



Photo by Ted Stein

Batala Women's Brazilian Drummers fired up the WPC Awards on 12/14/07.
2007 Peace and Justice Award honorees listed on Page 16.

Burma/Myanmar Solidarity Actions

By Pete Perry

Late September and all through October of last year the entire global community watched as a peaceful revolution was launched and apparently quashed in Myanmar, also known as Burma. At the center of this conflict is the fact that a brutal military junta of a few extremely wealthy generals rules over a beautiful and fascinating Buddhist country.

The struggle erupted after more than a decade of relative silence when saffron-robed monks marched in the streets for freedom. On one of the first days of the peaceful revolution, they marched to the home of the detained Aung San Suu Kyii, the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

In 1990, the people of Myanmar elected Aung San Suu Kyii and her political party, the National League for Democracy, by a large margin. Since then the military junta has suppressed the wishes of the people, placed Suu Kyii under arrest, first in the nation's most notorious prison. For 12 of the past 17 years she has been a prisoner in her own home. Other members of the NLD have been imprisoned, executed or have fled the small nation.

In the wake of rising fuel and food prices, as well as continued

repression, thousands of monks began marching in the streets. At first the marches were in the nation's capital, Yangon, and the second largest city, Mandalay, but then they spread to other cities and towns. Within a few days the military responded violently by shooting monks and arresting them in droves. The violence peaked on September 27th and 28th, and the military government quickly cut off connection to the Internet. A Japanese national, a professional news photographer, was shot and killed in Yangon.

It has been difficult for any accurate news to emerge from Myanmar. Some reports say 13 Burmese were killed, but most experts believe the deaths were in the hundreds. Many monks remain in prison or strictly confined to their monasteries.

Online, a Facebook group called "Support the Monks' Protest in Burma" grew by a few thousand within a couple days. They began to call for an international day of action for Burma.

Here in D.C. I learned of a blogger, Dawn_109, and read her simple, personal and quite poignant blog on the Xanga.com website. I left her a

BURMA Cont. on Pg. 3

EYE ON ASIA

Japan 'Peace Constitution' Under Attack

On November 1, 2007 a group of Japanese lawyers attending the National Lawyers' Guild convention spoke at a forum organized by the Washington Peace Center and the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Committee at Busboys and Poets.

They were here to educate U.S. activists about Article 9 of the

Japanese Constitution, which is under siege by the Japanese and American governments, although popular with the people, and to invite people to an Article 9 Conference in May, 2008. The Washington Peace Center will send a small delegation to Japan who report back in the next issue.

More on page 4

Revolutionary Afghani Woman Tells It Like It Is

Speech by Amana Shams of RAWA in October, 2007:

I am very glad to be here in the United States because I am very curious to learn about the American people and at the same time would like to let them know of what is happening thousands of miles away in my country where the Islamic extremists, drug mafia, and International terrorists joined hands and pose dreadful threats to the well-being of the Afghan people.

CharityHelp International invited me here and I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to them for their invitation and their kind support and help to the suffering Afghan children.

I come here to represent those innocent kids and convey their message and agony to you and their beloved sponsors. I feel very proud of this job. Our Child Sponsorship Program organized with CharityHelp's assistance was a big turning point in the lives of the war-stricken girls and boys that are now being cared for in RAWA orphanages in Afghanistan and Pakistan. With the latest mobile

internet technologies, these children communicate with their sponsors, which I believe brings valuable experiences not only for children but for their sponsors. And credit goes to the whole CharityHelp team. Thanks again for their commitment to this noble cause.

Respected audience, I belong to Afghanistan, a country that has been at intense war for over three decades and now has fallen back into the hands of most notorious criminals, who made the major contribution in its looting and destruction. I am speaking of the Islamic fundamentalists, whose reign of terror from 1992 to 1996 left behind a legacy of hundreds of thousands of homeless and deaths. These Islamic militants, or warlords, rule over the whole country with their guns and unfortunately the Western world, with the United States at the top, just stare at them.

Dear friends, I am sure the general perception over here as the media portray it is that the plight of Afghan

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Our Fifth Decade
Working for Peace
& Justice

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The Washington Peace Center is a non-profit, anti-racist, multi-issue peace and justice organization committed to nonviolent social change. The Peace Center serves as a clearinghouse and resource center and has provided peace education and action in the Metropolitan area since 1963. We are supported by the generous contribu-

tions of our readers. **Interns**

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The *Washington Peace Letter* (ISSN 1050-2823) is published for the social justice community of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area. Its purpose is to support local, national and international struggles against oppression. It seeks to present a radical analysis of current events, covering information not readily available in the corporate media.

The *Peace Letter* welcomes submissions of articles, announcements, letters-to-the-editor and artwork from the progressive community. Articles may be from 300 to 1,200 words, but may be edited for space considerations. Preference is given to coverage of actions or campaigns being organized in the D.C. area. We reserve the right to select or reject all submissions.

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Jay Marx and Perry King at Independence Hall in Philadelphia Oct 27, 2007

From the Coordinator

Since I came on board half a year ago, many things have happened. Thanks to the leadership and encouragement of our all-volunteer board and crucial help from a collection of outstanding interns, we have:

- Welcomed a delegation of Japanese “Hibakusha” (atomic bomb survivors), who came in August for the annual week of commemoration of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings.

- Hosted a delegation of Japanese Lawyers teaching about Japan’s endangered Peace Constitution and how we can help support it.

- Sponsored and supported a young Iraq War veteran, Evan Knappenberger, in a 7-day, 24-hour vigil to bring attention to the unfair Stop-Loss policies of the US military.

- Backed recent immigrants in their struggle against new draconian and racist anti-immigrant policies in Prince William County, VA.

- Represented WPC at multiple street demonstrations in September and October, in Washington and Philadelphia.

- Participated in a rally to stop bio-weapons production at Ft. Dietrich in Frederick, MD.

- Hosted multiple social and cultural events, including film showings, concerts, and a live theatre/comedy/poetry production special event at the Warehouse Theatre.

- Sponsored speeches and conversations with friends from Palestine and Afghanistan.

- Joined in the demonstrations of the No War! No Warming! Coalition to unify the energy of the anti-war and climate justice movements, including a day-long filibuster on the Capital Lawn.

We’re doing a lot, but there’s still a war on!

Skills Especially Needed:

(Potential volunteers and interns,, please let us know if you have any of these special skills or interests)

- * Web-building
- * Newspaper Production
- * Photography / Videography
- * Drawing
- * Painting Banners
- * Event Organizing
- * Publicity Development
- * Grant-writing
- * Archiving
- * Transportation

Are you getting our weekly Activist Alert Bulletin yet?

Send us an email at
wpc@igc.org - subject line:
“SUBSCRIBE”

The Occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan are costing us \$720 million dollars a day (counting current and future health care and pension costs, and interest on excess debt incurred, according to numbers compiled by the American Friends Service Committee).

Three-quarters of a billion dollars every day!

This expense is, of course, pathological--our society is sick. Our job is to learn how we can heal. And we know that--with love, patience, persistence, and justice, we can.

We believe that the people, organized and adamant, can bring our troops home from the ongoing

occupation of Iraq, now in its sixth year. And we can bring accountability to the misleaders who lied to start it.

Meanwhile, our ongoing work for social justice (the only foundation on which true peace can rest) continues.

Some of our plans for 2008 include:

- We will continue working with No War! No Warming!, advocating that our government forego warmaking and concentrate instead on catastrophic climate change as the truest threat to the security and well-being of our country and our shared planet.

- We will continue our film series’ at Foundry United Methodist Church and the Friends Meeting of Washington on the first and third Sundays of each month. (Coming up, “The Lives of Others,” and “Rachel Corrie: An American Conscience.” Full schedule on Pg. 16.)

- We will continue our educational outreach about the inequality and hypocrisy of US activity in the Middle East, including the disproportionate influence the AIPAC lobby wields on US foreign policy.

- We will raise funds to send a small delegation in May to join our Japanese sisters and brothers at the Global Article 9 Conference to Abolish War in Tokyo.

- We plan to mobilize a positive and peace-inducing presence at the national political conventions.

- We will continue educating about the social, racial, economic, environmental, and political justice issues, locally, nationally and globally, that have been and remain the underlying causes of conflict in our society.

- We will plan a peace conference to discuss the direction and long-term strategy of the movement against military occupations abroad and increasing justice at home.

- And we will continue working with the many other excellent peace and justice activist groups in the region—and concerned individuals like you—to increase public awareness of, and actions to end, all wars and the causes of war. Peace, peoples. -Jay Marx

Crucial Issues

(not covered in this issue)

“If you want peace, work for justice.” So said Pope Paul VI, and so goes the struggle for justice on behalf of all peace-positive people.

The more you learn about the global struggle for social, economic, environmental and political justice, the more you learn there is to know.

Each day brings more information about how many different places and people are struggling for justice around the world. And, too often, more of the real, often unhappy history of our own country--the parts they didn’t teach us about in school.

Sad to say, there’s only so much room in each issue of the Peace Letter, and we can’t give every issue its due. For instance, here’s a short

list of recent, ongoing or upcoming items worth your interest:

1. **Kosovo** - Serbia irate; Albania jubilant. Think you know the truth about the Balkans? Guess again.

2. **DC’s Handgun Ban** - Supreme Court review pending March 18. Could a “well-regulated militia” of newly-armed DC denizens win statehood for the Last Colony?

3. **Counter-Recruitment** - No recruits = no troops=no army = no wars. Recent decision gets ASFAB testing out of DC Schools. Victory!

4. **Elections** - Think any presidential nominee from the corporate party duopoly will get us out of Iraq? Don’t hold your breath. . .

5. **Impeachment** - If the Constitution still matters, it’s not too late. Impeach for Peace!

6. **Unite! Unite! Unite!**

- JM

Pakistan's Musharraf Learned Fear Tactics From US

by Naomi Wolf and Shahid Buttar

This post first appeared on the website www.CommonDreams.org last month, informed by Shahid Buttar's participation in a National Lawyer's Guild-led delegation to Pakistan last December. The delegation visited several areas across Pakistan in early January and interviewed over 50 Pakistanis. Their preliminary report, "Defending Democracy: U.S. Foreign Policy and Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy," is [posted here](#). Most of the Bush/Musharraf parallels in this post were drawn by Shahid; I (Naomi) have contributed some additional thoughts about the situation in the U.S. and Bush's negative influence on the world.

As we know well in this country, elections are a time for reflection. They are a time to consider who we are as a nation and what we want to become. Sometimes it is appropriate to stop and think about how lucky we are to have the freedom to make these kinds of choices. We should also think about the fact that there is no guarantee these freedoms will remain forever.

Take Pakistan, for example. Observers across the political spectrum have noted persisting restrictions on the press, politicized election administration at both the local and federal level, and the conspicuous lack of an independent judiciary to resolve electoral disputes.

Sadly, the United States is doing very little to help the situation in Pakistan and may well be making it worse. The Bush administration has consistently pressed for elections to

proceed despite security concerns and various allegations of unfairness. Not surprisingly, from an administration installed by a controversial Supreme Court ruling, its view appears to be that elections confer legitimacy on whichever regime emerges victorious, regardless of complaints about how the votes were tallied.

Even worse, these electoral similarities are only the tip of an iceberg reflecting deep connections between the agenda of the Bush administration and the Musharraf regime. While criticism has abounded of Musharraf's various abuses of the rule of law, observers have generally overlooked the means Musharraf has taken to squelch dissent of his administration, and how they resemble some of the tactics Americans have seen domestically. As one prominent anchor of a major Pakistani television news program suggested when discussing the threats to democracy in his country, "Musharraf's playbook is the same as the Bush administration's."

This is especially disturbing to me as I have written recently about how the Bush administration seems to be following the playbook of twentieth century leaders, such as Stalin and Mussolini, who shut down democracies in their own countries. It is painful to think that the Bush administration is filling a similar role, making the United States of America an example for would-be tyrants.

At a broad level, both Bush and Musharraf have consistently magnified real threats to security in their public communications in order to promote fear and intimidate political opponents. In America, fear of another catastrophic attack in the

wake of 9/11 was used to justify the round-ups of material witnesses, domestic spying and the PATRIOT Act. Meanwhile, in Pakistan, the threat of armed fundamentalists was cited as the reason to sack the Supreme Court and restrict the press.

In carrying out this governance by fear, both administrations have claimed that domestic checks on their agendas have given comfort to the enemy, effectively (if not literally) saying that "You're either with us, or against us." And these accusations haven't been confined to civil society.

Musharraf has framed Pakistan's former Supreme Court — which he sacked with U.S. support in November for the second time last year — as having interfered in his counter-terrorism efforts. Similarly, in addition to accusing opponents of the War in Iraq of undermining "our troops," officials in the Bush administration have derogated other branches of the federal government in order to aggrandize the executive branch. For instance, the White House has refused to provide Congress with documents necessary to understand the legal basis of the administration's torture policy, and when faced by challenges brought by detainees, sought to evade the jurisdiction of appellate courts.

The detainee cases are especially poignant. Both Musharraf and Bush have assaulted civil liberties, arguing against habeas corpus rights for detainees and resisting judicial efforts to ensure impartial trials. Student activists from Balochistan were imprisoned and even "disappeared" by Pakistani agents, while hundreds of detainees were imprisoned without trials for years at Guantanamo Bay. Recently, the Bush

administration announced that six of these detainees would be tried in military court for their alleged involvement in 9/11, despite the fact that much of the evidence to be used against them was obtained as the result of torture and abuse.

While Musharraf's attack on judicial independence took the form of sacking the Supreme Court, removing the majority of its justices and jailing several of them, Bush has more subtly compromised judicial independence. When vacancies emerged on the U.S. Supreme Court, Bush nominated a pair of Justices whose principal qualification was prior service in the Reagan-era Department of Justice, where they aggressively championed executive power. Chief Justice Roberts even violated ethical rules by interviewing with the White House for his Supreme Court appointment at the same time as he sat in judgment on White House detainee policy in the Hamdan case, in which he cast a deciding vote for the administration — before the Supreme Court later reversed the decision.

Both Bush and Musharraf have largely ignored the real security threats they use to promote fear. Bush started a war in Afghanistan only to then grow distracted by an Iraq conflict whose only relation to terrorism was to encourage more of it. Musharraf has ignored his regime's ongoing support for militants despite the threat they pose to his own government, instead spending U.S. money on high-tech force structure (such as F-16s) for a hypothetical war with India.

Both presidents practice belligerence in their foreign policy decisions. Musharraf launched a war in the Himalayas before seizing power in 1999, for which he derived massive public support. The invasion of Iraq was similarly used by the Bush administration to rally support behind its other agendas.

And, perhaps most significantly, both Presidents have taken strong measures to intimidate the press. Musharraf removed entire channels from the air, while banning certain personalities from appearing and censoring what little content remained. Those journalists who challenge the media blackout — at least in Urdu-language outlets most watched by Pakistanis — are subject to intimidation and personal threats.

In the U.S., journalists who have exposed state secrets (such as the domestic spying program revealed by *The New York Times*) have been threatened with prosecution.

President Bush once promised that his administration would spread freedom around the world. Instead, he is apparently teaching other world leaders how to promote fear and diminish freedoms in order to assume and maintain power. He has nothing to share, but fear itself.

BURMA Cont. from Pg. 1

few messages, wishing her well. Then after another week, soon after the Internet was restored to Burma, we became online friends. I learned that she had lived in Washington, D.C. about 12 years ago and went to high school at School Without Walls.

Around this same time I learned about the U.S. Campaign for Burma. The staff there was working all hours day and night during the crisis. They are a group dedicated to monitoring conditions inside Myanmar, and advocating for its transition to democracy. The Washington Peace Center aligned itself with the campaign to organize and promote a march and rally on the International Day of Solidarity with Burma on Saturday, October 6th.

Working with a couple monks and other Burmese who had been camping in front of the Embassy of Myanmar at 23rd and S Streets, NW, the campaign and the peace center pulled together a memorable, spirited protest action. Over 200 people, led by a small group of monks and an exiled member of the NLD (he was

elected to parliament in 1990), marched from the embassy of Myanmar to the Chinese Embassy where some spirited speeches were given, and then finally to the Indian Embassy where we stood in the shadow of a statue of Mahatma Gandhi. At every stop we called for boycotting the Olympics until there was democracy in Myanmar and the monks along with the political activists were freed.

Subsequent Saturdays have seen other marches to the Chinese Embassy, but the October 6th Washington march was just one out of hundreds around the world — Australia, England, Japan and Thailand all had dozens of protests calling for freedom in Myanmar. It was really inspiring to see the "saffron revolution" going worldwide.

Unfortunately, the military junta is still in control and the cost of food is becoming higher — and in some areas of the nation there are food shortages. Meanwhile the military junta lives in luxury, and you can see on YouTube one of the top general's daughters having a lavish wedding where guests

are literally tossing diamond necklaces at her.

One sign of hope was in November when the brutal regime allowed Aung San Suu Kyi to leave her home for a brief meeting with the top generals. Most of the media is diminishing the importance of this meeting, as simply the regime posturing before the world; however, it might have been a very real first step toward change. The U.N. special envoy is returning to Myanmar to give energy to the cause of a peaceful transition.

The U.S. Campaign for Burma is focusing on boycotting rubies from Myanmar and a general boycott on Chevron, which deals with the junta. You can learn more about the campaign at <http://www.uscampaignforburma.org/>.

I stay in contact with my friend, and I wish for her, her family, and her country a happier and more just and peaceful future. The world continues to watch.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

~ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Preserving Article 9 - Legal Foundation of Japanese Pacifism

The following presentations were given at a Washington Peace Center event on Nov. 3, 2007

The Japanese Pacifistic Constitution is in Danger

By Aiko Sugeno, Japan Lawyers Association for Freedom

“Every Parliament should adopt a resolution prohibiting their government from going to war, like the Japanese (Article 9).” This is number one in the “Ten Fundamental Principles for a Just World Order” established by approximately ten thousand attendants from around the world at the Hague Appeal for Peace Civil Society Conference, which convened in 1999. But the Japanese Article 9 is on the brink of extinction due to the Japanese government’s and ruling party’s attempt to abolish it.

Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan stipulates as follows:

1. “Aspiring sincerely to international peace based on justice and order, the people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes.

2. “In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, air forces as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.”

The Constitution was enacted in 1946, reflecting the deep repentance for Japan’s invasion of East Asia and killing some 20 million people.

The Japanese nation pledged to the people of the world that it would never again wage war. Since then, Article 9 has prevented a Japanese resurgence of militarism and the use of armed force. However, in 1954, the Self Defense Forces were born out of the Cold War and pressure from the United States. The SDF has grown up to be the second largest military force in Asia. The SDF is the de-facto military of Japan and is contradictory to Article 9. The SDF was recently deployed to Iraq at the request of the U.S. for logistic duties.

Nevertheless, the existence of Article 9 and Japanese civil society’s strong

support for its pacifistic principles have forced the Japanese government to maintain its peace policy, including the non-export of weapons, the three non-nuclear principles (i.e. a ban on possession, production and import of nuclear weapons), and not deploying the SDF abroad for active combatant duties. As a result, Japanese troops have never killed anyone overseas since the end of World War II, a fact of which I am very much proud.

I believe Article 9 has worldwide significance.

Article 9 and the pacifism of the Constitution of

Japan is not merely a Japanese constitutional provision, but rather an international mechanism to reduce tension and to prevent war, an arms race, and military violence.

The preamble of the Constitution explains the motive of the renunciation of war as follows: “We, the Japanese

people, desiring peace for all time and deeply conscious of the high ideals controlling human relationships, have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving people of the world.”

If all of the countries had followed this pacifistic ideal, neither the Vietnam War nor the Iraq War would have taken place. Its significance has been gradually recognized by the international community. The adoption of Article 9 as the number one principle of “Ten Fundamental Principles for a Just World Order” was

one of the examples. In July 2005, the United Nations held a conference in order to establish a Global Partnership to prevent military conflict. As a result, the conference established a resolution. The World body said Article 9 was the cornerstone role of security within the Asian Pacific area.

However, Article 9 is in jeopardy as the US has been pressuring Japan to revise it. For instance, in 2004, the then Deputy Secretary of Defense Richard Armitage said, “Article 9 is an impediment of the US-Japan alliance.”

As illustrated in the Iraq War, the US is increasingly in need of unlimited military support from Japan. The US expects Japan to deploy the SDF whenever and where-ever the US is engaged in military combat.

Unfortunately, the Japanese government and the leading parties have been subservient to the US military strategy.

Therefore, if it were not for Article 9, the SDF would have been engaged in actual combatant duties in the Vietnam War and the Iraq War.

The revision of Article 9 would

change Japan from a war renouncing state into a war waging state, and will bring great harm and instability to East Asia and the world.

In September 2006, Shinzoh Abe, the hawkish right wing politician, became prime minister. He declared that accomplishing “the departure from post war regime” centered on constitutional revision. He even pledged to amend the constitution within his tenure.

This past May, his government bulldozed a bill that set up a procedure for constitutional revision, despite strong opposition. He tried to change

the government’s established interpretation that the constitution does not allow the right of collective defense in order for the SDF to join combatant duties at the request of the US Military. At the same time, he stuck to his economic policy benefiting large corporations and generating increased poverty and social disparities.

This July, the Upper House election, the first national election since Abe’s taking power, was held and his party, the LDP, was devastatingly defeated. The main cause of the defeat was that people rejected his government’s policy of prioritizing its scheme to turn Japan into a nation that will use force in conjunction with the US, by revising Article 9, and ignoring the increased hardship in people’s lives.

This September, Fukuda, the former chief cabinet secretary of Koizume’s cabinet, succeeded Abe as prime minister. As a result of the summer election, the majority of the seats of the Upper House are occupied by the opposition parties. Therefore, the government failed to extend the expiration date, i.e. November 1 of this year, of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures law, which authorized deploying the Maritime SDF to the Indian Ocean to refuel the US battle ships, which were engaged in actual combatant duties in Afghanistan and Iraq.

For the time being, Fukuda’s government is taking a conciliatory posture and is shelving the attempt at constitutional revision. However the pressure from the US and the desire of the right wing forces to eliminate Article 9 are so strong that they will never give up on pursuing this goal.

We, the Japanese progressive lawyers, are organizing an opposition movement with peace loving people in Japan.

The recent polls showed that the majority of Japanese people oppose the revision. To foil the attempt to dump Article 9, we need international public opinions to pressure the Japanese government, calling for maintaining Article 9. I would be much obliged if you would understand the importance of Article 9 and support our movement.

Maguire, from Northern Ireland, musical performances, and so on.

The second day, May 5th: Workshop session, participants estimated to be around 3,000. Four of the workshops will be planned by the executive committee and by participants through application to the committee.

The third day, May 6th: On this day, the regional assembly is going to be held in Osaka, Sendai, Hiroshima.

Please see detailed information about the World Conference on the website of the Global Article 9 campaign, <http://www.article-9.org/en/index.html>.



“International Common Value” of Article 9

The Significance of Talking About Article 9 in the World, Where the Opinion of Withdrawal from Iraq is Increasing

By Jun Sasamoto,
Japanese Lawyers International
Solidarity Association

Contrary to popular belief in Japan, Article 9 did not originate in Japan, but the U.S. The concept of “renunciation of the right to wage war” originated in the movement to outlaw war in the 1920’s in the U.S. The establishment of the Kellogg-Briand treaty in 1928 proclaimed an end to all types of warfare. The words within the document declared that defensive war violates international law. The burden of proof shifted from the victims to the perpetrators.

Article 9 is a symbol of the ideal of peace without force. The notion behind

Article 9 is that not maintaining armed forces is the best way to abolish war. The principle of Article 9 is to establish peace by non-military means; to make peace without depending on arms is imperative.

These are reactions from people all over the world to Global Article 9 Campaign:

Canada: “If Canada had Article 9, it may not dispatch the troops to Afghanistan”

Europe: “The Japanese Article 9 is most faithful to the UN charter.”

Africa: “Though Africa is now a weapons market for Europe and U.S., Article 9 has power to abolish weapons, and is most needed in Africa.”

Faith and Resistance Report

The following is an effort to chronicle non-violent DC area civil resistance for peace since last fall.

by Art Laffin

Rev. Yearwood Assaulted by Police During Capitol Protest—Faces New Charge for Opposing Iraq War

On September 10, Rev. Lennox Yearwood, Jr., president of the Hip Hop Caucus, was attacked by six capitol police when he was stopped from entering the Cannon Caucus Room on Capitol Hill, where General Petraeus gave testimony to a joint hearing for the House Arms Services Committee and Foreign Relations Committee on the war in Iraq.

After waiting in line throughout the morning for the hearing that was scheduled to start at 12:30pm, Rev. Yearwood was stopped from entering the room, while others behind him were allowed to enter. He told the officers the blocking him that he was waiting in line with everyone else and had the right to enter as well. When they threatened him with arrest he responded with "I will not be arrested today."

According to witnesses, six capitol police, without warning, "football tackled" him. He was carried off in a wheel chair by DC Fire and Emergency to George Washington Hospital. He was later released from the hospital to be taken to central booking, "The officers decided I was not going to get in General Petraeus' hearing when they saw my button, which says 'I LOVE THE PEOPLE OF IRAQ.'"

Initially, Rev. Yearwood faced a felony charge of assaulting a police officer, but this charge was dropped. On February 25, he went to trial for the disorderly conduct charge. After the government failed to prove its case, the charge was dismissed.

However, before leaving the courtroom, a Capitol police officer informed the prosecutor that Rev. Yearwood was going to be charged with "disorderly conduct" for speaking during the October 22 "No War! No Warming!" protest on Capitol Hill and supporting those risking arrest. During the Polar Bear trial (see No War! No Warming! protest) a video of the protest was shown, which included Rev. Yearwood calling for an end to the war in Iraq.

As we go to press, Rev. Yearwood is preparing to turn himself in on this new charge. To find out how you can support him contact: liz@hiphopcaucus.org.

Mass Arrest at U.S. Capitol for Anti-War Protest

On September 15, 2007, tens of thousands of protesters marched from the White House to the Capitol in an effort coordinated by the ANSWER coalition. The protest came on the heels of the congressional testimony of Gen. David Petraeus, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, and President Bush's speech to the nation. At least two protesters were pepper-sprayed after they tried to breach the police barricade on the west front plaza of the Capitol. They joined the 187 other anti-war activists who were arrested for crossing a police line. One person was charged with a felony. Iraq Veterans Against the War co-chairman-elect Adam Kokesh stood on the concrete fence and was arrested by Capitol Police wearing riot gear. "We were lied into this war and it is lies that are keeping us there. When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes duty," Kokesh said at the earlier rally, rousing cheers from protesters.

For more info contact <http://ivaw.org>

Rivers of Blood: Activists Convicted of Action at Capitol Crypt Given Suspended Jail Sentences and Fines

On September 20, over 60 peacemakers from around the U.S. held a nonviolent protest at the U.S. Capitol to call on Congress to end all funding for the immoral and criminal U.S. occupation of Iraq. The protest was sponsored by the National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance and the Declaration of Peace.

Outside the Capitol, peacemakers carried out a powerful die-in as military veterans, including Iraq veterans, stood in solemn formation. There were no arrests outside. Inside the Crypt of the U.S. Capitol, 34 people were arrested for doing a "die-in" to remember all the war-dead. Before each person died-in a name was read of either an Iraqi victim or a U.S. soldier who died in Iraq. All wore blood-stained shirts and some wore photos of Iraqi victims or U.S. soldiers.

Those arrested were charged with "disorderly conduct" and "unlawful assembly" and were released by Capitol Police after five hours of processing. On January 16-18, 2008, thirty-one defendants were tried before Judge Keary. Everyone was acquitted of "disorderly conduct" but found guilty of "unlawful assembly." Judge Keary's rationale was that the tee shirts and banner were provocative and a breach of peace. She claimed that the die-in could have caused unsympathetic bystanders to engage in violence.

At sentencing, D.C. Prosecutor Shapiro broke the defendants into three groups based on prior convictions. Keary gave suspended jail sentences to all ranging from three days to ten and six months of unsupervised probation. All were ordered to pay at least \$50, though for some it is \$100, to the Victims of Violent Crime fund. Some defendants also received stay-away orders for the Capitol Crypt. For more info: <http://jonahhouse.org>

AFA Arms Bazaar Protest

On September 26 over 50 peacemakers held a demonstration at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel to protest the Air Force Association (AFA) annual Air & Space Convention and Technology Expo—"Arms Bazaar". This year's convention featured the "Global Air Chiefs." There were speeches by military officials, lavish meals, parties, and a \$200+ per plate banquet. 125 military contractors peddled their newest weaponry and technology to Pentagon officials and agents from other



Photo by Andrew Kennedy

nations. These weapons are used to terrorize and kill people in places like Iraq, Afghanistan, Colombia, Palestine, and throughout Africa. These top military officials and arms makers, who reap huge profits from weapons contracts, discussed how the U.S. can maintain global military dominance and control space. The protest, organized by the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker, included speakers from IVAW, Veterans for Peace, Oil Change International, Witness for Peace, and the Washington Peace Center.

Global Warming Protest

On September 27, 50 activists were arrested at the State Department for protesting President Bush's sideshow act on global warming. Instead of working with the international community and signing the Kyoto Protocol, President Bush summoned a meeting of the largest and dirtiest nations polluting the globe.

The goal of this meeting was to persuade other countries to undermine United Nations negotiations and substitute it with voluntary pledges. The countries who met in Washington account for over 90% of emissions worldwide. Real action by those gathered in Washington could deliver massive cuts in emissions under the Kyoto Protocol. But this would require binding, mandatory targets for industrialized countries, which the U.S. rejects.

The protest was organized by Greenpeace, Oil Change International, and other environmental groups. For more info contact: <http://greenpeace.org>



Photo by Andrew Kennedy

Seven Protesters Convicted for Protest at Blackwater HQ

On October 21, 2007, seven activists were arrested at Blackwater headquarters in Moyock, North Carolina after re-enacting the Sept. 16 shooting incident in Baghdad involving Blackwater contractors in which 17 Iraqis died. It was the first protest at the 10-year-old private military company's headquarters.

The activists drove a gray station wagon, marked with improvised bullet holes and smeared with red paint, onto Blackwater's front entrance. As one person lay "dead" in the driver's seat, five others got out and lay on the ground. The scene was intended to

depict that in Baghdad's Nisour Square, where an Iraqi doctor and her son died from gunfire as their car approached a Blackwater diplomatic convoy.

The protesters also smeared red handprints on two Blackwater signs. A crowd of about 50 more protesters gathered in support along a nearby public road. The group carried signs with slogans such as "Bring Blackwater to Justice," "Security Contractors are Unlawful Combatants" and "Blackwater: Shoot First, Ask No Questions."

Currituck County sheriff's deputies, called to the scene by Blackwater guards, placed the seven under arrest. The six re-enactors arrested were Steve Baggarly of Norfolk; Beth Brockman of Durham, N.C.; Mark Colville of New Haven, Conn.; Peter DeMott of Ithaca, N.Y.; Laura Marks of Ayden, N.C.; and Bill Streit of Louisa County, Va. They were charged with second-degree trespassing, injury to real property and resisting arrest. A seventh protester, Mary Grace of Madison County, Va., was arrested after the re-enactment when she walked onto Blackwater's property and knelt on the pavement. She was charged with second-degree trespassing. The protest was organized by the Norfolk Catholic Worker and Blackwater Watch, an activist group based in Durham, N.C. The seven were held in lieu of \$1,000 bail and were released on October 24.

The activists were tried on December 5 in a courtroom closed to the press and public. Currituck County District Judge Edgar Barnes took the rare step of clearing the courtroom after trying one of the protesters, Steve Baggarly of Norfolk, in public. The remaining six were then tried, convicted and sentenced behind closed doors. The judge gave no reason for his action.

The seven were convicted of second-degree trespassing. Six were also convicted of resisting arrest, and one of injury to real property. Several went limp when they were arrested and dragged from the scene. The seven received jail terms ranging from 10 to 45 days and were fined \$100 each. They said they will not pay the fines. One was ordered to pay \$450 restitution to Blackwater for damage to its property. All were released pending their appeal. Every case in North Carolina can be appealed and go to jury after the initial bench trial.

During Baggarly's trial, he was repeatedly cut short by the judge when he tried to discuss the morality of the Iraq war and Blackwater's role in it. The only issue up for discussion was trespassing and the related charges, the judge said. "We feel like Blackwater is trespassing in Iraq," Baggarly told the judge. "And as for injuring property, they injure men, women and children every day."

In their appeal trial in Currituck Co. on January 24, the seven were tried and convicted. They were sentenced to time served (five days), and they were told not to return to Blackwater property. For more info: <http://blackwaterwatch.net>

No War! No Warming! Action

On October 22, hundreds of people converged under the banner No War! No Warming! on the U.S. Capitol Building to protest the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the Bush administration's record on climate change. At least 61 people were arrested after some blocked a street near the Cannon House Office Building. Seven of the protesters dressed as Polar Bears were arrested by Capitol Police, as they danced,

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Faith and Resistance Report (cont. from p. 5)

sang, and did street theatre and education around global warming issues.

After a six-day trial they were acquitted on the charges of disorderly conduct and unlawful assembly. However, DC Superior Court Judge Rafael Diaz convicted them of "Failure to Obey a Police Order" as a lesser-included offense. They are currently filing a Motion for Reconsideration of this verdict, and oral arguments are Friday, March 7 (Courtroom 211, 500 Indiana Ave., NW). For more info about court dates contact: <http://www.priceofoil.org>

Priests Imprisoned for Five Months in Torture Protest

On October 17, Fr. Louis Vitale, OFM, (75) and Fr. Stephen Kelly, SJ (54) were sentenced to five months in prison for attempting to deliver a letter to then-commander Major General Barbara Fast at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, denouncing torture and the Military Commissions Act of 2006. The priests were represented by human rights attorney Bill Quigley. At the beginning of the hearing, the men had changed their pleas to no contest, and later told the court they could not accept any sentence that included supervision, a fine, or compulsory community service. They were taken into custody immediately after sentencing.

In a statement read to supporters who gathered outside the courthouse and then filled the courtroom of Magistrate Hector Estrada, Frs. Vitale & Kelly declared: "The real crime here has always been the teaching of torture at Fort Huachuca and the practice of torture around the world. We sought to deliver a letter asking that the teaching of torture be stopped and were arrested. We tried to put the evidence of torture on full and honest display in the courthouse and were denied. We were prepared to put on evidence about the widespread use of torture and human rights abuses committed during interrogations at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo in Iraq and Afghanistan. This evidence was gathered by the military itself and by governmental and human rights investigations.

"Because the court will not allow the truth of torture to be a part of our trial, we plead no contest. We are uninterested in a court hearing limited to who was walking where and how many steps it was to the gate. History will judge whether silencing the facts of torture is just or not. Far too many people have died because of our national silence about torture. Far too many of our young people in the military have been permanently damaged after following orders to torture and violate the human rights of other humans. We will keep trying to stop the teaching and practice of torture whether we are sent to jail or not. We have done our part. Now it is up to every woman and man of conscience to do their part to stop the injustice of torture."

Following their arrest in November, 2006, the men were charged with one federal count of trespassing (USC 18-1382), and later with an additional Arizona state count of "Failure to Comply with Police Officer" (ARS 28-622). Their sentence is three months in prison for the federal conviction, plus two months for the state conviction, to be served consecutively. They are to be released in mid-March.

For more info: <http://TortureOnTrial.org>.

Eve Tetaz Jailed

On November 2, 77 year old activist Eve Tetaz was sentenced to 7



Photo by Andrew Kennedy
days in D.C. Jail for violating a stay away order from Capitol Hill due to her

multiple arrests opposing the U.S. war in Iraq. She issued the following statement the day of her sentencing:

"Dear Friends, As I begin my 7 day sentence in DC Jail for peacefully and non-violently protesting the US invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, I wish to appeal to the American people to join together as one voice in opposing the illegal and immoral actions of our leaders, elected to act in our name. We are a nation of law governed by the Constitution that begins with the words 'We the people...'

"When our leaders betray our trust by committing crimes against humanity in the waging of a war that has been condemned by international law, the highest religious authorities, and members of our own military, I believe that we must declare before the world, NOT IN MY NAME. When the government advocates the use of such tactics as rendition and torture to further their ends, we must shout, NOT IN MY NAME.

"As a nation made up of responsible individuals capable of making moral choices, we are obliged to admit our wrong doings in order that justice be served, and our credibility among other nations be maintained. When our leaders cease to reflect the principles upon which this country was founded, I believe it to be the duty of every American citizen to peacefully and non-violently refuse to submit to their authority, in a manner that he or she deems appropriate.

"I am reminded of Moses when he challenged the Children of Israel to act as moral beings and be held accountable for their actions. 'I have set before you today life and death, blessings and curses...Choose life so that you and your descendants may live...' My friends, today I have chosen life in the hope that my country will change course and turn from a path that will only lead to death and destruction; it is my earnest prayer that this nation will, instead, lead the way in teaching nations to turn their

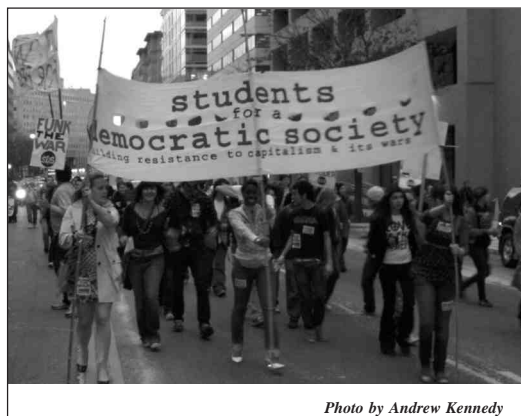


Photo by Andrew Kennedy

swords into plowshares and study war no more."

20,000 Surround Justice Department During Hate Crimes Protest

On Friday, November 16, over 20,000 demonstrators surrounded the Justice Department headquarters in Washington to protest the federal government's handling of the Jena Six case and to call for increased enforcement of hate crimes legislation. The march was organized by Rev. Al Sharpton and the National Action Network. On Saturday, November 17, the Hip Hop Caucus organized a second demonstration against hate crimes and police violence at the Washington Monument. In early November, USA Today reported that the number of hate crimes being prosecuted by the Justice Department has dropped by 71 percent over the past decade. For more info: <http://nationalnetwork.net>

20,000 Protest School of the Americas in Georgia—11 Arrested

On November 16-17, over 20,000 people gathered outside the gates of Fort Benning to demand the closing of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHISC)—formerly known as the School of the Americas (SOA). Eleven people were arrested and charged with criminal trespass. The U.S. military uses the school to train Latin American soldiers in combat, counterinsurgency and counter-narcotics. Frequently dubbed the "School of the Assassins," critics say the school's graduates are responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in Latin America. This was the 18th annual Vigil to Close the SOA.

On January 28, the eleven were found guilty and given prison sentences ranging from 30-90 days. For more info: <http://soawatch.org>.

Ft. Huachuca Resisters Arrested, Jailed, Convicted and Fined

On November 18, more than 300 people rallied against torture outside the gates of Ft. Huachuca, Arizona, home of the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and school for interrogation. Three people were arrested during the rally as they tried to bring their witness against torture onto the base. Betsy Lamb, Mary Burton Riseley, and Franciscan Fr. Jerry Zawada were taken into custody and charged with criminal trespass on a military installation and failure to comply with a police officer.

At a detention hearing on December 6 in federal court in Tucson, Betsy Lamb, a retired Catholic lay leader, and Franciscan Fr. Jerry Zawada were jailed without bail until their trial. Magistrate Hector Estrada was concerned by evidence that both Lamb and Zawada had failed to heed an order of the court in cases pending in other jurisdictions. He told the defendants he didn't trust them and that he believed they were right where they wanted to be - before him in chains. Estrada then ordered that Lamb and Zawada be kept in custody until their February 4 trial because they "remain a flight risk, and are a danger to the community."

On February 4, Magistrate Judge Jacqueline Marshall found Zawada, Lamb and Riseley guilty of the charges of trespassing and failure to obey an officer. Judge Marshall then imposed the same sentence on each of the three: two years of supervised probation, and a \$5000 fine or 500 hours of community service. She told the defendants that they could do their community service by participating in

demonstrations, handing out leaflets and other legal forms of protest. She also advised them that they could ask for an early end to their probation as soon as they either paid the fine or completed their community service, whichever they chose to do. Supporters left the sixth floor courtroom to the sight of a large, brilliant rainbow outside the large courthouse windows. Soon after, Lamb and Zawada were released from custody. For more information visit: <http://tortureontrial.org/>

Seasons of Discontent—A Presidential Occupation Project

On November 9, Voices for Creative Nonviolence and the Des Moines-based Catholic Peace Ministry began a new campaign, a Presidential Occupation Project (SODaPOP), to place the Iraq war in the center of Iowa's presidential caucus, and to call for an immediate end to all war funding and the occupation. Targeting the campaigns of front-runners Hillary Clinton and Rudolph Giuliani, ten activists were arrested for a sit-in at Giuliani's campaign headquarters and nine were arrested at Clinton's campaign office. From December 31st until January 3rd, activists occupied four offices of leading presidential candidates in Iowa. Members of the campaign visited former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee (Dec 31),

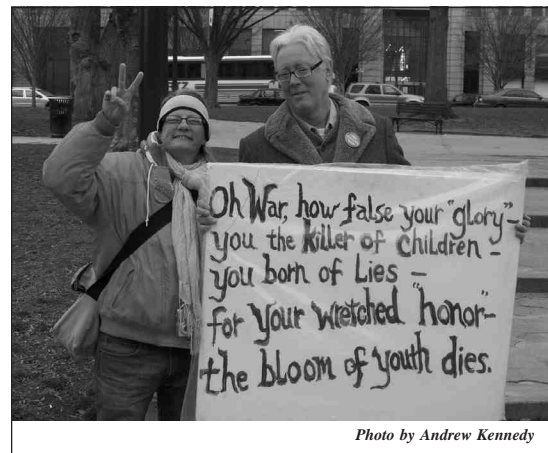


Photo by Andrew Kennedy

Governor Mitt Romney, Sen. Barack Obama (Jan 2), and Sen. Hillary Clinton (Jan 3).

In total, 15 members of SODaPOP were arrested. The demands of the campaign to

the presidential candidates include complete withdrawal of the U.S. military forces from Iraq and Afghanistan within 100 days of assuming the office of President, and a halt to any and all military actions against Iraq and Iran. For more info and to see a complete set of demands: <http://vcnv.org/sodapop-demands>

Student Anti-War Protests

On November 1, about 70 students at Morton West High School in Illinois took part in an All Saints' Day sit-in against the Iraq war—they gathered in the school lunchroom and refused to leave. The students then agreed to move their protest outside in return for a promise of no charges of disrupting the school day. Those who left the protest before the end of the school day received 3-5 day suspensions, but 37 who protested until the end of the school day received 10 day suspensions and expulsion papers.

On November 16, over 1,000 students in Washington State participated in a nationwide student walkout to protest the Iraq war and military recruiters in schools. At Foster High School in Tukwila, WA, 150 students walked out saying, "Money for Schools, Not for War." For more info: <http://yawr.org>.

Holy Innocent Faith and Resistance Peacemakers Arrested

From December 27-30, between 70 and 100 people gathered in D.C. for the Holy

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Not Guilty! Activist Reflections on the Trial of the Hart 7

by Joy First

After a four day trial, defendants were found not guilty for protesting against the Iraq War. Below is a narrative by Joy First, one of the participants, whose story conveys the joy, fear and victory in speaking out against injustice – and being heard.

I was arrested along with Ellen Barfield, David Barrows, Gordon Clark, Sam Crook, Malachy Kilbride, and Eve Tetaz in the Hart Senate Office Building on Thursday March 29, 2007. We went there one hour after the Senate voted to continue to fund the war. We set up cardboard tombstones with pictures of soldiers and Iraqis who have died in the war since the Democrats took control of Congress in January. We began to read their names. After about 20 minutes, we were arrested by Capitol Police and charged with unlawful conduct.

We were arraigned on Friday morning after David, Malachy, Eve, and Ellen spent the night in jail. We all pleaded not guilty and since the charge carries a possible six months in jail we requested a consolidated jury trial. We began planning our trial, and as in the past, we were going to be representing ourselves as pro se defendants. Mark Goldstone graciously agreed to be our attorney advisor. He has had a great deal of experience in this kind of work. I was so grateful to have him on our team. We each had a role to play in the trial. I was to give the closing statement.

I flew from Madison, WI to Washington, DC on Sunday July 8. While sitting in the airport, I was thinking about what I was doing and feeling scared, but I reminded myself that if the most important thing is that I don't go to jail, then I wouldn't have gotten arrested in the first place. No – the most important thing is that I speak out when my government is doing something that is illegal and immoral.

The seven of us, along with Mark Goldstone, met on Sunday night to go through the trial. Mark said that our primary defense is the tourist standard which is applied in unlawful conduct charges. What this means is that we were no more disruptive than an equal size group of tourists. The test is the impact of how disruptive we were, not the activities we were engaged in.

This would be my first experience with a jury trial and I was feeling very anxious. I certainly don't continue to risk arrest and go to trial because I enjoy it. But with the suffering that continues in Iraq, and with families of US soldiers in Iraq, I feel called to continue to do this work.

Jury selection

...Fortunately, at about 3:00 pm, we were called into the courtroom and told that the jury selection process would begin. Gordon Clark was our

representative, along with Mark Goldstone, going before the judge to question individual witnesses about their responses to the Voir Dire questions. One of the questions that the judge asked the potential jurors was: Do you have such strong feelings about the war in Iraq that it would be difficult for you to be fair in judging this case?

The majority of the potential jurors answered yes to this question. Each side was able to strike three potential jurors, but because of the large number of jurors answering yes to the above question, the prosecutor could not strike all of them and we ended up with a jury that was very sympathetic to our cause. Two potential jurors were dismissed by the prosecutor because they said that they had such strong feelings about the war and what we did that they absolutely would not have been able to convict us. One woman was dismissed, and as she stood to leave she held her hands together and bowed to us before she walked away. One of the final jurors was a reporter from Al Jazeera.

The jury was told that the government has to prove each and every element of the charge with each and every defendant. After the jury selection was complete, the court adjourned for the day.

Opening statements

We began Tuesday morning with opening statements. The prosecutor, Sean Farrell, was not a particularly eloquent speaker. He laid out what he thought were the facts of the case according to the police report. There were some clear discrepancies in the police report. Mr. Farrell said that we can't just do what we want. He likened us to spoiled children who wanted to be arrested and ignored several warnings.

David Barrows followed with his opening statement. Mr. Farrell objected many times during David's opening and many of the objections were sustained. David eloquently stated, "We came not to break the law, but to remind our Senate of its obligation to enforce the law." He later stated, "When our congress, our president, and even our very courts turn their backs on the Bill of Rights and the US Constitution, then it falls to the people of the land to demand justice."

The Government's Case

The government first called Officer Langley to the stand. She made our case for us when she said under cross examination by Malachy that we were not more disruptive than other groups of seven in the building...

The government played the Youtube video of our action at

www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ttLP25VsSM
I think playing this video hurt the government. It was very moving to watch our action on the big screen in

Time for Nonviolent Revolution *Resist in March*

By Malachy Kilbride & Pete Perry

*"You must be the change you want to see in the world." ~Mahatma Gandhi
"Many ask: What is the sense of our small effort? They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time." ~Dorothy Day*

This year, 2008, brings us all to a crossroads where decisions need to be made and responsibilities borne by the people who care about a peaceful world built with justice. However, this crossroads is not about the electoral choices of this election year.

We are about to pass from five years of war and occupation into our sixth year of the illegal Iraq War. We have worked long and hard to end this crime against peace. We have written, faxed, e-mailed and lobbied, we have marched and demonstrated, signed petitions and held vigils, and yet this illegal military occupation of Iraq continues.

Recent public opinion polls have shown about 70 percent of our fellow citizens want the war and occupation to end. However, Congress continues to fund it! Our elected representatives are not responsive to our calls for peace, for a more just future for our country, for an end to war and a halt to the erosion of our civil liberties.

The election of 2006 has shown us that those we have entrusted with ending the war and occupation of Iraq have relinquished their constitutional responsibilities but have actively supported the Bush Administration's illegal war and fear mongering.

In 2007, thousands of people across America engaged in nonviolent civil resistance to the "War OF Terror" and our government's illegal and inhumane use of torture. Most were arrested in these actions, and many went to trial. However, this resistance movement needs to grow and be supported — as those risking arrest are often the same dedicated souls, now nearing jeopardy with their homes and jobs. Please don't thank us, we are past that point — we need you to join us!

The choices and responsibilities concern our duty to actively make the world we want come into being. Many of you have probably already considered it, but have worried about possible repercussions of being arrested. You need not worry, we initially had this reaction too, but we chose to engage in acts of nonviolent resistance to war-making and oppression because we felt it was our duty, our role.

We have faith that you can also come to that same decision. Acting in a peaceful direct action with your brothers and sisters is an incredible act of solidarity and is extremely empowering.

This year there have already been numerous nonviolent civil resistance arrests, most recently inside and outside of the U.S. Supreme Court. Here, 82 activists said enough was enough after six years of the Guantanamo gulag.

These actions have been effective, but not yet successful. This year, it is imperative that greater numbers engage in peaceful direct action against violent misuse of power in our names. Otherwise we will have continued war, occupation, misery, and injustices waged in our name. As Dr. King once said. "A time comes when silence is betrayal."

We must not be fooled, lied to, and lulled into a false sense of security with hopes for a positive electoral outcome. We are faced with the reality that all of the leading presidential candidates support the war and continued occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan in one way or another. Furthermore, most candidates for office have not taken a stand against torture and for the restoration of Habeas Corpus.

In March many will come to Washington, DC to protest the five years of murder and destruction in Iraq. It will be five years since "shock and awe" diminished our nation's reputation around the globe, and expanded the wallets of war profiteers. Meanwhile, approximately 1 million Iraqis have been killed since March 2003, and 3,940 U.S. service personnel have been sent to their deaths due to a pack of lies. We invite you to join us in March by joining large acts of nonviolent civil resistance to immoral governmental and corporate warmongering ways, and to demand peace and justice for all!

Now at this crossroads, we the people must decide to take action to right the wrongs that have been perpetrated for so many years now. This is our responsibility. Our duty is not to wait for a November election but to actively pursue peace and the world built with justice for all people.

The Washington Peace Center (www.washingtonpeacecenter.net) will be taking the lead in organizing nonviolent direct action trainings in March around these mobilizations. Students from the organization Our Spring Break (www.ourspringbreak.org) will be coming to Washington to participate. We also need you!

There will be nonviolent direct actions on March 12 and March 19 in Washington, DC. Come be a part of history, and help us begin to bring about a change that matters—a change not just of our government, but of the direction of our future.

Let us start building a more just and peaceful tomorrow, today.

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A variety of actions from March 10th to 19th offer unique opportunities for our movement to grow after five years of war

MARCH 10 to 12, 2008 (Monday to Wednesday) in Washington, D.C.: STOP-LOSS CONGRESS

This March, while tens of thousands of Americans in Washington, D.C., and all over the United States will be participating in acts of nonviolent civil disobedience to protest the ongoing occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, and involuntarily deployed U.S. soldiers and innocent civilian victims begin another year of occupation, torture, and murder, U.S. Congressmembers will be on vacation (from the 15th to 30th, technically a "district work period"), ignoring the killing and suffering they have enabled, supported, and financed.

To intensify the irony, Congress has condoned a widespread stop-loss policy in the military which requires soldiers to involuntarily extend their tours and prolong the killing. It is time to **Stop-Loss Congress!**

On Monday, March 10, and Tuesday, March 11, we will deliver "official" stop-loss notices to all members of Congress in their Capitol Hill offices. These will notify them that all of their LEAVES, VACATIONS and HOME VISITS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED until further notice.

Just as they require that active-duty personnel endure involuntary extensions of their tours of duty, we, the people for whom they work, are notifying them that they, too, will have their tours of duty INVOLUNTARILY EXTENDED until every foreign soldier and mercenary is out of Iraq, and home.

When all the troops and contractors get home, then Congress can go home, and no sooner.

On Wednesday March 12, we will take nonviolent action on Capitol Hill, to ensure that, while thousands of Iraqis, Afghanis, and foreign invaders die and are injured for life, the members of Congress and their staffs do not go home but remain to DO THEIR DUTY, and immediately end the funding of the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. No members of Congress goes home UNTIL THE TROOPS COME HOME.

To participate in planning these events, to learn meeting times and places, to help distribute flyers and organize travel, training, and other preparation: <http://resistmarch.org/>



March 12 Taking it to Capitol Hill: Ghosts of the Iraq War

<http://www.iraqpledge.org/>
Antiwar activists will gather on Capitol Hill on March 12, 2008, while Congress is still in session. Participants will be wearing "We Will Not Be Silent" tee shirts and other clothing to simulate being a ghost. These Ghosts of War will eventually announce, on an individual basis, "I am a ghost from the Iraq War. While I died needlessly, I am here to demand an end to the funding of the war so that others do not have to die."

Among the Ghosts of War will be those who are risking arrest, supporters, observers, reporters and videographers. There will be a meeting on March 11 to plan and to discuss legal consequences.

If interested in joining us on March 12, call Max at 410-366-1637 or email him at mobuszewski@verizon.net.

The theme—"We Are the Ghosts of the Iraq War"—is appropriate: March 19 will be the beginning of the sixth year of the war. There are now some one million ghosts, and we must speak on their behalf.

NCNR is also working with others in the STOP-LOSS CONGRESS action.

Please consider this opportunity to work with students newly involved in antiwar activities.

March 13 (Thurs)–March 16 (Sun) Winter Soldier: Iraq & Afghanistan Iraq Veterans Against the War
<http://ivaw.org/wintersoldier>

In 1776, Thomas Paine wrote: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman." that the voices of veterans are heard. Once again, we are fighting for the soul of our country. We will demonstrate our patriotism by speaking out with honor and integrity instead of blindly following failed policy. Winter Soldier is a difficult but essential service to our country.

Winter Soldier: Iraq and Afghanistan will feature testimony from U.S. veterans who served in these wars and occupations, giving an accurate account of what is really happening day in and day out on the ground.

The four-day event will bring together veterans from across the country to testify about their experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan - and present video and photographic

evidence. In addition, there will be panels of scholars, veterans, journalists, and other specialists to give context to the testimony. These panels will cover everything from the history of the GI resistance movement to the fight for veterans' health benefits and support.

For those interested in watching or organizing around the proceedings at Winter Soldier, there will be a number of ways to watch and listen to the event:

- Live television broadcast via satellite tv, accessible through Dish Network as well as public access stations that choose to carry the broadcast (Friday and Saturday only).
- Live video stream on the web Thursday through Sunday
- Live radio broadcast via KPFA in Berkley, California, and other Pacifica member stations Friday through Sunday.
- Live audio stream via [KPFA's website](http://www.kpfa.org) Friday through Sunday.

MARCH 14 (Friday) in Washington, D.C.: Washington Peace Center Happy Hour, 5:30-9pm, Chief Ikes Mambo Room, 1725 Columbia Rd NW, open mike, music of peace, justice and love. For info call 202/234-2000.

The "K Street Corridor" of Washington, DC: An Anti-War/Peace-n-Justice Visitor's Guide

MARCH 17 and 18 (Monday and Tuesday) in Washington, D.C.: Training, Lobbying, Restoring the Constitution

Training in Nonviolence in preparation for March 19, Training in lobbying, and nonviolent direct action and on the 18th: Take Back the Constitution Day lobbying 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and evening event at 8 p.m. Join us for a spirited day in the Halls of Power in Washington, D.C., from Congress to the Justice Department to the Parties' Headquarters to the White House, and an evening event with Constitutional scholars and writers. This is a call for impeachment, an end to the occupation, an end to torture.

MARCH 18 (Tuesday) in Washington, D.C.: We Care

Concert, 7:30 pm at the 9:30 Club, 1815 V St NW. Over ten musical acts, sponsored by the Hip-Hop Caucus and Amnesty International.

MARCH 19 (Wednesday) Everywhere: Nonviolent Civil Resistance and/or Disobedience in all 435 Congressional Districts and in the Nation's Capital on the Fifth Anniversary of the Occupation of Iraq.

Locations in each congressional district, to be determined locally, can include congressional offices, Congress Members and Senators will be in their districts on this day), federal buildings, military recruiters, weapons makers, war profiteers, or corporate media outlets. In Washington, with Congress out of town, the focus will be on war profiteers in the military industrial disaster-capitalism complex. Where possible, events will include a place for people not willing to risk arrest. Evening town hall forums can also include a larger audience.

MARCH 18 and 19 in D.C.:

We know there are key pillars of support that enable this illegal and immoral war for oil and global domination to continue. On March 19th we will take nonviolent direct action to disrupt each of these key pillars in Washington DC and in communities across this country in what we hope will be an unprecedented day of collective action and solidarity.

We will take a variety of actions over a 24-hour period to commemorate 5 years of war.

KEY TO MAP:

1. Exxon Corp. -- 2150 M Street NW
2. ... -- 1850 M Street NW
3. Resources Group -- 1211 Connecticut Ave NW
4. .../KBR -- 1150 18th Street NW #200
5. ...d Williams LLP -- 1800 K Street NW
6. ...ger Group Inc. -- 1819 H Street NW
7. ...o, Dow Chemical -- 1776 I Street NW
8. ...s International Inc. -- 1717 H Street NW
9. ...SA LLC -- 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW
10. ...air and Logistics Support USA -- 1025 Connecticut Ave. NW
11. ...dios -- 1717 DeSales St. NW
12. ...Enterprise Institute/PNAC -- 1150 17th Street NW
13. ...c. -- 1050 17th Street NW #500
14. ...President Mines -- 1667 K Street NW
15. ...on Post -- 1150 15th Street NW
16. ...l Martin/Parsons Corp -- 1133 15th Street NW
17. ...rces Recruitment Center -- L at 14th St. NW
18. ...orp. -- 1015 15th Street NW #1700
19. ...ar Inc. -- 1425 K Street NW

20. United Technologies Corp., Shell Oil Co., Chevron, Clear Channel, Blackwater Lobbyists (Womble, Carlisle, Sandridge, and Rice) -- 1401 I Street NW
21. US Dept. of Veteran Affairs -- 810 Vermont Ave.
22. United Press International -- 1810 H Street NW
23. DynCorp -- 655 15th Street
24. Marathon Oil Company -- 700 13th Street NW
25. National Press Club -- 14th Street NW
26. IRS -- 1111 Constitution Ave. NW
27. Department of Justice -- 950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
28. Carlyle Group -- 1001 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
29. Sunoco -- 1101 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
30. DC Republican Committee -- 1275 K St. NW
31. American Petroleum Institute -- 1220 L Street NW
32. Research Triangle Institute -- 1615 M Street NW

Fun Game: Find out how much the federal government has paid to each of the above businesses since the start of the Iraq war! For public companies, find out how much their stock has risen!

Actions will begin on ***Tuesday, March 18 at 5:00 pm*** with **Sound the Alarm at Union Station**. This is an opportunity for all of us to come together in one place to sound the alarm. Building on recent actions in New York City with 200 people, we will freeze for 5 minutes for 5 years of war.

When we move again, we will step forward using our voices in a call to the people to **RISE UP - END THE WAR** which we will follow with leafleting. Visit this link to see the action at Grand Central: www.youtube.com/watch?v=jwMj3PJDxuo

*** Wednesday, March 19th *** will begin early with a Public Assembly at **7:30 AM in McPherson Square (15th and K St.)** with information about the day and how to plug in.

At **8 AM** some groups will blockade the IRS, others will shut down war profiteers in the K St. Corridor, while Grannies will Knit for Peace outside the recruiters office!

At the same time, a March of the Dead will begin in Arlington Cemetery and process through downtown.

At **8:30 AM** a Critical Mass bike ride will meet at Dupont Circle.

At **9 AM** a Veterans March for Peace will begin with several stops, culminating with actions near the White House and Veterans Administration.

Also that morning, **TAKE ACTION** at the Petroleum Institute, 13th and L Sts. NW to shift funding from war and big oil to clean energy and human needs.

At **noon**, students will dance in the streets saying Funk the War and exposing war profiteers, recruiters and

media along the way, while others call for No War, No Warming - end this war for oil.

There will also be a demonstration of waterboarding outside the White House in the mid-afternoon. Imagine thousands of us moving throughout the streets in Downtown DC, in big groups and small, all working to expose, disrupt and transform those that promote and profit from war.

At 5:00pm, we will gather at the Reflecting Pool on the West side of the Capitol and march with pots and pans in a cacophony of resistance to the Democratic National Committee Headquarters. There we will make it clear that we hold them accountable too for the death, destruction and lies, and that we will continue to take action and intervene until our call for peace is honored and all of our troops come home.

Faith and Resistance Report (cont. from p. 6)

Innocents Faith and Resistance Retreat, sponsored by Jonah House and the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker. On Dec. 28, the anniversary of the slaughter of the holy innocents by King Herod, a witness was held at the Pentagon to remember the war refugees who they consider "every bit the victims of Empire of today as the Christ child was of the Roman Empire". A large horse and donkey puppet reminded us that all creation is endangered by the Pentagon and its wars.

Several people participated in a die-in. Sr. Margaret McKenna and Aaron Weiss from New Jerusalem Community in Philadelphia, Tom Lewis from Emma House Catholic Worker in Worcester, Mass., Marcus Melder, Little Flower Catholic Worker in Virginia, and Liz McAlister from Jonah House in Baltimore were arrested; they have a court date March 21, 2008 at 9 a.m. at the Alexandria Federal Court.

On December 30, the Jonah House donkey joined Mary, Joseph and Jesus, walking through Lafayette Park to the White House. Continuing the theme of the retreat, they were accompanied by many war refugees to the "Refugee Camp" tent set up in front of the White House. The donkey was banned and barred from the District of Columbia, and Patrick O'Neil from Martin de Porres Catholic Worker in Raleigh, North Carolina and Eve Tetaz from D.C. were arrested at the White House. Their charges were dismissed. For more info see: <http://jonahhouse.org>

82 Arrested at U.S. Supreme Court in Shut Down Guantanamo Protest

On January 11, 2008, 82 people were arrested at the U.S. Supreme Court as part of Witness Against Torture's January 11th action to Shut Down Guantanamo to mark six years of unjust imprisonment and abuse for the men held in Guantanamo.

About half were arrested inside the U.S. Supreme Court; the others were arrested on the steps of the Court. Many of the arrestees were denied food and water for most of the 30-some hours they were detained.

Art Laffin, Kate Grady DeMott, Martha Hennessy, Leah Grady Savitz, Patrick Stanley and Tom Feagley held a banner in front of the Supreme Court.

About 70 of those arrested withheld their legal name and instead gave the name of a detainee upon arrest. When they appeared in court on January 12, they gave their legal name but stated that their arrest was on behalf of a detainee. Thus, one of the main goals for the action was achieved because a number the court dockets as well as individual citations have one of the detainees' names on them. People were charged with "unlawful free speech on Supreme Court grounds." People who were arrested inside the building received an additional charge of "causing a harangue within the supreme court." Arrestees included people from all over the country, teenagers and octogenarians, first time arrestees, members of the Witness Against Torture's original delegation that walked to

Guantanamo to visit prisoners, and Dorothy Day's granddaughter, Martha Hennessy.

The arrests followed a solemn march from the National Mall of 400 persons that included a procession of activists dressed like the Guantanamo prisoners in orange jumpsuits and black hoods. The procession was preceded by a short rally at the Mall organized by Amnesty International, National Religious Campaign Against Torture and Witness Against Torture. The event was part of an International Day of Action that was endorsed by over 100 groups and included 83 events around the world. For more info: <http://witness torture.org>

BRIEFS

* **Ted Glick**, coordinator of the U.S. Climate Emergency Council, ended his 107 day "Climate Emergency Fast" on December 20. During the fast he participated in numerous protests to call attention to the global climate crisis and advocating concrete steps the US and other nations can take to save our planet. For more info: <http://indpol@igc.org>

* Postponed was a January appeal hearing for **Mordechai Vanunu**, an Israeli nuclear whistle-blower accused of violating post-release restrictions, including speaking with foreigners and foreign media. Despite already completing his 18 year prison sentence, Vanunu has been under severe restrictions since his release from prison in 2004. He faces a six further months in prison. For more info: <http://vanunu.com>

* **David Barrows** will face a jury trial for interrupting General Petraeus during a

September congressional hearing. He was arrested for asking Petraeus to end the war in Iraq and to not wage war against Iran.

Separately, on February 25, Mr. Barrows was found guilty of simple assault in D.C. Superior Court. Last September he was arrested as he interrupted Senator Lieberman in Upper Senate Park during a press conference in support of the Iraq war. David's accuser claimed that he forcibly held her wrist as he approached the stage where Lieberman was speaking. Despite his clear innocence, he was convicted on fabricated evidence and contradictory testimony. He is considering an appeal. Sentencing is 4/22/08.

* **Start Loving, a D.C. activist**, has been fasting and vigiling in front of the Cannon House Building on-and off since September to call for an end to war in Iraq, no use of depleted uranium weapons, and no war against Iran. For more info: start_loving@yahoo.com.

* **US Army Colonel Ann Wright (Ret.)** was sentenced to three days in jail in early December for a Capitol Hill protest calling for an immediate end to the U.S. war in Iraq.

* On November 9, a sit-down by **50 activists at the main gate of Olympia Port**, near Seattle, prevented two Stryker military vehicles from leaving the port to Iraq. The protest was organized by Olympia Port Militarization Resistance. For more info about this striking and successful action: <http://olywip.org>

Write the Prisoners! Please see <http://jonahhouse.org> for addresses of peace prisoners and other prisoners of conscience.

Resist, Speak Truth, Set Yourself Free

Continued from Pg. 7

the courtroom. I began to cry as I watched. I also noticed that David was crying. When I looked at the jurors, one of them was clearly crying and many of them looked very moved and even pained. The video made it crystal clear what we were doing in trying to stop the war which causes the death and suffering of so many innocent people.

Officer Connor claimed both on direct and cross that we were taking up a large portion of the atrium. This is not true. We were about 30 people, and the atrium is huge. He also said that we clearly got three warnings. This is also not true. I did not hear any warnings. The videotape clearly shows Captain Neeld walk ing to the area to shout out, "Cease and desist. You are getting locked up. There will be no warnings. You will be arrested right now." She immediately walked over to Malachy and me and said, "These two are going."

Our case

The trial had been going on for a day and a half. The jury was getting tired. We decided that it would be best if we put two witnesses on the stand and didn't drag it out too long. Ellen and I were the ones chosen to go on the stand. I didn't really want the added stress of being on the stand because I was getting nervous about the closing, but I said that I would do it if that was what was decided. I don't have good notes on what happened while I was on the stand. I testified that I did not hear

any warnings. Then I was asked by Sam, "Didn't you know that when the police were there, they were going to be arresting us?" I answered that I am often at demonstrations against the war. There is always a police presence, but often no arrests take place.

On cross, Mr. Ferrell asked me if I had permission from my Senator to be in the Hart Senate Office Building that day. I looked at him in disbelief. I said that I did not understand the question. I couldn't believe he would suggest that I needed my Senator's permission to be there. I think the jury must also have been taken aback by that question. He also asked if I was demonstrating and I said yes. I think that was a mistake. I should have said I was there petitioning my government.

We rested our case after Ellen and I testified and were cross-examined by Mr. Farrell.

Closing Statements

Mr. Farrell delivered a lukewarm closing statement. The jury did not appear to be very drawn into his arguments.

It was then my turn and I was very nervous, but also felt the support of so many people behind me, friends and co-activists in Madison and in DC. I had added a lot to my statement as the trial unfolded. While I was giving the statement I tried to focus on the jury and make a lot of eye contact with them. I was interrupted a lot by objections from Mr. Farrell, but I kept going to get my message out. I made

several political statements that were objected to as I expected. However, I was surprised that when I talked about our First Amendment right to petition our government, there were objections that were sustained.

One of the things I wanted to say, but didn't get out was, "If we remain silent while our government is engaged in illegal and immoral activities, then we are complicit, we are guilty of being in violation of international law, going against our most dearly held values. It is our responsibility to speak out."

I was again stopped as I began the last paragraph. I thought to myself, what do I do now? I wanted to get my last line in. I knew the judge was getting tired of this. I also knew that this was my only chance to get this statement into the court record. So, I said, "We need to bring the real criminals to justice." I was looking right at the jury when I said it. The reporter from Al Jazeera broke into a huge smile. I sat down shaking like crazy.

The prosecution then had a chance for rebuttal. He kind of lost it during rebuttal. He sounded petty and vindictive. He talked about us being spoiled children who thought we were above the law. He said that we were there because we wanted to be arrested.

It was then the end of day 3. The next day the jury began deliberations.

The verdict

As the jury walked in, I noticed several of them were smiling. I am thinking - is that a good sign? It seemed like time lost its meaning as the jurors took their chairs and we

waited to hear the verdict. Then the judge asked the foreman to stand and read the verdicts. He began, "Gordon Clark - not guilty." When I heard that I knew we would all be found not guilty, but I wanted to hear my name. The foreman continued, "Joy First - not guilty....." And on for all seven of us. I started to weep. I couldn't believe it. I looked at the jurors and saw that a couple of them also began to cry.

It was such an intense, unbelievable experience. I came home utterly exhausted, both physically and emotionally. It was a small victory for the peace movement. But, again, it has to be put in perspective.

We must continue this work, taking risks in speaking out against the war. Our government continues its illegal and immoral actions in the war and occupation of Iraq, causing the needless death of over 600,000 Iraqis and almost 4,000 US soldiers. The suffering of families who have lost a loved one is immeasurable. As I said in my closing statement, when we have a war criminal in the White House who is responsible for this suffering, and we are arrested for reading the names of the dead, there is something woefully wrong with our system.

Though we have been fighting for four years to end the war, I believe what we do does make a difference. I believe that we must continue the struggle for peace and justice. We need more people to join in and I believe that is happening. We, the people, are the deciders. We, the people, can make a difference. I'll see you at the next action.

AFGHANISTAN, from pg. 1

people, and particularly the women, started with the Taliban, but I want to make it clear that it didn't start with the Taliban nor has it ended with their defeat.

No doubt, the "War on Terror" toppled the misogynist and barbaric regime of Taliban, but it did not remove the Islamic extremism, which is the root cause of all the ongoing troubles in Afghanistan. In fact, the US has replaced one misogynist religious fascist regime with another. After September 11, when President George W. Bush announced his intention to bomb Afghanistan in response to the Taliban's role in sheltering Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda, the US government used the oppression of the Afghan women as a legitimating factor in the overthrow of the Taliban. Never mind that the women of Afghanistan had already suffered under five years of Taliban rule while the US had been negotiating with the Taliban for oil pipelines and poppy eradication.

America--no! I don't want to say America--the *government* of the United States came with tanks and bombs to grant us democracy in this terrorist hunt! Criminal warlords like Sayaf, Rabanni, Fahim, Khalili, Dostum, and alike were terrified that they may be put on international trial. But no, the government of the United States and its allies turned a blind eye on them and once again allowed them to descend upon the Afghan people against their wishes.

We pay high respect and esteem for the American people--we do believe the people want exactly opposite to what the Bush administration did or does in Afghanistan and Iraq. A clear example might be the protests of American people against the war.

Now, over 6 years have passed since the so called democratic Karzai gov-ernment has been installed, but the depth of tragedy and misery of Afghan people still remains intact, unlike what is being shown and presented in the media. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch paint a rather different picture of Afghanistan. The latest report released by Human Rights Watch by the name of "Blood-stained hands" says: "Numerous high-level officials and advisors in Afghanistan's current government are implicated in major war crimes and human rights abuses that took place in the early 1990s." This report particularly pointed to the most notorious criminals, who now have encircled the whole Karzai government:

"Sayyaf, a radical Islamist commander, who now advises President Karzai and exercises major political power over the Afghan judiciary and has numerous proxies within the Afghan government, and he is a member of the Parliament.

Dostum, the leader of the Junbish-e Milli faction who now holds a senior post in the ministry of defense and exercises political control of several provinces in the north of Afghanistan.

"Fahim, Afghanistan's defense minister from 2001 to 2004.

"Karim Khalili, a commander in the Hezb-e Wahdat faction, and now one of President Karzai's two vice-presidents."

We believe that since these criminals have not been put on trial but rather have been free to exercise their power against the innocent people, we have been witness to constant incidents happening every day in Afghanistan.

People of the world should know that in the so-called "liberated" Afghanistan, Afghan women are still suffering harshly. It was on April 22, 2005 that Amina, an Afghan woman, was stoned to death under a local court decree in Northern Afghanistan.

In August 2006, Sanobar, 11-year-old girl, was abducted, raped, and then traded in exchange for a dog by warlords in Aliabad district of Kondozi province in North of Afghanistan. On August 2006 Taliban militants killed a woman and her 13-year-old son after accusing them of spying for the government and for foreign troops in southern Afghanistan.

Amnesty says: "Karzai's shaky government has proved unable to protect women. The risk of rape and sexual violence by members of armed factions and former combatants is still high. Forced marriage, particularly of girl children, and violence against women in the family are widespread in many areas of the country."

But lack of human rights and women's rights is not the only problem



www.rawa.org

Taliban beating women in public, facing Afghanistan today. Neither opium cultivation nor warlordism and terrorism have been uprooted. President Karzai is a prisoner within his own government, the nominal head of a regime in which former notorious Jehadi commanders hold the real power. Billions of dollars donated by the world communities for reconstruction were stolen by the warlords. Four million people are at risk of starvation and only 5% out of 25 million of population have access to enough water. A large number of refugees in Pakistan and Iran are still hesitant to return because of the lack of security, jobs, shelter, and continuation of ethnic and religious conflicts by warlords. And this list goes on.

Under the US occupation, Afghan-



Photos courtesy of RAWA

stan turned into the world's largest opium producer, which is a shame to Mr. Karzai and his American masters. On May 29, 2005, Los Angeles Times disclosed that some top Afghan government officials, including Gen. Daoud, a former warlord who is Afghanistan's deputy interior minister and in charge of the anti-drug effort, are themselves involved in trafficking drugs and have links with drug mafia in the country. This reminds us of an Afghan saying, "They have assigned rabbits to take care of a carrot."

If the fundamentalists are not put on trial for the countless crimes they have committed and if the warlords are not disarmed, then Karzai's government will not bring betterments and relief to our people.

As the only and oldest humanitarian political feminist organization, RAWA has been advocating for a democratic and secular government since 1977 as the only cure to the wounds of the Afghan people and particularly women.

As women living in this very unliberated country, it is clear that RAWA members, the outspoken advocates against warlords and fundamentalism, remain at high risk in a country still controlled by armed warlords and fundamentalists. After 30 years of underground resistance, RAWA continues its struggle to provide for the needs of the Afghan people, to empower women, and to work for democracy, peace, freedom, and human rights.

Clearly the main obstacle to the establishment of women's rights in Afghanistan is the presence of fundamentalism as a political and military force. When there are fundamentalists, there will be hostility against women and their struggle for equal rights. Only in a society based on democracy and secularism can the rights of women be guaranteed. The fundamentalists who misuse religion and ancient tradition to oppress women are still prevalent. As a result RAWA's mission for women's rights is far from over and our work continues.

RAWA has concentrated on raising awareness and organizing masses of women in legal and social sectors, and increasing education and literacy among them. We strongly believe that education is power and Afghan women cannot fight for their rights as long as they are not equipped with this sharpest weapon against ignorance and fundamentalism.

With the weapons of education, Afghan women's rights could not be ignored by any government in the country. Orphanages have been the cornerstone of RAWA's social program since its inception in 1977 because we believe that children, as the new generation of the society, can make a big difference in terms of ensuring peace and democracy in Afghanistan for a long-term plan provided they are to grow in an environment of peace, love, and respect. Therefore, we put our whole resources to teach the children to respect each other, irrespective of the differences in gender, region, or even religion. We teach them to understand and practice equality and to show tolerance. We teach them to live in peace and love and be against any violence.

Our martyred and founding leader was the first one to establish an orphanage for Afghan refugees in Pakistan shortly after the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, and we, her followers, began to follow her mission.

Now, I am proudly saying that RAWA takes care of over 500 children in Afghanistan despite manifold financial and security problems.

RAWA is asking time and again that those who are real friends of our people should support democratic forces, not our bloody enemies. They should put pressure in any possible way on sources like the UN to remove fundamentalists from power, disarm criminal commanders and bring to justice the criminals through an international court.

Once again thanking you all, RAWA assures all its friends and supporters around the world that we will not for a moment give up our struggle for freedom, democracy, and women's rights in fundamentalism-blighted Afghanistan.

We ask you to join us.

Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan

Website: www.rawa.org

Email: rawa@rawa.org

CharityHelp International

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YOUTH VOICES

Exploring Injustice: South Africa, Child Labor and Robben Island

By Hallie Goertner

In September, I had to interrupt my duties at the Washington Peace Center for a week when I was given the very fortunate chance to participate in a Model United Nations in Cape Town, South Africa. This was a very moving experience for me, not only the Model UN but the trip as a whole, which included “doing time” at the former prison on Robben Island.

There were 20 countries involved in our Model UN, each represented by four students from schools in South Africa, the UK, Kenya, Ethiopia, and the U.S. The School Without Walls was the only school from Washington, DC, and we represented Zambia. We had three structured debates on a variety of current issues, including climate change, discrimination on the basis of HIV/AIDS, and child labor.

The Model UN session on child labor was the most moving part of the entire debate. It was the third and last topic we debated, and everyone was finally getting into the flow of things, despite being exhausted from the sleepless night before that was spent preparing for the full day of debating.

The opening statements and formal caucusing were nothing spectacular, even predictable. All of the countries present said that child labor was a negative aspect of our society, the countries with child labor admitted that there was a problem, and everyone spoke about their country’s policies. The informal caucusing, however, was an incredible experience.

The initial informal caucusing began about midway through the formal caucus, and I was one of two of my team who left the room to join some of the other delegates outside. We were already planning to meet to begin drafting a working document to go to the General Assembly as a resolution for a vote. When we left the formal caucus we found people milling around, trying to find alliances with other countries, discussing policies. One group grew extremely large. It became apparent we were all saying the same things: we all agreed that child labor was bad, just with minor differences in policy. The idea of creating one massive working document started circulating, with some people, including myself, extremely excited, and others not so sure. This was completely unprecedented, as up to then there had always been several working documents, each with only a few countries as signatories.

The majority of countries, excluding Zimbabwe and the United States, agreed to go ahead with this plan, at least for the time being, so we all sat down on the floor in a circle, and began to work out the document. This posed quite a challenge, because everyone wanted to be sure that their country’s policies were represented accurately, which led to lots of arguing and talking over one another. Eventually we set up a system, very much like a classroom, with people raising their hands and waiting to be called upon to speak.

Things were almost lost when the rest of the delegates joined us and the informal caucus really began, because there was a rush into the room of about 40 people who had no idea what was going on. It very nearly did not work, and I think that without the few people, myself included, who were extremely enthusiastic about this novel idea, it would not have succeeded. However, through extreme patience, cooperation, and an excitement to do something that had never been done, eighteen countries, represented by 76 teenagers, managed to create a single working document on child labor.

Throughout this entire process, I was getting more and more thrilled with the situation that I found myself in. Here we were, a large group of teenagers from all over the world, working together to create realistic solutions to the growing problem of child labor, something that seemed to be impossible for the delegates of the actual United Nations. I felt so honored and proud to be a part of something that felt very revolutionary. It also gave me incredible hope for the future, because if anyone is going to be leading the countries of the world, it will be the incredibly talented youth I met at this Model UN.

Visiting Robben Island was another highlight of my trip to Cape Town.

The island has been turned into a kind of museum, and this is what we were expecting when we arrived. We were severely mistaken, however. The moment we got off the ferry, our bags were taken and all watches, cell phones, and cameras were confiscated. We were then given prison numbers, paired up with someone from a different team, tied together at the wrists and ankles, and made to walk in silence to the jail. This was very difficult, and somewhat painful, but we all thought that it was a joke, laughing most of the way, with frequent shouts

from the adults in charge to “SHUT UP AND MOVE!”

We were then put into four communal cells, with no explanations, information, or instructions. There were 20 people in my cell, some of whom I knew, others I had never spoken to. At first we sat down on the benches, still tied together, and whispered among each other, trying to figure out what exactly was going on. After what felt like 30 minutes, but could have been only ten, we got restless and began to untie ourselves and wander around the cell, only to rush back to our partners at the slightest noise outside. The cell was a fairly large room, with benches, some cupboards, a table or two, an outdated bathroom, a screen, and no way for us to turn on any lights.

We began by just getting to know each other, chatting, playing games, and even singing “We Will Rock You” extremely loudly, in an attempt to annoy our captors. As this got boring, we decided to play a trick on the wardens, by hiding in the bathroom, and waiting for them to come and check on us. Eventually it became apparent that we were going to be left alone for a while, so we got bored and gave up. At some point, one of the other cells broke out, and went running around screaming for an uprising. We all supported them, but our door was locked, making it impossible to escape.

As it got later, the need for a bathroom coupled with incredible boredom caused some people to start yelling for the wardens’ attention, who came and took them away. Those of us who remained in the cell had no idea what was going on, and it was only later when we got new additions to our communal cell, that we learned that people were put into solitary confinement for acting out. The energy in the room, which had started out very high, waned and some of us tried to sleep to pass the time.

I couldn’t sleep so I got up, frustrated, and started socializing again. My cell was extremely diverse, so we all started asking each other questions, about life in different countries, politics, often bringing up stereotypes and then quashing them. Languages were a large topic, and we passed a lot of time teaching each other different phrases. I spoke French with a girl from Kenya and learned some things in Afrikaans from several South Africans.

After about four hours, we were all let out of our cells, and taken to dinner, which was “prison food”. The type of

food you got was determined by the color of the string on your prison number, either black or white. After the first few people received different food, we began to realize that the color of the string represented your race as a prisoner, and that this was yet another example of what life on Robben Island had been like.

Dinner was dismal, but most of us ate our food anyway, as we were not sure when we would eat again. Afterwards, we were led into a very large room, this time with chairs, where we discussed our experiences in jail. It was very interesting to hear what other people had to say, but the most valuable part of the session was having a discussion with an ex-political prisoner from Robben Island.

He had observed our reactions to our jail time, sitting silently with the adults in the circle, without revealing who he was. After our exercises and comments, he came out into the middle of the circle and introduced himself. We were all astonished, and I think somewhat embarrassed that an actual prisoner from Robben Island had witnessed our complaints after only a few hours in jail.

He was an incredible man, in his seventies, rather short and stocky, with long, graying dreadlocks, who said whatever he felt was necessary, even if it involved profanity. At first he told us about his experiences in jail, he was incarcerated for seven years, and then spent five years in house arrest.

However, he was much more interested in speaking with us, and encouraged us to ask as many questions as we wanted. The questions covered a wide variety of topics, ranging from very serious ones about how he was affected by his time in jail, to silly ones like whether or not he would support South Africa in the upcoming Soccer World Cup. No question was unworthy of a response, so no question went unanswered. He had a very interesting insight on the world as a whole, making it a pleasure to have a chance to participate in this discussion.

I thoroughly enjoyed the time that I spent in Cape Town, and feel that it was an extremely precious experience. I loved exploring a new part of the world and interacting with people my age from all over the world. I learned a lot in South Africa, and hope to return someday soon.

~ Hallie Gertner is a student at School Without Walls in Washington, D.C., and has helped us as an intern at the Washington Peace Center.

Nelson Mandela, former prisoner, at Robben Island

Spoils of War - Curtis LeMay, Paul Tibbets and the Atomic Bombing of Japan

By Matt Love

On Nov. 15, I celebrated my 21st birthday. On the same day 99 years ago, Gen. Curtis LeMay was born. The name LeMay means little to my generation, but to the parents of the baby boomers he is remembered for being one of the fiercest war hawks in our history.

He served as the main Air Force commander toward the end of World War II, when he ordered the firebombing of dozens of Japanese cities, killing half a million people, and as the Air Force Chief of Staff during the Cuban Missile Crisis, where he argued for the bombing of Cuba.

His hawkishness was so legendary that, toward the end of his career, he was often compared to Gen. Jack D. Ripper in Stanley Kubrick's classic 1964 film, "Dr. Strangelove."

Reflecting on his firebombing campaign, LeMay said, "Killing Japanese didn't bother me very much at that time. ... I suppose if I had lost the war, I would have been tried as a war criminal.... Every soldier thinks something of the moral aspects of what he is doing. But all war is immoral, and if you let that bother you, you're not a good soldier."

Despite these cold remarks LeMay broke with fellow hawks, the govern-

ment, and public opinion when he, according to historian Gar Alperovitz, declared that World War II would have been over in two weeks, and the bomb did not cause the surrender.

The atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were dropped in 1945 under the pretext that they would bring a swift end to the war and actually save lives by preventing further attempts to invade Japan, which some argued would have led to even more deaths than the hundreds of thousands killed by the bombs' initial blast, the ensuing heat and the lingering radiation.

Flash forward to Nov. 1, 2007. LeMay had been dead for 17 years, and it's roughly three months after the 62nd anniversary of the atomic blasts that shook the earth. Paul Tibbets' 92-year-old ashes were scattered over the English Channel.

At age 30, Col. Tibbets led a crew of 13 men on a mission like no other. He was chosen to drop a five-ton uranium weapon of mass destruction on a city of defenseless Japanese men, women and children. Not only did he accept the mission, he went to his grave proud and remorseless.

The Associated Press's story about his passing depicts him as a romantic, though controversial, American hero,

with the only scathing critiques coming from the Japanese.

All epoch and zeitgeist shifts aside, how is it that a man responsible for unimaginable atrocities, the results of which are still being uncovered to this day, is lauded as a patriot?

Is this a country of barbarians?

Recall the chilling but telling words of LeMay: "I suppose if I had lost the war, I would have been tried as a war criminal."

German Nazis were war criminals, Japanese militants were war criminals, but cold, remorseless American bombers were heroes. If Mr. X were to kill his neighbor, Mr. Y, in New York City, he could go to jail for life. LeMay and Tibbets were promoted.

Is this a part of American culture? Not necessarily. It is tied to the phrase "to the victor go the spoils." Those spoils include kudos.

The United States was the big winner. It had not suffered the devastation wreaked on its allies. It had kept the Soviet Union from committing troops to Japan and further expanding its influence in the region. And it had sent a clear message to the world as to what would happen if anyone dared challenge its supremacy.

Moreover, the United States would call the shots in post-war Japan.

The American people shared the spoils, enjoying a higher quality of life after the war thanks to the end of the Great Depression, federal spending of \$120 billion dollars on housing loans in less than three decades, and other programs such as the G.I. Bill.

Dreamlands called suburbs sprang up on empty plots throughout the country, the plight of blacks and other ethnic minorities were relegated to the inner cities and memories of the war faded.

But now and throughout the last six years, the familiar war cries and drumbeats have returned.

In 2002, Tibbets, seemingly far from out of the game, told Studs Terkel that he wouldn't hesitate to use nukes in the wars of today.

According to The Washington Post: "I'd wipe 'em out," he said. "You're gonna kill innocent people at the same time, but we've never fought a damn war anywhere in the world where they didn't kill innocent people. If the newspapers would just cut out the [expletive]: 'You've killed so many civilians.' That's their tough luck for being there."

It's Tibbets' wonderful luck that allowed him to make such crass statements. How lucky he was that his country won the war, for if not, he would have achieved his rightful status in the world — that of a war criminal.

Report from the People's Peace Delegation to Iran

By Phil Wilayto

In July 2007, the Virginia Anti-War Network (VAWN), the DC Anti-War Network (DAWN) and The Richmond Defender newspaper co-sponsored a People's Peace Delegation to Iran.

The purposes of this project were to extend a gesture of peace and friendship to the Iranian people; to learn as much as possible about the social, cultural and political realities of Iran today; and to return home better prepared to counter efforts by the Bush administration to psychologically prepare the U.S. public for a military attack on Iran.

The delegation consisted of five members: two Army veterans, one of whom had been stationed in Iraq; an environmentalist (the only woman on the delegation); a former labor official; and the editor of The Richmond Defender, a community newspaper published in Central Virginia.

The journey

The delegation arrived in Tehran on July 20, flew by Iran Air to the southern city of Shiraz and then traveled 1,350 miles by van. In addition to Shiraz, the city of "poetry, roses, nightingales and (formerly) wine," we visited the ancient oasis city of Yazd, the cultural center of Isfahan, the holy city of Qom and back to the capital, Tehran. We had contracted with an Iranian travel agency, Iran Doostan

Torus, which provided the van, a driver and a guide who doubled as interpreter.

Over the course of our 11-day journey through the Islamic Republic of Iran, we interacted with Iranians on three levels:

First, we visited the standard tourist sites to learn about the history and culture of the country — the ancient ruins of Persepolis, once the ceremonial center of the First Persian Empire; Iman Square in Isfahan, the second largest public square in the world; the tomb of Ayatollah Khomeini and the palace of the last Shah of Iran, both just outside Tehran; the Temple of the Sacred Eternal Flame of the ancient Zoroastrian religion in Yazd; along with mosques, mausoleums and museums. We also visited Behesht-e Zahra, the massive cemetery outside Tehran that holds the remains of some 200,000 soldiers killed in the Eight-Year War with Iraq.

Secondly, we were able to arrange formal meetings with the following: three veterans of the war with Iraq, one of whom is the son of a man killed when the U.S.S. Vincennes shot down a civilian Iranian Airbus over the Persian Gulf in 1988; the director and staff of the Tehran Peace Museum, dedicated to exposing the horrors of warfare in hopes of promoting peace; the director of the Islamic Center for Computer Studies in Qom; and S. Rahim Rasheed, Vice President for Tourism, Heritage and Handicrafts. The last meeting, which lasted two hours, was reported

by Press TV, Iran's new English-language television channel.

Most rewarding were the many chance encounters we had with Iranians, on the streets, in restaurants, public parks, etc. Everywhere we went, people came up to us and asked where we were from. When we said "USA," they broke into smiles, shook our hands and thanked us for visiting their country. This was true even before we were able to explain that we had come on a mission of peace.

Without a doubt, our most unusual and moving encounter was the one we had when leaving a tourist site in the city of Yazd. We ran into into 300 members of the Revolutionary Guard, who were also sight-seeing. Like everyone else, they asked us where we were from, and when we told them they started smiling, waving the peace sign and thanking us for coming.

The conclusion we drew from all this was that among the people of Iran — students, workers, business owners, children, soldiers — no one is being taught to hate Americans. And that would seem to mean that the government is not preparing its people for a war with the United States.

Follow-up & outreach

Since returning from Iran, we have tried as much as possible to get this message out to the U.S. public: that Iran is not our enemy, that Iranians do not hate us, that Iran is not a dangerous

place for Americans or other travelers. This was really the first objective of our trip: to counter the stereotype of Iran as a dangerous, forbidding place of sullen fanatics.

We have been able to reach out in a number of ways. The day after returning from Iran we held a press conference in Washington.

A report from that press conference was picked up by hundreds of progressive Internet sites. In Norfolk, Va., one of our members was able to arrange several media interviews with local TV, radio and Norfolk's daily newspaper.

In Richmond, we held two report-back meetings with a slide show about the trip.

In October, I took part in a speaking tour of colleges, high schools and churches in Atlanta, Ga., organized by the Southeastern Office of the American Friends Service Committee. The other two members of that tour were Simin Royanian and Rostam Pourzal, both Iranian-Americans active in opposing a war against Iran. That tour also resulted in media interviews, with the Atlanta Constitution and local radio and other print media.

Report prepared by:

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Would Charging for Congestion Improve DC's Air Quality?

By David Schwartzman

A congestion charge is a payment required of drivers (or owners of vehicles) to enter a designated area of a city, usually the core business area which has the most traffic.

Air pollution and carbon emissions from transportation (and power plants) using fossil fuels go hand in hand.

Hence, by taking timely steps to reduce carbon emissions that contribute to global warming we likewise reduce air pollution, with immediate benefits to the well being of our residents.

I will present here the case for just such a step, implementing a DC congestion charge.

A planning process should start now, involving those most affected, the working class majority living in the District.

The congestion charge approach to reducing traffic, air pollution levels and carbon emissions contributing to global warming is now being used in a growing number of cities around the world. London has had a congestion charge since 2003.

There is \$1.1 billion of federal aid in the US available to fight urban traffic.

A congestion charge for the District is now being widely discussed. Last May DC officials requested \$17.8 million from the federal government to study how to reduce traffic, including the possible options of a congestion charge, increasing taxation on downtown employee parking, as well as higher meter rates for designated hours. San Francisco received \$1 million from the federal government to study the feasibility of a congestion charge for its downtown area.

In July, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) issued a report concluding that a toll or surcharge would create incentives for drivers to shift their travel to periods of lower demand, use other roads, or make other adjustments, when the costs of their decision to drive during congested periods exceed the benefits they receive. Further, without such incentives, the transportation system will be headed for more frequent occurrences of congestion that last longer, resulting in more time spent traveling, greater fuel consumption, and higher emissions in the long run.

The London experience with its congestion charge shows significant benefits, with traffic congestion reduced by 30%, CO2 emissions by 15%, nitrogen oxide by 8%, particulates 7%. Accrued revenues went to subsidizing the London Underground and bus use, so students now ride free!

Linking Environmentalism & the Anti-War Movement

What Can Be Done to Stop the Madness?



By David Schwartzman

Various groups and actions are bridging the environmental and anti-war movements. Here we describe some of these movements and actions that might interest you...

Excerpts from No War No Warming campaign:

It's time to bridge the divide between the peace movement and the climate action movement. For far too long, our groups have been working on one or the other of these issues, but now is the time to acknowledge the ways in which these

issues are linked and the need for people throughout the world to take action to end both war and climate change.

Oil is the critical link between war and climate change.

There would have been no invasion of Iraq if that country's main export were broccoli. It was the US addiction to oil that drove our country into the Iraq war and will fuel future resource wars, unless the US ends its addiction. Additionally, the US military is the largest single consumer of petroleum in the country, so as the military grows, so does our addiction to fossil fuels. Oil is also the main cause of climate change.

Our addiction to greenhouse-gas-emitting oil is melting the Arctic and Greenland before our eyes, destroying indigenous cultures and peoples. It is disappearing small island nations as sea levels rise... Meanwhile, who suffers from war and climate change? In both cases, it is the poorest people, people of color and people from the Global South, who suffer the most, and it is oil companies, arms dealers, defense contractors, mercenaries, Halliburton and other corporate pillagers who reap the profits.

The Iraq war and the threat of climate change are the twin global threats about which millions of Americans said they wanted immediate action on after the U.S. mid-term election. But as Iraq continues to devolve into violence and chaos, and as we hit another year of record warm temperatures, our legislators are failing to respond to the will of the people. We want a safe and healthy planet for years and years to come. [Please join us in a series of actions in 2008 to fight climate change!"] www.NoWarNoWarming.org

Air pollution's negative health impacts

Reducing air pollution would have immediate health benefits, particularly for DC's children. Pollution from mobile sources (cars, trucks, vans, etc) is the leading cause of ozone and smog in the DC, dangerous compounds that cause respiratory illness and childhood asthma. One in ten adults and children suffer from asthma in DC, one of the top five most challenging places for people with asthma to live, especially in summer. A typical summer in DC sends 2,400 people with respiratory related diseases to the hospital and causes 130,000 asthma attacks.

Pollution related to transportation (including cars and SUVs) accounts for up to 70% of pollution during poor air quality days in the summer. While some pollution is obvious, ozone and other dangerous pollutants float unseen. The DC metro area is in violation of Clean Air Act standards for ozone and other pollutants, putting residents at higher risk for asthma, respiratory illness, and code-red smog days in the summer.

Urban air pollution is now linked to wide variety of negative health impacts affecting both the unborn, children and adults. Besides increasing asthma attacks, these impacts include damage

to children's lungs, heart birth defects, harm to the fetus linked to low birthweights and cancer later in life and damage to the cardiovascular system, increasing the risk of heart attacks.

What's the connection to global warming? Besides generating air pollution, cars and other vehicles that burn fossil fuels - whether it be gasoline or diesel fuel - contribute to CO₂ emissions that increase the greenhouse house effect, leading to global warming. The Metro DC area has seen a spike in carbon emissions from 2001 to 2005 - two times the national rate, attributed in large part to those commuting from the suburbs.

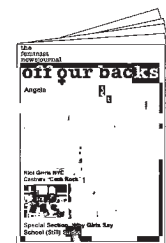
The signature of global warming is already apparent in the long-term rise of temperatures, especially in the last decade. The global scientific consensus predicts flooding and heat waves in the coming decades. Two recent reports by the National Research Council of the National Academies have linked global warming to increased ozone levels. Studies have suggested that many of the deaths (20-50%) that occurred in the 2003 heat waves in Europe could be directly attributed to increased ozone and particulate levels that occurred during the heat waves.

Tapping into the sun's immense energy flux to Earth by the myriad technologies of solar power, wind, photovoltaics, thermal, etc., would provide abundant energy for global society for the foreseeable future. But we must start now!

Solarization, demilitarization and conversion of fossil-fuel intensive industrial agriculture to agroecologies are necessary and achievable. "Think globally, act locally," thus the relevancy of implementing a program to "green" the District. Converting both our energy sources and food production to renewable and sustainable technologies is imperative.

The biggest obstacle to prevent catastrophic climate change is the nuclear military industrial fossil fuel complex. Its radical reduction will insure a much more peaceful, just and sustainable world for our children and grandchildren. Otherwise, perhaps as soon as ten years from now, the world will be even more dangerous and miserable than the living hell for hundreds of millions we now experience. For entire article, see www.dcmetroSAP.org

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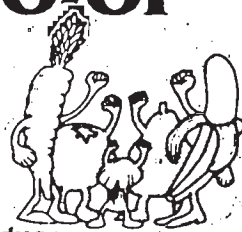
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BELOVED MENTORS, PRESENTE!

Remembering Sister Sita

by Ellen Thomas



When Sita Akka Paullickpulle ("Sister Sita") died at age 95, she left behind reams of poems she had sung and danced, and essays she had distributed, outside the White House for many years. She said often, to everyone she met:

I Feel Very Strongly...

... we must teach our children that we are all one humanity, and we must learn to live together happily.

Sita was born in Sri Lanka and moved to the United States, a nurse and teacher, because "the United States was the only place in the world where people of all races, religions, and backgrounds have learned to live together harmoniously. I wanted to be a part of that."

Sita prayed, "Before I die, I hope that war will be made illegal."

Unfortunately, she didn't live quite that long, but we'll keep her banner flying.



TO BE SANE & HUMANE, DARE!
MAKE WAR ILLEGAL ATROCITY:
PRESERVE ALL HUMANITY!
SING, DANCE, PLAY, LAUGH, EAT,
TOGETHER... NO NATION PLAN to
DEVASTATE, KILL, ANY OTHER!
THE HUMAN FAMILY MUST LIVE HAPPILY--

Drumming for Truth and Justice: Salute to Henry Moses

by Jay Marx

I met Henry Moses dancing and drumming at the Josephine Butler Center one night in the year 2000.

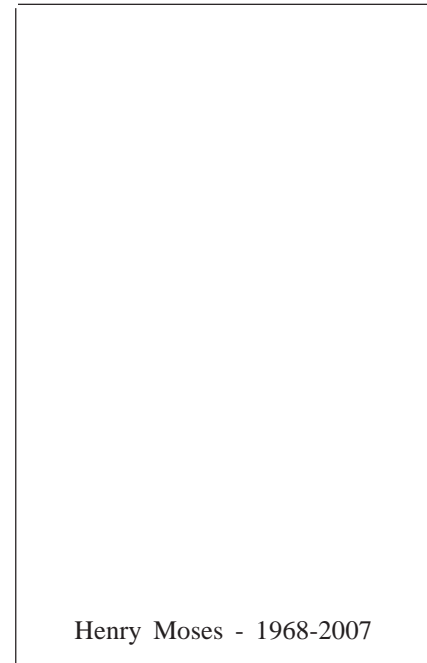
I remember his spirit. I remember his passion. I think of his enormous heart, and the strength of his love. I think of his focus. I think of his smile and his eyes. I see him powering the Mother Drum Ship, in one of his colorful shirts, beating relentlessly, sweating profusely, seized in the moment, in the spirit, in the rhythm.

We did not always get along. He told me he didn't understand me, that he'd never met anyone like me. I had to admit, for me the same was true of him. Henry was unique.

Once I asked him to help with some peace project or another, because I knew that it would be successful if he was involved. But there was no taking Henry for granted, and he said, "You know what? Make your own magic."

Henry always made his own magic, and he carried it with him, and those who were lucky enough to share some of it know how powerful it really was.

I realize now that I probably never even knew Henry at his best, or at the peak of his physical powers. Before he was an activist, he was a wrestling



Henry Moses - 1968-2007

champion. During the last few years, without letting most of us know it, Henry was suffering. He was weakened, and he soldiered on without complaint, because that's how he was.

He had a joyful and courageous spirit. In many ways he was like a child, smiling big, drumming and dancing, loving who he loved with everything that he had in him.

I cried when I heard that he was so sick; when he realized that he might

really die (it's so hard to believe of a friend who seems so vital—always so easy to stay in denial). I hear that by the end the pneumonia had so ravaged his lungs that he was only kept alive by a respirator, breathing for him, and that on a Thursday morning he personally disconnected himself from the machine, knowing what the consequence would be. Selfishly, I was angry at him for that. I wish he had not done that, that he had waited—that he had just waited long enough for me, for more of his friends to get there, to shake his hand again, to tell him how much he meant to us, to encourage him to fight, to say goodbye. But he was a strong and stubborn man, and it would not have been much like Henry to wait on anyone. I guess he decided he was ready to go, and off he went, and like so much else, you have to admire him for that.

I'm sorry that we didn't work together more. I remember how strong, how confident, how optimistic, how joyful, how powerful he could be. I miss him now, and I think I will miss him often. I commit his spirit to infuse my work, and know that he can infuse us all with the same righteous sense of joy and justice. We're banging the drum for you, Hank, the way you showed us how.

Local Educator Experiences Work In Palestine

by Nora Buch

I recently returned from a year teaching English at AlQuds University in the West Bank, Palestine. As an educator, I had met many students from that part of the world, but this was my first sojourn to the Middle East. As a result of my contact with Palestinian students, my understanding of the history of the Israel/Palestine conflict was fairly sound, but I felt completely stymied in terms of what one person in the US could do to contribute to a remedy for that situation.

The one Palestinian whom I often saw on TV, explaining that point of view, was Hanan Ashrawi, a member of the PLO leadership, who earned a PhD. from a US university and who speaks perfect English (in addition to being a

formidable speaker!) Inspired by her, I gradually came to the conclusion that a meaningful contribution would be to teach English to Palesinian youth.

During my teaching at Al Quds, I found that having a native speaker in the English department was indeed very useful, despite the fact that all the local faculty speak good English, but do not often use it conversationally, in or out of class.

I lived in the village of Abu Dees, where the university is located, a part of Jerusalem itself before the construction of the Separation (Apartheid) Wall.

It was my good fortune to be able to live with a Palestinian family, one of whose members is the chair of the Gender Studies Department at the university.

Having access to her English language library was a wonderful education, particularly for the study of Islam and women in Palestine. I also learned that the history of the Middle East conflict did not start in 1939, or even in 1917, but rather traced its origins to the rise of competing nationalisms in the early 19th century.

Most of all, though, I made friends with many Palestinians, my students and others, who surely taught me more than I taught them.

It is my hope to share my experiences in Palestine with Americans in the DC area, particularly with those who until now have gleaned their information about this explosive part of the world from the distorted view of mainstream media.



Merging into the future: Be on the lookout for Ronald Kirk's Bicycle² - a new idea for an old problem!

This space for rent!

The Washington Peace Letter is a quarterly newsletter with a press run of 5,000 copies. Over a thousand are sent to our members. The rest are distributed locally at events, libraries, streetcorners and friendly businesses.

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Thank you for everything you do for peace.

Peace and Justice Calendar

The Washington Peace Center continues its film series on the first and third Sunday of each Month. If you would like to host additional showings, please contact us at 202-234-2000; email wpc@igc.org

FOUNDRY PEACE WITH JUSTICE FILM SERIES

April 6: "Rachel Corrie: An American Conscience"

This documentary chronicles Ms. Corrie's humanitarian work in the Gaza Strip. The Israel-Palestinian crisis is the key to the Middle East region, and this film is an excellent expose of the crisis there as well as a moving story of a dedicated activist.

May 4: "Buying the War"

This episode of Bill Moyer's Journal examines the role of the media in the lead-up to the war. It analyzes the stream of unchecked information from administration sources and Iraqi defectors to the mainstream media, amplified by pundits, and how stories challenging the official view were often pushed aside while the administration claims were given prominence.

June 1: "Life and Debt"

Using excerpts from the award-winning non-fiction text "A Small Place." by Jamaica Kincaid, this film focuses on the struggles for survival of individual Jamaicans as their day-to-day existences become more and more determined by foreign economic



Photo by Ted Stein

Malachy Kilbride gives 2007 Peace & Justice Organizers' Award to EMPOWER DC

agendas. This is an excellent portrayal of the impacts of global economic and political systems on the poor.

First Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

**Foundry United Methodist Church
1500 16th Street, NW**

MORE FILMS

Friends Meeting Film Series:

3rd Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

2111 Florida Ave. NW

March 16: "The Lives of Others"

Stasi surveillance in '80s East Berlin

April 20: "The Quiet American"

British journalist in Vietnam during the period before the French pulled out

May 18: "'Breaker' Morant"

Australian court-martial hides war crimes

June 15: "The Grand Illusion"

Classic French prisoner of war tale

Counter-Recruitment Contacts:

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<http://www.nisbco.org>

GI Rights Hotline

(counseling network for those in the military)
800-394-9544
girights@objector.org

National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth (NNOMY)

Contact:
arlene@militaryfreeschools.org
<http://www.nnomy.org>

Iraq Veterans Against the War

<http://www.ivaw.org>

Winter Soldier Testimony March 13-16:

<http://ivaw.org/wintersoldier/howtowatch>

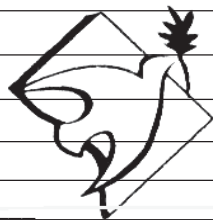
Peace Center Wish List

- * Modern phone system
- * "Endowed" armchair for our office library corner.
- * Sponsor for our new color copier (soon to be delivering posters to a lamppost near you!)
- * Sponsor for our delegation to the Global Article 9 Conference to Abolish War in Tokyo, Japan
- * Sheets suitable for banners
- * Blankets for sticker display
- * Bicycle
- * Teapot

"Separate oil and state!" On Friday, February 22, activists from US Labor Against the War, Oil Change Int'l, and IVAW rolled oil barrels down 16th Street to the White House, demonstrating against the proposed Iraq Oil Theft Law.

It's Time to Join the Peace Center!

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Peace & Justice Awardees, 2007

Lifetime Achievement

Nadine Bloch – Peaceful

Environmental Warrior – No War No Warming

Colman McCarthy – Teach Peace and Pursue It

Hungry for Peace and Justice

Ted Glick

Start Loving

Suffering for Justice

Eve Tetaz

Rev. Lennox Yearwood

Escalating Effort

Jose Rodriguez (VIDEO)

Peaceful Veterans

IVAW (Evan Knappenberger, Adam Kokesh, Geoff Millard)

Hub of the Resistance Resistance

Code Pink House (Group)

Joan Stallard – Vision to Reality/Movement Expansion

Liz Hourrican – Activist Enabler (Super Support Sister)

Desiree Fairouz – Activist Enabler (Truth to the Face of Power)

Midge Potts – Peace Through Art

Lori Purdue – Banned from DC!

Col. (Ret.) Ann Wright – You Oughta Be President

Grassroots Guerilla

Tina Richards

Unsung Hero/Heroine

Jim Preston – Code Pink, WPC
Rosana Batista

Legal Doves

Ann Wilcox

Jack Barringer

Justice For All

Mexicanos Sin Fronteras

Media Hero/ine

Kathleen Gabel – WHYNot News

Super Intern

Chris Lotz – Created new website (Also - Haynes Bunn, Matt

Theologus, Julie Bowes, Ned Goodwin, Yong Kwan, James Springer, Johanna Pizer, Amanda Lazorchack, Chris Wall,

Glenn Waltersdorf, Andy Kennedy, Suv)

Housing Justice

Eleanor Johnson

Jim McGrath - TENAC

Community Mobilization/Most Dynamic Local Organizers

EMPOWER DC –

Linda Leeks/Parisa Norouzi

Posthumous (Don't Know What You Got Till It's Gone):

Henry Moses