

free family health coverage, strengthens protections for immigrant workers, and expands employment opportunities in the hotel industry for African Americans.

In these times, service workers cannot hope to advance without strong allies standing shoulder-to-shoulder with them as they fight to improve their lives and the lives of their families.

We hope that you will join the Office of the Americas in supporting this important campaign. If you are planning or participating in an event in one of these hotels during the next six months, or if you would like more information about how you can actively support this campaign, please call Derek Smith at (310) 801-1410.

'I'M NOT SCARED—I'M STICKIN' TO THE UNION'

But workers are scared. They're negotiating without a contract in the shadows of the grocery strike. If you'd like to help inform people of what they're trying to accomplish, and possibly even contribute to the strike fund, contact LOIS

DAVIS at (310) 475-5729 to set up a meeting at your house. All you need is your address book, a living room and a platter of cookies and coffee. It's so easy and so gratifying to be part of Solidarity....The union makes us strong!

WARSZAWA SALONS

A year ago this month, Warszawa Restaurant approached the Office of the Americas to sponsor an evening of lectures and discussion. Since that time, Paul and Elina O'Lague have welcomed us each month into a tranquil courtyard where guests have the opportunity to listen, ask questions and collaborate on how to act. Previous guests include Robert Scheer, Jay Levin, Robert Greenwald, Military Families Speak Out, and Blase Bonpane. The onslaught of information that marks these times can render us immobile. Join the fight! Come see what others are doing to improve our world. Enjoy drinks and delicious hors d'oeuvres.

Upcoming: Dolores Huerta on June 30th.

OOA Boardmembers:

Edward Asner
Theresa Bonpane
Blase Bonpane, Ph.D.
*Rev. Roy Bourgeois
*Rev. Gregory Boyle
*Bruce Chalett
*Noam Chomsky
*Lois Davis
*William J. Davis
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*James Lafferty
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*Joyce Norman
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*Angela Sanbrano
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*Studs Terkel
*Patrice Wagonhurst, M.A.,M.P.H.
Haskell Wexler
*Don White
*Howard Zinn, Ph.D.
Clarissa Romano; Executive Assistant
*Advisory Board.

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

FOCUS: Peace Now!

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TACTICS OF U.S. PRISONS AND THE SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS EXPORTED TO IRAQ

The physical mental and sexual abuse of prisoners which has been documented in Iraq takes place in American prisons and is codified in Torture Manuals from the School of the Americas (popularly known as the School of the Assassins). Reports from Texas State prisons under the leadership of Governor George Bush are strikingly similar to those of Abu Ghraib prison.

THE LAW: GENEVA CONVENTION

The United States together with 190 other nations signed the 1949 Geneva Convention which included the following resolutions: Prisoners of war must be provided adequate food, shelter and medical aid. Prisoners of war must be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation, and against insults and public curiosity. If questioned, prisoners of war are required to provide their name, rank, serial number and date of birth. They may not be forced to provide any other information.

Prisoners of war may not be subjected to physical or mental torture. Those who refuse to answer questions may not be threatened, insulted or exposed to any unpleasant or disadvantageous treatment of any kind. Representatives from the International Committee of the Red Cross must be permitted access to prisoners of war as soon as practical. All prisoners of war must be protected against assault, including sexual assault. Female

prisoners of war shall be treated with regard due to their gender, and like all prisoners of war, are entitled to respect for their person and their honor.

THE BUSH RECORD

As President Bush has stated, war criminals will be prosecuted. We must work to see that he and all others who have perpetuated torture as a routine methodology are prosecuted.

Was Governor Bush unaware of the conditions in his Texas prisons?

* Female prisoners were regularly kept in portable detention cells for hours in Texas summer heat with no water. Fear of more time in the cages led many women to submit sexually to their oppressors.

* Prison guards brutalizing inmates in the Brazoria County Detention Center in Angleton, Texas were taped beating prisoners (arrested on drug violations) and forcing them to crawl while kicking them and poking them with electric prods. Did Governor Bush never see the tape?

Did the governor know nothing about the hunger strike at the notorious Terrel Unit facility in Livingston, Texas, where death-row prisoner Michael Sharp said before his execution, "Many guards think it is their patriotic duty to torture and brutalize prisoners." Attorney Donna Brorby had described Texas' super-max prisons as "the worst in the country, where guards reportedly gas

prisoners and throw them down on concrete floors while handcuffed."

JUDGE WILLIAM WAYNE JUSTICE

The Austin Chronicle reported the words of Texas Judge William Wayne Justice, written after hearing lengthy expert and inmate testimony on prison conditions:

"Texas prison inmates continue to live in fear. More vulnerable inmates are raped, beaten, owned, and sold by more powerful ones. Despite their pleas to prison officials, they are often refused protection. Instead, they pay for protection, in money, services, or sex."

"Correctional officers continue to rely on the physical control of excessive force to enforce order. Those inmates locked away in administrative segregation, especially those with mental illnesses, are subjected to extreme deprivations and daily psychological harm." (See Alexander Zaitchik in Counter Punch, May 8, 2004)

ATTORNEY GENERAL ASHCROFT

Attorney General John Ashcroft announced the appointment of the team to restore Iraq's criminal justice system. The prison officials, judges, prosecutors and police chiefs sent to Iraq were chosen by him. The reopening of Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq was entrusted to Lane McCotter who resigned under pressure as director of the Utah Department of



OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS

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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.

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.

Corrections in 1997 after a schizophrenic inmate died while shackled naked to a restraining chair for sixteen hours.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. McCotter was director of business development for the Management and Training Corporation, the third largest private prison company. The company's operation was under investigation by the Justice Department and the New Mexico Department of Corrections. Over 40 state prison systems have been under some form of court order for brutality, overcrowding, poor food, lack of medical care (research by The Sentencing Project).

After Mr. Ashcroft announced the appointment of the team to restore Iraq's criminal justice system including Mr. McCotter he said, "Now all Iraqis can taste liberty in their native land, and we will help make that freedom permanent by assisting them to establish an equitable criminal justice system based on the rule of law and standards of basic human rights."

Colonel McCotter had been a military police officer in Vietnam. He was later warden of the Army prison at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. Later he was head of the corrections departments in New Mexico, Texas and Utah. In an interview with Corrections.com Mr. McCotter stated that of all the prisons in Iraq, Abu Ghraib is the only place we agreed as a team was truly closest to an American prison." (See New York Times, May 8, 2004)

A TRUTH COMMISSION IS NECESSARY

The official word from the Bush administration is that the torture and sexual abuse of Iraqi prisoners by U.S. troops in Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison is not systematic, according to General Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. If we ignore all of the facts in the public record over the last four decades, this would be a plausible explanation. This type of torture of indigenous and Third World people, however, is well-documented as a pattern and practice of the U.S. military and the CIA. In January 1997, the Baltimore Sun exposed a 1983 CIA torture manual that was used to instruct five Latin American nations security forces. A 1996 U.S. government investigation into the U.S. Army School of the Americas in Ft. Benning, Georgia resulted in the release of no less than seven training manuals used at the school which taught murder, torture, and extortion as a means of repressing so-called subversives, according to a Congressional report. In addition to the seven training manuals, add the 1983 Honduran Interrogation Manual and the 1984 Contra Manual as evidence of the U.S. military industrial complex long-standing practice of torture. By now much of the world has seen images of a hooded Iraqi prisoner with electrical wires attached

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to his body. This is another long-standing practice of U.S. military and CIA interrogators. The Baltimore Sun also uncovered a 1963 manual called

KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation containing references to the use of electric shock. A.J. Langguth wrote about this in a July 11, 1979 New York Times article entitled Tortures Teachers. Langguth notes in his article that the C.I.A. sent an operative to teach interrogation methods to SAVAK, the Shahs secret police, [and] that the training included instructions in torture, and the techniques were copied from the Nazis. Forced masturbation was a favorite Nazi tactic. The only new trend in pattern and practice of U.S. military/CIA torture interrogation is the strong push to privatization, in line with President Bush's ideology. [Taken from an article by Bob Fittrakis, a Political Science Professor and the editor of The Free Press, (www.freepress.org).]
* The International Red Cross repeatedly warned the U.S. on the Abu Ghraib.

FROM SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS WATCH

From Abu Ghraib to Latin America: Map of U.S. Pattern of Abuse Grows. Torture of Iraqi Soldiers Indicative of Ongoing Policy of Systematic and Illegal Abuse.

Recent reports of the torture of Iraqi detainees at the Abu Ghraib military prison near Baghdad are part of a larger pattern of abuse and torture at the hands of U.S. soldiers, U.S.-trained soliders, "independent contractors" and intelligence agents around the world. In fact, U.S. Army intelligence manuals advocating torture techniques and how to circumvent laws on due process, arrest and detention were used for at least a decade to train Latin American soldiers at the U.S. Army's School of the Americas, renamed in 2001 the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation or WHINSEC.

"We see a consistent pattern of the Pentagon claiming to work for democracy," says Fr. Roy Bourgeois, founder of SOA Watch, "while in their prisons and training centers, reports of torture and human rights abuses continue to surface."

Read the rest of the article at www.SOAW.org

WHAT THE UNITED STATES MUST DO

1. Immediately sign the Convention on the Prevention of Torture
2. Close the School of the Americas, remove those who taught counter-insurgency techniques from the military.
3. Oblige the President to stop the policy of blackmailing other nations with threats of withholding aid to force them to agree not to bring charges against Americans before the International Criminal Court.

4. Because of his sordid history as U.S. Ambassador to Honduras during the Contra War, John Negroponte should not be given any post in the reconstruction of Iraq.
Note: For contact with victims of torture under U.S. direction contact:

Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International
4121 Harewood Road NE Suite B
Washington, D.C. 20017-1597
202/529-2991
FAX: 202/529-8334



LORI BERENSON

Lori Berenson's case was heard by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in San Jose Costa Rica. Her parents, Mark and Rhoda Berenson were present together with her lawyers Ramsey Clark, former Attorney General of the United States and Thomas Nooter, a criminal and international lawyer based in New York City. Peruvian lawyer Jose Luis Sandoval Quesada who represented Lori in her civilian trial also participated. The Office of the Americas is an Amicus Curiae in this case. The decision of this court is expected in September of 2004.

More than two years ago, Lori was vindicated by the unanimous decision of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Peru is required to explain why it refused to comply with that decision to fully restore Lori's rights and provide her with moral, psychological and financial compensation. Lori has been unjustly imprisoned for eight years and five months.

Go to www.FreeLori.org for further information.

WAGING PEACE

Academy Award winner, Barbara Trent has done it again. Her new film Waging Peace captures the excitement and hope of the world's largest recorded peace demonstration. Waging Peace recently won the Burke Award for best documentary. For further information contact:
www.empowermentproject.org

AN AWARD FOR THERESA

We were overjoyed when Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE) chose Theresa for their Giants of Justice award together with Rabbi Leonard Beerman, Rev. Malcolm Boyd, Father Gregory Boyle, Ms. Dolores Huerta, Rev. James Lawson, Jr.

**Be sure to check our website:
www.officeoftheamericas.org**

OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS IN ACTION

World Focus can be heard every Sunday at 10:00 AM on KPFK- (90.7 FM, Los Angeles and 98.7 in Santa Barbara. In addition, our weekly commentaries are interspersed during regular news hour broadcasts.

Some of our recent guests on World Focus : Noam Chomsky, Jeff Cohen, Jodie Evans, Jamie Cromwell, John Dean, Jonathan Schell, Kimi Lee, Bill Hartung, Rosemary Ruether, Gino Strada, Kate Rowlands, Gail Phares, Eric Debode, Edward Asner, Aliya Strauss, Max Cabrera, Margaret Prescod, Javier Stauring, Shan Cretin, Loring Werbel, John Farrell.

Presentations and Actions

To the Pomona Valley Peace Organization at the City Center of California,

To students at UCLA on Nicaragua,
To students at UCLA on Liberation Theology, Keynote address to the Call to Action Conference,

To the Alliance for Retired Americans on Contemporary Latin America,
April 5th Emergency Iraq protest at the Westwood Federal Building,

Vigils every Thursday at the Westwood Federal Building (5:00-7:00 PM) under the direction of Dr. Alice Powell,

Caravan for Justice speaker at office of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on May Day,

Office of the Americas Salons at the Yard featuring Jay Levin, Maurice Zeitlin, Robert Sheer and Barbara Trent,

OOA invited to Washington, D.C. as member of The Quixote Center's National Round Table on Haiti in the aftermath of the recent coup.

UNITE-HERE

As we've all seen from the Southern California grocery workers' strike, basic rights to livable wages, health coverage, sick days and participation in workplace decision making are under massive threat.

As respected activists, we know that your heart and mind are attuned to the challenges of our community's working families. That is why we want to inform you early about an upcoming contract campaign which will affect thousands of tourism workers and their families.

Currently, 4000 workers, represented by H.E.R.E. Local 11 are in contract negotiations with their employers. The contract was scheduled to expire on April 15th, but has been extended on a week to week basis.

Housekeepers, cooks, servers, dishwashers, bellmen, and front desk agents throughout 16 major Los Angeles area hotels, including the Westin Bonaventure, Millennium Biltmore, Downtown Hyatt Regency, Wilshire Grand, Sheraton Universal, Century Plaza, St. Regis and the Regent Beverly Wilshire will be affected.

UNITE-HERE is committed to winning a fair contract that addresses heavy workloads, preserves