

# MISSION STATEMENT

Adopted by the **NATIONAL LABOR ASSEMBLY for PEACE** in Chicago, 10/25/03

## The Current Situation

We are living in an era in which the government has manipulated our nation's fear of terrorism to launch wars, destroy our economic security, undermine government services, erode our democratic rights and intensify racism, sexism, religious discrimination and divisions among working people.

Under the mantle of National Security, the present Administration seeks to reverse decades of victories won by working people to regulate corporate conduct, protect the environment, strengthen the rights of workers, defend civil liberties and end, racism, sexism and discrimination and provide an adequate social safety net. Democracy as we know it is under threat. The USA Patriot Act threatens our fundamental rights under the Constitution.

This crisis is aggravated by the government's policies of military intervention abroad and attacks on working peoples' rights at home. Only corporations and the wealthy have benefited. Our nation faces a domestic calamity – unemployment, declining wages and benefits, deunionization of the workforce, privatization and reduction of public services, crumbling health care and educational systems, underdeveloped communities, cuts in veterans benefits, escalating public debt and decreased economic, social and personal security. These government policies have hit women and people of color hardest.

We cannot solve these economic and social problems without addressing U.S. foreign policy and its consequences.

The foreign policy of the Bush Administration, with the consent of Congress, is based on military aggression and the threat of force. It has weakened, rather than strengthened security in the U.S., creating enemies around the world and alienating friends. This policy has done immense harm to innocent civilians abroad and to our friends and family members in the military. The wars against Iraq and Afghanistan have turned into hostile occupations that are developing into Vietnam-like quagmires.

The policy of Permanent War has been based on lies and false promises to the American people and lucrative contracts to large corporations. This is coupled with a strategy of unbridled economic globalization with so-called 'Free Trade' Agreements aimed at exploiting workers abroad, controlling natural resources and destroying jobs and communities at home. War has become a strategy for advancing the interests of US corporations in international markets. The massive military spending, combined with tax cuts for the rich, are creating colossal budget deficits that threaten to destroy needed social programs for decades, further undercutting the standard of living of working people here at home.

## Our Principles

**To protect our members and the lives and livelihoods of working people everywhere, we will advocate, educate and mobilize in the US labor movement for:**

- **A Just Foreign Policy** that will bring genuine security and prosperity to working people. A policy that strengthens international treaties, supports human rights institutions, respects national sovereignty and upholds the right of self-determination for all peoples. ➤ A foreign policy that solves disputes by diplomacy rather than war. ➤ A policy that promotes global economic and social justice rather than the race-to-the-bottom, job-destroying, discriminatory practices favored by multinational corporations.
- **An End to U.S. Occupation of Foreign Countries**, replaced by the reconstruction of war-devastated nations with the full support of the international community and the full participation and decision-making power of affected peoples.
- **Redirecting the Nation's Resources** from inflated military spending to meeting the needs of working families for health care, education, a clean environment, housing and a decent standard of living based on principles of equality and democracy.
- **Supporting Our Troops and their Families** by bringing the troops home now, by not recklessly putting them in harm's way and by providing decent compensation, veterans' benefits and domestic policies administered without discrimination that prioritize the needs of working people who make up the bulk of the military.
- **Protecting Workers' Rights, Civil Rights, Civil Liberties and the Rights of Immigrants** by promoting democracy, not subverting it. Ethnic, racial and religious profiling and stereotyping must be replaced by policies that promote dignity, economic justice and respect for all working people.
- **Solidarity With Workers and their Organizations Around the World** who are struggling for their own labor and human rights, and with those in the U.S. who want US foreign and domestic policies to reflect our nation's highest ideals.

**WE PURSUE THESE OBJECTIVES AS *US LABOR AGAINST THE WAR (USLAW)*.**