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Langley Hill Friends Meeting
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Teahaugley Hill Friends Meeting

March 19, 2006 Minute at Martha's Vineyard Meeting of Friends

We the members of Martha's Vineyard Friends Meeting are in spirit and support of the members of the Christian Peacemaker Team in Iraq and in other nations of the world. We feel deep sorrow at the death of Friend Tom Fox. We hope that the other hostages will be released soon. We hope for the continuance of their work toward peace and truth-telling throughout the world. That is our hope too. We affirm the need to preserve what is human in all of us.

*For the Meeting -
Jane L. Brown*

Letter to the Editor
M.V. Times
March 20, 2006

Back in November, 2005, four men from the UK, US and Canada from the Christian Peacemaker Team were captured by a militant group in Iraq. The Peacemaker Team, based in Chicago and Toronto has long operated in the world's troubled regions, in Iraq for the past three years, in Gaza and the West Bank for the past decade. It is still active in Columbia They are not missionaries. Their group describes its work as "truth telling". They aim to find out what everyday life is like for ordinary Iraqis, hear their stories,

In the words of Tom Fox, a Quaker from Virginia and one of the Peacemaker Team: " We members are aware of the many risks both Iraqis and internationals currently face. However we are convinced that at this time that the risks, while significant, do not outweigh our purpose in remaining.

Many Iraqi friends and human rights workers have welcomed us as a non-violent, independent presence. During the previous year they asked us to tell their stories, since they could not easily be heard, nor could most flee to a safer country. We need to preserve what is human in all of us and so offer glimpses of hope in a dark time.

We forgive those who consider us their enemies."—October 7, 2004.

Since November 2005 the four members of the Christian Peacemakers Team were imprisoned. Recently a picture was shown of three of the Team, then later a news release (March 12, 2006) tells us that Tom Fox, American peace activist, had been tortured by his captors before being shot multiple times in the head and dumped on a trash heap next to a railway line in western Baghdad. (New York Times). He was dressed in a grey track suit and stuffed in a large plastic bag. Fox had been bound at the wrists and ankles.

We remember his words, "We forgive those who consider us their enemies. Therefore any penalty should be in the spirit of restorative justice, rather than in the form of violent retribution."

A Friend and colleague of Fox said that in death Fox has shown that "one or two people, or a small group, who show courage, can change the world."

Compiled by Jane L. Brown
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Jane Brown ^{is former} was a member and one of the founders of Langley Hill Friends Meeting in McLean, Virginia and met Tom Fox long ago but has followed his experience in Iraq. She is now a full member in the Martha's Vineyard Friends Meeting which meets at the Hillside Community building in Vineyard Haven.