

**Peace and Social Order Committee
Report to RepCom
March 2011**

Peace and Social Order Committee has been meeting on a monthly basis by conference call, on the last Monday of the month, since the summer of 2010. An email reminder is sent out to all Peace Committee clerks and others interested Friends. If you want to be part of this conversation, contact Anthony Manousos at interfaithquaker@aol.com.

Minutes of the PSO committee meeting at the YM annual session and other PSO concerns have been posted at laquaker.blogspot.com. See

<http://laquaker.blogspot.com/2010/08/peace-and-justice-concerns-of.html>

<http://laquaker.blogspot.com/2011/01/santa-monica-friends-oppose-torture.html>

PSO has also been supportive of the "Pay Your Taxes Under Protest" campaign: See <http://laquaker.blogspot.com/2011/02/pay-your-taxes-under-protest.html>

As clerk of PSO, I took part in the QUIT anti-torture conference that took place at Ben Lomond Quaker Center in September, 2010. Notes on this conference are posted at: <http://laquaker.blogspot.com/2010/09/end-torture-now.html>

PSO has received a minute of concern opposing torture from Santa Monica Meeting, which is being forwarded to Quarterly Meeting for seasoning:

Santa Monica Friends stand firmly opposed to torture and support the work of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (<http://www.nrcat.org/>) as well as of Quakers Initiative to End Torture (<http://www.quit-torture-now.org/>). We call on our elected officials, and especially the President of the United States, to bring to justice those who have authorized torture in violation of US and international law. We also want the United States government to stop preventing the victims of US-sponsored torture from seeking redress and just compensation in US courts. Finally, we support the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), which can help prevent torture and abuse by requiring a ratifying country to establish National Preventative Mechanisms (NPMs) to monitor the treatment of

prisoners. In addition to the NPMs, OPCAT allows for international oversight of places of confinement to ensure that torture and other abuses are not occurring.

As Quakers, we feel that torture is a moral and religious issue. We believe that there is "that of God" in every human being and therefore everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. Torture does incalculable and long-lasting damage to both the torturer and the torture victim. Torture erodes our nation's moral fibre, diminishes our moral standing in the world, incites retaliation, and puts at risk the lives of Americans abroad and at home.

PSO has also received the following requests for interest groups:

1) Quakers and the Truth of 9/11. 9/11 was used to justify wars of aggression, curtailment of civil rights, and torture: all of which continue to this day. To address the evils of 9/11 we must seek the truth of 9/11. This interest group consider whether Quakers have a role in the 9/11 Truth Movement. Group leader: **David Chandler**, Visalia Friends Meeting, and a member of Scientists for 9/11 Truth, Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, and the International Center of 9/11 Studies. (For more background see message below from Noel Glynn in the UK who has founded Quakers for Truth on Terrorism, another group to which David belongs.)

2) Friends and the Interfaith Movement. Learn about what is happening locally and globally to promote interfaith understanding and peace (including the spiritual, political and musical), and how you can take part and make a difference.

Facilitator: **Anthony Manousos**, a member of Santa Monica Friends Meeting, the Christian and Interfaith Relations Committee of FGC and the Quaker Universalist Fellowship, as well as numerous interfaith organizations, such as the Parliament of the World's Relations. In the summer of 2011 he will be traveling again in the ministry, visiting Quaker meetings across the USA as he did last summer, and giving a workshop on Friends and the Interfaith Community at the Friends General Conference gathering at Grinnell College in Iowa. He has a letter of support for his leading to do interfaith ministry from Pacific Yearly Meeting as well as from his monthly and quarterly meeting.

3) **Laurel Gord**, clerk of FCL-CA, is planning to organize an interest group focusing on racism, drugs and the criminal justice system. .

4) **Health Care Reform in California and nationwide**. Learn about what is going on, specially at the state level, to promote a meaningful change to our health care system and how you can take part and make a difference. Senate bill SB 810 has been reintroduced this month of February and the HCA (Health Care for All) State Strategy group is working on the language for a ballot initiative to be introduced in 2012 through the legislature. Contents of SB 810 and of the "Patient Protection and Affordability Act (PPACT)" will be discussed.

Facilitator: **Hubert Morel-Seytoux**, a member of Palo Alto Monthly Meeting, a member of the Board of Health Care for all-California and director of the local San Francisco mid-Peninsula chapter, has been involved with the movement to bring a single-payer system to California for over a decade.

5) AFSC is organizing an interest group, according to **Eisha Mason**.

Yours in peace and friendship,

Anthony Manousos, Clerk
Peace and Social Order Committee