

May 22nd Rally Speech by Jenny Andry

I don't know about y'all, but I'm tired.

I'm tired of learning about the atrocity of the week, the injustice of the day, the exploitation of the hour. I'm tired of political "leaders" who talk a real good game before assuming their position to lick the boots of capitalism. I'm tired of the constant gaslighting: "War is necessary." "Police murders are justified." "All jobs are good jobs." "Unions are corrupt bullying entities rooted in greed." "Turns out no one wants to work anymore."

I'm tired of a wealthy few parading around like they own the planet and the people on it. And I'm tired of the attempts (and successes) to shut us down by telling us we should be grateful for any job they graciously offer regardless of if it pays shit wages, regardless of if it denies workers workplace democracy, regardless of if the job is in an industry fueled by the blood of human beings killed in one of the many constant wars, regardless of if the job is in an industry that is contributing to the death of our planet by exacerbating climate change, and regardless of if the job can be described by all of the above. The jobs "created" here at this site, in our city, can be described by all of the above.

In a most self-congratulatory way, our County Commissioners have boasted about the good they're doing for our region. They need us to know that this gigantic project through which the blood red carpet is being rolled out for the MIC is for the good of WNC residents.

In a most manipulative way, those responsible for this decision feel the need to talk loudly about the commercial side of the production that will happen here and whisper the part about the imperialist side. Perhaps, in addition to hoping that we won't hear the part they whisper, they also speak the truth about this project quietly so that their consciences won't hear them either.

In a most predictable way, those climbing into bed with the MIC parrot over and over again the textbook justifications for harmful projects like this one: "If we don't let them come here, they'll just go somewhere else." "We're just lowly county officials; we have no power to shape federal foreign policy." "Jobs, Jobs, Jobs!"

To everyone responsible for this deal: We've heard it all before. We aren't fooled. WE. AREN'T. FOOLED! And we won't let you forget your direct contribution to the nightmare happening in Yemen right now. We won't let you forget about your direct contribution to the nightmare happening in Palestine right now. We won't let you forget about your direct contribution to prolonging the reign of fossil fuels and non-unionized labor and imperialism and colonialism and climate change. We won't let you forget about the time you were faced with a choice between good and evil, a choice between maintaining the destructive status quo and ushering in a new, just paradigm, and you chose poorly. We won't forget, and we won't let you forget either.

So, yeah, I'm tired. But don't get me wrong, I'm not too tired. I'll never be TOO tired to shine light on the greed, the exploitation, and the destruction perpetuated by a tiny minority of wealthy individuals who lack any semblance of moral clarity or empathy. I'll never be TOO tired to fight for the healthier, more just, more equitable, more loving, and more peaceful world that we know is possible. I'll never be TOO tired to show up in the face of so...much...injustice. I'll never be TOO tired to fight for the long overdue paradigm shifts away from colonialism and colonization and imperialism. I'll never be TOO tired to deconstruct widespread violent and racist systems. I'll never be TOO tired to do my part in dismantling the racist, sexist, Islamophobic, anti-immigrant, homophobic, patriarchal disease known as capitalism that is plaguing every corner of this earth, that necessarily exploits people and planet, that necessarily perpetuates war and murder, that necessarily keeps us exhaustedly entertaining feelings of hopelessness and existential dread, that needs us to mistrust and assume the worst about our neighbors and to think we're all alone, and that threatens the very existence of ALL living things on this planet. I'm tired, but I'm not TOO tired. We're tired, but we aren't TOO tired. We aren't going anywhere.