Intelligences

www.intelligences.org

EVERY THING GOOD HAS TO BE DONE OVER AND OVER . . .

Volume 29, No. 2 2016
EVERYTHING GOOD HAS TO BE DONE OVER AND OVER AGAIN FOREVER

From recent headlines, we could get the impression that if we got rid of Donald Trump and got rid of ISIS, everything would be more or less all right. But of course, it wouldn't.

As a young student, historian Page Smith asked Rosenstock-Huessy, his professor, why we couldn't have a few massive movements to straighten the world out, and then go play golf. Rosenstock answered him in the words of British historian Lord Acton:

“Everything good has to be done over and over again forever!”

That’s the way it is. Over and over again forever. We can’t straighten it all out.

That is why the symbols of angels and devils, Yin and Yang, Light and Darkness persist. And why the stories of Snow White and the Seven Dwarves and St. George and the Dragon don’t go away. The struggle between Life and Death, Good and Evil, Lust and Love is here to stay.

The Balinese have a ceremony (which they seldom use) to balance the Good and the Evil in the world. They use it when they feel the balance has gotten way out of whack. (They are wise enough to know that a ceremony to get rid of Evil entirely just wouldn’t work!)

So we keep at it, knowing that major news media does not report the good that so many people, all over the world, are doing over and over again forever!
The Drastic Need for Economic Change

The CEOs of the largest US companies now earn 10 times more than they did three years ago. In between 1978 and 2014, according to a report released by the Economic Policy Institute, inflation-adjusted CEO pay increased by almost 1,000%, whereas typical workers saw a pay raise of just 11%.

The ratio between average American CEO pay and worker pay is now 303-to-1.

In 1965, CEOs earned an average of $832,000 annually compared to $40,200 for workers. In 2014, CEO pay had risen to an average of $16,316,000 compared to only $53,200 for workers.

Such figures are not just statistics. They are a dramatic description of the world we now live in. The rich keep getting richer and richer, and ordinary people keep sinking lower and lower. So we now have an election season which may seem crazy, but which probably reflects how hungry ordinary people are for change.

Noam Chomsky made the following remarks about Bernie Sanders and his following: "He's considered radical and extremist, which is a pretty interesting characterization, because he's basically a mainstream New Deal Democrat. His positions would not have surprised President Eisenhower, who said, in fact, that anyone who does not accept New Deal programs doesn't belong in the American political system... Sanders has mobilized a large number of young people who are saying, 'Look, we're not going to consent anymore.' And if that turns into a continuing, organized, mobilized force, it could change the country—maybe not for this election, but in the longer term."

Even the word SOCIALIST (an absolute no-no in the US for the past 50 years) is once again respectable. Bill Garvey sent us the following article on why he himself is a democratic socialist.

WHY I AM A DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST

In this election year economic inequality has been thrust to the forefront. We live in a society in which, with capitalism run amuck, the rich get richer, the poor get poorer and the middle class wanes, slowly but steadily sinking.

This is obviously an issue of economic fairness and ultimately of justice. It is alright for some citizens to be wealthy, but as Bernie Sanders says, just don't rig the game against everyone else. This is exactly what is happening with laws and tax loopholes that favor corporations and the already wealthy.

Democratic Socialism is a political philosophy that puts the needs and well being of the average person first rather than those of the elite. It seeks to provide a structure in which everyone can benefit. Many European countries have governments that provide some benefits aimed at accomplishing this goal, such as universal free health care, a minimum of paid four-week vacations, women
having equal pay for equal work, guaranteed pensions, paid sick leave, a livable minimum wage, free college education, and others.

These countries can be described as having democratic socialist governments, while they also continue to be capitalistic. It is not one or the other, but in fact, democratic socialist principles can and do coexist with capitalistic principles. Furthermore, the governments of democratic socialist countries do not take over private enterprise, which many in the US erroneously fear.

In addition, many people object to democratic socialism because it means higher taxes. Taxes do have to be raised for most people and especially the wealthy who should pay their fair share. But consider the benefits. No one would be paying $1000 or more a month in health insurance; no one would be wondering how to pay for a college education for their kids or wondering where they would get the money to survive in old age.

In addition to specific benefits there is a quality of life benefit as well. In surveys conducted in countries that have at least some of these economic benefits, people have less economic worries and are more content. People rate themselves as happier than people in countries like the US. They simply do not have as much economic stress.

This issue ultimately boils down to a question of what kind of a society that you want to live in. Do you want to live in a country with capitalism on steroids, in which a small percentage flourish, or one in which everyone has the opportunity to be comfortable economically?

You don't have to call yourself a Democratic Socialist if you support these ideas. If you believe in economic justice, you just need to vote for the candidates who will support some of them. Democratic Socialism offers the best possibility to restore economic justice to this society. It is definitely my choice.

PIETRO AMEGLIO’S STUDENTS—KEEPING UP HIS GREAT WORK  by The Peace and Nonviolence Team

Pietro Ameglio’s work in nonviolence education and organizing in Mexico includes a good deal of work with college students. Pietro once said that working with college students may be his most important work. The Peace and Nonviolence Team of students at the UNAM (Mexico’s largest public university) have been trained by Pietro. IF asked these students to tell us about what they themselves are doing.

WHO ARE WE?

The Peace and Nonviolence Team emerged from the course “Peace and Nonviolence Culture” taught by Professor Pietro Ameglio in 2014. We are artists and students from a variety of majors, including Education, Latin America Studies, Philosophy, and Intercultural Development and Management.

Our process, which has not been easy, began with the opportunity to offer a series of 11 workshops on nonviolence at the Museum of Memory and Tolerance in May 2014 on the occasion of the third anniversary of the founding of the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity.
We drew on our own interests and experience in selecting themes. The preparations were done collectively, with everyone giving feedback. This helped us to see our own confusion and mistakes, as well as points of real clarity.

In subsequent university workshops, we set up a particular sequence so that the reflections from one workshop would be built on the previous one.

Our program now consists of seven workshops, covering fear, prejudice, discrimination, gender violence, health and nonviolence, care of the environment, migration, and peace with justice. We use theater, literature, drawing, movement, and humor in the workshops.

Pictured are some of the team that emerged from the course “Peace and Nonviolence Culture” taught by Professor Pietro Ameglio

WE LIVE IN A VIOLENT CONTEXT

The level of violence in Mexico is extremely high. According to government statistics, between 2006 and 2014 there were 125,000 people murdered, 33,000 disappeared and hundreds of thousands displaced. While the violence is distributed unevenly, all of us experience insecurity every day, and we live in fear and a sense of powerlessness.

Our fears tend to close us off within our homes and within ourselves. This closing off impedes the communal sharing and social organization that we need in order to face our fears and to build cooperation, solidarity and autonomy.

In order to identify and make visible the violence all around us, our workshop program is aimed at precipitating small ruptures in how we relate to each other. Then we try to use these ruptures to disarm the culture of violence in which we find ourselves. The workshops aim to nurture a long-term process toward peace that the participants can continue on their own. During the workshops, we reflect on our own concrete situations in order to raise awareness of how we ourselves are involved in creating fear, and how we might eventually transform it.

PEACEBUILDING IN TLÁHUAC

Our most recent teaching experience was in a public primary school in Tláhuac, located on the outskirts of Mexico City. Although a significant part of Tláhuac is farmland, the area where the school is located is more urban, with many people working in public services and small businesses.

The workshop participants were two groups of sixth grade students, 40 students in each group. We were able to work with different manifestations of violence, including some that appeared
Integrating in the workshop exercises themselves. For example, in one of the workshops, Ernesto (a child who was isolated in his group and who had come to blows with classmates on several occasions) and Armando (the smallest child in the group) had a history of fighting each other. They found themselves in the same small group.

Armando said that he couldn't forgive Ernesto for having hit him and for making fun of his small size. We had all the kids listen to Ernesto, encourage Armando not to be afraid and to say what he felt, and we involved all of the kids in the problem at hand. Some children shared their view of the situation, and Ernesto began to explain what causes him to act violently. In the end, the children expressed their feelings, and new questions were generated that could be used to continue the reflection.

Behaviors that we saw included ridicule, indifference, angry outbursts, and other forms of aggression. The children feared being singled out or making a mistake. So they were hesitant to speak or to participate.

The violence that exists in the lives of the children was also evident in the ideas they shared in some of the exercises. In one case, we told a story in which a tiger is shut up in a cage because he is different from the other tigers. The children were asked to propose solutions to rescue him. Their ideas included:

- Make a tunnel to him, like El Chapo (a reference to the drug lord Chapo Guzmán who escaped from a federal prison in 2015, obviously with a lot of help, through a mile-long tunnel);

- Lynch those who put him in the cage (vigilante justice, including killing of suspected criminals, is increasingly common in a Mexico where people have learned they cannot count on the police or the courts for justice);

- Help him to escape.

We discussed these ideas, questioning whether lynching those who caged the tiger would resolve the problem and exploring alternatives that enabled the children to see that violence was not necessary.

Insecurity on the streets was a frequent experience for the children and one of their greatest worries. When we asked what makes them afraid, they cited being alone on the streets and encountering drunks, drug addicts or criminals.

We could see that the way the kids related to each other at school reflects their daily lives at home and in the community. We realized that, to a certain degree, the children have internalized violence as a way of confronting conflict. That is why we believe it is important to identify and acknowledge the ways in which we all participate in the structure of violence. With that awareness, we will be able to overcome the unconscious behaviors in our day-to-day lives that continue to reproduce unjust social relations.

In closing we note that the process of awareness raising has primarily benefitted ourselves. Our praxis, the recurring cycle of reflection and action, continually provokes new ruptures which offer us the opportunity to rethink how we relate with others and thereby helps us to better walk the path of peace.
CHALLENGING THE “JUST WAR” THEORY

Pietro Ameglio, whom IF has been supporting for a number of years, was one of 80 experts invited to the Vatican for a recent conference on Peace. The conference drafted a statement which will be presented to Pope Francis by Cardinal Peter Turkson, head of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. The statement says, in part,

"Any war is a destruction and there is no justice in destruction of life, of property...so no spending of resources for the destruction of life."

methods of warfare make "just war" an impossibility. Too often, they allege, the "just war theory" has been used to endorse, rather than to prevent or limit military action.

See the IF website @ www.integrities.org
for more information on Pietro's activities and updates on other IF-supported projects.

RISE UP. SHOW UP. WIN. by Peggy Law

The call went out: Rise Up To Save Democracy. On April 15, 2016, thousands converged on Washington DC. The results were hopeful.

DEMOCRACY?

The 1965 Voting Rights Act has been gutted. With the blessing of the Supreme Court, big money is allowed to hijack democratic processes. States continue to enact voter suppression laws that make it increasingly difficult for people to register to vote, cast a vote, or feel assured that their vote will actually be counted.

The Iowa Secretary of State claims "Voting is a privilege not a right."

A nationwide string of "inexplicable irregularities" further restricts voting access. Hundreds of thousands of names have somehow disappeared from voting rolls. Significant reductions in the number and placement of polling places create waiting lines of up to 6 hours. An alarming number of voting machines "malfunctioen" in ways that over-ride the voter's choices.
Some argue that these are just random problems, not dirty tricks.

However the pattern is clear. Restrictive laws and “glitches” almost exclusively impact areas heavily populated by low-income folks, immigrants, people of color, seniors and young voters—constituencies that tend to support progressive candidates and issues.

These anti-democratic practices are so broad and entrenched that researchers using “functional voting scales” now rank the United States way below most other democracies around the world.

Many disgusted and discouraged people in the US say the situation is intractable—that the confluence of big money and reigning power always has and always will have its way.

The Democracy Awakening activists in the conference rooms, congressional offices, streets and civil disobedience actions in DC do not share that sentiment. The struggle will be long, but it is winnable.

**NOT A MOMENT—BUT A MOVEMENT**

Democracy Awakening was not organized as an event. It was organized as base building for the long run.

Repeatedly, in many different settings, voices and song we were reminded of our place and responsibility in the stream of history.

The Voting Rights Act was secured by decades of activism and written in the blood of those who stood up, stood fast, no matter what the risk. We came to honor that courage and sacrifice, and vow to do whatever had to be done to not only to get those voting rights back—but to strengthen and extend them.

---

**A CLEAR FOCUS**

We demand a future where every voice and every vote is important and money can no longer buy the democratic process.

**AN UNSHAKABLE COMMON CAUSE**

The gathering was endorsed by over 300 organizations, each with its own specific mission, goals and practices. But we were all clear on one point. None of the things we care about can be accomplished if people cannot exercise political power through the vote.

It was remarkable how people stayed on message. Never once did I hear anyone use the power of the microphones and bullhorns to push the importance of their own issue or organization.

**LEADERSHIP FOR THE LONG HAUL**

There was not one identifiable charismatic leader. There were many. Many articulate, wise, diverse and impassioned people took the microphones and bullhorns. They all held the same respectful attention of the crowds. Most came from the ranks of emerging young leaders who tend to organize collectively, strategically and for long-term staying power.

*Photo by Peggy Law*
DIRECT ACTION

After two days of rallies, marches, speeches, teach-ins, songs, chants, humor, solidarity and networking came a day of action.

Support teams stood in 80+ degree sunshine as long as necessary in order to send-off, greet, cheer for, hug and otherwise support every person engaged in direct actions.

One action team had been trained to have very focused visits to congressional offices to demand that Congress stand up for broad voting rights in this country. Afterwards I heard elated people say they had never done anything like that before, that it was an empowering experience, that they now knew they could do it on their own and encourage others to join them.

Another group had taken a pledge of non-violent civil disobedience—blocking the steps to the Capitol building. Over 300 of us chose to get arrested that day—over 1400 in the entire week—many for the first time. We were supported by crowds of people cheering as each group of 10-20 was led off by police—and greeted many hours later by cheers, high-fives, hugs and thanks as each group of arrestees was released from custody.

COMMITMENT

Voting rights have been eroded by those who fear the power of organized popular voices.

That tells us what we have to do to win. Gather and organize more voices, ratchet up the pressure, follow the popular street

chant, “There ain't no power like the power of the people and the power of the people won't stop. Say what?”

WINDING DOWN AND RAMPING UP.

As this gathering wound down, I observed exhausted participants immediately start ramping up for “what next?”

Jim Hightower has two encouraging responses to this question:

“Massive social change is easy. You only have to do one thing. Show up and keep showing up until they know your name.”

Show up at rallies, demonstrations, direct actions. Show up by responding to questionnaires, signing petitions and passing along informative and inspiring articles, tweets, videos, etc. Show up by providing financial support to movement-building efforts. Show up at voter registration tables and make get-out-the-vote calls. Share the fun and hope by showing up with friends, children, grandchildren.

“And those who say it can't be done should never be allowed to interrupt those who are doing it!”

AND IT IS BEING DONE!

Many progressive organizations are changing their messaging to make it clearer that they are about sustaining a movement well beyond this moment.

Bernie volunteers, many of them new to political involvement, are already organizing for a post-election agenda for the political revolution.
Integrilites

National Nurses United has called for a People's Summit on June 17, 2016 in Chicago.

People's Revolution, a group founded by former Occupy organizers, is hosting a People's Convention in Philadelphia two days before the Democratic National Convention.

There is no predicting exactly how this momentum will play out, but I firmly believe that it is unstoppable. Perhaps the most creative sign I saw in DC has it right. Addressed to the political and economic power elite it simply stated:

"You keep screwing us and we'll just keep multiplying."

Photo by Peggy Law

IN MEMORIAM

Sally McClain, Nick Kuhn, Carl Bunje, Vic Ulmer, Fran Adamson. All longtime friends of IF. We love them and will miss them.

Membership Form

LET INTEGRILITES BRING NEW POSSIBILITIES TO YOU, TO YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND COMMUNITY.

Your tax-deductible donation includes a one-year Integrilites subscription and IF membership.

Please send Integrilites to:

Subscriber Name and Mailing Address

This is for myself____ This is a gift*____
(please print clearly)

(please check one)

First Name

Last Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone Number

Email

I would like to give a gift subscription. Enclosed is $15 (or more) donation. Please write the following message on my gift card:

Yes_____ Please send me the email version of Integrilites. (Please be sure your email account is not blocked and that you have printed your email address legibly.)

Yes_____ Please send me the printed version of Integrilites

Yes_____ Please send me both the Email and Printed version of Integrilites.

Feel free to duplicate this page for as many subscriptions as you need.

Please tear out this page and mail with check made payable to IF • 160 Sunflower Lane • Watsonville, CA 95076 • Thank you!