BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES

THE OLIVE BRANCH

Weekly Newsletter
September 7-14, 2011

IN THE MIDDLE EAST, JUSTICE SERVED IS NOT ALWAYS JUSTICE DONE

By: George Wolfe

If we are to expect authoritarian dictators in the Middle East and elsewhere to voluntarily step aside and allow democracy to take root, the international community and the citizens of the country desiring reform must be prepared to offer some form of asylum. The trial and possible execution of former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak is an unfortunate development and will merely serve as a warning to other despots in the region to hold fast. Rather than respond to the demands to relinquish control, they will be motivated to dig in their heels and cling to power at all costs, making violent revolution inevitable.

The example for reform the Arab states should look to is the nation of South Africa which began transitioning beginning in 1994 from Apartheid to an inclusive democratic rule. Its newly elected leader, President Nelson Mandela, a man who had been imprisoned for 27 years by the Apartheid government, knew there was a great risk that his country could degenerate into ethnic violence. Rather than seek prosecution and revenge, he and Bishop Desmond Tutu convinced the citizens of South Africa to embark on a radical new course: the path of forgiveness and reconciliation. By forgiving those who had condemned him as a political prisoner, Mandela set an example no one who had suffered less than him could stand against. He convinced South Africans to tell their stories of human rights abuses and then move beyond hostilities to end division and suspicion. Mandela's calm and persuasive leadership enabled his country to avoid a bloody civil war.

We must understand that we cannot kill evil. Trying to do so merely strengthens the resolve of supporters and enables their cause to live on. The best course is to marginalize corrupt leaders by minimizing their influence. This is done by giving those who agree to relinquish power conditional asylum, resisting the desire for revenge, and building coalitions with moderate voices who are entering the political arena. Justice served through civil war is not justice done given the suffering and hardship that is delivered onto the civilian population, and the refugee crisis that inevitably results.

This article was published in The Star Press, Muncie, Indiana, on September 1, 2011.

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About George Wolfe

George Wolfe is the Coordinator of Outreach Programs for the Ball State University Center for Peace and Conflict Studies. He is also a trained mediator and the author of The Spiritual Power of Nonviolence: Interfaith Understanding for a Future Without War.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

On– Campus

Wednesday, September 7

- *Sex + Money Sponsored by Free the Slaves*

  The organization Sex + Money will be showing a documentary on child sex trafficking in the United States at 7:00 PM in the L.A. Pittenger Student Center in Cardinal Hall. For more information, contact cloutcalt@bsu.edu.

Monday, September 12

- *OXFAM America Meeting*

  5:30 PM in WB 140. For more information, contact oxfambsu@gmail.com.

- *Social Justice League Meeting*

  6:00PM at the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies (310 N. McKinley Ave.) For more information, contact SJL@bsu.edu .

- *Ball State Timmy Foundation Call-Out Meeting*

  8:00-9:00 PM in BL 082B (Classroom 2 in the Library Basement) INTERESTED IN GLOBAL HEALTH? COMMUNITY SERVICE? TRAVELING? Come check out the BSU Timmy Foundation. We spend the year raising money and medical supplies which we then take with us on our annual trip to Tena, Ecuador--all majors are eligible to join. For more information contact Emily Sullivan at easullivan2@bsu.edu.

Tuesday, September 13

- *Feminists for Action Meeting*

  6:00 PM in BB 220. Come have tea, discuss current events, and become an activist for gender equality. Everyone is welcoming, including non-students and community members. For more information, contact feministforaction@gmail.com or ckhurst@bsu.edu.

- *International Ambassadors Club*

  7:00PM at the L.A. Pittenger Student Center in Room 306. For more information, contact IAC@bsu.edu .

- *Free the Slaves Meeting*

  9:00PM at Bracken Library in Room 301. For more information, contact Chelsey Outcalt at cloutcalt@bsu.edu .

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Off– Campus

Sunday, September 11

- *A Better Way Peace Walk— Muncie*

  Take a stand against violence and remember the 9/11 terrorist attacks by promoting peace in our homes, community, and world. The walk is 2.3 miles and will begin at the Delaware County Fairgrounds and end at Westside Park. Registration starts at 12:00 PM, and the walk will begin at 1:00 PM. Bring all pledges to the walk. Walkers will receive a free ABW t-shirt while supplies lastFor more information, call 765-747-9107 or visit abetterwaymuncie.org.

- *9/11 Prayer Vigil for Peace and Unity— Indianapolis*

  Twelve different faith traditions and congregations will each provide prayers in a style fitting their tradition to remember the 10th anniversary of 9/11. You are welcome to attend any portion of the Vigil. You do not have to stay for an entire hour. Please enter and exit in silence. Location: St. Luke's United Methodist Church 100 W. 86th St. Park behind the church at Door 7 (room is to the left) or at Door 8 (room is on the right).

  7-8am— The Orthodox Christian Community of Central Indiana

  8-9am— LifeJourney Church

  9-10am— Baha'I Faith

  10-11am— Congregation Beth-El Zedeck

  11-Noon— Indiana Buddhist Center

  Noon-1pm— Muslim Community

  1-2pm— Quaker Community

  2-3pm— Progressive Spiritualist Church

  3-3:30pm— The Hindu Temple of Central Indiana

  3:30-4pm —The Sai Center of Indianapolis

  4-5pm— St. Luke's UMC Spiritual Life Center's Labyrinth Ministry

  5-6pm— Miami Nation of Indians of the State of Indiana

If you would like for your events to be included in this newsletter, please contact Lacey Lord at lglord@bsu.edu.

DISCLAIMER: The events described in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies.