



Merrimack Valley People For Peace

Serving the communities of the Merrimack Valley

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

September 2005

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

GOOD NEWS

compiled with the help of Boryana Tacconi

Only weeks away from a horrendous and heartbreaking national disaster of such overwhelming dimensions, how do we open the current issue with Good News "as usual?" Without chiming into the "things-are-under-control, go-on-with-your-normal-life" mood that we all know so well? Yet, recent months have given us examples of many positive events that should not be forgotten. So, as we recall some of them, may they be hopeful guideposts in our difficult work ahead...reminders that the human spirit can take the measures of suffering, injustice, and oppression that come our way, and even work for some good in their midst. Individuals--alone and together--can take action that says, Yes, in spite of everything.

In July, Hattie Nestel, our pacifist friend and activist MVPP member, joined the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance on a long walk from Augusta, GA, to Oak Ridge, TN, a pilgrimage organized to renew the call of citizens for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Hattie's witness was another in a long line of hundreds of peaceful protests against nuclear weapons she has participated in since her first trip to Hiroshima in 1985. She remarked: *"It is difficult to wake up to the realities and horror the United States has inflicted on other nations for materialist gains. The bombing (of Hiroshima) was to create superiority in the world and so everyone would know we had nuclear weapons and not to mess with us."*

In August, other friends and members, John and Carrie Schuchardt of the House of Peace in Ipswich, spent 10 days in Japan honoring and praying for the hundreds of thousands who died as a result of the U.S. bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 60 years ago. Their principal mission was to offer apologies to the Japanese people for our country's first use of these horrific weapons upon their citizens. They attended ceremonies at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial on August 6 and in Nagasaki on August 9. They met with survivors and their children, held a nine-day fast and vigil during their stay, and traveled city side-walks and busy streets carrying a sign with words of sorrowful apology: *"We Americans Apologize With Deepest Sorrow and Remorse for the Sufferings Caused by the Nuclear Holocausts."* See excerpt from John's article in the Ipswich Chronicle on p.8.

Throughout August, a new depth of feeling against the war in Iraq spread across the whole country in response to what first started as a single person's vigil. Cindy Sheehan really inspired people with the idea that one person can make a difference! Did she expect to be joined by hundreds in no time? Did

she envision "Camp Casey I" and "Camp Casey II" with a turnout of about 5,000 over the weekend of August 27-28? The outpouring of support and love from many thousands more, the flowers, letters, donations to the camp? The inspiring atmosphere in the protest site, described by almost everyone who was able to be there? She called the response "overwhelming and amazing" and confessed to be scared to death of becoming an icon. More than 50,000 across the country registered for 1,627 candlelight vigils in support of Sheehan, quickly organized through MoveOn.org. (85 participated at the Andover vigil--the most that we have had since the worldwide vigil on March 16, 2003, just before the war started--and several communities across New England reported hundreds in attendance.) In Cindy's own words: *"This definitely is a mainstream thing (for) normal Americans who know that the war is a mistake and want it to be over. Enough is enough."*

"Camp Casey III" is now operating out of Covington, LA--a group of volunteers, many of them from Veterans for Peace, who moved straight to Louisiana from Crawford to organize a grassroots relief effort.

Massachusetts State Representatives voted to adopt a resolution to ban nuclear weapons and support the campaign of the International Mayors for Peace. This historic move was achieved through the grassroots efforts of residents of small towns in Western Massachusetts. The campaign to encourage mayors in Western Massachusetts to sign on to the Mayors for Peace Emergency Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons originated with activists at the Peace Pagoda in Leverett, MA, coordinated with volunteers out of the local office of the AFSC. Organizing education and outreach activities in their own towns, peace activists built up so much support from residents that one by

MVPP Monthly Meeting – North Parish Church – Tuesday, September 27, 2005, 7:30 PM Printed on recycled paper
<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org>

Weekly Vigils

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

one, nine Massachusetts mayors signed on. The House resolution was sponsored by state representative Peter Kocot (D-Northampton). He also worked to get the support from other representatives to pass it. Companion legislation will be introduced in the state Senate this fall.

The "Raging Grannies" in Tucson, AZ, recently engaged in and were arrested for one of the season's most innovative acts of civil disobedience, after which charges eventually were dropped. Five grandmothers, ranging in age between 65 and 81, were part of a group that had been protesting at a Tucson military recruitment center every week for three years. Then they "crossed the line." They showed up to enlist, and when they were told repeatedly that they were too old, they protested this policy and sat down in the office, refusing to move. They insisted that they wanted to go to Iraq so that their children and grandchildren could return home! The charges of trespassing were dropped. The "Grannies" declared that they will continue to protest outside the recruitment center "until there is no longer a need to be there."

U.S. municipalities are taking official stands against the continuation of the Iraq War. On September 14th, the Chicago City Council passed a resolution demanding the removal of U.S. troops from Iraq. By a vote of 29-9, with 12 abstaining or not voting, the Council urged "the United States government to immediately commence an orderly and rapid withdrawal" from Iraq. To support this urgency, the resolution stresses that the financial share of appropriations borne by Chicago residents for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan now exceeds \$2.1 billion. This action received considerable support from numerous peace and justice groups in Chicago neighborhoods that garnered over 6,500 signatures from every Ward in the city ahead of time. The day beforehand, Evanston, IL, a prominent suburb north of Chicago had voted against the war. Last month, Gary, IN, had taken its similar stand.

On September 15th, the Philadelphia City Council passed a similar resolution calling for the administration to "rapidly withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq expeditiously." The resolution passed by a vote of 16-1. Front and center as key advocates for this position were members and friends of the Bring Them Home Now Bus Tour, including Celeste Zappala, co-founder of Gold Star Families for Peace. Chicago, Philadelphia, and San

Francisco now are among the largest major U.S. cities in such public opposition to the war.

On September 15th, Boston City Council President Michael Flaherty announced his opposition to the Boston University BSL4 Bioterrorism Lab. In fact, his decision was to withdraw his earlier support. As he explained by letter to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, he called for the immediate halt of plans to construct the lab, asserting that Boston is not prepared to deal with an accident at such a facility and that to build it now would be "neither a responsible nor safe venture." He further explained that one of the reasons he reconsidered his position was the "total breakdown of government response" to the devastation of Hurricane Katrina on the Gulf Coast. Now, will Mayor Menino sense the winds of change on this highly controversial and dangerous project and rethink his position? Time to put the pressure on him!

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, independent media and personal eyewitness accounts keep providing uplifting stories of the persistently courageous, creative, and generous work of everyday people--victims and rescuers alike. Not the disproportionate focus of the major media on the activity of a criminal minority--the looting, violence, and anarchy that called for armed force to secure New Orleans. As one e-mail correspondent on the scene wrote: "*There are a million stories of inspiration, love, hope, affection and community from New Orleans. The focus should be on the 99 1/2 percent of people who were brave and patient and who managed to help others.*"

Curbside Chatter

Driver rolls down window and yells: "You ever fought in a war?"

Vigiler, smiling: "You ever lived in a democracy?"

Pedestrian, over her shoulder: "I'm with you, but I can't stand there with you."

Vigiler: "I'm sure you do what you can though."

RECENT EVENTS

Snapshots of highly successful events since late July compiled with the help of Becci Backman

Lowell Folk Festival: July 28, tabling from 11 am to 8 pm; hands-down, the most productive counter-recruitment effort yet for MVPP, in conjunction with Greater Lowell for Peace and Justice. People sometimes were lined up 3-5 deep for information, including many veterans and military family members.

Andover Vigil on Nagasaki Eve: August 8, 7 pm to 8 pm; a very moving witness with at least three dozen people on the square in front of Old Town Hall; song, poetry, and readings; highlighted by statements by young students.

Raytheon Vigil on the 60th Anniversary of Nagasaki: August 9, 6:30 am to 8:30 am. Fifteen to 20 people joined the weekly vigil of Raytheon Peacemakers at the front entrance to Raytheon on Rte. 133. Toward the end, Peacemaker and MVPP member Mary Kate Small and her friend, Tom Feagley of Malden, participated in a solemn act of civil disobedience for which they were arrested and charged with misdemeanors of obstructing traffic. Prior to her arrest, she said, "We were looking for weapons of mass destruction all over Iraq, and we have weapons of mass destruction right here." They received a \$20 fine which they refused, and the judge substituted four hours of community service which they accepted.

Vigils in Solidarity for Cindy Sheehan: August 17, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm at Old Town Hall, Andover; MVPP hosted the MoveOn.org vigil supporting Cindy Sheehan, with 85 in attendance. Concurrently, MVPP members joined other solidarity vigils in Gloucester (300-310 people), Ipswich (65 people), and Market Square in Newburyport (150 people). Additionally, about half a dozen members attended the vigil in Boston Common on the previous Saturday evening, August 13; Paul Brailsford, 89, of Ipswich, founding member of Veterans for Peace and long-time MVPP member, was featured in a large photograph in the August 14th Boston Herald, as he asked: "Why did you make this war? Did you make it for oil? Let's get one big cheer for Cindy."

Bread and Roses Festival: Labor Day tabling in Lawrence from 1 pm to 6 pm. MVPP's annual participation at this Festival was a great success. A large percentage of the estimated 10,000 attendees visited our booth, signed petitions, picked up literature on numerous issues, and purchased merchandise. Many thanks to Bill Sweet of AFSC for his assistance and literature countering the military's recruitment of our youth.

Paws for Peace Festival: September 11 in Amesbury; we set up our tables at this inaugural Festival, and event that the organizers (Kids and K9Assist of Amesbury) hope will grow annually. More than 1,000 adults and kids, along with their tail-wagging friends, visited Woodsom Farm and many stopped by the MVPP booth. They signed petitions, learned about MVPP's activities, and purchased merchandise. Again, our heartfelt thanks to Bill Sweet of AFSC for his able contributions and assistance.

MAJOR ACTION

Counter-Recruitment DVD

"THINK BEFORE YOU ENLIST: A Reality Check"

*Editor's Note: As part of our core commitment to education for peace and justice, MVPP participates actively in counter-recruitment education along with other regional and national groups. The most recent manifestation of our work is our support for the creation of the DVD, "Iraq Veterans Speak Out," and its recent distribution with our folder of critical information, **THINK Before You Enlist: A Reality Check.** We now have 500 copies of the DVD (half of the total order) which we are distributing with its accompanying packet at no charge to individuals who either work with young people of high school or college age or who personally know others in such work (Other peace and justice groups in the Greater Boston region have received the balance of the initial DVD order.) We urge all members to help with this distribution, and if you want one or more full packets, please contact Don Abbott at 978-474-9253 or bdabbott@comcast.net.*

Kudos to Noble Larson of Arlington, MA for his tireless efforts to edit and improve the DVD as initially produced by "Documenting Dissent" of Golden, CO and Arlington, MA.

The following is the core text of the letter that introduces the DVD and its packet of supporting information:

September 2005

Merrimack Valley People for Peace (MVPP) is pleased to make available the enclosed DVD and its accompanying folder of information for your use in presenting students and parents with a reality check about military service. We do so to:

- help young people understand today's realities of war and military service;
- refute false or incomplete information too frequently provided by military recruiters and advertising;
- inform young people and their families about their rights; and
- provide young people and their families with resources and contacts for exploring options to military service.

The DVD - Iraq Veterans Speak Out

The DVD features members of two groups associated with veterans and military families - **Iraq Veterans against the War** (www.ivaw.net/) and **Military Families Speak Out** (www.mfso.org/ - speaking in the Greater Boston area in winter 2005. It includes presentations and a Q&A session with young people at **The Center for Teen Empowerment, Inc.**, an organization in Roxbury, MA (www.teenempowerment.org). Approximately two hours long overall, it is laid out as follows, with buttons for easy navigation.

The first 45-minute segment consists of:

- Introduction by **Nancy Lessin**, co-founder of Military Families Speak Out (MFSO), whose stepson, a Marine, served in Iraq;

- Talk by **Michael Hoffman**, a founding member of Iraq Veterans against the War (IVAW), a Marine Corps Lance Corporal, who participated in the initial invasion of Iraq in March, 2003;
- Talk by **Kelly Dougherty**, a founding member of IVAW, a member of the Colorado National Guard, who joined the Guard to serve as a medic, but ended up serving as an MP in Iraq;
- **Talk by Rose Gonzalez**, a member of MFSO, whose mother was called up from the Massachusetts National Guard and is still driving convoys in Iraq;
- Talk by **Debra Lucey**, sister of Marine Reservist Corporal Jeffrey Lucey, who described her family's attempts to get help for Jeffrey after he returned from Iraq with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and to cope with his suicide after the VA had failed to provide the mental health care he needed; and
- Wrap-up to the initial segment by **Charley Richardson**, co-founder of MFSO, whose son, a Marine, served in Iraq.

The next 40-minute segment contains speeches by Michael Hoffman and Charley Richardson at Teen Empowerment, and the lively Q&A session that followed. The teens heard about the realities of war, commented on their preconceived notions, and asked tough questions about what it means to serve in the armed forces.

The DVD closes with remarks by (1) Boston City Councilor **Chuck Turner**; (2) **Diane Quinones**, MFSO member from Lowell, MA; and (3) tour organizer, **John Harris** of Chelsea, MA.

The Packet of Written Information

The materials contain an **opt-out letter** or form for students or parents to return to their school, plus documents that (1) pose questions every potential enlistee should ask; and (2) expose misinformation contained in promises often made by military recruiters. We have separately indexed the materials.

We have drawn on a variety of sources, including the **American Friends Services Committee**, **Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors**, the **Student Peace Action Network**, and **major news services**. We urge you to copy and distribute the materials widely.

Suggested Use

MVPP has developed this information for use by students and adults who work directly with high school and college age young people or who play key roles in their education, job training, or career orientation. We strongly urge that you view the DVD before presenting it to groups. Some parts, more than others, may be particularly suited to your specific audience. We believe there are segments that are important for everybody! Please use and reuse to suit your needs.

We strongly recommend that you allow follow-up time(s) to discuss the information presented. Plan for leading a discussion of questions you wish to have your group explore. For starters, we suggest:

- What questions would you now ask of the returning veterans or military recruiters?
- What experience have you, your family, or your friends had with military recruiters?
- What do you think is missing from this presentation?
- Do you want to be trained to kill another human being?
- Were you aware of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and its implications?
- What are your viable options to enlisting in the military?
- Do you believe that the United States/the Veterans Administration/Congress are adequately compensating and caring for our veterans?
- What steps can you take to address the problems being faced by returning combat veterans?

Counter-recruitment education is a top priority for MVPP because too many of the messages and programs in the media and in education increasingly justify war, glorify violence, and militarize our youth. We respect those who believe they have a duty to serve our country through military service, but we believe that everyone has the right to make an independent and informed choice.

Machismo Meets Haiku

Don Abbott, poetaster

Bush's conundrum.

We can't get out, 'cause we can't.

We're not strong enough!

Action for Peace in Iraq

Shift the debate about Iraq in a new direction.

Urge passage of a resolution being promoted by Friends Committee on National Legislation, FCNL (see www.fcnl.org for full text of the resolution and a toolkit for action).

The resolution's key clause: "It is the policy of the United States to withdraw all U.S. military troops and bases from Iraq."

This simple resolution, called STEP (Sensible Transition to an Enduring Peace), charts a significant first step toward a policy of U.S. withdrawal from Iraq. While some might be concerned that the resolution has no punch--nary a deadline, timetable, or exit strategy--it has value for exactly what it is: a transparent statement of U.S. policy and intentions.

As such, it sends an important message, as FCNL states, "to the people of Iraq, the United States, and the rest of the world that the U.S. does not have imperial intentions in Iraq and that the U.S. does not plan to occupy Iraq permanently (militarily or economically)." Furthermore, it reframes the debate in Congress,

“which has so far been focused on military strategy instead of other aspects of rebuilding and recovery.” The resolution makes clear that it is the legal and moral responsibility of the U. S. to restore security, rebuild Iraq, and return sovereignty to the Iraqi people.

The resolution could gain support from a broad spectrum of political viewpoints and establish a basic platform from which all details of withdrawal could be built. We encourage members to press elected representatives to support FCNL’s initiative.

Now is the time to shape the country’s change of course. Polls indicate that a growing majority of Americans is against the war. While many in Congress may remain unconvinced that the people support a strategic shift vis-à-vis Iraq, it is the “public debate” that must be changed, because it is so narrowly framed in terms of “cut and run” anxieties. Post-Katrina, more and more people are waking up to the fundamental reality that our nation must redefine its priorities and stop squandering our economic, social, and environmental resources. Let’s jolt Congress awake to the reality that business as usual in Iraq is over and that the administration’s doctrine abroad and at home is dead.

Please also note for study and consideration. There is at least one other active proposal for major change in the U.S. course of action in Iraq--away from occupation toward peace and reconstruction:

“A People’s Petition for an Iraq Peace Process”

<http://pdamerica.org/petition/iraq-withdraw-petition.php>

It proposes five major principles as essential to ending the war in Iraq:

- 1.) U.S. declaration of no interest in permanent military bases or control of Iraqi oil or other resources.
- 2.) Declarations of U.S. goals for ending the occupation and bringing the troops home.
- 3.) U.S. request of U.N. to monitor the process of disengagement and de-escalation and to organize a peaceful reconstruction effort, with full U.S. acceptance of its obligations toward that process.
- 4.) U.S. appointment of a peace envoy independent of the occupation authorities.
- 5.) Engagement by the peace envoy in talks with Iraqi opposition groups, including insurgents, to explore a political settlement.

Post-Katrina:

“Where is the national debate about our priorities which Katrina should prompt? What does it take to wake us up? It is a debate that must begin, if not on this Senate Floor, then in the barber shops and grocery stores of America and in the print and broadcast media of this great nation.”

— U.S. Senator Robert Byrd; 9/13/05

What Can We Do? What Have We Learned?

Commentary by Don Abbott

As we go to press, the impact of Hurricane Katrina and the untold suffering it has caused continue to be revealed in dimensions that defy explanation and description, with consequences that will play out for years and years to come. In the aftermath of a catastrophe of such magnitude, our psyches numb, and we find it harder and harder to address what has really happened and why, much less to discover how to respond.

What can we do? Relief agencies of all kinds call for our assistance. Many are reputable. Several may be fraudulent. Some provide immediate charitable help. But some funnel dollars into complex bureaucracies with overhead, while others put the money directly to work at the grassroots level. It’s a struggle to evaluate the options for giving what we can, no matter the amount.

Then, the long-haul nature of the reconstruction and the massive amount of money it will require are mind-boggling. How shall dollars be allocated and for whose benefit? For what vision? It is becoming clearer that long before the storm hit, the Gulf Coast cities and communities had been victimized by decades of poverty, racism, and environmental degradation. And as the curtain is drawn back on the deep-seated realities in that region, we may become even more sensitized to the similar realities closer to home--the victims of the widening societal divide between the minority who have and the growing majority who do not. Where then shall we place our priorities and extend our personal resources?

For me, however daunting this all seems, however unclear the road ahead, two guideposts are always at the ready: 1.) go grassroots and 2.) build and rebuild for justice.

Early and incomplete research tells me to put my contributions toward local, grassroots efforts for humanitarian relief, recovery, and community development. An excellent website with links to such organizations is www.sparkplugfoundation.org/katrinarelieff.html. Within this large group, I particularly call attention to the **Southern Mutual Help Association**, a 36-year-old rural development organization serving Louisiana, with a solid track record in handling money responsibly and achieving mission (www.southernmutualhelp.org). It inevitably happens that in long recovery efforts, rural areas come in last and receive the least. SMHA has set up a special Rural Recovery Fund to assist the rural poor in Louisiana. Checks may be made payable to “**SMHA – Rural Recovery Fund**” and mailed to [Southern Mutual Help Association, Inc., 3602 Old Jeanerette Road, New Iberia, LA 70563](mailto:SouthernMutualHelpAssociation, Inc., 3602 Old Jeanerette Road, New Iberia, LA 70563). Further information is on the above website. Three additional umbrella groups are worthy of consideration: [Gulf Coast Community Foundation](#), [Greater New Orleans Foundation](#), [Baton Rouge Area Foundation](#).

Also, one of my mentors, Bill Coffin, reminds me that charity, while important, is differs from justice. He has written, “*Charity is a matter of personal attributes; justice, a matter of public policy. Charity seeks to alleviate the effects of injustice; justice seeks to eliminate the causes of it. Charity in no way affects the status quo, while justice leads inevitably to political confrontation.*” Here comes the challenge for us. Once we have responded to the immediate crisis, what shall we have learned about the root causes of it--social, economic, political, environmental--and how will that understanding inform our continuing

progressive activism on behalf of the victims of unjust policies in our country and our world?

What we have relearned so far: poverty is a growing national crisis (data from The U. S. Census Bureau).

- 37 million** = total number of people living in poverty in the U.S.
- 13 million** = number of children living in poverty.
- 1.1 million** = number of people who fell below the poverty threshold between 2003 and 2004.
- 4** = number of consecutive years in which the poverty rate has risen in America.
- 8.6%** = percentage of whites in poverty.
- 21.9%** = percentage of Hispanics/Latinos in poverty.
- 24.7%** = percentage of African Americans in poverty.
- 45.8 million** = number of people without health insurance.

As stated by the UJP flier for the September 24th March on Washington: *"Hurricane Katrina has shown just how wrong our nation's priorities are. Resources that could have been used to save lives are instead tied up in a war that continues to kill Iraqis and U.S. servicepeople. Out nation is at a crossroads: Will we continue to squander resources and take lives in a war that never should have happened? Or will we commit ourselves instead to addressing the urgent human needs in the Gulf Coast and overcoming the racial and economic divide in this country?"*

If there ever was a time for a clear, indivisible union of purpose between peace groups and economic and social justice groups, the time is NOW!

What the waters have revealed

by Jim Wallis
from Sojourners; 9/9/05

In what may be the most catastrophic natural disaster in American history, the waters of Hurricane Katrina are washing away our national denial of just how many Americans are living in poverty, our reluctance to admit the still persistent connection of race and poverty in America, and even the political power of a conservative ideology that, for decades now, has seriously eroded the idea of the common good.

The pictures from New Orleans have stunned the nation. They have exposed the stark realities of who is suffering the most, who was left behind, who was waiting in vain for help to arrive, and who is facing the most difficult challenges of recovery. The face of those stranded in New Orleans was overwhelmingly poor and black, the very old and the very young. They were the ones who could not evacuate; had no cars or money for gas; no money for bus, train, or airfare; no budget for hotels or no friends or family with room to share or spare. They were already vulnerable before this calamity, now they were totally exposed and on their own. For days, nobody came for them. And the conditions of the places they were finally herded to ("like animals," many testified) sickened the nation.

From the reporters covering the unprecedented disaster to ordinary Americans glued to their televisions watching their reports, a shocked and even outraged response was repeated, "I didn't realize how many Americans were poor." Powerful images have emerged along with the pictures. "We have now seen what is under the rock in America," said a carpenter in Washington DC.

The vulnerability of the poorest children in New Orleans has been especially riveting to many Americans, especially other parents. Many say they had trouble holding back their tears when they saw mothers with their babies stranded on rooftops crying for help or jammed into dangerous and dirty places waiting for help to arrive. And the pictures may get worse as countless bodies are brought out of New Orleans. Even Homeland Security Director, Michael Chertoff, is warning that it will be horrible and gruesome. Clearly, a very high percentage of those bodies will be poor, black, elderly, and even children. The public anger may grow.

As a direct result of Katrina and its aftermath, and for the first time in many years, the media are reporting on poverty, telling Americans that New Orleans had an overall poverty rate of 28% (84% of them African-American), and a child poverty rate of almost 50% - half of all the city's children (rates only a little higher than other major cities and actually a little lower than some others). Ironically (and some might say providentially) the annual U. S. Census poverty report came out during the Hurricane's deadly assault showing that poverty had risen for the fourth straight year with 37 million Americans stuck below the poverty line - and they were the ones most stuck in New Orleans.

Katrina has revealed what was already there in America; an invisible and mostly silent poverty that we have chosen not to talk about, let alone to take responsibility for in the richest nation on earth. This week, we all saw it; and so did the rest of the world. And it made Americans feel both compassionate and ashamed. Many political leaders and commentators, across the ideological spectrum, have acknowledged the national tragedy, not just of the horrendous storm, but of the realities the flood waters have exposed. And some have suggested that if the aftermath of Katrina finally leads the nation to demand solutions to the poverty of upwards of a third of its citizens then something good might come from this terrible disaster.

That is what we must all work toward. Rescuing those still in danger, assisting those in dire need, relocating and caring for the homeless, and beginning the process of recovery and re-building are all top priorities. But dealing with the stark and shameful social and racial realities Katrina has revealed must become our longer term but clear goal. That will require a combination of public and private initiatives, the merger of personal and social responsibility, the rebuilding of both families and communities, but also the confronting of hard questions about national priorities. Most of all it will require us to make different choices.

The critical needs of poor and low-income families must become the first priority of federal and state legislatures, not the last. And, the blatant inequalities of race in America, especially in critical areas of education, jobs, health care, and housing which have come to the surface must now be addressed. Congressional pork barrel spending which aligns with political power more than human needs must be challenged as never before. That requires a complete reversal of the political logic now operating in Washington and state capitols around the country - a new moral logic must re-shape our political habits. In the face of this natural disaster, during a time of war, with already rising deficits; new budget cuts to vital programs like food stamps and Medicaid, and more tax cuts for the wealthy in the form of estate tax repeal and capital gains and stock dividend reductions, would now be both irresponsible and shameless.

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MVPP is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions to MVPP are tax deductible. **Membership renewals continue to arrive, but slowly. Members owe dues if mailing labels do not say "2006."** 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.

Restoring the hope of America's poorest families, renewing our national infrastructures, protecting our environmental stability, and rethinking our most basic priorities will require nothing less than a national change of heart and direction. It calls for a transformation of political ethics and governance; moving from serving private interests to ensuring the public good. If Katrina changes our political conscience and re-invigorates among us a commitment to the common good, then even this terrible tragedy might be redeemed.

Letters by Members

Slow Response to Poor and Blacks

The Eagle-Tribune; published September 5, 2005

I am appalled at the slow response of the Bush Administration to the needs of the people victimized by Hurricane Katrina.

Newscasts are filled with reports of the dead and dying; most are poor and black. If this hurricane destroyed Hilton Head and its surrounding area, the Bush Administration would respond more quickly because the "haves and the have mores" are Mr. Bush's base. Not so the poor black people of the gulf.

Choices were made, at the federal level, to cut funding for infrastructure repair. If the levees of New Orleans had been reconstructed, perhaps the devastation from Katrina would not have been as great. Choices were made to cut taxes for the wealthiest among us while infrastructures of cities continue to decline.

Mr. Bush is not a compassionate conservative. He and his administration are calloused to the needs of the poor. This administration is more concerned with Iraqi occupation and with the control of oil. Even during this time of national crisis, the oil industry continues to amass record profits; sons and daughters of the poor and working class of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama continue to fight in Iraq and worry about their families back home.

Never, in my 58 years, have I experienced such hideous disregard from a presidential administration. But then again, George W. Bush is taking care of his base. The rest of us can die of thirst, hunger or simply drown. And this is the United States?

Brenda McCarthy, North Andover

What does it take?

Newburyport Daily News; published September 12, 2005

A recent letter printed in The Daily News that condemns Cindy Sheehan misses the point. The letter's author chooses to attack the person of Cindy Sheehan rather than face the painful truth of her message: that this nation and the men and women sent to war in Iraq have been lied to and manipulated to serve an administration that keeps its real agenda from the public; that this terrible and useless war is spawning more threats and devastation with each passing day. Credible and documented information that makes clear the administration's duplicity is available to anyone willing to read it. I implore Cindy's detractors to truly inform themselves, to make an effort to go beyond the party line.

For decades environmentalists have warned that the dangerous loss of wetlands through development, dam building and levees was imperiling the city of New Orleans and surrounding areas. Many have tried valiantly to bring about the development of alternative fuels, recognizing the severe social, economic and environmental consequences of dependence on oil. Global warming, air pollution, the dwindling of fish stocks are but a few of the real dangers we face. And yet, for the most part, people seem oblivious to these threats and often, as in the case with this administration, environmentalists are scorned and belittled for their concerns.

What does it take? Peace activists are attacked for seeking a world that promotes peace, not bloodshed. Environmentalists are attacked for seeking sane policies to safeguard everyone's well being. Human rights organizations struggle with the hostility of those who would bludgeon the world into submission to serve the greedy ends of a powerful few. What does it take for people to recognize that they are already involved in the failure and consequences of not dealing in a sane way with the realities facing us? Military might cannot, and will not, solve our problems.

Diana Philip, Newburyport

Does George Bush support the troops?

Newburyport Daily News; published August 10, 2005

Consider the following.

After the invasion of Iraq the Bush administration supported decreased benefits to families of soldiers killed in Iraq. It rolled back imminent-danger pay and family separation allowances and refused to consider military tax relief. Medical services for returning veterans are seriously under-funded. A bipartisan February 2005 Congressional study found that the Pentagon can't track the wounded nor assure they all get necessary attention. Families of servicemen often face serious financial hardship.

Some soldiers have had to fortify their own vehicles with sand bags and plywood as armored vehicles have been in short supply; some have depended on family and friends to send walkie-talkies from electronics stores for means to communicate with other soldiers in the field; there have not been enough Kevlar vests to go around.

Meanwhile, individual private contractors are paid from \$600 to over \$1,000 per day; corporations such as Halliburton continue to reap vast profits paid in U.S. tax dollars (even when it is known to overcharge for its services) and the private arms and support industries thrive. The reasons for the invasions given by the Bush administration have long since proven to be false, and documents such as the Downing Street memos continue to surface showing how the public was duped. The conditions in Iraq seem to grow worse by the day and the lives of ordinary Iraqi citizens have become a nightmare. According to the prime minister of culture in the current Iraq government – a woman – conditions for women were better when Saddam was in power, and the future appears very bleak.

Over 1,800 troops have been killed and over 15,000 injured, and tours of duty are repeatedly extended. Iraq is in shambles and the entire region is dangerously unstable.

George Bush uses the troops, but it cannot be said that he supports them.

Diana Philip, Newburyport

Atomic bombing of Japan was unnecessary

The Eagle-Tribune; published on August 17, 2005

I write in response to the editorial published Aug. 7, 2005, concerning the use of A-bombs to end the conflict with Japan.

A book titled "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," has very strong evidence to rebuff the editorial's view that President Truman made the right choice to drop the A-bomb. In that book, the author, Gar Alperovitz, and a dedicated team of patient researchers, working many years, came to a different conclusion.

They quote convincing statements made by many of our country's highest-ranking World War II military leaders, men who ordinarily would not speak publicly of such controversial war matters.

One quote made by a good friend of Harry Truman, Fleet Adm. William D. Leahy, a top admiral who presided over the U.S. Joint chiefs of Staff during World War II, stated a few years after the war: "It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our

war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender..."

A second example the research provides are words of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe against the Nazis, as well as a future president of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Recalling the 1945 moment when then Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson informed him the A-bomb would be used against Japanese cities, Eisenhower stated: "During the recitation of relevant facts, I had been conscious of a feeling of depression and so I voiced to him my grave misgivings, first on the basis of my belief that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary and secondly because I thought that our country should avoid shocking world opinion by the use of a weapon whose employment was, I thought, no longer mandatory as a measure to save American lives. It was my belief that Japan was, at that very moment, seeking some way to surrender with a minimum loss of 'face'..."

Again, less than a year after the bombings, an extensive official study was made public by the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey. It concluded that Japan would likely have surrendered in 1945 without atomic bombing, without a Soviet declaration of war and without an American invasion.

Many other examples that support the above are available from the text stated earlier.

The truth must be made known that thousands of innocent men, women and children died or are still suffering from the effects of our immoral and unnecessary dropping of the A-bomb.

I think both countries owe one another apologies.

I pray that, for the future of humanity, the united States will cease using nukes and mini-nukes as strong links in our foreign policy and does an about face and sincerely works to abolish all nuclear weapons!

J. Arthur Brien, Lawrence

We harvest what we have sown

The Ipswich Chronicle, excerpt from *Guest Column*
published on September 1, 2005

...The Second World War held a Pyrrhic military victory for some but ultimate moral defeat and failure, as well as military contradictions for all. For the first time American justified indiscriminate fire-bombing and extermination of civilian populations of the major cities of Germany and Japan. For the first time America waged war against women and children. Victory did not and could not bring peace nor the end of war. Rather, the atomic bombs brought the full possibility of the end of the world.

There is a law of cause and effect in human history: we inexorably harvest what we have sown. It is an immutable law like gravity, known to all religions and to great prophetic leaders of our time like Gandhi, Thomas Merton, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., John Paul I, Ven. Nichidatsu Fuji, and innumerable World War II combat veterans like Rev. Philip Berrigan, Kurt Vonnegut, Ramsey Clark, and John Kennedy. Evil means produces evil ends; violence always produces violence. General Omar Bradley said it well, "We know all about killing and nothing

about living. We know all about the mysteries of the splitting of the atom and nothing about the Sermon on the Mount."

Peace was the hope of my five uncles who returned alive from World War Two. They aspired to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war," as stated in the Charter of the United Nations. They sincerely believed they had fought to establish peace, not to plant the seeds for global annihilation.

Human morality and conscience have a meaning and a purpose; they guide us towards life and the preservation of life. Is there still time for a great awakening of conscience that could be a beacon drawing us towards human survival and away from extinction?

John Schuchardt, Ipswich
(one of the original members of Plowshares Eight 25 years ago--September 9, 1980--and co-founder of the House of Peace in Ipswich)

Upcoming Events

compiled with the help of Sue Imhoff

Saturday, September 24 through Monday, September 26: March on Washington to End the War on Iraq! Sickened by the killing, the torture, the destruction, and the spiraling human and financial costs of the illegal and immoral war? Join United for Peace and Justice for three powerful days and action to tell Congress and the White House that we are fed up and will hold them accountable. Three Days of Massive Action: Saturday the 24th--March On Washington to End the War On Iraq; Sunday the 25th--Interfaith Service/Grassroots Training; Monday the 26th--Lobby Day/Nonviolent Direct Action/ Civil Disobedience. For further information: ujpcoalition@yahoo.com or Becca at 617-491-4857.

Saturday, September 24, 1:00 pm: CAN'T GET DOWN TO WASHINGTON? For those who can't go to Washington for the big Mobilization, come to the regular 6-year-old Saturday Vigil for the Iraqi People sponsored by the Committee for Peace and Human Rights. **Join others at the Park St. "T" Station at Boston Common**, who will show their support for the Washington demonstration and their opposition to the war in Iraq. We will make a strong statement of our own that Boston wants peace in Iraq, even those who didn't make it to Washington. For additional information: nosanctions@yahoo.com.

Friday, September 30, 4:00 pm: 2004 Nobel Peace Laureate, Wangari Maathai, at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Sponsored by The Public Forum at the Kennedy School. For further information: dieterwier@aol.com. **Lithauer Center at the Kennedy School.**

Saturday, October 1, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm: "Talking Back" to Whitman: Poetry Matters. The 2nd Ikeda Forum for Intercultural Dialogue. This year marks the 150th anniversary of Walt Whitman's masterpiece, *Leaves of Grass*. As scholar Ed Folsom has noted, "Poets from Whitman's time to the present have continued to engage in dialogue with him, literally 'talking back' to him just as he talked forward to 'Poets to Come'." Join us as we celebrate diverse voices, from Asia and the Americas, who have responded to Whitman's poetic vision. For further information: adminassist@brc21.org or 617-491-1090. **396 Harvard St. Cambridge, MA.**

Saturday, October 1, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm: Daniel Ellsberg in Cambridge! Daniel Ellsberg of the infamous Pentagon Papers will be speaking with **Bernard Lown, M.D.**, Nobel Laureate and co-founder of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). This program is part of the 25th anniversary observance of IPPNW, whose Board of Directors are coming to Cambridge from four continents to discuss the future of nuclear proliferation and the role of this medical organization in promoting peace. Open to the public. For further information: amyh@technology.com or 617-738-8029. **Episcopal Divinity School Auditorium, 99 Brattle St. Cambridge.**

Saturday, October 1, 8:00 pm: Concert featuring Kim and Reggie Harris. Two vibrant, superbly talented and engaging performers whose captivating stage presence has inspired audiences around the world for over 25 years. Sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Andover. Donation: \$10. Refreshments. Doors open at 7:30 pm. **The Coffeehouse at 6 Locke Street, Andover, MA.**

Sunday, October 2, 2005, 6:30 pm: Talk by Eli Pariser, MoveOn Campaign Director, entitled "Reclaiming Democracy." Sponsored by Ford Hall Forum and WAND Education Fund. Moderated by WAND Executive Director Susan Shaer. Pariser will speak about his work, the state of democracy, and what lies ahead. **Faneuil Hall, Boston.**

Friday, October 7, 7:30 pm: ACKNOWLEDGING 40 YEARS OF SPEAKING OUT FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE. A benefit for United for Justice with Peace, featuring Noam Chomsky. From 1965 to 2005, Chomsky has analyzed U.S. foreign policy and been an outspoken critic of U.S. wars on Vietnam, Iraq and the proxy wars on Central and Latin America. He generously gives his time to peace groups for fundraisers. UJP is taking the opportunity to acknowledge his longstanding commitment to peace and justice by offering program sponsorships until 9/30, and an advance ticket for a \$50 donation. Please make checks payable to UJP, PO Box 390449, Central Square, Cambridge, MA 02139. Remaining tickets may be available at the door on a first come first served basis the night of the event. For information: ujpcoalition@yahoo.com or 617-491-4857. **First Church in Cambridge Congregational, 11 Garden Street.**

Saturday, October 8, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm: Annual St. Francis Day Celebration; "Say No to the Lords of War, Yes to All Living Things." Presented by the Agape Community. Iraq War Veterans (including the family of Jeffrey Lucey); Megan Bartlett from Ground Zero for Peace, 9/11 First Responders against the Iraq War; storyteller George Cappaccio; musicians Fran Reagan and Lynne Smith; Holyoke Catholic HS a capella Choir; John and Carrie Schuchardt; and others. For further information: peace@agapecommunity.org or 413-967-9369. **Agape Community, 2062 Greenwich Road, Ware, MA.**

Thursday, October 20, evening: Peacework's Annual Pat Farren Memorial Lecture featuring Jennifer Harbury. A benefit evening of readings and discussion with the attorney, author and activist who has spent years working for human rights reforms in Guatemala and the U.S. Author of upcoming book, *Truth, Torture, and the American Way: The History and Consequences of U.S. Involvement in Torture*. She also is the Director of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's STOP torture campaign. Suggestion donation: \$50 - \$10, sliding scale. \$5 high school students. For further information: 617-661-6130. **Cambridge Friends Meetinghouse, 5 Longfellow Place, Cambridge (opposite 101 Brattle Street).**

Wednesday, October 26, 7:00 pm: “Granny D” Doris Had-dock will speak at an event scheduled by Seacoast Alliance for Democracy. Topic: keeping our democracy alive. For further information: Nancy Brown at NRGBrown@aol.com. **South Church, 292 State Street, Portsmouth, NH.**

Wednesday, October 26, 7:00 pm: Panel Presentation—“The Patriot Act: Balancing Public Safety and Civil Liberties.” Sponsored by The League of Women Voters of Andover/North Andover. Panelists: Kimberly Lynn, Chair, Intellectual Freedom Committee, MA Library Association; Tom Powers, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, FBI Boston Division; Carol Rose, Executive Director, MA ACLU; and a representative of the US Attorney for MA (to be named). **Rogers Center for the Arts, Merrimack College, 315 Turnpike Street (Rtes. 114 & 125), North Andover.**

Friday, October 28 evening (exact time TBA): “Thirty Years of Change: Marking the 30th Anniversary of the American Friends Service Committee's New Hampshire Program.” Guest Speaker: **Holly Sklar**, widely published columnist and author (*Raise The Floor: Wages and Policies that Work for All of Us*). Long associated with the AFSC, she is the editor of AFSC's recent publication, *Putting Dignity and Rights at the Heart of the Global Economy*. For further information: www.afsc.org/nh. **Concord Unitarian Universalist Church, 274 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH.**

Friday, October 28 and Saturday, October 29: “Hemisphere on the Brink: Building Movements to Reverse Politics of Oppression. Fall Conference of Witness for Peace New England. Speakers will include Noam Chomsky, Flor Rivera, Mateo Bernal, and Janna Bowman. For registration and information: 802-434-2980. **Woolman Hill Retreat Center, Deerfield, MA (413-774-3431).**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 11 am: STOP THE WAR! MASSIVE MOBILIZATION ON BOSTON COMMON. REGIONAL PEACE AND JUSTICE GROUPS ARE NOW PLANNING THIS MAJOR FOLLOW-UP TO THE SEPTEMBER MARCH ON WASHINGTON. End the Occupation of Iraq! Military Recruiters out of Our Schools! Fund Human Needs, Not War! For further information: www.oct29.org. or 617-338-9966, option 5.

Books of Note

Recommended Reads, compiled by Don Abbott

Harvey J. Kaye: Thomas Paine and the Promise of America, Hill and Wang, 2005. Bill Moyers says this is “the best political book of the year.” He may just be right. Kaye traces the life and ideas of this revolutionary writer and thinker and follows his fascinating influence up to our day, despite Paine's checkered public treatment by critics over time. The reader is left with a vivid sense of Paine's central position in the “radical” and “revolutionary” tradition of America, and the timeless relevance of his insight and spirit.

Kathy Kelly: Other Lands Have Dreams; from Baghdad to Peking Prison, CounterPunch and AK Press, 2005. This courageous peace activist never relinquishes hope. And few writers can help us understand the pain of others better. Vivid testimony by one who has made nonviolence an active living force, who records the secret casualties of our time across the spectrum of

war and incarceration. She challenges and inspires us to see the humanity and dignity of victims of U.S. power...and to stand with them to resist and transcend such force.

Charles Marsh: The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice from the Civil Rights Movement to Today, Basic Books, 2005. Traces the history of the spiritual vision of Martin Luther King Jr. over the past four decades. Shows that, despite periods of destructive weakening and disillusionment, the vision remains a vital, even growing, source of moral energy and activism today, promoting social justice in ways markedly different from the “faith-based initiatives” typically portrayed by popular political media. A captivating account of faith in action, at a time when race remains the major moral challenge for America.

Carl N. McDaniel: Wisdom for a Livable Planet, Trinity University Press, 2005. The author highlights the visionary work of eight “environmental pathbreakers”: Terri Swearingen, Dave Foreman, Wes Jackson, Helena Norberg-Hodge, Werner Fornos, Herman Daly, Stephen Schneider, and David Orr. An antidote to the rumored “death of environmentalism” and a wellspring of insights into how, against all apparent odds, individuals can think and plan and act and teach in ways that bear promise of improved conditions for the continuation of life as we know it.

Michael N. Nagler: The Search for a Nonviolent Future, A Promise of Peace for Ourselves, Our Families, and Our World, Inner Ocean Publishing, 2004. The winner of the 2002 American Book Award and written by a renowned peace scholar. Explores why people commit acts of inhumanity, what positive alternatives there are to confronting violence, and specific ways each of us can in fact do something on behalf of a nonviolent future. According to Rabbi Michael Lerner, “Every political leader and every teacher should be required to read this book.”

Notice re. Meeting Minutes

Minutes for the monthly MVPP meetings in July and August are posted on our website.

If you would like a hard copy of either or both of these meetings, write to

Don Abbott
300 South Main Street
Andover, MA 01810

Other Relief Funds to Consider for the Gulf Coast

(See listing at www.justicewithpeace.org or call UJP office at 617-491-4857.)

- **Community Labor United; www.gecr.org.**
- **Louisiana Environmental Action Network; www.leanweb.org.**
- **The Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights; www.msworkerscenter.org.**
- **Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children; www.jjpl.org.**

POETRY

Memory's Insistence

by Don Abbott

The insistence of memory
disrobes denial
strips off Bikini's bra and thong
disarms security's caress
and lifts the curtain
on the *danse macabre*
staged for the affections
of the unbottled genie.

Memory's piercing lament,
eternal cry of innocent blood,
transfuses the heart
pulses the veins
evokes contrition, summons forgiveness
makes bold our resolve:

Abolition, not depletion!
Never again. Not once.

For All

by Gary Snyder

Ah to be alive
on a mid-September morn
foraging a stream
barefoot, pants rolled up,
holding boots, pack on,
sunshine, ice in the shallows,
northern rockies.
Rustle and shimmer of icy creek waters
stones turn underfoot, small and hard as toes
cold nose dripping
singing inside
creek music, heart music,
smell of sun on gravel.

I pledge allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the soil
of Turtle Island,
and to the beings who thereon dwell

one ecosystem
in diversity
under the sun

With joyful interpenetration for all.

What We Need

by David Budbill

The Emperor,
his bullies
and henchman
terrorize the world
every day,

which is why
every day

we need

a little poem
of kindness,

a small song
of peace

a brief moment
of joy.

NEWS FLASH

Romney should apologize for remarks

The Boston Globe; published September 20, 2005

The members of the Merrimack Valley People for Peace ask Governor Mitt Romney to apologize and recant his recent speech to the Heritage Foundation on Sept. 14. The governor suggested that mosques should be wiretapped, and Arab students in Massachusetts put under surveillance in an effort to gather more domestic intelligence (page A1, Sept. 15).

And who will be next to come under suspicion? Christians? Pat Robertson, a noted Christian evangelical leader, advocated a terrorist act when he suggested that U.S. agents should assassinate Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Do all Christians warrant surveillance?

And how about native-born white men? The Oklahoma City bombing was committed by Timothy McVeigh.

Terrorists are real, and precautions should be taken to safeguard our country. However, without our freedoms, the country in which we live will be a mere shadow of the America we cherish.

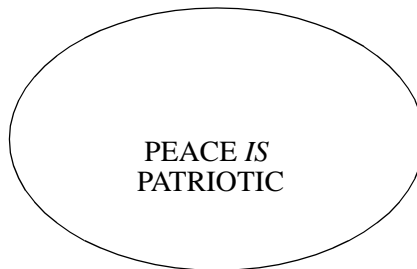
We must jealously guard the freedoms we have left. Being an American citizen requires civic participation: keeping informed, questioning when things need to be questioned, and standing up for the freedoms we hold so dear. Complacency could bring a day when we all awaken to find that, because we failed to pay attention and act, our rights have been usurped under the guise suggested by Governor Romney.

We at Merrimack Valley People for Peace deplore Governor Romney's suggestions because they pose the greatest threat to the freedoms all Americans take for granted. We see a real danger in Romney's divisive words.

Bobbie Goldman, President, MVVP

Merrimack Valley People For Peace
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North Andover, MA 01845-0573

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



The MVPP Newsletter is printed monthly and has a current mailing of 160. 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, Barbara Haack, Sue Imhoff, Brenda McCarthy, Diana Philip, Brian Quirk, John Schuchardt, and Boryana Tacconi.

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

President George W. Bush

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

Senator Edward M. Kennedy

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

Senator John F. Kerry

304 Russell Senate Office Building
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202 224-2742 fax: 202 224-8525
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617 565-8519 fax: 617 248-3870
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>