5-30-2000

Resist Newsletter, May 2000

Resist

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/resistnewsletter

Recommended Citation
https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/resistnewsletter/322
Space Domination

NASA Builds Pyramids to the Heavens

BRUCE GAGNON

It was the Persian Gulf war that convinced the US military that “Space dominance and space control” are necessary. And it was the war in Kosovo/a that they used to show the world that they have achieved their goal.

In a news release dated June 17, 1999 the US Space Command proclaimed, “Any questions about the role or effectiveness of the use of space for military operations have been answered by NATO’s operation Allied Force.”

The news release concluded, “The Space Command’s Global Positioning System constellation of 24 satellites is credited with providing navigation and timing support to coordinate the actions of allied aircrews and naval forces operating in the [Balkan] region.”

As the Space Command says in its slick “Vision for 2020” brochure, “Control of space is the ability to assure access to space, freedom of operations within the space medium, and an ability to deny others the use of space if required.” The Pentagon is so sure that whomever controls space will control the Earth and beyond that they are feverishly working to deploy anti-satellite weapons that will enable the US to knock out competitors’ “eyes in the sky” during times of hostilities.

The early deployment strategy of the military is to put into orbit the Kinetic energy anti-satellite weapons, known as KASATs, that would essentially smash into a rival’s satellite. Space Command hopes to be able to deploy the KASAT within the next five years.

At the 36th Space Congress at Cape Canaveral in Florida last April, I asked a panel of military officers the status of the anti-satellite program. One panelist, Col. Tom Clark, responded that the issue was “politically sensitive.” He went on to tell the audience that ultimately the US would “need an event to drive the public to support KASAT deployment. But it will happen. We are now talking, planning, doing research and development. Someone will attack one of our systems.”

In the meantime Col. Clark assured the audience of 250-300 NASA workers, aerospace industry representatives and military officers that we have the “defensive” Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) system that was recently approved by Congress. It is “obvious that dual use is clear,” Col. Clark stated, referring to the fact that lasers in space could be fired either defensively or offensively.

Where’s the Power?

One of the great problems for the military is filling the need for massive power projection for their space-based weapons. In Military Space Forces: The Next 50 Years, a study commissioned by Congress, author John Collins notes that “nuclear
Among other things the "declaration" calls "American leadership in the exploration of fund NASA at levels that guarantee lies introduce it as a House resolution. to fund space "defensive" systems and NASA and aerospace corporations move NASA's Cassini space mission.) Work is also ongoing at Los Alamos labs in New Mexico between 1993-95 as DoE prepared the plutonium generators for NASA's Cassini space mission.) Work is also ongoing at Los Alamos on the nuclear rocket to Mars, with nuclear reactors for engines.

The Space Command's "Vision for 2020" not only speaks of controlling the Earth and the sky above our planet. It also envisions controlling the space beyond as NASA and aerospace corporations move outward in coming years to mine the moon, Mars and other planetary bodies for minerals. Like Queen Isabella of Spain, who paid for Columbus' exploration in hopes of greater economic rewards, these forces are lining up to harvest the enormous benefits expected from the exploitation of the outer reaches.

"Vision for 2020" says: "Due to the importance of commerce and its affects on national security, the US may evolve into the guardian of space commerce—similar to the historical example of navies protecting sea commerce."

Just Making Sure
The aerospace industry is taking no chances. A coalition of aerospace corporations are now engaged in a campaign called the "Declaration of Space Leadership" and have had their congressional allies introduce it as a House resolution. Among other things the "declaration" calls to fund space "defensive" systems and fund NASA at levels that guarantee "American leadership in the exploration of space." (For information, see the industry's web site at www.spaceconnection.com)

Bruce K. Gagnon coordinates Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, which received a grant from Resist in 1999. For more information, contact them at PO Box 90083, Gainesville, FL 32607; globenet@afn.org; www.globenet.free-online.co.uk.

Protester in Philadelphia opposes the Pentagon's budget. Photo courtesy of the Peace, Justice and Environment Network

Much of the organizing tactic of the aerospace corporations is to brainwash US youth into a knee-jerk support of everything connected with "space." NASA now has a program to reach every science teacher in the US with its space puffery. By 2020 those teachers' young students will be taxpayers, and industry hopes that they will be programmed to believe that we should spend the national treasury to go to Mars—and that war in space is inevitable. It's a long-term investment

Not everyone is cheering, though. Russia and China are deeply concerned, not only about the US circumventing the Anti-Ballistic Missile and Outer Space Treaties, but also about US plans to be Master of Space (as the Space Command uniform patch reads). Russia and China have both called for the UN Conference on Disarmament to form an ad hoc committee on the "prevention of an arms race in outer space," but the US is now blocking such a process.

Fight the Flight
During the past year the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space has expanded its work to organize opposition to the US space agenda. As the reality of the recent congressional vote on BMD has become clear, citizens all over the world are angry. They see the bad seed of space exploitation and warfare as something we must move to stop now before it is too late.

As we internationally face yet more domestic program cuts from the New World Order it becomes clear where much of that money will be going. The International Space Station is now at $100 billion. More than $120 billion has been wasted on Star Wars to date. Regular launch failures at Cape Canaveral waste billions of tax dollars while we are told that there is no money for health care, child care, and other important programs.

This country is building pyramids to the heavens, and the aerospace industry knows that they must convince the public that its "plans for space" are vital, exciting, and patriotic. The time has come for a rigorous international debate and campaign around the entire space program.

Resist Newsletter is published ten times a year by RESIST, Inc., (617)623-5110. The views expressed in articles, other than editorials, are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the RESIST staff or board.

RESIST Staff: Robin Carton Carol Schachet RESIST Volunteers: Lisa Anderson Daphne Lees Abby Patner

Newsletter Editor: Carol Schachet Printing: Red Sun Press

Printed on Recycled Paper with Soy Ink
Military’s Plans to Dominate Space

JEFFREY MASON

Just as military establishments in previous centuries sought to dominate and control access to sea lanes, so today’s militaries seek to dominate outer space. The role of space in recent conflicts was noted by Air Force Chief of Staff General Michael Ryan at a 1998 Air Force Association symposium: “Our space-based capabilities were instrumental in the execution of the campaign that dismantled Iraq’s military capability... [and in] our operations in Bosnia [where] I can tell you that space systems were vital. They afforded us precision targeting, the capability to revisit those targets, to avoid collateral damage and contribute to the peace.”

In the recent war in Kosovo, given the poor weather conditions in the first few weeks of the NATO bombing campaign, Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites were especially critical in guiding bombs and missiles to their targets.

US and Russian dominance of outer space is declining as other nations acquire space-based capabilities. Thirty or more nations now possess significant space industries and eight countries have direct access to space through their own launch vehicles. The US alone has over 200 commercial, civil, and military satellites in active operation with a combined value of over $100 billion.

Growing economic competition in space as well as traditional concerns about the military control of the exoatmospheric domain have prompted more—and more definitive—official US statements on the uses of space. President Clinton’s latest “National Security Strategy For A New Century” (October 1998) states:

Our policy is to promote development of the full range of space-based capabilities in a manner that protects our vital interests. We will deter threats to our interests in space and if deterrence fails, defeat hostile efforts against US access and use of space. We will also maintain the ability to counter space systems and services that could be used for hostile purposes against our ground, air, and naval forces, our command and control system, or other capabilities critical to our national security.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff’s 1997 “National Military Strategy” similarly outlines US space policy but with a more assertive tone: “It is becoming increasingly important to guarantee access to and use of space as part of joint operations and to protect US interests. Space control capabilities will ensure freedom of action in space and, if directed, deny such freedom of action to adversaries.”

Where the US is headed is well summarized in the US Air Force’s publication, “Global Engagement: A Vision for the 21st Century.” This document (and other recent Air Force doctrinal manuals) points to a forthcoming “transition of enormous importance” whose goal, in the words of Air Force Chief of Staff Ryan, “is to eventually evolve from an air and space force, which we call ourselves today, into a space and air force.”

Another spokesman for this “transition,” Air Force Historian Richard P. Hallion, recently wrote that “We must dominate the military space dimension and integrate space forces into our overall warfighting capabilities across the spectrum.”

While this sounds benign enough, many observers such as Dr. Karl Grossman, Professor of Journalism at the State University of New York, insist that “space control” really means an increasingly dangerous, destabilizing militarization of outer space by US armed forces. Dr. Grossman, in the 1996 Air Force Board Report “New World Vistas: Air and Space Power for the 21st Century,” says: “A first option for force projection from space would capitalize on advances in large lightweight antenna technologies...which will enable space-based electro-magnetic weapons...to project very narrow beams with extremely high power density on airborne, surface, or space targets.” The report elaborates on this point by discussing space-based high energy laser weapons and hypersonic precision-guided projectile weapons.

Most recently, in Spring 1999, the Defense Science Board’s “Joint Operations Superiority in the 21st Century” identified advanced technologies needed for US military operations in 2010 and beyond. Military capabilities in space were especially noteworthy. These include: two-stage ballistic-missile launched precision weapons for attacking high-value ground targets; GPS satellites used in conjunction with kinetic energy or conventional penetrator projectiles; a constellation of space-based lasers to provide global coverage and defense against hostile missile launches; and a fleet of space orbiting vehicles carrying rods of heavy material in highly elliptical orbits to re-enter and transit the atmosphere striking targets at hypersonic speeds (Mach 10 or 10,000 feet per second).

Perhaps, in part, to dampen increasing unease about planned military uses of space by the Pentagon, General Richard Myers, Commander-in-Chief of NORAD and US Space Command, stated “There is no national policy to weaponize space. So our focus now is looking at the concept [of operations] and some of the basic technologies that would someday, if we’re tasked by the national command authority, to go do that.” Whatever his intent, Myers’ statement provides little comfort, particularly since he added that the US is only “a decade or two away from having a significant space force application capability.”

There can be little doubt, if the Pentagon has its way and the capabilities evolve, that the militarization of space will move from concept to reality.

Jeffrey Mason is a research analyst at the Center for Defense Information. This article originally appeared in the Defense Monitor, Volume 3, Issue #46 (December 2, 1999) published by CDI, 1779 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036; www.cdi.org.
Protecting Children From War

What the New International Agreement Really Means

SHANNON MCMANIMON

In January 2000, after six years of negotiations, dozens of government representatives unanimously approved a new United Nations (UN) agreement regarding the use of children as soldiers. Most news coverage of this agreement lauds the United States and other working group members for their great victory in protecting children. Indeed, the agreement adds further protections for the world’s children. What is too often glossed over, however, is how it falls short and how the United States helped block a stronger agreement.

Prior Provisions and Background

Today, an estimated 300,000 children under age 18 are participating in armed conflicts worldwide. Many more face recruitment or are members of armed forces not presently at war. Rädda Barnen, the Swedish children’s rights organization, reports that during 1997-98 children under age 18 participated in the armed conflicts of 36 countries; 27 of these involved children under 15.

For the past 10 years, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), UN representatives, and others—increasingly recognizing the devastating impact of war on children—have pushed to raise the minimum age for all forms of soldiering to 18. The current recognized standard, age 15, is specified in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), a comprehensive children’s rights agreement.

The age 15 minimum is out of step with the other provisions of the CRC, all of which define a child as anyone under 18. In most countries, 18 is regarded as the age of maturity, as marked by voting and other privileges. Many human rights advocates have argued that raising the age for soldiering by three years would further protect the youngest and most vulnerable. While it might be relatively easy to pass off a 12-year-old as 15, it would not be so easy to claim he or she was 18 and nearly impossible to claim that a nine-year-old was 18.

Earlier UN efforts to raise age limits were unsuccessful due largely to sustained opposition from the US government. Despite these setbacks, some positive steps were taken in the late 1990s. In 1998, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan declared that UN military peacekeepers must be at least 18 years old, and preferably older than 21. Some governments changed (or considered changing) their policies to include a higher minimum age for soldiering. Instruments such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child reflect this perspective. In the United States, several police forces raised the minimum age for their police officers beyond 18. Such policies reflect the viewpoint that occupations in which a person uses or is exposed to deadly force require a great deal of maturity and are not suitable for children.

Provisions of the Optional Protocol

The new UN agreement, known as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, contains the following provisions: States must take “all feasible measures” to ensure that persons under 18 do not take a direct part in combat. Persons under 18 shall not be “compulsorily recruited” (forced or drafted). Nongovernmental armed groups cannot recruit or use children (whether voluntarily or involuntarily) under age 18 and states are required to prevent and criminalize such use. States must make the minimum age for voluntary enlistment in government armies no younger than 16. States which permit voluntary enlistment by persons under age 18 shall have safeguards such as parental consent and proof of age. States should take steps to help with the demobilization, reintegration, and rehabilitation of child soldiers used in violation of this agreement.

As a result this massive presence [of pre-and para-military programs], young people are often led to adopt an unquestioning view of military service and warfare.

The agreement must first be approved by the UN General Assembly. It will take effect for participating governments three months after the tenth country completes its ratification process.

Many of these provisions are cause for encouragement, as they are more specific and go further than the CRC. The new agreement provides more protections for young people between the ages of 15 and 17, those subject to forced recruitment, members of nongovernmental armed groups, and children currently employed as soldiers (specifically the demobilization and reintegration provision).

Also significant is the US’s reversal on holding up the consensual process. With this new protocol, the US government agreed for what may be the first time to change a national practice—to make an effort to keep 17 year-olds out of combat—to support a human rights treaty. This provision has been declared a great achievement by many groups, individuals, and the media.

Overlooked in the rush to applause are weaknesses in the agreement itself and problems growing out of the US government’s role in the negotiations.

US Objections Relating to Voluntary Recruitment

The agreement fails to specify 18 as the minimum age for voluntary recruitment into governmental armed forces. Children’s advocates such as Olara Otunnu (UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict) comment that this provision is weaker than what was hoped for. This omission is largely due to the influence of several countries, led by the United States, that intend to maintain their current recruitment policy.

continued on page five
Pentagon has made a concerted effort to than 18. Government spending on pre- and recruitment practices.

For the United States to be a party to an agreement that specified a minimum voluntary recruitment age of 18, a change in US law and potentially in other aspects of policy would have to occur. Thus, the new Optional Protocol allows the United States to join the international consensus without having to make significant changes in recruitment practices.

It is important to understand that the Pentagon has made a concerted effort to reach young people at much earlier ages than 18. Government spending on pre- and para-military programs for youth has expanded dramatically in the last decade. There is a growing debate in Washington legislative circles about whether pre-enlistment military-run youth programs are more effective recruitment tools (in terms of both cost and productivity) than traditional recruiting programs. Programs such as the Civil Air Patrol, Project Focus, the Young Marines, and JROTC have as their primary targets young people under the age of 18, sometimes as young as elementary school.

Indeed, the proliferation of these pre- and para-military programs is likely to result in an increase in the enlistment of 17 year-olds. The expansion of these programs can be seen as a violation of the spirit of the new accord.

As a result of this massive presence in their lives, young people are often led to adopt an unquestioning view of military service and warfare. Many young people come to view soldiering as their best or only option, especially when coupled with high pressure tactics by recruiters.

The typical way young people under 18 agree to join the services is through the Delayed Entry Program, a type of military "layaway plan" in which a young person signs up (usually while still in high school) and then enters the services months later. About 95% of new US recruits join in this manner. While a majority of these young people turn 18 and graduate from high school before entering the military, this program provides a pipeline of young recruits for the military, most of whom do not know that they can leave this program with no negative consequences.

Conceding to pressure from the US and a few other countries on this issue has similar ramifications for young people around the world. In many cases, what constitutes "voluntary" recruitment is open to interpretation. Often, social and economic pressures lead young people to believe that they have no options other than the military; they may join "voluntarily," but only because they are under duress.

Finally, the agreement does not specify a complete ban on the use of children under 18 in combat, but calls for "all feasible measures" to prevent their "direct" participation. As Michael Southwick, head of the US delegation stated, the United States may not always be able to withhold volunteers from hostilities. In the 1990s US soldiers under the age of 18 have been deployed to war zones in the Gulf, Somalia, and Bosnia. The phrase "all feasible measures" may seem like mere semantics. However, it was specifically chosen over such alternatives as "ensuring" that under-18s are kept out of conflict. Additionally, what constitutes a "direct part in hostilities" is quite often murky in today's wars. Before negotiations began, Radda Barnen stressed that all participation, direct or indirect, must be prohibited. In fact, "direct" participation is a step backwards from the stronger language (active participation) criminalizing the use of child soldiers (under age 15) in the statute of the International Criminal Court. These loopholes in the final agreement leave much open to interpretation.

The US delegation's Michael Southwick described the compromises that resulted in the Optional Protocol as "effective, sensible, and practical." Is it "effective, sensible, and practical" to allow the politics and recruitment practices of the United States and a few other countries to take precedence over the attempts of so many groups to protect all children? Doing so does not advance the rights of children around the world nor does it protect young men and women of recruitment age in the

Fact Sheet: Children Soldiers

- Currently more than 300,000 children participate in armed conflicts around the world.
- Children, both boys and girls, are used by both government and guerilla armies for a variety of purposes such as cooks, messengers, sex slaves, spies, and front-line combatants.
- Over 50 countries currently recruit child soldiers into the armed forces. Children participated in over 30 armed conflicts during 1996 and 1997.
- When a conflict has ended, child combatants often do not receive any special treatment for their reintegration into civil society. Child soldiers have different needs than adult soldiers and require special services, such as education and training, after a conflict has ended.
- There is no international law prohibiting the use of child soldiers under 18. Only the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child prevents the use of child soldiers under the age of 15. The United States has not ratified the UN Convention.
- The United States blocked progress of a Working Group drafting an Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which would raise the age of recruitment, conscription, and participation in armed conflict to 18. The Optional Protocol's plan is known as the "Straight 18" position.
- The United States recruits children under the age of 18 to participate in combat-ready forces. According to the US Defense Department, children under the age of 18 make up less than one-half of one percent of active US troops.
- The Pentagon sponsors JROTC programs for approximately 400,000 high school boys and girls, where children are taught to march, shoot, act, and think like soldiers.

Prepared by the Center for Defense Information in December 1998. For more information please contact Americas Defense Monitor: (202) 332-0600.
Soldiers Refuse the Anthrax Vaccine

ABBY PATNER

Citizen Soldier formed in 1969 to organize Vietnam War veterans to publicly testify about the war crimes policies that they were forced to implement. The New York-based group continues to support military personnel who stand up against various military practices which they believe are unconstitutional, illegal or immoral.

Currently Citizen Soldier maintains a steady effort to alert soldiers about the risky nature of the anthrax vaccine and to support their resistance efforts. With the help of RESIST grant money, they are providing counseling and legal advice to hundreds of active-duty and reserve anthrax vaccine refusers.

Tod Ensign, an attorney who directs Citizen Soldier, describes the responses to the groups vaccination resistance efforts: "When we first learned, almost three years ago, that the Pentagon was planning to inoculate all 2.4 million GIs and reservists with an obscure vaccine that had previously only been used by a small number of workers, we didn’t foresee the groundswell of opposition that it would foment."

Ensign traces the intensity of the reaction to a growing mistrust of military operations since the Vietnam War:

When young service members or their families began to flood our office with requests for information and assistance about vaccine refusal, they would commonly cite Agent Orange or the Gulf War Syndrome as reasons for not trusting military claims about the vaccine’s safety. Instead of assuming, as earlier generations of GIs did, that Uncle Sam would look out for them, young troopers are quick to challenge practices which potentially could harm them.

Arguments For and Against Vaccination

Defense Secretary William Cohen announced on December 1997 that 2.4 million GIs, both active-duty and reserve, would be inoculated against anthrax over the next six years.

Anthrax is considered by government officials to be the primary biological warfare threat faced by United States military forces. Although anthrax has not been used in modern combat to-date, its 90 percent fatality rate if left untreated makes it a highly powerful potential weapon. First to receive shots were the 100,000 troops deployed in the Middle East, Korea, and Japan—where the threat from bioweapons is believed to be the greatest.

The anthrax vaccine was originally developed to protect lab technicians and is now typically used by veterinary workers to protect against skin exposure to anthrax spores from farm animals. The vaccine has not been proven to be an effective protection against anthrax weapons because these weapons do not work through skin exposure. Instead, they disperse anthrax spores via a very fine aerosolized mist that deposits the spores in the lungs through inhalation. A Senate Veterans Affairs Committee report concluded that the vaccine’s effectiveness against inhaled anthrax is unknown and should be considered investigational when used as a protection against bio-warfare.

The vaccine was used on 150,000 Desert Storm soldiers leading some to believe it may be one of the chief factors causing the still undiagnosed Gulf War Syndrome. Vaccine opponents also charge that the vaccine may cause sterilization and cancer. Although military health officials told Army Times that fewer than five percent of those inoculated would experience localized adverse reactions, this could mean that 12,000 people will become ill from the anthrax vaccine (assuming side effects occur at a constant rate over the 2.4 million planned injectees).

Victor Sidel, a physician at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York and president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War has described the vaccination as “a snare and a delusion.” He told Army Times (8/17/98), “There’s every kind of evidence that this material is ineffective against the anthrax strains that are likely to be used.”

In addition, new vaccine-resistant strains of anthrax probably exist. Several recent articles in scientific journals have reported that Russian researchers have genetically engineered a resistant strain.

Repercussions of Resistance

An August 1998 Army Times article reports that Private First Class Mather Baker went absent without leave from Fort Stewart, Georgia “when his first sergeant threatened to have him strapped to a gurney and forcibly injected with the anthrax vaccine.” Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Ronald Blanck’s office has said that they do not support the forcible administration of vaccines as “a general practice,” but remained adamant that the principles behind the vaccination policy is to keep all soldiers safe. Some GIs have decided to acquiesce and take the shot, fearing the repercussions on their careers if they refuse.

Soldiers who refuse to take the required series of six shots face a reduction in pay, punishments including work duty and restrictions, court-martialing, a downgrade in rank, and expulsion from military service under “less than honorable circumstances.”

Army experts and some scientists argue that the vaccine is effective, although the weight of their evidence is indirect due to the unethical nature of testing battlefield anthrax on people. The vaccine works by disabling the protective antigen, a component of anthrax which aids the microbe’s two toxins to penetrate the cells they are attacking. Vaccine proponents claim that since all known strains of anthrax share the same basic proactive antigen, the vaccine should remain effective even against
more than 25,000 copies of their brochure, "Anthrax and Other Vaccines: Protections or Placebo?" to concerned citizens and military personnel. In addition, Citizen Soldier has tapped into the internet as an efficient way to disseminate information to service members overseas by creating www.citizen-soldier.com. "Given their long months of isolated sea duty, many sailors rely on the internet for communication with their families and for gathering information," explains Tod Ensign. "Without the internet, it would have been impossible to instantaneously reach thousands of soldiers with questions about the vaccine that were not being discussed on the Pentagon's web-sites."

This issue has transformed many citizens into political activists demanding that the Defense Department make the anthrax vaccination voluntary. A town meeting in San Diego organized by Citizen Soldier in February of 1999 drew a standing-room only crowd of marines and sailors. "It was very moving to listen to these young GIs express their heartfelt fears about suffering health problems or raising children with birth defects due to the vaccine," Ensign recalls.

In part due to the mounting pressure, a February 2000 report by the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee concluded that the inoculation program should be suspended until questions about the effectiveness of the anthrax vaccine and its side-effects could be answered.

Citizen Soldier applauds service members who have courageously challenged what they describe as the Pentagon's "reckless indifference to their safety and health." Ensign notes, "The damage done to morale and trust cannot be easily measured, but it is considerable."

Abby Patner recently completed a Masters in Education at Harvard Graduate School and volunteers at RESIST. Citizen Soldier has received numerous grants from Resist over the last 20 years, including one in 1999. For information, contact Citizen Soldier, 267 Fifth Avenue #901, New York, NY 10016; www.citizen-soldier.com.

continued from page six

continued from page five

Vol. 9, #4

Abby Patner recently completed a Masters in Education at Harvard Graduate School and volunteers at RESIST. Citizen Soldier has received numerous grants from Resist over the last 20 years, including one in 1999. For information, contact Citizen Soldier, 267 Fifth Avenue #901, New York, NY 10016; www.citizen-soldier.com.

Challenging Reckless Indifference

Last year Citizen Soldier distributed more than 25,000 copies of their brochure, "Anthrax and Other Vaccines: Protections or Placebo?" to concerned citizens and military personnel. In addition, Citizen Soldier has tapped into the internet as an efficient way to disseminate information to service members overseas by creating www.citizen-soldier.com. "Given their long months of isolated sea duty, many sailors rely on the internet for communication with their families and for gathering information," explains Tod Ensign. "Without the internet, it would have been impossible to instantaneously reach thousands of soldiers with questions about the vaccine that were not being discussed on the Pentagon's web-sites."

This issue has transformed many citizens into political activists demanding that the Defense Department make the anthrax vaccination voluntary. A town meeting in San Diego organized by Citizen Soldier in February of 1999 drew a standing-room only crowd of marines and sailors. "It was very moving to listen to these young GIs express their heartfelt fears about suffering health problems or raising children with birth defects due to the vaccine," Ensign recalls.

In part due to the mounting pressure, a February 2000 report by the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee concluded that the inoculation program should be suspended until questions about the effectiveness of the anthrax vaccine and its side-effects could be answered.

Citizen Soldier applauds service members who have courageously challenged what they describe as the Pentagon's "reckless indifference to their safety and health." Ensign notes, "The damage done to morale and trust cannot be easily measured, but it is considerable."
RESIST awards grants six times a year to groups throughout the United States engaged in activism for social and economic justice. In this issue of the Newsletter we list a few grant recipients from our April allocation cycle. For more information, contact the groups at the addresses below.

Free Burma Coalition
P.O. Box 19405
Washington, DC 20036
info@freeburmacoalition.org

The Free Burma Coalition is a grassroots organization dedicated to supporting the Burmese people in their quest for freedom, human rights, and democracy. Their mission is to draw attention to multinational corporation's complicity in prolonging the rule of Burma's illegal military dictatorship.

Resist's grant of $2,000 will help to fund the Second International Day of Action against the Suzuki corporation, one part of their larger effort to pressure Suzuki to leave Burma. The Day of Action will occur in the spring of 2000 in ten cities throughout the United States as well as in Canada and England. This grant was made from the Freda Friedman Salzman Memorial Fund at RESIST.

Gateway Green Alliance
P.O. Box 8094
St. Louis, MO 63156

The Gateway Green Alliance exposes the effects of economic globalization on the environment, specifically focusing on attempts by the US to use world trade agreements to force genetically engineered foods into European markets. GGA organized a conference entitled “First Grassroots Gathering on Biodevastation” and launched a campaign to label genetically engineered foods.

Resist awarded the Gateway Green Alliance a multi-year grant to fund the Missouri Resistance Against Globalization Project which will expand ties between St. Louis area environmentalists and others threatened by the drive toward economic globalization, including organized labor, African-American organizations, women-abortion rights groups, farm organizations, youth, and human rights groups.

Prison Moratorium Project
180 Varick Street, 12th floor
New York, NY 10014

The Prison Moratorium Project works to stop prison expansion by educating the public about criminal justice and involving youth and their communities in criminal justice activism.

Not With Our Money: Students Stop Prisons-for-Profit, a coalition of student and youth organizations led by the Prison Moratorium Project, seeks to organize students and youth to fight the expansion of for-profit private prisons. The group identifies financial ties between universities and private prison corporations, educates the public about prison privatization, and puts direct pressure on the institutions to stop doing business with private prisons.

Resist's grant of $2,000 will help the organization to work on a national effort to force Sodexho Alliance to divest from Prison Realty Trust by educating and organizing faculty and students at schools where Sodexho Mariott Services holds contracts.

Los Angeles Day Laborer Association
1521 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90017

The Los Angeles Day Laborer Association organizes day laborers, mostly Hispanic men, to fight to protect their fundamental rights as workers and immigrants. Their vision is to create and maintain an autonomous, democratic organization of day laborers. Among the most exploited sectors of our society, day laborers typically earn far below poverty wages for work that is often difficult and performed under adverse conditions. The association conducts weekly leadership training classes, organizes a soccer league, and supports the band whose music is based on the experiences of day laborers.

Resist's grant of $2,000 will help the group purchase a computer system. The equipment will be used to train members in computer skills and to produce materials needed for the promotion and development of their organizing work such as flyers, information for meetings and workshops, and their newsletter, Jornaleros al Dia.