

The Peace Memo

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Volume 3, Number 5



May, 2011

I'M LATE! I'M LATE!

And I apologize! It's spring in East Tennessee, my brief opportunity to build, hack, and plant before summer's heat drives me back indoors. But while I dug chunks of concrete out of my garden, Osama bin Laden was killed in Pakistan. While I find it hard to mourn his death, I deplore its cause. John Donne (1572-1631) said, "... Every man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind..." ([Meditation 17](#)). Even the theology of "[just war](#)" admits war is sin, while acknowledging that sometimes it is the least of available evils.

If we can accept, for the moment, the "necessity" of the Global War on Terror (GWOT), we can reframe this event: What a good opportunity to end GWOT! To bring our forces—and all those private contractors—home, to reinvest in education and infrastructure at home and worldwide. That's one theme we examine in this issue.

The second theme is related, though the connection was not immediately obvious to me. I recently began to study farmer suicides in India. There was a little news coverage in the U.S. recently, but no one connected the dots. Then I heard [Vandana Shiva](#), physicist, ecologist, activist, and advocate for small farmers and the planet. She caught my attention when she said, "Every input in agriculture is a war chemical. Every agrichemical is a war chemical. ... Fertilizers came out of explosives factories..." It's about new markets for war products.

Lastly, beginning with this issue you may notice a difference in presentation; the only articles reproduced in their entirety are those submitted for publication here. Thanks to Bob Rundle and the Thurstins for their faithfulness. The rest of the material will be excerpted and cited, either with hyperlinks or full bibliographic citations. This should help condense the newsletter, avoid duplication, and protect copyright. Perhaps it will encourage more of you to submit items for publication here.

And with that, it's back to the garden for me. I wish you happy reading and strength for your journey.

For Peace,
Victoria

VANDANA SHIVA

Vandana Shiva was born and raised in the foothills of the Himalaya. She left India to complete a Ph.D. in Quantum Physics at the University of Western Ontario, in Canada. Returning to India, she moved to interdisciplinary research science, technology, and environmental policy, which she carried out at the Indian Institute of Science and the Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore. In 1982, she left to set up her Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resource Policy in her home town of Dehra Dun.

A prolific writer, she has published [books and articles](#) on topics including agriculture and technology, women, water, and globalization. She is also an engaging and stimulating speaker. This list—by no means exhaustive—contains videos that introduce and explain how our world really works.

[Understanding the Corporate Takeover](#) (2011, 00:19) This is good place to start.

[The Future of Food and Seed](#) (2009, 59:54) This is long, but well worth the time. Don't miss the Q&A at the end.

[Future of Food](#) (2009, 3 parts, total time: 00:23)

[Plant Trees and Be More Womanly](#) (2007, 00:12)

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

When nothing seems to help, I go and look at a stone-cutter hammering away at his rock perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the hundred and first blow it would split in two, and I know it was not that blow that did it, but all that had gone before together.

-Jacob A. Riis, journalist and social reformer (1849-1914) (Thanks to "[A Word A Day](#)")

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Osama bin Laden

There has, of course, been extensive media coverage of the operation that killed Osama bin Laden. The *New York Times* published an [excellent summary](#). Perhaps it sounds like a *24* script, with Jack Bauer leading the raid, but it presents the official story.

Yet, for some, there are unanswered questions and concerns left unaddressed. Here is short list of articles selected to promote reflection and deeper analysis. Is there a way from here to peace in Central Asia?

[Juan Cole](#) is Richard P. Mitchell Collegiate Professor of History at the University of Michigan. For three decades, he has sought to put the relationship of the West and the Muslim world in historical context. Cole is fluent in Arabic, Persian and Urdu and reads some Turkish, knows both Middle Eastern and South Asian Islam. He lived in various parts of the Muslim world for nearly 10 years, and continues to travel widely there. Read his analysis at [Informed Comment](#), particularly his May 3rd post, "[The Muslim World Sounds off on Bin Laden's Demise](#)"

Tom Hayden, long-time peace activist writes in the [LA Progressive](#), "...the death of bin Ladin is not likely to end the Long War on Terror, now spreading from Iraq to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and a dozen other theaters of counterterrorism."

[Chris Hedges](#), award-winning journalist and author of *War is a Force that Gives us Meaning*, reminds us that the U.S. taught this generation the language of violence in his [comments](#) on bin Ladin's death, made at a *Truthdig* fundraiser.

And, lest we forget that violence includes far more than open aggression, Ben Carnes reminds us of U.S. history in "[Osama bin Laden: Code Name Geronimo](#)".

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SAGE* THOUGHTS

In the past two issues of *The Peace Memo* we have looked at the dominance of our war industry and at ideas about how we can begin to change this. Two recent experiences started me thinking more broadly about these issues.

The first was a meeting sponsored by the [Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition](#). One of the speakers was Board member Fran Ansley, retired professor of law at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. She noted that the U.S. immigration system was broken. She did not think it could be fixed by just changing our immigration laws without dealing with broader issues. Two of these issues are our inadequate labor laws and the great disparity in wealth between nations.

In talking with Fran later, I noted my own frustration that the main stream media usually ignores two major areas tied to the "problem" of Mexicans coming here: our trade laws (particularly [NAFTA](#)) and the desire of many U.S. businesses to employ cheap labor. After NAFTA largely destroyed the right of Mexicans to protect their products, sales of highly subsidized U.S. agricultural giants pushed Mexicans off their farms by underselling them. Since about 80% of Mexicans were farmers at that time, this led to a major movement to cities. The pull to get them across the border to U.S. jobs occurred after many of these migrants found they could not find work. This significant big corporate push/pull approach still operates but loses out to stories about "protection" like bigger fences, more patrols, and identity cards. And of course, who owns most of this main stream media? As Fran and I discussed the immigration situation, it became clearer to me how the folks fighting for better immigrant and refugee rights are in the same boat as those of us fighting for peace. We are both really fighting against the influence of big business on our public policies.

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Then I ran across an article by Betsy Hartmann, Director of the Population and Development Program at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts titled "[Why Anti-Nuclear Belongs in All of Our Movements](#)". She notes that nuclear power waste and weapons threaten all of us and the generations to come. Hence, these impact areas like reproductive rights, environmental justice, climate change, labor rights, world peace, and our democracy. She thinks that activists working in areas like these need to recognize their common interests in supporting efforts to deal with the dangers of nuclear power.

I certainly agree that it is important for activists to see how other social problems impinge on their own specific area of work. But I think they are called to move even beyond this level to a shared concern about the control of public policy by big corporations. This underlying issue is central to all our efforts to create a society that represents the best of our shared human values. But this is largely a long-term issue. I fear that many social activists tend to make the same mistake they complain business leaders do: they focus on the short term. I would be surprised to see more than a miniscule amount of the staff and financial resources of social change organizations spent on corporate influence (except for those like [Public Citizen](#) whose main focus is on this area). One can only wonder what a 5-10% commitment might bring. If [Paul Hawken](#) is right (see his [Blessed Unrest](#)) that there are now millions of people and organizations globally involved in some way in creating a just and sustainable world, such a level of support could have great power. So the failure to reduce the influence of big money on our efforts is more a failure of vision than of resources.

Hartmann notes the economist [Joseph Stiglitz](#) wrote recently that financial meltdown and nuclear meltdown are closely related. He thinks both are products of a system of delusional speculation, technological hubris, public subsidies and private greed. This remarkable sum-

mary seems to apply to many other areas of our social concerns. For example try it out with our inadequate health care system, mountain top removal mining and the constant wars that plague us. The power of Wall Street, technology, subsidies and greed certainly go along a long way in explaining why we have these problems and illustrate the power of big corporations to impact our lives.

A classic example of the power of big money is the ever-fresh idea of [trickle down economics](#). (You know, the one where our government gives big tax breaks to those on the top for benefits like more jobs that will "trickle down" to the rest of us.) In the current tax and budget battles in Washington, this antiquated idea is dragged out repeatedly. It usually takes the form of ponderous warnings that you can't raise taxes on the wealthy in a recession without making the economy worse. (Of course in good times, the story goes that to keep them rolling, the same all-purpose policy applies.) I have no trouble understanding why the conservative right espouses this nonsense. What used to surprise me was the totally ineffective job the political left did in punching holes in this myth. But as I got wiser it dawned on me that many liberal politicians are as beholden (if not more) to support from the rich, given the election system we have and now the Supreme Court's decision on corporate spending in elections. So an economic policy with very little supporting data continues to live decade after decade, to wreak havoc with the federal budget and the human programs it could be funding. And we wonder why such programs don't get more funding.

If you find this discussion of the power of the private sector on our lives distorted, I encourage you to read [John Kenneth Galbraith's](#) brief and very readable series of essays, [The Economics of Innocent Fraud](#) (2004). He notes that the concept of the public sector is now largely a myth since it is so dominated by private interests. If one looks closely at the organizational efforts at

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social change in the United States, I find it hard to argue with this view.

Bob Rundle

4-18-11

*SAGE is the Institute for Spirituality and Global Economics, one of the Institutes of the Peacebuilding Institute. You can find us on the web at

http://www.peacebuildinginstitute.org/global_economics/spiritualityglobaleconomics.htm

Workshops, Events, Etc.

US—Knoxville, Tennessee

The Peacebuilding Institute of East Tennessee presents

FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON

VIOLENCE IN KNOXVILLE

June 10-11, 2011

Church of the Savior, 934 Weisgarber Road

Friday, June 10—Plenary Session

6:30 - 8:30 PM—Registration, Suggested contribution, \$25 (\$40.00 for two or more from the same church or organization)

Introduction to Violence—False Premises, Failed Outcomes, [Jack Guillebeaux](#). Speaker

Questions and Feedback

Introductions of Workshop Leaders

Sign up for Saturday workshops

Saturday, June 11—Workshops

10:00 - 11:45 AM (offered concurrently)

Work shop #1—***Violence in the Schools***; Dr. Ed Francisco, Facilitator

Workshop #2—***Violence against Women***, Rev. Marcia Free, Facilitator

12:00—1:00PM—Soup and Sandwich Lunch (donation)

1:15 - 3:00 PM (offered concurrently)

Workshop #3—***Violence in the Streets***; Rev.

Mike Henry and Jill Powell, Facilitators

Workshop #4—***Religiously Motivated Violence***; Rev. Chris Buice and Jack Guillebeaux, Facilitators

3:15—4:00 PM--Wrap-up

Nonviolent Living Introduction; Revs. John Lackey and Jim Foster, facilitators (Nonviolent Living workbook available, \$25.00; group orders discounted)

4:00 PM—Closing Circle

US—Newark, New Jersey

Newark Peace Education Summit: [The Power of Nonviolence](#), May 13-15, 2011

The Newark Peace Education Summit is a three day conference focusing on peacemaking practices from around the world. It features panels and workshops with His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama, Newark Mayor Cory Booker, Somaly Mam, Nobel Laureates and peace advocates from a wide cross section of cultures, disciplines and perspectives. The summit will explore the programs, policies, and methods used by communities to establish peace, why and how they work, and how to replicate them in America and around the world. The event will be held at the NJPAC (New Jersey Performing Arts Center) in Newark, New Jersey, May 13-15, 2011. Do not miss this precious opportunity to cultivate peace. [EXPLORE THE PROGRAM](#)

US—Harrisonburg, VA

Dear Peacemaking Friends—The [Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America](#) invites you to our [annual conference](#). This year, our conference features an amazing group of leaders who will

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no doubt challenge and inspire us. It also features a warm, welcoming, and nurturing community—programs for all ages—opportunities for exploring spirituality—and a lovely setting.

We'd love to have YOU join us! You don't have to be Baptist to enjoy the week immensely. We'd also be grateful to you for sharing this information with anyone you know who might be interested.

Thank you for what you do to create peace.

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Image source: <http://sadreearth.com/announcing-%E2%80%9Cthe-open-mind%E2%80%9D-shrink-vs-scribe/>

LETTERS

From the [Peace and Conflict Resolution Project](#):

I would like to greet you and let you know about some steps that we are taking in working to support the groups that we are serving in our Organization PCR, the attachment is some mentioning about the program of the young single mothers, and we have several program as our focus is to help the Victims of the war that were took place in our area. Thanks for all support from you that is helping us to reach our goal, you are so blessing to us. And we hope if you may continue to know other way

that may be help us in what we are doing, you will inform and help as you usually doing.

Thank you and God bless you.

Pastor Samuel Muderhwa

Coordinator

PCR/ BUKAVU D.R.CONGO

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www.peaceconflictresolutionproject.webs.com

From [The Peace Alliance](#)

Dear Victoria,

The Peace Alliance and the Peace Alliance Educational Institute are up to new good - sharpening our focus, renewing our goals and setting our sights on the next phase in our evolution as a force for peace.

Three weeks ago at our board and staff retreat in Northern California, we made time and opportunity to revisit and refine our deepest goals and priorities, and to chart a path forward with renewed strength and clarity. We dug broadly and deeply into the soul and direction of our mission, our work in the world, looking at our distinct opportunities to advance the field of peacebuilding.

Since we launched in 2004, focusing on a legislative advocacy campaign for a U.S. Department of Peace, our organization has grown into a powerful, grassroots-driven force for change and a leader in the emerging field of peacebuilding. We have nurtured a network of coalition partners, developed and shared tools to support

a fledgling peacebuilding infrastructure and sparked a national conversation on the optimal paths to peace spanning all 50 states and reaching deep into the halls of Congress. So now what?

Our Core Values and Our Legacy

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At our retreat, we named the gifts we would choose as our organizations' legacies; what are the gifts we wish for TPA(EI) to give to this and future generations.

The Peace Alliance, and the Educational Institute, are built upon a set of core values that guide and inform all our choices. These core values include: the sacredness of all life; the imperative to both work for peace and also aim to "be peace" in our communications; and the belief in tangible, practical actions and methods to create and promote peace.

With these values as our North Star, the legacy we envision - our chosen gift to this planet - may be summarized as:

A safer, and more loving world, in which all have the opportunity to benefit from a lasting infrastructure based on the guiding principles and effective tools of peacebuilding.

Our Strengths and Niches

The way forward looks like an exciting emphasis on our role in defining and promoting a largely unrecognized field - the field of peacebuilding. It will involve identifying and advancing programs and federal legislation that do the most good in this realm - with the greatest effectiveness, efficiency, and compassion - from our neighborhoods to the other side of the globe.

It also looks like a continued and strengthened emphasis on our role as an Alliance, a network, a connector - much of our role as a "game-changer" is in the strength of our network. We are positioning our organization to better facilitate the strengthening of a broad field called peacebuilding," much of which does not yet recognize itself as a field.

We will work with our phenomenal grassroots support base to promote awareness and effectiveness of the peacebuilding tools in the communities where we all live, as well as to focus on national initiatives and legislation that will spotlight and support the emerging call for global nonviolence and peace.

We look forward to sharing more of the exciting, tangible ideas that have emerged from this retreat space, to engage your own creative ideas and to get feedback

on what we are exploring. Join our conference call tonight to hear more details. (See sidebar to register).

The staff and boards of The Peace Alliance /Educational Institute (photo above) hope that you continue to engage with us in the coming weeks, watching for the fruits of these labors. You may experience an increasingly vibrant, dynamic, and deeply grounded organization - working with focus and grace toward peace... with every step.

In Peace,

Dan Kahn & Board/Staff Team
Board Member, Peace Alliance Educational Institute
& Florida State Coordinator

P.S. Survey results: We have released the compiled results of our January survey of our network. Much of what we learned from the survey helped deeply inform the conversation at our retreat. Download it now to see what others had to say!

IN OTHER NEWS...

Our friend and SPI participant, **Elvira Angsinco**, attended peace research methodology training in I Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in April.

The 2011 United States Peace Index, put out annually by the Institute for Economics and Peace, ranks Maine most peaceful state and Louisiana the least peaceful. (Tennessee ranks 49th.) Key findings include these:

- o Peace has increased 8% since the mid-1990s
- o The potential economic gains from improvements in peace are significant
- o Peace is linked to opportunity, health, education, and the economy
- o Peace is not related to political affiliation

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This Mother's Day, consider giving a copy of [Julia Ward Howe's original proclamation](#) along with those flowers.

THE SPARROW SINGS

The flyover of four military jets before the Super Bowl cost taxpayers \$450,000. The fuel alone cost \$109,000. (Daily Mail Reporter). According to the Pentagon, it costs \$2 billion each week to stay in Afghanistan. More than 100 military contractors, providing everything from aircraft to wrist cuffs for gloves, committed civil or criminal fraud between 2007 and 2009, yet many continued to receive funds the Pentagon, including some barred from contracting. The security firm SOC Inc. has a contract for protecting the billion dollar embassy in Iraq worth as much as \$974 million. (Wired magazine, 1/1/11) The estimated operating expense for the embassy is \$1.5 billion a year. The military budget is as large as the budgets of the rest of the world. The Pentagon, CIA and Homeland Security budgets account for the \$1.1 trillion of the federal deficit that is forecasted for fiscal year 1012. In the 1980s, Franklin "Chuck" Spinney, a long-time employee of the Pentagon, told Congress that the Pentagon cannot account for \$1.1 trillion. Donald Rumsfeld said the Pentagon cannot account for 25% or \$2.3 trillion of its funds. (CBS News, /29/02. The military has already spent over \$1 trillion on the invasions and occupations in the last 9 years, and there is no accurate record as to how that was spent. The reward for this is an increase in the military budget, which now totals 57% of the budget (FCLN, NWTRCC). The Pentagon this year will spend over \$1.7 billion just for recruiting our young, including \$100 million in the last 10 years sponsoring NASCAR drivers. Racer Ryan Newman recently got \$11.9 million from the military. The U.S. has in the past supported as many as 43 dictators and continues to support with military funds and equipment, courtesy of U.S. taxpayers, the following dictators; Idriss Deby of Chad, Paul Biya of Cameroon, Burganguly Bereymukhamedov of Turkmenistan, Teodoro Obiang Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan, King Abdullah Bin Abdul-Aziz of Saudi Arabia, Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia and recently ousted Hosni Mubarek of Egypt, who received \$60 billion over the last 10 years. Last year, the U.S.

deported thousands of immigrants, which cost taxpayers \$5 billion, and still indefinitely detains undocumented workers with taxpayer money. The U.S. oil companies last year received \$4 billion in subsidies and tax breaks. According to the Economic Policy Institute, 61% of agricultural subsidies go the wealthiest 10% of farmers, mainly for farming corn, cotton, soybeans and wheat. (Alternet, 2/7/11) In light of these facts on waste and accountability, is there a question as to where cuts need to be made? Would you not rather have your tax money go toward healthcare and education for all? --Don Timmerman

"Ending the Afghanistan War altogether would save taxpayers in Wisconsin \$1.7 billion this year alone, more than ten times the amount 'saved' in Walker's attack on state employee rights." -- Robert Greenwald in Common Dreams, 2/19/11

"Man has no right to kill his brother. It is no excuse that he does so in uniform. He only adds the infamy of servitude to the crime of murder." --Percy Bysshe Shelley

INTERESTING FACTS

"Using terrorism on behalf of American interest is always permissible, because the actual definition of a terrorist is nothing more than this, 'someone who impedes or defies U.S. will with any degree of efficacy.'" --April Glaspie, former U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, in 1990 in a [talk](#) with then U.S. friend, Saddam Hussein

The Pentagon reported in November that [suicide rates are soaring among veterans](#), the backlog at Dept. of Veterans Affairs had reached more than 700,000 disability cases. Columbia University professor Joseph Stiglitz [told the House Veterans Affairs Committee](#) in September that the costs of Iraq and Afghanistan, including interest payments on the money borrowed for these invasions and care for our wounded soldiers and veterans is likely to total \$4 to \$6 trillion.

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According to a new groundbreaking report from Harvard, coal is costing Americans up to half a trillion dollars every year. We're talking about kids with asthma, mothers taking time off of work to take care of sick relatives, communities turning into cancer clusters, climate change...the list goes on and on. --[Greenpeace](#)

Complaints are made about Medicaid costing around \$800 billion this year, yet tax cuts for the wealthiest 2% of Americans costs more than \$1 trillion. Deficits are not caused by spending. They are caused by spending more than you collect. --[Campaign for America's Future](#), 2/16/11

Over a 15 month period, [Corrections Corporation of America](#) (CCA) spent \$4.4 million lobbying the Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Department of Homeland Security, both houses of congress and other government bodies. Five of CCA's most lucrative contracts with ICE have no end date. And as a result, ICE is devoting less funding to immigration policies that meet basic human rights standards. Meanwhile, CCA owners who refer to detained immigrants as "product," are set up to reap huge profits. The federal government is spending \$60.50 per inmate per day at the detention center. The more immigrants locked up indefinitely the bigger the profit for CCA. --[Witness for Peace](#)

The Baghdad Iraq city government is demanding the U.S. pay \$1 billion and apologize for damage to the city caused by blast walls erected and destruction of the infrastructure of the city during the 8 years of armed occupation. -- A.P., 2/17/11

Farm workers help a \$28 billion fruit and vegetable industry in the U.S., 85% of which is hand harvested and/or cultivated. Almost three quarters of U.S. farm workers earn less than \$10,000 per year, and 3 out of 5 farm worker families have incomes below the poverty level. --Park Beat, Dec. /Jan., 2011

The Israeli military recently destroyed a Palestinian medicine factory in the Gaza Strip with U.S.-made war

planes wounding 8 Palestinian civilians. --[Democracy Now](#), 2/10/11

On 2/22/11, the Israeli army demolished 5 tent-houses, 2 cisterns and village's olive trees effectively killing the village leaving 3 families homeless. --Cassandra Dixon of Mary House, Oxford WI

Bradley Manning is presently still in solitary confinement in Quantico Marine Base in Virginia, accused of providing Wikileaks with a video of a U.S. collateral murder of unarmed adults and children filmed in Afghanistan. --<http://www.bradleymanning.org>

As gas prices continue to climb, Shell Oil has announced its profits doubled last year to \$18.6 billion. This means they made more than \$50 million each day last year. Meanwhile, Chevron Oil is refusing to pay a \$8 billion it was ordered by the courts to pay to Ecuador for the deaths and illnesses to its residents and the damage done to the environment in the country. --[Democracy Now](#), 2/4/11

In 2010, Mexico, with 18.4 homicides per 100,000 people did not have the most homicides in Latin America. El Salvador had 92.3 per 100,000, Colombia 73.4, Venezuela 64.2, Guatemala 55.4, and Brazil 51.6. -- Source: [Ritla, Instituto Sangari](#)

Gov. Scott Walker say there is a "budget shortfall of \$137 million. But Walker failed to tell the state that less than 2 weeks into his term as governor, he pushed through \$117 million in tax breaks for business allies of the GOP. There is the crisis! Union-bashing right wing media hosts Hannity, Limbaugh and O'Reilly are AFL-CIO Union affiliated members. --[Altnet](#), 2/26/11

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

When	Who	What	Where	Details
May 8 2:00 PM	Peacebuilding Institute of Est Tennessee (PIET)	Planning Meeting	Church of the Savior 934 Weisgarber Rd. Knoxville, TN	Planning for First Annual Conference on Violence in Knoxville
May 13-15	Newark Peace Education Summit	The Power of Nonviolence	New Jersey Per- forming Arts Center Newark, NJ	A three day conference focusing on peacemaking practices from around the world. Panels and workshops with His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama, Newark Mayor Cory Booker, Somaly Mam, Nobel Laureates and peace advocates from a wide cross section of cultures, disciplines and perspectives. <i>Details on p.4.</i>
June 10-11	The Peace- building Insti- tute	Conference on Violence in Knox- ville	Church of the Savior 934 Weisgarber Rd. Knoxville, TN	Registration: \$25 or \$40.00 for more than one participant from same church or organization. For those coming from out of town, housing may be provided. <i>Details on p.4.</i> Contact: Jim Foster 865-573-4089; jimsandyfoster@yahoo.com
July 4-9	Baptist Peace Fellowship of North Amer- ica	Annual confer- ence: So You Must For- give	Eastern Mennon- ite University Harrisonburg, VA	Our conference features an amazing group of leaders and a warm, welcoming community—programs for all ages, opportunities for exploring spirituality. <i>Details on p.4.</i>