



### Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents a growing number of area residents of diverse backgrounds brought together over the 2002 Iraqi crisis.

We support multilateral action for non-violent conflict resolution, human rights, ecological integrity for the planet and international law, through education and dialogue locally and globally.

We encourage everyone's participation as we strive for peace and justice to build a better world for future generations.

BPI web site: [www.boundarypeace.20m.com](http://www.boundarypeace.20m.com)

**Boundary Peace Initiative suspends regular meetings until at least 3 commit to attend. For info call 250 442 0434.**

### To Do

We have no events scheduled in January but keep an eye out for information on the **No Boundaries Film Festival** slated for the last weekend of **February**. Mark your calendars, reserve the time for a rewarding, inspiring and educational 3 days of documentary films.

Stability and peace in our land will not come from the barrel of a gun, because peace without justice is impossibility.

Desmond Tutu

### Child poverty up in more than half of developed world since 2008

By: Unicef report/October 2014

Child poverty has increased in 23 countries in the developed world since the start of the global recession in 2008, potentially trapping a generation in a life of material deprivation and reduced prospects.

A report by Unicef says the number of children entering poverty during the recession is 2.6 million greater than the number who have been lifted out of it. "The longer these children remain trapped in the cycle of poverty, the harder it will be for them to escape," it says in [Children of Recession: the Impact of the Economic Crisis on Child Wellbeing in Rich Countries](#).

Greece and Iceland have seen the biggest percentage increases in child poverty since 2008, followed by Latvia, Croatia and Ireland. The proportion of children living in poverty in the UK has increased from 24% to 25.6%.

Eighteen of the 41 countries in the study have seen falls in child poverty, topped by Chile which has seen a reduction from 31.4% to 22.8%.

Norway has the lowest child poverty rate, at 5.3% (down from 9.6% in 2008), and Greece has the highest, at 40.5% (up from 23% in 2008). Latvia and Spain also have child poverty rates above 36%. In the US, the rate is 32%.

"In the past five years, rising numbers of children and their families have experienced difficulty in satisfying their most basic material and educational needs," says the report.

"Unemployment rates not seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s have left many families unable to provide the care, protection and opportunities to which children are entitled. Most importantly, the Great Recession is about to trap a generation of educated and capable youth in a limbo of unmet expectations and lasting vulnerability."

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### (From last column) Child poverty

It adds: "The impact of the recession on children, in particular, will be felt long after the recession itself is declared to be over."

The study's authors asked people about their experiences and perceptions of deprivation, based on four indicators: not having enough money to buy food for themselves or their family; stress levels; overall life satisfaction; and whether children have the opportunity to learn and grow.

In 18 of the 41 countries, scores showed a worsening situation between 2007 and 2013, revealing "rising feelings of insecurity and stress".

The percentage of households with children unable to afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish or a vegetable equivalent every second day more than doubled in four European countries – Estonia (to 10%), Greece (18%), Iceland (6%) and Italy (16%).

Material deprivation and stress affected parents' relationships with their children, the report for the UN's agency found. "Lower levels of consumer confidence are associated with increased levels of high-frequency spanking, a parenting behavior that is associated with greater likelihood of being contacted by child protective services."

Young adults have arguably been the hardest hit by the recession, according to the report, with 7.5 million within the EU not in education, employment or training (Neet) – nearly a million more than in 2008.

Israel had the highest Neet rate, with 30.7%, but this was a marginal increase on 2008. The biggest absolute increases were in Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Romania. In contrast, Turkey's Neet rate fell from 37% in 2008 to 25.5% in 2013 – still the second-highest rate.

(Continued page 2)

(From page 1) **Child poverty**

“Even when unemployment or inactivity decreases, that does not mean that young people are finding stable, reasonably paid jobs. The number of 15- to 24-year-olds in part-time work or who are underemployed has tripled on average in countries more exposed to the recession,” the report says.

Many countries responded to the recession by adopting economic stimulus packages and pushing up public spending, it points out. “Governments that bolstered existing public institutions and programmes helped to buffer countless children from the crisis – a strategy others may consider adopting.”

The report concludes: “The problems have not ended for children and their families, and it may well take years for many of them to return to pre-crisis levels of wellbeing. Failing to respond boldly could pose long-term risks.”

**Israeli Chooses "Honorable Life" Over Joining Military**

By: David Swanson

Danielle Yaor is 19, Israeli, and refusing to take part in the Israeli military. She is one of 150 who have committed themselves, thus far, to this position:

We, citizens of the state of Israel, are designated for army service. We appeal to the readers of this letter to set aside what has always been taken for granted and to reconsider the implications of military service.

We, the undersigned, intend to refuse to serve in the army and the main reason for this refusal is our opposition to the military occupation of Palestinian territories. Palestinians in the occupied territories live under Israeli rule though they did not choose to do so, and have no legal recourse to influence this regime or its decision-making processes. This is neither egalitarian nor just. In these territories, human rights are violated, and acts defined under international law as war-crimes are perpetuated on a daily basis. These include assassinations (extrajudicial killings), the construction of settlements on occupied lands, administrative detentions, torture, collective punishment and the unequal allocation of resources such as electricity and water. Any form of military service reinforces this status quo, and, therefore, in accordance with our conscience, we cannot take part in a system that perpetrates the above-mentioned acts.

The problem with the army does not begin or end with the damage it inflicts on Palestinian society. It infiltrates everyday life in Israeli society too: it shapes the educational system, our workforce opportunities, while fostering racism, violence and ethnic, national and gender-based discrimination.

We refuse to aid the military system in promoting and perpetuating male dominance. In our opinion, the army

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(From last column) **Israeli Chooses**

encourages a violent and militaristic masculine ideal whereby ‘might is right’. This ideal is detrimental to everyone, especially those who do not fit it. Furthermore, we oppose the oppressive, discriminatory, and heavily gendered power structures within the army itself.

We refuse to forsake our principles as a condition to being accepted in our society. We have thought about our refusal deeply and we stand by our decisions.

We appeal to our peers, to those currently serving in the army and/or reserve duty, and to the Israeli public at large, to reconsider their stance on the occupation, the army, and the role of the military in civil society. We believe in the power and ability of civilians to change reality for the better by creating a more fair and just society. Our refusal expresses this belief.

Only a few of the 150 or so resisters are in prison. Danielle says that going to prison helps to make a statement. In fact, [here's](#) one of her fellow refuseniks on CNN because he went to prison. But going to prison is essentially optional, Danielle says, because the military (IDF) has to pay 250 Shekels a day (\$66, cheap by U.S. standards) to keep someone in prison and has little interest in doing so. Instead, many claim mental illness, says Yaor, with the military well-aware that what they're really claiming is an unwillingness to be part of the military. The IDF gives men more trouble than women, she says, and mostly uses men in the occupation of Gaza. To go to prison, you need a supportive family, and Danielle says her own family does not support her decision to refuse.

Why refuse something your family and society expect of you? Danielle Yaor says that most Israelis do not know about the suffering of Palestinians. She knows and chooses not to be a part of it. “I have to refuse to take part in the war crimes that my country does,” she says. “Israel has become a very fascist country that doesn't accept others. Since I was young we've been trained to be these masculine soldiers who solve problems by violence. I want to use peace to make the world better.”

Yaor is touring the United States, speaking at events together with a Palestinian. She describes the events thus far as “amazing” and says that people “are very supportive.” Stopping the hatred and violence is “everyone's responsibility,” she says — “all the people of the world.” (Ed.note: This article dates to Oct. 2015)

In November she'll be back in Israel, speaking and demonstrating. With what goal?

One state, not two. “There's not enough space anymore for two states. There can be one state of Israel-Palestine, based on peace and love and people living together.” How can we get there?

(Continued page 3)

(From page 2) **Israeli Chooses**

As people become aware of Palestinians' suffering, says Danielle, they should support BDS (boycotts, divestments, and sanctions). The U.S. government should end its financial support for Israel and its occupation.

Since the latest attacks on Gaza, Israel has moved further to the right, she says, and it has become harder to "encourage youth not to be part of the brainwashing that is part of the education system." The letter above was published "everywhere possible" and was the first many had ever heard that there was a choice available other than the military.

"We want the occupation to end," says Danielle Yaor, "so that we can all live an honorable life in which all of our rights will be respected."

### **BRICS and the SCO challenge U.S. global dominance**

By: Asad Ismi From: CCPA Monitor November 2014

United States military aggression globally is stimulating the creation of a new international economic order that could serve as a viable alternative to the present Western-dominated version. Washington's surrounding of both Russia and China with military bases and warships, its severe economic sanctions, against Russia and Iran, a close Russian ally), and its attacks on Syria (a Russian and Iranian ally) are accelerating the consolidation of the BRICS country alliance (Brazil, Russian, India, China and South Africa), as well as the expansion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) that now includes about half of the world's population.

In May, BRICS members Russia (the world's biggest energy producer) and China (the world's biggest energy consumer) signed a \$400 billion energy agreement in which Gazprom, the large Russian state energy company, agreed to supply China national Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) with 3.75 billion cubic feet of liquefied natural gas a day for 30 years. That equals a quarter of Russia's huge gas exports to Europe.

Crucially, the gas deal was sealed in Yuan and rubles, which worries the U.S. Most oil and gas trade happens in US dollars and the requirement for countries to stock US currency to pay for energy gives the US enormous economic power. The Russia-China energy deal is a significant—and very intentional—step away from this setup. As Pepe Escobar, correspondent for Asia Times, put it in one article, "Russian President Vladimir Putin and [Chinese President Xi Jinping]...are scaring the hell out of the 'Empire of Chaos'. No wonder: their number one shared priority is to dent the hegemony of the US dollar—and especially the petrodollar—in the global financial system."

Escobar remarked the deal creates a 'tectonic shift', with Asia's vast pipeline network, "intersecting with a growing Sino-Russian political-economic-energy partnership. Along with it goes the future possibility of a push, led again by China and Russia, towards a new international reserve currency—actually a basket of currencies—that would supersede the dollar."

Peter Koenig, an economist and former employee (of 30 years) of the US-dominated World Bank, told me the Russia-China energy deal is: 'symbolic, because Russia's total hydrocarbon trading per year alone amounts to about US\$1 trillion. It is also a demonstration to the world that Russia and China are morphing into a strong alliance in trade, politics and defence. In that sense yes, the gas deal is clearly undermining the dollar.'

The IMF has reported that since 2003, reserves in other currencies in emerging markets have shot up to 400%. In the six months leading up to February, South Korea increased its Yuan holdings 25-fold.

"The chances are good that a BRICS currency will eventually displace the dollar as 'world currency', in other words as currency of reference and major reserve currency," Koenig told me. "once the new money is established with a secure exchange and transaction

(Continued page 4)

## **Book Recommendations**



### **The Will to Resist: Soldiers Who Refuse to Fight in Iraq and Afghanistan**

By: [Dahr Jamail](#) © July 1, 2009

Publisher: Haymarket Books

Dahr Jamail, author of *Beyond the Green Zone*, brings us inside the movement of military resistance to the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Since 2006, a majority in the United States have opposed the continued occupation of Iraq, and increasing skepticism surrounds the escalation in Afghanistan. But how do the soldiers who carry out the American occupations see their missions?

Fragmented reports of battalions refusing orders, of individual soldiers refusing redeployment and taking a public stand against the occupations have trickled into the mainstream reportage over the last five years. But how deep does the current of resistance run? What makes soldiers decide to go AWOL, file for conscientious objector status, and even serve sentences in military prison for their acts of refusal?

Dahr Jamail's comprehensive study of today's military resisters sheds new light on the contours of dissent within the ranks of the world's most powerful military.

*Ed Note: If you read a book or see a film you feel is of value and interest to others, please let me know at [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).*

It is dangerous to be right when the government is wrong  
Voltaire

"We appeal, as human beings, to human beings:  
Remember your humanity, and forget the rest."

Russell-Einstein Manifesto, 1955

Once one assumes an attitude of intolerance, there is no knowing where it will take one. Intolerance, someone has said, is violence to the intellect and hatred is violence to the heart.

Mahatma Gandhi, 1942

### (From page 3) BRICS and the SCO challenge

system...it is very likely that many countries that so far do not dare abandon the dollar (for fear of sanctions) might join the new money pool, thereby strengthening it.”

This would be a good thing, according to the economist. “It is high time that the currency of worldwide theft, abuse and exploitation—the US dollar, financial instrument for endless wars and economic terrorism—be replaced with a currency of peaceful endeavors that respects national sovereignty, a currency that works for the people, not for the elite.”

According to Escobar, the BRICS countries want to become a counterforce to the G7 western powers and the global economic architecture established after the Second World War.

“They see themselves as a potential challenge to the exceptionalist and unipolar world that Washington imagines for our future (with itself as the global Robocop and NATO as its robo-police force),” he wrote in May. “The BRICS long-term plan involves the creation of an alternative economic system.”

In July, the BRICS countries set up a \$100 billion development bank that could eventually rival the World Bank and IMF as a source of project financing for the Global South. Koenig suggested the BRICS bank represents “a step away from the Washington Consensus,” with its focus on “privatizing public goods and services, like water supply and health and education services”.

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The BRICS development bank “will likely concentrate on infrastructure development and enhancements [like] transportation, energy distribution, telecommunication and so on, energy exploration and exploitation, including alternative clean energy and social services,” he said, adding it “could temporarily act as a BRICS Central Bank and when the time comes issue a new BRICS currency.” Together the BRICS account for almost 30% of world GDP and for about 45% of the world population.

Conn Hallinan also thinks the BRICS bank will be better for the Global South than the US-dominated system. He is an analyst with Foreign Policy in Focus, a project of the Washington D.C.-based Institute for Policy Studies.

“The new BRICS development bank will lend money not only to the BRICS but other countries as well,” he told me. “The importance of that is that the money will not come with all the ‘free market’ Washington Consensus nonsense that has plunged country after country into a debt trap.

“The needs of the Global South are for basic infrastructure and poverty reduction. The World Bank accomplishes neither, and its economic policies end up increasing poverty. Also, the creation of a development bank will make it possible to bypass the IMF for balance-of-payment loans, thus avoiding the organization’s onerous austerity requirements.”

The U.S. system is based on a deeply flawed economic model, Hallinan continued, which can be summed up as follows: finance debt through tax cuts and enforced austerity.

“All austerity does is drive up debt because it causes economies to shrink, and tax cuts translate into deeper government debt,” he said. “Even the IMF and many EU members are starting to resist this formula [that] totally destroyed Latin America in the 1990s and early 2000s”.

In contrast, Hallinan explained the BRICS system is closer to the kind of “pump priming” used to pull the U.S. out of the Great Depression, and which Japan and South Korea “used so effectively to jump start their manufacturing booms: after the Second World War and Korean War.

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### (From last column) BRICS and the SCO

“Because the new system focuses on building up infrastructure it will not only create jobs, it will raise productivity through building transportation systems and the like. This is desperately needed for Brazil and India, not so much for China and Russia. It is very difficult for developing countries to get loans to modernize their economies and when they do they have many restrictions attached. The BRICS plan is to major step away from that,” he said.

Developing countries are also concerned about the ability of the U.S. to manipulate the dollar to its advantage, Hallinan added, and they are fearful of attracting heavy, debilitating sanctions (e.g. Against Russian and Iran) imposed by the U.S., European Union and their allies, including Canada.

In September, in another “tectonic” shift, BRICS members China and Russia, and the other four members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)—Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, [Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan—agreed to add four new members to the group: India, Pakistan, Iran and Mongolia. For Escobar, this is proof the SCO is shaping up to be the most important international organization in Asia.

“It’s already clear that one of its key long-term objectives will be to stop trading in U.S. dollars, while advancing the use of the petroyuan and petroruble in the energy trade,” he commented.

With this expansion, SCO members now control 20% of the world’s oil and half of all global gas reserves. The organization represents about half of the world’s population.

“The expansion is a big deal,” said Hallinan. “The US has been trying to isolate Iran and Russia. After this expansion I think it is relevant to ask who is looking more isolated these days?”

Hallinan said a major focus of the SCO is security, with Russia and China wanting to diminish the U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) presence in Central Asia to what it was before the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. The SCO has pressured countries in the region to close U.S. military bases with some success. The U.S. was evicted from the Karshi-Khanabad base in Uzbekistan in 2005 and from the Manas base in Kyrgyzstan in 2014.

“At present, the SCO has started to counterbalance NATO’s role in Asia,” commented Alesksey Maslov, chair of the department of Asian studies at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow, in a recent article.

“The aggressive nature of Western actions towards Russia has certainly united the SCO members: concurred the London-based political commentator Alexander Clackson in Oriental Review this September. “What links them all—whether members or observers—is the rejection of Western-dominated institutions, such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund, which are all U.S.-based. The SCO, like the BRICS with their Development Bank, sees itself as a forum against the Western dominated global order.”

Hallinan wrote recently that the days when these Western institutions could, “dictate international finances and intimidate or crush opponents with an avalanche of sanctions are drawing to a close. The BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are two nails in that coffin.”

“This cannot happen fast enough in order to stop U.S.-led Western aggressions and financial terrorism around the world,” said Koenig.

The Boundary Peace Initiative (BPI) welcomes articles. All articles are the responsibility of the author and may not be common consensus. To submit an article, contact **Laura at 250-442-0434 or L4peace@telus.net**. The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War, affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation; we work with local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

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Go to the Government of Canada website for emails of all MPs, Ministers at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>