



DECLARATION OF PROTEST AND CONDEMNATION OF THE NOTORIOUS SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS/WHISC

WHEREAS: The School of the Americas, now Western Hemisphere Institute of Security Cooperation (WHISC) is a U.S. training school that instructs soldiers and military personnel from Latin American countries in subjects which include counterinsurgency, infantry tactics, military intelligence and commando operations.

WHEREAS: The operations of SOA/WHISC is funded by U.S. taxpayers.

WHEREAS: Among those specifically targeted by SOA/WHISC graduates are educators, union organizers, religious workers, student leaders and others who work for the rights of the poor.

WHEREAS: Hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans have been tortured, raped, assassinated, "disappeared," massacred and forced into refuge or exile by those trained at the School of the Americas.

WHEREAS: From its beginning, the SOA mission has been to train soldiers to protect the interests of multinational corporations, and to maintain the economic status quo for the few rich and powerful in the U.S. and their counterparts in Latin America.

WHEREAS: Seventy-one U.S. citizens have collectively served over forty years in U.S. prisons for engaging in nonviolent resistance in a broad-based campaign to close the school, while SOA/WHISC torturers and assassins continue to operate with impunity.

WHEREAS: There is currently a bill before Congress, HR 1810, calling for the closure of WHISC (formerly the SOA) and the establishment of a joint congressional task force to assess U.S. training of Latin American military.

WHEREAS: On November 2001, over 10,000 persons, motivated by moral outrage at our government's ongoing terrorist actions, gathered at the gates of Fort Benning, Georgia in a nonviolent action calling for the closure of WHISC and forty-three were charged with trespass.

NOW THEREFORE, we three citizens of the Bay Area, three of the thirty-seven nonviolent activists facing six months in prison and a \$5000 fine for trespass, declare our solidarity with our Latin American sisters and brothers.

WE RESOLVE to carry our nonviolent protest to Columbus, Georgia, where we will stand before the Federal Court to serve as public witnesses to the shameful history and unethical mission of the SOA/WHISC and again we will call for its complete closure.

WE CALL on our Congressional Representative, Nancy Pelosi, to continue her efforts in the Congress on behalf of justice for all in this hemisphere, and work to bring HR 1810 before the House of Representatives to close WHISC and end this shameful chapter in U.S. history.

Signed: