December 7, 2009

Dear Friends,

As you consider making year-end contributions, we ask you to reflect on the unique work that the Muste Institute has done for the past 35 years, and continues to do:

• providing thousands of grants to the most grassroots local, national and global projects promoting nonviolent action for social and economic justice, helping people like you to spread your giving to groups you might otherwise never have even heard about;

• providing tens of thousands of dollars in rent support to activist groups including War Resisters League and Met Council on Housing through the sheltering mission of our building program;

• sustaining dozens of organizations and projects such as SOA Watch, United for Peace and Justice and International Solidarity Movement through our sponsorship program;

• launching exciting grantmaking initiatives bolstering nonviolence training around the world, counter-recruitment education here at home, and grassroots gatherings in Latin America.

The new year will bring new challenges, but with your help, the Muste Institute will continue to strengthen the global movement opposing war and militarism and building economic and social justice.

Please renew your commitment by making a generous contribution today.

Sincerely,

Jane Guskin
Co-Director

Jeanne Strole
Co-Director

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Protesting Militarism in Europe

War Resisters International (WRI) activists participate in a blockade against the NATO Summit in April 2009 in Strasbourg, France, while a “Clown Army” of activists satirizes NATO’s war-mongering. More than 1,000 people took part in a nonviolent direct action campaign coordinated by WRI and other groups in Europe under the name NATO-ZU. The ongoing campaign will be on the agenda of a WRI meeting planned for January 2010 in India and supported by the Muste Institute—see Social Justice Fund grants, page 2.

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Building Program Takes New Steps

by Peter Muste, Board Chair

As we have reported in past issues of Muste Notes, the building at 339 Lafayette Street in downtown Manhattan that houses the Muste Institute and our social justice movement tenants is in need of serious structural repair.

After investigating several alternatives, consulting with architects and engineers, and engaging in a great deal of deliberation and personal and organizational soul-searching, the board has voted to move toward a sale of the property and the purchase of a new home for the Institute and our tenant organizations.

While we are saddened to leave our current home, we look forward to new opportunities, and a chance to refocus our energies and resources on strengthening all of our program work, including our mission of providing low-cost office space to grassroots groups dedicated, as we are, to nonviolent social change. The dialogue on this matter has generated several interesting long-term possibilities, and we will keep you informed of them, as well as the progress of this process.

Your continued support is not only valuable, it is indispensable as we face the challenges of this transition.
Our Social Justice Fund makes grants for grassroots activist projects in the US and around the world, giving priority to those with small budgets and little access to more mainstream funding sources. The next deadline is April 19, 2010. Guidelines are at http://ajmuste.org/guidelin.htm. If supporting social justice activism is important to you, please donate now to help us expand this important grantmaking program.

May 2003: Nukeywatch activists participate in a Mothers’ Day blockade of the Navy’s Extremely Low Frequency (ELF) submarine warfare transmitter in northern Wisconsin. After years of protests, the ELF system was finally shut down in September 2004.

NUKEWATCH
Luck, WI: $1,000
Founded in 1979, Nukeywatch is an environmental and peace action group dedicated to the abolition of nuclear power and weapons. This grant goes for Resistance for a Nuclear Free Future, a national gathering scheduled for the July 4th weekend, 2010, with the goal of increasing awareness and action around nuclear issues through discussions, workshops, nonviolence training, celebration and direct action. The gathering will be hosted by the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance, another past Muste Institute grantee. www.nukeywatch.com

PICA–PEACE THROUGH INTERAMERICAN COMMUNITY ACTION
Bangor, ME: $1,000
PICA is a grassroots, member-based organization in Bangor, Maine which has been working for more than 20 years for human rights and a fair economy. This grant goes for “Getting it together in the Global Economy,” an event scheduled for April 2010 which will bring together labor, immigrant and community activists, people of color, educators and students to build broader alliances in Maine for worker and immigrant rights and fair trade. The event is part of “kNOw US AND THEM,” a program of education and grassroots organizing connecting immigrants, displaced workers, and their allies. www.pica.ws

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE HONOR PROGRAM/ THE OTHER DEATH PENALTY PROJECT
Lancaster, CA: $1,000
Operating out of a state prison in Los Angeles County since 2000, the Honor Program gives imprisoned people an opportunity to work on specific self-improvement and rehabilitative goals and projects which benefit the community. Our grant goes for the Other Death Penalty Project: led and comprised solely of prisoners serving life without parole sentences comprise an unjust “other death penalty.”

www.theotherdeathpenalty.org

WAR RESISTERS’ INTERNATIONAL
London, UK: $2,000
Since 1921, War Resisters’ International (WRI) has been promoting nonviolent action against the causes of war, and supporting and connecting people around the world who refuse to take part in war or in preparations for war. Our grant goes for an international conference investigating the links between local nonviolent livelihood struggles and global militarism, to be held in India in late January 2010. www.wri-irg.org

Help us save money, and trees!
We want to acknowledge every gift we receive, yet we share your concerns about wasting resources. So whenever possible, we would like to start acknowledging your contributions via email. Please note your preference on our new reply envelope, and include your email address. Thanks!

An image from The Other Death Penalty Project’s powerpoint presentation: Life without parole “exposes our society’s concealed beliefs that redemption and personal transformation are not possible for all human beings, and that it is reasonable and just to forever define an individual by his worst act.”
Counter Recruitment Grants, October-December 2009

The Muste Institute’s Counter Recruitment Fund makes small grants for grassroots efforts to inform young people about the realities of military service, help them protect their privacy from recruiters and refer them to non-military education and employment options. Our next deadline for proposals is February 8, 2010. Guidelines are on our website at www.ajmuste.org/counter-recruit.htm.

American Friends Service Committee, Chicago Chapter, Chicago, IL: $1,500 for the Social Justice Spring Break and Summer Institutes, a plan to offer social justice activism training to 40 high school students during spring break and summer vacation.

Bash Back! Denver, Denver, CO: $1,000 to develop materials and resources that speak directly to LGBTQI youth considering joining the military.

Cleveland Peace Action Education Fund, Cleveland, OH: $1,000 for Alternatives to Military Recruitment, a program to expand efforts to counter the methods used by the military recruiters in Cleveland’s high schools and to provide accurate information to students and their parents.

Peace & Social Justice Center of South Central Kansas, Wichita, KS: $1,000 for a plan to expand an existing opt-out campaign to 10 additional school districts in south central Kansas, and to provide information on alternatives to military service to school counselors in all of the participating schools.

United for Peace and Justice, New York, NY: $1,500 for leafleting to educate students and parents about Opt-Out and recruiter access, as well as surveying New York City schools on adherence to the Department of Education’s guidelines on recruiter access.

Adalys Travel Grants, August-October 2009

The Adalys Vázquez Solidarity Travel Fund (formerly known as the NOVA Travel Fund) helps grassroots activists from Latin America, the Caribbean and indigenous territories throughout the hemisphere to participate in regional meetings. In August and October 2009, the Adalys Fund made 16 grants totaling $15,352.30 to groups based in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru. For a complete list of these grants see the online version of Muste Notes.

#1: Martin Luther King, Jr. – America’s leading apostle of human dignity – Loving Your Enemies; Letter from a Birmingham Jail; Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam. Also available in Spanish – see #13.

#2: Barbara Deming – the feminist connection to nonviolence – On Revolution and Equilibrium

#3: Henry David Thoreau – the original architect of resistance – On the Duty of Civil Disobedience

#4: Jessie Wallace Hughan – suffragist, peace activist, founder of the War Resisters League – Pacifism and Invasion; On Duelling

#5: Emma Goldman – fiery orator, anarchist, agitator for peace and liberation – Preparedness: The Road to Universal Slaughter; The Individual, Society and the State

#6: Rosa Luxemburg – courageous leader of Germany’s democratic socialist movement – Prison Letters

#7: A. J. Muste – foremost 20th Century pacifist theoretician and activist, minister, socialist – Who Has The Spiritual Atom Bomb?

#8: On Wars of Liberation – three essays on nonviolent resistance and free struggles, including analysis of Gandhi’s position

#9: Aldous Huxley – Twentieth Century visionary and prolific writer – Science, Liberty and Peace


#11: Some Writings on War Tax Resistance – thoughts, poems, tales from resisters, including Juanita Nelson, Allen Ginsberg and Pete Seeger

#12: Sidney Lens – peace and labor activist, socialist, occasional political candidate – six articles spanning three decades on the state of the U.S. labor movement

#13: (Spanish) Martin Luther King, Jr. – Spanish language translation of Loving Your Enemies, Letter from a Birmingham Jail and Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam.

#14: Jeannette Rankin – first woman in Congress, suffragist, pacifist – “Two Votes Against War” and Other Writings on Peace

#15: David McReynolds – longtime activist with the War Resisters League, Socialist Party presidential candidate – A Philosophy of Nonviolence

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* for bulk rates, contact the Muste Institute office

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