



# 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.

September - October 2007

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*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."*

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## GOOD NEWS

Boryana Tacconi

**Jon Stras is back!** All of us who know Anne Chay from Andover as a fearless and outspoken peace activist and Military Families Speak Out member were overjoyed to hear that her son Jon is back in the U.S. after serving 15 months in Iraq. We hope that Anne will welcome him home in Andover soon, and that he never has to go back again.

Relieved and happy as she is to know that her son is now on U.S. soil, Anne continues campaigning for all troops to come home with undiminished fervor and persistence. *"Everyday when CNN in the morning said there were eight deaths, you didn't know until that night if you got the visit at the door. Excruciating to say the least,"* she said in an interview with NewsCenter 5 on September 13th, shortly before the President addressed the nation in favor of prolonging the surge. *"We want people to know that those of us in the military families love our troops. We want to take care of them. And if we really want to take care of them, it is bringing them home."*

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**For the second time this summer, Kennebunkport, ME** became the meeting place of thousands of peace, environmental, labor and social justice activists, who converged on August 25th for the largest anti-war rally in town history. It was organized by the Kennebunks Peace Department, enthusiastic local activists, headed by the tireless Jamilla El-Shafei. The event was endorsed by more than 50 national and regional peace and justice organizations. Speakers included Gold Star Parents Cindy Sheehan and Melida and Carlos Arredondo, Congressman Dennis Kucinich, Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney, Retired Col. Ann Wright, George Paz Martin, and Dr. Dahlia Wasfi, Liam Madden and several Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) members. There was great music from Emma's Revolution, The Indigo Girls, Pat Scanlon & Band, the Leftist Marching Band, The Ragging Grannies (Boston Chapter) and Son of Nun.

Over 4,000 participated in the high-spirited and peaceful march on one of the hottest summer days (in the 90s!) The rally started at 10 a.m. and continued after the march until about 5 p.m.

The activities started Friday night with a potluck supper and concert and continued with a workshops on Sunday morning. Many participants stayed for two nights in two camp sites, named Camp Casey and Camp Alex in honor of Casey Sheehan and Alexander Arredondo, both killed in Iraq.

MVPP was of course among the endorsers of the event, and over a dozen MVPP members came to the rally and march. Our resident bard, Pat Scanlon, helped organize, performed Friday and Saturday, and was a great stage manager during the whole rally.

Richard Hudak gave a Sunday morning workshop on non-violent conflict resolution.

At least 15 MVPP members were present. The event got extensive coverage (most of the front and two middle pages in section A) in the Maine Sunday Telegram.

**The start of the new school year brings encouraging reports of increased youth activism** in many parts of the country. In Lancaster, PA, the local chapter of the newly reignited Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) is joining in the Iraq Moratorium and is going to mark the third Friday of each month with various events. On Friday, September 21, about 60 young people – most too young to drive – held a vigil on the courthouse steps, bringing contagious energy to the protest and inspiring the drivers in the traffic to honk like never before. One of their signs read: 'Vietnam II, Relive the Tragedy,' now playing in selected Iraq cities, directed by George W. Bush, starring people you love."

In Madison, WI, about 200 demonstrators protested against Halliburton recruiters during a career fair at the University of Wisconsin. The Campus Antiwar Network accused Halliburton of profiting from war and other unethical practices. University rules said protesters could not chant or shout, so they sang: "It started with Dow and it continues now!" summoning the memory of the 1967 Madison demonstration against recruiters for Dow Chemical Co., which made napalm used in the Vietnam War.

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**MVPP Monthly Meeting – First United Methodist Church – Tuesday, October 23 – 7:30 PM.**  
<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/>

*Printed on recycled paper*

In Des Moines, IA, twelve high school students occupied Sen. Charles Grassley's office on September 21, demanding that he promise to not vote for more funding of the war. They quietly sat in a circle on the floor, passing around a copy of Thomas Merton's "The Nonviolent Solution." Four protesters pledged to not leave until securing the promise. They were taken into custody by the police and later cited and released. The students said their passion for ending the war outweighed the potential effects as they apply for college.

**Environmentalists and concerned people around the world hail the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to former Vice President Al Gore and the U.N. Climate Panel (IPCC) as the first award clearly linking climate change to peace.**

"The Nobel Peace Prize Committee has today made it clear that combating climate change is a central peace and security policy for the 21st century," said Achim Steiner, head of the U.N. Environment Program.

World Wildlife Fund President and CEO Carter Roberts said that the award recognizes climate change as a great destabilizing force and a root cause of some of the world's most violent conflicts. "*Climate change isn't just about the environment – it's about people's livelihoods. We must act with urgency because of the profound connection between climate change and political stability around the world,*" Roberts said.

Leading British campaigner for the environment, George Monbiot, was interviewed by Amy Goodman on Democracy Now! He said that he was particularly delighted for the IPCC, "a very conservative scientific panel which chooses only the science which is rock-solid, and yet it's often portrayed as an insane radical organization trying to overthrow civilization as we know it. And it's fought a long, hard battle for the science to be heard, and that battle is now being rewarded."

The Nobel Prize will be handed out in a ceremony in Oslo on December 10. At the same time, the world's environment ministers will be meeting in Bali and working on a two-year negotiating mandate to broaden the Kyoto Protocol - the main plan for curbing global warming - to outsiders such as the United States and China.

**The Right Livelihood Prize 2007**, an annual "alternative" to the Nobel prizes, was awarded on October 2nd to peace and environmental activists from Sri Lanka, Kenya, Canada and Bangladesh.

- The two million Swedish kronor (\$310,000) prize will be shared by Christopher Weeramantry of Sri Lanka for "his lifetime of ground breaking work to strengthen and expand the rule of international law" and Dekha Ibrahim Abdi from Kenya for her "effective peace work and conflict resolution" in many divided countries.
- Percy and Louise Schmeiser of Canada were named for giving "the world a wake-up call about the dangers to farmers and biodiversity everywhere from the growing dominance and market aggression of companies engaged in the genetic engineering of crops."
- Grameen Shakti, a company in Bangladesh, was cited for showing "that solar energy applications can be scaled up

massively and rapidly to provide an affordable and climate-friendly energy option for the rural poor."

"The 2007 Right Livelihood Award Recipients highlight existing solutions for today's world," said the award's founder Jacob von Uexcull.

**The U.S./Labor Education in the Americas Project reports that the struggle for worker justice in the global economy has achieved some important victories in the last months:**

- The authority for the President to negotiate more NAFTA's has expired, and congressional leaders have no plans to renew it anytime soon.
- Those trade agreements already negotiated but not yet approved, with Peru and Panama, must now meet much stronger worker rights conditions than those contained in NAFTA and CAFTA.
- The pending free trade agreement with Colombia may not come up this year or next.

These victories mean that for the first time since NAFTA was passed over a decade ago, U.S. trade rules protecting workers are being strengthened, not weakened.

**The Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2007**, passed on September 21 by the Senate Finance Committee, aims to make private landowners partners in conservation by providing \$400 million a year in new tax credits. Plus, there are additional deductions and exclusions for citizens who take steps to help endangered species on the properties they own.

**In Italy, about 200,000 people marched from Perugia to Assisi** on October 7, calling for the end of wars and "all human rights for all." The peace march concluded a "peace week" featuring some 400 initiatives on peace and human rights. "Peace and justice walk together" and "Water for all" were among some of the banners at the march. Many marchers carried rainbow peace flags.

The march, the 17th of its kind, was started by peace activist Aldo Capitini in 1961. It was organized by Peace Roundtable, a coalition of NGO's, unions, church groups and local administrations working for peace and solidarity.

A large contingent was "No Dal Molin" from Vicenza in Northern Italy. Dal Molin is an unused airport due to be turned into a U.S. military base. This decision has generated strong protest activity in the last months.

Many wore red T-shirts in solidarity with Burma. Human rights were at the core of the "United Nations of the People," attended by more than 700 delegates from 50 countries. Justice in Africa and peace in the Middle East were the two main themes at this meeting. A "United Nations of Young People" was held for the third time, where over 700 young attendants from Italy, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East came together to discuss ways of contributing to a better world.

**The anti-war candidate won** in our US Congressional fifth district!

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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.*

## Ongoing Campaigns

From October 21.-23., a movement rising up against war and global warming is planning a massive intervention in Washington, DC. **No War, No Warming** insists on immediate action to:

**STOP** the war in Iraq and future resource wars by ending our addiction to fossil fuels.

**SHIFT** government funding to rebuild New Orleans and all communities suffering from racism and corporate greed.

**GO** green and promote environmental justice with new jobs in a clean energy economy.

Non-violent civil disobedience at Capitol Hill is planned for October 22nd. Several local actions in support are planned around the country. ([www.nowarnowarming.org](http://www.nowarnowarming.org))

One of the organizers is **Ted Glick**, the coordinator of the U.S. Climate Emergency Council ([www.climateemergency.org](http://www.climateemergency.org)). He has been on an open-ended Climate Emergency Fast for over 30 days to protest the failure of lawmakers in Washington to address climate change. He can be reached at [indpol@igc.org](mailto:indpol@igc.org). Below, we reprint his recent essay:

### “No War, No Warming, Rise Up!”

For months a movement has been developing that consciously and intentionally links the related issues of the war in Iraq/oil wars and the heating up of the earth that is disrupting the world's climate. On Monday morning, October 22, in Washington, D.C. on Capitol Hill and elsewhere around the country, that movement will become visible as large numbers of people engage in nonviolent direct action to disrupt business as usual. We will be calling for an end to this criminal war and strong action to slow, stop and reverse global warming ([www.nowarnowarming.org](http://www.nowarnowarming.org)).

These issues are connected, of course, by oil. Everyone who's got their head screwed on straight knows that the reason for the invasion of Iraq was oil. The U.S. government is occupying Iraq both for its oil and to try to turn it into a U.S.-friendly military base from which it can better control the entire region.

Why? It's not just because Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice, Wolfowitz and the neo-cons are motivated by we're-the-rulers-of-

the-world ideology. There is actually a perverse logic to what they're doing, particularly given their personal connections to the oil industry.

The U.S. and the world are in a deepening energy crisis. Easily accessible oil and natural gas are getting hard to find even as the demand for and competition over energy throughout the world accelerates. There is agreement among those who study this issue that we are either right at or very soon will be at "peak oil," a point where as much oil that is in the ground will have been found and used as there is oil still remaining. And the big problem is that those remaining reserves are getting harder and more expensive to bring out of the ground.

There is a common sense solution to this dilemma. Instead of war in Iraq escalating into war with Iran and who knows where else, the U.S. could lead the world by using its technological know-how and resources to advance a worldwide clean energy revolution. We could rapidly undercut the appeal of Al-Qaeda by withdrawing our troops from the Middle East and promoting, instead, huge solar energy farms in this sun-drenched region of the world. We could help the formerly colonized countries of the Global South who are currently developing their economies by using greenhouse gas emitting coal or dangerous nuclear power. We could help them shift to renewable energy technology to obtain energy via solar panels, wind turbines, the tides or the earth (geothermal).

What kind of world do we face if we don't stand up, if we don't rise up to demand a serious course correction?

A report was put out this spring by the CNA Corporation, a national security think tank, written by six retired admirals and five retired generals, including the former Army chief of staff and George W. Bush's former chief Middle East peace negotiator. In it, in the words of an Associated Press story, they "called upon the U.S. government to make major cuts in emissions of gases that cause global warming." "The report warned that in the next 30 to 40 years there will be wars over water, increased hunger, instability from worsening disease and rising sea levels and global warming-induced refugees. 'The chaos that results can be an incubator of civil strife, genocide and the growth of terrorism,' the 35-page report predicted. "Climate change exacerbates already unstable situations,' former U.S. Army chief of staff Gordon Sullivan told Associated Press Radio. . . "In a veiled reference to Bush's refusal to join an international treaty to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the report said the U.S. government 'must become a more constructive partner' with other nations to

fight global warming and cope with its consequences." The options before us are crystal clear. Down one road, the one we're now on, lies a cascading series of oil and water wars, climate disasters and ecological devastation. Down the other lies a turn toward peaceful resolution of conflicts, energy conservation, efficiency and a clean energy revolution, and social and economic justice.

Another world is possible, but for it come about another U.S. is necessary, in the words of the recent U.S. Social Forum. It's a world worth fighting for, a world worth sacrificing for. Our children and their children are counting on us to do the right thing, and to do it now. The clock is ticking, and we need to act as if the future of human society depends upon what we do, because it really does.

## IRAQ MORATORIUM

The Iraq Moratorium initiated by antiwar activists from several groups around the country calls for local, decentralized, personal action or statements against the ongoing war and occupation of Iraq on the third Friday of every month. The idea is simple: everyone, wherever we are, does something that publicly says, "I am against this war – and I want it to end now!"

The Iraq Moratorium is something everyone can get involved with as individual or/and as part of a group. Here are a few ideas of things to do:

- Wear an antiwar button or sticker to work or to school.
- Wear a black armband to let people know you mourn the overwhelming loss of life in this war.
- Hang an antiwar sign in your window or put one in your yard.
- Call a local radio talk show and explain why do you want this war to end.
- Talk to people.
- Write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper and let people know about the Iraq Moratorium and how they can get involved.
- With just a few people, make a large antiwar sign or banner and hang it from a busy overpass where people traveling to or from work will see it, or from some other highly visible location.
- Organize a vigil in front of a military recruiting station, your local federal building, or the office of your senator or representative in Congress.
- Call the Washington, DC offices of your senators and your representative.

For more information about the Iraq Moratorium, visit [www.iraq-moratorium.org](http://www.iraq-moratorium.org). Many people sent in accounts and photos of what they did on the first Friday of the moratorium, September 21st. It promises to be a growing movement! So, let's get inspired, creative and persistent. Friday, October 19th, is a national coordinated day of outreach for the October 27th rallies planned in ten cities across the country.



## THE ARMY MAN PROJECT

The Little Green Men are around! People keep finding them in stores, libraries, cafeterias, bus stops and train stations, anywhere in public places around the country – because other people left them there. They are little plastic toy soldiers, holding a label with the simple message: STOP THE WAR! BRING ME HOME! Wishful thinking expressed in a childish way? Or wake-up pinpricks to the conscience of people encouraged not to think about the wars we are waging, to go on with life, to go shopping while bombs are dropping? And who says that activism can't be also fun, anyway!

To learn more about the project, visit [www.mouthswideopen.org/armymen.shtml](http://www.mouthswideopen.org/armymen.shtml). The site holds many photos of the toy soldiers in their different surroundings, as well as letters from people who have gotten involved in the project and information about where to order inexpensive toy soldiers in bulk. You can also contact us at MVPP and get a dozen or so of little men complete with labels, if you wish to spread them around.

## Recent Events

### Andover sees New Orleans fight for schools

MVPP member Lou Bernieri has been working with teachers in the New Orleans Public Schools (NOPS) for the past two years through his work as Director of Andover Bread Loaf (ABL), an outreach program of Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, and a center for the national Bread Loaf Teacher Network. ("Bread Loaf" refers to the Bread Loaf School of English, Middlebury College's graduate school of English and American Literature). In the summers of '07 and '08, ABL brought 13 teachers from NOPS to Andover on full fellowships to participate in ABL's summer workshop for teachers. These teachers joined other public school teachers from Oakland, CA, Lawrence, MA, and Mumbai, India in the intensive 13 day graduate program in writing and the teaching of writing, literature and the arts, and educational theory and practice.

ABL's staff have visited New Orleans numerous times during the past two years, working with teachers, students, administrators, and community organizations in rebuilding the public school system. After Katrina, national, state, and local government and business leaders planned to privatize the whole NOPS through mostly for-profit charter schools. They poured (and continue to pour) millions of dollars into these elite schools, while the NOPS was severely underfunded and almost completely shut

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Return to P.O. Box 573 North Andover, MA 01845  
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.**

down. Had this plan been fully implemented, it would have been another catastrophe for New Orleans poor and working class. Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of many of the citizens of New Orleans and of the NOPS teachers, students, and administrators as well as community organizations in the poorer parts of the city, enough public schools have reopened to serve about 15,000 children, half the current student population of New Orleans.

ABL staff consider it a great privilege to be invited by New Orleans teachers and NOPS administration to work in the city. Although things are still dire there, the idealism and spirit of its citizens, and especially its teachers and students, is an inspiration to us all. There is still a long struggle ahead for the NOPS, however, ABL is optimistic about the future of public education in the city.

NOTE: ABL's network has been active in the Lawrence Public Schools since 1987.

### Sharing the Land of Canaan

Brian attended a presentation by Dr. Mazin Qumsiyeh at Brookline High School, September 16. It was interesting to hear what he had to say this time, having seen him shouted down at Andover High School in January. He is not an anti-Israel fanatic. He has spoken out also against Palestinian leaders. He sincerely wants to build peace, to be good for Moslems, Christians and Jews.

Dr. Qumsiyeh began by showing part of the 90 minute video, "Occupation 101." It seems like a good film, believable and interesting. After the program, he had his book for sale, and promoted another book "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine," by Israeli Ilan Pappé. I bought Mazin's book, "Sharing the Land of Canaan."

There were about fifty people, mostly from the side opposed to the "Wall" and settlements. After the presentation there was a question and answer process. About ten people opposed Mazin. One challenged his definition of Canaan in an academic but not opposing way. Some opposers were insistent, and one of the anti-Israel people had to be calmed down, but it was pretty civilized. Later in the Q&A I could hear a loud conversation through a door that had been closed to the hall outside.

**This Labor Day again, MVPP was part of the annual Bread and Roses Festival** in Lawrence, MA. Our blue tent adorned with flying rainbow peace flags was assigned to a great location at the main walking area. All during the day, many visitors stopped to buy bumper stickers and buttons, to pick up printed materials, and just to talk. Thanks to all who put in time and

energy to set the tent and display up and down and to work at the table: Arthur Brien, Dee Halzack, Brian Quirk, Peter Cameron, Michael Bleiweiss, Niki Rosen and Boryana Tacconi.

One of the performers who appeared on the main stage at the Bread and Roses Festival had come all the way from California: well-known musician and activist **Faith Petric**, just turned 92. To listen to those timeless labor songs in her rendition, to sing along with her and to get in touch with her radiant energy was such a joy! The evening before the festival, a circle of music lovers sat around Faith in the UU Church at 6 Locke St. in Andover for an unforgettable sing-along. Heartfelt thanks to Rev. Ralph Galen for making this great evening happen!

**The ANSWER coalition had taken out a permit for 10,000 demonstrators for the Washington D.C. Rally** September 15th - and about **100,000 showed up!** An overwhelming part of the demonstrators were people in their teens and early twenties. Speakers included Cindy Sheehan, Melida Arredondo, a large group of Iraq Veterans Against the War, Retired Col. Ann Wright, Ralph Nader, National ANSWER coordinator Brian Becker and others.

A densely packed march stretched more than ten blocks on Pennsylvania Avenue. At the capital steps, the protesters were met by a police line. There, Iraq veterans conducted a solemn ceremony in memory of the U.S. soldiers and Iraqis killed in the war. Over 5,000 people then laid down in a symbolic "die-in" - one of the largest acts of civil disobedience in recent years. 197 people, including veterans and activists, were arrested when they tried to deliver to Congress the message to stop the war. This mass action came on the heels of Gen. Petraeus report to Congress and the President's wholehearted endorsement of that report.

Towards the end of the march. Carlos Arredondo, pulling his traveling memorial for his son Alex, was attacked and seriously beaten up by five counter-demonstrators, each one of them twice the weight of Carlos. The police broke the beating up, but no arrest was made. Friends of Carlos are seeking legal redress.

**Lois Fisher**, long time member of MVPP, moved recently to The Meadows at Edgewood, Osgood St., North Andover. Ralph Galen and Jane Cadarette visited with her last month and brought flowers and greetings on behalf of the peace group's members.



## Coming Events

**Arlington UJP, vigil on Saturday, October 20** from 10am-12 at the intersection of Route 16 and Mass. Ave. (Rt 3) to promote the Oct 27 rally.

October 21, 10:30 AM - **Forum: Returning Home from Iraq: Veterans Feel the Pinch** The William Joiner Center at the University of Massachusetts Boston serves veterans, war refugees and survivors, and victims of war through programs that address the consequences of war. Kevin Bowen will address the plight of veterans returning from the war in Iraq and the recent Dole-Shalala report on how to serve our veterans better upon their return home. Longy School of Music, Rey-Waldstein Bldg, 33 Garden St, Cambridge

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### October 27 Noon Rally on Boston Common

**March at 2PM. Bring your friends! Print the flier:**  
[http://www.justicewithpeace.org/index.php?target=home&sub-target=Feature\\_Detail&selected=2620](http://www.justicewithpeace.org/index.php?target=home&sub-target=Feature_Detail&selected=2620)

**Also, coordinated with the rally, Friends of Sabeel** is sponsoring "The Apartheid Paradigm in Palestine-Israel: Issues of Justice and Equality" October 26 - 27, 2007 Old South Church, 645 Boylston St., Boston; Friday—2:30 PM—10:00 PM; Saturday—8:00 AM—4:30 PM, Keynote Address by **Archbishop Desmond Tutu Sat. 1:30.**

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October 28 10:30 AM- **Forum: Combating Violence by Teaching Peace** Eric Dawson is Director of Peace Games Boston, which promotes creative ways to teach children about peace. His talk will address the problem of violence in America, and how it is possible to build a generation of just, compassionate young people. Longy School of Music, Rey-Waldstein Bldg, 33 Garden St, Cambridge

Nov. 15 **Avi Chomsky's talk at Amesbury meetinghouse Peace Center.** She'll be leading a dialogue on immigration issues. Her book is "They Take Our Jobs!" And Twenty Other Myths about Immigration.

American Friends Service committee can send an e-mail calendar. see [afsc\\_pes@topica.email-publisher.com](mailto:afsc_pes@topica.email-publisher.com)

## Commentary

### Let's Face It: The Warfare State Is Part of Us

By Norman Solomon, ZNET, October 9, 2007

The USA's military spending is now close to \$2 billion a day. This fall, the country will begin its seventh year of continuous war, with no end in sight. On the horizon is the very real threat of a massive air assault on Iran. And few in Congress seem willing or able to articulate a rejection of the warfare state.

While the Bush-Cheney administration is the most dangerous of our lifetimes -- and ousting Republicans from the White House is imperative -- such truths are apt to smooth the way for progressive evasions. We hear that "the people must take back the government," but how can "the people" take back what they never really had? And when rhetoric calls for "returning to a foreign policy based on human rights and democracy," we're encouraged to be nostalgic for good old days that never existed.

The warfare state didn't suddenly arrive in 2001, and it won't disappear when the current lunatic in the Oval Office moves on.

Born 50 years before George W. Bush became president, I have always lived in a warfare state. Each man in the Oval Office has presided over an arsenal of weapons designed to destroy human life en masse. In recent decades, our self-proclaimed protectors have been able -- and willing -- to destroy all of humanity.

We've accommodated ourselves to this insanity. And I do mean "we" -- including those of us who fret aloud that the impact of our peace-loving wisdom is circumscribed because our voices don't carry much farther than the choir. We may carry around an inflated sense of our own resistance to a system that is poised to incinerate and irradiate the planet.

Maybe it's too unpleasant to acknowledge that we've been living in a warfare state for so long. And maybe it's even more unpleasant to acknowledge that the warfare state is not just "out there." It's also internalized; at least to the extent that we pass up countless opportunities to resist it.

Like millions of other young Americans, I grew into awakening as the Vietnam War escalated. Slogans like "make love, not war" -- and, a bit later, "the personal is political" -- really spoke to us. But over the decades we generally learned, or relearned, to compartmentalize: as if personal and national histories weren't interwoven in our pasts, presents and futures.

One day in 1969, a biologist named George Wald, who had won a Nobel Prize, visited the Massachusetts Institute of Technology -- the biggest military contractor in academia -- and gave a speech. "Our government has become preoccupied with death," he said, "with the business of killing and being killed."

That preoccupation has fluctuated, but in essence it has persisted. While speaking of a far-off war and a nuclear arsenal certain to remain in place after the war's end, Wald pointed out: "We are under repeated pressure to accept things that are presented to us as settled -- decisions that have been made."

Today, in similar ways, our government is preoccupied and we are pressurized. The grisly commerce of killing -- whether through carnage in Iraq and Afghanistan or through the deadly shredding of social safety-nets at home -- thrives on aggressive war and on the perverse realpolitik of "national security" that brandishes the Pentagon's weaponry against the world. At least tacitly, we accept so much that threatens to destroy anything and everything.

As it happened, for reasons both "personal" and "political" -- more accurately, for reasons indistinguishable between the two -- my own life fell apart and began to reassemble itself during the same season of 1969 when George Wald gave his speech, which he called "A Generation in Search of a Future."

Political and personal histories are usually kept separate -- in how we're taught, how we speak and even how we think. But I've become very skeptical of the categories. They may not be much more than illusions we've been conned into going through the motions of believing.

We actually live in concentric spheres, and "politics" suffuses households as well as what Martin Luther King Jr. called "The World House." Under that heading, he wrote in 1967: "When scientific power outruns moral power, we end up with guided missiles and misguided men. When we foolishly minimize the internal of our lives and maximize the external, we sign the warrant for our own day of doom. Our hope for creative living in this world house that we have inherited lies in our ability to re-establish the moral ends of our lives in personal character and social justice. Without this spiritual and moral reawakening we shall destroy ourselves in the misuse of our own instruments."

While trying to understand the essence of what so many Americans have witnessed over the last half century, I worked on a book (titled "Made Love, Got War") that sifts through the last 50 years of the warfare state... and, in the process, through my own life. I haven't learned as much as I would have liked, but some patterns emerged -- persistent and pervasive since the middle of the 20th century.

The warfare state doesn't come and go. It can't be defeated on Election Day. Like it or not, it's at the core of the United States -- and it has infiltrated our very being.

What we've tolerated has become part of us. What we accept, however reluctantly, seeps inward. In the long run, passivity can easily ratify even what we may condemn. And meanwhile, in the words of Thomas Merton, "It is the sane ones, the well-adapted ones, who can without qualms and without nausea aim the missiles and press the buttons that will initiate the great festival of destruction that they, the sane ones, have prepared."

The triumph of the warfare state degrades and suppresses us all. Even before the weapons perform as guaranteed.

Norman Solomon's book "Made Love, Got War: Close Encounters with America's Warfare State" will be published in early fall. The foreword is by Daniel Ellsberg. For more information, go to: [www.MadeLoveGotWar.com](http://www.MadeLoveGotWar.com)

## Linking Iraq to 9/11 has brought a terrible toll

09/25/2007, Newburyport Daily News

To the editor:

Blaming the victim is an age-old technique for evading guilt, whether practiced by individuals or nations or megacorporations. And including hysteria by preying on the fears of the naive and unsuspecting has long been a tool for gaining political power. Add the deliberate inflaming of religious prejudice through deceitful propaganda and the stage for mayhem is set.

Recently Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, addressed the Islamic Society of North America. He asked how it was that Christian fundamentalists made "vicious and public attacks" against Islam. He asked how law-abiding Muslim citizens find themselves "blamed for the crimes of terrorists they abhor?" Rabbi Yoffie cited the "profound ignorance" about Islam that prevails in the United States. He also pointed out that passages that seem to promote violence appear in the Hebrew and Christian Bibles and in the Koran. I will add that the histories of all three religious groups contain tragic episodes of violence and atrocities perpetrated against others. Rabbi Yoffie said, "You cannot honor God if you do not honor the image of God in every human being ... ." I am neither Jewish nor Muslim nor Christian, but I profoundly agree with this statement.

There is an ongoing effort in the United States to demonize Islam. This serves the interests of all those who profit politically or monetarily by wars against countries with primarily Muslim populations. There are billions of Muslims in many countries throughout the world. A very tiny percentage of these populations are violent extremists, just as there are extremists to be found in every culture. Of course, if United States foreign policy endangers or threatens people in these countries, extremist groups gain influence.

The false propaganda campaign that linked Iraq with 9/11 was so successful that one-third of Americans still believe there was a connection between Iraq and 9/11, even though, as reported in the Washington Post, Bush himself admitted that Iraq was not connected to 9/11, as did former Press Secretary Ari Fleischer, who now heads the propaganda group Freedom's Watch.

If, instead of sitting on vast oil fields, the main product of Iraq had been asparagus, the Bush regime would never have invaded Iraq. Even the opium crop in Afghanistan, in spite of the disastrous consequences of its cultivation, receives very little attention. It is a country's resources, markets and location that are coveted by outsiders. Tragically, the greed of those who would rob a country of its wealth and well-being impels them to use the most malevolent means available, including the promotion of religious bigotry.

Thus, close to 4,000 American lives and over one 1,000,000 Iraqi lives have been lost (Los Angeles Times), and millions more maimed and displaced. A brutal, horrific toll.

D. PHILIP  
Newburyport

## On Terror

August 19, 2007, New York Times

To the Editor:

Samantha Power has done extraordinary work in chronicling the genocides of our time, and in exposing how the Western powers were complicit by their inaction.

However, in her review of four books on terrorism, especially Talal Asad's "On Suicide Bombing" (July 29), she claims a moral distinction between "inadvertent" killing of civilians in bombings and "deliberate" targeting of civilians in suicide attacks. Her position is not only illogical, but (against her intention, I believe) makes it easier to justify such bombings.

She believes that "there is a moral difference between setting out to destroy as many civilians as possible and killing civilians unintentionally and reluctantly in pursuit of a military objective." Of course, there's a difference, but is there a "moral" difference? That is, can you say one action is more reprehensible than the other?

In countless news briefings, Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney, responding to reporters' questions about civilian deaths in bombing, would say those deaths were "unintentional" or "inadvertent" or "accidental," as if that disposed of the problem. In the Vietnam War, the massive deaths of civilians by bombing were justified in the same way by Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, Richard Nixon and various generals.

These words are misleading because they assume an action is either "deliberate" or "unintentional." There is something in between, for which the word is "inevitable." If you engage in an action, like aerial bombing, in which you cannot possibly distinguish between combatants and civilians (as a former Air Force bombardier, I will attest to that), the deaths of civilians are inevitable, even if not "intentional." Does that difference exonerate you morally?

The terrorism of the suicide bomber and the terrorism of aerial bombardment are indeed morally equivalent. To say otherwise (as either side might) is to give one moral superiority over the other, and thus serve to perpetuate the horrors of our time.

Howard Zinn, Auburndale, Mass.

## LEGISLATION WATCH

Peter Cameron

In 2005 the US Congress passed the "Real ID" law, which calls for states to develop highly secure drivers license and identity cards. Several states have refused to implement it because it is unfunded, it is a possible threat to privacy, and other reasons. In Massachusetts, it is a bill filed by Senator Richard T. Moore, Democrat from Uxbridge, calling for funds or repeal.

There is a bill pending in Congress which would reinforce the Clean Water Act's prohibition of dumping industrial waste -- including mine waste -- into streams. This is in response to a proposed rule by the Bush Administration which would allow mining companies to blast and bulldoze the tops of mountains (to mine coal) and dump rock and debris into streams and hollows. This "Mountaintop Removal" was the subject of a NOVA program on PBS recently.

## CURBSIDE ENCOUNTERS

Saturday morning vigil in front of the Old Town Hall in Andover. A driver honks to attract our attention and shows us the finger. A local policeman who happens to be around looks at us with a good-natured grin:  
"Friend of yours, huh? Telling you that you're Number One!"

A friendly young couple with two toddlers comes by and says hello. The woman tells us that her daughter - about four years old - said to her while they were approaching:  
"Mommy, what are they doing there? They want the war to go away, right?"

Sunday vigil at Shawsheen square in Andover. A middle-aged woman who regularly drives by and always waves to us, this time stops at the light and rolls her window down:  
"You people really make a difference. I hope you know this."  
"Thank you", Don says.  
"You change people's lives. I know you changed my life," and she points towards her heart before she drives away.

## Song: Young Soldier, Welcome Home

Chorus

I can't walk in your boots  
I don't know what you've been through  
But I once had boots like yours  
Raised the flag marched off to war  
Had ribbons on my chest  
Proud soldier, once the best  
Had each other, not much more  
As we marched off to war

Verse

I am sorry for what I did  
My God, was just a kid  
Mapped the targets, bombs away  
Death, destruction every day  
I can't count the numbers killed  
But I know I always will  
Carry pain inside  
For the thousands that have died

Now you've come home from war  
Different than before  
Broken body, tortured mind  
Can't leave the past behind  
Memories won't go away  
As real as yesterday  
Shattered nerves, nightmares and more  
Can't escape from war

Over years I have found  
You and I are bound  
Different ages, different war  
Yet together evermore  
I will stand by your side  
Hold you up, it's safe to cry  
You are not alone  
Young Soldier, Welcome Home

© Patrick Scanlon 8/12/07

# END THE WAR NOW

*saturday,*

*national day of action*

## OCTOBER 27<sup>th</sup>

Rally: 12 Noon - March:2 PM - Boston Common

*New England Mobilization to End the War*

**Join us! Merrimack Valley People for Peace (MVPP)**

<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/> (978) 461-0104

**Bring All The Troops Home NOW!**

End all funding for the Iraq War Now!

Don't attack Iran!

Support Our Communities

Fund Human Needs

Stop the Attack on Civil Liberties

Defend Human Rights!

**BOSTON**

CHICAGO

LOS ANGELES

NEWYORK CITY

NEW ORLEANS

ORLANDO

PHILIDELPHIA

SALT LAKE CITY

SAN FRANSISCO

SEATTLE

The people of this country want the war to end, but Washington has failed to take decisive action.

With each passing month, nearly 100 service people and countless more

Iraqis are killed, some 12 billion of our tax dollars are spent, and death and destruction continue.

Our communities -- from New Orleans to Minneapolis -- are neglected and suffer the consequences.

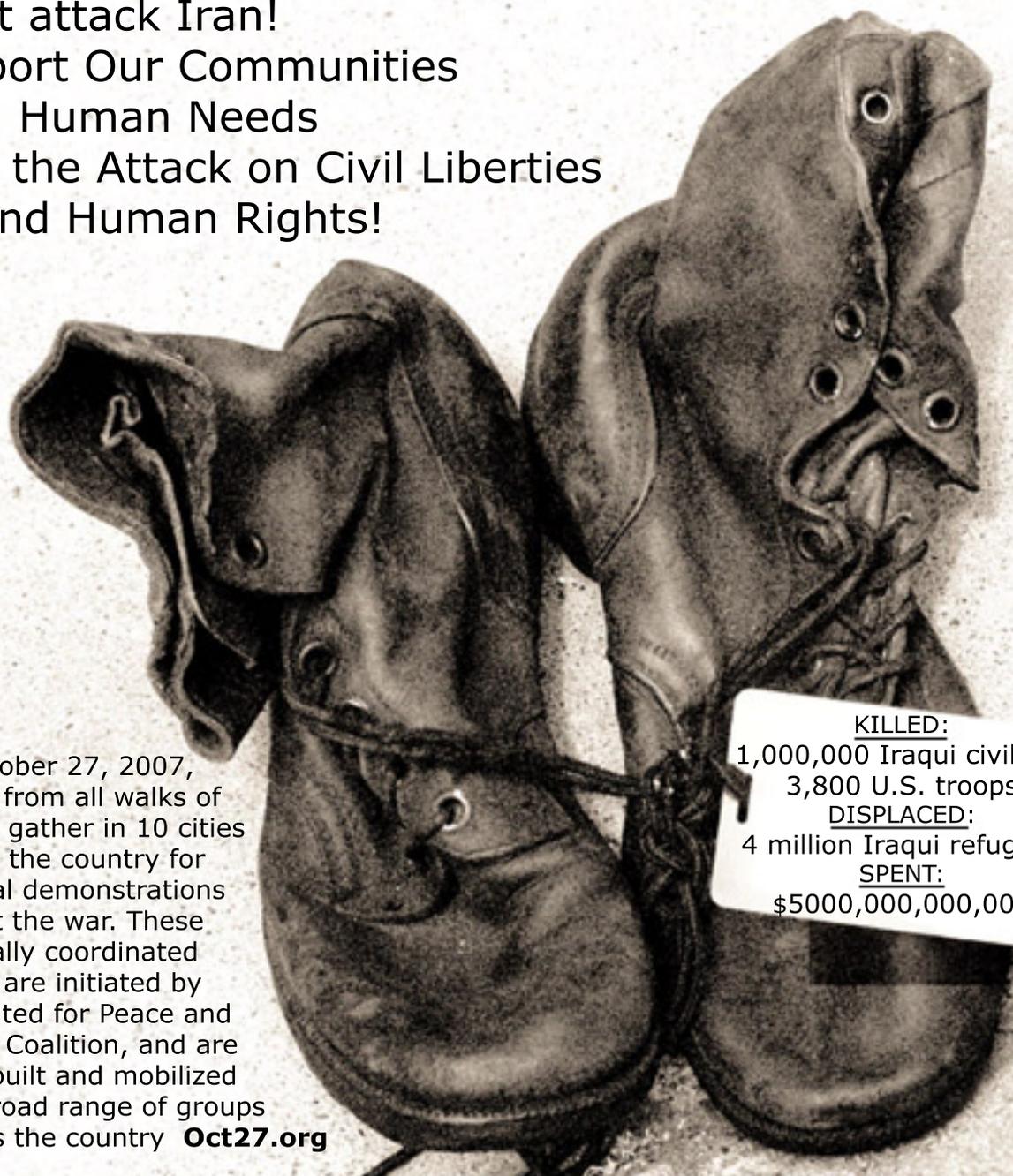
From Vermont to California, from Florida to Wisconsin, the people have spoken:

***We want this war to end, and we want it to end NOW!***

**Get Involved!**

**[www.Oct27.org](http://www.Oct27.org)  
[NewEnglandUnited.org](http://NewEnglandUnited.org)**

Statistics current as of 9/25/2007



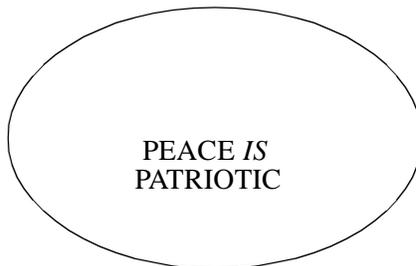
**KILLED:**  
1,000,000 Iraqi civilians  
3,800 U.S. troops  
**DISPLACED:**  
4 million Iraqi refugees  
**SPENT:**  
\$5000,000,000,000

On October 27, 2007, people from all walks of life will gather in 10 cities around the country for regional demonstrations against the war. These nationally coordinated events are initiated by the United for Peace and Justice Coalition, and are being built and mobilized by a broad range of groups across the country **Oct27.org**

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

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

**OCT 27 Rally at  
Boston Common  
Noon till 4**



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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](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>