

Amnesty with the stroke of a pen

by Karen Nipper

What exactly is Amnesty International? According to Meredith senior Sarah Booth, AI is a group of about fifty countries which investigates human rights abuse cases throughout the world. Not only do these nations investigate, they also work to obtain fair treatment or release of prisoners through a very simple process that many students do every day: letter-writing.

Yes, ordinary students write letters to governments which abuse the human rights of political prisoners by denying fair trials, submitting prisoners to torture and even death. Students can let those government's officials know that the world is watching and disapproves of their actions.

Amnesty International publishes a newspaper, Urgent Action, which provides letter-writing guidelines such as how to address a government leader,

whether or not to sign a feminine name and other crucial details that help make working for human rights easy and rewarding.

Rewarding because it works. Letter-writers have been able to pressure governments into releasing political prisoners. Perhaps as fulfilling is the knowledge that prisoners realize that they are not forgotten and alone.

If letter-writers are worried about safety, she does not have to put a return address or sign her name on the letter.

Amnesty International's most important cause is to see that prisoners are treated justly. For more information about letter-writing or to help start an Amnesty International chapter at Meredith, contact Sarah Booth at 856-9911 or join second Faircloth at its hall educational on April 15, 1991 at 7:30 pm.

Dying-In

by Karen Nipper

Editor's note: This article was written prior to Gulf War cease fire.

February 27th at 10:00 pm began a 24-hour peace vigil at the North Carolina State University brickyard, hosted by the NCSU Students for Peace. In response to the ensuing ground battle in the Gulf War, students staged a "die-in" to display the consequences of war.

Side-blinded participants could see only straight ahead to a mock television contained a dancing puppet and were oblivious to the effects of the war outside the television.

A personified "War" carried a paper airplane and swept over other participants as they carried out everyday activities such as dancing, playing basketball, and conducting business.

The "dead" lay motionless until personifications of "Death" dragged them off to a mock cemetery filled with cardboard

tombstones.

Eventually, the unsuspecting television-watchers were carried away by the ravages of "War" and "Death."

Others represented villagers and other victims in Mid-East countries such as Iraq, Isreal, Syria and Saudia Arabia.

The point of the mock dying was to show fellow students and faculty how easy it is to be lulled into detachment through television and other distractions, forcing a sense of callousness to carnage and injustice. The participants attempted to remind observers that other countries are involved in the war and may suffer more deeply from its impact.

Students for Peace is concerned not only for Americans, but for other citizens as well, as demonstrated by the fact that all of the "dead" were buried in the

Hands Off

by Karen Nipper

As American soldiers return home from the Gulf War amidst the happy hugs and cheers from friends and family, fourteen Marine reservists are being held up at Camp Lejeune. They are conscientious objectors (COs) awaiting trial.

Although each reservist voluntarily submitted himself to the military justice system and is willing to finish out his contract in any civilian job that does not conflict with his beliefs or support the "war machine," these COs are being tried as "deserters."

Seven were tried on January 22 and 23 and the remainder were scheduled for trial in late February. These men face up to seven years "in the brig" regardless of the outcome of their hearings. The COs have received hate mail and phone calls threatening them and their families. Some of the men have endured physical assaults from other Marines and one has suffered a nervous breakdown.

Almost all of the COs admit to signing contracts with the reserves simply to further their college educations with the money they would earn as reservists. They wrote a "Declaration of Peace" as well, which states in part, "We believe in the freedom our country was founded upon and that every American citizen has the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Any interested person may write to the COs commanding officer: Commander General, 4th Marine Division (REIN) FMF, 4400 Dauphine St., New Orleans LA 70146-5400. To write the COs directly: LCPL Leacock, Building H-1 Wing A, 2nd MEB, MCB, Camp Lejeune NC 28540-5090.

For specific names and information, call Karen Nipper (829-7653) or contact Hands Off! at 111 East 14th Street Room 132, New York NY 10001, phone (212)353-2445 or (212)475-6647.

same cemetery. The group feels that it is crucial to find workable peaceful solutions to conflict between countries in order to prevent further callousness, hatred and carnage.

For more information about Students for Peace, call Karen Nipper at 829-7653.

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