

FCNL POLICY STATEMENT¹

(Approved 11/03)

We seek a world free of war and the threat of war.

We seek a society with equity and justice for all.

We seek a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled.

We seek an earth restored.

PREAMBLE

The Friends Committee on National Legislation is composed of members of the Religious Society of Friends who bring spiritual values to bear on public policy decisions. Our legislative policy grows out of our basic belief that there is that of God in every human being and that God's love endows all creation with worth and dignity. Through individual and corporate worship we try to be open to the will of God and to express the spirit of Christ in all relationships and levels of interaction, whether personal, communal, national, or global.

We work together to secure justice and freedom for all people so that we may live at peace with one another. As seekers after truth and Christians, Friends strive to make the social, economic, political, and environmental aspects of our lives consistent with our spiritual values and Quaker heritage. We endeavor to live in right relation with the earth.

The Friends Committee on National Legislation engages in the positive, continuing process of interpreting to people in government our convictions on the moral and spiritual values that should undergird government and law. We work to encourage Spirit-led decision-making on legislative matters. We listen to others, convey our beliefs about policy issues, urge members of Congress and others in government to support specific policies and actions, and try to shape and support legislation consistent with our convictions. We work to educate Friends and like-minded people to participate in the political process, whether as voters, activists, or elected officials.

In consultation with and on behalf of a broadly representative group of Friends, we have composed this statement of our objectives for public policy. In this Statement, we focus on broad principles and goals rather than specific legislative actions that may flow from them. We attempt to focus on root causes of injustice and their long-term consequences, knowing that many issues are inextricably linked with one another. Many of the goals that we outline here require profound changes in attitudes and behavior, both in and out of government. Change may entail personal and material costs which we are prepared to share. We are convinced that such changes are essential for life on earth to survive and flourish.

Underlying all the legislative recommendations in this statement are spiritual convictions that ultimately cannot be legislated. They live in each individual conscience, forged and nurtured through ties to family and community, growing out of a continual search for truth.

Above all, we seek to remain open to where God's spirit leads us. **FCNL**

¹ "Past statements, minutes, and other documents of FCNL legislative policy remain relevant, insofar as they do not contradict the newly approved Statement of Legislative Policy. These documents offer a wealth of resources that continue to inform FCNL staff, committees, and others." The FCNL General Committee approved this minute November 16, 2003.

The FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION (FCNL), a Quaker lobby in the public interest, seeks to follow the leadings of the Spirit as it speaks for itself and for like-minded Friends. Views expressed in FCNL's *Washington Newsletter* are guided by the Statement of Legislative Policy which is prepared and approved by FCNL's General Committee. FCNL includes Friends appointed by 26 Friends' yearly meetings and by seven other Friends' organizations in the United States.

Clerk: Stephen McNeil
Assistant Clerk: Joanne Rains Warner
Executive Secretary: Joe Volk

The *FCNL Washington Newsletter* is published ten times a year (monthly, with July-August and November-December combined issues). In addition, a voting record is published annually.

The *Washington Newsletter* is sent free upon request and automatically to current donors. Your contributions are needed to support FCNL's lobbying and education work.

Editor: Liz Hofmeister

Large print and audiotope versions of the *Washington Newsletter* are available upon request. The *Washington Newsletter* is available in microform from University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Dept. P.R., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Reprinting *Washington Newsletter* Items: We encourage our readers to copy and distribute items from FCNL's *Washington Newsletter*. When doing so, please include the following credit:

"Reprinted from the *Washington Newsletter*, [issue #, month and year] published by the Friends Committee on National Legislation."

We would appreciate receiving a copy with a brief note indicating how/where the item was used and the approximate numbers of copies distributed.

Friends Committee on National Legislation

245 SECOND STREET NE
 Washington, DC 20002-5795
 Phone: 202-547-6000
 800-630-1330

Fax: 202-547-6019

Legislative Action Message:
 202-547-4343

e-mail: fcnl@fcnl.org

Web site: <http://www.fcnl.org>



Printed on recycled paper
 with soy-based ink.

PART I. "We seek a world free of war and the threat of war."

Friends long have found inspiration in George Fox's words that we should live "in the virtue of that life and power that [takes] away the occasion of all wars."² We believe that peace throughout the world is God's will and is attainable. True security results from a culture of peace, including a healthy environment, a fair and sustainable economic life, democratic participation, an educated population, personal well-being, and healthy families. Peace and security can be achieved only by peaceful means.

As we seek to remove violence from our lives, we recall the words of John Woolman: "May we look upon our treasures, and the furniture of our houses, and [our] garment...and try whether the seeds of war have any nourishment in these our possessions...."³ To prevent violence, we must address the roots of conflict. These include economic deprivation, intolerance, humiliation and inequity, oppressive power, spending on weapons and armed forces at the price of civil development, and war itself. Those who have been caught up in a spiral of violence, both oppressors and oppressed, often carry within themselves the seeds of further violence. We support efforts to address the suffering caused by past injustices, repressive regimes, and ethnic and other oppression.

Section 1. Building the Framework for Peace

Friends are called to help build a framework for world peace. This goal depends on cooperation among nations and peoples, forged within a global framework of law, justice, human rights, and orderly social change. International cooperation requires strengthened global and regional institutions, with fair representation of all concerned parties.

We recognize the importance of treaties and covenants among nations as instruments of world order. While acknowledging the role of official dialogue and the efforts of regional bodies, we also call for inclusion of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based groups in peacemaking efforts.

We support the United Nations (UN) and its role in pursuing world order and peace. We urge full and meaningful participation by the United States in the work of the UN, its programs and its specialized agencies, demonstrating respect and support for the rule of international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We recognize the need for equitable sharing of power within the UN.

² Fox, *Journal*, 1694, ed. Nickalls, p.65.

³ Woolman, *Plea for the Poor*, 1793, ed. Moulton, p.255.

Section 2. Reducing Armaments

Although national security is widely perceived to depend on military strength, more weapons do not provide enduring security. Military expansion provokes fear and potential retaliation. Threats tend to increase the hostility and distrust that lead to war.

We believe that nations must move toward comprehensive disarmament. We urge the elimination of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. We urge arms control and restrictions on the production, transfer, marketing, and sale of conventional weapons, including small arms.

We urge multilateral disarmament, supported by the conversion of military industries to the production of civilian goods and services, and the retraining of personnel toward that end. We also advocate that the United States take unilateral steps toward its own disarmament, believing that other nations will respond affirmatively to this example. The risks of disarmament are far smaller than the risks involved in the current course of weapons stockpiling and development.

Section 3. Preventing and Resolving Violent Conflicts

Because violence degrades the sacredness of life, we seek alternative forms of conflict resolution. We support active non-violent responses to prevent or transform violent conflict at all levels. The cycles of violence perpetuated by acts of terror and the armed overthrow of governments serve as warning against the use of force, while the examples of nonviolent movements for change provide concrete alternatives. No war is justified. We call for our country to renounce doctrines of first-strike war, whether pre-emptive or preventive.

The United States should participate in and comply with international tribunals, courts, and treaties, including the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice. Funding must be transferred from the military to organizations using nonviolent methods of conflict resolution.

The United States should assist in humanitarian and emergency response efforts outside its boundaries. The military is not the appropriate mechanism for

such assistance. The United States should develop and support nonmilitary assistance programs in partnership with appropriate international and independent NGOs. We support the development of professionally trained international civilian police under UN auspices to restore civil order, protect civilians, and ensure access for humanitarian relief.

CHALLENGE:⁴ In situations of genocide or intense conflict, how should Friends respond to the use of UN or other multilateral military forces to impose order or settlement?

We affirm our opposition to military conscription, and we reaffirm our support of conscientious objection to military service and conscientious objection to military taxation. We oppose the militarization of U.S. foreign policy, including the training of foreign military or paramilitary personnel.

Sanctions as a means of furthering negotiations and changing governmental behavior may sometimes be the least offensive means available for ending injustice or aggression. Any proposed sanction must be carefully considered and, if used at all, be focused to minimize impacts to the daily lives of innocent people and used only when there is a broad multilateral consensus. The objectives of the sanctions must be clear and consistent with international law, be proportional to their objective, and be monitored and reported by a neutral international body.

⁴ Challenges

A number of serious issues that confront Congress and the people of the United States also challenge the Religious Society of Friends. Many of these issues are not clearly addressed in the Scriptures, in the traditional testimonies of our Religious Society, or in recent statements of official Quaker bodies. Sometimes the controversies derive from different religious convictions or different ethical judgments. Others may more closely reflect the customs and historical traditions of the particular sector of society in which we participate. Furthermore, information bearing on these issues is neither uniformly shared nor interpreted alike by different people. FCNL invites Friends and others to enter into loving dialogue on these matters, remembering that Friends must continuously search for truth, light, and clarity as we face the urgent problems in our world.

Section 4. Building Mutual Understanding and Trust

We believe that peace within and among nations depends in part on replacement of ignorance and unjustified fears with mutual understanding and trust. Educational, cultural, scientific, commercial, and other exchanges among nations and peoples build such mutual understanding. We support civilian programs that promote peace by encouraging service in national and international humanitarian organizations.

An effective and compassionate response to the root causes of hunger, deprivation, and conflict builds trust. This response must include greater support for participatory and sustainable development pro-

grams,⁵ equitable trade policies, debt relief, and fiscal and monetary policies that improve the fair distribution of resources. National and global security is enhanced by relieving extreme economic inequities and enabling self-reliant efforts to satisfy basic human needs.

Because women and children carry an undue share of the burdens imposed by poverty and war, increased respect for and attention to the human rights of women and children – including adequate nutrition, education, health care, noncoercive family planning, and economic security – are crucial for a better world community. We support agreements to eliminate slavery, trafficking in persons, the use of child soldiers, and the exploitation of child labor worldwide.

PART II. “We seek a society with equity and justice for all.”

“What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”⁶ Friends’ testimony calls for right relationships among people and between individuals and God. Governments are instituted, in part, to promote and protect basic human rights. These are rights, not mere privileges subject to easy denial. Friends acknowledge the indispensable role of government in safeguarding the integrity of our society and the essential dignity of all human beings. Citizens have the responsibility to participate vigorously in making government more responsive, open, and accountable.

Section 1. Governmental Institutions

Electoral Processes. Active and informed citizen participation in the political and electoral process is essential to the proper functioning of government.

We urge support for government and media policies that shift the emphasis in political campaigns from image-making to an in-depth understanding of a wide range of perspectives on the issues and the candidates’ qualifications. We support campaign and election reform to achieve more open access to public office, to reduce the influence of money, to insure the integrity of the balloting process, and to provide full participation for those now disfranchised.

District of Columbia. We support full voting representation in Congress for the District of Columbia.

Government Accountability and Transparency. We hold our government institutions and officials to rigorous ethical standards of fairness, honesty, openness, and avoidance of even the appearance of con-

flicts of interest. We expect our government to abide by the U.S. Constitution, national and international law, and international treaties. The system of checks and balances among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches is central to our form of government and must be maintained.

Secrecy in governmental decision-making, funding, and operations erodes representative government. We believe that the gathering and compiling of information related to public policy and government practices must be an open process, allowing the public opportunities to evaluate and use data. Timely and free access to accurate information enables the constitutional process of checks and balances to

⁵ **Participatory and sustainable development** refers to an approach to economic development that conscientiously safeguards the global commons such that ecological integrity is maintained and the needs of future generations will be met. The approach involves local residents by building on their strengths, assets, and knowledge; and avoids creating external dependencies.

⁶ Micah 6:8. (King James).

function well, and allows informed participation by individuals in government activities.

A strong, vibrant, and independent media is a pillar of democracy. Government policy should promote diversity of media ownership.

Criminal Justice. We call for a transformation of our current system of criminal justice. We acknowledge that a well trained police force and incarceration of violent and destructive individuals are necessary to protect society. We urge our government to work toward a criminal justice system that is restorative, seeking to return rehabilitated offenders to society with the restoration of their full rights and obligations. Crime prevention should include programs that address the complex and pervasive causes of crime, which often are rooted in social and economic injustice.

The criminal justice system today is used principally as an instrument of retribution, a policy contrary to our Quaker beliefs. We call for laws that provide equitable and prompt adjudication; education, training, or treatment for those convicted; and restitution to the victims of crime. We insist upon a system that treats juveniles as children, not adults; is not biased by race or economic status; and provides full access to competent counsel. We oppose the privatization of prisons and the exploitation of prison labor. We support measures that ensure constitutional protections for offenders.

We seek the abolition of the death penalty because it denies the sacredness of human life.

Violent acts that stem from using, selling, or transferring drugs, or obtaining money to use them, should be prosecuted through the criminal justice system. However, substance abuse itself is fundamentally a health issue requiring prevention, education, treatment, and rehabilitation.

Section 2. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Believing in the presence of the Light in each person, Friends are compelled to uphold the sanctity of the individual. Hence, we believe in the paramount need to protect and promote human rights, civil liberties, and civil rights. Friends seek a society free from discrimination, including on the basis of race, creed, gender, ethnic or national heritage, age, sexual

orientation, disability, medical condition, genetic background, and gender identification.

We support the separation of church and state. We support guarantees for the free exercise of religion and oppose any action or attempt to favor particular religious beliefs or groups.

Freedom from arbitrary or undue governmental intrusion and the equal treatment of all people by the state are inherent to each individual's realization of her or his potential. We advocate the restoration and protection of civil liberties that are a foundation of our nation and society, including commitment to the rule of law in national and international affairs; representative government; First Amendment freedoms (speech, assembly, petition, press, religion); due process and equal protection guarantees; and rights of privacy and of conscience. We expect our government to uphold the rights and liberty of each person, as identified in the Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We expect law enforcers to adhere to the highest standards of civil liberties and due process.

Communities Free of Violence. Friends seek peaceful and nonviolent solutions to personal and societal problems at all levels. The seeds of war are sown in communities that tolerate verbal and physical violence in its many forms or that tolerate the disrespect of ethnic, gender, racial, religious, and other differences. We advocate policies that encourage community mediation, conflict resolution, and other programs to resolve conflict peacefully and to promote mutual respect. We also advocate stricter gun control and the reduction of gun ownership, possession, and use.

Section 3. A Society Free of Racism

We continue to pursue a vision of society which recognizes that all people are created equal and respected as children of God. The people of the United States continue to live with the legacy of slavery and the perpetuation of discrimination and institutional racism, and so must continue to seek reconciliation and remediation. While each person must examine unintended, unrecognized personal racism, the federal government has a special responsibility to establish policies that acknowledge our history and seek to create genuine equality of opportunity. This would include measures to assure voting rights and

political voice; transform our criminal justice system; protect civil rights; promote educational, economic, and employment opportunities; and create communities free of violence.

Section 4. Relationships with Native Americans

Friends have long sought to honor William Penn's commitment to live "a kind, just and peaceable life"⁷ with Native Peoples.⁸ In this spirit, while acknowledging and addressing our unjust treatment of this land's original inhabitants, we encourage respectful relations with Native peoples. Federal policies must recognize that Native peoples retain certain aboriginal rights, including access to land, water, hunting and fishing, and the free exercise of their religions and languages. Treaties and trust agreements reflect solemn promises and must be honored. The tribal governments established by Native Americans are entitled to set policies that govern life on reservations and that affect tribal members who live off reservations. The federal government should relate directly to tribal governments, respecting their sovereignty.

Section 5. Immigration and Refugees

We believe that the world should move toward becoming a global community that safeguards the human rights and guarantees the economic opportunity of all people in their country of choice. Free and open borders need not result in large scale migration in a world with a more equitable distribution of global wealth and economic opportunity than exists at present; with more widespread respect for and protection of human rights; and with greater tolerance and valuing of differences. U.S. involvement and investment in advancing these concerns, alongside international efforts, is essential to dealing with international migration.

The United States was built from many and varied cultures and histories, and the contributions of many peoples continue to enrich this society. We support openness to refugees, those seeking asylum, and

family members of citizens. Selection criteria for other immigrants set forth in present laws should be made equitable, eliminating bias based on race, national origin, and economic status.

The federal government should support programs to mitigate the social, economic, and environmental impact on regions where immigrants concentrate.

All those seeking to enter the United States or residing here should, without regard to immigration status, be treated with justice and equity. They should be accorded equal protection under the law and full human rights, as well as access to governmental social services. Fair labor laws and health and safety standards in the workplace should be firmly enforced, regardless of the immigration status of the workers.

About This Statement

This Statement of Legislative Policy provides the framework for FCNL's program and for the views expressed in congressional testimony, newsletters, and other publications and statements. The Statement of Legislative Policy is revised and updated on an ongoing basis. Changes to the Statement of Legislative Policy are approved by FCNL's General Committee at an Annual Meeting. The present statement reflects the "sense of the meeting," although not necessarily unanimity on all points, reached by this broadly representative group. Prior to the Annual Meeting, drafts of the proposed changes are circulated among General Committee members and Friends in local meetings and churches where the proposed changes are extensively discussed. Neither in this policy statement nor in its legislative testimony does FCNL purport to speak for all Friends.

FCNL legislative priorities, also approved by FCNL's General Committee, are drawn from the Statement of Legislative Policy. Priorities are generally revised for each two-year congressional session. They are selected with an eye to the upcoming congressional agenda, the central concerns of Friends, and the urgency of particular issues. Because FCNL's resources are limited, only a few of the many issues set forth in this Policy Statement can be selected as legislative priorities.

We hope this document will enable you to understand better the context out of which FCNL's actions grow. You may also want to use it as an educational tool or to stimulate discussion among those who share a commitment to a world of peace and human justice. If you have comments, we invite you to send them to the clerk of the FCNL Policy Committee, 245 Second St., NE, Washington, DC 20002.

⁷ *William Penn's Own Account...*, ed. A. C. Myers, 1970, p. 61.

⁸ The words Native Peoples and Native Americans are used in reference to indigenous peoples within the United States, who often use names for themselves that translate as "the people." These people include American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

PART III. “We seek a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled.”

“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these . . . ye have done it unto me.”⁹ We believe that God dwells in each human soul, and therefore it is the birthright of all persons to live a life of dignity with access to the basic necessities for human growth and development. Accordingly, we believe that all members of society should take responsibility for each other, not only to provide the essentials of life but also to ensure an opportunity for meaningful work and recreation so that each can contribute to society according to his or her abilities. Society benefits when families and communities make commitments to care for their members.

Section 1. Fostering Economic Justice

We seek to eliminate hunger and poverty at home and abroad through economic policies that enlarge opportunities for all people to have an adequate income. We believe that governmental policies should seek to eliminate large economic disparities and the concentration of wealth in few hands. All persons should receive an income adequate to maintain health and dignity. We believe more equitable economies are also more productive.

Domestic Economic Life. In the United States, federal government policy directly affects communities and establishes the framework in which private economic decisions are made. The federal budget should allow for adequate spending to meet the actual needs of the nation, including federal assistance to individuals, communities, and states. Resources should be refocused from military spending to meeting human needs. We support progressive taxation so the tax burden on individuals is related to the ability to pay. We oppose raising revenue through government-sponsored gambling. Corporations that do business in the United States, whether or not headquartered in the United States, should pay their fair share of taxes.

In general, ongoing federal programs and activities should be paid for with current revenues. Government borrowing is appropriate only for countering economic recessions and making long-term investments in research, education, health, environmental protections, and public infrastructure.

We affirm that a key role of the private sector is to create jobs and economic development. (*See note 4 in Part I regarding sustainable development.*) Corporations exert considerable power over society, both

directly and through influencing federal and local government policy. We believe the federal government should take an active role in ensuring corporate accountability through such measures as strengthening and enforcing antitrust, fraud, and securities oversight legislation. The use of public funds to guarantee corporate security through bailouts is not an appropriate role for government. Government regulation of corporations should emphasize the social responsibilities of corporations for the environment, human rights, public safety, and the communities in which they operate. Corporations in the United States should no longer enjoy the status and benefits of “corporate personhood” under the law.

Global Economic Interdependence. Due to the size and impact of its economy, the United States has a particular responsibility to conduct its affairs in ways consistent with the economic, environmental, and social well-being of all the world’s people. U.S. policies must ensure that the benefits of globalization do not adversely affect the right-sharing of world resources. The concentration of wealth in a few countries and groups can be a destabilizing force on society and its institutions. The globalization of economic activity requires increasing individual and corporate responsibility for the full life cycle of goods and services.

Amidst growing global economic interdependence, the terms of international agreements assume growing importance. To assure broad benefits from such agreements, negotiating processes must provide for participation by the range of parties affected. These include representatives of labor, trade, environmental movements, non-governmental organizations, as

⁹ Matthew 25:40 (King James).

well as international organizations such as United Nations development and human rights organizations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization.

Employment. Meaningful work contributes to the development of human potential, self-esteem, and community well-being. We believe that “work” includes a wide range of socially valuable activities, paid as well as unpaid. We affirm the responsibility of everyone to contribute to society through work, within the limits of health and other capabilities. It is a public responsibility to ensure that each person is provided with the skills and opportunity to earn income adequate for family needs through work under non-exploitative conditions. We affirm the responsibility of government to promote job creation and training; to design public assistance programs to enhance human dignity and development; and to provide for those who cannot provide for themselves. We support the institution of a living wage in this country. We believe in strengthening laws that guarantee all workers, including those in agriculture, the right to organize unions and to bargain collectively. The United States should adequately fund programs to assist and retrain people dislocated by economic restructuring or military conversion.

Section 2. Building Viable Communities

The development of safe and thriving communities that honor diversity should be a major objective of government policy. Strong communities depend upon a broad and resilient economic base. We call for a national commitment to work with and support state and local communities to assure adequate infrastructure, health care, housing, education and public transportation. This will require federal assistance, including increased economic opportunities, public investment, and incentives for private investment and non-exploitative, environmentally sensitive development. Concurrently, we affirm the need to involve local residents and businesses in the design and implementation of economic development programs.

Health Care. We affirm health care as a right, regardless of employment or ability to pay. We support universal access to timely health care. We support preventive, curative, and palliative health care,

using principles of chronic disease management when appropriate. To maintain and improve the physical and mental health of the entire population, health care must cover the entire life span. We recognize that substance abuse and domestic violence should be addressed as health care issues that require treatment. We advocate systems that provide for the fair distribution of health care resources.

Public health services, which affect us all on a community and environmental basis, require continued federal support. Such programs should be independent of, but coordinated with, national security systems.

CHALLENGE: Members of the Society of Friends are not in unity on abortion issues. Therefore, FCNL takes no position and does not act either for or against abortion legislation. On occasion, FCNL may appeal to lawmakers not to use the abortion debate to paralyze action on other legislation.

Education. In addition to providing basic knowledge and skills, education should foster critical thinking and provide a foundation for individual growth and responsible participation in a democratic society. We support lifelong access to education. We support programs that promote conflict resolution, diversity awareness, recognition of global interdependence, and opportunities for learners to pursue their individual potential. We support civilian programs that promote peace by encouraging voluntary service in national and international organizations. We oppose military recruitment in schools, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs, and military training for young people as well as any compulsory national service.

The federal government has an important role to play in addressing the educational needs of underserved areas and disadvantaged populations. A strong public education system requires adequate funding that is equitably distributed and locally controlled. Adequate financing by public means will preclude school systems seeking corporate funds, which may be inconsistent with the educational mission.

Housing. We believe that safe, adequate, affordable housing should be available to all. Government policies should provide appropriate community-based services for people who need supported living environments such as the homeless, the mentally or physically disabled, and the elderly.

Families and Households with Children. All children have the right to living conditions that include adequate food, housing, health care, and an environment free from violence and poverty. We support tax policies, welfare policies, and flexible employment policies that enable parents and other caregivers to care for children at home. We also support an expansion of safe, supportive, and affordable child care and early education programs.

We encourage increased funding for programs to prevent substance abuse, child and other domestic abuse, and to provide constructive intervention. Intervention programs should include an alternative safe environment if needed.

Agriculture. It is essential that the United States maintain a sound agricultural base to ensure safe, adequate, and affordable food, fiber, and other essential agricultural products. The destruction of farmland by uncontrolled suburban development and unsound agricultural practices must be addressed. Farmland, farmers, workers, and consumers must be protected by ensuring that chemicals and genetically engineered products are proven safe for people and the environment. Government policy should assure the consumers' right to be informed when and how their food has been altered. It is important to maintain a strong, self-perpetuating agricultural system that can sustain independent farm families within a healthy environment.

Transportation. Many people lack access to affordable, reliable transportation. In order to build viable communities and regions, more energy-efficient public transit systems are needed, requiring federal funds and compatible land use policies. Federal policies should also encourage ecologically sustainable forms of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, and car-pooling.

PART IV. "We seek an earth restored."

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."¹⁰ We believe that humankind must respect the ecological integrity and the sacredness of the natural world. People must choose activities, create institutions, and establish policies and laws that are beneficial to the earth and will help protect and regenerate its ecosystems.

We recognize that issues regarding the use and protection of the earth's resources are global and require mutual respect and cooperation with every community on earth. Environmental degradation and resource scarcity are among the underlying causes of violence and war. We believe that Friends' testimonies on peace and simplicity have deep relevance to the global environmental crisis.

Humanity must commit to curbing excessive and destructive consumption and pollution. We believe that these responsibilities are urgent and must be acted upon globally, nationally, locally, and individually.

Section 1. Caring for the Earth

The health of the earth's ecosystems and their ability to support life has been and is being seriously impaired by human activities. We deplore the pollution of the earth's land, water, and atmosphere; the decline in biodiversity and nonrenewable resources; and the increase in deforestation and desertification. The world is in the midst of a mass extinction of species, primarily human in cause.

We urge that national legislation promote ecologically sound and safe agricultural, extractive, industrial, and commercial enterprises. Ways must be found to meet the needs of human beings without doing violence to the rest of creation. Specifically we advocate that the U.S. government develop policies that encourage regional and international cooperation for solutions to environmental problems, including

¹⁰ Psalms 24:1 (King James).

environmental standards in trade agreements that assure nations and local governments of their right to establish more stringent environmental protections and standards.

We call for adequate funding of the UN Environmental Program and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Regional and international cooperation is also required to conserve and allocate diminishing water resources and natural ecosystems. We support efforts to protect open spaces, wilderness areas, and productive farmlands from urban sprawl and development. The military and all government agencies must comply with the same environmental laws and regulations as the private sector.

The federal government must support the expansion of research, development, and implementation of appropriate technologies and strategies to minimize waste and prevent pollution, including a comprehensive recycling program and economic incentives that encourage both the use of recycled materials and the creation of markets for the use of recycled products.

We advocate the development and enforcement of regulations to safeguard biological diversity and international cooperation to abate the loss of biodiversity worldwide.

We advocate the prohibition of brutal and inhumane treatment of animals in food production and animal testing. We support the careful evaluation, regulation, monitoring, and product labeling of synthetic chemicals and genetically modified organisms and products.

Section 2. Population and Consumption

We believe it is impossible to improve the lives of all the peoples of the earth if the population continues to grow. The failure to confront the problems of population growth and over-consumption will endanger the finite home planet that all people share. We support government policies to promote the education of children and adults on the impact of global population growth and over-consumption.

We support access to, and adequate financial and institutional support for, effective, universally available, safe, and noncoercive family planning in the

United States and throughout the world. (*See challenge under Health Care in Part III.*)

Although most population growth is occurring in the developing world, the average person in the United States consumes and pollutes many times more than does the average person in these developing nations. Massive corporate advertising and many federal policies promote unhealthy levels of consumption. This over-consumption not only threatens the global environment, but also sows the seeds of war and reduces the resources available to meet the world's needs. We urge the federal government to develop economic policies which will sustain general prosperity without high levels of consumption and the associated exploitation and pollution of the environment.

We urge the promotion of life cycle cost analysis, environmental cost analysis, or a similar process to bring the environmental impact of raw materials, production, packaging, use, and final product disposal to the forefront of manufacturing and purchasing decisions for companies and consumers.

Section 3. Global Climate Change and Energy Policy

We believe that the right use and sharing of the world's resources for energy are crucial to human survival and welfare. We realize that land and energy use are inextricably linked to greenhouse gas generation and climate change. We urge that energy policies be based on global humanitarian and environmental concerns rather than narrow commercial, military, or national interests, and that the price of energy reflect its full cost.

All people need equitable access to sources of energy for personal needs and the development of their communities. The great risk to the environment and to future generations posed by increased use of fossil fuels and nuclear energy requires a shift to renewable and less damaging energy sources, increased efficiency, and conservation.

We urge the U.S. government to assume leadership in addressing global warming by ratifying and implementing international agreements; developing strong, fair, and effective policies to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases; promoting energy conser-

vation through federal standards and regulations that reduce fuel consumption and increase efficiency for stationary and mobile emission sources; and instituting taxing and pricing policies that more fully reflect and publicize the economic, environmental, and social costs of energy production and use. We support the promotion of research and development of sustainable energy technologies for domestic use and export, adopting incentives for the production and use of renewable energy, and removing regulatory barriers to renewable onsite power generation and distribution.

We urge an explicit moratorium on the construction of nuclear fission power plants and the transportation of nuclear wastes until methods for safe transportation and disposal have been demonstrated. We support policy against reprocessing spent nuclear fuels in the United States and elsewhere.

Section 4. Environmental Restoration and Regeneration

Restoration of the earth requires healing the places damaged by the release of nuclear and other toxic substances. We expect the Departments of Defense and Energy, other government agencies, and private companies to take responsibility for the damage they have caused and work to redress it. We believe the cost of cleanup should be borne by the responsible

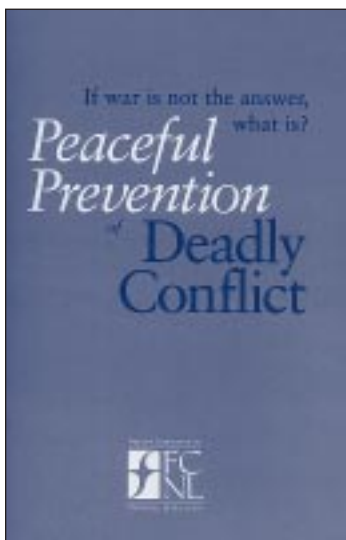
parties; however, cleanup should proceed promptly and not be delayed by litigation over who ultimately will bear the cost. The dangers of pollution and waste disposal should not fall disproportionately on the world's poor or marginalized peoples. These dangers should be fully disclosed and addressed in consultation with affected communities.

We urge that our federal government participate in this environmental restoration. The government should monitor, limit, and reduce toxic build-ups in both humans and wildlife; enforce penalties for hazardous discharges in excess of legal, risk-based limits; prohibit the export of toxic products; and work to destroy or safely dispose of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and materials stockpiled in the United States, Russia, and other countries.

We also call for the strengthening and enforcement of laws and regulations to protect and clean up water resources, with sufficient funds earmarked for implementation.

We are convinced that all on this earth are interdependent, and we cherish the sacred value of the natural world as God's creation. Impelled by both the sacred and the practical, and inspired by Friends' testimonies, we seek an earth restored.

Join Us in Taking a Stand to Promote Peaceful Alternatives to War



Order FCNL's new booklet, "If War Is Not The Answer, What Is? The Peaceful Prevention of Deadly Conflict" for your family and friends! Put some on the literature table of your meeting or church, house of worship, or community center.

The booklet provides a thorough introduction to the peaceful prevention of deadly conflict. Its contents include frequently asked questions, concrete policy suggestions, further resources, and examples of critical conflict prevention work already underway around the world.

The booklet is available free of charge for up to five copies. For orders of more than five, a \$1 per booklet donation is recommended. To order, please send an email with your contact information to field@fcnl.org or call 1-800-630-1330 ext. 142.

You also can order "War Is Not The Answer" bumper stickers, yard signs, and auto sun screens.



FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL LEGISLATION
245 Second Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-5795

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 161
Lynchburg, VA

Address Service Requested

INSIDE STATEMENT OF LEGISLATIVE POLICY

No. 682, November/December 2003

Use FCNL's Information and Resources

Web site: Visit us at www.fcnl.org for current information about important legislative issues, information on Congress, status of bills, tips on how to effectively engage you member of Congress, and much more.

Washington Newsletter: This monthly report provides news and analysis for a selection of domestic and international issues with a primary focus on peace, disarmament, international cooperation, and social and economic justice. It is sent free upon request and automatically to current donors.

Indian Report: This quarterly publication supports FCNL's Native American advocacy program. It is sent to all *Washington Newsletter* recipients as well as to tribal leaders and others with a particular interest in FCNL's Native American program.

Email Lists: FCNL maintains email lists for sending out updates on legislative and policy matters, particularly those needing constituent calls and letters to members of Congress or the Administration. To join an email list, go to www.fcnl.org and click on "Join FCNL's Nationwide Network."

fcnl-news: weekly Legislative Action Messages and periodic InfoLine messages.

fcnl-prevent war: updates and action messages on peaceful prevention of deadly conflict and other foreign policy issues.

fcnl-library-friends: background information, updates, and action messages about civil liberties issues affecting libraries and bookstores.

fcnl-nalu: periodic alerts on Native American issues.

Nuclear Calendar: weekly updates of events concerning nuclear weapons, disarmament, and non-proliferation.

You Can Add Your Support

FCNL's many educational resources are made possible through the generous contributions of individuals, foundations, and groups from around the country. Donations to FCNL [a 501(c)(4) organization] are not tax-deductible and go toward public interest lobbying. Gifts to the FCNL Education Fund [a 501(c)(3) organization] are tax-deductible and support non-partisan research and education. Mail your checks to FCNL at 245 Second Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. Visa and Mastercard are accepted both by phone (800-630-1330) and online (www.fcnl.org, then click on the "Support FCNL Financially" button on the navigation bar).