

PRESS PACKET

End the War – Begin the Peace

Bring the Troops Home Now! No More Blood for Oil!

March 19th Mobilization for Peace and Justice

March 19th, 2006

Waterfront Park, downtown Portland, Oregon

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For interviews with speakers, or event organizers, please go to the main stage.

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MEDIA ADVISORY**MEDIA ADVISORY****MEDIA ADVISORY****For Immediate Release
March 19th Mobilization****RALLY PROGRAM, SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES INCLUDED BELOW**

<p>Event: Local Communities Gather at Waterfront Park to Mark 3rd Anniversary of Iraq War, Call for US Troops to Return Home.</p> <p>Date: Sunday, March 19th, 2006</p> <p>Time: 1:30 PM gathering, 2:00 PM rally, 2:30 PM peace march.</p> <p>Place: Waterfront Park, north of the Morrison Bridge, downtown Portland</p>	<p>Contacts: Dan Handelman Peace & Justice Works Iraq Affinity Group 503-236-3065</p> <p>William Seaman East Timor Action Network/Portland (503) 888-7455</p>
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Local Communities Gather at Waterfront Park to Mark 3rd Anniversary of Iraq War, Call for US Troops to Return Home.

158 organizations endorse call to end US war and occupation
(a new record for the number of organizations signing on)

Today, Sunday, March 19th, at 1:30PM at Waterfront Park in downtown Portland, over 150 local organizations are mobilized for Portland's next big rally and march for peace. As in the months prior to the war that started three years ago, and as the death tolls among US soldiers and innocent Iraqis mount, local peace and social justice organizations have come together to express the deep, widespread and increasing opposition to the Bush Administration policies in Iraq and beyond. The local event marking the third anniversary of the US invasion and occupation of Iraq is one of many such demonstrations taking place across Oregon and the Pacific Northwest, throughout the country and around the world. Protests have taken place in London, Basra, Baghdad, Madrid, Rome, Sydney, and other major cities.¹

"It becomes more clear with each passing day of carnage and tragedy in Iraq and Afghanistan that the policies of the Bush Administration, built on lies and designed to enrich its corporate allies at Bechtel and Halliburton, have been a catastrophe for the people of the region and for US citizens as well," said William Seaman, a volunteer with one of the groups involved in planning today's event. "Our missiles and bombs continue to kill innocent civilians, our military is incapable of quelling the ever-expanding insurgency, our soldiers are either not deployed or are powerless to prevent the death squad style killings that are increasingly evident in the cities of Iraq, and the

majority of the American people now demand that we end this misguided, mismanaged and illegal occupation.”

The overarching theme for the March 19th mobilization is “End the War, Begin the Peace!”. The key themes adopted for the event are:

- “Bring the Troops Home Now - No more blood for oil”
- “End the Occupations of Iraq, Afghanistan, the West Bank and Gaza”
- “Fund Education, Healthcare, Jobs and the Environment, Not War”
- “Respect Human Rights and International Law – Stop the Torture and Spying”
- “Military Recruiters Out of Schools”

Some local organizers focus on concrete steps that they say should be taken to begin such a withdrawal and end the US occupation. “Our troops should be moved to the borders of Iraq, and should end all offensives and leave the population centers,” said Seaman. “The Bush Administration must immediately abandon its plans for permanent bases in Iraq, and must clearly and unequivocally declare that it will not attempt to control, directly or through surrogates, the oil resources and related infrastructure of Iraq.”

Some organizers said that the US must support the development of Iraqi government ministries to take on the administration of the state. They say the US must begin immediate negotiations with the resistance in Iraq to bring an end to the violence and to come up with a mechanism for a safe and orderly withdrawal of US troops. Reconstruction of the country, they say, must be turned over to Iraqis and there must be an end to the profiteering by US and foreign companies such as Halliburton and Bechtel, which have reaped huge profits from no-bid contracts and yet failed to rebuild a reliable power and water supply infrastructure for the country. Few people involved in Sunday’s event harbor any illusions about the difficulties that lie ahead, but they insist that the path of continued US occupation holds the certain promise of worsening violence with no end in sight.

“The US military occupation has become the primary focus of the insurgency, and the US has failed to provide either a restoration of the most basic services for civil life, nor a minimum of security for the Iraqi people,” said Seaman. “That is a recipe for continued unrest and carnage.”

Many people involved in planning the peace rally and march were encouraged by the announcement this week of legislation introduced by Congressman Earl Blumenauer that would begin the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. The legislation directs the

President to redeploy United States Armed Forces from Iraq, beginning with the National Guard. Many believe the bill, H.R.4983, known as the “First Step to Redeployment Act of 2006”, would benefit from efforts of other members of the Oregon delegation, specifically Senator Ron Wyden, to recruit co-signers in the House and to introduce corresponding legislation in the Senate.

Cosponsors for the March 19th Mobilization for Peace include: Peace & Justice Works Iraq Affinity Group (503-236-3065), Portland Peaceful Response Coalition (503-344-5078), Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, East Timor Action Network/Portland (503-235-4986), Sisters of the Road, American Friends Service Committee, September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, Veterans for Peace Chapter 72, Palestine Arab-American Association, Portland Labor for Peace and Justice, People of Faith for Peace, Peace Action Group - First Unitarian Church Portland, Oregonians Against the War, Peace Justice and Environment Committee-Mennonite Church, Families for Peace, Rural Organizing Project, Code Pink Portland, White Feather House (Catholic Worker), Christ the Healer - United Church of Christ, Living Earth, Oregon Peace Institute, Pax Christi Portland, Alliance for Democracy - Portland Chapter, Metanoia Peace Community-United Methodist Church, Portland Rainbow Coalition, Vancouver For Peace, Portland Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Portland Central America Solidarity Committee (PCASC), West Hills Friends Church, St. Philip Neri Catholic Church Peace and Justice Commission, Christ the Reconciler-United Methodist Church, Americans United for Palestinian Human Rights, Episcopal Peace Fellowship, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom-Portland Branch, War Resisters League-Portland (503-238-0605), Cascadia Magical Activists, Women in Black, East Side Democratic Club, School of the Americas Watch Oregon (SOA Watch), Portland Solidarity (portlandsolidarity@post.com), Friends of Sabeel-North America, Friends of Voices in the Wilderness/Portland, Multnomah Monthly Meeting of Friends (Quakers), NW VEG (Northwest Vegetarian Education and Empowerment Group), Portland International Socialist Organization <pdxiso@yahoo.com>, JubileeUSA Oregon, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, Voz (Worker Rights Education Project), Oregon PeaceWorks (503-585-2767-Salem), Board of Peace and Social Concerns of Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends, Justice & Witness Team of Bridgeport United Church of Christ, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom-Washington County, Department of Peace Campaign, Portland Alliance (media cosponsor), Albany/Corvallis Women in Black, Portland Area Rethinking Schools, Oregon Fellowship of Reconciliation, AFSCME local 88 - Multnomah County Employees, Latino Network, Amnesty International Group 48, Justice and Peace Commission of St Ignatius Catholic Church, DemocracyforAmerica - Old Friends Coffeehouse Meetup, Democracy for Oregon, Augustana Lutheran Church, Oregon Bolivarian Circle, street roots (media cosponsor), Healthy Oregon, MoveOn.org, St

Stephen's Episcopal Parish Vestry, Spirit Moves Peace Center, Tikkun Olam (Social Action) Committee of Congregation P'nai Or, Oregon-Idaho Chapter of the Methodist Federation for Social Action, KBOO 90.7 FM Community Radio (media cosponsor), Citizens for Global Solutions, St. Andrew Catholic Church, Center for Intercultural Organizing, The Global Country of World Peace, Zen Center of Portland, and the Portland Chapter of the Social Welfare Action Alliance.

Endorsers include: Northwest Veterans for Peace, PSU Progressive Student Union, PSU Socialist Party, Concerned Students of PSU, SUSTAIN (Stop US Tax-funded Aid to Israel Now), Friends of Lucinda Tate for City Council, No War Drum Corps - Portland Drum Collective (www.pdxdrums.org), Recruiter Watch Pdx (Portland Anti-Military Recruitment Coalition), Furniture Craft, Environmental Justice Action Group, Ash Creek Press, People's Activist Cafe (www.peoples-activist-cafe.info), Bumberlam, Oregon Wildlife Federation, Back 2 the WALL, Northwest Progressive Community, Jews for Global Justice, Reedwood Friends Church, Black Monday Committee, Virginia Lopez and the Mambo Queens, Dones X Dones (Barcelona-Spain), Shelly's Garden-Honkin' Huge Burritos, Freedom Socialist Party, Love Makes a Family Inc, WILPF/Ann Arbor-Michigan, Lane County Taxes for Peace Not War, Portland Jobs with Justice (503-236-5573), Corvallis Alternatives 2 War, West Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Social Action Committee, Lesbian Community Project, Tienda Tikal, Centro Proceso Social (Lima-Peru), Eugene Justice Not War Coalition, Portland Nurses For Peace, Women in Black-London, Mirador, Portland Industrial Workers of the World-General Membership Branch, Central Coast Patriots for Peace, Coastal Progressives, Oregon Coast Peace Wave, Flying Focus Video Collective (media endorser), Socialist Equality Party, It's a Beautiful Pizza, Portland Insight Meditation Community Social Action Committee, PCUN (Northwest Tree Planters and Farm Workers Union), Radical Women, Portland International Women's Day, In Other Words-Women's Books and Resources, Laughing Horse Books, Red and Black Cafe, SisterSpirit, Samusson & Tomassi, Oregon Natural Resources Council (ONRC) ACTION, CAUSA (Oregon Immigrant Rights Coalition), Students for Peace and Justice, Lincoln High School Activist Club, Wisdom Keepers Project, Mojo's Coffee Den, In Defense of Animals, Pete Sorenson for Governor, Hollywood Vintage, Portland Schools Alliance, Ainsworth United Church of Christ, Willamette Valley Jobs with Justice, Three Friends Coffeehouse and Cafe, The Community to Elect Chris Iverson, International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 8, Downtown Chapel of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish, Justice for Mumia Coalition, House District 26 Democrats of Clackamas County, Women in Black Chapman Park Portland, Law Office Of Phil Goldsmith, Anarchist Student Union, Eugene PeaceWorks, Sustainable Forestry

Network, Citybikes Worker Owned Cooperative, Goldendale Citizens for Peace, and pdxjustice Media Productions (www.pdxjustice.org).

1. “Third anniversary of Iraq war is marked by protests around world”, By Terry Kirby, Chief Reporter, Published: 18 March 2006 - Independent (UK)

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(Rally Program and Speaker Biographies Below)

March 19th Mobilization Rally Program (subject to change)

– speaker biographies included as separate attachment –

End the War – Begin the Peace

Rally and March for Peace & Justice

Bring the Troops Home Now! No More Blood For Oil

1:30 PM: Music: Marilyn Keller vocals, Tom Grant piano

1:45 PM: The Peace and Justice Singers

2:00 PM: Rally co-hosts, Ms. Swapna Mukhopadhyay and Rev. Tara Wilkins welcome the community to the March 19th Mobilization for Peace.

2:02 PM: First Speaker: Steven De Ford speaking on behalf of Gold Star Families Speak Out, Military Families Speak Out, Veterans for Peace Chapter 72, Northwest Veterans for Peace, and Gold Star Families for Peace.

2:08 American Friends Service Committee youth speaker: Alfredo Cano with translator, speaking on the impact of the war on students and youth.

2:12 Rev. Dr. Leroy Haynes, speaking on human rights and international law.

2:17 Ms. Emam Ahmed Khamas, Iraqi journalist and translator, speaking on the current situation in Iraq.

2:21 Mr. Ramon Ramirez, President of PCUN, keynote speaker.

2:29 Peace march information, invitation to rejoin the rally after the march.

2:32 Music: Marimba di Guatemala

2:52 Music: Raging Grannies

3:12 Music: Satori Men's Chorus

3:32 Music: Samusson & Thomassi

3:50 Welcome marchers back and begin second part of rally.

3:52 Jamila Wahab, speaking on Afghanistan

3:55 Ms. Zaha Hassan & Steve Goldberg, speaking on Palestine/Israel

4:00 Luis Primo with translator, speaking on the war, jobs & health care

4:07 Closing comments by hosts, a call to action.

4:10-4:30: Music: Suckapunch

Biographical Information Speakers and Rally Hosts March 19th Mobilization for Peace

Rally Hosts Ms. Swapna Mukhopadhyay and Rev. Tara Wilkins

Ms. Swapna Mukhopadhyay: Born and raised in Calcutta, Swapna is a mathematics educator focusing on issues of social justice and cultural diversity. Widely traveled, she came to the US in 1980 and to Portland in 2002, and currently teaches at the Graduate School of Education at Portland State University. She believes in alternative forms of knowledge and in validating the voices of people who are generally silent or deliberately not heard.

Rev. Tara Wilkins is Executive Director of the Community of Welcoming Congregations and, as a person of faith, an ardent activist for GLBTQ inclusion and equality. Rev. Wilkins has earned a solid reputation in the Pacific Northwest as an inspiring speaker, workshop leader and preacher. She and her wife, Carole, have 6 children and 2 grandchildren.

Keynote Speaker:

Mr. Ramon Ramirez is president of PCUN (Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste), the Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United. PCUN is Oregon's union of farmworkers, nursery, and reforestation workers, and Oregon's largest Latino organization. PCUN's fundamental goal is to empower farmworkers to understand and take action against systematic exploitation and all of its effects. To achieve this end, PCUN is involved in community and workplace organizing on many different levels. Founded in 1985 by 80 farmworkers, PCUN has since grown to include more than 5,000 registered members, 98% of which are Mexican and Central American immigrants, and to encompass a wide variety of organizing projects. (from PCUN's website at <http://www.pcun.org/>)

Ms. Eman Ahmad Khamas: a journalist, translator and human rights activist who lives in Baghdad with her husband and two daughters. She is a member of the Women's Will organization, which focuses on defining and defending women's rights outside of political party interests and opposing incarceration of women as hostages. Khamas regularly publishes articles on women's conditions in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion, and has documented human rights violations committed by US and Iraqi forces. She is also involved in mobilizing emergency relief (medicines, food and clothing) for victims of the war, especially women and children living in refugee camps.

Mr. Steven DeFord, a Vietnam veteran who lost his son, Sgt. David Wayne Johnson, in the Iraq war. Mr. DeFord will be representing Gold Star Families Speak Out, Military Families Speak Out, Veterans for Peace Chapter 72, Northwest Veterans for Peace, and Gold Star Families for Peace. His son David was a cook in the Oregon National Guard who was converted to a machine gunner as a consequence of the Halliburton Corporation taking the contract to provide meals for the troops. While on a routine resupply convoy traveling north of Baghdad, David's unarmored Humvee was ripped by the explosion from a roadside IED (improvised explosive device). David was killed instantly and was the only one injured in the Humvee (which the US forces continued to use).

Reverend Doctor LeRoy Haynes, Jr is a veteran of the Civil Rights and Post Civil Rights Movements. He has served as a youth organizer for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Southeast Texas, under the national leadership of the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. He later became an organizer for the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the state of Texas. He served as co-organizer for establishing the Black Panther Party throughout the state of Texas. Dr. Haynes presently serves as Senior Pastor of Allen Temple CME Church in Portland, Oregon. He has been a visible leader in the movement for police accountability following recent Portland Police shootings.

Ms. Zaha Hassan is a Palestinian-American attorney in Portland. She went to high school in the occupied Palestinian town of Ramallah which sparked her interest in human rights and social justice and compelled her to study law at the University of California at Berkeley. She spent the past year working with Palestinian organizations advocating for the land rights of Palestinian refugees and those who have been internally displaced inside of Israel. She is a founding member of the Portland-based Americans United for Palestinian Human Rights and former co-chair of the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation based in Washington, DC. Zaha and Steven are working together on the lawsuit challenging the NSA wiretapping program.

Mr. Steven Goldberg is a graduate of Harvard Law School, and has been an attorney in Oregon since 1975. His law practice has focused on the representation of labor unions and working people. However, he has also been involved in numerous political cases over the years: Representing prisoners challenging medical and mental health conditions in the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, representing Freedom Socialist Party in gaining access to the ballot, representing Emiliano Santiago in his challenge to the Army's stop loss policy, and most recently being part of the legal team in Portland challenging the National Security Agency's wireless wiretaps. Goldberg has also been chairperson of the National Lawyers Guild's international committee, and has represented the Guild at meetings in and delegations to South Africa, Cuba, and Israel and Palestine.

Mr. Luis Primo is the Caracas-Miranda Regional Coordinator of the Venezuelan National Union of Workers (UNT). He is responsible for Trade Union / Political Education for the UNT at a national level and works with the Ministry of Labour on the Committee on the Recovered Factories. He is the former president of the Caracas metro workers union.

Ms. Jamila Wahab, a documentary filmmaker originally from Afghanistan now living in the United States. Born in Afghanistan in 1979, Jamila left with my family for Pakistan when she was three. In Pakistan she spent eight years in Peshawar before moving to Portland, Oregon in 1991. She has lived in Portland since then, going to high school, college and now graduate school. She has traveled back to Pakistan and Afghanistan four times. She is a current board member of the Ghazni Education Programme (GEP) and has planned and coordinated events to raise funds for rebuilding schools in Ghazni, Afghanistan. She filmed, narrated, co-produced and exhibited "Years of Absence" – a video documentary that focuses on the lives, living conditions and education of women and children in rural Afghanistan. She has traveled to Afghanistan in 2000, 2003 and 2004 to monitor GEP's ongoing projects in Kunsaf, Ghazni,

and has given a number of presentations about rural Afghan women (there life styles, hardships, lack of education and health care available to them) to audiences here in the US.

Mr. Alfredo Damian Cano, 21, a youth speaker from the American Friends Service Committee of Portland, is a student at Mt Hood Community College.

Interpreters:

Ms. C. M. Hall

Ms. Holly Hoffman