A TIME TO BREAK THE SILENCE

GRADE LEVEL: 6-8

TOPIC: Dr. King's Vision for World Peace

CONTENT AREAS: Social Studies
Language Arts
Fine Arts
Mathematics

LEARNING OBJECTIVES/QCC:

The students will:

Social Studies: Geography – Locate the countries of Asia, the Middle East, South America and Africa on a world map;

Social Studies: History – Select relevant information about a topic from various sources;

Social Studies: History – Outline the important historical developments of the Middle East, Asia, South America and Africa, and demonstrate how geographic factors influence events and conditions;

Social Studies: Economics – Describe how unequal distribution of resources leads to specialization and interdependence among people and nations;

Language Arts: Writing – Use available electronic communications and technology in writing;

Fine Arts: Artistic Skills and Knowledge – Demonstrate social discipline activities such as story telling, story theatre, readers' theatre (oral, choral interpretation), collage theatre, pantomime, children's theatre, and theatre activities; and

Mathematics: Charts, Tables, Graphs, Distributions – Collect, organize data, determine appropriate method and scale to display data, and construct frequency distribution, bar graphs, line graphs, circle graphs, tables, and charts.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS:

1. What are some risks of "breaking the silence?"

2. What are the "costs" of war?

3. According to Dr. King, which aspects of American life may need to change to promote peace around the world?

4. What can individuals do to foster peace at home and abroad?

BACKGROUND:

In this lesson, students build upon their studies of peace by examining issues raised by Dr. King's "Beyond Vietnam" speech. Dr. King's vision for the civil rights movement is contrasted with his vision for world peace. Critical questions regarding the impact of war on children are examined as students are pushed to develop their own stand on the possibility of peace and the root causes of many contemporary global conflicts.

MATERIALS/RESOURCES:

Print:

Dyson, Michael. (2000). *I May Not Get There With You: The True Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Free Press.

Grossfield, Stan. (1997). *Lost Futures: Our Forgotten Children.* New York: Aperture Foundation.

Holliday, Laurel. (1999). *Why Do They Hate Me?: Young Lives Caught in War and Conflict.* New York: Pocket Books.

Pran, Dith. (1997). *Children of Cambodia's Killing Fields: Memoirs by Survivors.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Raymond, Alan & Susan. (2000). *Children in War.* New York: TV Books, LLC.

Online:

The Guatemalan Times
http://www.worldtrek.org/odyssey/latinamerica/011299/guidebook.html
Includes geographical, historical, political and social information about Guatemala and its people.
Cambodian Civil War
http://www.onwar.com/aced/data/charlie/cambodia1970.html
Details the American involvement in the Cambodian Civil War.
Road to the Killing Fields
http://www.tamu.edu/upress/books/1997/deac.html
Book summary about the Cambodian Civil War.

Beyond Vietnam
http://www.africanamericans.com/MLKjrBeyondVietnam.html
Full text of the speech delivered at church on the topic of US participation in Vietnam.

When Shall We Ever Learn? Dr. King's Forgotten Speech
http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/opin/mlk03.html

During this time of the Iraqi war crisis an eye-witness recalls hearing Dr. King's "Beyond Vietnam" speech and comments on its wisdom for today.

Honoring King While Clouding His Legacy
http://www.fair.org/media-beat/980402.html
Writer questions the media blackout of Dr. King's more "radical" speeches.

The Martin Luther King You Don't See On TV
http://www.fair.org/media-beat/950104.html
Journalists examine the media construction of Dr. King.

Attachments/Handouts:

Attachment 1: Copy of full text of the "Beyond Vietnam" speech.

Attachment 2: Definitions

Attachment 3: King Opposed Vietnam War; We Must Oppose US War in Iraq.

Attachment 4: Are We Ready to Listen to Dr. King?

Handout 1: A Time to Break the Silence – Readers' Theater

Equipment:

Computers with internet access

Other:

Maps, globes, atlases, pictures of children of war

HOOK:

Writing Prompt:

Have you ever had to "pay the cost" for doing something that you didn't even know was wrong or that wasn't even your fault? How did paying unjustly make you feel? If you could, what would you say and/or do to the person or people who made you pay? Write them a letter describing your sentiments.

Have you ever gotten credit for something that you really didn't do or for something that had nothing to do with you? How did you feel? If the person due the credit ever showed up, would you readily give the credit to him or her? Write a letter acknowledging the person to whom credit is due. Apologize for your deception.

PROCEDURES:

1. Ask students what they know about the "costs" of war. Encourage them to think about "costs" in much broader terms than just monetary. Write their responses down on a chart. In think-pair-share teams, ask students to generate categories to classify the "costs" listed on the chart.

2. Show pictures of children from Lost Futures: Our Forgotten Children (You can have them go to the following site if you do not have the book-- http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/gallery/0.8542.886475.00.html). Ask students to reflect upon what the costs of war are for the children in the photographs. Discuss as whole class.

3. Have students write about the costs of war from the perspective of a child in one war-torn region of the world.

4. Have students discuss what they would do if they had the power to intervene on the behalf of that same child.

5. Now ask students to discuss what they would do if intervening meant that their lives would change. Discuss the potential "costs" of promoting peace.

6. Distribute copies of the excerpts from Dr. King's "Beyond Vietnam" speech. (Handout 1) Break the students up into small groups. Have to write down 5 key questions, concerns or comments that come to mind while they read.

7. Next, have students discuss their questions, concerns and comments in their small groups.

8. Finally, student groups create and perform a readers' theater reading of the speech. Emphasize that the reading should highlight and dramatize the issues that they think are important. Each small group performs their readers' theater for the class. (Variation: Students can insert audios of Dr. King's voice delivering the Beyond Vietnam speech that they download from the internet; they can arrange their readers' theater to music; they can read their piece like a spoken word poem, etc.)

CENTERS/EXTENSION IDEAS:

1. Have students locate the places mentioned in Dr. King's speech on a world map. Have them also brainstorm some of the "dozen other names" that Dr. King alluded to but did not directly mention. As they name these places they should also mark them on the map.

2. Refer to Handout 1. Ask students to identify what Dr. King says are the key causes of global conflict. Write the words *materialism, racism, and militarism* so that the first letters spell out MR. M. Discuss what makes MR. M. such a dangerous "person" both for Dr. King to speak out against and for the people on whose behalf he is speaking out. Discuss the consequences of "breaking the silence."

3. Have students identify times when they either kept or broke the silence and make a poem about it.

4. In pairs or small groups, have students create a bar graph reflecting the results of their research on the number of deaths, costs, and years of United States' involvement in various wars. (Each student group selects one of the countries that is already marked on their map to research and gather war-related data about.)

5. Have students research the demographics of their selected countries. Students can make charts and bar graphs to show the proportion of resources that are produced within the country to those used by the people of the country. Charts can also be made which show the ratio of people living without basic necessities to those who have basic necessities in their country and in the United States and other developed countries.
6. Students can do an inventory of their personal belongings and graph the number of countries represented by their items. They can research the working conditions of the people who produce the products they consume and read articles like http://multinationalmonitor.org/mm2001/01/october/oct01interviewlouie.html which deal with movements against exploitation of workers in the US who come from many of the very same countries the students have researched.

7. Finally, students can develop a personal action plan to address an issue that particularly concerns them.

SYNTHESIS:

BEFORE THE VISIT:

Have students read and reflect upon the following articles:

When Shall We Ever Learn? Dr. King's Forgotten Speech

http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/opin/mlk03.html
During this time of the Iraqi war crisis an eyewitness recalls hearing Dr. King's "Beyond Vietnam" speech and comments on its wisdom for today.

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DURING THE VISIT:

Have students note the post-Civil Rights Act pictures of Dr. King and contrast them with the number and presentation of pre-1965 depictions of Dr. King. Reflect on the similarities and differences.

AFTER THE VISIT:

1. Students work together in small groups to identify a pressing social issue that concerns them and identify ways that they can "break the silence."

2. Students create a production of Dr. King's post-1965 activities to present to the community.

3. Students craft letters to the editor of local newspapers to bring attention to their "discoveries" about Dr. King and challenge the media to present a more complete picture of Dr. King.

ATTACHMENT 1

"Beyond Vietnam,"
Address Delivered to the Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam, at Riverside Church

4 April 1967
New York City

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I need not pause to say how very delighted am to be here tonight, and how very delighted I am to see you expressing your concern about the issues that will be discussed tonight by turning out in such large numbers. I also want to say that I consider it a great honor to share this program with Dr. Bennett, Dr. Commager, and Rabbi Heschel, some of the distinguished leaders and personalities of our nation. And of course it's always good to come back to Riverside Church. Over the last eight years, I have had the privilege of preaching here almost every year in that period, and it is always a rich and rewarding experience to come to this grea church and this great pulpit.

I come to this magnificent house of worship tonight because my conscience leav me no other choice. I join you in this meeting because I am in deepest agreemen with the aims and work of the organization which has brought us together, Clerg and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam. The recent statements of your executive committee are the sentiments of my own heart, and I found myself in full accord when I read its opening lines: "A time comes when silence is betrayal." That time has come for us in relation to Vietnam.

The truth of these words is beyond doubt, but the mission to which they call us a most difficult one. Even when pressed by the demands of inner truth, men do not easily assume the task of opposing their government's policy, especially in time of war. Nor does the human spirit move without great difficulty against all the apathy of conformist thought within one's own bosom and in the surroundin world. Moreover, when the issues at hand seem as perplexing as they often do in the case of this dreadful conflict, we are always on the verge of being mesmerized by uncertainty. But we must move on.

Some of us who have already begun to break the silence of the night have found that the calling to speak is often a vocation of agony, but we must speak. We mu speak with all the humility that is appropriate to our limited vision, but we must speak. And we must rejoice as well, for surely this is the first time in our nation' history that a significant number of its religious leaders have chosen to move beyond the prophesying of smooth patriotism to the high grounds of a firm disse based upon the mandates of

conscience and the reading of history. Perhaps a new spirit is rising among us. I it is, let us trace its movement, and pray that our own inner being may be sensitive to its guidance. For we are deeply in need of a new way beyond the darkness that seems so close around us.

Over the past two years, as I have moved to break the betrayal of my own silence and to speak from the burnings of my own heart, as I have called for radical departures from the destruction of Vietnam, many persons have questioned me about the wisdom of my path. At the heart of their concerns, this query has ofte loomed large and loud: "Why are you speaking about the war, Dr. King? Why are you joining the voices of dissent?" "Peace and civil rights don't mix," they say. "Aren't you hurting the cause of your people?" they ask. And when I hear them, though I often understand the source of their concern, I am nevertheless greatly saddened, for such questions mean that the inquirers have not really known me, my commitment, or my calling. Indeed, the questions suggest that they do not know the world in which they live. In the ligh of such tragic misunderstanding, I deem it of signal importance to try to state clearly, and I trust concisely, why I believe that the path from Dexter Avenue Baptist Church-the church in Montgomery, Alabama, where I began my pastora leads clearly to this sanctuary tonight.

I come to this platform tonight to make a passionate plea to my beloved nation. This speech is not addressed to Hanoi or to the National Liberation Front. It is n addressed to China or to Russia. Nor is it an attempt to overlook the ambiguity c the total situation and the need for a collective solution to the tragedy of Vietnan Neither is it an attempt to make North Vietnam or the National Liberation Front paragons of virtue, nor to overlook the role they must play in the successful resolution of the problem. While they both may have justifiable reasons to be suspicious of the good faith of the Unitec States, life and history give eloquent testimony to the fact that conflicts are neve resolved without trustful give and take on both sides.

Tonight, however, I wish not to speak with Hanoi and the National Liberation Front, but rather to my fellow Americans. Since I am a preacher by calling, I suppose it is not surprising that I have seven major reasons for bringing Vietnan into the field of my moral vision. There is at the outset a very obvious and almos facile connection between the war in Vietnam and the struggle I and others have been waging in America. A few years ago there was a shining moment in that struggle. It seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor, both blacl and white, through the poverty program. There were experiments, hopes, new beginnings. Then came the buildup in Vietnam, and I watched this program broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle political plaything of a society gon mad on war. And I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds o energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continue to draw men and skills and money like some demonic, destructive suction tube. So I was increasingly compelled to see the war as an enemy of the poor and to

attack it as such.

Perhaps a more tragic recognition of reality took place when it became clear to m that the war was doing far more than devastating the hopes of the poor at home. was sending their sons and their brothers and their husbands to fight and to die in extraordinarily high proportions relative to the rest of the population. We were taking the black young men who had been crippled by our society and sending them eight thousand miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem. So we have been repeatedly faced with the cruel irony of watching Negro and white boys on TV screens as they kill and die together for a nation that has been unable to seat them together in the same schools. So we watch them in brutal solidarity burni the huts of a poor village,
but we realize that they would hardly live on the same block in Chicago. I could not be silent in the face of such cruel manipulation of the poor.

My third reason moves to an even deeper level of awareness, for it grows out of m experience in the ghettos of the North over the last three years, especially the las three summers. As I have walked among the desperate, rejected, and angry your men, I have told them that Molotov cocktails and rifles would not solve their problems. I have tried to offer them my deepest compassion while maintaining m conviction that social change comes most meaningfully through nonviolent actio But they asked, and rightly so, "What about Vietnam?" They asked if our own nation wasn't using massive doses of violence to solve its problems, to bring abo the changes it wanted. Their questions hit home, and I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today my own government. For the sake of those boys, for the sake of this government, for the sake of the hundreds of thousands trembling under our violence, I cannot be silent.

For those who ask the question, "Aren't you a civil rights leader?" and thereby mean to exclude me from the movement for peace, I have this further answer. In 1957, when a group of us formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference we chose as our motto: "To save the soul of America." We were convinced that we could not limit our vision to certain rights for black people, but instead affirmed the conviction that America would never be free or saved from itself until the descendants of its slaves were loosed completely from the shackles they still wea In a way we were agreeing with Langston Hughes, that black bard of Harlem, wh had written earlier:

O, yes, I say it plain,
America never was America to me,
And yet I swear this oath-
America will be!

Now it should be incandescently clear that no one who has any concern for the integrity and life of America today can ignore the present war. If America's soul becomes totally poisoned, part of the autopsy must read "Vietnam." It can never be saved so long as it destroys the deepest hopes of men the world over. So it is that those of us who are yet determined that "America will be" are led down the path of protest and dissent, working for the health of our land.

As if the weight of such a commitment to the life and health of America were not enough, another burden of responsibility was placed upon me in 1954.* And I cannot forget that the Nobel Peace Prize was also a commission, a commission to work harder than I had ever worked before for the brotherhood of man. This is a calling that takes me beyond national allegiances.

But even if it were not present, I would yet have to live with the meaning of my commitment to the ministry of Jesus Christ. To me, the relationship of this ministry to the making of peace is so obvious that I sometimes marvel at those who ask me why I am speaking against the war. Could it be that they do not know that the Good News was meant for all men-for communist and capitalist, for their children and ours, for black and for white, for revolutionary and conservative? Have they forgotten that my ministry is in obedience to the one who loved his enemies so fully that he died for them? What then can I say to the Vietcong or to Castro or to Mao as a faithful minister of this one? Can I threaten them with death or must I not share with them my life?

Finally, as I try to explain for you and for myself the road that leads from Montgomery to this place, I would have offered all that was most valid if I simply said that I must be true to my conviction that I share with all men the calling to be a son of the living God. Beyond the calling of race or nation or creed is this vocation of sonship and brotherhood. Because I believe that the Father is deeply concerned, especially for His suffering and helpless and outcast children, I come tonight to speak for them. This I believe to be the privilege and the burden of all us who deem ourselves bound by allegiances and loyalties which are broader and deeper than nationalis and which go beyond our nation's self-defined goals and positions. We are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless, for the victims of our nation, for those it calls "enemy," for no document from human hands can make these humans any less our brothers.

And as I ponder the madness of Vietnam and search within myself for ways to understand and respond in compassion, my mind goes constantly to the people that peninsula. I speak now not of the soldiers of each side, not of the ideologies the Liberation Front, not of the junta in Saigon, but simply of the people who ha been living under the curse of war for almost three continuous decades now. I think of them, too, because it is clear to me that there will be no meaningful solution there until some attempt is made to know them and hear their broken cries.

They must see Americans as strange liberators. The Vietnamese people proclaim their own independence in 1954-in 1945 rather-after a combined French and Japanese occupation and before the communist revolution in China. They were led by Ho Chi Minh. Even though they quoted the American Declaration of Independence in their own document of freedom, we refused to recognize them. Instead, we decided to support France in its reconquest of her former colony. Our government felt then that the Vietnamese people were not ready for independence, and we again fell victim to the deadly Western arrogance that has poisoned the international atmosphere for so long. With that tragic decision we rejected a revolutionary government seeking self-determination and government that had been established not by China-for whom the Vietnamese have no great love-but by clearly indigenous forces that included some communists. For the peasants this new government meant real land reform, one of the most important needs in their lives.

For nine years following 1945 we denied the people of Vietnam the right of independence. For nine years we vigorously supported the French in their abortive effort to recolonize Vietnam. Before the end of the war we were meeting eighty percent of the French war costs. Even before the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu, they began to despair of their reckless action, but we did not. We encouraged them with our huge financial and military supplies to continue the war even after they had lost the will. Soon we would be paying almost the full costs of this tragic attempt at recolonization.

After the French were defeated, it looked as if independence and land reform would come again through the Geneva Agreement. But instead there came the United States, determined that Ho should not unify the temporarily divided nation, and the peasants watched again as we supported one of the most vicious modern dictators, our chosen man, Premier Diem. The peasants watched and cringed as Diem ruthlessly rooted out all opposition, supported their extortionist landlords, and refused even to discuss reunification with the North. The peasants watched as all of this was presided over by United States influence and then by increasing numbers of United States troops who came to help quell the insurgency that Diem's methods had aroused. When Diem was overthrown they may have been happy, but the long line of military dictators seemed to offer no real change, especially in terms of their need for land and peace.

The only change came from America as we increased our troop commitments in support of governments which were singularly corrupt, inept, and without popular support. All the while the people read our leaflets and received the regular promises of peace and democracy and land reform. Now they languish under our bombs and consider us, not their fellow Vietnamese, the real enemy. They move sadly and apathetically as we herd them off the land of their

fathers into concentration camps where minimal social needs are rarely met. Th
know they must move on or be destroyed by our bombs.

So they go, primarily women and children and the aged. They watch as we poiso
their water, as we kill a million acres of their crops. They must weep as the
bulldozers roar through their areas preparing to destroy the precious trees. They
wander into the hospitals with at least twenty casualties from American firepow
for one Vietcong-inflicted injury. So far we may have killed a million of them,
mostly children. They wander into the towns and see thousands of the children,
homeless, without clothes, running
in packs on the streets like animals. They see the children degraded by our
soldiers as they beg for food. They see the children selling their sisters to our
soldiers, soliciting for their mothers.

What do the peasants think as we ally ourselves with the landlords and as we
refuse to put any action into our many words concerning land reform? What do
they think as we test out our latest weapons on them, just as the Germans teste
out new medicine and new tortures in the concentration camps of Europe? Whe
are the roots of the independent Vietnam we claim to be
building? Is it among these voiceless ones?

We have destroyed their two most cherished institutions: the family and the
village. We have destroyed their land and their crops. We have cooperated in the
crushing of the nation's only noncommunist revolutionary political force, the
unified Buddhist Church. We have supported the enemies of the peasants of
Saigon. We have corrupted their women and children and killed their men.

Now there is little left to build on, save bitterness. Soon the only solid physical
foundations remaining will be found at our military bases and in the concrete of
the concentration camps we call "fortified hamlets." The peasants may well wond
if we plan to build our new Vietnam on such grounds as these. Could we blame
them for such thoughts? We must speak for them and raise the questions they
cannot raise. These, too, are our brothers.

Perhaps a more difficult but no less necessary task is to speak for those who hav
been designated as our enemies. What of the National Liberation Front, that
strangely anonymous group we call "VC" or "communists"? What must they thin
of the United States of America when they realize that we permitted the repressi
and cruelty of Diem, which helped to bring them into being as a resistance grou
in the South? What do they think of our condoning the violence which led to the
own taking up of arms? How can they believe in our integrity when now we spea
of "aggression from the North" as if there were nothing more essential to the war
How can they trust us when now we charge them with violence after the
murderous reign of Diem and charge them with violence while we pour every nev
weapon of death into their land? Surely we must understand their feelings, even
we do not condone their actions. Surely we must see that the men we supported

pressed them to their violence. Surely we must see that our own computerized plans of destruction simply dwarf their greatest acts.

How do they judge us when our officials know that their membership is less tha twenty-five percent communist, and yet insist on giving them the blanket name? What must they be thinking when they know that we are aware of their control c major sections of Vietnam, and yet we appear ready to allow national elections in which this highly organized political parallel government will not have a part? They ask how we can speak of free elections when the Saigon press is censored and controlled by the military junta. And the are surely right to wonder what kind of new government we plan to help form without them, the only party in real touch with the peasants. They question our political goals and they deny the reality of a peace settlement from which they w be excluded. Their questions are frighteningly relevant. Is our nation planning tc build on political myth again, and then shore it up upon the power of a new violence?

Here is the true meaning and value of compassion and nonviolence, when it help us to see the enemy's point of view, to hear his questions, to know his assessme of ourselves. For from his view we may indeed see the basic weaknesses of our own condition, and if we are mature, we may learn and grow and profit from the wisdom of the brothers who are called the opposition.

So, too, with Hanoi. In the North, where our bombs now pummel the land, and our mines endanger the waterways, we are met by a deep but understandable mistrust. To speak for them is to explain this lack of confidence in Western word and especially their distrust of American intentions now. In Hanoi are the men who led the nation to independence against the Japanese and the French, the men who sought membership in the French Commonwealth and were betrayed b the weakness of Paris and the willfulness of the colonial armies. It was they who led a second struggle against French domination at tremendous costs, and then were persuaded to give up the land they controlled between the thirteenth and seventeenth parallel as a temporary measure at Geneva. After 1954 they watche us conspire with Diem to prevent elections which could have surely brought Ho Chi Minh to power over a united Vietnam, and they realized they had been betrayed again. When we ask why the do not leap to negotiate, these things must be remembered.

Also, it must be clear that the leaders of Hanoi considered the presence of American troops in support of the Diem regime to have been the initial military breach of the Geneva Agreement concerning foreign troops. They remind us that they did not begin to send troops in large numbers and even supplies into the South until American forces had moved into the tens of thousands.

Hanoi remembers how our leaders refused to tell us the truth about the earlier North Vietnamese overtures for peace, how the president claimed that none

existed when they had clearly been made. Ho Chi Minh has watched as America has spoken of peace and built up its forces, and now he has surely heard the increasing international rumors of American plans for an invasion of the North. knows the bombing and shelling and mining we are doing are part of traditional pre-invasion strategy. Perhaps only his sense of humor and of irony can save hir when he hears the most powerful nation of the world speaking of aggression as i drops thousands of bombs on a poor, weak nation more than eight hundred, or rather, eight thousand miles away from its shores.

At this point I should make it clear that while I have tried in these last few minutes to give a voice to the voiceless in Vietnam and to understand the arguments of those who are called "enemy," I am as deeply concerned about our own troops there as anything else. For it occurs to me that what we are submitting them to in Vietnam is not simply the brutalizing process that goes or in any war where armies face each other and seek to destroy. We are adding cynicism to the process of death, for they must know after a short period there that none of the things we claim to be fighting for are really involved. Before long they must know that their government has sent them into struggle among Vietnamese, and the more sophisticated surely realize that we ar on the side of the wealthy, and the secure, while we create a hell for the poor.

Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now. I speak as a child of Go and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam. I speak for those whose land is bei laid waste, whose homes are being destroyed, whose culture is being subverted. speak for the poor of America who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home, and dealt death and corruption in Vietnam. I speak as a citizen of the world, for the world as it stands aghast at the path we have taken. I speak as on who loves America, to the leaders of our own nation: The great initiative in this war is ours; the initiative to stop it must be ours.

This is the message of the great Buddhist leaders of Vietnam. Recently one of them wrote these words, and I quote:

Each day the war goes on the hatred increases in the hearts of the Vietnamese and in the hearts of those of humanitarian instinct. The Americans are forcing even their friends into becoming their enemies. It is curious that the Americans, who calculate so carefully on the possibilities of military victory, do no realize that in the process they are incurring deep psychological and political defe The image of America will never again be the image of revolution, freedom, and democracy, but the image of violence and militarism.

Unquote.

If we continue, there will be no doubt in my mind and in the mind of the world that we have no honorable intentions in Vietnam. If we do not stop our war against the people of Vietnam immediately, the world will be left with no other

alternative than to see this as some horrible, clumsy, and deadly game we have decided to play. The world now demands a maturity of America that we may not be able to achieve. It demands that we admit that we have been wrong from the beginning of our adventure in Vietnam, that we have been detrimental to the life of the Vietnamese people. The situation is one in which we must be ready to turn sharply from our present ways. In order to atone for our sins and errors in Vietnam, we should take the initiative in bringing a halt to this tragic war.

I would like to suggest five concrete things that our government should do immediately to begin the long and difficult process of extricating ourselves from this nightmarish conflict:

Number one: End all bombing in North and South Vietnam.

Number two: Declare a unilateral cease-fire in the hope that such action will create the atmosphere for negotiation.

Three: Take immediate steps to prevent other battlegrounds in Southeast Asia by curtailing our military buildup in Thailand and our interference in Laos.

Four: Realistically accept the fact that the National Liberation Front has substantial support in South Vietnam and must thereby play a role in any meaningful negotiations and any future Vietnam government.

Five: Set a date that we will remove all foreign troops from Vietnam in accordance with the 1954 Geneva Agreement. [sustained applause]

Part of our ongoing [applause continues], part of our ongoing commitment might well express itself in an offer to grant asylum to any Vietnamese who fears for his life under a new regime which included the Liberation Front. Then we must make what reparations we can for the damage we have done. We must provide the medical aid that is badly needed, making it available in this country if necessary. Meanwhile [applause], meanwhile, we in the churches and synagogues have a continuing task while we urge our government to disengage itself from a disgraceful commitment. We must continue to raise our voices and our lives if our nation persists in its perverse ways in Vietnam. We must be prepared to match actions with words by seeking out every creative method of protest possible.

As we counsel young men concerning military service, we must clarify for them our nation's role in Vietnam and challenge them with the alternative of conscientious objection. [sustained applause] I am pleased to say that this is a path now chosen by more than seventy students at my own alma mater, Morehouse College, and I recommend it to all who find the American course in Vietnam a dishonorable and unjust one. [applause] Moreover, I would encourage

all ministers of draft age to give up their ministerial exemptions and seek status as conscientious objectors. [applause] These are the times for real choices and n false ones. We are at the moment when our lives must be placed on the line if ou nation is to survive its own folly. Every man of humane convictions must decide on the protest that best suits his convictions, but we must all protest.

Now there is something seductively tempting about stopping there and sending u all off on what in some circles has become a popular crusade against the war in Vietnam. I say we must enter that struggle, but I wish to go on now to say something even more disturbing. The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this sobering reality [applause], and if we ignore this sobering reality, we will find ourselves organizin "clergy and laymen concerned" committees for the next generation. They will be concerned about Guatemala and Peru. They will be concerned about Thailand a Cambodia. They will be concerned about Mozambique and South Africa. We will be marching for these and a dozen other names and attending rallies withou end unless there is a significant and profound change in American life and polic [sustained applause] So such thoughts take us beyond Vietnam, but not beyond our calling as sons of the living God.

In 1957 a sensitive American official overseas said that it seemed to him that ou nation was on the wrong side of a world revolution. During the past ten years we have seen emerge a pattern of suppression which has now justified the presence of U.S. military advisors in Venezuela. This need to maintain social stability for our investments accounts for the counterrevolutionary action of American forces in Guatemala. It tells why American helicopters are being used against guerrilla in Cambodia and why American napalm and Green Beret forces have already be active against
rebels in Peru.

It is with such activity in mind that the words of the late John F. Kennedy come back to haunt us. Five years ago he said, "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." [applause] Increasingly, by choice or by accident, this is the role our nation has taken, the role of those wh make peaceful revolution impossible by refusing to give up the privileges and th pleasures that come from the immense profits of overseas investments. I am convinced that if we are to get on the
right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin [applause], we must rapidly begin th shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more importa than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism ar incapable of being conquered.

A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justic of many of our past and present policies. On the one hand we are called to play

the Good Samaritan on life's roadside, but that will be only an initial act. One da we must come to see that the whole Jericho Road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and robbed as they make their journey on life's highway. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring. [applause]

A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. With righteous indignation, it will look across the seas and see individual capitalists of the West investing huge sums of money in Asia, Afri and South America, only to take the profits out with no concern for the social betterment of the countries, and say, "This is not just." It will look at our allianc with the landed gentry of South America and say, "This is not just." The Western arrogance of feeling that it has
everything to teach others and nothing to learn from them is not just.

A true revolution of values will lay hand on the world order and say of war, "This way of settling differences is not just." This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation's homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into the veins of peoples normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice, and love. A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death. [sustained applause]

America, the richest and most powerful nation in the world, can well lead the wa in this revolution of values. There is nothing except a tragic death wish to prever us from reordering our priorities so that the pursuit of peace will take precedenc over the pursuit of war. There is nothing to keep us from molding a recalcitrant status quo with bruised hands until we have fashioned it into a brotherhood.

This kind of positive revolution of values is our best defense against communism [applause] War is not the answer. Communism will never be defeated by the use atomic bombs or nuclear weapons. Let us not join those who shout war and, through their misguided passions, urge the United States to relinquish its participation in the United Nations. These are days
which demand wise restraint and calm reasonableness. We must not engage in a negative anticommunism, but rather in a positive thrust for democracy [applaus realizing that our greatest defense against communism is to take offensive actior in behalf of justice. We must with positive action seek to remove those condition of poverty, insecurity, and injustice, which are the fertile soil in which the seed c communism grows and develops.

These are revolutionary times. All over the globe men are revolting against old systems of exploitation and oppression, and out of the wounds of a frail world,

new systems of justice and equality are being born. The shirtless and barefoot people of the land are rising up as never before. The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. We in the West must support these revolutions.

It is a sad fact that because of comfort, complacency, a morbid fear of communism, and our proneness to adjust to injustice, the Western nations that initiated so much of the revolutionary spirit of the modern world have now becor the arch antirevolutionaries. This has driven many to feel that only Marxism has revolutionary spirit. Therefore, communism is a judgment against our failure to make democracy real and follow through on the revolutions that we initiated. Ou only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go ou into a sometimes hostile world
declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism. With this powerful commitment we shall boldly challenge the status quo and unjust mores, and thereby speed the day when "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low [Audience:] (Yes); the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain."

A genuine revolution of values means in the final analysis that our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Every nation must now develop an overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole in order to preserve the best in their individual societies.

This call for a worldwide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class, and nation is in reality a call for an
all-embracing and unconditional love for all mankind. This oft misunderstood, this oft misinterpreted concept, so readily dismissed by the Nietzsches of the world as a weak and cowardly force, has now become an absolute necessity for the survival of man. When I speak of love I am not speakir of some sentimental and weak response. I'm not speaking of that force which is just emotional bosh. I am speaking of that force which all of the great religions have seen as the supreme unifying principle of life.
Love is somehow the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality. This Hindu-Muslim-Christian-Jewish-Buddhist belief about ultimate reality is beautifully summed up in the first epistle of Saint John: "Let us love one anothe (Yes), for love is God. (Yes) And every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. . . . If we love one another, God dwelleth in us and his love is perfected in us." Let us hope that thi spirit will become the order of the day.

We can no longer afford to worship the god of hate or bow before the altar of retaliation. The oceans of history are made turbulent by the ever-rising tides of hate. History is cluttered with the wreckage of nations and individuals that pursued this self defeating path of hate. As Arnold Toynbee says: "Love is the ultimate force that makes for the saving choice of life and good against the damning choice of death and evil. Therefore the first

hope in our inventory must be the hope that love is going to have the last word." Unquote.

We are now faced with the fact, my friends, that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life ar history, there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief o time. Life often leaves us standing bare, naked, and dejected with a lost opportunity. The tide in the affairs of men does not remain at flood-it ebbs. We may cry out desperately for time to pause in her passage, but time is adamant t every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residues of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words, "Too late." There is an invisible book of life that faithfully records our vigilance or our neglect. Omar Khayyam is right: "The moving finger writes, and having writ moves on."

We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent coannihilation. We must move past indecision to action. We must find new ways to speak for peace in Vietnam and justice throughout the developing world, a world that borders on our doors. If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged dov the long, dark, and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight.

Now let us begin. Now let us rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter, but beautiful, struggle for a new world. This is the calling of the sons of God, and ou brothers wait eagerly for our response. Shall we say the odds are too great? Shal we tell them the struggle is too hard? Will our message be that the forces of American life militate against their arrival as full men, and we send our deepest regrets? Or will there be another message-of longing, of hope, of solidarity with their yearnings, of commitment to their cause, whatever the cost? The choice is ours, and though we might prefer it otherwise, we must choose in this crucial moment of human history.

As that noble bard of yesterday, James Russell Lowell, eloquently stated:

Once to every man and nation comes a moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth and Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah offering each the bloom or blight,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light.
Though the cause of evil prosper, yet 'tis truth alone is strong
Though her portions be the scaffold, and upon the throne be wrong
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

And if we will only make the right choice, we will be able to transform this pendi cosmic elegy into a creative psalm of peace. If we will make the right choice, we

will be able to transform the jangling discords of our world into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. If we will but make the right choice, we will be able to speed up the day, all over America and all over the world, when justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream. [sustained applause]

* King says "1954," but most likely means 1964, the year he received the Nobel Peace Prize.

ATTACHMENT 2

Definition of Key Concepts

Key Concepts

Materialism - Definitions & Doctrines
Materialism can refer either to the simple preoccupation with the material world, as opposed to intellectual or spiritual concepts, or to the theory that physical matter is all there is. This theory goes beyond a simple preoccupation with material things, stating that everything in the universe is matter only, and that there is no spiritual or intellectual reality. Materialism can also refer to a doctrine that material success and progress are the highest values in life. This doctrine appears to be prevalent in western society today. Materialism can also refer to the term cultural materialism. (Definition taken from http://www.materialism-1.com/)

Militarism
The terms 'militarism', 'arms races' and 'arms control' are expressions drawn from the Cold War era and before. Militarism refers to excessive levels of military spending by the state and excessive influence of armed forces over civilian life. 'Arms races' refer to the competition between similar types of military forces. 'Arms control' refers to the process of treaty making between states based on the assumption that stability can best be preserved through a 'balance of power (or terror)' between states. (excerpted from **Beyond Militarism, Arms Races and Arms Control by**
Mary Kaldor at http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/kaldor.htm)

Racism

The ICERD (International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination) defines racism as follows:
"Any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field of public life."

The International Council on Human Rights Policy (IHCRP) argues:
"racism has not disappeared… we confront forms of racism that are covert or more complex or are linked to wider issues, such as changes in the nature of the state, gender discrimination, or marginalization due to developments in the global economy." (from http://www.sahrc.org.za/definition_of_racism.htm)

ATTACHMENT 3

KING OPPOSED VIETNAM WAR: WE MUST OPPOSE US WAR IN IRAQ

(Statement by Lawrence Hamm, Chairman, People's Organization For Progress, January, 2003)

During the last years of his life Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. opposed the war in Vietnam because he believed it to be unjust. His reasons for opposing the war were clearly laid out in his famous speech "Beyond Vietnam," which he delivered at the Riverside Church in New York City on April 4, 1967.

After delivering the speech Dr. King faced a firestorm of criticism. Interestingly, he was assassinated exactly one year later on April 4, 1968.

Everyone should read this great speech by Dr. King. And any person having read the speech would understand that if Dr. King were alive today he would oppose the U.S. war in Iraq as unjust, unnecessary, immoral, and racist, which are the same reasons he opposed the war in Vietnam.

One of the reasons that King opposed the Vietnam War, in addition to the needless destruction of life, was because he believed that it undercut the ability of this country to eliminate poverty and inequality here at home. He pointed out more than 35 years ago the "facile" relationship between the billions that we are spending for war abroad and the abject conditions that exist in communities here at home.

The invasion and occupation of Iraq could cost the United States more than a trillion dollars. This is obscene. Rather than spending billions of our tax dollars on this war we should be using that money to deal with the needs of the people in this country.

That money should be used to create jobs with decent wages, eliminate poverty, hunger and homelessness in our nation, provide health care for all who need it, build housing and schools, increase scholarships and financial aid for students, assist farmers and small businesses, provide aid to our cities, fund mass transit and clean up our environment, and help our veterans from previous wars.

It is time for every person opposed to this war to act. All of us should talk about this war with our family and friends. We should educate ourselves and others about the war.

Call and write your elected officials and tell them to vote against any measures in support of the war. Urge community, religious, labor, and student leaders and organizations to also take action.

Make your opposition known by sending letters to the editors of newspapers in your area. Circulate petitions opposing the war in your community, school, and workplace. Distribute educational materials.

When we write and call about the war we should demand a halt to the invasion of Iraq, no preemptive strike, an end to the current bombing, lifting the sanctions, a negotiated settlement, and that our tax dollars be spent on people's needs and not on this unjust war.

Finally, you must get involved. Attend meetings and participate in demonstrations and protests against the war. Most importantly, join and become active in organizations such as the People's Organization and other groups that are taking a stand against the war.

http://www.njpop.org/press/king011203.html

ATTACHMENT 4

Are We Ready to Listen to Dr. King?

"Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation."

By Arnie Alpert

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 2002

In an airport restaurant on his way to Jamaica for a rare vacation in early 1967, Martin Luther King, Jr. picked up a magazine article on "The Children of Vietnam" and the impact of American napalm.

King "froze as he looked at the pictures from Vietnam," Bernard Lee, a King aide, told author David Garrow. "He saw a picture of a Vietnamese mother holding her dead baby, a baby killed by our military. Then Martin just pushed the plate of food away from him. I looked up and said, 'Doesn't it taste any good?,' and he answered, 'Nothing will ever taste any good for me until I do everything I can to end that war.'"

From then until his death, sixteen months later, Martin Luther King, Jr. was one of the most prominent opponents of the United States war in Vietnam.

King's opposition to the war stemmed primarily from his philosophical commitment to nonviolence. As King preached to his congregation early in 1966, "It's just as evil to kill Vietnamese as it is to kill Americans." According to Garrow, one member of the church, an Atlanta police officer named Howard Baugh, was troubled by his pastor's dissident views, but later recalled that King told him, "Never could I advocate nonviolence in this country and not advocate nonviolence for the whole world."

Thought of then-and now-primarily as a civil rights leader, Dr. King accepted his Nobel Peace Prize as an obligation, not just as an honor. When he received it he told the Oslo audience, "Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time: the need for man to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence. Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love."

Exactly a year before his assassination, King delivered his most controversial speech before a group called Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam. "The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this sobering reality we will find ourselves organizing clergy and laymen concerned committees for the next generation," he prophesied. "We will be marching and attending rallies without end unless there is a significant and profound change in American life and policy."

Now, nearly thirty-four years later, we can pick up a report by Marc Herold, a University of New Hampshire economist, who has sifted through international press accounts to estimate how many civilians have been killed by the U.S. war in Afghanistan. From the beginning of bombing, Oct. 7 to Dec. 7, Herold estimated nearly 4000 civilian casualties. The count is higher now.

There are few photos to examine, and the Defense Department and the White House have done an effective job of fending off questions about civilian casualties. But the truth remains: the U.S. "war on terrorism" has caused a terrible toll in human lives. Like the attack on the World Trade Center, the victims played no part in the conflicts that motivated their killers.

As the sole superpower, the United States now spends as much money on military forces as the rest of the world combined, and is the world's number one arms trafficker. The Bush administration is ready to extend its war to the Philippines, Somalia, Yemen, Indonesia, Iraq, and says it will continue for our lifetimes.

A nation which honors Dr. King with a holiday seems unready to listen to his prophetic voice.

Dr. King knew something about terrorism; African Americans had been terrorized for hundreds of years by slavery, lynching, and segregation by the time he rose to the leadership of the freedom movement. Yet he counseled the use of nonviolence, "the sword that heals," and practiced it despite death threats, bombing of his house, and awareness that his own assassination was likely.

In King's philosophy, nonviolence did not mean allowing evil to occur without response. He spoke about active resistance to evil, which "seeks to reconcile the truths of two opposites-acquiescence and violence-while avoiding the extremes and immoralities of both."

King new that nonviolence does not work with the speed of a guided missile, and that it is not easy to change the practices of those determined to use violence to achieve their ends. "The nonviolent approach does not immediately change the heart of the oppressor," wrote King. "It first does something to the hearts and souls of those committed to it. It gives them new self-respect; it calls up resources of strength and courage that they did not know they had."

We should note that the African American freedom movement succeeded not so much because it converted its adversaries as because it moved the people in the middle. Passive supporters became active allies. Disinterested people became supporters. Moderate adversaries became less sure of their position. And the hard-core adversaries, the ones most likely to practice terror, became isolated from their own base of support. Those who practiced violence against Blacks could no longer count on the active support or acquiescence of the authorities. The ground shifted.

Surely it is naïve to think the United States can overcome terrorism with bombs. The road walked by Dr. King can be slow, but in the end it is the only way that will work.

Arnie Alpert is New Hampshire Coordinator for the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker organization that works for peace and social justice.

http://www.afsc.org/nero/nh/mlkoped.htm

HANDOUT 1

A Time to Break the Silence- Readers' Theatre

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
"A Time to Break Silence"
April 4, 1967
Riverside Church, NYC

"The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this sobering reality we will find ourselves organizing clergy-and -laity-concerned committees for the next generation. They will be concerned about Guatemala and Peru. They will be concerned about Thailand and Cambodia. They will be concerned about Mozambique and South Africa. We will be marching for these and a dozen other names and attending rallies without end unless there is a significant and profound change in American life and policy. Such thoughts take us beyond Vietnam, but not beyond our calling as sons [and daughters] of the living God.....
....."Five years ago [the late John F. Kennedy said "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolutions inevitable." Increasingly, by choice or by accident, this is the role our nation has taken - the role of those who make peaceful revolution impossible by refusing to give up the privileges and the pleasures that come from the immense profits of overseas investment.
"I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a "thing-oriented" society to a "person-oriented" society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered.....
"America, the richest and most powerful nation in the world, can well lead the way in this revolution of values. There is nothing, except a tragic death wish, to prevent us from reordering our priorities, so that the pursuit of peace will take precedence over the pursuit of war.....
"Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism. With this powerful commitment we shall boldly challenge the status quo and unjust mores and thereby speed the day when "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be straight and the rough places plain."
"A genuine revolution of values means in the final analysis that our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Every nation must now develop an overriding loyalty to [humanity] as a whole in order to preserve the best in their individual societies....
"This call for a world-wide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love of all men..... When I speak of love I am not speaking of

some sentimental and weak response. I am speaking of that force which all of the great religions have seen as the supreme unifying principle of life. Love is somehow the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality.
"We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time. Life often leaves us standing bare, naked and dejected with a lost opportunity. The "tide in the affairs of men" does not remain at the flood; it ebbs. We may cry out desperately for time to pause in her passage, but time is deaf to every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residue of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words: "too late." There is an invisible book of life that faithfully records our vigilance or our neglect.... We still have a choice today; nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation.
"Now let us begin. Now let us rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter- but beautiful - struggle for a new world. This is the calling of the sons [and daughters] of God, and our brothers [and sisters] wait eagerly for our response."

Texts related to King Studies
http://oll.temple.edu/ih/IH52/Liberation/King/KingRelate2.htm
Printed version of Dr. King's views on the Vietnam War