

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WE UNDERSTAND WAR AND IT IS NOT THE ANSWER

We, the Asian and Pacific Islander Coalition Against War, are a coalition of Asian and Pacific Islander groups and individuals in the Bay Area who mobilized in the aftermath of the September 11 attack. We offer our deepest condolences to the families and friends who lost loved ones tragically on September 11. We also grieve and are traumatized by the attack on American soil. We cannot help but be reminded of our first hand experience with war, whether it be the Japanese internment camps during WWII or the military struggles waged throughout Asia. We mourn the deaths and honor the lives of those killed on the East Coast and in our global community by working to build a more just and peaceful society beginning in our local community in the Bay Area of California. We are particularly concerned with educating and organizing APIs to join our anti-war efforts.

Members of APICAW are united around the following three points:

- 1) We oppose the United States government's "war against terrorism" and any "retaliation" for the September 11 attack. This includes sanctions, bombings, the deployment of grounding troops, covert operations or any other violent reaction. The United States government's proposed plan of action is not a solution. It will result in more violence and the loss of more innocent lives both in the United States and abroad. Our communities and those we stand in solidarity with will suffer the most because retaliation will target Third World countries and because the United States armed forces are disproportionately composed of young people of color.
- 2) We oppose all racist xenophobic scapegoating. We stand in solidarity with all targeted communities, including South and West Asians. Entire communities have been unjustly blamed for the September 11 attack, resulting in harassment, violent attacks and murders. In particular, Sikhs, Muslims, Afghans, and Pakistanis are being targeted. The internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II reminds us where current scapegoating can lead.
- 3) We oppose any further erosion of our civil and political rights. We demand that our right to political statement be upheld, including the right to protest and organize. We oppose increased surveillance and harassment of organizations and individuals. The September 11 incident should also not be used to strip immigrants of their rights or increase restrictions on immigration including deportation and prolonged detention.

Our anti-war campaign will consist of political education, the distribution of posters, fact sheets, and joining our voices with other people of color anti-war coalitions, as well as larger anti-war movements locally, nationally, and internationally. APICAW's intention is to stop the war, protect all communities from further discrimination and harassment, and to fight against any infringement of our constitutional rights.