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Dear Friends,

As you may recall, the year 2014 began with tension and uncertainty. In addition to the crisis in Ukraine that began early in the year, we also saw continued unrest in the Middle East with the rise of ISIS, U.S. military action in Syria, and a war in Gaza that left thousands of people dead. In the U.S., the deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson and Eric Garner in New York sparked large protests across the country and birthed the #BlackLivesMatter movement.

But 2014 was also filled with hope. In November, the mid-term elections saw voters across the country backing higher minimum wages at the state and local level, saying yes to legal pot, and embracing paid sick leave. And last December, President Obama announced the normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba. As we celebrate this historic move, we remember former IPS Fellow Saul Landau, who spent decades doing this work until his death in 2013.

As a community of public scholars, we provide innovative research, bold analysis, and creative communications for progressive social movements who are tackling today’s most important issues. Our work is done at the local, national, and international levels, addressing issues that affect everyone from local communities to the whole global community.

We are proud that, over the past year, our work has contributed to changing the conversation on inequality, racial justice, climate justice, and peace. Our work on the criminalization of poverty, low wage workers, CEO pay, and corporate abuse have garnered vast media coverage and sparked robust dialogue in our communities and social networks. The Institute’s independent media projects – OtherWords, Inequality.org, Foreign Policy in Focus, and the Economic Hardship Reporting Project – are reaching millions with innovative analysis, hot facts, and storytelling.

As the #BlackLivesMatter movement is re-opening conversations about structural racism, this year IPS has committed to focusing much of our inequality work on examining the relationship between inequality and racial justice. We have also recommitted to mentoring a new generation of public scholars, particularly young people of color and low-income youth. We want to be a community where young progressives who will be leading tomorrow’s social movements can learn and grow, and we want those leaders to reflect the full diversity of our world.

As you reflect on this past year with us, we hope you will be encouraged by the stories of the progress we have made in the struggle for equality, true democracy, and peace. And we hope you’ll continue to walk with us as we continue the fight in 2015 and beyond.

Onward,
John Cavanagh, Director

E. Ethelbert Miller, Board Chair
For over 50 decades, we have served as a policy and research resource for visionary social justice movements - from the anti-war and civil rights movements in the 1960s to the peace and global justice movements of the last decade.

We are committed to putting bold ideas into action to promote true democracy and challenge concentrated wealth, corporate influence, and military power. The cornerstone of our work is public scholarship, a term we use to describe the connection between our policy research (ideas) and grassroots advocacy and organizing (action).
THE 38TH ANNUAL LETELIER-MOFFITT AWARDS

For 38 years, IPS has hosted its annual human rights awards ceremony to honor the memory of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt by celebrating brave changemakers who are making a positive impact on their local communities while championing human rights in the United States and around the world.

NATIONAL Awardee:
Robin Reineke and the Colibrí Center for Human Rights (Tucson, Arizona)
The Colibrí Center maintains the most comprehensive dataset of missing persons last seen crossing the U.S.-Mexico border, and assists families in their search for missing loved ones while informing the public of the human rights crisis on the border.

“The dead call us to action. They call us to the highest task of simply becoming more fully human. To me, more fully human is to follow the example set by people like Bruce Anderson—to treat the dead the way we would want our own loved ones to be treated. The dead call us to action. Before we can heal our border, we must remember the humanity of migrants, or we risk losing our own.”
In the past four years, we’ve learned that protection is not just an issue of security guards or cameras. We are building a holistic model that in its own way, is reconstructing a social fabric capable of facing violence while rebuilding state institutions. It’s a model that relies on supportive communities that catch and prevent burn-out, that confront discrimination and violence in our own families and organizations. We are certain that if we build sustainable organizations and movements that are capable of challenging and eradicating violence, we will be able to keep the ideals that Orlando Letelier, Ronni Karpen Moffitt, and thousands of women and feminists all over the world.”
THE 38TH ANNUAL LETELIER-MOFFITT AWARDS

SPECIAL RECOGNITION:
Dr. Juan E. Méndez

became a political prisoner in Argentina because of his legal defense of those threatened by torture and arbitrary arrest in the 1970s. Since being released and exiled as part of an international campaign, he has spent 15 years with Human Rights Watch, acted as Director of the Inter-American Institute on Human Rights, and is now a professor of International Human Rights Law at American University defending their land against illegal mining.

I hope tonight gives us a chance to renew our commitment to a torture-free world...

We are conditioned to think torture works, or to think of it euphemistically as “enhanced interrogation” so we don’t have to insist on its absolute prohibition. I hope tonight we can renew our insistence that every single act of torture must be investigated, prosecuted and punished.”
One of the essential principles that guide IPS’s work is our belief that big systemic change is needed in order to address pervasive issues like economic inequality and sustainability. We also believe that change begins at the local level, where community leaders and local decision-makers can be held accountable by those that are most affected by their actions.

In February 2014, our Boston office held the Fourth Annual State of Our Neighborhood Forum (SOON). More than 350 people attended, including city councilors, state senators, and representatives, to discuss issues such as affordable housing, public health, emergency preparedness and community resilience, small business development, and education. In just four years, SOON has become a place where people not only come together to discuss neighborhood challenges, but also where real solutions are discussed and implemented.

Some key, tangible results of the 2014 SOON included a subsequent hearing on curbside composting, a proposal to the city on racial justice policies, and a series of community meetings to address gentrification and slow economic displacement. Perhaps most notable is the fact that people representing the rich diversity of Jamaica Plain, a neighborhood in an intense battle over gentrification, came together in a demonstration of unity and solidarity. State of Our Neighborhood is the flagship event of IPS’s Jamaica Plain New Economy Transition.

Also this year, IPS introduced the new economy framework in Maryland, building on our previous work to incorporate the Genuine Progress Indicators in measuring the state’s economic development.
Ushering in a new economy - one that promotes peace - requires transitioning communities dependent on military jobs into jobs that are better for the planet. In 2014, IPS played a key role in getting $10 million transferred from the Pentagon’s operations account to an agency that helps defense-dependent communities transition to alternative economic foundations. In successfully arguing for this transfer on the House floor, U.S. Representative Keith Ellison (MN-D) submitted for the Congressional Record an op-ed written by Miriam Pemberton, IPS Peace Economy Transitions project director, that advocated for the shift. Pemberton also testified before a Connecticut Commission working on a plan to diversify the state’s defense-dependent economy, and is working with advocates in several other states seeking to replicate this model.

In March, IPS held the fourth regional gathering of our New England Resilience & Transition Network in Keene, NH. Sixty-five people, representing all six New England states, came together to discuss the question of region-wide resilience. A key outcome of the gathering was the formation of a new Regional Organizing Committee (the ROCKers), which will take responsibility for the wider network and ensure ongoing communication among the various constituencies. The ROCKers will also engage in strategic action to enhance regional resilience.
OtherWords (OtherWords.org), the Institute’s editorial service, continued to steadily expand its reach in 2014, with the number of U.S. newspapers that run our progressive, newsroom-ready op-eds rising to more than 350 papers, read by a total of about 7.5 million people. In addition to the commentary and cartoon distribution we achieve via OtherWords, the Institute directly pitches op-eds to specific newspapers and other syndicates. In the past year, IPS garnered at least 150 hits for op-eds published through other channels, including appearances in the Los Angeles Times, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, and the Cleveland Plain Dealer. Through OtherWords and these other channels, the Institute gleaned some 1,700 hits with its commentaries in the nation’s op-ed pages.

IPS also reaches broad audiences through its Foreign Policy in Focus website (FPIF.org), which in 2014 began to co-publish two pieces a week with the widely read TheNation.com. In addition, IPS’s Inequality.org is widely seen as the most extensive and accessible source of analysis on inequality in the country. Finally, IPS’s Economic Hardship Reporting Project carried out pathbreaking pieces of original journalism on the criminalization of poverty.

IPS provides research, policy analysis, and networking support to low-wage worker organizations advocating for living wages, decent working conditions, and basic labor rights for all workers, regardless of their immigration status. In 2014, IPS worked produced a series of reports highlighting low-wage worker issues. For example, reports on low-wage employees in the restaurant and retail industries were covered by CNN, Politico, CBS News, Buzzfeed, Forbes, Guardian, CBS Moneywatch, and Fortune.

In May, IPS released “The One Percent at State U,” a pathbreaking report that was the first to connect low-wage faculty and student debt trends with high pay for public university executives received massive media coverage. In addition to a May 23, 2014 editorial in The New York Times that lauded the report, Academe Magazine wrote on June 1, 2014 that “this one report did more than anything previously to change the conversation.” The report was used by Jobs with Justice and other grassroots organizations as a tool in organizing campaigns.
Our research and media work, as part of a much larger surge of activism, have contributed to a public climate in which noteworthy victories have been possible through ballot initiatives and state and municipal legislation. In the past year, for example, seven minimum wage increases passed on ballot initiatives. The Labor Department has also approved a new set of worker rights for roughly 1.9 million home health care workers.

TAXING WEALTH AND INCOME CONCENTRATION

In 2014, IPS published six reports exposing excessive compensation for top executives and promoting practical reforms that garnered major publicity in the New York Times, Washington Post, CNN, and many other outlets. The Institute’s 21st annual “Executive Excess” report was the first to analyze a little-known Obamacare provision that limits the tax deductibility of health insurer executive pay.

Two related reports exposed how much Walmart and major restaurant corporations are benefiting from loopholes that allow unlimited deductions for executive compensation. House Democrats included a fix for this loophole in their “100-Day Action Plan” and Republican Rep. Dave Camp also came out for a fix. In response to public pressure regarding corporate tax dodging, President Obama took regulatory action in 2014 to crack down on “inversion,” a tactic for lowering tax bills by reincorporating overseas.

IPS is part of a task force involving labor unions, consumer and other activist groups that advocates various approaches to reining in CEO pay. A major focus has been pushing for rigorous implementation of the CEO pay reforms in the Dodd-Frank financial reform legislation. We have made progress in getting a strong proposed regulation out of the SEC regarding CEO-worker pay ratio disclosure – despite an intense corporate backlash. We’ve also been working with activists and state legislators to build on this disclosure requirement by linking the CEO to worker pay ratio to state-level tax and procurement policies.
For five years, IPS has played a lead role — at the international level and in the United States — in advocacy around financial transaction taxes. These taxes are small levies on trades of stock, derivatives, and other financial instruments designed to curb short-term speculation while generating massive revenues for urgent needs, such as global health, climate change programs, and job creation.

In 2014, IPS’s coordination and media work helped move this transformational idea into the center of mainstream debate, with 11 EU governments moving towards implementation and growing support in the U.S. Congress.

In 2014, IPS worked with the Center for Effective Government to co-launch Americans for a Fair Estate Tax. This coalition is engaging unusual allies including farm, business and life insurance companies, to defend federal estate tax against repeal. In addition, IPS, led by longtime estate tax champion Chuck Collins, is working at the state level to build support among student groups and other activists around the idea of using revenue from state-level estate taxes to fund programs that make higher education more affordable.
The Poor Get Prison: The Alarming Spread of the Criminalization of Poverty garnered significant attention in news outlets and social media. Described as “groundbreaking” by activist Marian Wright Edelman, the report put the phrase “criminalization of poverty” into the media lexicon and is helping tell the criminalization of poverty story as it relates to the #BlackLivesMatter movement.

This year, IPS Senior Scholar Bob Alvarez was invited to become a regular columnist for the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. His first offering was published in March, and it detailed the Energy Department’s Waste Isolation Pilot Plant problem (WIPP) near Carlsbad, New Mexico and what it means for defense nuclear waste disposal.

Over the past two years, the Nuclear Policy Project at the Institute for Policy Studies has completed four major reports, including an assessment of the safety of spent nuclear fuel storage at the Columbia Generating Station in Washington State. This report was released in conjunction with Physicians for Social Responsibility in November. In 2014, Alvarez also published five columns for the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, two of which were cited by the New York Times, and conducted three open “nuclear skills” lectures for graduate students at the John’s Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

Beginning in 2015, IPS will devote a significant portion of our attention and resources on three niches of inequality work. Our aim is to change the narrative on inequality, lay out rule changes to address extreme inequality, and work with allies to build power to win these changes. The three niches are: supporting policy campaigns to reduce concentration of wealth and power, increasing dialogue and action on the intersection of economic inequality and racial justice, and laying out paths to reduce inequality on a finite planet.

IPS launched two projects in 2015 to address the intersection of economic inequality and racial justice: the Criminalization of Poverty Project and the Black Worker Initiative. Both projects build on over two decades of IPS inequality work that has sought to challenge concentrated wealth and power, and address structures and systems that perpetuate inequality.
As we work to bring real change at the local and national levels, we know it is equally important to enact policies that make the United States a more responsible member of the global community. We promote true diplomacy in matters of security, and we advocate for policies that prioritize human and environmental rights above international corporate interests.

IPS has worked to educate the public on the global implications of bad trade deals like NAFTA, and the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the U.S. and Europe. IPS has helped to launch a campaign on the global implications of TTIP, with the assumption that it is a mechanism for the U.S. and Europe to gain leverage against other countries and to undermine historic resistance to their intentions to impose a global free trade model. IPS worked with colleagues across the Americas for a “Call for the Building of an Alternative Legal Framework to the International Investment Treaties: favoring the Public Interest while doing away with Transnational Corporate Impunity”, which challenges the notion that there is no alternative (the infamous TINA of Ms. Thatcher) to the neoliberal, deregulatory model.

In 2014, IPS continued to support organizations in El Salvador in their fight against destructive gold mining projects led by multinationals outside their country. IPS mobilized advocacy around a case brought by an international mining company against El Salvador over the right to carry out a controversial gold mining project. In September 2014, IPS led an action that brought members of 16 organizations to protest against the opening hearing in this case, which was covered in the Washington Post and several other outlets. Because of the growing opposition to such “investor-state” rules, more countries are starting to challenge the corporate-driven approach to trade and investment.

IPS also worked with the National Domestic Workers Alliance and National Guestworker Alliance to negotiate a new International Labor Organization (ILO) Protocol on forced labor. Through our research and media work, we, along with our allies, called for a new protocol that creates rules for governments and employers on prevention, protection and restitution for trafficked domestic workers. In June, the ILO adopted this new international treaty, and now it needs to be ratified by member countries.
PRIORITIZING HUMAN RIGHTS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

In 2014, our work in Middle East policy began with defending what we built the previous year – the public opposition to U.S. bombing of Syria that resulted in the Obama Administration’s pullback from its threatened attack. Through talking points, teach-ins and briefings, and media appearances, IPS’ Middle East expert Phyllis Bennis was able to help maintain that consensus during the first half the year.

In mid-summer, that consensus came under new pressures with the escalation of U.S. threats against Syria – soon followed by renewed bombing in Iraq and the beginning of attacks in Syria. During this time, Bennis continued to represent IPS’s people-first perspective by providing analysis and commentary on a variety of media outlets, including MSNBC, The Nation, The Hill, Al Jazeera, PBS NewsHour, Democracy Now, BBC, and NPR’s Diane Rehm Show. Bennis was quoted in the New York Times and authored an op-ed for The Washington Post. The result is the ongoing collaboration of national organizations working to reclaim public opposition to the new iterations of the same wars, and to build a powerful new anti-war movement in response.

As the summer’s crisis in Gaza unfolded, with the Israeli assault that left more than 2100 Palestinians dead, almost 80% of whom were civilians, Bennis continued to speak, write, and mobilize across the country and internationally. Bennis spoke at conferences and teach-ins from Philadelphia to Portland, Kansas to Louisville, New York and Boston, and at a major United Nations conference in Tokyo, Japan.

2014 also saw a dramatic shift in U.S.-Cuba policy, a shift that IPS public scholars have been advocating for many years. Key to the policy shift, which includes full normalization of U.S.-Cuba relations, was a prisoner swap. U.S. contractor Alan Gross, who was jailed in Cuba for espionage, was released in exchange for the release of three members of the Cuban 5, a group of Cubans sent to Miami to infiltrate right-wing terrorist organizations.

For the past three years, IPS has also been an active supporter of the annual advocacy events called “Five Days for the Cuban Five,” led by the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban 5. These events included rallies at the White House, visits to Members of U.S. Congress and Senate, and public and cultural events with well-known personalities from the United States and abroad. Former IPS Fellow Saul Landau dedicated much of his life to freeing the Cuban 5, work that he remained passionate about until his death in 2013.
2014 saw a dramatic shift in U.S.-Cuba policy, a shift that IPS public scholars have been advocating for many years.

The impacts of climate change...hurt people who are living in communities of color and low-income communities FIRST and WORST. - Janet Redman, Climate Policy Project Director on Democracy Now!

After 15 years of advocacy, Colombian government will stop spraying super concentrated RoundUp in a futile effort to eradicate coca.
In 2014, IPS continued to work with the climate movement to promote clean and sustainable energy alternatives. The People’s Climate March in September 2014 saw over 400,000 people in the streets of New York calling for action to address climate change. IPS was involved in many aspects of this historic march.

IPS also worked with National Nurses United, Friends of the Earth, VOCAL NY, Health Gap, International Rivers, and others from the U.S. Robin Hood Tax Campaign to hold a Robin Hood Tax rally and action in front of a Wall Street Bank, kicking off the People’s Climate March. Along with these allies, IPS called for a financial transactions tax to raise public money for climate action, community solutions, and international climate finance.

IPS also supported Climate Justice Alliance, an IPS core ally, in the People’s Climate March by helping organize the People’s Climate Justice Summit, a two-day conference alternative to the climate summit convened by U.N. General-Secretary Ban Ki Moon. In addition to organizing three of the conference’s sessions, IPS also worked to ensure that a variety of frontline voices from international alliances were represented, and that there were useful spaces for dialogue and exchange of ideas.
At its 50th anniversary in 2013, IPS made a major commitment to equip and empower the next generation of public scholars through a number of fellowships that provide opportunities for young leaders to develop critical skills needed to serve as the next generation of progressive activists, organizers, or public scholars. IPS has a strong commitment to expanding public scholarship among people of color and low income people.

New Mexico Fellowship

Diana A. Torres was the 2014 New Mexico Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies. During her time at IPS, Diana learned how to write for general audiences, and published opinion pieces on immigration and environmental policy in local newspapers throughout the United States. She also provided research assistance to a number of the Institute’s reports, and learned about development and fundraising work that is necessary for the success of any non-profit organization. Diana credits her time at IPS as instrumental to further cementing her commitment to social justice work and to nourishing her interest in pursuing graduate studies.

The Carol Jean and Edward F. Newman Fellowship

During her two-year tenure as the Newman Fellow, Leslie Garvey played a vital role on the IPS Communications Team. She increased reach and engagement on the organization’s social media channels — more than doubling its audience on Facebook — largely through the use of designed visuals and graphics. Viral site Upworthy, for instance, featured two infographics she designed based on the findings from IPS reports.

Leslie’s most significant impact at IPS was her leadership in the development of IPS’s new logo and visual identity, which she designed and executed in 2014. Leslie also produced a number of important visual materials during her tenure, including print and digital materials promoting major IPS events, such as its 50th Anniversary Celebration and the 2014 Letelier-Moffitt Awards.
Building from the momentum of 2013’s NextGen intern program, IPS launched a new summer internship curriculum in 2014.

More than half of IPS’ staff was involved in shaping the summer experience, which included serving on the planning committee and helping lead a series of 15 workshops and events.

The 2014 Next Leaders program was a result born out of our 50th anniversary celebration. We recruited a diverse group of 22 interns. They participated in a summer curriculum designed to build community, spark intergenerational dialogue, and share skills needed to become successful public scholars. All of them were introduced to the frameworks of the progressive movement. Many have gone on to successfully publish pieces in respected news magazines such as The Nation, have represented IPS at major conferences, and one was interviewed on a major television news channel for her story about living on low wage work and tipped minimum wage while saddled with student debt.

Of their many accomplishments, the 2014 summer interns published at least fifteen articles for Foreign Policy In Focus (fpif.prg). Three interns collaborated on widely published reports, and five interns authored op-eds for our OtherWords service. The 2014 summer experience served as the pilot for the Next Leaders Internship Program which launched in June 2015.

In the Fall of 2014, IPS recruited a diverse group of 15 future leaders as New Economy Maryland Fellows, a program that will focus on building power to create change in the state. Fellows commit to devoting at least one day a month in 2015 to participating in a professional development program that build two sets of skills - mastering a compelling conceptual framework for transforming Maryland into a more equitable, environmentally sustainable, and democratic state; and writing op-eds, letters to the editor, and blog posts intended for a broad general audience.

The 2015 New Economy Maryland Fellows bring a wide range of intellectual and activist backgrounds to the table and benefit from mentoring and training to become leaders of a new movement on the cusp of creating real and lasting positive change. Fellows also engage in an activist lab intended to create learning opportunities through collective action.

Violeta Duncan, New Economy Maryland Fellow
Over the course of 2014, OtherWords managing editor and columnist Emily Schwartz Greco delved with increasing frequency into the rise of green energy and the bleak outlook for fossil fuels. 


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In early 2015, IPS finished the re-design of Inequality.org, giving this great resource a new look.

J&P Cleaners, a local immigrant-owned business in Jamaica Plain, opened its new toxin-free “wet cleaning” store on September 11, 2014. IPS’s Jamaica Plain New Economy Transition project made the transition possible by linking J&P with technical assistance and crowd-funding $17,000 for equipment.

Our New Economy Working Group hosted a panel discussion with various allies to examine the root causes of structural racism and inequality, and explored strategies for transitioning Baltimore — and greater Maryland — towards a New Economy that builds inner-city equity that fosters racial justice.

Tiffany Williams at the AFL-CIO launch of her report on human trafficking of domestic workers, which is now used as a policy roadmap for a survivor organizing campaign of the National Domestic Workers Alliance.

2014 – 2015 HIGHLIGHTS
Here are some ways we put ideas into action this year:

Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN) cited an op-ed by Miriam Pemberton, Director of IPS’ Peace Economy Transitions project, in his successful effort on the House floor to shift $10 million from military operations into the agency that helps communities adjust to military spending cuts.

New Economy Maryland is introducing the “new economy” framework with the goal of transforming Maryland into a more equitable, environmentally sustainable state. In September 2015, New Economy Maryland will host a conference in Baltimore that will explore how the can advance policies that put people and the planet first.

In early 2015, IPS finished the re-design of Inequality.org, giving this great resource a new look.
FINANCIALS
2014

IPS 2014 EXPENSES TOTAL:
$3,517,999

IPS 2014 INCOME TOTAL:
$6,275,673

Programs
$3,165,320
90%

Administrative
$161,484
5%

Fundraising
$191,195
5%

Other
$177,724
3%

Bequests Placed Into Reserves
$2,469,975
39%

Foundations
$1,753,243
28%

Individuals
$1,874,731
30%
THANK YOU

All of us at the Institute for Policy Studies draw great strength from our community of donors*, including those who give anonymously. Our accomplishments in 2014 are a credit to each of you.

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