

# Integrities

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**CONFUSING VOICES**

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## *Integrities Editorial Team*

Bill Cane, Editor ([bcane@baymoon.com](mailto:bcane@baymoon.com))  
Peter/Betty Michelozzi, Peggy Law,  
Karen Cane, Art Editor

## *IF Office*

Lauren Moody, Office Manager  
[if.laurenmoody@gmail.com](mailto:if.laurenmoody@gmail.com)  
leave message (831) 724-4108

*Publishing, Format and Design*  
MMPublishing™ Janet Martinez

website: [www.integrities.org](http://www.integrities.org)  
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**2018 Event - RSVP appreciated**  
**831-724-4108**

**Dec 16**

**Winter Solstice/Light and Darkness Celebration**

Sunday at 4:30 p.m. Potluck - No Charge  
Lake Freedom • 60 Sunflower Lane  
hosted by Bill and Karen Cane



*Cover illustration and Inside Cover Photo*  
*by Karen Cane*

## CONFUSION! WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING?

Some years ago, I attended a play at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. The play, written by Brian Friel, was about some young Irish people who had wandered into a government building to escape a riot. When the young people emerged from the building, they were shot dead by British Officers. The British officers claimed that the young Irish people had been armed.

Sitting next to me at the play was an MD who had actually been present at the shooting and had rushed to examine the young Irish to see if any of them were still alive. He had been the first person to reach them, and he had found that *none* of them was armed.

Next to the MD sat a woman journalist who had researched the entire event. She had written an article claiming that the young people had been innocent, and the British officers guilty of killing innocent youths.

The play that was being presented was about the riots and the shootings. *But it really centered on the confusing accounts of what had really happened!*

### COMMENTS FROM ABOVE THE STAGE

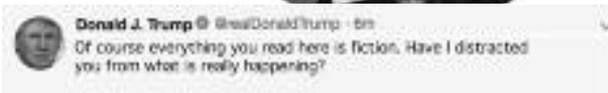
The main events took place on the stage, but above the stage there were two boxes: one on the left, from which various people commented, and a higher box on the right from which a politician spoke. So as spectators, we saw first the event as it happened, then someone commenting on it, and then a politician making a statement about it!

Our eyes widened as we listened to the different accounts of what had just happened on stage. The events began to take on a sense of confusion when they kept being commented upon from above!

## CONFUSING VOICES FROM THE BOXES IN OUR WORLD

As I look around at our present-day world, I feel that what is happening is being commented upon on by a number of boxes above the stage. There is a box from which Trump tweets, a box from which Sarah Huckabee Sanders explains events to the press, a box from which CNN is reporting, a box from which Fox News is reporting, boxes on the Internet, boxes everywhere! I am overwhelmed by the number of boxes commenting on what has just happened! And I end up confused!

Rather than receiving *descriptions* of what is actually happening, we are constantly being served with *distractions* from what is really happening!



## WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING?

We have to keep concentrating on at least three major *tragic* realities: First, the ultra rich are being made richer, and the poor and the immigrants are being deprived. Second, the Republican politicians that run our country, by denying climate change, are leading humanity toward mass suicide. Thirdly, nuclear weapons and nuclear danger keep growing.

## MONEY GOING UPWARD

The recent tax scam was a purposeful effort not only to give more money to the super-rich and the corporate sector—corporate profits, of course, are overflowing—but it was also an effort to sharply increase the deficit, which now can be used to undermine government actions which benefit the general population—Medicare, Social Security, food for poor children. Anything done to



*Illustration enhanced by Karen Cane*

shaft the general population can now be justified by the argument that we have a huge deficit and we can't afford to help those in need—thanks to our stuffing the pockets of the rich.

## DENIAL OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Previous progress in fighting air pollution, drilling and extractions, toxic substances, water pollution and other environmental threats is being rolled back.

To date, the Trump administration has sought to reverse more than 70 environmental rules, according to a New York Times analysis, based on research from Harvard Law School's *Environmental Regulation Rollback Tracker*, Columbia Law School's *Climate Tracker* and other sources. Rollbacks in progress are air pollution, drilling and extractions, toxic substances, water pollution and others.

The other massive thing that is happening is a march toward climate suicide. Climate change is already killing people. But the present Republican Party is run by people who deny that climate change exists. We're destroying the environment for our children and all who come after us.

## MORE NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Another threat to life on earth is the presence of nuclear weapons. Yet we keep building more nuclear capability. The US is now spending billions on upgrading nuclear weapons. It's a miracle that we've survived this long. Human beings, for the first time in history, have to ask, "Can human life survive?"

## **PUSHING BACK AGAINST DISTRACTION AND DISCOURAGEMENT**

It is increasingly easy to become confused, throw up our arms and give up! But we must not do that. *Peggy Law helps us to overcome our distraction and discouragement in the following article she wrote and sent to us:*

“Imagine yourself as a supporter of bigotry, exclusion, shredding our constitution and erasing civil rights. Then ask yourself, “What are the best ways to weaken the opposition?” One answer is obvious. *Confuse them!*”

### **RACHET UP THE DISTRACTIONS!**

*by Peggy Law*

One lie after another. One scandal after another. One disaster after another. One policy reversal after another. One attack on “others” after another. One drama after another. One expert after another (speaking from the upper balconies of power) interpreting events unfolding around you. Who can concentrate enough to think for themselves?

It’s like a soap opera on steroids! Fascinating enough to keep the audience mesmerized, boggled, and—most importantly—in their seats rather than on the activist stage.

Who’s to know what, if anything, they can do to make a difference if they are paralyzed by distractions.

## **DISCOURAGEMENT—A TEMPTING BUT DEADLY RESPONSE**

In 1990 I had a memorable discussion with a group of Nicaraguan women. Their recent elections (highly influenced by US intervention) had quickly erased hard-won gains in public education, medical care and food security. They asked me why, just when they needed solidarity more than ever, the steady stream of activists from the north had drastically decreased.

One answer to that complex question was discouragement. But they told me discouragement was never an option for *them* because if they got discouraged and backed off from the struggle more of their children would die. Discouragement is only an option for the privileged. Ouch!



*Photo courtesy of  
the internet*

## **SO, HOW TO PUSH BACK AGAINST DISCOURAGEMENT?**

We are part of a small human rights group struggling with this question. A few of our strategies:

**Weaning ourselves from mainstream media, the great distractor.**

We encourage each other to consume just enough of the media to know what soundbites are dominating national discourse. . . but not a minute more. Refusing to become addicted to handheld gadgets helps a lot too!

That leaves more time for exploring other media sources, eye contact and long discussions, learning from and being motivated by folks who bring diverse understandings and experiences to their activism.

## **Keep showing up!**

Numbers, like votes, matter. So just showing up at gatherings matters.

Anyone *can* show up. We organize cheering sections for those who cannot march. We provide safety training and accompaniment for those who might be fearful.



*Photograph courtesy of the internet*

## Keep history front and center in our lives.

Today we heard Oregon's Chief Public Defender address the issue of Racism in the Criminal Justice System. One of his points was chillingly clear. Most injustices are not actually written into public policy. But they become **'de facto public policy'** through social neglect. One example: lynching—"100+ years of terror" that continued because there was no national public policy demanding that it stop.

Might lynching still be prevalent today if folks had not had the deep courage and tenaciousness to force the issue into the national dialogue?

What if they had gotten discouraged and backed off? What if we do that today when most of our human and civil rights are in drastic need of being defended?



*Photo by  
Karen Cane*

## MULTIPLYING YOUR MOTIVATORS:

### Surround yourself with change-making wisdom.

Notes, posters, quotes all over the house. We move or change ours regularly so we continue to really see them and feel their challenge.

*“Power Concedes Nothing without a Demand. . .”*  
(Frederick Douglas)

*“Some people have to come too early so others can arrive on time.”*  
(Rosenstock-Huessy)

*“Well Behaved Women Seldom Make History!”*

*“We Solemnly Declare that there shall Never be Another Season of Silence.”* (Elizabeth Cady Stanton)

*“Fight Truth Decay”* . . . and many others.



## Party!

“A **revolution** without **dancing** is not a **revolution** worth having,” declared Emma Goldman. A group I am part of throws itself a party a day or two after major actions. . . to celebrate the work and each other, review what we learned, beef up enthusiasm for ongoing action.



*Dancing Protesters from Berlin to Vietnam to Australia to United States.  
Photos courtesy of internet, montage by Janet Martinez*

## **Be creative!**

Do something fun that others are not doing. One idea taking hold here:

“Thank You Delegations” bearing flowers and handmade cards visiting stores and restaurants whose window displays make it clear they stand against all forms of bigotry and exclusion.

## **Find ways to psych yourself up every day!**

Every morning I stand with arms tightly crossed and feet firmly planted, a no-nonsense look on my face and declare. . .to someone else or to the mirror: “I cheerfully refuse to be discouraged!”

Try it. It works for me! It also makes me laugh. That’s good too!”

## **SOME GOOD THINGS ARE HAPPENING**

Some friends have sent us accounts of good things that have been happening in the midst of all the confusion. The first is from the Friends of Farmworker Families:

A VICTORY FOR MIGRANT FARMWORKERS (from the *Center for Farmworker Families Newsletter*, Summer, 2018)

The primary drawback for family residency in California’s migrant camps is the so-called 50-mile regulation. This regulation mandates that once the growing season has ended in the region, farmworker families living in the camps must move at least 50 miles from the camp and live away from the camps for at least three months, if they wish to return the following season. . .

The greatest negative impact of this regulation is the interrupted education of farmworker children. Farmworker children arrive at the camp on May 1st (the end of one school year); then they are required to move away from the camp near the beginning of a second school year (November 28th). In any given year, the children attend at least two schools per school year. Some of the farmworkers that I have interviewed have children that attend four schools in two countries each year.



*Photo courtesy of the internet*

. . . From 2010 to 2018, we engaged in several projects designed to change or eliminate the regulation. . .

Ultimately, a state Assembly member in Salinas, California, Ana Caballero, shared our concerns, having received numerous complaints from constituents in the Salinas area. She introduced legislation at the state level offering a new exemption to the 50-mile regulation. The Governor signed the legislation into law in July, and the exemption will be in effect until 2024. We and the

migrant camp farmworkers continue to celebrate this long-awaited victory!!

## **CALIFORNIA RESOLVES TO PROHIBIT NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

In August, the California State Assembly and State Senate passed Assembly Joint Resolution 33, which calls on the federal government to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, make nuclear disarmament the centerpiece of national security policy, and spearhead a global effort to prevent nuclear war.

## **ACTIVE LOCAL GROUPS THAT NEED HELP**

Phil McManus sent us the following news on local groups that are doing great work and could use our help:

**Sanctuary Santa Cruz** includes a variety of committees that take on specific pieces of work. See: <https://sanctuary-sc.net/> The website mentions the need for volunteer help with tabling on weekends.

Other volunteer opportunities with Sanctuary Santa Cruz:

**The YARR (Your Allied Rapid Response)** group seeks help with arranging logistics for their advocate trainings (e.g., securing venues, finding graphic designers, lining up resource persons from the list of trainers). Contact: [rapidresponseSC@riseup.net](mailto:rapidresponseSC@riseup.net)

**The Muslim Solidarity Group** could use graphic design for posters; people to send out PR notices to radio, TV and

newspapers; help with food preparation, serving, dishwashing for events; video and photographic documentation of events; musicians who play Middle Eastern music. Contact Sheila Carrillo: [escuelita@baymoon.com](mailto:escuelita@baymoon.com)

**Santa Cruz Indivisible** is one of a number of groups that are organizing congressional district canvassing, phone calling and other activities in the run-up to the November elections. Their focus is on a couple of districts in the Central Valley, where they are sending weekly carpools. To get involved, contact Masina Hunnicutt <[ca22@santacruzindivisible.org](mailto:ca22@santacruzindivisible.org)> or Maria Mead <[ca21@santacruzindivisible.org](mailto:ca21@santacruzindivisible.org)>. SC Indivisible is also doing house parties, texting and writing postcards to voters, and more. Contact [santacruzindivisible.org](http://santacruzindivisible.org). Or just contact the campaign office of a candidate you wish to support. They always need volunteers.

**The Food Bank** in Watsonville welcomes volunteers to help with its extensive food redistribution operation. Contact: [www.thefoodbank.org/volunteer/](http://www.thefoodbank.org/volunteer/) The Food Bank can also provide a list of local food pantries it supplies that often need volunteers, no doubt including one or more near where you live.

## WHAT INDIVIDUAL FRIENDS ARE DOING

Elections, of course, are crucial. Friends of ours are helping minorities register to vote, and helping Spanish-speakers to vote.

Helping the poor is essential. A friend who does massage is volunteering once a week to go into the fields and massage people who are working there.

Other friends sort donated food that is given to the needy every day.

Another friend lives in a residence for seniors, but she holds weekly gatherings for films and lectures which raise awareness.

## **IF KEEPS UP ITS WORK**

Helping local farmworkers by continually providing them with food and supplies

Paying the stipends for environmental student-teachers at Watsonville Wetlands

Supporting community gardens for the poor

Supporting Pietro Ameglio, SERPAJ and the Peace and Nonviolence Collective in Mexico

Providing food supplements for undernourished children in Nicaragua.

Helping to provide legal assistance for immigrants in Watsonville.

Helping to reduce the causes of climate change locally

GIFTS TO IF ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE. IF HAS NO EXECUTIVE SALARIES.

OFFICE SPACE IS DONATED.

IF: 160 Sunflower Lane, Watsonville CA 95076

*"Only when the last tree has died*

*And the last river been poisoned*

*And the last fish been caught*

*Will we realize*

*We cannot eat money"*

*Cree Indigenous People*



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