

# Peace Center Press



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The Oxford Citizens for Peace and Justice*

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## War, War and More War: What Can We Do About It?

The Bush wars combine blind, brutal force with secrecy and fear-mongering in what the administration says are vital campaigns to defeat terrorism and establish democracy. No one in the administration and few in Congress appear even to consider alternatives to this course and to such tactics.

In this setting, what is the peace movement—and a peace and justice organization—to do? Our public discourse should express at least the obvious:

- There is no acceptable reason for the U.S. attack on Iraq or for continuing the occupation.
- The nation that wages a preemptive war is the aggressor.
- Any member of Congress who says he/she might have voted for the president's Iraq-war option, knowing that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, is playing into Bush's hand.
- Continuing the war in Iraq does not diminish the insurgency but feeds it by stirring up more insurgents.
- Whether there is a time-line or not, the U.S. must commit itself to leave Iraq absolutely and completely—to not retain any military bases there.
- Chaotic conditions in Iraq after the U.S. departure

would not be the fault of that departure but of the venture's insanity in the first place.

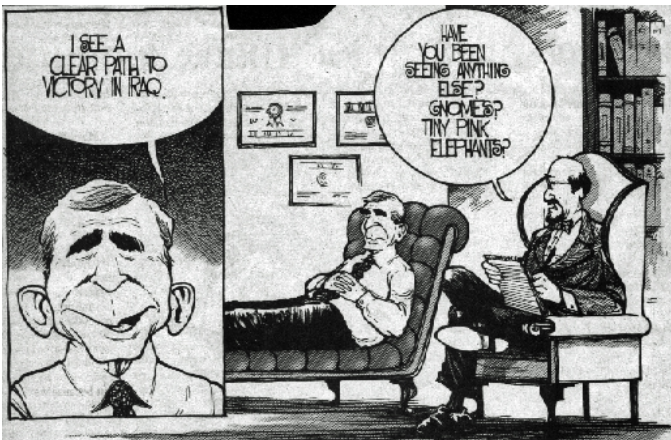
- The U.S. response to the 9/11 attack should not have been in terms of war but, rather, in terms of the pursuit of justice. Vastly greater efforts could then have been channeled into detective and policing work, and the terrorist network could have been rendered far less effective. The term "war on terrorism" is being misused—employed as an excuse for trampling on civil liberties.
- The by-products of the Iraq war and the "war on terror" have been enormously damaging to our country. Among these by-products are: (1) the abuse and torture of prisoners, as at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, (2) the suggestions by public figures that torture of prisoners is a viable option, (3) the special rendition of prisoners to countries where torture is used, (4) secret U.S. prisons in other countries, (5) the administration's pervasive use of fear tactics, (6) the government's and the public's neglect of the worldwide problem of nuclear arms proliferation, and (7) Bush's finding an "excuse" for his illegal, warrantless, and unwarranted spying on U.S. citizens.

The reason Bush gives for his domestic spying is a prime example of the administration's use of the fear tactic. The argument that the swift advance of communication technology has made obsolete even FISA's proviso for a 72-hour judicial-oversight time is intended not only to scare but also to delude citizens. The point that Bush does not make is that if technology has sped up terrorists' contacts with each other, it has also sped up the ability of detectives to detect.

Thus democracy in our country dwindles as Bush cries out that we are spreading it in Iraq and throughout the Middle East. At no time since Eisenhower's famed warning about the encroaching military-industrial complex has that complex grown more frighteningly or been so much enmeshed in government as at present. Wars and more wars for the sake of war-industrialists'

profits are integral to the operations of the right-wing and the present administration. The current course leads to perpetual war, and that is sure death for democracy.

We must, in this mid-term election year, do all we can to encourage the growing public discontent with the Bush regime and the whole right-wing madness. We must help to change the direction of our country. Perhaps Bush and his cohorts can be impeached and ousted, but that is doubtful. More important is our focus and effect in the local and state elections this fall. Jim Hightower declares in a recent issue of his *Lowdown*: "I have great hope, because grassroots people are so much stronger, more resilient, more creative, and more *American* than the gooberheads at the top, and they'll not long be held down or held back." If that is so, we certainly need to keep saying what is so obvious. People are beginning to listen.



Each one of us can help in one or all of the following ways:

- Responding honestly and confidently to political comments made in conversation.
- Keeping addresses (e-mail and slow mail) and telephone numbers handy for frequent contact with the media and members of Congress.
- Writing frequent letters to editors of local and area newspapers (once every one or two months).
- Speaking out at every opportunity, and joining with others—their voices and actions—to enhance the power of your own.

What we cannot do is continue to let this happen without our dissent. —RD

*If now isn't a good time for the truth, when will we get around to it?*  
—Nikki Giovanni

## Three Years Too Many: Who Will Change the Course?

The costs of prosecuting this illegal war based on lies and of the failed policies of the U.S. occupation of Iraq can now be measured by the names and lives of tens of thousands, by billions of dollars diverted to war-fighting and profiteering rather than reconstructing, and by the growing anger at the U.S. in the rest of the world. Yet the president insists on "staying the course" and reporting that, "The American people have to understand that we are making progress in Iraq."

If the president won't change course, then he must be compelled to change course—by the Congress and the majority of the American people who, polls show, have turned against this war. Congress must pull the purse strings on the funding of the war (in a supplemental, meaning off-budget, "emergency" request for 2006, Bush is asking for \$70 billion more for Iraq operations alone) as well as constrain the U.S. prosecution of the war by any number of other ways. In this mid-term election year, even with approval ratings for the president and the war taking a nose-dive, however, our Republican-controlled Congress (including a disappointing number of Democrats) is still inclined to stick with the president and "stay the course." But that should not deter us. We should make every effort to press members of Congress to co-sponsor, move to debate and a vote, and support the following legislation introduced—

### **In the U.S. House of Representatives:**

H.R. 4232, "End the War in Iraq Act of 2005," Jim McGovern (D-MA) This bill would prohibit use of taxpayer funds to deploy U.S. troops to Iraq, allowing DOD funds to be used only to provide for: the safe and orderly withdrawal of all troops; consultations with other governments, NATO, and the UN regarding international forces; and financial assistance and equipment to either Iraqi security forces and/or international forces. Further, the bill would allow for non-defense funding to carry out reconstruction in Iraq. [15 Co-sponsors by 2/1/06]

H.R. Res. 73, Statement and Resolution, John P. Murtha (D-PA) This bill states: (1) The deployment of U.S. Forces in Iraq, by direction of Congress, is hereby terminated and the forces involved are to be redeployed at the earliest practicable date. (2) A quick-reaction U.S. force and an over-the-horizon presence of U.S. Marines shall be deployed in the region. (3) The United States of America shall pursue security and stability in Iraq through diplomacy. [97 Co-sponsors by 2/1/06]

H.J. Res. 55, "Homeward Bound Act," Abercrombie

(D-HI / Jones (D-NC) This bill asks the President to report his plan for troop withdrawal and for that plan to start implementation no later than Oct. 2006. [65 Co-sponsors as of 2/1/06, including 5

Republicans: Jones (NC), Gilchrest (MD), Leach (IA), Paul (TX), and Duncan (TN)]

H.Res. 543 IH, Discharge Petition on H.J. Res. 55, Abercrombie (D-HI) / Jones (D-NC) Upon gathering 218 signatures, this petition would discharge H.J. Res. 55 from committee for a debate and vote on the House floor. It would be debated under “open rule,” i.e., it could be amended to include other provisions (such as no permanent bases) and to update the date for an exit strategy report. [60 signatures as of 2/1/06]

H. Con. Res. 197, “No Permanent Bases in Iraq,” Barbara Lee (D-CA) States that Congress declares that the policy of the United States is not to enter into any base agreement with the government of Iraq that would lead to a permanent U.S. military presence in Iraq. [70 Co-sponsors as of 2/1/06]

### **In the U.S. Senate:**

While the Senate has been disappointingly quiet on the subject of Iraq, peace movement lobbyists are pushing for more Senate action, particularly for companion pieces to the House bills. The following two initiatives were introduced in the Senate late last year:

“United States Policy on Iraq Act,” Carl Levin (D-MI) An amendment to the 2006 Defense Authorization Bill (S1042), it demanded regular updates from the administration on the course of the war and the progress Iraqi forces are making, said the administration needs to explain to Congress and the American people its strategy for the successful completion of the mission in Iraq, endorsed phased redeployment of U.S. troops, called for a flexible timetable for withdrawal, and stated that the administration should tell the Iraqis that the U.S. will eventually leave. [Levin’s amendment was defeated 40 to 58, and a Republican copy-cat but much weakened version, introduced by Frist and Warner, passed by a vote of 79 to 19.]

S. Res. 171, Russell Feingold (D-WI) States that the President should submit to Congress a report on the time frame for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. [As of 2/1/06, Boxer (D-CA), is the only Co-sponsor]



### **On Main Street, USA**

You may not have read much about it in the papers,

but to mark the third anniversary of the invasion of Iraq hundreds of thousands took to the streets to attend hundreds of anti-war events in communities across the country and around the world. From every indication, Americans' support for Bush's war and occupation has gone sour. For a president who claims not to pay attention to or be influenced by public opinion polls, Bush's recent desperately-seeking speaking tour speaks volumes about his rationales and his adamance and intentions. That is reason enough to increase our volume and be persistent in calling on Congress to pull the purse strings on this war.

Our tasks now include keeping the pressure on the Congress and speaking the truth to the public and the press. Silence, as the saying goes, does equal acceptance. And the war on and occupation of Iraq is unacceptable.

Take another step: TAKE TO THE STREETS! Please add your voice to the growing chorus. Join in public witness and solidarity with other peace-seekers. Working together, we will end this war. Join others for the **Oxford “Three Years Too Many” Peace Rally Saturdays, Noon to 1:00 PM, beginning Saturday, March 25 (and every Saturday thereafter, through May 6) at the Edge of the Uptown Memorial Park (High and Main Sts.)** As the spirit of the call moves you, gather and stand with others, bring your signs, sing, leaflet, speak out, sign and circulate anti-war petitions. Add the message of your presence and voice to the single call for: Peace in the Middle East! End the War and Occupation of Iraq! Bring the Troops Home Now! Leave No Bases Behind!

### **Mass Mobilization in New York City–April 29**

Thousands are planning to “March for Peace, Justice, & Democracy” on Saturday, April 29, in NYC. Called by United for Peace & Justice and allied national coalitions and local organizations, this national march and rally will be yet another demonstration for ending the war in Iraq and bringing all our troops home NOW! The message of organizers is: “Unite for change. The times are urgent and we must act! In this climate of a war based on lies, spying, corruption, attacks on civil liberties, and Katrina survivors abandoned by government, we are coming together to march, to vote, to speak out, and to turn our country around.” Learn more at [www.UnitedforPeace.org](http://www.UnitedforPeace.org)

–LMK

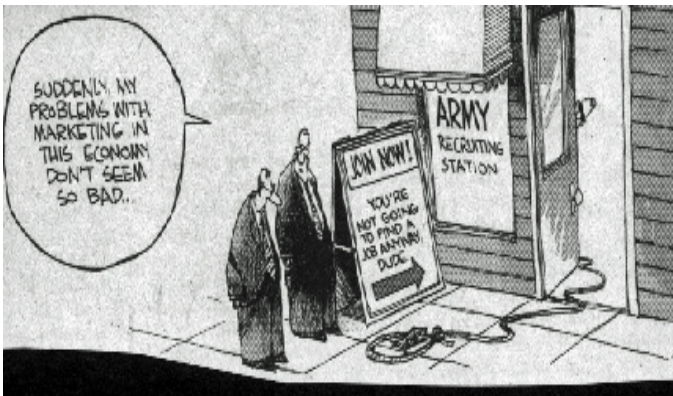
### **Countering Military Recruitment**

*[Editor’s Note: America has a “volunteer army” in name only. With no formalized national draft, the Pentagon spends almost \$4 billion a year on*



*recruitment, targeting high-achieving, low-income youth—children of color and the poor—taking advantage of an economy that increasingly squeezes out those with little hope of college. It's known as the "poverty draft." The military often uses glitzy and dishonest recruitment tactics—slick commercials and brochures, video games, personal visits, and enlistment bonuses—that lure too many teens with empty promises. The U.S. Dept. of Defense today spends \$16,000 in promotional costs alone for each soldier it signs up. The DOD also has a database of 30 million 16- to 25-year-olds—their names, birth dates, addresses, Social Security numbers, email addresses, phone numbers, fields of academic study, grade-point averages, height, and weight. The military recruiter will fill potential enlistees with tales of valor, glory, and camaraderie, of college funds, jobs skills, and exotic ports of call. He won't tell him/her about the young soldiers, not much older than the high school kids standing around him, whose burned and battered bodies are dragged from Humvees every day and sent home in flag-draped coffins.*

*[It is unacceptable that our public high schools—even some middle schools—have become military recruiting stations.]*



You know what they say: “Read the fine print” and “The devil is in the details.” Well, the Talawanda School District read the fine print in the “Leave No Child Behind” Act over the summer and discovered the “devil.” This law requires all school districts receiving federal dollars to provide names, addresses and phone numbers of all high school students to the Pentagon each October for its tracking and recruitment purposes. Who knew?

OCPJ was alerted to this last summer and did some research. We used the information and tools we found to alert parents and students to this invasion of family privacy and to the “**Opt-Out**” option, also hidden in the new law. The Opt-Out provision gives students with their parents the choice to opt-out from the requirement, i.e., to request the removal of a child’s name and other information from recruiters’ lists. We printed and distributed Opt-Out forms that students with their and their parents’ signatures could return to the school. We contacted the high school counselors and eventually the superintendent’s office about making such forms

available and advertising the option. (Like most schools, they didn’t even know about the provision.) The forms and explanations of their use went out in the high school principal’s October newsletter/report to parents. After our recent request of the principal for some accounting, he reported that between 85 and 100 Opt-Out forms were turned in last fall.

Mission accomplished? Not quite. As with many issues that you finally begin paying attention to, many more examples of questionable tactics by the military establishment come to your attention. An OCPJ Board member reported that his sons in elementary school had received age-appropriate material about the military as a career. In the fall, a military helicopter landed at the middle school as part of a “Career Day” event. And military recruiters make quarterly forays into the high school, set out their literature, and attempt to sign up our sons and daughters for service in the army, navy and marine corps.

OCPJ is attempting to get into the high school, set up our literature table next to the spiffy young men in their fancy uniforms, and provide information to the young people on the unmentioned realities of military service as well as the many other options for their future.

The message along with the information and materials will be that their community cares about the decisions they make at this time in their lives and that working for peace and justice is a more rewarding career choice. Our first test for this plan of action has failed. School administrators told us “No,” that many outside groups request access to the students and that all such requests are denied. However, we continue to explore other ways to get the information, materials, and message to the students.

It was the sense of the OCPJ Board at the last meeting that this counter-recruitment campaign requires our ongoing attention and energies. In broad outlines, we intend to communicate with school principals, counselors, the superintendent, and perhaps even the school board about the efficacy and morality of giving the military such unfiltered access to students; work with THS student organization allies to facilitate access; request an information table at the next Career Days in both the high and middle schools; publicize the “Opt-Out” option again in the fall; and launch a public awareness campaign around the issue.

We are being told repeatedly that we must sacrifice some of our rights to privacy in this era of global threats and unrest. But we must resist both the message and the government’s pressure on our children and all attempts to coerce them into (perhaps literally) signing their lives away before they are mature enough to make such

commitments. Guns and helicopters can be very seductive. As adults we must stand between such blandishments and protect all our children.

—LN

## Hang Up on Tax for Iraq War

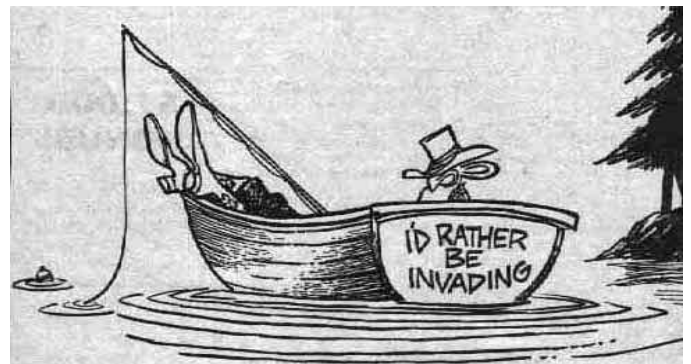
War tax resistance has been around for a very long time. And so have the people who decided to make a choice about how their tax money is used and do not want it used to fund war efforts. Like being conscientious objectors to military service, war tax resisters object to their tax dollars going to war and refuse to voluntarily pay for it. The small number of Americans who in protest do not pay any or an appreciable portion of their federal taxes often give the money to groups who take care of people instead. That, of course, usually leads to collection efforts by the IRS, fines, and other more serious penalties. (Others are inventive in their non-payment, like the farm family in southwest Ohio who, in protest, pays federal taxes in agricultural goods, the value of which approximates their federal income tax bill. It is not the form of payment the IRS wants, but they have yet to be penalized or jailed for refusing to pay in hard cash.)

Still more Americans protest taxation for war in smaller and symbolic ways, especially by **refusing to pay the federal excise tax on their monthly phone bill.**

Ruth Benn, a spokesperson for the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, estimates that more than 10,000 phone customers do not pay the tax, and that number is growing. Why? The federal phone tax has been viewed as a war tax since it was first adopted in 1898 to pay for the Spanish-American War. In 1902, after the Spanish-American War ended, the tax was repealed. But it was later reinstated to help pay for World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. War protestors withholding the phone tax first gained attention during the Vietnam War, when acts of civil disobedience were more common. Then, in 1990, the tax was made permanent as part of Federal Communications Act legislation.

The telephone excise tax currently raises about \$5 billion a year, and while the IRS will not confirm that the money goes exclusively to the military (instead says it goes for general fund expenditures, including military spending), the tax long ago became a symbol for active resistance to spending for war. At three percent on each line, the tax doesn't amount to much, perhaps not much more than fifty cents on a monthly phone bill, but collections countrywide add up to real money, and those who refuse to pay run the risk of IRS scrutiny.

The phone companies do not complain about the loss of revenue. The money is not theirs, they do not like being pulled into the tax-collection business, and they do not cut off phone service to customers who refuse to pay the tax. The phone companies are legally obligated to try to collect the tax but have no enforcement power. Verizon, Cingular, and AT&T say they will work with customers who refuse to pay the tax. A national AT&T spokesperson told *The Denver Post* reporter last December, "We will exempt customers who do not want to pay the federal excise tax." Customers are advised by war tax resistance coordinators, though, to let the phone companies know why they are not paying the tax. (Including a note with a phone payment is one way to do that.) Qwest, the largest phone service provider in 14 western states, says it adjusts customers' bills to remove the excise tax if customers request it. Qwest does not release the number of customers in its territory who do not pay the tax, but company spokespersons say the number is growing.



But phone companies are required to report all this to the IRS. They must give the IRS a list of those who are not paying the excise tax, including their addresses, the services provided, and the dates and amounts the customers owe. And these customers run the risk of being contacted by the Internal Revenue Service for payments due. Experiences of war tax resisters with the IRS varied during the Vietnam War. This writer received regular, almost monthly notices from the IRS about my overdue phone tax payments. In less than a year, though, the notices stopped coming and the IRS took no further action to collect or penalize me for non-payment. (I'd like to think that the IRS was overwhelmed by the number of war tax resisters to keep up with notices and collection efforts.) The experience of another OCPJ Board member was different: his monthly paycheck from Miami U. was "attached" by the IRS to collect the paltry sum he refused to pay voluntarily. But that was then.

Today, three years into an illegal, horrible

war on and occupation of Iraq, a slowly growing number of Americans have decided to refuse to pay the federal excise tax on their phone bills—a symbolic step, perhaps, to show their resistance in some way to the war-fighting their tax dollars support. But, as one war tax resister in Colorado recently put it, “It does matter. I’m not afraid of being identified as a war tax resister. I’m not doing this as a scofflaw, or because I need the money or for other things. I do it because I strongly oppose what the money is going for.”

Then as now, it is a choice available to each of us.

—LMK



## Iraq War Index

<b>30,000+</b>	Iraqis killed directly since March 2003
<b>100,000+</b>	Iraqi deaths attributable to the war
<b>1,400+</b>	Iraqis killed in sectarian attacks following the Shiite mosque bombing in Samarra
<b>4,100+</b>	Iraqi police and military deaths
<b>2,300+</b>	Americans killed in Iraq
<b>25,000+</b>	Americans wounded or maimed in Iraq
<b>5,000</b>	Estimate of resistance fighters in Iraq in November 2003
<b>20,000</b>	Estimate of resistance fights in Iraq in October 2005
<b>27,000</b>	Number of attacks by Iraqi resistance in '04
<b>34,100</b>	Number of attacks by Iraqi resistance in '05
<b>138,000</b>	Number of U.S. soldiers in Iraq as of 2/1/06
<b>23,000</b>	Number of “Coalition of the Willing” soldiers in Iraq as of 2/1/06
<b>50,000–100,000</b>	Number of private military contractors in Iraq
<b>341,000</b>	Number of U.S. troops who have served two or more tours in Iraq
<b>4 out of 10</b>	Number of U.S. soldiers in Iraq who are National Guard members or Reservists
<b>106</b>	Number of U.S. bases in Iraq, ranging in size from micro to mega
<b>\$24,278</b>	U.S. military pay (annual) to Army Private
<b>\$100,000</b>	U.S. pay to private military contractor

<b>\$168,509</b>	U.S. pay to military general with 20+ years experience
<b>\$11,586,000</b>	Pay to U.S. defense contractor CEO
<b>\$592 million</b>	Cost of new U.S. Embassy being built in Baghdad’s Green Zone
<b>\$100 billion</b>	Cost of repairing & replacing Army equipment damaged in Iraq & Afghanistan, according to Army Materiel Command
<b>\$300 billion</b>	Direct expenditures by U.S., to date, for war in Iraq
<b>\$251 billion</b>	Amount that, in one year, could have paid for 2.3 million affordable housing units, 48.7 million scholarships for college students, and 33 million Head Start slots in the U.S.
<b>\$251 billion</b>	Amount that could have paid for 3-years-worth of full funding for global anti-hunger programs, full funding of worldwide AIDS programs, and full funding for basic immunizations for every child in the world
<b>\$894</b>	Estimated cost of war to date to every U.S. citizen
<b>\$15.37</b>	Hourly wage the typical U.S. worker must earn in order to afford rent and utilities on the typical two-bedroom apartment in all but four of the 3,066 counties in the U.S.
<b>\$5.1 billion</b>	Average monthly cost of the Vietnam War, adjusted for inflation
<b>\$5.6 billion</b>	Average monthly cost of the Iraq War to US
<b>\$1.3 trillion</b>	Estimated total cost in the long term for U.S. war and occupation of Iraq (includes VA costs, veterans disability, costs, and interest on the national debt) demobilization costs, increased defense
<b>\$19 billion</b>	Amount appropriated by Congress for reconstruction in Iraq
<b>\$9 billion</b>	Amount appropriated for reconstruction in Iraq that has been spent
<b>\$10.8 billion</b>	Amount awarded in contracts to military contractor Halliburton
<b>\$1.4 billion</b>	Amount of “questionable” and “unsupported” Halliburton expenditures found by Senate investigators
<b>375%</b>	Increase in Halliburton stock value since March 2003
<b>30%</b>	Of Americans support the Bush



72% administration's handling of the Iraq war  
Of U.S. troops serving in Iraq believe U.S. forces should leave in the next year

50% Of active-duty military personnel  
disagreed that "the civilian leadership in the has my best interests at heart," according to a December 2005 poll

87% Of all Iraqis want the U.S. occupation to end

47% Of Iraqis support attacks on U.S. troops

60% Of Iraqis are unemployed

76 Number of resolutions calling for an end of the war passed by City Councils in the U.S.

350 Number of essential items for hurricane response that, in the weeks before Hurricane Katrina, the Louisiana National Guard reported it lacked

200,000+ National Guard troops who have been deployed to fight the "war on terror"

*[Data compiled from government and independent sources and studies, including the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, the Government Accountability Office, and studies and reports by the Institute for Policy Studies and the Iraq Task Force of Foreign Policy in Focus]*



## Reclaiming Civil Liberties Takes Sisyphean Stamina

*Credit . . . has to go to the American people who stood up despite the dismissive and derisive comments of government officials and said with loud voices—the*

*PATRIOT Act needs to be changed. These voices came from the left and the right, from big cities and small towns all across the country. So far, more than 400 state and local governmental bodies have passed resolutions calling for revisions to the PATRIOT Act. I plan to read some of those resolutions and revisions on the floor of the Senate in this debate.*

—Senator Russ Feingold, 15 Feb. 2006, during the waning days before reauthorization of PATRIOT Act provisions

The term "PATRIOT Act" has become a symbol of the government's disregard for basic civil liberties and constitutional principles in its response to 9/11. But the USA PATRIOT Act was just part of an expansion of government powers and programs that included secret arrests; indefinite detentions; prisoner abuse (aka torture); shipment of individuals to countries that practice torture (aka extraordinary rendition); domestic data-mining; NSA warrantless spying (in secret until Dec. '05); and authorization for secret searches, surveillance, even infiltration of peaceful groups without probable cause of criminal activity.

**The federal courts** have declared several of these expanded powers to be unconstitutional. (The Supreme Court is currently hearing arguments on jurisdictional issues and the administration's claims of powers related to the Bush NSA's warrantless surveillance program.) But **Congress** has done little to check the dangerous assault on civil liberties and human rights. A stalwart minority, however, has made Sisyphean efforts to repeal or drastically change certain PATRIOT Act provisions over the last four years. Remember, although Russ Feingold was the only senator who voted against the PATRIOT Act in October 2001, 66 U.S. representatives also voted against it. And we must remember the brave souls in the House (138) and the Senate (10) during the debate on reauthorization early last month, who thought our freedoms were more important than their jobs. The vote in the House was 280-138—a squeaker, just two more votes than needed for passage, under special rules requiring a two-thirds majority. The close vote caught senior Republican aides in both chambers by surprise. In the final vote on the "compromise" amendment bill in the Senate, reauthorizing the 16 expiring provisions, the senators who voted "Nay" to the PATRIOT Act were only 10: Akaka (D-HI), Bingaman (D-NM), Byrd (D-WV), Feingold (D-WI), Harkin (D-IA), Jeffords (I-VT), Leahy (D-VT), Levin (D-MI), Murray (D-WA), and Wyden (D-OR). (Where was Kerry? Where was Kennedy? Where was Clinton? Where were all those who had earlier expressed their grave concerns about the final

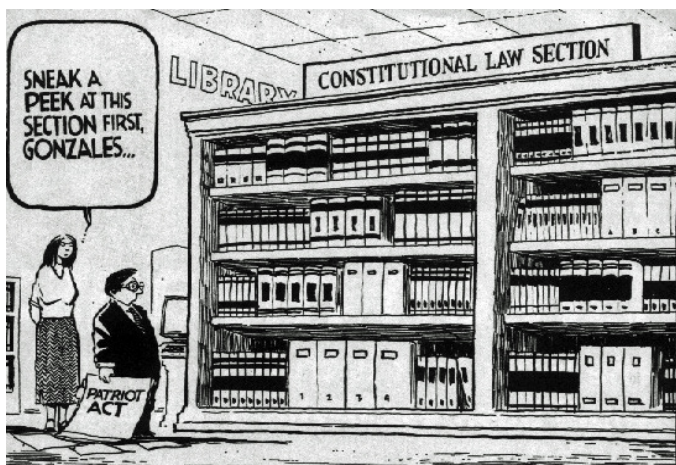
form of the bill, which contained a paltry few new civil liberties protections with several troubling new provisions added?)

The administration's cynical strategies for defending its antiterrorism laws and policies exploit public fears, threaten members of Congress to vote their way or risk being labeled "weak on terrorism," use secrecy and attacks on the press and government whistleblowers, and inflate the success of its antiterrorism laws and policies.

There is, though, a flip side to this gloomy picture. # Any success in Congress is all the more impressive when set against the backdrop of the most divisive body in recent memory—a Congress that exposes virtually every issue it considers to a partisan lens, a Congress controlled, after all, by a radical Republican majority. # Despite the administration's strategies, it is losing ground: Since Congress passed the PATRIOT Act in October 2001, members willing to vote against the PATRIOT Act have tripled in the House and increased tenfold in the Senate.

# Congress's reauthorization process was longer (nearly a full year, beginning on April 4, 2005), broader, and less partisan than anyone could have predicted. It's fair to say that this is due partly to the size, continuing growth and energy, and nonpartisan character of the national grassroots movement and the tireless work of its many organizational allies.

# The administration and its defenders made several concessions that it had not intended to make, such as more checks on the use of Section 215 and three new sunset clauses. Furthermore, several representatives and senators have vowed to continue working for more changes, including Sen. Arlen Specter, chief Senate sponsor of the reauthorization bill. (On March 6, Specter introduced a new measure, S.2369, which includes the four defeated amendments that Feingold and Bingaman had offered before the Senate reauthorization votes.)



# Lawmakers couldn't help but take notice of the 405 anti-PATRIOT Act resolutions passed by local and state governments around the country (the latest by the California state legislature). Over the past year, they were mentioned frequently on the House and Senate floor and in committee meetings, proving that they resonate with some members of Congress. The resolutions were used by more than ten legislators to justify the Senate filibuster on reauthorization late last year, and they have provided the primary support for those members of Congress taking courageous stands to uphold our rights and liberties.

### **Impact of the Grassroots Movement—What's Next?**

The administration's strategies compare poorly to those of the grassroots movement, which continues to educate people about the new laws, policies, and programs and to engage people, regardless of political leanings, in open debate. The challenge to the Bill of Rights Defense movement (and its many organizational and individual allies) has from the start been to raise public awareness and concern. "Hello-o: Do you know what's happening? Have you thought about what it means? To you? To any and all of us? There is something we could say and do about it? Please help reclaim the rights and liberties that are being taken away." As both an educational method and a political tactic, the pro-civil liberties/anti-PATRIOT Act resolutions have proven to be a dandy way to use a democratic process to effect change even as our democracy is eroding. The 405 local, county, and state governments—plus hundreds of civic and religious organizations, college and university governing bodies, librarians' associations, and other groups—that have passed resolutions upholding rights and liberties represent and speak for 85 million residents of the country. That's one-third of the U.S. population, a volume that is unprecedented in modern history. And the movement continues to grow in both numbers and scope. Many more resolutions are in progress.

### **Oxford Bill of Rights Defense Committee (BORDC)**

Since Spring 2002, the work of BORDC, under OCPJ's sponsorship, has focused on research and self-education, public education, petition drives, media coverage of the issues, and meetings with local government officials and other forms of targeted lobbying. It was often hard to get others' attention, even to so important a matter as the conspicuous erosion of our Constitutionally guaranteed rights and liberties. But then, it is a tough matter to tackle when you're only one person, or if you think there is nothing you should or could do about it. The results of all those efforts, so far,



have not been too shabby—**5 pro-civil liberties/anti-PATRIOT Act resolutions in Oxford! Two adopted by the Oxford City Council (in 2003 and 2005), one adopted by the Miami Student Senate (in 2004), and two adopted by the Miami University Senate (in 2005 and 2006).** You might safely wager that no other city in the country has produced that many resolutions. Oxford BORDC thanks all those who made contributions to this accomplishment. There is little time, though, to rest on our laurels. The resolutions themselves widen the work ahead of us, and we must continue work on weakening the Bush administration’s ability to stir up irrational fears of terrorism among the general public. Take the last two resolutions passed, for example.

**Oxford City Council Resolution #4109 (Sept. 2005)**

This ordinance directed the City Manager to send out letters of inquiry annually to local, university, township, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies with requests for specific information for the purpose of helping Council (and citizens) “assess the extent and manner in which PATRIOT Act powers and other new powers have been exercised with effects on the residents of the City of Oxford.” (Short of changes to the PATRIOT Act during reauthorization, which did not happen, or local refusal to cooperate with federal authorities in fishing expeditions or worse, our purposes were at least to hold authorities accountable for the new powers they were exercising, and to make any information we received public.) Those official letters of inquiry went out in early December. Surprisingly, all agencies responded before the last day of the year. From all but two federal agencies (the area FBI office and the DOJ’s U.S. Attorney’s office for the Southern District of Ohio) came the response, essentially, that they had no knowledge of PATRIOT Act powers being exercised in our city and that they had not participated with federal authorities in any use of those powers. No one referred to a disruptive gag rule attached to a few PATRIOT Act powers preventing disclosure of certain activity, and the state police overlooked mentioning the controversial surveillance program called “MATRIX,” in which Ohio with a small number of other states still participates. But the coup de grace came from the feds: “. . . almost all of the information requested is confidential and would be inappropriate . . . to disclose.” Both responses also referenced, as their legal grounds not to provide any information, the Privacy Act and the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution. Privacy? for persons secretly arrested or detained?! The Fifth Amendment prohibits secret arrests and detentions; names must be placed in public records. The use of the Supremacy Clause for

their power of higher authority was very telling: Our federal card trumps your local government card, so don’t ask because we won’t tell because we don’t have to tell YOU.

We had a lot to comment upon at the first Council meeting in February. But we emphasized the importance of the public’s right to know, and it had been the case that BORDC had to inquire whether responses had come in and then for copies of the letters from all the law enforcement agencies. The information in those responses is available to the public if, the City Manager insisted, anyone asks for it, but the information has yet to be made truly public. It’s another task for BORDC.

**The Miami University Senate Resolution** passed in February parallels the language and intent of the second Oxford City Council Resolution, with the exception that the University Senate recommends the president and board of trustees of the university make the requests for information from the various law enforcement agencies. We expect the resolution’s recommendation to be on the agenda at the next Miami Board of Trustees meeting scheduled for April 21. Our task for that meeting is to pull out good attendance and speakers from the community and campus to demonstrate wide support for the resolution.

**THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO:**

- The senators who opposed reauthorization of the PATRIOT Act should be thanked for their courageous stands. Importantly, we should let our Senators DeWine and Voinovich know we were very disappointed by their votes to reauthorize. Tell them what changes you want them to work for that will help us reclaim our disappearing civil rights and liberties.
- Let the City administration know that the responses from the various law enforcement agencies to its letters of inquiry need to be made truly public. Demonstrate the point by calling the Municipal Building (524-5200 or 524-5201) to request that copies of the letters of response be sent to you.
- Attend the Miami Board of Trustees meeting on Friday, April 21. Consider making brief comments on the resolution, if Board procedures and time limitations allow for it. We’ll provide updates on location and time as well as information and talking points you may draw from.

–LMK

**The “F” Word:  
Sliding into Fascism?**

Dr. Lawrence Britt has examined the fascist regimes of Hitler (Germany), Mussolini (Italy),

Franco (Spain), Suharto (Indonesia) and several Latin American regimes, and found 14 defining characteristics common to each. [See “The 14 Defining Characteristics of Fascism” at the website of the Project for the Old American Century –

<http://www.oldamericancentury.org/14pts.htm> – and review the accumulating evidence on the U.S. under the Bush administration, pointing to a slide into fascism.] What follows are Britt’s 14 defining characteristics of fascism in summary. Judge for yourself.

### **1. Powerful and Continuing Nationalism**

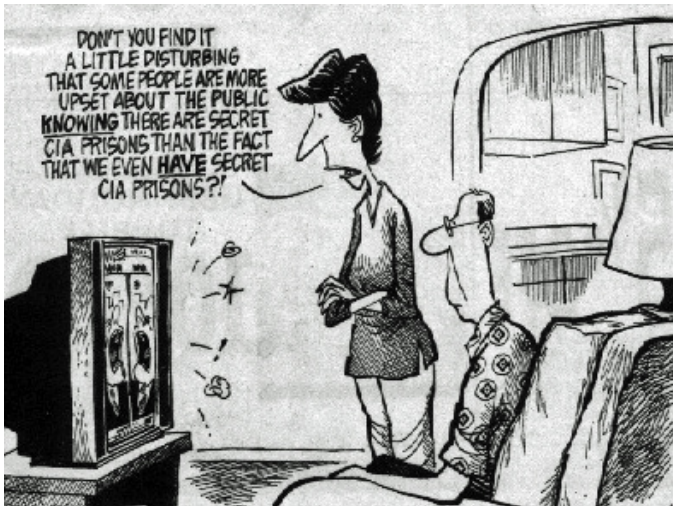
Fascist regimes tend to make constant use of patriotic mottos, slogans, symbols, and other paraphernalia. Flags and flag symbols are seen everywhere.

### **2. Disdain for the Recognition of Human Rights**

Because of fear of enemies and the need for security, the people in fascist regimes are persuaded that human rights can be ignored in certain cases because of “need.” The people tend to look the other way or even approve of torture, executions, long incarcerations of prisoners, etc.

### **3. Identification of Enemies/Scapegoats as a Unifying Cause**

The people are rallied into a unifying patriotic frenzy over the need to eliminate a perceived common threat or foe: racial, ethnic or religious minorities; liberals; communists; socialists, terrorists, etc



### **4. Supremacy of the Military**

Even when there are widespread domestic problems, the military is given a disproportionate amount of government funding, and the domestic agenda is neglected. Soldiers and military service are glamorized.

**5. Rampant Sexism**–The governments of fascist nations tend to be almost exclusively male-dominated. Under fascist regimes, traditional gender roles are made more

rigid. Divorce, abortion and homosexuality are suppressed and the state is represented as the ultimate guardian of the family institution.

**6. Controlled Mass Media**–Sometimes the media is directly controlled by the government, but in other cases indirectly controlled by government regulation, or sympathetic media spokespeople and executives. Censorship, especially in war time, is very common.

**7. Obsession with National Security**–Fear is used as a motivational tool by the government over the masses.

### **8. Religion and Government Are Intertwined**

Governments in fascist nations tend to use the most common religion in the nation as a tool to manipulate public opinion. Religious rhetoric and terminology is common from government leaders, even when the major tenets of the religion are diametrically opposed to the government's policies or actions.

### **9. Corporate Power Is Protected**

The industrial and business elites of a fascist nation are often the ones who put the government leaders into power, creating a mutually beneficial business/government relationship and power elite.

### **10. Labor Power Is Suppressed**

Because the organizing power of labor is the only real threat to a fascist government, labor unions are either eliminated entirely, or are severely suppressed.

### **11. Disdain for Intellectuals and the Arts**

Fascist nations tend to promote and tolerate open hostility to higher education and academia. It is not uncommon for professors and other academics to be censored or even arrested. Free expression in the arts and letters is openly attacked.

**12. Obsession with Crime and Punishment**–Under fascist regimes, the police are given almost limitless power to enforce laws. The people are often willing to overlook police abuses and even forego civil liberties in the name of patriotism. There is often a national police force with virtually unlimited power in fascist nations.

### **13. Rampant Cronyism and Corruption**

Fascist regimes almost always are governed by groups of friends and associates who appoint each other to government positions and use governmental power and authority to protect their friends from accountability. It is not uncommon in fascist regimes for national resources and even treasures to be appropriated or even stolen outright by government leaders.

**14. Fraudulent Elections**–Sometimes elections in fascist nations are a complete sham. Other times elections are manipulated by smear campaigns against or even assassination of opposition candidates, use of legislation to control voting numbers or political district boundaries, and manipulation of the media. Fascist nations

typically use their judiciaries to manipulate or control elections.

*We will export death and violence to the four corners of the Earth in defense of our great nation.*

—George W. Bush

as quoted by Bob Woodward in *Bush at War*

## **Tips for Effective Lobbying: Communicating with Congress**

**Congress received five times more communications in 2005 than in 1995**—an estimated 200 million messages a year. The huge increase is due to the surge in Internet-based communications with members of Congress. 73% of managers of Congressional offices say they spend significantly more time on constituent communications than just two years ago. While staffing levels in Congressional offices have not changed over the past decade, more and more Hill staffers are overwhelmed and under-staffed in dealing with communications from constituents. Yet, writing letters and/or sending emails that express your concerns is still considered one of the best mechanisms for persuading members of Congress to act. (The most influential form of communication is still in-person visits from constituents, and the most influential person making the contact with a member of Congress or her staff is one who represents and can speak for many others.)

**The Internet is generally having a positive effect on the discourse between citizens and Congress.** 79% of Congressional staff surveyed believe the Internet has made it easier for citizens to become involved in public policy; 55% believe it has increased public understanding of what goes on in Washington; and 48% believe it has made Congressional members more responsive. Yet, no one mechanism for communicating with Congress will work with every member. All of the offices are different and treat letters, emails, and requests in different ways.

**Quality is more persuasive than quantity.** Only 3% of Congressional staff surveyed say campaigns generating identical form letters arriving via postal mail would have “a lot” of influence on their member of Congress. In contrast, 44% report that personally-generated, individualized postal letters from constituents would have “a lot” of influence. Consider placing greater emphasis on generating messages of higher quality (personal) and reducing high-volume “form letter” communications.

**At least half of Congressional staffers doubt the**

**legitimacy of “identical” form communications,** suspecting that they are sent without constituents’ knowledge. Nearly 75% of Congressional staffers surveyed believe that a lot of the communications they get is generated by an organization(s) tacking people from their list onto a letter without the constituents’ involvement.

**The organization behind a grassroots campaign matters.** Don’t hide the fact that your organization’s campaign is the force urging citizens to contact Congress. (Congressional staff can tell when letters are generated by a campaign versus spontaneous, personal communication.) Utilize the political power of the numbers in your organization and/or the campaign. When writing or calling Congressional offices, mentioning your organization and/or the campaign helps get results, and helps direct Members and their staffers back to your group or website for info on the issue.

**Personalize your messages. Keep it on one issue and keep it brief but informative and compelling.**

Because of the increasingly high volume of communications being sent to Congress, any reference materials you use or send should be no more than one page (or else it may never get read). The basics of what to include on an effective one-pager are: your full contact info (including name, address, zip, phone number, email—and website, if you have one; the name of your organization and/or a brief description of who you represent, if you wish; the specific legislation or issue you are writing/calling/emailing about, including the bill number and sponsor (if possible); the direct impact of this issue on you, your community, and/or the Member’s constituents; a brief summary of the issue in common (non-technical) terms with citations or links to where to find more details.

*[Source for data: Congressional Management Foundation, Communicating With Congress, 2005, based on a survey of 350 Congressional staff in 202 DC offices.]*

LMK

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**NAME** (if family membership, list all names)

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