



## Letter from your Executive

Dear Fellow VANA Members in BC:

“We, the peoples of the United Nations Determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...” run the first seventeen words of the United Nations Charter.

Nearly all of the signs carried in the series of four marches that began on 17 November have been home-made, unlike in former marches where large numbers of mass-produced signs were carried. A list of these personal messages seen in Vancouver and also in Washington DC, appears below. My favourite: **“War is terrorism with a bigger budget.”**

Opposition to war and nuclear terrorism is world-wide. VANA received a letter from the Hyogo Council against A & H bombs in Kobe, Japan asking for our endorsement of their stand in denying nuclear-armed ships entry to their port. Their letter and our reply appear below.

International solidarity, especially with the peace movement in the USA, is essential in these dark days. We therefore close with a message from a US Gulf War veteran, encouragement from a Veteran For Peace member to use talk-show radio to get our message out and a Statement of Conscience

being distributed to US servicemen currently

**VANA BC is fortunate in having as a member Carl Stewart who served with the Princess Pats in Croatia. Carl has agreed to speak about his experiences at our next members' meeting on Monday 24 March, 1:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room of the Unitarian Church at 49th Avenue and Oak Street, Vancouver. Don't miss this interesting meeting. Carl is a link with a younger generation of veterans some of whom may be interested in joining VANA.**

Do keep sending in your news, information, articles, writing, questions, beefs and bouquets. They are always welcome and will be included in future updates.

Your VANA BC exec:

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Bas Robinson, Membership Coordinator  
At Large: Emil Grieshaber, Ed Shaffer

**Home made signs 15 February 2003  
march, Vancouver**

Bush Blair listen the entire planet is against  
you  
Stop mad cowboy disease  
The moron wants the war on  
Bush you have not made your case. Stay  
home with dad.  
No more American terrorism  
Bush is a child-killer  
Bush & Bin Laden both kill civilians  
Absolute power corrupts absolutely  
Don't let the peace process get bushwhacked  
Jeez, it almost makes you nostalgic for  
Kissinger  
No to war on the Iraqi people  
No to war No to Saddam Yes to people's  
power  
War is not a good idea. I choose peace. I am  
not alone  
No blood shed/Peace (5 year old child)  
Let children grow up, not blow up  
Stop whispering start shouting  
What colour is the terror alert in Iraq?  
War is terrorism with a bigger budget  
It is the job of the thinking people not to be  
on the side of the executioners  
Holy wars are never rational  
Bravo France, Russia  
War=Terror  
Not in my name  
No no no no no no no no no  
Weapon inspectors into USA  
Drop Bush not bombs  
Canada say No to Bush's war

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**Some of the best signs in Washington DC  
march, 15 Feb'03**

Drunken frat boy drives country into ditch.  
How did our oil get under their sand?  
Daddy, can I start the war now?  
He is a moron and a bully.  
Draft dodgers shouldn't start wars.

Consume -- Consume -- Bomb -- Bomb --  
Consume --Consume  
An eye for an eye leaves the whole world  
blind (Gandhi).  
Mainstream white guys for peace. (Sign held  
by three mainstream-looking white guys)  
War is so 20th century!  
While you were watching the war, Bush was  
raping America.  
Don't waive your rights while waving your  
flag.  
I asked for universal health care and all I got  
was this lousy stealth bomber.  
America's problems won't be solved in Iraq.  
Bush "Why should I care what the American  
people think? They didn't vote for me."  
Regime change begins at home.

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**Kobe Letter**

Hyogo Council against A & H bombs  
Kobe, Japan  
20 February 2003

Dear Friends

On the 18 March this year, we will be  
celebrating the 28th anniversary of the  
nuclear-free "Kobe Hoshiki," a local  
government procedure banning nuclear  
weapons from the Port of Kobe. Last year's  
anniversary meeting received 120 messages  
from abroad, which was most encouraging for  
the citizens of Kobe, as well as the 300  
participants at the meeting. It would  
encourage us greatly again if you were to  
send messages once more as we celebrate this  
year's anniversary.

As many of you know, the Port of Kobe  
insists that any warship entering the port must  
submit non-nuclear certification, that the ship  
is not carrying nuclear weapons. This is  
called "Kobe Hoshiki," or Nuclear-free Kobe  
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formula. US warships have been refused entry to the port for the past 28 years because of their policy not to confirm or deny the presence of nuclear weapons on board their ships. However, before the Kobe Hoshiki, 432 US warships entered the port between 1960 and 1974.

As the US rushes to war against Iraq despite massive anti-war protests all over the world, we are very alarmed about the possible use of nuclear weapons by the US. Now is the time for all of us to stand up and say no to war, no to the use of nuclear weapons. But Japan's Koizumi Cabinet has expressed its willingness to help the US and this help is regarded as top priority. The government has already dispatched warships of Japan's Self Defence Forces, including the Aegis-class destroyer, to the Indian Ocean 14 times. In addition, the government is contriving to enact contingency legislation to give even more support to the US.

If this legislation becomes law, all ports and harbours in Japan will be at the disposal of the US. Last year we were succesful in preventing this law from going ahead. This year the Ordinary Diet session has already started and we are working hard to stop it again.

Strongly encouraged by your messages of support, we are making the utmost effort to spread Kobe Hoshiki to all ports and harbors in Japan in spite of much pressure from the US to abandon our nuclear-free stand. The Kobe Hoshiki was mentioned as a shining example and a model to be followed by all states at the NGOI's Millenium Forum at the UN in May 2000. This means that the attack on the Kobe Hoshiki is considered an attack

on world opinion which seeks peace and nuclear disarmament. Please send us a message of solidarity and encouragement for this year's meeting. We shall work together with you to achieve peace in the 21st century. Let's make our voice heard against war, against the use of nuclear weapons.

With warmest regards, solidarity and support to your every effort for peace.

Shushi Kajimoto  
(General Secretary)

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To: Shushi Kajimoto, (General Secretary)  
Hyogo Council Against A & H Bombs,  
Chamoto bldg. 6-7-6 Motomachi-dori,  
Chuo-ku Kobe 650-0022 Japan

Re: ***28th anniversary of nuclear-free Kobe formula***

Dear Mr. Shushi Kajimoto:

Many thanks for your letter of 20 February 2003 regarding your 18 March meeting to celebrate the 28th anniversary of the nuclear-free Kobe Formula, whereby your city has insisted that any ship entering your port must submit certification that it is not carrying nuclear weapons. This is an admirable record.

We note that your staunch opposition to visits by nuclear armed ships is now under pressure from the Koizumi Cabinet, whose plans to enact contingency legislation will put all ports and harbours in Japan at the disposal of the US. We strongly oppose this legislation. Our organization has always opposed visits to Canadian ports by warships whose captains  
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will "neither confirm nor deny" whether their ships carry nuclear weapons. We will therefore circulate a copy of this letter widely to peace organizations in Canada

On behalf of Veterans Against Nuclear Arms (VANA) in Canada, please accept a strong renewal of the full support, solidarity and encouragement in maintaining the Kobe Formula, which we sent to you last year.

Yours truly,  
David Morgan  
National President, VANA

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### **Gulf War Veteran speaks**

Charles Sheehan Miles, is a Gulf War veteran and former President of the National Gulf War Resource Center

(<http://www.ngwrc.org>). He also helped to found the extraordinarily useful "Veterans for Common Sense"

(<http://www.veteransforcommonsense.org/>)

which has a great deal of information about the current situation. On January 16, 2003, he wrote:

"This war does nothing to protect American lives, but it will do everything to destroy the lives of many thousands of Iraqis and Americans. This war will not protect us from weapons of mass destruction, but it will make it more likely Iraq will try to use them.

This war will not liberate the Iraqi people, but it will do everything to ensure they receive a new master, one ruled by corporate profits and oil to fuel more American consumption. This war isn't worth the life of one American soldier."

(<http://www.alternet.org/story.html?StoryID=14952>)

### **Use talk-show radio**

From: VFP National Office  
<[veteransfp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:veteransfp@sbcglobal.net)>  
Subject: Using "Talk Back Radio".

Hello,

The interesting aspect of AM talk radio is that progressives can call in and use their format to talk about the "Myths of Iraq Coverage," and many other pressing issues. It only takes a moment to challenge the hosts, make a point, suggest a resource and, most critically, give the audience a different perspective. Over the years, I've noticed that this tactic is not only underutilized, but is rarely even suggested. We're so accustomed to complaining about the corporate media and how we can't reach the "unconverted," that we're overlooking a free avenue through which to reach hundreds, thousands, sometimes tens of thousands of people - regular folk who are politically curious, but are often being manipulated.

Kind Regards,

Preston

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### **Call to Conscience from Veterans to Active Duty Troops and Reservists**

December 6, 2002

We are veterans of the United States armed forces. We stand with the majority of humanity, including millions in our own country, in opposition to the United States' all out war on Iraq. We span many wars and eras, have many political views and we all agree that this war is wrong. Many of us believed serving in the military was our duty, and our job was to defend this country. Our experiences in the military caused us to question much of what we were taught. Now we see our REAL duty is to encourage you as

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members of the U.S. armed forces to find out what you are being sent to fight and die for and what the consequences of

your actions will be for humanity. We call upon you, the active duty and reservists, to follow your conscience and do the right thing.

In the last Gulf War, as troops, we were ordered to murder from a safe distance. We destroyed much of Iraq from the air, killing hundreds of thousands, including civilians. We remember the road to Basra - the Highway of Death-where we were ordered to kill fleeing Iraqis. We bulldozed trenches, burying people alive. The use of depleted uranium weapons left the battlefields radioactive. Massive use of pesticides, experimental drugs, burning chemical weapons depots and oil fires combined to create a toxic cocktail affecting both the Iraqi people and Gulf War veterans today. One in four Gulf War veterans is disabled.

During the Vietnam War we were ordered to destroy Vietnam from the air and on the ground. At My Lai we massacred over 500 women, children and old men. This was not an aberration, its how we fought the war. We used Agent Orange on the *enemy* and then experienced first hand its effects. We know what Post Traumatic Stress Disorder looks, feels and tastes like because the ghosts of over two million men, women and children still haunt our dreams. More of us took our own lives after returning home than died in battle.

If you choose to participate in the invasion of Iraq you will be part of an occupying army. Do you know what it is like to look into the eyes of a people that hate you to your core? You should think about what your "mission" really is. You are being sent to invade and occupy a people who, like you and me, are only trying to live their lives and raise their

kids. They pose no threat to the United States even though they have a brutal dictator as their leader. Who is the U.S. to tell the Iraqi people how to run their country when many in the U.S. don't even believe their own President was legally elected?

Saddam is being vilified for gassing his own people and trying to develop weapons of mass destruction. However, when Saddam committed his worst crimes the U.S. was supporting him. This support included providing the means to produce chemical and biological weapons. Contrast this with the horrendous results of the U.S. led economic sanctions. More than a million Iraqis, mainly children and infants, have died because of these sanctions. After having destroyed the entire infrastructure of their country including hospitals, electricity generators, and water treatment plants, the U.S. then, with the sanctions, stopped the import of goods, medicines, parts, and chemicals necessary to restore even the most basic necessities of life. There is no honor in murder. This war is murder by another name. When, in an unjust war, an errant bomb dropped kills a mother and her child it is not "collateral damage," it is murder. When, in an unjust war, a child dies of dysentery because a bomb damaged a sewage treatment plant, it is not "destroying enemy infrastructure," it is murder. When, in an unjust war, a father dies of a heart attack because a bomb disrupted the phone lines so he could not call an ambulance, it is not "neutralizing command and control facilities," it is murder. When, in an unjust war, a thousand poor farmer conscripts die in a trench defending a town they have lived in their whole lives, it is not victory, it is murder.

There will be veterans leading protests against this war on Iraq and your participation  
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in it. During the Vietnam War thousands in Vietnam and in the U.S. refused to follow orders. Many resisted and rebelled. Many became conscientious objectors and others went to prison rather than bear arms against the so-called enemy. During the last Gulf War many GIs resisted in various ways and for many different reasons. Many of us came out of these wars and joined with the anti-war movement.

If the people of the world are ever to be free, there must come a time when being a citizen of the world takes precedence over being the soldier of a nation. Now is that time. When orders come to ship out, your response will profoundly impact the lives of millions of people in the Middle East and here at home. Your response will help set the course of our future. You will have choices all along the

way. Your commanders want you to obey. We urge you to think. We urge you to make your choices based on your conscience. If you choose to resist, we will support you and stand with you because we have come to understand that our REAL duty is to the people of the world and to our common future.

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**On the Light Side**

Questions actually asked of witnesses by attorneys during trials. Massachusetts Bar Association Lawyers Journal

Q: "Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?"

A: "No, this is how I dress when I go to work."

Q: "All your responses must be oral, OK? What school did you go to?"

A: "Oral."

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**VANA MEMBERSHIP**

To renew your membership in or to join VANA, please fill out the form below and send, along with a cheque payable to VANA, to Ted Powis, Treasurer, #603-1745 Esquimalt, W. Vancouver, V7V 1R7. The dues are \$30, \$20 of which go to the national office and \$10 to the branch. (You can use the enclosed addressed envelope)

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **Prov** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_