



NEXT VFP-56 MEETING

Thursday, Jan. 5, 2006
7:00 Marsh Commons

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look something like the following. There would be:

- 57 Asians
- 21 Europeans
- 14 from the Western Hemisphere
- 8 Africans
- 52 would be female
- 48 would be male
- 70 would be nonwhite
- 30 would be white
- 70 would be non-Christian
- 30 would be Christian
- 6 would possess 59% of the entire world's wealth and all 6 would be from the USA
- 80 would live in sub-standard housing
- 70 would be unable to read
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition
- 1 would be near death
- 1 would be near birth
- 1 (yes, only 1) would have a college education and
- 1 would own a computer

(Written by William G. Callahan and published in the Greenfuse newspaper, publication #64)

The War on Terror Requires a Look in the Mirror British Playwright Harold Pinter Tells Americans the Truth about Ourselves

by S. Brian Willson

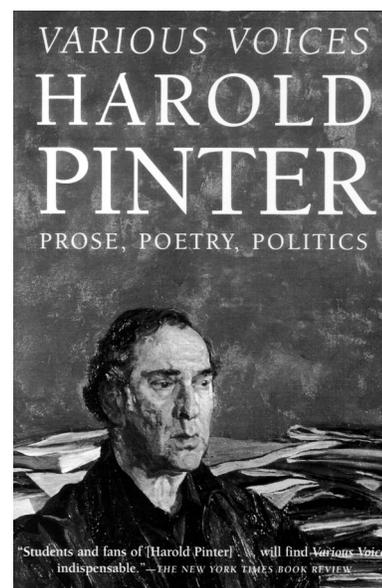
The US-led "war on terror" is the ultimate in hypocrisy and deceit. If the US is serious about addressing the evil de jour, "terrorism," it must honestly look at itself and be prepared for a painful journey of healing, just as a chronic drug addict or drunk gets ready to endure the arduous 12-step program of recovery.

Historic and contemporary behaviors of US civilization reveal classic examples of psychologist Carl Jung's archetypal defense mechanism of projecting one's shadow onto others. One's own darkness is so terrifying that it is easier not to muster the courage to face it. In 1928 Jung described how the psychology of war brings the shadow to the fore: "Everything which our nation does is good, everything which the other nations do is wicked. The center of all that is mean and vile is always to be found several miles behind the enemy's lines." Many veterans of war have painfully experienced the projections stripped from our eyes and minds. We saw the enemy—it was first myself, then ourselves as a collective culture. Holy royal shit! How the fuck could that be? Wow!

As a nation it is imperative that we muster the courage to discover our own shadows. They exist in the images we project—evil axis, Hitler-like leaders, weapons of mass destruction, ruthless dictators, deceitful nations, mushroom clouds, etc. Each image is a huge clue about our own nation—they are OUR images, the shadow of the darkness within us as a culture, and as individuals who have collectively participated in and legitimized the projections.

The Slovenian philosopher and psychoanalyst Slavoj Zizek has said that 9/11 was merely a distilled version of our own essence.

"For the last five centuries, the relative prosperity of the 'civilized' West was brought by the export of ruthless violence and destruction into the 'barbarian' *OUTSIDE*: the long history from the conquest of America to the slaughter in the Congo. Cruel and indifferent as it may sound, we should also, now more than ever, bear in mind that the actual effect of these bombings is much more symbolic than real. The US just got the taste of what goes on around the world on a daily basis, from Sarajevo to Grozny, from Rwanda and Congo to Sierra Leone...America's 'holiday from history' was a fake: America's peace was brought by the catastrophes going on elsewhere. Therein resides the true lesson of the bombings: the only way to ensure that it will not happen *HERE* again is to prevent it going on *ANYWHERE ELSE*." [Quote from "Welcome to the Desert of the Real," an essay by Slavoj Zizek, found on the literary website, *Re:constructions: Reflections on Humanity and Media After Tragedy*,



This collection of works by British playwright Harold Pinter includes an opinion piece aired on May 31, 1990 in which he suggests that US foreign policy can be defined as "kiss my ass or I'll kick your head in."

Q&A Forum with Army Recruiters and Hotline Volunteers

by Carl Stancil

On Wednesday, December 7th, “a day that will live in infamy...,” a “forum” took place in the St. Bernard’s Catholic High School library from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Attended by about 100 students (mostly juniors and seniors with freshmen and sophomores observing), the event featured two Army recruiters, Sgt. Clark and Sgt. Haugen, and two GI Rights Hotline volunteers—HSU lecturer Melanie Williams and myself.

Initially the recruiters had wanted to send three representatives, but in the interest of balance we agreed on two and two. St. Bernard’s instructor Jim Lennon recalled a recruiter commenting, “Are they scared of us?”

I had expected the recruiters to wear their full dress uniforms with medals to project a powerful image to the students, but to my surprise they chose combat fatigues. I introduced myself and struck up a conversation with them as they stood awkwardly waiting for the event to begin. The senior recruiter, Sgt. Clark, grew up in a career Army family in Tennessee. He admitted to being apprehensive, saying, “I’ll keep my answers short.” Sgt. Haugen was a handsome, 25-year-old, new father from Illinois who had enlisted at 18 seeing no opportunity for him at home. I spoke of my Vietnam service and asked each of them about theirs. Sgt. Haugen was just back from Tikrit, Iraq but he and his new family were now stationed here. “Welcome home. Glad you returned safely,” I said. “You guys have been put in an awful situation over there.”

The instructor Jim Lennon had assigned his students preparatory work requiring them to write questions that they might ask. In addition, he structured the process so that each group of two was allowed two minutes to respond to each question. There was a student timekeeper and a monitor to cut off presenters who went over time. Jim would call on students who raised their hands to pose a question.

Some questions were:

1. *At what point is my enlistment legally binding?*
2. *What if I want to join the military but not be in combat?*
3. *Is it true that the military can change the terms of my original contract?*
4. *Which benefits am I guaranteed when my enlistment is over?*
5. *If I join up, how would I qualify for the \$71,000.00 through the GI Bill?*
6. *Is there harassment of people who are perceived as being gay in the military?*
7. *How is the government treating vets who suffer from PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder)? Are there many such cases?*
8. *What kind of care will I receive if I am wounded or injured in the military?*
9. *How much choice will I have regarding jobs in the military?*
10. *What happens if you become pregnant while in active service?*
11. *Do you think the war in Iraq is justified? Why? Why not?*
12. *When should we withdraw from Iraq?*
13. *Would you encourage your son or daughter to join the military today?*
14. *How do you try to convince teenagers that the military could be good for them?*

The brisk interchange went on for an hour with answers by one group being responded to by the other. As students listened to the often-contrasting responses from panelists, they undoubtedly were challenged to engage their critical thinking skills to decide what was true and where additional questions need to be asked for clarification.

The recruiters gradually began to relax, realizing they were not going to be attacked by the students or us. The students also became more forthcoming with questions. In addition to content, there was an opportunity for students to

observe and participate in a *different process*, one in which each speaker showed respect for another person while at times disagreeing with their ideas or beliefs. We modeled a process of *carefully listening, examining what was heard, and calmly responding to the statement rather than the person*. Sgt. Clark, however, made a telling request to Jim after the forum, asking to make his presentation alone in individual classes. It was clearly not their best venue to be challenged by others with a broader view.

After the final question, many students came forward to thank us all for being there. We also thanked both recruiters. I specifically asked Sgt. Haugen to supply me with the “new” enlistment contract as he had commented that mine was out of date. I gave him my card, suggesting that we get together on “neutral ground” to hear each other’s concerns. He nodded. It would be useful to hear their concerns and to voice mine about “improprieties” I have observed elsewhere, as well as our expectations of candor and ethical behavior toward the young people of our community. I want a personal way to express the fact that I will not tolerate our children being taken advantage of and that recruiters are being watched very closely.

After the crowd left, Melanie and I browsed the magazine and brochure holdings of the school library. Melanie noted a dozen military magazines and an absence of peace or alternative service fliers and periodicals. That needs to change! Perhaps Jim could work on balancing the school library’s periodicals collection.

This “forum” was a very useful next step for VEOP and GI Rights work in the schools. It set a precedent that we can build on to encourage other school administrators to arrange similar events on their campuses. In addition, Jim agreed to share his lesson plan with other teachers. The entire event was videotaped by St. Bernard’s staff and we hope to use it in our “Resources for Teachers CD.”



San Francisco Says “No” to Military Recruiters

by Kristin Anderson (article submitted by Jim Sorter)

On November 8th the citizens of San Francisco joined the growing counter-recruitment movement. Fifty-nine percent of voters expressed the opinion that military recruiters should not be allowed in public schools.

According to Todd Chretien, the author of the College Not Combat proposition known as Prop I, the reasons for initiating this campaign were simple. “After seeing CAN [Campus Antiwar Network] activists protest military recruiters at Seattle Central Community College, City College of New York and San Francisco State University, we knew that the tide was turning against the war. When each campus administration called the police on student activists, we decided that a good way to demonstrate the popular support for the students was to give the people of San Francisco the chance to tell the world what they thought of military recruiters by voting for Proposition I.”

Over the summer, activists spent countless hours organizing and gathering the signatures needed to put College Not Combat on the ballot. In the end the campaign turned in 15,500 signatures to the department of elections. Many of the signature gatherers reported that enthusiasm for the measure was high not just in San Francisco but also with residents of neighboring towns who expressed dismay that a similar measure was not on the ballot in their city.

Local CAN activists, in addition to helping gather signatures, used the September 24th College Not Combat contingent as a publicity drive not just for CAN but also for the campaign, which co-sponsored the College Not Combat contingent on the West Coast.

This victory was the result of the hard work of the College Not Combat coalition of San Francisco which included CAN, Code Pink, the International Socialist Organization, the National Lawyers Guild, Bay Area United Against the War, Gold Star Families for Peace, United Educators of San Francisco, the Green Party, Peace and Freedom Party, and the American-Arab Anti-discrimination Committee and was endorsed by a broad range of groups including San Francisco Labor Council, Service Employees International Union (SEIU)–Local 790, and American Federation of Teachers–Local 2121 (AFT 2121).

Despite the smear campaign engaged in by local newspapers, San Franciscans had no trouble reading between the lies about what the campaign would and would not accomplish. The *San Francisco Chronicle* refused to endorse the proposition despite the editorial board’s declared opposition to the war,

stating, “[I]f its call for restrictions on military recruiting in public schools were carried out, it could cost city schools \$40 million in federal funds, a sacrifice that no one who cares about education would advocate.” Another local publication, *SF Weekly*, ran a cover story titled “Pacifists for War: Within a feuding peace movement counter-recruiters are conspiring to bring back the draft.”

The right has wasted no time in trying to paint the campaign as nothing more than ultra-left, America-hating liberals. Ultra-right radio host Bill O’Reilly stated on his show, “[I]f Al Qaeda comes in here and blows you up, we’re not going to do anything about it. We’re going to say, look, every other place in America is off-limits to you, except San Francisco.”

The reality is obviously quite different. The sentiment that San Francisco expressed in this election is in no way isolated from that of the rest of the country. In fact public sentiment is largely turning against the war. Almost one-third of Americans are demanding ‘troops out now’ and the counter recruitment movement is growing and spreading all across the country. Ragina Johnson of Prop I campaign stated,

“The passing of Proposition I shows that a majority of people in San Francisco are opposed to this war and the ongoing occupation. They are explicitly saying that they are opposed to the fact that it is poor and working class people and people of color who are driven to join the military through the economic draft. This victory represents only a part of the movement to get military recruiters out of our schools nationally. It is going to take both the grassroots organizing of students, parents and teachers challenging recruiters every time they dare to step foot on campus and anti-war activists off campuses continuing the fight to get rid of No-Child Left Behind and the Solomon Amendment. Students can now hit their campuses with the confidence that the majority of San Franciscans support your efforts. Now we need to work to spread the College Not Combat campaign into every city across the nation. This is just the beginning.”

For more information on the College Not Combat campaign, visit <http://www.collegenotcombat.com>

Kristin Anderson is the student at SFSU and serves as West representative on the Campus Antiwar Network Coordinating Committee. For more info. visit <http://www.campusantiwar.net>

The people of San Francisco are explicitly saying that they are opposed to the fact that it is poor and working class people and people of color who are driven to join the military through the economic draft.



Veterans For Peace Chapter 56: The Inside Stuff

by Fred Hummel

Some transparency here. This is a blatant attempt to recruit more of our members to become active in the inside workings of their organization. Much of what we VFPers accomplish is done through our committee structure with Associate and Full (Veteran) members serving side by side. Unfortunately, committee reports at our monthly membership meetings are often cut short, so many members don't get a true feel for what is being done at that level.

Here's a little insight of what actually goes on in each committee so you can get a better appreciation for what is being done and what more could be done with stronger member support.

We'll briefly touch on the **Coordinating Committee**. About a half dozen of the senior members of our chapter serve here. These folks are concerned with the overall health and direction of our group.

They establish the agenda for our monthly membership meetings and attend to any issues that are so timely they must be addressed between meetings. This is necessarily an abbreviated description because their focus is so broad that defining it in a short article is impossible.

The **Veterans Education and Outreach Program (a.k.a. VEOP Committee)** is one of our most active groups. Co-chaired by Laura Simpson and Carl Stancil, the primary focus of this group is to educate the community about the untruths being foisted on our youth by military recruiters, and about the underhanded method the military uses to gain access to off campus contact information for students. Members of this committee have

worked to gain legal access to most schools so they can speak to students individually or on a class by class basis.

The classroom educational experience works both ways; none of us ever leave a classroom without having learned something ourselves. This is one of the most personally rewarding activities our members can experience. We always have more classrooms available to us than members available to fill the slots.

The **Depleted Uranium/WMD Committee (a.k.a. DU Committee)** focuses primarily on the dangers of DU munitions and secondarily on the many, often unrecognized, WMDs in use today. Chaired by Peter Aronson, this committee has many projects underway at all times.

Currently, we are proposing legislation to require that military members returning from deployment be tested for exposure to DU. We are also preparing a Power Point presentation to take into the community, and expanding the DU/WMD section of our VFP56 web page. With additional members, more of this committee's goals could be achieved.

The **Events Committee** is the successor to our former Speakers Committee. Members of this group, chaired by Gordy Anderson, work to bring about educational, fun, and fund raising events that benefit both the larger community and our own chapter. The upcoming New Years Eve celebration in cooperation with the Bayside Grange (see announcement on back page) is an example of combining fun, education and fundraising all in one event. The chapter's 4th of

July food booth at the Arcata Plaza was another. We have lots of ideas and interesting speakers to invite, but it takes cooperation to effectively promote and present a quality event.

The **Media Committee**, chaired by Becky Luening, maintains our chapter website and media relations throughout the county. Don Maddox often contributes photographs of vigils and actions; otherwise, most of this committee's work is accomplished single-handedly by Becky—when she has time. With a bit of help from other members, our web page development and publicity efforts could increase exponentially.

The **General Store** is pretty much the work of one man, Doug Smith. At the present, Doug has it running smoothly and is happy to do the job.

Are you good at detail work? Our current **Treasurer** is Kathie Kelly, who does an effective job, but is looking to step down in the near future. Here's a job that would put the right person close to the heart of our organization. The treasurer also serves on the Coordinating Committee.

These thumbnail sketches of our committees omit a lot of the very innovative and exciting activities that come off because of the dedicated folks who serve on them. You have ideas? Join a committee and see if we can't put them into the service of our chapter. If you need contact information for a specific committee chairperson, or need to know more about a committee before you take the jump into action, call Fred Hummel at 826-2363 or send an e-mail to fch@humboldt1.com and we'll get you what you need.



Veterans' Right to Know

by Peter Aronson, Chair, DU/WMD Committee

Current and past members of our Armed Forces have a right to know if their government conducted experiments on them without their knowledge or consent. Ample evidence demonstrates a legacy of chemical and biological warfare testing on US service members.

An example is the DOD testing of Vx and Sarin nerve gas used on unsuspecting service men and women between 1962–1974 called Project 112 and SHAD. Information critical for vets to receive proper medical assessment and health care is classified. Our government would much prefer the conve-

nience of hiding their dirty deeds than to reveal illegal experiments and risk accountability and liability.

Our Congressman Mike Thompson introduced a bill last month, HR 3256, the Veteran's Right To Know Act, which would declassify related documents of who was tested by which agents, and under what circumstances. The only threat to national security posed by declassifying such information is indirect—it's bad PR for the Pentagon, DOD, and the reigning administration.

A May 2004 GAO report reveals a substantial number of vets still don't know tests were conducted on them. All

those who would declassify information known not be critical to national defense should support this bill even though it is limited to SHAD112 investigation. Only declassification of information critical to identification of exposures can create the opportunity for proper medical assessment and services.

If we lie about the dangers of poisons, like we have with Agent Orange, radiological weapons such as DU, and other established WMDs, for the sake of military advantage, knowing the detriment to innocent civilian and our own troops, what difference is there between our actions and those "Evil Doers"? Can you imagine the DOD's response to an enemy using uranium ammunition against our troops or property? And yet we've used thousands of tons of these "dirty bombs" on other nations—I guess that's OK because we have God on our side, don't we? We don't let laws or ethics stand in the way of our mission.

Thompson said of his bill (co-sponsored by Denny Rehberg, R-MT.), "It's about openness, honesty and forthrightness in government; above all, it's about doing the right thing and uncovering the truth." Though laudable, his bill is asking for our democratic process to press for accountability and protection of human rights over military priorities. Why should we expect rationality and justice to prevail now?

Though we should support efforts such as Thompson's HR3256, we should be demanding, not requesting, veterans' right to know what has been done to them while serving their country. Among the worst consequences of such experiments is the current use of radiological agents hiding under the guise of "safe" and "conventional" DU weapons. We all have a right to know when our own government threatens public health and welfare, and that of those who have served it.

Agent Orange Survivors Call for Relief and US Responsibility 30 Years after the War

by Becky Luening

Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange concluded an 11 US Cities Tour on December 10th, Human Rights Day, with an event co-sponsored by San Francisco Veterans For Peace Chapter 69.



The tour was organized by the Viet Nam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign to educate the US public, with the aim of securing relief funds for the Vietnamese Association of Victims of Agent Orange (VAVA) and to create ongoing support for VAVA's lawsuit in US courts to hold accountable the US corporations, including Monsanto and Dow, that manufactured the estimated 110 thousand tons of chemicals sprayed on Viet Nam.

Two Vietnamese survivors of exposure toured to tell their stories. They were accompanied by Dr. Nguyen Trong Nhan, former President of the Viet Nam Red Cross and VAVA official, and a translator.

Mrs. Dang Thi Hong Nhut served as a Viet Cong political officer in the Cu Chi area, part of the iron triangle and one of the most heavily defoliated during the war. She was sprayed several times and drank water polluted with the chemical. After being captured, Nhut spent six years as a prisoner of war, including 2 or 3 years in the infamous tiger cages. She had given birth to a healthy son in the 1960s, but after the war she suffered multiple miscarriages and two stillborn children. (The fetuses are still displayed in bottles along with other specimens of Agent Orange deformities in a special room in the War Crimes Museum in

continued on page 7...



A Look in the Mirror *(from page 1)*

Interpretations (<http://web.mit.edu/cms/reconstructions/interpretations/desertreal.html>), 09/15/2001.]

As I have described over and over, the United States as a civilization was *founded* on systematic application of terror so grotesque that we hardly ever talk about it or acknowledge it. Equally troubling, we have consistently *maintained* our American Way Of Life by acts of terror for 385 years, pre- and post-Republic, first in the Western Hemisphere, then moving like a cancer to the entire globe in our insatiable search for cheap or free resources, markets, and labor. Since 1997 the US military establishment has explicitly identified its policy as “full spectrum dominance.” There it is! William Blum offers a concise list of the last 60 years worth of our various crimes against humanity in his *Rogue State: A Guide to the World’s Only Superpower* (Common Courage, 2000).

British Playwright Harold Pinter has described US foreign policy as “kiss my ass or I’ll kick your head in” [*Various Voices: Harold Pinter Prose, Poetry, Politics* (London, Faber, 1998), p. 216]. His recent speech on the occasion of accepting the 2005 Nobel Prize for Literature is one of the clearest, most stinging indictments of US imperialism I have ever read. Are you ready? Here goes:

But my contention here is that the US crimes in the [post-war] period have only been superficially recorded, let alone documented, let alone acknowledged, let alone recognized, as crimes at all. I believe this must be addressed and that the truth has considerable bearing on where the world stands now. Although constrained, to a certain extent, by the existence of the Soviet Union, the United States’ actions throughout the world made it clear that it had concluded it had carte blanche to do what it liked.

Direct invasion of a sovereign state has never in fact been America’s favoured method. In the main, it has preferred what it has described as ‘low intensity conflict.’ Low intensity conflict means that thousands of people die but slower than if you dropped a bomb on them in one fell swoop. It means that you infect the heart of the country, that you establish a malignant growth and watch the gangrene bloom. When the populace has been subdued—or beaten to death—the same thing—and your own friends, the military and the great corporations, sit comfortably in power, you go before the camera and say that democracy has prevailed. This was a commonplace in US foreign policy in the years to which I refer. The United States supported and in many cases engendered every right-wing military dictatorship in the world after the end of the Second World War. I refer to Indonesia, Greece, Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Haiti, Turkey, the Philippines, Guatemala, El Salvador, and, of course, Chile. The horror the United States

inflicted upon Chile in 1973 can never be purged and can never be forgiven.

Hundreds of thousands of deaths took place throughout these countries. Did they take place? And are they in all cases attributable to US foreign policy? The answer is yes they did take place and they are attributable to American foreign policy. But you wouldn’t know it.

It never happened. Nothing ever happened. Even while it was happening it wasn’t happening. It didn’t matter. It was of no interest. The crimes of the United States have been systematic, constant, vicious, remorseless, but very few people have actually talked about them. You have to hand it to America. It has exercised a clinical manipulation of power worldwide while masquerading as a force for universal good. It’s a brilliant, even witty, highly successful act of hypnosis.

I put to you that the United States is without doubt the greatest show on the road. Brutal, indifferent, scornful and ruthless it may be, but it is also very clever. As a salesman it is out on its own and its most saleable commodity is self-love. It’s a winner. Listen to all American presidents on television say the words, ‘the American people’, as in the sentence, ‘I say to the American people it is time to pray and to defend the rights of the American people and I ask the American people to trust their president in the action he is about to take on behalf of the American people.’

It’s a scintillating stratagem. Language is actually employed to keep thought at bay. The words ‘the American people’ provide a truly voluptuous cushion of reassurance. You don’t need to think. Just lie back on the cushion. The cushion may be suffocating your intelligence and your critical faculties but it’s very comfortable. This does not apply of course to the 40 million people living below the poverty line and the 2 million men and women imprisoned in the vast gulag of prisons, which extends across the US.

The United States no longer bothers about low intensity conflict. It no longer sees any point in being reticent or even devious. It puts its cards on the table without fear or favour. It quite simply doesn’t give a damn about the United Nations, international law or critical dissent, which it regards as impotent and irrelevant. It also has its own bleating little lamb tagging behind it on a lead, the pathetic and supine Great Britain.

The US is the world’s *wholesale* terrorist, provoking *retail* terrorist re-actions among the ignored, the invaded, the desperate, the disempowered, and the victims of double standards. Our job as human beings is to participate in a revolt from below, from within the belly of the beast. The practice of living justly is the foundation for peace. Folks, this system

continued on page 7...



A Look in the Mirror *(from page 6)*

does not deserve our support and legitimacy—just the opposite. It does not deserve our votes, our dollars, or the bodies of our sons and daughters. This is a leap in thinking but the historical empirical evidence is overwhelmingly clear. We have grown up in a monster, disguised as a “representative democracy.” It can only continue if we choose to remain complicit and obedient to it. Please imagine the numerous creative and courageous ways to say NO, while constructing the revolutionary alternatives in each of our thousands of local communities.

Agent Orange *(from page 5)*

Saigon.) Nhut’s husband recently died of lymphoma, and she has other health problems attributed to dioxin poisoning. She now runs a facility in Saigon that serves children badly damaged by this ongoing chemical nightmare.

Mr. Ho Sy Hai served as a truck driver in the North Vietnamese Army, working along the Ho Chi Minh trail, which was sprayed many times over during the war. He and his wife had several children who were very badly deformed and died at a young age; their one surviving adult child is mentally retarded. Hoi himself now suffers from chronic hepatitis among other afflictions.

How do we know that Agent Orange is the culprit? The evidence is mostly statistical. The Vietnamese report that the incidence of Agent Orange-damaged children in North Viet Nam is almost nil, except among children of veterans, while the problem of deformed kids is widespread in the south, where the defoliation campaign was waged, and can be correlated to the geographical areas known to be most heavily sprayed. Vietnamese studies have shown a rise in these areas of the same cancers and birth defects that the US Veterans Administration has listed as presumptively caused by exposure to Agent Orange/dioxin.

Despite the fact that the Vietnamese Victims of Agent Orange tour came to the Bay Area during the holiday season without much advance notice, approximately 85 people turned out for the event in San Francisco (including 25 right-wing Vietnamese Americans who came to protest but ended up sitting and listening respectfully; a few even shook hands with the Vietnamese speakers afterward), and about 65 people attended a separate event at Stanford University sponsored by Asian Student Union. The Vietnamese also were featured on the local CBS television station and KPFA radio in Berkeley.

It is difficult for many in this country to face the fact that dioxin poisoning still affects so many people in Viet Nam 30 years after the war. Sadly, the US government has stonewalled, delayed and walked away from any serious efforts to study the ongoing problems caused by our chemical

Terrorism in Colombia

The following speech was given by Debora Barros Fince, Indigenous Wayuu, at the November 20, 2005 demonstration to close the School of Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Good afternoon to all of you. I am here because my family and my community were the victims of a massacre. Of the 82 indigenous groups in Colombia, we are the largest group, the Wayuu indigenous community. We are located in the northern part of Colombia.

At 6:30 in the morning one year ago, 150 paramilitaries came into our community. Now these are paramilitary who work together with the national army. And they began to kill women and children in my community. They had no mercy. They cut them; they cut their heads off.

As you were marching it was very painful for me to see how many crosses there are. And how much grief and pain there is in each one of us who are victims of all of this. That’s why I ask each one of you to please tell your government and your president to stop the bloodshed in Colombia. The blood not only of indigenous peoples is being spilled in Colombia. People are being killed constantly. Labor union leaders. Human Rights defenders. These are people who, in one way or another, are helping the indigenous groups to defend ourselves against this huge monster. Tell Bush not to give ANY more money to President Uribe for the military of Colombia. And I also want to ask you to continue coming here each year. This action helps to guarantee at least a little bit of peace in Colombia, and not only in Colombia, but also, in other parts of the world.

And in the name of the 12 people who were killed in my community, I thank you for this solidarity. Good luck with everything.

Debora Barros’ trip to Georgia to speak out at the SOA protest was sponsored by Bridges Across Borders, an international, non-governmental organization that was formed to address the root causes of violence and hatred in the world. Go to <http://www.bridgesacrossborders.org>

campaign in Viet Nam. The chemical companies too have eschewed responsibility. Note that Global Exchange named Dow Chemical one of the “most wanted” corporate human rights violators of 2005. Meanwhile, Agent Orange Victims and those who support them will continue to call for justice—and relief.

Thanks to Paul Cox of VFP Ch. 69 for his help with details for this article. For more information about the Viet Nam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign, visit their website at <http://www.vn-agentorange.org>





**Veterans For Peace
Chapter 56**

**NEW Phone: 707-822-4975
Email: VFP56@aol.com**

**We're on
the Web!**



<http://www.vfp56.org>

**COORDINATING
COMMITTEE**

**Steve Stamnes Rob Hepburn
Kathie Kelly Linda Sorter
Jim Sorter Gordon Anderson**

STANDING COMMITTEES

**WMD/DU: Peter Aronson
General Store: Doug Smith
Media: Becky Luening
VEOP: Laura Simpson
Carl Stancil**

LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

If you would like to submit an article, opinion, comment or response to anything you have read that might interest the members of VFP-56, please email it to turtldncer@aol.com in Word format, or mail to Jim Sorter at 1762 Buttermilk Lane, Arcata, CA 95521. Submissions will be included on a first come basis until the newsletter is full. Late arriving submissions will be archived for future issues.

Celebrate New Year's Eve at the Grange!

— A JOINT BENEFIT FOR THE BAYSIDE GRANGE AND VFP 56—

FEATURING: Great Food - Musical Theatre & Cabaret - Contra Dancing

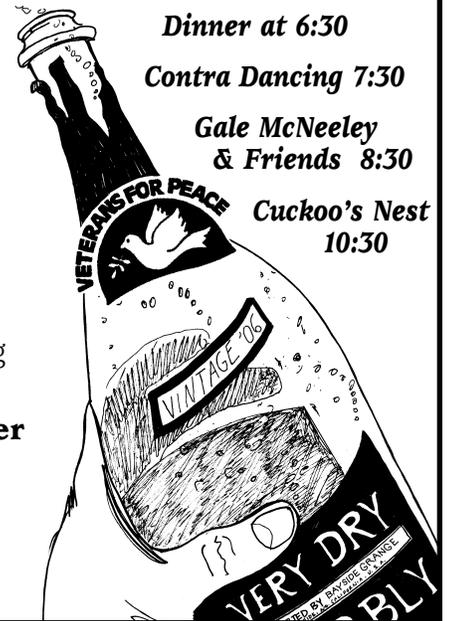
*Then... Dance the night away to **CUCKOO'S NEST**,
one of the area's favorite gypsy jazz/swing bands.*

Tickets: \$25 for the entire evening,
\$15 without dinner

Available at: Wildwood Music and
The Works in Eureka & Arcata

Reservations: Call 822-9998 or email
hallmanager@baysidegrange.org

**VFP NEEDS VOLUNTEERS to help pour beer
and wine (our main responsibility). You will
be rewarded with a half-price dinner. Call
Gordy Anderson at 498-5889 or 443-9663
to sign up, or for more information.**



**Veterans For Peace Chapter 56
P.O. Box 532
Bayside, CA 95524**

VFP Trivia

Ever wonder whether the "for" in our organization's name should be capitalized? Is it "Veterans for Peace" or "Veterans For Peace"?

When I was working on VFP's convention booklet this summer, I received the following email from Communications Director Gabriela Inderwies:

"Please make sure that in all publications "Veterans For Peace" is always capitalized. That includes the 'F' in the word 'For'—this is part of our official logo." [email dated 7/13/05]

If you have a hard time remembering such details, just think emphasis: Veterans *For* Peace.

—Becky Luening, Chair, Media Committee