



VETERANS FOR PEACE

Winter 2002

Respecting the Laws That Govern Nations

This statement was issued as a News Release by the VFP National Office on February 22.

Veterans For Peace, an organization of men and women who have served in the armed forces, having collectively experienced combat, imprisonment, bombing, shelling, firefights, all the manifestations of war, and its after-effects in terms of human suffering and cultural decline, is deeply troubled that the United States administration, in violation of our own Constitution, has waged an announced, but not legally declared war on a sovereign nation in response to a terrorist attack, heinous though it was.

We believe, our government is setting a dangerous precedent by choosing to bypass and avoid compliance with the United Nations Charter, which requires member states to refer disputes threatening international peace to the UN Security Council for determination of how to deal with such threats. Since the United States was one of the original signers to the treaty that established the principles of international law embodied by the United Nations, it should constitute the law of the land, and we should be its strongest champion.

Further, the United States military, subsequent to its attack on Afghanistan, has abducted hundreds of combatants, transporting them blindfolded, drugged and in chains to imprisonment at the US Navy base at Guantanamo, Cuba, where they are being treated improperly. These persons, according to Amnesty International, are being subject to illegal interrogation, while suffering the stress of close confinement, isolation in a foreign land, lack of access to legal counsel, and deliberately humiliating treatment.

By these acts, the United States Government has abrogated the Geneva Convention covering the treatment of Prisoners Of War and weakened the influence of the United Nations, thereby jeopardizing the security of our nation and the safety of our military men and women.

The security of our nation is threatened by the fear and

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Rebuilding El Salvador

John Amidon

The Tom Paine Chapter of Veterans For Peace (Albany NY) and the Romero Foundation are partnering to send a work delegation to the area of El Carmen, the department of Cuscatlan, some 30 miles east of San Salvador. Our immediate purpose of the delegation is to assist in the reconstruction of housing destroyed by the recent earthquakes and hurricanes experienced by El Salvador. Upon our return we will also work to educate, plan and raise funds for a second delegation to El Salvador to continue the work of rebuilding. OUR GOAL IS TO DEVELOP LINKS FOR LONG TERM SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLE OF EL SALVADOR.

The first delegation is scheduled to leave Wednesday, April 10 and fly to El Salvador. There, we will be met by a member of the Romero Foundation and proceed to the host community. We will return to the States on Saturday, April 20, 2002. Participating individuals will purchase their own airline tickets. Our group may be as small as two and will be no larger than ten individuals. We will be housed by hosting families. Work assignments will include construction, brick making and removal of debris from structures destroyed by the earthquakes. We will work with community members learning more about each other and the condi-

(EL SALVADOR continued on page 2)

April Demonstrations in DC

During the period April 19-22 there will be a number of protest actions in Washington, DC. Below are excerpts from the websites of three organizations. VFP members are encouraged to be part of a VFP presence at these events. For further details consult the indicated websites.

Stop The War

www.a20stopthewar.org

The White House promises a war without end. Under the pretext of strengthening security, our democratic rights are being further eroded, hundreds of people have been "disappeared" into jails and prisons, and corporate interests are shamelessly trying to use this crisis to their advantage. It is clear: unless we, the people of this country, rise up and come together now, the future for us and

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(EL SALVADOR continued from page 1)

tions in El Salvador. This is a wonderful opportunity to share the friendship and good will which comes from working together, shoulder to shoulder in common purpose creating a better world to live in. The cost of the trip will range between \$700 and \$900. This includes the price of airfare and expenses of approximately \$20 a day while in country.

Requirements: You need not speak Spanish but you must be in good physical condition. If you cannot walk at least 5 miles unassisted and in good form, please do not join. You will need a valid passport. You will need to provide for all of your expenses. Working in Central America requires patience, a willingness to adapt to a more relaxed time frame and sometimes differing organizational structures for work details. It is a great learning experience. If you are interested in joining this work delegation please call John Amidon at 518-482-1562, E-mail <jajaja1234@aol.com> for complete information.

(LAWS continued from page 1)

resentment generated by threats of unrestrained military action against named and un-named sovereign states said to harbor terrorists. Even our closest allies view the United States as acting in a dangerously provocative manner. It should not be surprising, then, that those countries specifically threatened by our rhetoric are preparing for conflict. The net result is an increase, not a decrease, of the likelihood of terrorist attacks upon U.S. citizens, possessions and territory.

We have grave concerns, too, for the safety of our brothers and sisters serving in the US military and being put in harm's way under these most unfavorable conditions. In the case of capture, they are likely to be subject to unrestrained, debasing treatment, in similar disregard of the Geneva Conventions.

For their safety and in the name of common humanity, Veterans For Peace demands that the abductees in Guantanamo Bay, Afghani's and other nationalities, be accorded the status of Prisoners of War (POW) with all attendant rights under the Geneva Convention and any other Conventions governing wartime activities and the treatment of prisoners that the United States is party to. This should include access to the International Red Cross, access to legal advice, the ability to communicate with families, freedom of religious practice, release from close confinement, the ability to exercise daily and be accorded proper medical care.

We also ask the United States government to begin planning for the repatriation of these prisoners, and that it be accomplished sooner rather than later, as mandated by international law.

If the United States is, indeed, a Nation of Laws; and if we expect our citizens to abide by its laws, then we have the right to expect our government to abide by the laws that govern other nations and insist that it do so.

Hey, Shut the Door—I Feel a Draft

The Smith-Weldon bill, HR 3598, was introduced on December 22, 2001. It calls for the introduction of "universal" military service. If Hollywood, economic factors and patriotic support for a forever War on Terrorism can't increase voluntary enlistment, maybe the nation's youth will be "persuaded" by other means. The bill calls for military training of U.S. **males** (and foreign males residing in the U.S.!!) between 18 and 22. The duration of the service will be "not less than six months and not more than one year" with high school dropouts given an additional six months. Males and females are encouraged to *volunteer* for a similar period rather than be drafted (???) The bill in its entirety is on the web at:

[http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c107:H.R.3598.IH:](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c107:H.R.3598.IH)

It's worth looking at, however unlikely its passage into law may seem. It gives flesh (literally) to the vapors of militarism now enveloping the nation.

A Peaceful Tomorrow on Tour

Woody Powell, VFP National Administrator

This morning I attended an event in St. Louis at which Amber Amundson and her sister-in-law Kelly Campbell both spoke. Tremendously moving. The two have a powerful message -- and connect very well with the simple sincerity of their presentations.

Amber is the widowed mother of two, whose husband, Craig, lost his life in the Pentagon plane crash. He was an active worker for peace, in the military! Kelly went to Afghanistan, with other women who had lost family on 9/11 and met with Afghan women who lost family to our retaliatory bombing. They established a relationship of common interest in Peace with them. We need to be tied in more closely with that effort. They are carrying their message of peace throughout the country.

I talked to Amber and offered our assistance in augmenting their venues. She was very grateful. Their website carries a complete list of future engagements. I am asking all you Veterans For Peace who live anywhere near any of those places where these women will be speaking to show up and get as many people out to hear them as possible. She speaks for a dead soldier who believed in working for peace. That's what we do, too.

Check their schedule at: **www.peacefultomorrow.org** and let me know what you need for effective follow-up. (*Contact information for VFP national is on page 7.*)

Ed. Note: John Grant, President of Philadelphia Chapter 31, reports that he was asked to introduce Amber and Ryan Amundson (Craig's brother) at an all-day peace event at Swarthmore College. John writes, "I expected very earnest people, but I was inspired with how committed and smart they both were. I introduced them as "veterans for peace" and was happy to connect the organization to their efforts. It is good to see the connection spreading.

Place Peace on the Country's Agenda

Coleman P. Gorham, Maine VFP

America's history reveals the fact that we are in the habit of resolving conflicts by going to war. Maybe it is the result of a frontier mentality in which we resolve matters with a shoot-out at the OK Corral. We have been engaged in numerous wars and conflicts. We have designed and built a strong military force as a means of resolving our differences in the world. Seven of our Presidents have been military generals, one a colonel, one a Lt. Colonel and one a major. In recent years three of our Secretaries of State: Marshall, Haig and Powell, have been army generals, while eight recent presidents have served in the military. We have four military academies and many ROTC programs in our colleges. We are well prepared to wage war. The subject of peace is nowhere to be found in the curriculum.

It is terrorism that now threatens the peace of the world. So, what is it that fuels this vehicle of terror and hate? According to psychologists it is anger and resentment that develop into hate. Whenever people perceive that they are treated unjustly and feel helpless to do anything about it, they feel compelled to project that anger onto those they blame for the real or perceived injustice. Those who are poor, hungry and uneducated are ripe candidates to become terrorists. Our President and his leadership team believe that by attacking, killing and imprisoning the terrorist they can solve the problem. Sure, you may treat the symptoms by hunting down and killing terrorists, but you can't kill the idea—the idea that some people feel they have been unjustly treated. Every effect has a cause. We must determine the cause and try to remedy the cause rather than just blindly attack the symptoms.

What are respected leaders saying about the causes of terrorism? Pope John Paul II is forever telling us that it is the inequity in how the world's goods are distributed that breeds terrorism. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan recently told the World Economic Forum that wealthy nations must do more to fight poverty and social injustice or risk growing threats from terrorism. He added that too much power and wealth is concentrated in the hands of too few people and countries. Financier George Soros stated: "We need to address wealth disparities and inequalities" Bill Gates stated: "People who feel the world is tilted against them will spawn the kind of hatred that is very dangerous for all of us." The managing director of the International Monetary Fund, Horst Koehler, stated: "Societies in the advanced countries are too selfish to give up their privileges."

We need to confront our greed. The above-mentioned leaders are telling us, in effect, that the division between the haves and the have-nots is getting wider and wider while violence and terrorism increase. Most of us don't like to hear this and respond by saying that we shouldn't try to change the status quo. Some of us respond by saying that to try to change the system is class warfare, social engineering or Marxism. Some of us say, "Don't mess with capitalism." Such responses are, of course, a smoke screen to cover up our insatiable greed. A climate of greed works against the spread of peace.

Is there a connection between Islam and terrorism? We know from our chemistry class that most of the earth's elements are benign when found alone, but when joined with other elements in a compound they can be explosive. Maybe when Islam is joined with certain conditions such as "social culture", poverty and ignorance, the resulting compound can become explosive. We know that terrorism doesn't germinate in a vacuum. Perhaps the wealthy nations should devise and fund a plan similar to the Marshall Plan which will be designed to help the impoverished nations eliminate the seeds of terrorism.

Is there a politics of war? The formula seems to be: fail at peace, then declare war on terrorism and your approval ratings will go sky high.

Most of us fell for the speech. Afterwards some of us placed flags on our cars and pick-up trucks and drove around professing our patriotism. Instead we should be doing something positive to contribute to world peace.

Some may say, "Well, we have the Peace Corps." But it doesn't make sense to have Peace Corps foot soldiers when our leaders have enlisted in the War Corps. Our war policy erodes the good works of the Peace Corps. If we truly believe in peace, we won't be intimidated by political correctness. Our voices need to be heard. We need to establish a Peace Cabinet Post and a Peace Academy. Instead of a "Call to Arms", let's have a "Call to Peace"! If you are moved by this idea, contact your elected officials. We need to place peace on the country's agenda.

Coleman Gorham is a retired U.S. Navy Lt. Commander who served in the Mediterranean during WWII, having made D-Day landings in Sicily, Salerno, Anzio, Elba and France. He is a new member of VFP. He can be reached at (561) 343-7132.

National Vieques Summit For Peace With Justice

The National Vieques Summit will convene community activists, environmentalists, labor leaders, religious leaders, cultural workers, artists and elected officials who have been in solidarity with and who have shown commitment to the struggle for peace with justice in Vieques. The summit seeks to reconfirm the commitment of those gathered and reactivate a national campaign to work in tandem with the leading organizations of Vieques that will focus on the points of unity outlined below. The National Vieques Summit will be held in New York City on Saturday, April 13 and will achieve the following:

- Outline a strategy and redefine a work agenda regarding the struggle for peace with justice in Vieques, Puerto Rico;

- Produce a document (e.g. resolution, position paper, etc) with signatories that will be presented to the President of the United States.

Summit supporters and participants will unite in solidarity around the following:

- Understand that the central objective of the struggle in Vieques is the universally accepted 4 point program for the island municipality of demilitarization, decontamination, devolution, and sustainable economic development;

- Recognize that the struggle for peace with justice in Vieques is a human rights issue that has had serious ramifications of genocide, and ecological and environmental degradation;

- Endorse use of non-violent, peacefully civil disobedience, and other efforts in that spirit, as a strategy to disrupt, demand and denounce military training exercises and the occupation of the island municipality by the U.S. Navy.

The National Vieques Summit will have as its priority the above outlined points of unity. Organizations, individuals or elected officials interested in supporting and/or participating in the summit can address any issue(s) that fall outside of the purview of the points of unity at information and literature tables to be provided at the summit.

The summit seeks to reach out to and include all peace with justice loving people irrespective of political affiliation or tendencies and whether you support commonwealth, independence or statehood.

For more information call (212) 348 8004

Iraq Water Project Continues

Tom Sagar, VFP Iraq Water Project Coordinator

Background

Iraq's water treatment facilities were deliberately targeted and destroyed during the 1991 Gulf War by the US military, with full knowledge of the devastating effect this would have on Iraqi civilians. For the 11 years since the end of the Gulf War, Iraq was prevented from rebuilding and maintaining its water treatment capacity by the most comprehensive economic sanctions ever imposed on any group of people, again, with full knowledge by the US government that Iraqi civilians, particularly children under 5, were dying by the thousands every month from water borne diseases and complications directly attributable to the lack of clean water.

The Iraq Water Project, which began in 2000, has already rebuilt four water treatment plants serving 70,000 people in the Basrah area. It is envisioned that the repair of the two water treatment plants at Tawi, on the Euphrates River above Ar-Ramadi and Old Hudaidah in the City of Baqooba will be completed by June 1, 2002. We are determined to continue the Iraq Water Project until economic sanctions against Iraq are lifted. Should any of the water treatment plants that we have rebuilt be bombed or destroyed by the US military, we are determined to rebuild them again.

The IWP is intended to ease the suffering of the Iraqi people. However, it is equally intended to create a galvanizing event that enables us to better educate the American public as to the devastating effects of sanctions. We believe firmly in the need for humanitarian work abroad to be linked with educational efforts back home. It is our hope that the image of former US military people from all eras (and their friends) going into Iraq to help rebuild the civilian infrastructure, will have a dramatic effect on the American consciousness.

So far we've been very successful and we hope it continues that way. If accepted, you will witness the effects that sanctions and ongoing bombing have wrought on the civilian population. And in a public showing of solidarity with Iraqi civilians, you will work on the water treatment facilities that the IWP has committed itself to restore. You will also be asked to follow in the successful footsteps of previous IWP delegations in creating local events in your communities. These events should aim at raising awareness of both the devastating effects of sanctions, and raising money for the continuing efforts of the Iraq Water Project.

Spring 2002 Trip

We are looking forward to a very exciting, history making trip. We envision a 14-day trip, spending 10 days in Iraq and a consider-

able amount of that time at Tawi and Old Hudaidah working in solidarity alongside of Iraqi contractors and laborers repairing these water treatment plants. These plants which have been destroyed by war and economic sanctions will provide 15,000 people, 3 schools, and 2 medical clinics with safe clean drinking water.

The trip will not be all work. We plan to visit schools, hospitals, clinics, museums, and at least one archeological site. There will also be some lectures and briefings to attend, and possibly one day of doing something both educational and relaxing. In addition we hope to visit the four water treatment plants that have already been repaired by the Iraq Water Project.

Although dates are not firmly set yet, we are planning to leave on May 6 or May 7 or very soon thereafter. We will probably hook up for at least part of the trip with other groups that Voices in the Wilderness (VitW) is leading into Iraq. We do not have a firm figure, but we envisage a cost of no more than US\$1,000 from Amman into Iraq, traveling in Iraq, and back out to Amman. All participants are required to raise their own expenses, and pay for their own travel to and from Amman.

Each participant will need to get his or her own Jordanian visa. VitW will take care of Iraqi visas for all participants.

NOTE 1: Because of the volatile situation in Iraq, the itinerary will be subject to change at any time without notice. There is no absolute assurance that anything that is planned will actually occur.

NOTE 2: If you have an Israeli stamp in your passport, you need to get a new passport. Iraq will not let anyone enter who has a mark of Israeli entry on their passport.

If you are interested in going on the trip, please contact Tom Sagar, at:

8 Laird Ave.
Rolla, MO 65401
phone: 573-368-5551
email: tomsagar@yahoo.com

News From National

President's Column

Dave Cline

At the January Board of Directors Meeting I was elected National President of Veterans For Peace. This is a great honor for me, and I look forward to actively building our organization at this crucial time in our country's history.

For those who don't know me, I am a disabled Vietnam combat veteran (25th Infantry Division 1967-1968) and have long been active in the struggle for veterans' rights, social justice and peace. I live in Jersey City, NJ, and am the father of two.

As Veterans For Peace we face a major challenge today. The Bush Administration's "War on Terrorism" has gone far beyond the initial claims of bringing those responsible for the September 11 attacks to justice. In fact very little progress has been made in that effort. Instead we have increased militarism and the threat of more war. The fighting continues in Afghanistan, and the number of dead and wounded—both Afghan and American—

continues to grow. There are reports that the number of innocent civilians killed by American bombs is greater than those killed in the 9-11 terrorist attacks, although you wouldn't know that from our "free press."

Recently U.S. troops have been deployed to the Philippines, Yemen, Georgia and elsewhere, while government spokesmen openly discuss plans for another war in Iraq or Somalia and even Colombia. The President asked for an additional military spending increase of \$48 billion (reported in *The Nation* as more than the total military budgets of all other countries in the world combined), which may provide security for some military contractors' bank accounts but will do little to increase national security for most Americans. For us it can eventually only mean more taxes and fewer social programs.

We pride ourselves in being a free country, but today we find our civil liberties under attack by the misnamed PATRIOT Act and other legislation. Arab-Americans are being racially profiled, and several thousand immigrants have been incarcerated even though they have no connection to terrorism. In the name of national security our Constitutional rights are being undermined.

Remember the oath we took when entered the armed forces. We swore to defend and uphold the Constitution from all enemies—internal and external. Today we are being called upon to fulfill that commitment again. During the Vietnam era, members of Vietnam Veterans Against the War coined the phrase "winter soldiers." It came from Tom Paine's criticism of "sunshine patriots and summer soldiers," who were there when things were easy but disappeared when things got tough. Being a "winter soldier" meant you were committed for the long haul no matter how bleak the situation appeared.

Today we are again called upon to be "winter soldiers." It would be easier to retreat into cynicism and inaction. Sometimes standing up for what is right is hard to do; but in the end if we don't do it who will? I remain committed to the struggle for peace and freedom and will do my best as President of Veterans For Peace, but I am just one person. Together we can make a difference. We ought to stand up for what is right and do what we can to promote reason and sanity in these trying times. That remains our duty to our conscience, our country and humanity.

National Office Report

Woody Powell, National Administrator

As your National Administrator I am pleased to report that your National Office is humming along in high gear. Here are the highlights of our activities since September, 2001, when Lee Vander Laan delivered the office to St. Louis in a Ryder Rental van.

Membership

Our membership has more than tripled and continues to grow daily. As of this writing [February 20], our paid membership stands at 1500. We believe our most recent mailing, which went to 3800 present and former members, will bring us to a much higher level in the next two months. (The first three days of response brought in 61 members and \$3,200.) We will follow up shortly with an appeal for Associate memberships.

Now that we are more solvent, plans are under way for a membership advertising campaign using publications that reach out to people most likely to share our views on the futility and waste of war.

Funding

Funds are flowing in with the memberships. We have added several more life members (\$1000 ea.) and anticipate being able to operate without deficits for the foreseeable future. Our funds have been augmented by a recently acquired grant of \$5,400 and another from the Global Peace Campaign for \$20,000, the result of the activity surrounding the fundraising for the New York Times and Los Angeles Times full-page ads. However, the trend is heavily in favor of dues income, which is providing us with a solid foundation for managing this office.

Outreach

Opportunities to connect with other organizations, provide speakers, field inquiries from the media are steadily increasing. Hardly a day goes by that we don't provide information or leads to qualified members who can inform the public on a variety of topics. The information files are pretty well organized and we are becoming more skilled at putting our hands on good data. We have been able to work closely with the Board of Directors on definitive statements representing VFP views on issues such as the men being held illegally (in our opinion) in Guantanamo Bay and, earlier, our general response to the events of 9/11.

Recently, we learned how to produce, and put on CD, a modest slide show featuring Alan Pogue's pictures from his recent trip to Pakistan. They are being sent to all chapter contacts for their own use and dissemination. It is to be considered a sort of teaser for booking his exhibit and personal presentation on the refugee camps and the state of foreign aid in Pakistan.

Merchandise sales are slowly increasing as chapters throughout the country come back to life and realize we are, indeed, there to support them.

Administration

We have two paid staff, working part time, plus the services of myself and whatever volunteer help is available from time-to-time. At that, we are working at top speed to get everything done.

We are setting up a new accounting system that integrates intimately with the membership database and will give us instant reports on our status at any given moment. It will also allow us to easily manage the set-aside funds for projects, such as the Iraq Water Project, the Veterans Vietnam Restoration Project, Afghan Relief, etc.

Chapter News

Chapter 10 NY (Tom Paine): Veterans For Peace and the Iraq Water Project received excellent press in the Spring 2002 issue of YES! magazine. Frank Houde suggests that VFP members get a copy and check out the article "What Happens To Your Heart" on page 40. Unfortunately, the article did not contain contact information for VFP, but Frank—thorough as ever—has emailed YES! and asked to have that information in the next issue! The current issue focuses generally on the question, "What does it mean to be an American?" Frank notes that a similar question, "What is Patriotism?" has been suggested for the theme of this year's VFP National Convention in Duluth.

Chapter 21 NJ: Implementing a course of action in opposition to the "War on Terrorism", the chapter has: (1) Participated in the Martin Luther King Day demonstration at the Hudson County Correctional Facility in Defense of civil liberties for imprisoned Arab-Americans; (2) sent a letter to all New Jersey Congressional representatives voicing opposition attacks on citizens' Constitutional rights and further military action against other countries; (3) attended a Black History Month presentation at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Holmdel given by Greg Payton along with the documentary film, *Vietnam—the Dream Shot Down*.

Chapter 23 MN: Bob Heberle has written a letter to the editor of his local paper telling about VFP generally and describing the content of our Statement of Purpose. He also told of references to his "lack of patriotism" by passerbys while he was protesting U.S. policy. In the letter he voiced his deep love country, his veteran status—as well as his German ancestry, which he used as a take-off point for a discussion of the silence of Germans during the rise of Nazism. No response to the letter was noted.

Chapter 31 PA: John Grant has been looking at international war films with a possible VFP/Brandywine (PA) Peace Community Antiwar Film Discussion group in mind. John has written an essay on of the 1969 Italian film *The Battle of Algiers* in the context of the current War on Terrorism. The essay appeared in the latest Chapter 31 Newsletter. Mike Felker reports that Chapter 31 in conjunction with the Philadelphia and Washington DC Chapters of the United Nations Association has raised \$31,300 over the past 2 years to de-mine a minefield in Mozambique. The money has been sent on to the UNA Adopt-a-Minefield Program.

Chapter 69 CA: The chapter got to see two photo albums of Alan Pogue pictures: one of Palestinians, the other of Afghan refugees in Pakistan from Alan's recent trip. The photos are being shown in the Bay Area. Two chapter members gave a showing of the documentary *The Good war and Those Who Refused to Fight It* at a meeting The Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, after which there was a discussion. Chapter members

spoke at an evening put on by the East Bay Coalition Against the War at which the Chomsky video *Making Sense of the War on Terrorism* was shown, along with a discussion. A number of chapter members are giving talks in the area through the Veterans Speakers Alliance.

Maryland VFP: On October 15, 2001, VFP Vice-President Ellen Barfield and Brian Barrett took part in a demonstration against the Maryland National Guard for its involvement in the war in Afghanistan. During the demonstration, they tried to persuade members of the Guard not to engage in warmaking. On February 13, Ellen and Brian appeared before District Court Judge Darryl Fletcher, charged with trespass and failure to obey a lawful order. The two argued well the prosecution failed to prove that they were on private property and that standing politely with antiwar signs was not a disturbance—as required to be convicted of failure to obey a lawful order. The judge, however, did not give much consideration to the elements of the charges and found them guilty on both counts and sentenced them to ten days imprisonment. Judge Fletcher said the defendants are not entitled to interfere with the operations of the military. Since they engaged in similar protests in the past, he sent them immediately to jail. Both activists read statements before sentencing. Barrett condemned the so-called "war on terrorism" and the killing and wounding of the innocent people in Afghanistan. He called upon the United Nations and other international bodies to settle conflicts and promoted an International Court of Justice. Barfield informed the court that she was a veteran, and that her antiwar protest was not against individual members of the Maryland Air National Guard.

A note from Candy Lovett

Some of you probably already know that my son Leon passed away on February 7th. It has been real hard on me as I am still in a state of shock. But my son believed in the Iraq Water Project. He was proud of me going back to Iraq and he said he could see the change in me. I was so proud of how hard my son worked towards getting his physical body back in shape. I was proud that he enrolled in college and decided to be a journalist instead of a bartender. Emmy from the Bruderhof Community was responsible for the little book that she did on me. My first customer was my son. Leon is finally out of the pain he lived with every day. I still struggle with knowing my son passed away before me. But I have such great friends in Veterans For Peace and a few other groups. When some people gave me checks, I just cashed them and wrote a check from my checkbook. This I do in Leon's memory. I do hope you get all the money you need for the third team.

Candy S. Lovett

Candy is a VFP member and Gulf War veteran who was a member of the Phase 2 IWP team that went to Iraq last year. An article appeared in the Spring 2001 VFP Newsletter

Remembering Dresden

Alan Cabal in *New York Press*, February 13, 2002
(sent in by Mike Ferner, Ohio VFP)

At 10:10 p.m. on Feb. 13, 1945, some 1000 British bombers and support craft attacked the German city of Dresden. There were no military targets in Dresden, and the population had nearly doubled over the winter months as a result of the massive influx of refugees fleeing the advancing Soviet troops. British air commander Sir Arthur Bomber Harris has stated that the object of this particular exercise was to set the city on fire. This purpose was expedited by the dropping of 3000 high explosive and 650,000 incendiary bombs. The absence of any kind of anti-aircraft response mechanism made it easy to fly in low and hit targets such as hospitals and factories with pinpoint accuracy. This first attack created a firestorm unlike anything ever seen before, a firestorm miles high and thousands of acres in area, a veritable tornado of fire that could be seen from hundreds of miles away.

Three hours after the first attack, a second wave of British bombers struck at the center of the city, to keep the firestorm going, and at the edges of the conflagration, to expand it outward. The timing of this second attack strongly suggests that it was intended to target rescue workers, firefighters and surviving civilians as they emerged from the air-raid shelters.

Ash Wednesday saw rescue workers and medical personnel from all over Germany converge on the ruined city just in time for a third assault. This time more than 300 American "Flying Fortresses" and a support contingent of fighters finished the job the British had so effectively begun. The bombers re-ignited the firestorm, and the little Mustangs strafed civilians wherever they gathered. As many as 135,000 people were killed, nearly all civilians. None of them had cell phones, so their last words are lost to posterity.



VFP member Lou Block from Portland, Oregon provided support for the Hiroshima Flame Interfaith Peace Walkers for two days as they passed through northern Oregon. Lou, a Vietnam veteran who has returned to Vietnam many times, spoke to the Peace Walkers about peace and reconciliation at their welcoming dinner.

**Is your 2002 VFP membership paid up?
You can do so on the VFP website
www.veteransforpeace.org**

Communicating with the Editor

Please send chapter news (or "individual" news in the case of an at-large member) directly to the Newsletter Editor by either email (pbs@psu.edu) or surface mail

Peter B. Shaw
446 Meeks Lane
Port Matilda PA 16870.

PLEASE keep these reports **BRIEF** and to the point. In particular, do not send newsletters that have to be culled for news. **You** decide what is most important. Actions and projects are of the greatest interest to people—they want to know what you are doing.

Articles intended for publication should be emailed to vfp-newsletter@yahoo.com or in the absence of email send a **typed** copy to the above address. Please keep the articles reasonably short (under 500 words), although longer articles will be accepted if space and interest permit.

VFP STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We, having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace.

To this end we will work, with others:

- ? Toward increasing public awareness of the costs of war;
- ? To restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations;
- ? To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons; and
- ? To abolish war as an instrument of international policy.

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans for Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

VFP Contact Information

National Office address on back of newsletter

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(DC continued from page 1)

for people around the world is very bleak. But united, as we have done in the past, WE CAN MAKE A CHANGE! There is an alternative! Join us on April 20th to demand:

- ? A U.S. foreign policy based upon social and economic justice, not military and corporate oppression.
- ? An end to racial profiling and military recruitment targeting youth of color and working class youth.
- ? Government funding for programs to benefit the economic victims of the 9-11 attacks and the recession.
- ? An end to the degrading and secret imprisonment of immigrants.
- ? Increased funding for non-military-based financial aid for education
- ? Full disclosure of military contracts with universities.

Preparatory events will be held in various cities prior to April 20th.

Note: The International Action Center's (IAC) A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism) is independent of the above and has moved its action in DC from April 27 to April 20.

Colombia Mobilization

www.soaw.org/colombiaMobilization

Colombia, with over 10,000 troops trained at the SOA, is the school's largest customer. Not surprisingly, Colombia currently has the worst human rights record in all of Latin America, currently averaging a massacre per day. 2,000,000 people have been killed or displaced by civilian-targeted warfare carried out by graduates of the SOA. General Mario Montoya Uribe, an SOA graduate with a history of ties to paramilitary violence, commands the Joint Task Force South, which includes the 24th Brigade. The 24th brigade is ineligible for U.S. military aid due to its complicity in paramilitary

violence. A leading Colombian newspaper identifies Gen. Montoya as "the military official responsible for Plan Colombia."

U.S. Military aid under Plan Colombia has been sold to the U.S. public as part of the war on drugs. In actuality, the forces under Montoya's command are engaged in a counter-insurgency war against leftist guerillas. The aid is directed to troops taking offensive action against guerillas in areas targeted for coca fumigation. Evidence shows that these offensives often happen in conjunction with paramilitary attacks. Robert Zoellick, a top foreign policy advisor to President Bush, was recently quoted as saying, "We cannot continue to make a false distinction between counter-insurgency and counter-narcotics."

*Friday, April 19: SOAW Vigil & Lobby Action at the Capitol
Saturday, April 20: Colombia Teach-in & Activist Skills Training
Sunday, April 21: Rally, Action Planning, Nonviolence Training
Monday, April 22: Colombia Solidarity March & Nonviolent Direct Action*

Mobilization for Global Justice

www.globalizethis.org

The World Bank and IMF will host another round of meetings in Washington D.C. April 20-21. These meetings [come] in the wake of the economic crisis in Argentina, where the free-market policies pushed around the world by the World Bank and IMF unraveled into real human suffering. They also come after the collapse of the multinational-corporate-giant Enron—a model of the abuses and strength of corporate power. The Mobilization for Global Justice calls on activists from around the country to converge in Washington, DC April 19-22 and make your voice heard.



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