



Merrimack Valley People For Peace

Serving the communities of the Merrimack Valley

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

July - August 2006

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

GOOD NEWS

compiled with the help of Boryana Tacconi

On June 27, Mario Rodas was granted a six-month delay in the hearing of his deportation case.

The featured speaker at MVPP's Annual Meeting in June, Mario, a 2005 honors graduate from Chelsea High School, made a lasting impression on us both through his story and by the quiet strength and dignity of his personality. He had been arrested earlier this year by immigration agents who noticed that he had overstayed his visa. He had come from Guatemala with his family at the age of 12. Two days after his case was delayed, he wrote to Boryana Tacconi: *"It was your support that was one of the factors that helped the case get delayed. I appreciate your phone calls, letters, and the great introduction at the annual dinner. Again, thank you!"* Mario's plight and fight are far from over, but there is a lot of hope that the delay will help his case. We will continue to follow Mario's story and be active supporters in his cause, while pressing for legislation that would offer a chance at citizenship to hard-working and talented people like Mario who are living in the US illegally and already making important contributions to our society.

With the assistance of MVPP, on July 6th a prominent colloquium series at Phillips Academy's Summer Session featured an evening with Military Families Speak Out (MFSO).

MFSO's co-founders, Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson, whose son served with the marines in Iraq in the spring of 2003, and Staff Sergeant Andrew Sapp of the Massachusetts National Guard, who served from 2004-2005 in Iraq and is a member of IVAW (Iraq Veterans Against the War), spoke about the war in Iraq and its impact on soldiers, families, communities, and the nation. The presentation at the W.E.B. DuBois Colloquium held the audience of approximately 80 spellbound (predominantly high school students plus several MVPP members); it was followed by many questions. MVPP received special thanks (especially Becci Backman and Lou Bernieri) for connecting MFSO with the organizers of the colloquium.

In the end of June, the Northwest Hawaiian Islands were designated by the U.S. administration as a national monument, granting the island archipelago the strictest protection possible under the law.

This vast chain of remote islands teems with sea life, much of it endangered. The reserve will span some 140,000 square miles supporting a vibrant marine ecosystem, which harbors 70 percent of America's coral reefs and supports more than 7,000 marine species. It is now the largest patch of protected ocean on earth. By comparison, it is 100 times larger than Yosemite National Park; it is larger than 46 of our 50 states, and it is over seven times larger than the total of all of our national marine sanctuaries. Elliot Norse, president of the Marine Conservation Biology Institute, called the action *"the most important thing that President Bush has done for the envi-*

ronment since he took office." *"I think it's one for the history books,"* Norse says.

Earlier this month, IFCO/Pastors for Peace registered a huge victory. Pastors for Peace is a project of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), a national ecumenical agency which has been working for social justice since 1967. This year, it successfully led an aid caravan of nine vehicles carrying over 60 tons of humanitarian aid to Cuba. The aid, collected in 127 communities across the US and Canada, was delivered by the Pastors for Peace Friendship Caravan to Cuba, the 17th such effort in recent years. The motto of this 17th Caravan was "Cuba is our neighbor; end the blockade now." Past caravans have met much resistance and harassment from Homeland Security and Treasury officials, who selectively inspected and confiscated items of humanitarian aid including computers for disabled Cuban children. Last year, more than 100 past participants received letters from the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), threatening them with fines for traveling to Cuba. This year, however, the caravanistas, with solid legal support, remained highly disciplined and in high spirits as they faced long hours of interrogation from scores of officials. And their humanitarian cause was a full success. The Rev. Luis Barrios, IFCO board member, said, *"...we refuse to be intimidated from fulfilling our mission of humanitarian aid and fellowship."* Another caravanista is reported to have said, *"If there is a law against loving our neighbor, I want to break it."*

MVPP Monthly Meetings – North Parish Church – Tuesday, August 22 – 7:30 PM .
<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/>

Printed on recycled paper

Weekly Vigils

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We salute the 8 courageous members of the U.S. Congress who on July 20th were the only elected representatives to vote against House Resolution 921, a non-binding resolution backing Israel's escalation of violence in the Middle East.

The one-sided resolution passed by an overwhelming majority 410 in support, 8 against, and 4 present (the latter seen perhaps as a protest vote). It failed to condemn Israel's disproportionate use of force against civilian populations and infrastructure. The 8 representatives who had the courage to oppose the main-stream, unconditional support for Israel are lights in a gravely dark time: Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), John Conyers Jr. (D-MI), John Dingell (D-MI), Carolyn Kilpatrick (D-MI), Jim McDermott (D-WA), Ron Paul (R-TX), Nick Rahall (D-WV), Pete Stark (D-CA). *Editor's note: We urge MVPP members during the August recess to arrange personal meetings with our representatives, each of whom did not stand with their dissenting colleagues. We can not be complicit with the U.S.'s uncritical support for Israel right now. Nor can we be silent about the escalation of barbaric violence committed by all sides in the Middle East.*

Late-breaking Good News! Thanks to the hard work of several MVPP members, led by Brenda McCarthy, Barbara Haack, and Niki Rosen, MVPP is proud to announce that at 7 pm on September 23, 2006, we are sponsoring an evening with Helen Caldicott, M.D., internationally renowned physician, author, and activist for a sane and nuclear-free world. Her speech and book signing will be at Newburyport City Hall, which has a seating capacity of 300. Please help us to overflow the hall! (See Upcoming Events, p. 10.)

Local Action

"Where Is the Rage?"

Pat Scanlon's New Song to Wake People Up and End the War

MVPP member, Vietnam veteran, and songwriter/activist Pat Scanlon has written a stirring new song rooted in his burning passion to end the Iraq War. **"Where Is the Rage?"** is just the kind of protest song that our times desperately need. Now available on a CD, accompanied by Pat's reprise of his earlier "I've Got a Feeling I've Been Here Before," it could sweep far and wide and tap deeply into a latent American yearning for justice and peace.

Here's how Pat explains his song:

"Every day my stomach turns in knots when I hear the latest news report of another fallen soldier in Iraq, a war that did not have to be. War is ugly, horrifying, terrifying and very personal for the soldiers, their families and friends. During the Vietnam War we saw the tragic images of flag-draped caskets returning home. Today, we are not allowed to see those images. During the Vietnam War we heard stirring protest songs on the radio, but not today. During the Vietnam War parents and students felt personally threatened by the draft. Today, the vast majority of students are not in the streets protesting because the war does not directly affect them. It is poor kids who have their boots on the ground. Today, the absence of images, sounds and the draft contribute to a sense of separation and insulation from the war.

*"I wrote **Where Is the Rage?** to help people feel a connection to this war, a connection to the experience of the soldiers and their families. In order to end this war, it has to become personal for all of us.*

"I am connected to war. I am a Vietnam Veteran, a graduate of the U.S. Army Intelligence School. In 1969 I held a Top Secret Clearance, and served in J2 (Intelligence), Targets Division, Bomb Damage Assessment (BDA), B52s, MACV Headquarters in Saigon.

"The picture on the cover of the CD is of the casket of my best friend from high school, PFC Timothy McHugh USMC, as he arrived home from Vietnam at 30th Street Station in Philadelphia in March of 1968. This is the image we are not allowed to see today."

The production of Pat's first 2,000 CDs was sponsored and funded in part both by MVPP and by donations from some individual members. Pat's goal is to raise enough additional money to mobilize a grassroots effort to get this song heard by as many people as possible, as quickly as possible across the country. This means producing thousands more CDs and getting them in the hands of peace and justice organizations (the national umbrella of United for Peace and Justice covers approximately 3,500 itself) and into local radio stations, especially college, high school, and public radio.

Already, in addition to MVPP's initial support, Pat has received a highly enthusiastic response from many organizations who want to spread the song, including Massachusetts Veterans for Peace (who are taking 100 CDs to give to the state leaders at the National Convention of Veterans for Peace in Seattle in August),

AFSC in Cambridge and New Hampshire, New Hampshire Peace Action (who have taken the song to a recent national strategy meeting in Detroit), North Shore Coalition for Peace and Justice (who used the song in recent July 4th parades), House of Peace, Progressive Democrats for America, and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. The local Air America Radio Station wants to have Pat on an upcoming program. Further, Jean Hay Bright, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate from Maine, has made the song available for free download on her website, www.jeanhaybright.us/20060630_whereistherage.html, and has sent a press release about it to every news outlet in her state!

So, in just a short time, the "Where Is the Rage Project?" has gained strong legs. Any individual who contributes \$100.00 to the project will receive 25 CDs to give to family, friends, and associates. Donations of any amount will be appreciated. All donors will receive a small supply of CDs. Pat is giving the song away. Any organization working for peace can use the song in any way they see fit to help end the war. Every cent he raises for the project will be used to place the CD in the hands of peace activists, politicians, radio stations, and everyday people.

For further information, visit Pat's web site at www.patscanlon.com or e-mail him at patscanlonmusic@yahoo.com.

Those who wish to make a contribution should make checks payable to Pat Scanlon and mail them to: Where Is the Rage? c/o Pat Scanlon, 34 Washington Avenue, Andover, MA 01810.

Editor's comment: We urge members to consider supporting the ongoing work of this project and to swell the active effort to spread the CD all over the land. As MVPP President Bobbie Goldman said after Pat sang his new song at our Annual Meeting in June: "This song is what MVPP is all about."

"Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are."
--Ben Franklin

Urgent Action

Editor's comment: As we prepare to go to press, catastrophic events unfold in the Middle East, calling all of us to take action to halt the death and devastating suffering inflicted on hundreds of thousands of innocent people, a disaster with potentially unlimited dimensions and untold consequences. On July 18, United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) issued the following summons for "Emergency Action to Stop Israel's War." We commend this statement for immediate action against the "mutually assured destruction" now unleashed in the Middle East. (See the article by Chris Hedges that follows on p. 4.)

UFPJ Statement (7/18/06): "Stop Killing Civilians in Lebanon, Gaza, and Israel! Immediate Ceasefire! Start Negotiating!"

"George Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert are creating a humanitarian and political catastrophe in Lebanon and Gaza. Israeli military strikes have killed 210 Lebanese, almost all of them civilians; destroyed much of Lebanon's infrastruc-

ture; put Israeli citizens at much greater risk (29 Israelis have been killed since June 27th); and made a full-scale regional war a possibility.

"UFPJ opposes all violence against civilians. We condemn Hezbollah's attacks on Israeli civilians, and we condemn the Israeli assault in Gaza and Lebanon. We also see the vast differences in the scope and scale of these actions. As the French Foreign Minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy, described it, Hezbollah's seizure of the soldiers and firing rockets into northern Israel were "irresponsible acts"; Israel's bombing of the Beirut international airport was "a disproportionate act of war."

Israel's military offensive in Lebanon comes while Israel continues a separate siege of the Gaza Strip. Three weeks of Israeli air strikes and attacks have killed more than 60 Palestinians, stripped most of Gaza's 1.4 million residents of access to electricity and water, and plunged them into further deplorable living conditions. Just last Wednesday, 23 Palestinians were killed, including a family of nine.

George Bush is giving a green light to Israel's use of force, which is being conducted in part with U.S.-supplied weapons. The Bush administration's trampling of international law and national sovereignty in its war on Iraq has also emboldened Israel to disregard international condemnation of its behavior.

These U.S.-backed Israeli actions -- the disproportionate, collective punishment of civilian populations -- are illegal and irresponsible responses to the capture of two Israeli soldiers and killing of eight others in southern Lebanon, and the capture of an Israeli soldier in Gaza. In fact, Israeli peace activists have been in the forefront of pointing out that these are being used as pretexts by an Israeli government determined to use force to impose its will on Palestinians, Lebanese and other neighboring peoples.

United for Peace and Justice urgently calls on the Bush administration and Congress to:

- pressure Israel to immediately cease its military operations in both Lebanon and the Gaza Strip;
- work with international partners to broker an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Lebanon, Palestine, and Israel;
- commence negotiations to peacefully resolve outstanding disputes, including the release of prisoners held on all sides, an end to Israel's 39-year-old occupation of Palestinian lands, and implementation of U.N. resolutions on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

For a cease-fire and negotiations to have a chance, the Bush Administration's unconditional, one-sided backing of Israel's actions must end. **Now, it is more important than ever for the U.S. antiwar movement to be speaking out for a peaceful and just solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and an end to the U.S. role in sustaining it.**

TAKE ACTION: Hold the Bush Administration to account for its backing of Israel's killing of civilians and destruction of civilian infrastructure in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon.

Issues

Mutually Assured Destruction in the Middle East

by Chris Hedges

published on Common Dreams, 7/15/06, www.common-dreams.org/views06/0715-20.htm.

Lebanese youths gather on a hilltop at sunset Friday, July 14, to watch smoke billow from a fuel dump at Beirut International Airport, which was hit by an Israeli airstrike Thursday. Israel has intensified its attacks on Lebanon, striking hundreds of targets including highways and army bases to put pressure on the government and force Hezbollah to free two Israeli soldiers the guerrillas captured Wednesday. Seventy-three people have been killed in Lebanon since the offensive began.

Israel's air, land and sea blockade of Lebanon, which includes jet fighter strikes against the airport in Beirut, presages a new era in the Middle East, one in which the center has collapsed and Muslim and Jewish extremists, capable only of the language of violence, determine the parameters of existence. These strikes, like the suicide bombings carried out by Islamic militants in Iraq or Israel, expose the Ahab-like self-immolation that now inflects the region. And unless it is halted soon, unless those fueling these conflicts learn to speak another language, unless they break free from an indulgence in collective necrophilia, the Middle East will slip into a death spiral.

This has been a long time coming. The Bush administration never had any interest in helping to broker Middle Eastern peace agreements. This willful negligence was seen as befriending Israel, along with the bizarre demands of the Christian right. In fact, the administration befriended only an extreme political wing in Israel that, since the death of Yitzhak Rabin, has done a pretty effective job of endangering the Jewish state by dismantling all mechanisms for peace and turning Israel into an international pariah. As the machinery of Middle Eastern diplomacy rusted shut with disuse it was gleefully replaced by harsher Israeli closures, curfews, shelling and airstrikes. Palestinians have, since Bush arrived in office, been reduced by Israel to a subsistence existence matched only by Africans'. And the tools of repression against Palestinians now match those once imposed on South African blacks by the apartheid regime, with the exception that the South Africans never sent warplanes to bomb the townships.

And why should this not be so? In this binary worldview, force is the only thing Arabs understand. This logic only fuels those in the Arab world who also speak exclusively in the language of violence. The escalating repression by Israel, like the escalating repression by the American occupiers in Iraq, has become the most potent recruiting tool for Islamic extremists. It has rendered each side deaf and dumb. As those under the boot of Israel or America lose all hope for justice, as they give up on peaceful recourses to ameliorate their plight, as they fall into despair, it throws them, by default, into the hands of extremists. And as the extremists grow and their attacks became more deadly, it likewise helps silence those in Israel and the United States who call for compassion, restraint and understanding. It is difficult to argue with those holding up bloodied corpses. Each side finds it useful to keep the supply coming.

In this demented world, friend and foe need each other. Hamas and Hezbollah yearn, on some level, for Israeli airstrikes against

civilians just as the hard right in Israel yearns in some dark way for suicide bombers. The indiscriminate violence of one justifies the indiscriminate violence of the other. The violence stokes the fear that is the driving force behind all messianic, violent movements—American, Jewish and Muslim. And since these groups have nothing to offer other than violence, they need fear to keep those around them compliant. The atrocities committed by one—real or imagined – make possible the atrocities of the other.

Does anyone in the Israeli government really believe that attacking Lebanon and killing more than 60 Lebanese civilians will ensure the freedom of the two captured Israeli soldiers? There have been hostages, including Israeli hostages, taken captive in Lebanon before, and most have been freed through long and painful negotiations. If the Israelis do believe in this violence, it is a sad indication of how out of touch they are with the world that opposes them.

We cannot ascribe equal amounts of moral blame to all sides. Israel is the oppressor in Gaza, the West Bank and now Lebanon. America is the oppressor in Iraq. And there can be no hope for a peaceful resolution to these conflicts until Iraqis are freed from American occupation and Palestinians are allowed to build a viable state. It is the distorting and dehumanizing effects of occupation that made possible the proliferation of extremist groups that, albeit on a smaller scale, simply hand back to the occupier some of their own medicine. The numbers, after all, make clear that most of the victims are Palestinian, Iraqi and now Lebanese civilians, although the numbers game can also obscure the fact that the murder of any innocent by any group is indefensible.

This is the world of the apocalypse. It is the world where those on either extreme become indistinguishable. And if we do not find a new way to speak, and soon, there will be untold suffering—not only for many innocents in the Middle East but eventually innocents at home. It was the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon that spawned and empowered Hezbollah. It was the decades-long occupation and humiliation of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank by Israel that spawned and empowered Hamas, and it is the brutal American occupation that has bred the legions of extremists in Iraq. And when Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah promises “open war” against Israel, as he did in an address shortly after his Beirut offices were bombed, and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert says he won't cease his attack until Israel is secure, it is time to run for cover, especially when George W. Bush is our best hope for peace.

Chris Hedges, the former Middle East bureau chief for The New York Times, is a senior fellow at The Nation Institute. He has 15 years of experience reporting from war zones in the Persian Gulf, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Colombia, the West Bank and Gaza, Sudan, Yemen, Algeria, the Punjab, Bosnia, and Kosovo. In 2002, he shared a Pulitzer Prize for The New York Times' coverage of global terrorism. Hedges is the author of the bestseller “[War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning](#).”

“History teaches us that men and nations behave wisely after they have exhausted all other alternatives.”

—Abba Eban

Depleted Uranium

adapted from a piece by North Seattle Neighbors for Peace and Justice

Editor's note: The following piece has been adapted by MVPP for our use by our committee studying depleted uranium weaponry. We are grateful to North Seattle Neighbors for Peace and Justice, who have allowed us to use it among our handouts on this critical topic. The lethal issues related to DU remain top educational priorities for MVPP, especially since DU still is such a relative unknown to the majority of American citizens. We encourage anyone with new sources of information on DU to forward it to committee chair, Brenda McCarthy, at Brenda_McCarthy@msn.com.

Q: What is depleted uranium (DU)?

A: DU is a byproduct of the process that produces enriched uranium for use in atomic weapons and nuclear power plants. Both forms of uranium are very highly concentrated compared to uranium in the ground, and both are toxic and radioactive. Since DU has a half-life of 4.5 billion years, its radioactivity effectively lasts forever.

Q: What is it used for?

A: It's used as anti-armor munitions because it can pierce very heavy armor. It's almost twice as dense as lead, and will self-sharpen on impact. However, it also bursts into flame on impact and atomizes into microscopic radioactive particles that are easily inhaled.

DU is also used as armor in the Abrams tanks, and there is some question about the health effects on the soldiers sitting in Abrams tanks that are armed with DU ammunition. Leonard Dietz has addressed this in his research: "Exposure to gamma rays emitted from DU is another pathway into the body. Crews are exposed to the equivalent of one chest X-ray for every 20-30 hours they spend in an Abrams tank armed with DU ammunition (Ref. 30)."

There are also many reports that babies born to service personnel who were exposed to significant quantities of DU aerosol dust and DU fragments during the fighting, have significant health problems and birth defects.

Q: Wasn't it used in the Balkans and the 1991 Gulf War with very few health effects?

A: Thousands of veterans of the Gulf War have long-term health problems relating to their service in the Gulf, and there are indications that DU is a contributor to their problems. A November 2002 article in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer has pointed out: "Of the 696,778 troops who served during the recognized conflict phase (1990-1991) of the Gulf War, at least 206,861 have applied for VA medical benefits. As of May 2002, 159,238 veterans have been awarded service-connected disability by the Department of Veterans Affairs for health effects collectively known as the Gulf War Syndrome."

A December 2002 Christian Science Monitor article talks about the health effects on the local population of Iraq: "But the invisible particles created when those bullets struck and burned are still 'hot.' They make Geiger counters sing, and they stick to the tanks, contaminating the soil and blowing in the desert wind, as they will for the 4.5 billion years it will take the DU to lose just half its radioactivity." The article also mentions that Abdulkarim Hussein Subber, a gynecologist at the Basra Maternity and Children's Hospital, has three photo albums full of images of unimaginable birth defects that he claims are six times more prevalent today than before the Gulf War.

Q: Isn't it true that DU is 40% less radioactive than natural background radiation?

A: That's true when comparing one molecule of each to the other. But uranium in the earth is relatively scarce; on average there is about one teaspoon of uranium in 5 tons of earth. Background radiation comes from uranium radiating from miles below the earth, whereas DU is a much more "in your face" or (more accurately) in your lungs source of radiation, because it bursts into flames upon impact when used in combat, creating radioactive particles that are inhaled by anyone in the area (at the time of impact and afterward).

Geiger counter readings done recently in Iraq indicate that "DU shell holes in the vehicles along the Highway of Death are 1,000 times more radioactive than background radiation, according to Geiger counter readings done for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer."

Consider this: Water when you swim in it, is harmless, but aspirating it into your lungs is an entirely different matter. The same is true for uranium when it radiates at you from a highly diluted form in the soil, versus when you inhale concentrated bacteria-sized particles of it. And that's the form of exposure (inhalation) that's most problematic about DU: when it's used in combat, it bursts into flame (before or during contact with the target) and creates microscopic light-as-air uranium particles that are easily inhaled.

And inhalation can occur even long after the 'burning' event, since part of the dust which settles on the dirt and sand will be re-stirred whenever someone walks on it. Re-stirring includes the movement of children playing in the area, as can be seen from the photo in this article on DU contamination.

Once inhaled, or ingested by hand-to-mouth from dust-tainted objects, the DU enters the blood stream and travels throughout the body.

Q: Well, OK, so the route of travel makes a difference, but the Pentagon maintains that all uranium taken in is excreted by the urine. **Is there any evidence that DU stays in the body or causes any damage while in the body?**

A: It's been known since before DU was first used on the battlefield that it causes kidney damage when inhaled or ingested in high doses, but Armed Forces researchers have recently discovered that it can cause both short term and long term chromosomal damage (Dr. A. C. Miller), and has been detected in the semen of some Gulf War veterans (Dr. M. McDiarmid).

Q: Where can I find more information?

A: These are all useful beginning resources:

What is depleted Uranium?

www.cadu.org.uk/intro.htm.

Iraqi cancers, birth defects blamed on U.S. depleted uranium.

seattlepi.nwsources.com/national/95178_du12.shtml.

UN finds Kosovo nuclear danger, a special report from Guardian Unlimited.

www.guardian.co.uk/uranium/story/0,7369,423418,00.html.

Christian Science Monitor:

www.csmonitor.com/atcsmonitor/specials/uranium/.

"The Military Toxics Project":

www.miltoxproj.org/DU/DU_Titlepage/DU_Titlepage.htm.

Depleted Uranium Campaign at Traprock Peace Center:

traprockpeace.org/depleteduranium.html.

Uranium Medical Research Center:

www.umrc.net/.

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P.O. Box 573

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

Casualty count as of the end of February 2006:

- 1,129,339 have been deployed since the beginning of Gulf War I.
- Of this total, 939,217 (83%) are still alive. 17% have died.
 - of those still alive, 375,137 (40%) have applied for permanent disability.
 - of those who applied for permanent disability, 293,121 (78%) have been awarded permanent disability.

In short, of the 1.1 million healthy young Americans deployed as members of the U.S. armed forces since Gulf War I, **more than 25%**, had become permanently disabled by February 2006.

Statistics from Maj. Douglas Rokke, Ph.D., veteran of Vietnam War and Gulf War I, former head of the of Pentagon's Depleted Uranium Project, in a speech in Concord, NH, in May, 2006.

Nuclear Energy: It's neither Safe nor Clean nor Green nor Inexpensive

by Hattie Nestel, MVPP member who is in the vanguard of grassroots activists to close the nuclear plant at Vermont Yankee, Vernon, VT.

Everyone has a stake in closing nuclear power facilities and banning nuclear weapons. The Bush administration is now promoting nuclear energy as the answer to global warming and trying to convince us that it is safe, clean, green and inexpensive. Nowhere are we informed of the use of fossil fuels necessary to mine, process and transport uranium and other components to create nuclear power. Omitted from the issue is the fact that the plutonium that is created in nuclear reactors can then used to manufacture nuclear weapons. Hidden from public scrutiny is the fact that there is no system or facility to safely store highly radioactive waste for thousands of years. Disregarded in the push for nuclear power is the cellular damage resulting from the emissions of ionizing radiation during every stage of production in creating and running nuclear power facilities.

If nuclear power is so safe, why has the insurance industry, the federal government and the corporations that run the nuclear power facilities all stated that they assume no financial responsibility in case of an accident at any of the 103 operating nuclear power facilities in the United States? Historically the insurance industry and the government have denied medical benefits to

those who have suffered health consequences due to radioactive processing or emissions from nuclear facilities.

In order to dispel the myths created by the government that nuclear power is the answer to greenhouse emissions and a safe replacement for fossil fuels, I have compiled a short list of books I recommend and websites I refer to for credible information.

"Through the release of atomic energy," said Albert Einstein in 1947, "our generation has brought into the world the most revolutionary force since the prehistoric discovery of fire. There is no secret and there is no defense; there is no possibility of control except through the aroused understanding and insistence of the peoples of the world. We scientists recognize our inescapable responsibility to carry to our fellow citizens an understanding of the simple facts of atomic energy and its implications for society. In this lies our only security and our only hope--we believe that an informed citizenry will act for life and not death."

Understanding the inherent dangers of nuclear power, my hope is that you will join efforts to shut down nuclear reactors, ban nuclear weapons and advocate for safe, sustainable, affordable and renewable energy. I also want to encourage everyone to look into ways you can undertake conservation in your homes or businesses, which will greatly lessen our nuclear dependency.

Suggested resources with ISBN numbers follow for help locating books. Some of them need to be found as used books.

[Killing Our Own; The Disaster of America's Experience with Atomic Radiation](#) by Harvey Wasserman and Norman Solomon; 1982; Publisher, Delta; ISBN 0-440-54566-6. Well-documented history of health disasters and cover-ups by the nuclear power and nuclear weapons industries. Important case histories of American "guinea pigs" of America's nuclear industry. In-depth exposé of the Three-Mile Island accident and the effects of bomb testing and dropping of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs. Lifts the veils of secrecy surrounding our nuclear history.

[No Immediate Danger; Prognosis for a Radioactive Earth](#) by Rosalie Bertell; 1985; Publisher, The Women's Press, Toronto, Ontario; ISBN 0-88961-092-4 Publisher, the Women's Press, Toronto, Ontario. Dr. Bertell is one of the world's foremost researchers and recognized experts of the health effects of low-level radiation. As a member of the Order of Grey Nuns she campaigns internationally against the continued use of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. She shares her understanding of the biological effects of exposure to ionizing radiation, an integral part of the technology now being used to produce both nuclear power and nuclear weapons, and the political secrecy,

which has surrounded each. She is poignant as she asserts, “I have been grieving for the 16 million casualties already produced by our nuclear industries.” Comprehensive yet simply stated, a compelling page-turner!

Chernobyl: Environmental, Health, and Human Rights Implications—Permanent People’s Tribunal, Vienna, Austria 1996. Publisher, Permanent People’s Tribunal, Rome, Italy, and International Medical Commission on Chernobyl, Toronto, Ontario; ISBN 3-00-001534-5. A report from testimony of scientists, doctors and professors regarding the 1986 meltdown of Chernobyl—the day the world changed forever. In the foreword Adi Roche, executive director of The Chernobyl Children’s Project, states, “The magnitude of this accident has not been fully grasped by the international community. Not only were the predictions of the health effects grossly incorrect, but few are seriously looking at the incalculable damage to the victims...(This report) bears witness to the victims and will act as a vital tool to help us break the silence and to finally, tell the truth.” Finally, the Tribunal condemns the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for trying to promote nuclear energy through falsehood, intimidation, and unethical use of money power, and for their attempts to suppress all forms of alternative renewable and sustainable sources of power. Understanding Chernobyl puts the supposed “safety” of nuclear power in a completely different light.

Deadly Deceit; Low-Level Radiation, High-Level Cover-up by Jay M. Gould and Benjamin A. Goldman; 1990; Publisher, Four Walls Eight Windows, New York, NY; ISBN: 0-941423-35-2. A comprehensive statistical analysis of mortalities due to nuclear reactors at the Savannah River Site in Georgia, Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, Chernobyl in Ukraine, Peach Bottom and two at Millstone in Connecticut, and nuclear testing. Excellent charts and graphs help us comprehend the distribution and correlation of radioactive emissions to mortality and diseases that have escalated greatly since the dawning of the nuclear age.

Insurmountable Risks: The Dangers of Using Nuclear Power to Combat Global Climate Change by Brice Smith; 2006; Publisher, Rdr Books; ISBN 1571431624. While it involves some dense reading, this book provides meticulously researched analysis of the risks of considering nuclear energy the option of choice today. It also offers a thorough review of the history of the nuclear power industry--just the kind to answer pro-nuclear advocates and policy makers.

Recommended Websites:

Citizens Awareness Network: www.nukebusters.org.
Pilgrim Watch: www.pilgrimwatch.org.
Nuclear Information Resource Service, NIRS: www.nirs.org.
Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, IEER: www.ieer.org.
Union of Concerned Scientists: www.ucsusa.org.

Why Nuclear Weapons Should Matter

Editor's note: A characteristically thoughtful piece by this important writer, this article is of utmost urgency, given the policies of the current administration. It should be required reading by any citizen on the eve of the 61st anniversary of Hiroshima, once termed a "butchery of untold savagery" by Pope Paul VI.

by David Krieger, President of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation; May 2006;

www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2006/05/00_krieger_nuclear-weapons-matter.htm

For most Americans, nuclear weapons are a distant concern, and deciding what to do about them is a low priority. As a culture, we are relatively comfortable possessing nuclear weapons, believing that they are, on balance, a good security hedge in a dangerous world. We leave it to our leaders to determine what should be done with these weapons. But our leaders may be moving in exactly the wrong direction.

Seymour Hersh reported in the April 17, 2006 New Yorker magazine that the US government is developing plans for the possible preemptive use of nuclear weapons against Iranian nuclear facilities. Although George Bush dismissed such reports as “wild speculation,” he did not deny them. The reports should awaken the American people to some relevant issues. First, our political and military leaders are considering the preemptive first-use of nuclear weapons, an act that would undoubtedly constitute aggressive war and a crime against humanity. Second, these leaders hold open the possibility of using nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear weapons state, despite official pledges not to do so. Third, the decision about whether or not to use nuclear weapons preemptively rests in the hands of a single individual, the president.

The framers of our Constitution could not have imagined the circumstances of the Nuclear Age, in which the possibility exists of one leader triggering a nuclear holocaust, yet they wisely stipulated that the consent of Congress, the political arm of the people, would be necessary to initiate any war.

We need an open and vigorous discussion in every village, town and city about the anti-democratic and anti-Constitutional tendencies inherent in the presidential control of nuclear weapons. Without such discussion, we relegate the fate of the country and the world to the whims of a single individual.

In addition, an equally fundamental question must be confronted – have nuclear weapons increased or decreased our security as a nation? In today’s world, nuclear weapons are a far more powerful tool in the hands of a weak actor than in the hands of a powerful state. Thus, Pakistan can deter India and China can deter the US and Russia. A powerful state, such as the US, has everything to lose and very little to gain from the possession of nuclear weapons. This concern isn’t being effectively addressed in the US.

The more the US relies on nuclear weapons, the more likely it is that other countries will do so as well. The most reasonable course for the US to take is to provide leadership to bring the world back from the nuclear precipice by working to achieve global nuclear disarmament.

An argument can be made that a small number of nuclear weapons are needed for deterrence until they are all eliminated. But any threat or use of nuclear weapons for purposes other than minimum deterrence will certainly encourage other states to seek their own nuclear arsenals, if only to prevent being bullied by nuclear weapons states. This is the position that North Korea and Iran find themselves in today.

Current US nuclear policy favors allies, such as Israel and India, and threatens perceived enemies, such as Iran and North Korea. We are already engaged in an aggressive, illegal, protracted and costly war against Iraq, initiated on the false basis that it had a

nuclear weapons program. Iran, because of its uranium enrichment, is currently within US gun sights.

There is no conceivable US use of nuclear weapons, with their powerful and unpredictable consequences, that would not turn the US into a pariah state. The US engenders animosity by pushing beyond the limits imposed by minimum deterrence and failing to take seriously its disarmament obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It also creates a climate in which other states may seek to develop nuclear arsenals and in which these weapons may end up in the hands of terrorists. This should be a major concern for all Americans because it could lead to US cities being the targets of nuclear weapons used by extremist groups.

Polls show that Americans, like most other people in the world, favor nuclear disarmament. However, as a nation, we neither press for it nor question the nuclear policies of our government. But we refrain from such actions at our peril, for a bad decision involving nuclear weapons could destroy us. Inattention and apathy leave the weapons and the decision to use them beyond our reach.

Thus, we continue with nuclear business as usual, drifting toward the catastrophic day when our policies will lead either to nuclear weapons again being used by us or, as likely, against us by extremist organizations that cannot be deterred by threat of retaliation. We are long past time to bring our nuclear policies back onto the public agenda and open them to thoughtful public discourse.

Immigration: Start Over

by Laura Carlsen; June 29, 2006
www.tompaine.com/articles/2006/06/29/immigration_start_over.php

Editor's note: Laura Carlsen is the director of the International Relations Center of the Americas Program, <http://americas.irc-online.org/>. IRC "works to make the U.S. a more responsible member of the global community by promoting progressive strategic dialogues that lead to new citizen-based agendas." This article suggests that now, with politics on immigration stalled in Congress, activists have a chance to build consensus for a better law.

In recent weeks, newspapers featured variations of a stern-visaged soldier standing guard on the U.S.-Mexico border. The Bush administration's decision to begin deployment of thousands of National Guard members on the border sparked protests in both countries.

Combined with the raids on undocumented workers in mid-June, it also belied the benevolence of the current immigration reform that some had heralded as progress.

As the so-called security measures move full steam ahead, House leaders recently announced that they will hold public hearings over the summer before discussing a joint House-Senate immigration bill. Comprehensive reform has fallen off the fast track, and with the November elections complicating the political stage will likely not be taken up until next year.

Given the current political climate, that might be just as well. There is no doubt that immigration reform is an urgent national priority. Twelve million people living and working without citi-

zenship, legal security or labor rights not only hurts them but erodes the democratic base of society, divides communities and foments racism and discrimination. A labor market that encourages cheap immigrant labor while failing to offer legal status sends mixed messages to society about the role of its workers.

These profound contradictions must be resolved. However, the proposals on the board do little to really resolve them. The House law myopically interprets immigration as solely a problem of crime and punishment while the Senate version—closely following the proposals laid out by President Bush—attempts to reconcile labor needs with calls for "border security."

There is no logical or practical way to reconcile the portrayal of immigrants as security threats with their day-to-day role in the labor market and their communities. Imposing a security paradigm on the immigration debate has obscured the real issues and opened up dangerous tendencies within society.

Illegal immigration is a national problem, but it is not a national security threat. National security threats like drug trafficking and terrorism have not been linked to illegal immigration except in anecdotal cases.

Nor are immigration flows a crime wave to be combated. Unlike murder or theft, immigration itself is not a universally condemned criminal act. Under U.S. law it continues to be a civil violation and the history of immigration law shows that the law changes to conform to political and economic realities. Sometimes it lags significantly behind. Like now.

Since 9/11, many Americans have valid fears of outside attacks. But immigration is not a plot against the peace and security of the United States. It is a problem of labor flows. These stem from deep economic roots that include the economies of the immigrants' home countries, U.S. trade policies and the interplay between the two.

Bundling immigration reform with national security issues has confounded the debate and unleashed deep insecurities in society. Despite massive immigrant rights rallies that expressed the desire of the undocumented to become part of U.S. society—not attack it—mainstream media, vigilante groups, politicians and others continue to make the spurious link between immigrants, terrorists and even a fictitious attempt of Mexican nationalists to "re-conquer" the Southwest.

The conflation of immigration and security issues has painted an entire population—not just of undocumented workers but increasingly of Latinos in general—as criminals and threats to society. That kind of broad-brush approach is the perfect cover for extremist tendencies.

A recent report by the Anti-Defamation League documents a sharp rise in anti-immigrant rallies and hate crimes indiscriminately committed against Latinos in the United States. The report notes that "extremists have become increasingly emboldened by, and fixated on, the controversy over immigration policy, encouraging their supporters to capitalize on the issue by encouraging anti-immigrant activism, and even violence against all Hispanics." It warns that these groups now view immigration as a "wedge issue" to promote white supremacist agendas, with particular success in Southern communities.

A militarized border—and there is no doubt that sending troops in, whether permanent or temporary, is militarization—leads

invariably to conflicts and rising human rights violations. Slated increases in National Guard and border patrol officers will double the current number of law enforcement agents on the border, and there are plans to train state and local officials to take on the task. Many local officials in border states have said they do not want to be involved in this kind of work, arguing that given limited resources, seeking out illegal immigrants is not a law-enforcement priority and undermines neighborhood crime prevention programs.

Straddling irreconcilable positions is the opposite of taking a firm stand. The only real comprehensive immigration reform is one that accepts the right of immigrants--who go to work every day, who form part of their communities, who educate their children, and who add immeasurably to the wealth and diversity of our society--to obtain their rightful place as members of the nation. By creating legal channels for workers, we remove immigration from border security issues and free up resources to pursue drug traffickers, terrorists, and criminals who pose real threats to security.

As long as a punitive and military perspective persists as the dominant model for interpreting immigration reform, no progress can be made. In that case, it might be better for everyone, rights activists and legislators, to return to their communities and work to build a strong national consensus that would make the priorities peaceful co-existence, human and labor rights, and a rational immigration system.

Letter to the Editor

Editor's note: For the time being, the following excellent letter effectively closed out the recent local press coverage and debate about MVPP's counter-recruitment work by our members Jim and Mary Todd at the Greater Lawrence Technical School in early June.

Peace advocates offer a different view
published in the Eagle-Tribune; June 25, 2006

I read The Eagle-Tribune's editorial (June 19) on Merrimack Valley People for Peace. Since my name was mentioned I want to respond.

The editorial is right! Merrimack Valley People for Peace's message is not about equal time--it is about standing, witnessing and working for peace and justice.

We choose to raise questions and resist, not the military, but the civilian administrative structure that has taken us into an illegal and immoral pre-emptive war in Iraq. We agonize that such a questionable venture has led to over 2,500 deaths of U.S. troops and countless thousands of Iraqi civilians.

My father and uncle served in the Second World War and I saw them as heroes. One of my favorite bumper stickers says: "Honor the Dead, Heal the Wounded, End the War." Please do not conclude that people of peace do not honor those who live, serve and die in the military. Right now, however, some of us seriously question why any of these men and women had to sacrifice their lives.

Our presence in the Greater Lawrence Technical School was mainly to provide information that is often not disseminated by military recruiters. The theme of the presentation simply states: "Think Before You Enlist." We hope high school young men and women will thoughtfully consider whether the military is the right choice for them. While they have the right to choose the military, they should fully understand all the implications and outcomes. Some of the available information comes from veterans of several wars, including Iraqi veterans.

The school activity by MVPP members was called "proselytizing." We call it "information sharing." MVPP is there because we were granted permission to be there by a school committee and high school administrators. I doubt they would offer the same privilege to known racist groups.

I wish the editors had a higher respect for what "peacemakers" see as their goal for all people, regardless of nationality, race, culture, religion, etc. We do not hope to hold anyone hostage to political correctness. What we do hope to do is to raise issues of personal conviction ("PC") that builds peace.

While I would not personally share my faith in such a place as a high school, the editors need to know that my own personal reasons to work for a peaceable world comes directly from my Christian faith: "Love God, love your neighbor, love yourself...love (act with goodwill toward) your enemy." These teachings of Jesus challenge and compel me to be among the groups of people who, for whatever reasons (religious, ethical, humanitarian) strive to bring about the same ends for all humanity.

Men and women in uniform can be a part of that peacemaking effort and many die for the cause. But peace advocates--antiwar activists--as the editorial states, also work for a sustainable future on our planet. Our members commit themselves to the interrelated actions of education for peace and justice, the prevention of war, an end to the arms race, the abolition of nuclear weapons and the protection of the environment. I wish The Eagle-Tribune editors could find a way to embrace peacemaking efforts as well.

Jim Todd, Lawrence

Upcoming Events

compiled with the help of Sue Imhoff

Thursday, July 27, 6:00 pm: "WHY WE FIGHT," 2nd offering of the Boston Political Film Festival. The film inspired by President Eisenhower's famous farewell speech, sternly warning of the "military industrial complex" from which half a century later our nation can not become disentangled. The movie shows how a free public can become so powerless in the face of the tightly woven connection of political, corporate, political, academic, and Pentagon interests that have led to wars and calamities through the years. This film will be shown free of charge. For further information: elisa_02128@yahoo.com or 617-523-3957. **Boston Public Library, West End Branch, 151 Cambridge Street in Boston, near City Hall.**

Monday, July 31, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm: "WILL the GOP Steal the 2006/2008 Elections?" Features Harvey Wasserman, Ohio writer and long-time peace and anti-nuclear activist, who will speak about the 2004 election as well as the upcoming 2006 and 2008 elections. Wasserman came to Washington with 50 people from Ohio in January 2005 to constitutionally challenge the election results of Ohio. He has a lot to say about what we can do to improve our elections. Free and open to the public. N.B.: The space is not wheelchair accessible. For further information: 781-316-2018. **Church of Our Saviour, 21 Marathon Street, Arlington, MA.**

Tuesday, August 1: Forum to discuss the conditions of war affecting people in Boston and the U.S. Sponsored by the African People's Solidarity Committee with two featured speakers: Diop Olugbala (Lead Organizer for International People's Uhuru Movement, Brooklyn, N.Y.) and Penny Hess (National Chairwoman for African People's Solidarity Committee, author of *Overturning the Culture of Violence*). This is an international group working under the leadership of the African People's Socialist Movement and the Uhuru Movement (a group whose goals are to unite, organize, and liberate all African and oppressed people worldwide.) For further information": harri-sondaniels@hotmail.com. **Jackson Mann Community Center, 500 Cambridge St. in Allston, MA.**

Sunday, August 6, from noon to 5 pm: "SING FOR PEACE - A Pro-Peace Concert on the Parkway." Co-sponsored by the First Unitarian Society of Exeter, NH, The Exeter Congregational Church Music Committee, and The West Epping Preparatory (Quaker) Meeting. Celebrate the possibility of peace with a variety of upbeat music at the new pavilion on the parkway in Exeter. Performers will include Randy Armstrong, hailed by the Boston Globe as a "sure-fingered guitar virtuoso," who plays more than 200 instruments from around the world; the Leftist Marching Band; The Peacemongers; Ned Chase; and other popular regional musicians (including MVPP member/songwriter/singer Mary Kate Small). Performance poetry by Patricia Frisella, President of the Poetry Society of New Hampshire and area representative for The Peace Alliance, also will be showcased. Any donations will support The Peace Alliance, a non-profit group forging practical new ways to create peace on domestic, community and international levels, as envisioned in the proposed U.S. Department of Peace (www.thepeacealliance.org). Further information: contact Holly at holly_thewritehand@comcast.net. **Swazey Parkway, Exeter, NH.**

Thursday, August 17, 7:30 pm: Screening of "AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH." Al Gore's acclaimed film on global warming, followed by a panel discussion. Sponsored by The Timberland Company. Free admission. Further information: Amy Antonucci at amyla44@juno.com or Phyllis Killam-Abell at pkillamabell@comcast.net. **The Music Hall, 28 Chestnut Street, Portsmouth, NH.**

Monday, September 4, noon to 6:30 pm: Bread and Roses Festival in Lawrence. MVPP again will have its table at this major community festival—the 22nd in an annual series—featuring music, dance, food, children's entertainment, and more. For further information: Becci Backman at 978-475-5679 or raback@ix.netcom.com. **On the Common in Lawrence, MA.**

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, September 23, 7:00 pm.

HELEN CALDICOTT, M.D.

Internationally renowned physician, speaker, and author.

After her speech, Dr. Caldicott will be signing her recently released book: **Nuclear Power is Not the Answer.**

Sponsored by MVPP.

Newburyport City Hall,
60 Pleasant Street,
Newburyport, MA.

Suggested fee at the door: \$10.



Saturday, September 30, 7:30 pm: Holly Near in Concert—Benefit for United for Justice with Peace. Singer, songwriter, and activist, Near is defined by her passion for human rights. For more than 35 years, she has traveled to every corner of the country and around the world, singing for peace and justice. From concert halls to rally stages, Holly's voice gives strength to those in the front lines of struggle. This is her first solo concert in Boston in years. A full house is expected, so order your tickets soon for this important benefit. Suggested price: \$35; Sliding scale from \$20 -\$60. For further information: 617-491-4857 or ujpcoalition@yahoo.com. **Arlington Street Church, 351 Boylston Street, Boston.**

Books of Note

Recommended Reads compiled by Don Abbott

Joan Chittister, Murshid Saadi Shakur Chisti, and Rabbi Arthur Waskow, with a foreword by Karen Armstrong. *The Tent of Abraham: Stories of Hope and Peace for Jews, Christians, and Muslims*, Beacon Press, 2006. At a time when extreme religious beliefs spawn unspeakable violence, along comes this book to reenergize the story of Abraham, as found in Jewish, Muslim, and Christian sources, as a basis for peace. An accessible exploration of the mythic teachings of reconciliation rooted in the Torah, Quran, and the Bible. A fascinating weaving of strains of wisdom from major religious traditions. Grist and balm for minds and souls that ache for the stories and the language that can help build communities across the walls that otherwise divide, estrange, and destroy us.

Al Gore. *An Inconvenient Truth: The Planetary Emergency of Global Warming and What We Can Do about It*, Rodale, 2006. The companion publication to the acclaimed documentary film of the same title, Gore's clarion call to heed the indisputable climate crisis facing life as we know it on earth today. Its visual and textual impact places before all of us a moral imperative to act. Its warnings may contain truths that are inconvenient to our "civilized" way of life, but their order of magnitude is incalculably significant. To ignore them will mean that the planetary emergency will only grow, perhaps exponentially.

Meizhu Lui, Bárbara Robles, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Rose Brewer, and Rebecca Adamson, with United for a Fair Economy

(UFE), one of our country's leading economic justice organizations. The Color of Wealth: The Story behind the U.S. Racial Divide, The New Press, 2006. An excellent follow-up to the earlier publication spearheaded by Chuck Collins and Felice Yeskel of UFE, Economic Apartheid in America. Written by five leading experts who identify the key points of intersection between race and class and reveal the role our government has played in shaping inequality in our society. A unique multicultural history of American wealth with a vision of greater equality, it stands to add much to our national conversation about opportunity and justice.

John Pilger. Freedom Next Time, Bantam Press, 2006. The latest work by the renowned journalist and film-maker that documents why true freedom for much of humanity remains a distant dream. Vivid eyewitness reporting from Palestine, India, South Africa, Afghanistan, Britain and the U.S. reveals unreported truth about the façades of empire and the enduring struggle of people for their freedom. Vandana Shiva once called for "an insurrection of subjugated knowledge." With his characteristic brand of truth-telling, Pilger is leading the uprising.

Howard Zinn, with David Barsamian and a foreword by Arundhati Roy. Original Zinn, Harper Perennial, 2006. A collection of recent conversations between the noted historian and activist and the founder and director of Alternative Radio. Taking their cue from unrehearsed questions, the interviews spark with spontaneous originality and wit on topics ranging from American militarism to civil disobedience to the critical historical discipline of remembering to the role of various artists as agents of social change. In his trademark manner--with acute perception and a probing mind--Zinn engages and inspires us once again with fresh historical insight and essential perspectives.

Curbside Chatter

July 12; Drenching rain soaks Andover's Old Town Hall Square. A car heading downtown pulls to the curbside in front of a single vigilier with his flag. The driver leans over and rolls down the passenger side window.

Driver: I don't believe in what you are doing, but you are brave to be standing there like that all this time.

Vigiler: Oh, no. It's the soldiers who are brave--those who have been asked to do wrong, yet resist.

July 14; Two women cross Main Street, and one glances toward the vigilier.

Woman: So, you're all by yourself tonight.

Vigiler: Oh, but there are lots of people with me.

The woman stops in the middle of the street. She stares, then smiles and nods in recognition.

Vigiler: I'm never alone.

The woman smiles again and walks on, still nodding.

Poetry

Editor's Note: On the second day of the Sukkat Bat Shalom (September 2002), a Palestinian woman from the Ramallah was visiting her sister in the area. She saw the Sukkah, and she stopped and asked to read a poem to those assembled. She read the poem in Arabic, and a Bat Shalom activist read the translation to Hebrew that the Palestinian woman gave her. Bat Shalom is a feminist peace organization working toward a just peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Bat Shalom, together with the Jerusalem Center for Women, a Palestinian women's peace organization, comprise The Jerusalem Link. The following translation into English is by another Bat Shalom activist.

I and You

by a Palestinian mother

I wept today and you will weep tomorrow.
Maybe you've wept for your husband and tomorrow you'll weep for your son.
Let me tell, I've already wept for both my son and husband.
I wish I could walk into every house around carrying within me anguish and heartache and mourning.
Come, mother of Ibrahim and mother of Itzhak, let's weep together, you and me.
Longing for our loved ones unites us, you and me.
Motherhood unites us, you and me.
The heart aches.
Let's remember if in life there is no place for us on this earth,
We have place enough under it.
Let's pray together, mother of Ibrahim and mother of Itzhak.
I and you are the conscience.
I and you are love and peace.
I and you are the bridge to truth.

All I Have

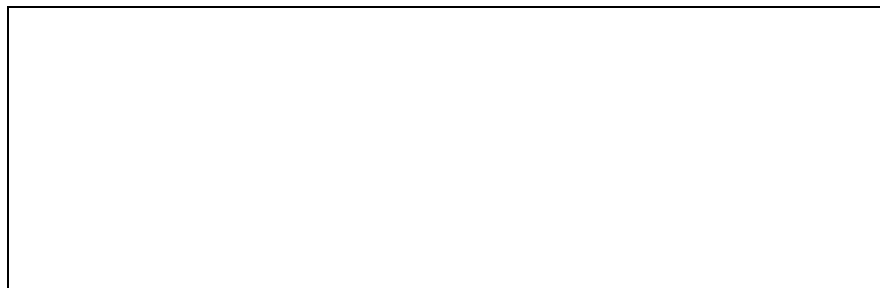
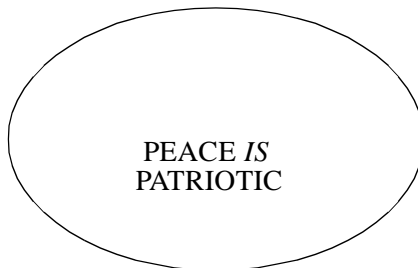
by Tawfiq Zayyad
trans. Sharif Elmusa and Charles Doria

I never carried a rifle
on my shoulder
or pulled a trigger.
All I have
is a lute's melody
a brush to paint my dreams,
a bottle of ink.

All I have
is an unshakeable faith
and an infinite love
for my people in pain.

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



The MVPP Newsletter is printed monthly and has a current distribution of 200. We are grateful for suggestions, comments, and help with publication. (Unless 2006 appears on your label, your dues have expired. Please remember to renew.)
MVPP President: Bobbie Goldman. Vice President: Becci Backman. Newsletter Editor: Don Abbott. Newsletter contributors: Becci Backman, Arthur and Margaret Brien, Bobbie Goldman, Sue Imhoff, Brenda McCarthy, Hattie Nestel, Brian Quirk, Pat Scanlon, Boryana Tacconi, and Jim Todd.

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E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

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2400 JFK Building, Boston MA 02203
617 565-3170 fax: 617 565-3183
Form: <http://kennedy.senate.gov/contact.html>

Senator John F. Kerry

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Form: <http://kerry.senate.gov/text/contact/email.html>

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E-mail: <http://www.house.gov/tierney/email.htm>

A link to all in US legislature:

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

How Senators and Representatives voted:

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

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