



Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute

A unique center for human rights and peace law founded in 1965

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PRESS RELEASE

Berkeley, Dec. 21: "Government spying on peace demonstrators and animal rights activists isn't all the Government has been doing to violate human rights," according to Barbara Blong, President of Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute. "The U.S. has violated three human rights treaties it ratified by not filing the required periodic reports on human rights violations in the U.S. And when the Government finally filed its late report with the UN Human Rights Committee in Geneva, it was full of nice words covering serious human rights violations, from Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo to airport screeners in San Francisco and racism in dealing with Katrina victims."

Blong spoke out as the New York Times revelations on NSA spying were compounded by the latest Status Report of the House Judiciary Committee Democratic Staff on the Downing Street Minutes and attacks on those who disagreed with Bush policy on the Iraq War. The Meiklejohn Institute, a center for peace law and human rights, submitted 13 Issues to the Human Rights Committee in Geneva to use in its dialog with the U.S. Government over the tardy U.S. report required under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Ann Fagan Ginger, Executive Director of the Institute, said: "Our Issues include denial of the right to privacy through the recently revealed NSA spying operations, local police killing several innocent civilians and treating people differently based on their race, and other racist actions leading to different life expectancies of Black men and women, higher rates of unemployment and poverty due to race and gender, and less money for good schools in Black/Latino neighborhoods. While the report says the Government has 'reached out' to Arab/Muslim Americans, in fact we must report many attacks on individuals and their community organizations. The United Electrical Workers Union (UE) is also reporting many actions forbidding labor unions in many government job classifications. And NGOs are concerned about racist military recruiting on campuses, and failure to make adequate plans to help injured Service members returning from duty in Iraq."

These Issues will be presented on March 13 at the New York meeting of the Committee, along with issues from many other U.S. human rights organizations. They will be part of the Committee dialog with the U.S. Government representatives in July in Geneva, according to Ginger.

The full list of Issues presented to the Human Rights Committee is attached.

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