



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 2005

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

Approximately 50,000 people participated in a major anti-nuclear march and rally in New York on May 1, on the eve of the month-long conference at the United Nations to review the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. A coalition of over 2,000 organizations around the world teamed up with United for Peace and Justice to organize the event. Eight MVPP members joined a contingent of protesters comprised of a significant number of international participants, including the mayors of the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as a group of "Hibakusha," survivors of the two atomic bombings by the U.S. that killed hundreds of thousands 60 years ago. Marchers made their way past the UN building up to Central Park, where thousands of them fashioned themselves into a giant Peace Symbol before the start of the rally. One MVPP participant reported that a highlight of the day was witnessing a quiet, tender conversation between a fellow MVPP member and a Hibakusha, as they exchanged words of apology for what their countries had done to each other.

War resister Pablo Paredes won a surprise victory in a court-martial on May 12. In a stunning blow to the Bush administration, Navy judge Lt. Cmdr. Robert Klant gave Petty Officer 3rd Class Paredes no jail time for refusing orders to board the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard before it left San Diego bound for the Persian Gulf on December 6, 2004. "I think that the government has successfully proved that any service member has reasonable cause to believe that the wars in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq were illegal," said the judge. Although Pablo faced the possibility of one year in prison, ("Sailors all over the world want to know whether this will be tolerated", said the lead prosecutor Lt. B. Hale, imploring the judge to hand out a stiff sentence), he was sentenced to three months of hard labor and his rank was reduced to seaman recruit. Said Paredes in his speech at the court-martial, "I am guilty of believing this war is illegal. I am guilty of believing war in all forms is immoral and useless, and I am guilty of believing that as a service member I have a duty to refuse to participate in this war because it is illegal." He said he formed his views about the illegality of the war by reading truthout.org, listening to Democracy Now!, and reading articles by Noam Chomsky, Naomi Klein, Stephen Zunes, as well as Kofi Annan's statements that the war is illegal under the UN Charter, plus material on the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals. Paredes had a strong support network. Fernando Suarez del Solar and Cindy Sheehan, both of whom lost sons in Iraq, came to speak in support of Pablo. Present throughout his court-martial were Camilo Mejia, who had earlier spent nine months in jail for refusing to return to Iraq after a military leave, and Tim Goodrich, co-founder of Iraq Veterans against the War. "We have all been to Iraq, and we support anyone who stands in nonviolent opposi-

tion," said Goodrich. Mejia thanked Pablo for bringing both humanity and conscientious doubts about the war into people's hearts. Mejia also wrote in an article for *CommonDreams.org* on May 25 that recent findings by military judges "represent important accomplishments for the antiwar movement, as they seem to indicate that military authorities are handling public dissent within the ranks with a bit more caution, as more members of the military are speaking out against the occupation." Paredes's lawyer, Jeremy Warren said, "Pablo's victory is an incredible boon to the anti-war movement."

At a recent meeting of the Parent Teacher Student Association at Garfield High School in Seattle, participants voted 25 to 5 to adopt a resolution that says "public schools are not a place for military recruiters." Garfield, a racially diverse school with 1,600 students, is one of Seattle's top high schools. It also is one of the first in the U.S. to debate and vote against military recruiting on high school campuses. This comes at a time when recruiters struggle to meet enlistment goals and recruiting figures have plummeted to an all-time low. Opposition to military recruitment seems, in part, to reflect parents' growing realization that their taxes spent for the Iraq War are funds not spent on education. Further, as the mother of a Garfield senior said, "The mission of the PTA is to protect and defend kids. It's not just limited to education issues—which explains why the PTA takes positions on kids' health, violence, and other serious issues." While Garfield's resolution is primarily symbolic—Section 9528 of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires schools to have access to information about students—Seattle's public school district has said it would increase its efforts next year to help students and parents under-

MVPP Monthly Meeting – North Parish Church – Tuesday, June 28, 2005, 7:30 PM (Annual Meeting: June 17, 6:30 PM)

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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.

Gloucester: Tuesday, 7-8 pm; Fisherman's Wives Memorial.

Ipswich: Saturday, 11-noon; at the bottom of Town Hill (Junction of Route 133).

Lawrence: Saturday, noon-1 pm; Broadway and Essex Streets; Lawrence Peace Coalition; Martina Cruz, martina_m_cruz@yahoo.com.

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

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).

Salem, NH: Saturday, 12:30-1:30 pm; at corner of Routes 28 and 97; Henry Misserville, 978-470-0663.

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

stand their rights to "opt out" or withhold their names and home addresses from military recruiters.

The public school board of Berkeley, CA, has adopted an innovative approach to making student information available to military recruiters: an "opt in" policy whereby no student information will be released unless parents give their specific written approval. This is not without risk, since federal funding is at stake through non-compliance with No Child Left Behind. An ACLU lawyer states, however, *"I think NCLB allows 'opt-in' on its face, if that's what districts want to do. And as a matter of principle, we believe that the issue of privacy is so important that the assumption should be don't release the information unless the parents or students say to do it."* (See www.alternet.org/story/22006.)

"A Resolution to End the U.S. Occupation of Iraq" was successfully passed at the recent Massachusetts Democratic State Convention on May 14. Volunteers handed in 843 signatures and the petition was easily certified. The vote was declared in favor by consensus. The final section of the resolution states: *"Therefore be it resolved that the Democratic Party of Massachusetts supports our troops, opposes the continued military occupation of Iraq, urges the U.S. government to announce a timetable for the rapid withdrawal of its military forces from Iraq, and calls for the U.S. government to reject plans for a long-term presence in Iraq, except for those associated with normal diplomatic relations and a commitment to reparation for war damage."*

In "An Open Letter to the President of the United States and U.S. Congress," religious leaders recently condemned the \$82 billion war bill. Signed by more than 70 prominent leaders from different denominations and religions, this is considered the first time since the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 that such a number of religious leaders have taken a public stand against the Bush administration's Iraq policies. The signators are members of the newly formed organization **Clergy and Laity Concerned about Iraq (CALC-I)**, an echo of the group that was such a force in mobilizing early opposition to the Vietnam War in the '60s: "Clergy and Laity Concerned about Vietnam (CALCAV)". The full text of the letter, much of which could be helpful in community education and organizing, is found at the website of United for Peace & Justice: www.unitedforpeace.org/.

Sister Carol Gilbert has been released from prison after serving a 33-month sentence in a federal prison in Colorado.

She was jailed along with two other Dominican nuns, Sister Ardeth Platte and Sister Jackie Hudson. They had been arrested and convicted for destroying government property during a Plowshares action at a Minuteman III missile silo in Colorado. Specifically, they had cut through the fence and with bottles of their own blood sprayed six crosses on the silo lid before pounding a symbolic hammer on it. A welcome home celebration was held on May 23 at Jonah House in Baltimore. Sister Carol said: *"I would do the same thing all over again. I know we acted legally, morally and with great love."* It was reported that her only regret was that she went to jail at the peak of the peace protests over the Iraq War!

On May 20 and May 21, large numbers of students, faculty members, and alumni objected strongly to President Bush's visit as commencement speaker at Calvin College, a Christian evangelical school in the strategic Republican stronghold of Grand Rapids, MI. More than 800 of them signed a letter of protest that appeared over two days as a full-page advertisement in *The Grand Rapids Press*. It said, in part, *"Your deeds, Mr. President – neglecting the needy to coddle the rich, desecrating the environment, and misleading the country into war – do not exemplify the faith we live by."* Another open letter, signed by more than 100 of 300 faculty members and 40 staff, also appeared in the same newspaper the day of the President's address. While politely welcoming the President's visit to the campus, the undersigned stated in part: *"As Christians we are called to be peacemakers and to initiate war only as a last resort. We believe your administration has launched an unjust and unjustified war in Iraq. As Christians we are called to lift up the hungry and impoverished. We believe your administration has taken actions that favor the wealthy of our society and burden the poor."* The letter ends with an appeal to the President to re-examine his policies *"in light of our God-given duty to pursue justice with mercy"*.

The people know what the government will not acknowledge: global warming is a real problem with causes and consequences that simply cannot be ignored. As of the middle of May, over 150 local U.S. governments, representing more than 50 million people in 35 states, had joined a bipartisan coalition to fight global warming on the local level. Alarmed by a series

of dry winters, unusual for his rainy city, Seattle Mayor Gregg Nickels has begun a nationwide effort to carry out the Kyoto protocol, spawning a coalition that has pledged to reduce greenhouse emissions by 7% below 1990 levels in 2012. This level would surpass the commitment made so far by European countries. Mayor Nickels has been joined by like-minded mayors from cities as liberal as Los Angeles and as conservative as Hurst, TX. On May 12, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg brought New York City into the coalition. In an implicit rejection of the Bush administration's insistence that meeting Kyoto targets would lead to higher gas prices and millions of lost jobs, many of the mayors said they were acting precisely out of concern for the economic vitality of their cities. Cutting energy costs, ditching SUV's, and rethinking transportation and heating strategies are all part of this positive movement. Salt Lake City has become Utah's largest buyer of wind power in order to meet its reduction target. In New York, the Bloomberg administration is buying hybrid electric-gasoline powered vehicles for the municipal fleet. And by the end of this year, Seattle's power utility, Seattle City Light, will be the only utility in the country with no net emissions of greenhouse gases.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts now has the opportunity to become the sixth state officially to register its opposition to the Patriot Act. Thanks to a successful campaign spearheaded by the Mass ACLU and others, House Bill 1881, "The Resolution Affirming the Civil Rights and Liberties of the People of Massachusetts" is now before the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security. MVPP is one of the many organizations that have endorsed this state-wide campaign. The committee will hold a hearing on the bill at the State House on the morning of Wednesday, June 22. (See www.aclu-mass.org/.) Let's be there in force!

Three revered workers for peace and justice have recently received major recognition, richly deserved: The Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Jr., balladeer/activist Pete Seeger, and historian Howard Zinn. On April 27 and 28, Yale Divinity School honored "The Public Witness and Ministry of William Sloane Coffin, Jr.," the centerpiece of which was a gala dinner attended by more than 400 individuals, many of whom were Yale graduates from Coffin's years as University Chaplain, 1958-1977, during the height of the civil rights and Vietnam eras. When Coffin finally rose to speak at the conclusion of moving testimonials, he looked out over the crowd and exclaimed, with dramatic flair, "It's wonderful to see so many Yalies... who are NOT part of the problem!" He proceeded to call for "a politically engaged spirituality" that affirms that "despair is not an option" and demands wholesale justice (starting with the poor), reverence for the natural world, and the total abolition of nuclear weapons. Then, on May 3, Seeger celebrated his 86th birthday, and to mark the occasion, there was a nationwide festival of tributes--a musical outpouring of appreciation and affection--including one by MVPP in Old Town Hall Square (www.seegerfest.com). Studs Terkel wrote about Pete in the May 16th issue of *The Nation*: "For sixty-five years, he has held forth continuously through periods known more for their bleakness than for their hope: the cold war, the witchhunt, the civil rights and civil liberties battles. Pete has been in all of them. Wherever he was asked, when the need was the greatest, he, like Kilroy, was there. And still is... Whether it be a concert hall, a gathering in the park, a street demonstration, any area is a battleground for human rights. That is why describing him as an 86-year-old gaffer is not quite true. The calendar often deceives. This is a sparkling case in point." Rounding out the set of triple tributes, on May 15, Zinn received an honorary

degree and delivered the commencement address at Spelman College (GA). It was as chair of the History Department in the late '50s and early '60s that Zinn had mentored and supported Spelman students who led the civil rights movement in Atlanta and across the South. His civil rights activities caused him to be fired from the college in 1963. His homecoming after 42 years afforded him the opportunity to urge this year's graduates, and the rest of us, not to be discouraged: "*The lesson of that history (of the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War) is that you must not despair; that if you are right, and you persist, things will change. The government may try to deceive the people, and the newspapers and television may do the same, but the truth has a way of coming out. The truth has a power greater than a hundred lies.*"

Affirming Our Obligations to Prevent War Crimes

Editor's note: In 1967, "A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority" was signed by more than 25,000 people and printed in such publications as The New York Review of Books and The Nation. Declaring the Vietnam War unconstitutional, illegal, a crime against humanity, and full of war crimes, its wording drew from the Nuremberg Principle: "...every free man has the legal right and moral duty to exert every effort to end this war, to avoid collusion with it, and to encourage others to do the same."

It was a misdemeanor to sign the 1967 document, and those who did so risked criminal prosecution. The "call to resist" was used as state's evidence against several anti-war activists, including the Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Michael Ferber, Mitchell Goodman, Marcus Raskin, and Dr. Benjamin Spock.

*In 2005, following this tradition, "A Call to Resist the War in Iraq" has been issued by Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice (RTPV). We print "A Call to Resist ..." in full below. It has been endorsed by the Fellowship of Reconciliation (www.forusa.org). Launched following the attacks of September 11, 2001, RTPV is a Connecticut-based interfaith network of clergy and lay people (www.ReclaimingThePropheticVoice.org) who stand together against a militaristic response to terrorism. For more information about Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice and this campaign, see *Foreign Policy in Focus* www.fpiif.org/papers/0504rtpv.html or contact John Humphries (jhumphries@igc.org) or Allie Perry (aperry7247@aol.com).*

I commend this statement and urge the supportive signatures of individuals and organizations committed to active resistance to the continuation of the illegal and unjust war and occupation in Iraq.

"A Call to Resist the War in Iraq"

A statement by Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice and endorsed by the Fellowship of Reconciliation

A growing number of U.S. citizens have realized that the war in Iraq is an immoral and profoundly destructive waste of both Iraqi and American lives. The war was begun in violation of international law, and founded on lies told to our own people and to our allies. It has included defiance of the Geneva Conventions with illegal and secret detentions of prisoners, a denial of due process of law and well-documented torture and killing of prisoners in American custody. Its extravagant cost increasingly robs our own neediest citizens of vital services while enriching a few private corporations.

We believe it is the moral responsibility of every U.S. citizen to raise our voices and take action to stop this illegal war and bring our soldiers home. We believe it is our duty as both Americans and members of the international community to insist that our government immediately adhere to the international agreements binding us, including the Geneva Accords protecting prisoners from torture and indefinite detention.

Many members of the armed services are seeking ways to avoid service in Iraq or leave the military completely; some young men are refusing to register for Selective Service. Increasing numbers of enlisted men and women are risking prison sentences or forced emigration in order to avoid collaboration in an immoral war. We applaud these choices and will do all that we can to encourage others to follow their example.

More specifically, we support and will spread the word about the G.I. Rights Hotline and other efforts to support soldiers in withdrawing from the military. We will counsel young men turning eighteen on the moral obligations as well as risks inherent in a refusal to register with the Selective Service, and we will raise funds to support them in their legal defense. Should a draft be reinstated we will encourage young men and women not to comply.

The War Crimes Tribunals following World War II declared, "Anyone with knowledge of illegal activity and an opportunity to do something is a potential criminal under international law, unless the person takes affirmative measures to prevent the commission of the crimes." We, the undersigned, commit ourselves to undertake all affirmative measures available to us to fulfill our obligations under these treaties, which have guided our world for half a century. We will continue to raise our voices and engage in nonviolent resistance until our government has withdrawn from Iraq and brought our soldiers home.

"There is no discussion taking place in the world today that is more crucial than the debate about strategies of resistance."
--Arundhati Roy

Local Actions/Issues

Curbside Chatter in Andover

Vigiler's sign: **"We Don't Belong in Iraq.
Zero Reasons to Be There"**

Driver # 1: "Get real! They saved your ass over there!"

Vigiler: "Tell that to the people of Fallujah."

Driver: "What's Fallujah?"

Driver #2: "Where do we belong?"

Vigiler: "Here at home. Minding our own business."

Driver #3: "You've got the right to stand here because they're protecting you over there."

Vigiler: "I thought my right comes from the Bill of Rights."

Driver: "You should be ashamed of yourself holding that sign."

Vigiler: "Actually, I made it myself!"

Continuing to Oppose Boston University's Bio-Lab: Support Rep. Gloria Fox's Bill, HB 1397

Thursday, June 9, opens a critical stage in the opposition to development of the B. U. Bio-Lab, proposed and funded for construction in Roxbury. A hearing is scheduled on that date regarding **HB 1397**, legislation introduced by Rep. Gloria Fox and co-sponsored by 31 other legislators, entitled "An Act to Protect the Public Health and Environment from Toxic Biological Agents."

The bill has been assigned to the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture, chaired by Rep. Frank Smitzik of Brookline and Rep. Pam Resor of Middlesex and Worcester, both of whom are co-sponsors of the legislation. **HB 1397** would create a comprehensive state program to regulate high containment biological research labs for health and safety purposes. Why? Because there is NO comprehensive monitoring or regulatory program for those labs at any level—local, state, or federal!

Boston Mobilization puts it quite clearly: **"The federal government has only self-enforcing guidelines that have been proven unsuccessful. Massachusetts has standards for other inherently dangerous facilities, such as nuclear plants, landfills, power plants and even restaurants, but for a laboratory which will be working with the most dangerous pathogens known to humanity - nothing!"**

If **HB 1397** were enacted, more than health and safety issues would be addressed in the operation and maintenance of such a lab. The law would require transparency and public review to assure that no offensive weapons research could be undertaken and would include measures to prevent the lab from conducting clandestine bioweapons projects. The world does not need a new and deadly kind of weapons arms race!

Committee membership includes the following:

Resor of Middlesex and Worcester
Pacheco of First Plymouth and Bristol
Brewer of Worcester, Hamden Hampshire and Franklin
Creedon of Second Plymouth and Bristol
O'Leary of Cape and Islands
Tarr of Essex and Middlesex

Smizik of Brookline
Kulik of Worthington
Petersen of Marblehead
Straus of Mattapoisett
Gobi of Spencer
Patrick of Falmouth
Kocot of Northampton
Rush of Boston
Guyer of Dalton
Gifford of Wareham
Humason of Westfield

MVPP members are urged to consider taking any or all of the following steps:

- Call or write your reps and senators to tell them that concern about the Bio-Lab is widespread and urge their support for **HB 1397**. Postcards are available at the website of United for Justice with Peace: www.justicewithpeace.org/.
- Sign the online Boston Mobilization petition, "Protect Our Safety-Regulate Bio Research Labs" at www.thepetition-site.com/takeaction/637198817.
- Write or call other committee members to voice your support for the bill. Notify friends in the districts of committee members to do the same. This is an issue that moves quickly all the full spectrum: local-regional-national-global.
- Attend and testify at the hearing: 1 pm on June 9th, the State House, Hearing Room B-1.

Veterans' Issues: What does it mean to support the troops?

excerpted from "Sojourners" (SojoMail@sojo.net), 5/18/05

Editor's note: At the annual passing of our observance of Memorial Day, as we continue to reflect on the sacrifices made by American men and women in uniform—especially those who since 2003 have been placed in harm's way by our government in an unjust war of our country's choice—we need to voice concern for the way in which the United States really treats its soldiers and veterans. The following posting by "Sojourners" calls us to hold our country accountable, asking it "to uphold its responsibilities to veterans, practice real compassion, and truly support the troops." We urge members to continue to speak out and raise veterans' issues wherever we can: in letters, calls, and conversations with our local newspaper editors, our elected representatives, and our colleagues at work, and within our religious communities.

"Even those of us who advocate nonviolence must recognize the humanity of those who, for many reasons, made the hard choice to join the armed forces. As we protest a war and an occupation that has claimed as many as 100,000 Iraqi civilians' lives, we must have compassion for the suffering experienced on all sides. "Well over 1 million soldiers have served in Afghanistan and Iraq since September 11, 2001, according to the Pentagon. A full third of those million have served more than once. In addition to the 1,600-plus soldiers who have been killed in Iraq, more than 12,000 troops have been wounded and needed to seek medical treatment. Soldiers who have suffered psychologically are more difficult to count--and often more difficult to treat. A 2004 study published in The New England Journal of Medicine pointed out that 17 percent of Iraq veterans were exhibiting signs of major depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). But according to that study, less than 40 percent of those soldiers sought treatment for PTSD, due to the stigma associated with its diagnosis. According to Steve Robinson at the National Gulf War Resource Center, the military needs to be doing much more to educate about and treat PTSD.

"Once soldiers arrive home, they face new difficulties. According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, although veterans compose only 9 percent of the U.S. population, they represent 23 percent of our nation's homeless. More than 500,000 veterans experience homelessness each year.

"The White House isn't getting kinder to vets, either. In January of 2003, just prior to the March invasion of Iraq, President Bush

suspended the health-care benefits of 200,000 veterans. The Bush administration's proposed 2006 budget would charge a new \$250 enrollment fee to 2.2 million veterans, and would double vets' prescription drug co-pay, which could limit access to those drugs for veterans living in poverty. The budget also proposes to cut \$351 million from veterans' nursing homes, and \$4 million from medical and prosthetic research."

Affirming the Right to Object: Resources for Conscience and Courage

In these difficult times, an increasing number of young Americans, both within the military and without, find that they must square their beliefs with participation in and support for the conduct of war. Their families, friends, and loved ones often seek to know how best to support each other when ultimate questions of conscience, courage, dignity, and freedom are put to the test, along with love of family and loyalty to country.

There are numerous resources to help sort out the myriad legal, moral, ethical, and religious issues involved. The following is a partial list, recommended to all who seek to educate themselves about conscientious objection or about non-military options for youth.

GI Hotline: 1-800-FYI-95GI (394-9544)

GI Rights: www.GIrights.objector.org/

American Friends Service Committee: www.afsc.org/youthmil/

Center on Conscience & War: www.nisbco.org/

Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors: www.objector.org/

The Christian C.O.: www.peacehost.net/christianCO/

FOR; "The Nyack Declaration of Conscience and Courage": www.forusa.org/

Iraq Veterans against the War: www.IVAW.net/

Peace-Out: www.peace-out.com/

Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities: www.projectyano.org/

Selective Service System; Fast Facts: www.sss.gov/FSconsobj.htm

Thinking about War and Peace: www.Quaker.org/co/

Veterans for Peace: www.VeteransForPeace.org/

*"To have a job where you can make things better for people?
That's a blessing. Why would I do anything else?"*

--Marla Ruzicka (1976-2005); founder of CIVIC, The Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict. Killed in a suicide bomb attack in Baghdad on 4/17/05.

Global Perspectives

Editor's note: During the month of May, one of the most critical meetings of our time has been taking place at the United Nations—the Nuclear Nonproliferation Review Conference. Yet, as we prepare this issue, we find that the mainstream media have paid almost no attention to the issues being addressed at this important conference. With the complicity of the media, the United States appears to be sabotaging this opportunity to strengthen the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty through international cooperation. Silence on this issue is a threat to all humanity. We print below two voices among many who refuse to remain silent. As we approach the 60th Anniversary of the nuclear attacks by the U.S. on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, let us stand “in vocal solidarity” with the witness of individuals like Krieger and Ellsberg.

It is up to us

by David Krieger, President, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation
www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2005/04/15_krieger_it-is-up-to-us.htm

(Acceptance speech upon receiving Global Green's Millennium Award for International Environmental Leadership on April 15, 2005)

I am very honored by this award, and I accept it on behalf of all the people I work with and have struggled with to build a better world – particularly my colleagues at the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

When we founded the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, we believed that we cannot sit back and wait for leaders like Mikhail Gorbachev. Such leaders – with his wisdom, vision and courage – are all too rare.

We believed that we ordinary citizens must step forward, and create the change we wish to see in the world.

My life was transformed when, shortly after graduating from college, I visited Hiroshima.

The Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima awakened me, as I had not been before, to the true extent of the dangers of the Nuclear Age.

Over the years since then, I have come to know many of the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They are called *hibakusha*. With one voice, they say, “*Never again! We will not repeat the evil.*”

The *hibakusha* understand, as few others in this world do, that nuclear weapons and human beings cannot co-exist, and that we must eliminate these weapons before they eliminate us.

That is our challenge. It is the challenge that I confront daily. It is the challenge of our time and of our generation. It is a challenge we cannot fail to accept and we cannot fail to accomplish.

I believe that each generation has a responsibility to pass the world on intact to the next generation. You might say that that is the least we can do for the future.

But for us in the Nuclear Age, this is a more difficult task than ever before. Nuclear weapons contain the potential to foreclose a human future.

If we succeed in eliminating these weapons of genocide, indeed omnicide, we will be viewed in the future as having done our part to save the world.

If we fail, there may be no future generations to remember us or to judge us.

We in the United States must press our government to stop being the greatest obstacle to nuclear disarmament. It is not in our interest, nor that of our children, for our government to cling tenaciously to these terrible weapons and even try, as it is doing now, to create new nuclear weapons for specific purposes.

Rather, the United States, as the world's most powerful nation, should, in our own interest and that of humanity, lead the way to a world free of nuclear weapons. It is up to us to change our country and the world.

Each of us can be as powerful as anyone who ever lived. All we need to do is set our intentions and take a first step. Without doubt, a first step will lead to a second, and we will be on our way.

We are all gifted with consciences to guide us, with voices we can raise, with arms to embrace, and with feet to take a stand. These are the gifts with which the future calls out to us to act.

We must fight ignorance with education, apathy with direction, complacency with vision, and despair with hope. We owe this to ourselves and to our children.

I'd like to conclude with an excerpt from a poem in my new book. The poem is about *hibakusha*, the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and it is about silence. It is called **Hibakusha Do Not Just Happen**, and this is the way it ends:

*For every hibakusha many must contribute
For every hibakusha many must obey
For every hibakusha many must be silent*

It is up to us to break the silence – for each other, for humanity and for the future.

Statement on Behalf of Mordechai Vanunu to the Delegates of the Seventh Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty

Daniel Ellsberg, May 11, 2005.

www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2005/05/11_ellsberg_statement-vanunu.htm.

Nineteen years ago, Mordechai Vanunu, a technician at the secret nuclear weapons production facility at Dimona in Israel, did something that he was right to do, something that others with his knowledge of Israel's nuclear activities and their implications for Israeli security and democracy and for world order should have done earlier, or later. He revealed to his fellow citizens and to the world truths about these activities that had long been wrongly concealed and denied by his government.

What he revealed was not merely that Israel was a nuclear weapons state; that had been known for more than a decade on the basis of widely-publicized leaks in the US about official American intelligence estimates to this effect. Vanunu's photographs and interviews with the London Sunday Times revealed that Americans and all others had substantially underestimated the

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North Andover, MA 01845-0573

MVPP is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions to MVPP are tax deductible. **“2005” on your mailing label indicates that your membership is paid only through May 31, 2005. “2006” means that your dues are current. Otherwise, now is the time for the renewals.** Last year, approximately one-third of our members joined/renewed at higher than the basic rate.

pace and scale of the Israel's secret and un-inspected production of nuclear materials and warheads, especially since the early '70s. New estimates on the basis of his revelations put the Israeli arsenal in 1986 at some 200 warheads (rather than 20) – making it the fifth and possibly fourth largest nuclear power, ahead of Britain, and possibly ahead of France. After nineteen more years of production, that ranking probably remains valid.

Did not Israelis, citizens of a democracy, and other nations of the world deserve to know this? Was not his example of truth-telling, at great personal risk, to be thanked and emulated? For a generation, the nuclear scientist Joseph Rotblat, a founder of the Pugwash Movement for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, has argued that the confidence required in the inspection and enforcement agreements on nuclear disarmament could and must rest in part on “societal verification:” the courage and conscience of scientists, technicians and officials who could reveal to inspectors activities violating those agreements. Unhappily, the last 35 years since the NPT went into effect have not seen many examples of such initiative, other than that of Mordechai Vanunu. Yet the potential value of such revelations by someone willing, like Vanunu, to risk the heaviest personal costs, is evermore clear.

Imagine, for example, if an Indian citizen aware of India's secret preparations for nuclear testing, and of the disastrous impact this would foreseeably have on regional and world security, had made this knowledge unequivocally public in time for world opinion to come to bear to avert that tragic error and the Pakistani testing it was sure to provoke. The result for that person could well have been a long prison sentence, as it was for Vanunu; yet surely such an act would deserve a Nobel Peace Prize, for which Rotblat – using his prerogative as a Nobel Laureate – has nominated Mordechai Vanunu repeatedly.

Now, a year after serving his full sentence of eighteen years – nearly twelve of them spent in solitary confinement in a two-by-three meter cell – Vanunu is under indictment and faces a return to prison for violating restrictions on his freedom of speech that clearly violate his fundamental human rights. He has and will continue to speak out in favor of a nuclear-free-zone in the Middle East and the global abolition of nuclear weapons, telling whatever he knows that supports these objectives. It is absurd to maintain, as the head of Israel's security system does, that revelation of any further details Vanunu learned from his access in Dimona nineteen years ago could undermine Israeli national security, when no one has been able to identify any damage whatever to Israeli security in the years since his revelations in

1986. Rather, the prohibitions against his speaking to foreigners and to foreign journalists on any matters, or to his fellow citizens on nuclear matters, are clearly intended to extend his punishment in prison for unauthorized truth-telling for an indefinite period.

The deterrent message to other potential Vanunus – either in Israel or elsewhere – could not be more clear. In a world where more Vanunus are desperately needed – above all, in my own country, the United States, and in other nuclear weapons states violating their Article VI obligations – is this a message that the rest of the world should tolerate to be sent unchallenged? In the interest of vital transparency and future societal verification, there should be international protest of Vanunu's new indictment and of the restrictions on his speech and travel.

It is time for the rest of the world to join Mordechai Vanunu in demanding that Israel acknowledge its status as a nuclear weapons state with a large and growing arsenal, and in demanding that ALL the nuclear weapons states – including Israel, India and Pakistan, but above all the US and Russia – negotiate concrete steps on a definite timetable toward the global, inspected abolition of nuclear weapons.

Upcoming Events

Compiled with the help of Sue Imhoff

June 1 – June 29: Exhibition of "The Forgotten Population", black and white photography in the Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon. Reception: June 16; 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm.
Boston Public Library, West End Branch, 151 Cambridge St., Boston.

Wednesday, June 1, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm: Military Recruitment at Cambridge Rindge & Latin School. Come for a conversation and strategizing about military recruitment at CRLS. Sponsored by Cambridge Chapter of UJP, Peace Commission. Additional information: 617-349-4694 or ujpcoalition@yahoo.com. **UJP Office, 55 Norfolk St., Cambridge.**

Thursday, June 2: Women Demand That Massachusetts Abide by International Human Rights Law. Martha Davis, from Northeastern University Law School and the Mass. CEDAW Project, will talk about the importance of broadening the human rights conversation in our state through the introduc-

tion of HR bill 706 in the MA legislature. Sponsored by Mass. CEDAW, the international Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Contact: Laura Roskos at 617-864-0712 or email to ardittir@aol.com. Center for New Words Reading Room, 186 Hampshire St. Cambridge.

Thursday, June 9, 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm: SAVE THE DATE!! The Joint Committee Hearing on Gloria Fox's Bill, HB 1397 (see article on the B.U. Bio-Lab, p. 4). The bill would create a comprehensive state program to regulate high containment biological research labs for health and safety purposes because there is NO comprehensive federal, state or local regulatory program for those labs. Contact parthasa@bc.edu or call Vicky Steinitz, 617-864-5211, for additional information. **State House Hearing Room B-1.**

Friday, June 10, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm: Open House Party to Launch the Resource Rights Initiative. Grassroots International is celebrating the launch of the exciting new Resource Rights Initiative with an evening of conversation and interactive activities focused on proclaiming and protecting the fundamental human rights to land, water, and food. Additional information: 617-524-1400. **179 Boylston St, 4th Floor, Jamaica Plain.**

Sunday, June 12, 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm: “Thirst,” A Documentary on Global Resistance to Water Privatization. Pizza served first at 5:00 pm. RSVP for pizza to cjingleb@comcast.net.

For more information on the film: www.thirstthemovie.org. A moving film, a warning that multinational water companies are coming to a town near you, and a piercing look at the claim that water is a human right, not a commodity. Sponsored by North Parish Social Action Committee, League of Women Voters, People for the Environment, and MVPP. Jonathan Leavitt, Massachusetts Global Action and the Water Allies Network, will lead the dialogue after the 60-minute film. **North Parish Unitarian Universalist Church, 190 Academy Road, North Andover.**

Monday, June 13, 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm: “B.U. Is Bringing Bioterrorism to Boston!” Public forum on the impact that B.U.'s proposed “bioterrorism lab” would have on Boston and beyond. Short presentations by two speakers--Daniel Goode-nough, Professor of Cell Biology at Harvard Medical School, and Jonathan King, Professor of Molecular Biology at M.I.T.--followed by Q & A. Sponsored by Pax Christi Boston, Coalition to Stop the Bioterrorism Lab, Safety Net, and Alternatives for Community and the Environment. Contact: 617-442-7822. **Paulist Center, 5 Park Street, Boston.**

Wednesday, June 22, morning: The Joint Committee Hearing on House Bill 1881 in Opposition to the Patriot Act: “The Resolution Affirming the Civil Rights and Liberties of the People of Massachusetts” Refer to www.aclu-mass.org/ and news item on p. 3. **State House, Boston.**

Friday, June 24 – Sunday, June 26: 19th Annual WILD Summer Institute. The Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD) is an inspirational educational program that provides women with leadership vision, confidence and skills to become more effective leaders and organizers in the labor movement and workplace in Massachusetts. We welcome rank-and-file union members, stewards, staff, officers and women organizing a union or organizing around workplace injustice. This summer's program includes dinner, and workshops on fighting racism, skill-building, political education,

organizing and mobilizing. Additional information: 617-426-0520. **Clark University, Worcester, MA.**

Saturday, June 25, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm: Giant Yard Sale/ Fundraiser for UJP. Good stuff only - no adult clothes. Call Duncan: 617-628-0610, Marilyn: 781-316-2018, or Emily: 781-636-7699 to arrange delivery sometime before June 24th. Volunteers needed to organize and staff yard sale. Call Marilyn to sign up. Further information: duncan.mcfarland@sappi.com. **AFSC Office, Mass. Ave, Cambridge, west of Porter Square, near Davis T stop.**

Saturday, July 2, 11:00 am - 9:00 pm: Imagine Studios Performing Arts Series 2005 Proudly Presents: “Phoenix Rising.” An outdoor music festival and fundraiser for peace. A portion of the proceeds from this event will benefit Veterans For Peace. Featured performers include Carl Cacho, Mamadou, Ol' Brown Shoe, Lucian Parkin, Meg Rayne, Kate Redgate Band, Dave Talmage, Lynne Taylor, and Kim Trick. \$12 advance, \$15 day of event; ½ price for students & seniors; kids under 12 free. Tickets available online at www.imaginestudios.org. Additional information: 978-834-0367. **Sparhawk School Lower Campus: 259 Elm St., Amesbury, MA.**

Sunday, July 3 – Monday, July 4 : March to Abolish Poverty. This march seeks to remind us of the right to overthrow an oppressive government. Join the New Abolitionists--Picking up the Torch of the Poor People's March. The statewide march begins on June 17th and arrives in Boston on July 3rd. Events and details to be announced. Do help organize! The voices of Massachusetts's low-income communities and our allies can abolish poverty just as those who spoke out and organized and abolished slavery, even though it seemed impossible when they started. Our struggles include: welfare and the safety net, homelessness and lack of decent, affordable housing, loss/lack of jobs, pay and benefits, no affordable health coverage. Additional information: email to graccross@aol.com or call 508-333-2394. **Government Center, Boston.**

Thursday, August 4 – Sunday, August 7: “Many Stories, One Vision for a Nuclear-Free World.” Sponsored by Pax Christi USA and the Nevada Desert Experience. A national conference and public witness in remembrance of the 60th anniversary of the U.S. bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Contacts: info@paxchristiusa.org or nde_august@peacenet.org. **University of Nevada/Las Vegas and the Nevada Test Site.**

Saturday, August 6 – Tuesday, August 9: Commemorations of the 60th Anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Several local and regional events are being planned in many communities. Check your local calendars for updates. Tentative MVPP plans in Andover may include vigils on Saturday morning, August 6, and Monday evening, August 8, plus another event on the morning of August 9.

Saturday, September 24 – Monday, September 26: Mass Anti-War Mobilization in D.C. A three-day event, sponsored by United for Peace & Justice, including a massive march, rally, and festival on Saturday; interfaith religious services and trainings in direct action and grassroots lobbying on Sunday; and day of lobbying and mass nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience on Monday.

Books of Note

Recommended Reads, compiled by Don Abbott

Medea Benjamin and Jodie Evans: Stop the Next War Now: Effective Responses to Violence and Terrorism, Inner Ocean Publishing, Inc., 2005. The co-founders of CODEPINK compiled this new book "to absorb the lessons learned, gather new insights, refortify ourselves, and move forward." With a forward by Alice Walker and an introduction by Arundhati Roy, plus the ideas and visions of over 70 experts, scholars, artists, activists, and journalists. Available online at www.codepink4peace.org/.

Robert Jensen: Citizens of the Empire: the Struggle to Claim Our Humanity, City Lights Books, 2004. A "manual" that critiques the dominant political mythology in our culture, suggests new ways for progressive individuals to respond, looks at how key institutions have failed us, and confronts critical personal issues that must be negotiated if we are to act responsibly by taking apart the imperial power that increasingly pervades our lives.

James Howard Kunstler: The Long Emergency: Surviving the Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-first Century, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005. Recently published, gaining readership, and provoking searching discussion. We sleepwalk into an uncharted future of hardship and turbulence as we enter the relentless age of oil depletion and its accompanying economic, social and political changes. Riveting, startling, urgent. Yet with all its daunting and dreadful prospects, the emergency, Kunstler speculates, may bring benefits at a profoundly local level: communal relations, working intimately with our neighbors, "being engaged in enterprises that really matter...instead of being merely entertained to avoid boredom."

María López Vigil, translated by Kathy Ogle: Oscar Romero: Memories in Mosaic, EPICA, 2000. A moving remembrance of Monseñor Romero, just as fitting at the 25th anniversary of his death as it was on its release at the 20th. Memories and anecdotes, told by Salvadorans who had a passionate personal connection with the martyred, modern prophet, "whose humanity is more inspiring than his martyrdom" (James P. McGovern, U.S. Representative, MA). A radiant portrait, lovingly assembled; a challenge to the soul of every reader.

"...what is called for is not subjugation but genuflection."
excerpt from Resistance by Barry Lopez (see "Books of Note," March 2005)

"We regard ourselves as servants of memory. We will not be the servants of your progress. We seek a politics that goes beyond nation and race. We advocate for air and water without contamination, even if the contamination be called harmless or is to be placed there for our own good. We believe in the imagination and in the variety of its architectures, not in one plan for all, even if it is God's plan. We believe in the divinity of life, in all its human variety. We believe that everything can be remembered in time, that anyone may be redeemed, that no hierarchy is worth figuring out, that no flower or animal or body of water or star is common, that is the key to a lock worth springing, that what is called for is not subjugation but genuflection."

"We trace the line of our testament back beyond Agamemnon, past Ur, past the roots of the spoken to handprints blown on a wall. We cannot be done away with, any more than the history if the Sung dynasty can be done away with, traveling as it does as

a beam of coherent light far beyond our ken. We cannot, finally, be imprisoned or killed, because we remember and speak.

"We are not twelve or twenty but numerous as the motes of dust lining the early morning shafts of city light. We are unquenchable and stark in the same moment that we are ordinary. We incorporate damage and compassion, exaltation and weariness-to-the-bone.

"These pages are our response to your intrusion, your order to be silent, your insistence that we have something to talk over."

Minutes of MVPP Meeting, May 24, 2005

The following were in attendance: Don Abbott, Becci Backman, Lou Bernieri, Arthur Brien, Peter Cameron, Bobbie Goldman, Barbara Haack, Sue Imhoff, Brenda McCarthy, Brian Quirk, Kathie Robinson, Niki Rosen, Masood Sheikh, Mary Kate Small, Boryana Tacconi, and Melinda Tavanto-Garnis.

Treasurer's Report: Peter reported that our current balance stands at \$6,690.41, including pre-payments of approximately \$920 for Peace Flags to be ordered.

Memberships and Sales: Becci reported that total memberships stand at just under 100, with the bulk of renewals due shortly. New Peace Flag orders have not yet been executed, due to lack of response from our regular contacts in Italy. If our source remains out of communication, we may turn back pre-payments already received for new orders. Sales of Palestinian olive oil remain brisk, and we decided to purchase 5 additional cases for sale, 3 of which are already called for. Andover Day on June 11 will be an excellent event for our table of information and sale items. The new canopy with logo should be available for our first use at that occasion. Several members volunteered to assist Becci with set up and staffing the table.

Newsletter: Don asked for feedback on recent issues and gave special thanks to Boryana, Sue, and Brian for their invaluable assistance. He briefly reviewed the range of articles planned for the next issue, due for mailing in the first week of June, and received suggestions for the July issue that will follow the Annual Meeting.

Annual Meeting: Set for Friday, June 17, with our traditional potluck supper at 6:30 PM, the program will feature the co-founders of Military Families Speak Out: Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson. We reviewed all plans and logistics and several members volunteered for assignments. We voted to set aside a sum of money to make a charitable gift in honor of a long-time MVPP member, an individual we plan to recognize at the meeting. In light of our featured speakers, we especially hope to be able to publicize the event effectively and to extend many personal invitations to friends. Boryana and Masood will develop a special flier for the table on Andover Day. All agreed that the Annual Meeting is an opportune occasion to introduce MVPP to potential new members.

Nominating Committee: Arthur reported that the committee is prepared to present at the Annual Meeting a slate of officers for next year, plus names for new board members. The following have agreed to serve, if elected: Bobbie Goldman as President, Becci Backman as Vice President, Sue Imhoff as Treasurer, and Don Abbott as Clerk. Nominees for new board members include Peter Cameron, Kathie Robinson, and Boryana Tacconi. Bobbie reviewed and led a discussion of a list of prospective

participants for various committees, which will be finalized and announced at the next monthly meeting.

Potential Future Engagement with Students: Lou announced information with high potential for MVPP engagement with students during the 2005-06 academic year. The president-elect of the student body at Phillips Academy is a Muslim student from Salem, NH. He and his younger brother, a rising 11th grader at Phillips Academy, have established a new club known as "ASAP," "Andover Students Ask for Peace." Lou will serve as the faculty advisor. Lou also has been asked to be the faculty advisor for the Phillips Academy students involved with Amnesty International. The interest, leadership, and initiative of these students—in combination with contacts we can develop at local high schools in Lawrence and Andover—provide fertile possibilities for our collaborative work. Lou also has made a recent connection with a Phillips Exeter (NH) Academy student whose articles appear on ZNet, so we might be able to develop even broader outreach and involvement, perhaps through a student-led symposium.

Highlighting Upcoming Events: 1.) Opt Out party in Chelmsford on June 1. 2.) "Thirst: A Documentary on Global Resistance to Water Privatization" will be featured at a program on Sunday, June 12, from 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the North Parish Unitarian Universalist Church in North Andover. Jonathan Leavitt of Massachusetts Global Action will lead the dialogue after the 60-minute film. We agreed to co-sponsor the event, and we voted a contribution of \$200 to Mass Global Action. 3.) UJP Brunches on June 26, July 31, and August 28. 4.) UJP Yard Sale on June 25. 5.) Imagine Peace Fest on July 2 in Amesbury.

Program Planning: 1.) DVD project re. Iraq Veterans against the War. Several members reported very favorably on their viewing of the edited version of Nobel Larson's work last week at Bobbie's home. The final version should be available shortly, at an estimated production cost of \$1,000. In addition to the \$200 we had previously voted, \$300 has been received by Nobel from Arlington UJP and \$200 from Watertown Citizens for Environmental Safety. We voted an additional \$100 to bring our total to \$300, which will purchase 300 DVD copies for our distribution. We authorized Bobbie to expend up to \$200 more, if the project requires such further support, with the understanding that the additional copies we were "purchasing" would be made available to other peace and justice groups and organizations that can not afford their purchase. 2.) Anti-recruitment support in Lawrence. Bobbie, Becci, and Don met earlier this month with Jose Balbuena and Martina Cruz, at which time they developed a tentative plan to participate in some of the events of the major Hispanic Week in Lawrence in mid-June. Thousands of people participate annually in this week leading up to the weekend of June 18-19. Even though we have heard nothing further from Jose and Martina, we are proceeding with the plan to coordinate with Latinos United for Justice by providing a table of information, in both English and Spanish, at the evening gathering on Saturday, June 18 (approx. 5 pm-10 pm). We authorized Bobbie to pay whatever fee is required. Becci will continue to see if AFSC can provide a bi-lingual resource to be present, and she will oversee the production of hand-out materials. Arthur will help coordinate, and Peter also expressed willingness to assist at the table. We shall also participate in the Hispanic Week Parade on Sunday, June 19 (steps off around 1 pm), as we have in the last two years. 3.) 60th Anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Bobbie, Brenda, and Mary Kate reported on a recent conference call they had with Boston area peace and justice groups, during which numerous ideas were floated for shared participation. Several of these possibilities in the Watertown area interest our

members. We also favor doing something locally during the August 6-9 period, and at this point we are thinking of a combination of the following: a.) tolling of church bells at the exact minute of the Hiroshima bombing, b.) our regular Saturday morning vigil, c.) a special vigil on the eve (Monday the 8th) of Nagasaki in Old Town Hall Square, and a witness, of a nature still to be determined, at Raytheon at the regular, early Tuesday morning time, preceded perhaps by a walk. Further discussion and more specific planning will be on our June meeting agenda.

The next monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 28, 2005, at 7:30 PM at North Parish Church, North Andover.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Abbott, Clerk

REMINDER: MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

MVPP's membership year ended May 31. Many thanks to all who have already renewed. If your address label reads "2006", your dues are current. Otherwise, please send your check soon to save us the expense of personal reminders. More than a third of our members renew at higher than the basic level. Please consider a larger donation. It will be money well spent!

For savings of budget, paper, and postage, **please indicate with your renewal if you would prefer to receive the MVPP newsletter via e-mail, instead of regular mail.**

MVPP ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, June 17, 2005 6:30 P.M.

**North Parish Church
North Andover**

Pot Luck Supper

**Guest Speakers:
Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson,
co-founders of Military Families Speak Out.**

Poetry

“...in a history of spiritual rupture, a social compact built on fantasy and collective secrets, poetry becomes more necessary than ever: it keeps the underground aquifers flowing; it is the liquid voice that can wear through stone.” --Adrienne Rich

“Look Out”

by Wendell Berry

Come to the window, look out, and see
the valley turning green in remembrance
of all springs past and to come, the woods
perfecting with immortal patience
the leaves that are the work of all of time,
the sycamore whose white limbs shed
the history of a man's life with their old bark,
the river under the morning's breath quivering
like the touched skin of a horse, and you will see
also the shadow cast upon it by fire, the war
that lights its way by burning the earth.

Come to your windows, people of the world,
look out at whatever you see wherever you are,
and you will see dancing upon it that shadow.
You will see that your place, wherever it is,
your house, your garden, your shop, your forest, your farm,
bears the shadow of its destruction by war
which is the economy of greed which is plunder
which is the economy of wrath which is fire.
The Lords of War sell the earth to buy fire,
they sell the water and air of life to buy fire.
They are little men grown great by willingness
to drive whatever exists into its perfect absence.
Their intention to destroy any place is solidly founded
upon their willingness to destroy every place.

Every household of the world is at their mercy,
the households of the farmer and the otter and the owl
are at their mercy. They have no mercy.
Having hate, they can have no mercy.
Their greed is the hatred of mercy.
Their pockets jingle with the small change of the poor.
Their power is their willingness to destroy
everything for knowledge which is money
which is power which is victory
which is ashes sown by the wind.

Leave your windows and go out, people of the world,
go into the streets, go into the fields, go into the woods
and along the streams. Go together, go alone.
Say no to the Lords of War which Money
which is Fire. Say no by saying yes
to the air, to the earth, to the trees,
yes to the grasses, to the rivers, to the birds
and the animals and every living thing, yes
to the small houses, yes to the children. Yes.

GOOD NEWS FLASH!

Historic Moment in Iraq War Debate

Thanks to Rep. Lynn Woolsey (D-CA), on May 25, 2005, the House of Representatives launched the first official debate and vote in Congress over the continuing American presence in Iraq. Woolsey offered an amendment to the Defense Authorization Bill (\$491 billion budget for the pentagon) that stated: “It is the sense of Congress that the President should (1) develop a plan as soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act to provide for the withdrawal of United States Armed Forces from Iraq; and (2) transmit to the congressional defense committees a report that contains the plan describes in paragraph (1).”

While the amendment only called for a sense of Congress, and there was no expectation of its passage, it provided an excellent start for serious debate in Washington about exiting Iraq. It was defeated 128-300, but it drew majority support from Democrats: 122-79. Five Republicans, including Harold Coble (NC), John Duncan (TN), Walter Jones (NC), Jim Leach (IA), and Ron Paul (TX) voted in support as well. (Some people will recall that Rep. Jones, a most conservative member of Congress, led the campaign in 2003 to morph French Fries into Freedom Fries.)

This debate and vote represents quite a dramatic shift from the situation just months ago, after the January elections in Iraq, when the subject of withdrawal was not publicly mentioned by the majority of progressive lawmakers. Furthermore, legislative opposition to the war and occupation in Iraq is heating up with greater speed than during the Vietnam War, when it took many years to pass before a majority of Democrats could be assembled to call for withdrawal. It was not until 1971 that Congress began to vote on that war, and as we know, major escalation into a quagmire started in 1965.

All 10 members of the Massachusetts delegation voted in favor of Woolsey's amendment. They deserve our calls and e-mails of thanks, and our encouragement to keep the pressure on this Congressional debate. The vote on May 25 is just the first step in a larger and longer campaign.

The Senate is due to take up the Defense Authorization Bill around June 6. The final House vote will follow shortly thereafter. Further amendments may be attempted in this short term, so members are urged to stay tuned through legislative updates from organizations like Council for a Livable World, www.clw.org/ and Friends Council for National Legislation, www.fcnl.org/.



MVPP members in NYC May 1, to support the nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty.

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

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

MVPP ANNUAL MEETING!
JUNE 17, 6:30 PM
(see page 10)

PEACE IS
PATRIOTIC



The MVPP Newsletter is printed monthly and has a current mailing of 160. We are grateful for suggestions, comments, and help with publication. (2005 on your mailing label indicates that your 2004-2005 dues have expired on May 31, 2005)
MVPP President: Bobbie Goldman. Vice President: Katherine Robinson. Newsletter Editor: Don Abbott. Newsletter contributors: Becci Backman, Arthur and Margaret Brien, Bobbie Goldman, Sue Imhoff, Brian Quirk, and Boryana Tacconi.

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

Every legislator knows one letter is worth a thousand votes.

President George W. Bush

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500
White House Comment Desk: 202 456-1111
E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

Senator Edward M. Kennedy

304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202 224-4543 fax: 202 224-2417
2400 JFK Building, Boston MA 02203
617 565-3170 fax: 617 565-3183
Form: <http://kennedy.senate.gov/contact.html>

Senator John F. Kerry

304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202 224-2742 fax: 202 224-8525
One Bowdoin Sq., Boston, MA 02114
617 565-8519 fax: 617 248-3870
Form: <http://kerry.senate.gov/text/contact/email.html>

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978 531-1669 fax: 978 531-1996
E-mail: <http://www.house.gov/tierney/email.htm>

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>