prior to the effective date of this amendment shall conduct a hearing to resentence the offender. At the resentencing hearing, the court shall impose upon the offender a sentence of life imprisonment without parole."

~ H.B. No. 160

Upcoming Events:

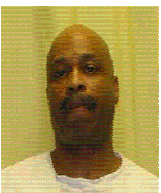
May 10, 2011 9:00 AM — 2:00 PM
OTSE Lobby Day at the Ohio Statehouse
Contact Renee Berlon at [513-543-1585](tel:513-543-1585) by April 26th to register for individuals & groups.

MAY 11, 2011 5:30pm — 7:30pm
Cincinnati OTSE WRITE-A-THON
At the Peaslee Neighborhood Center
Write Governor Kasich to ask for a commutation of the sentences for Ohioans with death dates. Write legislators to encourage them to support HB160. **Bring a dish to share.**

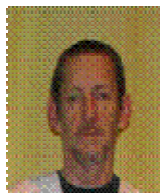
Shawn Hawkins Innocence Case:

- The only eye witness changed his testimony many times and then recanted his story.
- Fingerprint evidence which may have shown Shawn's innocence was destroyed.
- A jailhouse snitch testimony offered to change his testimony for money.
- The gun prosecution claimed was used in the murder was in police custody when the murders took place. Both the Grand Jury and trial jury were shown the gun box as evidence. No murder weapon was every found.
- No mitigating information was given at the sentencing
- 3 judges involved in Shawn's case have expressed misgivings about his guilt.

Why do we kill people to show people that killing is wrong?
Go To ijpc-cincinnati.org to sign petitions to save these men



Clarence Carter
4/12/11



Daniel Bedford
5/17/11



Shawn Hawkins
6/14/11



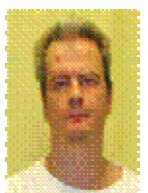
Kenneth Smith
7/19/11



Brett Hartmann
8/16/11



Billy Slagle
9/20/11



Joseph Murphy
10/18/11



Reginald Brooks
11/15/11



Charles Lorraine
1/18/12



Michael Webb
2/22/12

**May they rest
in peace**



Frank Spisak
executed by the
State of Ohio on
February 17, 2011

Johnnie Baston executed by
the State of Ohio on March
10, 2011.

Remember them in your prayer and also their family and friends, the victims of the crimes they were convicted of, the family and friends of those murdered, Governor Kasich and all who have the power to save life.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

By Monica McGloin, OP
Chairperson Cincinnati Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice

On March 1, 2011 thousands of Ohioans rallied at the Ohio State House to support Middle Class American Workers by protesting Senate Bill 5 (SB5). SB5 was introduced by Senator Shannon Jones and supported by Governor John Kasich as a way to close the projected 6-8 billion deficit in the Ohio State budget. SB5 focuses on Public Employees (teachers, nurses, police officers, fire fighters, sanitation workers, etc.) specifically their right to collective bargaining and to strike. This bill was formulated with no input from these workers or their representatives.



Monica speaking before 20,000 people in defense of working families.

Why we question SB5:

- The right to collective bargaining and to form unions and collectives is a core principle of Catholic Social Teaching and a means to balancing the power between “owners” and “workers”.
- The right to have a “voice” is also a key principle of Democracy.
- Before workers won the right to form unions and collectives, there were grave injustices in the workplace including low wages, unsafe practices (Triangle Shirtwaist Factory as an example), unregulated child labor and, long and excessive work schedules. The formation of unions led to improved working conditions, legislation to protect workers and assure minimal compensation, child labor laws and, ultimately the development of a “middle class” in America. SB5 is an attack on the middle class and threatens to erode communities already weakened by the current financial crisis.
- SB5 attempts to divide Ohioans by pitting public service workers against private sector workers. This is an artificial division and a common tactic used by those in power to maintain control. Gov. Kasich has said that the burden of balancing our budget requires shared sacrifice by all Ohioans. If enacted the effects of SB5 will ripple out to the whole community and ultimately we will all be poorer, unemployment will rise and our children will inherit our past, i.e., a two class system where people are secondary to profits.

- If SB5 is truly about shared sacrifice to reduce our projected budget deficit, the bill would focus on job creation (Gov. Kasich's campaign promise) and would address reducing the privileges of the wealthy and corporate welfare. The current economic crisis was not caused by middle and working class citizens. It was created by Wall Street, the Banks and unscrupulous business practices (see the documentary film, "Inside Job"). If corporations were to bear their share of sacrifice, we would propose legislation to require job development in exchange for tax abatements and caps on CEO wages and benefits (CEO wages are currently 500 times greater than the average worker). Rather than "picking the pockets" of working people, our legislators and Religious Leaders would call on those who have more to give more. Instead they continue tax breaks for the wealthy and are planning to eliminate the Estate Tax here in Ohio.



The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected--the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

*Teachers, firefighters, police, nurses, and more in attendance. All workers gathered at the Statehouse—
This is what democracy looks like!*

*Photos by Paul Davis.
Used with permission.*

- SB5 and similar legislation is aimed at destroying Unions and their capacity to contribute to campaigns. This is a poorly disguised effort to enable Corporate America to control our federal and state legislative bodies. As we witness other nations struggle for a democratic form of government, we must be vigilant and not give up our democracy. At the heart of protests against SB5 is the right of all people to have a voice in decisions which impact our communities. **We encourage everyone to support the campaign to place SB5 on the ballot. When the petitions are available, sign them, circulate them and VOTE on November 8, 2011.**

Continue to follow this effort!

Find Stand Up For Ohio on Facebook

For More Information about SB5, go to: Ohio Legislative Service Commission and search for SB5

Visit oh.aficio.org/cincinnati/

And Sign Up for IJPC's Newsletter

10 Years Later

In April 2001, while IJPC was organizing around the execution of Jay D. Scott—mother Angela Leisure was about to lose her son, Timothy Thomas. We had been part of vigils and marches when Michael Carpenter was killed in March 1999, and when Roger Owensby Jr was killed in November 2000. But 2001 was different. When Timothy Thomas was killed - the energy, the passion, the ethical indignation reached higher levels—and would not be ignored. People paid attention.

At Mr. Thomas' funeral—attention was paid by the President of the NAACP Kweisi Mfume; Ohio Governor Taft; Martin Luther King III; Mayor Luken and others—all demanding that Timothy's death not be in vain—to be a turning point for a new Cincinnati.

Damon Lynch III preached, "Stand Up! Stand Up for something! Stand Up! Stand Up and we've got to keep on standing until everyone is free!"

Many groups and publications have offered reflection on this 10th anniversary. We simply want to offer a few questions.

- *Was April 2001 a turning point for Cincinnati? If so, how?*
- *Is Cincinnati better? How are you measuring?*
- *Have you stood up? For whom?*
- *Are you part of change?*
- *In contrast to 2001, on Election Day 2009 many people voted for the first time and a feeling of Hope was palpable on the streets of Over The Rhine. Do you continue to experience this hope? Why do you think that is?*
- *When is the last time you had a conversation with someone about racism? Do you think this is an issue that we should be talking/acting more about?*

Dialogue Scene and Heard



Dialogue efforts continue full force at IJPC with an increasing number of outside requests for dialogue services. In recent months . . .

- The Dialogue Program has been on the road to a Contemporary Ethical Issues Class at XU as well as to social service agencies interested in working better together.
- A recent dialogue facilitator training has led to more opportunities to expand the dialogue's reach.
- Three public dialogues are in the works including a follow up to a Church in Pain : Pathways to Healing which will occur in October and is titled "Evening of Dialogue on Emerging Spirituality, A Journey Within."
- Coming Soon - A new offering will be made available called the Public Square, a monthly forum at a local café where dialogue facilitators will be present to facilitate small group dialogues on pressing issues of the day. Stay tuned. Sign up for the dialogue e-news to find out more!

B.Y.E Update

The **Before You Enlist** program had a great success recently! We had an opportunity to interact with over 50 students from Virtual High School as well as guidance counselors who were very receptive to our program to ensure people make an informed decision about military enlistment. Please be on the lookout for a BYE event happening this summer. We are always looking for volunteers so please call

Katherine at 579-8547 or email,

Katherine@ijpc-cincinnati.org

Save the Date!

Nonviolent Conflict Intervention Training

Saturday, July 16, 9am-4pm
Peaslee Neighborhood Center

Take one practical step towards a less violent world. This workshop will introduce techniques you can use when faced with a conflict that might turn nasty or violent. By defusing the immediate situation, you create a space that gives everyone time to understand the root of the conflict and to resolve it in a peaceful way.

Cost: \$25— includes materials and lunch
RSVP: Kristen Barker at 513.579.8547

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& Peace Center
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THANK YOU

*To all of our generous donors
for supporting our
2011 IJPC Phon-a-thon
It was a great success!*



Sponsored by the Intercommunity
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Good Friday April 22, 2011 Way of the Cross/Way of Justice

**A Public Worship of Prayer, Song and Theater on
Good Friday.**

A unique religious event, the Way of the Cross/Way of Justice retraces the journey of Jesus in his final hours. As we view presentations of the stations of the cross, we will recall the suffering of Jesus by remembering those who suffer in our city and world. Supported by faith in Christ's resurrection, the Way of the Cross/Way of Justice is an expression of hope that the violence and injustices in our world and our lives, will be redeemed.

PLEASE JOIN US AS WE PRAY

For more information please contact the Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center at (513) 579-8547 or email Katherine at katherine@ijpc-cincinnati.org