

PEOPLES UNITED FOR PEACE

(Manifesto)

We, the peoples of the world, appalled by the horror and cruelty of war, are determined to usher in an era of peace, and remove the root causes of war.

We share a dream, of a world free of fear, free of violence and war, free of poverty and hunger,
Where love and our sense of connection with all life,
with all the peoples of the earth, with nature,
Illuminate our sense of being, our spirit
and we are at peace with each other and all the world.

We struggle against those who are driven by greed and avarice, and the institutions they create or bend and use for their own evil purposes.

We ask: What are the root causes of war? How can we bring about peace?

Capitalism is institutionalized violence. It is driven by the profit motive, and all other considerations are subordinated to this. Even in its mildest form, capitalism is hierarchical in character. Each large corporation has a vertical form of organization and is run as a dictatorship. Workers are dictated to by their bosses, these bosses are dictated to by the senior managers who in turn are subject to the orders of the Chief Executive Officer of the corporation. This economic tyranny is at the core of the systems of inequality we face today.

The relentless pursuit of profit results in both exploitation of workers and the exploitation of the resources of the planet. The hunger for oil, water and other resources causes our national leaders to destroy our peoples, creating division and animosity between us and turning us into consumerists, making us forget our culture, our values and our principles. Capitalism results in manipulation of unmet needs to create a cult of consumerism, where people feel compelled to consume, while at the same time feeling empty inside.

Capitalism, in its worst form, is now the primary cause of wars of aggression. For example:

- (1) The invasion of Iraq in 2003 was to take control of the oil of that country.
- (2) The aggression against Afghanistan cleared the way to gain access to the natural gas in the region.
- (3) The war on Bougainville was fought because Rio Tinto Corporation wanted to exploit the copper and gold there.
- (4) The constant threats now being made against Venezuela in order to regain control of the oil of that country.
- (5) The threats against Iran, and many other examples.

Capitalism, because it is driven by greed and depends on the exploitation of people and nature, leads to wars over resources such as oil and minerals. It becomes a brutal form of international piracy, which causes great human suffering to innocent people, especially women, children and old people.

We cannot accept that our children and young people are being bombarded with images of violence and war, presented as a form of entertainment. This insidious influence creates and perpetuates a culture of war and we do not want our children to see this as a way of life.

The Earth is descending into a state of crisis caused by the destruction of wetlands, rainforests, and estuaries which recycle air, water and nutrients necessary for life itself. Capitalism is the driving force in the over-exploitation of our natural resources, and the root cause of the resource wars which cause so much destruction to the Earth and her peoples. We are at a crucial moment in the history of humankind. Either we stop the spread of warfare across the planet, or our future and our children's future will be jeopardised, and we will not be able to share and enjoy the natural bounty of this beautiful Earth.

We insist that this crazy capitalist system, which ultimately threatens the well-being of all of us, be replaced by an egalitarian system of economic and social relations, where we can all work together for the common good. The forms this will take will vary according to the history and cultures of the various peoples of the Earth.

FIRST, we demand an end to all wars:

1. The USA and its allies must withdraw their forces from Iraq and respect the right of the Iraqi people to self-determination. The right of all peoples to self-determination is enshrined in international law.
2. The USA led aggression against Iraq is a war crime which resulted in the deaths of more than a hundred thousand innocent civilians. We demand that George W. Bush be tried for war crimes and crimes against humanity.
3. The USA must stop pressuring other sovereign states, such as Iran and Venezuela, with threats of intervention. We will resist any attempt by the USA to attack Iran, Venezuela or any other country.

SECOND, we demand from the USA and its allies refrain from all forms of intervention in the affairs of other countries, including:

1. Wars of aggression, such as attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq.
2. Indirect military interventions, for example, in Colombia.
3. CIA covert operations to destabilize and remove democratically elected governments like in Haiti.
4. Economic and financial intervention, for example by the IMF and the World Bank, in the interests of Transnational Corporations (MNC's) and international financial institutions.
5. Manipulation of national governments to pressure them into hosting foreign military bases.

To achieve these demands we call for:

1. A global protest march all over the world during the weekend of 17th to 19th of March, including the delivery of a copy of this manifesto to the USA embassy in each country.
2. An organized boycott of products of corporations based in the USA and other countries engaged in military aggression.
3. A national strike in the USA and elsewhere demanding the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops occupying sovereign states.
4. Peaceful acts of civil disobedience to resist those governments involved in wars of aggression or other forms of intervention in the affairs of other countries.

We demand that the USA stops invading other countries and respects international law. We pledge our lives to prevent, and where necessary, resist further aggression. We look towards the dawn of a new era, when all peoples of the Earth shall walk free, and where peace and harmony will be our common inheritance.

The promoter of this manifesto was Rosemarie *Waratah* Gillespie, Australian human shield during the invasion on Iraq. The following people participated in the drafting of this text: Mary Chacón Mora (Venezuela), Iris Quinteros Candeché (Venezuela), Domingo Raín (Venezuela), Eduardo Torres Mundaraín (Venezuela), Luz María Casanova (Dominican Republic), Nina Navid (United Kingdom), Linda Krausen (United States) and Miguel Otero Iglesias (Spain). The idea of writing this manifesto came up after the showing of Gillespie's touching documentary "Witness to invasion" at the World Social Forum in Caracas the 29th January 2006.

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