



Buddhist Peace Fellowship
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PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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After the Election: Statement and Call to Action from the Buddhist Peace Fellowship

Berkeley, CA — *With the conclusion of the 2004 U.S. presidential election, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship (BPF) is calling on its more than 4,000 members and the wide Buddhist community to recognize that our hard work for peace and justice carried on throughout this long election season does not end today.*

As part of an interfaith effort with other religious peace fellowships in the Fellowship of Reconciliation, BPF is encouraging its members and the Buddhist community at large to participate in the call to action *below* to develop teach-ins, workshops, vigils, and other events to be held during Inauguration Week (January 17-21, 2005) in order to explore and affirm the value of nonviolent alternatives to war.

Our nation's situation in the world is still the same, no matter what the results of this election. A pointless war is underway. Lives on both sides are lost daily. We hold precious the lives of our troops in Iraq, and grieve for the more than 1,000 who have given their lives. And we hold equally precious the lives of Iraqis entangled in escalating violence. The most recent reports indicate that at least 10,000 Iraqis have died as a result of this war (some sources cite the figure closer to 100,000). According to one study, the risk of death by violence for civilians in Iraq is now 58 times higher than before the US-led invasion (*The Lancet*).

In these times, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship's commitment to work toward social, political, economic, and environmental justice for all remains strong. We will continue to speak out against this war and stand in solidarity with our colleagues in the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the American Friends Service Committee, and the more than 800 organizations of the United for Peace and Justice coalition. We will continue to work on building a culture of peace by supporting initiatives such as the Department of Peace. And we will continue to offer a witness for peace and justice in situations and locations of suffering and injustice.

A Call for Dialogue, Reflection, and Action!

November 2, 2004 is an important day for our country. Yet it is clear that whichever candidate becomes president of the United States, discussion of foreign policy options—especially nonviolent alternatives—is urgently needed. With this in mind, we propose holding educational programs, teach-ins, workshops, vigils, in colleges and universities, religious and community groups during Inauguration Week, January 17-21, 2005. For more information on this action within the Buddhist community, contact Maia Duerr, maia@bpf.org, 510-655-6169, ext. 311.

A full version of the BPF's post-election statement appears on our website, www.bpf.org.

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ABOUT THE BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP

The mission of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship (BPF), founded in 1978, is to serve as a catalyst for socially engaged Buddhism. BPF's programs, publications, and practice groups link Buddhist teachings of wisdom and compassion with progressive social change. BPF is an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the International Network of Engaged Buddhists.