

SOLIDARITY STATEMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
FROM LINDA EVANS, U.S. POLITICAL PRISONER

Sisters,

My warmest revolutionary love and greetings to each and all of you. Many of you know I am one of many North American anti-imperialist political prisoners, locked-up as a result of my political activism against racism, in solidarity with national liberation movements, and for fighting for women's and lesbian liberation. You have helped me continue to be an active part of our movement, and I thank you all for your ongoing support.

It's hard for me to feel the joy we usually share on International Women's Day. Like all of you, I've been feeling tremendous rage and deep sorrow because of the atrocities and massacres carried out by the U.S. government against the people of the Middle East. But under U.S. imperialism, war is a constant necessity. U.S. prisons are an often forgotten front of this war. Thousands of African-American, Native-American, Puerto Rican, and Mexicano-Chicano women have been unjustly imprisoned for crimes of survival -- economic crimes, self defense against abuse, victims of the "war on drugs." Many of these prisoners' sentences have been transformed into death sentences because they are HIV positive and have no access to AIDS treatments, drug trials, or even counseling. Almost half of the prisoners here in this prison are from other countries, forcibly separated from their children and families, serving longer sentences than those imposed by any other country in the world -- all to serve U.S. aspirations of being the world's policeman.

Increased social repressiveness has been accompanied by increased political repression -- now over 150 long term political prisoners and prisoners of war from national liberation and other progressive and revolutionary movements inside the U.S. are locked up because of our political actions. I am imprisoned here at Pleasanton, a federal women's prison, with five Puerto Rican women political prisoners and prisoners of war -- jailed for fighting for the liberation of Puerto Rico. Our numbers are bound to increase as we intensify our militance in opposing the real crimes of the U.S. government.

We hope you will build a wall of women against the war strong enough to break through these prison walls: to support the struggles of all prisoners for humane living conditions and medical care, for justice and human rights -- and to fight to free all political prisoners and prisoners of war so we can rejoin you in our liberation movements.

(Linda Evans' Statement Cont'd)

This is a difficult time to feel powerful. The enemy we are confronting is one of the strongest international war criminals in the history of the world. But we can unite across international borders, adding our energies and commitment to those of people in Palestine, south Korea, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, South Africa, the Phillipines, and others who are fighting for self determination and national liberation. We will be stronger if we embrace each others' needs, struggles, and victories as our own. Inside the U.S., our vision of a new society can only become real if we fight hard to eliminate the colonialism, racism, homophobia, and class differences that define the world around us, and divide us from each other. Step by step, person by person, we can build a resistance movement strong enough to stop the war against us all.

Dare to struggle, Dare to win,

Linda Evans

**STATEMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY FROM ANTI-IMPERIALIST
POLITICAL PRISONERS AT MARIANNA PRISON, USA MARCH 8, 1991**

Historically, we have joined together as women on International Women's Day to celebrate our heritage, acknowledge our history, underline our continued subjugation, press our demands and resist the inequalities that confront us. We did it empowered by the knowledge that in every nation in the world other women were also raising their voices and fists. This year, March 8th, occurs in the shadow of a barbarous episode of United States aggression; the extent of the destruction still unknown, maybe never to be fully revealed. We gather filled with the images of women and children wounded, maimed, dead; the "collateral" damage of the allies "surgically precise" bombardments.

While others cheer the victory, we as women must redouble our efforts to mobilize and organize against the actions of the U.S. and in support of the self-determination of nations and peoples. As women we raise our voices in solidarity with the people of the Middle East and in particular the Palestinians, the abandoned, invisible, other target of this war. The hostilities might have temporarily ceased, but the war is not over! We are at the beginning of a protracted U.S. military occupation of a large part of the Middle East. The troops are not coming home; they will remain there to impose the will of the United States and its allies and to assure the longevity of futile ruling dynasties that history has already bypassed. Any hopes for redressing regional grievances through mass democratic movements such as the Intifadah will now face an obdurate wall of U.S. Marines. Despite the turgid rhetoric emanating from Washington, autocracy, women's oppression and backwards economic relationships will be reinforced by the presence of the United States. This is the "new world order" commanded Bush.

If polls are believable, a large portion of women in the U.S. did not support this war. The spectacle of battle-fatigued female soldiers is insufficient to win us over. Could it be that our responsibilities as providers, nurturers, educators and parents fill our consciousness with a different agenda? We who must feed the children, care for the sick and dying, find shelter when none is available, clean the wounds left by the increasingly violent, racist and homophobic attacks, experience the day-to-day reality of the "new world order." The domestic face of war and aggression is increased poverty and degradation. When the bill is finally presented for the "new world order," women and children will be the first to pay.

The cost is not limited to economics. Repression, racism, sexism and homophobia are the immeasurable debts accumulating

inside the United States. Racial stereotypes are multiplying, reproducing some of the worst caricatures of past years. Arabs have been equal to demons and people have lost compassion for fellow human beings. A prisoner here said, "Let's just turn the place into a parking lot." It was received with overwhelming applause. Dissent is being silenced; there is a concerted effort to isolate those who disagree. At our prison we were told no discussion of the war would be tolerated, while the staff displayed increasingly large flags, buttons and yellow ribbons. Black History Month was used to mobilize support for the war. The majority of the invited speakers represented the most reactionary elements in the African-American community. All these efforts were only partially successful. Dissent continued and the opposition on the outside gave encouragement to those who resisted this manipulation.

As a movement we have had a preview of our capacities. Thousands came into the streets to express condemnation of U.S. military aggression. Yet the world-wide anti-war forces did not stop the war or the bombings and the murder of more than a hundred thousand Iraqi people. The movement has not been successful in forcing the U.S. to uphold the Palestinian people's right to return to their land and end Israeli occupation. We have not won, but we have not definitively lost. The struggle continues.

The upsurge of the last several months may end and the numbers of people in motion may diminish but the contradictions at home, in this prisonhouse of nations and nationalities, will continue. Twenty-five years ago the Black Liberation struggle brought the war home from Vietnam and challenged the society to its white supremacist core; that challenge is more urgent now. In opposing war and aggression abroad, let us not forget the war at home.

In the years since we have been in prison the world has changed drastically. East and West have become North and South. But one thing has not changed --- U.S.-led imperialism. We are in prison because as women we acted in opposition to U.S. imperialism and in support of self-determination of the oppressed nations and peoples. Current events demand continued anti-imperialist resistance.

Now is the time for women and lesbians to come to the forefront and fight for our agenda. As we gather this year and build our walls of resistance let's promise ourselves that when we meet next year we will celebrate the victory of the FMLN in El Salvador, full U.S. withdrawal from the Saudi Arabian peninsula and an intensified mobilization at home to win full human rights and justice.

Venceremos! Silvia Baraldini, Marilyn Buck, Susan Rosenberg