



Institute for Global Education

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Candlelight Vigil Marks 3,000th U.S. Fatality in Iraq

In response to the announcement of the 3,000th U.S. fatality in Iraq, Grand Rapids' Peace Presence and the Institute for Global Education have organized a candlelight vigil for 5:30 p.m. on Monday, January 1, 2007. The vigil will be held at the corner of Division and Fulton.

The event is part of the nationally-coordinated "Not One More Death, Not One More Dollar" campaign organized by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), a Quaker peace and social justice organization and co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. The event mourns the human cost of war, calls for the U.S. troops to come home, and supports funding an Iraqi-led reconstruction of the war-torn country.

So far, more U.S. lives have been lost in Iraq than in the first four years of the Vietnam War. In addition, more than 20,000 U.S. servicepersons have been seriously injured in Iraq. Estimates of Iraqi casualties vary widely, but a recent Johns Hopkins study published in *The Lancet* put the figure as high as 600,000 Iraqis killed.

This vigil is a testament to our commitment to change course in Iraq. We believe not one more Iraqi or U.S. soldier should be killed; not one more U.S. dollar should be spent sustaining war and occupation. Instead of adding more troops to Iraq, the U.S. should focus on diplomatic efforts and Iraqi-led reconstruction of their country.

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