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Franciscan-based peace group launches Campaign Nonviolence

John Dear | Sep. 24, 2013 On the Road to Peace

"We have to make truth and nonviolence not matters for mere individual practice but for practice by groups and communities and nations," Gandhi once said. "That at any rate is my dream. I shall live and die in trying to realize it."

Like many of you, I, too, share Gandhi's dream. I've traveled the nation and the world speaking about the wisdom of nonviolence, inviting people to practice it, teach it and proclaim it, in the hope it will become a new way of operating for the world. For me, nonviolence is the message of Jesus, the world's greatest need, a way out of our madness, and a way forward into hope and peace.

This week, my friends and colleagues at Pace e Bene [1] are proud to launch a new national movement to practice and promote nonviolence. We call it: "Campaign Nonviolence." Our slogan: "Unleashing the power of nonviolent change for a world that works for us all!"

I invite everyone in the nation and the world to sign on with Campaign Nonviolence [2] and join us as we redouble our efforts to bring nonviolence into the mainstream. We want to spread the way of nonviolence far and wide over the next year; to prepare for sustained nonviolent direct action in fall 2014 in every Congressional district in the nation; to demand an end to drone warfare, extreme poverty and environmental destruction. This program is something every peace group, church group, youth group and student group can be part of.

Here's the mission statement of Campaign Nonviolence:

> Campaign Nonviolence will take a stand against the widespread violence and injustice we face today by promoting and activating the power of nonviolence in our lives, our communities, our nation, and our world. At this critical moment, we are called to become people of nonviolence working to transform our world of violence into a new culture of nonviolence. The long-term goal of Campaign Nonviolence is a more just and peaceful world where people everywhere practice nonviolence toward themselves, one another, and the earth. Toward this goal, Campaign Nonviolence is launching a movement of education, community building, and action for nonviolent change:
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> - **Education.** Campaign Nonviolence will publish resources, organize study groups, hold workshops and speaking events, use social media, and work with partners to build a national nonviolence trainers network that can spread the message of nonviolence far and wide.
> - **Community Building.** Campaign Nonviolence will build a network of individuals, groups, religious communities, and organizations to help mainstream nonviolence and to collaborate in the work of transforming the nation and the world into a culture of nonviolence.
> - **Action.** Campaign Nonviolence will take nonviolent action to help build this culture of

> nonviolence, focused first on dismantling the U.S. drones program; confronting systems that keep people in poverty; and stopping the destruction of the environment. Nationally coordinated nonviolent actions will be held before the 2014 Congressional elections calling for these policy shifts. Beginning in September 2013, we will organize a year-long process preparing people across the U.S. to take nonviolent action in Fall 2014 and beyond.

> The Campaign Nonviolence Pledge commits us to begin or renew our efforts to take up the way of active nonviolence practiced by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. Everyone is invited to take The Campaign Nonviolence Pledge and join this new movement for peace with justice for humanity and creation.

How can you get involved? First of all, sign The Campaign Nonviolence Pledge [3]. Lend your name, promise to renew your nonviolence, and join the campaign to bring nonviolence into the mainstream.

Next, order 100 brochures about the campaign (or 500, or 1,000) and distribute them to your church, peace group, friends and communities. Then, try to get 1,000 others to sign on. Get your local peace group to sign on to the campaign and join the effort to redouble our work to spread nonviolence as a way of life. We want everyone to discuss and practice active nonviolence and to help change the focus of the nation toward peace. Also, we invite everyone to prepare with us for local nonviolent protests around the country one year from now during the fall of 2014 before the next congressional elections. We will announce details next year, but basically, we urge people to pick one issue -- we suggest drone warfare, poverty or environmental destruction -- and take your message to your local congressional office and demand new action.

My part in the campaign includes my new book, *The Nonviolent Life [4]*, which is out this week. Next year, I will embark on a 40-city national speaking tour to discuss my book, promote Campaign Nonviolence and help lead up to nonviolent direct action across the country. (You can help by purchasing copies of my book and promoting my speaking tour. Thanks.)

This is such an exciting project. I'm going to work hard to promote this campaign, and I invite all friends to join in, to do what we can to bring nonviolence to others. It's a simple, concrete, organized project everyone can join. For details, visit paceebene.org [1] or call their office.

My hope is that it will help more and more people adopt Jesus' way of nonviolence; build a stronger global grass-roots movement of nonviolence for the end of war, poverty and environmental destruction; and hasten the realization of Gandhi's dream. That, as Gandhi says, is something worth living for.

[John Dear's new book, *The Nonviolent Life*, is now available at paceebene.org [4]. John is currently on a speaking tour of Scotland. Next year, he will tour the United States speaking about the life of nonviolence. To see John's speaking schedule or to invite him to speak in your church or peace group, go to his website [5] or contact the Franciscan-based peace group Pace e Bene [6]. John's book *Lazarus, Come Forth!* [7] and other recent books, including *Daniel Berrigan: Essential Writings* [8], *Put Down Your Sword* [9] and *A Persistent Peace* [10], are available from Amazon.com.]

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Links:

[1] http://www.paceebene.org/
[2] http://paceebene.org/campaign-nonviolence
[3] http://org.salsalabs.com/o/859/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=14090
[4] http://paceebene.org/store/item/nonviolent-life
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