

***“IN THE NAME OF THE GOD OF PEACE”***

***Speech at Rally Against Star Wars, in front of the White House,***

***Sunday, June 10, 2001, Washington, D.C.***

Dear Friends, the God of peace created the universe, the stars and the sun and the moon and the earth, as a gift of peace for the human race.

But today we have rejected that gift and risk destroying the earth by militarizing space and filling the sky with nuclear weapons, just as we have filled the earth with 30,000 nuclear weapons and millions of guns and bombs.

As people of faith and conscience, we say, in the name of the God of peace, that these plans are immoral, illegal and just plain impractical, and we name Bush’s Star Wars a sin that deserves to be utterly condemned.

In the name of the God of peace, we call upon our country to stop these mad plans to militarize space; not to take another step forward with further plans for nuclear death, but to reverse our direction and undertake international treaties for nuclear disarmament, so that we can dismantle every nuclear weapon and every weapon of mass destruction.

In the name of the God of peace, we pledge to tell the truth of peace---that the Bush administration is wrong; that the Pentagon is wrong; that the U.S. military is wrong; that nuclear weapons and Star Wars are wrong; that the people of the earth do not want these weapons of death circling our planet; that they are a waste of billions of dollars while millions starve and die; that no one is safe from nuclear weapons until they are all dismantled.

In the name of the God of peace, we tell the Bush administration that you can’t buy off the religious community around the country by promising big bucks for faith-based initiatives while at the same time mocking our faith by risking the destruction of the planet with these

insane weapons; that millions of people of faith, in churches, synagogues, and mosques around the country reject such hypocrisy and want disarmament and an authentic peace based on justice for the poor.

In the name of the God of peace, we promise to do what we can to resist our government's plans for star wars and its maintenance of these insane weapons; and in a spirit of nonviolent goodwill and satyagraha, to pray and fast and organize nationwide vigils and go to jail if necessary against Star Wars.

In the name of the God of peace, we vow to become people of nonviolence, to love our enemies, to offer justice and human rights to the poor and to seek the ancient spiritual wisdom of peace.

In the name of the God of peace, we proclaim the coming of that new day when all nuclear weapons will be abolished, along with war itself and the death penalty and the sanctions on Iraq; when space will be demilitarized; when our guns and bombs will be dismantled and the Pentagon turned into a hospital for the poor; when our hearts will be disarmed and we will beat our swords into plowshares; and convert our culture of violence into a culture of nonviolence.

Dear Friends, if we keep on practicing nonviolence; keep on speaking the truth of disarmament; keep on walking forward together in faith, hope and love; keep on trusting that this new day of peace will dawn, we will sow the seeds of peace and disarmament that will bring a harvest of peace and justice, because, finally, we are learning to walk side by side with the God of peace. God bless you.

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