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RPEC IN FINANCIAL CRISIS - NEED MEMBER SUPPORT IMMEDIATELY

Over the past few years, most non-profit organizations have been hit hard, with donations from individuals and organization down. Unfortunately RPEC has not been spared this hardship. In the last newsletter, the RPEC Board announced an austerity budget to help the Center get through this year, with more cuts to come if necessary.

This crisis is real and we need the help of all RPEC members.

- In this election year, the information that RPEC gets to each of us through newsletters and e-mail are crucial in helping peace-loving individuals mobilize and make smart voting decisions.
- With a growing gap between the haves and have-nots, each of us needs a group to help us seek justice for all people more effectively.
- With a growing youth violence problem in Richmond, the work of the Richmond Peace Education Center is critical.

What can you do?

(Continued on page 4)



PEACE VIGIL



RPEC is hosting a Peace Vigil on Friday, March 19, with prayers delivered from a variety of religious faiths, 5:40 to 6:40 p.m. at Forest Hill Park, and co-hosting with the First Unitarian Church on Sunday, March 21 a five member panel titled "Iraq, One Year Later", at the First Unitarian Church, 1000 Blanton Ave. 7-9 p.m. We encourage all RPEC members and invite the general public to attend these events. Info: Tyla Matteson, 275-6476 or

rpec NEWS

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Message from the RPEC Board Chair

Dear Friends,

Spring is finally here and with it another season of growth and renewal has begun. The RPEC board has also grown this year, with the addition of several new board members: Wendy Northup, a former executive director of RPEC; Megan Field, a student at the prestigious Maggie Walker Governor's School; and longtime peace activist Jane Rosecrans. They have already proven to be exceptional additions to the board in their dedication and service during one of the most difficult financial situations RPEC has faced in years. While we have managed to prevent a disaster so far, we are not in the clear yet. At our most recent meeting the board agreed to continue the austerity budget that was initiated two months ago. Summer is our most difficult financial time and more help is needed if RPEC is to continue as the oldest peace center in the region. If you haven't made a donation to the Richmond Peace Education Center in a while, this is the time to do it. If you can't afford to make a monetary contribution, your donation of time is just as valuable. RPEC does not exist without you, the members. Please take a moment right now to consider what you can do to ensure that we are able to continue to serve the community with our work for peace and justice.

Yours truly,
Noah Scalin, Board Chair

Call to a Time to Reflect ... NCC Urges Peace Vigils Nationwide March 19-21 to Mark First Anniversary of the Start of the Iraq War



The first anniversary of the start of the Iraq War will be a time for people across the United States -- indeed, around the globe -- to take stock, to mourn the dead, to pray for all affected by the war and by the decades of dictatorship and sanctions that preceded the war, and to direct their energies toward a more peaceful future. The National Council of Churches USA is encouraging houses of worship -- churches, synagogues and mosques -- to commemorate the March 20 anniversary by holding peace vigils sometime during the weekend of March 19-21.

We hold in our hearts and prayers:

- * The more than 130,000 U.S. troops in danger in Iraq, the more than 535 who have died, and the many thousands who have returned with physical and mental injuries.
- * The hundreds of thousands of others who have lost their lives in Iraq -- during the past year and during the long years of brutal dictatorship and devastating economic sanctions that preceded the war.
- * The hundreds of thousands of people in the United States and around the world whose lives have been diminished by the Iraq War but who are not included in any official count of the casualties: people living in poverty, veterans whose benefits have been cut, children whose schools have no books, and families with no health insurance.

Time to Resist

Dave Depp

April 15th is approaching and it is time for all the sheep to be shorn of their tax dollars to support a military budget allocation of 800 billion dollars.* Perhaps this statement requires explanation.

The 800 billion figure includes past wars (e.g. Veteran's Administration services and benefits), an estimated portion of the accumulated national debt incurred due to past wars, and current military expenditures including allocations our government buries in peaceful components of the budget, such as the energy department. This 800 billion figure, despite its shocking size, doesn't include dollars for the war in Iraq or the "war on terror".

According to non-governmental economists, these 800 billion accounts for 47% of the 2004 federal budget. The government publishes a budget summary stating that the military only amounts to 17.5% of the total budget. This figure is arrived at employing the legerdemain of placing trust funds like Social Security in the overall budget. The practice of combining trust and federal funds, which is named the "unified budget", began in the 1960's during the Viet Nam War when the government found it politically expedient to minimize the cost of war. Political expedience remains in style, which brings us to the sheep reference in the opening sentence above.

Year after year we accept government budgetary deception along with many other deceptions; currently the existence of weapons



of mass destruction in Iraq as a justification for war. All of us can create a list of government deceptions stretching back to the Tonkin Gulf resolution and before. How do we explain our acceptance of chronic deception? How do we explain our continual readiness to pay for war and preparation for war, even while some of us speak of nonviolence and express anti-war sentiments? Is it complacency, apathy, insensitivity, fear, and/or ignorance? Why do we behave like sheep? Is it that we have not experienced war up close? But we saw the New York towers fall and we constantly see pictures of violent acts and their consequences from all over the world. Are our lives too comfortable? Are we enmeshed in a materialism that deadens our spirits and kills our compassion? Are we complacent and apathetic because we feel powerless in a political system controlled by a moneyed elite? Is it ignorance because our schools overemphasize unquestioning obedience and put a patriotic gloss on our national history? Is it

insensitivity because we have been overexposed to violence as entertainment? Is the problem docility? George Beranos in his book Tradition of Freedom written in the 1940's puts the focus on docility. He says,

"I have thought for a long time now that if, some day, the increasing efficiency of the technique of destruction finally causes our species to disappear from the earth, it will not be cruelty that will be responsible for our extinction and still less, of course, the indignation that cruelty awakens and the reprisals and vengeance that it brings upon itself...but the docility, the lack of responsibility of the modern man (sic), his base subservient acceptance of every common decree. The horrors which we have seen, the still greater horrors we shall presently see, are not signs that rebels, insubordinate, untamable men (sic), are increasing in number throughout the world, but rather that there is a constant increase, a stupendously rapid increase, in the number of obedient, docile men (sic)."

It is time for us to withhold at least some small portion of our federal income tax payment as a nonviolent act of resistance or civil disobedience. It has been said we must choose nonviolence or face nonexistence given the advances in

(Continued on page 12)

**RPEC IN FINANCIAL
CRISIS -
NEED MEMBER SUPPORT**



Committee Reports



Programs Committee

(Continued from page 1)

- If you are a regular contributor, send something extra now.
- This is a time of slow giving, and we do not have the safety net we have had in the past.
- You have received a "membership" mailing. Even if you have never contributed in the past, please send you membership contribution in and feel proud to belong to an organization that has been fighting for peace and justice for the past 20 years.
- Tell someone you know about the Richmond Peace Education Center and urge them to become a member. There are few enough of us in Richmond. We need to band together.

The Programs Committee met February 5th. We continued planning of Peace Weekend: Since the Iraq War Has Ended which will include a Candlelight Vigil on March 19th and panel discussion on March 21st. Also, we continued organizing our yearly peace essay contest, the Richmond Youth Violence Prevention Summit for this spring, and our conflict resolution training. Volunteers are needed for these events and for our involvement in "Make a New Friend Day" on April 24th, "One City/Our City" on May 15th, and our annual concert on June 25th. Please contact Christopher Patterson at chris@ca4a.org or (804) 303-2204 if you want to volunteer for any of these events, want to get involved with our committee, or have any questions or suggestions. Our next meeting will be Thursday, March 4th at 4 PM at the RPEC office.

Newsletter Committee

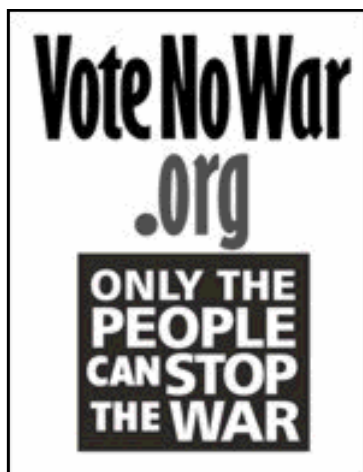
The Newsletter Committee met on February 3 to plan the March-April N/L. We also discussed the impact of cutting back to one issue every two months, and how to move toward publishing primarily via electronic media. We meet on 4/22/04 at 2:30 PM to plan the next issue. Contact John Gallini (272-8141, gallinjb@aol.com) with questions or suggestions or if you would like to be included on the calendar items e-mail list.

Fundraising Committee

The F/R Committee met on February 3 and will meet again on March 9. We have two new members, Wendy Northup and Anne Chase se, and we reviewed the primary sources of funding for RPEC. The John Mc Cutcheon concert is now scheduled for June 25 at the VCU Performing Arts Center. Chop Suey Books will contribute part of the proceeds from their Bazaar Market on March 27 to RPEC (contact Paul if you can help.) The recycled computer printer cartridge program is beginning to bring in some money. Contact Paul Fleisher (795-5326, pfleishe@infi.net) with questions or suggestions.

Membership Committee NEWS!

The Membership Committee met and developed a letter and membership card to be sent to all members. You may have already received yours. The membership committee would love to have more members. If you have any interest in helping us develop ways to be more involved with current members and attract new members, please call Mim at 353-0217. (E-mail: mimings@aol.com)





National Addiction

Dave Depp



The United States is an addict habituated to the drug named oil. This addiction has seven characteristics. First, like any addict, the U.S. worries constantly about securing its supply, and second, it reacts strongly and sometimes violently, to any threat to its supply. Third, like most individual addicts, the U.S. cannot be trusted to live by, or uphold, its expressed moral values because at anytime the craving for its drug might require their temporary violation or abandonment. Just picture the drunken parent showing up late for a child's birthday party. Fourth, needless to say, an addicted Uncle Sam doesn't want to listen to friends and family urging reform or rehabilitation. Fifth, reduction of dependency through the use of alternatives, or the reduction through the acceptance of discomfort or suffering, are angrily rejected. Sixth, again like most addicts, the U.S. will assiduously hide evidence of addiction and devote much time and energy to the concoction of stories diverting attention from the true nature of the problem. Finally, the seventh characteristic is that the longer the U.S. consumes its drug, the more it needs to consume in order to obtain the same or more pleasure.

The truth is that we are all part of a highly addicted national body and we will ultimately all suffer the pain inevitably associated with violent attempts to maintain or expand the supply of our drug, or the deep pain inherent in detoxification; changing our lifestyle. Let us examine in greater detail the seven characteristics of our national oil addiction.

1. Insuring Supply. During the nineteenth century, competition between Great Britain and Czarist Russia for control of Eurasia was called the "Great Game" by historical observers. The Caspian Basin in the heart of Eurasia contains an estimated 85 to 219 billion barrels of crude oil worth up to 4 trillion dollars. This Caspian reserve is considered the largest untapped fossil fuel source on earth and the U.S. is maneuvering for control in the new "Great Game".¹ The U.S. has deployed troops not only in Afghanistan, but also in the former Soviet Republics of Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, all in the name of fighting terrorism. The U.S. is also negotiating long-term use of a "family" of military bases in Africa aimed in part at securing our supply of West African oil, particularly from Nigeria.² The intense desire to insure the U.S. supply of oil, also accounts for our willingness to deface the Alaskan wilderness, support the oppressive Algerian regime, send massive amounts of money to Columbia, while accepting the chronic risk of environmental disaster as massive oil tankers traverse the world. Remember the Exxon Valdez!

2. Violent Protection of Supply. The U.S. continues to expand its military presence in areas and nations with significant oil reserves. The U.S. is a major player in the long-lasting war in Columbia, the war in Afghanistan (likely oil pipeline route), two wars in Iraq, and rising military tension with Russia. The U.S. placing troops in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, while also making overtures to Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, is analogous to Russia or France or England building military bases in Texas or California if those states were to become independent from the U.S. It is highly inflammatory behavior, which risks reviving the cold war. In fact, Russia recently established its first military base outside its own borders in Kyrgyzstan, twenty miles from a U.S. base. This cynical exercise of power by the U.S. can be explained as a logical outgrowth of the long developing National Security strategy published in September 2002 which clearly states that U.S. economic and military dominance must be established and preserved at all cost. For example, it says, "our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military buildup in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States."³ The imperialistic euphemism, "preemptive war" is part of this strategy. Indeed, the U.S. is Britain's replacement in the "Great Game", among other "games" worldwide.

3. Abandonment of Moral Principles. In the rush to secure and defend its supply of oil, the U.S. is supporting many repressive governments. For years we were Saddam Hussein's supporter and we continue, however reluctantly, our dependence on Saudi despotism. In September 2002, Teodoro Obiang, the bloody tyrant in oil rich

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Equatorial Guinea, was received at the White House with full honors by President Bush.⁴ Now we are supporting Islom Karmov in Uzbekistan, a leader famous for his crushing of political opponents and Islamic groups. In fact, the U.S. gave Karmov \$500 million last year in aid and base rent payments.⁵ We are also supporting the repressive governments of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Pakistan. The U.S justifies such support as necessary for the war on terrorism, disregarding the very real possibility that repressed people become terrorists. Lutz Kleveman quotes a young Uzbek Muslim as saying “the Americans don’t help us, the people, but only the government. I hate America.”⁶

4. Resisting Advice from Friends. The U.S. ignored millions of people all around the world who demonstrated against war in Iraq. The U.S. ignored the United Nations and weakened it by speaking of its irrelevancy. The U.S. refused to sign the Kyoto Protocol which was a worldwide attempt to counter global warming, and the U.S. has opposed a variety of existing and proposed treaties placing limits on war-making capabilities. For example, the U.S. opposed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty of 1970, the ABM Treaty, Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention Against Germ Warfare, and barred the reaffirmation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of gas and bacteria during war. Further, the U.S. has refused to join the world in supporting the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which was a step toward banning space warfare.⁷ Why is the U.S. so opposed to efforts to reduce weapons worldwide? In large part, because the U.S. oil addiction has fueled the drive for hegemony, and implicit in being the world’s only superpower is freedom from all restraints.

5. Rejection of Alternatives or Treatment. Despite our growing national consumption of oil, the U.S. government refuses to mandate smaller cars, a higher mpg standard, mass transit, higher taxes, or a crash program with financial incentives to develop alternative energy sources. Reducing oil consumption through a sustainable alternative energy policy would result in greater national security and would make our national dream of hegemony less compelling.

6. Hiding Addiction Through Fiction. We need to challenge our government’s claim to be promoting democracy while supporting oil controlling autocrats who “play ball” with us. We need to challenge our government’s policy of putting business profits ahead of environmental health, and while we are questioning our government, we should continue to ask about Iraqi WMD. U.S. troops, while killing and being killed in Iraq, found oil but no WMD.

7. Needing More for the Same High. We the people of the U.S. need to face the fact that we are 4% of the world’s population consuming 25% of the world’s energy. Again, we the people need to consider the strong possibility that we too often define luxuries as necessities, and too often are unconscious of our exploitation by advertising. We need to examine whether more “stuff” equals more happiness. We need to challenge the religion of materialism and support nonviolent government policies that are consonant with our spiritual values. We also need to consider the quality and wisdom of our leadership when our president advises more shopping as a response to terrorist attack.

Mr. Kleveman concludes his *Nation* article saying, “...a bold policy to reduce the addiction to oil would be the most powerful weapon to win the epic struggle against terrorism...no matter how many military forces are deployed to protect oil fields and pipelines, the oil infrastructure may prove too vulnerable to terrorist attack to guarantee a stable supply...more gas guzzling Hummers on U.S. highways only lead to more Humvees and American soldiers near oil fields.”⁸ We need to cure our national addiction to oil.

¹ “Oil and the New Great Game”, Lutz Kleveman, *The Nation*, February 16, 2004, pp. 11-14.

² “Oil and Democracy Don’t Mix”, Frida Berrigan, *In These Times*, March 1, 2004, p. 6-7.

³ Hegemony or Survival: America’s Quest for Global Dominance, Noam Chomsky, Henry Holt and Co., 2003, p. 11.

⁴ *Ibid.* p.114.

PARTNERS FOR PEACE

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Email: pfp@igc.org
Web: www.partnersforpeace.org*

Partners for Peace Jerusalem Women's Tour

**Richmond, Virginia
March 31- April 1,
2004**

Richmond Contacts: *Nidal Mahayni* *Riad Mahayni*
Email: mahayni@comcast.net max_vo2@msn.com
Phone: 804-359-8382 804-323-5992

Locations

March 31, 2004

Unity Christ Church of Bon Air
923 Buford Road,
7:00-9:00 pm

April 1, 2004

Baptist Theological Seminary at
Richmond
3400 Brook Road
Turnball Room at Virginia Hall
7:00-9:00 pm

Charlottesville, VA

Thursday, March 18

6:30 p.m. University of
Virginia—Charlottesville
New Cabell Hall, Room 138

Lynchburg, VA

Friday, March 19

3:00 p.m. Randolph-Macon
Women's College
Jack Lounge
Smith Memorial Building

I hope you join me in welcoming Partners for Peace to the Richmond area. This non-profit organization brings together three women who share differing perspectives on the most discussed and least understood issue in foreign policy facing Americans, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. **Nahla Assali** (a Muslim Palestinian), **Michal Sagi**, (a Jewish Israeli), and **Dr. Nuha Khoury**, (a Christian Palestinian) will visit Richmond, Virginia on March 31 and April 1, 2004 as part of this year's U.S. tour.

The three women, all born in Jerusalem, will speak on the need to share the small land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River to achieve peace in the region. The speakers, who did not know each other previously, come with no organizational agenda. They represent the true and valid voices of the feminine perspective in the area of conflict. They are mothers, daughters, wives, and grandmothers, all striving for a just peace.

The speakers' presentations will include different points of view as they emphasize a common assertion of the fundamental need to share the land. The sponsoring organization, Partners for Peace, does not structure debate, but rather invites rational, passionate discussion of the tragic situation in which they, the speakers, find themselves. There is absolutely no editorial control by Partners for Peace over what the women say. Partners for Peace simply offers an opportunity to share with Americans whatever is most important to the participants to convey.

With a history of six national speaking tours, Partners for Peace proudly presents: "Jerusalem Women Speak: Three Women, Three Faiths, One Shared Vision." The six previous tours share the same format but regularly feature new participants. The goal of Partners for Peace is to promote a just and lasting peace in Israel and Palestine by creating a visible measurable change in public opinion by opening hearts and minds to the true nature of the conflict.

The Richmond stop will be included in this year's southeastern tour. The speakers will also visit Charlottesville, VA; Greensboro, Charlotte, and Asheville, NC; Atlanta, GA; Birmingham, AL; and the Washington, DC metro area. The speakers will have engagements throughout Richmond and with members of the Richmond community.

PEACE WEEKEND

Friday, March 19 – Sunday, March 21

To mourn, understand, and take action in response to the war in Iraq on the occasion of its one-year anniversary, join us for the following:



Candlelight Peace Vigil

**Friday, March 19, 2004
5:40-6:40 PM**

Forest Hill Park

Forest Hill Avenue @ 41st Street
We will meet at the Stonehouse

Christian, Buddhist, Muslim,
Jewish, Wiccan, and Unitarian
Universalist remembrances,
prayers and meditations
Bring a candle or flashlight!
If you cannot attend please light a
single candle in your window.

Folk Music by

Donna Bain and John Ramsey

Silent Walking Peace

For more information on any of
these events, contact
Tyla Matteson at 275-6476 or
tmatson1@mindspring.com,
Jane Rosecrans at 864-8778 or
janerosecrans@riseup.net, or
Nora Weinhold at 231-1415 or
noralee@mindspring.com or visit
www.PeaceAndJustice.info

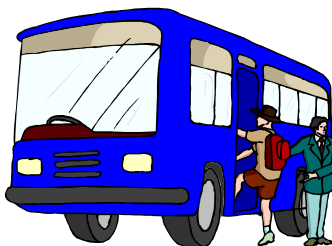
Peace Vigil

**Saturday, March 20, 2004,
9:00 AM**

Meet on Boulevard between
Grove and Hanover Avenues.
Walk in silent meditation to
Broad St. and back.

The World Says No to War:

**A Day of Global Action
Saturday, March 20, 2004
New York City, 12 Noon**



**On its one-year anniversary,
millions of people from all
over the world will
demonstrate against the
bombing and occupation of
Iraq**

*For information on carpools
and buses to NYC, contact
Jane Rosecrans @ 864-8778*

Silent Meditation

**Sunday, March 21, 2004,
1:00 PM**

Monroe Park

Join the Buddhist Peace
Fellowship for an hour of silent
meditation



Iraq: One Year Later A Panel Discussion

**Sunday, March 21, 2004
7:00-9:00 PM**

**First Unitarian Church
1000 Blanton Avenue
Across from Byrd Park
and the Carillon**

Panelists include:

Marie Rietmann - Public Policy
Director, Women's Action for New
Directions

Dr. Ali Hossaini - Founder, Islamic
Center of Virginia

Saba Abed - President, Ibn Rushd
Cultural Center

Larry Syverson - Antiwar Activist

Glen Besa - Regional Director for
the Appalachian Region, Sierra

*Sponsored by the Richmond Peace Education Center and
PeacAandJustice at First Unitarian Church*

Consumers Corner

The Economy and CSA's

John Gallini

Last year, around this time, I wrote about a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program in our area and encouraged you to check it out. After the newsletter was published I learned about another CSA, this one coordinated by our own Board Chair, Noah Scalin. Needless to say, when I decided to try out the idea, I went with Noah's CSA, named SPROUT. So now I can report on my year's experience as I once again encourage you to try it also.

The concept of a CSA is that members of a community buy shares of a local farm. In this case Mr. and Mrs. Phillips operate an organic farm located in Caroline County. Each week from April through October the farmers bring to town a quantity of produce for each member (a "share" is approximately one large brown paper grocery bag's worth of produce with 6 to 10 different items). This year members can pick up their shares on Sunday mornings at a Recreation Center near The Diamond or at the Farmers Market on Thursdays. There is also a home delivery option. The quantity and type of produce depends on the season and the weather. So in good years the members share the bounty and in lean years the quantities are smaller. The cost of a regular share is \$516 per year and there are a number of "work" shares available at \$258 per year. So the farmer has a guaranteed income and the risk of



EAT YOUR PROFITS!



small scale farming is shared by the consumers.

Last year Nancy and I, together with the families of three of my children, decided to split two shares. It was a great experience and we are continuing our membership this year (and looking forward to fresh asparagus and strawberries in a few weeks!) One of the challenges, which I enjoyed, is learning to cook different vegetables as they come into season. One of the rewards is going with your children (or grandchildren) to the Phillip's farm and picking potatoes or strawberries with them.

In a world where much of what we buy is produced with sweatshop labor in ways that pollute our earth, it is a pleasure to really know where

your food is coming from. To sign up, or to get more information, call Noah at 804-321-6677 or go to the Sprout website at <http://www.sproutorganic.org>

Which brings me to "THE ECONOMY", as in "It's the Economy, Stupid!" That slogan of the Clinton election campaigns is still valid, as much as some of us believe "It's the War". So for the rest of 2004 (at least until November 2) "Just Say No!" – No

Bizarre Market to Benefit RPEC

Chop Suey books, 1317 W. Cary has made RPEC the beneficiary of it's next Bizarre Market, to be held on March 27 from noon to 5 p.m. This is an arts and crafts bazaar, and they ask everyone who participates to donate 10 percent of their proceeds to the named organization (RPEC, in this case.) RPEC will have a table, with information and materials for sale.

We encourage RPEC members and supporters who are artists or crafters to participate. Anyone from RPEC who would like to be a part of this, either with your own booth or by helping to staff the RPEC booth, please contact Paul Fleisher (795-5326).

Caprivi Update - Justice Delayed, Justice Denied

Scott Morgan

In the early hours of 2 August 1999 members of an armed secessionist group known as the Caprivi Liberation Army launched an assault on government troops and Installations in the regional Capital of Katima Mulilo, which is in the Caprivi region of Northeastern Namibia. Official news accounts indicated that among those installations attacked were the Police Headquarters, the local offices of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation, an Army base, and an immigration post. Eleven people perished in the attacks, of whom, at least six were members of the Security Forces.

After initial success by the insurgents the government forces repelled the assault and rounded up both rebel troops and those civilians suspected of sympathizing with the rebels. Over 300 people were detained in suspicion of taking part in the attack, sympathizing with the rebels or assisting in planning or launching the attacks. These actions were taken after President Nujoma declared a State of Emergency. Many detainees were beaten in custody and denied medical care. The Prime Minister at the time, Hage Geingob, stated in Parliament, "Because of the provocation of the separatists some unfortunate excesses had resulted in the efforts of our security forces to zealously protect their motherland." The Defense Minister stated that security forces "had made some mistakes regarding human rights abuses in the first days after the attack". He stated that commanding

officers were instructed to stop the ill-treatment of detainees and that disciplinary action would be taken against officers who had beaten detainees. That was in 1999.

Before I update the current situation a brief update about why the attack took place is in order. Caprivi is one of the 13 provinces of Namibia. It is an isolated corridor in the northeast of the country and borders Angola, Zambia and Botswana. For more than a century it was part of the multi-ethnic Lozi or Barotse Kingdom that stretched over the same area. After an 1890 treaty the region became part of German Southwest Africa until South Africa took over in 1920 after Germany was defeated in World War I. Namibia gained Independence in 1990. Approximately 100,000 people live in the region. The two main ethnic groups are the maSubia, which supports the ruling SWAPO (Southwest Africa Peoples Organization), and the larger Mafwe which has usually supported opposition parties. The dissatisfaction of the Mafwe, which resulted from displeasure with the government in Windhoek, led to the formation of armed political forces in the 1990s. There are long-standing claims for either autonomy or a special political status for the province. These claims, which predate independence, have not been met to the date of this writing. However, in 1995 the Mafwe lost some of their power when it lost part of East Caprivi to the Yeyi Tribe when the Government

approved its request for a traditional chieftain.

In August 2003 the Human Rights Watchdog of Amnesty International released a report documenting its finding on those in custody. One hundred twenty-two still await trial for their believed roles in the attack. Twelve people have died in custody from injuries suffered at the hands of security forces. Recently eight men who were returned to Namibia by Botswana were added to the list of those facing treason charges resulting from the Caprivi assault. Amnesty International has made the following recommendations to the government of Namibia.

- First, ensure that the conditions for a fair trial are guaranteed.

- Second, try defendants promptly or release them. Waiting over 4 years for a trial is long enough.

- Third, establish independent and impartial inquiries into all reports of torture and bring those responsible to justice.

- Fourth, ensure humane conditions and allow access to doctors, lawyers, and family members.

- Fifth, and finally, issue an invitation to the UN special Rapporteur on Torture and provide redress to the victims and their families.

With other problems in the region in the spotlight of the

CALENDAR**March/April 2004****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 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.** **Equality Virginia**, 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 4th Sat.** **Pax Christi Peace Community** - Call Paula Powdermaker for details - 355-7395
- 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
- Every third Sunday** **The Richmond Virginia Buddhist Peace Fellowship** holds a meditation vigil for peace in Monroe Park, from 1 PM to 2 PM. Aug. 17, Sept. 21, Oct. 19 All are welcome.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 18** **Fill the Field! - at Greenville Correctional Center**, 8:30 PM
- March 19** **Candlelight Peace Vigil Friday - 5:40-6:40 PM**, Forest Hill Park, Forest Hill Avenue @ 41st Street We will meet at the Stonehouse
- March 20** **Peace Vigil Saturday - 9:00 AM** Meet on Boulevard between Grove and Hanover Avenues. Walk in silent meditation to Broad St. and back.
- March 20** **The World Says No to War: A Day of Global Action Saturday**, New York City, 12 Noon. For information on carpools and buses to NYC, contact Jane Rosecrans @ 864-8778 or janerosecrans@riseup.net
- March 21** **Buddhist Peace Fellowship Silent Meditation** - Sunday, 1:00 PM Monroe Park
- March 21** **Iraq: One Year Later A Panel Discussion - Sunday 7:00-9:00 PM** - First Unitarian Church, 1000 Blanton Avenue Across from Byrd Park and the Carillon
- March 24** **Monthly Protest Against the War with Iraq** - 10th and Main at 12:00 Noon.
- March 27** **Bizarre Market** - Chop Suey books, 1317 W. Cary noon to 5 p.m.,
- March 27** **Annual Haiti Gathering** - Saturday, 9:30 AM - 3 PM, at Church of the Incarnation, Charlottesville. Keynote speaker will be **Dr Paul Farmer**. Call the Office of Justice and Peace, Catholic Diocese for reservations (359-5661).
- March 27-30** **Annual SOA Watch Protest** - for info go to <http://www.soaw.org/new/>
- March 31** **Richmond Execution Vigil** - Richmond Friends Meeting, 8:30 PM.
- March 31, April 1** **Jerusalem Women's Tour - 3/31** - Unity Church of Bon Air; **4/1** - Baptist Theological Sem.
- April 9** **Stations of the Cross** - Church Hill, Meet at St. John's Episcopal Church, Patrick Henry Park, 24th and Broad, 11:45 AM,

Moving to an Electronic Newsletter



The Board has suggested, as a move to cut cost (and save trees), that we move from our paper newsletter to an electronic version.

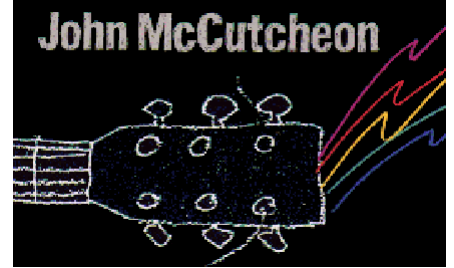
This will require purchasing the necessary software and learning how to use it. There is great potential that we can provide an improved product, as a number of national groups like Sojourners have done. The biggest challenge will be to obtain the e-mail addresses from our members. We will be contacting you during the next months to get this information, and we will keep you posted as we

Time to Resist

(Continued from page 3)
weapons technology.

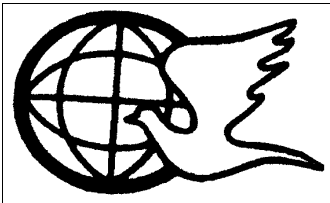
Let us shed our docility this April 15th. Let us inform our government representative, friends, family and neighbors that we are committing civil disobedience. Let us explain our actions to as many media outlets as possible. It is time to act on our humanity and abandon our docile imitation of sheep.

To place your resisted federal income taxes in an escrow account or to acquire more information about tax resistance, contact the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund (phone 888-PEACE-TAX), the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee (718-768-3420), or Dave Depp (804-227-3691).



McCutcheon Concert Set for June

Our annual Spring Concert is moving to early summer. John McCutcheon will bring his musical talent and commitment to peace and justice to Richmond once again on Friday, June 25, at VCU's Performing Arts Center. Mark your calendars and plan to enjoy a great evening of folk music.



**Richmond
Peace
Education
Center** 14 N. Laurel St., Richmond, VA 23220

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