

Messing with the Merchants of Death in Syracuse, New York

by Jack Gilroy, published in Veterans For Peace Newsletter | Spring 2023 25

An Earth Day celebration mocking the clever fools of the war machine produced a lot of grim fun in Syracuse, New York, on Friday, April 21. A coalition of peace groups including Upstate Drone Action, Veterans For Peace Chapter 90, Peace Action, UpState PaxChristi, and Ithaca Catholic Worker had already issued subpoenas to six merchants of death and their enablers in the Syracuse community to testify at the November 2023 Merchants of Death Tribunal. Now it was time to hear from the war enablers themselves.

Speaking outside the federal building offices of Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, Senator Schumer, the majority leader of the U.S. Senate (played by Jack Gilroy) said: *"Just imagine if we followed JFK's call for disarmament and friendly relations with the Russians 60 years ago...? We wouldn't be the leaders we are now in weapons production and... [kicking] ass around the world. Sure, we usually get our own asses kicked, but hey! A lot of people get rich in the process—it's a capitalist country, no?"* Our sign illustrated his point: *"Chuck Schumer Takes More \$\$ from the Merchants of Death than any other U.S. politician."*



LEFT: Jack Gilroy plays Chuck Schumer in a political skit out in front of the New York Senator's Syracuse office building. RIGHT: JP Morgan (Todd Sadler) and fellow Fat Cats cheer on the politicians. Photos: John Amidon

Binghamton actress Judy McMahon, playing Senator Gillibrand, told how lucky she was to marry a Brit whose family pretty much controlled BAE (formerly British Aeronautical Engineering), now one of the top ten merchants of death. Sen Gillibrand told how she received a half million dollars from her Brit relatives to help her become a Senator who sits on the Armed Services Committee and enjoys not only voting for the military budget each year but increasing it. *"My aides tell me that millions struggle to have food stamps, but I say guns over butter. Let them make cake! We need more tanks and planes. How will we very be able to blow our enemies to smithereens if we don't spend a trillion dollars to upgrade our nuclear weapons system? Some say we should spend some of those needed nuke dollars to pay for mental help needs. How crazy is that?"*

Colonel Glorious Guano (played by Kirsten Whistle), the new commander of the 174th Attack Wing of the N.Y. State National Guard, told the crowd, "We sit on our asses as we decide who lives and dies in faraway places... We're the U.S. Chair Force!

We miss finding targets in Afghanistan, but thankfully we have a president who has given us new opportunities to hone our killing skills with his after-Afghanistan policy, Beyond the Horizon, keeping us busy right here in Syracuse doing assassinations without worrying about church leaders or other 'moralists' interfering with our ability to keep our boy's and girls' boots off the ground."

Diane Sare gave a brilliant talk on the messed-up U.S. Intelligence system now desperate to find new draconian ways to arrest and imprison people who speak out in opposition to wars concocted in secret by privileged captains of industry.

Medea Benjamin, our USA Activism for Justice Rock Star, played her usual captivating self, and pantomimed distributing dollars to Schumer and Gillibrand for real needs.

Diane Sare played "*We're In The Money*" on her trombone, as the crowd of Fat Cats and sign carriers followed the band to nearby Chase Bank, where JP Morgan (Todd Sadler in top hat) did a spoof at the bank that included reading a subpoena that he ordered taken to the CEO of JP Morgan Chase.



Actors playing Bishop Lucia of Syracuse and Pope

Francis (barely visible in the rear of this photo) joined in the walk to the Syracuse Diocese headquarters led by trombonist Diane Sare playing "When the Saints Go Marching In." Photo: Michelle Erin

On the chancery steps of Syracuse Diocese headquarters, Pope Francis congratulated Bishop Lucia for his initiative in bringing about an apology from the Vatican for 500 years of domination of aboriginal people in the Western Hemisphere, The Doctrine of Discovery. Then the Pope admonished the Bishop for his silence about the assassination drone base near his office, and for not speaking up forcefully to condemn environmental damages caused by the Merchant of Death, Lockheed Martin, in his own diocese.

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