

# Grandmothers for Peace International

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Founded in 1982

*Barbara Wiedner, Founder/Director*

Sunday, May 24, 1998

## International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament



illustration: Anne S. Walker/Grace Jung - ITWC

Although thousands of women engage in year-round peace work and conflict resolution, seldom is this work recognized. The focus of May 24<sup>th</sup> is to inform the world, home countries, cities and villages that "women refuse violence as a 'solution' to the world's problems. Women are working for a just and peaceful world, one that meets human needs, not military ones." Conflict and violence touches everyone, whether or not you live in a war-torn country. Look at the recent shooting deaths at American schools.

The International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament had a successful beginning in Europe in the early 1980s, but May 24<sup>th</sup> peace activities have been dormant since the late '80s.

However, in the Peace Tent at the NGO (Non-Governmental Organizations) Forum of the 1995 UN Conference on Women in Beijing, China, women called for a day dedicated to women's peace activities. This call was heard by the International

Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) and the International Peace Bureau (IPB).

On May 24, 1996, women's peace actions ranged from radio broadcasts about women's contributions to peace, fund-raising activities for landmine victims, petitioning for the abolition of nuclear weapons, to street actions against militarism. These activities occurred in Croatia, Serbia, Canada, Norway, Azerbaijan, Italy, Bangladesh, Chile, Australia, Zambia, New Zealand and elsewhere.

May 24, 1997, witnessed similar activities.

And for May 24, 1998, IFOR and IPB are stressing the importance of women working together across international boundaries - sharing insights, solutions, and encouragement.

For more information, contact:

International Fellowship of Reconciliation  
Sporstraat 38, 1815 BK Alkmaar, The Netherlands  
Tel. +31-72-512-3014; Fax +31-72-515-1102  
E-mail: [office@ifor.ccmil.compuserve.com](mailto:office@ifor.ccmil.compuserve.com)  
Web site: <http://www.gn.apc.org/ifor>

International Peace Bureau  
41 rue de Zurich, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland  
Tel. +41-22-731-6429; Fax +41-22-738-9419  
E-mail: [ipb@gn.apc.org](mailto:ipb@gn.apc.org)  
Web site: <http://www.itu.ch/ipb>

### **GFP Founder/Director receives prestigious peace award**

Barbara Wiedner, founder/director of Grandmothers for Peace International received the National Peace Foundation's 1997 U.S. Regional Peacemaker/Peacebuilder Award. She was recognized for over 15 years of devotion to the cause of peace and justice, not only in the U.S., but also in the world.

She formed Grandmothers for Peace, a non-profit organization, in May 1982 to protest nuclear weapons at Mather Air Force Base. In later years, she expanded GFP to include humanitarian work in Russia, Nicaragua, Mexico, Bosnia, and Palestine.

Three other regional recipients were: Bishop Thomas Gumbelton, auxiliary bishop of the Detroit Archdiocese, Detroit, MI; James Mang, director of the Western New York Peace Center, Buffalo, NY; and Barbara Simmons, director of the Bucks County Peace Centers, Langhorne, PA.

The 1997 National Award was given to Attorney General Janet Reno for her work promoting conflict resolution and training programs in schools.

The 1997 International Award was presented to Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Each recipient received a crystal sculptured plaque depicting the Foundation's logo, the "Bird of Peace."

*"This award truly honors all of you who have worked to make Grandmothers for Peace International the respected and influential organization it has become. I am deeply grateful to each of you."*

- Barbara Wiedner



## GFPI to receive Peace Cereal Grant at International Peace Prayer Day

You are invited to join Barbara Wiedner, GFPI Founder/Director, and other members, June 20, 1998, for the 13th Annual International Peace Prayer Day. Founded by Yogi Bhanjan, this is a day for peace loving men, women and children of diverse faiths and cultures to unite in song and prayer.



Hosted by the Sikh community, this 1 p.m. to sunset event is held on sacred Native American land in the Jemez Mountains high above Española, New Mexico.

Some past performers and speakers have included singer/songwriter Arlo Guthrie; actress, Marsha Mason; Yogesh Ghandi, peace activist and nephew of Mahatma Ghandi; and speakers from Amnesty International and other world humanitarian and peace organizations.

Each year a Man/Woman of Peace Award is presented for outstanding service for peace. Last year's recipient was Bill Richardson, United States Ambassador to the United Nations.

In addition to this Peace Award, grants are presented annually to organizations working for peace. These awards are made possible by the Golden Temple Bakery which produces Peace Cereal and donates 10 per cent of the profits to help support International Peace Prayer Day. A variety of Peace Cereals are available at your local natural food store.

For more Peace Prayer Day information, contact 1-800-747-7056.

## Network with the Grannies

If you haven't visited the GFPI website, you are missing a wonderful site/sight.

After you finish this newsletter, go to [www.grandmothersforpeace.org](http://www.grandmothersforpeace.org) and see the terrific job Webmaster Bryan Krofchok does with the latest news about current issues.

### E-mail Alert

GFPI also maintains an E-mail Alert Network. To join, just send us ([wiednerb@aol.com](mailto:wiednerb@aol.com)) your e-mail address and we will keep you posted concerning the latest need-to-know issues.

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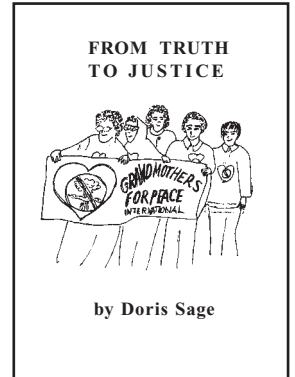


**Bryan!!!**

## Grandma's Christmas Gift

For the past 5 years, there has been a Grandma story book under the Christmas tree for the grandchildren. This year's story explained to Daniel, Katie and Alina why Grandma and Grandpa may not be celebrating holidays and birthdays with them for a while.

Doris and Dan Sage were two of 601 protesters who crossed the line at the Fort Benning, Georgia, November 16, 1997, Close the School of the Americas demonstration. Since they and 26 other protesters had been arrested previously at Ft. Benning SOA protests, they were charged with a crime and are currently serving a six month jail term, and received a \$3,000 fine. See "Crossing the Line" by Lorraine Krofchok, page 3.



If you would like a copy of "From Truth To Justice," please send \$5.00 to: Grandmothers for Peace International, 9444 Medstead Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758, USA.

All proceeds are donated to the School of the Americas Watch (SOA Watch).

## Join the Nov. '98 GFPI SOA delegation

Meet us November 22 at Fort Benning, Georgia, and protest the use of this US military facility, supported by your tax dollars, to train Latin America soldiers to be some of the worst human rights abusers on the planet.



Call or write GFPI for details:

9444 Medstead Way

Elk Grove, CA 95758 USA

Phone (916) 684-8744 Fax (916) 684-0394

Email: [wiednerb@aol.com](mailto:wiednerb@aol.com)

Website: <http://www.grandmothersforpeace.org>

## 15 Peace and Justice Scholarships!!!

Kudos to all our generous members and supporters. You made it possible for Grandmothers for Peace International to award 15 *Dorothy Vandercook Memorial Peace and Justice Scholarships* for 1998.

Our stated goal is to provide four \$250 scholarships per year. However, thanks to our very generous members and supporters, during the program's five-year existence, we have awarded a total of 54 scholarships to students from the United States, Africa, and Kyrgyzstan (formerly part of the U.S.S.R).

For 1998, we received 620 application requests and 63 completed applications. Thanks, also, to the Scholarship Committee for their hard work.

The happy, deserving 1998 winners are:

David Sebastian Almeling - Topeka, KS

Kimberly Ann Barron - Plattsburgh, NY

Jacob A. Costello - Flanders, NJ

Téa Marija Franich - Lake Oswego, OR

Star Deleeece Howell - Detroit, MI

Namik Kovac - Superior, WI

Jessica D. Morris - Texas City, TX

Ferheen Irfan Naqvi - Piscataway, NJ

Naushin Irfan Naqvi - Piscataway, NJ

Nazgul Sahidbek - Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Melisa E. Santacroce - Lincoln, NE

Erin Dawn Scott - Yakama, WA

Kirran Jabeen Syed - Cleveland, OH

Maureen Beth Whitley - Marlton, NJ

Elizabeth Jean Yu - Bloomington, IN

# Crossing the Line

## The SOA Protesters' Trial: Columbus, Georgia — January 21, 1998

By Lorraine Krofchok

*GFP Southeast Coordinator*

On Wednesday, January 21, 1998, some of the finest people who walk this earth were sentenced to six months in jail and a \$3,000 fine. Their crime? Trespassing at Fort Benning during the November School Of The Americas protest. Twenty-two will go to jail, along with three already sentenced.

Judge Robert Elliott, 89, passed these maximum sentences on priests, ministers, nuns, teachers, grandmothers, grandfathers, and students. Judge Elliott is the oldest sitting federal judge in the nation, appointed by John F. Kennedy in 1962. In the 1960s, he issued injunctions forbidding Martin Luther King's civil rights marches in his district (90% of Elliott's civil rights decisions during the 1960s were reversed by higher courts). He reversed Army Lieutenant William Calley's conviction in the My Lai massacre in Vietnam. Judge Elliott also led the "Georgia walkout protest" at the 1948 Democratic Convention over the party's civil rights platform\*. (For more information, the 1988 Pulitzer Prize winning book "Parting The Waters" by Taylor Branch recounts the judge's efforts to stop King and his fellow peaceful demonstrators.)

The non-violent protesters "crossed the line" to keep others out of danger. Graduates of the School of the Americas have been implicated in atrocities throughout Latin America, and, just recently, graduates of the SOA have been linked with the violence in Chiapas, Mexico. (Rep. Joe Kennedy has sent a "Dear Colleague" letter to his fellow Representatives, titled "SOA Graduates' Fingerprints on Mexico's Chiapas Policy.")

The protesters, in a silent funeral procession carrying coffins containing hundreds of thousands of petitions to close the SOA, were commemorating the murders on November 16, 1989, of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her 15-year-old daughter in El Salvador. In 1993, the United Nations Commission reported that 19 of the 26 killers were trained at the School of the Americas.

Judge Elliott allowed each protester to speak before he gave out the maximum sentence. He also offered to waive the \$3,000 fine if the protester agreed to never cross into Fr. Benning again "without invitation." All declined.

Father Roy Bourgeois, 58, Maryknoll, and leader of the SOA Watch in Columbus, GA, said, "These sentences will energize us and we will not be silenced, we will speak from our prisons."

Fr. Bill Bichsel, 69, Jesuit priest, and Catholic Worker in Tacoma, WA, forcefully said, looking directly at the judge, "You will be seeing us!" (At that moment the spectators burst into applause).

Rev. Dr. Nicolas C. Cardell, Jr., 72, a Syracuse, NY Unitarian Universalist Minister who was a POW in WW II passionately said, "the war was a horrible thing, probably had to be fought, but was SO horrible because people were so dedicated to obedience they could not say NO to even the worst atrocities and, now, I am a political prisoner for six months. As long as the SOA is open, we are Judas's by proxy."

Sister Marge Eilerman, 60, OSF, a Pastoral Associate in Boonville, KY, recounted: "At El Mozote a child was on the end of a bayonet by SOA Graduates and that 'sacred' white line we crossed runs with blood, I fear!"

Ed Kinane, 53, Syracuse, NY, an Editor, spoke: "The women who have been raped by SOA graduates, isn't that 'illegal entry'? According to a tape by Major Joseph Blair, a former instructor at SOA, the Latin American officers were laundering drug money in Columbus. They do not have to go through customs with their suitcases full of money. Is this not 'illegal entry'?"

The impassioned and eloquent voices continued throughout the afternoon, but Judge Elliott was not moved. Six months in jail, for "illegal entry." Six months for trying to prevent further slaughter by SOA graduates, six months in memory of murder, six months for exercising the First Amendment. And \$3,000 each; a total of \$66,000. One defendant asked whether her \$3,000 could be given to a charity. Judge Elliott said "no."

Justice was not blind on January 21, 1998. Justice was decapitated.

\* Source: Major Joseph Blair, "Open Letter to President Clinton" (SOA Watch website: [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org))

### Addresses of 20 Imprisoned SOA Watch Activists

On March 23, 1998, the people listed below and on the following page reported to prison to serve 6-month sentences for trespassing at Fort Benning during a solemn funeral procession protesting the School of the Americas. Please send them a card or letter to keep them with us in spirit. Five more prisoners await sentencing.

Fr. Roy Bourgeois, MM  
# 83274-020  
FPC Estill  
100 Prison Road  
Estill, SC 29918

Nicholas Cardell  
# 88109-020  
FPC Allenwood  
P.O. Box 1000  
Montgomery, PA 17752

Mary Earley  
# 88117-020  
FCI Coleman  
P.O. Box 759  
Coleman FL 33521

Sr. Mary Kay Flanigan  
# 88121-020  
FPC Pekin  
KS building  
PO Box 6000  
Pekin, IL 61555-6000

Anne Herman  
# 88104-020  
FCI Danbury  
Rt. 37  
Danbury CT 06811-3044

Paddy Inman  
# 88111-020 Unit 5  
FPC Sheridan  
P.O. Box 6000  
Sheridan, OR 97378-6000

Christopher Jones  
# 88118-020  
FPC Sheridan  
P.O. Box 6000  
Sheridan, OR 97378-6000

Ken Kennon  
# 88105-020  
FPC La Tuna  
P.O. Box 8000  
Anthony, NM 88021-9899

Dwight Lawton  
# 88103-020  
FPC Jesup  
2650 Highway 301 South  
Jesup, GA 31599

Rita Lucey  
# 88120-020  
FCI Coleman  
P.O. Box 759  
Coleman, FL 33521

Bill McNulty  
# 88108-020  
FPC Schuylkill  
P.O. Box 670  
Minersville, PA 179554

Sr. Meagan Rice  
# 88101-020  
FPC Danbury  
Rt. 37  
Danbury, CT 06811-3099

Carol Richardson  
# 88116-020  
FPC Alderson  
C-22  
Box A  
Alderson, WV 24910-0991

Dan Sage  
#88083-020  
FPC Allenwood  
P.O.Box 1000  
Montgomery, PA 17752

Doris Sage  
# 88099-020  
FPC Danbury  
Rt. 37  
Danbury, CT 06811-3099

Randall Serraglio  
# 88100-020  
FCI Safford  
PO Box 9000  
Safford AZ 85548-9000

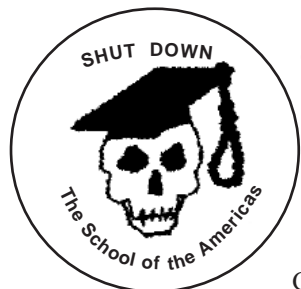
Sr. Rita Steinhagen  
# 88119-020  
FPC Pekin  
KS building  
PO Box 6000  
Pekin, IL 61555-6000

Ann Tiffany  
# 88114-020  
FPC Danbury  
Rt. 37  
Danbury, CT 06811-3099

Judith Williams  
# 88115-020  
FPC Pekin  
KS building  
PO Box 6000  
Pekin, IL 61555-6000

Ruthy Woodring  
# 88112-020  
FPC Lexington  
P.O. Box 14525  
Lexington, KY 40510

## YOU can help **CLOSE** the School of the Americas (It's your tax \$\$\$\$\$\$)



One of the best ways to help close the School of the America is to contact your elected representative and encourage him or her to cosponsor HR 611, a bill introduced by Rep. Joseph Kennedy that would close the SOA. Forty-four more representatives are needed to cosponsor HR 611 to force a vote in the House of Representatives. Without those 44 additional cosponsors, HR611 may never come up for a vote.

Bill S.980 is an amendment that would cut nearly 25% of the SOA's funding, but it would **not** close the SOA.

Contact your Representative and ask him or her to cosponsor HR 611 and to vote to close SOA.

### Current\* Status of H.R. 611 and S. 980

On Feb 5, 1997: HR 611 was referred to the House Committee on National Security.

No vote has been scheduled yet on HR 611.  
HR 611 has 136 cosponsors.

\*This information is current as of April 18, 1998.

The Senate companion bill, S. 980, was introduced June 27, 1997, by Senator Durbin and was referred to the Senate Committee on Armed Services.

No vote has been scheduled yet on S. 980.  
S. 980 has 13 cosponsors.

You can **contact** your Representative through the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121, or write to him or her at:

The Honorable (write your Representative's name here)  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

**School of the Americas Watch:** <http://www.soaw.org/>  
for more information about SOA Graduates; SOA Manuals;  
Books and Videos; Press Releases and News Reports; Previous  
Protests; Interviews with SOA Watch; and more.



# The Truth Cannot Be Silenced if 1,000 People Will Make the

## *Commitment to Cross November 22, 1998*

The US Army School of the Americas at Ft. Benning, Georgia has trained 60,000 Latin American soldiers who consistently have returned to their countries to murder, torture, rape and intimidate the poor and those who work for the rights of the poor.

On November 16, 1997, 601 people "crossed the line" onto the Ft. Benning Army base to say NO! to this School of Assassins. These veterans, nuns, priests, students and other people of conscience and compassion came from around the country to carry crosses and coffins filled with petitions calling for the SOA to be closed down.

Military police arrested all 601 "line crossers," and after several hours released everyone. First time "crossers" received a letter barring them from Ft. Benning for one year. Thirty of the 601 had crossed the line at the SOA before and were charged with criminal trespass. For their gentle act of conscience and compassion, these "repeat offenders" will serve jail time.

**We make an urgent appeal to  
those who have never  
"crossed the line" to close  
the SOA**

Clearly, supporters of the SOA are trying to silence the voices of protest against the School of Assassins. They hope they can intimidate others and keep them from "crossing the line" at Ft. Benning next November. We firmly believe the truth cannot be silenced and that the movement to close the SOA will grow.

We call upon 1,000 women and men of conscience and compassion to sign a Commitment to Cross next November. We make an urgent appeal especially to those who have never crossed the line to close the SOA. "First timers" can expect to be banned from Ft. Benning but not be charged for trespass.

On November 22, 1998, once again, people from around the country -- "first timers" and "repeat offenders" -- will walk together in a solemn funeral procession onto Ft. Benning. Together we will honor and speak for our sisters and brothers who have been killed, raped and tortured by SOA graduates. Do not let the truth be silenced.



Rini Timpleton

**Clip and return to SOA Watch 1719 Irving St. NW Washington DC 20010**

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**COMMITMENT TO CROSS PLEDGE FORM**

I pledge to help close the SOA. I will "cross the line" at Ft. Benning on November 22, 1998.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

The following people will join me in this Commitment to Cross pledge.

Name/Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Address \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE COPY AND DISTRIBUTE BROADLY!

*Involve your grandchildren  
in a meaningful humanitarian project!*

All those outgrown shoes tucked in the corners and closets of their rooms, and the rooms of their friends, are desperately needed by poor children in a war-torn land who will make them "run around" again. This is a "feel good" project for all involved.

The following organization is gathering good-quality children's shoes, boots, sneakers and sandals in all sizes. Donations of one pair, or many pairs, will get to children who need them.

Send your donations to:

The International Committee for the Children of Chechnya  
PO Box 38-1305  
Cambridge, MA 02238

Telephone: 617-354-0822 Fax: 617-868-1915 E-mail: [iccc@igc.org](mailto:iccc@igc.org)

The International Committee for the Children of Chechnya (ICCC) is an independent charity founded to assist the child victims of the war in Chechnya. Contributions to ICCC are tax-deductible. The International Committee for the Children of Chechnya, Inc., is a non-profit organization, recognized as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



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*Newsletter Editor/Publisher: Patricia Altenburg*

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# STOP CASSINI EARTH FLYBY Petition

We, the undersigned, support the abolition of nuclear technologies of mass destruction. The Cassini space probe is scheduled to "swingby" the Earth on August 18, 1999, with 72.3 pounds (32.8 kg) of plutonium on board. It is expected to be traveling at over 42,000 mph (64,000 kph) and according to the NASA Environmental Impact Statement "approximately 5 billion of the estimated 7 to 8 billion world population at the time of the swingbys could receive 99 per cent or more of the radiation exposure" if there is an inadvertent reentry of the probe. Risking the health of our planet to study the rings of Saturn is simply irresponsible. We demand that the U.S. Government cancel this dangerous Cassini Earth flyby before June 24, 1999.

Signature

Printed Name

Address / Telephone / E-mail\*

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\*You will be e-mailed the latest NO FLYBY information.

Please return signed petitions to:

**GRANDMOTHERS FOR PEACE INTERNATIONAL**, 9444 Medstead Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758

On June 24, 1998, the Stop Cassini Earth Flyby Action Site is sponsoring an International Action, one year before NASA is scheduled to direct the probe toward earth. Please consider participation and help us stop this dangerous Earth flyby. For information on this and other Actions to stop the Earth flyby, please visit the Noflyby Action Site:

<http://www.nonviolence.org/noflyby/>