

IRAQ WAR

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When Will We Learn?

By Dave Depp, RPEC Board Member

When will we learn:

- That love is better than hatred and forgiveness is better than revenge?
- That America's lifestyle can't be sustained without increasing exploitation and shortage elsewhere in the world?
- That it is imperialistic to maintain military bases around the world, dictate how other countries arrange their governments and economies, and ignore or undermine international agreements and institutions?
- That as little as 5% of the combined military budgets of all countries could meet the basic human needs for health care, clean water, food, and education of all the world's people now living in squalor?
- That there is truth in the teachings and examples of Gandhi and King; we **can** rely on nonviolence as a means to resolving conflicts?
- That "smart bombs" like those used in the 1991 war with Iraq can penetrate underground bomb shelters, incinerating women and children?
- That a country leading the world in the development and deployment of weapons of mass destruction is an unreliable judge of the behavior of other nations regarding such weapons?
- That a government speaking about including the use of atomic weapons in its military planning is morally and spiritually bankrupt?
- That war degrades the natural environment while hardening the human heart and spirit?
- That much of what we are told by the media is government or corporate sponsored propaganda designed to stimulate knee-jerk patriotism and turn the American people against those of other nations?

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rpec NEWS

is a publication of the
Richmond Peace
Education Center

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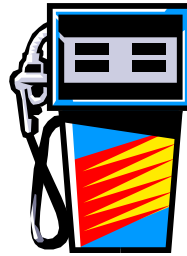
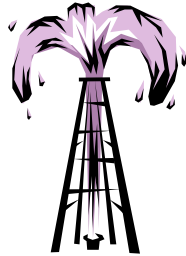
The opinions and
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rpecNEWS is published 10
times per year and has a
circulation of approximately
1,200.

Consumers Corner

Christmas and Iraq

By John Gallini



Those of you who know me will expect some discussion of how these two topics are connected – since I am always trying to make connections among the various justice issues. But the connection this time is just that I want to write a few words about both of these issues from a consumer standpoint.

The suggestion I want to make relates to the coming Iraq war has to do with the oil companies. I have written in this column in past years about choices of where to purchase gasoline based on environmental and social justice perspectives. An e-mail from Paul Bohannon Jr. suggests that we might want to include another consideration, i.e. does the company import a significant amount of oil from the mid-east? If, in fact, the coming war with Iraq is really about oil and control of oil in the mid-east, then those companies that get their oil from there are most likely promoting the war through the Cheney-Bush administration. Bohannon lists the five major importers of Middle Eastern oil (in order): Shell, Chevron/Texaco, Exxon/Mobil, Marathon and Amoco. Some large companies that do not import Middle Eastern oil include: Citgo, Sunoco, Conoco, Sinclair, BP/Phillips and Hess.

As for Christmas, I want to remind folks that do exchange gifts that you can purchase handicrafts from third-world artisans at Ten Thousand Villages and AlterNatives (both in Carytown, just a block or two apart). Certainly an item made in Ghana or Guatemala, from a store that assures that the artist is paid a fair wage, expresses the spirit of the season in a different way than does a war toy from WalMart.

Last year I shared the slogan: “Celebrate **BIG...Consume Little...Share Much.**” In an effort to move in this direction, our family has had an extended discussion of how to celebrate the season. Last year we reduced the number of gifts that we exchanged and we spent Christmas Eve visiting with the CARITAS guests at our church. As I write this, the conversation is continuing about what steps to take this year. The point I want to make is that the conversation itself is valuable as each provides some insight about how to express and live our values.

Preemptive Attack: A Dangerous Scenario

by Judy Bennett

Many voices have declared that "everything has changed" since 9/11, among them representatives of the Bush administration, although exactly how "everything" has changed is less than clear. No one would deny that the terrorist attack on that otherwise ordinary Fall day introduced Americans to a new experience - - a massive and audacious attack on our own soil - - but neither terrorist attacks nor the conditions that produce them are new. Both have, according to Carl Conetta, author of a briefing report for the Project on Defense Alternatives, "been gestating for some time."(1) What is new, he adds, is not the world scene, but the spirit of US security policy as it approaches the world scene, a spirit which will ultimately "touch all the world's shores and borders" and so, in that sense, the statement "everything has changed" becomes "not so much an observation as a promise."(2)

What's New, What's Not

Components of this new approach include the following:

- a renewed focus on the role of states in supporting terrorism
- shifting emphasis from stability operations toward traditional war missions, with a new emphasis on "regime removal"
- geographic shift toward Asia generally, including dramatic expansion of military presence and engagement in central and south Asia
- reorientation of US presence in Europe, serving a primarily political function while making it more available for use elsewhere
- increased willingness to act alone

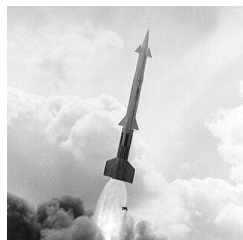
The US has the right, according to the President, "to use military force against any state that is seen as hostile or makes moves to acquire weapons of mass destruction - - nuclear, biological

militarily, turning to short-term, ad hoc coalitions when needed

- broadening of military assistance to other states
- significantly increased pace of US military modernization

The new approach reached its clearest articulation in a graduation address delivered by President Bush to this year's graduating class at West Point, as he spelled out his doctrine of preemption. The US has the right, according to the President, "to use military force against any state that is seen as hostile or makes moves to acquire weapons of mass destruction - - nuclear, biological or chemical." (3)

Critics of the administration find little correspondence between the new directions and on-the-ground realities. They have, writes Conetta, "resurrected a traditional Realist paradigm despite the post-modern (non-state) character of the new terrorism." Moreover, they have fallen back into traditional war-oriented behaviors in accelerating the ABM program, hurling threatening rhetoric at Iraq and North Korea,



advocating military modernization focused largely on traditional military structures. While some continuities

between the present and previous administrations can be noted, the Bush administration's policies differ in several important ways, most notably "a reduced emphasis on multilateralism, a reduced emphasis on arms control agreements and international legal mechanisms, and a reduced emphasis on non-traditional military missions." (4) Where the Clinton administration focused on containing instability and expanding democracy geographically, the Bush policy is more defensive in nature, echoing ideas developed by Dick Cheney during the senior Bush administration. Here the emphasis shifts to increasing the effectiveness of US deterrent and war-fighting power. It is, in short, "not a policy that seeks to make new friends so much as it seeks new ways to cow enemies, both old and rising." (5)

What's Wrong with This Picture?

Following the end of the Cold War, Conetta notes a series of policy contradictions in play in successive administrations. The first of these is the continued pursuit of an activist global military agenda even as overt military threats to the US have faded. Lacking a "life and death" struggle between superpowers, it was difficult to muster popular support for military activism, and such initiatives were to be engaged in selectively and required time-limits, explicit exit strategies, and sensitivity to casualties.

A second contradiction involved a mismatch between policy and available resources. The Cold War brought budget and personnel reductions for the Pentagon in the mid-1980s, in response to reduced threat and the desire to reduce government deficits. However, the vast military infrastructure still consumed an even greater proportion of available defense

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Preemptive Attack: A Dangerous Scenario

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resources than previously, partly due to the loss of benefits related to economy of scale, partly because despite the efforts of the Clinton and both Bush administrations, "the political opposition of service and parochial domestic interests to infrastructure reform was too great." (6) In addition, the military required highly skilled personnel whose salaries were driven upward by private sector salaries, resulting in recruitment and retention problems.

Serious reform was needed, but was impeded by yet a third contradiction: while the mainstream military leadership adopted the rhetoric of radical transformation of the military, they used that rhetoric for a different end - - the modernization of traditional structures and platforms. The end result is "a split between 'high-tech' and 'maneuver warfare' enthusiasts," while the mainstream leadership supports anything that bolsters pre-existing modernization programs, which "serves nothing but the past." (7) Against the background of these differences, 9/11 provided the opportunity to circumvent, but not resolve, these contradictions and "may have put the United States on a road toward strategic over-extension and economic problems reminiscent of the Reagan era." (8)

If 9/11 did not change "everything," nonetheless it produced a sea change in the shift from diplomacy to war talk as the foundation of national security, one that has evoked far less serious discussion than it warrants, especially given the lack of convincing evidence of any connection between the genuine threat Al Qaeda poses to this nation and the regime of Sadaam Hussein. In a 10/7 article in *The Nation*, Richard Falk writes, "It is extraordinary that at such a time the government seems to be recklessly determined to wage a pre-emptive war against Iraq that is contrary to

international law and morality, constitutionally dubious and strategically imprudent, risking catastrophic side-effects." (9) Such action deserved "vigorous debate that addressed fundamental issues of fact and law," Falk says, but instead there have been questions raised about the means of waging war, e.g., issues of timing, cost and feasibility.

Such issues as whether a preemptive attack on Iraq is consistent with international law, or whether it is justified because Iraq poses exceptional danger, have received scant attention. International law permits military action in self-defense only if an attack has occurred, although there may be tolerance in certain instances when an attack is demonstrably imminent, as an extension of self-defense. The facts in the case of Iraq do not support that exception, and an attack on Iraq would represent a repudiation of the core concept of the United Nations Charter, subsequently reinforced by the World Court in The Hague. The aims of the Bush administration, writes Falk, represent "a doctrine without limits, without accountability to the UN or international law, without any dependence on a collective judgment of responsible governments and, what is worse, without any convincing demonstration of practical necessity." (10)

Is There A Better Way?

The Bush administration would have us believe that Saddam is a bloodthirsty tyrant who has defied the UN often, and has backed terrorists in the past. However, others have been equally tyrannical and we have looked the other way, other countries have defied the UN and we have not gone to war with them, and the groups Iraq has harbored in the past posed no significant threat to the US, nor would the elimination of Saddam have resulted in their elimination.

Two additional arguments raised for ousting the Iraqi leader are analyzed by Mearsheimer and Walt in

their article, "Can Saddam Be Contained? History Says Yes." One argument holds that a successful war against Iraq will reinforce respect for American power and spark democratic reform in the Middle East. Such an outcome might happen, they say, "but a bitter anti-American backlash is more likely." A second argument characterizes Saddam as so "too reckless, relentless, and aggressive" to be allowed to possess weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. (11)

The authors trace Saddam's thirty-year rule in Iraq and, while he scarcely qualifies as a kindly uncle, neither is he "mindlessly aggressive nor particularly rash or reckless" - - quite the opposite. (12) He went to war twice against his neighbors; in both instances Iraq was vulnerable and, while his aggression is not to be excused, still it hardly proves that he cannot be contained. In the case of his attack on Kuwait, there were grievances between the two countries, Saddam had tried diplomacy with little movement on the part of the Kuwaitis, and he approached the US to determine how this country would react. He was told by then US Ambassador April Glaspi that "We have no opinion on Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait," followed by a message from the State Department avowing that the US had "no special defense or security commitments to Kuwait." Whatever message Washington may have intended to convey to Saddam, the effect was a green light for his plans. Given the problems he was facing with Kuwait, say the authors, his decision to invade "was hardly the act of an irrational or reckless aggressor"; moreover, no effort was made to deter him. (13)

Two more indications that Saddam is deterrable are provided. When he launched conventionally-armed SCUD missiles at Saudi Arabia and Israel during the Gulf War, he refrained from using chemical or biological weapons on coalition forces

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that were decimating the Iraqi army. Later testimony by Iraqi officials indicated he did not use those weapons because of the senior Bush administration's threat to retaliate with nuclear weapons. Second, when the remnants of Iraq's army were mobilized in an apparent attempt to block weapons inspection, the UN issued a new warning, the US reinforced its forces stationed in Kuwait, and Iraq



quickly withdrew its forces. Thus, in both cases, Saddam was easily deterred.

Though the Bush administration would paint Saddam as reckless and irrational, he has consistently weighed his options. When launching an attack on another country or in the case of the Kurds, he has avoided conflicts he clearly could not win; he understands that he is no match for US military might. Finally, "given what the United States could do in response to any Iraqi attack, Saddam has no incentive to use chemical or nuclear weapons against America and its allies, unless his survival is threatened." (14)

What proponents of Saddam's ouster seem to forget is that America has supported him in the past, sometimes including the very behavior they now point to in order to portray him as a madman. The US backed Iraq when Saddam was gassing Kurds and Iranians, providing satellite imagery of Iranian troop positions so he could use his chemical weapons more effectively.

(15) During the same era the Reagan administration allowed Iraq to import anthrax, West Nile virus, and botulism toxin for use in their development of biological weapons.

It is worth recalling that the central figure who visited Baghdad in 1983 and met with Saddam in order to foster better relations between the US and Iraq, was none other than Donald Rumsfeld. Again, roughly a year after the gassing of the Kurds, in October of 1989, the senior President Bush signed a formal directive declaring that "normal relations between the US and Iraq would serve our longer-term interests and promote stability in both the Gulf and the Middle East." (16) Why the earlier lack of US concern over Iraq's interest in biological and chemical weapons? Because, say the authors, they correctly understood that he was unlikely to use them against the US unless threatened directly. "The real puzzle," they observe, "is why they think it would be impossible to deter him today." (17)

The final nightmare scenario in the minds of preemptive war advocates is the possibility that, should he develop nuclear weapons, Saddam might give them secretly to Al Qaeda or some similar group. That likelihood seems extremely small, according to Mearsheimer and Walt, first because such a transfer is not likely to go undetected and second, because there has been no love lost between Saddam and Osama bin Laden in the past. Saddam's brand of secularism is anathema to bin Laden's Islamic fundamentalism, and any weapons in terrorist hands might well be used against Iraq. Saddam cannot afford to guess wrong about either detection or bin Laden nor, for that matter, about the possibility of nuclear retaliation by the US. In short, say the authors, "both logic and historical evidence suggest that a policy of vigilant containment would work, both now and in the event that Iraq acquired a nuclear arsenal." It does not take a genius, they add, to grasp the consequences for Iraq if they

tried to use such weapons. "It only takes a leader who wants to remain alive, and who wants to remain in power" and throughout his lengthy and brutal career, these have been Saddam's paramount goals. "That is why deterrence and containment would work, and that is why preventive war is unnecessary." (18)

(1) Conetta, Carl, "The Pentagon's New Budget, New Strategy, and New War," Project on Defense Alternatives, 6/25/02, www.comw.org/pda/0206newwar, p. 1

(2) Ibid.

(3) Falk, Richard, "The New Bush Doctrine," *The Nation*, 7/15/02, p. 1 www.thenation.com/docprint.mhtml?i=20020715&s=falk

(4) Conetta, p. 2

(5) Ibid.

(6) Ibid.

(7) Ibid.

(8) Ibid.

(9) Falk, Richard, "A Dangerous Game," *The Nation*, 10/7/02, p. 1, www.thenation.com/docprint.mhtml?i=20021007&s=falk

(10) Falk, "The New Bush Doctrine", *The Nation*, p. 2

(11) Mearsheimer, John J. & Stephen M. Walt, "Can Saddam Be Contained? History Says Yes", 11/12/02, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, p. 1

(12) Mearsheimer, op. cit., p. 5

(13) Ibid.

(14) Mearsheimer, op. cit., p. 8

Bands to Perform for RPEC Benefit

The 3rd Annual Happy Skalidays band fest will take place December 22 at the 929 Cafe (formerly Twisters), 929 W. Grace St., Richmond. Four bands, The Ernies (their last show ever), Murphy's Kids (ska), Eastern Standard Time (ska/jazz from DC), and Slow Kids (ska/punk) will perform as a fundraising effort for RPEC. The doors will open at 5:00 p.m. with a \$6.00 admission fee. For more information call (804)358-1958.

Disarm Iraq Without War

A Statement from Religious Leaders in the United States and United Kingdom

"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:4)

As the calls for military action against Iraq continue from our two governments, despite the new opening for U.N. weapons inspections, we are compelled by the prophetic vision of peace to speak a word of caution to our governments and our people. We represent a diversity of Christian communities - from the just war traditions to the pacifist tradition. As leaders of these communities in the United States and the United Kingdom, it is our considered judgment that a preemptive war against Iraq, particularly in the current situation would not be justified. Yet we believe Iraq must be disarmed of weapons of mass destruction; and that alternative courses to war should be diligently pursued.

Let there be no mistake: We regard Saddam Hussein and his regime in Iraq as a real threat to his own people, neighboring countries, and to the world. His previous use and continued development of weapons of mass destruction is of great concern to us. The question is how to respond to that threat. We believe the Iraqi government has a duty to stop its internal repression, to end its threats to peace, to abandon its efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction, and to respect the legitimate role of the United Nations in ensuring that it does so. But our nations and the international community must pursue these goals in a manner consistent with moral principles,

political wisdom, and international law. As Christians, we seek to be guided by the vision of a world in which nations do not attempt to resolve international problems by making war on other nations. It is a long-held Christian principle that all governments and citizens are obliged to work for the avoidance of war.

We therefore urge our governments, especially President Bush and Prime Minister Blair, to pursue alternative means to disarm Iraq of its most destructive weapons. Diplomatic cooperation with the United Nations in renewing rigorously effective and thoroughly comprehensive weapons inspections, linked to the gradual lifting of sanctions, could achieve the disarmament of Iraq without the risks and costs of military attack.

We do not believe that preemptive war with Iraq: is a last resort, could effectively guard against massive civilian casualties, would be waged with adequate international authority, and could predictably create a result proportionate to the cost. And it is not clear that the threat of Saddam Hussein cannot be contained in other, less costly ways. An attack on Iraq could set a precedent for preemptive war, further destabilize the Middle East, and fuel more terrorism. We, therefore, do not believe that war with Iraq can be justified under the principle of a "just war," but would be illegal, unwise, and immoral.

Illegal

Whether we oppose all war, or reluctantly accept it only as a last resort, in this case the U.S. government has not presented an adequate justification for war. Iraq has not attacked or directly threatened the United States, nor is it clear that its weapons of mass destruction pose an immediate and urgent threat to neighboring countries or the world. It has not been credibly implicated in the attacks of September 11. Under international law, including the U.N. Charter, the only circumstance under which individual states may invoke the authority to go to war is in self-defense following an armed attack. In Christian just war doctrine, there are rigorous conditions even for an act of self-defense. Preemptive war by one state against another is not permitted by either law or doctrine. For the United States to initiate military action against Iraq without authorization by the United Nations Security Council would set a dangerous precedent that would threaten the foundations of international security. And under or domestic governance, the U.S. Congress and the U.K. Parliament must also play a key role in authorizing any contemplated military action.

Unwise

The potential social and diplomatic consequences of a war against Iraq make it politically unwise. The U.S. and the U.K. could be acting almost entirely alone. Many nations, including our European allies

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*I am Kasi's friend.
I know him as a man who likes cats,
who loves his country of Pakistan
And its many beauties, who is
fiercely passionate about his
religion,
And who is generous and kind to
those who befriend him.
He has within him much goodness.
I am very sorrowful that he is to die
tonight in this manner.
And I am glad that I have known
him as a friend.*

When Jesus said to his followers, "I call you friends," he did not put limits on that friendship. He talked often of forgiveness. He said to forgive, to forgive and to forgive again and again the wrongs done against us. That does not mean to ignore what has been done or to condone an act of violence and hatred. It means to reject the deed but to accept the person who has done the wrong and to move forward to reconciliation and understanding. That is not what is happening here tonight.

Jesus said to love our enemies. And surely our government has declared Kasi an enemy. Can we realize, as Martin Luther King, Jr. stated so clearly, "that the evil deed of the enemy-neighbor ... never quite expresses all that he is. When we look beneath the surface ... we see within our enemy-neighbor a measure of goodness, and we know God's image is ineffably etched in his being." Yet tonight our state will kill that goodness of Kasi that is of God, as surely as it kills what it labels as 'evil. This cannot be what Jesus meant when he said, "Love your enemies."

We are offering not love but hate - a risky choice. Again, in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.,

Disarm Iraq Without War

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and most of the Arab world, strongly oppose such a war. To initiate a major war in an area of the world already in great turmoil could destabilize governments and increase political extremism throughout the Middle East and beyond. It would add fuel to the fires of violence that are already consuming the region. It would exacerbate anti-American hatred and produce new recruits for terror attacks against the United States and Israel. A unilateral war would also undermine the continued political cooperation needed for the international campaign to isolate terrorist networks. The U.S. could very well win a battle against Iraq and lose the campaign against terrorism. The potentially dangerous and highly chaotic aftermath of a war with Iraq would require years of occupation, investment, and a high level of international cooperation - none of which have yet to be adequately planned or even considered. And the Iraqi people themselves have an important role in creating nonviolent resistance within their own country with international support.

Immoral

"Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. ((Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.)) Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence,

We are particularly concerned by the potential human costs of war. If the military strategy includes massive air attacks and urban warfare in the streets of Baghdad, tens of thousands of innocent civilians could lose their lives. This alone makes such a military attack morally unacceptable. In addition, the people of Iraq continue to suffer severely from the effects of the Gulf War, the resulting decade of sanctions, and the neglect and oppression of a brutal dictator. Rather than inflicting further suffering on them through a costly war, we should assist in rebuilding their country and alleviating their suffering. We also recognize that in any conflict, the casualties among attacking forces could be very high. This potential suffering in our own societies should also lead to prudent caution.

We reaffirm our religious hope for a world in which "nation shall not lift up sword against nation." We pray that our governments will be guided by moral principles, political wisdom, and legal standards, and will step back from their calls for war.

Speak Out!

Sign this statement and send it to President George Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and U.N. Secretary General Kofi

((and toughness multiplies toughness)) in a descending spiral of destruction.

Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend. ((We never get rid of an enemy by meeting hate with

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700 march Downtown for peace

by Phil Wilayto, Richmond Free Press

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Anti-war protests: They're not just for big cities anymore. Following the massive march and rally that drew more than 100,000 protesters to Washington, D.C. on Oct. 26, Richmond has joined the growing number of smaller towns and cities where substantial numbers are turning out to oppose a

Iraq with "serious consequences" if it refuses unlimited access to U.N. inspectors searching for weapons of mass destruction.

The Richmond protest was initiated by Food Not Bombs, an organization of young activists that

"war on the poor."

After about an hour of speeches, the crowd began its march, traveling north through Jackson Ward. At 4th and Leigh streets, the marchers, more than 90 percent of whom were white, received thumbs-up gestures and clenched-fist salutes from a group of black construction workers. For the most part, however, the first half of the police-approved route was largely devoid of spectators.

The protesters then turned south on 3rd Street, stopping at the East Franklin Street offices of the conservative Richmond Times-Dispatch between 3rd and 4th streets. As the tightly packed

ATTACK IRAQ
NO

**NOT IN
OUR NAME!**

serves a free meal for homeless people each Sunday in Monroe Park. Other local groups helped to promote the march, which attracted contingents from throughout the Richmond area, as well as from Charlottesville, Louisa, Harrisonburg and Hampton Roads.

Events began with a 2 p.m. rally at Festival Park, near the Coliseum.

Toni Harper, vice president of the Central Virginia Chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, told the crowd she was speaking out "as a mother and grandmother," afraid for her sons in the face of a new war.

Ali Abed, a Palestinian-American from Hampton Roads, stressed that "Jews are not my enemy," while criticizing President Bush for continuing to send massive amounts of aid to the Israeli military.

In addition to opposing a war on Iraq, the march also demanded an end to U.S. military aid to Israel; an end to racial and religious profiling; and opposition to state budget cuts, denounced as a

**NO BLOOD
FOR OIL**

marchers filled the entire block, organizers unfurled a banner on the newspaper's steps that read, "Don't believe the lies in the Richmond-Times Dispatch!"

After a few speakers denounced the newspaper's editorial positions, the march resumed, heading for Capitol Square. As the protesters passed the Free Press building at 5th and East Franklin, organizer Annette Cousins took the mobile loudspeaker to thank the African-American-owned newsweekly for what she called its "balanced coverage" of community issues, as well as its opposition to a new war.

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new war against Iraq. Under the watchful eyes of dozens of police officers, at least 700 people wound their way through Downtown streets last Saturday. They carried colorful signs saying "No blood for oil," vigorously chanted slogans and waved a 10-foot-tall puppet draped with a banner reading "Not in our name!" Black-clad young anarchists, some with kerchiefs covering their faces, marched alongside tie-dyed-wearing university students, gray-haired veterans of earlier protest movements and young parents pushing baby carriages.

One chant rose above the rest: "1, 2, 3, 4, we don't want your racist war! 5, 6, 7, 8, stop the killing, stop the hate!"

The march took place one day after the United Nations Security Council approved a U.S.-engineered resolution that threatens

When Will We Learn?

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- That the immersion of generations of young people in military training leads to further violence, even during periods of peace when too many veterans become abusive or suicidal?
- That any war resulting in the death and destruction of innocent women, children, and other non-combatants is not a “just war”?
- That war is completely incompatible with the core teachings of most religions?
- That governments lie to their people in order to gain and maintain support for wars whose real purposes are only revealed in later historical studies?
- That wars waste enormous quantities of financial, natural, and human resources that could be applied to solving the problems often cited as the causes of war?
- That wars result in millions of deaths not directly related to bullets and bombs; those caused by disease, malnutrition, poverty, and environmental degradation?
- That cooperating with other nations to build viable international organizations and agreements could solve

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hate; we get rid of an enemy by getting rid of enmity. /// By its very nature, hate destroys and tears down; by its very nature, love creates and builds up.)) Love transforms with redemptive power.”

Let us offer love to Kasi,

global problems and lead to greater peace?

- That paying for war while praying for peace is counter-productive?
- That every war continues to destroy long after the guns fall silent, as generations of survivors struggle with resulting addictions, emotional disorders, and general malaise?
- That every citizen has an obligation to follow his or her conscience to obey a power higher than the state?
- That nonviolence is active, not passive, and requires as much or more courage than the use of violence?
- That in an age of high-tech weaponry, the existence of humanity is being threatened by our continuing reliance on violence and our habit of separating ourselves from each other and from nature?
- That finally, we need to listen to Dorothy Day who wrote, “Let us not worry so much about being effective, but let us concentrate on being faithful - faithful to what we know in our conscience.” Perhaps if we all act on this advice, we will effectively shift our nation’s priorities and

to his family, to all those he has wronged and who have suffered because of his deeds, to everyone here tonight, even those whose job it is to deny love, and to those in governments everywhere who make decisions based on hate and fear. Let us offer love to all persons, that we might call them friends.

700 march Downtown for peace

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The demonstrators also left the Free Press a large thank-you card that expressed gratitude for the newspaper's efforts for peace with justice.

The demonstrators then proceeded north to Broad Street, marched around the Capitol grounds and wound up with a final rally at the Bell Tower in the southwest corner of Capitol Square.

“So this is what democracy looks like!” declared community activist Marty Jewell from the Tower’s steps, looking out over the hundreds of demonstrators.

Just days before, Mr. Jewell had lost his second bid to replace Rudolph C. McCollum Jr. as council representative from the 5th District. On Saturday, as he did during his campaign, Mr. Jewell denounced city policies that he said favored Downtown development over the needs of neighborhoods, as well as what he called a neglect of poverty in the country as a whole.

“This war is a diversion for all that is wrong in America, by people who don't have the moral courage to fix it!” he shouted.

On Monday, police spokeswoman Jennifer Reilly said the Richmond Police Department does not provide crowd estimates. However, she said one police major had said he thought Saturday's march was the city's largest protest in a quarter-century.

Two From Richmond Arrested at School of Assassins Protest in Georgia

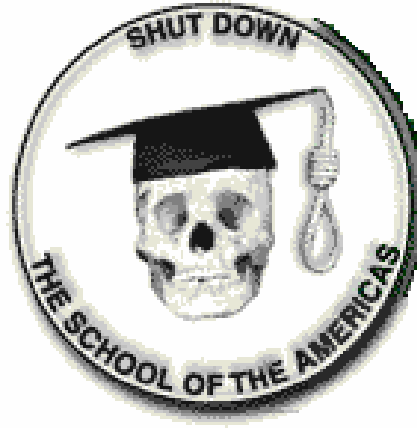
By John Gallini

This past weekend, six of us traveled from Richmond to Fort Benning to participate in the annual vigil on the anniversary of the deaths of the Jesuits at UCA in El Salvador. Nancy Gowen, of course, is still at Alderson Women's Prison for her protest there last year, but was certainly with us in spirit.

Here is the description from SOA Watch:

November 2002: The Movement for Justice in Latin America Continues to Build and Grow

Over 10,000 people from far and wide gathered at the gates of Ft. Benning to speak truth to power, calling for the closure of the School of the Americas (renamed: the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation). Our movement continues to grow - for many it was the first time that they joined the annual vigil action at Fort Benning and stood together with thousands to demand a fundamental change in US foreign policy. It was a spirited weekend filled with hope, joy, courage and solidarity. Thousands engaged in an act of nonviolent civil disobedience as they crossed en masse onto Fort Benning and transformed the main gate into a memorial wall for the countless victims of the SOA/WHISC. 96 people were arrested as they attempted to continue to process to the SOA, by either going over, around or through the fence. Visit <http://www.Atlanta.Indymedia.org>



for updates, detailed reports, and audio/video footage of the weekend.

All of the people who were arrested on the base have been released from jail on bail. The SOA Watch legal collective worked tirelessly for their release.

There were also folks from Food Not Bombs in Richmond and others from around the state. Two from our group, Tom Cleary and Dave Depp, went onto the base and were arrested and kept overnight in Muskogee County jail. They were processed Monday morning and held on \$5,000 bail each. By late afternoon we posted the bond and Tom and Dave were released - and we were back in Richmond early Tuesday morning.

One story from the protest typifies why it is so important to shut down the SOA. Two young girls had driven from the Midwest for the protest, but did not have specific directions as to where the protest was to be held. As you drive into Columbus, GA on I 185, there are

signs that direct you to Fort Benning, and the road goes right into the Fort, leading to a gate with MP's. When the girls got to the gate and explained they were looking for the demonstration (which was at a different gate several miles away) the soldiers directed them to come onto the base to turn around, which they did.

When they got onto the base, soldiers stopped the car and arrested the two girls and took them to be interrogated. This is entrapment of the worst kind! They put the driver in jail - all day Saturday through Monday, when she was arraigned like the others, and finally released about the time that Tom and Dave were - late Monday afternoon.

The soldiers did not hold the other girl - but took her off the base and put her out in the countryside - at night, alone! When she was found by a woman driving by, she was hysterical. She eventually called her parents in the Midwest who arranged to get her back home.

The mother of the driver got the news and immediately drove the 10+ hours to get to Georgia - but could not get her daughter out of jail until Monday (we heard this story from the mother on Monday).

The point of relating this sad story is that this is exactly how young women are treated/intimidated in Latin America - and this is precisely what the School of Assassins teaches - still! today! - as evidenced by the behavior of the military that is doing the training.

CALENDAR DECEMBER 2002

Meetings of Local Groups

- Every Sunday** **Food Not Bombs, Richmond <Meal Sharing**, 4:00 P.M. in Monroe Park. Hotline # 359-4880 for details
- Every 3rd Wed.** **Amnesty International**, 7:00 PM at Friends Meeting. 4500 Kensington Ave. Call 320-9488
- Every 2nd Thurs.** **Virginians Against Handgun Violence**, 7:15 PM., Jewish Community Center, B. Phillips-Taylor, 737-2975
- Every 3rd Friday** **Sufi Dancing: Dances of Universal Peace**, 7:30-9:30 PM except Oct. Round House, Byrd Park. 353-4901
- Every Thurs.** **Richmond Organization for Sexual Minority Youth (ROSMY)**, 7:00-9:00 PM. Call support line: 353-2077 for more information; 353-1699 for the administrative line.
- Every 3rd Sat.** **Virginians for Justice**, 12:00 noon at the office. A political advocacy group working towards equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens of Virginia. Open to the public. Contact number is 643-4816.
- Every 3rd Sun.** **Richmond Community for Ethics and Meaning**, at First Unitarian. 1000 Blanton Ave., 5-8 PM, Susan at 784-4069.
- Every 4th Sat.** **Pax Christi Peace Community** - Call Elaine Ogburn for details - 320-4514.
- Every 1st Mon.** **Virginia People of Faith for Alternatives to the Death Penalty**, 4:45 PM
Catholic Diocese Conference Room, Floyd and Cherry, Kathleen Kenney, 359-5661

UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 21** **"Sun, Moon and Stars - An Alternative Christmas Celebration"** - at Virginia Hall on the campus of UTS/PSCE.
- December 22** **The 3rd Annual Happy Skalidays band fest** - a fundraising effort for RPEC on December 22 at the 929 Cafe (formerly Twisters), 929 W. Grace St., Richmond. For more information call (804)358-1958.
- December 31** **World Day of Peace liturgy** - Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond
- January 10-12 and 24-26** **AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project) training** - Call RPEC @ (804) 358-1958 for location and registration information.



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RPEC World Wide Web Address:
<http://www.rpec.org>

Annual Dinner – 2002

By John Gallini

It took some effort and some creative reshuffling, but I think we were finally able to find a seat at a table for everyone at this year's Annual Dinner. We used every table and every chair in the hall, plus some from classrooms. My estimate is that attendance was near 160, which was a pleasant surprise after last year when fewer than 100 attended.

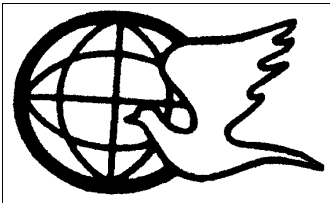
After a time for people to find seats, make bids on some of the auction items, and renew acquaintances, Ken welcomed folks with prayers for peace and led us in a moving Pledge of Resistance, "Not in Our Name." Several members stepped up to encourage participation in coming events, including the November 9 Rally and March to oppose the coming Iraq war.

Joel Moses, long-time RPEC member, prepared a great



dinner. And while we were eating, Sylvia Clute introduced some of the winners of this year's Peace Essay contest and read excerpts from their essays on the theme "What Has 9/11 Taught Us About Peace and Justice." Several of the winners were from the same school, Holy Trinity in Norfolk, and they were present to receive their prizes, accompanied by family members, their teacher and the principal of Holy Trinity. The evening concluded with the live auction, ably led once again by Steve Northup.

From a financial standpoint, RPEC was able to raise about \$4,000 – better than last year, but not reaching the \$6,000 goal reached in some past years. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the evening a success, and especially to our Office Manager, Johnnie Taylor, who worked so hard to prepare for the event.



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