

JPIC Express

Whereas "many human beings are still victims of dehumanizing poverty, injustice and oppression, the brothers should devote themselves, with all people of good will, to restoring the social order, so that it can be based on justice, liberation and peace in the risen Christ. After weighing the causes of injustice in each situation, the brothers should participate in activities that build up charity, justice and international solidarity. (GGCC art 96#2)"

1. BRAKE EXPANSION OF US MILITARY ACTION IN COLOMBIA

The Latin America Working Group (LAWG) has created an online petition for a new Colombia policy. The petition calls for a departure from the militarized policy that the U.S. currently employs and *wishes to escalate*. Instead, it urges a policy focused on addressing **the lack of adequate drug treatment programs in the U.S. and the lack of economic opportunity for poor farmers in Colombia**. The petition will be delivered to the presidential candidates and members of Congress just before the Colombia aid debate this year. View the petition and consider adding your signature:

<http://www.lawg.org/tools/petition.htm>

2. STAR WARS IS BACK. President Bush wants to spend \$10 billion more to deploy the untested Star Wars Missile Defense this year. Previous tests failed. Does it work now? Nobody knows. To send a fax to your Senators urging more prudence in funding or not funding Star Wars, go to <http://action.truemajority.com/action/index.asp?>

3. HAITIAN POLICE KILL PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATORS, MARINES STAND BY.

May 18, 2004 *the Haiti Information Project* (HIP) from Port-au-Prince, Haiti reports that the Special Forces units (SWAT) of the Haitian National Police (PNH) killed demonstrators from deposed Pres. Aristide's Lavalas party. About 50 U.S. Marines stood by. One of the marines officers in command tried to threaten an American journalist who was filming the action. Reports of similar killing is coming in from different areas of the city. For more info go to www.haitiaction.org

4. SISTERS SPEAK UP TO CATERPILLAR

At the request of the group *Jewish Voice for Peace* (JVP) the Ursuline and Loretto Sisters as Caterpillar shareholders filed a controversial resolution. Sister Valerie Heinonen of the Ursuline Sisters told ***Crain's Chicago Business***, "*We believe that (the Israeli actions) are a violation of the Palestinians' human rights,*" They argued that Caterpillar should establish a set of human rights criteria that would govern equipment sales. –They want us also to ask Congress to investigate Israel's use of Caterpillar equipment to demolish Palestinian homes: Go to

http://go.sojo.net/campaign/bulldozers_in_bethlehem/

5. CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (CAFTA)

Under the guise of protecting investor's legitimate interests, CAFTA will give foreign corporations *greater rights than local citizens* and the opportunity to completely *bypass* domestic courts, therefore undermining democratic self-government. To learn more and to tell your Member of Congress to reject CAFTA, go to Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch website: <http://www.citizen.org/trade/cafta/>

6. WORLD BANK NEEDS PRESSURE IN ORDER TO CHANGE

The groundbreaking "***Extractive Industries Review***" (EIR) recommends a number of major reforms to World Bank operations to better protect human rights, indigenous peoples and the environment. The report also recommends that the Bank greatly increase funding for clean, renewable energy. The World Bank will soon decide just how far they are willing to go to adopt these recommendations. In the past, without grassroots pressure, the Bank often opted for the lowest common denominator in reforming its practices. Write World Bank President James Wolfensohn today urging the Bank to adopt the EIR's recommendations. You may send as is or modify the letter at Global Action: <http://ga1.org/campaign/eir>

7. AMERICAN INDIAN HEALTH CARE

Although Indian health care is a federal responsibility flowing from treaty obligations; denial of care continues despite severe need. The expenditure per Medicare enrollee is \$6,000; each veteran gets \$5,200; each federal prisoner receives \$3,803 but only \$1,914 is spent per Native American eligible for Indian Health Service. **Urge your representative and senators to support significant funding increases to meet health needs of indigenous people and to support immediate reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (S 556, HR 2440) to update, refocus, and expand programs for Indian Health.** Tell him/her to support also the Health Care Equality and Accountability Act (S 1833, HR 3459) advanced to improve the health status of minority groups and to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care. Rep. Pearce 202-225 2365, Rep. Wilson 202-225-6316, Rep Udall 202-225-6190, Sen. Bingaman 202-224-5521, Sen. Domenici 202 224-6621. ***I also called Sen. Frist at 202-224-3344, that he allow these bills to come to the Senate floor for a vote.***

8. TWO BROADCASTING ISSUES

(1) ***Define Standards Requiring Public Service Broadcasting.*** The airwaves belong to the public and, for three-quarters of a century, broadcasters who use them have been obligated to serve the *public interest, assisting citizens to become informed about the key issues of the day.* Yet the FCC has left it to broadcasters to define this obligation, resulting in oversimplified and inadequate coverage of important issues. In the coming age of digital TV, broadcasters will be able to transmit six times as much programming over the public airwaves. We believe that: **"Before allowing broadcasters to profit even more from public airwaves, the FCC must define minimum standards for broadcasters to fulfill their public interest obligation through coverage of elections and civic affairs."** Sign the petition to our elected officials and to the FCC at www.commoncause.org

(2) ***Promote independence of public TV and radio.*** An ever smaller number of media companies control what we see and hear. It is, therefore, more important than ever that *public television and public radio* remain strong and independent. **Support legislation that will guarantee them independence and freedom from political influence. Also, support legislation that provides stable, long-term funding, especially for the important programs that come from PBS and NPR.** Go to www.commoncause.org

