

Preparation for National Stand Down Day - November 18, 2005

Nonviolent Resistance Actions at Recruiting Centers

The following are ideas and tips to help get your group started organizing for a nonviolent resistance action on November 18. More information will be forwarded in the days and weeks to come, so please continue to check in at www.iraqpledge.org for updates.

1) Commitment to Nonviolence - Commitment to nonviolence is where our actions begin and end. Nonviolence, following the practices and discipline of teachers such as Gandhi and King, asks us not only to protest the war in Iraq, but to actively resist it and refuse our cooperation whenever possible with the systems that support this illegal and immoral war. Following specific nonviolent guidelines allows us to communicate a seriousness of purpose that the public generally understands and respects, by referencing deep traditions of peaceful change and forceful opposition to violence, war and injustice. The discipline also helps us to keep focused on the goal of our action, and, most importantly, helps to keep everyone as safe as possible during the course of the action. You will find two different versions of nonviolent guidelines on our website (in the lefthand column), as well as the nonviolent principles espoused by Dr. King. Whether you use one of these or create your own, we urge your group to adopt and agree upon nonviolent guidelines as part of planning an action on November 18.

2) Nonviolence Training - No one should participate in a nonviolent resistance action without first taking appropriate nonviolence training. Such training builds common tactics, purpose and understanding for the action, and also helps build community among the group. If you do not know a nonviolence trainer in your area, consult the listings at the website of the War Resisters League at http://www.warresisters.org/nv_training.htm.

3) Get Legal Advice and Support - Any group contemplating nonviolent resistance actions should consult with and seek support from a knowledgeable local attorney. We will be putting out a general legal brief by November 1, but this is not a substitute for direct legal support for your group. If you do not know an attorney in your area experienced with nonviolent resistance actions, we suggest contacting the National Office of the National Lawyers Guild at 212.679.5100 or www.nlg.org to help you locate one.

4) Thoughts on choosing a site for your nonviolent action - As explained on the Call for the National Stand Down Day, our action will also be supporting the National "Not Your Soldier" Youth and Student Day of Action on Thursday, November 17. If youth or student groups are considering a demonstration at a local recruiting center, you might consider holding your nonviolent resistance action at the same center the following day. Also, we recommend that you be sensitive to race and class issues when choosing a location for your action. If you are considering a recruiting center that is in a different area than where your activists come from, we strongly recommend seeking the support and participation of local community groups, to minimize the chance that you will be seen by the local community as outsiders, or portrayed that way by the media.

5) Have materials on alternatives to military service - Depending on the nature of your action, you might want to have materials on alternatives to military service available to distribute. We will be compiling sources for such materials and posting them on our website shortly.

6) Connecting with a group for a nonviolent action - We will be posting planned November 18 actions around the country as we are informed of them; if you are an individual looking to hook up with a group, we recommend that you check back on our website in the coming weeks to see where actions are taking place. You might also consider organizing your own group for this action with your friends and colleagues, and/or contacting local peace and anti-war groups to see if they are interested in organizing for the National Stand Down Day.

We hope that this information is helpful in getting you starting planning an action for National Stand Down Day on November 18. Please keep checking back for additional information in the coming days and weeks.

*National Stand Down Day is a project of the Iraq Pledge of Resistance's
National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance.*