

Dear Friends,

As you can read here, the Muste Institute has lost a board member, the peace movement has lost a stalwart activist and we have lost a good friend. Elmer Maas's sudden death on May 8 was a great shock to us all. Elmer served on the Board since 1991 and was always a steady and cheerful presence. He was devoted to pacifism and nonviolent action, and he lived a life consistent with his values.

The best thing the Muste Institute can do to honor Elmer's long service on the Board is increase our efforts to educate and agitate for nonviolent social change. Our ability to accomplish our mission largely depends on your contributions. We are trying hard to respond to the many activist groups who have asked for our support, but our fundraising is still not keeping pace with the demand. Although many of you responded generously to our last appeal, we did not raise the extra \$20,000 we had sought by April 15 to increase our grant-making. We hope you will read the enclosed letter from our Board member Carol Kalafatic and make the largest donation possible for our work. We have ambitious plans to expand our programs and, with your help, the Muste Institute will grow and strengthen its active support for peace and justice.

In Peace,

Murray Rosenblith
Executive Director

PHOTO BY AMADEE BRAXTON



IVAW members lead march in Fayetteville, North Carolina (home of Fort Bragg) on March 19, 2005, a national day of action against the Iraq war and occupation.



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Grantee Profile: Iraq Veterans Against the War

The Muste Institute made a \$1,600 grant in April 2005 to Iraq Veterans Against the War for an organizing skills training of regional coordinators and other core members (see *New Grants*, p.3). This article is by IVAW Administrative Coordinator Amadee Braxton.

Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) is a national organization of recent veterans and active duty service members who, based on their experiences serving in Iraq, oppose the war and occupation. "People should be aware that we are fighting average Iraqis, that when we're dropping 500-pound bombs in residential neighborhoods, we're killing mostly innocent women and children," says Mike Hoffman, who founded IVAW with eight other Iraq war veterans in August 2004 at the annual convention of Veterans for Peace in Boston.

Now a national organization with members in 24 states, IVAW is reaching out to vets and service members who feel disillusioned and outraged that they have been killing and risking their lives in a war based on lies and to fill corporate coffers. Many soldiers feel isolated when they return, not wanting to share what they've seen with their families and friends, and not exactly feeling like heroes. "Joining IVAW saved my husband's life," says the wife of an anonymous member. "When he came home from Iraq, he was depressed and would fly into a rage over small things. After working with IVAW, connecting with other vets and speaking out, he is back to his old self again."

Patrick Resta was an Army medic in Iraq for eight months in 2004. After his return he got involved with IVAW and began speaking out against the war and occupation. "If you really want Iraqis to have democracy, let them run their own affairs," he said in a recent interview.



PHOTO BY AMADEE BRAXTON

IVAW member and conscientious objector Anita Coles carries banner at the March 19 protest in Fayetteville.

"When you break something in a store you don't sit there with crazy glue trying to piece it back together. And you most certainly don't run around with a bat breaking more things. What you do is apologize, write them a check, and get out before you do any more damage."

IVAW members are doing counter-recruitment work in schools and colleges, defending the rights of war resisters and conscientious objectors, and sharing resources on how to fight for veteran benefits and deal with health issues like post traumatic stress disorder and the effects of depleted uranium (Gulf War syndrome). IVAW also participates in the United for Peace and Justice coalition and serves as a bridge between longtime peace activists and the millions of Americans who disagree with what's happening in Iraq, but who've never seen themselves as activists or protesters.

IVAW needs your help to end this war. Get in touch with us at PO Box 8296, Philadelphia, PA 19101; tel: 215-241-7123; fax: 215-241-7177; email iraqvet@mail.com; website www.ivaw.net

—Amadee Braxton

Elmer Maas, 1935-2005

A.J. Muste board member Elmer Maas died on May 8, 2005, while on retreat with the Atlantic Life Community in Voluntown, Connecticut.

Born in 1935 in Kansas City, Missouri, Elmer's gifts led him to the University of Chicago to study music, although his parents wanted him to get a business education. Elmer moved to New York City around 1961 and lived on St. Mark's Place with his niece, Julie Maas. From 1962 to 1968 he was a professor at Juniata College in Pennsylvania, where he helped organize students into the civil rights movement.

By the late 1970s he was back in New York, joining the 339 Lafayette Affinity Group in the 1977 occupation of the Seabrook, New Hampshire nuclear reactor at which 1,400 people were arrested. In 1980, Elmer and seven other activists carried out the first Plowshares disarmament action. He later did Plowshares #4 in 1982 and Thames River Plowshares in 1989. He helped prepare people for about 50 other actions, did support for imprisoned anti-nuclear activists and



PHOTO BY BILL OFENLOCH

joined projects like the 2002 Hiroshima Flame walk, for which he gave a reflection at New York City's Ground Zero.

Elmer played piano at many Plowshares support functions and enjoyed working as choir director at Valley Lodge in New York. He wrote three musicals, two of which were performed. Last year Elmer took part in the Telling Lives Project of the Columbia University Oral History Research Office, sharing stories and songs of the civil rights movement with students at a Chinatown middle school.

Elmer's local peace organizing was based out of Kairos/Plowshares NY, his home community, where he coordinated the office and got arrested at actions—at Riverside Research, the Intrepid war museum, the Times Square recruiting station. His life-work, the "curriculum,"

was a project he wanted to share with everyone, envisioned as a seven-year, once a month course on the genesis and evolution of the nuclear state, leading to the idea that history would come to a synthesis of nuclear disarmament and peace.

In addition to serving on the Muste Institute Board, Elmer was on the Executive Committee of the War Resisters League for several years. He was patient, kind, principled, and even when there were the kind of rumblings that are inevitable in groups, Elmer was a steady presence, offering his intelligence, experience, and listening ear. He was gracious, gentle and generous. He also had a good sense of humor—he enjoyed subverting authority, and liked joking about it, too. He was endlessly hospitable, and an amazing cook.

One of the unsung heroes of the peace and justice movement, Elmer's life was an example of the daily actions that personify nonviolence and love—not only did he take risks himself, he was there for others. It seems too small to say that he will be missed, which of course is true; or that his legacy goes on, which it will, with all of us. I feel as if there is a hole in the fabric of our resistance and we will have to work together to mend it.

—Melissa Jameson

New Developments

An update on projects funded by the Muste Institute



PHOTO BY JACQUES-EANTIZIOU

Farmworkers celebrate the Taco Bell boycott victory in Louisville, Kentucky, on March 12.

The Winter 2005 issue of *Muste Notes* featured the **Student Farmworker Alliance** and its dynamic Taco Bell boycott campaign in support of fair wages for tomato pickers. The Coalition of Immokalee Workers, the Florida farmworker group which launched the boycott in 2001, announced on March 8 that Taco Bell's parent company, YUM Brands Inc., had agreed to all the campaign's demands. YUM will pay a penny more per pound for Florida tomatoes, nearly doubling the pay of some 1,500 tomato pickers. The Student Farmworker Alliance played a key role by successfully organizing students—Taco Bell's target market—into "Boot the Bell" campaigns at some 300 colleges and universities. The boycott is over, but CIW and the Alliance have their sights set on the rest of the fast-food industry, including corporate giants such as McDonalds and Burger King. As the Alliance says on its website (www.sfalliance.org): "Watch out Ronald...we know how to win!"



PHOTO FROM WWW.VANUNU.PRESERVE.CO.UK

Vanunu speaks to the international press.

In April 2005, Israeli nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu was indicted for speaking to foreign journalists and violating other restrictions imposed on him following his release from prison a year earlier. A former technician at the Dimona nuclear plant, Vanunu spent nearly 18 years in prison for exposing Israel's secret nuclear program. The Muste Institute supported the **U.S. Campaign to Free Mordechai Vanunu** with grants in September 1993 and February 1998. The Campaign is asking for letters of protest to Israeli officials—see www.nonviolence.org/vanunu/.

New Grants, April 2005

GREEN ACTION

Tel Aviv, Israel: \$1,500

Green Action has been working for environmental and social change in Israel and the Palestinian Territories since 1995, focusing on militarism, the environment and fair trade, among other issues. This grant goes for a nonviolent direct action training workshop at the fifth annual Activism Festival in Lod, Israel, in June 2005, to be followed by an action against segregation barriers currently under construction in Lod.

IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

Philadelphia, PA: \$1,600

Iraq Veterans Against the War is a national organization made up of recent veterans and active duty service members from the military and National Guard whose experiences serving in Iraq have led them to oppose the war and occupation there. Our grant goes for a two-day training for regional coordinators and other key members to learn basic skills in grassroots organizing.

NIGER DELTA PROJECT FOR ENVIRONMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS & DEVELOPMENT

Rivers State, Nigeria: \$1,900

Since August 1999 this group has been organizing communities to nonviolently confront the Elf Totalfina multinational oil company and the

Nigerian government over the environmental destruction, social breakdown and human rights abuses caused by oil drilling in the Niger Delta. This grant goes for a training workshop in Sangana, a Niger Delta community in Bayelsa State which has been badly affected by oil development.

OAK RIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL PEACE ALLIANCE

Oak Ridge, TN: \$1,000

Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance was founded in 1988 to oppose nuclear weapons production at the Y12 plant in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. This grant goes for an August 2005 demonstration at the Y12 plant marking the 60th anniversary of the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

PEACE HOUSE

Ashland, OR: \$500

Peace House was founded in 1982 as a resource center for nonviolence, education and action around peace and justice issues. This grant goes for the Youth and Militarism Program, specifically for counter-recruitment outreach in southern Oregon's public schools, including Operation Opt-Out, encouraging parents and students to protect their privacy from military recruiters.

PEACE AND JUSTICE CENTER

Burlington, VT: \$500

Founded in 1979, the Peace and Justice Center works to educate and mobilize Vermont residents around a

wide range of social and economic justice issues. This grant is for the Conscientious Objector and Counter Recruitment Project, a coalition effort working with local high school students to provide information about alternatives to military service, consequences of joining the military, conscientious objection and related issues.

PROJECT ON YOUTH AND NON-MILITARY OPPORTUNITIES

Encinitas, CA: \$1,500

Project YANO was founded in 1984 by local community groups to counter the powerful influence of the armed forces in the San Diego area. Project YANO also provides written materials, trainings and other resources to similar projects around the US. This grant goes for revising and restocking bilingual counter-recruitment literature for local and national distribution; and digitizing a counter-recruitment organizing manual to make it available via the internet.

TRI-VALLEY CARES

Livermore, CA: \$1,500

Tri-Valley CARES was founded in 1983 by Livermore residents concerned about how nuclear weapons work at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory was impacting their communities. The organization seeks to clean up the lab and convert it to socially beneficial, environmentally sound research, and to abolish nuclear weapons worldwide. This grant is for a project to mark the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with a major disarmament demonstration and nonviolent action at Livermore lab, organized in coordination with actions at nuclear weapons sites around the country.

The A.J. Muste Memorial Institute makes small grants to groups engaged in nonviolent education and action for social justice. Our next deadlines for proposals are July 22 and October 21, 2005. Guidelines are on our website at www.ajmuste.org.

MUSTE QUOTES

MUSTE "Nuclear war is politically irrational and morally an indefensible and hideous atrocity, whoever perpetrates it. Preparation for such war is also politically irrational, and since there is no guarantee that the preparation will lead to anything but war, the preparation itself is an atrocity and a degradation of mankind."

(from *Getting Rid of War*, 1959)



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339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012
phone (212) 533-4335 fax (212) 228-6193
e-mail: info@ajmuste.org
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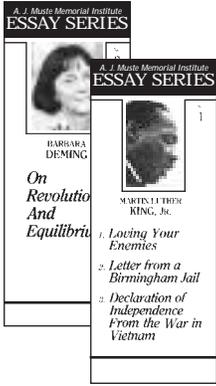
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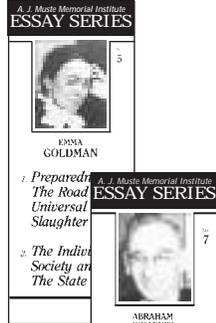
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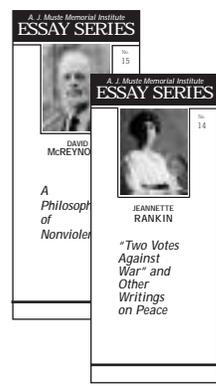
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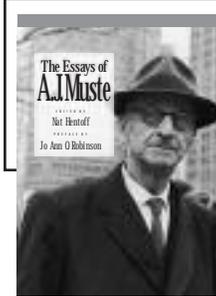
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