

December 12, 2002

From: Women's International League For Peace and Freedom New York Metro Branch

Dear Fellow Human Rights, Labor, Peace, Racial and Social Justice and Ecological Activists,

We of the New York Metro branch of the Women's International League For Peace and Freedom (WILPF) are joining Unanswered Questions and the 9-11 Truth Alliance to request your organization's participation in an historic struggle for transparency, accountability and democratic renewal. We invite your participation in the early stages of a process to set up a Citizens 9/11 People's Truth Commission as described below.

We welcome the broadest possible involvement of all people and organizations committed to true democracy, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the belief that "Another World is Possible".

WHO WE ARE: As an organization, WILPF began in 1915 in the USA and elsewhere, arising out of the women's peace and suffragist movements to call for an end to war. In the US, WILPF has 41 branches in 22 states. (For a brief history, please see our national office website at www.wilpf.org. For details on Unanswered Questions and the 9-11 Truth Alliance, please see www.unansweredquestions.org and www.pi911.org). In view of our historic concerns, personal grief, and physical closeness to the scene of this crime, we feel it is appropriate for Metro WILPF to join the call for a people's 9/11 commission to expose the full truth of this world-churning event. As members of one of the world's oldest women's peace & freedom networks, we believe we would betray our mission to do any less.

We realize that many concerned Americans today are now rightfully focused on innumerable emergencies - how to stop perpetual warfare, restore the Bill of Rights, rescue the environment, find a living wage job or affordable health care and housing, fight police brutality, racist attacks, illegal detentions and deportations, fight the AIDS epidemic, sweatshops, the list seems inexhaustible. To achieve any of this, it may help immensely to discover the truth about the explosive tragedy which triggered so many dark forces in our land, and from which so much of their power still flows. To understand 9/11 may be to understand this world, and illuminate the hidden interests marketing fear, racism, obedience and war.

WHY WE ARE MOBILIZING FOR A CITIZENS 9/11 TRUTH COMMISSION:

Before 9/11, rapidly growing social justice and environmental movements in the USA and abroad had begun to converge and articulate an inspiring global vision signified by the slogan "Another World is Possible". Since 9/11, however, the Bush administration has exploited the attacks to justify an apparently long planned war -- a war that now threatens the inclusive, sustainable, and justly merciful world we envisioned with obliteration before it's begun.

WILPF's New York Metro office sits minutes from the epicenter of the 9/11 tragedy that is changing the course of human history. Within days of the heart-numbing strikes, peace activists and hundreds of other previously un-politicized people began noting very disturbing omissions and misrepresentations in the official story (please see attached materials for details). Equally

unnerving was the brutal haste of the government's reaction, launched before any of our questions were answered, while even more disturbing facts were surfacing, and in utter disregard for the chorus of voices calling for a carefully measured response. In a few shocked weeks after 9/11, the administration unleashed its "War on Terror" at home and abroad, and declared it a war without end.

At Metro WILPF we joined the rapidly growing international outcry declaring War Is Not The Answer. We pressed for mass media objectivity and accountability, called for a non-partisan Congressional 9/11 Truth Commission to investigate the horror, and continued to follow the curious information being unearthed by journalists and 9/11 researchers around the world.

The administration's fierce resistance to any independent inquiry during this time, its single-minded commitment to war, its hurried enactment of the repressive Patriot Act, its racial profiling of Islamic people only heightened our distrust of the "official story" and our suspicions of their true intentions. Now, a year later, our worst fears have deepened.

9/11 has been exploited as a pretext to demonize dissent, conquer Afghanistan, elect an obedient militant congress, divert attention from corporate treachery, fan racism and xenophobia, gut civil liberties at home, and prepare for a generation of imperial war and proxy rule in the oil-rich lands of Eurasia. The subsequent legislative agenda has been equally disastrous, favoring the rich over the poor, profits over public health and the environment, fossil fuels over renewable options, and corporate power over human rights.

The consequent fear, repression and economic misery this has wrought are bitter fruits from an already devastating day. In trying to grasp what we are enduring we cannot but recall the basic dictionary definition of fascism: - "a system of government marked by extreme centralization of authority, convergence of corporate and state power, suppression of dissent through coercion and censorship, and a policy of belligerent nationalism and racism." All this in one unprecedented year. All this from one still unexplained day.

We realize there are many who do not doubt the official explanation of 9/11 events, many who have never heard the scores of unanswered questions that our media so studiously ignore. There are also a growing number who entertain entirely different, darker explanations of the attacks' horrific success, or cause.

As yet we side with no one in this debate. We simply believe that the victims' families, the American people as a whole, and the hundreds of thousands of our uniformed youth now being readied to kill or be killed "to prevent future 9/11s" all deserve a full, transparent accounting of everything that transpired on and before that tragic day. We also believe that all the people of the world, most especially the embattled citizens of Afghanistan, Iraq, and other lands targeted in our so-called "War on Terror" have the same right as Americans to know the entire truth.

We at Metro WILPF feel that this is now absolutely imperative both for the sake of our own freedoms and security, and the future of peace in our world. We believe it is not merely the truth about 9/11 that is on the line. This government's swift, repressive and militarized response to 9/11 has put our very democracy and democracy around the world at risk .

We therefore hope, in collaboration with a nationwide network of endorsing and participating organizations, to call a conference in New York as soon as possible, so we may, in face to face dialog, develop and launch the commission as one part of a national mobilization to expand our human rights and democracy just when they are most threatened. In this convergence of effort we hope to articulate a nationwide strategy, an action plan built on the common ground beneath the great diversity of issues we address organizationally and individually in our daily lives. We propose in this process to mount a concerted challenge to the Bush agenda, and to put in its place the agenda of an empowered, sovereign people capable of making 'another America possible', where human needs, not corporate greed drive the nation's domestic and foreign policy.

In 1850, Pauline Wright Davis opened the first national women's rights convention with the following challenge: "The reformation we propose is radical and universal....an epochal movement. It seeks to replace the worn-out with the living and the beautiful, so as to reconstruct without overturning, and to regenerate without destroying". Our collective advance towards this vision of a greater democracy is the unfinished business of America. Now this administration's 9/11- triggered , forced march to war promises to again arrest our progress on all fronts, and this time we simply cannot allow it.

As we envision it, a People's 9/11 Truth Commission, embedded in a deep democracy movement, will advance one of the most critical, incomplete projects of American democracy: that is, addressing the problem of war, human rights and the true nature of America's "national security interests". We ask your help in embracing this historic responsibility and claiming for the entire world our right to know the truth.

WHAT WE ARE REQUESTING OF YOU

- * Please endorse this initiative
- * Please spread this call through your network of contacts and help us mobilize demand for a people's truth commission as widely as possible.
- * Please help us set a date for a National conference, where all our representatives may meet face to face to discuss, design and launch a People's 9/11 Truth Commission.
- * Please help shape the structure and agenda for the conference.

Please discuss this with your friends and colleagues and respond to us as soon as you can. We are in the process of designating a website to this effort. For those who are ready to respond, or have questions, kindly communicate with us via e-mail at wilpf@wilpfnymetro.org

With great respect and anticipation in these worst and best of times,

On behalf of WILPF NY Metro

I am

Premilla Dixit