

QuakerAction

**World Social Forum shows
that another world IS possible**

**In Newark, immigrants get
legal aid and much more**

**Speaking tour inspires the
next generation of Africa
activists**

**Cambodian villagers
improve their food
and economic security**



**American Friends
Service Committee**

www.afsc.org





What's new
on **afsc.org**

QuakerAction

Summer 2005
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Join our email newsletter

We've recently reformatted our monthly email newsletter to better inform you about our current actions and resources.

www.afsc.org/email/

Find Youth and Militarism resources



Find information about what's true and false in military recruiting, conscientious objection, the military's

access to our schools, and more.

www.afsc.org/youthmil/

Support Israeli conscientious objectors

AFSC's Faces of Hope campaign has information about jailed Israeli conscientious objectors and ways you can help support them.

www.afsc.org/israel-palestine

All about economic justice

From one page, you can now find resources, action alerts, and more about our federal budget priorities, international debt, maquiladoras, trade pacts, and other economic justice issues.

www.afsc.org/economic-justice

On the cover

A monk in Sre Ambel, Cambodia, at the Center for Moral Education, tends to saplings donated by AFSC. The monks in Sre Ambel work with Khmer Ahimsa [Khmer Nonviolence], which grew out of an AFSC initiative to address village violence. Part of the group's focus is to inspire monks to become educators, mediators, and peacemakers in their communities. See related story on page 12.

Cover photo: Jim Wasserman

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Who we are

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace, and humanitarian service. Its work is based on the belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.

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Imagine

World Social Forum shows that another world IS possible

Imagine a sea of more than 200,000 celebratory, united voices marching for social justice, humane economic change, and peace.

Imagine 3.5 kilometers full for six days with workshops and panels (2,000 in all).

Imagine collaboration between trade unions and workers, religious and secular peace groups, indigenous peoples from Latin America and Asia, African movements against the debt, student groups, and women's organizations.

Imagine that another world IS possible.

Imagine the World Social Forum.

The World Social Forum (WSF) is a vital manifestation of the diversity and strength of the international peace and justice movement. It began in 2001 as a response to the World Economic Forum, an annual meeting of governmental and corporate leaders that endorses free market policies and promotes corporate globalization.

Since then, the WSF has become an annual event that brings together grassroots movements, unions, NGOs, *campesino* (rural worker) groups, and others to develop and share a peoples' alternative to corporate globalization and militarization.

In January, delegates from AFSC traveled to Porto Alegre, Brazil, to participate in the fifth WSF. This was AFSC's fourth year participating in the gathering.

AFSC delegates attended strategy sessions on various issues and networked with partner organizations. AFSC led three workshops:

- Peace and Social Justice Movements on the Global Stage: Building Power through Strategic Nonviolence
- Faith and the Future: Can Organized Religion Play a Constructive Role in the Struggle for the New Global Reality?
- The Impact of the Recent U.S. Election on the Peace and Justice Movement

AFSC delegates also presented on panels led by other groups, discussing issues such as migration, nuclear weapons, U.S. military bases, and water privatization.

In addition to the workshops, AFSC delegates attended strategy sessions on programmatic issues such as U.S. military bases, migration, water privatization, the global antiwar movement, Israel/Palestine, and debt cancellation. Many of these sessions focused on organizing global campaigns and actions.

The WSF does have room to grow and is working to address the ways in which it replicates

some of the systemic biases it seeks to confront.

For example, there is under-representation of Arab delegates from the Middle East, indigenous peoples, and groups from Africa. One of the ways the WSF is addressing these issues is by holding the WSF in countries other than Brazil.

In 2004, the WSF was held in Mumbai, India. The 2006 WSF will take the form of decentralized, regional forums, and in 2007 it will be held on the African continent.

Currently, many are discussing whether the forum should continue as a "space for debate" or develop into an organized movement for change.

However, as AFSC's General Secretary Mary Ellen McNish, who attended this year's forum, explains, "No matter what happens ... the energy that drew 150,000 people to engage in these important issues will prevail and the WSF will be a force to be reckoned with in the future."



Photos: (top) Arnie Alpert; (bottom) Sumanda Ghosh

Photos: (top) Water rights activists prepare for the 2006 World Water Forum; (bottom) AFSC delegation at the 2005 World Social Forum opening march.

A FAMILY FEELING

In Newark, immigrants get legal services and much more



BY WILLIE COLÓN REYES

Blanca Molina's dedication to her work defending the rights of U.S. immigrants is fueled by a mix of compassion, altruism, and first-hand experience—she was once an undocumented immigrant herself.

Blanca, originally from El Salvador, came to the AFSC Immigrant Rights



Blanca Molina, legal assistant/community organizer

Program in Newark, New Jersey, in 1991 because she needed help navigating the maze that is the U.S. immigration system. She stayed on as a volunteer, was hired as a community organizer, and is now both an organizer and legal assistant for the program.

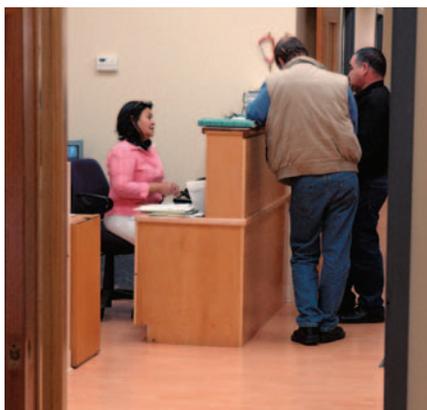
“I get very emotional when I think about the relationships between the people here and their families back home,” Blanca said. “They can’t go home.”

Blanca's emotion about the people she tries to help was echoed during interviews I conducted with other staff and volunteers, some of whom also came to the program as clients. I listened to them carefully. It sounded like they were talking about family.

Blanca's emotion about the people she tries to help was echoed during interviews I conducted with other staff and volunteers, some of whom also came to the program as clients. I listened to them carefully. It sounded like they were talking about family.

A range of services

Established in 1988, the regional program, based in Newark, provides an impressive range of services, including:



Esther Chavez (seated) helps day laborers solve a problem.

- Community outreach and education to immigrant groups
- Legal counseling and representation to low-income immigrants
- Educational meetings on immigration laws and immigrants' rights
- Community organizing and leadership development

With 13 staff members, the program is also part of AFSC's nationwide Project Voice, which works with immigrant-led organizations and their allies to influence the national agenda for immigration policy and immigrants' rights.

Small wonder that the uninitiated can get overwhelmed after spending a day in the program's bright, new, sixth-floor offices on Newark's bustling Market Street.

During a visit this past April, I watched and listened as the office buzzed with nonstop activity and conversations in Spanish, English, and French. The program's lawyers, legal assistants, community organizers, and volunteers juggled constant phone calls (including calls to a new legal hotline), appointments with clients who've im-

migrated from throughout the world, consultations with drop-ins, and prepared for the frequent presentations about immigrants' rights and immigration law that they're asked to give.

Then there were the reams of paperwork required for each case. The forms sound like a highway system gone mad: I-90 (Replacement of Green Card); I-360 (Special Immigrant Juvenile); I-821 (Temporary Protected Status); I-765 (Work Permit); I-485 (Adjustment of Status to Permanent Resident); and on and on.

I, for one, was exhausted. Yet, according to several staff members, this was a slow day.

As attorney and program director Amy Gottlieb noted, the office's level of activity reflects two factors: the tremendous need and the few lawyers who want to do this work.

“The stakes are so high,” Amy said. “We make a mistake and deportation can be the consequence.”

Aggravations abound

Frustrations are similarly high.

On the morning of my visit, Marguerite Marty, a staff attorney, had to rush to the nearby offices of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. One of her clients had encountered unexpected problems during a routine hearing. When Marguerite returned, she was shaking her head in disbelief.

“I talked to a supervisor who said, ‘You have to understand, we don't



Amy Gottlieb, program director

know the law. We don't do too many cases like this [immigrant victims of domestic abuse]," Marguerite recounted. "So I gave her a copy of the law."

The problem is compounded when dealing with government agencies that now require proof of legal status such as the Department of Motor Vehicles, noted Philippe Weisz, the program's managing attorney. He works primarily with immigrants seeking asylum or facing deportation, and immigrant children who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected.

"If immigration officials don't know their own laws, state officials certainly don't," he said. "How many people are falling through the cracks, denied services, when they legally could and should be OK?"

Meanwhile, Danielle Bolden, a staff attorney who works with immigrants detained at the Elizabeth (New Jersey) Detention Center, voiced her own disappointments. She spent the morning helping a Middle Eastern woman get



Marguerite Marty,
staff attorney

ready for her asylum hearing. The woman came to the United States to escape her abusive husband and was initially detained at the Elizabeth center.

Despite her dire situation, the woman's case won't be easy, especially with a system that's stacked against immigrants.

"The political climate after September 11 is extremely hostile to immigrants," Danielle said. "Many people with legitimate cases are considered suspect or thought to be lying."

A familiar story



Danielle Bolden,
staff attorney

Later in the day, Esther Chavez, one of the program's three-community organizers, called me to the reception desk. She was covering for the office's multitasking

wizard of a receptionist, Myrna Hernandez. Three men were standing nearby.

"We also have day laborers who come in with problems involving their employers," Esther said, motioning to the men, who looked distressed. "We try to help them out. That's another aspect of the work."

Indeed, it's impossible to capture all that the program does in 900 words. But the feeling behind the work—it comes back to family.



Philippe Weisz, managing attorney



Blanca Muñoz (left), volunteer and **Esther Chavez,** community organizer, prepare for a leadership training.

One of the newest members of that family is another Blanca—Blanca Muñoz. I listened as this Blanca, who's from Honduras, told me her story.

"I heard about AFSC from a friend," she said in Spanish. "I called to ask if this place really existed. It seemed like a dream, too good to be true."

Blanca, now a member of one of the immigrant-led committees organized by the program, was volunteering in the office. She was working with Esther to prepare for a 20-hour training that will help develop a new group of immigrant leaders.

It all sounded very familiar.

Willie Colón Reyes is the editor of Quaker Action.



Myrna Hernandez, the office's multitasking wizard of a receptionist.

The beautiful quilt (page 4, top) was created and donated to the Newark office by M'Annette Ruddell of the Development Department.

Putting all the options on the table

AFSC and military recruitment

BY MARY LORD

War has a human face. The faces of children and families caught in a crossfire or trapped in a besieged town. These are some of the victims of war.

Warriors also have a human face—faces of young men and women few of whom expected to find themselves in Iraq. When we look into the faces of the U.S. soldiers now in Iraq or Colombia or any one of hundreds of U.S. military bases around the world, it is right to ask what brought them here—individually, personally into this place.

While for some it is a love of country that includes military service, for many young people, the military is the only path they see that can take them from poverty to college, advanced job training, and a career. Studies show that 33 percent of men and women enlist in the U.S. armed forces to fund their education. Another 34 percent of men and 31 percent of women enlist for job training.

For too many, enlistment is perhaps the only road they see to the American dream.

But for many of these young men



and women, the military does not lead to advanced job training, or money for college, or the American dream. It is a road to an American nightmare of broken promises, misrepresentation, and often outright lies from military recruiters desperate to meet quotas.

Even if they escape the death and injury that can come with war, fewer than 35 percent of soldiers get any money for college. In fact, bureaucratic rules can let the military take the money the soldiers themselves put into their college account.

For too many the promised advanced job training in computers or mechanics turns out to be infantry training. Young people, who are told by recruiters they can always leave the Army if they don't like it, find out in

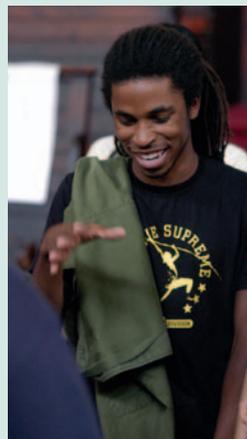
basic training that the military is a job you can't quit.

"Do You Know Enough to Enlist?," AFSC's brochure for young men and women considering the military, gives a short checklist of questions and advice. Volunteers and AFSC offices have distributed tens of thousands of copies in English and Spanish to schools and centers where young people hang out. We respect the decisions young persons make about their lives, but it is important they are informed choices.

A real choice

It is not the sons and daughters of the privileged who go into the military. The schools the recruiters go to are poor rural and inner city

Photos: (top) Connie Houder; (bottom) Terry Foss



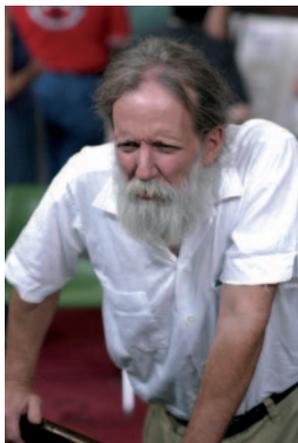
schools. The neighborhoods are poor neighborhoods and immigrant neighborhoods where both documented and undocumented immigrants are promised U.S. citizenship in return for military service in Iraq.

If we want to make sure that young people have an informed choice, a real choice about military service, we need to reach out to the same schools and neighborhoods visited by the recruiters.

For nearly 20 years AFSC's Youth and Militarism Program has challenged the military recruiters and the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs. For many years we were one of very few programs around the United States working on "counter-recruitment."

Now the movement is spreading. More organizations, including the powerful voices of military families and Iraq vets, are getting involved. This June, AFSC will again host the third annual national training conference on counter-military recruitment work, bringing together activists, vets, and educators who want young people to have a real choice.

Mary Lord is AFSC's Assistant General Secretary for Peace and Conflict Resolution



Youth & Militarism resources

AFSC's "Do You Know Enough to Enlist" brochure has helped tens of thousands of young people answer questions such as:

Will enlistment help me achieve my goals?

Am I trying to escape my own problems?

Am I willing to give up control?

Am I willing to kill and be killed?

Do I have other options?



Brochures are available in Spanish and English. A new poster, "Ten Points to Consider Before You Sign a Military Enlistment Agreement," produced in conjunction with the Syracuse Cultural Workers, is also available.

Order copies or get a downloadable version from the Youth and Militarism Program at www.afsc.org/youthmil/resources or by calling (215) 241-7176.

For more information about AFSC's Youth and Militarism Program, including the June conference on counter-military recruitment work, log onto www.afsc.org/youthmil.

Photos: (top, page 6) Members of Veterans for Peace at a "No Child Left Unrecruited" event in Albany, New York. (bottom) Scenes from the June 26, 2004, counter-military recruitment conference in Philadelphia.

News from around AFSC

PEACEBUILDING AND DEMILITARIZATION

Waging peace on the second anniversary of the Iraq War

Responding to AFSC's call to "Stand for Peace," untold thousands turned out across the country on the second anniversary of the Iraq War.

Anchored by the Eyes Wide Open exhibit in Los Angeles and a United for Peace and Justice rally at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, more than 250 events took place, drawing enthusiastic support from Olympia, Washington, to Key West, Florida. Organizers in Cherry Valley, New York,



Nearly 1,000 people marched behind this flag-draped coffin in downtown Chicago as part of the March 20 second anniversary event sponsored by United for Peace: Faithful Citizenship. Chicago AFSC was a catalyst in forming this faith-based coalition.

reported that "52 people in a town with one traffic light is a lot." In Show Low, Arizona, the 11 people who gathered for a midday vigil on March 19 reported that smiles and waves far outweighed negative reactions.

To date, more than 80,000 people have viewed the online Wage Peace movie, more than 45,000 have signed the Iraq Peace Petition, and 35,000 are wearing the Wage Peace bracelet. Learn more at www.afsc.org/wagepeace.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

After the tsunami

After responding to the December 2004 Asian tsunami with emergency aid, AFSC is now in recovery mode.

Continuing our partnership with the Indonesian organization Society for Health, Education, Environment, and Peace (SHEEP), the focus is on East Aceh, an isolated area that has not received much assistance. We are helping 10 local organizations with access to food and medical aid and to get aid workers out to remote villages. We also are directly supporting the rebuilding of livelihoods.

Relief efforts have expanded work to Thailand where AFSC works with several agencies that are assisting Burmese

migrant workers in Thailand who were affected by the tsunami but who have been discriminated against in aid distribution.

More information is available online at www.afsc.org/tsunami.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Juvenile death penalty abolished!

On March 1, the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed the execution of juvenile offenders. The majority in the 5-4 decision sided with the coalition of civil rights groups, religious denominations, legal organizations, and medical associations urging the court to strike down the juvenile death penalty.

The AFSC and others filed an amicus brief with the Supreme Court ques-

tioning the constitutionality of executing minors. "With this decision, the United States takes a major step toward joining the twenty-first century," said Tonya McClary, director of AFSC's Criminal Justice Program. "The U.S. Supreme Court has confirmed that executing youthful offenders is indeed a cruel practice."

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

SOS! Campaign calls for a moral budget

This winter and spring, AFSC's SOS! (Save Our Services) Campaign called on Congress to adopt a "moral budget" that reflects justice, equality, and opportunity. Organized by AFSC's Economic Justice Program, the campaign has yielded concrete results and strengthened faith-based organizing on a



In the bones

A China workcamp volunteer continues a family tradition

BY M'ANNETTE RUDELL

**The earnest young Quaker...
the compassionate nurse...
a chance meeting in the chaos of
World War I in France...**

While it may sound like a movie plot, Craig Shaw says that's how his maternal grandparents really met. Henry Dearden and Marion Craig were among the first who volunteered for the "units," largely staffed by Friends, that provided medical and humanitarian assistance in Europe during the war. Their service began a family tradition and connection to AFSC.

That tradition was continued by Craig's parents, Mary (known as Mardy) and Mark Shaw. They both volunteered for the Friends Ambulance Unit in China, with Mark arriving in 1946 and Mardy two years later. They were married in China.

Craig "inherited" the family interest in China and studied Chinese history in college, eventually getting a PhD in Chinese literature. He now teaches Chinese language, and works as a translator and freelance editor on books related to China.

Through a family friend, Craig found out about the AFSC-sponsored summer workcamp in China. His initial inquiry evolved into an assistant director position where his language skills were especially useful. In 2004, he joined other U.S. citizens (ranging in age from 16 to more than 70), five South Koreans, two Japanese, and sev-



eral Chinese graduate students in Xiaoshicun ("Little Stone Village") in eastern Hunan Province.

AFSC's East Asia Quaker International Affairs Representatives, James and Wu Na Reilly, have a strong connection to the community because it is the home village of Wu Na's family. She and James developed the plans for China Summer along with local activists. In addition to AFSC, Westfield

Friends Meeting (New Jersey) and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting are involved in recruiting volunteers to go to Xiaoshicun.

A major long-term goal of the project is greater educational opportunities for young women, who typically attend classes only through junior high school.

In the past several years, the workcamps have rehabilitated an abandoned building for use as a community education center for language classes, a library, and computer center. The volunteers taught English and there has been an increasing emphasis on

environmental education.

Craig's volunteer group held a Science Fair Day where demonstrations using solar cookers and producing dyes from native plants were big hits.

Reflecting on this unique experience, Craig says, "While excited about the progress of the project, seeing the flow of information among the participants, and the wonderful sharing at a very human level, for me the most satisfying aspect of China Summer was seeing how rural China works. Just being part of a small, vital community added a significant dimension to my understanding of the country."

Craig also notes that he strongly felt the support of his parents as he volunteered with AFSC. And he was aware, too, of the heritage his Dearden grandparents gave to him.

"AFSC has been a constant thread in our family," Craig says, "and I am grateful to have been of service in such an important project."

M'Annette Ruddell, whose family also has a long-time connection to the Service Committee, is Associate Director of Donor Marketing for AFSC. In 1948, her father, Dick Ruddell, met Mardy Shaw's ship in Shanghai.

Photos: (top) Craig Shaw (front row, left) with workcamp participants; (bottom) The project promotes greater educational opportunities for young women.





Advocates of hope

Speaking tour inspires the next generation of Africa activists

*This past February, AFSC-St. Louis staff member Anyango Reggy helped organize an 11-city, 36-college campus speaking tour, *Life Over Debt: Africa in the Age of Global Apartheid*. The tour helped increase awareness and inspire young people to organize around the issues that most affect the African continent: HIV/AIDS and international debt.*

Below, Anyango shares her thoughts on what she calls “...one of the most memorable experiences of my life.”

AFSC’s Africa Peacebuilding Program has a proud 20-year history of bringing activist speakers from various parts of Africa to U.S. communities. This year, the tour was led and organized by youth from six countries in Africa.

I had the opportunity to travel with three of the speakers. They represent a new wave of freedom fighters at the forefront of the struggle for economic justice and peace building on the African continent.

Stories of struggle

Jean Claude Nkundwa, a youth peace trainer from Burundi, spoke about dropping out of school in the middle of his university studies because education is no longer affordable for the average young person in Burundi.

John Bomba, the National Coordinator of Zimbabwe-based Student’s Against Privatization, was born in 1980, when Zimbabwe gained independence. He is part of the generation known as the “born frees.” After independence, every child had access to books, meals, and a packet of milk.

“This meant a lot to most of us

because our families are poor,” he said. “The government was then told by the IMF [International Monetary Fund] to cut spending on services like health care and education so they no longer provide these services for free. Education is no longer a right; it is a privilege of the few.”

Nomasonto Mthimkulu, Coordinator of Youth for Work in South Africa, shared that her brother died last year because her family did not have enough money to purchase much-needed medicines to save his life.

“Our family members are dying because there are pharmaceutical companies in the West that care more about making profit than saving people’s lives,” Nomasonto said.

These youth activists urged audiences to challenge detrimental U.S. government and corporate policies. “There is an emergency situation in Africa today, a crisis that the world is not paying attention to,” John Bomba said. “We know the world cares about human suffering because we saw it during the recent tsunami disasters. Africa needs us to advocate on her behalf.”

A memorable experience

After 28 very intense days on the road, I reflect on one of the most memorable experiences of my life.

Young adults were energized and inspired to organize around Africa’s most pressing issues; connections were made between African youth and African-Americans as we recognize our deep historical and social connections. Countless African immigrants were challenged to stay connected with their homelands. Solidarity and cultural sharing was achieved with Native

American youth; and we broke bread and fellowshipped with Quakers and other friends.

This trip renewed my hope in the future of the continent that I love so much and have dedicated my life to serving. The future of Africa is bright as a new generation of well informed and empowered young people commit their lives to her liberation.

A virtual tour

Find out more about the recent Africa speaking tour online by listening to organizers from six African countries talk about problems and solutions on their continent. Go to www.afsc/africa-listen



Anyango Reggy (right) and Nomasonto Mthimkulu during a stop in Philadelphia.



John Bomba (left) and Nomasonto Mthimkulu (center) talk to a woman from Nigeria about the need for debt cancellation.



Bread and peace

Cambodian villagers improve their food and economic security

A 45-minute boat ride from the town of Sre Ambel, Cambodia, will land you in a village along a brackish river where houses are perched on stilts, fishing nets hang from porch beams to dry in the sun, and giant clay jars catch and store fresh rainwater for drinking.

In the lowlands, saltwater tides flood the fields, and families struggle to grow enough rice for survival; inland, the Cardamom Mountains are covered in forest but threatened by logging. Traditional trades and agricultural techniques, once taught from one generation to the next, have been lost due to the disruptions of violent conflict.

Here on land once considered Khmer Rouge territory, villagers today are working to restore their community and their livelihoods and protect precious natural resources for future generations.

Restoring tradition

Khmer Ahimsa [Khmer Nonviolence], now a Cambodian nongovernmental organization, grew out of an AFSC initiative to address village violence. Khmer Ahimsa staff help communities rebuild their meeting houses and traditional self-help associations, restoring a positive sense of self-reliance into fragmented villages. It also works



Photos: Ann Morrill

with monks, to inspire them to become educators, mediators, and peacemakers in their communities, as they were in the past.

Concurrently, the AFSC Integrated Sustainable Livelihood Program (ISLP), led entirely by Cambodians, is helping villagers in rural Cambodia regain lost farming skills and restore the Cambodian tradition of *sankhabak kasekor* or “farmers helping each other.”

Farmers are rebuilding dams to keep out the saltwater tides that destroy the rice crop. To bridge seasonal rice shortages, farmers can borrow rice from a community rice bank and repay in-kind at the end of the season, when their own crops are harvested. ISLP introduces new seeds and better cropping techniques to help farmers improve yields.

ISLP and villagers also are developing cooperative natural resource management in order to claim and protect village livelihood resources. Volunteer fishery and forestry patrols prevent illegal and destructive harvesting, protecting the communities’ future.

For labor and transportation, few animals are sturdier or more reliable than the water buffalo.

To help the poorest and most vulnerable families, ISLP has introduced water buffalo “banks.” Groups of four families are loaned two water buffalo to jointly care for and whose labor they share. Together they plow fields, haul firewood, and lend out the work animals in exchange for goods and services. The first two offspring are given to two families, and two new families are brought in to share.



The process of sharing resources, cultivating land, and learning from one another has yielded something previously absent and yet most essential to sustainability: a cohesive community in this remote corner of Cambodia.

Challenges ahead

This area, once isolated by terrain and conflict, is now opening rapidly to outside forces. New roads and port development are bringing increased traffic into the area. Illegal logging and commercial trawlers threaten local livelihoods, and attendant disputes have erupted in violence. Tensions over land use between villagers, environmental groups, and foreign investors are compelling Khmer Ahimsa and ISLP to take a role in conflict mediation to protect the fragile environmental, economic, and social balance in the region.

The past few years of dealing with adversity and finding solutions has strengthened these communities and prepared them to face what may be their greatest challenge yet.

Photos: (top and bottom) Villagers in a remote part of Cambodia are building a cohesive community.

Staff picks

Tips on movies, books, and music to expand your horizons

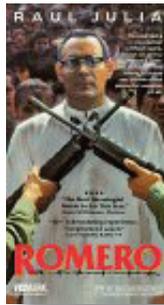


In an era of media explosion—and time scarcity—how do we choose what to watch, read, or listen to? In this issue, AFSC staff from around the country share tips on books, movies, and music that expand their horizons, inform their work, and help them make sense of the world.

FILM/VIDEO

ROMERO

This film movingly portrays the life of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, who was killed by the military 25 years ago. Raul Julia brilliantly plays Romero, a champion of the poor and of human rights.



Josefina Castillo, Austin

HOTEL RWANDA

When hearing about the Rwanda massacres, very little is said about the apathy shown by the so-called super powers toward humanity outside their sphere. The movie traces the roots of dissension between the Hutus and Tutsis to Rwanda's former colonizers and prompts soul-searching reflection.

Shahina Malik, Philadelphia

DOWNFALL

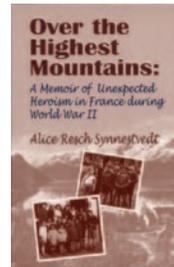
Covering the last ten days of the Third Reich, Bruno Ganz is remarkable as the fuehrer. The film reminds us of the inevitable tragic consequences when good people remain silent as arrogant government officials embark on foolhardy imperial adventures.

Max Obuszewski, Baltimore

BOOK

Over the Highest Mountains: A Memoir of Unexpected Heroism in France during World War II

by Alice Resch Synnestevedt



The book gives a vivid picture of what it was like to live under Nazi occupation in France. Alice, who served as an AFSC representative in France, shares her efforts to help hundreds of people, under threat of arrest and death, to escape into the relative safety of Switzerland and Spain.

Jack Sutters, Philadelphia

(Note: Available from AFSC Literature Resources Unit. Call (215) 241-7048 or log onto www.afsc.org/resources.)

The Fifth Sacred Thing

by Starhawk

This work of fiction presents a picture of a country in the future ruled by greed, supported by religion, and bolstered by violence. Set against this are communities of people deeply committed to nonviolence and a humane world. A great story, full of wonderful concepts, it presents true pictures of what it costs to live nonviolence.

Maria Pappalardo, Philadelphia

Bury the Chains

by Adam Hochschild

This in-depth look at the anti-slavery struggle in the British Empire, from the late eighteenth century to the end of the slave trade in the 1830s, is viewed as the first modern human rights movement. British abolitionists (disproportionately Quaker) combined moral outrage with

practical arguments to change public opinion and, ultimately, public policy.

Ed Nakawatase, Philadelphia

Confessions of an Economic Hit Man

by John Perkins

A *New York Times* bestseller, this book exposes the entrapment of poor developing countries in a debt cycle that allows the North to keep a comfortable control over their policies, and includes the startling revelation that there really are “economic hit men” being hired by the U.S. government to fulfill this mission.

Jessica Walker Beaumont,
Philadelphia, and Martha Yager,
New Hampshire

MUSIC

Greg Brown (numerous recordings)

As tunes go, Iowa's own Greg Brown is tops. Although most of his songs aren't political, all delve into the depths of what it means to be human—how we relate to others, God, ourselves, and our planet.

Jon Krieg, Des Moines

Loretta Lynn, *Van Lear Rose*

Loretta's Grammy-winning latest is a wonder, with terrific songwriting and that unmistakable voice. Never one to hide her emotions, retreat into victimhood, or take herself too seriously, Loretta Lynn just keeps moving into fresher, riskier territory.

Kay Whitlock, Missoula, Montana



Stay tuned for more staff picks in the next issue of *Quaker Action*.



Acts of conscience

A message from AFSC General Secretary Mary Ellen McNish

...yet there was in the depth of my mind a scruple which I could not get over; and at certain times I was greatly distressed on the account.... To refuse the active payment of a tax which our society generally paid was exceedingly disagreeable, but to do a thing contrary to my conscience appeared yet more dreadful.

John Woolman
18th Century Friend

I can't begin to tell you what the encouraging mail I receive from so many of our supporters means to me. I recently received a copy of a letter that a Quaker supporter sent to the Internal Revenue Service. In his letter, he writes:

"...I find myself unable, in conscience, to voluntarily pay the military portion of my tax liability.

"Several times in the last months I have given volunteer time to assist with the staging of the 'Eyes Wide Open' traveling exhibit sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee.

... I pray in the conviction that our policy makers' eyes and hearts can and will become wide open to the death, suffering, economic havoc, and environmental destruction being wreaked, and that the present disastrous course of our nation be corrected.

"My decision comes with testing and struggle. Uneasy with putting myself in noncompliance with the U.S. tax system, I must nevertheless do what I can to comply with God's law, which is the higher law."

This friend's witness reminds me that it is often individual prophetic acts



strung together one by one that change our world—sometimes more quickly than we would have expected. The spirit in which he writes also reminds me that we must never forget that conscience must be at the root of all we do.

Whether it is in refusing to fund war, resisting military service, or calling for government policies that protect the vulnerable and the stranger, we must resist being drawn down to the level of personal animosity. It is in our reason and conscience that we are made in God's image, and it is in using these in love and humility that we grow into the Spirit of God.

Mary Ellen McNish

REFLECTIONS

A legacy of justice

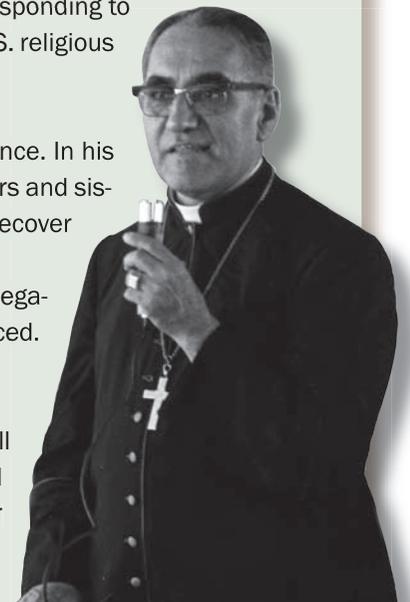
Remembering Archbishop Romero

Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador wrote to President Jimmy Carter in February 1980, urging him not to send military aid because it would only sharpen the repression of the Salvadoran people. Responding to that repression, AFSC's Central America staff, Angela and Phil Berryman, organized a U.S. religious leaders' delegation to San Salvador that arrived on March 22.

They attended Archbishop Romero's Sunday mass where he acknowledged their presence. In his homily, he particularly addressed soldiers and police saying, "You are killing your brothers and sisters. God's law, 'Thou shalt not kill,' should prevail over any given by man. It is time to recover your conscience and obey it. I implore you, in the name of God: stop the repression."

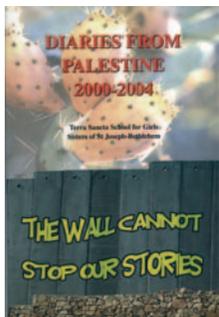
The next evening, Archbishop Romero was assassinated while saying mass. The AFSC delegation went to the hospital where he was taken and was present when his death was announced. That night they met with U.S. ambassador Robert White and expressed their concerns.

Although he often received death threats, Archbishop Romero said, "If they kill me, I will arise in the Salvadoran people." Twenty-five years later people from around the world remember Romero's legacy by committing themselves to work for justice in El Salvador and across the globe.



HIP Program Manual: Empowering Youth through Conflict Resolution and Community Building

Creating a community of youth who have the communication skills to cooperate with each other to build a better world is a powerful way to foster peace. AFSC's Help Increase the Peace Program (HIPP) revised manual has new and updated activities to teach conflict resolution, raise awareness about social issues, and guide you in how to start a HIP Program in your area. **\$30** per copy plus \$6 shipping for the first copy. To order, send a check to AFSC, P.O.B. 73008, Washington, D.C. 20056 or call Kathryn Liss, HIPP National Coordinator, at (202) 299-1052



The Wall Cannot Stop Our Stories: Diaries from Palestine 2000 – 2004

This collection of diary entries is, in part, the result of AFSC's Quaker Palestinian Youth Project diary writing project.

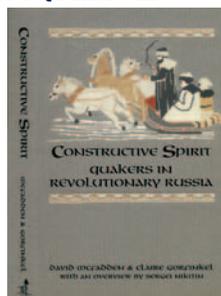
The project allowed young women and men to register what happened around them in their daily lives, cope with negative and traumatic feelings and experiences, and reflect on a world with conflicting cultural demands and opportunities. Softcover, 293 pages. **\$20**

We Felt Their Kindliness: An American Family's Afghan Odyssey 1949 – 1951

In 1949, Rebecca and Osborne Cresson and their two children moved to Afghanistan. For two years, while teaching and homemaking, they recorded the scene around them in words and pictures. Proceeds benefit AFSC Afghan projects. Softcover, 253 pages. **\$20**

Constructive Spirit: Quakers in Revolutionary Russia

In the chaotic aftermath of WWI, the newly-formed American Friends Service Committee sent a team of six women to join their



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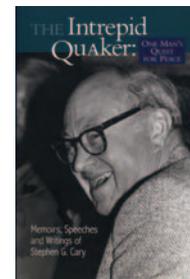
And show your support for peace with WAGE PEACE Bracelet \$2



Unless otherwise noted, order all items on this page through AFSC's Literature Resources Unit

1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102-1403
Phone: (215) 241-7048 (or toll-free 1-888-588-2372, ext. 2)
Fax: (215) 241-7275 or order online at www.afsc.org/resources

British counterparts who were helping refugees fleeing from Poland into Russia. *Constructive Spirit* includes dramatic first-hand narratives of their courageous adventures. Softcover, 232 pages. **\$16.95**



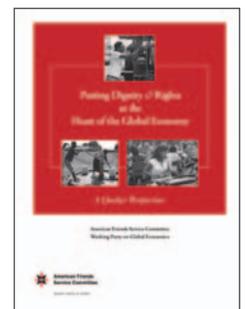
The Intrepid Quaker: One Man's Quest for Peace

The memoirs, speeches, and writings of long-time AFSC staffer and board member Steve Cary reveal leadership and philosophy that mirror the Quaker

experience in education and peace work in the latter half of the twentieth century. Hardcover, 337 pages. **\$20**

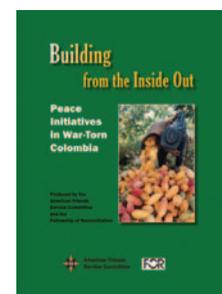
Putting Dignity and Rights at the Heart of the Global Economy

Written by an AFSC Working Party on Global Economics, *Putting Dignity and Rights at the Heart of the Global Economy* examines the global economy through the lens of human dignity and economic rights. It reflects Quaker values and principles relevant



to a just economy, as well as the AFSC's longtime experience in economic justice work. Paperback; 118 pages. **\$7**

Building from the Inside Out: Peace Initiatives in War-torn Colombia



This vivid, often-moving booklet presents stories and testimonies of Colombians working to find a non-violent resolution to the long-running civil war in their country. Softcover; 32 pages. Available for free download at www.afsc.org/colombia. Print copies: **\$5**. Order from the Latin America/Caribbean Peacebuilding Program, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19102; e-mail: colombia@afsc.org.

Build a Future for ...

Peace

Every year, bequests from our supporters allow AFSC to undertake peacemaking work in some of the world's most difficult regions.

Right now in Beijing, Bogotá, and Jerusalem, Quaker International Affairs Representatives are playing important roles in addressing some of the world's thorniest regional conflicts. At the Quaker United Nations Office, staff have played a valued role for more than 50 years.

All of this is possible, in part, because of Friends and supporters like you who remember AFSC in their estate planning.

AFSC values all bequests, whether large or small. Together, these gifts ensure the stability of AFSC's ongoing witness for peace, justice, and human dignity.

By naming AFSC in your will or trust or as a beneficiary of your retirement account, you can reduce estate taxes and continue your commitment to Quaker service. Best of all, it's quite easy.



To learn more about becoming a "Friend for the Future" contact Mike Valoris of our Gift Planning Office at 1-888-588-2372, extension 200, or send an e-mail to GiftPlanning@afsc.org, or check the box on the enclosed reply envelope.

Photos: top right: Palestine, Terry Foss; top left: China Summer Work Camp, Jaime and Wu Na Reilly; bottom right: Colombia, Rachel Chandler-Worth



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