

MARYLAND UNITED FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE, INC.

SUMMER 2005 NEWSLETTER Volume 16, Number 3

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Note: All opinions expressed in this publication are those solely of their authors and do not necessarily reflect those of MUPJ and/or its members...as usual! Many thanks to Carol Solomon, Ron Solomon, and Paulette Hammond for helping with this issue.



WAR IS NOT THE ANSWER: WHAT IS? Wrap-up

The twentieth Annual Maryland Peace, Justice, and Environmental Conference was held on Friday evening, April 29 and Saturday, April 30, 2005 at the Evangelical Lutheran Church, 35 East Church Street. in Frederick, Maryland. It was sponsored by Maryland United for Peace and Justice, MUPJ— Institute For Positive Action (IPA) and the Peace Resource Center of Frederick.

On Friday, April 29 we held a Pot Luck Dinner. About 20 people showed up to share dinner, engage in informal networking, share fellowship, and set up the church for the conference the next day.

Saturday, April 30 started with registration, groups and individuals setting up their tables, bagels, cream cheese, coffee, and tea. About 130 people attended the conference, the largest group in years. We were welcomed to Frederick by Mayor Carol Dougherty, who said we were engaging in a very courageous act by questioning our government's policies in Iraq. Pastor Charles Frederick, acting senior pastor of Evangelical Lutheran Church also welcomed us to his historic church in the center of historic downtown Frederick. Bob Hansen of the Frederick Peace

Resource Center, the major co-sponsor of the conference, also welcomed us.

Medea Benjamin, Founder of Code Pink & Global Exchange, presented the Keynote Address. In her address, among other things, she explained that Iraq could not have a true democracy and fair elections while being occupied by foreign soldiers. In addition, the role of women has been greatly curtailed due to the rise of religious fundamentalists, and reconstruction has taken a back seat to oil and fighting insurgents. Following her talk there was a period of questions and answers

The group then next broke up in small groups to discuss "Strategies for Action."

Seven groups met: US out of Iraq, Nonviolence training, Darfur (the Sudan situation), Fort Detrick, the Patriot Acts, Counter-recruitment, and the Death Penalty. During the following Plenary Session, one member outlined what each group had discussed. Each group came up with plans for action.

Veggie Annie, a local caterer, provided a vegan lunch. Entertainment was provided by "The Free Radicals", a trio comprised of two members of the Global Coalition for Peace (Ganesha [Richard] and Rama [Carlos]) with noted vocalist Pam Parker.

The 9th Annual Fred Benjamin High School Peace Awards Ceremony was conducted by Ron Benjamin, Fred's son. The topic was: "What steps can high school students take to improve safety in their schools, homes, or communities?" The winner of the essay contest, Ashley Ridgeway (St. Mary's Ryken High School), read her essay to the attendees, and we will publish it in our next issue. The winner of the Art section was Paul Bortner (Calvert Hall College High School); his entry was displayed prominently in the hall. Lindsey Alvis (St. Mary's Ryken High School) was the winner of the poetry section, and her poem will also appear in our next issue. There were eight honorable mentions: ART, Garvi Sheth (St. Mary's Ryken High School) and Maria Szmagalski (Good Shepherd School), POETRY: Gregory Brown (St. Mary's Ryken High School), and Brittany Ouellette (St. Mary's Ryken High School), ESSAY: Brad Fallon (Calvert Hall College High School), Megan Gromely (St. Mary's Ryken High School), Carmen Goodier (Hammond High School), and Zachary Cooke (Hammond High School). Each 1st place winner received a certificate and \$200,

while the Honorable Mentions received a certificate and \$25. Congratulations to these fine young women and men who are concerned with the state of the world!

Two sets of WORKSHOPS were held after lunch. Due to a medical emergency (Damu Smith was in Johns Hopkins Hospital with colon cancer) and contact problems (Carolyn Boyd), we were not able to hold "MLK's Philosophy of Non-violence." However, Nancy Fayer, from the Fellowship of Reconciliation was able to step in and present a valuable workshop on "How to Talk about Difficult Issues." Other workshops included:

- Julie Enszer, Executive Director, Nuclear Policy Research Institute, "Nuclear Weapons"
- Lisa Archer, Friends of the Earth, "Chemicals In The Environment And New Campaign For Toxin- Free Cosmetics"
- Eileen Kittridge, Center for Food and Safety, "Genetic Modifications and Irradiated Foods"
- Barry Kissin, "Biological Weapons At Fort Detrick"
- Cindy Parker, Chesapeake Climate Action Network, "Global Warming"
- Chuck Michaels, author of *No Greater Threat*, "Update on Anti-Terrorism Laws"
- Bob Krasnansky, MD School Mediation Program, "How to Start a Student Peer Mediation Program"
- Bob Krasnansky, President, Marylanders for a Free Palestine and Secure Israel, "Nongovernmental Peacemaking for Israelis & Palestinians"
- John Morlino: "How you can Help End the Genocide in Darfur"

During the Closing and Sharing Period, attendees gave feedback and suggestions about the conference. One idea was to have the workshops in the morning and the action sessions in the afternoon. Jay Levy suggested visiting the website www.costofwar.com to see what the Iraqi occupation is costing the USA.

At the MUPJ Annual Meeting, the following officers were re-elected:
 Co-Conveners: Tony Langbehn and Paulette Hammond
 Treasurer: Chuck Frascati



**Final Cosponsors List
 THANK YOU!!!**

Principal Sponsors:

Maryland United for Peace & Justice
Peace Resource Center of Frederick
County



Molly Ivins Speaks

Organizations:

Adelphi Friends Meeting
All Saints Lutheran Church – Social
Justice Committee
Anne Arundel Peace Action
Baltimore Campaign to End the Death
Penalty
Baltimore Ethical Society
Baltimore Independent Media Center
Baltimore Phil Berrigan Memorial
Chapter Veterans for Peace
Baltimore NOW (National Organization
for Women)
Benjamin Peace Foundation
Committee on the Environment,
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
Communist Party of Maryland
Dorothy Day Catholic Worker
Fellowship of Reconciliation – Baltimore
Chapter
Fellowship of Reconciliation – DC
Chapter
Generations for Peace and Democracy
Global Coalition for Peace
Global Peace Services – USA
Grandmothers for Peace – Maryland
Grassroots Cooperative
Howard Co. Campaign to End the Israeli
Occupation
Howard Co. Coalition for Peace & Justice
Howard Co. Friends of Latin America
Interfaith Coalition for a New Drug Policy
Life of Peace for Peace
Little Friends for Peace
Md. Conservation Council
Md. Interfaith Coalition for the
Environment
Md. Universal Health Care Action
Network
Marylanders for a Free Palestine and a
Secure Israel
Montgomery Co. Coalition for
Alternatives to War
Montgomery Co. Peace Action
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Baltimore Presbytery
Social Justice Council, Cedar Lane
Unitarian Universalist Church
Southern Maryland Greens
Tikkun Community
WLP Consulting
Women in Black – Frederick
Women's International League for Peace
& Freedom (WILPF) – Baltimore
Branch
World Peacemakers/Division of Every
Church a Peace Church

Individuals:

David Kandel
Jen Porter
William Wilson

The unholy combination of theocracy and plutocracy that now rules this country is, in fact, enabled by dumb liberals.

Being of the populist persuasion, I am a terminal fan of Thomas Frank, who has gone from "What's the Matter With Kansas?" to "What's the Matter With Liberals?" in the current issue of the *New York Review of Books*, which is a good spot for it.

Those of us in the beer-drinking, pick-up-truck-driving, country-music-listening school of liberals in the hinterlands particularly appreciate his keen dissection of how the Republicans use class resentment against "elitist liberals," while waging class warfare on people who work for a living.

The unholy combination of theocracy and plutocracy that now rules this country is, in fact, enabled by dumb liberals. Many a weary liberal on the Internet and elsewhere has been involved in the tedious study of the entrails from the last election, trying to figure out where Democrats went wrong. I don't have a dog in that fight, but I can guarantee you where they're going wrong for the next election: 73 Democratic House members and 18 Democratic senators voted for that hideous bankruptcy "reform" bill that absolutely screws regular people.

And it's not just consumers who were screwed by the lobbyist-written bill. *The Wall Street Journal* shows small businesses are also getting the shaft, as the finance industry charges them higher and higher transaction fees. If Democrats aren't going to stand up for regular people, to hell with them.

Now here's some populist lagniappe (that's a word us populists often use) for you to chew on.

The Economic Policy Institute reports the economic well-being of middle-class families has declined between 2000 and 2003 for three reasons: the generally lousy economy, the Bush tax policies and the cost of health care.

Pre-tax incomes for middle-class families of every type (children, young singles, seniors, single mothers) are down, leaving the typical household with \$1,535 less income in 2003 than in 2000, a drop of 3.4 percent.

After taking into account changes in both pre-tax incomes and taxes, the finding remains that most middle-class families lost ground between 2000 and 2003. This is true for married couples with children, elderly couples and young singles, although single mothers did gain

1.9 percent because of the greater refundability of child tax credits.

Family spending on higher insurance co-pays, deductibles and premiums escalated, rising three times faster than income for those married with children, absorbing half the growth of their income.

The Tax Justice Network recently reported the world's richest individuals have placed \$11.5 trillion in assets in offshore tax havens to avoid paying taxes, a sum 10 times the GDP of Great Britain. The most authoritative study yet done shows that rich people clip \$860 billion in coupons a year off this money.

"Governments appear unable, or unwilling, to prevent the rich employing aggressive strategies to minimize their tax liabilities," said the Observer of Britain. We can emphasize the "unwilling" with this administration.

The ratio of CEO pay to average worker pay reached 301-to-one in 2003. The average worker takes home \$517 a week, while the average CEO earns \$155,796, according to *BusinessWeek*. In 1982, the ratio was 42-to-one.

Dialogue between President Bush and a citizen during a February meeting in Nebraska, where Bush was trying to sell his scheme to privatize Social Security:

Woman: "That's good, because I work three jobs and I feel like I contribute."

Bush: "You work three jobs?"

Woman: "Three jobs, yes."

Bush: "Uniquely American, isn't it? I mean, that is fantastic that you're doing that. (Applause.) Get any sleep? (Laughter.)"

One out of every two jobs created in the United States over the past 12 months was taken by a worker over 55. Economist Dean Baker says the flood of older workers is caused by the falling value of retirees' 401(k)s and the cost of health care.

The number of long-term unemployed who are college graduates has nearly tripled since 2000. Nearly one in five of the long-term jobless are college graduates, according to the *Los Angeles Times*.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has a brand-new study out showing the uneven division of the fruits of the supposed economic recovery:

"The data show that the share of real income growth that has gone to wages and salaries has been smaller than during any other comparable post-World War II recovery period, while the share of real income growth that has gone to corporate profits has been larger than during all other comparable post-World War II recoveries."

In previous recoveries, workers got an average of 49 percent of the national income gains, while corporate profits got 18 percent. This time, the workers are

getting 23 percent and the corporations are getting 44 percent -- about one half as much as the share that has gone to corporate profits.

None of that apply to you? Good. Go listen to Tom DeLay give another lecture on moral values.

Molly Ivins is a best-selling author and columnist who writes about politics, Texas and other bizarre happenings. This article appeared on <http://www.alternet.org/story/21895/>. Check out the website!



Gael Murphy: 'The guards are sleeping: An interview with Helen Thomas'

Editor's Note: This is an excerpt from ['Stop the Next War Now: Effective Responses to Violence and Terrorism \(Inner Ocean\)'](#), edited by Code Pink co-founders Medea Benjamin and Jodie Evans.

Helen Thomas, known as "the first lady" of the press, was a White House correspondent for four decades, sitting in the front row during presidential press conferences, asking the tough questions. She was the first woman to hold posts in the White House Correspondents' Association and the National Press Club. She now writes a syndicated column twice a week for the Hearst newspapers. She was one of the only "mainstream" journalists who vehemently opposed the invasion of Iraq and challenged the Bush administration on the fabrications and distortions that led the United States to war. The following is a conversation between Helen Thomas and CODEPINK cofounder Gael Murphy.

Gael Murphy: Our so-called independent media, the cornerstone of our democracy, have truly failed us in the most recent events around Iraq. They didn't do the investigations or critical analyses of the administration's policy toward Iraq. They didn't take into account opposing voices, alternative sources, and the millions of protesters. Why do you think the corporate media paid so little attention to exposing the flaws in the Bush administration's justification to go to war?

Helen Thomas: I think that the media really went into a coma and rolled over and played dead, just as Congress did. It was a politics of fear after 9/11. Everybody, even reporters, started wearing flags after 9/11. At these White House briefings there was an atmosphere among the reporters that you would be considered unpatriotic or

un-American if you were asking any tough questions. Then it segued into a war where you'd be seen as jeopardizing the troops if you asked certain questions.

And the administration did an amazing job of linking Saddam Hussein and terrorism. In every briefing I attended in the lead-up to the war, the spokespeople would say, "Saddam Hussein, 9/11"-- "Saddam Hussein, 9/11" in the same breath. Obviously they had put the two together and wanted the media to as well. Then a week or so before the war they said there was no connection. Well, by this time, the job was done. It was a beautiful propaganda message, and it worked.

Another problem is that there are no investigative reporters anymore. During the unraveling of the Watergate scandal, the *Washington Post* had eighteen reporters on the story and the *New York Times* had an equal number, digging in everywhere. In this case, no one was around, really, to challenge the administration.

But there were a lot of alternative sources of news and investigative journalism, and there was also the world press doing its job. Don't mainstream journalists look at these other sources?

We have a herd mentality here. It was groupthink. Nobody wanted to get out of line. Reporters felt that they shouldn't push too hard. I didn't feel that way. I was against this war from day one, and I kept challenging the White House spokesperson, Ari Fleischer. One day, about six months before the U.S. invasion, I said, "Ari, why does the president want to kill thousands of people?" I mean that's about as simplistic as I could put it. And he said, "Why are you saying that, Helen? They have a dictator! They have no say in their country!" I said, "Neither do we." I went up to Condoleezza Rice after the U.S. invasion and said, "Where are the weapons? Where's the smoking gun? Where's the mushroom cloud?" She said, "Saddam used these weapons twelve years ago, he had them. ..." And then she went up in smoke herself. She flew out of there with her eyes blazing, so angry that she should be challenged.

Regarding the White House press corps, is it sort of the cream of the crop of journalists who get to be part of those briefings?

Every new administration comes in with a new crop of reporters who have been on the campaign with them and have gotten to know them, and their bosses say, "You're going to the White House because you know intimately so-and-so and can call them up and get an interview." So not only do they tend to be young, but they tend not to question what

is said.

It almost sounds like reporters are embedded with a presidential candidate and then inherit the White House as their reward.

That's certainly true. They get to the White House because they've done a good job on the campaign, they've gotten to know the players, and they're supposed to have this kind of entrée and closeness. And then they engage in self-censorship instead of challenging everything that's being said. I remember Bush's press conference a few days before the war. It was a fiasco, because everybody knew we were going to war and asked things like Do you pray? instead of asking the hard-news questions like: Why are we going to war? Why haven't you done more to avoid it? Why haven't you used diplomacy? Under what justification can you go into someone else's country? I'm also one of the few reporters who push the Pentagon on Iraqi casualties. When I'm writing a column about war casualties, I call the Pentagon and say, "Well, now, how many fatalities?" They'll readily say how many, in battle and in accidents. Then I ask about the wounded soldiers, and they reluctantly tell me about the wounded. Then I say, "How many Iraqis?" And the answer I'd get is, "We don't track that. They don't count." So once I called back and I said, "Look, aren't we supposed to be liberating these people? What do you mean they don't count? I want a rationale for why you don't count them." And they said, "Look, our purpose is not to kill, but if there is resistance, we do our job and don't count the numbers." Iraqis don't want foreigners in their country, and some will resort to terrible things to get rid of them. But what right do we have to be there? That's the bottom line. I can assure you no reporter has asked that question. What right do we have to be there?

Did you ever challenge your colleagues about their reporting?

No. They knew how I felt, they could hear me, but there is an unwritten rule that you do not challenge your colleagues. Except I must say that the *Wall Street Journal* called me the crazy aunt in the attic, and so did Fox, for questioning the war. Well, I want to know, who is the crazy aunt in the attic now? I think the *Wall Street Journal* owes me an apology.

Have you always questioned U.S. military involvement?

I was in favor of U.S. involvement in World War II. It was absolutely necessary. We were attacked. And our country was unified--we believed in it. I'm critical of unnecessary wars. I hated the Vietnam War, not from the moment Kennedy and Johnson put their foot in the door, but from the time of French colonialism from 1948 and the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1953. I

certainly thought it was wrong for us to go into Indochina after the French had been defeated.

I did support the invasion of Afghanistan. I thought we had to go to the core and find out more about Al-Qaeda. But I thought Iraq was absolutely wrong. It was just out of the blue, when Bush came into power and decided that he was going to have a regime change in Iraq. And then Congress signed on the dotted line, giving a blank check without asking any questions!

I couldn't believe the people in Congress who actually did that. I couldn't believe Senator Kerry--he went to Vietnam and came back saying, "War is horrible. This is a horrible war and we shouldn't be in it." I suppose that eighteen years in the Senate can make you an Establishment person, and you forget. The authorization to go into Iraq is practically word for word from the Gulf of Tonkin resolution. Why didn't bells ring? How on earth could Kerry have just signed on? Because he was running for president and thought it would get him more votes?

So how do we get journalists and the media to do their job, to be critical of administrations and the policies that are not in the best interests of the public? How do we wake up America?

I think journalists are coming out of their coma now. I think they're getting a little more feisty. I think the public kind of bore down on the press and the press started to respond, although there is certainly a lot more we need to do.

I think the public should reach out to the editorial writers and the publishers and take them to task for their pro-war positions. People should get meetings with the editorial departments of the major papers and the local papers and say, "Look, your paper came out for this war. Can you explain why? And what do you have to say now? Have you changed your mind? Have you printed your new position?" Ask them if they'll do a mea culpa. I'm sure most of them won't, but they should be encouraged to do it.

People should also go to the TV stations, including the talk shows. They should complain about the one-sided nature of the guests on the show. They should ask why, every Sunday, did we hear from Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice and Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney, but not equally from the antiwar side? Remember, a free and independent press is the basis of democracy. Journalism is the last resort against a government with such imperial motives, and we have to hold their feet to the fire.

I think that we should shame Congress for signing on the bottom line but not

asking the tough questions they should have asked. They defaulted on the most important privilege they have in the Constitution--the right to declare war. They let the Constitution down. They let the country down. I think everyone who voted to authorize the president to go to war should be pinned down. [John D. Rockefeller IV, of West Virginia] was the vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee. He said that if he knew then what he knows now, he would not have voted to go to war. I would go to every congressman, every senator, who voted for the war, and say, "Knowing what you know now, would you still have voted the same way? And if you would, why?" Reporters should put them on the line, and so should their constituents.

Reporters should put presidents on the line as well, and the public should demand that presidents have regular press conferences. During the campaign we should make them say that they will hold regular news conferences every two weeks. Bush hated talking to the press and only did when forced to. He had a seating chart and would pick the journalists he wanted. He was told to not call on me because I would ask a very tough question. He didn't allow any follow-up questions and would get mad if a reporter asked a two-part question. I mean, c'mon. The president of the United States should be able to answer any question, or at least dance around it. Presidents should be obligated --early and often--to submit to questioning and be held accountable. The presidential news conference is the only forum in our society, the only institution, where a president can be questioned. If a leader is not questioned, he can rule by edict or executive order. He can be a king or a dictator. Who's to challenge him?

So in terms of the media, looking toward the future, what hope do you see?

My hope is that we'll all wake up and realize our tremendous collective failure. Maybe we could have saved lives. Maybe we could have stopped Bush from the folly of invading Iraq. We certainly must learn from our mistakes-- not being aggressive enough, not being curious enough, not demanding enough--so that we can help to stop the next folly of war.

And my hope is that people will begin to hold their government leaders accountable, and that we'll have true leaders who understand the horror of war and who do everything in their power to work for peace.

Gael Murphy is a cofounder of [CODEPINK](http://www.codepink.org).

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A Global Pact Against Depleted Uranium

During September of 2004 I launched an international campaign to conclude a global pact against depleted uranium (DU) munitions by having every state in the world officially and publicly take the position that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 already includes within itself a flat-out prohibition on the use of DU in wartime, which they have not yet done. So far the United States is the only government in the world that uses DU munitions during wartime. In addition to prohibiting "the use of bacteriological methods of warfare," the 1925 Geneva Protocol also prohibits "the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials, or devices." Clearly DU is "analogous" to poison gas.[i] But we need every government in the world to legally and openly take that position. Then the entire world can pressure the United States to remove DU munitions from its arsenal.

Politically, the easiest way to accomplish that objective is not the conclusion of a new international treaty prohibiting the use of DU, but rather simply having every state in the world submit an interpretative Letter to that effect to the Government of France, which is the official depositary for the 1925 Geneva Protocol. This latter approach would also avoid the need to have the respective national legislatures of every state in the world to approve a new anti-DU treaty and thus complicate and prolong the process. All that needs to be done is for anti-DU citizens, activists and NGOs in each country of the world to pressure and convince their respective Foreign Ministers to sign, date, and then file this model Letter with the French Foreign Minister as indicated below. That task is eminently feasible.

As the Land Mines Treaty has already demonstrated, it is possible for a coalition of determined activists and NGOs, acting in concert with at least one sympathetic state, such as Canada, to actually bring into being an international treaty to address humanitarian concerns. This template Letter is for the use of concerned citizens, activists and NGOs worldwide, to pursue through universal governmental participation the complete and final elimination of DU munitions from the face of the earth:

Francis A. Boyle
Law Building
504 E. Pennsylvania Ave.
Champaign, IL 61820 USA

217-333-7954 (voice)
217-244-1478 (fax)
fboyle@law.uiuc.edu
(personal comments only)

His Excellency Michel Barnier
Foreign Minister
French Republic
37, Quai d'Orsay
75351 Paris
FRANCE
FAX: 33-1-43-17-4275

Dear Excellency:

The Republic of X presents its compliments to the French Republic. I have the honor to draw to your attention the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare of 17 June 1925, for which the Government of the French Republic serves as the depositary. The Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibits the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices, as well as the use of bacteriological methods of warfare. The government of X believes that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 already prohibits the use in war of depleted uranium, uranium ammunition, uranium armor-plate and all other uranium weapons. We respectfully request your Excellency to circulate this communication to the other High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurance of our highest consideration.

Foreign Minister
Republic of X
Day, Month, Year



Bunker-Busting Nukes Could Devastate Civilians

NewScientist.com news service
Jeff Hecht
28 April 2005

<http://www.newscientist.com/article.ns?id=dn7318>

Nuclear "bunker busters" could destroy enemy hideouts hundreds of metres underground but, if the target is in an urban area, a strike could lead to more than a million civilian deaths, warns a report from the US National Research Council (NRC) issued on Wednesday.

"Using an earth-penetrating weapon to destroy a target 250 meters deep - the typical depth for most underground facilities - potentially could kill a

devastatingly large number of people," said John Ahearne, chair of the report committee.

The report is unlikely to resolve the heated debate over the Bush administration's plans to develop a new Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator - a weapon hardened to penetrate deep into the ground.

Its conclusions echo the claims of administration officials who say the bombs are needed to destroy deeply buried military control centres, labs and stores. But it also supports the contentions of critics who warn they could cause heavy civilian deaths. And the report fails to address two crucial criticisms - that developing new nuclear bunker-busters would encourage the resumption of nuclear testing and lower the threshold for use of nuclear weapons.

The US nuclear arsenal already has one earth-penetrating weapon - the B61-11 bomb - but it cannot penetrate solid rock. Pentagon planners want a weapon that can penetrate several metres of rock. That would allow it to target the more than 100 potential-enemy complexes, identified by US intelligence, and built 100 to 400 metres underground. In 2003, Congress asked the NRC to study the potential health and environmental impact of the new weapon. Destructive forces

Subsurface explosions transfers energy into the ground far more efficiently than surface blasts. The NRC panel concluded that detonating a nuclear bomb just a few metres below the surface increases its power to destroy underground targets by a factor of 15 to 25 over a surface explosion.

Most of that advantage comes from penetrating just 3 metres into the ground. Once this depth is obtained, a 300-kiloton earth penetrator could destroy a target buried 200 m deep, while a 1-megaton weapon would be needed for a target 300 m underground.

The problem is that earth penetrators cannot plunge deeply enough into the ground to fully contain the effects of a nuclear blast, so casualties would be "for all practical purposes, equal to [those] from a surface burst of the same weapon yield", the report suggests. That means surface casualties could be high.

Urban areas

And half of the 1000 "strategic" hardened or buried targets identified by the Pentagon are in urban areas, where the panel estimate death tolls would range "from thousands to more than a million, depending primarily on the weapon yield".

Nor would nuclear weapons be able to destroy chemical or biological agents in

buried labs - unless the bomb was detonated inside the buried chamber, the panel concluded. That being the case, a non-nuclear "thermobaric" bomb - using fuel-air explosives - might be just as effective at destroying the agents if detonated inside the chamber.

And a nuclear bomb would probably kill more people than any chemical agents released from a destroyed underground factory, says the report, though that might not be true for biological weapons. "Release of as little as 0.1 kilograms of anthrax spores" would kill as many people as a 3-kiloton nuclear earth penetrator, the panel concluded.



STEP Forward for Iraq Peace

Your congregation or organization can adopt the Iraq Sustainable Transition to Enduring Peace resolution to model the behavior that you want from your member of Congress.

Read more and download the Iraq STEP resolution from the FCNL web site at <http://www.fcnl.org/iraq>.

Read the latest breakdown of the rising costs in lives lost and money spent: <http://www.fcnl.org/pdfs/iraq/IraqCosts0505.pdf>



20th PEACE CONFERENCE ACTION PLANNING REPORTS

Counter-recruitment

Goals for this group:

1. Get into schools
2. Survey students/parents

When will goals be carried out?

In each county

-ongoing-

What resources are needed and where could they come from?

Info, post cards NNOMY (National Network Opposed to the Militarization of Youth), CHOICES (copa@starpower.net), National AFSC, Veterans for Peace, Center on Conscience and War
When and where will the group meet again?

Virtual-county by county basis
Jay Levy with McCaw
(Montgomery County Coalition for Alternatives to War), JL27@juno.com
Actions I

1. Get information regarding counter-recruitment
2. Survey students and parents (support of war)
3. Contact legal dept.. of public schools, guidance parents, supers.

4. Contact PTA, County Commissioners
5. Place information at the schools and libraries
6. Require school boards to provide notification to opt out on separate form
7. Get county/city resolutions for notifications
8. Educate guidance on dep and other laws.

Actions II

1. Target attention on high-recruitment localities
2. Offer draft counseling
3. Get counter-recruitment training
4. Show up on career days
5. Examine the law and use it to "our" advantage, e.g. "Equal Access" not greater
6. Research career alternatives to military
7. Enlist help from veterans
8. Know the fine print on enlistment agreement.

Group contact person Ronda Cooperstein, 3105 Northbrook Road, Baltimore, MD 21208
 e-mail address rondacooperstein@hotmail.com
 telephone number 410-486-6307

Campaign To End The Genocide In Darfur/"Take The Darfur Pledge"

Action Summary: *Members of the workgroup agreed to take the following actions:

- 1.) Take the "Darfur Pledge" (ie: Daily message to President Bush, requesting sufficient number of peacekeepers; recruitment of one other person to do the same; registering their commitment at www.the-ethic.org/darfur.htm.)
- 2.) Distribute information about the campaign to family, friends and associates, and brainstorm about potential speaking opportunities (for John M.) to promote it.
- 3.) John E., Chuck F., Cindy P., and John M. to contact specific national and international organizations to ask for their support in promoting the campaign.
- 4.) Request that Ron/Carol email info about the Darfur Pledge Campaign (below) to each of the co-sponsor organizations of the MUPJ Conference for distribution to their members.

Campaign Summary:

Emergency Campaign to End the Genocide in Darfur www.the-ethic.org/darfur.htm - Take the Darfur Pledge!

Would you make a single phone call if it could stop the genocide in Darfur?

Would you be willing to make that same phone call every day until the killing stopped?

Over the past two years, 400,000

Sudanese have been systematically slaughtered in Darfur (Africa) in attacks orchestrated by their own government. Today the killing continues, alongside rampant rape, castration and other forms of mutilation. Nearly two million people have been displaced and face the prospect of death from disease or starvation. The United States and the international community have done virtually nothing to stop this death and destruction -- arguing about the viability of sanctions and resolutions against the Khartoum government, debating the definition of genocide, and deliberating over the appropriate level of intervention while the killers continue their methodical work.

In February 2005 at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, General Romeo Dallaire, who led a handful of peacekeeping troops in Rwanda, and made a heroic attempt to warn the world of the impending 1994 massacre, estimated that 44,000 peacekeepers - with a mandate to protect innocent civilians- could stop the cycle of violence in Darfur. (Currently, there are fewer than 3000 peacekeepers in the region.) He went on to say that the citizens of the United States possess the collective capacity to exert their will on our government leaders, if only we would use that power. It is in the spirit of General Dallaire's words that we ask you today to make the following pledge on behalf of the people of Darfur.

Take the Pledge to Save Darfur:

Until 44,000 peacekeepers have been deployed in Darfur to stop the killing, I pledge to take the following actions:

- 1) EVERY DAY,* I will call the White House switchboard (202-456-1414) and leave the following message for President Bush: "This is [name] from [state]. Forty-four thousand peacekeeping troops could stop the genocide in Darfur. Please act immediately. Thank you." If calling long distance is a financial hardship or if I can't leave a message due to the volume of calls, I will send an email to President@WhiteHouse.gov every day with the same message. (*You can leave a voice message at the White House Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. eastern time.)

2) I will recruit at least ONE other person to take this pledge.

- 3) To ensure that my actions are counted, I will register my pledge with The ETHIC by emailing my name and address to DarfurPledge@peacemail.com. or by signing the online pledge petition at <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/391810134>.

The ETHIC is an all-volunteer non-profit organization founded in 2002 to promote,

peace, nonviolence and compassion toward all beings. For more information about this campaign, please visit our website: <http://www.the-ethic.org>. To schedule a presentation about this campaign, contact The ETHIC's Founder, John Morlino, at 301-962-8391/john_morlino@the-ethic.org

Fort Detrick

Goals for this group:

- May 18 Funding
- Give alternative use of money
- June 5th protest,

www.frederickpac.org/antibioweapons/

- Honor good work at Fort Detrick
- Save the Community

Group contact person Barry Kissin
 e-mail address

barrykissin@hotmail.com

telephone number 301-698-0688

Teaching Nonviolence

What resources are needed and where could they come from?

Nancy has a resource: a 20-hour course in how to do nonviolence

Steve [?]

Group contact person Nancy Fayer,
 Fellowship of Reconciliation

e-mail address fayer1@erols.com

telephone number 410-750-1479

Violence dominates, diminishes, dehumanizes and destroys

4 types: Institutional, verbal, physical, ___?emotional

Building a culture of non-violence and peace

Tools_ skills- nonviolence. Uses personal experience, relevant experience

Identify spiritual

Build trust and sense of community

Nonviolence is the power of the people

All are wounded, all deserve respect

Necessary: Counter cultural

Respect

Self control

Self discipline

Conflict is normal, through it seek to determine the truth. Everyone has a piece of the truth

Conduct training at Koinania- facilitators

\$50-\$300, includes 6 meals

Education

High schools in Prince Georges County were teaching mediation training and pee groups

Nursing students in Public Health - prevention

Need Middle Schools

[Harry said?] could continue

education course for nurses?

Professional credit and

community work

Maybe schools of Social Work

Nonviolence taught in Baltimore

City

"A soft answer turnest away anger. Harsh words stir up anger."

Multi-generational

But we are in a violent culture

"Boys will be boys"

3 lines in newsletter [?]

Middle Schools

Prince Georges County

Baltimore City already has but little effect

Harry at George Washington University- other resources

Put an ad in the email, look there when you need this resource

We agree: one way, Make yourself an example

PATRIOT Acts

Goals for this group:

Organizing around civil liberties:

Municipal resolutions—ACLU

Libraries/bookstores

Civil liberties forums

High schools/ colleges

Congressional activity (four tracks)

-sunset sections of Title II

-PATRIOT fix legislations SAFE

Act

-legislation to expand PATRIOT

Act: VICTORY Act

-legislative pieces to pass

sections or PATRIOT Act II

~financial institutions

~lone wolf terrorists

When will goals be carried out?

Different times

Who else could help carry out goals?

ACLU, FCNL, BORDC, local civil liberties coalition

What resources are needed and where could they come from?

"A Grand Truth" on Iraq war, DVD

"Reopen 911 Investigation"

mrzata@hotmail.com

Group contact person Chuck

Michaels

e-mail address

cwmichaels@igc.org

telephone number 410-321-0107

Opposition to Iraq War

Goals for this group:

Get US out of Iraq!

When will goals be carried out?

Immediately!

Who else could help carry out goals?

Everyone!

Notes of session:

1. Elections

-Candidate Forums

2. Woolsey Resolution

(<http://coastalrain.tripod.com/wmfso/id25.html>)

-Candidate support

3. Example-Vietnam

- Protests to target war leaders and corporations

- Work with G.I.s

- Recruiters-counter
- Educate (teach-ins)
- Cable access
- Listen to WPFW-Democracy Now
- How to keep the pre-Iraqi millions involved?
- Boycotts
- [non-right-wing fundamentalist] Christians should speak out
- Nation building
- Iraqis have own model and secular institutions (consensus another way0
- Media misinformed-also corporate owned
- How can we challenge the view that we have to stay in Iraq? (Change the priorities)
- How decisions hurt people
- Vietnam protests took a while to succeed
- Censoring reporters
- Urge Dean to retract www.pdamerica.org petition
- Bring new people in (how to do it)
- Young people
 - Internet
 - Street Theatre
 - Demos
- Veterans for Peace
- Veterans in hospitals and Vet organizations
- Democratic Party Events
- State resolutions – bring National Guard home
- Local resolutions
- School Boards
- Draft concerns
- History teachers
- 9-11 DVD: Re-open the Investigation mrzata@hotmail.com
- Americans understanding of history is shallow; remind them of the truth
- June 5th demo against biological weapons at Ft. Detrick www.frederickpac.org/antibioweaapons/
- Malgo Schmidt
- Mercenaries
- Ground Truth DVD – troops
- Connection between poor who fight wars and poor in countries where they are fought
- Goal: no intent to own Iraqi oil
- Youth 18 years old not aware of reality of war
- Support anti-war Democrats only
- Resolution to www.moveon.org Green Party (?)

Group contact person Tony
Langbehn, 10549 Nashua Lane, Bowie,

MD 20716

telephone number 301-390-9684



Soaring Birth Deformities And Child Cancer Rates In Iraq

By James Cogan

10 May 2005

http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/may2005/iraq-m10_prn.shtml (excerpts)

Iraqi doctors are making renewed efforts to bring to the world's attention the growth in birth deformities and cancer rates among the country's children. The medical crisis is being directly blamed on the widespread use of depleted uranium (DU) munitions by the US and British forces in southern Iraq during the 1991 Gulf War, and the even greater use of DU during the 2003 invasion.

The rate of birth defects, after increasing ten-fold from 11 per 100,000 births in 1989 to 116 per 100,000 in 2001, is soaring further.

The rise in birth defects is matched by a continuing increase in the incidence of childhood cancers.

In addition to its radioactive dangers, uranium is chemically toxic, like lead, and can damage the kidneys and lungs. Perhaps, the fatal epidemic of swollen abdomens among Iraqi children is caused by kidney failure resulting from uranium poisoning. Whatever the effect of the DU shells, it is made worse by malnutrition and poor health conditions....

Iraq holds the United States and Britain legally and morally responsible for the grave health and environmental impact of the use of DU ... (A version of the report is available at:

http://www.iacenter.org/depleted/du_iraq.htm)

Terrible as these results were, the last six years have witnessed a further rise in the number of children under 15 falling ill with cancer in Iraq. The rate has now reached 22.4 per 100,000 more than five times the 1990 rate of 3.98 per 100,000.

The statistics point to the long-term consequences of depleted uranium contamination. Munitions containing an estimated 300 tonnes of DU were unleashed by coalition forces in southern Iraq in 1991. A decade after the war, DU shell holes are still 1,000 times more radioactive than the normal level of background radiation. The surrounding areas are still 100 times more radioactive. Experts surmise that fine uranium dust has been spread by the wind, contaminating swathes of the surrounding region, including Basra, which is some 200

kilometres away from sites where large numbers of DU shells were fired.

While the US military denies there is any relationship, exposure to depleted uranium is one of the factors blamed by veterans and medical researchers.

Somewhere between 1,000 and 3,000 tonnes of DU was expended during the three-week war in 2003. Unlike 1991, however, where most of the fighting took place outside major population centres, the 2003 invasion witnessed the wholesale bombardment of targets inside densely-populated cities with DU shells.