GANDHIAN WAVE

NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION
TO CLOSE THE U.S. ARMY'S SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS/
WESTERN HEMISPHERE INSTITUTE
FOR SECURITY COOPERATION
at FT. BENNING, GEORGIA

A CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE HANDBOOK

SOA WATCH/CNY

OCTOBER 2002
Nothing but organized nonviolence can check the organized violence of the British Government.

This non-violence will be expressed through civil disobedience. I know that in embarking on non-violence I shall be running what might be termed a mad risk. But the victories of truth have never been won without risks. Conversion of a nation that has consciously or unconsciously preyed upon another, far more numerous, far more ancient and no less cultured than itself, is worth any amount of risk.

My ambition is no less than to convert the British people through non-violence, and thus make them see the wrong they have done to India.

Gandhi
Dear friends,

"Gandhian Wave" is a practical guide for doing civil disobedience -- for making waves -- for making wave after wave -- at Ft. Benning, GA. Benning, of course, is the home of the new School of the Americas clone: the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. The goal of such civil disobedience is to expose and close this U.S. Army school for terrorism.

This manual derives its title from Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869-1948). That liberator of India was the mentor of Martin Luther King, Jr. of the U.S. Civil Rights movement...and of Fr. Roy Bourgeois, of the SOA Watch movement. Both movements have drawn mightily on Gandhi’s legacy: Empowerment through Nonviolence. Through relentless persistence. Through prison witness.

Just as the British Empire once dominated and exploited India, the U.S. dominates the people of the Caribbean and Central and South America. By arming and training their militaries, the U.S. holds guns to their heads. Without such guns we could not siphon off their wealth nor coerce their cheap labor for the benefit of “our” multinational corporations. Without such guns the onslaught of corporate globalization would be far less lethal.

U.S. taxpayers fund the SOA/WHISC. In solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Latin America, each November since 1990 SOA Watchers using Nonviolent direct action risk arrest at Benning. Many of us have gone to prison. Let us “up the ante” at Benning -- let us make waves far more often than once a year.

Ed Kinane & Ann Tiffany
SOA Watch/CNY
340 Midland Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13202
(315) 478-4571

We dedicate this edition to the SOA 37 -- most of whom are now enduring probation or prison, having been found guilty of trespass for “crossing the line” at Benning on November 18, 2001. We also dedicate this edition to Bill Quigley and his legal term who so ably empowered these defendants to so eloquently speak their truth in federal court last July.
NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT  by Starhawk

Author/activist Starhawk circulated these reflections in early November 2001. She argues that, in the wake of Sept. 11, "now is the moment when we need to move forward, not retreat, when we need to step up our activism, not pull back."

I'm sitting here scrolling through my backlog of e-mail, and two themes predominate: the illegitimacy and horror of America's New War, and a multitude of voices from the movement I thought I was part of telling us to pause, to keep quiet, that protest now might jeopardize our cause.

And I find myself thinking about Emma Goldman, who, when she took an extremely unpopular position, said that the more people disagreed with her, the more strongly she had to speak out. We need a little more of her spirit in the movement today.

Now is the moment when we need to move forward, not retreat, when we need to step up our activism, not pull back.

The media and the government are trying to construct a reality for us. If we silence ourselves, we play into their hands. If they accuse dissenters of being unpatriotic, and we stifle our dissent in response, we are accepting their view of reality.

If they accuse us of being terrorists, and we hide, we confirm the association in the public mind. And we have no reason to hide, nothing to apologize for, no reason to retreat one inch. We stand for the very values the U.S. is presumably fighting for: democracy, accountability, real security, true justice — and we should be loud and proud about it.

The best way to truly differentiate ourselves from the terrorists is to do what we do, loudly, publicly, and visibly, to continue to speak, to march to gather publicity, to organize blatantly, and yes, to mount actions that challenge the institutions of corporate control, actions that embody the principles of freedom, direct democracy, respect for diversity and love for life.

If the government passes laws that define dissent as terrorism, they still have to implement those laws, prosecute people under them, defend their position in court. Whether they do so or not will depend on what they perceive will be the political price. If we have a strong, vital movement and strong solidarity, we can make each step costly and difficult.

If we stifle our own dissent out of fear, we've done their work for them. Repression requires compliance. No repressive system, no matter how pervasive and strong, can afford to actually enforce its every decree. Instead, such systems depend on intimidating people so that we police ourselves out of fear.

— over
Fear surrounds us at the moment. It’s being wafted to us every night from our TV screens; it falls out of the pages of our newspapers, an invisible powder more deadly than anthrax. We can’t blame each other for being afraid, but we can lovingly challenge each other to move past the fear to a place of courage: that ability to stare possible loss in the face and act anyway.

For fear does not lead to good decisions. Fear cuts us off from information, from choices, from vision and hope. It inflates the power of the authorities, narrows our possibilities and leaves us easily controlled.

The WTO, the IMF and the World Bank are not pausing for reflection. They are continuing to meet, and are pushing as hard as they possibly can to implement their entire corporate agenda. The Bush Administration isn’t thoughtfully slowing down – it’s moving full speed ahead with a campaign of gratuitous violence that now threatens millions of Afghans with starvation.

If we pull back now, we won’t later find a more favorable moment to act. Every piece of their agenda that gets locked into place becomes that much harder to dislodge. Every political space we relinquish will become that much harder to regain.

We could act stupidly, and provoke a backlash that we’ll be struggling against for decades. We could act timidly, or not act, and lost the political ground we have gained. Or we can act with courage, vision, humor and creativity, and continue to challenge the system with new possibilities, new analyses, new voices. We can be a model for all those whose real feelings are far more complex and ambiguous than the polls show.

Yes, public opinion seems against us. But public opinion was never changed by silence. We don’t change opinions by deferring to them, but by challenging them. Challenge does not have to be strident or doctrinaire. New forms of dialogue may be called for. But people are hungry to talk about these issues. If we are willing to listen as well as speechify, our actions can become forums for breakthroughs and openings.

It’s likely our actions will be met with a hailstorm of vitriol and name-calling from the Right. What’s new about that? The Civil Rights movement, the anti-Vietnam war movement, the feminist and les/bi/trans/gay rights movements and virtually every movement for social justice all faced virulent hatred, and many still do.

All were originally seen as too radical, too provocative, as likely to detract from the achievement of some agenda or another. Yet all of them weathered the storm and went on to make major changes in the public consciousness....###

For more Starhawk analysis and commentary, see her Web of Power: Notes from the Global Uprising, forthcoming from New Society Publishers in Sept. '02. Also check out her website, www.starhawk.org.
The starting point is the reality of Latin America. And that reality is about poverty. It is about people struggling for food for the table.

This is not a complicated issue, Your Honor. It's a very, very simple one. It's not about crossing the line. It's about that reality of poverty.

Parents who are trying to get schools for their children, medicines, adequate housing. People who see their children die before their time, before 3 or 4 years old. That's the starting point of this issue.

-- Fr. Roy Bourgeois
Jan. '98 "SOA 25" trial.
Sentenced to six months
GANDHIAN WAVE
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GETTING STARTED....

The purpose of this binder is to encourage and facilitate effective nonviolent actions at Fort Benning, GA. Such “Gandhian Wave” actions aim to help expose and close the U.S. Army’s School of the Americas (now called the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, WHISC).

Some of our material comes from “movement” sources. To those sources (whom we respectfully stole from) we hereby express our immense appreciation. Much of the material, however, was developed by SOA Watch or specifically for this binder. Often we used material derived from our own anti-SOA campaign work in Syracuse.

The binder, first published in 1999, is a work in progress. Periodically we update it. Please send us feedback and resource ideas for future editions. If you find yourself planning a Gandhian Wave action and have any questions, or want to explore any ideas, please contact us.

A. Using this binder

Ideally everyone taking part in a Gandhian Wave action would have her own binder. But these are expensive to produce. So a few folks may want to share a binder. Each item has been designed for ready copying. Every page can be copied and distributed. Many are especially suited for handing out at trainings.

It would be gratifying if our format and material were adapted for other venues, causes and campaigns. After all, the SOA/WHISC is only part -- a heinous part -- of the problem....

B. What to bring to Georgia

~ Photo ID.
~ Any props needed for the action.
~ An affinity group support form for each member risking arrest.
~ A filled-out sound bite form for each member risking arrest.
~ A local media contact list for each member risking arrest.
~ A carefully crafted, one-page typed press release to be finalized and sent out right after the action.

C. Finances

The Gandhian Wave receives good will but no funding from SOA Watch. The Wave, however, has (limited) independent funding thanks to some generous donors. Those wishing to support the Gandhian Wave should make (tax deductible) checks payable to 8th Day Center and send them to our treasurer:

Sister Dorothy Pagosa
c/o 8th Day Center
205 W. Monroe
Chicago, IL 60606
HOTELS & MOTELS IN COLUMBUS

(all non-800#s are area code 706)

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<td>800) HAMPTON</td>
<td>Hampton Inn</td>
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<td>800) HOLIDAY</td>
<td>Holiday Inn/Center City</td>
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<td>800) 531-5900</td>
<td>LaQuinta Inn</td>
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<td>800) 325-3535</td>
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<td>The Villager</td>
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SHUTTLE to & from Atlanta International Airport

Groome Transportation offers 19 round-trip departures daily between Columbus and Atlanta International Airport. Groome vehicles depart Columbus from 2800 Harley Court at the intersection of Veterans Pkwy and Double Churches Rd. and from the ground transport area of Atlanta International Airport. $26 one way; $45 round trip. 800) 584-6735 or 706) 324-3939.

LAKE PINES CAMPGROUND
6404 Garrett Rd., Columbus, GA 706) 561-9675
private, open year-round $18 per tent site for two people; extra for each additional person. $120 week.
directions:
from Columbus: I-185 north to exit 10. U.S. 80 east 9 1/2 miles to Garrett Rd. (on left will be a Pratt Whitney plant). Turn right, first driveway on left leads to campground.
from Atlanta: I-85 to I-185 south to exit 10. Follow directions as above.

F. D. ROOSEVELT STATE PARK
for cottage & camping rates, call 800) 864-7275...or check www.gastateparks.org.

There are also hotels & motels in Phenix City, Alabama across the river about seven miles from Benning.
Directions To Visitors Center

FROM NORTH, I-185
Take exit 6, Airport Thruway, proceed to the third traffic signal. Turn left on Veterams Parkway. Continue South on Veterans Parkway to 10th Street. Turn right on 10th Street and continue to end at Bay Avenue. Visitors Center is on right.

FROM ALABAMA, Highway 280
Cross the river on the Ogelthorpe Bridge... Golden Park, Naval Museum and Civic Center are on your right... Proceed to first traffic signal in front of Civic Center, Veterans Parkway. Turn left on Veterans Parkway. Proceed North to 10th Street. Turn left on 10th Street and continue to end at Bay Avenue... Visitors Center is on right.

Columbus Convention & Visitors Bureau
1000 Bay Ave. - Columbus, GA 31901
Telephone: (706) 322-1613
Toll-Free: (800) 999-1613
24-hour visitor hot line: (706) 322-3181

In Columbus, tune your radio to 1610 AM for visitor information

cvvb@msn.com
Web Site: columbusga.com/ccvb

FT. BENNING MILITARY RESERVATION

--- over ---
SOA & SOA WATCH HISTORY


1946 SOA predecessor opens in Panama.

1970s Somoza’s Nicaraguan National Guard trains at SOA.

1980s Salvadoran civil war. Salvadoran military -- including the Atlacatl Battalion, perpetrators of the El Mozote massacre -- train at the SOA.

1983 Fr. Roy Bourgeois MM, impersonating an officer, enters Ft. Benning, climbs tree next to the Salvadoran barracks, and after dark plays boombox tape of Archbishop Romero’s last homily urging soldiers not to kill their own people. Roy gets 18 months in prison. His accomplices, Charlie & Pat Liteky, get six months.

1984 Booted out of Panama, the SOA “School of Coups” moves to Ft. Benning, GA.

1989 On November 16 the Atlacatl Battalion perpetrates Jesuit massacre at University of Central America in San Salvador, El Salvador. 19 of 26 implicated officers trained at the SOA.

1990 Roy moves into tiny apartment across the street from Benning’s main entrance and founds SOA Watch. Roy, Kathy Kelly and eight others do a 35-day water-only fast at Benning’s main entrance.


1994 On January 1, protesting NAFTA, the Zapatistas rise up in Mexico; Mexico begins sending many of its military to the SOA.

    Roy and others do a 40-day juice-only fast on the steps of the Capitol in DC.

    Joe Kennedy introduces 2nd bill to close SOA -- we lose by 42 votes.

    -- over
1995 On November 16 some of the “SOA 13” simulate Jesuit massacre at Benning’s main entrance; octogenarian Judge J. Robert Elliott gives each a sentence ranging from two to six months in federal prison for “trespass.” This is the beginning of our strategy of doing direct actions at the main entrance annually on or just after November 16. These permit the media and many more supporters to take part.

1996 Carol Richardson opens SOA Watch office in DC to do legislative work.

Pentagon forced to release SOA training manuals; numerous passages encourage torture, extortion & “neutralizing”...and in general are permeated with contempt for law and democracy.

Sixty received ban and bars for “crossing the line” at Benning in the first of our annual November solemn funeral processions commemorating victims of SOA graduates.

1997 In November, 600 ban and barred for “crossing the line.” Two months later 25 of these who already had ban and bar letters get six months and are fined $3000 each.

1998 Over 2000 cross the line -- with 8000 supporters present: largest civil disobedience action in the U.S. since the Viet Nam War. No prosecutions.

1999 Over 4000 cross the line -- with 6000 supporters present. The following year 10 of these go to prison for three months each.

2000 Several thousand cross the line -- with thousands of supporters present.

26 recidivists are prosecuted; one gets probation; 25 get prison -- most for six months.

SOA Watchers take part in A16, the anti-World Bank mobilization; many spend five nights in the DC jail doing jail solidarity.

Beginning of periodic direct actions (“Gandhian Waves”) at the SOA or at the main entrance apart from the annual November vigil action.

In December the SOA “closes,” i.e. takes a holiday break.

-- more
2001

In January the SOA re-opens under a new alias: the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. Within months Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) introduces HR1810 calling for closing WHISC.

Beginning January 1, Oberlin College senior, Becky Johnson, fasts for 30 days at Benning’s main gate. In the spring Viet Nam vet, Jeff Moebus, fasts for 52 days at the gate.

On November 16, federal magistrate G. Mallon Faircloth, responding to an injunction brought by the city of Columbus, ruled that SOA Watch -- by virtue of its decade-long track record of nonviolent protest -- had a First Amendment right to continue gathering at the Columbus side of Benning’s main entrance every November.

On November 18 over 5000 process to the new fence at the main gate, weaving crosses and other symbols into it. Seventy arrested going around fence.

Orbis Books publishes Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer’s School of Assassins: Guns, Greed and Globalization.

2002

In April, two SOA-linked generals attempt unsuccessful to topple Venezuela’s president Hugo Chavez.

In July, 37 tried in Columbus Federal Court for trespass last November. One found innocent (first ever), seven get probation; 14 sentenced to 90 days and 15 sentenced to six months.

ONGOING

~ Soldiers from many Latin American countries -- especially Colombia -- train at the SOA.
~ Roy on national speaking tours; numerous campus and local SOA Watch chapters founded.
~ Every spring: mobilizations (often in broad coalition) and grassroots lobbying in DC; often with pageants and die-ins at the Pentagon.
~ Ninety nine SOAW prisoners of conscience have cumulatively served -- or are in the midst of serving -- about 50 years in prison. Four of those years have been served by Fr. Roy.
ANTI-SOA LEGISLATION

When we go to Benning, we are often asked, “Why are you here and not in Washington, DC? That’s where the decision-makers are.”

SOA Watch strategy is two-pronged: civil disobedience and prison witness on the one hand, and lobbying and legislative work on the other. Each approach depends on and complements the other.

Without our recurring mass arrests and our numerous prisoners of conscience proving how intensely U.S. voters feel about the SOA, our lobbying would likely be ignored in Washington. Similarly, no matter how much civil disobedience we did at Benning, it’s unlikely we’d make any headway with Congress without the hard steady work of lobbying, both in DC and in our home districts.

The following chronology is adapted from a Feb. 2002 SOA Watch “SOA Legislation Summary.” Note the upward trend in Congressional support -- which forced the SOA name change. For updates, check www.soaw.org. To coordinate lobbying effort, contact the SOAW legislative director in DC, Gail Taylor, 202) 234-3440.

1993 Rep. Joe Kennedy (D-MA) introduces the first legislation to close the SOA: Amendment 333 to the House Defense Appropriations Bill HR 2116 to eliminate the SOA’s $2.9 million operating budget. We lose by a vote of 174 to 256.

1994 Fr. Roy Bourgeois and a dozen others fast for 40 days on the Capitol steps. At the end of the juice-only fast Kennedy introduces Amendment 568 to Defense Authorization Bill HR4301. It would prohibit any HR4301 funds to be used to operate the SOA. We lose 175 to 217.

1995 Fearing we are stymied in Congress, Kennedy introduces HR2652. It would close the SOA but establish in its place a “US Academy for Democracy and Civil-Military Relations.” This bill, unpopular with many anti-SOA grassroots activists, is referred to the House Committee on National Security... where it lapses into obscurity.

1997 Rep. Kennedy introduces HR611 to close the SOA. It’s referred to the House Committee on National Security and acquires 150 co-sponsors. It never gets out of committee.

Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) introduces SB980 to close the SOA. With only 15 co-sponsors it never gets out of the Armed Services Committee.

Reps. Esteban Torres (D-CA) and Thomas Foglietta (D-PA) introduce an amendment to HR2159, the House Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, which would cut funds to the SOA. The amendment loses 210 to 217.

1998 Joe Kennedy introduces Amendment 906 to HR4569, the House Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, to cut SOA funding. We lose 201 to 212.

1999 With Kennedy no longer in the House, in February Rep. Joe Moakley (also D-MA) introduces HR732 calling for closing the SOA. It’s referred to the Armed Services Committee, acquires 156 co-sponsors, but gets nowhere. -- over
In April Senator Durbin introduces SB873. It's referred to the Armed Services Committee, acquires 15 co-sponsors, but gets nowhere.

In July Moakley offers an amendment to Foreign Operations Appropriations bill HR 2606 to cut SOA scholarship funding (about 10% of the entire SOA budget). We win 230 to 197. While this is a major victory, it's soon canceled out in the House-Senate Conference Committee where the proposal is defeated by one vote.

2000 Moakley offers an amendment to the Defense Authorization bill, HR4205, to cut off all SOA funds. We lose 204 to 214. HR4205, Section 2166, authorizes the Department of Defense to close the SOA and open its clone, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHISC). While this is a blow to SOA prestige, the change is only cosmetic.

2001 We lose a valiant ally when Joe Moakley dies of leukemia. In May Reps. Jim McGovern (also D-MA) and Joe Scarborough (R-FL) introduce HR1810, a bill calling for the temporary closure of WHISC while a Congressional task force assesses the issue of U.S. training of Latin American military. The bill is referred to the Armed Services Committee.

No Senate bill. The "new" school allows many in Congress to say the SOA is now closed and that they need to see the WHISC track record before voting to close it.

2002 HR1810 remains in Committee. As of October 1 there are 112 co-sponsors.

Text of HR 1810:

Section 1: The Secretary of the Army shall close the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation....No training or education facility may be established in the Department of Defense for Latin American military personnel (as a successor to the United States Army School of the Americas, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, or otherwise) until the end of the ten-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

Section 2: There is established a joint congressional task force to conduct an assessment of the kind of education and training that is appropriate for the Department of Defense to provide to military personnel of Latin American nations. The task force shall be composed of eight Members of Congress, of whom two each shall be designated by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the Senate, and the minority leader of the Senate. Not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the task force shall submit to Congress a report on its assessment under subsection (a).

The report shall include --

(1) a critical assessment of courses, curriculum and procedures appropriate for such education and training; and

(2) an evaluation of the effect of such education and training on the performance of Latin American military personnel in the areas of human rights and adherence to democratic principles and the rule of law.

[GWlegislative summary/oct02]
The Principles of Nonviolence

By Mohandas K. Gandhi

(1) Nonviolence implies as complete self-purification as is humanly possible.

(2) The strength of nonviolence is in exact proportion to the ability, not the will, of the nonviolent person to inflict violence.

(3) The power at the disposal of a non-violent person is always greater than he would have if he were violent.

(4) There is no such thing as defeat in nonviolence.

Nonviolence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our very being.

I know this cannot be proven by argument. It shall be proved by persons living it in their lives with utter disregard of consequences to themselves.

Given the proper training and proper generalship, nonviolence can be practised by the masses of mankind.

Nonviolence is the supreme law. I have not yet come across a situation when I had to say that I was helpless, that I had no remedy in terms of nonviolence.

A nonviolent revolution is not a program for seizure of power. It is a program to transform relationships, ending in a peaceful transfer of power.

In nonviolence, the masses have a weapon which enables a child, a woman or even a decrepit old man to resist the government successfully. If your spirit is strong, mere lack of physical strength ceases to be a handicap.

The first principle of nonviolent action is that of noncooperation with everything humiliating.

One has to speak out and stand up for one's convictions. Inaction at a time of conflagration is inexcusable. Satyagraha (truth force or nonviolent action) is always superior to armed resistance. This can only be effectively proved by demonstration, not by argument. Satyagraha can never be used to defend a wrong cause.

The conditions for the success of satyagraha are:

(1) The satyagrahi (practitioner of satyagraha) should not have any hatred in his heart against the opponent.

(2) The issue must be true and substantial.

(3) The satyagrahi must be prepared to suffer until the end.

The virtues of mercy, nonviolence, love and truth in any man can be truly tested only when they are pitted against ruthlessness, violence, hate and untruth.

SOA WATCH NONVIOLENCE PLEDGE

Every November those risking arrest at Benning recite the SOA Watch Nonviolence Pledge. We do it aloud together -- first during the group orientation sessions on Saturday, and then Sunday just before many join our annual funeral procession.

We ask that your affinity group likewise reflect upon and respect these commitments during your Action. At our training sessions participants discuss each item of the Pledge. We focus on understanding its relevance to civil disobedience at Benning.

Our goal is to expose and close the US Army’s School of the Americas/WHISC. We will act with full respect for our Latin American sisters and brothers, both living and dead. We will use our anger at injustice as a Nonviolent force for change. We will act with full respect for the diverse Nonviolent tradition that SOA Watch embodies.

Accordingly, at today’s Vigil Action —

— We will carry no weapons.
— We will not vandalize.
— We will not use nor carry alcohol or illegal drugs.
— We will not swear or use insulting language.
— We will not run in public nor otherwise make threatening motions.
— We will not assault — either verbally or physically — those who oppose or disagree with us...
  even if they assault us.
— We will protect those who oppose us from insult or attack.
— We will honor the emergency decisions of the empowered coordinators and spokescouncil representatives.
— Our attitude as conveyed through words, symbols and actions will be one of respect toward all — including police officers, military personnel, members of the larger community, and all vigilers and members of the SOA Watch family.
— If prosecuted, we will use the judicial process to continue our resistance. Where possible, we will put the SOA itself on trial.
— We know this Vigil is part of an ongoing, protracted campaign. We will return to our community and renew our work to close the SOA.###

[revised Sept. 2001]
The primary goal of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change is to preserve and advance Dr. King's unfinished mission by applying his precepts of nonviolence in all areas of human activity. The basis for the work is found in the six principles and six steps that follow.

Six Principles of Nonviolence

1 Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.

   It is active nonviolent resistance to evil.
   It is aggressive spiritually, mentally and emotionally.
   It is always persuading the opponent of the righteousness of your cause.

2 Nonviolence seeks to win friendship and understanding.

   The end result of nonviolence is redemption and reconciliation.
   The purpose of nonviolence is the creation of the Beloved Community.

3 Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice, not people.

   Nonviolence recognizes that evil doers are also victims and are not evil people.
   The nonviolent resister seeks to defeat evil, not people.

4 Nonviolence holds that suffering can educate and transform.

   Nonviolence accepts suffering without retaliation.
   Nonviolence accepts violence if necessary, but will never inflict it.

5 Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate.

   Nonviolence resists violence of the spirit as well as the body.
   Nonviolent love is spontaneous, unmotivated, unselfish and creative.
   Nonviolent love gives willingly,
Six Steps for Nonviolent Social Change

The Six Steps for Nonviolent Social Change are based on Dr. King's nonviolent campaigns and teachings which emphasize love in action. Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence, as reviewed in the Six Principles of Nonviolence, guide these steps for social and interpersonal change.

1 Information Gathering
To understand and articulate an issue, problem or injustice facing a person, community or institution you must do research. You must investigate and gather all vital information from all sides of the argument or issue so as to increase your understanding of the problem. You must become an expert on your opponent's position. Some of the many sources from which you can gather information are: past and present newspaper and magazine articles, radio and television (including the archives of radio and television stations). Many organizations often have expertise in some aspect of the issue; these organizations should be asked to help. The public library, personal discussions and interviews, the more than 4,000 electronic data bases can also be used.

2 Education
It is essential to inform others, including your opposition, about your issue. This minimizes misunderstandings and gains you support and sympathy. You can write articles for newspapers and magazines. You can appear on radio and television talk programs. You can hold seminars, workshops and build coalitions on the issue. You can conduct mass rallies. You can write statements for pastors, priests and rabbis to include in their sermons.

3 Personal Commitment
Daily check and affirm your faith in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence. Eliminate hidden motives and prepare yourself to accept suffering, if necessary, in your work for justice.

4 Negotiations
Using grace, humor and intelligence, confront the other party with a list of injustices and a plan for addressing and resolving these injustices. Look for what is positive in every action and statement the opposition makes. Do not seek to humiliate the opponent but call forth the good in the opponent. Look for ways in which the opponent can also win.

5 Direct Action
These are actions taken to morally force the opponent to work with you in resolving the injustices. Direct action imposes a "creative tension" into the conflict. There are over 250 different direct action tactics, including: boycotts, marches, rallies, rent strikes, work slowdowns, letter-writing and petition campaigns, bank-ins, property occupancy, financial withdrawal, and political denial through the ballot. Direct action is most effective when it illustrates the injustice it seeks to correct.

6 Reconciliation
Nonviolence seeks friendship and understanding with the opponent. Nonviolence is directed against evil systems, forces, oppressive policies, evil and unjust acts, not against persons. Reconciliation includes the opponent being able to "save face." Through reasoned compromise, both sides resolve the injustice with a plan of action. Each act of reconciliation is one step closer to the "Beloved Community." Not only are individuals empowered, but so is the entire community. With this come new struggles for justice and a new beginning.

Derived from "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence" in Dr. King's Stride Toward Freedom, Harper & Row, 1958.

Active Nonviolence: A Way of Life, A Strategy for Change
WORKING ASSUMPTIONS OF NONVIOLENCE

Non-violence is the constant awareness of the dignity and humanity of oneself and others; it seeks truth and justice; it resists violence both in method and in attitude; it is a courageous acceptance of active love and goodwill as the instrument with which to overcome evil and transform both oneself and others. It is the willingness to undergo suffering rather than inflict it. It excludes retaliation and flight."

Wally Nelson, conscientious objector, civil rights activist, and tax resister

The following working assumptions form a preliminary framework for the understanding of nonviolence:

The means must be consistent with the ends. A good example of this principle is group or consensus decision-making; the process used to reach a decision is as vital as the political viability of that decision.

Respect all life. The essence of this working assumption is the attempt to relate to all individuals in as human a way as possible, despite disagreements or anger, and to value and respect non-human forms of life.

Transform opposition rather than destroy it. Because there is a basic respect for the other individual in any confrontative situation, it is possible to work toward changing rather than destroying that person. Linked to this approach is the awareness that it is not only the other person who needs to change; we must be willing to listen and undergo change or hardship ourselves.

Use creativity, humor, and love. Use of creative ways to approach adversaries can sometimes prevent reactions of fear, anger, and hate, and at the same time, produce unexpected positive results.

Aim for underlying changes. Nonviolence seeks underlying changes more than surface changes. To reach deeper, more profound change in society and the way people live obviously may take much longer, but will produce more enduring, higher quality change.

In El Salvador

Bullets find their nests in the breasts of nuns & of teachers
there is blood in the apples
there are tears in the looms.

In the White House
the unemployed hack cowboy actor
eats jellybeans
& says:
Human rights will not be our concern. It is not our business what happens in those countries.
& sends guns & bullets to the generals.
There is blood in the apples
there are tears in the looms.

Rafael Jesús González

6. Power lies in social dynamics. Power doesn’t “belong” only to certain people or groups; it lies in social dynamics. It is our cooperation with people and institutions in power positions that gives them power. Through organized nonviolent action and civil disobedience, it is possible to withhold our cooperation from those who abuse power and thus remove power from them.

7. Nonviolence is active. Although to some the word nonviolence implies passivity, nonviolence is actually an active form of resistance. It analyzes the sources of institutional violence and intervenes at a philosophical and political level through direct and persistent actions.
Correcting Common Misconceptions about Nonviolent Action

BY GENE SHARP

What nonviolent action is

Nonviolent action is a generic term covering dozens of specific methods of protest, noncooperation, and intervention, in all of which the actionists conduct the conflict by doing—or refusing to do—certain things without using physical violence. As a technique, therefore, nonviolent action is not passive. It is not inaction. It is action that is nonviolent.

The issue at stake will vary. Frequently it may be a political one—between political groups, for or against a government, or, on rare occasions, between governments (as in imposition of embargoes or resistance to occupation). It may also be economic or social or religious. The scale and level of the conflict will also vary. It may be limited to a neighborhood, a city, or a particular section of the society; it may at other times range over a large area of a country or convulse a whole nation. Less often, more than one country and government may be involved. Whatever the issue, however, and whatever the scale of the conflict, nonviolent action is a technique by which people who reject passivity and submission, and who see struggle as essential, can wage their conflict without violence. Nonviolent action is not an attempt to avoid or ignore conflict. It is one response to the problem of how to act in politics, especially how to wield power effectively.

What nonviolent action isn’t

1) Nonviolent action has nothing to do with passivity, submissiveness, and cowardice; just as in violent action, these must first be rejected and overcome.

2) Nonviolent action is not to be equated with verbal or purely psychological persuasion, although it may use action to induce psychological pressures for attitude change; nonviolent action, instead of words, is a sanction and a technique of struggle involving the use of social, economic, and political power, and the matching of forces in conflict.

3) Nonviolent action does not depend on the assumption that people are inherently “good”; the potentialities of people for both “good” and “evil” are recognized, including the extremes of cruelty and inhumanity.

4) People using nonviolent action do not have to be pacifists or saints; nonviolent action has been predominantly and successfully practiced by “ordinary” people.

5) Success with nonviolent action does not require (though it may be helped by) shared standards and principles, a high degree of community of interest, or a high degree of psychological closeness between the contending groups; this is because when efforts to produce voluntary change fail, coercive nonviolent measures may be employed.

6) Nonviolent action is at least as much of a Western phenomenon as an Eastern one; indeed, it is probably more Western, if one takes into account the widespread use of strikes and boycotts in the labor movement and the noncooperation struggles of subordinated nationalities.

7) In nonviolent action there is no assumption that the opponent will refrain from using violence against nonviolent actionists; the technique is designed to operate against violence when necessary.

8) There is nothing in nonviolent action to prevent it from being used for both “good” and “bad” causes, although the social consequences of its use for a “bad” cause may differ considerably from the consequences of violence used for the same cause.

9) Nonviolent action is not limited to domestic conflicts within a democratic system; it has been widely used against dictatorial regimes, foreign occupations, and even against totalitarian systems.

10) Nonviolent action does not always take longer to produce victory than violent struggle would. In a variety of cases nonviolent struggle has won objectives in a very short time—in as little as a few days. The time taken to achieve victory depends on diverse factors—primarily on the strength of the nonviolent actionists.

How Nonviolent Struggle Works  
by GENE SHARP

Striking at the Roots of Power

Nonviolent struggle works by undermining the opponent's power at its source. A government's political power, for example, ultimately depends on the consent and cooperation of its citizens. Rulers of governments and political systems are not omnipotent, nor do they possess self-generating power. On the contrary, all dominating elites and rulers depend for their sources of power upon the cooperation of the population and of the institutions of the society they would rule. If the population rejects the rulers' right to rule and to command, they are withdrawing the general agreement, or group consent, which makes the existing government possible. This loss of authority sets in motion the disintegration of the rulers' power. That power is reduced to the degree that the rulers are denied authority. Where the loss is extreme, the existence of that particular government is threatened.

Facing Repression

When nonviolent struggle presents a serious challenge to the opponent, the opponent is likely to react with repression against the nonviolent activists.

Faced with repression, nonviolent activists have only one acceptable response: to overcome they must persist in their action and refuse to submit or retreat. Without willingness to face repression as the price of struggle, the nonviolent action movement cannot hope to succeed.

Facing repression with persistence and courage means that the nonviolent activists must be prepared to endure the opponent's sanctions without flinching. The nonviolent activists must be prepared to suffer in order to advance their cause. Some people may interpret this suffering in a metaphorical or spiritual sense, but this view is not necessary for the technique; it is sufficient if the volunteers understand that their withstanding repression will contribute to achieving their objectives.

Political Jiu-Jitsu

Political jiu-jitsu is one of the special processes by which nonviolent action deals with violent repression. By combining nonviolent discipline with solidarity and persistence in struggle, the nonviolent activists cause the violence of the opponent's repression to be exposed in the worst possible light. This, in turn, may lead to shifts in opinion and then to shifts in power relationships favorable to the nonviolent group. These shifts result from withdrawal of support for the opponent and the grant of support to the nonviolent activists.

Mechanisms of Change

When successful, nonviolent action produces change in one of the following ways:

Conversion

The opponent has been inwardly changed so that he wants to make the changes desired by the nonviolent activists.

Accommodation

The opponent does not agree with the changes (he has not been converted), and he could continue the struggle (he has not been nonviolently coerced), but nevertheless he has concluded that it is best to grant some or all of the demands. He may see the issues as not so important after all, the activists as not as bad as he had thought, or he may expect to lose more by continuing the struggle than by conceding gracefully.

Nonviolent coercion

The opponent has not changed his mind on the issues and wants to continue the struggle, but is unable to do so; the sources of his power and means of control have been taken away from him without the use of violence. This may have been done by the nonviolent group or by opposition and noncooperation among his own group (as, mutiny of his troops), or some combination of these.

Disintegration

The opponent's sources of power are so completely severed or dissolved that the opponent simply falls apart as a viable entity. No coherent body remains, even to accept defeat. The opponent's power has been simply dissolved.

NONVIOLENT RESPONSE TO PERSONAL VIOLENCE

Nonviolence focuses on communication:

1. Be clear about your objectives.
   Your objectives must be reasonable. You must believe you are fair and you must be able to communicate this to your opponent.

2. Don't be frightened.
   Maintain as much eye contact as possible.

3. Don't be frightening.
   Make no abrupt gestures. Move slowly. When practical, tell your opponent what you are going to do before you do it. Don't say anything threatening, critical, or hostile.

4. Don't be afraid of stating the obvious.
   Say simply, "You're hurting my arm", or "You're shouting at me".

5. Don't behave like a victim.
   Someone in the process of committing an act of violence has strong expectations as to how his/her victim will behave. If you manage to behave differently—in a nonthreatening manner—you can interrupt the flow of events that would have culminated in an act of violence. You must create a scenario new to your opponent.

6. Seek to befriend your opponent's better nature.
   Even the most brutal and brutalized among us have some spark of decency which the nonviolent defender can reach.

7. Don't shut down in response to physical violence.
   You have to play it by ear. The best rule is to resist as firmly as you can without escalating the anger or the violence. Try varying approaches and keep trying to alter your opponent's picture of the situation.

   Get your opponent talking and listen to what s/he says. Encourage him/her to talk about what s/he believes, wishes, fears. Don't argue but at the same time don't give the impression you agree with assertions that are cruel or immoral. The listening is more important than what you say—keep the talk going and keep it calm.

—adapted from an article by Mark Morris in WIN, (P22), January 24, 1974.

THE MEANS may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree.

—GANDHI
Peaceful Conflict Resolution is Teachable:
Nine steps provide the key to resolving disputes peacefully

by Colman McCarthy

When speaking before audiences about nonviolent conflict resolution, I ask two questions. How many of you have ever been hit in any physical way anytime in your life by a total stranger? A few isolated hands go up. Second question: how many of you have ever been hit in any physical way anytime in your life by someone you know or by a member of your family?

Nearly all hands go up.

Yet most of us are conditioned to fear the street criminal, even though for many people there is more to fear walking in the house at night than walking out.


Whether it's across a living room or across a border, conflicts will be settled either through violent force or through nonviolent force. Conflict, by definition, means only this: we need to change our way of dealing with each other; the old way no longer works. Conflict is a neutral term, neither positive nor negative. If someone says, "I like to avoid conflict," get them a one-way ticket to Mars, Pluto, or Neptune. On earth, this third-rate planet revolving around a second-rate sun, we have conflict. It's almost always a signal to get another way of dealing with a disagreement.

Since 1982, I have been teaching high school, college, and law students the methods of nonviolent conflict resolution. I have learned two realities from having taught some 5,000 students: first, nonviolence is teachable; and second, the young are hungry to learn the skills.

No nation has so vast a literature on nonviolence as America. Yet, judging from our history of wars, our high rates of homicide, spouse and child abuse, abortions, the killing of animals for food, our death row executions, it's as if the art of resolving conflicts nonviolently were as hard to learn as astrophysics in Urdu.

It isn't that hard. The following steps are among the well-tested methods of decreasing or ending violence—whether the disputes are among or within nations, companies, school kids, or families:

Define the conflict. If defined objectively, rather than subjectively, which is how most of us do it, conflict means only this: We need a new way of doing things, the old way has failed.

Sociologists report that in as many as seventy-five percent of husband-wife fights, the combatants are battling over different issues. The husband may be enraged over what his wife said or did that morning. The wife is out of control over what her husband said or did ten weeks ago. They can't settle their conflict because they don't know what it's about. It's this to him, that to her.

This dynamic is seen among warring nations, not only battling couples. In 1991, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and President George Bush, leaders of two governments long accustomed to solving conflicts by killing people, defined their dispute differently. For Hussein, it was a property issue: Land under Kuwait's...
control really belonged to Iraq. Bush defined it several ways. First, it was oil. Then it was the threat to the industrial world. Finally, it was that old standby: stopping naked aggression.

Here were two politicians, as self-righteous and self-deluded as a warring husband and wife, unwilling to define the essence of the conflict. If two sides can define what they are fighting about, the chances increase that misperceptions will be clarified.

It’s not you against me, it’s you and me against the problem. The problem is the problem. Most people—and nations—go into battle convinced. I’m right, you’re wrong; I’m good, you’re evil; I’m wise, you’re foolish: I’m going to win, you’re going to lose. Even if one side does win, the first reaction of the loser is, I want a rematch: I’ll come back with meaner words, harder fists and bigger bombs. Then you’ll learn, then you’ll be good and then we’ll have peace forever.

This is an illusion, but few can give it up. By focusing on the problem, and not the person with the problem, a climate of cooperation, not competition, is enhanced.

List the relationship’s many shared concerns and needs, as against one shared separation. In Ernest Hemingway’s novel, A Farewell To Arms, the most soulful of his stories (as against his usual chest-thumping books), a character is described in a hauntingly beautiful phrase: “He was strong in the broken places.” All of us have been, are being, or will be broken by life. If we are strong in the broken places, chances for mending increase. They’ll increase if the strengths of the relationship—the shared concerns and needs—are given more attention than the lone unshared separation.

When people have fought, don’t ask what happened. This is an irrelevant question. They will answer with their version of what happened, almost always self-justifying. The better question is: “What did you do?” This elicits facts, not opinions. Misperceptions are clarified, not prolonged.

Skilled trial layers, whether in civil or criminal cases, don’t ask people on the stand what happened. Instead, it’s “What did you do?” Juries decide or are told to decide on the relevance of factual information.

Work on active listening, not passive hearing. Conflicts escalate when partners try to talk more than listen and then only listen as a timeout for verbal rearming. Listening well is an act of caring. If you are a good listener, you have many friends. If you are a poor listener, you have many acquaintances. Anatomically, we are made to listen more than speak, which is why we have two ears and one mouth.

Choose a place to resolve the conflict, not the battleground itself. Armies tend to sign peace treaties far from the war zones. Too many emotions are there.

In some schools around the country where progressive faculties are teaching, peace rooms are in place. Anyone who was fighting—in the schoolyard, the halls, the bus—automatically knows to go to the peace room at the time set: say every Friday morning from nine to noon. Who will be there? Mediators: classmates who have been trained in the essentials of nonviolent conflict resolution. Principals and psychologists in schools that have peace rooms see the results in lower rates of violence.

Start with what’s doable. Restoration of peace can’t be done quickly. If it took a long time for the dispute to begin, it will take time to end it.

Work on one small doable rather than many large un-doables. Almost always, it’s a laughably small wound that causes the first hurt in a relationship. But then, ignoring the smallness takes on a size of its own. Ignoring the problem becomes larger than the original problem.

Develop forgiveness skills. Many people of large minds are willing to say after the conflict, “I’m going to bury the hatchet.” To themselves, they add: “But I’m going to mark exactly where I bury it, just in case I need to dig it up for the next fight.”

Forgiveness looks forward, vengeance looks backward. Again, it’s anatomy: we have eyes in the front of our heads, not the back.

Purify our hearts. This is merely an elegant way of telling ourselves, “I need to get my own messy life in order before I can instruct others how to live.”

The United States—President Clinton, Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, Defense Secretary William S. Cohen and others—have been busy preaching to Saddam Hussein about Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction, while the United States has the largest arsenal of such weapons in the history of the planet.

Why not send in the heralded United Nations inspection team to tell the world where America’s weapons of mass destruction are located—and how many, and how much money was spent on them that could have gone to schools, health care, and road repair?

Purifying America’s heart would involve facing the unpleasant reality that the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of April 4, 1967, in his antivvar speech at Riverside Church in New York: “The greatest purveyor of violence in the world today [is] my own government... A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.”

Do these nine steps of nonviolent conflict resolution always work? No. Sometimes the conflict partners are so emotionally wounded or ideologically hidebound that nothing can stop the violence. But large numbers of conflicts can be resolved without killing or wounding the other side, provided the strategies for peacemaking are known. If they aren’t known, start to teach them: in the world’s schools, in religious institutions. They all claim to want peace.

Gandhi routinely said, don’t bring your opponents to their knees, bring them to their senses. Nonviolence means prevention before the crisis. Violence says the opposite: intervention after—intervention with fists, guns, bombs, and armies.

With 28,000 high schools in the United States, 78,000 elementary schools and 3,000 colleges, few other opportunities for decreasing violence are greater than peace education: systematically teaching the literature of peace and techniques of conflict resolution, in every grade in every school.

Wishful thinking—yes, let us hope for peace—won’t do it. Serious thinking will.

Colman McCarthy directs the Center for Teaching Peace, 4501 Van Ness St., Washington DC, 20016 (www.centerforteachingpeace.org).
HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF NONVIOLENT STRUGGLE

494 BCE The plebeians of Rome withdraw from the city and go on strike to correct their grievances against the Roman consuls.

1765-1775 The U.S. American colonists mount three major nonviolent resistance campaigns against British rule (against the Stamp Act of 1765, the Townshend Acts of 1767, and the Coercive Acts of 1774) resulting in de facto independence for nine colonies by 1775.

1850-1867 Hungarian nationalists, led by Francis Deak, engage in nonviolent resistance to Austrian rule, eventually regaining self-governance for Hungary as part of an Austro-Hungarian federation.

1906-1906 In Russia, peasants, workers, students, and the intelligentsia engage in major nonviolent strikes, forcing the Czar to accept the creation of an elected legislature.

1917 The February 1917 Russian Revolution, despite some limited violence, is also predominantly nonviolent and leads to the collapse of the czarist system.

1913-1919 Demonstrations for women's suffrage in the U.S. lead to the Constitutional amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote.

1920 In the Weimar Republic of Germany a general strike foils attempted coup.

1923 Despite severe repression, Germans resist the French and Belgian occupation of the Ruhr, making it so costly politically and economically that the French and Belgian forces finally withdraw.

1920s-1947 In one of the best known examples of protracted nonviolent struggle, Mohandas Gandhi leads the Indian independence movement.

1940-1945 There are many examples of nonviolent resistance to Nazi occupation in World War II, especially in Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands.

1944 Two Central American dictators, Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez (El Salvador) and Jorge Ubico (Guatemala), are ousted through nonviolent civilian insurrection.

1953 Political prisoners in Soviet labor camps employ a wave of strikes leading to some limited improvements in living conditions.

1968-69  Czech nonviolent resistance to the Soviet invasion enables the Dubcek regime to stay in power for eight months -- far longer than would have been possible with military resistance.

1986  The Philippines "people power" movement brings down the oppressive Marcos dictatorship.

Source: the Albert Einstein Institution in Boston

[GW historicalexamples of nonviolence May 2002]
SAMPLE NONVIOLENCE TRAINING AGENDA

All Gandhian Wave participants should have prior nonviolence training geared for their particular action. The Gandhian Wave binder includes many resources for your training. You can copy various pages to use as handouts, or to distribute as packets.

"The purpose of training is for participants to form a common understanding of the use of nonviolence. It gives a forum to share ideas about nonviolence, fears and feelings. It allows people to meet and build solidarity with each other and provides an opportunity to form affinity groups.

"It is often used as a preparation for action and gives people a chance to learn about an action, its tone and legal ramifications. It helps people to decide whether or not they will participate in an action. Through role-playing, people learn what to expect from police, officials, other people in the action, and themselves." (Handbook for Nonviolent Action)

While a whole weekend (two-day) training is preferable, the following sample agenda can fit a single day. Adapt it to your needs. Assign times to each agenda item beforehand (including breaks and mealtime). Depending on how many participate, an agenda like this works best with two or three trainers. You might provide each trainer with a detailed typed agenda...while keeping the posted public agenda much simpler.

[TIMES]

_____ WELCOME [facilitators welcome participants, introduce themselves, note any ground rules or housekeeping matters (location of lavatories, etc.)].

_____ AGENDA REVIEW [have agenda already posted on large sheet on a wall; give a couple of minutes for participants to read it to themselves; clear up any questions]

_____ INTRODUCTIONS [go-around: besides name and organizational affiliation, participants could be asked to briefly share where they are on the path to helping to close the SOA...or they might each share a word or phrase which helps them define "nonviolence"]

_____ HISTORY & THEORY OF NONVIOLENCE [cite impact of Gandhi and MLK, Jr.'s civil rights movement on SOA campaign. Brainstorm what Nonviolence is (if not used in introductions), OR, using the nonviolence quotes in this section, distribute one to each participant; have each participant read their quote aloud and briefly comment on it.]

_____ NONVIOLENCE DYADS [have participants pair off -- if possible, with someone they don't already know; each person gets two minutes to speak to a topic without interruption. Sample topics: A) how do I handle conflict situations? B) could a nation-state have a foreign policy based on nonviolence? Repeat with a new partner. De-brief. [Variation: with each topic, allow the listener a minute to reflect back to the speaker what s/he has said; discuss the relationship between listening and nonviolence.]

_____ SOAW NONVIOLENCE PLEDGE [perhaps have a go-around with each participant reading a sentence of the pledge and commenting on it, allowing room for some discussion]
NONVIOLENCE BAROMETER [see sheet in this training section]

AFFINITY GROUPS [discuss nature, history, purpose and advantages of affinity groups, and individual roles within one]

SCENARIO [review plans and roleplay anticipated direct action]

HASSLE LINE [see description in “Other Nonviolence Training Exercises” in binder; use a situation directly linked to the anticipated direct action]

CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING

QUIK-DECISION ROLEPLAY [see description in “Other Nonviolence Training Exercises”; you could use a scenario likely to occur at Benning.]

LOCAL MEDIA WORK [emphasize need for local media work for the action; have participants read one of the sample press releases and analyze what elements make it effective or not. Distribute first several pages of the media section (including model press release) in the training packet.]

LEGAL BRIEFING [discuss likely charges, pleas, trial strategies and sentences, etc. for this particular action]

PRISON WITNESS [you might brainstorm costs and benefits of being a prisoner of conscience; cite the role of prison witness in the SOA campaign]

FEARS & CONCERNS [you might have group break into dyads for several minutes...followed by a brainstorm of fears and concerns. then address each item one by one.]

EVALUATION [use go-around or brainstorm on what was good about the training and what might have been done better]

CLOSING CIRCLE [a good time for a solidarity song]

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The time immediately after a training can be used to show any of the excellent SOAW videos. It can also be a time for an affinity group meeting. Trainings can be followed by other events, often in the evening, including pizza parties, potlucks, SOA teach-ins or SOAW fund-raisers.

[GWtrainingMay2002]
NONVIOLENCE BAROMETER (training exercise)

Nonviolence Barometers provide a lively way to explore our own personal vision of Nonviolence. They also help us explore the nuances and ambiguities of Nonviolence. One of the beauties of the exercise is that it vividly demonstrates that people of good will can hold many different -- and even opposite -- opinions: there's no exclusive way to be Nonviolent.

Any number up to about 25 can participate. You need a large room with open floor space.

A facilitator -- ideally one well familiar with Nonviolence -- has the group line up or cluster in the center of the room. The facilitator designates one end of the room as the Nonviolent side and the opposite end as the Violent side. S/he then reads aloud a brief scenario of two or three sentences (see below).

In response, each participant moves toward either the Violent or the Nonviolent side of the room -- whichever personally feels appropriate. How strongly s/he feels about it determines how far away from the center s/he moves.

After participants have taken their respective positions, a short facilitated discussion ensues. The facilitator may first call on those taking the most extreme positions to explain why they have done so. Often individuals will physically move from their positions as they are influenced by others' points of view.

After a few minutes of discussion the facilitator has everyone return to the center. S/he then offers a new scenario and the action repeats itself. The facilitator paces the exercise which can take up to 45 minutes or an hour depending on the group dynamic and available time. A variation: instead of one long session, do two or three or four short sessions.

The following scenarios were used for a training in Syracuse before the April 16, 2000 World Bank blockade in Washington, DC. The first four are generic and the last four are specific to that action. Instead of using those last four, the facilitator might prepare some scenarios directly related to an action at Benning. [The items in brackets are themes the facilitator may want to briefly comment on if they haven't already emerged in discussion.]

SCENARIOS

1. We’re all on a fact-finding delegation in Colombia; a hungry mosquito is resting on your arm. You swat it.

2. It’s Thanksgiving. The family has gathered for its annual reunion. Your Mom serves turkey with all the fixings. Although normally a vegetarian, you decide to go with the flow and eat a slab of white meat.
3. You’re a woman walking alone in downtown Syracuse late at night. A man starts paying you some unwanted attention and seems about to lay hands on you. Before he can do so, you mace him. [self-defense]

4. In a “third world” country, a baby formula manufacturer puts up billboards suggesting that breast feeding is old-fashioned and that using baby formula is modern. [systemic violence]

5. In Bolivia, thanks to World Bank structural adjustment demands, the government tries to privatize municipal water supplies. Bechtal Corporation buys one city’s supply and jacks up the water rates. [systemic violence]

6. Thousands of people from all over the country converge on DC on April 16. Our affinity group’s job is to help block the main entrance of the World Bank. But the police have set up barriers to keep us forty yards away. Frustrated, we begin chanting, “No justice, no peace. No racist police.” [provocation; stereotyping, sloganeering, demonizing, issue of respecting all whom we encounter]

7. Some of us break through the barriers and are met by a phalanx of riot police. Before they begin apprehending us, we sit on the pavement, refusing to cooperate with the arrest.

8. Our group is determined not to let the police stop us from getting to the World Bank doors. We dodge the police and sprint past them. [provocation and running]

9. After the demo we write a press release for the media back home. We figure there were about 10,000 demonstrators in the streets, but in our press release we say there were 20,000. [nonviolence & truth]

Frequently participants find that a particular scenario is violent, but seems to work. Or that a scenario is nonviolent, but ineffectual. One way to explore these ambiguities is, after having done several scenarios on a single axis (nonviolent/violent), to introduce a second axis: where two opposite walls are designated “violent” or “nonviolent” poles, the two other opposite walls can be designated “effective” or “ineffective.” Thus instead of choosing between two halves of the room, participants must now choose among four quadrants: violent/effective, violent/ineffective, nonviolent/effective or nonviolent/ineffective.
NONVIOLENCE QUOTATIONS EXERCISE

Take a few minutes and read both sides of this sheet. If a quotation particularly strikes you, read it aloud and (briefly) comment on it. Feel free to comment on the quotations others read.

Hatred bounces. -- e.e. cummings

We must be the change we wish to see in the world. -- Gandhi

This earth remains my first and last love. -- Albert Camus

If only I may grow firmer, simpler, quieter, warmer. -- Dag Hammerskjold

Live simply so others may simply live. -- bumper sticker

It is no longer a choice between violence and nonviolence in this world; it’s nonviolence or nonexistence. -- Martin Luther King, Jr.

It is better to be violent, if there is violence in our hearts, than to put on the cloak of nonviolence to cover impotence. There is hope for the violent person to become nonviolent. There is no such hope for the impotent......The weakest of us physically must be taught the art of facing dangers and giving a good account of ourselves. -- Gandhi

The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree. -- Gandhi

Nonviolence has the unique ability to simultaneously accept and reject -- to acknowledge and connect us with that which is valuable in a person at the same time as it resists and challenges that person’s oppressive attitude and behavior. -- Jane Meyerding

If as revolutionaries, we will wage battle without violence, we can remain very much more in control -- of our own selves, of the responses to us which our adversaries make, of the battle as it proceeds and the future we hope will issue from it. -- Barbara Deming -- over
As you come to know the seriousness of our situation -- the war, the racism, the poverty in the world -- you come to realize it is not going to be changed just by words or demonstrations. It's a question of risking your life. It's a question of living your life in drastically different ways.
-- Dorothy Day

Nonviolence begins with taking responsibility for our own state of mind, feelings, and actions. Nonviolence takes responsibility for our own behavior, no matter what others do.
-- Ken Butigan

Noncooperation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with good.

I would say that I'm a nonviolent soldier. In place of weapons of violence, you have to use your mind, your heart, your sense of humor, every faculty available to you...because no one has the right to take the life of another human being.
-- Joan Baez

Thou shalt not kill.

In the composition of the truly brave there should be no malice, no anger, no mistrust, no fear of death or physical hurt. Nonviolence is certainly not for those who lack those essential qualities.
-- Gandhi

Nonviolence is the constant awareness of the dignity and humanity of oneself and others; it seeks truth and justice; it renounces violence both in method and in attitude; it is courageous acceptance of active love and goodwill as the instrument with which to overcome evil and transform both oneself and others. It is the willingness to undergo suffering rather than inflict it. It excludes retaliation and flight.
-- Wally Nelson

The sage has not self to call his own
He makes the self of the people his self.
To the good I act with goodness;
To the bad I also act with goodness:
Thus goodness is attained.
-- The Way of the Tao

In every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.
-- Great Law of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois)
OTHER NONVIOLENCE TRAINING EXERCISES

BY GRACE HEDEMANN

Exercises used in nonviolence training usually fall into one of the following categories: process, group dynamics, sensitivity, vision/strategy, and tactics. Process exercises include introductions, evaluation, facilitation, and clarification. Group dynamics exercises include listening, participation level, group observation, and priority setting. Sensitivity exercises include energizing, cooperative and sharing games, confidence building, and trust development. Vision and strategy exercises include methods to pinpoint ultimate goals, analyze case histories, and develop long term strategy. Finally, tactic exercises include role plays, extended role plays, hassle line, quick decision, and situation analysis.


General Role Play

General Role Play is an impromptu acting out of a given situation in preparation for an anticipated event or to evaluate a past incident. The purpose is to analyze the dynamics of roles, emotional responses, strategy testing, and to develop interpersonal skills in anticipating and reacting to these situations.

Trainers should prepare for role plays by writing a scenario in advance (choosing a relevant anticipated action), and consider the values to be transmitted. The purpose of the role play should be determined. Describe the scene, characters, roles, and note any special instructions for a particular group. It is important not to reinforce stereotypes, and to create people and situations that are real. Then list questions that you think are pertinent to ask during the evaluation discussion.

In presenting a role play, briefly describe what a role play is and how it works to the participants. Explain that it is not a test and no one is being judged. Emphasize that there is no correct response. Then present the scenario quickly, vividly, and clearly. Limit the number of questions and detailed answers. Let people use their imagination. Indicate the physical layout. Ask participants to volunteer for the various roles. Give special instructions for each role separately to ensure spontaneous reactions. Give participants a few minutes to plan their strategy or tactics. Trainers may at this point take individuals aside to whisper the special instructions within a role. Cut the role play at a natural break when it exhausts itself, when the major issues have been raised, or when participants have become over involved. Trainers should be observing the action carefully and be ready to recall incidents which might be omitted in the evaluation discussion.

The evaluation should be brisk and to the point. The group might want to move to another location for discussion, to allow everyone to unwind from the action. Initially allow spontaneous reactions from all the characters. Get the facts on what happened, who did what and the response. Ask particular characters how they felt when a given incident took place. Probe for alternative solutions. Question conclusions as a relevant tactic. Question solutions in light of nonviolence philosophy. Participants should summarize results of the discussion.

Hassle Line

Hassle Line is a one-on-one verbal role play. In a short amount of time a hassle line will generate a lot of information. All participants must take an active role. Have participants form two lines facing each other one-on-one. The scenario is presented with one person taking one role and the other line taking the second role (e.g. Wall Street worker and demonstrator discussing far power investment). Give participants no more than one minute to get into their role. Start and freeze the action within three to five minutes. Reverse roles, and mix participants within a line. This procedure minimizes falling out of the role with the same partner. Give a minute to prepare for role and begin action. Evaluate the same as a role play.

Quick Decision

Quick Decision exercise presents a crisis situation to an individual or small group (3-4 people) which requires an immediate solution. The exercise encourages initiative and action, and tests good decision making process.

Trainers ask participants to break into groups of three or four. Explain the group’s function and scenario. Set a two to three minutes time limit. Start and stop discussion with a stop watch. Do not listen to pleas, “Just one more minute!” Have participants remain with the group for discussion and evaluation. Trainers ask each group to report on their solution. Compare various solutions. Have each group describe the decision making process that led to the solution. Evaluate the process as well as the solution.

Taken from an article by Grace Hedemann from the War Resisters League Organizer’s Manual, pp.173-175.
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Deming, Barbara, Revolution and Equilibrium: Can't recommend this collection of essays too highly. Often brilliant and always personal, she traces her development from the early sixties through the feminist revolution. The title essay is definitive.

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Lakey, George, Strategy for a Living Revolution: Highly recommended.

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NONVIOLENCE LESSON #1:

VIOLENCE BEGETS VIOLENCE...

"So then I says to Borg, 'You know, as long as we're under siege, one of us oughta moon these Saxen dogs.'"

S o A
Group Communication Tools

It is crucial for any movement fighting for social justice to make sure that its patterns of communication and decision-making empower every group member. Any type of oppressive behavior — particularly if it discounts the voices of women and other subordinated groups — divides us, reproduces the hierarchies we oppose and contradicts our goals.

Status quo patterns of domination have a tendency to seep into our group interactions. We have an obligation to each other to be aware of ways in which group members may manipulate male privilege, white privilege or class privilege to disempower others. Likewise, we need to be sensitive to subtle and overt barriers that continue to prevent full participation by those activists historically alienated from positions of power in our movements. To do so requires self-scrutiny and willingness on the part of the group to confront dysfunctional patterns and transform them.

The following behaviors undercut our intent to encourage everyone’s active participation:

Being a unilateral problem-solver. Continually jumping to provide answers before others have the opportunity to make suggestions. Preemptively taking on tasks before others have the chance to volunteer.

Dealing with certain members paternalistically. Restating what another member has just said, as if the authority of his/her voice is inadequate. Treating women, minorities and their input as tokens, acceptable by invitation only, and less valuable than the rest of the group.

Focusing on tasks and content alone, without attention to the emotional health of group members and the processes that can nurture it.

Speaking in capital letters. Talking too much, too long and too loudly. Giving opinions authoritatively, as the final word on the subject. This is often aggravated by tone of voice and body posture.

Being on the defensive. Responding to contrary opinions or constructive criticisms as personal attacks.

Railroading the focus of the group discussion to fit one’s own agenda.

Being unnecessarily critical. Pointing out minor or irrelevant flaws in others’ statements.

Maintaining a monopoly on key information.

Self-listening. Focusing on your reply to a statement, rather than on understanding it.

-- over
Using sexuality to intimidate, manipulate, dehumanize or discredit people.

Speaking for others. Using phrases like, "A lot of us think we should..." or, "What so and so really meant was..."

Seeking leadership positions for leadership's sake and exercising authority for authority's sake, rather than for the good of the group and its goals.

Here are some specific ways we can work proactively to change these behaviors:

Do not interrupt people.

Become a good listener. It's important not to disengage from the discussion when you are not speaking. Good listening is active participation.

Communicate opinions in an open manner, recognizing the value of others' views. Diverse views greatly enhance a group's problem-solving abilities.

Give and take support.

Speak when you have something to say. Realize that it is unnecessary, and often counterproductive to speak on every subject that comes up.

Do not devalue group members or yourself. Examine why you feel compelled to attack someone. Formulate criticisms in a constructive way.

Call each other out when we act oppressively. Create spaces where behavior can be discussed openly, honestly and safely. Examine destructive interactions as a group, and support those involved in striving for healthier dynamics.

Be aware that politically active individuals from minority populations often risk a lot physically, emotionally, financially, socially and legally. No one should be alienated or stigmatized for feeling vulnerable. Instead, the group should be actively addressing these concerns as group concerns.

Seriously working toward group processes that encourage the active participation of all members is a powerful statement against racism, sexism, classism, homophobia and all forms of social domination. When we refuse to divide and conquer ourselves, we grow in the unity, respect and resolve that demands real social change.

[Adapted from a piece originally written by Bill Moyers of the Movement for a New Society (MNS)]

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Affinity Groups

Affinity groups are self-sufficient support systems of about 5 to 15 people. A number of affinity groups may work together toward a common goal in a large action, or one affinity group might conceive of and carry out an action on its own. Sometimes, affinity groups remain together over a long period of time, existing as political support and/or study groups, and only occasionally participating in actions.

If you are planning to do civil disobedience, it is a good idea to either form an affinity group or join an already existing one. Affinity groups serve as a source of support and solidarity for their members. Feelings of being isolated or alienated from the movement, the crowd, or the world in general can be alleviated through the familiarity and trust which develops when an affinity group structure reduces the possibility of infiltration by outside provocateurs. However, participants in an action should be prepared to be separated from their affinity group.

Affinity groups form the basic decision-making bodies of mass actions. As long as they remain within the nonviolence guidelines, affinity groups are generally encouraged to develop any form of participation they choose.

Every affinity group must decide for itself how it will make decisions and what it wants to do. This process starts when an affinity group forms. If a new person asks to join an affinity group, she/he should find out what the group believes in and what they plan to do, and decide if she/he can share it. Some groups ask that all members share a commitment to feminism, for example, or to nonviolence as a way of life. Others, which have specifically formed to do a particular action, might have less sweeping agreements.

A group cannot hope to reach consensus decisions without having some base of agreement. Once a base is agreed upon, working out the details of specific issues and actions is not as difficult as one might expect, providing that there is a willingness to go along with a good idea, even if it is someone else's. If you find that you cannot work effectively with your group, it might be better to try to find another one.

Roles Within the Affinity Group

These roles can be rotated:
- Facilitator(s), vibes-watchers
- Spokesperson to convey affinity group (AG) decisions to core support and other AG's in a mass action.
- Support person(s) once you take on this responsibility, you should see it through.

Support

The role of support in a civil disobedience action is crucial. Support people accept the responsibility of being a visible, involved contact to the outside once a member of the affinity group is arrested. They are the personal extension of the care and concern an affinity group shares among its members, an extension of the need all the participants have to see that individuals
who participate in nonviolent direct action are not isolated, neglected, and overburdened because of their political statement.

It can be hard for you to decide whether to do civil disobedience or support. It is strongly encouraged that those considering doing support go through nonviolence training. In making the decision, you could consider how each role would affect your family, job, and other commitments, as well as your legal status (i.e. being on probation, not being a U.S. citizen, etc.). During and after a mass action, be sure to stay in touch with support people from other affinity groups, for information sharing and emotional support.

Before an Action:
Help the affinity group decide upon and initiate their action, provide physical and moral support, and share in the excitement and sense of determination.
• Know the people in your affinity group by name and description.
• Know where people who are arrested are likely to be taken.
• Make a confidential list with the following information:
  Name of arrestee,
  Name used for arrest,
  Whether or not individual wants to bail out, and when,
  Who arrestee would like contacted and under what circumstances,
  Special medical information or other special needs info,
  Whether the individual plans to cooperate, and in what ways,
  Whether the person is a minor,
  Whether the person wants/needs a lawyer.

For a Mass Action:
• Know who the support coordinators are.
• Know the phone number of the action office.
• Be sure the group fills out an affinity group check-in sheet.
• Be sure your name, phone number, where you can be reached, and how long you will be available to do support work are written on your affinity group’s list.

During an Action:
• Know the boundaries of arrest and non-arrest areas, if applicable.
• In a mass action, give emergency info yourself to another support person.
• Bring paper and pen, and lots of food for yourself and people doing civil disobedience (CDers).
• Hold ID, money, keys and any other belongings for CDers.
• Keep in touch with CDers as long as possible, noting any changes in arrest strategies, etc.
• Once arrests begin, write down each individual’s name, and the time and nature of the arrest, the activity of the person arrested, the treatment of the arresting officer (get the badge number, if possible), and who is noncooperating.
• At least one support person from you affinity group should stay at the place of arrest until all members of your group are arrested, and at least one should go to where those arrested are being taken as soon as the first member of your group is arrested.

At the Courthouse (if that’s where CDers are taken):
Be present during arraignments, and try to keep track of the following info for each person in your group.
During a mass action, call this info into the office:
• Name of judge or magistrate
• Name of CDer (Doe # if applicable)
• Charge
• Plea (Not Guilty, Nolo Contendre, Creative Plea, Guilty, etc.)
• If found guilty, sentence imposed
• If not guilty:
  Amount of bail, if applicable
  Whether the person pays bail or not
  Date, time and place of trial
• If there’s a lawyer in the courtroom ask her/his name
• Any other info that seems relevant

After the Action:
• Call whoever needs to be informed about each person who was arrested.
• Go to trials or any other appearance of CDers; help with rides.
• Help gather information for pro se defendants.
• In a mass action, be sure to let the office and/or support coordinators know when/if you have to leave town and give them all relevant info about the people you’ve been supporting.

If CDers are in jail, it is important for someone to be near a phone so that calls from jail may be received. You will probably be the go-between for you AG members who are not jailed together, as well.
• Contact the office (in a mass arrest) about people in jail and where they are being held.
• Be prepared to bring medication to the jail site for whoever needs it, and follow up on whether or not it has been administered.
• Visit your group members in jail, and pass on any messages.
• Take care of plants, pets, cars, etc., for CDers.
• Write letters to the people in jail; organize a support vigil in front of the jail.
• Be there to pick CDers up when they are released from jail.
• Support other support people — working together will ease the load.

—Nancy Alach

WHAT IS AN AFFINITY GROUP?
An affinity group is a small group of 5 to 20 people who work together autonomously on direct actions or other projects. You can form an affinity group with your friends, people from your community, workplace, or organization.

Affinity groups challenge top-down decision-making and organizing, and empower those involved to take creative direct action. Affinity groups allow people to "be" the action they want to see by giving complete freedom and decision-making power to the affinity group. Affinity groups by nature are decentralized and non-hierarchical, two important principles of anarchist organizing and action. The affinity group model was first used by anarchists in Spain in the late 19th and early 20th century, and was re-introduced to radical direct action by anti-nuclear activists during the 1970s, who used decentralized non-violent direct action to blockade roads, occupy spaces and disrupt "business as usual" for the nuclear and war makers of the US. Affinity groups have a long and interesting past, owing much to the anarchists and workers of Spain and the anarchists and radicals today who use affinity groups, non-hierarchical structures, and consensus decision making in direct action and organizing.

HISTORY OF AFFINITY GROUPS
The idea of affinity groups comes out of the anarchist and workers movement that was created in the late 19th century and fought fascism in Spain during the Spanish Civil War. The Spanish Anarchist movement provides an exhilarating example of a movement, and the actual possibility of a society based on decentralized organization, direct democracy and the principles behind them.

Small circles of good friends, called "tertulias" would meet at cafes to discuss ideas and plan actions. In 1888, a period of intense class conflict in Europe and of local insurrection and struggle in Spain, the Anarchist Organization of the Spanish Region made this traditional form (tertulias) the basis of its organization.

Decades later, the Iberian Anarchist Federation, which contained 50,000 activists, organized into affinity groups and confederated into local, regional, and national councils. Wherever several FAI affinity groups existed, they formed a local federation. Local federations were coordinated by committees made up of one mandated delegate from each affinity group. Mandated delegates were sent from local federations to regional committees and finally to the Peninsular Committee. Affinity groups remained autonomous as they carried out education, organized and supported local struggles. The intimacy of the groups made police infiltration difficult.

The idea of large-scale affinity group based organization was planted in the United States on April 30, 1977 when 2,500 people, organized into affinity groups, occupied the Seabrook, New Hampshire nuclear power plant. The growing anti-nuclear power and disarmament movements adopted this mode, and used it in many successful actions throughout the late 1970s and 1980s. Since then, it has been used by the Central America solidarity movement, lesbian/gay liberation movement, Earth First and earth liberation movement, and many others.
Most recently, affinity groups have been used in the mass actions in Seattle for the WTO and Washington DC for the IMF and World Bank, as well as Philadelphia and Los Angeles around the Republican and Democratic National Conventions.

**WHAT IS A CLUSTER AND A SPOKESCOUNCIL?**

A cluster is a grouping of affinity groups that come together to work on a certain task or part of a larger action. Thus, a cluster might be responsible for blockading an area, organizing one day of a multi-day action, or putting together and performing a mass street theater performance. Clusters could be organized around where affinity groups are from (example: Texas cluster), an issue or identity (examples: student cluster or anti-sweatshop cluster), or action interest (examples: street theater or [black bloc]).

A spokescouncil is the larger organizing structure used in the affinity group model to coordinate a mass action. Each affinity group (or cluster) empowers a spoke (representative) to go to a spokescouncil meeting to decide on important issues for the action. For instance, affinity groups need to decide on a legal/jail strategy, possible tactical issues, meeting places, and many other logistics. A spokescouncil does not take away an individual affinity group's autonomy within an action; affinity groups make their own decisions about what they want to do on the streets.

**HOW TO START AN AFFINITY GROUP**

An affinity group could be a relationship among people that lasts for years among a group of friends and activists, or it could be a week long relationship based around a single action. Either way, it is important to join an affinity group that is best suited to you and your interests.

If you are forming an affinity group in your city or town, find friends or fellow activists who have similar issue interests, and thus would want to go to similar actions. Also, look for people who would be willing to use similar tactics - if you want to do relatively high risk lockdowns, someone who does not want to be in that situation may not want to be in the affinity group. That person could do media or medic work, but it may not be best if they are completely uncomfortable around certain tactics of direct action.

If you are looking to join an affinity group at a mass action, first find out what affinity groups open to new members and which ones are closed. For many people, affinity groups are based on trusting relationships based around years of friendship and work, thus they might not want people they don't know in their affinity group. Once you find which affinity groups are open, look for ones that have an issue interest or action tactic that you are drawn to.

**WHAT CAN AN AFFINITY GROUP DO?**

Anything!!! They can be used for mass or smaller scale actions. Affinity groups can be used to drop a banner, blockade a road, provide back-up for other affinity groups, do street theater, block traffic riding bikes, organize a tree sit, [confront the police, strategic property destruction], change the message on a massive billboard, play music in a radical marching band or sing in a revolutionary choir, etc. There can even be affinity groups who take on certain tasks in an action. For instance, there could be a roving affinity group made up of street medics, or an affinity group who brings food and water to people on the streets.

- more
What makes affinity groups so effective for actions is that they can remain creative and independent and plan out their own action without an organization or person dictating to them what can and can't be done. Thus, there are an endless amount of possibilities for what affinity groups can do. Be creative and remember: direct action gets the goods!

AFFINITY GROUP ROLES [IN A PROTEST]
There are many roles that one could possibly fill. These roles include:

Medical - An affinity group may want to have someone who is a trained street medic who can deal with any medical or health issues during the action.

Legal observer - If there are not already legal observers for an action, it may be important to have people not involved in the action taking notes on police conduct and possible violations of activists rights.

Media - If you are doing an action which plans to draw media, a person in the affinity group could be empowered to talk to the media and act as a spokesperson.

Action Elf/Vibes-watcher - This is someone who would help out with the general wellness of the group: water, massages, and encouragement through starting a song or cheer. This is not a role is necessary, but may be particularly helpful in day long actions where people might get tired or irritable as the day wears on.

Traffic - If it is a moving affinity group, it may be necessary to have people who are empowered to stop cars at intersections and in general watch out for the safety of people on the streets from cars and other vehicles.

Arrest-able members - This depends on what kind of direct action you are doing. Some actions may require a certain number of people willing to get arrested, or some parts of an action may need a minimum number of arrest-ables. Either way, it is important to know who is doing the action and plans on getting arrested.

Jail Support - Again, this is only if you have an affinity group who has people getting arrested. This person has all the arrestees contact information and will go to the jail, talk to and work with lawyers, keep track of who got arrested etc.
THE ADVANTAGES OF FORMAL CONSENSUS
When choosing a decision-making method, one needs to ask two questions. Is it a fair process? Does it produce good solutions? To judge the process, consider the following: Does the meeting flow smoothly? Is the discussion kept to the point? Does it take too long to make each decision? Does the leadership determine the outcome of the discussion? Are some people overlooked? To judge the quality of the end result, the decision, consider: Are the people making the decision, and all those affected, satisfied with the result? To what degree is the intent of the original proposal accomplished? Are the underlying issues addressed? Is there an appropriate use of resources? Would the group make the same decision again?

Conflict - While decision-making is as much about conflict as it is about agreement, Formal Consensus works best in an atmosphere in which conflict is encouraged, supported, and resolved cooperatively with respect, nonviolence, and creativity. Conflict is desirable. It is not something to be avoided, dismissed, diminished, or denied.

Majority Rule and Competition - Generally speaking, when a group votes using majority rule or Parliamentary Procedure, a competitive dynamic is created within the group because it is being asked to choose between two (or more) possibilities. It is just as acceptable to attack and diminish another's point of view as it is to promote and endorse your own ideas. Often, voting occurs before one side reveals anything about itself, but spends time solely attacking the opponent! In this adversarial environment, one's ideas are owned and often defended in the face of improvements.

Consensus and Cooperation - Consensus process, on the other hand, creates a cooperative dynamic. Only one proposal is considered at a time. Everyone works together to make it the best possible decision for the group. Any concerns are raised and resolved, sometimes one by one, until all voices are heard. Since proposals are no longer the property of the presenter, a solution can be created more cooperatively.

Proposals - In the consensus process, only proposals that intend to accomplish the common purpose are considered. During discussion of a proposal, everyone works to improve the proposal to make it the best decision for the group. All proposals are adopted unless the group decides it is contrary to the best interests of the group.

Characteristics of Formal Consensus - Any group that wants to adopt Formal Consensus needs to give considerable attention to the underlying principles that support consensus and help the process operate smoothly. This is not to say each and every one of the principles described herein must be adopted by every group, or that each group cannot add its own principles specific to its goals, but rather, each group must be very clear about the foundation of principles or common purposes they choose before they attempt the Formal Consensus decision-making process.

Formal Consensus is the least violent decision-making process - Traditional nonviolence theory holds that the use of power to dominate is violent and undesirable. Nonviolence expects people to use their power to persuade without deception, coercion, or malice, using truth, creativity, logic, respect, and love. Majority rule voting process and Parliamentary Procedure both accept, and even encourage, the use of power to dominate others. The goal is the winning of the vote, often regardless of another choice that might be in the best interest of the whole group. The will of the majority supersedes the concerns and desires of the minority. This is inherently violent. Consensus strives to take into account everyone's concerns and resolve them before any decision is made. Most importantly, this process encourages an environment in which everyone is respected and all contributions are valued.

Formal Consensus is the most democratic decision-making process - Groups which desire to involve as many people as possible need to use an inclusive process. To attract and involve large numbers, it is important that the process encourages participation, allows equal access to power, develops cooperation, promotes empowerment, and creates a sense of individual responsibility for the group's actions. All of these are cornerstones of Formal Consensus. The goal of consensus is not the selection of several options, but the development of one decision that is the best for the whole group. It is synthesis and evolution, not competition and attrition.

Formal Consensus is based on the principles of the group - Although every individual must consent to a decision before it is adopted, if there are any objections, it is not the choice of the individual alone to determine if an objection
prevents the proposal from being adopted. Every objection or concern must first be presented before the group and either resolved or validated. A valid objection is one in keeping with all previous decisions of the group and based upon the commonly held principles or foundation adopted by the group. The objection must not only address the concerns of the individual, but it must also be in the best interest of the group as a whole. If the objection is not based upon the foundation, or is in contradiction with a prior decision, it is not valid for the group.

**Formal Consensus works better when more people participate** - Consensus is more than the sum total of ideas of the individuals in the group. During discussion, ideas build one upon the next, generating new ideas, until the best decision emerges. This dynamic is called the creative interplay of ideas. Creativity plays a major part as everyone strives to discover what is best for the group. The more people involved in this cooperative process, the more ideas and possibilities are generated. Consensus works best with everyone participating. (This assumes, of course, that everyone in the group is trained in Formal Consensus and is actively using it.)

**Formal Consensus is not inherently time-consuming** - Decisions are not an end in themselves. Decision-making is a process that starts with an idea and ends with the actual implementation of the decision. While it may be true in an autocratic process that decisions can be made quickly, the actual implementation will take time. When one person or a small group of people makes a decision for a larger group, the decision not only has to be communicated to the others, but it also has to be acceptable to them or its implementation will need to be forced upon them. This will certainly take time, perhaps a considerable amount of time. On the other hand, if everyone participates in the decision-making, the decision does not need to be communicated and its implementation does not need to be forced upon the participants. The decision may take longer to make, but once it is made, implementation can happen in a timely manner. The amount of time a decision takes to make from start to finish is not a factor of the process used; rather, it is a factor of the complexity of the proposal itself.

**Formal Consensus cannot be secretly disrupted** - This may not be an issue for some groups, but many people know that the state actively surveilles, infiltrates, and disrupts nonviolent domestic political and religious groups. To counteract anti-democratic tactics by the state, a group would need to develop and encourage a decision-making process that could not be covertly controlled or manipulated. Formal Consensus, if practiced as described in this book, is just such a process. Since the assumption is one of cooperation and good will, it is always appropriate to ask for an explanation of how and why someone's actions are in the best interest of the group. Disruptive behavior must not be tolerated. While it is true this process cannot prevent openly disruptive behavior, the point is to prevent covert disruption, hidden agenda, and malicious manipulation of the process.

**ON DECISION-MAKING**

Decisions are adopted when all participants consent to the result of discussion about the original proposal. People who do not agree with a proposal are responsible for expressing their concerns. No decision is adopted until there is resolution of every concern. When concerns remain after discussion, individuals can agree to disagree by acknowledging that they have unresolved concerns, but consent to the proposal anyway and allow it to be adopted. Therefore, reaching consensus does not assume that everyone must be in complete agreement, a highly unlikely situation in a group of intelligent, creative individuals.

**FOUNDATION UPON WHICH CONSENSUS IS BUILT**

For consensus to work well, the process must be conducted in an environment that promotes trust, respect, and skill sharing. The following are principles which, when valued and respected, encourage and build consensus.

**Trust** - Foremost is the need for trust. Without some amount of trust, there will be no cooperation or nonviolent resolution to conflict. For trust to flourish, it is desirable for individuals to be willing to examine their attitudes and be open to new ideas. Acknowledgement and appreciation of personal and cultural differences promote trust. Neither approval nor friendship are necessary for a good working relationship.

**Respect** - It is everyone's responsibility to show respect to one another. People feel respected when everyone listens, when they are not interrupted, when their ideas are taken seriously. Respect for emotional as well as logical concerns promotes the kind of environment necessary for developing consensus. It is important to distinguish between an action that causes a problem and the person who did the action, between the deed and the doer. We must criticize the act, not the person. Even if you think the person *is* the problem, responding that way never resolves anything.

- **MORE**
Unity of Purpose - Unity of purpose is a basic understanding about the goals and purpose of the group. Of course, there will be varying opinions on the best way to accomplish these goals. However, there must be a unifying base, a common starting point, which is recognized and accepted by all.

Nonviolence - Nonviolent decision makers use their power to achieve goals while respecting differences and cooperating with others. In this environment, it is considered violent to use power to dominate or control the group process. It is understood that the power of revealing your truth is the maximum force allowed to persuade others to your point of view.

Self-Empowerment - It is easy for people to unquestioningly rely on authorities and experts to do their thinking and decision-making for them. If members of a group delegate their authority, intentionally or not, they fail to accept responsibility for the group's decisions. Consensus promotes and depends upon self-empowerment. Anyone can express concerns. Everyone seeks creative solutions and is responsible for every decision.

Cooperation - Unfortunately, Western society is saturated in competition. When winning arguments becomes more important than achieving the group's goals, cooperation is difficult, if not impossible. Adversarial attitudes toward proposals or people focus attention on weakness rather than strength. An attitude of helpfulness and support builds cooperation. Cooperation is a shared responsibility in finding solutions to all concerns. Ideas offered in the spirit of cooperation help resolve conflict. The best decisions arise through an open and creative interplay of ideas.

Conflict Resolution - The free flow of ideas, even among friends, inevitably leads to conflict. In this context, conflict is simply the expression of disagreement. Disagreement itself is neither good nor bad. Diverse viewpoints bring into focus and explore the strengths and weaknesses of attitudes, assumptions, and plans. Without conflict, one is less likely to think about and evaluate one's views and prejudices. There is no right decision, only the best one for the whole group. The task is to work together to discover which choice is most acceptable to all members.

Commitment to the Group - In joining a group, one accepts a personal responsibility to behave with respect, good will, and honesty. Each one is expected to recognize that the group's needs have a certain priority over the desires of the individual. Many people participate in group work in a very egocentric way. It is important to accept the shared responsibility for helping to find solutions to other's concerns.

Active Participation - We all have an inalienable right to express our own best thoughts. We decide for ourselves what is right and wrong. Since consensus is a process of synthesis, not competition, all sincere comments are important and valuable. If ideas are put forth as the speaker's property and individuals are strongly attached to their opinions, consensus will be extremely difficult. Stubbornness, close-mindedness, and possessiveness lead to defensive and argumentative behavior that disrupts the process. For active participation to occur, it is necessary to promote trust by creating an atmosphere in which every contribution is considered valuable. With encouragement, each person can develop knowledge and experience, a sense of responsibility and competency, and the ability to participate.

Equal Access to Power - Because of personal differences (experience, assertiveness, social conditioning, access to information, etc.) and political disparities, some people inevitably have more effective power than others. To balance this inequity, everyone needs to consciously attempt to creatively share power, skills, and information. Avoid hierarchical structures that allow some individuals to assume undemocratic power over others. Egalitarian and accountable structures promote universal access to power.

THE STRUCTURE OF FORMAL CONSENSUS
Formal Consensus is presented in levels or cycles. In the first level, the idea is to allow everyone to express their perspective, including concerns, but group time is not spent on resolving problems. In the second level the group focuses its attention on identifying concerns, still not resolving them. This requires discipline. Reactive comments, even funny ones, and resolutions, even good ones, can suppress the creative ideas of others. Not until the third level does the structure allow for exploring resolutions.

Each level has a different scope and focus. At the first level, the scope is broad, allowing the discussion to consider the philosophical and political implications as well as the general merits and drawbacks and other relevant information. The only focus is on the proposal as a whole. Some decisions can be reached after discussion at the first level. At the second level, the scope of the discussion is limited to the concerns. They are identified and publicly listed, which
enables everyone to get an overall picture of the concerns. The focus of attention is on identifying the body of concerns and grouping similar ones. At the third level, the scope is very narrow. The focus of discussion is limited to a single unresolved concern until it is resolved.

**ON DEGREES OF CONFLICT**

The individual is responsible for expressing concerns; the group is responsible for resolving them. The group decides whether a concern is legitimate; the individual decides whether to block or stand aside. The following is a description of different types of concerns and how they affect individuals and the group.

Concerns that can be addressed and resolved by making small changes in the proposal can be called minor concerns. The person supports the proposal, but has an idea for improvement. When a person disagrees with the proposal in part, but consents to the overall idea, the person has a reservation. The person is not completely satisfied with the proposal, but is generally supportive. This kind of concern can usually be resolved through discussion. Sometimes, it is enough for the person to express the concern and feel that it was heard, without any actual resolution.

When a person does not agree with the proposal, the group allows that person to try and persuade it to see the wisdom of the disagreement. If the group is not persuaded or the disagreement cannot be resolved, the person might choose to stand aside and allow the group to go forward. The person and the group are agreeing to disagree, regarding each point of view with mutual respect. Occasionally, it is a concern that has no resolution; the person does not feel the need to block the decision, but wants to express the concern and lack of support for the proposal. A blocking concern must be based on a generally recognized principle, not personal preference, or it must be essential to the entire group’s well-being. Before a concern is considered to be blocking, the group must have already accepted the validity of the concern and a reasonable attempt must have been made to resolve it. If legitimate concerns remain unresolved and the person has not agreed to stand aside, consensus is blocked.

**The Formal Consensus Process**

**Introductions**
- clarify process
- present proposal or issue
- questions to clarify presentation

**Level 1**
Broad open discussion
- group discussion
  > call for consensus

**Level 2**
Identify concerns
- list any concerns
- group the related concerns

**Level 3**
Resolve concerns
- resolve grouped concerns
  > call for consensus

- restate remaining concerns
- questions to clarify concerns
- discussion limited to resolving one concern at a time
  > call for consensus

**Alternative closing options:**
- send to committee
- stand aside
- declare block
One major contribution of the feminist movement to current social change movements is the awareness that effective group process and meaningful personal interaction are crucial factors in developing a successful movement. This tenet of feminist philosophy has merged with the principles of a variety of nonviolent movements, such as the Quakers, to reinforce a basic premise: nonviolence begins at home—in the ways we treat each other.

Such an awareness stresses that relationships within the group cannot be separated from the accomplishment of political goals. Effective group process, in fact, means valuing cooperation over competition, recognizing the contributions of each individual, and decentralizing power through a non-hierarchical organizational structure.

**PROCESS SUGGESTIONS**

1. Use go-rounds: Equalize speaking time by going around the circle and allowing each person to speak for a specified time.
2. Share skills and rotate responsibilities: Keep work groups open so that new members can have access to all information and acquire experience.
3. Value feelings: Include time in meetings for expressing emotions and for personal interactions.
4. Work together cooperatively: Bear in mind that the goal is to further the work of the group—not bettering any given individual’s position.
5. Meet separately: Allow time for women to meet with women and men to meet with men in order to facilitate self-awareness and strengthen each person’s participation. This applies to other groups as well, such as blacks and whites, etc.
6. Meet in small groups: Allow time for meeting in small groups so that individuals who feel uncomfortable speaking in large groups can speak more freely. Small groups will give each person more speaking time as well. This format is also useful for discussing conflicts and sensitive issues.

**CONSENSUS**

By John Lavine

Consensus is a process in which no decision is finalized until everyone in the group feels comfortable with the decision and is able to implement it without resentment. Ideally, consensus synthesizes the ideas of every member of the group into one decision.

The skill of coming to genuine consensus decisions is a real and hard one. It involves a willingness to change and an openness to new ideas. People must be committed not only to expressing their own feelings, but also to helping others with opposite views to express those as well. Because the ideal of consensus is to reach a decision that is not only acceptable to everyone, but is best for everyone, there must be a “bottom line” of shared beliefs about what is best for all concerned. These are the principles of unity. These basic agreements will undoubtedly not encompass all the beliefs of each individual in the group, but rather, will help define the working relationship of the members. This may vary from the specific goals of a coalition formed around a single action, to an in-depth, ongoing process of self-definition in a small collective. Whatever their scope, without these basic agreements, and a willingness to work within them, consensus will never succeed.

**HOW IT WORKS**

An issue is raised in a group. This may be in the form of a concrete proposal for the group to act upon, but more often it will be as a general discussion. Often, a go-round is used for everyone to express their point of view, and these ideas are then synthesized into a proposal. When the proposal has been formalized, there is further discussion and debate. There may be questions concerning the specifics of the proposal that need to be clarified. There will most likely be modifications, in the form of additions or friendly amendments. These must be acceptable to the originator of the proposals to be considered as such, or they may be offered as a counter proposal. This process is repeated until a general agreement emerges. At any point during this discussion, process suggestions may be offered on how to proceed. This is often signalled by raising both hands, and takes precedence over other speakers. Process suggestions are strictly that, however, and should not be used to express opinions on the issue. Dividing the proposal into several parts for discussion, breaking into smaller groups to allow fuller debate, forming a committee to rework the proposal, or pointing out a mistake in procedure are all examples of process suggestions that can be helpful in overcoming difficulties.
When a proposal seems finalized, the facilitator tests for consensus. This is done first by asking for reservations. Even though a proposal may be acceptable to someone who is not in total agreement with it, it is important nonetheless for these reservations and concerns to be voiced. Group members who are a clear minority may often be willing to abandon a position—stand aside—when they see that there is no chance to persuade the rest of the group. This flexibility allows a group to move forward, but it is not true consensus; it is often referred to as "lukewarm" consensus. Such a process can in the long run become very debilitating. Some people do not even consider lukewarm consensus to be a valid consensus. For consensus to function in a constructive way, a group should always encourage and respect minority points of view, and should strive to incorporate all of them. Every proposal has its weak points; looking carefully at people's reactions and disagreements provides an opportunity for improvement. Such a process leads to a truer view, and should strive to incorporate all of them. Every proposal has its weak points; looking carefully at people's reactions and disagreements provides an opportunity for improvement. Such a process leads to a truer view, and should strive to incorporate all of them. Every proposal has its weak points; looking carefully at people's reactions and disagreements provides an opportunity for improvement. Such a process leads to a truer view, and should strive to incorporate all of them.

Since many decisions can be reversed quite easily, and because feelings and ideas and circumstances can change, there should be an understanding that everyone in the group or every group represented will be open to new ideas and be willing to experiment further. This leads to the idea of two-way consensus: as soon as there is disagreement about a decision, there is, by definition, no longer consensus, and until a new consensus is reached, the original decision and its implementation does not stand. In status-quo consensus, on the other hand, once a decision is made, in order to change the decision everyone must agree to change, and until there is a new agreement the original decision stands and is implemented. In one sense, two-way consensus is a truer form of consensus, based on a dialectical philosophy which incorporates analysis and change. In another sense, it is an invitation to chaos. Which form one uses can depend a lot on the size of the group and its basis of unity. An affinity group or a small work collective often may find two-way consensus the only way to go; a large organization or coalition may decide that status-quo consensus is necessary to provide continuity and allow the group to move forward.

If no one blocks a proposal, and if it has been fully discussed, the group can consense to it by using a show of hands, smiles, cheers or whatever. This should be followed by deciding what needs to be done to carry out the proposal, and who is going to do it.

Decision-making in large groups can be handled by having spokes (representatives from each affinity or working group) meet in a fishbowl format. In that situation, all spokes meet in the center of the room, with other members of their groups sitting behind them and making comments to their spokes as needed. Another method for large groups is to hold a meeting of empowered spokes, consisting completely of individuals who have been given the power to speak for and make decisions for their respective groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator—Helps move the meeting along. Takes suggestions for the agenda and arranges them in order of priority. Makes sure all necessary roles are filled. Calls on people to speak in turn. Helps insures that everyone has a chance to speak, and that no one dominates the discussion. Helps group resolve conflict and make decisions by summarizing, repeating, or re-phrasing proposals as necessary. Should remain neutral on topics being discussed; when an issue arises about which the facilitator feels strongly, someone else should take over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timekeeper—Warns the group near the end of the time period allotted for an agenda item.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notetaker—Records minutes, especially all proposals and amendments the group makes. Decisions and who is to implement them should be noted as precisely as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process watcher—Pays attention to group process, especially unexpressed feelings and tensions; reminds the group to relax and take breaks as needed. This role is especially important in large meetings.</td>
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DIRECT ACTION DISCERNMENT SHEET

“If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are people who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning.… Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and never will.”

-- Frederick Douglass, Abolitionist

Before “crossing the line” into Civil Disobedience, ask yourself:

~ Do I understand the larger strategy of which this particular action is just one part?

~ Have I done my homework on the issue? Do I know enough about it to do at least a brief radio interview?

~ In joining this affinity group and in doing this action, do I understand my own motivation?

~ Can I abide by the Nonviolence Pledge without significant mental reservation? Will I be taking part in this action in the spirit of Nonviolence? How well do I understand Nonviolence? Do I see Nonviolence as a tactic…or as a value system and way of life?

~ Do I trust the other members of my affinity group, especially those I may be going to trial with? Do I feel this affinity group will provide the support I’ll need?

~ Am I prepared to have news of my arrest appear in my hometown newspaper?

~ Am I aware of the possible legal consequences? Am I prepared to endure the worse case scenario even if it might involve going to trial and prison?

~ How will my possible arrest, trial and imprisonment affect my family or others close to me? How will it affect my schooling/job/career?

~ Do I have any fears about any of the foregoing? Have I discussed them with others in my affinity group?

~ Do I see value in “prison witness”?

Note: A good preparation for doing an action is to write out a statement explaining why you feel so strongly about this issue that you are willing to break the law and risk imprisonment. You can use such a statement as the basis of an op-ed in your local paper and as the basis of the remarks you’ll make in court.

[GWdiscernment/June2001/syr]
PREPARING FOR ARREST
by Laura Booth


Prior to the day of the action:

1. Roleplay the Action Scenario with your affinity group and others. Focus on the events which are confusing or seem risky.
2. Be sure to discuss with your affinity group members different phases of the arrest/booking/arraignment/jail proceedings. It is best to discuss these issues in depth with your affinity group prior to the action itself. It will be much easier to make last minute decisions during the actual process if each person has a clear sense of the decisions and intentions of all AG members concerning these issues.
3. Plan for more time away from your normal routine than you expect to need, and if at all possible arrange for your responsibilities to be covered at home, work, etc.
4. Give your support people such things as I.D., phone numbers, special medical needs, emergency contacts, etc. Make sure you have their phone numbers to call when you need to reach them, either during or after the action.

On the day of the action:

5. Wear sensible clothing suitable for being dragged; for hot, cold, or wet weather; and for sleeping in. Wear layers for changing weather. Wear sturdy shoes (not sandals).
6. Take along some food, such as pre-made sandwiches, dried fruit, carrots, etc., in a bag you don’t mind parting with. Bring water or juice to drink.
7. Carry with you the names and phone numbers of your support people. You can write one or two key phone numbers on your arm. Bring a pen and pad for taking notes.
8. To expedite your release, carry photo I.D.
9. Don’t carry alcohol, non-medical drugs, or anything the police might construe as a weapon (pocket knife, sticks, etc.).
10. Don’t carry anything you are unwilling to part with. Once you are released you should be able to retrieve any items taken from you -- but don’t count on it. Leave all jewelry and excess money at home.
11. A small paperback or other reading material may come in handy.
DIRECT ACTION SUPPORT FORM

Fill this form out before risking arrest and review it with your support person and buddy. Give it to your support person before risking arrest.

your name

age

mailing address

home phone

work phone

e-mail

contact person back home

phone #s

on site support person (not risking arrest)

your buddy (risking arrest)

any medical & medication matters your support person & buddy should know about:

any phone calls [to family, employer, etc.] your support person needs to make if police detain you longer than expected:

PHONE #

NAME

ROLE

a) ( )

b) ( )

c) ( )

other info your support person & buddy needs to know:

circle or fill in items you’ll be giving to your support person: keys wallet

$________ other ____________________

[[GW AG support form /July 2000/syr]]
ARREST SUPPORT FORM  please print

NAME
   Email address
   Phone #s
   Snail mailing address

IS THIS YOUR FIRST ACTIVIST ARREST?  Yes ____ No ____
HAVE YOU EVER SPENT AT LEAST ONE NIGHT IN JAIL?  Yes ____ No ____

SUPPORT PERSON
   Contact info

ANYONE WHO NEEDS TO BE CONTACTED IF YOU’RE HELD OVERNITE or longer
   [mate, other relative, employer, etc ]
   Phone #s

RELEVANT HEALTH OR MEDICATION ISSUES?
   No ____ Yes ____
   Details:

IF DETAINED, DO YOU WANT TO BE BAILED OUT?  Yes ____ No ____
   If so, who has your bail $$?
   Phone #s

YOUR LOCAL MEDIA CONTACTS:
   Name/affiliation
   Phone #s
   Name/affiliation
   Phone #s

ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD KNOW?

IN ONE OR TWO SENTENCES: WHY ARE YOU RISKING ARREST TODAY?
   [for use in press releases, etc.]
Map of Fort Benning

MAIN ENTRANCE = trapezoid at top of map
SOA/WHISC HQ = skull logo in center of map
source (with more buildings labeled):
www.benningmwr.com/mainpostmapzoom.htm
BENNING DR. MAIN ENTRANCE (As of fall 2001 the base is no longer "open." There is now a 1000-foot long eight-foot high barbed wire fence across the entrance. Entry is with military ID only.) Not drawn to scale.
Nov. '95 Benning main entrance: re-enacting the 1989 murder of six Jesuits and two women in El Salvador by SOA grads. The "SOA 13" all got between two and six months in prison. [SOAW photo from cover of first edition of Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer's School of Assassins (Orbis, '97)]

FT. BENNING SITES, SCENARIOS & CONSEQUENCES
* some or all participants arrested
** some or all participants imprisoned

A) BENNING MAIN ENTRANCE (see diagram)
On Benning Dr., Columbus, GA. Now fenced and guarded. Within walking distance of Roy's office, restaurants, & motels. Supporters can stand on Columbus side of the white line without risking arrest. Good site for legal vigiling (use Columbus city permit in this binder).

~ early 90's: Roy's (and a few others') 35-day water-only fast
~ Nov. 17, '90: after march from Columbus, seven crossed line with huge puppet representing slain Jesuits and planted a rose bush. Never prosecuted*
~ annual November vigils and funeral processions with, cumulatively, thousands arrested and dozens imprisoned -- for misdemeanors**
~ Nov. '95: re-enactment of Jesuit massacre -- a misdemeanor**
~ Nov. '96 and Nov. '00: cemetary-like planting of crosses**

- over
~ Sept. '97: editing of Benning welcome sign ("SOA=torture") with five felony arrests** and simultaneous bannering between the two pine trees behind the entrance sign in the median (using ladder and deer platforms)*
~ throughout '99: Charlie Liteky’s daily (legal) vigils
~ Jan. '01: Becky Johnson’s legal 31-day Vigil and juice-only Fast
~ Jan. 17, '01: four arrested for lockdown & three for carrying baby’s coffin*
~ Apr. 12 - June 3, '01: Jeff Moebus’ 52-day legal Vigil and juice-only Fast
~ May 23, '01: spray-paint erasure of white line separating base & Columbus*
~ July 18, '01: eleven members of SOAW/Witness for Peace delegation returning from Colombia issued ban and bars for trespass
~ Nov. 18, '01: thousands added white crosses, banners, uniforms, etc. to fence. 70 went under or around fence;** 14 held overnite in county jail.
July 2002 trial: 14 get 90 days; 15 get six months; one acquitted; seven get probation. On day of sentencing Becky Johnson locks herself to gate.*
~ Aug. 11, '02: three returning from Colombia delegation climb over locked gate with banner quoting human rights worker there tortured by SOA grad.*

B) SOA/WHISC MAIN BUILDING
Most prominent building on base, about two or three miles in from main “gate.”
Public bus and private vehicles must go through checkpoint near entrance; security closely monitors vehicles and buildings. WHISC provides building tours.

grounds: ~ March 10, 2000: coffin burial and cross planting in lawn *
~ May 23, 2001: man & woman caught praying*

entrance: potential site for die-ins, blockades, petition deliveries, etc.
~ Nov. 16, '94: chaining of SOA doors**
~ Apr. 28, '00: re-enactment of Bishop Gerardi’s killing **
~ May 24, '00: Oberlin College affinity group “New Name, Same Shame” action -- all received five-year ban and bar letters only*
~ May 23, '01: posting of oversized “ban & bar” letter on door*

inside: ~ Nov. 16, '90: Roy and Pat & Charlie Liteky threw blood on portraits in Hall of Fame**

C) OTHER BENNING LOCATIONS
The PX and, on Sundays, the Catholic and the Protestant churches could be leafleted. In Nov. '01 actions occurred near other entrances to base.
~ Aug. '83: Roy’s boombox broadcasting of Romero’s last homily in tree outside of Salvadoran barracks -- a felony**
~ Nov. '94: leafleting of cafeteria -- a misdemeanor**
~ Nov. 14, '01: Josh Raisler Cohn “hung” himself from a bridge on base.*
~ Nov. 29, '01: Josh and Liz “Sprout” Guy unfurled huge banner from water tower.* Josh served six months; first-timer Sprout not prosecuted.

[GWsites&scenarios/Oct02]
SOA WATCH ANNUAL CYCLE

As part of strategizing your action, consider how its timing fits into the SOA Watch annual cycle. An action in October or early November, for example, may impinge on the annual SOAW November vigil action.

FEBRUARY
   -- strategy weekend in DC

SEPTEMBER to EARLY NOVEMBER
   -- local nonviolence trainings in preparation for the November vigil action

NOVEMBER 16 (weekend of/or just after)
   -- Benning Vigil Action
      ~ Friday: caucuses & orientation
      ~ Saturday: speakers & live music all day
      ~ Sunday a.m.: nonviolence pledge...presente dirge...solemn procession...crossing the line...affinity group actions...arrests
      ~ Sunday p.m: awaiting release of arrestees...media work

SPRING
   -- DC Mobilization
      -- lobbying in DC...and at home (throughout the year)
      -- court witness stemming from November vigil action arrests:
         pre-trial media work (by defendants/ SOAW)...prep workshops for defendants & supporters...trial(s)...sentencing...Gandhian Wave actions by supporters just after sentencing...post-trial media work...some incarcerations

FALL/WINTER
   -- pre-prison media work & presentations
   -- more incarcerations (usually for up to six months) from last November's actions

[GW annual cycle/nov2002]
DEVELOPING YOUR GANDHIAN WAVE SCENARIO
Goal: to expose and help close the School of the Americas/WHISC

Develop your action scenario within an affinity group setting. It's best done after your group has: a) agreed on its decision-making process, b) gotten some understanding of SOA Watch strategy, c) begun Nonviolence training, and d) studied the SOA Watch Nonviolence Pledge.

1. CHOOSING & SHAPING
   a) choose action date & travel time frame
   b) discuss degree of importance of: media attention, trial, and prison witness
   c) study the sites and scenarios sheet. Brainstorm scenarios (no need to be bound by previous actions). In your brainstorm include details -- e.g. using vivid, photogenic symbols like signs, masks, shrouds, crosses, coffins, banners, big photos, puppets, army fatigues, cardboard guns, and other faith & death symbols and costumes.
   d) seek a scenario tailored to your group and one that projects a clear powerful image.

2. FILL IN THE ROLES
   ~ explore each affinity group member’s risk level:
      a. arrest/non-arresi/still discerning
      b. misdemeanor/felony
   ~ support roles:
      support person for each one risking arrest
      logistics (transport, lodging)/equipment (vehicles, cell phones)
      home area/on site media person
      photographer/videographer
      first aid & paralegal
      (eventually) prison support for each captive.
   ~ roles for those willing to risk arrest:
     buddy up until released from custody
     quick decision-making facilitator
     cell phoner (contacting media & support from on base)
     driver (may be less exposed to arrest if just dropping off at SOA HQ)
     other (scouts, lookouts, decoys, climbers, ladder holders, “soldiers,” “campesinos,” “Uncle Sam,” “capitalist,” “IMF,” “FTAA”...)
     each arrestee might prepare a statement to give captors and media; it can later be adapted for court and for op-eds, etc..

-- over
3. REHEARSE
   a) “walk through” the scenario -- simulate location; check out logistics, timing, props & costumes, etc.
   b) with each participant in her designated role, roleplay the action including encounters with media, bystanders, police, etc.
   c) address potential snarls: terrible weather, police who refuse to arrest, etc.
   d) take action photos to use for publicity
   e) before leaving for Benning, finalize pre-press release.

Commemorative dates
Often our civil disobedience actions commemorate assassinations and massacres linked to or perpetrated by SOA grads. Here is a sampling of such dates:
~ Mar. 24, 1980 Assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero (El Salvador)
~ Apr. 26, 1998 Assassination of Bishop Juan Gerardi (Guatemala)
~ July 18, 1992 Massacre of nine university students & a professor (Peru)
~ Nov. 16, 1989 Assassination of six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter (El Salvador)
~ Dec. 2, 1980 Massacre of four U.S. church women (El Salvador)
~ Dec. 10, 1981 Massacre of 900 men, women & children (El Mozote, El Salvador)
~ Dec. 22, 1997 Massacre of 45 men, women & children (Acteal, Chiapas, Mexico)

Transparency and discretion
“Experiments with Truth” is the subtitle of Gandhi’s Autobiography. For Gandhi Nonviolence is intimately entwined with Truth. In everyday life that translates into honesty, openness and accountability in all our interactions. In an activist context this is sometimes called transparency:

Within Nonviolence there isn’t room for lying or other forms of deceit -- even if they seem to yield tactical gain. Gandhi taught that means and ends are interchangeable: bad means can’t yield good ends. This is at the heart of the Nonviolent critique of violence.

Even so, when we do civil disobedience our scenario may rely on the element of surprise. If it does, we must be discrete and not tip our hand. In Columbus, GA, a military town, it make sense, then, to be circumspect in public about who we are and about why we’ve come to town.

For example, it would be smart to avoid talking about our plans or our politics in Denny’s or in our motel lobby. Otherwise the military police may be ready and waiting for us when we enter Benning.

In civil disobedience, as in life, discretion and transparency complement each other.

[GWdeveloping scenario/Oct02]
Gene Sharp compiled the following list of nonviolent tactics. For a discussion of each with historical examples, see chapters 3-9 of vol. 2 of his monumental Politics of Nonviolent Action, Boston, 1973. Given the rich development of nonviolent tactics since 1973, this list would be rather longer if it were compiled today. Nonetheless, the list -- and those chapters -- can help you strategize your local campaign. Use them to enrich your civil disobedience scenario brainstorm.

**Footnote:** *= SOA Watch has used in one form or another

### Formal statements
1. Public speeches*
2. Letters of opposition or support*
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions*
4. Signed public statements*
5. Declarations of indictment or and intention
6. Group or mass petitions*

### Communications with a wider audience
7. Slogans, caricatures and symbols*
8. Banners, posters and displayed communications*
9. Leaflets, pamphlets and books*
10. Newspapers and journals*
11. Records, radio and television*
12. Skywriting and earthwriting*

### Group representations
13. Deputations*
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying*
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

### Symbolic public acts
18. Displays of flags and symbolic colors*
19. Wearing of symbols*
20. Prayer and worship*
21. Delivering symbolic objects*
22. Protest disrobings
23. Destruction of own property
24. Symbolic lights
25. Displays of portraits*
26. Paint as protest*
27. New signs and names*
28. Symbolic sounds*
29. Symbolic reclamations
30. Rude gestures

### Pressures on individuals
31. "Haunting" officials
32. Taunting officials
33. Fraternization*
34. Vigils*

### Drama and music
35. Humorous skits and pranks*
36. Plays and music*
37. Singing*

### Processions
38. Marches*
39. Parades*
40. Religious processions*
41. Pilgrimages*
42. Motorcades

### Honoring the dead
43. Political mourning*
44. Mock funerals*
45. Demonstrative funerals
46. Homage at burial places

--- over
Public assemblies
47. Assemblies of protest or support*
48. Protest meetings*
49. Camouflaged meetings of protest
50. Teach-ins*

Withdrawal and renunciation
51. Walk-outs
52. Silence*
53. Renouncing honors
54. Turning one’s back

Ostracism of persons
55. Social boycott
56. Selective social boycott
57. Lysistratic nonaction
58. Excommunication
59. Interdict

Noncooperation with social events, customs and institutions
60. Suspension of social and sports activities
61. Boycott of social affairs
62. Student strike
63. Social disobedience
64. Withdrawal from social institutions

Withdrawal from the social system
65. Stay-at-home
66. Total personal noncooperation
67. “Flight” of workers
68. Sanctuary
69. Collective disappearance
70. Protest emigration (hijrat)

Action by workers and producers
78. Workmen’s [sic] boycott
79. Producers’ boycott

Action by middlemen [sic]
80. Suppliers’ and handlers’ boycott

Action by owners and management
81. Traders’ boycott
82. Refusal to let or sell property
83. Lockout
84. Refusal of industrial assistance
85. Merchants’ “general strike”

Action by holders of financial resources
86. Withdrawal of bank deposits
87. Refusal to pay fees, dues, etc.
88. Refusal to pay debts or interest
89. Severance of funds and credit
90. Revenue refusal
91. Refusal of a government’s money

Action by governments
92. Domestic embargo
93. Blacklisting of traders
94. International sellers’ embargo
95. International buyers’ embargo
96. International trade-embargo

[Various types of strikes
97.- 119.]

Action by consumers
71. Consumers’ boycott
72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
73. Policy of austerity
74. Rent withholding
75. Refusal to rent
76. National consumers’ boycott
77. International consumers’ boycott

-more
Methods of Political Noncooperation

Rejection of authority
120. Withholding of allegiance
121. Refusal of public support
122. Speeches & literature advocating resistance*

Citizen’s noncooperation with government
123. Boycott of legislative bodies
124. Boycott of elections
125. Boycott of government positions & employment
126. Boycott of government agencies & departments
127. Withdrawal from government educational institutions
128. Boycott of government-supported organizations
129. Refusing assistance to enforcement agents*
130. Removal of own signs and placemarks
131. Refusal to accept appointed officials
132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

Citizens’ alternatives to obedience
133. Reluctant and slow compliance
134. Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision
135. Popular nonobedience
136. Disguised disobedience
137. Refusal of an assembly to disperse*
138. Sitdown*
139. Noncooperation with conscription & deportation
140. Hiding, escape and false identities
141. Civil disobedience of “illegitimate” laws*

Action by government personnel
142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aids
143. Blocking of lines of command & information
144. Stalling and obstruction
145. General administrative noncooperation
146. Judicial noncooperation
147. Deliberate inefficiency & selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
148. Mutiny

Domestic governmental action
149. Quasi-legal evasions & delays
150. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

International governmental action
151. Changes in diplomatic & other representation
152. Delay & cancellation of diplomatic events
153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition
154. Severance of diplomatic relations
155. Withdrawal from international organizations
156. Refusal of membership in international bodies
157. Expulsion from international organizations

--- over ---
Methods of Nonviolent Intervention

Psychological intervention
158. Self-exposure to the elements
159. The fast
   (a) fast of moral pressure*
   (b) hunger strike*
   (c) Satyagrahic fast*
160. Reverse trial*
161. Nonviolent harassment

Physical intervention
162. Sit-in*
163. Stand-in
164. Ride-in
165. Wade-in
166. Mill-in
167. Pray-in
168. Nonviolent raids
169. Nonviolent air raids
170. Nonviolent invasion*
171. Nonviolent interjection
172. Nonviolent obstruction
173. Nonviolent occupation

Social intervention
174. Establishing new social patterns
175. Overloading of facilities
176. Stall-in
177. Speak-in*
178. Guerrilla theater*
179. Alternative social institutions
180. Alternative communication system

Economic intervention
181. Reverse strike
182. Stay-in strike
183. Nonviolent land seizure
184. Defiance of blockades*
185. Politically motivated counterfeiting
186. Preclusive purchasing
187. Seizure of assets
188. Dumping
189. Selective patronage
190. Alternative markets
191. Alternative transportation systems
192. Alternative economic institutions

Political intervention
193. Overloading of administrative systems*
194. Disclosing identities of secret agents
195. Seeking imprisonment*
196. Civil disobedience of “neutral” laws*
197. Work-on without collaboration
198. Dual sovereignty & parallel government

[GWsharp/July2000]
GANDHIAN WAVE ACTIONS AT BENNING

Gandhian Wave actions are nonviolent direct actions -- usually involving civil disobedience -- perpetrated at Ft. Benning. Their goal is to help expose and close the SOA and any clone. "Gandhian Wave" refers to all such actions at Benning except the highly promoted mass mobilizations each year on or just after November 16.

March 10, 2000: One man and five women, all recidivists, bury coffin and plant crosses in the lawn of the SOA building. Action occurs on the day the "SOA 10" are sentenced to three month prison terms. All are arrested, but none have been arraigned yet.

April 28: Two women and one man from the St. Francis Catholic Worker in Columbia, MO reenact Bishop Girardi’s assassination outside the SOA building. All are arrested, but only one, Steve Jacobs, is prosecuted. Six months of Steve’s 12 month May ’01 sentence is for this action.

May 24: Nine college students (mostly from Oberlin) plus the mother and grandmother of one of them do “New Name, Same Shame” demo outside SOA building. All are arrested, but none have been arraigned yet.

November 14: Josh Raisler Cohn “hangs” himself from a bridge on the base to draw attention to the upcoming November 19 Vigil Action. In May ‘01, Josh is sentenced to six months for this and his water tower action about two weeks later.

November 29: Josh & “Sprout” Guy rappel down Benning water tower and unfurl a 1750 square foot banner calling for closing of SOA. Josh, now a recidivist, is taken into FBI custody and is arraigned in Federal Court in Columbus, GA. A non-recidivist, Sprout isn’t prosecuted.

January 17, 2001: Seven (mostly Oberlin students; and the mother of one of them) are arrested just inside the base on Benning Road. Three women have entered the base on foot carrying a baby’s coffin; they seek to join the opening ceremony that day for the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. They are charged with trespass. Four men who have locked arms together inside pipes briefly blocking Benning Road are charged with trespass and resisting arrest. Oberlin senior Becky Johnson is among those arrested; the action occurs during her month-long legal vigil fast at Benning’s main entrance.

April 12 to June 3: Viet Nam War vet and retired career military man, Jeff Moebus, vigils and fasts (legally) at the main entrance for 52 days.

-- over
May 23: As the SOA 26 are being sentenced, eleven are arrested on base for three different actions: a) erasing the white line at the main entrance with spray paint; b) posting a large “ban & bar” letter to the SOA/WHISC door; c) praying near the SOA/WHISC building.

July 18: Immediately upon returning from their Witness for Peace/SOA Watch delegation to Putomayo, Colombia, 11 are arrested crossing the line.

July 13, 2002: Around 10AM the morning after Magistrate G. Mallon Faircloth sentenced 29 of the SOA 37 to prison, Becky Johnson swung closed Benning’s main incoming gates, locked them with a hardened bicycle lock, and locked herself to them with another bicycle lock around her neck. The gates remained locked and the incoming entrance remained closed for three hours as the military sought to extricate her. Taken right to the county jail, Becky was released due to “lack of room.”

August 11: Immediately upon returning from their Witness for Peace/SOA Watch delegation to Barrancabermeja and Cauca, Colombia, three are arrested as they climbed over the barbed wire fence at Benning’s main entrance bearing a banner.

All of those arrested in the above actions received ban and bar letters forbidding them from reentering Benning upon risk of further arrest.

[GWactionsOct'02]
Our direct actions (fasts, vigils, parades, etc.) need not involve civil disobedience or risk of arrest. SOA Watch has a long tradition of legal demonstrations at the main entrance to Benning on the Columbus side of the painted white line. These events require a permit from the Columbus Police Department.

You can copy and submit the permit application form in this binder (over). Because the Columbus police patrolling that beat may not have a copy of your permit, a member of your group should have a copy on her person during your event. The Columbus police are empowered to enforce the following regulations:

Sec. 17B-1 All assemblies and picketing shall be peaceful and unattended by excessive noise and boisterousness.

Sec. 17B-2 Picketing and demonstrations shall be conducted only on public sidewalks maintained by the city or other walk areas on the public right-of-way, and only the outside five (5) feet of said sidewalks next to the curb shall be used by the pickets or demonstrators. No picketing or demonstrating shall be conducted on the remaining portion of said sidewalks or on that portion of the streets used primarily for vehicular traffic.

Sec. 17B-3 Marching shall be in single file, and pickets shall be limited to a total of 15 persons and shall not interfere with ingress or egress to any business or public facility.

Sec. 17B-5 Pickets or demonstrators shall carry only cardboard or paper placards or signs.

Sec. 17B-8 The chief of police of the City of Columbus is to be given at least five hours notice by any person or persons planning to picket or demonstrate: This written notice shall include the name of the organization or organizations planning to picket and also shall include the names of the places of business or public facilities which will be picketed and the hours that the picketing or demonstrating will be conducted. The chief of police shall immediately forward a copy of any such written notice to the business or public facility which is the subject of picketing or demonstration.

Sec. 17B-9 Whenever the free passage of any street or sidewalk in the City of Columbus shall be obstructed by a crowd, the persons composing such crowd shall disperse or move on when directed to do so by a police officer. It shall be unlawful for any person to refuse to so disperse or move on when so directed by a police officer as herein provided.

Sec. 17B-10 No vehicle shall be used in any picket or demonstrating line, and all pickets or demonstrators shall be afoot.

[For PARADES, see Chapter 17B, Article II]
NOTICE OF PROPOSED PICKETING OR PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION

NOTIFICATION DATE: ________________ TIME: ________________

Group or Individual Planning to Participate: __________________________

Contact Person: __________________________

Address: __________________________

Phone Number: __________________________

Location of Public Demonstration: __________________________

Name of Establishment: __________________________

Date of Demonstration: __________________________

Time of Demonstration (Begin & End): __________________________

Purpose of Demonstration: __________________________

Type of Activity Planned: __________________________

NOTIFICATION OF PICKETING OR A PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION MUST BE MADE TO THE CHIEF OF POLICE IN WRITING AT LEAST FIVE (5) HOURS PRIOR TO THE ACTIVITY. (COLUMBUS CODE 17 B-8)
USING THE MEDIA TO PUBLICIZE YOUR ACTION AND EXPOSE THE SOA

We do Gandhian Wave actions to expose the SOA/WHISC. The more people that hear about the SOA, the better. And the more people that hear about how the SOA and Benning — those self-proclaimed bastions of democracy — stifle dissent, the better.

It seems, however, that unless we risk arrest and imprisonment, the media will pretty much ignore us. That, of course, makes complete sense: the major mainstream media are owned by mega-corporations whose interests the US military and the US government eagerly serve.

Our job, then, is to use the media despite itself. SOA Watch has worked hard to get media attention. After years of virtual blackout, we've had some success. But most of our success has come from either huge national actions or from grassroots activists — and prisoners of conscience — mobilizing their own local media. Our movement is built on such grassroots media work.

This is why we strongly encourage you to focus on your own local media, i.e. the home or college town media of each of your folks risking arrest. Begin developing your local press contacts before coming to Benning; then follow up with them immediately after the action...and when you get home from Columbus.

To do this you need to distribute press releases. (See samples below.) After you've faxed your press release and made follow up phone calls to those contacts, you can then begin to work national media contacts. There's a list of such contacts in this section.

Presumably your Gandhian Wave action won't be just a flash in the pan, but part of an ongoing long-term campaign of educating your local public about the SOA and what it represents. This requires ongoing interaction with — and education of — your local media.

One of the best guides for working the media is Jason Salzman's Making the News: A Guide for Nonprofits & Activists, Westview Press, 1998, $19.95, 289pp. Get it; use it; share it. If you're feeling rich, buy copies for other activists. If you take Making the News to heart, you will considerably amplify the effectiveness of your Gandhian Wave.
Wasserman's view

Here at the School of the Americas, we've had an image problem.

We were accused of training assassins and running a torture academy.

So we're having a makeover—new name, new look.

Welcome to the School of Friendly Persuasion!
WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Andy is on the staff of the Syracuse Peace Council and helps produce its “Peace Newsletter,” the country’s oldest independent local peace and justice monthly. These are his pointers:

Don’t assume they’re against us. Yes, we face an increasing problem of media ownership and control being in fewer and fewer corporate hands. This does shape what is reported and how it is reported. However, there are many journalists who believe in getting a fair and accurate story. Some mainstream media, if only to maintain the illusion of “balance,” will occasionally publish a progressive story. Give them the chance!

Don’t neglect alternative and “movement” media outlets. Sure, that’s singing to the choir, but it’s precisely the choir we need to mobilize.

Do your homework. Learn who to contact and when you need to contact them to get your story covered. Know your issue and be prepared to provide clear, concise, non-rhetorical sound bites. Remember: you are not talking to other activists, but to the general public.

When you make media calls to radio stations, be ready to be interviewed over the phone without needing to schedule a follow-up for when you’re better prepared. Be sure you have accurate information on your issue at your fingertips.

US media coverage tends to avoid providing context. Be prepared to provide your interviewer with the background information your story needs.

Be diplomatic, but persistent. Press releases sent to media have a way of getting buried or misplaced. The follow-up phone call is essential. Your issue is likely to be a low-priority to journalists and their news organizations. Be willing to contact them more than once.

When being interviewed, know the issues and perspectives which your group wants to present and be sure those points are made -- regardless of which questions are asked. Don’t evade a question, but don’t let reporters run the interview or determine your agenda. Many questions don’t need to be answered literally; instead use the question as an opportunity to provide key points or perspectives.

Be mindful of your words. Think before you speak. Choose your words carefully. Anything you say -- no matter how casual or offhanded -- may be quoted. Don’t assume a “friendly” reporter is sympathetic to our cause. Always maintain professionalism when working with the media and keep our goals in mind.

Build relationships: build credibility. Don’t fudge, mislead, ventilate, exaggerate, or tear down your adversaries...or allies. Avoid hard-to-believe assertions if you can’t document them. You want the journalist to see you as a reliable source for future stories.

Keep notes of your media contacts and how they covered your story; save your press clippings. Systematically save media names, titles, phone #s, fax #s, e-mail addresses, snail mail addresses. No sense in re-inventing the wheel next time you’re trying to get your story out.

[GWworking with media/feb'02]
TIPS FOR WRITING A PRESS RELEASE

The one-page press release is the basic tool for reaching the media and, through them, the public. It's critical that they hear about our actions (and trials and imprisonments). This personal hook is one major way we get to expose the SOA.

The press release goes to your local dailies and weeklies, and to your local radio and TV news departments. Also, be sure to send it to your local alternative media and to any monthly events calendars before their deadlines.

The likely readership of your press release are journalists who may get far more press releases -- via fax, e-mail and snailmail -- than they can deal with. If your press release isn't clear, compelling, and easy to refer to, it just might end up in their circular file.

Because the time just before and after an action may be hectic, craft your press release before coming to Columbus. Immediately after the action and before distributing it to the media, you can fill in any missing information. Use the accompanying sample press releases as models.

Here's how to make your press release effective:

~ If you can, use the letterhead of a participating or sponsoring organization.
~ In the top left corner, type "For Immediate Release." Below that type the date.
~ In the top right corner, about half or two thirds of the way across the page, type "Contacts:"

Below that, type the names and phone numbers of two contacts who can speak to the issue and who are informed about your action and those participating in it. Make sure these contacts can be easily reached by phone and that they get a copy of the press release as soon as the press does.

Under these contacts, you can write: "For more info, check www.soaw.org"
~ Focus on crafting your headline and first paragraph. You need to quickly catch the attention of your reader: she may be working under a tight deadline with scads of other releases vying for attention.
~ Use bolder print and a larger font for your headline than for the rest of the text. If necessary, your headline can be up to four lines. Include only essential info in it.
~ Your first paragraph or two should answer who, what, where, when (include day of the weekend whether AM or PM) and how. This essential info should "leap off the page." Since this is a civil disobedience action, you'll need to be also be clear about why. One format is to write these key words (who, etc) in bold or caps on the left side of the page and answer them on the right side.

-- over
~ Write the release like a news story with the information appearing in descending order of importance.
~ Keep sentences short and uncomplicated. Try using only one or two sentences per paragraph; at most use three or four. Try to be brief enough so you can double space your lines especially in your top two or three paragraphs) or if that isn’t possible, skip a line between paragraphs.
~ Keep your release to one page only. Only unusual circumstances require spilling over to a second page. If -- heaven forbid! -- you do, write, “MORE” at the bottom of page one; put contact phone # and brief headline in upper right corner of any subsequent page.
~ If you’re able to do so, offer to provide photos of your action.
~ Type “--30--” or “###” to clearly mark the end of your release.

Follow-up

~ To supplement your press release consider including the basic SOA Watch fact sheet and one or two other info sheets in your press packet.
~ Keep a list of whom you’ve sent your press release to. Besides your contact people, send your press release to any ally who -- directly or indirectly -- is referred to in it and to other members of your group. Keep allies in the loop.
~ Soon after you figure the journalist has received your press release, phone and ask if she has received it and whether she has any questions. A journalist typically pays attention only to those press releases she gets follow up calls on.
~ As you make your calls, annotate your media contact list with the responses you get
~ Keep file copies of your press releases for ready adaptation in the future.

LOCAL ROMAN CATHOLIC NUN SENTENCED TO SIX MONTHS IN PRISON

Sister Megan Rice SHCJ, 69, of Manlius, gets maximum six months in prison and $5000 fine for protesting the School of the Americas -- enters jail immediately.

Ten nonviolent anti-School of the Americas protesters, arrested last November for entering Ft. Benning as part of a solemn memorial funeral procession, were sentenced by Federal Judge Hugh Lawson in Columbus, GA today.

Among them were Roman Catholic nun, Sister Megan Rice SHCJ, recently of Manlius, NY. Rice, who used to work at St. Lucy’s parish in the near west side of Syracuse, was given the maximum sentence for this misdemeanor: six months in prison and a $5000 fine. Rice was one of the “SOA 25,” who in 1998 spent six months in Danbury Federal Prison for a similar “offense” at Ft. Benning, home to the US Army’s notorious School of the Americas. Rice, 69, was a longtime missionary in Nigeria and Ghana.

Also receiving the maximum sentence was Charlie Liteky, Viet Nam War chaplain and winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor. Liteky got a total of one year in prison and a $10,000 fine for two trespass charges.

Rice and Liteky’s co-defendants, Brooks Anderson, Judy Bierbaum, Tom Bottolene, Charles Butler, Gerhard Fischer, John Honeck (of Hamlin, NY, near Rochester), and Margaret Knapke, were each sentenced to three months in prison and fined $2500.

Kathleen Fisher, due to personal circumstances, was sentenced to “only” one year probation and fined $1000.

According to local anti-SOA activist and former prisoner of conscience, Ed Kinane, “Given the nature of the ‘crime,’ these sentences are absurdly harsh. The repression of nonviolent dissent at Ft. Benning exposes the SOA as the enemy of democracy and free expression -- not only in Latin America, but here at home.”

Twenty anti-SOA protesters have been arrested this Spring for three other Nonviolent civil disobedience actions at Fort Benning and are awaiting arraignment.###
Syracuse human rights activists Kathleen Rumpf and Ed Kinane to be sentenced July 23 in Columbus, GA to up to 14 months in prison for transforming sign at Fort Benning, host of the School of the Americas

On July 23 Ed Kinane, 53, Kathleen Rumpf, 47, and three others -- an artist, a Catholic nun and a Jesuit priest -- will be sentenced in Columbus, GA for transforming the sign at the main gate of Fort Benning. Benning is the host of the School of the Americas, a US Army training center for Latin American military.

In their September 29, 1997 public protest the five pried metal letters off Benning’s entrance sign. They replaced them with ten words stenciled in red paint: Home of School of Americas/school of shame and SOA=torture. In September 1996 the Pentagon acknowledged that the SOA had long used training manuals endorsing torture, extortion, and assassination. The SOA is widely known as the “School of Assassins.”

Long-time anti-SOA activists Rumpf and Kinane note that SOA graduates are notorious for abusing the human rights of their own people. Known for exposing human rights abuse in the Syracuse jail, Rumpf sees the irony of “our going to prison when the SOA licenses soldiers to kill and maim with impunity.” She adds that, “Any time we spend in prison will be worth it if it hastens the closure of the SOA. Given the scale of terrorism and torture, the stakes are very high.”

“SOA abuse is perpetrated largely to assure cheap labor for local and international corporations,” says Kinane. In the eighties Kinane did human rights work with Peace Brigades International in Guatemala and El Salvador and saw first-hand the effects of terror there.

On March 4 a jury found Rumpf, Kinane, Mary Trotochaud (Atlanta, GA), Sister Marge Eilerman, OSF (Booneville, KY) and Father Bill Bichsel, S.J. (Tacoma, WA) guilty of “destruction of government property with malicious intent,” a felony. They will be sentenced by federal judge, J. Robert Elliott, 90, to up to 14 months in prison.

[On January 23, 1998 Elliott sentenced six Central New Yorkers (including Kinane) and 16 others to a $3000. fine and six months in prison -- the maximum penalty -- for “unlawful re-entry,” a misdemeanor. Their crime: peacefully entering Benning on November 16, 1997 with petitions calling for closure of the SOA.]

* Photos of the September 29 action and SOA Watch documentary videos available.###
# Local Media Contacts

**For:** ______________________  **City:** ______________________

## Newspaper(s)

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Television News Outlet(s) (Continued from page 1)

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Radio News Outlet(s)

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Phone __________________________________ Fax ____________________________
eMail __________________________________ Notes: ___________________________

____________________________________ Reporter ___________________________
Phone __________________________________ Fax ____________________________
eMail __________________________________ Notes: ___________________________

Local SOAW Media Person

____________________________________ Reporter ___________________________
Phone __________________________________ Fax ____________________________
eMail __________________________________ Notes: ___________________________
MEDIA CONTACT LIST

Immediately after your action, update and complete your pre-prepared one-page press release. After you have faxed it to all of your local and hometown media contacts, fax it to each of the following. Please mail us a copy too.

Phone each contact to draw attention to the press release and to answer any of their questions. Be prepared: this conversation may turn into an interview.

Columbus, GA

1. Columbus Ledger-Enquirer
   phone 571-8509
   fax 576-6290
   Over the years we’ve gotten some pretty decent coverage from this local daily. You may want to contact the Ledger the day before your action. If your scenario depends on surprise, have the journalist agree not to contact Benning until after the action.

2. WTVM-TV, Ch 9, ABC
   phone 324-6471
   fax 322-7527

3. WRBL-TV, Ch 3, CBS
   phone 323-3333
   fax 323-0841

Atlanta:

4. Associated Press
   phone 800) 222-1790
   fax 404) 524-4639

5. Peach State Public Radio
   phone 404) 685-2677
   fax 404) 685-2684

6. Atlanta Journal-Constitution (a major daily)
   attn: Virginia Anderson
   phone 404) 479-8613
   fax 404) 526-5746

7. Chicago Tribune (Atlanta bureau)
   phone 404) 869-0382
   fax 770) 455-6055

--- over
8. Fox News, Atlanta  
   fax 404) 249-1694  
   phone 404) 875-5555

9. CNN, Atlanta  
   fax 404) 827-1400

10. Los Angeles Times  
    fax 404) 586-9177  
    phone 404) 221-0128

11. New York Times  
    fax 404) 524-0420  
    phone 404) 524-2410

12. NBC News (national)  
    fax 404) 874-0929  
    phone 404) 881-0154

--- Washington, DC:

13. UPI wireservice  
    fax 202) 898-8057

14. Knight Ridder newspaper chain  
    fax 202) 628-0345

15. Spanish News Agency  
    fax 202) 393-4119  
    phone 202) 745-7692  
    Goes all over Latin America

16. Catholic News Service  
    fax 202) 541-3255  
    phone 202) 541-3269

--- more ---
MEDIA ALLIES IN THE STRUGGLE

1. National Catholic Reporter  
   fax 816) 968-2280  
   phone 800) 444-8910  
   A lively weekly tabloid for progressive Catholics.

2. “Democracy Now”  
   attn: Amy Goodman  
   fax 212) 431-8858  
   phone 212) 431-9090  
   miranda@democracynow.org  
   lizzy@democracynow.org  
   PO Box 693 Canal St. Station  
   New York, New York 10013  
   Amy is the brilliant host of this progressive nationally-syndicated daily radio news program. She occasionally interviews SOA Watch defendants and activists.

3. Nuclear Resister Newsletter  
   attn: Jack or Felice Cohen-Joppa  
   phone 520) 323-8697  
   po-nukeresister@igc.org  
   PO Box 43383  
   Tucson, AZ 85733-3383  
   Unique, invaluable and wonderfully supportive. This quarterly tabloid covers anti-SOA, anti-nuclear and other anti-militarist civil disobedience actions, trials and sentences here and abroad. Each issue provides the names and jail mailing addresses of currently imprisoned activists.

4. The Nonviolent Activist  
   attn: Judith Pasternak, editor  
   phone 212) 228-0450  
   fax 212) 228-6193  
   wrl@igc.apc.org  
   339 Lafayette St.  
   New York, NY 10012  
   Bi-monthly magazine of the War Resisters League

5. Fellowship  
   attn: Richard Deats, editor  
   phone 845) 358-4601  
   fax 914) 358-4924  
   fellowship@forusa.org  
   Box 271  
   Nyack, NY 10960  
   Bi-monthly magazine of the Fellowship of Reconciliation

Be sure to also include your local peace and justice media....
and send your news release and clippings to:

SOA Watch  
PO Box 4566  
Washington, DC 20017  
phone 202) 234-3440  
info@soaw.org  
www.soaw.org  

Mathew Smucker, SOAW Media Coordinator  
202) 903-7257  
msmucker@soaw.org

[GWmedialist/Feb’02]
Philadelphia police watch Becky Johnson lie on a downtown Philadelphia street on Monday in protest of School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Ga.
NOVEMBER VIGIL ACTIONS AT BENNING: ARRESTS & IMPRISONMENT

On November 16, 1989, at the Catholic university in San Salvador, El Salvador, the Atlacatl Battalion massacred six Jesuit priests and their housekeeper and her daughter. Nineteen of the 26 officers implicated in the massacre by a UN report were SOA-trained.

In November 1990 SOA Watch founder, Fr. Roy Bourgeois, and a few others, did a water-only fast for 35 days at Ft. Benning's main entrance. Fr. Roy and Pat and Charlie Liteky then poured blood on photos of SOA graduates on display at SOA headquarters. Charged with trespass and destruction of government property, Pat and Charlie got six months and Roy got 14 months in prison.

The following chart shows the extraordinary growth of this anniversary observance...and of the campaign to close the SOA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Supporters</th>
<th>Line Crossers</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Prosecuted</th>
<th>Sentences</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>approx. 50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>action began inside base; no supporters present</td>
<td>5 for trespass</td>
<td>(various; part of SOA 13 trial the next year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>less than 15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>re-enacting Jesuit massacre at the entrance and beyond</td>
<td>10 for trespass</td>
<td>first-timers: 2 months; recidivists: 4 months; Fr. Roy: 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>approx. 450</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>funeral procession on to the base</td>
<td>none; all booked &amp; given ban &amp; bar letters only</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>approx. 2000</td>
<td>601 -- all booked and given ban &amp; bars</td>
<td>funeral procession with tens of thousands of petitions in coffins</td>
<td>25 recidivists for illegal re-entry</td>
<td>all 25: 6 months prison + $3000 fine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>approx. 5000</td>
<td>2319</td>
<td>funeral procession</td>
<td>-- over</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Supporters</td>
<td>Line Crossers</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Prosecuted</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>over 6000</td>
<td>over 4400</td>
<td>funeral procession led by about 70 mourners with coffins staging a die-in (in black shrouds &amp; white death masks)</td>
<td>none; no ban &amp; bars; all bussed off base</td>
<td>10 for illegal re-entry</td>
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<td>all fined; one got probation; seven got 3 months; a nun — one of the SOA 25 — got 6 months; Charlie Litey got 6 months (+ 6 more for another action)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>approx. 5500</td>
<td>approx. 4500</td>
<td>similar funeral procession as previous year. At its conclusion, 32 others, dressed as campesinos and SOA soldiers, crossed the line and staged a massacre by &quot;Colombian paramilitaries.&quot; Then a second procession of 200 with giant puppets, costumes and drums entered the base. Simultaneously other affinity groups entered through different entrances and engaged in street theater and blocking the road with their bodies. Some planted corn on the base to symbolize life and hope.</td>
<td>26 out of the scores of recidivists were arbitrarily selected for prosecution</td>
<td>all found guilty by Magistrate G. Mallon Faircloth on May 23, '01; two given probation; most others given six month sentences; some also given fines ranging from $150 to $3000. Dorothy Hennesy, an 88 year-old Franciscan nun, after refusing six months' home confinement, was sentenced to six months in prison.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>over 6000 (most &quot;crossed the line&quot; going up to the fence)</td>
<td>70 (+ over 30 blocking road by the main entrance in evening)</td>
<td>funeral procession up to the new fence. fence covered by white crosses and banners, etc. two-hour long die-in at the fence. several affinity groups crawled under or went around fence into Benning (on &quot;high alert&quot; since Sept. '01)</td>
<td>road blockers released after two nights in county jail with time served. SOA 37 tried week of July 8, 2002. Faircloth sentenced 14 to 90 days, 15 to six months, seven to probation, and acquitted one. our pro bono lead attorney: Bill Quigley. plus several pro se defenses.</td>
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RELEVANT LAWS

Compiled by Katya Komisaruk

These are taken from the list of laws Katya provided for our November 2001 Vigil Action at Benning.

Federal Laws

>>> TRESPASS (18 United States Code 1382): You can be convicted of trespass on military property merely for entering the property for an unlawful purpose. It is not necessary that you re-enter the property or receive a ban and bar notice before you’re prosecuted for trespass. Trespass is a Class B misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum of six months in jail and/or $5000 fine.

>>> VIOLATING A SECURITY REGULATION (50 United States Code 797): It is illegal to disobey a military commander’s regulation or order issued to protect the safety or security of military property. Disobeying an officer’s order is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum of one year in jail and/or a $5000 fine.

State Laws

>>> OBSTRUCTING A STREET OR SIDEWALK (official Code of Georgia 16-11-43)

>>> OBSTRUCTING AN OFFICER (Official Code of Georgia 16-10-24(a)): Obstruction is principally physical resistance, including going limp. The only verbal behaviors that are considered obstructing an officer are making threats of violence or giving false information. Refusing to answer questions is not obstructing an officer, because you always have the right to remain silent.

>>> DISORDERLY CONDUCT (Official Code of Georgia 16-11-39): It is illegal to act in a violent or tumultuous manner, putting people or property at risk.

>>> UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY (Official Code of Georgia 16-11-33): It is illegal for two or more people to remain assembled for the purpose of illegal activity, after having been told to disperse by a law enforcement officer.

>>> TRESPASS (Official code of Georgia 16-7-21(b))

The maximum penalty for these misdemeanors is twelve months in jail and/or $1000 fine.

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[GWlaws relevant2/02]
GANDHIAN WAVE LEGAL CONSEQUENCES

In our trials our goal is not necessarily to be acquitted. Rather, we seek to speak truth to power. In the Gandhian spirit, we believe our cause is furthered by people of conscience boldly exposing the SOA and accepting the consequences -- even if these include prison and/or probation.

SOA Watch isn't in a position to subsidize or arrange for legal representation for those doing civil disobedience against the SOA/WHISC. Your affinity group may want to consider having its defendants “go pro se,” i.e. represent themselves in court.

Being arrested

We cannot predict how the Ft. Benning military police will respond to your civil disobedience. Typically they have been courteous and professional with no “rough stuff” for those SOA Watchers not resisting arrest. As would be the case anywhere, however, if you go limp upon arrest the police may not be gentle; there is risk of injury.

If you “cross the line” into Benning to participate in “partisan political activity,” you are committing civil disobedience and most probably will be arrested at least for trespass, a misdemeanor. “Partisan political activity” has little to do with partisanship; it refers to any anti-SOA or anti-military, etc. activity. According to the Army -- that zealous defender of democracy -- at Benning free speech, freedom of assembly, and the right to petition our government are illegal; the First Amendment doesn’t apply.

Those who “cross the line” for the first time may receive only a ban and bar letter and not be prosecuted. There is no guarantee of this: in 1996 several of us went to prison for two months for trespass even though we had no ban and bar and had never been to Benning before. A number of first-timers arrested at our November 2001 mass vigil action got sentenced to three or six months.

If you already have a Benning ban and bar you may well be charged with illegal re-entry, a form of trespass which is also a misdemeanor. A ban and bar is a letter issued by the base declaring that you cannot return to the base for a specified period -- like a year or five years or a lifetime -- upon penalty of arrest. (See the specimen letter in this section.) Ban and bars from other bases don’t apply at Benning.

Here is the likely arrest scenario. You will be

-- arrested, perhaps handcuffed, patted down for weapons, and taken to the Military Police station on base for processing (mug shot, fingerprinting, etc.);
-- issued a ban and bar letter and charged with criminal trespass...and perhaps other charges which may eventually be dropped;
-- ordered to appear on a later date in federal court in Columbus, GA;
-- bussed off base after the entire group has been processed (which may take some hours).

If you don’t have picture ID this booking process is likely to take much longer.

Our people have never been arraigned on the day of the arrest; Nov. 2001 was the first time our people have been detained overnight.

- over
Going to Court

On a different date (days, weeks, or months later), you will have to appear for arraignment in federal court in Columbus before a US magistrate and/or a federal circuit court judge. You can plead “guilty,” “not guilty” or “nolo contendere.” If you plead guilty or nolo you will probably be sentenced immediately; if you plead not guilty you will have to go trial sometime in the future.

You will have a chance to make a statement in court. Despite Nuremberg and international law and the purity of our motives, only one of us (in July 2002) has ever been found innocent in this court. Your trial will be an excellent opportunity to generate solidarity and media attention. For misdemeanors you’ll have a bench trial, not a jury trial. Either way we use our trials to put the SOA on trial.

Sentencing

If your lawyer has arranged for it with the court, sentencing may occur on the day you are found guilty. Otherwise sentencing may not be scheduled for about eight weeks and only after the federal probation department has completed the Pre-Sentencing Investigations of you and all your co-defendants. The PSI is to guide the judge in sentencing you and to guide the prison system in incarcerating you. You may have to post a $250 (cash) appearance bond to be released in your own recognizance until the sentencing.

For each trespass misdemeanor you can be sentenced to up to six months in prison and fined up to $5000. When you are sentenced you will have the opportunity to make a statement to the court. Except by choice, our people have never been immediately taken into custody at sentencing. Upon your posting a $250 (cash) appearance bond, the judge will give you “self-surrender.” This means you turn yourself in at a prison and on a date (yet to be determined) which you’ll be informed of in four to 12 weeks. Normally you’ll have several days notice before you must report to the prison -- which will probably (no guarantee) be in your region of the country.

In solidarity with the poor who seldom get such a privilege, over the years about ten SOA Watchers have refused self-surrender. Immediately upon being sentenced each was taken into custody and lodged in the Muscogee County Jail -- not a nice place. Most, especially those serving six month sentences, were eventually transferred to federal prison (after enduring a long, unpleasant transport in shackles). Visiting hours at Muscogee are on the weekend only. The prisoner mailing address there is:

Muscogee County Jail
700 10th Street
Columbus, GA 31901.
(706) 653-4258

Fines

Our fines have ranged -- quite arbitrarily -- from $150 to the max of $5000. In 1998 Judge J. Robert Elliott offered the SOA 25 a deal: agree never to return to Benning or pay a $3000 fine (which was then the max). None of the 25 made the deal. Nor did they all pay the fine.

-- more
Some paid the fine on their own within the time allotted. After all, to collect fines, the feds have been known to garnishee wages and put liens on cars, houses, bank accounts. Some defendants use the fine as an organizing opportunity -- a way to rally community support. Supporters unable or unwilling to risk prison often are glad to chip in to help pay an activist’s fine. The community can hold a fund-raising event -- like a grand sendoff for the prison-bound activist -- to pay off the fine.

While in prison the feds can deduct funds from the very small wage you earn or from funds sent to you from outside. If they think you’re not cooperating, they can deny you amenities and privileges. Likewise if you’re on probation, the feds will insist on a percentage of your income each month -- 10% is typical -- toward paying off the fine.

Low income and propertyless defendants often refuse to pay fines -- either as a matter of expediency or of principle. Many activists equate paying fines with paying war taxes -- they’re agin it. Unless they are in the clutches of the penal system, there may be little the feds can do to force them to pay. While fines remain due for life, the feds don’t always persist in trying to collect. There are civil disobedients who have unpaid federal fines going back decades.

To pay or not to pay -- it’s a personal choice.

Probation In May 2001 two of the SOA 26 got probation: one of these was a school teacher and mother of four (including one of the other defendants) who got three years probation; the other was the only one of the SOA 26 who pled guilty -- she got two years probation. In July 2002 seven of the SOA 37, all first-timers, got probation in lieu of prison. Each of the five felons who in 1997 helped edit the welcome sign at Benning’s main entrance got prison plus two years probation.

Federal probation entails enduring certain restrictions. Among other things, you must periodically meet with your assigned probation officer; you can’t legally leave your federal district without applying for written permission; you must make a monthly written report (see the form at the end of this section) regarding income, expenses, employment, residence, any contact with law enforcement or other criminal types, etc. If you owe a fine, you’ll be required to have a job and be paying it off.

It’s sobering that many of the multitudes now in federal prison are there for violating probation. There’s no trial and little due process when you are so charged.

Jail/prison See Karl Meyer’s and Ed Kinane’s articles on jail and prison in the Prison Witness section of this binder.

[GWlegalconsequences/oct’02]
SOME LEGAL QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
by Katya Komisaruk

The author is a former Plowshares activist and prisoner of conscience. Katya is now an attorney and a member of the Just Cause Law Collective. She provided legal support for the Jail Solidarity action at the November 2001 SOAW vigil action in Columbus. These notes are taken from a 14-page handbook she prepared for that event.

How do we handle medical needs so we can participate fully in the action?
If you have a potentially dangerous medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizures), wear a “medic-alert bracelet.” You should be able to get them at most drug stores. This will make the police and jail staff take you much more seriously if you start to have difficulties.

Will getting arrested for civil disobedience prevent me from getting jobs or getting into college?
If you have the qualifications for the job or school, a civil disobedience arrest or conviction is not likely to stand in your way. Many institutions are actually interested in people who have consciences.

Could we lose our licenses (medical, teaching, etc.)?
Many teachers, lawyers and health care professionals have engaged in misdemeanor-level civil disobedience. We are not aware of any who have actually lost their licenses, although some have been hassled by their respective bureaucracies. Applying for a license, as opposed to being deprived of one you already possess, may be somewhat more cumbersome; however, misdemeanor convictions resulting from principled acts of conscience are generally not a major impediment to professional licensing.

When do we go to court for the first time?
If you’re in custody, the authorities are legally supposed to bring you to court “without unnecessary delay,” which is usually understood to mean within 48 hours. If you’re not being held in jail, then your first court date may be anywhere from a week to months after arrest. Court dates should be written on the citation or release forms. Sometimes the authorities try to release people without a date, saying they’ll send a notice with the date later. This is bad, because that makes it easier for the authorities to process everyone and to single people out, prosecuting some but not others. If you’re being released, you should demand to have a specific court date, and make sure that everyone gets the same date.

When do we actually have to go to court in person, instead of having a lawyer appear for us?
Generally, you must be in court for every hearing. Sometimes, you can arrange to have a lawyer appear for you at a given hearing, but it’s better to be there in person for several reasons. First, your presence shows the court (and the media) that you care about the case and are ready to fight. Also, your presence ensures that you will have maximum input into any decisions, negotiations

-- over
and especially plea bargains that come up in court.

If you do have a trial, you have to be in court for every day of it. If you lose, you must be present at sentencing.

What happens if we don't show up for a court hearing?
If you miss a scheduled hearing, the judge will usually issue a bench warrant. If an individual with an outstanding bench warrant gets into any kind of trouble (e.g. a traffic violation), s/he is subject to arrest. The judge may accept extreme excuses for missing a hearing, like funerals or medical emergencies. Conflicts with school or work schedules are not acceptable excuses.

What goes on at trial?
At trial, you can testify if you choose to do so. You can also put on eye (and ear) witnesses to testify about your good character. In addition, you have the right to cross-examine the witnesses against you, who will probably be law enforcement officers. You also get to make opening and closing arguments.

The judge may try to forbid you to talk about anything political, on the grounds that it would be irrelevant. Lawyers may be able to get around the judge’s prohibitions, but there’s considerable precedent (published analyses of earlier trials) supporting the notion that judges can forbid discussion of political matters at trial.

Often, your lawyer questions witnesses and make the opening and closing arguments, etc. -- and all you do is testify. Alternatively, you can represent yourself (going pro se). In these situations, it’s useful to have an attorney as advisory counsel or co-counsel, to help with technical matters.

You don’t necessarily get a jury trial. The alternative, a bench trial (judge trial), means that the judge decides the verdict, as well as deciding what will be allowed as testimony and evidence. In federal court, you must be charged with an offense that carries a maximum sentence of more than six months to get a jury trial. This requirement rules out all infractions and most misdemeanors, including trespassing. The trial ends with the verdict: guilty or not guilty. If you’re found not guilty, you celebrate. If you’re found guilty, then the judge sentences you. The judge can either sentence you immediately after the guilty verdict or set a separate hearing just for sentencing.

What happens at sentencing?
You invite your friends and supporters and the media. You get to make a speech, because you have the right to allocution. This sentencing statement is normally a chance to beg for mercy and explain mitigating factors -- but activists often use it as a chance to discuss political matters, especially if they didn’t get to speak their minds at trial.
Office of the Commanding General

Allison J. Stuyan
27 Alderwood Dr
Akron, PA 17501

Dear Ms. Stuyan:

On today's date you were apprehended for Criminal Trespass on the Fort Benning Military Reservation in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1382. You are hereby excluded from the Fort Benning Military Reservation for a period of five years from the date of this letter. You are directed not to reenter the confines of the Fort Benning Military Reservation and any land under the jurisdiction of Fort Benning until this exclusion expires.

Entering the Fort Benning Military Reservation for any reason will constitute a violation of Section 1382, Title 18, United States Code, which provides as follows:

Whoever within the jurisdiction of the United States, goes upon any military, naval, or Coast Guard reservation, post, fort, arsenal, yard, station, or installation, for any purpose prohibited by law or lawful regulation; or

Whoever reenters or is found within any such reservation, post, fort, arsenal, yard, station, or installation, after having been removed therefrom or ordered not to reenter by any officer or person in command or charge thereof shall be fined not more than $5000 or imprisoned not more than six months, or both.

Sincerely,

John M. Le Moyne
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding General

Copy Furnished:

Director of Public Safety
MEMORANDUM FOR

Allison J. Styan 3706 36th St. Mount Rainier, MD 20712

SUBJECT: Ejection from the Fort Benning Military Reservation (MPR # 01961-01)

1. By the authority of the Commanding General, I hereby order you to be ejected from the Fort Benning Military Reservation because of conduct detrimental to the performance of the military mission of this installation.

2. Your ejection from Fort Benning is for the following reason(s):
   - Criminal Trespass, Unlawful Assembly, and Damage to Government Property///

3. This ejection is valid through 23 May 2006. The offense(s) in paragraph 2, above, warrant permanent exclusion from Fort Benning. However, prior to a decision being made regarding your permanent exclusion from Fort Benning, you have the opportunity to disprove the allegations contained in paragraph 2 and present any evidence in your behalf. This information may be presented to the Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center, ATTN: ATZB-JAH (Fort Benning Hearing Officer), Fort Benning, Georgia 31905, or by telephoning 545-5254. You should contact this office to schedule an appointment.

4. If you are a retiree, a dependent family member of an active duty service member or retiree, and are a valid ID Card holder, you may access the installation for the purpose of receiving medical care at Martin Army Community Hospital, pending a final action regarding your exclusion. Additionally, if you have been apprehended for shoplifting and meet the requirements above, you may access the installation for the purpose of obtaining an overstamped ID Card at Building 2638. You may only access the installation for this limited purpose.

5. Action on this matter is being delayed pending your reply. If no reply is received within seven working days, you may be automatically excluded from the Fort Benning Military Reservation.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I acknowledge receipt of the foregoing order of ejection and understand that unless I contact the Installation Hearing Officer in paragraph 3 above, by 01 June 2001, I may be automatically excluded from Fort Benning.

23 May 01
Date

FOR THE COMMANDER:

GRAVES T. MYERS IV
Colonel, Military Police
Command Provost Marshal

FB (MPA) FL 9, DATE

Previous edition is obsolete
AT THE ARRAIGNMENT: MAKING YOUR PLEA

These notes are adapted from an article by the American Friends Service Committee in the Out & Outraged CD Handbook of the 1987 National Lesbian and Gay March on Washington. Typically, soon after being arrested and while still in custody, you are brought to court for arraignment.

Often, however, anti-SOA protesters at Benning are given ban and bar letters and are released without being charged with a crime or arraigned. Arraignment may be days or weeks later, and sometimes there may be no charge or arraignment at all -- and hence no prosecution. That has often happened, but there is no guarantee the pattern will persist.

At the arraignment you are read your rights and informed of the charges against you. At that time, you will be asked how you plead to those charges. You can make one of several responses:

1. “Guilty”
   By entering a guilty plea, you are admitting your guilt, thereby forfeiting your right to a trial. In such cases you will simply be sentenced by the judge or magistrate, though you may have to return to court at a later date for sentencing.
   Some civil disobedients believe this is the proper plea. By pleading guilty you say, “Yes, I committed the act of which you accuse me. I don’t deny it; in fact, I am proud of it. I know I did the right thing by violating this particular law; I am guilty as charged.” As a matter of principle, Gandhi always pled guilty. Some SOA Watchers pleading guilty have gotten lesser sentences than their co-defendants, and some have still received the max.

2. “Not Guilty”
   If you plead not guilty you must be tried and convicted before you can be sentenced. The burden of proof lies with the state; you are presumed innocent unless the state can prove your guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. To enter this plea, you need not believe you aren’t guilty.
   Civil disobedients often believe this is the proper plea. By pleading not guilty you say, “Guilt implies wrong-doing. I have done no wrong.” Since this places the burden of proof on the state, it may sometimes drop the charges before the case is tried. As of summer 2002, after 12 years of trials and about 100 SOA Watch defendants, only one has been acquitted in this court.

3. “Nolo Contendere”
   If you plead nolo (i.e. no contest) you forfeit your right to a trial and (as with a guilty plea) simply come before the judge for sentencing. Some think a nolo plea is a compromise between pleading guilty and not guilty. While not contesting the charges one is also not admitting guilt. Several SOA Watchers pleading nolo have been sentenced to six months in prison.

4. Creative Pleas
   Some defendants in political cases enter a “creative plea.” For instance, when asked by the judge how you plead, you might respond, “I plead for the closure of the SOA and its clones” or “I plead for an end to U.S. military intervention in Colombia.”

[GWpleas in courtOct’02]
Always take notes when talking with your attorney.

~ What are my charges at this point?

~ Who is my judge and what can we expect from him or her?

~ Has my case been consolidated (joined with anyone else?) If so, who are my co-defendants and how are we going to coordinate our efforts?

~ Do you think the complaint is likely to be amended in my case (that is, will the prosecutor change the charges)?

~ Which elements of each charge do you think would be hard for the prosecutor to prove... and why?

~ Do you see us relying on political defenses, like, "I was engaged in legitimate First Amendment activity"? Or technical defenses, like, "The prosecution can't prove I was one of the people who sat down and refused to move"? At what point will we have to make a decision about this?

~ What items of potential evidence are you asking the prosecution to give us, as part of the "discovery process?"

~ What kinds of potential evidence does the defense need to locate? How can my friends and I help with the investigation?

~ Whom are you thinking of calling as witnesses? I may be able to remember eye and ear witnesses who would be helpful. And I may be able to find character witnesses for myself. How can I best help?

~ What kinds of exhibits will we need in court? Photos, maps, diagrams? Is there anything my friends and I can do to help?

~ What motions have been made or reserved by the defense in my case? What motions have been made or reserved by the prosecution? Has the judge ruled on any of the motions that were already made?

~ Have any dates been set for filing or arguing [more] motions? How do I get copies of written motions in my case?

~ Which motions do you think will be granted (in whole or in part)?

~ Have you been in contact with other defense attorney's? Who's doing what?

~ At a maximum, if I want to be very involved in my case, what are the best ways for me to contact you and how often do you prefer to be contacted?

~ If I want to look at some of the discovery (potential evidence) in my case, when would be a good time?

~ At a minimum, when do I have to be in town and in court?

~ Is there anything else I should know about my case?

BE SURE TO THANK YOUR ATTORNEY FOR ALL THE WORK SHE'S DOING!###

[GWalkingpointsOct ’02]
"When arrested while making a statement through an act of civil disobedience, I prefer to go pro se (represent myself) because of the control it gives me in the courtroom. It means that I am a woman in charge of my life and responsible for my decisions and behavior, and that I am prepared for the results of my actions. Using a lawyer means that I must sit quietly and humbly through specious legal arrangements over my behavior and the proper punishment for it. It means that I am like a child with parents arguing about my naughtiness and what to do about it so that I will "learn a lesson" or "will have learned a lesson." I should add, however, that having a lawyer around to advise and explain potentially complicated issues is helpful."

—Catherine de Laubenfels, arrested at Women's Pentagon Action 1980, 1981

The Constitution gives you the right to represent yourself. The right is founded in the understanding that someone else may not say quite what you want said in your behalf, or may not say it in the way you want it said. You therefore cannot be forced to let someone speak for you.

Trials and hearings resulting from civil disobedience are particularly suited to unearthing the reasons behind, and the possibilities for, self-representation. Perhaps the CDer can better explain his or her own motivation. Why water down a deeply political and personal act of civil disobedience with a lot of legalistic jargon? Why let the application of the energizing ideas contained in the philosophy of non-violent civil disobedience stop with the arrests? If you choose to participate in action, it will be a result of much thought and consideration. Why not continue to involve yourself fully all the way through the trial? A lawyer must adhere to the legal restrictions of the courtroom and translate everything into the proper categories. You as a pro se litigant have much greater leeway. If you don't understand something don't hesitate to ask questions about what is happening during the trial.

Representation by an attorney may be the best route, if you desire an acquittal at any cost. In a group trial, the option of having some but not all defendants represented by counsel is often available. You should speak to people who have represented themselves. The most important thing is to remember that you have choices. The system teaches us to think that there is only one way of doing anything, but because we question that we choose to do civil disobedience in the first place.

In November of 1980, as part of the first Women's Pentagon Action, one woman chose to sing her "defense." She sang Malvina Reynolds' 'It Isn't Nice to Block the Doorway.' She was found guilty.

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The U.S. Social System is at fault, and we must all share the blame.

The Jury is sentenced to five years.

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'lt Isn't Nice
—by Malvina Reynolds

It isn't nice to block the doorway
It isn't nice to go to jail.
There are nicer ways to do it,
But the nice ways always fail.

Chorus 1
It isn't nice, it isn't nice
You told us once, you told twice
But if that is freedom's price
We don't mind

It isn't nice to carry banners
or to sleep in on the floor.
Or to shout or cry of freedom
At the hotel and the store.

Chorus 1
Well we tried negotiations
And the token picket line.
The government didn't see us,
They might as well be blind.

Chorus 2
Now our new ways aren't nice
When we deal with men of ice
But if that is freedom's praise
We don't mind.

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NOTES ON PRO SE DEFENSE

by Karl Meyer

In Faretta v. California (1975) the U.S. Supreme Court found that under the Sixth amendment defendants have the Constitutional right to defend themselves in court without being represented by an attorney. Going pro se is not the best strategy for every SOAW defendant. But for those prepared to do so, it can be an empowering and consciousness-raising experience...and one that can bring key legal and political issues to the fore.

In May, 2001 in Columbus, Georgia, Karl defended himself before federal magistrate G. Mellon Faircloth. We felt privileged to watch Karl’s unusually articulate and thoughtful defense. Karl not only raised our consciousness, but also quite possibly that of the judge. Nonetheless Faircloth sentenced Karl and most of the “SOA 26” (all of whom besides Karl were represented by attorneys) to six months.

Also see Karl’s article, “Notes From a County Jail in Georgia,” in the Prison Witness section below.

1. Pro se is personally empowering. It also helps to reinforce the understanding among judges and the general public that people have the right to defend themselves in court, and that legal process should be simple and clear enough to make such defense feasible.

2. Judges, especially in local misdemeanor courts, usually have crowded dockets that put pressure on them to dispose of many cases as rapidly as possible. They become impatient and arbitrary if defendants (or lawyers) present long-winded evidence or arguments that seem to them unnecessary or legally irrelevant. However, contemporary judges often respect pro se defendants who show understanding of legal issues, and present concise evidence and persuasive legal and Constitutional arguments.

3. There is often a large gap between the way legal process is supposed to work in principle, and the way it is actually practiced, especially in crowded local misdemeanor courts.

4. Law and legal process are complex; it is helpful to read about them, but quicker and easier to seek advice from experienced pro se defendants and lawyers. One of the best ways to learn how things actually work in your jurisdiction, and the attitudes of the judge who may try you, is to always sit in the front pew and listen intently to every other case, while you are waiting for your hearing.

5. Prosecutors have heavy caseloads. In misdemeanor courts, they seldom prepare cases in advance by carefully debriefing witnesses and arresting officers. The same is true for public defenders and, in many cases, paid defense lawyers. Therefore, there is an advantage to defendants who thoroughly understand the facts in their case and have thought carefully about the legal issues.

-- over
Shortly after arrest, you should make detailed notes of all the facts and circumstances that seem relevant. Reconstruct direct quotations of everything relevant said to you by arresting officers and other witnesses, and what you said to them.

Before trial, think about everything probable that witnesses may testify about your arrest. Make notes of all questions you might ask to bring out *legally relevant* facts, so that in the heat of the trial you don’t forget them. Prepare a concise outline of your own testimony, and what you want to ask your own witnesses. Prepare an outline for your closing statement and arguments. If possible, role-play your trial with friends who have some understanding of trials and legal issues.

Arresting officers in misdemeanor cases seldom document their arrests with careful notes or descriptions. By the time of trial several weeks or months later, they often forget most of the details of their arrests and conversations with defendants.

In mass arrest situations, there may be no documentation of individual arrests. Several officers may be selected to sign charges and appear as witnesses against multiple defendants, whose arrests they did not observe or participate in. (In mass arrests at Ft. Benning, arresting officers do not document their arrests, or even take the names of those they arrest.)

6. *Pro se* defense in civil protest cases can often expose three major sources of weakness in prosecution:

A) FACTS. To justify the arrest and to obtain a conviction, arresting officers sometimes exaggerate, misrepresent or lie about the facts of an arrest situation. These errors can be exposed by careful cross-examination, or by the honest testimony of defendants or other defense witnesses.

B) LAW. Because those activities annoy officers, property owners, or government officials who want them stopped, officers often arrest people for legal protest activities protected by the law and the Constitution. Police officers are often only marginally informed about the laws they are supposedly enforcing. When they get back to the police station with you, they ask superior officers or search in their code books to figure out what the criminal charges should be. Often they settle on “trespassing,” “disorderly conduct,” or “resisting a police officer.”

When you are released, always get a copy of the charges. To find out what the law actually says, go to a public library or law library and look up the sections of the code or regulations you are charged with violating. To find out the statutory definition of certain key terms used in the code (which may differ from their vernacular or dictionary definition), look up the “definitions” section of the relevant chapter of the code.

The description of your behavior in the citation or statement of charges, or in the testimony of witnesses against you may not match the statutory description or definition of the offenses charged. If this happens, you may get your case dismissed by pointing this out to the judge before trial, or at the conclusion of the prosecution case.

For instance, disorderly conduct charges are often dismissed after police witnesses concede that a protest was completely peaceful and orderly. Trespassing charges are often dismissed after prosecution witnesses concede that commercial or public property was open to the public, and that defendants were arrested without being notified they were trespassing, or were not allowed to leave after being notified. Resisting arrest charges are often dismissed after a showing that the legal definition of resisting in the statute doesn’t include arguing with a police officer or passive non cooperation, such as going limp.

-- more
C) CONSTITUTION. Local ordinances frequently conflict with generally accepted interpretations of the U.S. Constitution. Many contemporary judges will override local and state statutes and regulations if defendants present a clear and articulate defense appealing to the broad freedoms of religion, speech, press and public assembly guaranteed in the First Amendment.*

7. At my May 23, 2001 trial for illegal re-entry to Ft. Benning, the prosecutor presented seven witnesses against me. These testified about arrest and detention processes at Benning, and how I was processed on two occasions at their gymnasium processing center. However, they did not produce any witness to the date, time, place, or circumstances of my individual arrest. I pointed this out to the judge at the close of the prosecution case and asked for acquittal on prosecution failure to present proof of the charge against me. I also made an eloquent generalized Constitutional defense based on freedom to assemble at a base that was then otherwise open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for every other kind of normal entry and activities that are not guaranteed or privileged by the Constitution.

Judge Faircloth complimented me on my wisdom and on the competence of my defense. Nonetheless, without any explanation of his reasoning, he still found me guilty and imposed the maximum prison sentence of six months. No defendant, whether pro se or represented by a lawyer, should ever naively assume that a judge will conscientiously follow the laws, Constitution, or accepted legal procedures of our judicial system. You may be convicted when you have committed no illegal act; you may be acquitted, for various reasons, even though you may have committed an act that may be illegal.

8. Anyone new to pro se defense can benefit greatly from discussing their case thoroughly with experienced pro se defendants or lawyers familiar with civil protest cases. (Sometimes discussions with lawyers who have no practical experience with such cases will be misleading rather than helpful.)

Do it, and learn. I’m usually available, and happy to talk to other activists. Here is a rough count of my trial record over the last 34 years (since I first started representing myself and pleading not guilty in most nonviolent civil action cases): pled guilty, seven times; not guilty, 29 times; dismissed before trial on motion of prosecutor or judge, 12; acquitted, eight; convicted, eight; outstanding warrant, one. Conviction rate in contested cases, 29%. Not Clarence Darrow, but not shabby either.

Karl Meyer
Nashville Greenlands
2407 Heiman St.
Nashville, TN 37208
615 322-9523

* “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for redress of grievances.”

[GW Karl Meyer’s pro se notes/Feb 02]
YOUR OPTIONS IN THE LEGAL PROCESS

Note: It’s important to keep SOA Watch (202/234-3440) informed of developments in your case. These include all court dates, receipt of bar & bar letters, and dates for reporting to prison. You may designate an affinity group member to play this liaison role.

Be sure to keep your local press contacts updated too.
**U.S. PROBATION OFFICE**

**MONTHLY SUPERVISION REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF __________, 19___ .**

Name: ____________________________ Court Name (if different): ____________________________

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**PART A: RESIDENCE (If new address, attach copy of lease/purchase agreement)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Address, Apt. Number:</th>
<th>Home Phone:</th>
<th>Pager Phone:</th>
<th>Other Phone:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City, State, Zip Code:</th>
<th>Persons Living with you:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complex/Subdivision:</th>
<th>Own or Rent?</th>
<th>Did you move during the month?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, date moved: ____________________ Reason for Moving: ____________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mailing Address (if different):</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**PART B: EMPLOYMENT (If unemployed, list source of support under Part D)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name, Address, Phone No. of Employer:</th>
<th>Name of immediate supervisor:</th>
<th>Is your employer aware of your criminal status?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many days of work did you miss?</th>
<th>Why?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Held:</th>
<th>Gross Income:</th>
<th>Normal Work Hours:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Did you change jobs? | Yes | No |
Where you terminated? | Yes | No |
If changed jobs or terminated, state when and why: ____________________ ____________________

---

**PART C: VEHICLES (List all vehicles owned or driven by you)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year/make/model:</th>
<th>Color:</th>
<th>Tag Number:</th>
<th>Owner:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year/make/model:</th>
<th>Color:</th>
<th>Tag Number:</th>
<th>Owner:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**PART D: MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net Income From Employment</th>
<th>(Attach proof of earnings)</th>
<th>Past Due Debts:</th>
<th>Amount Past Due:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Income:</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you have a checking account?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>Balance: __________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Name:</td>
<td>Account Number: __________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you have a savings account?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>Balance: __________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Name:</td>
<td>Account Number: __________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List all purchases of individual goods or services for which you paid $500 or more:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Method of Payment</th>
<th>Description of Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**over**
PART E: COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF SUPERVISION DURING THE PAST MONTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Were you questioned by any law enforcement officers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, date:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>gency:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you arrested or named as a defendant in any criminal case?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, when &amp; where?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Attach copy of citation, receipt, charges, disposition, etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Were any pending charges disposed of during the month?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, date:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you have any contact with anyone having a criminal record?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, whom?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Did you possess or use any illegal drugs?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, type of drug:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you travel outside the district without permission?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, when and where?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a special assessment, restitution or fine?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special assessment:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restitution:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine:</td>
<td></td>
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NOTE: ALL PAYMENTS TO BE MADE BY MONEY ORDER (POSTAL OR BANK) OR CASHIER'S CHECK ONLY.

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I CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION FURNISHED IS COMPLETE AND CORRECT.

SIGNATURE DATE

REMARKS:

RECEIVED:

Mail OC
HC CC

RETURN TO:

Paul W. DeFelice
Chief U.S. Probation Officer
P. O. Box 7035
Syracuse, New York 13261

U.S. Probation Officer Date
**TRAVEL APPLICATION/APPROVAL FORM**

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**

**UNITED STATES PROBATION OFFICE**

**100 S. Clinton St., Room 1029**

**Syracuse, New York 13261**

**(315) 234-8700**

*TRAVEL REQUEST MUST BE SUBMITTED TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE UNLESS FOR EMERGENCIES*

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Other mode of transportation (specify):

**AGREEMENT:**

I understand that any deviations from the approved travel grant requires written consent of the Probation Officer. I also agree to furnish prior to and/or upon my return, a resume of my itinerary, including temporary residence, personal contacts, and/or any other information requested by the Probation Officer. I declare under penalty of law that the above information is true and correct.

**SIGNATURE**

For Official Use Only: Travel Request Approved: ☐ Not Approved: ☐ (If disapproved, give reason) (Over)

**CONTACT THIS OFFICE WITHIN 24 HOURS AFTER YOUR RETURN**

Special instructions:

**UNITED STATES PROBATION OFFICER**

Copy mailed to Chief Probation Officer in District of Destination

Copy mailed to Parole Commission, if applicable
I am going to try to think of it as a semester of unlearning my class privilege. It's not going to be pleasant and at its worst it's going to be relatively easy compared to what the people of Latin America have had to endure as a result of the SOA and U.S. policy.

-- Margaret Knapke, “SOA 10,” upon being sentenced to three months in prison, June 2000.
SOA protesters gladly go to prison for trespassing

U.S. District Court Judge Hugh Lawson doesn't hand out maximum sentences

By Jason E. Miczek
Staff Writer

Just before Charles J. Liteky walked into federal court, he adjusted his grip on a protest sign and looked down at his homemade white wooden cross.

"I'm pretty sure the sentencing will involve time in federal prison — that's what we're planning on, so there's no reason to believe otherwise," Liteky said.

He was right.

The Medal of Honor recipient was sentenced to one year in prison and given a $10,000 fine Thursday for trespassing at a U.S. Army School of the Americas protest in November. He also has a prior conviction of property damage during a previous demonstration at the school. Liteky served six months for that demonstration.

A federal judge sentenced Liteky and nine other supporters of the School of the Americas Watch, an active organization dedicated to protesting the School of the Americas at Fort Benning, to a variety of punishments for trespassing during the November protest. Each protester, with the exception of Liteky, faced a maximum sentence of six months in jail and a $5,000 fine.

U.S. District Court Judge Hugh Lawson failed to follow the pattern of previous Judge J. Robert Elliott, who handed down maximum sentences in previous School of the Americas trespassing cases.

Seven of the protesters each received three months in prison and a $2,500 fine:

- John W. Hopcek, 39, of Hamlin, N.Y., a residence counselor for mentally retarded adults; and
- Margaret L. Knapek, 47, of Dayton, Ohio, a natural therapies practitioner.

An environmental chemist received the lightest sentence after promising the judge she would never return to Fort Benning. Kathleen D. Fisher of Portland, Ore., received 12 months probation and a $1,000 fine.

With the exception of Rice, the protesters will report within 30 to 60 days to serve their prison sentences.

Just before 9 a.m. Thursday, 23 protesters rounded the corner of the Columbus Federal Courthouse carrying white crosses and a sign asking for the closure of the controversial school. Under the media's eye, the group huddled together and sang: "Peace is Flowing Like a River."

Most went inside, but Denise Laffan of Atlanta, a Buddhist nun, stayed outside to sing and beat her prayer drum. She had a sign attached to her yellow robe asking to "Stop the killing. Close the SOA now."

After the sentencing Thursday afternoon, the convicted left the courtroom in good spirits.

"I couldn't be more delighted," Liteky said about his conviction.

Attorney David Grindle, who represented nine of the protesters, said his clients represent "the only group of folks who want to go to jail."

Bierbaum said she was horrified at first about going to jail, but added that after a deep soul search she realized that incarceration for her beliefs was something she had to do.

"The irony is that going to jail is a privilege," she said.

Col. Glenn Weidner, commandant of the school, defended the school by saying, "It seems to be the tactic of our critics to incite people to break the law, civil disobedience, before they ever even attempt to really find out what happens at the School of the Americas."
Weighing the Costs and Benefits
A Letter from Allenwood Prison
by Dan Sage

Ed. note: Last month SPC received the following letter from Dan Sage, one of Syracuse’s SOA 9 currently serving a six-month sentence for marching on the School of the Americas last November. You can write to him at “Daniel Sage #88033-020, FPC Allenwood, PO Box 1000, Montgomery, PA, 17752.” For further info on the SOA, see Ed Kinane’s article on page 7.

In ANY CONSCIOUSLY planned activity, the objective is to maximize the benefit while considering the cost. This cost-benefit equation has been expressed in government and corporate circles as “getting the most bang for the buck.”

A parallel construct may be seen in the behavior of us protesters. As we worked through the discernment process of whether to risk (actually invite) arrest, and moreso as we “do our time” in federal prison, the primary (perhaps the only) commodity we possess to barter into the cost side of the equation is time. Exactly how we choose to expend this commodity offers some (however limited) options. I have searched a thesaurus for a synonym in benefit that begins with “t” to create a catchy idiom to express “getting more ___ for the time.” Finding none, I will have to resort to the more traditional cost-benefit.

The Rev. Roy Bourgeois, now serving time at the federal prison in Estill, SC, has made a choice. He has refused to do the menial tasks assigned, declining “to work for the same government that supports the School of the Americas, which teaches military tactics and doctrine to Latin American soldiers.” For this refusal Roy is doing his time “in the hole,” a solitary confinement situation that foregoes the relatively benign environment available to inmates of minimum security federal prisons. The calculated benefit from this action is the media attention that should raise the level of public outrage against the actions of the courts in sentencing peaceful protesters at all. Roy’s letter from “the hole” will undoubtedly carry more impact than those from us who cooperate and consent to working in prison. Roy also notes in an interview with the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer that on the benefit side he “looks at the experience as an opportunity for spiritual growth.”

For my part, as much as I respect Roy’s commitment and honor his decision, my perspective is influenced by a different set of values. As a correspondingly dedicated Secular Humanist, pragmatism enters into my thinking much more prominently. There apparently is a media interest in Roy’s stand, but our experience thus far with the media has not been great. Our demonstrations and the 601 person procession and arrests were given minimal attention nationally. A PBS broadcast of an SOA tape (subject to local option) isn’t like “Sixty Minutes,” and a favorable column in the New York Times doesn’t have the impact of a spread in Newsweek for getting national attention. The volume of mail and publications we receive in prison from various peace and justice groups are reinforcing in that they demonstrate the fervor of those who are “with us,” but they certainly constitute “preaching to the choir.” In view of these factors, what kind of cost-benefit is Roy’s action yielding?

In considering the implications of “working for the government,” while doing my time, perhaps my choice was made easier by the fact that I have the opportunity to teach basic academic skills in the prison’s education department. Faced with the sorry state of literacy and quantitative proficiency of many of my fellow inmates, it is not hard to conclude that doing time in this way is providing a direct benefit to extremely needy individuals and is not “working for the government.” While many of those needing help do not take is seriously and behave as they probably did 10 (or 30) years ago in high school, a significant number do recognize their deplorable situation, accept the opportunity to change it, and appreciate my contribution. Seeing the un­ restrained joy and tears in the eyes of mature adults proudly showing their GED certificates and high school diplomas, I could hardly refuse to “work” under those circumstances.

However, on the broader issue of cost-benefit a number of my more astute inmate colleagues, who are aware of our reasons for being here and who are trying to understand it all, raise some good questions about the efficacy of our choices. They ask about the media attention we are getting and wonder why we aren’t getting more. They ask whether we are achieving enough benefit for the time we are spending. They acknowledge that if time must be served, this is the place to do it, but they seriously question whether the gains we might achieve are worth any amount of incarcerated time.

So I am asking: Are we deluded in thinking we are making a difference? Could we make a greater impact in another way? How do I evaluate my own cost-benefit yield? don’t know. Maybe after my release September 21 and a return visit to Fort Benning in November, the equation will be more clear.

Peace Newsletter

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8/98 (Syracuse) Peace Newsletter
Is It Worth It?
A Response to Dan Sage in Allenwood Prison

Ed Kinane

27 June 1998

Dear Dan,

I’ve just read your letter from Allenwood, “Weighing the Costs and Benefits,” in the July Peace Newsletter. I find myself wondering if I too will question whether “it’s worth it” during my incarceration.

Probably so. Prison de-rails our lives. The routine is deadening; the indignities and bureaucratic pettiness are maddening. Missed amenities and missed opportunities loom large. Those we love are far away. I know — I’ve been there (briefly).

Now that I’ve gotten my sentencing date (July 23), the prospect of prison is more real to me. Especially after reading my probation officer’s pre-sentencing report. In it he informed the judge that, according to the federal guidelines, I should get between eight and 14 months. That’s on top of the six months from the “SOA 25” trial back in January.

Since I got that report a couple weeks ago, I sometimes find myself thinking: hmmm, maybe I’d be better off getting another degree instead of spending 14 or 20 months in prison. Just before I caught the “SOA bug” in ’94, I was about to begin a full-time MA program.

While I’m not sure how to weigh my own costs and benefits around working to close the School of Americas, I do know that the stakes in Latin America are huge. They not only involve human lives lost and human flesh maimed. They involve indigenous peoples’ land stolen and just wages denied. Further, those stakes involve whole people’s aspirations for sovereignty and democracy. I don’t know how to quantify these realities.

Sure, a lot of good might have come out of that MA program, both personally and professionally. For me it would have been a kick. I’m one of these guys — you’re probably one too — who loves studying, immersing himself in theory, and writing papers. I’m pretty good at it.

I’m not sure, however, that this nation has a shortage of grad students. But I am sure it has a shortage of resisters. While the campaign to close the SOA is fast growing — thanks, I believe, to your witness and that of a few dozen others — our numbers are few. Even so, there isn’t another issue in the country now with as many “prisoners of conscience.” That alone suggests the unique and pivotal role our witness is playing.

The juggernaut needs sand in the gears. And you and I, my friend, are privileged to be strategically-placed grains of sand. I have no doubt that our prison witness does in a modest way make a difference. We are exposing this heinous “school” in a way that for five decades wasn’t being done.

Look at the ripple effect. Its very invisibility makes it immeasurable. That’s why cost and benefit analysis is tricky. Dan, let’s add to your equation the fact that, in the wake of your imprisonment, your own congregation at May Memorial Unitarian has been mobilized.

I’m not sure this nation has a shortage of grad students.
But I am sure it has a shortage of resisters.

PS: Who knows, maybe they’ll send me to Allenwood and I’ll get to spend some time with you and Nick before you’re released. I’d welcome that. But of course I’d much prefer to begin incarceration after Ann is released on Sept. 18.

Ed
NOTES FROM A COUNTY JAIL IN GEORGIA

BY KARL MEYER

CRISP COUNTY DETENTION CENTER, CORDELE, GA, July 30—The outdoor exercise yard at Crisp County Jail is a concrete area 60' x 120', completely enclosed by a 10'-high cement block wall, but we can see the azure sky and the tops of a few trees. Rough-winged swallows glide overhead and perch on wires of a radio antenna. A young house finch is tough enough to perch with one foot on a razor's edge of the coiled razor wire that tops the whole perimeter of the cement block wall to prevent us from escaping.

I have been 10 weeks in county jails of south Georgia as an SOA Watch prisoner convicted with 25 others on May 23 for re-entry at Fort Benning in the annual protest at the School of the Americas. I was sentenced to six months in federal prison. Disregarding the warnings of SOA Watch staff about the rigors of county jails, I chose to go into immediate custody from the courtroom, rather than accept the option of self-surrender later at one of the designated federal prison camps, as most of the 26 did. I acted on an incarnational instinct retained from my Catholic past: Until we experience the hardships of others in our own bodies, we will not fully appreciate them and be moved to seek radical change in the structures of oppression. To state this in the words of Jesus, “I was in jail, and you visited me.”

I am still in county jails five weeks after my brothers in custody, Jack Gilroy and Josh Rasler Cohn, were taken to the federal system because it occurred to me three weeks into the process to write the Bureau of Prisons advising them to send me to a prison with exterior fences or walls, rather than an open federal prison camp, because I would not construct a virtual prison wall in my own mind to contain myself at their behest. This was like 88-year-old Sr. Dorothy Hennessy, who refused an offer of house arrest. Resistance to be my own jailer goes back to my deep respect for the Peacemaker tradition of Wally and Juanita Nelson, Ernest and Marion Bromley, Maurice McCrackin and Chuck Mattei; they acted on a more radical refusal to cooperate in any way with their own imprisonment, to the extent of refusing to eat or to walk to cells while held in jail.

Our first weeks were spent at Muscogee County Jail in Columbus, GA, where we were tried. Apparently because of past experiences with SOA Watch prisoners, the jailers at Muscogee decided to hold us in 24-hour-a-day lockdown, in almost total isolation from other prisoners. We believed this was to protect other prisoners from contamination with our spirit of organized nonviolent assertion and possible resistance.

Brick Walls, Tight Security

The whole jail was very tightly controlled. The cell for the three of us was 9' x 12' x 10' high, with foot-thick brick walls and a solid steel door. Through one tiny window at the top of the cell we could see only a little murky daylight and an occasional pigeon on the outer sill. The jail provided us with a 21-page Inmate Manual of rules and privileges that did not restrict our outside correspondence and promised a minimum of two hours of outdoor exercise per week. Our faithful SOA Watch visitors, Jeff Moebus and Alice Budge, could bring us each a book a week, so we were reading Nelson Mandela's Long Walk To Freedom and Primo Levi's The Periodic Table (both superb books). After 18 days we had received only a half-hour of outdoor exercise, and we were experiencing recurrent screw-ups on our weekly commissary orders for stamped envelopes. We filed written grievances, following the prescribed procedures. We pointed out that both Nelson Mandela and Primo Levi got at least an hour of outdoor exercise daily while jailed in apartheid South Africa and in fascist Italy, respectively. We got some informal resolution of the envelope order problems, and began to get an average of one hour of outdoor exercise per week, isolated and heavily guarded by up to eight armed guards in an enclosed yard.

After five weeks, Jack and Josh were shipped out to the federal holding center in Atlanta. Not receiving any answer to our grievance appeal after 20 days (the Inmate Manual mandated a reply by the administrator within 10), I undertook a fast from all food starting on my birthday, June 30. I did not publicize the fast or seek outside help. My fast soon gained sympathetic hearings from the jail doctor and psychologist, who both promised to carry my concerns to the jail administrator. I ended the fast after seven days for the protection of my own health. Three days later, U.S. marshals transferred me to Harris County jail, 30 miles south in Hamilton, GA. Harris proved to be the best run and most benign jail I have ever been in 44 years of nonviolent activism; I hoped the Bureau of Prisons might just leave me there for the four remaining months of my term.

It is a small jail, with only 46 prisoners when I was there, mostly from the local area, with a handful of federal prisoners awaiting transfer. It was built in recent years, with a capacity for twice as many prisoners. I was in one of 12 individual cells opening onto a large day room with tables and a dominant TV, always on, and usually tuned to law-enforcement dramatic series, The Price is Right, or The Jerry Springer Show. Each cell had its own stainless-steel sink and toilet unit and a built-in stool and writing desk looking out through a five-inch-wide window that showed a nice slice of wooded Georgia countryside.

When I arrived, the young guard at the receiving desk said she wanted “a room with view” for me; this was typical of the warm and friendly attitude of all the guards, who responded promptly to all reasonable requests by prisoners that were allowed by clearly defined rules. The attitude of the guards was so casual and cooperative that I did not see one incident of hostile tension between prisoners and guards, even when two guards went into a tier to conduct two prisoners

Longtime Catholic Worker activist Karl Meyer is a member of WRL’s Nashville local.
to the "hole" after they were discovered smoking smuggled marijuana. All of the younger prisoners were friendly and respectful to me. In these jails almost all of the prisoners are familiar with SOA Watch protests from television news reports. We were allowed an hour a day of outdoor exercise in a chain-link cage that looked out on the Georgia woods. The only aversive aspect of Harris County jail was the pervasive TV noise, which distracted from my reading and writing during the day when we were locked out of our cells from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Unfortunately, after 10 days I was transported again to Crisp County Detention Center in Cordele, south of Macon.

This is a local jail, as well as being a holding center for state and federal prisoners awaiting transport to prisons or trial in Macon. A count of one shift in the recreation yard this morning showed 10 white, four Latino, and 35 African-American prisoners, most of whom are from this region. Of the visible guards on duty, five were African-American and one was white. The system provides both survival jobs and criminal punishment for minority communities in disproportionate numbers, locking both prisoners and guards into a totally non-productive stalemate. Centuries of jail time are being served by a million U.S. prisoners, and a million guards work in shifts to keep them contained and paralyzed.

In the cell block, each tier consists of a 12’ x 27’ sleeping room, with four double-decker steel bunk beds and locker chests, and an adjoining day room of the same size with two tables and a TV shelf. Fortunately for my tastes, the TV in this tier was broken and has not been replaced, though other prisoners complain bitterly about this. The population shifts from day to day as prisoners come and go. Presently in this cell there are three whites, two Mexicans and four African-Americans. The latter have segregated themselves in the day room by putting down their mattresses between tables and along walls, partly to avoid climbing up and down to the top bunks and partly to stay together. (The lower bunks are occupied now by whites and Latinos, through accident of seniority in the cell.)

The balance between friendly communication and racial tension shifts constantly as people move in and out. One young white drug dealer and I maintain the integration of the tier by persisting in eating at the tables, playing cards and talking with the Black prisoners. The young African-Americans call me “Dad”; as I gain seniority in the cell community and refuse to show prejudice or partiality, I gradually gain respect, and I am able to mediate tensions with a few words here and there; all this dynamic has evolved in the 10 days I have been here.

I find in the county jail system today standards for conditions, rules and privileges that did not exist in county jails 40 years ago, when I first experienced them, but did exist in federal prisons. I infer from the generality of these standards that they resulted from federal imposition of standards as a condition for being allowed to house federal prisoners temporarily as the federal prisoner population expanded rapidly.

Who's in Prison and Why?

As always when I've lived among other convicted criminals, I conclude that we are fairly decent people like you outside. Most of my fellow recidivist criminals have been caught hustling to make a buck in an acquisitive culture that fosters more aspirations to prosper than opportunities to do it legally. The experience reinforces my belief in the abolition of prisons, as we know them; they could be replaced, if necessary, by a benign system of reasonable restraint for people who may persist in actual serious harm to others.

It's hard for me to believe this practice of holding federal prisoners for weeks at a time has evolved for actual efficiency in moving the prisoners to their assigned destinations. It seems more probable that it is a budget dodge, because it may cost less per diem to hold people in county jails than in federal prisons, due to wage and benefit differentials and more costly standards in the federal prisons. This would be a worthy subject for investigative reporting or research by a doctoral student in criminology or sociology.

I have now been held for ten weeks in county jails. Having been given lemons, I am making lemonade here, writing an autobiography of my years in nonviolent action. I am a third of the way through a first draft, having completed pages on my first jailing at the "Tombs" in New York City in 1957, with Catholic Worker founders Dorothy Day and Ammon Hennacy and the Living Theatre’s Judith Malina and Julian Beck, among others. Yesterday I finished the account of my first federal sentence, in 1959, at the age of 22, for an action at an intercontinental ballistic missile base in Nebraska. Forty-two years later we face the new threat of National Missile Defense and a second "Cold War" over domination in space.

Meanwhile, I await probable shipment tomorrow by "FedEx" and "Con-Air" to a federal prison, destination and time of delivery unknown.

To write to Karl Meyer or any of the other SOA 26, call SOA Watch at (202)234-3440 or see www.soaw.org.

To all the SOA prisoners of conscience,

If I were a faery goddessmother who could grant you one gift for your time in prison, it would be this: a great sense of peace and release in knowing that for this time out of your busy and responsible lives, just being who you are and where you are is enough. I would wish you to carry within you a sense of exaltation that cannot be touched by the discomforts and humiliations of prison, and to know without a doubt that you are changing the world. And that there is nothing you need do, plan, organize or care for except what arises in each moment where you are. And to know that you are held in love by many, many people, and you are never alone. You are sustained by forces so much stronger than concrete and steel, and in your breath and your bodies you carry within you all the elements of life, that can feed you wherever you are.

In love, gratitude and solidarity,

Starhawk

THE NONVIOLENT ACTIVIST/SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2001 9
Jail Can't Stop Nun's Protest

A defiant 88-year-old nun and her sister, who have now served six-month federal prison sentences for protesting at a US military base allegedly linked to Central American death squads, say the two will continue to pursue their cause.

"Whatever you do, please say we'll continue with this because the school is not closed and that is our goal," said Dorothy Marie Hennessey, a retired Franciscan nun convicted with two dozen other protesters including her sister, Gwen, of trespassing at the former School of the Americas in November 2000.

"I haven't changed my mind, haven't made an act of contrition for anything I did. If God is anything, he's against injustice to the poor and the marginalised," said Dorothy Marie, who lives with Gwen at Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Family, a convent and retirement home for 425 nuns in Dubuque.

The Hennessey sisters were among 3,500 protesters who marched onto the grounds of the former School of the Americas at Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia, where several Central American military leaders later implicated in death squads received training.

The protesters held crosses bearing the names of slain victims of Central American death squads, and the Hennesseys were among a group who received warnings and were prosecuted for repeated incursions onto the base.

The sibling nuns made international headlines in mid-July for refusing a judge's offer of serving their sentences under house arrest and instead reported to a federal prison in Pekin, Illinois. The stoop-shouldered Dorothy Marie, one of 15 children, told the judge, "I am not an invalid."

She said the attention to their cause was invaluable, though prison had some "not-so-nice" drawbacks.

"One of the things about prison is that there were some people... who were not exactly mean, but they acted

Also See:
- Trespassing Nuns Hold Their Convictions Dear
- Sibling Nuns Will Go to Prison for Protesting at U.S. Military School
- Federal Judge Makes World Safer, Sends Elderly Nuns To Jail
- Elderly Iowa Protester Prepares for Prison

http://www.commondreams.org/headlines02/0115-01.htm
mean," Dorothy Marie said, adding she had to surrender her own watch and buy one at the prison commissary.

About midway through her six-month sentence, Dorothy Marie was moved to a prison halfway house in Dubuque where she had served on the board of directors for medical reasons. Gwen, who turned 69 while in prison, served out her six-month term.

"We had a beautiful welcoming ceremony this afternoon. Gwen got up here in time from Pekin," Dorothy Marie said.

The sisters say their activism was stoked by their late brother, Ron, who spent years in Guatemala and El Salvador in the 1980s and recounted in letters to them the slaughter of native peoples by military death squads. He had also befriended Bishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, who was assassinated.

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SUPPORTING OUR PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Our prisoners of conscience need our support. The solidarity of those out there "on the street" is immensely sustaining when we're in the slammer. Here are some suggestions -- for both individuals and groups -- especially for those already close to an SOA activist being prosecuted:

~ help form an ongoing support group before her trial. You and your group can do media work, provide transportation to Columbus (and to and from prison), and whatever's needed to relieve any stress on the defendant and her family and housemates.

~ organize supporters to attend the trial. Your presence en masse is heartening. Attending political trials is a great consciousness raiser and solidarity builder.

~ have a sendoff gathering...and a grand coming home party. Invite the media.

~ provide a monthly stipend. Our Central New York SOA Abolitionist group offers our local defendants $100 a month for prison commissary expenses. Their 12 cents an hour prison "wage" doesn't begin to cover routine expenses (clothes, toiletries, phone, postage, etc.)

~ keep the prisoner posted on all your group's work to close the SOA. Write letters. Send relevant clippings.

~ send in paperback books and provide magazine subscriptions. He may want to tell you which ones he wants. Check-out beforehand the prison's regs regarding book packages.

~ coordinate your visits through the prisoner or folks very close to her. She needs to send you a visitor application form. Visiting hours and the number of visitors are limited and may need to be rationed.

~ when the prisoner is released, respect his need to catch up with himself and his loved ones. For a variety of reasons, homecomings and transitions out of prison can be bumpy. Resuming daily responsibilities and adapting to the quicker pace on the outside can be draining.

~ remember: it's often the prisoner's family and loved ones who will need the most support. Be there for them. Offer to do the work she had done before going in: child care, shoveling, lawn mowing, walking the dog, whatever. If the prisoner was supporting others financially, consider subsidizing them until she is out and earning income again.

~ set up speaking engagements for the ex-prisoner. His story needs to be heard far and wide.

[GWsupportingPOCs/Oct'02]
WHAT'S IT LIKE IN A FEDERAL MINIMUM SECURITY PRISON?
Notes for Potential Prisoners of Conscience
by Ed Kinane

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just [person] is also a prison.

If any think that their influence would be lost [in prison], and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State, that they would not be as an enemy with its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error, nor how much more eloquently and effectively [they] can combat injustice who [have] experienced a little in [their] own person.

-- Henry David Thoreau, "On Civil Disobedience"

These notes are for those engaging in civil disobedience (a.k.a. divine obedience) and who therefore may be risking arrest and imprisonment. Doing time probably will be hard on you and your loved ones. It's a major disruption in your lives. But, with preparation and the right mindset, much good can result -- both for you personally and for your cause.

You may want to share these notes with your family and your primary support people. Your incarceration may be harder on those left at home. They have to manage without you and may well get far less solidarity than you're likely to get as a prisoner of conscience.

My prison experience comes from taking part in several nonviolent protests against the School of the Americas at the main gate of Fort Benning in Georgia. The SOA is a U.S. Army school of terrorism and subversion. It trains Latin American soldiers to maintain Latin America as a vast pool of cheap labor for U.S. corporations.

In 1996, as one of the "SOA 13," I spent two months in McKean Federal Prison Camp. Then in 1998/99, as one of the "SOA 25," I served 12 months in FPC Allenwood. Conditions and treatment at these two minimum security prisons were rather better than at FPC Danbury --
the women's facility in Connecticut where in 1998 my partner Ann spent six months as one of the "SOA 25."

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If sentenced by a federal court to prison for a nonviolent action, whether a misdemeanor or felony, you will probably be sent to a federal minimum security camp. It should be in your region of the country. Both my camps were in Pennsylvania, about four hours drive from home. At your sentencing you may even request that you be sent to a particular camp. The request may or may not be honored.

It is likely you will be given "self-surrender." This means federal marshals won't take you into custody at sentencing; rather, several weeks later you will be notified of the date and camp you must report to on your own. The reporting date may be no more than several days after notification. This interlude between sentencing and incarceration is the time not only to settle your personal affairs, but also to do media work. If approached right, media are likely to be interested in your going to prison for a good -- or controversial -- cause.

Just before going to prison, you might mail yourself there an (unpadded) envelope with items like: address & phone list, press contact list, photos of loved ones, medical needs documentation, a few paperback books....For sharing and for reference include flyers, fact sheets, clippings, etc. on your issue. Most other things you’d like to send to yourself would be considered contraband.

I could bring only money and my eyeglasses in with me. A wedding ring would also have been allowed, but no other personal effects. The money was taken and credited to my commissary account. Rules on what you can bring in with you vary; you might phone the camp in advance to check out what their current rule is -- which may or may not be respected the day you arrive. Upon entering I was strip-searched ("lift your scrotum, bend over and spread your cheeks"). Then I got a set of army-surplus prison-issue clothes: belt, four undershorts and T-shirts, two or three pairs of pants, two or three shirts, steel-tipped shoes, rain poncho, winter jacket, mittens and cap.

A minimum security camp is not like prisons you’ve seen in movies. It is not "Shawshank." At my camps there were no bars, barbed wire, walls, electric fences, or guard towers. I never saw a firearm. I could have walked away, though the penalty would have been severe. Except from 10PM to 6AM, and around count time, I wasn’t confined to the dorm. The mess hall, work site, athletic facilities, etc. were elsewhere in the compound.

My two camps looked like suburban community college campuses: one and two story buildings amid lawns and landscaping, with baseball diamonds, basketball courts and other athletic facilities. These included handball and bocci ball courts, horseshoes, ping pong, pool, and weight lifting. I cherished all the green grass and blue skies. Allenwood is on a lovely site surrounded by wooded hills. We had lots of Canadian geese. Deer often came to our dorm looking for a handout. Such critters made the camp seem more humane.

I was assigned the top bunk of a very small two-person cubicle in a large room with about 60 other prisoners. If you are over 60 (or physically impaired) you’ll probably get the lower bunk. The doorless cubicle gave some, though not much, privacy. I got a lockable locker for my clothes and personal effects. My bunkie and I shared a small desk and book shelf. We each had a metal folding chair. I used mine to climb up into my ladderless bunk.

Life immediately became somewhat regimented. After a week’s orientation prisoners are assigned a menial job at the lordly sum of 12 cents an hour. At Allenwood even men over 70 were
required to work. During orientation you may be able to scout the various departments for a job more to your liking than those "fish" (new first-time prisoners) are typically assigned to. Once assigned, we couldn't transfer to a more suitable job for three months. Unicor, a factory system within federal prisons throughout the country, pays prison workers a higher hourly wage. But new or short-term prisoners aren't eligible. The handy and huge pool of cheap, unionized labor Unicor exploits is one reason U.S. prisons are proliferating.

If you refuse to work, you go to the "hole." This is a medium security punishment cell to which you're confined 23 hours a day; there's little contact with staff or other prisoners -- except your bunkmate. I once spent 12 days in the hole. Because my bunkie and I found plenty to talk about (T. was a Viet Nam combat vet and had trained Contras in Honduras), the time flew. But if we had been incompatible it might have been rather unpleasant. Some of the "SOA 25" spent their first few days in the hole under "observation" because we were sentenced without the customary Pre-Sentencing Report. Our jailors use the PSR to assess whether we are threat to ourselves or others.

This was my typical weekday schedule: 5:45AM wake-up; 6-6:30 breakfast; 7:30-10:45 work; 11-noon lunch; noon-3:30PM work; 4:00 standup count in my cubicle; 4:30-5:00 dinner; 10PM count in my cubicle; 10:30 lights off in the dorm. We could use the game room or TV room or phones after lights out. On the weekend, wake-up and breakfast are an hour later. On weekends my time was mostly my own, except I had to be in my cubicle for the 10:30AM standup count. Prisons take these counts very seriously. If you're not where you're supposed to be at count you can go to the hole.

Given our draconian drug laws, many -- maybe most -- minimum security prisoners are in for drug "crimes." Most are people of color. None is being incarcerated for violent offenses. Allenwood has a lot of white collar criminals. None is being incarcerated for violent offenses. Apart from these, many are probably in prison because they couldn't afford their own lawyer. Few are a physical threat to society. Virtually all belong in rehab programs or other alternatives to incarceration. Many have families which needlessly suffer by their absence. This is even far more true of women prisoners, most of whom have children.

The dorm often got loud and the language rather coarse. Earplugs were contraband, but luckily I was able to get some from guys working heavy equipment. While prisoners and staff were occasionally loutish, I seldom felt menaced. I never felt sexually threatened. Although several times I heard about fights (and, therefore, about those involved going to the hole or being shipped out to medium security facilities), I never witnessed physical violence. Many prisoners had their rough edges, but most seemed decent. Most minded their own business; they just wanted to do their time with as few hassles as possible.

Even some of the guards seemed decent (especially when other staff weren't present). Others could be petty or officious or vindictive. Many lacked professionalism and were poorly-trained. Most, but not all, guards were male. Unfortunately -- and very inappropriately -- this was also true at Danbury.

In Sartre's play No Exit hell is other people. For me the worst part about prison was the crowding -- crowding in the dorm, in the mess hall, in the visiting room. It can seem like you, your bunkie and your neighbors are aware of each others' every move and sound. I would have gladly traded in my first three bunkmates. My fourth was a very likable Colombian soccer player. My fifth and I had little in common, came from very different worlds; but our time together was stress-free. Along with bunkie can come bunkie's buddies. These can be intrusive. You might
seek to transfer to another cubicle. But doing so entails dealing with staff -- something I sought to avoid.

One of the nastier realities of prison is snitches. Prisoners can win concessions of various sorts and even get sentences reduced if they inform on others. So, be discreet. Also: don't be nosy, or fraternize too much with staff -- prisoners get suspicious. Snitches can suffer reprisals. It's standard prison etiquette not to ask someone about what got them into prison. The time I went to the hole was because a snitch reported I was talking to an unauthorized visitor -- an 83 year-old friend who had no idea he had to go through a screening process before visiting.

At Allenwood in our residence unit there were two TV rooms, each with six TVs. Every TV was set on a different channel and, blessedly, was silent. To access audio you had to have earphones, purchasable from the commissary. The TVs were on round the clock. They are a great pacifier.

We weren't allowed to possess cash or checks, etc.; our money was held in our commissary account. At a designated hour once a week, we could shop at the commissary. There was a limited range of junk food, groceries, vitamins, toiletries, clothes, stationary, tobacco products, etc. If you have it, you might want to start your account with about $250. You may immediately want to buy a watch, sneakers, bathrobe, sweatsuit, walkman, postage, some food, and a combination lock for your locker.

Although I was in pauperis (i.e. the court found me to be without income or assets), while in prison, our local SOA Watch solidarity group provided me a monthly stipend. The mail room automatically deposited their postal money orders in my commissary account. As I got a hefty fine, very early on my "counselor" asked me to authorize a $25. monthly fine deduction from my account. Although I generally refuse to pay political fines, I signed. If you refuse, they will find ways to make your prison sojourn more difficult (though not unbearable). This can limit the outreach you're able to do while incarcerated.

If you're not in pauperis, you'll probably be pressured to pay more. My sense was that my counselor was himself under severe pressure to wring fine money out of prisoners. Apparently the prison gets its cut of fines collected. You'll need to go through your "counselor" for most administrative matters; the title is misleading: s/he's a paper pushing cop. Many staff are resistant to working -- much less doing anything for a prisoner, even answering questions. Why such stonewalling? A) it's just another way to put the screws to you; b) the less you know, the more control they have (prison is all about control); c) often staff simply don't have the answers and won't admit it; and d) they're oppressed underlings wary of sticking their necks out.

The mess hall served three hasty meals a day, cafeteria style. I was pleasantly surprised: the food was diverse and occasionally tasty. Someone in the kitchen gave a damn. There was enough healthy food for large appetites and there were usually adequate alternatives for non-meat eaters like me. Vegans, or those with kosher or other special diet needs, arranged a "common fare" diet through their chaplain. This may be difficult to do if you haven't declared a religious affiliation upon entering prison. At Allenwood there was a range of religious services and fellowship available by denomination. Allenwood honored Islamic, Jewish and Christian holy days for prisoners in those traditions. The usual legal holidays were observed as well.

Mail call was nightly Monday through Friday. All incoming mail is opened, inspected for drugs and other contraband, and may be read by staff. Staff usually opened correspondence from my pro bono lawyers, unread, in my presence. Receiving a package required prior authorization, but we could receive paperback books if they came in an envelope. Hard cover books could only
be sent by a bookstore or publisher. You had buy postage in the commissary. I could seal my outgoing mail which normally wouldn’t be opened by staff. Each camp may have its own mail regulations. To avoid their mail being returned to them, you might send a copy of the mailing regs to your frequent correspondents.

As a prisoner of conscience, especially in such a popular campaign as closing the School of the Americas, I got lots of solidarity mail from all over the country. That was heartening, but also awkward because so many in the dorm got little or no mail. Our prison mailing address appeared repeatedly in the Nuclear Resister and in numerous movement newsletters. You may want to answer every note individually; this is time-consuming, but it’s a great way to help get others invested in your issue. Alternatively, you might periodically respond with a mass mailing: write a "dear friends" letter and have an outside support person copy it and mail it to the list you provide. You can use such a letter to educate and organize.

Smoking was permitted outdoors only. Thanks to the gym and track, etc. many leave prison in much better shape than when they went in. But prison is not a good place to be ill. Sick call is at 6AM. The medical and dental staff aren’t necessarily dedicated to your health and well-being; they suspect you’re a malinger. If you have any medical condition, do all you can to deal with it before going into prison. Get your teeth cleaned and repaired beforehand. Prison dentists are notorious for pulling teeth.

We weren’t allowed to bring in our own medications or have them sent to us. The prison doctor would have to prescribe any meds we’d use, and these usually would be generic and not those your outside doctor had prescribed. To avoid being assigned a job where I’d be on my feet a lot, before I went in I had a podiatrist document my bad feet. When I had to fill out a form regarding my health, I noted my poor hearing; I did this thinking it just might cover me if I was about to be disciplined for not heeding some order over the PA system.

In prison you can’t get phone calls. In a family emergency you might be able to get a call through the counselor or chaplain. At Danbury Ann could make collect calls to anyone -- though the phone rates were exorbitant. At Allenwood I could only call numbers that were previously authorized by my counselor. But it was cheaper because I wasn’t calling collect. The charges were deducted from my commissary account. I usually called Ann -- we were in prison at different times -- in the morning before work to avoid waiting in line to use the phone. Calls were limited to 15 minutes, and subject to monitoring. The monitoring is undetectable. Thanks to the monitoring two of the guys I worked with were punished when one of them got on the line when the other placed a call. Both had commissary and phoning privileges suspended for a few weeks.

Several days a week for at least several hours you may be able to receive visits, but usually only if your visitors have returned an application you’ve sent them and been approved. Visiting hours and regulations differ from prison to prison. You might get a copy of the visiting regs during orientation and send them to your potential visitors so they won’t run afoul of the regs. For several months at Allenwood we were strip-searched after every visit. That seemed to have been a temporary aberration foisted on staff and prisoners alike by a new "get-tough" warden.

Federal prisons have both law libraries and reading libraries. Some reading libraries are wretched (Danbury); some are quite good (Allenwood). I was able to use interlibrary loan. At Allenwood the law library had a ten-cent-a-copy photocopy machine accessed with a photo ID/commissary card. If you don’t have a high school diploma, you will be required to take the GED course. Other optional skills and academic courses may be available. At Allenwood these were mostly taught by prisoners. You may find yourself offering to teach one.
Each point in your penal journey -- arrest, trial, sentencing, self-surrendering, going to the hole, release -- is an opportunity for doing press work in your home town, with your alumni and professional organizations, or faith community, etc. After my sentencing our local daily ran an editorial, “Going to Prison for a Good Cause.” To get effective press out of your civil disobedience action, read Jason Salzman’s excellent Making the News: A guide for non-profits and activists, Westview Press. 1998, paperback, $19.95, 289pp. It isn’t egocentrism to use the personal hook to publicize your cause. Or the injustice of your prosecution...or the abuses of your incarceration or of the penal system as a whole (see attached bibliography).

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Phil Berrigan says, “Use their time against them.” I thought of my time as a federally-subsidized sabbatical or retreat. Many prisoners of conscience use their time “accompanying” fellow prisoners: being a tutor, a resource, a friend. In prison I read scores of good books. Through correspondence I “met” or deepened my relationship with good people. I took satisfaction in the simple, low-consumption lifestyle -- low by U.S. standards, not by campesino standards. Whatever deprivation I might have suffered was a passing inconvenience compared to what Latin Americans suffer at the hands of SOA grads. Given what was at stake, I felt my prison time was a pittance. Knowing that our prison witness was helping to build the SOA campaign was a sustaining joy.

Being in prison is consciousness raising -- like going on one of those movement delegations to Chiapas or Colombia. There’s much to be learned -- especially by those of us with middle class origins -- from the stark experience of those who have led much harder lives. Or who have gotten a much rawer deal.

In the U.S. the prison system is burgeoning. It can only do so through an enormous amount of injustice. It’s essential that activists gain firsthand experience in this Gulag in order to help retard its proliferation. Being a deliberate prisoner of conscience is qualitatively different from serving time either as a victim of the system or as a victimizer of others. It is as different as honor and stigma.

Frequently people wrote expressing sympathy for my “lack of freedom.” This led me to reflect on the constraints and opportunities that go with being in prison vs. being out on the street. Each side of the gate had a different configuration of constraints and opportunities. But I’m not sure whether as a prisoner of conscience I had more constraints or fewer opportunities than when I was on the street. I do know that prison was where I needed to be.

When I got out I became a more sought after speaker and had more credibility as an activist. I came out more empowered than when I went in. I’m a freer person now precisely because I followed my conscience, committed civil disobedience, and experienced incarceration.

Ed and Ann are longtime Central America solidarity activists who over the years have worked closely with Peace Brigades International. Since 1994 they have been active in SOA Watch. Ann is a former public health nurse, now full-time activist.

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COMPPELLING READING ON U.S. PRISON ISSUES

Being in prison is the ideal time to bone up on prison issues. To frame your experience and round out your picture of the entire Gulag, here's a brief biblio. I read all of these either in, or before I went to, prison.

-- *The Nuclear Resister*, a wonderful quarterly tabloid focusing on civil disobedience, trials and incarcerations of antinuclear, anti-imperial and disarmament activists. Excellent coverage of anti-SOA CD actions. Address: c/o Jack & Felice Cohen-Joppa, POB 43383, Tucson, AZ, 85733.


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[Jan. 2000 revision of notes for Nov. '99 SOAW nonviolence training]
Yeah, but look at the bright side... we don't have a lawn to mow.
SOAW Prisoners of Conscience
compiled by Mary Trotochaud

August, 1983
Fr. Roy Bourgeois MM (18 months)
Linda Ventimiglia (15 months)
Fr. Larry Rosebaugh (15 months)

November 16, 1990
Fr. Roy Bourgeois (14 months, 2 yrs probation)
Charlie Liteky (6 months)
Pat Liteky (6 months)

SOA 13 - November 16, 1994 and 1995
Fr. Roy Bourgeois MM (6 months)
Fr. Bill Bichsel SJ (4 months)
Br. Fred Mercy (2 months)
Joanne Lingle (2 months)
Sr. Claire O’Mara (2 months)
Ed Kinane (2 months)
Bill Corrigan (2 months)
Ray LaPorte (2 months)
John X. Linnehan (2 months)
Joe Zito (2 months)
Louie DeBenedette (4 months)
Will Prior (2 months)
Bob Holstein (2 months)

SOA 5 - September 29, 1997
Fr. Bill Bichsel SJ (12 months, 2 yrs probation)
Ed Kinane (10 months, 2 yrs probation)
Sr. Marge Eilerman (8 months, 2 yrs probation)
Kathleen Rumpf (12 months, 2 yrs probation)
Mary Trotochaud (8 months, 2 yrs probation)

SOA 25 - November 17, 1997
Fr. Roy Bourgeois MM (6 months)
Fr. Bill Bichsel SJ (6 months)
Rev. Dr. Nick Cardell (6 months)
Mary Early (6 months)
Sr. Marge Eilerman (6 months)
Sr. Mary Kay Flanigan (6 months)
Anne Hermann (6 months)
Paddy Inman (6 months)
Chris Jones (6 months)
Rev. Ken Kennon (6 months)
Ed Kinane (6 months)
Dwight Lawton (6 months)
Rita Lucey (6 months)
Bill McNulty (6 months)
Sr. Megan Rice (6 months)
Carol Richardson (6 months)
Dan Sage (6 months)

-- over
Doris Sage (6 months)
Randy Serraglio (6 months)
Sr. Rita Steinhagen (6 months)
Richard Streb (6 months)
Ann Tiffany (6 months)
Mary Trotchau (6 months)
Judith Williams (6 months)
Ruthy Woodring (6 months)

Pat Liteky (24 months)

SOA 10 - November 1999
Rev. Brooks Anderson (3 months)
Judy Bierbaum (3 months)
Tom Bottalone (3 months)
Rev. Charles Butler (3 months)
Gerhard Fischer (3 months)
Kathleen Fisher (12 months probation)
John Honeck (3 months)
Margaret Knapke (3 months)
Charlie Liteky (12 months)
Sr. Megan Rice (6 months)

SOA 26 - November 2000
Rev. David Corcoran (6 months)
Mary Lou Benson (6 months)
Russell De Young (6 months)

John Ewers (6 months)
Jack Gilroy (6 months)
Clare Hanrahan (6 months)
Martha Hayward (3 years probation)
Rachel Hayward (6 months)
Sr. Dorothy Hennessy (6 months)
Sr. Gwen Hennessy (6 months)
Rita Hohneshell (3 months)
John Hunt Jr. (6 months)
Steve Jacobs (12 months)
Rebecca Kanner (6 months)
Joel Kilgour (1 month)
Richard John Kinane (6 months)
Sr. Elizabeth Anne McKenzie (6 months)
Karl Meyer (6 months)
Lois Putzier (6 months)
Eric Robison (6 months)
Sr. Miriam Spencer (6 months)
Kathryn Temple (2 years probation)
William Houston (6 months)
Hazel Tulecke (3 months)
Mary Alice Vaughn (6 months)
Josh Raisler Cohn (6 months)

Pentagon - April 2001
Eric Robison (3 days)
Ally Styan (3 days)
THE SOA 37: sentenced July, 2002

For the entire week of July 11, thirty-seven SOA Watchers were tried by Magistrate G. Mallon Faircloth in Columbus federal court. All were charged with trespass at Benning on November 18, 2001. With the guidance of our pro bono lawyer, Bill Quigley of Loyola Law School, New Orleans, several of the defendants went pro se.

For the first time ever, one of our defendants was found not guilty. While Lisa had “crossed the line,” she alone was arrested on the city-side of the fence. The others had all either crossed under or walked around the fence on to the base.

Four of the defendants refused “self surrender” and, upon sentencing, were immediately taken in shackles to the Muskogee County Jail.

SENTENCED TO SIX MONTHS IN PRISON

- Maxwell E. Sadler of Waterville, Maine, with $2,500 fine
- Kenneth F. Crowley, 60, Houston, educator, with $1,000 fine
- Mary Margaret Dean, 37, Chicago, children's physical therapist, with $1,000 fine
- Kathleen Desautels, 64, Chicago, Catholic nun, Providence of St. Mary of the Woods
- Toni Flynn, 56, Valyermo, Calif., Catholic worker
- Catherine Fontanazza, 53, Milwaukee, teacher, with $1,000 fine
- Chantilly J. Geigle, 19, Salem, Ore., peace activist, with $1,000 fine
- Peter A. Gelderloos, 19, Harrisonburg, Va., peace activist
- John E. Heid of Luck, Wis.
- The Rev. Erik Johnson, 57, Knoxville, Tenn., Presbyterian minister, with $1,000 fine
- Niklan M. Jones-Lexama, 38, Blacksburg, Va., peace activist
- Rae S. Kraner, 55, Syracuse, N.Y., domestic violence trainer, with $5,000 fine
- The Rev. William O'Donnell, 72, Berkeley, Calif., Catholic parish priest, with $1,000 fine
- Michael Pasquale, 33, Syracuse, Catholic charities employment program director, with $1,000 fine
- The Rev. Jerome Zawada, 65, Cedar Lake, Ind., priest/Franciscan friar

SENTENCED TO TO 90 DAYS IN PRISON

- The Rev. Charles Booker-Hirsch, 41, of Ann Arbor, Mich., Presbyterian minister, with $500 fine
- Kathleen Shields Boylan, 58, Washington, D.C., Catholic worker
- Jonna Cohen, 20, Denver, MacAllister College student
- Abigail N. Miller, 23, Harrisonberg, Va., community worker, with $500 fine
- Summer Lisa Nelson, Missoula, Mont., environmentalist, with $500 fine
- Susan Jean Daniels, 41, Pembroke, Va., doctoral student
- Nancy Gowen, 68, Richmond, Va., peace activist, with $500 fine
- Palmer D. Legare, Springfield, Mass., Springfield College student, with $500 fine
- Laure MacDonald, 23, Syracuse, Catholic worker, with $500 fine
- Thomas S. Mahedy, 39, of Wall Township, N.J., laborer

Richard M. Ring, 33, Atlanta, paralegal, with $500 fine
Michael Sobol, 18, Denver, graduated high school in May, with $500 fine
Janice Sevre-Duszyńska, 52, Lexington, Ky., Catholic school teacher, with $500 fine
Louis Vitale, 70, San Francisco, Franciscan priest

SENTENCED TO SIX MONTHS' PROBATION, $500 FINE

- Brigid Conarchy, 23, Chicago, Catholic community worker
- Linda Holzbaur, 45, Ithaca, N.Y., Catholic worker
- Shannon McManimon, 26, Philadelphia, Catholic worker
- Ralph Madsen, 68, Newtonville, Mass., retired elementary teacher
- David O'Neill and Jennifer Lee Sturgis, Elkton, Va., husband and wife
- Leone Reibold, 24, Oakland, Calif., assistant harbormaster

FOUND NOT GUILTY

Defendant Lisa Ann Hughes, 36, of West Hartford, Vt., was found not guilty of trespass onto the military post.
Ten Arrested at Ft. Benning Reenacting SOA Murder of Salvadoran Jesuits

Ed Kinane

From November 11 to November 16, people from around the country held a vigil and fast just outside the main entrance to Ft. Benning. November 11 is Veterans Day; November 16 is the anniversary of the killing in 1989 of six Jesuit priests, their co-worker and her daughter in El Salvador.

The 3/93 UN Truth Commission cited 26 Salvadoran military officers for that atrocity. Of these, 19 were graduates of the US Army’s notorious School of the Americas. The SOA is at Ft. Benning.

Ft Benning is a vast army training base immediately south of Columbus, GA and across the Chattahoochee River from Alabama. The SOA, founded in 1946, moved here in 1984 after being thrown out of Panama. Using Spanish-speaking instructors, it trains Latin American military officers in combat and counter-insurgency skills.

We hold the six day vigil and fast to observe the anniversary of the slain Jesuits and to publicize this secretive school. From 10 AM to 5 PM each day, in mostly freezing or near freezing weather, we stand near the stone wall with its “Welcome to Fort Benning” sign. Facing traffic, in the median between the lanes going in and out of the base, we hold banners like, “CLOSE US ARMY’S SCHOOL OF ASSASSINS.” Some drivers flash thumbs up or peace signs. A few shout obscenities or flip us the finger.

Thirty yards north in a tiny apartment facing the wall is the office of S.O.A. Watch, the organization sponsoring the vigil. S.O.A. Watch, founded by Fr. Roy Bourgeois, monitors the School and since the early ’90s has been working with relentless persistence to see it closed.

The fast and vigil end on Friday the 16th with an 11 AM Eucharist celebrated by Fr. Bix. The liturgy is inclusive: not everyone taking part is Catholic. The Eucharist—or communion—in the Catholic tradition involves eating bread and drinking wine together. The bread and wine, consecrated by a priest, is said to be transformed into the body and blood of Jesus.

Jesus, let us recall, was an agitator and educator among the poor in occupied Palestine. He was tortured and killed by soldiers with the connivance of local collaborators. Together they served Rome, the prevailing imperial superpower. In this modern era the SOA trains such soldiers and collaborators. They, too, kill those who work for social justice among the poor.

At the liturgy, there are over 20 vigilers, a reporter from the Columbus daily Ledger-Enquirer and two TV news crews. No one from The Bayonet, the Ft. Benning weekly, seems to be on hand. Hovering nearby in parked unmarked cars are plain clothes security personnel.

After communion, one by one the names of each of the eight victims are called out:

Ignacio Ellacuria S.J.
Anando Lopez S.J.
Joaquin Lopez y Lopez S.J.
Ignacio Martin-Baro S.J.
Segundo Montes S.J.
Juan Ramon Muñoz S.J.
Eiba Julia Ramos
Celina Ramos.

With each name the vigilers collectively respond, “¡Presente!” This Spanish word signifies that a martyr is resurrected and is present among us. For each name a vigiler steps forward and has theatrical blood daubed sacramentally on her or his face.

Just as the eighth “presente” rings out, two other vigilers light flares and put them by each roadside, and two others position themselves facing traffic and hold aloft signs reading, “CAUTION—SOA MASSACRE IN PROGRESS.” Two others, dressed as SOA soldiers in fatigue and camouflage jackets, pick up cardboard machine guns. One puts a camouflage hood over his face, and points his gun at the communicants. Gutturally he shouts: "SUBVERSIVES! UP AGAINST THE WALL!"

At that, eight communicants each representing a specific victim, go over to the Welcome to Fort Benning sign, thereby entering the base.

“Get down!” the hooded soldier shouts. The eight shed their jackets and lay face down in the grass, mother and daughter clutching each other. Each wears a bloodied white blouse. The two soldiers begin executing the eight by putting their cardboard guns to each head. The head is targeted because in the real massacre the Jesuits—the alleged brains of the popular resistance—had their brains blown out and scattered across the laws. At each head the gun is jerked abruptly to simulate recoil, and the soldier shouts, “You’re dead!”

Soon Capt. John Doolittle from the Judge Advocate General’s office at Ft. Benning arrives. He is also wearing fatigues. Turning his back to the martyrs, he reads aloud a statement to the press and the remaining vigilers. It says: anyone entering Ft. Benning with a political agenda will be subject to arrest.

The “Ft Benning Ten”

Arrested were: Claire O’Mara, 74 year old Ursuline nun, New Rochelle, NY; Roy Bourgeois, VietNam vet and Maryknoll priest, Columbus, GA; Bill (“Bix”) Bichsel, Jesuit priest and former college dean, Tacoma, WA; Catholic Worker, Jo Anne Lingle, mother of eight, Indianapolis, IN; Bill Corrigan, WWII veteran, Marietta, GA; Bob Holstein, trial lawyer and former Jesuit seminarian, Riverside, CA; Louie De Benedette, VietNam vet, Uncasville, CT; Ray Laport, WWII veteran and Pax Christi staff person, Erie, PA; Joe Zito, School psychologist, Albany, GA; and Ed Kinane, Fordham (Jesuit) College alumnus, Syracuse, NY.

Author Ed Kinane, “dressed to kill” at the entrance to Ft. Benning.
Ft. Benning Arrests cont'd from page 5

But just as we had anticipated, "they" get clever and apparently decide not to arrest us...at least not while the media's at hand. The School of the Americas cultivates a low profile.

After about 20 minutes of the victims lying jacket-less on the ground, we activate Plan B. The hooded soldier shouts, "Get up!" Each victim gets up, and with arms raised, all begin trudging in a column along the median. Our destination: the SOA building three miles into the base.

Our two soldiers follow behind brandishing their cardboard guns. Accompanying us are TV camera crews on foot and in a vehicle, and at a distance, some MPs. MPs back at the main gate keep traffic from entering the base. When we are less than a mile into the base, at an isolated stretch of road, the MPs make their move.

As they come at us, the eight victims again go prostrate in the grass. The hooded soldier again re-enacts the '89 massacre, shooting the victims in the head one by one. When he gets to the sixth, the police shout "Stop!"

But he keeps on. A cop grabs him, pushes him and rips the cardboard out of his hand. It is this scene—the executions and the cop's roughness—that is shown close-up on that night's 6 o'clock news on both local TV stations.

Although we aren't handcuffed, we are all under arrest. A blue bus pulls up to take us to the MP compound. The tableau (captured in a prominent photo in the next day's Ledger-Enquirer) eerily resembles what has occurred many times over the years on isolated roads in Central America: soldiers stop a bus and order all the campesinos off, the soldiers then separate out some men...and execute them.

Because this is the core and not the periphery of the Imperium, our fate is different. The MPs treat us courteously and hold us four or five hours. Before being bussed off base, we're handed ban and bar letters and given appearance tickets. We're charged with criminal trespass. We'll be tried in Federal District Court in Columbus, probably in the spring.

Ed, a PNL contributing editor, worked with Peace Brigades International in fall while providing protective accompaniment in El Salvador, he saw first-hand the terror caused by SOA grads.
Guilty of Telling the Truth
"S.O.A. 13" Off to Prison

Ed Kinane #86279-020

O n April 29 the "S.O.A. 13" were found guilty of criminal trespass, a misdemeanor, in federal court in Columbus, GA. The charge stemmed from actions at Fort Benning, GA, site of the US Army's School of the Americas.

We were all granted "self-surrender." This means, instead of having been taken into custody immediately upon being found guilty, we report to wherever each of us is assigned at a date to be decided by the feds. We were freed on a $5000 unsecured bond.

On May 24 I learned that I must report to McKean County Correctional Facility in Bradford, PA on May 31. Bradford is just southwest of Olean, NY, maybe five hours' drive from Syracuse. I'll be in the minimum security camp there. Each of the defendants will serve time at a separate facility.

Besides me, the defendants include Fr. Roy Bourgeois, the Maryknoll priest and former Viet Nam naval officer who founded S.O.A. Watch. Since 1990 S.O.A. Watch has campaigned tirelessly to close the School. The other felons included a trial lawyer, a Jesuit priest, a school psychologist, a Viet Nam veteran, two World War II vets, a mother of eight, a 75 year old Ursuline nun, a former priest and superintendent of schools, and a former professional baseball player.

We were all arrested at Fort Benning by military police—on two separate occasions exactly a year apart. Three were arrested on November 16, 1994 for chaining shut the doors of the S.O.A.; ten were arrested on November 16, 1995 for re-enacting (with cardboard machine guns) the November 16, 1989 killing of eight Salvadorans, including six Jesuit priests [See Jan. '96 PNL.]. The killers were members of the Salvadoran military's Atlacatl Battalion who had trained at the School of the Americas.

Although barely known to the US taxpayers who fund it, the S.O.A. is well known throughout Latin America as the "School of Assassins." It is 50 shadowy years the S.O.A., using Spanish-speaking instructors, has trained 60,000 Latin American soldiers in combat and anti-insurgency skills. The School's nasty little secret is that the "insurgents" tend to be workers, peasants, teachers, labor organizers, human rights activists, nuns and priests—i.e. "commies." (In 1980 in El Salvador various S.O.A.-trained military officers assassinated, among many others, Archbishop Oscar Romero and four US women, including an Ursuline and two Maryknoll nuns.)

On the morning of the trial, scores of supporters from all over the country rallied at the courthouse. Robert Richter, the producer of several Academy Award-nominated documentaries, and his camera man were there filming. The event was made more colorful by two bold banners created by Central New Yorkers: Jaci Domin's proclaimed, GUILTY OF TELLING THE TRUTH; Rose Mannara's read, INDICT THE SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS FOR TERRORISM.

The courtroom was packed. Our trial was a bench trial, i.e. there was no jury. It was conducted by Judge J. Robert Elliott, 84, a.k.a. "Maximum Bob." Elliott has twice previously sentenced Roy Bourgeois to prison terms totalling over three years. In the courtroom were Congressmen George Brown (D-CA), a personal friend of Bob Holstein, one of the defendants, and Joseph Kennedy (D-MA), who introduced anti-S.O.A. bills in the House. [See box on page 17.]

We were defended pro bono by two fine lawyers, David Grindle of Columbus and Peter Thompson of Minneapolis. David is affiliated with the Georgia ACLU; Peter had previously defended Roy in a case he had argued before the Supreme Court.

The charge against us stemmed from our engaging in "partisan political activity" on a military base otherwise open to the public—a no-no according to base regs. To expedite the trial we stipulated to the facts concerning our "trespass." So the prosecution had no need to call any witnesses. It rested its case immediately upon submitting the stipulation to Elliott.

Our attorneys began the defense by questioning three subpoenaed witnesses. Each was local: a civilian lawyer working on the base, a Latino employed by the Columbus Chamber of Commerce who heads a civilian S.O.A. support group, and the Cuban-American widow of a millionaire businessman. Their testimony showed that political activity in support of the S.O.A. frequently goes on at Fort Benning. It became clear that, in being arrested for opposing the School, we had been selectively prosecuted in violation of our first amendment rights. While we knew this argument wouldn't fly in this court, David and Peter were laying groundwork for the eventual appeal.

After the three hostile witnesses, five of the defendants testified. While Elliott didn't permit us to testify as fully as we would have liked, we were able to say something about our motivation. Several of us had worked in Latin America and had seen firsthand the systemic violence there which S.O.A. grads actively maintain.

We all got to make pre-sentencing statements as Elliott told each separately he or she was guilty. Elliott had already granted our request that we be sentenced at the trial—rather than after a customary several weeks' delay. Those of us coming from as far away as New York, New Mexico, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, California, and Washington weren't eager to return yet again to Georgia. We had all returned in February for the arraignment and were tired of the commute.

In his statement Fr. Bill "Bix" Bichsel, S.J. told Elliott that this coming November 16 there would be far more of us at the Fort Benning gate to once again commemorate the slaughter of the six Jesuits and to call for the close of the S.O.A. This, and Bix's inviting the judge to join us then, brought sustained applause from the gallery. I think Elliott was so taken aback that he forgot to use his gavel. Later, supporters spoke of how moving the defendants' testimony and statements had been. There has even been talk of editing and publishing the transcript.

Elliott gave Roy the maximum penalty of six months in prison. Fr. Bix and Lou De Benedette, the two repeat offenders, each got two four month sentences—to be served concurrently. The rest of us, all first timers (at Fort Benning anyway), were sentenced to two months.

Among us were two women, Jo Anne Lingle and Sister Claire O'Mara, OSU, who had never been arrested anywhere before. Elliott sentenced them before the rest of us, to three years' probation. But after all the other defendants were sentenced to prison, Jo Anne and Sister Claire requested prison instead of probation. They told the judge they wanted to be in solidarity with their co-defendants and

S.O.A. 13 can't on next page

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didn't want special treatment because of their gender. Elliot, ever the Southern gentleman, obliged by giving them each two months in prison. In doing so he declared, "I have a soft spot in my heart for women."

Our sentences weren't unexpected, but they are untypically harsh. People of conscience exercising their first amendment rights protesting the military machine are frequently charged with trespass at military bases—without having to serve time. I've even been arrested for trespass at the White House, the Supreme Court and CIA headquarters (not to mention frequently at our own Griffiss AFB) without ever being sentenced to prison.

While we're in prison the many S.O.A. killers and those who teach torture at the S.O.A. will continue undicted. But the publicity around our protests, trial and sentences helps fuel the movement to close the School.

Both our November '95 action and the trial were front page news in Columbus, where the military is the main industry. On May 3 the Boston Globe editorialized against the S.O.A. The story was also picked up by the AP and CNN.

In Central New York both WRVO and WAER radio news ran stories on April 29. On May 1 the Syracuse Herald Journal published an excellent editorial, "Going to jail for a good cause," by M.C. Burns. The Syracuse New Times' Russ Tarby wrote a good article, "Exposing the 'School of Assassins'." Other defendants, especially Jo Anne and Sister Claire, also got excellent hometown coverage. For me, our civil disobedience—responding to a higher law—and the jail time are well worth it: it'll help expose and close the heinous School that USA taxpayers finance.

Ed is on the PNL editorial committee. Until the end of July, his mailing address will be: Ed Kinane, #82279-020, PO box 9000; Bradford, PA 16701.

New Video Exposes S.O.A. Torture Classes

At OUR TRIAL we tried to place in evidence a tape of excerpts from Robert Richter's new video, "Inside the School of Assassins." It's an hour-long sequel to his 18 minute "School of Assassins." It includes testimony by an S.O.A. grad interviewed by Roy in South America earlier this year.

Here is a partial transcript of the excerpts which Judge Elliot wouldn't hear and wouldn't allow into evidence:

ROY BOURGEOIS: We always heard that there was torture taught at the School of the Americas. But it was very difficult of course to have someone come forward to speak. We located someone in another country who was at the School of the Americas. He would speak only on the condition that his face would not be shown nor his name used.

MR. X: The school was always a front for other special operations, covert operations. They would bring people from the streets into the base and the experts would train us on how to obtain information through torture. We were trained to torture human beings. They had a medical physician, a US medical physician which I remember very well who was dressed in green fatigues, who would teach the students the nerve endings of the body, he would show them where to torture, where and where not, where you wouldn't kill the individual. He would tell them how much the heart can tolerate, can hold up. And there were also times where they would revive the person with a powerful drug. There were many tricks that you could play. There are manuals about those things.

ROY: That were used, a manual used?

MR. X: Sure.

NARRATOR: There is another graduate who once was a member of a Honduran death squad called Battalion 316. Right now he is in political asylum in another country and for the first time he's speaking publicly about what he learned about at the School.

JOSE VALLE: I took a course in Intelligence at the School of the Americas. The School of the Americas had a lot of videos which showed the type of interrogation and torture they used in Vietnam, their methods, their ways of questioning, all of it. These drawings were made for me to educate people so they would know the type of work done by the Death Squads, the interrogation and torture they committed. Although many people refuse to accept it, all this is organized by the US government.

At a March 28 press conference with S.O.A. Watch fasters on the Capitol steps in DC, Joe Kennedy said his current bill, HR2652, had only a slim chance of getting out of the Republican-controlled House National Security Committee.

HR2652 called for closing the SOA and establishing an Academy of Democracy and Civil-Military Relations at Fort Benning.

According to the S.O.A. Watch Spring 1996 Update, HR2652 was a strategy "worth trying." But, significantly, the Update goes on to note, "It now seems to be the desire of the vast majority of grass-roots organizers around the country to get back to simply closing the school without any alternatives."

Many feel HR2652 was flawed. It would have legitimized a site where Latin American military would continue to network, get indoctrinated, and be recruited by US intelligence agencies. The site would still function as an arm of the US imperium in Latin America.

ROY BOURGEOIS: I read this article about this training manual used at the School of the Americas that actually trained those soldiers in the techniques of torture. The article said that the manual was in Paraguay. And I did some research, made some calls and made contact with a human rights leader, Martin Almada, in Paraguay, to see what we could find out about this training manual.

ALMADA: This is the Palace of Justice. And on the eighth floor are the secret files of the political police of the Stroessner regime. And in these files we found documents which prove that the School of the Americas was training soldiers and policemen in Paraguay in techniques of torture. One of the documents tells how to keep the tortured alive.

ROY BOURGEOIS: Doctor, you have been tortured?

ALMADA: I was tortured. And my wife too. My wife died as a result of the torture. I was a victim of the School of the Americas and my torturers used manuals from the School of the Americas.

"Inside the School of Assassins" is slated for release in late June. Please consider acquiring it and showing it to a group of friends, or to a class, or...to anyone you can get to watch it. To order, contact Richter Productions, 330 West 42nd St., New York, NY 10036; tel. (212) 947-1395.
Three arrested in protest at School of the Americas

Protesters re-enact murder of Guatemalan bishop, allegedly slain by graduate of SOA

By Eileen Zaffiro

Keeping a promise to stage more frequent protests at the U.S. Army's School of the Americas, Friday morning three people re-enacted the murder of a Roman Catholic bishop they contend was slain by a graduate of the military training school.

One of the protesters, 45-year-old Steve Jacobs of Columbia, Mo., donned black clothing and a priest's collar, and laid as if he was dead just outside a main entrance to the Fort Benning-based school that trains Latin American soldiers. Two women donned black shrouds and white death masks. They set up a sign that read "Close School of Assassins" and knelt on either side of Jacobs, who had fake blood splotched on his face, and a concrete block beside his head to recall Bishop Juan Gerardi's skull being crushed.

The women had planned to read from the report on Guatemala's civil war where they say Gerardi was killed more than two years ago. However, military officials talked to them throughout their 10-minute demonstration and then took them into custody. The trio had been spotted as they walked toward the School of the Americas building. Within minutes, they were surrounded by the school's commandant, a public affairs official and Department of Defense civilian police.

"By doing this you're not learning about the school," Col. Glenn R. Weidner, commandant of the SOA, told the demonstrators. He also invited them to attend classes for soldiers in the future.

"We could have had a productive dialogue if you'd chosen," Weidner said.

Jacobs had to be pulled up by two police officers, but did not resist once on his feet. Chrissy Kirchhoefer, 22, was led away next and then 47-year-old Maureen Doyle was detained by officers. All three were taken to the military police station where they were placed in separate rooms.

The demonstrations, which protesters say will become monthly now, are "based on a myth and a lie," Weidner said. The classes soldiers attend deal with things such as medical assistance and peacekeeping, he said.

"It's ironic they're trying to close a school helping soldiers to do things our way," Weidner said.

An SOA graduate was arrested in Gerardi's assassination, but he has been released and a priest remains the chief suspect, Weidner said.

In an interview before the protest, Jacobs said Gerardi's death is "a classic example of how SOA graduates target human rights advocates and whistle blowers."

The three, who run and live in a Catholic homeless shelter in Missouri, were cited for disorderly conduct, destruction of government property and criminal trespass. By mid-afternoon, they were still being detained. It will be up to the U.S. attorney to pursue the charges, which could involve jail time and fines.

School of Americas draws Columbians' ire

Carrying bottles of theatrical blood and dressed in borrowed priest's garb, Columbia resident Steve Jacobs spent about 10 minutes on the steps of the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Ga., yesterday before base security hauled him away.

Jacobs was joined by two other members of the St. Francis House community: Maureen Doyle and Chrissy Kirchhoefer, both of Columbia.

Jacobs and other protesters fear the School of the Americas is a training ground for terrorists.

"They teach ... soldiers to go back and infiltrate grass-roots organizations," Jacobs said. "That would be illegal in the United States ... and yet we're teaching those soldiers to do the exact same thing."

The three activists made their trip to Georgia on the second anniversary of the assassination of Roman Catholic Bishop Juan Gerardi in Guatemala.

"We're just really fed up that our government is expecting us to continue to pay for members of our church to be killed," Jacobs said.

For Kirchhoefer, it was her third trip to protest the School of the Americas. She said her protests are intended to end "the atrocities that are occurring not only in Latin America, but throughout the world."

According to Jacobs, the protesters were charged with damage to government property, disorderly conduct and trespassing. They also were given a ban and letter barring them from Fort Benning for five years, he said, adding it's the second time the school has banned him from the property.

Fort Benning security could not be reached for comment.
Eleven SOA protesters arrested

Protest was in response to last week's decision by Congress not to close School of the Americas

By S. Theresa Harper

Nine Ohio college students and two others were taken into custody Wednesday at Fort Benning while protesting last week's vote in the Congress to keep the U.S. Army School of the Americas open.

Though protests by School of the Americas Watch have become more frequent in recent months, Wednesday's demonstration marked the first action following an alliance by the human rights group with anti-poverty protesters.

Some of those arrested were among thousands that protested in Washington, D.C., last month to raise environmental and social concerns during a meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, said SOA Watch spokeswoman Ann Tiffany.

The 11 protesters could be seen dashing toward the entrance of the school about 10:30 a.m. Standing in front of the entrance, they read statements through a bullhorn and unfurled signs, one reading "New Name, Same Shame. Wrong Way." Minutes later, a U.S. Department of Defense police officer arrived and ordered military police to the scene. The protesters were handcuffed and placed in military police cars.

Fort Benning spokeswoman Monica Manganaro said the 11 were cited for disorderly conduct, resisting arrest and criminal trespassing. They remained in military custody late Wednesday afternoon but were expected to be released later in the evening, Manganaro said.

Calling those changes "cosmetic," Tiffany said Wednesday's action served to broaden the group's philosophy, linking human rights to economic conditions.

"We are making connections between economic situations that lead to poverty and policies that lead to repressive governments and militaries," Tiffany said. "Repressive economies need repressive militaries."

"It's the same old thing," Weidner said. It is "their bread and butter. It kind of reveals who's behind this. It's a revolutionary, third-world agenda of promoting anti-capitalism and anti-military doctrine."

"It is a product of ignorance and, to some degree, racism," Weidner said. "They could have come inside and traded ideas, but they chose to demonize. We are not teaching criminal conduct. We are teaching principles of the U.S. Army."
A man and a woman were taken into military custody Wednesday morning at Fort Benning after suspending themselves from a 200-foot water tower in a protest of the U.S. Army School of the Americas.

After unfurling a 1,750-square-foot banner that read, "North and South the People Say: Close the School of the Americas," Liz Guy, 25, and Josh Raisler Cohn, 23, rappelled to the bottom of the banner and dangled about 100 feet above the ground.

Shortly before 8:30 a.m., post officials were notified of the action and dispatched rescue units to Dixie Road, near Way Street.

Cohn disconnected himself and climbed onto a 100-foot rescue ladder.

Guy, however, initially refused to halt the action but was talked down by a post firefighter about 45 minutes later, said post spokesman Rich McDowell.

Guy, of Seattle, and Cohn, a Portland, Ore., man who was cited for conducting a mock hanging of himself from a Fort Benning bridge on Nov. 14, were both charged with criminal trespassing.

Cohn, who was banned for five years from the post after the Nov. 14 action, faced the possibility of other charges, said Elsie Jackson, Fort Benning public affairs officer.

Father Roy Bourgeois, who heads SOA Watch, the primary SOA protest
PROTEST Pair charged with criminal trespassing

organization, said Wednesday night that Cohn had been released on $5,000 bond following his afternoon arraignment before U.S. Magistrate G. Malion Faircloth.

Cohn faces a Jan. 22 federal court trial, Bourgeois said.

Guy remained in military custody as of 6:30 p.m., Bourgeois said.

"It was a foolhardy act," McDowell said. "It endangered the life of the firefighter and themselves."

Guy and Cohn are part of the Ohio-based Peace Activists Coalition, said Coalition spokeswoman Kate Berrigan.

Berrigan, the daughter of long-time peace activist Philip Berrigan, called Wednesday's protest an "autonomous action" — not linked to any particular group but supported by the coalition — and that more can be expected.

"I definitely think we can expect more of these autonomous actions" against SOA, Berrigan said.

"This is a continuous movement."

The action nearly coincided with the 10 a.m. memorial service for a U.S. Army Ranger who was slain last week in Columbus. At one point, after Guy had refused to come down, post officials considered using a U.S. Army Ranger unit to assist with the operation.

After the two were taken into custody, the 507th Airborne's "man-in-the-steel" team — used to rescue paratroopers on the post's 250-foot jump towers — scaled the water tower ladder to the catwalk 150 feet above and removed the banner.

Post officials described the protest action as highly organized and well-planned operation.

"They were definitely experienced climbers," McDowell said.

Contact S. Thorne Harper at (706) 571-8516 or sharper@ledger-enquirer.com

Liz Guy of Seattle is led to a military police car Wednesday morning after being brought down from a water tower on Fort Benning.
WESTERN HEMISPHERE INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION OPENS

New school, same foes

Commandant Col. Richard Downie holds the school's flag after it was unveiled Wednesday at the activation ceremony at Benning.

Seven more protesters were arrested Wednesday, including three women carrying a baby's coffin who said they wanted to join the ceremony for the opening of WHISC. All were charged with trespassing, and four men who locked their arms together with chains and metal pipes were also charged with resisting arrest.

Rebecca Johnson, 21, and Laurel Pagel-Seekins, 20, both seniors at Oberlin College in Ohio, were previously banned from the post and could face up to six months in federal prison and a $5,000 fine. Johnson's mother, Deborah Meem, also was detained by military officials.

Fort Benning military police drag away four protesters including Jole McGreevy, 20, of Carlisle, Pa., left, and Rebecca Johnson, 21, of Cincinnati after they entered the post and blocked the entrance to protest Wednesday's opening of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, which replaced the School of the Americas.
Student finds spiritual outlet in protesting

Demonstrator at Fort Benning offers insights into idea of nonviolence

BY ALLISON KENNEDY
Staff Writer

Every day since Jan. 1, a 21-year-old Ohio woman named Rebecca Johnson has stood resolutely at Fort Benning's main gate. She speaks to passersby. She waves at people in passing cars. She chats with military police. She hugs visitors who have traveled to join her from all across the country.

The Unitarian-Universalist senior at Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio, is at Fort Benning to protest the opening of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly known as the School of the Americas.

As of today, she has been on a fast for 21 days.

No one told her to deny herself food. But, like other nonviolent protesters, Johnson said she feels compelled by her spirituality to act, to draw attention to a cause — training Latin American soldiers in combat skills — that she believes is wrong.

She was also arrested Wednesday after crossing the line onto post, and faces up to six months in federal prison in addition to a $5,000 fine.

Wednesday morning before her arrest, Johnson was among 12 adults standing near the main gate, holding up handmade posters in a drizzling rain.

See DEMONSTRATION, Page D2

DEMONSTRATION | Exploring aspects of faith

From D1

Wearing a rain jacket and clutching a legal pad of notes about the protest, Johnson talked with the Ledger-Enquirer about her mission and what role religion plays in it.

What does your faith teach you about this protest?
One of the first principles of Unitarian-Universalists is to respect the dignity and worth of every human being. It's not a dogmatic religion. I find a lot of my faith in nonviolence. Civil disobedience is very important to me.

What about your fast?
I've been on juice only ... carrot juice, V-8, apple juice, cranberry juice. I've lost weight. I take in 500 calories a day and multivitamins. I'm holding up pretty well. I take naps. I'm doing this until the 31st.

What's the message you're trying to get across?
I'm here because the (School of the Americas) is reopening. I'm not fooled by the Department of the Defense, trying to re-open a clone of the SOA.

Among spiritual leaders past and present, who inspires you?
Gandhi, King, Daniel and Phil Berrigan, Dorothy Day. All of them were and are very spiritual people, strong in their religion. Their religion told them to do nonviolent acts. They thought that civil disobedience was the best thing a person can do, to follow a higher order.

How did your parents inspire you in this?
Both of my parents are involved in various movements. My father supports the environmental movement, including the Sierra Club. My mother has taught me always to follow my conscience.

When do you graduate?
What happens after that?
In May. It depends on if I'm spending time in jail. I may do an SOA Watch/Northeast internship, in Philadelphia. Or I may spend a year at a Catholic worker house in Denver. We'll just have to see.
Protesters march on

SUA WATCH returns to FORT BENNING

Army institute's officials say opponents are focused on the past

BY S. THORNE HARPER
Staff Writer

Splattered with fake blood and carrying placards condemning recent alleged atrocities in Colombia, 11 demonstrators Wednesday crossed into Fort Benning protesting a revamped post school considered a vital component of U.S. drug war policy.

About 20 people, recently returned from a nine-day trip to Colombia, converged outside Fort Benning before the crossing, asserting that the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation — formerly the School of the Americas — continues to adopt human rights violations they link to its predecessor.

“We're seeking to bring back the stories of the campesinos who have experienced the repression of graduates of the School of the Americas,” said Eric LeCompte, 25, the Washington, D.C.-based outreach director for SOA Watch. “We're bringing those stories back here to the source.”

Protesters and institute officials mingled together, exchanging ideas, as the Rev. Roy Bourgeois, SOA Watch founder, hammered white crosses into the ground outside the main gate bearing the names of Colombian towns associated with massacres. The protesters criticized the defoliation associated with the U.S.-backed, $1.3 billion “Plan Colombia” anti-cocaine effort. The fumigation destroys the country's food crops in addition to coca plants, they said.

“We found entire banana plantations destroyed by fumigation.”

See PROTEST, Page C3

PHOTOS BY MIKE HASKEY

Gretchen Cercone of Buffalo, N.Y., waits Wednesday to cross the line onto Fort Benning as part of a protest of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly the School of the Americas, at the post.

Photos by Mike Haskey

-- over
PROTEST 11 cited

From C1

LeCompte said. Institute officials, meanwhile, said the protesters were using arcane arguments to criticize an institute with a new mission.

"We're not trying to be the regional hegemon," said Joe Leuer, chief of the institute's training management division. "We're trying to ensure that everybody in the region is part of the objective of peace and prosperity.

"The story they're telling is a critique of history. What we're about is the future."

"We're an open post and we welcome anyone to come and see what we're about," said Maj. Milton F. Mariani, the institute's public affairs officer.

Last year, Congress voted to close the School of the Americas, which many in government considered had been tainted by continuing public disclosure of atrocities committed in Latin America by some of its graduates. The school reopened earlier this year under a new name, structure and curriculum, including human rights courses. The institute provides leadership training for military officers, police and civilians who work for public safety agencies in 17 Latin American countries.

Of the 700 students expected to attend the institute this year, 148 of them are from Colombia, Mariani said.

Protesters planned Wednesday's action to coincide with Tuesday's jailing of 19 people convicted of trespassing on the post during a mass protest last November and U.S. congressional debate expected today on expanded fumigation of Latin American coca fields.

The march began when a young woman poured fake blood over her body, draped herself in a Colombian flag and led 10 others onto the post. The group was detained about 30 yards inside the main gate. The 11 were issued ban-and-bar letters, prohibiting them from entering the post for five years. They were then taken outside the post and released on their own recognizance, said Elsie Jackson, a Fort Benning spokeswoman.

Two members of the group had previously received ban-and-bar letters and post officials were considering Wednesday whether to prosecute them for a trespassing violation, Jackson said.

With some members of Congress considering an amendment that will reallocate toward education money initially earmarked for drug eradication, an SOA Watch spokeswoman said protests by groups returning from Colombia is having an effect.

"It's because people like this — the people who have been to Colombia and who have seen what's happening — that the amendment is being offered," said SOA Watch spokeswoman Jackie Downing.
The School of Assassins

The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, located at Ft. Benning, Georgia, is a combat training school for Latin American soldiers. The school, until recently known as the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA), has been steeped in controversy for nearly two decades.

From 1946 to 1984, the SOA was located in Panama. Before it was kicked out of the country under the terms of the Panama Canal Treaty, a major Panamanian newspaper dubbed it "The School of Assassins." Being well-earned and well-documented, the name stuck. SOA-trained soldiers have left a trail of blood and suffering in every country where they have returned.

During its 54 year history, the SOA has trained over 60,000 Latin American soldiers. It continues each year to train hundreds of soldiers in combat skills such as commando tactics, mine warfare, military intelligence, and psychological operations. In 1996, the Pentagon was forced to reveal the existence of training manuals used at the SOA. These manuals advocated torture, execution, and blackmail and targeted civilians for these tactics. The manuals have since been discontinued; but the strategy they embody persists.

SOA-trained troops continue to return home to wage war against their own people, with disastrous consequences. Hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans have been tortured, raped, assassinated, "disappeared," massacred, and forced into refugee camps by those trained at the "School of Assassins."

Our Tax Dollars at Work...

Recent Pentagon reports place the annual budget for the SOA at $4 million. This represents only the operating budget and excludes salaries and other expenses associated with the school. Previous official reports have shown that the total fiscal requirements for the SOA amount to $18.4 million tax dollars annually. This includes operating expenses, "scholarships" for soldiers and salary expenses for military and civilian personnel. In a time when U.S. families are struggling to find resources for education and other basics, it is a crime to use millions of dollars of tax money on the School of Assassins.

Guns and Greed

A recent Pentagon report to Congress notes that combat training at the school supports U.S. policy towards Latin America, which "seek[s] to develop stable, free market democracies throughout the region." The mission of U.S. Southern Command (encompassing the SOA) includes "... protecting the supply of strategic natural resources and access to the markets."

Protecting U.S. interests in Latin America has translated into creating a favorable business climate for U.S. corporations, one with rock bottom wages and environmental standards and weak or nonexistent unions. As the markets of Latin America open to "free" trade, the most vulnerable are driven ever deeper into poverty.

SOA graduates become the "enforcers" of these exploitative economic policies. Soldiers trained at the SOA consistently use their combat training against labor organizers, religious leaders, student activists and others who work for just wages, decent housing and other basic needs.

The economic rape of the poor that accompanies globalization could not stand without the repressive military apparatus that brutalizes those who rise up to resist.

Colombia and the SOA

Over 10,000 soldiers from Colombia have trained at the SOA, more than any other country. Reports issued in 2000 by the U.S. State Department and Human Rights Watch document the involvement of Colombian SOA graduates in kidnapping, murder, massacres and setting up paramilitary groups. 50% of the 247 officials cited in an earlier report were trained at the SOA. Some Colombians were featured as guest speakers or instructors or included in the "Hall of Fame" after their involvement.

~ Major David Hernandez Rojas and Captain Diego Fino Rodriguez, cited for the March, 1999 murder of the Antioqua Peace Commissioner and two other civilians as they tried to deliver ransom for a kidnapping victim.

~ Col. Alirio Antonio Uruena Jaramillo and two other SOA graduates were implicated in the gruesome Trujillo "Chainsaw" Massacres in which at least 107 prisoners were tortured and murdered.

~ Major Jesus Maria Clavijo Clavijo and another SOA graduate were linked to paramilitary groups through cell phone communications and regular meetings on military bases. Clavijo was implicated in the February 1999 paramilitary killings near El Carmen de Atrolo.

--- over ---
Bombs and Bullets Still the SOA Mission... With the Same Chilling Results.

In response to growing criticism, the Pentagon has mounted a smoke and mirrors PR campaign to give the school a new image, changing its name for the third time since it opened in 1946. The "reformed" SOA, now called The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, supposedly focuses on human rights, democracy, peacekeeping, and counter-narcotics training.

The Pentagon touts a few new courses as evidence that the school has been reformed. A close examination of the course descriptions reveals that behind the new packaging, business as usual continues at the SOA.

An article on the SOA web page describing the "Humanitarian De-Mining" course states, "land mines left behind by soldiers continue to terrorize and destroy lives long after the fighting has ended." What's left out is that in a parallel course, the SOA continues to teach soldiers to lay landmines.

Likewise, in the deceptively titled "Peace Operations" course soldiers learn psychological operations, military intelligence and population control techniques like setting up roadblocks.

Through all of the cosmetic changes and supposed reforms, the SOA has remained a counter-insurgency (translation: anti-civilian) combat training school. Before the recent name change, the late Paul Coverdell, influential Georgia senator and SOA supporter, noted that the reforms were "basically cosmetic" and that the SOA would still be able to fulfill its purpose.

Learn more ... Order these resources

SOA: Guns & Greed. NEW VIDEO! This 20-minute video shows how combat-ready SOA graduates use their guns to protect the greed of large corporations & world financial institutions. $8.95

School of Assassins, Academy award- nominated 18-minute video, history of the SOA narrated by Susan Sarandon. $13 English or Spanish.

SOA: An Insider Speaks Out. Award-winning video of former SOA instructor, Maj. Joseph Blair's testimony against the SOA. 16 min $13

Crossing the Line. This 16-minute video captures the hope, commitment and solidarity of the movement to close the SOA. $13

School of Assassins, paperback by Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer. Documents the story of the SOA and the foreign policy that drives it. 112 pages. $13 Orbis books

Solidarity in Action, A handbook for starting a local SOA Watch group. Includes information on legislative work, media and more $13 ($10 for students)

SOA Watch
PO Box 4566 ~ Washington, DC ~20017
(202) 234-3440 ~ www.soaw.org

Here's What You Can Do

Organize

Come to Fort Benning or the Capitol for the annual vigil and nonviolent direct action. (Contact SOA Watch for details.) Organize a demonstration at your local federal building. Form an SOA Watch group in your area and start a local campaign to close the School of Assassins.

Call or Write Congress or the President

Tell them you want the School of Assassins (Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation) to close.

The Honorable (name) The Honorable (name)
US House of Representatives US Senate
Washington DC 20515 Washington DC 20510

Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121
White House (202) 456-1111

Invite Fr. Roy Bourgeois to Speak

Fr. Roy Bourgeois, founder and co-director of SOA Watch, speaks powerfully and from personal experience about why the SOA must be closed. Call to schedule: (706) 682-5369

Spread the Word ~ Distribute This Flyer

Order the videos and book on the SOA. Speak to church and student groups, veterans' organizations and local unions.

Contact media in your community.
SOA Graduates in the News 2000/2001

COLOMBIA

SOA Graduates Cited for Recent Human Rights Atrocities and Paramilitary Ties

According to the 2000 State Department Report on Human Rights in Colombia, SOA graduates Major David Hernandez Rojas and Captain Diego Fino Rodriguez are being prosecuted in civilian courts for the March 1999 murders of Antiqua peace commissioner Alex Lopera and two others. Both men are members of the Colombian Military's 4th Brigade, which has been extensively linked to paramilitary groups.

SOA graduate Colonel Jorge Plazas Acevedo is being tried by the Prosecutor General of Colombia for the 1998 kidnapping and murder of Jewish business leader Benjamin Khoudari. Plazas is the former chief of intelligence for the Colombian Military's 13th Brigade.

The State Department reports that Colonel Jesus Maria Clavijo, a graduate of the SOA, is currently under investigation for collusion with paramilitary forces in 160 social cleansing murders from 1995-1998. In addition to the information provided by the State Department Report, a 2001 Reuters article reports that Clavijo has been accused of ties to a paramilitary death squad responsible for the massacre of at least 100 people in 1996 and 1997. Clavijo is currently in prison awaiting his trial.

Finally, the report states that SOA graduate Commander Mauricio Llorente Chavez was indicted by the Prosecutor General for complicity in a massacre that took place in Tibu, July 1999.

"The Ties that Bind", a report issued by Human Rights Watch in February 2000, cited at least seven SOA graduates for involvement with paramilitary groups. SOA graduate Brigadier General Jaime Ernesto Canal Alban, commander of the 3rd Brigade, was involved in helping to establish a paramilitary group known as the "Calima Front". Canal's brigade was found to have supplied the front with weapons and intelligence. In 1999, the Calima Front seized and executed community leader Noralba Gaviria Piedrahita. The following month, authorities discovered the mutilated and dismembered bodies of seven men near Tulu, also killed by members of the Calima Front. The front has been found responsible for 2,000 forced disappearances and at least 40 executions since 1999. In addition to his involvement with the Calima Front, Canal was in command of soldiers who entered a home and killed five civilians during the birthday party of a 15-year-old child in 1998.

The report cited General Carlos Ospina Ovalle, graduate of the SOA and former commander of the 4th Brigade, for "extensive evidence of pervasive ties" to paramilitary groups involved in human rights abuses throughout 1999. Ospina was the commander of the 4th Brigade in 1998 when troops massacred at least 11 people and burned down 47 homes in El Aro.

Major Alvaro Cortes Morillo and Major Jesus Maria Clavijo, both SOA grads, were linked to paramilitary groups in 1999 through extensive cell phone and beeper communications as well as regular meetings on military bases.

In February 2001, SOA graduate Hernan Orozco was sent to prison by a military tribunal for complicity in the Maripan torture and massacre of 30 peasants by a paramilitary group. General Mario Montoya Uribe, an SOA graduate with a history of ties to paramilitary violence, commands the Joint Task Force South, which includes the 24th Brigade. The 24th Brigade is ineligible for U.S. military aid due to its complicity in paramilitary violence. A leading Colombian newspaper identifies General Montoya as "the military official responsible for Plan Colombia".

A December 2000 AP article brought attention to the death of SOA-trained Lieutenant Carlos Acosta, who was killed for "disobedience" after escaping prison to join a Colombian death squad. According to the article, Acosta had taken a month-long infantry course at the SOA in which he learned to fire M-16 assault rifles and M-60 machine guns, and was trained in battlefield tactics. Acosta was a member of the Colombian military's 5th brigade, which has one of the worst human rights records as well as ties to paramilitary groups. Acosta was arrested when in 1994 he and his men intercepted a group of federal prosecutors, tied them up, shot them, and dumped their bodies into a river. According to Acosta's brother, "He [Acosta] used to say that a soldier in Colombia has to fight not only guerrillas, but also the human rights groups and prosecutors".

— over
GUATEMALA

Gerardi Trial

SOA graduate Byron Lima Estrada is currently on trial for the brutal 1998 assassination of Guatemalan Bishop Juan Gerardi. Gerardi was bludgeoned to death two days after he released the REMHI report, linking the Guatemalan army to most of the atrocities committed during the country's civil war. Lima Estrada headed the infamous D-2 intelligence Agency that was heavily cited in Gerardi's report.

The night before the trial began, the home of the presiding judge, Iris Yasmin Barrios, was attacked with grenades. The attack occurred despite the presence of police guards stationed at her house.

Genocide Cases

The year 2000 brought genocide cases against two former Guatemalan dictators trained at the SOA. In March, Rigoberta Menchu Tum, Nobel Peace Prize winner, filed suit in a Spanish court against SOA graduate General Efrain Rios Montt, who took power through a coup and governed Guatemala at the height of a counter-insurgency campaign that wiped hundreds of Mayan villages off the map, left thousands dead and forced hundreds of thousands into refuge or exile. The case also cites SOA graduates General Angel Anibal Guevara Rodriguez, the Minister of Defense and Colonel German Chupina Barahona, Director of the National Police.

In a parallel case, a group of Mayan survivors is suing former dictator Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia as well as former Army Chief of Staff Benedicto Lucas Garcia and former Defense Minister Luis Rene Mendoza, all graduates of the SOA. According to a recently declassified CIA document, Benedicto Lucas Garcia was key in strategizing the scorched earth policy that aimed to annihilate the civilian Mayan population. The plaintiffs are suing the former chiefs for ordering the rape, torture and massacre of their families and fellow community members. Their association represents eight communities that lost 800 people to massacres during the Lucas Garcia regime from 1981 to 1982.

Corruption Scandal

In addition, on March 21, 2001, Guatemala's highest court ordered General Rios Montt and five other lawmakers to resign from their congressional posts in order to face impeachment charges. The six were involved in a corruption scandal in which they are accused of altering a law passed by the legislature in June of 2000, which placed a 20% tax on alcoholic beverages. Mysteriously, the legislation was passed into law as a tax of only 10%. It is expected that Rios Montt will ignore the order to resign his congressional post.

BOLIVIA

Last year the Bolivian government sold the public water system of Cochamba to a private corporation, resulting in skyrocketing water rates for the people of Bolivia. As thousands took to the streets, Bolivian president and former military dictator, SOA graduate Hugo Banzer sent out the armed forces to attack civilians. In April 2000, after four days of anti-privatization protests, Banzer declared a “state of siege”, sending soldiers into the street with live bullets. 17-year-old Victor Hugo Daza was killed by a shot through his face and at least seven others were killed. The number of injuries resulting from military violence totaled over 100.

PERU

SOA honors graduate General Nicolas Hermoza Rios is currently serving time in a Peruvian prison, after pleading guilty to taking $14 million in arms deal gains. Hermoza is also under fire for allegedly taking protection money from Peruvian drug lords, whom the Peruvian military, along with military aid from the U.S., claimed to be fighting. In 1993, a witness who had worked with Demetrio “El Vaticano” Chavez, Peru’s most notorious drug trafficker, claimed that Hermoza had been receiving between $50,000 and $100,000 in protection money per month. The witness stated that “Montesinos is the one who is making the most from Vaticano”.

SOA Watch ~ PO Box 4566 ~ Washington, DC 20017 ~ (202) 234-3440 ~ info@soaw.org
Occidental Oil and U'wa land: One example of the sinister partnership

Under the guise of fighting the "war on drugs", U.S. involvement in Colombia has reached new heights. Recently the U.S. government began to implement "Plan Colombia", providing $1.3 billion of aid to a government with seemingly no regard for basic human rights.

Along with an increased involvement in Colombia has come an increase in U.S. corporate involvement. For years, a California-based petroleum corporation called Occidental Oil has been seeking the right to drill for oil on the sacred tribal lands of the indigenous U'wa people. Last year Occidental was successful in obtaining a permit from the Colombian government to drill in a 500 meter zone surrounding the Gibraltar well, leaving the U'wa in a state of environmental and economic devastation. As if this wasn't enough, Occidental is now seeking a new drilling permit that will allow them to further invade and destroy the U'wa tribal lands.

The Colombian military has already made attempts to evict the tribe from their homes, attempts which will no doubt intensify if a new permit is obtained. Indigenous opposition to these measures has been met with heinous brutality and violence from the Colombian military and other forces, already resulting in the deaths of 3 U'wa children during a non-violent demonstration as well as the murders of 3 U.S. activists.

If, as planned, the FTAA follows the model of current NAFTA policies, Occidental would hold the option to sue Colombia for expropriating their future profit if a drilling permit is ever denied. This would be a crippling blow to a government already facing massive debt repayments.

Occidental will be able to work with the FTAA and the WHISC (SOA) to ensure that they maintain the right to exploit tribal lands and that they can violently remove their opposition, the U'wa, using muscle straight from the School of Assassins.
Free Trade Enforcement in Bolivia

Last year the Bolivian government sold the public water system of Cochabamba to a private corporation, resulting in skyrocketing water rates for the people of Bolivia. As thousands took to the streets, Bolivian President and former military dictator, SOA graduate Hugo Banzer sent out the armed forces to attack civilians. After 4 days of anti-privatization protests in April 2000, the Bolivian government declared a “state of siege”, sending soldiers into the street with live bullets. On the afternoon of April 8th, 17-year-old Victor Hugo Oaza was killed by a shot through his face. At least 7 demonstrators were killed, with over 100 injured.

SOA Used to “Beat Down” Opposition to NAFTA

Hours after NAFTA went into effect, the Mexican military moved in with troops, helicopters, and artillery to squash the resistance to “free trade” – the newest installment in the war against the poor. At least 18 high-level Mexican officers who planned the repression campaign were trained at the US Army School of the Americas (now WHISC).

Consistently Latin American countries with the worst human rights records have sent the most students to the SOA during the heyday of the repression. Therefore, it is no surprise that shortly after the uprising against NAFTA, Mexico began pumping soldiers into the SOA and soon became the largest country client of the School of Assassins. Mexican soldiers made up 1/3 of the SOA graduating class in 1997 and over 1/4 of the total SOA enrolment in 1998. The SOA claimed that this training was necessary to fight the “war on drugs.” However, only 10% of the Mexican SOA graduates took counter-narcotics courses. No Mexican soldiers took the counter-drug operations course in 1999, whereas 40 received military intelligence training.

The SOA trained the military to beat down the opposition to NAFTA and other union busting economic agreements such as the FTAA.

Free Trade and the SOA Crush Unions in Colombia and Throughout Latin America

Colombia has sent 10,000 troops to train at the School of the Americas – more than any other country. Not surprisingly, the Colombian military tops the list in union busting. Of every ten trade unionists killed in the world, four are from Colombia.

The State Terrorism in Colombia report, details the participation of SOA-trained Colombian military in human rights abuses against labor leaders, clergy, nuns, student activists, and others who work for economic justice.

- **Workers assassinated**: SOA-trained Capt. Tomas Roncaricio was convicted of detaining six workers, forcing them into a cave, and slitting their throats.
- **Banana workers murdered**: 20 striking banana workers were brutally murdered. Eight of the 11 Colombian military officers cited for the slayings were SOA grads.
- **Union members targeted**: Unionists Maria Cristina Gomez and Miguel Angel Lazo Quintanilla were two of the labor leaders targeted for torture and murder by members of the Colombian air force. SOA grad, Juan Rafael Bustillo, commanded the troops cited.
- **Labor leader assassinated**: The assassination of union leader Manuel Gustavo Chacon Sarmiento in broad daylight incited five days of strikes and confrontation between the military and civilians. SOA-trained Capt. Cenon Dario Jimenez Leon was cited in the assassination.

Help stop the globalization of greed. Close the School of Assassins (WHISC). Here’s What You Can Do

- **Spread the word** — copy/distribute this flyer
- **Call Your Representative and Senators**
  Tell them to stop the FTAA and close the School of Assassins (WHISC) for good!
- **Show the video, “SOA: Guns and Greed”**
  (available from Maryknoll, 1-800) 227-8523, www.maryknoll.org) to groups you are active in.
COLOMBIA AND THE SOA:
New Developments in the War Against the Poor

Colombia, with over 10,000 troops trained at the SOA, is the school's largest customer. Not surprisingly, Colombia currently has the worst human rights record in all of Latin America. General Mario Montoya Uribe, an SOA graduate with a history of ties to paramilitary violence, commands the Joint Task Force South, which includes the 24th Brigade. The 24th brigade is ineligible for U.S. military aid due to its complicity in paramilitary violence. A leading Colombian newspaper identifies Gen. Montoya as "the military official responsible for Plan Colombia."

U.S. Military aid under Plan Colombia has been sold to the U.S. public as part of the war on drugs. In actuality, the forces under Montoya's command are engaged in a counter-insurgency war against leftist guerrillas. The aid is directed to troops taking offensive action against guerrillas in areas targeted for coca fumigation. Evidence shows that these offensives often happen in conjunction with paramilitary attacks. Robert Zoellick, a top foreign policy advisor to President Bush, was recently quoted as saying, "We cannot continue to make a false distinction between counter-insurgency and counter-narcotics."

Recent human rights reports have shown that graduates of the SOA continue to be front and center in this counter-insurgency warfare. Last year's State Department Report on Human Rights in Colombia included several examples of recent human rights violations committed by SOA-trained soldiers. According to the report, Major David Hernandez Rojas and Captain Diego Fino Rodriguez are being prosecuted in civilian courts for the March 1999 murders of Antuqua peace commissioner Alex Lopez and two others. Both men are members of the Colombian Military's 4th Brigade, which has been extensively linked to paramilitary groups. SOA graduate Colonel Jorge Plazas Acevedo is being tried by the Prosecutor General of Colombia for the 1998 kidnapping and murder of Jewish business leader Benjamin Khoudari. Plazas is the former chief of intelligence for the Colombian Military's 13th Brigade. The State Department reports that Colonel Jesus Maria Clavijo, a graduate of the SOA, is currently under investigation for collusion with paramilitary forces in 160 social cleansing murders from 1995-1998. In addition to the information provided by the State Department Report, a 2001 Reuters article reports that Clavijo has been accused of ties to a paramilitary death squad responsible for the massacre of at least 100 people in 1996 and 1997. Clavijo is currently in prison awaiting his trial. Finally, the report states that SOA graduate Commander Mauricio Llorente Chavez was indicted by the Prosecutor General for complicity in a massacre that took place in Tibu, July 1999.

"The Ties that Bind", a report issued by Human Rights Watch in February 2000, cited at least seven SOA graduates for involvement with paramilitary groups. SOA graduate Brigadier General Jaime Ernesto Canal Alban, commander of the 3rd Brigade, was involved in helping to establish a paramilitary group known as the "Calima Front". Canal's brigade was found to have supplied the front with weapons and intelligence. In 1999, the Calima Front seized and executed community leader Noralba Gaviria Piedrahita. The following month, authorities discovered the mutilated and dismembered bodies of seven men near Tulu, also killed by members of the Calima Front. The front has been found responsible for 2,000 forced disappearances and at least 14 executions since 1999. In addition to his involvement with the Calima Front, Canal was in command of soldiers who entered a home and killed five civilians during the birthday party of a 15-year-old child in 1998. The report cited General Carlos Ospina Ovalle, graduate of the SOA and former commander of the 4th Brigade, for "extensive evidence of pervasive ties" to paramilitary groups involved in human rights abuses throughout 1999. Ospina was the commander of the 4th Brigade in 1998 when troops massacred at least 11 people and burned down 47 homes in El Aro. Major Alvaro Cortes Morillo and Major Jesus Maria Clavijo, both SOA grads, were linked to paramilitary groups in 1999 through extensive cell phone and beeper communications as well as regular meetings on military bases.

A large portion of the U.S military aid to Colombia will pay for Blackhawk helicopters to be used in the counter-narcotics/counter-insurgency war described above. Flight training for these helicopters takes place at the Helicopter School Battalion (HSB) at Ft. Rucker, Alabama. The HSB has been a part of the School of the Americas since it opened in 1991. Until recently, it was part of WHISC also. The web site of WHISC reported, as part of its course listings, "Helicopter School Battalion remains unchanged." As public attention to the controversial Colombia aid package increased, the HSB disappeared from the course catalog. The public affairs officer had no explanation for the change. This is consistent with the history of the School of Assassins. The rhetoric changes, classes are shifted and re-packaged; but the same training continues and the poor continue to suffer.

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U.S. CORPORATIONS IN COLOMBIA

These U.S. corporations with subsidiaries in Colombia have at least $5 billion in annual worldwide revenue. Source: Colombia Support Network

agribusiness
Monsanto Co. [produces glyphosate]

communications/electronics
3Com Corp.
Cisco Systems, Inc.
Compaq Computer Corp.
Cooper Industries Inc.
Hewlett-Packard Co.
Hughes Electronics
IBM Corp.
Inacom Corp.
Microsoft Corp.
Motorola, Inc.
Oracle Corp.
Verizon Communications

"defense"
Rockwell International Corp.

energy/natural resources
BP Amoco
Chevron Corp.
Emerson Electric Co.
Enron Corp.
Exxon Mobil Corp.
Occidental Petroleum Corp.
Phillips Petroleum Co.
Schlumberger Limited

financial/consulting
Anderson Consulting
American International Group, Inc.
Bank of America Corp.
The Chubb Corp.
CIGNA Corp.
Citigroup, Inc.
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu International
Ernst & Young, LLP
Fleet Boston Financial Corp.
General Reinsurance Corp.
Liberty Mutual Group
Marsh & McLennan Cos., Inc.
PriceWaterhouseCoopers, LLP
St. Paul Companies, Inc.

health/pharmaceutical
Abbott Laboratories
Baxter Healthcare Corp.
Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.
Coulter Pharmaceutical, Inc.
Johnson & Johnson
Kimberly-Clark Corp
Merck & Company, Inc.
Pfizer, Inc.
Pharmacia Corp.
Schering-Plough Corp.

miscellaneous/industrial
3M
Alcoa, Inc.
Bestfoods, Inc.
Cargill, Inc.
The Coca Cola Co.
Colgate-Palmolive Co.
Crown Cork & Seal Co., Inc.
Cummins Engine Co., Inc.
Dana Corporation
The Dow Chemical Co.
E.I. Du Pont De Nemours & Co.
Eastman Kodak Co.
Eaton Corp.
The Gillette Co.
The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.
Huntsman Co.
Ingersoll-Rand Co.
McDonald's Corp.
Newell Rubbermaid
Office Depot, Inc.
Owens-Illinois,Inc.
Proctor & Gamble Co.
Rohn and Haas Co.
Smurfit-Stone Container Corp.
Union Carbide Corp.
Xerox Corp.

construction/transportation
DHL Worldwide Express
Haliburton Company
United Parcel Service of America, Inc.###

[GW UScorporationsFeb'02]
The U.S. Army School of the Americas, recently re-named the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHISC) and placed under the direction of the Department of Defense, is a combat training school for Latin American Soldiers. Since its opening in 1946, the school, located at Ft. Benning, Georgia, has readied over 60,000 Latin American troops in commando tactics, military intelligence, psychological operations, and advanced arms training.

SOA-trained soldiers have used these skills to make war against their own people. They have massacred entire villages, "disappeared" thousands, and forced hundreds of thousands to flee their countries.

Although the "School of the Americas" name has been changed as part of an apparent public relations ploy to cover up past atrocities, the mission remains the same. By any name, it is still a school of union-busting and assassination in the name of corporate welfare.

Union members in the U.S. know that an attack on workers anywhere is an attack on the rights of workers everywhere. U.S. unionists must speak out and join in solidarity with those trying to close this anti-union institution.

Recent Pentagon reports place the annual budget for the SOA at $4 million. This represents only the operating budget and excludes salaries and other expenses associated with the school. Previous official reports have shown that the total fiscal requirements SOA amount to $18.4 million tax dollars annually. This includes operating expenses, "scholarships" for soldiers and salary expenses for military and civilian personnel. In a time when U.S. working families are struggling to find money for the basics, it is a crime to use millions of dollars of our tax money to train union busters.

In 1996, the Pentagon was forced to release training manuals used at the SOA. These manuals advocated interrogation techniques such as torture, execution, and blackmail. According to these manuals, these techniques should be used on those who...

- Do "union organizing or recruiting"
- Pass out "propaganda in favor of the interests of workers"
- "Sympathize with demonstrators or strikes"
- Make "accusations that the government has failed ... to meet the basic needs of the people"
In just working conditions and wages—that everywhere.

"We believe foreign soldiers, who are graduates of the School of the Americas, are working to deny basic human rights, such as the right to organize and form free trade unions."

--International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 78

"The School of the Americas is a relic of a previous era of violence, and its very existence undermines the credibility of US government efforts to assist development in the region."

--AFL-CIO Executive Council Resolution, August 1999

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SOA Graduates Linked to Paramilitary Labor Abuses in Colombia

In 2000, Human Rights Watch released "The Ties that Bind", report linking SOA graduates to the formation and operation of Colombian paramilitary groups. These paramilitary groups are notorious for horrific labor abuses, including fatal attacks on Colombian labor leaders. Among those cited for involvement with paramilitary groups were:

Brig. Gen. Jaime Ernesto Canal Alban (SOA grad)—Canal commands the Third Brigade of the Colombian military, the brigade found responsible for setting up a paramilitary group called the "Calima Front" in 1999.

Maj. David Hernandez Rojas (SOA grad)—Hernandez, cited for the 1999 murder of peace commissioner Alex Lopera, is now reportedly working with the paramilitary group ACCU.

Maj. Jesus Maria Clavijo Clavijo and Maj. Alvaro Cortes Morillo (SOA grads)—In 1999, both men were linked to paramilitary groups through cell phone and beeper communications as well as regular meetings on military bases.

Gen. Carlos Ospina Ovalle (SOA grad)—The former commander of the Fourth Brigade, Ospina and his troops were cited with "extensive evidence of pervasive ties" to paramilitary groups involved in human rights abuses throughout 1999.

Colombian paramilitary groups have been involved in countless labor abuses including the following:

♦ On May 4, 2000, Javier Suarez, the leader of a truck driver's union, was shot and killed near his home.

♦ In early August of 2000, Carmen Emilio Sanchez Coronel, a trade unionist with the teacher's union in the Norte de Santander, was killed along with 7 other trade unionists at a paramilitary roadblock.

♦ In February 1999, paramilitaries killed Julio Alfonso Poveda, a founder of the United Labor Confederation (CUT).

♦ In an attack ordered by paramilitary leader Carlos Castano, 5 men fired at Wilson Borja, president of public employee's union FENALTARSE, while he was stopped in his car. Borja was seriously wounded from the attack.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO

Pass "Close WHISC" resolutions in your Local, Central Labor Council, and International.

Call your Congresspeople. Tell them to close WHISC. Capitol switchboard: 202)224-3121.

Spread the word—Distribute this flyer.

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Still a School of Assassins

The US Army School of the Americas has been the center of a storm of controversy for nearly two decades. This training center for Latin American military has turned out more than 60,000 soldiers. Its graduates have been linked to nearly every major human rights violation that has occurred in Latin America since the school's inception 50 years ago. As the public learned that SOA graduates were responsible for the assassination of Archbishop Romero, the Jesuit massacre and countless other atrocities, a tremendous grassroots movement to close the school developed. In 1999, a budget amendment cutting funds to the school passed the House by 30 votes. It lost by a one-vote margin in a House-Senate conference committee. The Pentagon took this threat very seriously and in 2000 introduced a "reform" package changing the name of the school to the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. Critics were not fooled by this PR campaign and the movement to close the School of Assassins continues.

Grassroots pressure forced them to change the name but . . .

. . . Here's what SOA supporters have to say:

"Some of your bosses have told us that they can't support anything with the name 'School of the Americas' on it. Our proposal addresses this concern. It changes the name." Col. Mark Morgan told Congressional aides at a Defense Dept. briefing just prior to the May, 2000 vote.

"The School of the Americas would still be able to continue its purpose," stated the late Paul Coverdell, influential GA Senator, in an April, 2000 interview with the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer. In the same interview, he called the proposed changes to the SOA "basically cosmetic."

In a December, 2000 interview with El Tiempo, Colombian Defense Minister Luis Fernando Ramirez and Commander of the Armed Forces Gen. Fernando Tapias stated that Congress and the U.S. Government had assured them that the School of the Americas will continue to function and that the Colombian military can still train there.

. . . Past "reforms" have involved only a re-packaging of the same courses:

Previously, the Pentagon responded to grassroots pressure to close the school with a "reform" package that eliminated some of the most offensive courses, such as Psychological Operations, and added new offerings with friendly-sounding names like Peace Operations An examination of the course descriptions revealed that little, if anything had changed. "Peace Operations" included military intelligence, psychological operations and methods of controlling the civilian population, such as establishing roadblocks and checkpoints. . This was not true reform, but simply a mechanism to deflect attention from human rights violations associated with the school. The website of the re-named school offers very little information about the content of the course offerings. Why should we believe the reform rhetoric of an institution with a history of blatant deception?

. . . There is no substantial difference in the curriculum of the "new" school:

After a recent debate with former SOA commandant Col. Glen Weidner, Fr. Roy Bourgeois asked why a course catalog is unavailable even after classes have started. Col. Weidner responded, "It's not ready yet. Just use the old one. They're basically the same."

Comparing the list of courses offered at the "new" school to the SOA course catalog as Col. Weidner suggested yielded the following results:

- Of the 37 courses offered at WHINSEC, 15 have exactly the same title and 14 have only a slight variation in title.
- Four courses with new titles correspond with courses taught at the SOA.
- Of six courses taught at the SOA and not listed at WHINSEC, at least four have clear correlations to WHINSEC courses.
- Only four courses WHINSEC are new.

This analysis shows that this is not a new school. The same information is being imparted at the same location under a different name.
Grassroots pressure forced them to change the name but . . .

. . . Keeping the school open under any name sends a powerful anti-human rights message:
This school has a legacy of providing training to some of the most notorious human rights abusers of this hemisphere. SOA graduates have gone on to become dictators, defense ministers and heads of secret police agencies where they have crafted genocidal policies resulting in torture, murder, disappearances and displacement for hundreds of thousands of people. Keeping this school open without investigating its connections to past atrocities sends a powerful message to Latin American militaries that the United States is not concerned with human rights. Defenders of the re-named SOA would have us believe that the atrocities are all in the past; but the people of Latin America will continue to suffer the effects of this training for generations. It is not up to those responsible for the atrocities to say, “let’s put this all behind us.” This school must close and there must be an investigation into its role in human rights abuses before the past can be put behind us.

. . . The atrocities are not all in the past:
The names of SOA graduates continue to turn up wherever there are human rights violations in Latin America.
In Guatemala, SOA graduate Lima Estrada is currently on trial for the 1998 murder of Bishop Juan Gerardi. The night before the trial was set to begin, two grenades exploded on the back patio of presiding judge Iris Yasmin Barrios.
When the Bolivian government sold the public water system of Cochabamba to a private corporation, water prices skyrocketed and thousands took to the streets in protest. Bolivia’s president and former military dictator, SOA Graduate Hugo Banzer, declared a state of siege and in the spring of 2000 ordered the troops into the streets. A 17 year-old boy was shot and killed by a Bolivian army officer.
In February of this year, Colombian SOA graduate Col. Hernan Orozco was sent to prison by a military tribunal for complicity in the Mapiripan torture and massacre of 30 peasants by paramilitary group.
On March 20th, Colombian prosecutors brought formal charges against SOA graduate Lt. Col. Jesus Maria Clavijo. He is currently imprisoned awaiting trial for complicity in paramilitary atrocities.
Colombian newspapers identify Mario Montoya Uribe, an SOA-trained general with documented paramilitary ties, as “the military official responsible for Plan Colombia.” Montoya commands Joint Task Force South, the troops that are currently engaged in a brutal counterinsurgency war under the guise of a war on drugs. Included in his command is the 24th brigade, currently ineligible for U.S. military aid because of it’s complicity in a paramilitary massacre.

. . . There is still no adequate tracking of graduates:
The Department of Defense (DOD) claims that only a small percentage of the school’s 60,000 graduates have been implicated in human rights abuses. In reality, they have no documentation for making this assertion. DOD reports state “The Department of State and Department of Defense have no formal program to monitor School of the Americas graduates for human rights abuse or other crimes . . .” and “. . . there is no formal tracking of School of the Americas graduates.” SOA Watch’s painstakingly researched list of human rights violators associated with the school is not comprehensive, just a chilling sample. Only those soldiers who attended the school under the IMET program (about 1/3) are subject to any scrutiny of their human rights records and this information is not made public. The truth is that the DOD has no idea how many of the SOA’s graduates have returned to their countries to commit crimes. Nothing in this “reform” package changed this. The DOD still takes no responsibility for monitoring the human rights impact of training at the School of Assassins.

Though SOA literature claims the school has been thoroughly evaluated, in truth there has never been an independent investigation into training at the SOA and it’s impact on human rights abuses in Latin America. It is arrogant and irresponsible to continue training at this school whose graduates have committed such atrocities. The re-named SOA must close and there must be a thorough, independent investigation into it’s role in human rights abuses in Latin America.
FORT BENNING’S POTEMKIN VILLAGE

By Ed Kinane

Field Marshall Grigori Potemkin once was the most powerful man in Russia. He diverted federal funds from domestic spending into military schemes. To gain access to markets and to expand the Russian Empire, he annexed the Crimea. Potemkin knew he had to keep his Empress -- Catherine the Great -- happy. It's said that, so she wouldn't see the squalor of her realm, he had new housing -- or rather the facades of new housing -- built along routes she traveled. In English we use the phrase Potemkin village to describe any such sham display masking an ugly reality.

These days the U.S. Army is perpetrating a kind of Potemkin village at Ft. Benning, GA. This smoke and mirrors operation kicked in January 17. On that day Benning opened the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHISC). Sounds lofty, doesn't it? Despite the plastic gravitas, what we have here is just another school of assassins. Just another school for terrorism. WHISC is the old U.S. Army School of the Americas tricked out with a new name. The SOA "closed" December 15. This event -- some might say, "non-event" -- is the result of the SOA name having grown so notorious that it had to be shed.

The SOA needs camouflage. Like other criminal operations, it requires an alias.

The SOA, as WHISC, will remain at Benning, occupying the same building. It will serve the same clients (Latin American officers mostly from countries immersed in civil strife) and the same overall strategy (U.S. corporate and military domination of Latin America). It will do so with most of the same courses and instructors. For PR's sake there will be more "human rights" course work. Most significantly, the letterhead will change.

Despite the facelift the SOA/WHISC hasn't repudiated its ways, hasn't confessed its sins. There's been no Truth Commission. Neither a grand jury nor a war crimes tribunal has been convened to explore indicting its commanding officers, nor have they yet served time. The survivors of its myriad victims have never received reparation.

The Pentagon has fought tooth and nail to save the SOA, both in name and in substance. For the Pentagon, civilian-initiated abolition equals loss of face. Its Latin American clients would be bewildered that U.S. civilians could possibly win a campaign to close the SOA. After all, isn't the SOA really all about controlling civilians, stifling their dissent? Isn't anti-civilian warfare its main thrust?

The SOA is essential to the Pentagon's strategy of dominating Latin America by co-opting its militaries. Given SOA Watch's accelerating success in mobilizing public opinion and Congress, the Pentagon saw the handwriting on the wall. It chose to make a tactical retreat, to sacrifice the name to save the substance. The timing is important: if it waited until Congress abolished the SOA, Benning would then find it much harder to open an SOA clone. It had to do so now...or never. A feint, a pre-emptive strike was imperative. Hence this clumsy Potemkin village scheme.

Although the SOA Watch campaign focuses sharply on the SOA, the stakes are far higher. Via the SOA issue, students, workers, clergy, bishops, editorial writers, and members of the US Congress are having their consciousness raised and their conscience awakened. This threatens the Pentagon. The SOA is just a tiny chip off the iceberg. It can't exist in a vacuum. Neither the SOA nor any clone is an aberration; they are part of a system. People exposed to the horror of the SOA seek to understand its context. For ever-increasing numbers of U.S. citizens the SOA campaign has been a slippery slope to awareness. We can't help but wonder what the very existence of the SOA says about U.S. militarism and U.S. foreign policy.

Every time the SOA claims -- perhaps truthfully -- to be using standard Army training doctrine, it thereby indicts that doctrine. After all, the notorious "torture manuals" used for years at the SOA sprang directly from U.S. Army experience in Viet Nam. The more the SOA seeks -- and is given -- legitimacy under the banner of U.S. Army training doctrine, the more that doctrine is exposed. The SOA's semantic shell game is as if, in the 19th century, the South had officially "abolished" slavery. It might declare that henceforth slavery would be called "service." But as long as the shackles and the whip and the auction block were retained, slavery by any name was still slavery. No Abolitionist would be fooled and no Abolitionist would slacken her determination to end it.

Ed works with the Central New York SOA Abolitionists
Educate Yourself and Others: 
Resources for the work to close down the SOA

Videos:

Guns and Greed

Makes the connection between sweatshops, the globalization of greed and SOA violence in Latin America. Includes footage from Latin America and the November vigil. 20 min $10 + $3s/h
Also available in Spanish and Portuguese

The New Patriots

U.S. Military veterans speak out about terrorism, patriotism and their opposition to the SOA/WHISC. 2002 Production (18 minutes) $12 + $3s/h

Crossing the Line

Powerful documentation of the 1998 vigil of over 7,000 people outside the main gates of Fort Benning and the 2,319 who "Crossed the Line." 16 min $10 + $3s/h

School of the Americas: An Insider Speaks Out

Former SOA instructor Major Joseph Blair reveals inside information. As an Army veteran for 20 years, with 2 tours in Vietnam, he speaks as a credible voice for the closing of the SOA. 16 min $10 + $3s/h

Books:

School of the Assassins: Gun, Greed and Globalization

Jack Nelson Pallmeyer's newest book looks at the SOA in light of the recent name change and places the present school's role in the context of issues such as U.S. foreign policy, Colombia, the IMF/World Bank, NAFTA, the FTAA, and the WTO. 155 pages, $15 + $3s/h

From Warriors to Resisters: US Veterans on Terrorism

Personal narratives by ten US veterans active in SOA Watch, who explain how they awoke to the reality of US foreign policy and why they have become resisters. Edited by Margaret Knapke, 67 pages, $7 + $3s/h
Organizing Manuals:

The Gandhian Wave - A Civil Disobedience Handbook
People who put their bodies on the line to speak as voices for the voiceless are crucial in the struggle to close the SOA. Former SOA Watch prisoners of conscience compiled this nonviolent direct action manual for you to plan civil disobedience at Ft. Benning. $12 + $3 s/h

(Order the Gandhian Wave from SOA Watch/CNY, 340 Midland Ave, Syracuse NY 13202)

Solidarity in Action - A Guide for Grassroots Organizing to Close the SOA*

The key to the tremendous power and the success of the organizing against the SOA is the tireless activism of thousands of individuals and groups. This detailed manual provides you with essential info to start a local SOA Watch office and offers help for effective actions, media and legislative outreach. $10 + $3 s/h ($7 + $3 s/h for students)

(Order Solidarity in Action from SOA Watch/NE, 6367 Overbrook Ave., Philadelphia PA 19151)

Music:

Sing it Down

Sing it Down is a compilation of upbeat original and traditional folk songs dedicated to the closure of the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia. $10 + $3 s/h

These resources can be very valuable tools for your outreach work.
All the proceeds are going directly back into the organizing work

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