

OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS NINETEENTH ANNIVERSARY OUR MOST IMPORTANT YEAR: 2002

Dear Friends:

Our nineteenth year is the most critical of all. Our unelected head of state is obsessed with war mania. The entire world is attempting to stop this war without end. The planet itself cannot sustain what is about to follow. Preemptive nuclear strikes can literally end life on earth. We are astounded by the power of one man to ravish the earth in order to save his corrupt political party. We will resist.

OOA'S HONOREES FOR 2002

MARTIN SHEEN, the Acting President of the United States. Martin has served on our Board of Directors since our inception. We have a secret desire to see him declare his candidacy for President of the United States. In addition to the incredible achievements that Martin has made in the film industry, OOA knows of his unrelenting work in the peace and justice struggle. He has gone to jail innumerable times as a testament to his profound commitment. Martin is one of the greatest actors of our time. His statement, "I'm a human being first and an actor second."

KELLY CAMPBELL AND BARRY AMUNDSON are the sister-in-law and brother of Craig Amundson who died in the Pentagon on September Eleventh and are founding members of September Eleventh Families for Peaceful Tomorrows. In January, Kelly traveled to Kabul, Afghanistan.

Kelly and Barry share how the events of September Eleventh personally affected their family, and their decision to speak out as a voice for peace. They describe their emotional journey to Afghanistan, the

stories of the Afghan sister families they met, and what can be done to help the innocent victims of US bombing in Afghanistan. The organization, September Eleventh Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, which they founded along with other September Eleventh families is working to promote peaceful responses to the tragedies of September Eleventh.

GREG PALAST an award-winning reporter for BBC Television's Newsnight and The Observer of London. Greg Palast's extraordinary reports have been front page news in Europe, yet blocked out of America's main stream media. "To Americans who cannot read his stories printed in Britain's Observer, he is America's journalist hero of the Internet." Alan Colmes, Fox Television.

Palast won Britain's highest journalism honors for his 1998 undercover investigation of influence peddling within Tony Blair's cabinet – by Enron and other US corporations. He then turned his sleuthing skills on to the Bush money trail: uncovering for BBC and The Observer the uncomfortable truths of how the Bush Administration quashed investigations of Saudi financing of terror – and Poppy Bush's extraordinary methods for stuffing his bank account and his son's campaign coffers.

THE BUSH MANIA FOR WAR

We are currently having our lives disrupted by the mania of one man. This one man, acting with dictatorial posture, is standing against every sane voice in the world. This individual is planning and plotting to conduct a massive slaughter of innocent civilians in Iraq. This

unelected head of state is not credible. He has become a disgrace to the United States of America. We recommend his impeachment.

9/11/01 to 9/11/02

Let's take a look at the past year.

The principalities and powers who attempt to control our lives and our minds generally have control of the media. But take heart. They are losing control daily. Voices from the base of society will be heard and are being heard, not only on Pacifica but in communities throughout the country.

Let's look at the response of the peace movement since September 11th, 2001. On September 12, 2001 the Coalition for World Peace was formed here in Southern California. This coalition was in sync with other coalitions nationally. The Coalition for World peace immediately called for a Peace Vigil in Griffith Park and met weekly ever since planning on-going Teach-Ins and demonstrations both local and national. Shortly after the formation of the Coalition for World Peace came the establishment of the Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace. This group represents religious people who do not think that religion should bless war. It has been a joy to see the meeting of Rabbis, Priests, Imams, Buddhists, Bahais, and many other faiths come together on Friday mornings at 7:00 AM to plan their on-going dissent to the war system. And yes, these groups do work together.

What About Local Office Holders?

Remember how we used to excuse local office holders on matters that related to foreign policy? Well, we no longer accept the

excuses of local politicians who simply say, for example, there is not enough money for health care in Los Angeles County. We are going to close fifteen clinics, and it is not our responsibility to deal with matters that apply to the Federal Government.

Sorry, board of supervisors, sorry city councils, sorry state assembly and senate and even you dear governor. Sorry folks, it is your job to connect the dots, it is your job to acknowledge that the reason for clinic closures in Los Angeles County is the War Machine, the War culture which has taken over the United States together with the war mongers who are making a fortune on massive killing.

Connecting the Dots

Please connect the dots. These addicts are in the process of destroying the United States of America. They glory in attacking the weakest nations on earth... Panama, Grenada, Haiti, Afghanistan and Iraq, a country which is now in ashes after twelve years of bombing including an initial assault of 88,000 tons of bombs, an ongoing crime against humanity. They have so dirtied the name of our country that it is now dangerous for U.S. citizens to travel. We have failed to sign each and every international treaty that could help the world to end the scourge of war.

You see we cannot afford good schools in California which for years was number one in education in the United States. You see we cannot afford health care as Italy can, as France can, you see we cannot afford health clinics. And friends, California is the fifth largest economic entity in the world. Los Angeles has a plethora of billionaires mixed with hard working people who labor forty hours a week and remain homeless. And who are the most neglected people in the United States: the children. In a human society children would be considered the privileged class together with the mentally and physically sick. In a human society, health care and education would be

considered a right... just as it is clearly stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Threats

Why can we not care for our own children? Because we have declared war on the world. Yes, some 60 countries have been threatened since 9/11. Let us look at a revolutionary prophesy made by Che Guevara a few years ago. Che saw it coming. He observed the rape of Vietnam from a distance but through the eyes of people at the base of society in Africa and Latin America. Here are his thoughts:

With a half million troops, with endless carpet bombing of civilians, with chemical warfare of dioxin, known as agent orange, with the hell fire of napalm burning men women and children alive, with the wanton destruction of civilian villages, torture, and summary execution in a place that has no air force... you are losing the war.

You are not capable of controlling the situation in half of one small country. What will happen when you have two, three, four, many Vietnams?

Well, friends, we now have many Vietnams and the creators of these new Vietnams are destroying the United States of America. They claim to be fighting against terrorism when they have used terrorism as a methodology in Indo-China, Central and South America, Haiti, Grenada, Iraq and Afghanistan. Any incompetent can start a war, and this is especially true if that incompetent wishes to cover up corruption at home.

One Word

This is the kind of leadership that gives the people of the United States credit for learning only one word every fifty years. And for over fifty years they used the word "communist" as the one word. That word meant simply "O.K. to kill." Millions of people were massacred after being assigned that one word. Children died by the hundreds of thousands because they were called that one word. Even those "suspected of being communists" could be killed. They were all O.K. to kill. When I lived in Guatemala I asked the leader of a Mano Blanca death squad why they

threatened a particular university student with death and he responded, "we heard him say he would give his life for the poor." Such was the definition of communism in Guatemala after our country overthrew its democratically elected leadership. And now after the collapse of the Soviet Union our experts had to look for a new word. Their disrespect for the people of this country continued and they found a new word. That word is terrorist. It was coined in its modern form by Ronald Reagan as he unleashed a rampage of death on the people of Central America. Now in a similar fashion young George Bush is responsible for unleashing the death squads (paramilitaries) of Colombia.

Terrorists

But wait a minute, there are terrorists. Some people attacked New York and Washington. That is correct. What is also correct is that the United States had laws and security forces to respond to such fanaticism. We did not need new laws to deal with this kind of crime. It has never been legal to plot, plan or carry out any such actions against an individual or group in the United States.

We did not need new laws after "Christian" fanatics attacked the Federal Building in Oklahoma City. The laws were all in place. But for political reasons President Clinton allowed his handlers to come in with very harmful anti-terrorist laws.

We did not need new laws after September 11 but Mr. Bush has allowed his rouges gallery of a cabinet to trash the liberties for which our founders dedicated their lives. I will be teaching Logic this semester and one of the long standing problems with logic is that it is based on one's belief system. For example if I believe that beating my children is the way to make them into good citizens, then it is logical for me to beat them. Naturally, I am dead wrong. Beating my children will not make them into good citizens so my very premise is false. Logic performs as a computer. If I put garbage in, garbage will come out. A good com-

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puter cannot correct a false belief system. If I believe that the foreign policy of the United States is the foreign policy of God, then whatever is done in our name is the will of God. Actually I would be supporting idol worship to have such a world view. The nation would become a craven image. An idol...indeed we shall have no strange gods!

Prisons

Do our prisons stop crime? On the contrary, our prisons are expanding crime. The same destructive logic of vengeance is used in our prison system. It is simply a reflection of the war system; vengeance and retaliation rather than restorative justice and rehabilitation. The logic we use toward our political enemies is used against our domestic delinquents. But vengeance and retaliation do not cure.

Is there any difference between the logic of street gangs and the foreign policy we live with every day? Both the war system and the prison system can be categorized as a failure.

Economics

Now behind this war system is an economic system and we must be aware that the Military is the enforcer of that economic system. But the structures imposed by this system have been rejected all around the world. In every country where the structural adjustment policies have been imposed, the domestic situation has proved a disaster: just look at the financial situation in Argentina, Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Haiti, Mexico and Central America, just look at all of Africa, Turkey, Russia and all of the former Soviet Union to say nothing of the economic crisis in Japan and much of Asia. Regarding violence I wish to recommend the book: Reflections on a National Epidemic; Violence by James Gilligan, M.D. published by Vintage Books 1997.

Peace Systems

We are proud of the peace and justice systems that are developing from the base of Society and which will eventually overcome the war

system with a peace system. We pledge resistance together with the Coalition for World Peace and Pax Christi, together with the American Friends Service Committee, together with the Education for Peace in Iraq Center, together with the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, together with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Lutheran Peace Fellowship, the National Network to End the War in Iraq and together with Voices in the Wilderness:

WE PLEDGE TO JOIN WITH OTHERS TO ENGAGE IN ACTS OF NONVIOLENT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AT U.S. FEDERAL FACILITIES IN ORDER TO PREVENT OR HALT THE DEATH AND DESTRUCTION THAT U.S. MILITARY ACTION CAUSES THE PEOPLE OF IRAQ.

OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS IN ACTION

We are so grateful to the many volunteers who have made our work flourish during this past year. Our nation is now in the most grave crisis of its history. That crisis is unnecessarily created by an unelected individual who has a fixation on making war. Apparently there is no other way his party can win the elections in November of 2002. Listed below are some of our activities.

Our most recent program on Adelphia, WORLD FOCUS, is an interview with Cythia Anderson Barker, an Attorney with the National Lawyers Guild and a specialist in cases of police abuse. It will air on both their public access and educational channels. Please check with Adelphia for time and channel in your area.

KPFK (90.7 FM) OOA commentaries are heard on the evening news between 6:30 and 7:00 PM. Because of the international crisis perpetrated by the Bush Administration it has been necessary to focus our attention almost entirely on our current foreign policy.

OOA WORLD FOCUS is now regularly scheduled on KPFK for 12:30 PM on Sundays.

We have hosted the work of the Coalition for World Peace and are very pleased with the Response to the recent actions in commemora-

tion of 9/11/01 such as:

- The Rally at Macarthur Park on September 8th for Peace and Justice: A Better World is Possible drew well over 1000 people. In spite of the length of the rally, the participants did not want to leave.
- The Ongoing Protests to Stop the Imminent Attack on Iraq. Every Friday at the Westwood Federal Building from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Please join us.
- Several hundred people participated in The Silent Peace Vigil at the Pier in Santa Monica on 9/11/02. In a rare experience for the peace movement in the past year, major commercial TV actually aired the excellent comments of spokesperson Elke Heitmeyer.

Please see the website <www.coalitionforworldpeace.org> for upcoming events.

Beyond War and Terror: New Visions of World Peace and World Law at the Baha'i Center in Los Angeles.

We joined with Not in Our Name for the Pledge of Resistance Rally at Pershing Square.

OOA was honored with the 2002 award by the Los Angeles Chapter of National Lawyers Guild.

We assisted in making an audio version of the book ADDICTED TO WAR by Joel Andreas.

Presentation at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Santa Monica.

Morning session at El Rescate regarding the plight of refugees from Central America and Mexico.

Banning High School in Wilmington. A presentation to Doctors from UCLA Harbor Hospital, including residents, medical students, and high school students on the relationship between the expanded military budget and the closing of health centers in Los Angeles County. Some of the doctors have joined the Coalition for World Peace. They contributed a substantive presence as well as a major speaker at the Macarthur Park Rally on September 8th.

Meetings with Alex Sanchez and Homies Unidos prior to the successful outcome of his deportation hearing before the Federal Immigration Court.

Promotion of a play about the history of Haiti: "Dessalines" (The Heart) Directed by Ben Guillory at the Greenway Court Theatre 544 North Fairfax Avenue in Los Angeles.

The play will continue until October 20th. Call 323/655-4402.

Two presentations at Throop Memorial Church in Pasadena (Colombia Today) and (The State of the Nation's Soul).

Gallery Figueroa, Highland Park, "War in Iraq?"

Review of script and treatment of material for a new documentary on WAR.

Speaker at, "Saving Lives: Water Across the Border" and the creation of a Democratic Immigration Task Force to address the issues of Family Reunification; Earned Access to Legalization and Border Safety and Protection.

Commentary on 9/11 for WBAI, New York.

Church 300 South Los Robles, Pasadena (626/795-8625) 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM. OOA has arranged for Nineth Garcia Montenegro, Congresswoman and founder of the Grupo Apoyo Mutuo in Guatemala to be a major speaker.

Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace: With Malice and Aforethought: The Impending U.S. Attack Against Iraq. Sunday October 13, 2002, 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM,

Loyola Marymount Center for Faith and Spirituality, One LMU Drive, Los Angeles.

OOA arranged for former Attorney General Ramsey Clark to be a major speaker.

In Memoriam. Dr. Irving Benjamin Rayman Passed away September 9, 2002 father of Lisa Smithline, OOA's Executive Assistant. Our love and prayers to the Rayman family.

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Upcoming

Father Roy Bourgeois, Founder of School of the Americas Watch will speak at the home

Of Jerry Manpearl and Jan Goodman on October 5, 2002 from 12:30 -2:30 PM.

Call 323/852-9808 for reservations.

Annual Encuentro: Struggling for Political and Economic Democracy at Home and in Latin America. Saturday October 12, 2002 at Throop Memorial

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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.

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

I would like an OOA speaker for a house / church / organization meeting.

I would like to join the Urgent Action Network.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip: _____

FAX: _____ Email: _____

Note: FAX and Email addresses are assurances that you will receive more notices of special events.