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ASIAN AMERICAN GROUPS OPPOSE ASIA'S SUPPORT OF WAR

Protest for Peace on 60th Anniversary of Attack on Pearl Harbor

San Francisco – December 4, 2001 -- On the 60th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor, the **Asian & Pacific Islander Coalition Against the War**, the **US-Japan No War Network** and the **Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines** announce a **Tour of Shame** that rejects the U.S.-led war on terrorism and Asian nations' support of military actions. On December 7, 2001, members of the three organizations and supporters will gather together in downtown San Francisco for a mobile protest that begins at the **Philippines consulate**, moves to the **Japanese consulate**, and ends at the **United Nations Plaza** with a speak-out. The groups reject revenge and military violence as the response to the tragedies of Pearl Harbor and September 11. Instead, Asian Pacific Islander Americans will stand united together on the historic "day of infamy" to call for a just peace and an end to the current war on terrorism. Said one member, "We cannot accept the loss of more innocent lives nor can we condone this domestic war on our communities. Asians and Pacific Islanders have an intimate understanding of war. We ask that our ancestral homelands and peoples resist being used as instruments of war by the United States."

Says Miho Kim of the US-Japan-No War Network, "On the 60th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, we urge the Japanese government to fully acknowledge the unjust and despicable horror of war, and pursue its Constitutional mandate as an agent of security, peace and justice for all peoples by using all diplomatic resources to urge the US and the international community to do the same." Because of the Japanese experience with military violence: severe state repression and neglect, brutal colonization of its Asian neighbors, as well as the US-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Network opposes the Japanese government's support of the US-led war. The Network also criticizes the Japanese government for deploying the Self Defense Forces for foreign combat operations for the first time since World War II, an act prohibited in its own Peace Constitution. The parallels of post-9/11 Japan to post-Pearl Harbor Japan is disturbing: Japan is fast eroding civil liberties of its people in bold attempts to amass unprecedented military power.

The Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines (CHRP) protests the Philippine Consulate because even Filipino-Americans far from their homeland understand that President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's open invitation to increase U.S. military presence in support of the war will only worsen the deep poverty suffered by many of our families here and abroad. We denounce the use of our ancestral islands as a launching pad for U.S. military attacks in West Asia. CHRP also condemns the use of war as an excuse

for repression and military action against genuine mass movements for freedom and self-determination in the Philippines. The shameful legacy of the U.S. military in the Philippines for over a century includes massacres and brutal human rights violations, toxic and nuclear waste and denial of benefits for Filipino WWII veterans.

While APICAW, the Network, and CHRP are only visiting two consulates on December 7th, the organizations urge all Asian countries to reconsider their responses to 9/11, saying “ratcheting up military budgets will not solve the poverty that is the root of terrorism.” The Tour of Shame's final stop at UN Plaza in front of the Federal Building will feature a speakout by local Asian Pacific Islander activists who will highlight the war's negative consequences in Pacific Rim nations. “The United States’ claims to moral high ground because of broad international support for this war ring false when you consider how Pakistan, China or Indonesia have been pressured and bribed,” said an APICAW member. As the International Herald Tribune reported last month, "All [Asian countries] offer support for the United States in return for whatever they need - money, trade, arms or using anti-terrorism as cover for suppressing local dissidents."

In the domestic context, the momentum of war-making has already brought a decrease in civil liberties and social services for all residents of this country. Because Asians and Pacific Islanders are two thirds immigrant and often poor, our communities are disproportionately impacted by reactionary cutbacks and diversion of domestic budgets to military spending. Asian and Pacific Islanders suffer from the racist and xenophobic backlash—South Asians and Muslims are targeted by hate crimes and unjustly detained, while immigrant Asian security workers are denied the right to work at local airports because of ill-considered citizenship requirements. Said one APICAW member, “Innocent people are persecuted to propagate an illusion of national security.”

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.

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