

Statement to the Press

We are gathered here today, in solidarity with the majority of people in the United States, in Iraq, and throughout the world, who want a rapid end to the US military occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan.

We are here to support the Declaration of Peace campaign- a nationwide movement that asked congress to establish before the end of their session last week, a concrete and rapid plan for peace in Iraq, including:

- a prompt timetable for withdrawal of troops and closure of bases;
- a peace process for security, reconstruction, and reconciliation;
- and the shift of funding for war to meeting human needs.

Because Congress has failed in its responsibility to declare peace, we must act now to protect our nation and the world. Inspired by peace makers such as Gandhi and Martin Luther King, we are risking arrest in a non-violent act of civil disobedience in defense of our soldiers and the innocent people suffering and dying in this war. We are occupying the entrance to a public space to call on the American Public not to just go shopping, but to demand the end of war for profit, and an end to US occupation of Iraq .

Fernando Suarez del Solar, whose only son, became one of the first soldiers to sacrifice his life in Iraq, stands with us today. Fernando is among the more than 26 hundred military families in the US, and the hundreds of thousands of civilian families in Iraq that have lost loved ones in this illegal and futile invasion and occupation. Fernando holds a picture of his son with the epitaph, "Bush lied and my son died." We cry out with Fernando, and our nation, to bring all of our precious sons and daughters serving bravely in our military home to safety now.

We join with Kofi Annan and other informed experts in acknowledging the illegality of the preemptive US invasion of Iraq. We concur with renowned legal scholars, such as Marjorie Cohen, international law professor and president elect of the National Lawyers Guild, that the Bush administration has knowingly violated key provisions of the US Constitution, the UN Charter, and the Geneva Conventions. Crimes perpetrated by George W Bush and his administration include: illegal spying, unlawful detention, inhumane treatment, secret prisons where people are held incommunicado with no legal charges, and without access to lawyers, torture of suspects. These crimes have become every day practice, promoted and sanctioned by the Bush administration, and are changing the way the world sees the face of America.

The dignity of our democracy requires a full accounting of the deceit, the corruption, and the war profiteering that has flourished under this administration. We assert that to maintain the integrity of the rule of law, senior Bush Administration officials must be held accountable for their criminal policies.

We are engaging in non-violent civil disobedience and risking arrest to call for the impeachment, prosecution and imprisonment of George Bush, Dick Cheney, and other senior officials of this administration for their criminal acts. .

We demand the reaffirmation of international human rights accords, the reintegration of the US as cooperative member of the worldwide community, and a rededication of our national resources to addressing human needs at home and abroad."

The women and men participating in non violent civil disobedience with SDCD today know that the majority of the people in the U.S. and the international community share the anguish about the terrible costs of this devastating war. We risk arrest with the hope to inspire others to take action for peace now.