



Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute

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Founded 1965

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U.S. REPORT TO U.N. ON RACE DISCRIMINATION COMES UP SHORT, SAYS HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP

BERKELEY, CA: "The United States filed an inadequate and inaccurate report with the United Nations Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), failing to describe such basic areas of race discrimination as health care" Judge Claudia Morcom stated as she announced the filing of a 'shadow' report in Geneva for Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute (MCLI) and the National Lawyers Guild (NLG). **"Our report provides statistics on discrepancies in life expectancy and other health care problems** among African Americans, Hispanics and Asian Americans, even in a progressive western city, Berkeley.

"As an African American with roots in the Mississippi delta community, and a long-time resident of the city of Detroit, with the current high unemployment rate, it is imperative that the U.S. report include statistics on the economic situation at the local level, so we included a table on Race and Poverty.

"The U.S. report must also include discussion of discrimination against Native Americans, the several indigenous peoples living in Hawaii and Guam and other U.S. territories. The U.N. Committee requests such information, therefore **our report includes hard-to-find statistics on discrimination against indigenous peoples.**"

"Katrina/Rita victims continue to suffer from racial discrimination," according to Rev. Daniel Buford, vice president of MCLI, regional coordinator of the People's Institute West and associate minister of the Allen Temple Baptist Church who attends frequent meetings of the People's Institute in New Orleans. "MCLI presents statistics on the specific differences in the status of New Orleans residents, pre-Katrina and post-Katrina, based on their race. Furthermore, the U.S. Government and the State of Louisiana are violating the Voting Rights Act and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and **disenfranchising African American voters by not returning the internally displaced residents to New Orleans.**

"And the basic connection between poverty and race is spelled out in statistics carefully pulled from U.S. Census records by MCLI interns. The U.N. Committee asked the U.S. a series of questions when it discussed the last U.S. report in 2001 but the U.S. did not answer these questions. And the U.S. did not seek reports from every city, county and state so that the current report would be complete and accurate, as the treaty requires and the Committee specifically requested. **MCLI encouraged the City of Berkeley to become the first in the nation to submit a city report**, which proved useful at the local level."

"The basic racism practiced by the U.S. military in both **Abu Ghrab** and in the detentions at Guantanamo are part of any discussion of racial discrimination in the U.S. and its territories in the years since 2001," says Ann Fagan Ginger, Executive Director of MCLI, a think tank she founded in 1965 to work on peace law and human rights. "The MCLI report spells out very briefly what the whole world now knows: **the torture and degradation and illegal detention of hundreds of prisoners in these two facilities, was based on the race, nationality, ethnicity, and religions of those arrested.**

"There is no way any U.S. citizen will be safe, even if Caucasian and native-born, if the U.S. government can treat human beings as the U.S. military has treated the men it sent to those two facilities." The complete MCLI report is on the web at www.mcli.org/MCLI_Report_to_CERD.pdf

BACKGROUND:

In 1994 the U.S. Senate ratified the U.N. Convention on Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, a U.N. treaty that requires periodic reports every two years from every signatory nation. The treaty is "the supreme law of the land" under the U.S. Constitution, Article 6, clause 2. The U.S. has only filed two reports since 1994, not the 5 reports required. And the Committee requires that the second and all future reports must include information at the state and local levels, which the 2007 U.S. report still does not do. The federal government has never insisted that every state submit a report, based on information at the city, county and state level. And the formal U.S. 2007 report says the government cannot afford to prepare reports for all 50 states plus all U.S. territories, so it only includes information on 4 states and those reports were prepared in Washington, not in Oregon, Illinois, New Mexico, and South Carolina.