

# March on the RNC and Stop the War information for September 1

**Welcome to the Twin Cities!** Thank you for being part of this historic protest. On September 1, we will march to demonstrate our opposition to the Republican agenda and make the following demands:

- **U.S. Out of Iraq Now**
- **Money for Human Needs, Not War**
- **Peace, Justice, and Equality for All**

**Buses:** Bus drop-off and pick-up will be on the west side of the Capitol grounds on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, between University Avenue and John Ireland Blvd. Volunteers will direct drivers to designated bus parking area.

**Rally:** A rally will begin at 11 am on the State Capitol grounds. The following are some of the organizations who have confirmed speakers. This is not a complete list. (There may be last minute changes.)

- **United for Peace and Justice**
- **International ANSWER**
- **Troops Out Now Coalition**
- **Iraq Veterans Against the War**
- **Veterans for Peace**
- **Voices for Creative Nonviolence**
- **Muslim Peacemaker Team, Iraq**
- **Codepink**
- **Latinos Against War**
- **Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign**
- **Students for a Democratic Society**
- **Latinos Against War**



**March:** The march will begin around 1 pm. Organized contingents will begin lining up at 12:30. The route is approximately 1.6 miles long and will take us directly across from the Xcel Center, where the RNC will meet. We expect that everyone will be able to march past the convention center either while delegates are arriving or while the convention is in session (start time 2:30).

**Closing Rally:** Following the march, there will be a closing rally back at the State Capitol with more speakers and music. It will end by 6pm.

**Public Viewing Area:** The police have designated a triangular area across the street from the Xcel Center as a public viewing area that will be open from 7 am-11 pm every day during the convention. **There is a city-sponsored stage that will be regulated by the police during the RNC.** Only those who have already applied and been approved by the city can speak from it. The Coalition has decided to boycott this stage.

**Permit:** We have a permit to be at the State Capitol from 7am-7pm and to march the route until 4 pm.

**Signs:** We encourage you to bring your own. Just be aware that according to the police, sticks or poles must be ¼ inch in thickness or less and 2 inches or less in width. The Coalition also printed a few thousand signs that reflect the main slogans for the demonstration.

**Other restrictions:** We also believe puppets, bicycles, and vehicles will not be allowed on the march route.

**Resources at the Rally:** There will be food and beverage vending on site. There are also some fast food and Asian restaurants on University Avenue, north and west of the State Capitol. There will be toilets. There will be a medic tent to the east of the stage, as well as street medics on the march, should anyone need assistance. Make their jobs easy, and remember to drink plenty of water all day!

## Solidarity with Others

**\*\*\*There are civil disobedience and direct actions planned during the RNC. However, the September 1st rally and march will be reserved for activities that are legal and permitted. Those joining us for this demonstration should feel confident in your right to speak out against the war without fear of arrest.**

In order to effectively coordinate our actions, the local groups who've been most involved in organizing against the RNC have signed on to the following points of unity, including the Coalition to March on the RNC and Stop the War.

- Our solidarity will be based on respect for a diversity of tactics and the plans of other groups.
- The actions and tactics used will be organized to maintain a separation of time or space.
- Any debates or criticisms will stay internal to the movement, avoiding any public or media denunciations of fellow activists and events.
- We oppose state repression of dissent including surveillance, infiltration, disruption, and violence. We agree not to assist law enforcement actions against activists or others.

### **Sample of Other Events during the RNC (not a complete list\*)**

#### **Sunday August 31**

**Solemn Funeral Procession** organized by Veterans for Peace  
Rally 10 am @ the State Capitol, followed by a march to the Xcel Center

#### **Tuesday Sept 2**

**Peace Island: A Solutions Driven Conference ( 2 DAYS )** @ Concordia University, 275 Syndicate St. N in St. Paul.  
Major topics are Energy & Environment, Global Peace & Nonviolence, Justice & Human Rights. See <http://www.peaceisland.us/home.html> for a complete schedule.

#### **Ripple Effect Concert**

12:30-7:30 @ the State Capitol. Artists include Michael Franti and Spearhead, Anti-Flag, Dead Prez, Wookiefoot, I Self Divine and others.

#### **Poor People's March for Our Lives**

4 pm @ Mears Park, 6<sup>th</sup> St. & Wacouta St, downtown St. Paul.  
Sponsored by the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign

#### **Wednesday Sept 3**

Peace Island Conference continued

#### **Thursday Sept 4**

##### **Student Strike Against the RNC**

11 am – Walk-out  
12-3 pm – Rally and Puppet Theater @ the State Capitol  
Followed by a march to Harriet Island

#### **Peace Island Picnic**

1-8 pm @ Harriet Island Park – across the Mississippi River from the Xcel Center

#### **No Peace for the War-Makers Demonstration**

3:45 – music from Junkyard Empire  
4:15 – rally at the State Capitol  
March to the Xcel Center where people will use creative tactics to oppose the wars at home and abroad.

### **Other Resources**

[www.marchonrnc.org](http://www.marchonrnc.org) – site for information on the September 1 march

[www.twincities.indymedia.org](http://www.twincities.indymedia.org) – for the latest updates on RNC protests, includes a more complete event calendar\*

[www.protestrnc2008.org](http://www.protestrnc2008.org) – site for broad coalition of Twin Cities groups organizing against the RNC

### **Helpful phone numbers**

Legal Support Hotline (651) 356-8635

Indymedia News Hotline (651) 503-5661

**Arise! Books Info-line (612) 871-2283**

- available 8 am-midnight
- for basic info on protest schedules, transit info, general questions

## **Suggested Talking Points for Media**

15,000 media personnel from around the world will be in the Twin Cities for the RNC, and many of them will cover our protest. At the rally, there will be a Media Center where they can interview speakers and Coalition spokespeople. Some of them may want to interview you. If they do, consider these helpful suggestions.

### **1. The September 1<sup>st</sup> March on the RNC to Stop the War will be national demonstration.**

The American people overwhelmingly oppose the war in Iraq. The Coalition to March on the RNC and Stop the War is organizing a massive protest to demonstrate this opposition at the Republican National Convention on September 1. 125 peace and justice organizations from around the country have endorsed the call for the demonstration. The Coalition is locally led and organized, but is national in scope. In February, over 150 activists from around the country attended an organizing conference sponsored by the Coalition. Participants included representatives from all three national anti-war coalitions: United for Peace and Justice, Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (ANSWER), and the Troops Out Now Coalition. National leaders from the labor, immigrant rights, welfare rights, and student movements were also present. The Coalition anticipates at least 50,000 protesters for a legal, permitted march on September 1. Buses are coming from a variety of locations including Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, and North Carolina. Across the Midwest, people are mobilizing with groups planning to travel from Duluth, Madison, Milwaukee, and Des Moines. The majority of Americans oppose the war in Iraq and the strength of our demonstration, both in numbers and in spirit, will bring a clear anti-war message to the war-makers and the world on September 1.

### **2. The September 1<sup>st</sup> anti-war rally and march will be a unified demonstration for all progressive movements.** The Coalition is organizing the September 1st rally and march around the following points:

- **U.S. Out of Iraq Now**
- **Money for Human Needs, Not War**
- **Say No to the Republican Agenda**
- **Peace, Justice, and Equality for All**

We are unified in our demand that the U.S. leave Iraq now and are committed to utilizing this country's resources to meeting human needs and upholding human rights at home. The issues facing low income families, immigrants, students, people of color, the queer community, and all oppressed peoples will be raised at this demonstration.

### **3. The Coalition to March on the RNC and Stop the War is working in solidarity with other groups planning protests at the RNC.**

The Coalition, along with several prominent activist groups in the Twin Cities, have agreed to the following principles. We urge all who march on the RNC with us to abide by them.

- **Our solidarity will be based on respect for a diversity of tactics and the plans of other groups.**
- **Different actions and tactics will be utilized to maintain a separation of time or space.**
- **Any debates or criticisms will remain internal to the movement, avoiding any public or media denunciations of fellow activists and events.**
- **We oppose any state repression of dissent, including surveillance, infiltration, disruption, and violence. We agree not to assist law enforcement actions against activists and others.**

## **Questions the media may ask with sample responses:**

### **1. Do you think this protest will make a difference? Won't John McCain still support the war after your demonstration?**

The vast majority of Americans oppose the war in Iraq and we have a right and an obligation to speak out against it. We will march to deliver a clear anti-war message, not just to John McCain and the Republican Party, but to all politicians who hold or seek office. We are against the war in Iraq and we will hold our elected officials accountable, both Republicans and Democrats, for supporting the war. We favor an immediate end to the occupation of Iraq and demand that our resources be spent on human needs like housing, education, and health care, not war. We know that the eyes of the world will be on St. Paul September 1-4, as the rich and powerful elites from the party who brought us the war gather to promote their agenda. 15,000 reporters from the national and international media will be in town to cover the convention. We will march to counter the Republicans' message with one of our own, to put pressure on both presidential candidates, and to show the people of the world that the American people do not support the war in Iraq.

### **2. Why are you protesting the Republican Party? Wouldn't it be more effective to tell people to vote for Barack Obama?**

The September 1<sup>st</sup> demonstration is a protest against the war in Iraq and the injustices at home that are directly connected. Democrats who have voted to fund the war, including Barack Obama, are just as responsible for the ongoing occupation. If Barack Obama is elected president, we will immediately pressure him to follow through on his promise of bringing the troops home. Real change happens when peoples' movements demand it, not when the correct politician gets elected.

### **3. Don't you agree that the U.S. troop surge was successful? Hasn't the U.S. already won the war in Iraq?**

The U.S. was wrong to go into Iraq and it's wrong for us to stay. All the justifications for war given by the Bush Administration have proven to be lies and deceptions. Over 4,000 U.S. troops have been killed, billions of dollars have been spent, and millions of Iraqis have lost their lives. This is not victory. Though U.S. casualties may have declined recently, Iraqis continue to die at an alarming rate and the presence of U.S. troops is making the situation worse, not better. According to a recent BBC poll, 70% of Iraqis believe security has deteriorated in the areas covered by the troop surge over the past 6 months. 75% said the surge has worsened conditions for political dialogue in Iraq. The U.S. needs to take responsibility for grave injustices committed in Iraq, end the occupation, and allow Iraqis to regain sovereignty over their country.

### **4. Are you concerned about violence at the RNC protests?**

The violence we are concerned about is the violence being carried out by our military in Iraq. The September 1<sup>st</sup> march is a legal, permitted demonstration. People of all ages should feel safe and empowered to participate in this demonstration. It will be one of several protests during the RNC. People are understandably outraged about the injustices being perpetrated in Iraq and at home due to the racism and inequality that pervade the current system. People are especially dissatisfied with the manner in which the Bush Administration has governed over the past 8 years, and they feel an urgent need for change. While people may choose to engage in civil disobedience or direct action, we are not aware of any groups that are planning violence during the RNC. We know that historically it's the police who engage in violence at political demonstrations. We expect the police to uphold our right to assemble and speak out against injustice. And we plan to demonstrate in solidarity with our progressive partners, though we may favor different tactics and styles of protest.