

OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS IN ACTION

Our work has reached a new dimension. The bad news is that there is so much bad news. The good news is that there are so many individuals and organizations working together for justice and peace. Here are some of our combined efforts.

COALITION FOR WORLD PEACE

The Coalition for World Peace was convened on September 12 in response to the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The Office of the Americas was one of the original organizing members and remains intricately involved in the day-to-day activities of the coalition. The coalition has organized several events in the Los Angeles area beginning with a vigil at Griffith Park on September 15, which assembled over 400 people. Many successful events followed including a demonstration at the Westwood Federal Building, with over 2500 people in attendance and another at Pershing Square, both, which were cosponsored with the Los Angeles/Orange County Coalition to Stop the War. The coalition meets regularly on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at the Peace Center where we organize to bring the peace and justice movement to the public. We work with many of the local peace and justice groups. We recently sponsored a Teach-In

on February 2, 2002, featuring Michael Parenti, Ann Fagan Ginger, Margaret Prescod, Reverend James Lawson, and others. We have a weekly Public Outreach Team that meets at various locations including the Santa Monica Promenade. The outreach team shows film clips of the true effects of the bombings in Afghanistan, converses and hands out flyers to those who are interested. The goal is to be an alternative voice to the drumbeats of war that we hear in the mainstream media.

COALITION FOR WORLD PEACE POINTS OF UNITY

- World Peace – No US War Drive
* No More Innocent Victims.
- Stand up for the Civil Rights of All
* Racism is Un-American.
- Billions For Victim's Needs and For Social Services – NOT WAR.
- Our Civil Liberties and Democratic Rights Must Not Be Sacrificed to War and Terrorism.

We are an organization whose goal is Peace. We wish to work together with all organizations, which have the same goal and agree with our Points of Unity. See: www.coalitionforworldpeace.org

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INTERFAITH COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

The Office of the Americas is proud to be part of the organizing group of the Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace, ICUJP. ICUJP was convened by Reverend George Regas just after the attacks of September 11. The group represents a broad spectrum of people of faith who are deeply concerned that the cries for retaliation for the terrorist acts have led to war, draining our resources and distracting us from the work of justice at home. The ICUJP exists to be an alternative voice to the current "war on terrorism," and to promote justice at home and around the world.

The ICUJP sponsors a monthly interfaith service on the second Sunday of every month at various churches, temples, synagogues and mosques. The worship services include diverse spiritual beliefs with the focus on

"prayer as action." As members of ICUJP we formed a human wall in front of the Los Angeles Islamic Center in opposition to the bomb threats which have plagued that institution.

www.icujp.org

OTHER OOA PROGRAMS

* Our OOA television program, World Focus, on Adelphia Cable has been airing at 7:30 PM on Mondays (channels 77 and 75). We hope to keep this prime time spot. The program features interviews with people who are on the cutting edge of building a humane world.

* The Director of AT and T Broadband (Wilmington), Gary Cox personally filmed our

18th Anniversary celebration and edited the material into a half hour program with the directors of OOA. The full video and edited program are available upon request.

* Theresa is on the steering committee of The Pico Youth and Family Center which is directed toward the needs of at-risk young people between the ages of 16 and 23. She also serves as a board member and adviser to Homies Unidos, an international program for the rehabilitation of gang members. Lois Davis arranges house parties for Homies Unidos. If you are interested you may call Lois at: 310/475-5729.

* OOA gave a summary of the collapse of the Argentine Economy by way of KPFA, Berkeley.

* OOA and David Barsamian appeared on Bill Rosendahl's nationally televised program, "Beyond the Beltway."

* We expressed our opposition to the Afghanistan War by way of KABC radio on Gloria Allred's Program.

* Some Presentations by OOA on the War:

* Los Angeles Art Institute; M.C. for Amy Goodman Reception; Tuesday Night Forum; Hollywood Unitarians; UCLA; UCSB; CSULB, CSUN; Occidental College, Saddleback College, Los Angeles Harbor College; FAIR.

* OOA staff is planning Teach-Ins together with movie industry people who wish to demonstrate Hollywood at Peace as opposed to Hollywood at War.

Are you an Office of the Americas Member? If we have not heard from you in the past year, please renew your membership. See the form on page 4.

* Our friend of many decades, Shirley Magidson, was part of the recent delegation to visit Lori Berenson at Huariz Prison in Cajamarca, Peru. The delegates also spoke to Peruvian and U.S. officials regarding their demand for Lori's immediate release. Lori was brutally transferred to this prison after teargas, beatings and sexual abuse were foisted on her and other women who had been imprisoned with her in Lima.

FLASH! Lori's case is at the most critical moment in six years. We expect her appeal to be heard by the Peruvian Court by the time you receive this newsletter.

See: www.FREELORI.org

* OOA Honoree for 2001 Medea Benjamin continues her dynamic witness by bringing a delegation of women to refugee camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan (see New York Times for 1/16/02). Medea's words: "To many of the people we met with, the U.S. is just another bunch of guys with guns. And they've seen all too many for the last 23 years. And they want to know how is the U.S. going to be different? The Soviets came in with guns and said they were liberators, then the Mujahedeen were liberating them from the Soviets, then the Taliban were liberating them from the Mujahedeen, and now we're liberating them

THE CLOSET LIBERAL

Recycle For Peace: Support OOA's Programs For Peace and Justice

8124 West Third Street, Los Angeles, CA 90048

Donations Needed:

Clothing	Cystal & China	Small Furniture
Antiques	Jewelry	Art Objects
Linens	Photos, Paintings	Art Books

Volunteers needed at the Closet Liberal! Free training! We are also available for Estate Disposal and related needs. Office of the Americas: (323) 852-9808

from the Taliban. They, especially the women, see it as just an endless cycle of violence. If the U.S. would show love and compassion for the people that are being hurt in this, I think it would make a big difference."

* The candlelight vigil on January 16 to say: No new war in Iraq; End the sanctions now, and stop the war in Afghanistan was very well received by Wilshire Blvd. traffic. We see many indications that our citizens are tired of perpetual war.

* And our congratulations to Producer Randy Vasquez for his magnificent film, "Testimony: The Maria Guardado Story" which premiered at the Laemmle Grand Theatre on January 17th. We are honored to have Maria with us in Los Angeles.

* Good news! Lisa Smithline, a longtime OOA volunteer, has joined us as a full time staff person. We are so grateful to her and to our generous donors who made this hiring possible. We already don't know what we did without her.

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AN INVITATION TO OOA MEMBERS

In times like this, do you feel you need to know more, do more, about the situation in our country and our world? If you do, we have an idea: Join OOA's Urgent Action Network.

What is the Urgent Action Network? Basically, it's a notification and action rapid response network or telephone tree. Sometimes events occur that require urgent action. This may mean firing off a letter, fax, e-mail, or telephone call to a government official, or it may mean attending an event on very short notice.

Being part of the Urgent Action Network is just one way that people support the work for social justice done by Office of the Americas. If you wish to participate, please so indicate on our response form on page 4. E-mail is the most efficient way for us to contact you, so please be sure to give us your e-mail address.

Thank you!

Leave the legacy of your commitment to your heirs: When drafting your will, please consider making a bequest to THE OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS. We are a 501-c-3 non-profit educational corporation. All contributions are tax deductible.

UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS: THE IMPOSTERS

We now have an anti-administration together with an anti-cabinet. Please review the fruits and the personnel of this ill suited cabal which has been structured in opposition to the common good of the people of the United States. Perhaps we can call it the ENRON Board of Directors.

By their fruits you will know them! Yes, some of these horrors began with previous administrations. We agree with the National Catholic Reporter in its editorial of 12/28/01

“The withdrawal from the ABM treaty and the decision to go forward with building a missile defense shield is the biggest U.S. foreign policy blunder since the Vietnam War.”

This Star Wars fantasy is nothing less than a theft of hundreds of billions of dollars from the needs of our citizens and a reckless endangerment of the entire planet.

1. December 2001, the United States officially withdraws from the 1972 Antiballistic Missile Treaty. This is the first time in the nuclear era that the United States has renounced a major arms control accord.
2. The 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention was ratified by the United States and 143 other countries. In July of 2001, the US walked out of a London Conference to discuss a 1994 protocol designed to strengthen the convention by providing for on-site inspections. At Geneva in November of 2001, US Undersecretary of State John Bolton stated that “the protocol is dead,” at the same time accusing Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya, Sudan and Syria of violating the convention but offering no specific allegations or supporting evidence.
3. In July of 2001 the United States was the only nation to oppose the United Nations Agreement to Curb the International Flow of Illicit Small Arms.
4. In April of 2001 the United States was not re-elected to the United Nations Human Rights Commission. As a former member of this commission the United States stood virtually alone in opposing resolutions supporting lower cost HIV/AIDS drugs; acknowledging a basic human right to adequate food; and calling for a moratorium on the death penalty.
5. The International Criminal Court Treaty was signed in Rome in July of 1998 to be set up at the Hague to try political leaders and military personnel charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity. It was approved by 120 countries. The United States opposed the treaty. In December of 2001 the United States Senate added an amendment to a military appropriations bill that would exempt US military personnel from complying with the jurisdiction of the new court.
6. The Treaty to ban Land Mines was signed by 122 nations in Ottawa in December of 1997. The United States refused to sign. Former President Clinton rejected the Treaty but said the United States would comply in 2006. President Bush rejected Clinton’s proposal in August of 2001.
7. The Kyoto Protocol of 1997, for controlling global warming: declared “dead” by President Bush in March 2001. In November 2001, the Bush administration

shunned negotiations in Marrakech (Morocco) to revise the accord, mainly by watering it down in a vain attempt to gain US approval.

8. In May 2001, refused to meet with European Union nations to discuss, even at lower levels of government, economic espionage and electronic surveillance of phone calls, e-mail, and faxes (the US “Echelon” program).
9. Refused to participate in Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)-sponsored talks in Paris, May 2001, on ways to crack down on off-shore and other tax and money-laundering havens.
10. Refused to join 123 nations pledged to ban the use and production of anti-personnel bombs and mines, February 2001.
11. Withdrew from the September 2001 International Conference on Racism, bringing together 163 countries in Durban, South Africa.
12. Was the only opposition to the International Plan for Cleaner Energy: G-8 group of industrial nations (US, Canada, Japan, Russia, Germany, France, Italy, UK), July 2001.
13. Enforced and tightened an illegal boycott of Cuba. In the UN in October 2001, the General Assembly passed a resolution, for the tenth consecutive year, calling for an end to the US embargo, by a vote of 167 to 3 (the US, Israel, and the Marshall Islands in opposition).
14. Comprehensive [Nuclear] Test Ban Treaty. Signed by 164 nations and ratified by 89 including France, Great Britain, and Russia; signed by President Clinton in 1996 but rejected by the Senate in 1999. The US is one of 13 nonratifiers among countries that have nuclear weapons or nuclear power programs. In November 2001, the US forced a vote in the UN Committee on Disarmament and Security to demonstrate its opposition to the Test Ban Treaty.
15. Optional Protocol, 1989, to the UN’s International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aimed at abolition of the death penalty and containing a provision banning the execution of those under 18. The US has neither signed nor ratified and specifically exempts itself from the latter provision, making it one of five countries that still execute juveniles (with Saudi Arabia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iran, Nigeria). China abolished the practice in 1997, Pakistan in 2000. Thanks to Richard Du Boff for this research. Centre for Research on Globalisation (CGR) www.globalresearch.ca/articles/DUB112B.html

ANY INCOMPETENT CAN START A WAR, IT REQUIRES HUMANITY AND GENIUS TO STOP ONE.

Washington continues to babble: “Let’s attack Iraq. No, let’s attack Somalia, O.K. but don’t forget Iran, how about the Sudan? What about the Philippines? Indonesia? What a minute, we forgot to attack Syria! Lebanon? Egypt? Palestine? These are wretched ghosts of the voices that destroyed the Greek, Roman, Spanish and British Empires. The social psychosis is more and more obvious to the world’s intellectual community.

On the 100th anniversary of the Nobel Prize, over 100 Nobel laureates, primarily from the hard sciences of chemistry (32) and physics (34), called for the "replacement of war by law," and an end to "the unilateral search for security." The laureates called the performance of the corporate media, "a madman rhetoric." They referred to the situation of the world's poor as, "desperate and manifestly unjust."

The statement concluded by saying, "To survive in the world we have transformed, we must learn to think in a new way. As never before, the future of each depends on the good of all."

COLOMBIA

Congratulations to our friend of many decades, Gail Phares, who led a Witness for Peace delegation of 37 labor leaders and environmentalists to Colombia at this critical moment. As the United Nations succeeded in its last minute effort to restart peace talks between the Colombian Government and the FARC, this delegation was in front of the United States Embassy in Bogota on Saturday, January 19, and Sunday, January 20, together with numerous Colombian peace organizations. "We want to show support for a negotiated solution to the Colombian armed conflict and to demand that our government support such a solution instead of increasing its capacity for war. We stand in solidarity with the Colombian people during this precarious time," said Gail.

ARGENTINA

Argentina, one of the world's richest countries just a century ago, has become another victim of the structural adjustment policies of the World Trade Organization.

** The OOA web-site is being updated. We hope to have it fully at your service by March 1, 2002.

UPCOMING

Saturday, Feb. 10th, 3pm:
WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
 with Medea Benjamin
 at: Soka Gakkai International (SGI-USA)
 606 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401
 310-260-8900

Feb. 15-18 at the Claremont Colleges in Southern California:
NATIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE Sponsored by Student Peace Action Network-
www.gospan.org *Including skills trainings by some of the top trainers in the country, representing groups like the National Youth & Student Peace Coalition, Ruckus Society, Campus Greens, Food Not Bombs, LA Independent Media Center, and more...plus, a training for trainers!

PEACE LEGISLATION UPDATE

Rep. Dennis Kucinich has introduced legislation to Congress to prohibit weapons in space. We want to support this now as the Bush administration seeks to withdraw from the ABM Treaty and to move ahead on missile "defense" and Star Wars. Peace Groups, please endorse the Kucinich Bill- HR 2977. Key websites for information are that of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear power in Space: www.space4peace.org, and The Institute for Cooperation in Space: www.peaceinspace.com

Please remember to check The Center for the Advancement of Nonviolence's excellent online peace calendar: *Go to: <http://nonviolenceworks.com> and click on the "calendar" link *

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.

- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King

Become an Office of the Americas Sustainer or Member

Members receive OOA's quarterly newsletter and the satisfaction of being part of an international movement for peace and justice. Sustainers receive monthly mailings of OOA issues, activities and special events.

I pledge: \$_____ each month quarter year other_____ for OOA's work.

Enclosed is my first pledge of: \$_____ (all contributions are tax-deductible).

Enclosed is my membership contribution:

Founder/\$1,000 Patron/\$500 Sponsor/\$250 Donor/\$200 Friend/\$100

Family/\$35 Individual/\$25 Limited income/\$10

Please send me information on your volunteer program. Please remove me from your mailing list.

Please put me on your Urgent Action Network.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip: _____

FAX: _____ Email: _____