

SUPPORT THE WORKERS AT ALBERTSONS, RALPHS AND VONS!

Don't Cross the Union Picket Lines.

As most of us are painfully aware, the grocery market strike continues, causing tremendous hardship to the over 70,000 workers who are either on strike or locked out. Supermarket workers aren't asking to become millionaires, they are merely trying to maintain a decent wage and adequate healthcare. Their demands have been met with a deaf ear leaving us to worry about the future of "middle class" jobs in our country. We must tell the truth about the scope and consequences of this struggle. The supermarket giants, Kroger, Albertson's and Safeway, led by Safeway's CEO Steve Burd, are a

clear example of corporate greed vs. human need. If corporate greed prevails in this wave of strikes, it will signal the death of workplace health care benefits in the supermarket industry and eventually for all workers. We urge all OOA members to actively support these courageous strikers as they fight the good fight for us all. Here's what you can do:

- Honk your horns as you pass the picket lines.
- Stop and talk to the strikers.
- Bring a snack to warm their spirits and their tummies.
- Join the picket line.
- Support the strike fund if possible – any little bit helps.
- Check our website: officeoftheamericas.org and/or ucfw.org for updates and action alerts.
- And of course – DON'T CROSS THE PICKET LINE!

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OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS

FOCUS: Peace Now!

OfficeOfTheAmericas.org

2003 A GOOD YEAR FOR THE JUSTICE AND PEACE MOVEMENT?

Ironically, yes. This painful year was the best for the peace movement in world history. We are proud to be part of a coalition which the New York Times describes as the other superpower.

Demonstrations in the Streets

This year's opposition was to war itself. We were overwhelmed in January of 2003 by the presence of 500,000 demonstrators in Washington, D.C. which was the greatest statement for peace prior to war in the history of the United States.

Following this massive witness, day to day organizing continued leading up to an international outpouring of twelve million people from seven hundred cities in sixty countries on February 15th of 2003.

Consistent with U.S. history in the abolition of slavery, many of the most radical peace people come from the religious community. A vanguard of heroic religious people symbolically attacked nuclear weapons sites and received long and harsh sentences. Father Roy Bourgeois' huge gathering to close the School of the Americas included many who crossed the line risking prison sentences of six months and more.

Demonstrators together with invited delegates revealed the failure of the World Trade Organization at Cancun in Mexico. Miami was the site of a bold denunciation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Perhaps some don't understand that Cancun and Miami represent demonstrations for world peace. The current forced trade system is simply another facet of the war system.

Israeli Military Refuseniks

And now over twelve hundred members of the Israeli military have refused to serve in Palestine as a result of their outrage at the endless oppression and humiliation of the Palestinian people. As such significant numbers of the Israeli military refuse to serve, as four former leaders of the Israeli Secret Police denounce the methodology of Sharon, U.S. policy dinosaurs are diligently imitating that same failed methodology in Iraq.

Latin America

The weak of the earth continue to confound the strong. Bolivia, the poorest country in South America, gave the most profound response to the doctrine of forced privatization by non-violently removing President Sanchez de Lozada.

Truth telling internet groups such as MoveOn and many others (we might even include www.officeoftheamericas.org) have lessened the power of our corporate managed media.

Two hundred cities across the United States have passed resolutions against the Patriot Act. Some of Bush's largest supporters such as Enron have been identified as

corporate criminals, to say nothing of the war profiteering of Halliburton and Bechtel.

The Immigrant's Freedom March crossed the nation in a bold manifestation on behalf of the rights of all workers. OOA played a key role in the organizing of this march.

Military Families Speak Out (mfso.org)

We mourn with the military families who have seen the devastation of their children and their parents. They know that these deaths have been the result of the corporate greed that has taken over our government. Deaths are counted but their return to the United States is hidden, the wounded are not counted by the media, the Iraqi and Afghani wounded and dead do not exist as far as our authorities are concerned, and we must acknowledge that the mental and moral damage to our troops will impact our culture for generations. Office of the Americas has met with Military Families Speak Out to determine how the peace movement can offer solidarity. Two of our licensed therapists have offered their services.

New Voices Speak Out

The entire world is outraged at our lawless behavior, and now the United States has demonstrated the absolute limits of super-power domination. Star Wars programs do not stop suicide bombers with

Leave the legacy of your commitment to your heirs: When drafting your will, please consider making a bequest to THE OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS.



OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS

Become an Office of the Americas Sustainer or Member

All contributions are tax-deductible

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.

Sustainers

- I pledge: \$_____ each * month * quarter * year * other_____ for OOA's work.
- Enclosed is my first pledge of \$_____ * Please charge my first pledge of \$_____ to my
- Visa * Mastercard Number _____ Expiration Date ___/___/___

Members

Enclosed is my membership contribution:

- Founder \$1,000 * Patron \$500 * Sponsor \$500 * 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.
- I would like an OOA speaker for a house/church/organization meeting.
- I would like to join the OOA email list.

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
FAX: _____ E-mail: _____

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

box cutters. Only social justice can do that.

We are pleased with the disgust that Republican insiders have expressed with the Bush Administration. For example the book, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill* by Ron Suskind, Simon and Schuster, 2004. Even our stodgy Supreme Court is beginning to awake to the blatant illegalities of the Bush cabal.

World-class academics like Dr. Chalmers Johnson have documented the deterioration of our government with irrefutable data. It was our pleasure to interview Dr. Johnson on WORLD FOCUS on three occasions in the past year. We recommend his newly released book, *Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic*, Metropolitan Books, New York, 2004.

And we must mention another very important book, *American Dynasty: Aristocracy Fortune and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush*, by Kevin Phillips, Viking-Penguin, 2004.

We are an educational non-profit corporation. For twenty years the Office of the Americas has re-thought and re-identified our methodologies as demanded by the times. We think our voice and our educational methodologies have been more effective than ever in this most painful yet fruitful year.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY HAITI!

Here is a letter from our dear friend Pierre Labossier on his return from the 200th anniversary of Haiti. Our government was stunned by Haiti's abolition of slavery

some 54 years before our Civil War. The United States was on good terms with various dictators who oppressed Haiti. But when Jean Bertrand Aristide became president and did the unthinkable by abolishing the Haitian Army, Washington's response was vitriolic. An embargo against the poorest country in the Americas (Haiti) followed. CIA disinformation promulgated by the corporate media is the daily fare of U.S. readers.

Dear Friends,

Best wishes for a happy and peaceful 2004!!!

I recently returned from Haiti where I attended the bicentennial celebrations of the declaration of independence from France. It was a very inspiring week-long visit.

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.

I was greatly dismayed by the gross inaccurate reporting of the festivities that I had witnessed both in Port-au-Prince and Gonaives. While in Haiti, I spent much time dispelling inaccurate stories that friends and relatives in the US were quoting from the NY Times and BBC among others.

The dissemination of these false stories, on this most special occasion for Haiti, Africa, Africans of the Diaspora and freedom-loving people world-wide, follows in the tradition of negative portrayal of Haiti since its founding 200 years ago. This tradition, initiated by the US and French "slaveocracy," lives on in the western media.

The article below by Haiti Progress is preceded by Frederick Douglass' poem "Until She Spoke."

Inspired by the high price paid by Haiti's revolutionaries for the sake of freedom, Frederick Douglass, who was appointed consul general to Haiti in 1889 and lived there for two years, left a lasting appreciation of his love and respect for Haiti.

Until She Spoke

Until she spoke, no Christian nation had abolished Negro slavery.

Until she spoke, no Christian nation had given to the world an organized effort to abolish slavery.

Until she spoke, the slave ship, followed by hungry sharks, greedy to devour the dead and dying slaves flung overboard to feed them, ploughed in peace the South Atlantic, painting the sea with the Negro's blood.

Until she spoke, the slave trade was sanctioned by all the Christian nations of the world, and our land of liberty and light included.

Men made fortunes by this infernal traffic, and were esteemed as good Christians, and the standing types and representations of the Savior of the World.

Until Haiti spoke, the church was silent, and the pulpit was dumb.

Slave-traders lived and slave-traders died. Funeral sermons were preached over them, and of them it was said that they died in the triumphs of the Christian faith and went to heaven among the just.

Frederick Douglass

Office of the Americas' Awardees Congresswoman Maxine Waters and Danny Glover participated the Haitian Celebration of 2004.

Tens of thousands of Haitians filled the streets around the National Palace in Port-au-Prince on Jan. 1, 2004 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Haiti's independence. A smaller celebration of about 7,000 took place later the same day in Gonaives, the city where Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Haiti's first head of

state, declared independence for the world's first black republic.

Despite threats of violence from the Washington-backed opposition and back-room pressure to dissuade them, many foreign delegations attended the bicentennial ceremonies. South African President Thabo Mbeki and his wife along with Bahamian Prime Minister Perry Christie shared center stage with President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, First Lady Mildred Trouillot Aristide, Prime Minister Yvon Neptune, and his wife.

France and the United States only dispatched their local ambassadors, although Washington's Luigi Einaudi and Ottawa's David Lee attended representing the Organization of American States, of which they are respectively Assistant Secretary General and Special Representative to Haiti.

The Office of the Americas is proud to be co-sponsoring with the Quixote Center the new book, *Let Haiti Live: Unjust U.S. Policies Toward its Oldest Neighbor*.

NICARAGUA

The word interference has defined United States policy toward Nicaragua. And now U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua, Barbara Moore, has hosted a meeting of right wing Nicaraguan politicians at her embassy in Managua. Her purpose: to exclude the Sandinista Party from the leadership of the National Assembly. Barbara Moore seems unaware that the Sandinistas were responsible for the only peaceful change of power in Nicaraguan history. Ever since the Sandinista Constitution of 1987 political parties have followed in peaceful succession. In Nicaragua's pre-Sandinista history opposition political parties were only able to achieve power by violence. This current interference follows on the heels of the 2001 Nicaraguan elections when high-level U.S. State Department officials threatened Nicaraguan voters with economic sanctions and further military intervention if the Sandinista candidate were elected. The Office of the Americas was an on-site observer of these pre-election threats in 2001. You are welcome to call Maeve Dwyer at the Nicaraguan Desk of the State Department at 202/647-3518 to express your disapproval at U.S. continued interference in Nicaragua's internal political affairs.

BUSH'S GUEST WORKER PROGRAM

"Welcome to the Wal-Mart Bracero Program," says journalist Juan Gonzalez. That's

what some Latino leaders are calling George Bush's plan to create a massive new government-sanctioned guest worker program for more than

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eight-million immigrants in the country illegally.

"This is a modern-day rewrite of the 1940's Bracero Program that tore families apart and stripped laborers of their earnings and their future," said Representative Ciro Rodriguez (D-Texas), chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

MARCH 20th: The World Still Says No to War

Momentum is building across the globe for the Global Day of Action against War and Occupation on March 20th, the one-year anniversary of the U.S. bombing and invasion of Iraq. The ANSWER Coalition and United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) along with many local and national groups are playing a key role in initiating and building massive demonstrations to be held across the globe and across the nation. Plans are already underway. In Los Angeles, the demonstration is planned to assemble at 12 noon at Hollywood and Vine. Our hope is that tens of thousands of people will gather with us in Los Angeles showing the strength of the peace and justice movement.

Join us on March 20th as millions around the globe take to the streets to say YES to peace and NO to pre-emptive war and occupation. Joining with growing numbers of military families and soldiers, we will call for an end to the brutal occupation of Iraq, Bush's militaristic foreign policies, and unjust U.S. trade policies—policies designed for empire, not security or justice. We were right to oppose the war, and nearly a year later, we still say no to war. The U.S. protests will call for global justice and an end to Bush's violation of human rights at home in the name of national security, abuses experienced most sharply by people of color. We will call for an end to the mass detentions and deportations of innocent immigrants in the name of fighting terrorism. We will express the growing opposition to the PATRIOT Act, which authorizes indefinite detentions, domestic spying, religious and racial profiling. And we will say no to massive military spending amidst vast cuts in vital domestic social and economic programs.

BRING the TROOPS HOME NOW!

END the OCCUPATION of IRAQ!

MONEY for JOBS, EDUCATION, HEALTH-CARE and HOUSING - NOT WAR!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.InternationalANSWER.org>

<http://www.unitedforpeace.org> | 212-868-5545