

UNITED FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE
DELAWARE VALLEY NETWORK
July 1, 2008

Present: Nina Huizinga, Robin Stelly, Cathy Leary, Jerry Taylor, Joe Coffie, John Kirklan, Sue Gordon, Sue Edwards, David Kalkstein, Elisabeth Leonard, rich Gardner, Debi Richter, Bill Deckhert, Libby Schwartz, Yvonne Marler, Eugene Miller, Bob Moore, Phyllis Gilbert, Bill Perry

PLANNING FOR OCTOBER 4TH

What we want:

We want it to be non-political, with the broadest possible representation. We can include things like the Peace Voter Guide that outline the positions of various candidates without explicitly backing one or the other.

We want a parade: drums, upbeat, music, bands, festival, splash, color, a well-known speaker, tables, a short rally.

Problems expressed previous to this meeting: Bob Smith feels a big demo just before the election is not a good idea, but a parade and festival will work. John Braxton and Ben Sears (both labor folks) say that the big push from unions will be on getting Obama elected and right before the election, they will not be able to get a big union turnout. On the other hand, unless they hear objections from the unions, they would help with getting the word out.

Highlight the cost of war as it affects education, health care costs. We need to prepare (educate) ourselves to take on the specifics about the cost of the war. Note: We will get the folks working on the health care campaign if we frame it as the cost of the war. This may also be a way to include labor issues.

Note: We are not just about this election. We are a long-term movement effort for peace and justice.

Where:

We AGREED on having a march from Philadelphia to Camden over the Benjamin Franklin Bridge via the pedestrian walkway with a march down Broadway ending perhaps in Wiggins Park or perhaps at Sacred Heart Peace Community. Have an "armada" of boats. People can also come via the PACTO train over the bridge or via Ferry. We can also duplicate last year's successful local rallies as people board Peace Trains going to the parade and festival from all over the area. We would have tables; some suggest also some tents (a place to meet and talk about specific issues). We think this would make a splash and get lots of media coverage.

Remind the Unions that this could serve as a kick-off party or an end-off party that they come to before or after they do their union outreach to members.

Motivation for the focus on Camden: Camden illustrates the way that our needs at home are being ignored while we fight unnecessary wars abroad. If we can't bring them (poor folks, working class folks, folks of color) out, we're going to them (in their neighborhood). Involve the Poets of Poverty. Put a link to this group on our website.

Program: Have booths with something at every booth, have a compact rally with focus on entertainment, have famous people, invite Larry Hamm, Father Doyle, get drum bands to play, engage professional promoters

Time: Gather at 11 a.m., March from Noon (high noon) to 2 p.m., festival to the end of the day

Money: For last year's demo, we ultimately raised over \$10,000, we got big donations from labor and various groups. We have about \$3,000 left. We will need money to rent a stage, print up flyers, posters, ads. We could have a newspaper for the day and sell ads. We should have co-sponsors and get them to donate money as a sign of their commitment.

Committees:

Fundraising: No one signed up yet. Stay tuned.

Publicity: Clarification: Publicity is about flyers, posters, ads, etc. Phyllis Gilbert, Elisabeth Leonard, John Kirkland. One person volunteered to ask a graphic artist she knows to help us.

Media: Clarification: Media is about outreach to existing newspapers, magazines, radio, TV. Phyllis Gilbert, Jerry Taylor (Bucks Media), Bob Moore (New Jersey media), Sue Gordon (Delco)

Electronic: Rich Gardner

Outreach: Elisabeth Leonard (AFSC, Friends, WILPF), Buxmont CFPA, Sue Gordon (Delco), Sue Edwards (Delaware Counth), Nina Huizinga

Union Outreach: We will contact John Braxton, Kathy Black, Ben Sears, and Ken Heard

Program: Joe Cleffie, John Kirkland

Philadelphia/Camden Logistics: Clarification: includes assembly point(s), start and end times, permits if any needed, etc. David Kalkstein and Bob Moore re: Camden and NJ logistics. Debi Richter re: Philadelphia logistics.

Next Steps:

Nina will write up these notes that outline our plans so far. Rich will place them onto our web site. Nina will email them out to all the groups that supported us last year and present these plans not final, but ask them for their feedback.

NEXT PLANNING MEETING:

Wednesday, July 23, 2008, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., if possible at the AFSCME building, 2606 Walnut St. David Kalkstein will check with AFSCME; once we have a location, Nina Huizinga will let everyone know.

DISCUSSION ABOUT IRAN; SPECIFICALLY THE SITUATION BEFORE OCTOBER 4TH

Currently, there are two bills on the floor of Congress. HR 363 (362?) is a resolution that would initiate sanctions against Iran with nothing about negotiations or dialogue first. A similar bill is being introduced in the Senate. It is on the floor of Congress now. Also, Israel has said

something to the effect that if Iran crosses a red line of having enough enriched uranium for building even one bomb, Israel will attack.

Many people at the meeting felt that it is very likely that “they” (the Cheney crowd) will attack and we just don’t know exactly how imminent the attack will be. Most think by the end of the year as Bush’s watch draws to a close. A lot of people don’t know. We can’t sit back and wait, but need to contact our members of Congress right away. If Iran is attacked, this could trigger big, long-term struggle. Russia and China will support Iran.

To be sure, there were other people at the meeting who felt that just as actual impeachment of Bush will not happen, an attack on Iran will not happen.

On the other hand, one person pointed out that there are already secret actions by the U.S. taking place on Iranian soil. An embargo (sanctions) is an act of war. Bush wants this; the rhetoric has been there for a while. There could be an “October Surprise,” especially if Obama seems to be winning.

Reference: Seymour Hersh’s article in The New Yorker. Amy Goodman’s interview with Hersh on Democracy Now this week.

What to do: We need to get in touch with our legislators all over the country and urge them to defeat the two bills. We need to educate Americans about the threat. We need to be in contact and support the efforts of the Iranian-American community. This community is planning actions to take place either July 14th or July 21st all over the country. We should take part in our region. National UFPJ is planning for an emergency demo. We could take out a full-page ad in the Inquirer.

AGREE: We should support whatever UFPJ comes up with. When we know more, we will pass it around. If there is an emergency demo, we will set up a conference call to the folks around the table at this meeting.

DISCUSSION ABOUT GAS PRICES AND THE WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

People think there is a connection between the disruption in the Middle East and the rising oil prices. A report will be released this week. (On the other hand, some folks at the meeting think it is all manipulated.) However, if you link the rising oil prices to the war, people will care about the war. If oil goes up, it will drive us further into recession. The Iraq War Recession: People understand it. See also: Painatthepump.org or some such location. This is also one was to get a whole lot of people concerned who are about the environment.

PennAction (doing their part with the national group US Action), is thinking about holding actions at gas stations. But the gas station manager they approached was not in favor of the idea.

What to do: If we like a particular action, we could co-sponsor it. We could have tables. We could send out the information to our personal email list.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday, July 2, 2008, Peace is Patriotic Event, intersection of Route 206 and Nassau Street, 6 p.m. picnic, 7-8 p.m. program. U.S. Col. Ann Wright will be the keynote speaker

July 18-20, 2008: Peace Action National Congress, Trinity University, Washington, DC. Will honor our very own Rev. Bob Moore for 25 years of service. Congratulations, Bob. To register, go to www.peace-action.org or call CFPA at (609) 924-5022.

July 9, 2008: 1:30 p.m., Celebrate the Bush legacy in Trenton. (Sorry, no additional specific info.)

July 10, 2008: Celebrate the Bush legacy in Philadelphia. (Sorry, no additional specific info.)

Tuesday, August 5, 2008: Commemoration of the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: 6:00 p.m. picnic, 7:00 p.m. program, location to be announced. Contact: cfpa@peacecoaliton.org or call them at (609) 924-5022.