



Update

October 2020
Volume 36, Issue 2

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a beloved friend
and mentor

**IT COULDN'T
MATTER MORE.**



**IT'S TIME TO RISE UP AND
TO VOTE LIKE YOUR LIFE
AND YOUR DESCENDANTS'
LIVES DEPENDED ON IT,
BECAUSE IT PROBABLY
DOES.**

Solidarity or Bust!

By Tim Wolcott

Raising your arm in a fist at a rally is not enough. We have internal work to do.

Solidarity for the common good is an aspiration too often thwarted by ego, white fragility and apathy. Nonetheless, it offers great hope in these tumultuous times. Most often, it is blocked by an individual's resistance to question their world view, by corporate economic interests and/or by regressive governmental policies. The window for breaking down the *silos* and joining like and unlike minded people for justice, peace and a habitable biosphere is quickly narrowing. Let's determine what moral values we share and join together to build solidarity. We have the power of numbers. Let's combine forces now!

The struggle for solidarity has an ally in the understanding that many disparate progressive organizations have common threads connecting them through intersectionality. In essence, **intersectionality** attempts to explain how a person's social and political identities (e.g. gender, race, class, religion, disability, physical appearance, etc.) can combine to create discrimination or privilege in their lives. Too often, a narrow focus on the environment or racial injustice or militarism can preclude the necessary joining together of activists that must occur for effective change to begin / to take place. In the interest of solidarity, we must reconsider our personal assumptions and intentionally practice humility while listening deeply to leaders of marginalized people articulate their grievances and goals. Looking carefully for what values (mission) another organization has that overlap (intersect) with your own facilitates that process. After which we should then support each other (as needed and requested) while we all resist, step up and/or speak out.

The **Poor People's Campaign** (poorpeoplescampaign.org) is an example of a multi-racial, young / old, male / female, able / disabled, cis and queer, coalition of poor / low income people and their allies that has created an organization that now functions in 40 states. Its leader, Rev. Dr. William Barber, encapsulates the mission of PPC - "We are committed to lifting up and deepening the leadership of the most affected by systemic racism, poverty, the war economy and ecological devastation and to **building unity** across lines of division." It exposes voter suppression policies as it helps fund candidates. The PPC works to build up the power of the people through state-based actions that coalesce into a moral movement. (Full disclosure – I am a member of the PPC and have participated in a PPC-organized civil disobedience action in Albany, NY.)

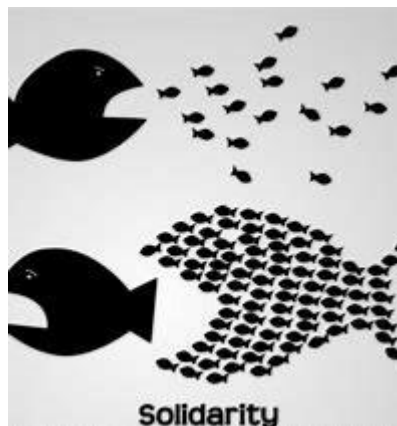
The **Rising Majority** (therisingmajority.com) is another intersectionally-focused coalition. It now includes 53 individual organizations. **The Movement of Black Lives** and allied organizations formed the "The Rising Majority" in 2017. The coalition includes some of my favorites such as Jewish Voices for Peace, Indigenous Environmental Network and Highlander Research & Education Center. US Labor Against the War, Grassroots Global Justice, Fight for \$15 and even About Face: Veterans Against the War are in the coalition. *

I believe in their mission. The Rising Majority is "committed to cohering movements and engaging organizations and individuals in strategies that are crucial to deepening solidarity and building power". They offer ways for us to *de-silo*, like organizing around shared targets in our campaigns, like promoting narratives, ideas and "cultural interventions that influence popular consciousness to uproot the fundamental systems of racialized capitalism and patriarchy." Furthermore, this coalition coordinates and shares leadership to guide organizations "to practice the anti-racist, radical democracy we are fighting for".

The Rising Majority "through convening spaces, such as think tanks, teach-ins and conferences" facilitate collective thinking and information sharing that creates "viable strategies for change, taking lessons from history and applying a transnational, anti-racist anti-imperialist perspective". Their focus is from the bottom up. They "believe it's important to fortify the leadership and organizing of Black people and people of color, Indigenous people, women, LGBTQ people, youth and students". A primary objective of The Rising Majority is "to develop a collective strategy and shared practice that will involve labor, youth, abolition, immigrant rights, climate change,

feminist, anti-war/anti-imperialist and economic justice forces in order to amplify our collective power and to build alignment across our movements".

I am a member of The Rising Majority and hope you consider becoming one. My greater hope is that more of us redouble our efforts to look more inside ourselves to find shared values with others, and then redouble those efforts to trust others in solidarity.



- (An aside – why isn't national Peace Action or national Veterans for Peace in the coalition? I'll find out, and I intend to comment later on that as need arises)

Black Lives Matter

By Jim Clune

How should we support those protesting racism in America?

A good first step is to stand up to say, in many ways, that **Black Lives Matter**. A second, and vitally necessary step, is to call for transparency and accountability of any police force (including military forces being misused), whenever their power is abused, and then, covered up. A third step is to recognize American racism affects us all, particularly Black, Brown, Native and most recently, Middle Eastern peoples.

The time has come to realize that sympathy for those who have suffered under white supremacy is charity that costs people of European origin in America very little. What costs so much in life and treasure is racism. It not only creates personal prejudice, racism generates and maintains unjust historical momentum through its effects in our economic, political and religious institutions.

The assumption that some people can dominate while others are dominated, as part of the natural order of things, is profoundly inhumane, and needs to be discarded. This requires getting to the roots of violence and injustice, and acting on the assumption that we all deserve better. Let's step up today and stand with our Black brothers and sisters.



"It is what it is."

By Jack Gilroy

Is this recent statement from the P.O.T.U.S. stoical or contemptible? We need to decide come **November 3, 2020**.

Having disbanded the national infectious disease preparedness board before the pandemic occurred and having dismissed the current anti-racist protesters as thugs and anarchists merely, uninformed actions or were, they a pattern of his sowing country-wide discord? We need to decide come November 3, 2020.

Voicing dissent may be in the DNA of members of Broome County Peace Action and Veterans for Peace. We work hard to end injustices. We urge people to vote, and we vote ourselves. In any case, our individual and organizational activism begs the question: What concrete societal benefits come from our efforts?

It's a fair enough question, but often impossible to answer. Usually we really don't know what specific good we create. Most often, like educators, there is a time lag between our actions and their effects, if there is an effect at all. We could just sit in comfort and complain, but something moves us not to accept the status quo. Meanwhile our Electoral College-anointed President seems reconciled to the situation: "It is what it is."

Members of Peace Action and Veterans for Peace ask, why is it, what it is?

We believe that injustice occurs because many good people find it more comfortable to ignore injustice than to try to stop it. We understand that some have neither the time, health nor money to spend on activism. However, for those who can, if enough people would commit to doing more than just vote, real change will happen. It starts with you.

Our PA/VFP mandate is to inform the ill-informed while we energize ourselves to not abandon our mission. The community-at-large has opportunities to advocate for justice (at the dinner table, at work, in church, in the classroom, at sports events and in the streets). If all we do is vote, our personal and national condition will remain scary, at the very minimum.

We need to find the courage to teach peace and social justice. Mary Harris (Mother Jones) and Dorothy Day, two activist icons of the 20th century, stood by the dictum: "Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

Come **November 3rd**, we need to comfort the good people of our nation crying out for justice by afflicting a resounding defeat of our callous, self-serving representatives in government, starting with the P.O.T.U.S.



George Haeseler, a beloved friend and mentor

Compiled and written by Cecily O'Neil

As many of you know, we lost a dear friend and fellow activist earlier this year. George Haeseler had moved to North Carolina to be closer to his adult children a few years ago, and occasionally visited us in the Broome County area. He was an inspirational leader and role model. Some of his many friends have offered the following remembrances:

"George was very generous. At his 80th birthday party, instead of receiving gifts, he asked people to donate the money to the peace activist fund...His kindness is certainly remembered. We visited him in North Carolina once and he couldn't have been more hospitable... I think George Haeseler grew old gracefully and with a full knowledge of affairs of the country."

Over many years George led and supported **B.C.P.A.** as President, counselor, Treasurer, Letter-to-Editor writer and outspoken advocate for peace. "When the second war on the people of Iraq was being hyped by the Bush-Cheney gang, George and others placed an advertisement **"NO WAR ON IRAQ"** in the press and on several area billboards. Then, George and eleven others stood on the top step of the Federal Building in Binghamton with a banner that read: **"War should not be the business of the U.S. Government. This office is closed"**. George had a bulldog grip on honesty and integrity.

George was proactive. "He loved supporting organizations that were challenges." George arranged bus trips to Washington, DC and New York City, and as an active member of Broome County Peace Action, "he was constantly making proposals that we almost always approved."

"I remember George being our moral compass in the **Stu Naismith Chapter 90 of Veterans for Peace**. He was an extremely generous and activist person. One time he loaned us his Toyota van to drive to the School of the Americas Watch in Columbus. GA. He was always there for progressive, peaceful causes. In his later years he said, 'If I can't be there in person, I'll send my dollars!'"

Many of his Broome County friends added their fond memories of George's beloved wife Arlene. "I remember Arlene as someone who always wanted to do good. When we organized the salad preparation at the UU Congregation of Binghamton for the Sarah Jane Methodist Church soup

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kitchen, she was a weekly regular. At her wake, George gave each person who came to pay their respects one of her many scarves [which] I still have.”

As scarves are shared and friendship and justice are honored, we revere you, George and Arlene.

Contributors: Cheryl Finch, Jack Sexton, George and Sue McAnanama, Jack Gilroy, Alan Jones and Toni Norton.

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19: You have already paid your membership in 2019. THANK YOU!

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UPDATE

Published by **The Broome County Nuclear Weapons Reduction Campaign, Inc.**, the educational arm of Broome County Peace Action, P.O. Box 1611, Binghamton, NY 13902, 607-773-0246 bcpeaceaction.org

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