

# ICS Peace Memo

Volume 1, Number 2

February, 2008

*The following is a report on a presentation by the Muslim Peacemaker Teams to the Christian Peacemaker Teams, in Suleimaniya, Kurdish Iraq. Read it and weep.*

## **THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING**

MPT Report on Depleted Uranium

Epidemic

By [Cliff Kindy](#), Christian Peacemaker Team in Iraq.

Dr. Najim Askouri and Dr. Assad Al-Janabi, members of Muslim Peacemaker Teams (MPT) in Najaf, presented their report on depleted uranium in Suleimaniya on December 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Dr. Assad is head of pathology at the public hospital in Najaf. Dr. Najim is a nuclear physicist. They were an MPT team documenting the health impact on Najaf of [depleted uranium](#) weapons used during the Gulf wars. The study faced limits of personnel, resources and equipment. It relied on accumulated public data and a major contribution of time and energy. The focus was Najaf, a city of over one million people, and the rural areas in that governate. The area is about 180 miles from where depleted uranium was used in the First Gulf War.

In 2004 there were 251 reported cases of cancer, in spite of a collapsed health care infrastructure. By 2006, with more complete data, that figure rose to 688. By 2007, 801 cancer cases had been reported. Those figures portray an incidence rate of 28.21 cases of cancer per 100,000 people by 2006. The normal rate is 8 to 12 cases per 100,000 people.

Two observations are striking: One, cases of cancers related to radiation exposure have increased dramatically, especially rare soft tissue sarcoma and leukemia. Two, the age at which cancer is first diagnosed is dropping rapidly, with incidents of breast

cancer at 16, colon cancer at 8, and liposarcoma at 1.5 years. Dr. Assad noted that 24% of cancer patients fell into the 11-30 age range.

The researchers gave special attention to three locations in Najaf. Al-Anzar Square is a street 50 meters long. Here there were 13 reported cancer cases among unrelated individuals of different ages and genders, with no family history of cancer. Al-Fathi, is a one-kilometer rural stretch along a river, where 37 varied cancer cases were reported. In Hay Al-Muslameen, a well-to-do sector of the city, twenty cases were documented.

Dr. Najim began his report by noting the U.S. military used 350 tons of depleted uranium in 1991 and 150 tons during the 2003 bombing of Baghdad. When depleted uranium hits a target it aerosolizes and oxidizes forming two compounds. The first is water soluble and enters the aquifers and food chain. The second is insoluble and settles as dust that is carried on the winds.

Aerosolized dust enters the lungs and causes problems as it crosses cell walls and impacts the genetic system. Dr. Najim said, "Cancer is spreading from the conflict area as a health epidemic and will only get worse." The cancer rate has more than tripled in 16 years in Najaf, with similar increases in Basra, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Using a Geiger counter, the team discovered radiation levels of 30-40 counts per minute in the Najaf area, compared to 10-15 counts per minute at the Tawaiha nuclear research reactor site outside Baghdad. Dr. Najim shared that his grandson was born with heart problems, Downs [*sic*] Syndrome, an underdeveloped liver, and leukemia. He assumes the parents' exposure to depleted uranium caused these conditions.

He concluded his talk by asking, "Would it be just to ask for equipment and facilities to document the problems, clean the environment, and care for those exposed to

depleted uranium?" The forum provided a model that others can duplicate in their own communities to highlight the serious problem as depleted uranium blows into neighborhoods across Iraq.

*I ask you, are the perpetrators of this crime against humanity, not to mention international law, brain dead? Or are they simply without a conscience, immoral idiots, and totally lacking in any moral and ethical sensibilities? I cry for the people of Iraq. -- Jim Foster*



## News and Notes from PIET

### Peace Coalition of East Tennessee Launched

The **Peace Coalition of East Tennessee** had its second meeting on January 5<sup>th</sup> with 10 peace groups represented. In addition to formally adopting our name, the group discussed possibilities for cooperative action, including participation in the Martin Luther King Parade on Monday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, and providing a peace group presence at other events, such as Earth Fest this spring and The Rossini Festival. For the parade, it was agreed we would walk as a "group of groups" behind a banner bearing the name of the coalition, but with each group carrying its own banner in addition. In effect, this will be the first announcement to the general public of the Coalition's existence. Participation in other events will, in most instances, involve setting up tables for each group to distribute literature for its own programs.

We also shared calendar information to the end that we may support each others' programs as we have opportunity. This **ICS Peace Memo** includes that information.

## REPORTS

### Introducing **SAGE: Institute for Spirituality and Global Economics**

**SAGE** is an Institute focused on the relationships among spirituality, global economics, and peace. It grew out of the Faith, Global Economics, and World Peace study group at Church of the Savior (UCC), in Knoxville, Tennessee. This interdenominational group studied a variety of materials that addressed these relationships. Group members became convinced that moral values need to be part of economic policy. **SAGE** seeks to share many of these materials and the group's views through the ICS web site. It also seeks to expand these explorations and to develop educational programs.

One of **SAGE's** ongoing activities is a film series, hosted at Church of the Savior, Weisgarber Rd., Knoxville. Topical films are shown the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month, September through May. Discussion follows.

Bob Rundle and Rev. John Lackey direct **SAGE**. John is a retired UCC pastor, who has written a number of papers on global economics from a faith perspective.

Bob is preparing a major policy statement, titled *Thoughts on Reducing World Poverty*, under the auspices of **SAGE**. It is currently undergoing review. The draft of this Statement is available online through the journal, [\*En Christo: A Journal for a New Christianity, vol. I, no. 4.\*](#)

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Publisher: Jim Foster, Editor: Victoria Medaglia

## MLK Day Activities

The Oak Ridge MKL Day Committee invited eight people, including Victoria Medaglia, to reflect on "What Martin Luther King, Jr. means to me." Victoria's comments are [available online](#).

## THE SPARROW SINGS

*A monthly collection of comments, quotes, facts and **Tamarac Notes** written and collated by Roberta Thurstin and Don Timmerman, published in collaboration with PEACEBUILDING INSTITUTE OF EAST TENNESSEE.*

On Oct. 31, I was accepted as an Episcopal priest in the Diocese of Eau Claire Wisconsin. I agreed to this because there seemed to be a need of a Eucharistic minister to fill in for the priest at St. Margaret's Church in Park Falls and Our Savior's Church in Lugerville. I had been a Roman Catholic priest, but I chose to marry and was then denied permission to practice my ministry in a Catholic parish. Since I was once canonized as a priest in Lukuledi, Tanzania I wanted to again minister to people as a priest.

At the upcoming Convention of the Diocese, I will be proposing a resolution that the Diocese declare that the invasion and occupation of Iraq is a violation of international law, of Christ's Law of Love, and of international norms of justice. As a result, we are asking that the members cease blessing and encouraging our young to go to Iraq to occupy and further harm the Iraqis. We are also asking the members to use nonviolent means to bring an end to the occupation of Iraq. This could include resisting paying for it, in the spirit of St. Hugh of Lincoln (1140-1200). who refused to pay taxes to King Richard I for his Crusades against the Jewish ghetto and suffered, as a result, the confiscation by the Crown of the property of his diocese. In other words, we are asking our members to

wage peace rather than war on the Iraqis. We Christians must stand for peace through nonviolence if we are truly followers of Christ. "Those who live by the sword will die by the sword." - Don Timmerman

"Faith is not about obedience to church dogma, and it is not about submission to established authority. A people's religion is the principle by which they live." - Tolstoy

Roberta and I went to trial on Friday, November 2 in Wausau, Wisconsin for our nonviolent civil disobedience action at Rep. Dave Obey's Office last year, when we went to see him to ask that he stop funding the Iraqi occupation.

On Oct. 2, we participated in a celebration of Gandhi's birthday, which resulted in our being arrested for trespassing with 20 others at the Alliant Tech corporate office in Edina, MN. Alliant Tech makes landmines, cluster bombs, and depleted uranium tipped munitions, parts for the Trident I and Minuteman missiles, and other nasty things. We were issued citations and released. Our question is: "Why are we being arrested? We are nonviolent citizens. Alliant Tech is violating international law in that it is producing indiscriminate weapons that are being used to kill and maim thousands of people, and no one arrests them!"

## INTERESTING FACTS

A one woman play called "Fool for Christ: The Story of Dorothy Day" is performed by Sarah Melici, reached by phone (732)345-0573 or by e-mail [sarahmeliciffe@comcast.net](mailto:sarahmeliciffe@comcast.net). She wrote, "I felt the need to share her vision of active nonviolence and peace, as well as her work to promote social, economic and political justice. I want people to know Dorothy Day, the writer, the lover, the mother, the teacher, the friend." On November 8 this year, Dorothy Day would have been 100

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yrs. old. She once said, "As you come to know the seriousness of our situation -- the war, the racism, the poverty in the world -- you come to realize it is not going to be changed just by words or demonstrations. It's a question of risking your life. It's a question of living your life in a drastically different way."

Chevron, formally Unocal, supports the military regime of Myanmar (Burma), which recently suppressed demonstrations for freedom. Some 200 monks have been arrested and ill-treated as a result of their participation. The offshore activities of Chevron and other oil companies have made no difference to the grinding poverty of the people. - [Truthout, 9-26-07](#)

Bechtel just received a contract in Tennessee to build a nuclear power plant near Spring City, TN at an estimated cost of \$2.48 billion, including subsidies from the federal government. The plant will serve 650,000 homes. - [The Chattanooga, 10-19-07](#)

Seismologists have found 10 faults within a 20-mile radius of Yucca Mountain that can generate ground motion capable of producing an earthquake with a magnitude of about 6.5. Yucca Mountain is the site where nuclear waste is to be stored. Already \$9 billion has been spent on constructing the repository at Yucca Mountain. - [The Las Vegas Review-Journal, 9-24-07](#) Nuclear energy is definitely not cheap!

1.1 billion people do not have access to drinking water; a child dies every 8 seconds from lack of clean drinking water. Some 850 million lack sufficient food. Over 800 are illiterate, and 11.5 million children do not attend primary school. And 1% of the world's richest people own 40% of its wealth, while 50% of the world's population shares 10%. Some 2 billion people do not have electricity. Only \$150 billion is needed to meet the Millennium

Goals for eliminating poverty in the world. The US spends \$2 billion a day on the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the US has failed to meet its commitment to set aside 0.7% of GDP for fulfilling the Millennium Goals. - [United Nations](#)

In the US, 42 million cannot read, and 50 million more read at a 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. There is a 10.4% school dropout rate. - [US Dept. of Education](#)

KBR, a subsidiary of Halliburton, bought Cadillac Escalades for its employees in Iraq, at a price of \$250,000 per car. Trucks costing \$85,000 that had flat tires were burned rather than having the tires fixed or replaced. KBR charges \$100 per bag of laundry done for the troops. According to some troops in Iraq, there is little accountability for the \$7 billion KBR received in a no-bid contract with the US government. - [Profiteers of War](#) (film)

Two priests, Fr. Steve Kelly and Fr. Louis Vitale, were recently given 5 months in prison for civil disobedience at Ft. Huachuca, the source of the infamous "torture manuals" distributed to hundreds of Latin American graduates of the School of the Americas in Ft. Benning, Georgia. Fr. Steve said, "We will keep trying to stop the teaching and practice of torture whether we are sent to jail or out. We have done our part for now. Now it is up to every woman and man of conscience to do their part to stop the injustice of torture. Again this year, on Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, people will demand the closure of the School of the Americas. - [School of the Americas Watch](#)

Legislators did not vote to override the Bush veto of the S-CHIP bill, which renewed health care for children. There is money for war, but not much for anything else. Some legislators said that children of families making as much as \$80,000 a year should not be eligible for the health care. However, the legislators themselves, who



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make in excess of \$100,000 a year, receive free health care not only for their children but their whole families! And they keep it after they leave office! So much for equality and justice for all.

A pint of strawberries cost about \$3 in your grocery store. Only about 13 cents of that goes to undocumented farm workers. - UFW Union

There are 1,404 immigration measures introduced into state legislatures so far this year, and 25% of white Americans and 33% of African Americans say that immigrants take away American jobs. - Harper's Index, Oct. '07

The US has plans for 150 more new coal-fired plants in the US. - Inter Press Service, 10-3-07

As of March '07 the US owes \$1.968 billion in dues to the U.N. - United Nations

The US ranks 49<sup>th</sup> in the world in literacy, and is ranked 28 out of 40 countries in math literacy. Americans with less than 9 years of education score worse than citizens of virtually all of the other countries. - The International Adult Literacy Survey

Nearly 900,000 children were abused or neglected in 2002, the last year for which such data are available. - Austin Chronicle, 9-1-07; America Online 9-2-07

The Darfur Action Coalition of Wisconsin is trying to pressure the branches of Fidelity, JP Morgan/Chase, Capital Group, and Vanguard Financial Services to tell their national offices to divest from Sudan, where genocide is still happening. Contact: Michael Komba at Casa Maria Catholic Worker (414)344-5745 or [ceramical@hotmail.com](mailto:ceramical@hotmail.com)

Our current marijuana laws cost American taxpayers \$42 billion a year in law enforcement and lost tax revenues. We

now arrest one American every 38 seconds on marijuana charges. Do we favor its use? No, but maybe we should regulate marijuana just as we do beer, wine and liquor, and save \$42 billion to use for saving lives here and abroad. - Marijuana Policy Project and research by Jon Gettman PhD

Doctors Without Borders has come up with a snack food that is loaded with nutrition. It is called "Fluffy Nut." They are feeding this to the starving children in Africa, and they find that it is a miracle food that helps them survive. The children love it because it tastes like candy. Doctors Without Borders is trying to raise funds to make and distribute more of the life-saving snack. Please help if you can. Thanks. - 60 Minutes on CBS

## NOTES FROM TAMARACK COTTAGE:

I always feel God's presence when experiencing the beauty of nature. Recently, I have reflected on God's presence seen in the beauty of the people I meet. This past week it was Wally. Wally lives on the fringe of Park Falls society. He has various problems. Wally came into the Christian Mission Thrift Store where Don and I volunteer. He came up to us with a large, red plastic glass. He said the glass would be perfect for a malt he would make for his friend. His eyes teared up when he asked us if we were aware that his friend, Louie, had cancer and was very ill. We did not. Louie is an older man with a long, gray beard and is always dressed for winter. Wally shared that he had taken his friend into his home after a hospitalization. He said Louie's living situation had been very poor. Louie does not have any relatives. Watching and listening to Wally's deep concern for his friend touched me deeply. A man who has very little gladly sharing his meager space and supplies with another. His voice shook,

and his eyes reddened when he shared his fear that when he took Louie to the doctor this week, they will tell him how long his friend has to live. Wally will make malts for Louie, which is one food he is able to drink. He will keep him warm. He will

share what he has and mourn for his friend. I am humbled. Peace, Roberta

## THE SPARROW SINGS

Don and Roberta

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## WORLD CITIZENSHIP CREED

As a citizen...

**I BELIEVE in the dignity of all humanity, that each person is a being of supreme worth.**

**I BELIEVE in the wholeness of the human race, undivided by economic, cultural, racial, sexual or national differences.**

**I BELIEVE in the stewardship of life and resources to the end that all may mutually benefit from the earth's bounty and that no person may have to go without food or shelter.**

**I BELIEVE in the primacy of human relationships as a person committed and responsible to other persons, regardless of their economic status, race, creed or nationality.**

**I BELIEVE in the global community, interdependent and mutually responsible for our physical and social environments.**

**I BELIEVE that we are One World and affirm that I am a citizen of this world. My allegiance to it and its people, my brothers and sisters, is primary over all other political entities.**

**I AM, therefore, committed to the promotion and care of the whole of humanity without partiality or prejudice and with such resources as I have at my command, both within and without.**

**I HEREWITH AFFIRM that I wish, as much as I possibly can, to base my actions on my beliefs and thus contribute to a world where justice and compassion rule and where greed and hatred are diminished.**

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

When	Who	What	Where	Details
Feb. 1-2 Fri. 6 - 10 PM Sat. 10:00 AM - 5:30 PM	PIET	Winter Workshop: “Teaching Non- violence: A Work- shop for Teachers and Parents.”	Grace Lutheran Church (ELCA) 131 W. Gettysburg Ave. Oak Ridge <a href="#">directions</a>	Potluck dinner on Friday, Saturday lunch provided
Feb 9 9:30-11:30 AM	PIET	Planning Committee meeting	<a href="#">Panera Bread</a> N. Peters Rd. Knoxville	Preparation for upcoming events
Feb. 23 2:30-8:30 PM		Counter-Recruitment Counselor Training	Community Room, Cherokee Health Systems, 2018 Western Avenue	See flyer below
Feb. 23		International Children’s Festival	<a href="#">Oak Ridge Children’s Museum</a> 461 West Outer Dr. Oak Ridge	Light supper provided
Feb. 26 11:00- 3:00 PM 6:00-10:00 PM		Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons	New Hope Center Scarboro Road Oak Ridge	On proposed modernization at Y12
Mar. 1 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM	ET Peace Coalition of	Planning Meeting	<a href="#">TVUUC</a> 2931 Kingston Pike Knoxville	
Mar.8 9:30-11:30 AM	PIET	Planning Committee Meeting	<a href="#">Panera Bread</a> N. Peters Rd. Knoxville	Planning for March workshops
Mar. 11 & 13 6:00-9:00 PM	PIET	“God’s Healing Strategy,” I & II, a healing workshop	Church of the Good Shepherd, 5337 Jacksboro Pike, Knoxv.	2 three hour sessions
Mar. 15	PIET	Workshop: Non- Violent Atonement	Church of the Good Shepherd, 5337 Jacksboro Pike, Knoxv.	Preaching Peace Team
Mar. 15-16 10:30 AM & 12-3 PM		5 <sup>th</sup> anniversary anti- war rally	10:30: West Hills Pk. 12-3: West Town Mall	
April 12 9:30-11:30 AM	PIET	Planning Committee Meeting	<a href="#">Panera Bread</a> N. Peters Rd. Knoxville	Planning for Summer Institute
May 2-3	ICS	ICS Board of Directors Annual Retreat	TBA	Spiritual Renewal
May 10 9:30-11:30 AM	PIET	Planning Committee Meeting	<a href="#">Panera Bread</a> N. Peters Rd. Knoxville	Planning for Summer Institute
May 23-26	PIET	Summer Peacebuilding Institute	Various venues	Building International Peace

## COUNTER RECRUITMENT COUNSELOR TRAINING

**Do you want to promote a nonviolent way of life for our young people?**

This is an invitation to join with other concerned people of conscience for 6 hours of training in alternatives to military enlistment and an introduction to GI Rights. This training is for youth, parents, teachers, clergy and everyone else who is concerned about a future for our young people.

**\*led by Bill Galvin from the Center on Conscience and War in Washington, D.C.**

**\*held in the community room at Cherokee Health Systems, 2018 Western Avenue, Knoxville. Enter at the door to the left of the main entrance. Entrance to parking lot is from 21st Street.**

**\*Saturday, February 23, 2:30-8:30 p.m.**

**\*supper provided**

**\*free and all are welcome**

**\*preregistration is appreciated but not required. Call 573-4089.**

**\*free literature will be available**

**\* an excellent book, Army of None, will be available for purchase**

Sponsored by the Knoxville Area Interfaith Committee on Conscience and War, Peacebuilding Institute of East Tennessee, West Knoxville Friends Meeting, Veterans For Peace, Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance, and the Carson-Newman Chapter of Amnesty International.