

peace EXCHANGE

events, actions, information

DEC 11-13 & 15: Anniversaries of Bill of Rights (218th) and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (61st) 12:15-1:00 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 15, State Capitol (Senate Chamber), Speaker – Dr. Dan Figgins on “Are Human Rights Indivisible?” Sponsored by ACLU of NC, Amnesty Int’l (Group 213), Human Rights Coalition of NC and UN Assoc. of Wake Co. Slater Newman (919) 821-2014

DEC 11-13: Training for Social Action Trainers, Stone House near Mebane, NC. Details, register, www.trainingforchange.org

DEC 16: 2 p.m., **UNA West Triangle Chapter Lunch & Learn Meeting**; Carolina Meadows (Chapel Hill); retired US Ambassador

Thomas Miller on US relations since Obama and the role of the UNA-USA, Jerry Berke, berkonup@mindspring.com

JAN 27: 2 p.m., **UNA West Triangle Chapter Lunch & Learn Meeting**; Carolina Meadows (Chapel Hill); talk by NCSU Emeritus Professor J. Oliver Williams on China/China-US relations, Jerry Berk, berkonup@mindspring.com

FEB 11: 6 p.m., **UN Peacekeeping Workshop**, UNA West Triangle Chapter, UNC-CH Ctr. for Global Initiatives and Curriculum in Peace, War, and Defense, Triangle Institute for Security Studies (reception 5:30 p.m.) Jerry Berke, berkonup@mindspring.com

Searching for Truth on the Internet

“Our press largely surrendered its independence and skepticism to join our government in marching to war.” Bill Moyers

The same pundits that got it wrong on Iraq are getting it wrong on Afghanistan. It’s not news, it’s bias. Type these web sites into your browser’s address box and search for the truth, because peace needs truth and truth requires investigation.

RETHINKAFGHANISTAN.COM A ground-breaking, full-length documentary focusing on the key issues surrounding this war.

WWW.ALTERNET.ORG An award-winning news magazine and online community.

WWW.DEMOCRACYNOW.ORG Provides access to people and perspectives rarely heard in the corporate-sponsored media.

WWW.COMMONDREAMS.ORG Breaking news from a progressive perspective. And the latest ideas and opinions of some of the world’s best progressive writers and activists.

WWW.AFTERDOWNINGSTREET.ORG A nonpartisan coalition working to expose the lies that create and sustain wars and occupations and to hold accountable those responsible.

NC Peace Action



P.O. Box 10384, Raleigh, NC 27605

INSIDE OUR SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE:

**The Peace Mom
& The Patriot**

Visiting Afghanistan

Counter-Recruitment

Settlement Freeze?

Kings Honored

Prisoner of Conscience

Cost of Occupations

The Peace Mom & The Patriot Tour

“War is a racket. A few profit; the many pay. So I say TO HELL WITH WAR!” Our tour began with those thunderous words by General Smedley Butler in 1935. It ended with a warning from Martin Luther King Jr., “We can no longer afford to worship the God of Hate or bow before the altar of retaliation. The oceans of history are made turbulent by the ever rising tides of hate. History is cluttered with the wreckage of nations and individuals that pursued this self-defeating path of hate.”

The featured attractions were The Peace Mom, Cindy Sheehan, and The Patriot, Lt. Col. Bob Bowman. Their message: America desperately needs a revolution of values. For Cindy, it’s a wake-up call from the myths that blind us. For Bob, it’s the restoration of our constitution.

This tour had its difficulties, but they were lessons in disguise. Bob was hospitalized and required a blood transfusion due to his contamination from Agent Orange 40 years ago while serving in Vietnam. Our weapons are painfully slow and inexorable. Cindy, who camped out at Bush’s ranch in Crawford, TX after her son was killed in Iraq, had to put up with lies, character assassination, and a public demonstration by the war-patriots at her appearance at Brunswick Community College. Imagine how painful it must be for a mother to have lost her son and to be called a traitor. War-patriots make war on peace and this is how they support the troops — with hate, lies, and self-righteousness.

In her e-book *Myth America*, Cindy writes about attitudes that make a difference. “We all care about our children, while some of us care about all the world’s children. We all care about keeping our country and our communities safe, while some of us want to keep everyone in the world safe. We all want prosperity for our families, while some of us want prosperity for all.” The attitudes that our children are better than Afghanistan’s, that we must strike Iraq first to keep America safe, that we need their oil resources for our prosperity, are justified by the myth that “America is the greatest country in the universe.”

Lt. Col. Bowman (retired) has seen through the myths and

proclaims, “This war was not brought on by faulty intelligence. It was brought on by manipulated intelligence, doctored evidence, and deliberate deception. This war has nothing to do with national security or freedom or democracy or human rights or protecting our allies or weapons of mass destruction or defeating terrorism or disarming Iraq. It has to do with money. It has to do with oil. And it has to do with raw imperial power. It is based on a pack of lies. And it is wrong. Those who forced this war on an unwilling world are guilty of violating the US Constitution, the UN Charter, the Nuremberg principles, and international law. What they have done is illegal, immoral, unconstitutional, and TREASON.”

With a sad touch of irony Cindy writes, “The Bush Administration kept on saying that the ‘terrorists’ attacked us on 9/11 because they ‘hate our freedoms.’ So, if one believes the official story, then our government has used 9/11 to destroy those freedoms that the terrorists hate.”

Our Peace Mom thinks that Obama, who taught Constitutional law, needs to restore those freedoms that Bush trashed for power. She writes that Bush “took away our 4th Amendment rights to privacy by the FISA Modernization Act and our protections under the 1st Amendment with the USA Patriot Act and our protections under the 8th Amendment by the Military Commissions Act.” She challenges us to demand that our freedoms be restored.

Our Peace-Patriot hopes for a change of direction from President Obama in Afghanistan. “The war in Afghanistan is just as unnecessary and wrong as that in Iraq. The reason given for the invasion of Afghanistan was that they were harboring Osama bin Laden. But the Taliban leaders of Afghanistan offered to give us bin Laden for trial if we had evidence against him. The Bush Administration ignored that offer because (1) they had no evidence linking bin Laden to 9/11 (and we still don’t), and (2) the attack on Afghanistan had been planned long BEFORE 9/11, because the Taliban refused to let Unocal build a



Cindy Sheehan's reception in Washington, DC

(continued next page)

The Peace Mom & The Patriot Tour

(continued from page 1)

gas pipeline through their country. 9/11 was a handy excuse for Cheney and company doing what they wanted to do anyway. The entire “War on Terror” is phony — all of it.”

If some of this information comes as a surprise; then follow Cindy’s advice, “The only response to the ‘free press’ in the US is to turn off our TV news and support Internet news sites, radio shows (www.cindysheehanssoapbox.com), or other independent media (www.thepatriots.us). Stay informed and keep up the pressure.

NC Peace Action organized the three chapters of the Veterans For Peace, two chapters of Code Pink, two chapters of NAACP, We are Change NC, and two congregations of Unitarian Universalist to bring the Peace Mom and the Patriot Tour to Asheville, Statesville, Charlotte, Brunswick County, and Raleigh. Thank you for supporting our Peace Action.

— Wally Myers, NCPA Chair

My Journey To Afghanistan

On our first full day in Kabul, I saw an old woman being dragged across the street by two men. One of our delegates thought she saw the men kick the clearly resisting woman.

This happened only a few blocks from our meeting with Women for Women International, who said they would have intervened. They claim to have educated 20,000 women since 2002 in vocational and civic training. They choose women affected by conflict who have hit bottom. As the program director explained, women have rights in Islam and some Mullahs need to be taught — that is why she travels the country. There is a big difference between cities and rural areas on many issues, including women’s rights.

Dr. Sardar Wali of the Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan (WADAN) told us of their Drug Demand Reduction program. Of the 30 or so million Afghans, two million are addicted to hashish, heroin, opium, pharmaceuticals or alcohol, and that 25% of police have tested positive for drugs. Dr. Wali claims a 65% success rate for his programs.

Afghans get addicted just like others, but with a few differences. Mothers use opium to help their babies sleep, allowing the women to get more work done. Drugs are sometimes given to employees to help them work, but when they get addicted

their employers take advantage of them.

While women are treated in the home, men get treated in centers. Many shave their heads to help deal with the withdrawals and heat. The facility is clean, treatment is free and addiction is treated as a sickness not a crime — something many in the states could learn from.

We also spoke with two men from the Institute for War & Peace Reporting. They argued that America had messed Afghanistan up and needed to train more Afghan troops, stop bombing and arresting innocents, and negotiate with Taliban.

One of them echoed what many will tell me later: President Karzai is weak and historically controlled by the US, and the elections were a fraud. Under the Bush Administration, the American ambassador pulled Karzai’s strings and now US Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke is dictating orders. Finger-pointing at Pakistan is another theme that emerged. He thought that Pakistan is not serious about getting rid of Al-Qaeda.

Our last meeting before our dinner reception was with the director of an NGO for war-affected children. 57% of the Afghanistan population is below 17 years old. In Kabul alone there are an estimated 60-70,000 children who work in the street for their own or their family’s sustenance. They collect firewood or other fuel, beg, sell candy and magazines, etc. According to the NGO, children’s lives have become worse since the US invasion. They get kidnapped, suffer drug abuse and sexual abuse. The director thought that a majority of Afghans don’t support foreign forces, but they do think if they leave it may cause another civil war.

Read more about our visit at <http://peaceblog.wordpress.com/>. To take action on Afghanistan, please visit www.peaceforafghanistan.org/.

— Paul Martin, Political Director, Peace Action



Paul Martin meets with Afghan women



The displaced children who live near Nooria

Counter Recruitment: We Won!

In 2007, NCPA's Bill Towe and Sally Ferrell, with the help of residents of Wilkes County and the ACLU-NC Legal Director, Katherine Lewis Parker, were successful in gaining access to the Wilkes County High Schools to inform students on Truth in Recruiting and alternatives to military enlistment. Our access was equivalent to the military's. We had tables near the lunchrooms at five high schools, and 500 students stopped by and picked up literature. Many students, faculty and parents thanked us for providing another point of view.

As we prepared for a second round, a principal said our handouts were "discouraging enlistment" and we were unable to schedule further school visits. I appealed the decision, and after a year of exhausting all informal attempts to negotiate equal access, the ACLU-NC filed a lawsuit on our behalf in State Court in January 2009 on the basis of viewpoint discrimination, a Constitutional free speech issue. Our legal team continued throughout the spring and summer to negotiate an out of court settlement with no success.

Our case was referred for court-mandated mediation on August 11. After nearly eight hours, an agreement was reached to approve equal access for NC Peace Action under the same terms and conditions as military recruiters — exactly what we had sought for four and a half years.

The agreement states, in part, "All recruiters will have the opportunity to present information about non-military career options and truthful, job-related information about military careers, which some may perceive as negative or discouraging."

If the school system keeps its end of the agreement, the lawsuit will be dismissed at the end of calendar year 2010. The new policy limits all recruiters, including the military, to a presence on campus ONLY for the purpose of initial individual meetings with students who request a meeting with them in advance and limited to sign up periods of no more than two weeks per semester per recruiter and only during nonacademic class time or lunch periods. Any subsequent meetings between a student and a recruiter will occur off campus. Recruiters may visit campus only during the times student appointments have been scheduled and only at locations designated by the principals, such as the guidance offices.

I am glad the lawsuit was settled in mediation and the schools have finally recognized our First Amendment right to express our viewpoint. Signup sheets are in the schools this fall and I began meeting with students in October. Daily announcements are made for the week prior to our visits that "NC Peace Action representatives will be available to discuss careers in peacemaking." Thanks to everyone who made this possible.

— Sally Ferrell, Friends Committee, Wilkes County

What About The Settlement Freeze?

I've lost the hope I had when Barack Obama called for a settlement freeze. Everywhere I look there are signs of expansion. If I'm hopeful, it's that this is the last big land-grab by Israeli settlers.

Up and down Route 60, the main north-south bypass road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, caravans (trailers) are creeping down the hills from settlements, and buildings are going up along the ridges above. I feel as if there is another caravan and another building each time I ride the road. Last week when going to a CPT meeting, I was greeted with evidence of new buildings in the illegal outpost of Havat Ma'on (Hill 833) as well.

But the site that most moved me was in the Beqa'a Valley earlier this month. One of our oldest friends and his extended family live there on their farmland. The Israeli military has demolished his home — built without a permit, almost impossible to obtain in the parts of the West Bank controlled by Israel, built too close to the bypass road for mostly Israeli traffic — three times. In March 2009 the Israeli military pulled up and hauled away irrigation pipes in the valley. In June they came and demolished water cisterns and again hauled away irrigation pipes. In September they came back and demolished more cisterns. The area is in the midst of a multi-year drought. What is a farmer to do?

Then I saw heavy equipment taking chunks out of a massive stone hill into which our friend's father's house is built, all to expand the Israeli settlement Harsina. The settlement of Kiryat Arba is on one side of the farmland, Harsina on the other. The families are more and more hemmed in.

On 29 October, the Israeli water company was at the farm, along with forces from the Civil Administration, pulling up water pipes.

In November 1999 I visited this family with the CPT delegation of which I was a part. They were living in a tent on the property part of the time, shifting to an apartment in the city for the winter. I stood on the roof of their recently-demolished home and watched the Israeli military pull up irrigation pipes in the vineyard across the road, as our friends cooked maqlube for us over an open fire.

Ten years on, some things never change.
Say it ain't so, President Obama.

— Donna Hicks, Christian Peacemaker Team



Settlement expansion continues in Harsina

Carolyn and Cy King Honored

The first time Carolyn and Cy King were nominated for induction into the Raleigh Hall of Fame, the couple graciously declined, not thinking they were worthy of a place alongside the likes of the Rev. W.W. Finlator and Sen. Jesse Helms. This year, the Kings were approached again, this time agreeing to accept in the name of Raleigh's greater peace, justice and civil rights community.



Cy & Carolyn King
at the Raleigh Hall of
Fame induction

The Kings accepted the Capital City's Hall of Fame nomination in the names of their many fellow activists in Peace Action, People of Faith Against the Death Penalty, Amnesty International and the scores of organizations they have supported in more than a half century of activism. "We were told this was not so much about us,

it was about the peace and justice community that we represented," Cy said.

Carolyn said she was also honored to represent the friends she has stood with during years of vigil-ing, picketing and marching for social change.

"We were thinking about all those wonderful people who have been in the peace and reconciliation community," Carolyn said.

The Kings' display of humility is honorable, but the couple's induction into the Hall of Fame is a well-deserved honor for two people who have

devoted their lives to speaking truth to power, said former state Peace Action coordinator Bill Towe, who has stood side-by-side with the Kings for decades of activism.

"Cy and Carolyn King have set a standard for the rest of us to live up to," Towe said. "Their message has been unwavering in defense of those on the margins of society, in opposition to war and violence, and in favor of a more just world. Our lives have all been enriched by our association with the Kings."

The Kings met at a YMCA conference center in Western NC and were married in 1948 ("My only regret is that I didn't marry her sooner," Cy said during a recent interview). They were early opponents of segregation, marching against Jim Crow laws.

A World War II veteran, Cy told a *Raleigh News & Observer* reporter, "I don't understand why anyone who experiences war is not a peacenik."

Longtime members of the Community United Church of Christ (CUCC), the Kings have distinguished themselves as activists in both the secular and faith-based communities. A strong supporter of the farm workers who harvest cucumbers for the Mount Olive Pickle Company, Cy King invited Mount Olive's CEO William Bryan to speak at CUCC. When both sides finally agreed to sign a union contract, Bryan sent the Kings a free case of Mount Olive pickles.

— Patrick O'Neill, Catholic Worker House, Garner

People of Faith Building Partnerships for Peace

The 2nd annual Lake Junaluska Peace Conference, September 20-22, featured descendants of Abraham, Jews, Christians and Muslims. The "Tent of Abraham" included some of the most eloquent spokespersons of Abrahamic traditions, including NCPA Board member Khalilah Sabra and Muslim American Society leader Sayyid Syeed.

Elias Chacour, the Arch-Bishop of Galilee, was our keynote speaker. Arch-Bishop Chacour is one of those invisibles during discussions of Israel and Palestine. He is a Palestinian, Arab Christian who remembers when Jews, Christians and Muslims lived in peace before the creation of the state of Israel. Elias' family has suffered deportations and other indignities by Israel, but he stands firm in his defense of the troubled tent of Abraham.

One session featured Rabbi Mordechai Liebling and Imam Abdullah Antepli, the first Muslim chaplain at Duke University. Rabbi Liebling does not recommend boycotts, sanctions and divestment against Israel. He argued that this will rally Zionists against reconciliation with Palestinians. But some of the conference's most enthusiastic

applause followed his statement that Israeli settlers on Palestinian lands will have to be removed, by force if necessary, for peace to be won.

We were joined by Katherine Hughes-Fraihetek, US Director of Peace Brigades International. NCPA had worked with Katherine during her brief tour of NC. In regard to Rabbi Mordechai's recommendation against boycott, divestment and sanctions, we agreed that every dollar we spend or invest is a political act, and we need to become more aware of the impact these have on the human rights of our brothers and sisters around the world.

The 2010 Lake Junaluska Peace Conference theme has been chosen: "Children at the Table of Peace." I look forward to NCPA's collaboration.

For further information, please explore:
www.lakejunaluska.com/marianedelman.aspx
<http://masraleigh.org/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elias_Chacour
www.coejl.org/speakers/liebling_m.php
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sayyid_Syeed
www.divinity.duke.edu/portal_memberdata/aantepli

— John Heuer, NCPA Director

Compassionate Support

Cliff Cornell has been imprisoned in the brig at Camp Lejeune Marine base for 9 months. He's counting down. In three months he will be free. But with a bad conduct discharge and loss of veteran benefits his transition will be difficult. His crime — refusing to participate in the Iraq War. He said, "It just didn't feel right. I don't want to be killing innocent people." Cliff explains that he joined the Army only after repeated promises from the military recruiter that he could serve his country without being deployed to Iraq. That turned out to be a lie. "Ninety per cent of what the recruiters tell you is a pack of lies. Army recruitment techniques amount to entrapment, targeting young men from poor families," said Cornell.

I'd been in the brig before so I was a little apprehensive visiting Cornell at Camp Lejeune. I try to avoid the military as much as possible; but protesters stick together when times are darkest, and this had to be a dark time for Cliff.

But not so dark. Cliff had three ladies visiting from Canada where he had been deported because he was a war resister. There was also a Quaker from Chapel Hill, and I made five visitors. Cliff told me that I had just missed Dave Taylor, who is a board member of NC Peace Action. Fact is, a lot of us visit Cliff. But on that day Cliff was beaming; six protesters in one day. We are not just protesters, we are compassionate supporters. John Heuer, our director, has visited Cliff because during the Vietnam War, John took refuge in Canada and was allowed to stay there.

In the summer of 2008 John and I were protesting the decision by the Canadian Prime Minister to end Canada's safe haven policy for US war resisters. Little did we know then that we would be visiting one of those war resisters in the Camp Lejeune Brig.

Send Cliff a letter: Cornell, Clifford; Bldg 1014, PSC Box 20140, Camp Lejeune, NC 28542.

— Wally Myers, NCPA Chair

Support NCPA

Angel (\$250+) Peacemaker (\$100)

Family (\$50) Individual (\$35)

Lim'd Income (\$25) Other (\$_____)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Make your check payable to N.C. Peace Action.

Questions from the Brig

In the last four to five years, I have been called a lot of things; some good, some bad. I have been forced to give up my life twice, been forced to move to another country. I even gave up my freedom, because I refused to take part in an illegal war. A war with no end, a war where torture is allowed, a war with endless victims on both sides, a war where the politicians get rich in exchange for blood and lives.

It's sad that people join the services to better themselves or they join to serve their country. They put their lives in the hands of other people. And what do they do? Send them to fight in an illegal war. To die for an unjust cause as if our lives were meaningless.

They say that it is our duty to protect and to defend our country. How is this war that disrupts, tortures, and kills innocent people, how is that protecting and defending our country?

When the Iraq War started they told us they had weapons of mass destruction, none were found. Shortly after they said we were there to liberate the people of Iraq; but isn't it against our constitution? Since when do we decide to pick or choose to follow The Constitution of the United States? And yet soldiers have no say. We can either go and believe that we are doing good or be punished for refusing to go. I'm serving a 12 month sentence and have been called a coward because I stood up and said that I won't kill people. I won't take part in the torture of people. I value human life more than my military career.

They say there is no draft; but I beg to differ. There is a draft and it's called a poverty draft. People join because there are no other good options. College is too expensive. A lot of people have no form of medical, dental, or vision insurance. Many have no jobs or if they do, it's a low paying job.

The military offers you everything you want, money, college tuition, and decent pay. All you have to do is sell your soul.

Is it wrong to want to better your life? To make something of yourself? Is it wrong to have hopes and dreams? Is it wrong that you joined under false promises? Is it wrong to refuse to take part in an illegal war? Is it wrong to be sent with little or no training? Is it wrong that the system works against you and not for you?

— Cliff Cornell, Prisoner of Conscience



Cliff Cornell, prisoner of conscience at Camp Lejeune



Support for Cornell comes in all sizes

Digging Our Own Grave In Afghanistan

**Bringing your
voice to power**
www.ncpeaceaction.org
Questions?
john@ncpeaceaction.org

Since antiquity, Afghanistan has been known as the “graveyard of empires.” Many of the world’s major empires have met with embarrassment and eventual retreat from the mountains of the Pashtuns. At its height, the British Empire decided to extend their borders from the Indian Raj across the Hindu Kush into what is present day Afghanistan. After two British officials were killed in Kabul, the British decided to move their 16,000 strong group from Kabul to the British barracks at Jalalabad ninety miles away. Of the 16,000 who left Kabul, one survived. The Russians did not fare much better. Despite having some of the most sophisticated military machines in the world at that time, they too lost 15,000 souls in Afghanistan.

This leads us to the present day problem for the NATO forces in this region: the Afghans, in particular the Pashtuns, will not allow their country to be occupied. Historically, invading the Afghan lands has not been difficult; occupying them for any length of time is the impossible feat. The other two issues faced by NATO forces in Afghanistan are who occupies the leadership of this country and who controls the opium poppy? In a country rife with corruption and tribal hatred, a unity government has been, in most cases, impossible. Ironically the only group to have achieved it more or less was the Taliban prior to NATO’s invasion.

The current President Hamid Karzai has a history in Afghanistan that predates the NATO occupation. His assistance to the Mujahedeen fighting against the Soviet Union and his early support of the Taliban is well known to the Afghani people. So is the fact that he was a top adviser to the El Segundo, the California based UNOCAL Corporation which was negotiating with the Taliban to construct a Central Asia Gas pipeline from Turkmenistan through western Afghanistan to Pakistan. Karzai’s ties with UNOCAL and the Bush administration are the main reason why the CIA pushed him as the initial interim Afghan leader over his rival Abdul Haq, who was assassinated. Haq was the former mujahedeen leader from Jalalabad and the leader of the Northern Alliance. He was seen by the CIA as being too close to the Russians and the Iranians.

Many Afghans see the refusal of the Taliban to be a willing partner in the gas pipeline deal (after originally agreeing) as the real reason for the US invasion. Of course in the US, we are told that we went to war because the Afghans harbored Osama Bin Laden. We have since found out that the Taliban regime unsuccessfully tried to negotiate the handing over of Bin Laden and Al Qaeda in the years leading up to 9/11 and in the immediate aftermath of that terrible tragedy.

Last but not least, the elephant in the room is Afghanistan’s opium crop. 90% of the world’s

heroin, which blights much of the inner cities in the West, is grown in Afghanistan — 60% of the world’s heroin comes from one province. Every group in this war-torn land has some involvement in the opium trade, including the US. On one side, the Taliban, who had virtually eradicated most of the opium crop in 2000, has now entered a Faustian pact with the opium smugglers and the farmers. The Taliban now defends the farmers, winning their loyalty and support. At the same time, they are paid by the drug smugglers for doing so, which finances the fight against the NATO forces. On the other side of this issue, who are the drug smugglers? How can 90% of the world’s heroin make its way from the relatively small country of Afghanistan to the capitals of the West without the compliance of the Karzai government? It can’t. And if recent allegations are to be believed, the brother of Hamid Karzai is heavily involved in the drug smuggling. So too, of course, is the US. Both the US and the Karzai government know where this heroin will end up. However, due to Afghanistan’s dependence on it, the US is fully aware that stopping this trade will lead to an incredible humanitarian disaster in the famine prone region. This would destabilize and collapse the Karzai government and harm our geostrategic plan for this area.

So how will all this end? Is there light at the end of this awful tunnel? Can President Obama get us out of this hole that the Bush regime dug so eloquently for us by sending more troops? The answer is no. The continuance, or God forbid, escalation of this war in Afghanistan plays right into the hands of those we mean to fight. The continued presence of an occupational force in Afghanistan empowers the Taliban. As the Soviet soldiers learned, if you capture a Pashtun and put a gun to his head, he will smile, look up to the heavens and say, “Al Hamdulillah” (Praise be to God). When your enemy lives in squalor and sees death around him every day, you can’t defeat him. Killing them makes their ideal stronger and encourages their children to lift the gun as soon as they are able.

Some things are inevitable for the future of Afghanistan. The American and NATO forces will leave. The power vacuum that is left will be filled by whatever Pashtun group is still standing after the inevitable civil war that erupts afterwards. The only other things left are the timetable for our withdrawal, our potential for destabilizing the nuclear state of Pakistan, and how many grieving families, American, European, and Afghani will mourn the loss of their loved ones in the interim.

— Marc Conaghan, Executive Director of AMPLE,
a non-profit representing political aspirations of
American Muslims in NC and throughout the US

Building A Culture Of Peace

It's hardly news that our young are growing up in a culture that frequently resolves disputes through violence; 40-50% of all American households have a gun. By age 18, a young person has seen an estimated 160,000 to 200,000 acts of violence on television alone. Nine out of ten young people murdered in the world are murdered in the U.S. You've probably seen data like this before. In fact, we peace advocates are not magically immune from these influences. Many peace movements, in their urgency to end the current war, have failed to heed the teachings of nonviolence and consequently created more polarization.

Building a culture of peace is a multi-level process, which requires that we unite with others who understand that we cannot create peace with the same mentality that we have used to promote war and militarism.

NC Peace Action has joined Educators for Nonviolence, a network of individuals and organizations sharing information and inspiration about materials, methods, and curriculum on nonviolence. It promotes the notion that the principles of nonviolence taught by Mahatma Gandhi and Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. have on-going relevance to all our efforts for social change. Approaching conflicts through nonviolence does indeed require a different mentality.

In the network are people who work with:

- young people in the schools (Institute for Creative Education, Center for Peace and Reconciliation, Target on Teens, Partners, Inc.)
- adult education (various individuals)
- building a culture of peace (North Carolina Peace Action)

- mediation (Women in Action's Durham Mediation Center)
- interpersonal communications (Nonviolent Communication)
- international peace building (Nonviolent Peaceforce, Witness for Peace)

Together we explore how the principles of nonviolence can guide our social change work and educational efforts as well as our communication with others. The network's first program, co-sponsored with NCPA, was a 4-part showing of the documentary film series "A Force More Powerful" in Durham, showing major campaigns where nonviolence overcame oppression and authoritarian rule. Geared to older teens and adults, this series with rare historical footage, was shown on public television several years ago. For this and other documentary films of this nature, see www.aforcemorepowerful.org/films.

In the coming months we will also be showing Soldiers of Peace, which makes the case that in fact, peace is breaking out. Contrary to the steady flood of war news, there are actually fewer people being killed in wars and there are important projects around the world succeeding at solving disputes peacefully. See [HYPERLINK "http://www.soldiersofpeacemovie.com"](http://www.soldiersofpeacemovie.com)<http://www.soldiersofpeacemovie.com>.

Principled nonviolence is not just a strategic approach to use when violence is not likely to succeed. It is truly a different way of thinking and acting. The more we explore it the more it penetrates our daily actions and thinking and ultimately, the culture.

For more information about Educators for Nonviolence call Betsy Crites, 919.381.5969 or email bcrites@sonic.net

— Betsy Crites, NCPA Vice Chair

Cost Of The Occupations Paid By North Carolina Taxpayers

	Iraq	Afghanistan	Health Care	Defense
Asheville	\$133,100,000	\$44,200,000	37,972	\$136,500,000
Chapel Hill	\$112,400,000	\$37,300,000	32,069	\$115,300,000
Charlotte	\$1,500,000,000	\$497,000,000	427,300	\$1,500,000,000
Durham	\$454,200,000	\$150,800,000	129,583	\$465,700,000
Greensboro	\$523,500,000	\$173,800,000	149,351	\$536,700,000
Raleigh	\$758,800,000	\$251,800,000	216,451	\$777,900,000
Winston-Salem	\$405,300,000	\$134,500,000	115,630	\$415,600,000
North Carolina	\$18,600,000,000	\$6,200,000,000	5,304,869	\$19,000,000,000
	<i>total Iraq occupation spending since 2003</i>	<i>total Afghanistan occupation spending since 2001</i>	<i>number of people that would be covered with Health Care for a year instead of the total Iraq and Afghanistan occupations spending since 2001</i>	<i>expected yearly Defense spending in FY2010, 57% of our federal taxes</i>

Calculated from the National Priorities Project (www.nationalpriorities.org)