

deadline for bringing troops home. I don't accept their reasons/excuses.

There is a letter written by three groups asking for Congress to "support our troops, de-fund the war, and bring them home now." Find the letter online at www.pdamerica.org under the section "Military Families and Vets." I have made copies to send to Oregon legislators, House and Senate leaders and mainstream media outlets. I will add my signature and anyone else's and then send it by snail mail to each one. I will hand it out to anyone who tells me we can't de-fund the war because the troops will suffer. They are suffering needlessly now.

It's time for Americans to say that if Congress can't do the job, we commit to meeting a million strong in D.C. to peacefully occupy the White House and halls of Congress until troops are on their way home and Bush, Cheney and their cabinet step down. That's something the media, Bush and Congress can't ignore.

Judi Ivy
Eugene

WHAT KIND OF PRESS?

In his March 2 article on the UO Law School's Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, *Register-Guard* reporter Lewis

Taylor quoted Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as referring to the failure of the "negligent and indignant press."

What Mr. Kennedy actually said was "negligent and indolent press." For those of us who have still not quite recovered from the deaths of Mr. Kennedy's uncle, father and cousin in 1963, 1968 and 1999 respectively, this "couldn't have said it better myself!" gift from the *R-G* to Mr. Kennedy offers a glimmer of hope.

Deborah Frisch
Eugene

CULTURE DISCONNECT

Pu-leez. Dan Savage? What is all the hoo-haw about? Here we are: We send our kids to school in lingerie fashion, we support a culture of violence by allowing our children to play military-style computer games, and by wearing camouflage and fatigues, we support, by not protesting, the gun lobby. We remain politically silent in the face of gun control and gun violence as school shootings occur across the nation; our kids watch, night after night, *American Idol* judges shame and humiliate young adult contestants — and we lash out at Dan Savage and how he might harm our children? Uh, I don't get it. Dan Savage, at the most, is frank and humorous in

his talk about sex, sexual preferences, sexual acts and oh, by the way, how to do it all safely and respectfully.

I wish no disrespect, but this energy feels misplaced to me. Why isn't it placed where our kids are really affected? Toward programming that is directed to them. The computer games that are packaged and marketed to them. The unreality-based abstinence sex education that is worming its way into our schools, the growing body of laws that are quickly illegalizing abortion throughout our nation? Toward gun control and against the powerful gun lobby? All of this has to do with our adolescents, a lot more than a Dan Savage column at the back of *EW*.

I have problems with this disconnect. *EW* seems like an easy target, Savage an easy place to focus this frustration. I have a feeling no child or adolescent is interested in the *EW*

and the Savage column except for the fact that adults are having problems with it. Personally, I support publication of his column. He is refreshing and a voice of reason in this disconnected culture.

Elizabeth Pownall
Eugene

drawing as therapy

by harvey dickson



JOHNNY APPLESAUCE

toast2850@yahoo.com

viewpoint BY EDGAR PEARA

Demonic War

Incompatible with morality and maturity

Pace is a modern idea. Not peace as simply the absence of war. Persons and countries have always entertained *that* idea of peace.

The contemporary concept of peace as an active circumstance is much more than the opposite of active combat.

Modern peace is the nonviolent agreement created by nations who commit themselves to resolving differences and solving problems by rational, civilized bargaining, by patient reasoning and open-minded, unselfish flexibility.

In the same sense freedom is also a modern idea. Twenty-five centuries ago, Aeschylus, the Greek dramatist wrote, "No one is free save Jove."

Our country's founders were motivated by a desire to make human freedom a reality for white colonists. The Emancipation Proclamation almost a century later proclaimed freedom to be a universal American reality. But isn't actual freedom and respect for all persons so new and untried that we're still working at making it palpable for everyone?

And so war, like human subjection, is primitive barbarism. War is madness, the brutal denial of human dignity. War is materialism, violence, cruelty, inability to recognize and resolve differences. War is lust for power. In Iraq, it's a consuming craving for the oil that powers our fossil fuel dependent nation.

James Madison wrote, "The strongest passions and most dangerous weaknesses of the human breast; ambition, avarice, vanity, the ... venial love of fame, are all in conspiracy against the desire and duty of peace."

Wars begin in fearful, selfish, impractical human minds before they become armed conflict. Only crude, small-minded persons want war.

Peace begins in humane, intelligent, innovative thinking with creative ideas. Slaves' eventual emancipation began in the abolitionists' minds.

We weren't born as a peaceful, charitable persons. Babies are totally self-centered. One has to learn to be an unselfish, nonviolent adult. Peace means being loving and respectful of the lives of others. No one has the right to kill another person.

War is demonic, immature. It is incompatible with morality, high-minded religion and common sense. Peace is an active condition more difficult to achieve than any military objective.

When our country invaded and provoked war with Iraq — a third world country of only 17 million persons that was no threat to us — it was not by the action of our president alone. Congress voted for the war, at the time with the approval of a big majority of our citizens. Isn't that shocking evidence of our barbarism and primitive inhumanity?

In contrast, our government had difficulty in persuading other democracies who were our allies to make an alliance with us to invade Iraq.

We elect and support a government whose policies have been characterized by lies, secrecy, terrorism, torture and military might.

President John F. Kennedy challenged us when he said, "May we be worthy of our power and responsibility that we may exercise our strength with wisdom and restraint and ... achieve in our time the ancient wisdom of peace on earth, good will toward men."

War is the immature, weak behavior of the cruel and impatient. Peace is the effort of the mature, strong and courageous.

After the bloody, martial history of the last century in which more died in wars than ever before in history, wouldn't we like to believe that civilized nations would now renounce war as an instrument of foreign policy? For war doesn't resolve interstate controversies. It crushes justice, produces death, cripples, widows, orphans, brings higher taxes and creates more scoundrels than it kills.

In our democracy, our thinking and values help set the course of our ship of state. Intelligent foreign policy, true diplomacy and effective peacemaking use forums in which disputing parties can examine their differences until agreements that benefit all parties are created. That is why the U.N., World Court and Arab League exist.

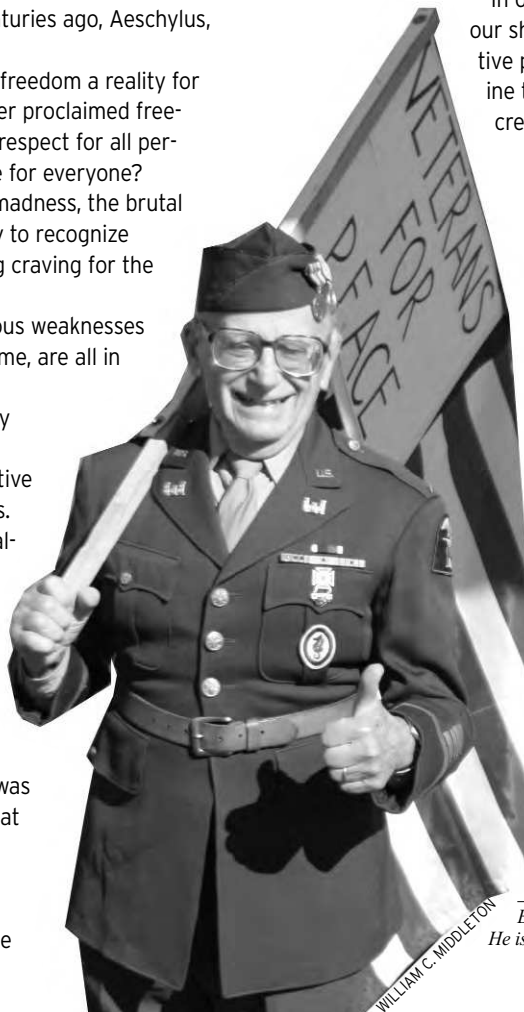
To establish peace one must understand that it is created by nonviolence, patience, reason, courage, unselfishness, just compromises and disciplined willingness to persevere in seeking understanding. It is immature and much easier to demonize an enemy, to say he is totally wrong and demand he do what you want without listening to his arguments.

Is there a sensible way one can help bring peace to our militaristic nation and retarded culture? What would help civilization and our country move beyond barbarism?

Can we believe in peace as abolitionists believed in freedom? They worked to make it a reality for the slaves.

War must be abolished. How willing are we to believe in peace, to work for it and vote for it? Do we have the moral strength to demonstrate for it until the world is emancipated from war?

Are we willing to help advance the evolution of our nation and the world away from violent militarism and war toward peace? That achievement will come eventually. Each advocate of peace can help speed its arrival.



Edgar Peara, a WWII veteran, has been a peace advocate for more than 40 years. He is a founding member of Eugene's Veterans for Peace.