Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters:

For a knowledge-based peace, justice, and ecology movement and an informed citizenry as the foundation for change. Informed citizens demanding a constitutional democracy.

From its beginning OMNI celebrated Human Rights, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the U.S. Bill of Rights, Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and our Human Rights Committee has actively opposed the death penalty and other human rights violations. Let us widen and deepen this commitment in the years to come by supporting the “emerging global ethos that says to the worst perpetrators of human-rights atrocities: ‘Think twice before you kill or torture.’”

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Kathryn Sikkink, Human Rights Prosecutions
Large Scale Interventions
Chile: Pinochet
Universal Rights
Bricmont, Humanitarian Imperialism
From: William Schreckhise <wschreckhise@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 6, 2012 at 8:23 PM
Subject: ACLU Forum on National Security and Civil Liberties
To: wschreckhise@gmail.com

A forum on national security and civil liberties was held Saturday, March 10, 2012, at 1:30 at Temple Shalom, sponsored by the local chapter of the Arkansas ACLU. Former Congressman Asa Hutchinson was one of the forum's participants.

PUBLIC FORUM NATIONAL SECURITY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES SATURDAY, 1:30 TEMPLE SHALOM, N. SANG AVE. THIS PUBLIC GATHERING WILL ADDRESS IMPORTANT ISSUES ABOUT THE NEED TO BALANCE HOMELAND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS WITH THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF AMERICAN RESIDENTS. PARTICIPANTS WILL INCLUDE ASA HUTCHINSON, PROF. STEVE SHEPPARD, AND PROF. LAURENT SACHAROFF, UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS LAW SCHOOL, AND OTHERS MODERATOR, DOUG THOMPSON, NORTHWEST ARKANSAS TIMES. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED. PLEASE ATTEND AND PRESENT YOUR VIEWS ON THIS VITAL QUESTION ABOUT THE POWER OF GOVERNMENT AND THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF CITIZENS
DONATE

ABOUT US

WATCH NOW

#MAKE OBAMA SIGN

TAKE ACTION

HORROR IN SYRIA

DONATE NOW

A CHILD SOLDIER SPEAKS

ACT LOCALLY

FIND A GROUP OR EVENT NEAR YOU.

Defend human rights for all.

Fight bad guys with every dollar.

DONATE NOW
• Stop arming human rights abusers.

TAKE ACTION
VIEW ALL ACTIONS

• VICTORY

Maryland Abolishes the Death Penalty!
18 down, 32 to go! Maryland makes history by becoming 18th state to abolish the death penalty.

TAKE ACTION
VIEW ALL VICTORIES

• EVENT

Human Rights Conference
Join us for Amnesty's 2013 Human Rights Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM). We'll expand our collective knowledge March 22-24 in Washington, DC.

LEARN MORE
VIEW ALL EVENTS

• FEATURED ACTION

Drones and the Law
Urge the U.S. government to follow the "rule book" on lethal force that already exists -- international law.

TAKE ACTION
VIEW ALL ACTIONS
Malala Yousafzai
14-year-old Malala Yousafzai was shot by Taliban gunmen for bravely speaking out for the rights of girls to receive an education.

TAKE ACTION

- Like Us on Facebook ›
- Follow Us on Twitter ›

THE AMNESTY USA BLOG

READ MORE

Shop for humanity.
Shop with a purpose.
• FEATURED ACTION

**Free Pussy Riot**  
Send your urgent message to Russian authorities now to stop the criminal persecution of Pussy Riot and protect free expression!  
[TAKE ACTION](#)  
[VIEW ALL ACTIONS](#)

• URGENT CASE

**Free or Retry Albert Woodfox of the "Angola 3"**  
Woodfox has spent nearly 41 years in solitary, but his conviction has again been overturned. Act now to make sure Louisiana doesn't appeal the ruling, so Woodfox can be retried or released!  
[TAKE ACTION](#)  
[VIEW ALL CASES](#)

• MUSIC FOR AMNESTY

**Chimes of Freedom**  
All profits from Chimes of Freedom, a 4-CD album featuring 76 newly recorded Bob Dylan songs, benefit Amnesty International's human rights work.  
[LISTEN NOW](#)  
[SHOP AMNESTY](#)

• EVENT

**Human Rights Conference**  
Join us for Amnesty's 2013 Human Rights Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM). We'll expand our collective
Argentina begins prosecution of military-era human rights abuses

Mar 12, 2013 12:14 pm (PDT) . Posted by:
"Dave Culver" mplsstreetwy

³This is a huge step to achieve the truth internationally,² says Atilio Borón, an Argentine political scientist who studies social movements and
democracy. Human rights have become a cornerstone of Argentine politics since Néstor Kirchner, the predecessor and late husband of current President Cristina Kirchner, overturned impunity laws.

* Eyes Wide Open (2010)
Jonathan Gilbert, Christian Science Monitor / MinnPost
Submitted by Evergreene Digest Contributing Editor Steve Clemens

In 1980, a young, left-wing Argentine militant named Horacio Campiglia was abducted in Rio de Janeiro and then taken to a military base in Buenos Aires, never to be heard from again.
In the southern cone, Mr. Campiglia's story is a familiar one he is one of tens of thousands of dissidents who were "disappeared" abducted and murdered by military dictatorships in the region in the 1970s and 1980s.
Now, the former government officials responsible for those disappearances are being put on the stand for the first time.

Full story...

Related:
Eyes Wide Open (2010), Democratic Underground
http://evergreenedigest.org/eyes-wide-open-2010
After 500 years of exploitation and repression, Latin America is at a turning point in its history: a series of socialist leaders has come to power. Can they satisfy their peoples' hunger for change?
Promoting Social Justice and Human Dignity
The Center for Human Rights and Peace Studies advances social justice and human dignity in an interdisciplinary fashion through active involvement of faculty, students, and community in research and teaching.

About the Center

The Center builds on Lehman College’s unique history: the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights began at Lehman College when the United Nations met at the College. Lehman College students, often immigrants and the first in their families to access higher education, engender a broad understanding of human rights. The Center unites student and faculty engagement on local and global rights issues in New York and the greater world community.

The Center emphasizes intrinsic linkages between human rights and peace. Not merely the absence of war or conflict, human security necessitates community building, safety, promotion of tolerance, environmental sustainability, expanded life chances, freedom of expression, movement and association, and equal access to resources across gender, ethnic, class, national, and other socio-economic divides.

Events

The Center for Human Rights and Peace Studies hosts a rich program of human rights events for both the Lehman community and the broader public throughout the year. Recent events include:

- Center for Human Rights and Peace Studies Spring 2012 Conference
  Lehman College
  East Dining Room
  Thursday, May 10, 2012
  Time: 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Last modified: Apr 17, 2012
My new op-ed on Rios Montt Trial and President Otto Perez Molina's denial of genocide "Genocide is not an 'Armed Confrontation'"

Dear Friends,

The historic Rios Montt genocide trial began on Tuesday, March 19 in Guatemala City despite every move you can imagine (including defense lawyers abandoning Rios Montt) to try to delay the trial.

I am sending you links to an op-ed I wrote entitled "El genocidio no es una confrontacion armado" for El Faro which has just been published by Plaza Publica in Guatemala. It would be great if you could add these links to your facebook page if you do facebook or just share with friends. Below these links are some others that may be of interest to you about the trial.

http://www.plazapublica.com.gt/content/el-genocidio-no-es-un-enfrentamiento-armado
NPR did a nice piece that you can link to here:
http://www.npr.org/2013/03/20/174812888/dramatic-testimony-marks-start-of-guatemalan-genocide-trial

For ongoing trial summaries, commentary and analysis, see a new Website launched by the Open Society Justice Initiative in partnership with the National Security Archive, the International Center for Transitional Justice, CEJIL and the Guatemalan on-line news site Plaza Pública:
http://www.riosmontt-trial.org/

And, last but not least, you can read about the first day of the trial in the attached documents written by the Association for Justice and Reconciliation AJR Center for Human Rights Legal Action CALDH-- the two NGOs who have been instrumental in moving the case forward and are representing the victims as querellantes adhesivos - lawyers working with the prosecutors to prosecute the case on behalf of the victims.

Please circulate widely.

Many thanks,

Victoria Sanford, PHD  Director
Center for Human Rights & Peace Studies
Professor of Anthropology  Lehman College & the Graduate Center
City University of New York

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”
Martin Luther King Jr., Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963

Universal Rights Down to Earth
A path-blazing lesson on how to reconcile lofty human rights ambitions with political and cultural realities. More

*Action: Arming human rights abusers in Bahrain? There oughta be a law!
Under current U.S. law as interpreted by the Obama Administration, the U.S. can arm a brutal dictatorship if it can be argued that the particular weapons won't be used for human rights abuses and the units being armed don't have a history of documented human rights abuse. Rep. Grijalva's bill would change that, and raise the bar for arming rights abusers. Urge your Rep. to support the Grijalva bill. [http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/act/hr5749](http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/act/hr5749) [How many human rights abusing nations does the US arm? --Dick]

"Somebody Else's Atrocities"


By Noam Chomsky, Nation of Change, posted June 7, 2012


The Justice Cascade

How Human Rights Prosecutions Are Changing World Politics

The Norton Series in World Politics

Kathryn Sikkink (Author)

Acclaimed scholar Kathryn Sikkink examines the important and controversial new trend of holding political leaders criminally accountable for human rights violations. Sikkink tells how international courts originated in domestic courts and developed in the 1990s, leading up to the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2002.

Grawemeyer Award winner Kathryn Sikkink offers a landmark argument for human rights prosecutions as a powerful political tool. She shows how, in just three decades, state leaders in Latin America, Europe, and Africa have lost their immunity from any accountability for their human rights violations, becoming the subjects of highly publicized trials resulting in severe consequences. This shift is affecting the behavior of political leaders worldwide and may change the face of global politics as we know it.

Drawing on extensive research and illuminating personal experience, Sikkink reveals how the stunning emergence of human rights prosecutions has come about; what effect it has had on democracy, conflict, and repression; and what it means for leaders and citizens everywhere, from Uruguay to the United States. The Justice Cascade is a vital read for anyone interested in the future of world politics and human rights. Rev. The Nation (March 19, 2012) by Samuel Moyn (author of The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History).

INTERVENTIONS

Best-selling author Rory Stewart and political economist Gerald Knaus examine the impact of large-scale interventions, from Bosnia to Afghanistan. More
1. **A Nation of Enemies**

"This will stand as the definitive work on Chile under Pinochet for many years to come."*Library Journal* [More]

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**OBAMA ADMINISTRATION’S EXTRAJUDICIAL PUNISHMENT**

DEMAND OBAMA’S memos justifying the targeted execution of U.S. citizens without trial.

**Demand President Obama Release the Execution Memos**

Brian Sonenstein, Firedoglake act@firedoglake.com

**Dear Dick,**

President Obama feels your Constitutional right to "due process" can be whatever secret process he makes up.

Yesterday, US Attorney General Eric

---
Holder reiterated the administration's support for their controversial program of secretly targeting US citizens for execution without notifying them of the accusations against them, officially charging them with a crime or offering them the opportunity to respond. Since the whole world is a battlefield in the vague ‘war on terror,’ the only due process afforded to someone who has been targeted for extrajudicial execution is a secret 'review' by the executive branch.

Just as the public demanded the release of the Bush Administration's Torture Memos to expose the ludicrous rationale behind their secret torture program, we too must demand to know the legal rationale for a program that allows our president to unilaterally choose to deprive someone of life and liberty - without the victim even being charged with a crime.

Holder’s speech was a cheap attempt to feign transparency without actually releasing the legal memos that define the administration's execution policy.¹ We need your help to demand the Obama administration release these memos immediately. Can you please sign our petition demanding the Obama administration release the Execution Memos?

Sign our petition demanding the Obama administration produce the internal memos and legal justification for their targeted execution program.

Click here to sign: http://action.firedoglake.com/page/s/release-the-memo

The administration's refusal to even outline this non-judicial 'due process' that allows US citizens to be secretly put on a kill list is beyond troubling to say the least.

As Salon writer Glenn Greenwald put it: “the ‘process’ which Eric Holder yesterday argued constitutes “due process” as required by the Fifth Amendment before the government can deprive of someone of their life: the President and his underlings are your accuser, your judge, your jury and your executioner all wrapped up in one, acting in total secrecy and without your
even knowing that he's accused you and sentenced you to death, and you have no opportunity even to know about, let alone confront and address, his accusations; is that not enough due process for you?"²

The ACLU, New York Times and others have been suing the Obama administration for months in hopes of securing the release of the Execution Memos, but as one of the least-transparent administrations in recent history, they have repeatedly blocked their release.³

If left unchallenged, this secretive program could continue to expand under Obama and future presidents, and further erode America's most basic principles of justice. Without the memos we do not know exactly how far the Obama administration believes this unprecedented power extends. We need your help to build a groundswell of pressure to force the release of any and all legal justification for the targeted killings program so there can be an open debate in this country about our president's unilateral authority to kill.

Sign our petition demanding the Obama administration produce the internal memos and legal justification for their targeted killing program.

This is a serious and dangerous precedent, and anyone who took issue with the Bush Torture Memos should be even more concerned about this latest power grab by the president. I hope you'll join us in fighting to release these memos.

Deepest Thanks,

Brian Sonenstein
Director of Online Activism,
Firedoglake.com

Since the end of the Cold War, the idea of human rights has been made into a justification for intervention by the world’s leading economic and military powers—above all, the United States—in countries that are vulnerable to their attacks. The criteria for such intervention have become more arbitrary and self-
serving, and their form more destructive, from Yugoslavia to Afghanistan to Iraq. Until the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the large parts of the left was often complicit in this ideology of intervention-discovering new “Hitlers” as the need arose, and denouncing antiwar arguments as appeasement on the model of Munich in 1938.

Jean Bricmont’s *Humanitarian Imperialism* is both a historical account of this development and a powerful political and moral critique. It seeks to restore the critique of imperialism to its rightful place in the defense of human rights. It describes the leading role of the United States in initiating military and other interventions, but also on the obvious support given to it by European powers and NATO. It outlines an alternative approach to the question of human rights, based on the genuine recognition of the equal rights of people in poor and wealthy countries.

Timely, topical, and rigorously argued, Jean Bricmont’s book establishes a firm basis for resistance to global war with no end in sight.

In this stimulating book, Jean Bricmont effectively deconstructs ‘humanitarian interventionism’ and makes a good case that leftists who support it are the ‘useful idiots’ of imperialism. He also provides a broader critique of the Western left and offers a number of constructive suggestions. This insightful book is chock full of enlightening case studies and provocative arguments. —Edward S. Herman, Professor Emeritus of Finance Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

Jean Bricmont’s provocative and carefully argued book deserves to be widely read and debated in the progressive, ecological, peace, and human rights movements. It may not be the last word on this subject but the issues Bricmont raises cannot be ignored.

—Alan Sokal, Professor of Physics, New York University

Jean Bricmont is professor of theoretical physics at the University of Louvain, Belgium. He is the author of *Fashionable Nonsense: Postmodern Intellectuals’ Abuse of Science* (with Alan Sokal) and other political and scientific publications.

Dick: See OMNI Newsletters on Arab Spring uprisings and Western interventions.
International concern for rights defenders in the Philippines grows

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) raised the alarm on the continuing human rights violations in the country under the Aquino government, particularly cases of extrajudicial killings of human rights defenders.

OMCT noted “the attacks on human rights defenders in a climate of pervasive impunity” especially those fighting for their land rights and the protection of the environment. “A climate of pervasive and systematic impunity is at the heart of this alarming situation,” said the OMCT delegation in a statement.

The OMCT conducted a mission in the Philippines on November 11 to 17, 2012, to investigate the situation of rights defenders. Two members of OMCT General Assembly, Ms. Vrinda Grover, a prominent human rights lawyer (India), and Ms. Claudia Samayoa, Coordinator of the Unit for Protection of Human Rights Defenders of Guatemala, led the mission. They met with leaders and network of Karapatan, indigenous peoples, farmers groups, lawyers, faith-based organisations, as well as government officials, foreign embassies and representatives of a transnational mining company in Manila and Mindanao.

The OMCT mission statement particularly cited the indigenous peoples who are “at risk in areas where conflict over land and natural resources has been aggravated by activities of national and transnational companies engaged in acquisition of land for mining and/or agro-industry.”

More than 70 farmer and indigenous peoples leaders and environmental advocates are currently in Metro Manila, the ManiLakbayan, to call the government’s attention for the same issues raised by the OMCT mission.

“The ancestral rights of indigenous people over land and natural resources are being brazenly violated often through the use of private security guards, paramilitary and the military. Indigenous human rights defenders resisting peacefully the violations and
asserting their lawful and ancestral claims face extrajudicial killings, vilification and threats,” said the OMCT.

The OMCT initial mission report noted the recent killing of indigenous leader Juvy Capion and her two minor children on October 18, 2012, in Tampakan, by members of the 27th Infantry Battalion of the Philippines Armed Forces, saying that it “exemplify the dangerous and violent conditions in the area sought for gold – copper mining by Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI) and transnational company Xstrata.”

The relatives of Juvy Capion, led by sister-in-law Erita Capion, are among the ManiLakbayan delegates who arrived in Metro Manila on Nov. 30 for a series of activities and protest actions to call the government’s attention to the killings due to counterinsurgency operations of Oplan Bayanihan, and also to quell people’s protests against large-scale mining.

The OMCT mission did not fail to notice the presence and activities of “legalized paramilitary groups such as the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU) and the Investment Defense Unit, as well as the large scale possession and availability of dangerous arms and weapons, are contributing to the climate of impunity for human rights violations including the attacks on human rights defenders.”

The OMCT has taken to task the Aquino government to “demonstrate its intent to respect and protect the rights of those that continue to struggle for human rights even in a climate of stigma and fear,” adding that “plethora of laws and institutional mechanisms, purportedly for advancement of human rights, does not inspire confidence, as in their actual working and practices those in position of political, economic and military power continue to enjoy impunity.”

Among the recommendations of the mission emphasized the “role of command responsibility in Government and among forces in the security sector should also be diligently scrutinized in the perpetuation of impunity.”

*Attached is a copy of the complete press statement of the international factfinding missions of the OMCT and FIDH with their preliminary recommendations.
KARAPATAN is an alliance of human rights organizations and programs, human rights desks and committees of people’s organizations, and individual advocates committed to the defense and promotion of people’s rights and civil liberties. It monitors and documents cases of human rights violations, assists and defends victims and conducts education, training and campaign.

END OMNI HUMAN RIGHTS NEWSLETTER #3

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Dick Bennett
My blog:
War Department/Peace Department
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