



Merrimack Valley People For Peace

Serving the communities of the Merrimack Valley

Merrimack Valley People for Peace, Inc. works for a sustainable future for all life on our planet. Our members commit themselves to the interrelated activities of education for peace and justice, the prevention of war, an end to arms sales, the abolition of nuclear weapons, and protection of the environment.

June 2006

Merrimack Valley People for Peace joins the United Nations and peacemakers around the world in proclaiming the years 2001-2010 to be the "International Decade for the Culture of Peace."

GOOD NEWS

compiled with the help of Boryana Tacconi

On June 1, thanks to the work of MVPP members Arthur Brien, Jim Todd, Mary Todd, Becci Backman, and Chad Montrie, MVPP was successful in bringing its counter-recruitment work to the Greater Lawrence Technical School. In late May, the School Committee voted 4-1 to allow MVPP to set up its resource table inside the school during the lunch hours. Jim and Mary staffed the table for 2 ½ hours. They were visited by 80-100 students--interestingly, by more young women than young men. Over 100 "Do You Know Enough To Enlist" brochures were handed out at the lunch tables. GI Hotline information was distributed to some students who had signed up and were having second thoughts. Many of the young women were interested in information about sexual assault in the military. Free buttons like "Demilitarize Our Schools" were popular; the supply was exhausted well before the end of the tabling. A reporter and a photographer from The Boston Globe were present, and the students crowded around for a conversation and a photo-op. An especially encouraging result of the visit is the invitation from the school administration to MVPP to call to schedule more visits in the next academic year. (See "Local Action" and "Commentary" for further coverage related to this event.)

On May 20th, Greater Lowell for Peace and Justice went ahead with the peace festival they had been lovingly working on for several months, despite all the difficulties created by the devastating rainfall earlier in the week. "Shedd Some Light 2006", a concert and speak-out at Shedd Park in Lowell, was organized to help local youth get the information they need to make up their own minds about enlisting in the military. The terrible reality of the war and occupation was expressed in the emotional witness of Carlos and Melida Arendondo whose son, Alex, was killed in Iraq. Several tables offered resources on alternatives to the military and the truth about military recruitment. The MVPP packet, *Think Before You Enlist*, was of course available, as well as our rich assortment of buttons, bumper stickers, and flags. And a festive and more lighthearted mood developed through balloons and peace flags floating in the spring breeze; music by the groups Chinggis, Piracy, Elemental Zazen, Eddy Dyer, and The Raging Grannies; and free food provided by Food Not Bombs. Congratulations to Greater Lowell for Peace and Justice for organizing the whole event and many thanks for inviting us!

On Mother's Day Weekend, military families and peace activists came together in a 24-hour peace vigil organized by CODEPINK in front of the White House, reclaiming the historical origin of the holiday as a time to work for peace. The group included Cindy Sheehan, Susan Sarandon, Patch Adams, Dick Gregory, and Iraqi and Iranian women. They put their bodies on the line creating an aerial image spelling "Mom Says NO WAR"; see www.codepinkalert.org. They cried together and

prayed with Native American healers, held teach-ins on Iraq, Iran, immigrant rights, Katrina and other vital problems. They sang and danced and created a powerful and passionate community. A dedicated group of CODEPINK women, inspired by the weekend, decided to stay in DC for a month, taking action at Congress every day to demand an end to war.

Women Nobel Peace Laureates have teamed up to launch a campaign to promote a peaceful solution to U.S.-Iran tensions. The initiators, Shirin Ebadi of Iran and Jody Williams of the USA, have been joined by Rigoberta Menchu Tum of Guatemala and Betty Williams of Ireland. Their written statement says, "We demand a nonviolent world where human security is the basis of our common global security." Jody Williams, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 for her work to outlaw the use of land mines, said: "We want to redefine peace as not just the absence of armed conflict. If there is not equal and social justice in the world, it is not peace."

The Philippines recently experimented with an impressive way of beating swords into ploughshares. Fort Magsaysay in the central Luzon region, the biggest Army camp in the country, is now site of a pilot farm for the growing of biodiesel-producing jatropha plants. Jatropha ("diesel weed") plants, grown in the first 30 hectares in the camp seven months ago, are now in the flowering stage, says Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, chief of the military's Northern Luzon Command. The seeds can be harvested in three months. Roughly three kilograms of seeds produce a liter of oil. Soldiers belonging to the Army's 7th Infantry

MVPP Monthly Meetings – North Parish Church – Tuesday, June 27, 7:30 PM .
<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/>

Printed on recycled paper

Weekly Vigils

Andover: Sunday, noon-1 pm; Shawsheen Square, Junction of Routes 133 and 28; Lawrence Friends Meeting/ Shawsheen Peace Witness; Allan Sifferlen, asifferlen@sbra.com.

Andover: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 7-8 pm; Saturday, 10:45 am-noon (in good weather, 10-noon); Old Town Hall, 20 Main St.; Merrimack Valley People for Peace; Lou Bernieri, lbernieri@andover.edu.

Andover: Tuesday, 6:30-7:30 am; in front of Raytheon plant near Routes 133 and 93; Raytheon Peacemakers; Arthur Brien, 978-686-4418.

Gloucester: Saturday, noon-1 pm; Grant Circle.

Marblehead: Wednesday, 5-7 pm; at the Peace Pole, Memorial Park (by the YMCA); Tom Gale, 781-631-1218.

Nashua, NH in front of Nashua City Hall from 11 to Noon every Sat. www.nashuapeace.org

Newburyport: Sunday, noon-1 pm; Market Square; Niki Rosen, 978-463-3208.

Reading: 2nd Saturday/each month, 11 am-noon; Reading Square; Reading People for Peace; Bob Connor, bobconnor1@yahoo.com.

Rockport: Wednesday, noon-1 pm; First Congregational Church (silent for peace).

Salem, MA: Saturday, 11-noon; Riley Plaza (by the Post Office).

You can buy Rainbow Peace Flags, buttons, bumperstickers, etc. at Saturday vigils in Andover.

Division have started preparing the next 90 hectares for a new round of planting. Farmers are being invited to visit the demonstration farm and are encouraged to try planting jatropha in abandoned grasslands to increase their earnings. In a recent speech, President Gloria Macapagal Aroyo made a pitch for the cultivation of jatropha, thus following the example of India, where the plant has become a conventional energy source. She said that the nation's largest oil refiner, Petron, as well as the world's largest oil refiner, Saudi Aramco, are ready to set up processing plants to extract diesel fuel from the seeds as long as there is enough of a supply.

In late April, six grassroots activists, received this year's prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize, also known as the "Green Nobel Prize."

The common denominators of all six, who were chosen from each of the world's major geographical regions, were their effectiveness and their relative anonymity. As Goldman Prize founder, Richard Goldman, put it, the six are "among the most important people you have not heard of before". They include [Silas Kpanan' Ayoung Siakur of Liberia](#), who exposed illegal logging authorized by then-Liberian President and accused war criminal, Charles Taylor; [Tarcisio Feitosa da Silva of Brazil](#), who has worked to create the world's largest area of protected tropical forest regions in a remote part of the Amazon; [Anne Kajir, a lawyer in Papua New Guinea](#), who also exposed illegal logging fueled by government corruption; [Yu Xiaogang of China](#), an expert in river ecology, who has spent his life promoting watershed management programs that protect the interests of local Chinese communities; [Olya Melen, a Ukrainian lawyer](#), who worked to halt construction of a potentially disastrous canal across the Danube Delta; and [Craig Williams of USA](#), a Vietnam veteran activist, who organized local communities to persuade the U.S. Defense Department to halt plans to incinerate old chemical weapons stockpiled around the country.

At its Annual Conference on June 8-11, The New England Conference of The United Methodist Church passed two important resolutions.

First, the 1200 delegates called for the end of the unjust occupation in Iraq, bringing the troops home, supporting the rebuilding of Iraq, and asking members of the 550 churches in the conference to contact the President and their congressional representatives and senators on the second week of each month until substantial progress is made. Second, they resolved to commit churches to study the local and global issues of migration and to oppose any further militarization of the U.S. border. Created by Julie Todd, who recently returned from a Migrant Trail Walk in the Sonora Desert, the resolution stated that as "privileged residents of the first world" we must

acknowledge the benefits we gain from the oppression of others and admit our complicity with the "dehumanization and demonization of the migrant in our midst."

Hats off to Massachusetts Congressmen Marty Meehan, Ed Markey, Jim McGovern, and John Tierney, who in April earned a score of 100% for their 2005 Congressional voting records on crucial issues of war and peace. They were among only 27 House members who earned this perfect rating from the Peace Action Education Fund. There was not one U.S. Senator in this elite company, although Senator Kennedy received Honorable Mention. The legislative actions that were monitored were actual, recorded "floor votes." The full report is listed at www.peace-action.org/. We encourage MVPP members to inform others about how Congress performed last year on the critical votes--especially friends, neighbors, and colleagues who share our passion for peace and justice. And let's keep holding all of our elected officials accountable (see articles on p. 4).

President's Report to Annual Meeting

Editor's Note: On Friday evening, June 16, nearly 50 individuals attended our annual meeting and potluck dinner at North Parish Church, including a number of special guests and friends. The featured speaker was Mario Rodas, a Chelsea High School honors graduate facing deportation (see p. 3). First, MVPP President Bobbie Goldman delivered her report on the past year, one that by everyone's reckoning has been extremely active on numerous fronts.

We had another successful and busy year.

Of course, we continued our almost daily vigils in Andover, as well as weekly ones in Newburyport and monthly ones in Reading. We also sponsored some larger special ones... Nagasaki and Cindy Sheehan last August, the 3rd anniversary of the start of the war in Iraq, and the constitutional vigil. Some folks also participated in the Good Friday vigil against the Death Penalty.

Becci and various helpers have set up our table and our wonderful new canopy at the Lowell Folk Festival, Paws for Peace, Bread and Roses, and Shedd Some Light Festivals, as well as at numerous coffee house events and concerts such as Pat Scanlon's CD release party.

Many of us have marched in Boston, New York, and Washington this year, and a number of MVPP folks joined the annual Walk for a New Spring in various locations around Eastern Mass.

We made donations to help with relief after Katrina, mudslides in Guatemala, the earthquakes in Pakistan, and our own local floods, as well as a large number of peace and justice organizations. This year we tried to be more organized and thoughtful about our donations.

We also decided as a group to focus on three issues: counter-recruitment--especially in Lawrence--depleted uranium weapons, and of course, ending the war in Iraq...and Afghanistan and preventing one in Iran.

We've learned a great deal about counter-recruitment this past year and have taught others as well. We've given out over 250 of our *Think Before You Enlist* packets. We've finally started tabling at Greater Lawrence Technical School, and we are working on getting into Lawrence High School. In this regard, we have copies here of last Sunday's front-page articles in the NorthWest section of The Boston Globe and the actual front page of the Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, featuring Mary and Jim Todd.

We have a DU committee, whose members are reading books and articles, watching videos, and attending lectures, to be more informed so we can inform others about the realities of depleted uranium.

We've heard lots of inspiring talks by folks like Camilo Mejia, Dahr Jamail, Doug Rokke, Noam Chomsky, and our own Masood. We've learned about DU, Israel/Palestine, Iran, our Constitution, our economy, and so many other topics, and some of us have attended town meetings with Marty Meehan and Ed Markey, Democracy School, and the Eyes Wide Open exhibit. And most of us read and forward lots and lots of emails.

A number of different MVPP members have also spoken at religion, sociology, and women's studies classes at Merrimack College.

We've even started our own lending library of books, videos, DVD's, and CD's.

We're starting to address immigration issues, and have continued our nice connection with the mosque in Methuen through Masood.

Quite a few of us worked to collect signatures for the National Guard referendum in Massachusetts. We write letters to the editor, and email and call our senators and representatives about so many issues. And of course, Becci, Chad, and I go to lots of meetings with UJP, connecting with other area peace activists to coordinate activities and learn from each other.

So, as I said earlier, we've had another busy and successful year. We have a great team of people who care passionately about peace and justice issues, each doing what we can to make the world a better place. While we have 4, now 5, officers and 15 board members who make decisions in between our monthly meetings, our various committees are also very important in continuing the work that we do. We now have over 125 members, and our impressive newsletter goes out to so many more people. Thank you all for your deep commitment and concern, and for the hard work that you all do. I'm really proud to be a part of Merrimack Valley People for Peace.

Annual Meeting Features Need for Immigration Reform:

Guest Speaker, Mario Rodas, Shares His Story

This year's Annual Meeting gave us an important opportunity to become more educated about the need for immigration reform. Our guest speaker, 19-year-old Guatemalan immigrant, Mario Rodas, shared his urgent personal story, one that mirrors the experience of untold numbers of hardworking immigrant children and their families in our country.

Mario was born in Guatemala but moved to Chelsea, MA, with his family at the age of 12, due to economic hardship in their country. Here he became an outstanding honors student, graduating last year from Chelsea High at the top of his class as secretary of his school's National Honor Society. This year he has taken courses at the Harvard extension program, with the professional goal of becoming a computer scientist.

Although he had no criminal record, but in fact for seven years has modeled the example of a stellar student, patient caretaker and committed leader in his community, he was detained by immigration and is facing deportation. His hearing takes place on June 27. Many citizens and community groups, including MVPP, have actively worked in recent weeks to rally local officials and Bay State elected officials to Mario's cause, including Senators Kennedy and Kerry and Rep. Capuano.

Mario's quiet resolve and perseverance led many in the audience to intensify their sense that immigration reform must become yet another priority in MVPP's ongoing work. We were fortunate that José Cruz of Latinos United for Justice was in attendance, and during the Q & A following Mario's presentation, José provided us with a quick primer on key immigration issues.

We encourage members to deepen their understanding of the "broken immigration system"--how its laws impact immigrants and what the myths and facts are. We seek ways to devote ourselves effectively to the cause of reform. The following websites are suggested as good starting points:

Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition:

www.miracoalition.org/home.

Irish Immigration Center: www.iicenter.org.

Justice for Immigrants: www.justiceforimmigrants.org/

National Immigration Forum: www.immigrationforum.org/ and www.immigrationforum.org/documents/TheJourney/MythsandFacts.pdf

National Lawyers Guild: www.nlg.org.

Refugee Immigration Ministry: www.r-i-m.net/ (see especially immigration legal services)

The flyer for "The Human Face of Immigration," a recent discussion at the First Methodist Church in North Andover, puts the issue in clear focus: "Immigration is a complex issue that is changing the face of cultures worldwide. It is often controversial with many social, economic, political and even religious implications. In the midst of the debate, what often gets lost are the human issues at stake."

URGENT ACTION

Editor's comment: We encourage members and readers to study carefully and to consider participating in the following nationally coordinated campaigns, endorsed so far by 30 peace and justice groups, including United for Peace & Justice.

Action #1: The Declaration of Peace

<http://declarationofpeace.org/>

This dynamic campaign declares that it is time to take our opposition to the Iraq War to a new level through massive nonviolence--bold, powerful, and peaceful steps--in Washington, D.C. and across the country. It is an ambitious effort to increase citizens' pressure on the Bush Administration to end the war and occupation by engaging in nation-wide, nonviolent action from September 21-28, if a comprehensive plan to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq has not been established and activated by that date.

The Declaration of Peace calls for a comprehensive, concrete, and rapid end to the U.S. War in Iraq, including:

- Withdrawal of U.S. troops and all coalition forces,
- Closure of U.S. military bases,
- Support for an Iraqi-led peace process, including a peace conference to shape a post-occupation transition and an international peacekeeping presence if mandated by this peace process,
- Return of Iraqi control over its oil resources and the political and economic life of the nation,
- Reparations and reconstruction to address the destruction caused by the U.S. war and thirteen years of sanctions,
- Establish a "peace dividend" for job creation, health care, education, housing, and other vital social needs,
- Increased support for U.S. veterans of the Iraq war, and
- No so-called "preventive" war against Iran or any other nation

This comprehensive plan must be established and activated no later than September 21, 2006, and completed no later than March 19, 2007, ending four years of war and occupation in Iraq. Individuals who sign the Declaration will take every non-violent step possible to meet this goal before these deadlines.

The Declaration of Peace Pledge

to sign: <http://declarationofpeace.org/sign-the-declaration-of-peace>

Yes! I join with the majority of U.S. citizens, the people of Iraq, and people around the world in calling for a comprehensive end to the U.S. war in Iraq. I solemnly pledge to:

___ Call on the Bush administration and Congress to immediately withdraw all U.S. troops from Iraq, with no future redeployments.

___ Urge my Congressional representatives to adopt a "bring the troops home now" position, and to establish a concrete, comprehensive withdrawal plan no later than September 21, 2006, International Peace Day, just days before Congress adjourns.

___ Participate in marches, rallies, demonstrations, and other peaceful strategies to establish this plan.

___ Engage in non-violent civil disobedience, as conscience leads me, if this plan for a comprehensive withdrawal is not established and activated no later than September 21, 2006.

For further information: 2501 Harrison St., Oakland, CA 94612.
E-mail: info@declarationofpeace.org.

Action #2: Voters for Peace Pledge

www.unitedforpeace.org/index.php

The majority of the people of this country, Iraqis, and active duty soldiers want to see an end to the war. But rather than take a clear stand against the war, too many candidates for Congress are fudging on what should be done.

It's time to put every Congressional candidate -- incumbents and newcomers alike -- on notice that if they want our votes, they must take a clear, public stand on ending the Iraq war and preventing any other unjust, illegal war.

As support for the war drops, these politicians are trying to distance themselves from Bush's "stay the course" policy by criticizing the management of the war or the decision to invade -- without calling for an end to the war. And they're hoping that antiwar voters aren't paying enough attention to know the difference.

Let's make war and peace the central issue in the November 2006 election. Make peace so powerful a demand that politicians simply cannot ignore it. As the out-spoken columnist, Molly Ivins, wrote a few months ago: "This is not a time for a candidate who will offend no one. It is time for a candidate who takes clear stands and kicks ass."

1. **Sign the Voters for Peace Pledge:**
www.democracyinaction.org/dia/organizationsORG/ufpj/signUp.jsp?key=1350

"I will not vote for or support any candidate for Congress or President who does not make a speedy end to the war in Iraq, and preventing any future war of aggression, a public position in his or her campaign."

2. Circulate the pledge form and secure the signatures of your family, friends, and colleagues.

RECENT LOCAL ACTION:

MVPP Provides Counter-Recruitment Information at Greater Lawrence Technical School; Visits to other Local Schools Being Planned

This spring, as part of MVPP's ongoing priority to provide students with alternative information and points of view about military service, our members Arthur Brien and Jim Todd met with Frank Vacirca, the superintendent of the Greater Lawrence Technical School, to secure permission for tabling activity in this

school. The superintendent determined that the matter should go before the School Committee, and at a subsequent meeting, approval was granted by a 4-1 vote, with Arthur and fellow member, Chad Montrie, in attendance.

And so it was that on the afternoon of June 1, two of our members, Mary and Jim Todd set themselves up at our counter-recruitment table in the cafeteria of Greater Lawrence Technical School, providing critical information for young people to consider before they might decide to enlist. Since only about a dozen schools statewide have so far hosted counter-recruiters, this educational event drew highly visible press coverage in front-page articles on Sunday, June 11th in both the Eagle-Tribune and the North West section of The Boston Globe. On June 12th, the article from The Globe, entitled "For Youth, Advice on Military, and Dissent," was posted in full on the major website, truthout.org: www.truthout.org/docs_2006/061206D.shtml.

MVPP Counter-Recruitment Committee continues to work on plans for visits to other schools in the region, including the Phillips Academy Summer Session in July and Lawrence High School during the 2006-07 academic year. The group also intends to update our major DVD packet of materials, *Think Before You Enlist*, in time for the start of the new school year.

Commentary

Helping Young People Make Fully Informed Decisions about Military Service

by Chad Montrie
MVPP member and assistant professor of history at the University of Massachusetts Lowell

Editor's note: The following was submitted to The Boston Globe and the Eagle-Tribune (published there on June 23) after these papers reported on June 11 about MVPP's recent tabling at Greater Lawrence Technical School.

You don't have to listen long to hear the words. Every other day, it seems, the President of the United States portrays the war in Iraq as an effort to bring "democracy" and "freedom" to the Middle East. The guiding idea, he claims, is to create a framework for government by which Iraqis rule themselves, without excluding anyone because of their religion, gender, or political beliefs.

Whether or not you believe the President, he defends the war on these terms because they resonate with Americans. We like to think we already have what the Iraqis lack. Yet, ironically, here at home, we don't always act like we live in a democratic society, one founded on the rejection of tyranny for liberty. Military recruitment is a case in point.

Every branch of the U.S. armed forces now has inordinate and sometimes exclusive access to persuade young people into signing up. Additionally, an increasing number of recruiters have taken free license to misrepresent the duties and benefits of military service to this end. Parents and their children should be advised.

When recruiters talk to prospective soldiers they downplay or neglect to mention the possibilities of injury and death. Instead, they promise money for college and job skills, huge cash bonuses, duty stations far from any conflict, a limited number of years in active duty service, and generous veteran's benefits.

They play on the worries and needs of young people at a vulnerable time in their lives, in communities hard hit by economic decline and social decay.

The truth is, these promises are often empty. There are many restrictions on use of college funds, so that few soldiers actually see the full amount pledged, if any at all. Only 15 percent, in fact, ever receive a college degree. Recruiters also don't explain the President's power to extend active duty service without notice, the so-called "stop-loss" measures. Meanwhile, the Bush administration is annually forcing deep cuts in veteran's benefits.

Still, if half-truths don't work, military recruiters have other means of getting young people to sign up. After the war in Iraq began, and the military started regularly missing its quotas for new soldiers, the pressure was on to make up the difference. This has led to a record number of violations, like recruiting youth with diagnosed mental illnesses and manufacturing high school diplomas for those without one. On May 20, 2005, the Army even called a one-day stand-down for its recruiters, following various public reports of abuses. But the high pressure sales tactics continue.

All of this is an argument for making sure young people receive an alternative point of view, particularly when they are a captive audience being recruited in schools. If we are to give form to the President's rhetoric of democracy and freedom here at home, we need to allow students and their parents to make fully-informed decisions about military service. To do that, however, members of local peace groups like Merrimack Valley People for Peace must have equal access to schools, to present what recruiters refuse or fail to say.

Headlines in the Streets of New York; April 29, 2006

Editor's Note: Several MVPP members joined the ranks of over 300,000 people who mobilized for peace and justice in New York in late April. The following are just a sampling of the messages carried by marchers, sentiments rarely heard or seen in daily media:

Just Say Whoa
Make Hummus, not War
When Government Lies, Democracy Dies
If You Can Read This, You're not the President
Be Peace in the Face of Fear
The Innocent: How Many More?
Bush Pull Out, Like Your Father Should Have
Misery Accomplished
Take Back the Future

Dear Latin American Country:
Please Invade Us and Bring
Democracy to Our Country
How Many Lives Per Gallon?
Leave No Tree Behind
Dear World: We Think He's a
Selfish, Arrogant, Ignorant,
Dangerous Idiot, Too!

Halliburton über Alles
Elect a Madman; You Get Madness
George Orwell Party

To continue to receive this newsletter... **We Invite You to Join /Rejoin Us**

\$20.00 Individual
\$10.00 Student/Senior
\$30.00 Family

Circle One

\$50.00 Supporting
\$75.00 Sustaining
\$100.00 Peacemaker

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____ Date _____

Return to
P.O. Box 573

MVPP is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions to MVPP are tax deductible. Last year, approximately one-third of our members joined/renewed at higher than the basic rate. **Check here [] if you prefer to receive your newsletter via e-mail.**

Issues

Cut and Run? You Bet:

Why America must get out of Iraq now

by Lt. Gen. William E. Odom (Ret.)
Foreign Policy; May/June 2006;
blog.foreignpolicy.com/odom/odom.html

Withdraw immediately or stay the present course? That is the key question about the war in Iraq today. American public opinion is now decidedly against the war. From liberal New England, where citizens pass town-hall resolutions calling for withdrawal, to the conservative South and West, where more than half of "red state" citizens oppose the war, Americans want out. That sentiment is understandable.

The prewar dream of a liberal Iraqi democracy friendly to the United States is no longer credible. No Iraqi leader with enough power and legitimacy to control the country will be pro-American. Still, U.S. President George W. Bush says the United States must stay the course. Why? Let's consider his administration's most popular arguments for not leaving Iraq.

If we leave, there will be a civil war. In reality, a civil war in Iraq began just weeks after U.S. forces toppled Saddam. Any close observer could see that then; today, only the blind deny it. Even President Bush, who is normally impervious to uncomfortable facts, recently admitted that Iraq has peered into the abyss of civil war. He ought to look a little closer. Iraqis are fighting Iraqis. Insurgents have killed far more Iraqis than Americans. That's civil war.

Withdrawal will encourage the terrorists. True, but that is the price we are doomed to pay. Our continued occupation of Iraq also encourages the killers-precisely because our invasion made Iraq safe for them. Our occupation also left the surviving Baathists with one choice: Surrender, or ally with al Qaeda. They chose the latter. Staying the course will not change this fact. Pulling out will most likely result in Sunni groups' turning against al Qaeda and its sympathizers, driving them out of Iraq entirely.

Before U.S. forces stand down, Iraqi security forces must stand up. The problem in Iraq is not military competency; it is political consolidation. Iraq has a large officer corps with plenty of combat experience from the Iran-Iraq war. Moktada al-Sadr's Shiite militia fights well today without U.S. advisors, as do Kurdish pesh merga units. The problem is loyalty. To whom can

officers and troops afford to give their loyalty? The political camps in Iraq are still shifting. So every Iraqi soldier and officer today risks choosing the wrong side. As a result, most choose to retain as much latitude as possible to switch allegiances. All the U.S. military trainers in the world cannot remove that reality. But political consolidation will. It should by now be clear that political power can only be established via Iraqi guns and civil war, not through elections or U.S. colonialism by ventriloquism.

Setting a withdrawal deadline will damage the morale of U.S. troops. Hiding behind the argument of troop morale shows no willingness to accept the responsibilities of command. The truth is, most wars would stop early if soldiers had the choice of whether or not to continue. This is certainly true in Iraq, where a withdrawal is likely to raise morale among U.S. forces. A recent Zogby poll suggests that most U.S. troops would welcome an early withdrawal deadline. But the strategic question of how to extract the United States from the Iraq disaster is not a matter to be decided by soldiers. Carl von Clausewitz spoke of two kinds of courage: first, bravery in the face of mortal danger; second, the willingness to accept personal responsibility for command decisions. The former is expected of the troops. The latter must be demanded of high-level commanders, including the president.

Withdrawal would undermine U.S. credibility in the world. Were the United States a middling power, this case might hold some water. But for the world's only superpower, it's patently phony. A rapid reversal of our present course in Iraq would improve U.S. credibility around the world. The same argument was made against withdrawal from Vietnam. It was proved wrong then and it would be proved wrong today. Since Sept. 11, 2001, the world's opinion of the United States has plummeted, with the largest short-term drop in American history. The United States now garners as much international esteem as Russia. Withdrawing and admitting our mistake would reverse this trend. Very few countries have that kind of corrective capacity. I served as a military attaché in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow during Richard Nixon's Watergate crisis. When Nixon resigned, several Soviet officials who had previously expressed disdain for the United States told me they were astonished. One diplomat said, "Only your country is powerful enough to do this. It would destroy my country."

Two facts, however painful, must be recognized, or we will remain perilously confused in Iraq. First, invading Iraq was not in the interests of the United States. It was in the interests of Iran and al Qaeda. For Iran, it avenged a grudge against Saddam for his invasion of the country in 1980. For al Qaeda, it made it easier to kill Americans. Second, the war has paralyzed the United States in the world diplomatically and strategically. Although relations with Europe show signs of marginal

improvement, the trans-Atlantic alliance still may not survive the war. Only with a rapid withdrawal from Iraq will Washington regain diplomatic and military mobility. Tied down like Gulliver in the sands of Mesopotamia, we simply cannot attract the diplomatic and military cooperation necessary to win the real battle against terror. Getting out of Iraq is the precondition for any improvement.

In fact, getting out now may be our only chance to set things right in Iraq. For starters, if we withdraw, European politicians would be more likely to cooperate with us in a strategy for stabilizing the greater Middle East. Following a withdrawal, all the countries bordering Iraq would likely respond favorably to an offer to help stabilize the situation. The most important of these would be Iran. It dislikes al Qaeda as much as we do. It wants regional stability as much as we do. It wants to produce more oil and gas and sell it. If its leaders really want nuclear weapons, we cannot stop them. But we can engage them.

None of these prospects is possible unless we stop moving deeper into the "big sandy" of Iraq. America must withdraw now.

Lt. Gen. William E. Odom (Ret.) is senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and professor at Yale University. He was director of the National Security Agency from 1985 to 1988.

Answering Questions about a US Department of Peace

by Marianne Williamson; May 2006
www.commondreams.org/views06/0503-28.htm

I cannot tell you with what weapons mankind would fight WW3, but I can assure you that WW4 would be fought with sticks and stones.

--Albert Einstein

There is currently a bill before both Houses of Congress to establish a United States Department of Peace (House Resolution 3760 and Senate 1756). This historic measure will augment our current problem-solving modalities, providing practical, nonviolent solutions to the problems of domestic and international conflict.

During the 20th Century, over 100 million people lost their lives to war -- most of whom were non-combatants. Now, at the dawn of the 21st century, the extent and current speed of nuclear proliferation makes the achievement of non-violent alternatives to war the most urgent need of the human race.

From the growing rate of domestic incarceration to increasing problems of international violence, the United States has no more serious problem in our midst than the problem of violence itself. Prison-building is our largest urban industry, and we spend over 400 billion dollars a year on military-related expenditures. Yet there is within the workings of the U.S. government, no platform from which to seriously wage peace. We place no institutional heft behind an effort to address the causal issues of violence, diminishing its psychological force before it erupts into material conflict. From child abuse to genocide, from the murder of one to the slaughter of thousands, it is increasingly

senseless to merely wait until violence has erupted before addressing the deeper well from which it springs.

Following are answers to some frequently asked questions about the Department of Peace legislation.

Q: Why should the American public support the Department of Peace?

A: There is currently no organized approach by the U.S. government that aims at creating nonviolent solutions to domestic and international conflict. A violent response to violence should always be our last resort, which is difficult in the absence of a sophisticated, well-funded strategy for peace. While certain applications of brute force -- from prisons to war -- are arguably necessary, as a nation we should still be actively involved in a search for their ultimate end.

By giving the interests of peace a full cabinet position, we make it a national priority. Peace becomes a national goal to which we aspire, as we analyze all domestic and foreign policy in light of its dictates. While the President and Congress remain the ultimate arbiters of our laws, with the Department of Peace they will have a higher level of consultation regarding nonviolent options to brute force.

Q: Does a Department of Peace duplicate the Department of State?

A: No.

First, the Department of State handles only international matters, while the Department of Peace will operate both domestically and abroad. Second, the State Department deals exclusively with other "States," i.e. recognized governmental entities. While such an approach was adequate throughout most of the post WWII era, there is obviously now a greater need to deal creatively, if not diplomatically, with non-state agents. The Department of State plays an important and pivotal role in American diplomacy, and nothing in this legislation would change that. The Dept. of Peace, however, will augment the efforts of the Department of State, as well as the Department of Defense. Its work will go beyond "intelligence-gathering," to a pro-active search for non-violent solutions.

We should be as sophisticated in the ways we wage peace as we are in the ways we wage war. Former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, speaking of his leadership during the Viet Nam War, said, "We knew nothing about Vietnamese religion, psychology or culture -- and we had no one to tell us." With a Department of Peace, that would never be the case. This department would be actively involved in studying the most human aspects of conflict, and applying ways to resolve them peacefully.

Q: There are so many departments not getting the funding they need. Where is the money for the Department of Peace coming from?

A: The current bill calls for budgeting the Department of Peace at 2% of our defense budget. With over 400 billion dollars now spent on military-related expenditures, it should not be asking too much to spend the equivalent of two per cent of that amount on providing complementary problem-solving options. From our police departments to our schools to our fire departments to our military, we are dangerously overstretched in our capacity to

respond to violence. Clearly, we should do everything possible to resolve conflict peacefully before it manifests violently.

Beyond that, we are at a point in our history when we must consider the deeper costs of violence, including the increasingly dangerous possibility of nuclear war. There should be no amount considered too much to spend for the search for a non-violent future.

Q: People have been violent forever. Isn't that just how people are?

A: While it can be argued that people have been violent forever, we have not had the proliferation of nuclear bombs at our disposal with which to express our violence. This is not like any other time in human history. We must evolve past war, or war will end our evolution.

Today we have at our disposal, along with highly-skilled practitioners, techniques for conflict-resolution and peace-building that should be swiftly added to our national response systems. The Department of Peace would be the agent for the integration of these techniques into our governmental functioning both domestically and abroad.

Q: Why can't work such as the Department of Peace legislation espoused be left to other agencies to integrate into their already existing efforts?

A: Obviously, peace work can be and in some cases already is a part of existing agencies. When such efforts are placed under one umbrella, however – such as in the establishment of our Department of Homeland Security – then they attain a higher level of synergy, effective co-ordination and influence upon the thinking of American citizens.

The establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency by Richard Nixon did not begin our commitment to the environment, yet it raised it to a much higher level of national priority. And so should it be with the interests of peace.

These are some of the many reasons why we feel this legislation represents an important collective effort, as American citizens, to do everything we possibly can to save the world for our children's children. The legislation will pass from bill to law under one condition: that a wave of citizen interest rise up from the American people and make itself heard in the halls of Congress.

The Peace Alliance (www.ThePeaceAlliance.org) educates and inspires thousands throughout the country with the knowledge, skill and enthusiasm to become powerful citizen activists on behalf of the Department of Peace legislation. Our campaign has citizen organizers working in all 50 states. Local activists are mobilizing a mighty wave of momentum by working with their members of congress, writing editorials, doing local radio and TV interviews, organizing local talks and trainings, getting city council endorsements, visiting with Police Chiefs, Fire Chiefs, Military Officials, Prison Officials, Directors of Abuse Shelters, School Boards, etc. to share and discuss how a Department of Peace would benefit their community. There are currently 64 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives and 2 in the senate.

Join us now. Create a Department of Peace.

Letters to the Editor

Technology exists to stop dependence on oil

published in the Newburyport Daily News; May 11, 2006

To the editor:

A few people I know power their cars with used cooking fats given to them free by restaurants glad to get rid of old fat. Kits are available to convert certain cars into these "greasemobiles" that run just like any other car, only with free fuel. It's that easy to fuel an automobile and can be that cheap. This should tell us something about the state of our civilization. It's that easy, yet the Bush administration is intent upon waging war upon the entire Middle East to monopolize oil supplies.

The technology to relieve some of the most pressing problems confronting us today already exists. Shifting from a dependence upon foreign oil to more rational forms of energy would require adjustments, but does that mean we are locked into a system that will destroy us with endless war and environmental degradation? Rather than implement energy solutions that foster peace and repair environmental damage (and lessen global warming), this administration intends to keep us dependent on fossil fuels to satisfy the industry's demands for profit. Do we send young people to war to guarantee some oil company executive, such as retiring Lee Raymond of Exxon, \$190,000 a day?

Mother's Day falls in May. How would Mother's Day be in Iraq, when half the torn bodies in the overflowing morgue of Baghdad are children and women; where women fear newborns will be deformed by exposure to depleted uranium used by the U.S. military; where many children can no longer attend school but spend their days in the streets, homeless, hungry, traumatized, with no way to earn money and without medical care; where families are shattered and filth and chaos and fear are the daily environment? And every day of agony brings new profits to the war industries: the Halliburtons, the arms manufacturers, the privatized "corporate warriors." And guess who pays the bill.

The Bush administration refused Iran's 2003 offer to the United States to negotiate differences, including its nuclear program, in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions and entry into the global economy. We have a long history of interference in the politics and economies of other nations, including Iran, with disastrous results. The CIA orchestrated the removal of a democratically elected president and replaced him with a dictatorial shah, leading directly to the revolution that put the current government in power. Now Bush, et al, having negated the nuclear non-proliferation treaty by continuing to develop and use nuclear weapons, plans to invade Iran using nuclear weapons, with the excuse that Iran might develop a weapon of its own. This is preferable to a negotiated settlement? Or was invasion always a part of the administration's overall plan for the Middle East? That might explain its obsession with secrecy and media control. Meanwhile, Donald Rumsfeld has created his own secret squads, called Special Operations, to roam the globe unchecked — and do what? How convenient it is to have an "-ism" handy to hide behind.

Making the United States the most hated nation on earth will not spread democracy, bring peace or create endless riches.

Diana Philip, Newburyport, MA

Depleted uranium is a danger to all

published in the Eagle-Tribune; May 12, 2006

To the editor:

We have just passed the 20th anniversary of the Chernobyl explosion and now recognize the long-term health and environmental effects of that disaster. Our own government is currently involved in another disaster. The United States uses radioactive depleted uranium (DU) weapons in Iraq. Our government supposedly went into Iraq to find weapons of mass destruction. None were found. We brought them with us and used them there.

Depleted uranium is a very effective weapon used in tanks and "bunker buster bombs." The half-life of depleted uranium is 4.5 billion years — and it is radioactive! By using these weapons, we brought environmental disaster in Iraq. We have poisoned their water. The cancer rate in children is dramatically higher than it was before the first Gulf War. Many Iraqi children are born with severe birth defects and develop childhood cancer at alarming rates. To bring it closer to home, many of our veterans also breathed in depleted uranium dust and are affected as well. Children of veterans from Iraq have some of the same birth defects as babies born in Iraq. DU is one of the factors blamed on the Gulf War Syndrome by veterans and medical researchers. Many people in our country do not know about depleted uranium — but the rest of the world knows! Try "googling" depleted uranium. I got 5.3 million hits.

Our government is not "supporting our troops" when they come home and cannot get medical treatment for DU poisoning. Contact your representatives, both locally and in the federal government. Demand that they not only study this issue, but that they fund medical care for our soldiers when they come home. Demand that they discontinue the use of depleted uranium weapons.

Mary Todd, Lawrence, MA

Books of Note

Recommended Reads compiled by Don Abbott

Michael Albert. Realizing Hope: Life Beyond Capitalism, Zed Books, 2006. The seventeenth book by the co-founder of South End Press, *Z Magazine*, the Z Media Institute, and ZNet (where he continues to work), it brims with provocative questions that both the average citizen and the professional economist can handle and must consider, broadly and deeply. By asking how to coordinate economic change with desired reform in virtually every major domain of human concern and activity, Albert argues for a different future than the one we now face. Neither dogmatic nor simplistic in its search for a world of much greater freedom and justice, this book is guaranteed to stretch the reader's ability to think unconventionally and in the process, perhaps, to reconsider what it means to be human.

James Carroll. House of War: The Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006. A prodigious chronicle of America's most powerful institution, from its birth to its mythic stature today. Researched and written by the noted Boston Globe columnist and author of An American Requiem and Constantine's Sword, who draws on his intimate personal experience as the son of a top Pentagon official,

this book marshals chilling evidence that the Pentagon is the loosest cannon in American history--one that has changed our country as no other institution has.

Richard Falk, Irene Gendizer & Robert J. Lifton, eds. Crimes of War Iraq, Nation Books, 2006. A vitally important addition to a growing number of books today that document and comment on the immorality and criminality of our country's policies with regard to Iraq. The editors explore the legal, historical, political, and psychological dimensions of the war, raising the most crucial questions that arise from their individual perspectives—international law, foreign policy, and collective psychology. While it may be a distant dream ever to expect a day when members of the current administration will stand trial for war crimes, this rich compendium of essays makes clear that the perpetrators of U.S. policies should be held individually accountable.

Jeff Goodell. Big Coal: The Dirty Secret behind America's Energy Future, Houghton Mifflin, 2006. A book of urgent importance by a veteran journalist who lays bare the faulty assumptions that promote the revival of coal as the alternative to Mideast oil and incisively shatters the myth that coal is cheap and clean. Already, we use a lump of coal virtually every time we flip an electric switch, and the politics of coal may soon place our demand for and dependency on coal at alarming heights. And as Goodell writes, "Most of us have no idea how central coal is to our everyday lives or what our relationship to this black rock really costs us." A book that should wake a lot of people up to deeply troubling realities that affect us at every level, local to global. As one reviewer says, it could do for energy "what Fast Food Nation did for the American meal."

Antonia Juhasz. The Bush Agenda: Invading the World, One Economy at a Time, Regan Books, 2006. From the first day of the Iraq War, Juhasz has been one of the few writers to report and comment consistently on the economic underpinnings of our invasion and occupation. This long-awaited book delineates the inseparable interdependence between U.S. policy of global military domination and the radical agenda of corporate globalization. Despite the title, the author uncovers the history of this agenda, making it clear that it started well before the presidency of George W. Bush. Today marks its most brutal application, however. Peace activists who focus on the need for total military disengagement from Iraq must understand that such a withdrawal is only half of the story. The economic occupation (a.k.a. corporate takeover) of Iraq by U.S. and multinational corporations was well planned and meticulously carried out, and it is the primary reason our young men and women (and hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis) are losing their lives.

"The enormous gap between what the U.S. leaders do in the world and what Americans think their leaders are doing is one of the great propaganda accomplishments of the dominant political mythology."

--Michael Parenti

Reflections

A Tribute to Daniel Berrigan, born May 9, 1921

“Daniel Berrigan told me long ago that the only way to be hopeful was to do hopeful things.”

--John Dear

Editor's comment: Daniel Berrigan turned 85 last month. On June 10, Amy Goodman, Pete Seeger and special guests gathered at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola in Manhattan to celebrate the life and legacy of the priest and poet who ranks as one of the signal peace activists of 20th century America. His witness, along with that of his late brother, Philip, serves as an inspiration for the ages. In tribute, we offer a small selection of his words. Each is a summons to follow the truth to which he has devoted his extraordinary life.

“The God of life summons us to life; more, to be lifegivers, especially toward those who lie under the heel of the powers.”

“Sometime in your life, hope that you might see one starved man, the look on his face when the bread finally arrives. Hope that you might have baked it or bought or even kneaded it yourself. For that look on his face, for your meeting his eyes across a piece of bread, you might be willing to lose a lot, or suffer a lot, or die a little, even.”

“But how shall we educate men to goodness, to a sense of one another, to a love of truth? And more urgently, how shall we do this in a bad time?”

“There are situations when you can't ask about success, because that question will get you down. If you make succeeding your primary concern, you have already capitulated to the system. Of course, there is an experience of powerlessness, but it must not paralyze you. Civil courage has to do with self-respect, with the self-assertion of human dignity. And it comes before success.”

“The death of a single human is too heavy a price to pay for the vindication of any principle, however sacred.”

“One is called to live nonviolently, even if the change one works for seems impossible. It may or may not be possible to turn the U. S. around through nonviolent revolution. But one thing favors such an attempt: the total inability of violence to change anything for the better.”

“One cannot level one's moral lance at every evil in the universe. There are just too many of them. But you can do something, and the difference between doing something and doing nothing is everything.”

“Serve the truth...resist all trespass on the spirit.”

*--Joseph Hurka, citing the message of his father,
Czech freedom fighter after 1948*

Thoughts on the Eve of July 4, 2006

www.ifcwtc.org/words22.html

Editor's comment: In the critical war year of 1944, Judge Learned Hand delivered the following eloquent, brief address at a ceremony entitled “I Am an American Day.” The setting: Central Park in New York City, May 21, when the outcome of the Second World War was still in doubt. Thousands of people attended, including a large number of new citizens.

Hand was arguably the most distinguished American legal mind of his generation who served at the time as a judge of the United State's Court of Appeals for the Second Court. His speech was so moving that it immediately garnered wide acclaim and broad circulation. Today, when we are pitched into an “endless war” allegedly to protect freedom at home and abroad, and when the rights of both immigrants and citizens in America are placed in grave danger, we commend Judge Hand's words as a source of profound and timely wisdom.

“We have gathered here to affirm a faith, a faith in a common purpose, a common conviction, a common devotion. Some of us have chosen America as the land of our adoption; the rest have come from those who did the same. For this reason we have some right to consider ourselves a picked group, a group of those who had the courage to break from the past and brave the dangers and the loneliness of a strange land. What was the object that nerved us, or those who went before us, to this choice? We sought liberty; freedom from oppression, freedom from want, freedom to be ourselves. This we then sought; this we now believe that we are by way of winning. What do we mean when we say that first of all we seek liberty? I often wonder whether we do not rest our hopes too much upon constitutions, upon laws and upon courts. These are false hopes; believe me, these are false hopes. Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it. While it lies there it needs no constitution, no law, no court to save it. And what is this liberty which must lie in the hearts of men and women? It is not the ruthless, the unbridled will; it is not freedom to do as one likes. That is the denial of liberty, and leads straight to its overthrow. A society in which men recognize no check upon their freedom soon becomes a society where freedom is the possession of only a savage few; as we have learned to our sorrow.

“What then is the spirit of liberty? I cannot define it; I can only tell you my own faith. The spirit of liberty is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which seeks to understand the mind of other men and women; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which weighs their interests alongside its own without bias; the spirit of liberty remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded; the spirit of liberty is the spirit of Him who, near two thousand years ago, taught mankind that lesson it has never learned but never quite forgotten; that there may be a kingdom where the least shall be heard and considered side by side with the greatest.

“And now in that spirit, that spirit of an America which has never been, and which may never be; nay, which never will be except as the conscience and courage of Americans create it; yet in the spirit of that America which lies hidden in some form in the aspirations of us all; in the spirit of that America for which our young men are at this moment fighting and dying; in that spirit of liberty and of America I ask you to rise and with me pledge our faith in the glorious destiny of our beloved country.”

Curbside Chatter

Scene #1

Shawsheen Square, June 4:

"Who cares?" bellows a voice behind the Shawsheen vigiler who, turning around, absorbs the rest of an improbable message being conveyed by a broad, helmeted smile atop a snorting motorcycle. "Why not be like me? I'm enjoying myself!" The vigiler nods, signs the peace "vee," and lightly taps his forehead with his right index finger, vainly inviting the cyclist toward a semblance of reflection. Comes the refrain with increased gusto: "Why not be like me? I'm enjoying myself! Who cares?" As the light turns green, the driver kicks up his heels and vrooms off, following his bliss.

Scene #2

Old Town Hall Square, June 17:

A van pulls up to the curb. The driver, a woman dressed smartly in bright summer slacks, blouse, and straw hat, approaches us at the MVPP table with her hand outstretched to shake our hands. "I'm _____, and I was with the _____th chemical warfare division in Iraq. I have many friends still over there. I want to thank you for what you're doing. Keep it up." Returning at once to her van, flashing the peace sign as she went, she was gone as quickly as she arrived, before we could offer more than our thanks in return.

MVPP Leadership for 2006-2007

The following slates of officers and board members were approved by votes at the Annual Meeting on June 16, 2006.

Officers:

President: Bobbie Goldman
Vice-President: Becci Backman
Clerk: Jim Todd
Assistant Clerk: Melinda Taranto-Garnis
Treasurer: Sue Imhoff

Board of Directors

2004-2007: Don Abbott, Lou Bernieri, Ralph Galen, Masood Sheikh, Mary Todd

2005-2008: Arthur Brien, Jane Cadarette, Barbara Haack, Brenda McCarthy, Boryana Tacconi

2006-2009: Peter Cameron, Chad Montrie, Kathie Robinson, Brian Quirk, Mary Kate Small

POETRY

by Daniel Berrigan

Some stood up once
and sat down.
Some walked a mile
and walked away.

Some stood up twice
then sat down.
I've had it, they said.

Some walked two miles
Then walked away.
It's too much, they cried.

Some stood and stood and stood.
They were taken for fools,
Then were taken for being taken in.

Some walked and walked and walked.
They walked the earth,
They walked the waters,
They walked the air.

Why do you stand? they were asked, and
Why do you walk?

Because of the children, they said, and
Because of the heart, and
Because of the bread.

Because
The cause

Is the heart's beat
And the children born
And the risen bread.

*I have a million nightingales on the branches of my heart,
singing, "Freedom, Freedom, Freedom."*

--Mahmoud Darwish

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: Get out your Checkbooks!

It's that time again. If your label doesn't say "2007," you now owe dues. It's simple. Your dues defray newsletter expenses and help keep our organization healthy. Please do your part to keep the "Good News" coming!

Merrimack Valley People For Peace
P.O. Box 573
North Andover, MA 01845-0573

<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/>

JUNE IS
TIME TO PAY DUES!
See p. 11

PEACE IS
PATRIOTIC

The MVPP Newsletter is printed monthly and has a current distribution of 200. We are grateful for suggestions, comments, and help with publication. (Unless 2007 appears on your label, your dues have expired. Please remember to renew.)
MVPP President: Bobbie Goldman. Vice President: Becci Backman. Newsletter Editor: Don Abbott. Newsletter contributors: Becci Backman, Arthur and Margaret Brien, Bobbie Goldman, Barbara Haack, Sue Imhoff, Chad Montrie, Diana Philip, Brian Quirk, Boryana Tacconi, Melinda Taranto-Garnis, Jim Todd, and Mary Todd.

CALL AND WRITE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES & SENATORS TO MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN

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A link to all in US legislature:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/legbranch/legbranch.html>

How Senators and Representatives voted:

Senate: http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/legislative/a_three_sections_with_teasers/votes.htm
House: <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2004/index.asp>

State Voting Information: Look up who you vote for at
<http://www.wheredoivotema.com/bal/myelectioninfo.php>