

Peace Press, June - July 2005

**Working tools for a nonviolent future
*The Growing Counter Recruitment Movement***

This special issue of the Peace Press is dedicated to the dignity of all life: to the youth of our schools and to the GIs in the military, in the belief that all life has value and may not be wasted or abused – by anyone, or in anyone’s name, and least of all, for corporate gain.

Index of articles:

War Crimes in Bush’s Illegal War (Getting Centered)
by Elizabeth Stinson, *Director of Peace & Justice Center*

A Victory for Conscience: Pablo Paredes
by Elizabeth Stinson

The War in Iraq: Counting the Cost
by Eric Johnson

GIs Serve at the Whim of the President and for Life:
Implications of the Santiago Stop Loss Case

War Resisters
by Rebel Fagin

PJC Section

A Community Level Approach to Anti-Militarism
GI Counseling During Permanent War
by Marti Hiken, *co-chair of the Military Law Task Force (MLTF) of the National*

Lawyers Guild

Help Dismantle the Military: One Individual at a Time
by Lindsey Jacobs

Reasons for HOPE
Both Counter Recruitment and Active-Duty Military Separations are
Increasing
by Earl Herr

Our PJC School Programs Counter the Military

Peace Fresno Organizes Their Community for Counter Recruitment
Our HOPE is the Model

Peace Focus: Global Non-Violent Struggles

Three nonviolent struggles by unrepresented people against the deadly impact of the greed for global resources

Tragic Loss of Lives 10 Years Apart Because of the Greed for Oil:

- Marla Ruzicka and Faiz al Salim died April 16 in Iraq
- Ken Saro-Wiwa Living Memorial: An Open Call for Ideas
- Unrepresented Indigenous Nations

Hiroshima Day Event: Sunday, August 7, in Courthouse Square

Vigil for Peace every Friday at Courthouse Square in Santa Rosa

Peace Center Annual Dinner: Saturday, November 12: Save the Date!

The Peace and Justice Center Is Looking to Double its Number of Members!

Support the Center by using the Community Smart Card

Help Wanted –Books Missing
by Derek Legg

Community Section

The American Dream Fund
Program Update on Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
by Kelli Kuykendall and Millie Tripp

Copwatch: Alternative Views on Cinco de Mayo
by Caitlin Childs

California One for Peace

Empire Waste Management Locks Out Striking Workers
by Alicia Sanchez

Back Cover

A Challenge to Continue the Ongoing Effectiveness of the Peace and Justice
Center
by David Anderson

War Crimes in Bush's Illegal War (Getting Centered)

by Elizabeth Stinson, Director of the Peace & Justice Center

Marjorie Cohn testified at Pablo Paredes' court-martial as a defense expert on the legality of the war in Iraq, and the commission of war crimes by US forces. Her testimony corroborated the reasonableness of Pablo's beliefs. Marjorie was able to explain to the judge that the war in Iraq violates the United Nations Charter, which forbids the use of force, unless carried out in self-defense or with the approval of the Security Council, neither of which were obtained before Bush invaded Iraq.

Her argument resulted in the reduction of sentence as well as a landmark military decision about the illegality of the war in Iraq and the Bush administration policies.

Marjorie Cohn stated that torture and inhuman treatment, which have been documented in Iraqi prisons, constitute grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, and are considered war crimes under the US War Crimes Statute. The United States has ratified both the UN Charter and the Geneva Conventions, making them part of the supreme law of the land under the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution.

Those of us who have worked for years in the human rights arena know that the Geneva Convention serves as one of the few agreements that "binds the United States to the defense of human rights". The Geneva Convention does so because the United States ratified the convention and because the language of the Geneva Convention is "binding." The Geneva Convention is an impeccable document that serves to prevent torture and abuse internationally.

The United States has repeatedly rejected and refused to sign other human rights conventions because the language was too "binding" all the time presenting themselves/us as champions of human rights.

The world recognizes that we can no longer make those claims.

We cannot both violate human rights and defend them. We do one or the other.

The Bush administration has compromised and misled the nation.

The Bush administration has changed the legal language to fit their illegal intent. By referring to "prisoners of war" as "detainees," they deny prisoners of war protections awarded them under the Geneva Convention.

The Uniform Code of Military Justice requires that all military personnel obey lawful orders. Article 92 of the UCMJ (Universal Code of Military Justice) states, "A general order or regulation is lawful unless it is contrary to the Constitution, the laws of the United States..."

Both the Nuremberg Principles and the Army Field Manual create a "duty to disobey unlawful orders."

Article 509 of Field Manual 27-10, codifying another Nuremberg Principle, specifies that "following superior orders" is not a defense to the commission of war crimes, unless the accused "did not know and could not reasonably have been expected to know that the act ordered was unlawful."

The Iraq war is illegal. US troops who participate in the war are put in a position to commit war crimes. This is why we at the Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County work tirelessly to provide assistance to active duty personnel who want OUT, who choose to be separated from this illegal and immoral war.

The Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County refuses to be complicit with this illegal war, with the human rights abuses at Abu Ghraib and at Guantanamo base in

Cuba as well as the multitude of abuses in Iraq and Afghanistan and the multitude of crimes against civilians.

We refuse to be complicit with these illegal and immoral acts. We stood in the streets, went to jail and continue to voice our opinions in spite of the repressive Patriot Act and numerous efforts to silence the movement.

We continue to offer our support, compassion and understanding to families who have lost loved ones in Iraq. We continue to speak in local schools in order to offer students a balance view in the face of massive recruiter access and fraud.

We work daily and nightly to prevent further human loss.

A Victory for Conscience: Pablo Paredes

by Elizabeth Stinson

On May 11, 2005, Petty Officer 3rd Class Pablo Paredes was found guilty of missing troop movement. On May 13th a Navy judge, Lt Commander Robert Klant gave Pablo no jail time for refusing orders to board the amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard when it left San Diego for the Persian Gulf on December 6th, 2004. Judge Klant found Pablo guilty of missing his ship's movement by design, but dismissed the charge of unauthorized absence. Although Pablo had faced one year in the brig (military jail), the judge sentenced him to two months' restriction and three months of hard labor, and reduced his rank to seaman recruit.

"I think that the government has successfully proved that any service member has reasonable cause to believe that the wars in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq were illegal."

– Lt. Cmdr. Robert Klant, presiding at Pablo Paredes' court-martial

In what has been called a stunning blow to the Bush administration and a huge victory for the antiwar movement, the connection was made remarkably clear between 1. the illegality of the war in Iraq and the perpetration of human rights abuses by the military and 2. the war as a violation of International Law.

"This is a huge victory," said Jeremy Warren, Pablo's attorney. "A sailor can show up on a Navy base, refuse in good conscience to board a ship bound for Iraq, and receive no time in jail," Warren added. Pablo still regrets that he was convicted of a crime. Pablo told the judge at sentencing:

"I am guilty of believing this war is illegal. I am guilty of believing war in all forms is immoral and useless, and I am guilty of believing that as a service member I have a duty to refuse to participate in this War because it is illegal."

Pablo has consistently maintained that transporting Marines to fight in an illegal war, and possibly to commit war crimes would make him complicit in those crimes. He told judge Klant, "I believe as a member of the armed forces, beyond having a duty to my chain of command and my President, I have a higher duty to my conscience and to the supreme law of the land. Both of these higher duties dictate that I must not participate in any way, hands-on or indirect, in the current aggression that has been unleashed on Iraq."

When there is clarity of conscience, as there is with Pablo Paredes and Stephen Funk and as well as with many more soldiers actively working toward separation from the military, there is no hope that a person can be trained, turned or intimidated into being complicit with killing, if they are in opposition to "violence as a solution." In order to qualify as a conscientious objector, you must *not* agree that war is a solution. Pablo was clear in his

beliefs and his legal support was argued by attorney Marjorie Cohn, who testified to the illegality of the war in Iraq under International law.

Jim Klimaski, a National Lawyers Guild Attorney from Washington D.C. who is considered by many of us an expert in military law tells us “that is absolutely a great result—no punitive discharge! I think it will have a big impact on the other cases like it.”

Pablo was given no BCD (bad conduct discharge) and no confinement. Congratulations to all who worked on this case and the many others like this. We must continue to defend the rights of people to determine if they are being grossly misled and to support their right to resist when they determine that they object to participation in this illegal and immoral war.

The right to self-determination is a basic human right.

The War in Iraq: Counting the Cost

by Eric Johnson

Intelligent discussion of the war in Iraq is impossible without a thorough understanding of the human, economic, ecological and social costs of the war.

The human cost of the war is the dead and wounded. In addition to hundreds of US and Iraqi dead, US forces alone have officially acknowledged over 11,000 wounded, with other estimates putting the total wounded as high as 38,000.¹ Further, judging from the statistics from the 1991 Gulf war, we can expect about 29% of those who serve in Iraq to be classed as “disabled veterans” by the Veterans Administration.² Since over 1,000,000 US soldiers have gone to war in Afghanistan and Iraq, we can anticipate that about 290,000 “disabled veterans” will be added to the VA’s rolls over the next few years.

The number of civilians killed is equally horrifying. Published accounts indicate that between 21,000 and 24,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed.³ There may be many thousands of unreported Iraqi civilian casualties. The British medical journal, *The Lancet*, put the Iraqi civilian death toll from the US invasion at around 100,000 by October 2004.⁴ Using the highest estimates, including the anticipated number of disabled veterans, the dead and injured will number over 431,000, more than half the population of San Francisco.

These bare figures cannot convey the pain and suffering of those killed or wounded, nor can they express the grief and loss of their families, but any true accounting of the costs of the war against Iraq must include those dead and injured—each life precious, unique and irreplaceable.

The war against Iraq also has an economic cost. Based upon Congressional appropriations, the war has cost more than 168 billion dollars to date.⁵ Listed below are some of the things that money could have bought instead:

- We could have hired over 2,900,000 additional public school teachers for one year
- We could have provided health insurance for over 100,000,000 children for a year
- We could have built at least 1,500,000 additional public housing units
- We could have fully funded global anti-hunger efforts for 6 years⁶

Instead, your government spent the money on a war against Iraq. Do you feel that you got your money’s worth?

Besides direct costs in lives and in dollars, our war against Iraq also has ecological costs. US and Coalition forces in Iraq have used thousands of weapons made from depleted uranium, a dense radioactive metal used to make armor-piercing bullets and shells.⁷ When a depleted uranium bullet strikes its target, it burns, releasing tiny, glasslike particles of

radioactive uranium oxides. These particles, which are small enough to be carried in the air, emit hard radiation.⁸ The *Christian Science Monitor* reported finding piles of depleted uranium ash and depleted uranium antitank rounds in Baghdad. One pile of radioactive dust emitted more than 350 times the average background radiation. The *Monitor's* reporters found a radioactive tank round which "pushed the radiation meter to the far edge of the 'red zone' limit."⁹ They also found a depleted uranium fragment the size of a pencil eraser that gave off 1,000 times the normal background radiation.¹⁰ The residue from depleted uranium weapons settles in the bone, lungs, kidneys and testicles¹¹ and causes cancers, birth defects and nerve, lung and kidney damage.¹² The Pentagon's first partial disclosure indicates US aircraft fired bullets containing about 75 tons of depleted uranium.¹³ The final total from all sources may be well over 300 tons.¹⁴ That's equivalent to about 12 ounces of radioactive poison for every man, woman and child in San Francisco. In counting the cost of the war, we must realize that the Iraqi people will be living with the effects of this poison dust for generations to come.

The war against Iraq has other, more subtle costs as well. These costs cannot be reckoned in lives, in dollars, or in tons of radioactive waste. These are the sociological costs of the war in Iraq. This war helps us to become accustomed to a continuous stream of falsehoods from our own government. This war teaches us to harden our hearts to the suffering of others. It shows us how to turn a blind eye to the daily murder of innocent people. What are we teaching our children? Perhaps they're learning that an acceptable solution to an international problem is massive indiscriminate violence. Or it could be that our children will internalize deeper principles, such as "might makes right" or "the end justifies the means." Is this the kind of society we want to leave behind for our kids? Do we really want to raise a generation of children who have learned contempt for the truth, callousness toward the pain and death of others and a selfish expediency at the expense of their consciences?

The war against Iraq has a human cost: thousands upon thousands of lives lost. It has an economic cost: billions of dollars wasted. It has an ecological cost: a poisoned land littered with bombs. It has a social cost: a nation's conscience lulled to sleep. If we care about these matters, what can we do? We must act to right the situation now, by talking with our friends and neighbors, by writing to our elected officials in government, by protesting in the streets, by countering the recruiters efforts to enlist our kids, and by joining organizations dedicated to peace. We must also act to prevent war in the future. We must inculcate in our children a deep and abiding respect for truth, justice and, above all, human life. Only then can we hope to live in a sane, peaceful society where war is regarded with the abhorrence that it deserves.

Footnotes:

1 Casualties in Iraq, retrieved 5/6/2005, <http://www.antiwar.com/casualties/>, Michael Ewens Ed.

2 Awaiting the Real Toll, written 5/5/03,

http://www.motherjones.com/commentary/columns/2003/05/we_404_01.html, Chalmers Johnson

3 Iraq Body Count, retrieved 5/6/2005, <http://www.iraqbodycount.net/>

4 U.S. Seen as Unaccountable in Iraqi Civilian Deaths, written 5/3/2005,

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N02663804.htm>, Alan Elsner

5 Cost of War, retrieved 5/8/2005, <http://costofwar.com/>

6 Cost of War, retrieved 5/8/2005, <http://costofwar.com/>

7 Depleted Uranium Use in Iraq, retrieved 5/8/2005, <http://www.uwec.edu/grossmzc/anderkel.html>, Kelley Anderson

8 What is Depleted Uranium, retrieved 5/8/2005, <http://www.cadu.org.uk/intro.htm>

9 Remains of Toxic Bullets Litter Iraq, written 5/15/2003, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0515/p01s02-woiq.html>, Scott Peterson

10 Remains of Toxic Bullets Litter Iraq, written 5/15/2003, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0515/p01s02-woiq.html>, Scott Peterson

11 Depleted Uranium Use in Iraq, retrieved 5/8/2005, <http://www.uwec.edu/grossmzc/anderkel.html>, Kelley Anderson

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- 13 Remains of Toxic Bullets Litter Iraq, written 5/15/2003, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0515/p01s02-woiq.html>, Scott Peterson
- 14 Awaiting the Real Toll, written 5/5/03, http://www.motherjones.com/commentary/columns/2003/05/we_404_01.html, Chalmers Johnson

Eric Johnson is a Web Wizard at the Peace Center and one snappy dresser. Footnote information is available on our web posting of the Peace Press at www.peaceandjusticesonomaco.com.

GIs Serve at the Whim of the President and for Life Implications of the Santiago Stop Loss Case

On June 11, 2004, two weeks before Emiliano Santiago's National Guard contract was due to expire, his platoon sergeant informed him that he was subject to the Pentagon's "stop-loss" policy and would not be allowed to leave the Guard. Then in October the Guard ordered Santiago to report to Fort Sill, Okla., for training in preparation for deployment to Afghanistan. Santiago balked. He reported to Fort Sill as ordered, but fought the government in court.

On May 13, 2005, a US appeals court said that the US military has the right to keep soldiers in the service beyond their original contracted time by issuing so-called emergency stop-loss orders. The judges basically said, "Contract? There is no contract in the military! It's whatever the Commander-in-Chief/Pentagon want. It doesn't matter what is or is not written on the document that recruits sign!"

A contract is supposed to bind both sides. No longer. The government can hold you in the military as long as it wants. GIs under stop loss can be forced to serve until at least 2031. Since the Santiago case, the military should include on all contracts now the words that there is "*No end of service when you sign this contract.*"—just like the required warning on a pack of cigarettes. This ruling makes it very clear that GIs serve at the whim of the president and for life—and, "Don't even *think* of that document as an 'employment contract'!"

War Resisters

by Rebel Fagin

You might want to whisper this, but the US has lost the war in Iraq. The US government is \$7.5 trillion in debt and the debt is growing. Of the 480,000 people in the Army, over 300,000 are now deployed overseas. Approximately half of the US military's total ground combat strength is tied up in Iraq and we are using up our reserves.

The choices for this administration are simple; abandon the occupation or massively increase the occupation forces. A draft is inevitable. On March 31 the Selective Service System reported that they would be ready to go by mid-May.

Recruitment numbers are falling. The Army missed its April goals by 42%. The Army Reserve was down 10% in prior months, and the National Guard was 25% off. Even the Marines are down. The main reason young people gave for not wanting to sign up was fear of getting killed in Iraq. The military suggested that the media not report on this so much. The Army has increased their street recruiters by 33% and they are trying a new tactic; appealing to the patriotism of the folks to influence their children to sign up. Maximum age for the

National Guard and the Army Reserve went up from 34 to 39. Combat roles for women and rules about siblings in combat zones are being looked into for possible revisions. Failed drug tests are being ignored in order to keep people in. Of the 4,653 Individual Ready Reserve soldiers mobilized last summer, 370 failed to report for duty. Iraq war veterans are speaking out: "Going back isn't on my short list." "Going back isn't an option."

There's a lot of that going around. The Pentagon reluctantly admits to over 7,000 soldiers having gone AWOL since 2002, with the numbers increasing month by month. Even recruiters are going AWOL: 37 of them. Many others are filing for conscientious objector status and helping others via their web site at www.peace-out.com. This site reported 3,000 hits on its first day of operation. The War Resisters Support Campaign helps resisters achieve refugee status in Canada, as does the Military Law Task Force of the National Lawyers Guild.

Here, at the Peace & Justice Center, Elizabeth Stinson aids those who want out of the military or at least not to go back to Iraq. She's worked on over 100 cases since the war began. She and her team help active duty military and those recently recruited to connect with lawyers and the GI-rights network so they can get what they need to go through the separation process successfully. The Peace & Justice Center is there to support the troops and help bring them home alive.

Resistance is growing throughout the country as Americans realize their complicity in this invasion. The Nuremberg Principle holds the individual responsible for knowingly committing acts of evil. It is up to us to stop this war. It is our moral responsibility.

"Non-cooperation is a protest against an unwitting and unwilling participation in evil."—Mohandas Gandhi.

Rebel Fagin is a long-time environmental & social justice activist and a proud member of the Radical Ions Affinity Group and the Progressive Club.

PJC Section

A Community Level Approach to Anti-Militarism GI Counseling During Permanent War

by Marti Hiken, co-chair of the Military Law Task Force (MLTF) of the National Lawyers Guild

The MLTF has been in existence over 30 years. It is a national committee of the National Lawyers Guild, a progressive legal association founded about 70 years ago. The MLTF has a long history of working with and supporting civilian military counselors. This work is important because there aren't enough lawyers to take the cases, many GIs feel more comfortable talking to counselors from their own communities rather than to lawyers, and often, GIs fear the expense of hiring a lawyer. Thus, the GIs, their family members and friends turn to their own community members to help them through a very difficult time.

To give you an idea of the military culture, the following is a blog on the Internet from the 11th Army Cavalry Regiment at Fort Irwin, California. It begins with the troop mission statement, and then it follows with the Tanker's Prayer:

The Lord is my tank commander. I shoot only depleted uranium. He makes me hide in sandy dust clouds to engage targets of opportunity. He restores my ammo wells and my coax box until they run over. My heavy metal will keep me safe and keep those who come knocking from getting in and allows me to fight another day. My wingman and I will ensure complete annihilation. Catastrophic kills shall follow me for all the days of my life and I will ride on a tank forever. Yea though I ride through the valley of the shadow of death. I will fear no evil, for I am the meanest, nastiest tanker in the valley.

Why do people do counseling? Mostly because people are against war, and they want to do concrete, meaningful work trying to move toward a more peaceful co-existence. Many counselors have been in the military, and they know what it's about, they've seen combat, and they want to continue to work in this area. Others are concerned about weapons of mass destruction, depleted uranium, and Agent Orange. Many have families who are in the military.

Parents deal with recruiters calling their houses with a hard-sell, lying to their kids and to them. This experience gets them involved in counter-recruitment work.

Many community members want to work toward saving lives. Still others are concerned about war crimes, abuse, and torture. There are those of us who want to learn the language of the military, its goals and its strategies. As counselors, we find out first-hand what the military intends to do, because GIs tell us.

American families are being militarized at an increasing rate. With the extensive use of Stop Loss, which keeps people in the military at the whim of the President for as long he wants, and with extensions of tours of duty, GIs and their families face a longer duration of time dealing with the military.

These realities draw us into an anti-militarism approach on a community level. You, as GI counselors, are the heart and soul in your community in dealing with the United States military. Maybe you don't think of yourselves that way, but as you begin the counseling, you begin to understand the central role that you play in your community to fight the whole concept of militarism.

For those not engaged specifically in counseling or counter-recruitment, there are other avenues. We might be involved in National Guard campaigns, i.e. to keep our state militias at home; in passing local or union-based anti-war resolutions; in sanctuary movements; working on cases of GI resisters; in learning about the options available to Americans and GI resisters in Canada and other countries around the world; anti-war activities; working with veteran organizations, etc.

What is the nature of this militarism beast we are dealing with here as the US changes from the world's policeman to the world's emperor, and as we are creating empire?

In this process, the US is involved in war crimes and ignoring and denying international law. As a result, we are endangering the lives of American citizens abroad, as well as US servicemen whether or not they are engaged in combat. And, perhaps the newest encroachment on the part of the government is the United States assuming control over foreign territory, either surrounding bases overseas or through military action.

We are particularly concerned with the implications of martial law in the United States as well as internationally. The War on Terrorism, the anti-terrorism laws, and the Patriot Act all create a stepping ladder to increased militarization in communities. For example, after 9-11 there was a martial law situation around the bases in Okinawa. The United States not only assumed control of the territory under those bases, but also of the Japanese citizens on-base and Japanese citizens off-base. This, of course, is a bone of contention in Okinawa and Japan; but it also begins to blur the degree of control and authority of the US over territory outside those bases.

Much of these changes in policy have come through the development of the US military dividing the world into Commands. The Northern Command is the one that oversees the United States and works in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security. * Northern Command, in a state of emergency, will assume control of the Canadian and Mexican borders. The United States is asserting its rights to assume control of the air space over Canada, although Canada has just said about four weeks ago that they would not allow this. The US assumes the right to arrest Canadian and Mexican citizens in their own countries.

In a nutshell, this is America's current foreign policy:

First, there are lies and promises, threats, weapons of mass destruction. This is what follows:

- the president declares a national emergency and issues a declaration of war
- Congress goes into hiding
- Shock and Awe bombing
- an invasion of ground troops, regime change, the occupation of that country and the beginning, building and development of American bases
- special operational forces entering into this country if they already haven't done so
- the leveling of large cities
- the setting up of a puppet government
- the training of native pro-US guards and forces
- elections and democracy American-style
- the institution of a US-backed interim government, with 20,000 American and possibly foreign troops remaining in the country
- chaos.

If the war in Iraq ends tomorrow, is our work done as counselors? No, because Bush has said "We are in a permanent war."

The US has a history of acting to influence the internal policies of countries. It now has a policy of this. The US government insists that its allies implement anti-terrorist laws. Thus, human and civil rights are whittled down and eroded in all countries.

The United States continues to create bases along the Arc of Instability, as Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz call it. The arc travels along Columbia, Haiti, and over to Northern Africa—where the US is building a base now in western Sudan. It goes across Africa to Djibouti and Saudi Arabia. It travels through the Middle East, and up through Eastern Europe—over to Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and to Southeast Asia and up to Japan.

This is the Arc of Instability where the US is building base, after base, after base. It's important to realize that these bases can be activated or deactivated as needed by the US. In Iraq, Afghanistan, and the surrounding countries, more than \$1 billion has been allocated for construction since 9-11.

We force foreign governments into complicity with American policies, and we engage in preemptive actions. Most alarming is the real threat and increasing possibility of the use of nuclear weapons, such as the 100 kiloton Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrators, currently being "studied."

Many military academics outline the history of war in terms of generations. This analysis can perhaps help us to better understand the intentions of our government, and to help us understand our role in our own communities:

The 1st generation warfare is tribal, agricultural—the process of warriors turning into soldiers. Philosophically, the intent is to destroy the enemy's soldiers.

The 2nd generation warfare is based on capitalism, with industrial might backing the war machine. It runs from about 1850 to 1915, and includes World War I, and the introduction of

firepower.

With 3rd generation warfare, World War II begins, based on the market economy. Warfare turns to conventional warfare and blitzkriegs. Philosophically, the aim is to destroy the enemy's combat control logistics in order to destroy his will.

Guerrilla Warfare becomes much more prominent after WWII. Not that Guerrilla Warfare hasn't existed for generations, but now it comes into play because of the development of Netwars based on the information age, i.e. computer and informational networks. Netwars are long-enduring and of low-intensity; they are not similar to conventional wars (or high-intensity warfare) where the war lasts for a period of months or years. The academics tie the beginning of Netwars with Mao and the People's War, the Long March. They see its further development with Ho Chi Minh and General Vo Nguyen Giap in Vietnam. Other examples include the Irish Republican Army, Sandinistas, Palestinians, Algerian War, Iranian Revolution, Balkans, Gulf War I, Afghanistan, Iraq, Philippines and Al Qaeda.

Guerrilla warfare is now viewed as the direct destruction of the enemy's will. The strategy has changed from looking at the special logistics of the United States military to destroying, not an area, territory, or city, but rather, destroying the will of the people to fight.

The Information Age, the 4th generation, is based on globalization. The world has moved away from nationalism and imperialism to a worldwide inter-dependent economy. Cyberwar is the Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld concept of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), the transformation of the United States military into highly technological forces able to fight in warfare based on communication and information technology; intelligent warfare where drones, mechanized and intelligent battlefields are now on the playing field. We can see this in play as the pentagon allows small units much more autonomy than in the past, and involves special operational forces in conflicts much more readily.

There is a lot of tension inside the military over these concepts. Netwars and Cyberwars are both based on communication and information, but Rumsfeld's RMA is very different from the concept of Netwars. He feels that the emphasis should be on developing advanced technology and indeed, the Pentagon is sinking millions into this. The military academics agree that the military must be re-organized, but the emphasis must be on understanding and developing countering networks—that the nature of warfare has changed and these stateless entities, or nations might act like a nation but they have no nation or national boundaries. It is no longer possible to invade and bomb Iraq, for example, and think that the war is won. It's not going to work.

Likewise, as the struggles around the world gradually change, so must the response of those who work inside our own communities. Our concepts of communities will change—our community might be forged with neighbors far across the sea. Most importantly, our own communities provide us with the support and sustenance to continue our work as we try to forge through the militaristic attitudes and actions perpetrated by our own government. Waging peace becomes a priority, as does a community approach to anti-militarism. We will build our own networks.

This article is a slight refinement of the first 20 minutes of the session on Military Law and Separation Counseling, given by both Marti and Luke Hiken at the Peace and Justice Center's Peacemakers Conference last April 9th in Santa Rosa. The entire 1 3/4 hour presentation is available on dvd. See the article below on "Reasons for HOPE" for details.

** Marti has a whole article on the Northern Command on the website for the Military Law Task Force www.nlg.org/mltf, or go to Google and type mltf and then it's on the left articles index, northcom, the Northern Command and how it functions.*

Help Dismantle the Military: One Individual at a Time

by Lindsey Jacobs

Are you feeling angry, confused, and saddened by the ongoing violence being carried out across the globe by the US military? Do you ever find yourself wishing there was something more you could do in addition to meditation and prayer? One way you can help out right here in your own backyard is by being trained as a military separation counselor. "What on earth does this mean?" you may find yourself wondering. As you already know, innocent civilians aren't the only ones being injured and losing their lives in these US-led invasions around the globe. Thousands of US soldiers are wounded and killed as well, not to mention the impact this has on their friends and family. The role of the military separation counselor is exactly what the term implies: to help people separate legally from the military, similar to the way people must file for divorce when they wish to end their marriage.

Sure, some people join the army in order to carry a gun and ignorantly or knowingly carry out the orders of a violent, unjust regime. However, there are plenty of good-hearted citizens in the armed forces as well. Husband-and-wife-team Luke and Marti Hiken, experts in the field of separation counseling and members of the National Lawyer's Guild, recently spoke at the Peacemakers Conference. This event was held here in Santa Rosa in early April, sponsored by the Peace and Justice Center of Sonoma County. In their lecture entitled "Military Law and Counseling," Luke recalls the numerous "kind, intelligent, and gentle people" he encountered throughout his long career as a lawyer in the military courts. And an increasing number of these people want OUT.

Like many peace-oriented people, I often wondered why anyone would even want to join the army in the first place. In their lecture, the Hikens reminded me of just a few of the many sensible reasons people have for enlisting in the armed forces. Some enter out of a sincere desire to protect the lives of others and create a more peaceful and just world. For many individuals, including those from a lower socio-economic status, joining the military affords them the opportunity to go to college and receive various sorts of vocational training and employment opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable. Some people join when times may seem relatively peaceful and the possibility of having to fight in a bloody battle overseas appears unlikely. Some are immigrants who may have even been told or promised they would never be deported. Still, other folks enter the armed forces at the behest of parents and relatives who may have spent time in the military themselves and see this as the honorable duty of their offspring. And some actually appreciate the highly structured, disciplined format of the military and find the mentally and physically challenging atmosphere rewarding.

So here they are, in the process of fulfilling their contract, and the enlisted person finds him or herself in the midst of an increasingly absurd battle being fought in the name of establishing world-wide 'democracy,' that bears an uncanny resemblance to world-wide *domination*. Many have first-hand experience with the horrors of war and the bottom line is: they no longer agree to carry out the orders of a ruthless, dishonest, and unjust government. They have families to return to, families who need their emotional and financial support. These soldiers have their very own sanity to maintain. And getting out isn't always easy. In fact, it's becoming increasingly difficult with procedures such as the Stop-Loss Order, which essentially proclaims that in times of war or national emergency, the president can override all military contracts and require that an individual remain in the military far longer than the length of time stated on his or her contract.

Though it can be difficult to leave, there is hope. The role of the military separation counselor is to learn the system and help the individual locate all possible escape routes. The Hikens, who appear to know the ins and outs of military policy like the backs of their hands, discuss the long list of conditions under which the enlisted person can legally leave the military. Though it may require a good deal of research and creativity on the part of the counselor, according to Elizabeth Stinson, a separation counselor (and director) at the Peace and Justice Center, you can almost always find a way out for someone attempting to legally disengage from the military.

And there are different levels of separation that may be required, depending on how far the person has gone with the military. Have they been in the service for over a year? Are they in the reserves? Or did they simply sign a form stating their interest in the military when they were in high school, and now they have turned 18 and the military is trying to convince them that they are legally bound? Those attempting to exit this Delayed Enlistment Program are referred to as "DEPs". According to Stinson, these individuals are the easiest to assist. As long as the DEP did not sign an additional contract when he or she graduated from high school, at which time the military comes to claim them, then the individual is in no way legally bound to enlist. Somebody simply needs to inform them of the facts before they sign the legal contract, and they are free to walk away.

This is just a sampling of the kind of information you will encounter on the dvd recording of Luke and Marti Hiken's presentation at the Peacemaker's Conference this past April. If you would like to find out more, come by the center at 467 Sebastopol Road in Santa Rosa or call (707) 575-8902. Check out the dvd, or purchase one for \$7 (it's free if you're going to be a counselor) or talk to the director, Elizabeth, about how you can help save lives and resist unjust US military policy by becoming a military separation counselor today. Unfortunately, there are many more enlisted individuals trying to separate than there are trained counselors available to help them. You can do it! Stop by or give us a call and play a constructive role in creating a more peaceful and just world.

Lindsey is a new volunteer at the Peace and Justice Center; just another soul struggling for liberation within and without.

Reasons for HOPE

Both Counter Recruitment and Active-Duty Military Separations are Increasing

by Earl Herr

One of the great strengths of the Peace and Justice Center of Sonoma County is the very busy and successful High school and college Outreach Peace Education (HOPE) program that Elizabeth Stinson and Sachiko Chernin created and very effectively operate. Elizabeth, a trained counselor, is our PJC director; Sachiko is a dedicated volunteer. Their tactics include both countering the recruiters directly whenever military recruiters appear in any of the county high schools, as well as helping college students to devise their own actions to counter the military recruiters. Some teenagers who have escaped from the recruiters by this help, such as Austin Keller, are now working with the Center's HOPE program rather than in Iraq with the military.

With the increasing deaths in Iraq, the numbers of AWOL (Absent Without Leave) GIs is dramatically increasing so that the Pentagon is no longer able to hide this information from

us. A May report on NPR's *Talk of the Nation* stated that increasing numbers of recruiters are going AWOL (42 at last count).

There are an increasing number of calls to our Center from both teenagers and their families who need help in resisting the recruiters' tactics, and from active duty GIs who need counseling and legal help to achieve their separation from the military.

The Center sponsored a two-day conference in Santa Rosa in early April to train more counselors throughout our state. Over fifty persons participated, mostly from California Peace and Justice Centers. Nine excellent sessions were presented by:

Karen Topakian Director of the Agapé Foundation, Barbara Lubin from Middle East Children's Alliance, Marti and Luke Hiken of the Military Law Task Force from the National Lawyers Guild, David Smith Ferri of Voices in the Wilderness, Inga Olson from Tri Valley Cares, Sam Joi from Code Pink, Joey Crottogini and Patrick and Caitlyn Childs from Food Not Bombs, Daniel Solnit from the GE Free Campaign, and Elizabeth Stinson from our Peace and Justice Center.

The following digital recordings are available.

1. *Military Law and Separation Counseling* by Marti and Luke Hiken
2. *HOPE Training in Counter Recruitment in the Schools, and Military Separation* by Elizabeth Stinson
3. *Revolutionary Grant-making* by Karen Topakian
4. *Iraq Before the Invasion* by David Smith Ferri.
5. *Alternatives to the Military* by Elizabeth, Sachiko and Austin to (and with) a senior English class at Casa Grande High School in Petaluma. This specific school presentation and active discussion resulted in the rescue of another teenager from the military recruiters. This was in early March, and provided a trial run to enable us to record Peacemaker Conference sessions.

The Center can now provide each of these dvds, part of our "Dismantling Militarism" Toolkit, to interested persons and organizations. Whether or not you wish to counsel, you will want to know the background information that these sessions provide. The dvds are \$7 each (add \$2 if mailed), or you may borrow any of them from our lending library. We expect also to make additional copies available of this special Counter Recruitment issue of the *Peace Press*.

Our PJC School Programs Counter the Military

- *High school and college Outreach Peace Education project (HOPE)*. HOPE was founded four years ago to counter the military presence on the high school campus, bring in speakers to government and social science classes, and table at their career days.
- *An annual HOPE art and poetry slam contest on social justice issues* in 11 local high schools.
- *Processing of Delayed Entry Program (DEP)* for military separation.
- *Conducting draft counseling training* for student activists, and providing tabling materials
- *In the "service learning option"* we work with the schools to place junior and senior high school students into service learning mentorships with local social justice organizations or here at the Center. Students receive credit as well as focus for their senior project and support in their presentations. This is our big door-opener into the schools.

Although those of us in the movement believe we should be there because the military

is there, it is very helpful to offer the student an introduction to and opportunity to work with and learn about local social justice efforts.

Peace Fresno Organizes Their Community for Counter Recruitment Our HOPE is the Model

On May 17 Elizabeth Stinson and Sachiko Chernin facilitated both a *HOPE: High school Outreach Peace Education* activist training in Fresno and a community forum on how to work with the schools and counter the recruiter presence on high school and college campuses. The Fresno activist community has successfully organized a counter recruitment coalition involving many teachers. In Fresno and surrounding areas there are numerous complaints that recruiters are bringing tanks and weapons onto the campus.

The Fresno City College direct action group had a new approach to dealing with the recruiters. They brought drums to the campus and drummed the entire time the recruiters were speaking. No one could hear the recruiters, so the recruiters left. We were told the students “drummed no matter who complained and they felt very empowered by the experience.” The students asked many questions about the Delayed Entry Program and the separation process. They easily identified this key process as a tool to adapt and the use of this contract by recruiters is “a threat to their generation.” Following the trainings, they had their own meetings to strategize.

Both the Santiago and the Paredas decisions and their impact were discussed. If the media does not find it important enough to discuss the Navy judge’s ruling that the war in Iraq is illegal, and clearly stating this during a court martial, then the burden falls again on the anti-war movement to disseminate the truth. Our HOPE project continues to serve as a growing and successful model for counter recruitment.

In response to nation-wide complaints over military recruitment tactics, recruiters have been asked for a one-day step down for retraining. The necessary retraining should happen on a policy level as well as administratively. Forty-two recruiters have gone AWOL, absent without leave, nationwide. In response to a multitude of complaints about recruiter abuses we have been asked to facilitate further trainings statewide. In June we will be training in Monterey.

Peace Focus: Global Non-Violent Struggles

Three nonviolent struggles by unrepresented people against the deadly impact of the greed for global resources

Tragic Loss of Lives 10 Years Apart Because of the Greed for Oil

Marla Ruzicka and Faiz al Salim died April 16 in Iraq

Marla Ruzicka, native of Lakeport and founder of Civic Worldwide, the Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict, and her co-worker Faiz ali Salim, CIVIC’s Iraq Country Director, were killed April 16 on the Baghdad Airport Road. They had given their lives to helping the innocent victims of war, and now the war consumed them. They were driving to visit a child injured by a bomb when a suicide bomber exploded nearby.

They worked without resting. Their mission was not only to work on specific cases of civilians injured and in need of medical treatment and compensation but to institutionalize in law the U.S. government's responsibility for the consequences of military action on civilians.

CIVIC is more committed than ever to continuing the work they began. Donations can be made online at www.civicworldwide.org or sent to CIVIC, 1605 Connecticut Ave, NW Suite 300, Washington, DC 20009

Ken Saro-Wiwa Living Memorial: An Open Call for Ideas

Ken Saro-Wiwa was born in October 1941, the eldest son of a prominent family in Ogoni, which is today in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Two of his best known works were drawn from his observations and experiences of the Biafran war. His most famous work, *Sozaboy: a Novel in Rotten English*, is a harrowing tale of a naive village boy recruited into the army. *On a Darkling Plain*, is a diary of his experiences during the war. Ken Saro-Wiwa was consistently concerned about the treatment of Ogoni within the Nigerian Federation.

Throughout his writing and his popular television work he often made references to the exploitation he saw around him as the oil and gas industry took riches from the beneath the feet of the poor Ogoni farmers, and in return left them polluted and disenfranchised. In 1990, Saro-Wiwa started to dedicate himself to the amelioration of the problems of the oil producing regions of the Niger Delta. That year the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), a non-violent action group, was formed. Focusing on his homeland, Ogoni, he launched a non-violent movement for social and ecological justice. In this role he attacked the oil companies and the Nigerian government accusing them of waging an ecological war against the Ogoni and precipitating the genocide of the Ogoni people. He was so effective, that by 1993 the oil companies had to pull out of Ogoni. This cost him his life.

On 10 November **1995**, Saro-Wiwa and eight others were brutally executed in defiance of international appeals for leniency. There was international condemnation and outrage against both the military junta and Shell Oil. The condemnation led to the strengthening of limited sanctions, and Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth. UK Prime Minister John Major, described the trial as, "a fraudulent trial, a bad verdict, an unjust sentence. It has now been followed by judicial murder".

The Peace & Justice Center has been asked to participate with national and international organizations and activists to create a living memorial to the life and work of Ken Saro Wiwa. We are working with the coalition to host events and speakers and disseminate information.

The issues that Ken Saro-Wiwa fought and died for are as pressing today as they were then. The Niger Delta remains impoverished and polluted. The idea of a Living Memorial is to say that these issues are alive, that Ken and his colleagues did not die in vain, that their deaths mean something to us today and beyond. This "living" quality will be embodied in the winning proposal. The Remember Saro-Wiwa coalition launched the **Open Call for Ideas**, the deadline for which is 30th June. Artists and activists: Please see www.peaceandjusticesonomaco.org for entry information or call Elizabeth at 707 575-8902. The selection panel will announce 5 finalists in the first week of August.

Elizabeth Stinson Invited to UN Indigenous Forum

Elizabeth Stinson, director of our Peace and Justice Center, was invited by the Nuxalk Chiefs to present them as observers at the indigenous forum at the UN in late May. In order

to attend the UN one must have one of two kinds of "credential," observer or presenter. The Nuxalk Chiefs were given observer status and it is "their" issue that Elizabeth and her friend, human rights observer, Julie Berriault have researched and supported within Nuxalk territory and in International forums for over eight years.

Elizabeth says that "This is not the first time I have been confronted with the inability for unrepresented nations to be heard, but I respect the willingness of both good friends, hereditary Nuxalk chiefs Qwatsinas and Nuximlayc, who have offered and provided much needed support and sanctuary for many people and issues throughout the years. Their struggle to preserve the Great Bear Rainforest in British Columbia—Nuxalk Reserve—is dear to my heart, as is the notion of a **truly indigenous forum within the UN, one in which dominant nations are forced to hear the impact of their issues on dominated and abused, sovereign peoples** (such as China and Tibet)." The Nuxalk have conducted a dignified non-violent struggle to preserve the environment. They are committed to protect their culture from the impacts of fish farming, logging and pollution. To read more about their struggle and their commitment to non-violence please visit www.nuxalk.org.

Hiroshima Day Event: Sunday, August 7, in Courthouse Square

60 years ago, on the morning of August 6, at the end of World War 2, the United States dropped the first Atomic Bomb on the people of the city of Hiroshima. On August 9 the United States dropped the second Bomb on the people of the city of Nagasaki. Now, 60 years later, the Bush administration is racing to build "bigger and better bombs" to terrorize and rule the people of the Earth. Join us to march against nuclear weapons in Livermore on Saturday, August 6. And the next day, on Sunday, August 7, at Courthouse Square in Santa Rosa join us in a day of remembrance and resolution to eliminate all nuclear weapons, including the deadly depleted uranium now devastating Iraq.

Before Hiroshima Day the Rialto Cinema will screen a special showing of "Rhapsody in August," the film by legendary director Akira Kurosawa about the effects of the bombing of Nagasaki on one family 45 years later. Check www.rialtocinemas.com for date and time.

Vigil for Peace every Friday at Courthouse Square in Santa Rosa

We've been vigiling for peace every Friday since the invasion of Afghanistan 3 years ago. Rain or shine, determinedly, hopefully, we continue. A lot of the faces of the people in the cars have gotten to look very familiar, like old friends. So join us on the streets of Santa Rosa for a pleasant, sunny evening hour. We'll be there till the war is over.

Every Friday from 5pm to 6:30pm. Let Bush quit! We shall not be moved!

Peace Center Annual Dinner: Saturday, November 12: Save the Date!

Brothers and Sisters: Our annual fall dinner and auction is our biggest fundraiser of the year. Thank you for all your wonderful support in the past, and come again this year! If you have an item that you think would be perfect for the auction or if you'd like to volunteer to help, call 707-575-8902. One change: we'll be at the Santa Rosa Vets Bldg this year, not in Sebastopol, as it has been. Last year's had a special community feel to it: let's come together again and renew our commitment to peace with justice and to our beloved community!

The Peace and Justice Center Is Looking to Double its Number of Members!

With new vigor the Bush administration is planning to expand its war on the world, privatize Social Security, further reduce our constitutional rights and freedoms, and bring back the draft, to list but a few of their reactionary ambitions. It is just these times that the Peace and Justice Center was created to deal with. There is so much to do in the immediate future that we must do all in our power to turn the tide back.

We must build the movement. A key part of this in Sonoma County is stepping up what the Peace and Justice Center is capable of doing. Our strategy to this end is to increase our membership, which will increase our funding and our volunteer base. With greater funding and more people to do the valuable work, we can assemble an effective campaign to stop Bush and the neocons and bring progressive values to the political dialogue.

We're looking to doubling our number of members!

Help us to make this happen. Contact the Peace Center today at 467 Sebastopol Ave., Santa Rosa, (707) 575-8902. Our website is www.peaceandjusticesonomaco.org.

Support the Center by using the Community Smart Card

You can contribute financially to the Center by using the Community Smart Card. It isn't a credit card, you don't buy or pay anything extra, and it is free and very easy to sign up. You can designate the Center as the recipient, and when you make a purchase at a participating business, by cash, check or credit card, a small percentage of the money you spend will be donated to the Center by that business. You can use the on-line application at <http://www.communitysmart.com/CSP/index.jsp>, or come to the Center for the application form. Their website lets you see the list of the many participating merchants. We really appreciate your support.

Help Wanted—Books Missing

by Derek Legg

The Peace and Justice Center has a great library, donated by many generous people. It includes current best sellers as well as classics in the fields of peace and justice, government policy, economics, politics, environment, the Middle East, Latin America and much more. The problem is that we don't have a good method of keeping the books in circulation. Many books that have been checked out have not been returned. We would appreciate any suggestions you might have for doing a better job of maintaining the library. Give me a call at the Peace and Justice Center.

Please check to see you have if any of the following books and bring them back so other people can learn from them.

Among the missing:

Cahn, Edgar—Our Brothers Keeper

Clark, Ramsey—The Children are Dying

Clayton, Edward—Martin Luther King, The Peaceful Warrior

Dear, John—Peace Behind Bars

Demott, Donald—Peace Building: A Textbook

Ehrenreich, Barbara—The Snarling Citizen
Greider, William—American Revolution, One World ready or Not
Hightower, Jim—If the Gods Had Meant Us To Vote
Holden, David—The House of Saud
Huberman, Leo—Introduction to Socialism
Johnson, Chalmers—Blowback
Keyes, Ken Jr.—The Hundredth Monkey
Rifken, Jeremy—Voting Green
Schell, Jonathan—The Unconquerable Void
Dr. Seuss—The Butter Battle Book
Solomon & Cohen—Wizard of Media Oz
Terkel, Studs—Will the Circle Unbroken
Trumbo, Dalton—Johnny Got His Gun
Wasserman, Harvey—Killing Our Own
Wilson, William Julius—When Work Disappears

Community Section

The American Dream Fund

Program Update on Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)

IDAs are designed to help low income persons in our community build and achieve assets—real assets that can help to lift them out of even generational poverty. Peace & Justice Center members were instrumental in the early planning for a local program, our members gave early financing, and several of us continue to serve on the IDA Advisory Committee. The following gives insight into the ongoing operation of IDAs in Sonoma County.

The American Dream Fund—IDA Program

by Kelli Kuykendall

The American Dream Fund is a project of Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County (CAP Sonoma). CAP Sonoma is a nonprofit that for over 37 years has operated programs to prevent or help reduce the impact of poverty and create self-sufficiency for low-income families and individuals. The interest in starting an IDA Program began in 1999, when a group of individuals in the community came to CAP Sonoma and asked that it sponsor such a program. The same group of individuals' active involvement in CAP Sonoma's IDA Advisory Committee has greatly contributed to the success of the program. To date, CAP Sonoma's IDA Program has assisted 15 families to purchase homes, utilizing AFIA grant and local match funds, in partnership with Burbank Housing Development Corporation's Sweat Equity Program. In addition to this, two families used FHLB funds for down payment assistance. Facing the challenge of the high cost of housing, we are currently looking to expand the program to include micro-enterprise and post-secondary education, utilizing AFIA funds. Presently, one participant is saving for micro-enterprise and another has received match funds to pay for college tuition.

Helping local farmers

CAP Sonoma is also partnering with California Farmlink (CFL) to provide financial education and matched savings to four CFL clients. Earlier this fall I had the opportunity to get away from my work in the office of CAP Sonoma and go on a field trip to visit two local farmers. My guide for the afternoon was Ashley Berendt, Equity Building Programs Associate/AmeriCorps Vista with CFL. CAP Sonoma's American Dream Fund/IDA Program and CFL are partnering to provide financial education and matched savings to four CFL clients. Upon reaching their savings goal and completing the required financial education, the CFL clients will receive a 3:1 match to their savings to invest in their farms. Ashley and I met at CFL's office in Sebastopol and journeyed north to Healdsburg to visit Tamara Scalera at Tomato Heaven, the name of her business. We were greeted by the farm mascot, a tomato-eating, gopher-hunting dachshund. Tamara specializes in heirloom tomatoes to sell to restaurants in Sonoma, Napa, San Francisco, and Las Vegas. She also sells her tomatoes, as well as melons and beans, at a roadside-stand during the summer and fall months off West Side Road in Healdsburg. Beneath a shade canopy, adjacent to the plentiful rows of pungent tomato plants, lay neat piles of every-color-of-the-rainbow tomatoes being gently packed into boxes for delivery. Before heading south to visit another farm, Tamara treated us, as well as her dog, to samples of a bright red, dry-farmed tomato, sweet as sugar, and gave us a few more uniquely colored and shaped varieties for the road. In Santa Rosa, we visited Kevin McEnnis, owner of Quetzal Farms. Kevin grows a variety of vegetables and flowers for sale at farmer's markets (Berkeley and Sebastopol) and Whole Foods Market. He had a few minutes to spend with us before dashing off to a farmer's market in Berkeley. We toured the small farm off Llano Road, walking amongst towering sunflowers, deep purple eggplants, and brilliant orange, red, and yellow sweet peppers (Kevin's specialty). A day in the field gave me the opportunity to sample the bounty of Sonoma County, but it also gave me the opportunity to taste the "fruits of our (CAP Sonoma and CFL) labor" in the community. CAP Sonoma's American Dream/IDA Program has helped low-income individuals and families in Sonoma County purchase homes, further their education, and is currently working to make small business ownership a reality for low-income Sonoma County residents. Please consider making a donation so we can continue to operate this successful program.

Kelli Kuykendall, among her other duties at CAP Sonoma, is the IDA program director. The program is in need of both operating and matching funds.

The American dream—Home ownership

by Millie Tripp

Oscar Coello and his three teenage children moved into their new home 2 years ago. He participated in a 13 month sweat equity program offered by Burbank Housing and used his savings and the IDA matching funds for closing costs. During construction, he participated in a financial literacy program at CAP, which included credit, budgeting, income tax and mortgage training. Oscar also worked full time, and said he was "exhausted" but anxious to reach his goal—"This is going to be my house".

Oscar described himself as a "person who works well with his hands but lacked confidence". During those months he says the "process opened doors for him". Oscar and his future neighbors, some of whom were also IDA participants, worked as a community on the

new houses. He recalls the satisfaction, support and value of working and learning from neighbors. "Sometimes I'm the teacher too, especially with other Latinos" when his second language was especially useful. He feels that he gained experience beyond that of a regular construction job, including learning the details of his own home. "I learned to be a responsible homeowner" and can now recognize preventive maintenance needs.

One year after the family moved into their new home, Oscar was laid off from his job of 11 years when he broke his hand. With his experience and new confidence, he moved ahead to study for his general contractor's license, which he received after 4 months. He is now saving again with the IDA program to start his own business. Oscar enrolled in small business classes at Santa Rosa Junior College. "Going back to school is an adventure too". He hopes to complete his newest saving program this summer and plans to use his new savings/match to purchase a computer and software to help him achieve his latest dream, his own business.

Oscar has secured a city permit for a project he wants to launch in Windsor. He's begun making contacts with architects and engineers. He's enthused and is already seeing rewards from his contractor license.

Oscar sums up his experience by saying, "Thru the IDA program, lives are being touched".

Millie Tripp is a long time PJC member who was part of the original group seeking to initiate a local IDA program and has continued to serve as an active member of the IDA Advisory Committee for CAP Sonoma. IDA program client Oscar Coello, and PJC members Helen Kochenderfer and Earl Herr also serve as active members of the IDA Advisory Board.

The American Dream Fund is one of CAP Sonoma's many important programs in our community that need and deserve support. CAP is located at 1300 N. Dutton Ave., Santa Rosa 95401, 707-544-6911, www.capsonoma.org.

Copwatch: Alternative Views on Cinco de Mayo

by Caitlin Childs

Rubber bullets, pepper spray, tear gas grenades, riot-gear SWAT teams, helicopters, a tank. These are the police sanctioned "crowd control" devices used Thursday, May 5, 2005, at an event best known as Cinco de Mayo. Traditionally a celebration of Mexican culture, in Sonoma County, due in part to negative coverage by the *Press Democrat* and the Santa Rosa Police Department, the day has come to be associated with gang violence and so-called "riots". This year over 150 SRPD officers were assigned to cover the Sebastopol Road and Mendocino Avenue areas protected by full riot gear and an arsenal of "non-lethal" crowd control devices. The cost for overtime payments alone was over \$45,000, not including the costs for regular and hazard pay, weaponry, patrol helicopters, and clean-up.

Escalation of police activity around Cinco de Mayo has been justified by the Police based on a relative few incidences of violence and vandalism in previous years. Police presence at this year's event was even more visible than in the past, and was hailed as a success by the department and the *Press Democrat*, whose May 6 article celebrated the police's "paramilitary precision." But in a city with a vibrant and growing Latino community, and a history of police brutality and racial profiling, the actions taken by the police against this community take on a different meaning.

The new Sonoma County chapter of Copwatch, an organization aimed at highlighting the problems of police misconduct and training citizens to know their rights, was also present at the Cinco de Mayo celebrations. Nearly 25 members passed out over 2,000 know your rights fliers and documented dozens of police detentions and instances of police misconduct. Members witnessed the police blockades of Mendocino Avenue and Sebastopol Road and commented on the frustration of the crowd with the police's heavy-handed response to their celebration.

The goals of Copwatch are to elevate the consciousness of citizens to the issues surrounding the police, and the incredible power we've given them in our society, and to hold the police accountable for their actions. While some cities have citizen review boards and police complaint forms can be found at many police stations in the county, many victims of police misconduct do not know their rights and have been too intimidated to stand up for them. Recently members of Food Not Bombs and Copwatch in Santa Rosa have heard complaints that officers have been threatening young people in Courthouse Square saying that only 10 people can be in the square at any one time. This is, of course, not true and it is just one example of the SRPD's continuing negative attitudes towards young people and people of color in this community. Copwatch will be in regular attendance at the Wednesday Night Market in downtown Santa Rosa this summer and more volunteers are welcome. Copwatch meets regularly in Santa Rosa and can be reached by email at sonomacopwatch@riseup.net or through the Free Mind Media infospace at (707) 579-1605.

Caitlin Childs is a longtime volunteer with Free Mind Media and Food Not Bombs. The Free Mind Media Infospace is at 546 Pacific Avenue, across from the JC. Call 707-579-1605.

California One for Peace

At noon on May 1st, residents of communities along the coast from Port Townsend to San Diego gathered on the coast highway to protest the war in Iraq and support our troops by bringing them home.

In Bolinas 40 people, including young children, held bright blue signs spelling P.E.A.C.E. People from Gualala, Jenner, Valley Ford, Tomales and Muir Woods displayed flags and banners. Tomales even had a band.

California One for Peace posted pictures of other demonstrations from Lompoc, Half Moon Bay, Moss Landing and many coastal communities in Oregon. In Florence, Oregon, 65 people gathered at the intersection of Hwy 101 and 126 to ask, "How much longer for this unnecessary, costly war that doesn't make us safer?" and paraded through a honking symphony of cars for peace.

For these and other inspiring pictures and stories go to caloneforpeace.org and the Oregon Peace Wave 2005 website at uci.net. The event, organized by California One for Peace with the Oregon Coast Peace WAVE, is the second in what may be a series of demonstrations to counteract the Bush Blues in the camaraderie of making a statement with like-minded friends and neighbors. Call 707-876-1960 for more info.

"Our blessing, it seems to me, is not what we know, but that we know each other." ~ Barry Lopez.

Support Empire Waste Management Workers in Sonoma County NOW!

The majority of the sanitary workers of Empire Waste Management voted to join the union 2 years ago—it was their 3rd attempt—and still don't have a contract. This has been a long hard struggle: the Company has harassed and fired union supporters and committed many unfair labor practices. Yet Waste Management reported a profit of \$931 million last year according to "The Forbes Global 2000—the World's Biggest Companies" and total assets close to \$21 billion. Please call (707-585-0291) or fax (586-8278) Rob Zakoor, District Manager of Empire Waste Management, and tell him to stop stalling and to start negotiating in good faith. Simply say you are a supporter of the workers and the union and want them to have a union contract NOW. The company is located at 3400 Standish Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95407. For more info call Greg Gunheim of Local 3 at 707-580-6197. When the community helps labor, both will benefit. Thank you so much! ~ Alicia Sanchez

An Important Message to all of our readers –

The Peace and Justice Center Needs to greatly increase its membership

The work of the Peace and Justice Center has increased dramatically as the Bush Wars continue to escalate, and we need to increase both (1) the Center's membership and funding, and (2) the numbers of our wonderful, committed volunteers. As we approach the end of our fiscal year, the Center is forced to deal with an annual deficit of \$11,000 for both this year and for the previous year. Yet through the excellent work of our Director, Elizabeth Stinson, with help from dedicated volunteers, and despite this financial shortfall, **the Center has become particularly effective in (1) working with youth to counter the military recruiters in our county schools, and in (2) counseling active duty GIs as they gain their legal separation from the military.**

The Challenge

We must and will make up our income deficit so that we can continue these vital programs and allow Elizabeth to pursue her current work and to help us train others in these skills. Since our financial need is ongoing, we are launching a Membership Drive to double our number of members. **We ask all of our readers who are not currently members to send in your membership form (see membership) and a check.** We ask all of you and especially our current members to find a like-minded friend, family member, neighbor or coworker to join the Peace and Justice Center.

For our current immediate need, we ask members to send in your checks if you have not yet responded to our recent Spring Appeal. Some of you may wish to put on a fundraising effort of your own, such as with a birthday or other party. If you can become a volunteer at the center, your help is needed. The continued health and effectiveness of the Center is up to us all.

David Anderson, member of the board of the Peace & Justice Center

