

September  
2016

# PASI NEWS

Newsletter of Peace Action of Staten Island, [www.peacesi.org](http://www.peacesi.org) 718-989-2881

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## Calendar:

- **THURS. SEPT. 8, 4-8 PM. Art Build for Presidential Debate.** A. J. Muste Memorial Institute, 168 Canal St 6th Fl. Manhattan. RSVP [Kate@panys.org](mailto:Kate@panys.org).
- **FRI. SEPT. 9, 7 PM. Noise Demo.** In solidarity with National Prison Work Stoppage Strike. Brooklyn Metropolitan Detention Center, 80 29th st Brooklyn NY 11232.
- **SAT. SEPT. 10-11, 9/11 Truth Symposium in NYC,** The Great Hall, Cooper Union 7 East 7th Street, New York, NY 10003. Entrance fee \$25-\$35.
- **TUES., SEPT. 15, All Day. Ferry Flying for PASI about the TPP FORUM.** Contact [pasi.contact@gmail.com](mailto:pasi.contact@gmail.com) to volunteer.
- **TUES., SEPT. 15, 4 PM. Eric Garner Birthday Back to School Give Back.** 202 Bay St. near Victory Blvd., Staten Island



## Forum on the Trans-Pacific Partnership at next PASI Meeting

**Saturday, September 17, 2016 5 to 8 PM**  
**Unitarian Church of Staten Island**  
**312 Fillmore St. (at Clinton Ave.)**

The TPP will push jobs overseas, as NAFTA has done, by exploiting low wages. It will legally protect profits for corporations, who will be able to sue against laws that affect their profits, at the expense of workers, our health, and the environment.

Join Peace Action of Staten Island on the 5th Anniversary of Occupy Wall Street as we host Trade Justice Alliance and Sustainable Staten Island to discuss whether proponents of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) will try to pass it during the lame duck session of Congress, after the Presidential election and before the swearing in of the next President. The Presidential candidates profess opposition to the TPP but will their opposition hold after the winner takes office?

Just recently, on August 25<sup>th</sup>, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said that Congress will not take action on the TPP this year. If so, this would be a major victory for the coalition of labor, environmental, family farm, consumer and human rights groups that worked for years to stop it.

The PASI forum on Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, will be led by **Adam Weissman**, organizer with **Trade Justice NY Metro** and **Global Justice for Animals and the Environment** and members of **Sustainable Staten Island**, which is a coalition of labor, environmental, and human rights groups.

PASI has also invited a representative of the **Lower East Side People's (LES) Credit Union** to address the meeting. LES People's FCU will be opening a branch in Stapleton this fall, and PASI has submitted paperwork to become an official partner of the credit union. Come to the meeting and find out what this means for you, the membership of Peace Action Staten Island.

Everyone is welcome to attend. There will be light refreshments served, donated by members and participants.

Come and get involved.

There are many ways to get active with Peace Action, by taking action on our issues, volunteering to flyer or table or join actions, using the materials available on the Peace Action NYS website to do local organizing in your own neighborhood or school ([www.panys.org](http://www.panys.org)), and coming to our meetings and events to network with other activists. PASI is gearing up for the annual Make Food Not War Awards Dinner, on Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5 to 8 PM at Olivet Presbyterian Fellowship Hall, 67 Myrtle Ave. Read more about how to get involved in the following pages.

- **TUES., SEPT. 15, 7-9 PM. A New Cold War? The U.S., NATO and Putin's Russia.** The Brooklyn Commons, 388 Atlantic Ave. between Bond and Hoyt, Brooklyn. Free, open to the public.
- **SAT. SEPT. 17, 1 - 5 PM, Black Heritage Parade & Festival,** Tappen Park, Stapleton
- **SAT. SEPT. 17, 5 to 8 PM, PASI MEETING.** Unitarian Church of Staten Island, 312 Fillmore St. Free, open to the public.
- **MON., SEPT. 26, 4 to 6 PM, Protest at First Presidential Debate, Hofstra University.** Hempstead Ave. and Uniondale Ave., Hempstead, Long Island.
- **SAT., OCT. 8. 6:30 PM. PANYS' PEACEMAKER AWARDS GALA.** All Souls Church, 1157 Lexington Ave, NYC. Tickets [www.panys.org](http://www.panys.org).
- **SAT., OCT. 22. 5 PM. MAKE FOOD NOT WAR DINNER.** Olivet Presbyterian Fellowship Hall, 97 Myrtle Ave (at Broadway). Tickets [www.peacesi.org](http://www.peacesi.org).
- **MON., OCT. 24. 7 PM. William Perry, former Secretary of Defense: "My Journey at the Nuclear Brink."** All Souls Church, 1157 Lexington Ave, NYC.

## Peace Action Calls to Action



### 1. Support No First-Use Policy on Nuclear Weapons

- Rumor has it, President Obama is considering a last-minute effort to have a foreign policy legacy, and that one of the options on the table is committing the U.S. to never being the first country to use nuclear weapons in conflict. He is reportedly under pressure from NATO allies to not make that policy, so he needs to hear from us, too.
- Action: Write letters and make phone calls to the White House, telling President Obama you support a no first-use policy, **White House Comments: 202-456-1111. Switchboard: 202-456-1414.** You can also sign our petition: [http://org.salsalabs.com/o/2244/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action\\_KEY=20243](http://org.salsalabs.com/o/2244/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=20243)

### 2. Oppose the 1.15 Billion Dollar Arms Sale to Saudi Arabia

- The Department of State approved a \$1.15 billion arms sale to Saudi Arabia! Even after the whole world knows they are using U.S. weapons to destroy Yemen and indiscriminately attack all civilians, including children. And, this also comes after we know Saudi Arabia blackmailed the UN into being taken off of a black list of child rights abusers, because of the war crimes of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen.
- Action: Members of Congress circulated a sign-on letter, calling on President Obama to delay the sale. The only NY Representative to sign on was Rep. Jerrold Nadler. Call the **Congressional switchboard (202) 224-3121** to reach your Member of Congress (Rep. Dan Donovan in Staten Island) and tell them to support all efforts to delay this arms sale, and call on President Obama to delay the arms sale. Also, CODEPINK has a Saudia Arabia campaign page <http://www.codepink.org/saudiarabia> and they are raising the voices of people from Yemen about the violence the U.S. and Saudi are waging. It's a powerful campaign - check it out if you haven't seen it already!

### 3. Hands off Syria: Oppose HR5732, Introduced by Rep. Engel, which Uses Humanitarianism to Justify Militarism in Syria.

- HR5732, sponsored by Rep. Engel, is called the Caesear Syrian Civilian Protection Act, but it would add more military action to Syria, and as we know from Iraq and Afghanistan - militarism cannot protect human rights. It would require more research into a no-fly zone, despite existing knowledge that a no-fly zone is an act of war that would require 70K US troops on the ground, a massive aerial bombardment campaign and USD \$1B per month. We cannot afford - economically or otherwise - another war with no exit strategy in the Middle East - and there's no reason to believe that military action would protect the Syrian people, but there is ample evidence to the contrary.
- Action: Call your **Congressional switchboard (202) 224-3121** to reach your Member of Congress (Rep. Dan Donovan in Staten Island) to OPPOSE HR 5732.

## Muslim-American Vet Responds to Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton

By Ghanim Khalil

As a Muslim-American, veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and New York Army National Guard, it is beyond numbing to experience yet another election season where Muslims and Islam are used as talking points for the sake of votes. It is soul burning when some dismiss how such rhetoric creates fear, hatred, and violence towards Muslims and those perceived to be, domestically and overseas. America can do better and it must with the help of Muslim-Americans who care more about America than many of our politicians do.

Republican Presidential hopeful Donald Trump has done it again, and again, and again. He continues to speak about American Muslims and Islam without much sense of what Muslims really believe or what positive roles they have played and continue to play in American society. Democratic Presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton has shown that she is willing to disregard the human rights of millions of Muslims by aiding Middle Eastern hardliners, dictatorships, and extremist militants in their oppression and violence towards others as well as their own people. For political objectives both hopefuls have shown they can compromise universal moral principles and values in order to be the next president of the United States. We the People are not really valued unless we feed into their polarizing agendas. I will not feed into the fear-mongering, hate, or the inhumane statesmanship that characterize so many of our representatives and leaders. Neither should you. We must be better than this.

I have become used to politicians and other people in leadership positions defaming Islam and Muslims for political, economic, ideological, and social gains. For decades my family and I have lived in the United States confronting different forms of discrimination and suspicion expressed towards us as a family and as individuals in schools, while shopping, and at our places of employment. We have always been surrounded by a longstanding and disheartening level of fear and hatred of Islam and Muslims based on ignorance and misunderstanding. As a community, Muslim-Americans are constantly characterized as a major threat to American values and principles, despite our many positive contributions to society in a number of important ways as medical professionals, engineers, teachers, business owners, lawyers, emergency responders, and government employees. Our value and contributions are often and quickly dismissed because of the actions of a tiny minority of Muslims who commit crimes against society. These crimes are then exploited by politicians like Trump whose divisive rhetoric has given voice to the kind of bigotry me, my family, and my community face almost every day.

I experienced the same levels of Islamophobia when I was in the Marines and Army National Guard. I volunteered to lead Islamic services for three and a half years while serving active duty in the Marine Corps on the Recruit Depot of Parris Island, South Carolina. During this time I reported the constant discrimination recruits, and other Marines and sailors would face in their platoons, commands, and work areas. Some of my superiors, equals, and subordinates also held hateful views of me due to what they saw in the news media. Among them were military chaplains who actively questioned my practice of Islam. This was a constant reminder to me of my designated status as an outsider, regardless of serving honorably and eventually earning an honorable discharge from both branches of the Armed Services.

But Muslim-Americans are not outsiders in any real sense though we are perceived to be by people who take the rhetoric of certain politicians to heart. Irresponsible speech rarely remains contained. As a recent report published by Georgetown University's Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding showed, there is a strong correlation between Islamophobia expressed in the presidential election and violence towards Muslims. It reported that "Since the first candidate announced his bid for the White House in March 2015, there have been approximately 180 reported incidents of anti-Muslim violence, including: 12 murders; 34 physical assaults; 49 verbal assaults or threats against persons and institutions; 56 acts of vandalisms or destruction of property; 9 arsons; and 8 shootings or bombings, among other incidents." Is this what America stands for? Do we as Muslim-Americans who serve our communities and country well deserve to be treated like outsiders? Do our children deserve to be bullied in school? Do our fellow brothers and sisters deserve to be discriminated against at work? Do we not all deserve the same rights to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness?

Thankfully I am not alone in confronting this reality. There are millions of Americans who are standing up against hateful rhetoric towards Muslims coming from politicians and others. There are also a growing number of military veterans of different backgrounds and having served in different times who have publicly demonstrated against hate, like the groups Vets Vs. Hate and Veterans Challenge Islamophobia. America can do better and will do it with the help of Muslim-Americans who care more about it than many of our politicians do.



Sources:

<http://bridge.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/When-Islamophobia-Turns-Violent.pdf>

**A NEW COLD WAR?**  
**THE U.S., NATO AND PUTIN'S RUSSIA**  
 A COMMUNITY FORUM  
 WITH  
**JOSEPH GERSON**  
 DIRECTOR, PEACE & ECONOMIC SECURITY PROGRAM,  
 AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE (AFSC)  
 MODERATED BY  
**MOLLY NOLAN**, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, NYU  
**BROOKLYN COMMONS THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15**  
**388 ATLANTIC AVE. 7:00 PM TO 9:00 PM**  
 Co-Sponsored by the Peace & Social Action Committee of the Brooklyn Friends Meeting

 **Brooklyn For Peace**  
 brooklynpeace.org // 718-624-6921

## PASI Endorsement of Sept. 9th Nationally Coordinated Prisoner Work Stoppage

by Jen Carlo



Peace Action of Staten Island (PASI) is a grassroots organization dedicated to promoting the nonviolent resolution of conflict, the abolition of nuclear weapons, and the promotion of culture based on human rights and economy rooted in human needs. To us, violence, and in particular state-sanctioned violence, is not simply the act of war and expanding militarization. It also encompasses degradation of our environment, policing which criminalizes, harasses, humiliates, and brutalizes communities and people of color through the bogus War on Drugs, and the deprivation of freedom through surveillance and imprisonment. It is also the economic exclusion of exploitative wages and wage theft, which are exacerbated within prisons and prevent people from meeting their basic needs.

It is a tragic fact that our country has chosen to value corporate interests over the well-being of its residents. That it supports the profitability of privately-run prison industries over the ability of individuals, both incarcerated and within low-income communities, to make a fair living and fully participate in society. That it willingly undercuts the lives of millions of people in order to drive corporate profits through a system of forced uncompensated or barely-compensated labor.

Many states contract out the management of their prisons to private for-profit corporations, often with a guarantee that the prisons will remain at a given percentage of capacity at all times, or else subsidize the corporation for "loss of income." This is to the detriment of the children and adults who, whether through the school-to-prison pipeline or the police terror that blacks, immigrants and poor are subjected to daily, are funneled into a system that was designed to profit off their misery. Incarcerated people in the United States are often made to endure substandard living conditions and subjected to various cruel reprimands. This includes toxic food, starvation rations, abuse, including verbal or sexual assault by guards or other prisoners, and the denial of visitation rights and parole. Prisoners are also often forced to work for little or no pay, despite the fact that the prison commissaries charge extortionate prices for everyday necessities and basic medical services come at prohibitively expensive cost. Private corporations have been making exorbitant profits off of prisoners' misery as some items sold with the label "Made in the USA" are made using forced and/or unpaid prison labor. A Call to Action (<https://iwoc.noblogs.org/post/2016/04/01/announcement-of-nationally-coordinated-prisoner-workstoppage-for-sept-9-2016/>) was written by prisoners in Alabama, Mississippi, Ohio, and Virginia, in which they rightly labeled this practice as slavery. This is no accident, as the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution did not abolish slavery and involuntary servitude when used "as punishment for a crime." Slavery continues to this day in the form of forced prison labor.

Slavery in the United States will end, and prisoners will be the ones to end it. In April of this year, prisoners affiliated with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee (IWOC) led a three week prison strike in Texas. In May, the Free Alabama Movement led a 10 day prison strike which culminated in the state of Alabama rejecting a bill that would expand the prison system. In June, prisoners in two prisons in Wisconsin went on hunger strike against the use of long-term solitary confinement, which the United Nations has determined constitutes torture, and they did so with the support of people on the outside. This momentum will carry on.

Peace Action of Staten Island is proud to join many organizations across the country in a Call to Action for a Nationally Coordinated Prisoner Work Stoppage on September 9th, 2016, and we encourage other groups to also give their endorsement!!

Election Time

Two years is the stupidity  
Of the Presidential campaign;  
It makes fools of us all  
To select the one who will reign.

It has come down to this  
The neo-fascist vs. the neo-liberal  
Who cares any more  
To hear more useless dribble

They have no compassion  
They don't know how to lead  
They are both corporate hawks  
That will make the world bleed.

The duopoly that strangles us  
Republican-Democrat  
Our country is so divided  
What will they do about that?

Healthcare, education – a disaster  
Gun violence, racial hatred – blood flows  
Both candidates are so empty  
The emperors have no clothes.

We Need an Enemy

Our country needs an enemy,  
It is in the DNA of the USA.  
The fourth of July is a sham  
Columbus Day a flim flam  
Land of the free and home of the brave,  
Is the land of the greedy and home of the slave.  
Let us put our enemies on display,  
Which has become the American way.  
Indigenous peoples, Africans too,  
people of color of every hue.  
Socialists, Communists, Islam as well,  
To which we have brought nothing, but hell.  
Black lives don't matter; its white supremacy.  
How can we say we live in a democracy?  
The war machine makes us hate and fear  
Chained to ignorance – let's be clear.  
Let us salute the red, white and blue,  
Our young sent home in body bags, oh how true!  
To keep us from getting power  
And drag down the one percent from their ivory tower.  
Yes, we need any enemy to survive  
To keep the military-industrial complex alive.

Blue Bows

Walking briskly as I usually do  
To dissipate the summer heat  
I notice something strange  
As I'm striding down the street

Something unusual, something weird  
What is tied to poles and tied to trees  
But big and small bows of blue  
Wrapped around everything I see

It cannot stand for Democrats  
In this borough of red  
Not to support some team or school  
But support the police instead

What does all of this mean?  
Such ignorance, what a pity  
Our bustling little island  
Not like the rest of New York City

Blue bows will not bring us together  
It will not bring us the truth  
That police brutality is a disease  
That is meted out on black youth

Let us not forget Eric Garner  
It is the shame of S.I.  
And his killer who walks free  
Has given us all a black eye

**Poems by Sarah Walters**

**2016**

## Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth Holding Symposium in NYC

by Michael Santangelo

What could be more important to the peace movement than the truth about what happened on 9/11? Since that day, there have been many conspiracy theories and debates. I personally don't subscribe to most of them.

However, there is a solid body of evidence, largely ignored by the mainstream press, which disputes the official explanations for the collapses of the 3 world trade center high rises. Many people are unaware that the government has abandoned the so called "pancake theory". Many people are unaware of the studies which have found explosive residues in the WTC dust. And still many people are unaware of the 3rd largest (after the towers) structural engineering failure in history...the collapse of WTC building 7.

I'm no expert in engineering or in controlled demolitions, but I have taken the time to listen to the arguments on both sides of this debate and I encourage others to do the same. I think that at a minimum, there is enough evidence that warrants a more thorough and transparent investigation into the only steel framed high rises ever to collapse due to fire.

There is a 2-day symposium this September 10th and 11th sponsored by Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth in The Great Hall, Cooper Union 7 East 7th Street, New York, NY. There you can hear the arguments for demolition from experts in the field as well as talks about other 9/11 issues. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/events/2078403445718321/> to get tickets. Can't make it there? You can live stream the entire event for \$10 or any donation.

<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/justice-in-focus-911-2016-a-weekend-symposium-in-nyc-tickets-26718651205>

I have linked to 4 videos that do an excellent job of presenting the evidence for demolition:

- 9/11: Explosive Evidence -- Experts Speak Out <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stOQ5VI9d0k>
- September 11: The New Pearl Harbor (Parts 6 & 7 - The WTC) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMkyL\\_YJDUc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMkyL_YJDUc)
- 911 Blueprint for Truth. Full Documentary <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBG-i2SbVgs>
- '9/11 Analysis' with David Chandler (58 min version) 2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkqLnN2HPiQ>



## Peace Action of Staten Island

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[pasi.contact@gmail.com](mailto:pasi.contact@gmail.com)

### PASI BOARD 2016-17

Co-Chair – Ilya Geller  
Co-Chair – Michael Santangelo  
Secretary – John Lawrence  
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Bardel, Steve Buckley, Jen Carlo,  
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Soji Oluwole, David Poleshuck

**Membership Coordinator:**  
Sylvia Zaage

## Thank You for Joining or Renewing Your PASI Membership.

*If you aren't a member yet or still need to renew, it's easy.*

### Membership form

We have a sliding scale membership. No member turned away.  
Donations are tax-deductible.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### Contribution

\_\_\_ \$26 (regular)      \_\_\_ \$40 (family)  
\_\_\_ \$10 (senior, student, fixed)  
\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### I can help with

\_\_\_ Actions  
\_\_\_ Lobbying  
\_\_\_ Membership  
\_\_\_ Speakers Bureau  
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\_\_\_ Communication/Publicity  
*Make check out to PASI and  
mail to address at left.*

***Pssst... You can save a stamp  
by joining online at  
[www.peacesi.org](http://www.peacesi.org)***

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**PASI MEETING**  
**SATURDAY, SEPT 17<sup>th</sup>,**  
**5 - 8 PM**

### **Trans-Pacific Partnership**

*A PASI Forum with Adam  
Weissman and  
Sustainable Staten Island*

Unitarian Church of  
Staten Island  
312 Fillmore St. (at  
Clinton Ave.)

## PASI Volunteer Opportunities

- **Flyering for PASI in Ferry Terminal.** Email [pasi.contact@gmail.com](mailto:pasi.contact@gmail.com).
- **March or Table on September 17, Black Heritage Parade and Festival.** Join PASI at NOON at Vanderbilt and Targee to March. Join PASI between 1 to 4 PM, help staff the PASI table in Tappen Park, Water Street and Bay, Stapleton. Email [pasi.contact@gmail.com](mailto:pasi.contact@gmail.com).
- **Protest for Peace at Presidential Debate on September 26** at Hofstra University, 4 pm at Uniondale Ave. and Hempstead Turnpike, Hempstead..
- **Help with October 22 Make Food Not War Dinner.** In addition to supporting the event, volunteer to setup or cleanup! Go to [peacesi.org](http://peacesi.org) for tickets. Email [m.santangelo101778@gmail.com](mailto:m.santangelo101778@gmail.com) to volunteer.
- **Join PASI and get in the Loop of PASITALK** to stay current & share!