

## Worship and Action Update 9/27/02

Dear Friends in New York Yearly Meeting:

As we attend to work and witness, the pervasive public drumbeat of rage, paranoia and fear may be causing some to feel a loss of centeredness. "In these times New York Yearly Meeting Friends hear anew the call to pray and work for peace. . . . Grounded in shared worship, we experience fresh guidance and inward power to act." (**Worship and Action Minute**, approved by New York Yearly Meeting in session 7/26/02)

Efforts to deter war are gathering energy both abroad and at home. New on the Peace Action page of NYYM's Web site ( [www.nyym.org](http://www.nyym.org)) is a "Statement on Iraq" adopted by Britain Yearly Meeting this month. Also now on the Peace Action page is the Joint Statement in Response to Threat of War with Iraq issued this week by the General and Executive Secretaries of Five Friends Organizations (FCNL, AFSC, FGC, PYM & Pendle Hill). On September 24th, over 100 people participated in a prayer vigil outside the Connecticut offices of Senator Christopher Dodd, and a delegation of 10 "clergy" members, including John Humphries of AFSC, met with members of Dodd's staff.

Upcoming actions include:

- NJ Peace Action is sponsoring a rally at Picatinny Arsenal in Jefferson Township, NJ (near Morristown) on Saturday, September 28, from 11A.M. 1 P.M. Voices in the Wilderness will join for a vigil to oppose war on Iraq.
- The National Network to End the War Against Iraq is sponsoring a Non-Violent March Against the War on Iraq in Washington, DC on Sunday, September 29th, gathering at Dupont Circle (Massachusetts & Connecticut Aves, NW) at 2:00 P.M., and then marching to key embassies (Britain, Japan, Turkey, Egypt) to deliver messages of peace. The march will end with a rally outside Vice President Dick Cheney's house at the Naval Observatory, 3400 Massachusetts Ave NW.
- Many groups are organizing a lobbying day in Washington, DC on Monday, September 30th to prevent war. For information and registration online go to [www.epic-usa.org/lobbydays/](http://www.epic-usa.org/lobbydays/).
- FCNL is again urging Friends to contact your Congressional representatives to "let him or her know that you oppose going to war against Iraq." Congressional phone numbers can be found at [www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org); or at [www.commoncause.org](http://www.commoncause.org); or at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org), and FCNL's Web site also has sample letters which you can email or fax directly from their site. Or try sending free faxes to your Members of Congress asking that they give UN inspections a chance to work by going to the True Majority

Web site, set up by Ben Cohen of Ben & Jerry's fame, [www.truemajority.com](http://www.truemajority.com), and clicking on the Take Action bar.

- A Not In Our Name rally is planned for October 6 from 1-5 P.M. in the East Meadow of NYC's Central Park (enter at Fifth Avenue and 96th Street).
- Connecticut Peace Action is sponsoring a program on Prevention *Not* Pre-Emption on October 8th, from 7:30-9:30 P.M. at the YWCA in Greenwich, Connecticut.
- Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Women's Gathering Group has called for a vigil at the Pentagon in Washington, DC on Sunday, October 20, 2002. Quaker women and "friendly" women are asked to join together to encircle the Pentagon and hold its occupants in the Light. Spiritual preparation in nonviolence training will be offered. The New York area contact is Judith Fetterly, [JF@albany.edu](mailto:JF@albany.edu) or 518-475-1773. NYYM Women's Concerns Committee has endorsed this action, and it is among the actions suggested by of NYYM Peace Concerns Committee for consideration by Friends.
- Summit Meeting is offering a training program for counselors on conscience and war on October 26th, featuring Bill Galvin. People are requested to register by October 1st, and teenagers are particularly encouraged to participate. Contact Cindy Kwalwasser at [Kwalwassers3@comcast.net](mailto:Kwalwassers3@comcast.net). Information also is available at the Peace Activity Notes & Links portion of the Peace Action Web page of the Yearly Meeting's site ([www.nyym.org](http://www.nyym.org)).

Members of the NYYM Trustees and Liaison Committee met by conference call on September 18th to consider the possible tax implications of our sustained worship and action for peace. The risk of adverse consequences to NYYM's tax exemption was agreed to be small, but could not be completely ruled out. In prayerful deliberation, it was agreed that NYYM would continue to pursue public testimony of our faith in peaceful alternatives to war on Iraq. Regional and monthly meetings are urged also to give attention to this question in determining how they will witness for peace, and may wish to consult the memorandum on the tax exemption implications of peace actions available on the Peace Action Web page of the NYYM Web site.

In continuing care,

*Linda Chidsey, Vicki Cooley, Fred Dettmer  
NYYM Worship & Action working group*

Even when pressed by the demands of inner truth, men do not easily assume the task of opposing their government's policy, especially in time of war. Nor does the human spirit move without great difficulty against all the apathy of

conformist thought within one's own bosom and in the surrounding world.

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Some of us who have already begun to break the silence of the night have found that the calling to speak is often a vocation of agony, but we must speak. We must speak with all the humility that is appropriate to our limited vision, but we must speak.

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I would yet have to live with the meaning of my commitment to the ministry of Jesus Christ. To me the relationship of this ministry to the making of peace is so obvious that I sometimes marvel at those who ask me why I am speaking against the war. Could it be that they do not know that the good news was meant for all. . . .

*Rev. Martin Luther King*  
*April 4, 1967*