



Sacramento Area Peace Action NEWSLETTER

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BRING CLEAN WATER TO THE CHILDREN OF GAZA

The water crisis in Gaza is extreme. When the state of Israel was established in 1948, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were driven from their homes in what is now southern Israel to the small and arid Gaza Strip. At the same time, Israel cut off access to water sources around Gaza. The only source available, the Gaza Aquifer, could not support the huge and sudden rise in population, and the water it generates has been steadily deteriorating for more than sixty years.



The Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA) started the Maia Project (maia means water in Arabic) in 2007 to bring clean drinking water for tens of thousands of Palestinian children. Working in partnership with community organizations, MECA is building water purification and desalination units in schools and towns throughout the Gaza Strip.

MECA founder Barbara Lubin and Palestinian refugee Ziad Abbas will be in Sacramento on April 8 to talk about and raise funds for the Maia Project. Lubin is a life-long peace, justice, and disability rights activist; she visited Gaza twice in 2009 and will show photos from these visits. Co-founder of the Ibdaa Cultural Center in the Dheisheh refugee camp, Abbas is also a journalist who has worked with Palestinian and international media and has participated in the production of several documentary films.

The fundraiser is scheduled for April 8, 7pm at the Newman Center, 5900 Newman Court. More information about the Maia Project is on the www.mecaforpeace.org website.

APRIL FILM

USA vs. Al-Arian is a documentary addressing free speech and political persecution. Professor Sami Al-Arian, a pro-Palestinian activist, was charged with terrorism and held in prison without trial for two and a half years. The film documents the struggles faced by Al-Arian family, a battle waged both in court and in the media. The film is an updated 2009 release that includes a 15 minute segment detailing events that have taken place since the film was originally released. The film will be shown on April 27; see calendar for more information.

UNDERSTANDING THE ISRAEL LOBBY: APRIL 22

The Israel lobby does not operate just at the federal government level through AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee), but also at the state and local levels. Recent examples of local activist include the attempt to stop the Sacramento-Bethlehem sister city project and organizing opposition to letting Davis Food Co-op shareholders vote on whether they wanted the Co-op to boycott Israeli products until Israel stopped violating the rights of the Palestinian people.

On April 22, activist, radio talk show host and writer Jeffrey Blankfort will discuss how the Israel Lobby works at all levels of U.S. government and how it impacts U.S. foreign and domestic policy. The talk is 7pm at 909 12th Street, Sacramento.

Blankfort, who was raised in a non-Zionist Jewish family, has worked on behalf of Palestinian rights since his first trip to the Middle East in 1970. He was a founder and editor of the *Middle East Labor Bulletin* and has had articles in *CounterPunch*, *Dissident Voice*, *City Lights Review*, *Left Curve* and *Lie of Our Times*. Most recently, he has authored the entries on the Israel Lobby and US Aid to Israel in the *Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, published in April.

TAX DAY ACTION

April 15 is the most important day of the year to remind people that the majority of their tax dollars are paying for military costs (past and present).



SacPeace and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom have scheduled their annual tax day action at the Broadway post office. If you would like to help leaflet at the Broadway post office, another location, or would like copies of the flyer, please contact the office.

BRING OUR WAR DOLLARS HOME

Deer Isle, Maine, residents passed a resolution – by 67% - at their recent annual town hall meeting to call on Congress to end funding for the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

As Maine goes, so goes the nation?

The local Coalition Against the War marshaled a resolution through the Sacramento City Council in ---2005, asking Congress for a withdrawal from Iraq, citing the cost to Sacramento taxpayers.



MEMBER MEETING/ELECTIONS IN MAY

Mark May 14 on your calendars for the annual meeting, beginning with the usual tasty potluck at 6 PM. There will be a brief business meeting, including election of the new Board. Look for more details in the May newsletter.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please call the office if you are interested in volunteering.

- Tax Day leafleting (April 15)
- Outreach committee (including tabling at various events)
- Vigil committee