

# HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

*for political prisoners*

## PRESS RELEASE

777 U.N. Plaza  
(44th Street and 1st Avenue)  
December 12, 1988, 2 p.m.

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## INAUGURATION OF A HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE UNITED STATES

On Monday, December 12, 1988, at 2:00 p.m., a new Human Rights Campaign for political prisoners in the United States will formally announce its inauguration at a press conference at 777 United Nations Plaza. The Campaign, which is a coalition of families and friends of political prisoners, professionals, religious leaders, and community activists, will call upon the government of the United States to acknowledge that it holds political prisoners, to come into compliance with international standards regarding their treatment, and to proceed with their release.

Political prisoners are those whose incarceration is the direct result of actions taken or expressions made to further a political or social vision. This Campaign, international in scope, seeks to remedy conditions of confinement which violate international standards of human rights and seeks the release of all political prisoners in the United States.

The Human Rights Campaign is organizing people across the country--teachers and students, professionals, and churchgoers--to raise the cry for dignity and human rights for political prisoners here in the United States. Dozen of former political prisoners will be present to answer questions at the press conference.

Speaking for the Campaign will be:

Josefina Rodríguez--mother of Alicia and Ida Luz Rodríguez, Puerto Rican prisoners of war.

Patricia Levasseur--former political prisoner, now on trial in Springfield, MA, for seditious conspiracy.

Roger Wareham--staff member of the Center for Law and Social Justice, Medgar Evers College, and former political prisoner.

December 5, 1988

# National Campaign for Amnesty & Human Rights for Political Prisoners

666 Broadway, 7th Fl clo MSN

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PRESS CONFERENCE REPORT

5 January 1989

During the preparations for the December 12, 1988 inaugural press conference for the National Campaign for Amnesty & Human Rights for Political Prisoners, the press release (printed on the back of this page) was sent to all 130 members of the United Nations Correspondents Association, all relevant daily press in the New York City area and another 250 magazines, journalists and newspapers. The three primary speakers for the Campaign were Josefina Rodriguez, Eve Rosahn for Pat Levasseur who had to be in court, and Roger Wareham. The texts of their statements are attached to this report. After the initial three statements were made, 8 other members of the campaign spoke to the press, sitting together and representing the campaign as a whole. Following is a list of the participants and their affiliations, in the order in which they spoke.

James Robideau, Leonard Peltier Support Committee

Imari Obadele, President, Provisional Government,  
Republic of New Africa

Ahmed Obafemi, National Organizer, New African  
People's Organization

Shelley Miller, Free Puerto Rico Committee

Juan Antonio Castillo, Special Committee to Free  
Puerto Rican POWs

Viola Plummer, December 12 Movement and mother of  
Robert Taylor, political prisoner

Elizabeth Quinones Ramirez, Companera of Nelson  
Ramirez, political prisoner

Bella Rosenberg, mother of Susan Rosenberg, political  
prisoner

The press conference was filmed by Channel 47, recorded by WBAI radio and videotaped by several members of the campaign. Channel 47 and WBAI ran the story in several reports during the evening and following day El Diario had a story on the press conference. Of the other 25 journalists who either came to the press conference or spoke to the campaign office, the Guardian has published a story and several other are in progress. The International Press representatives were vocal and interested during the question period. We will continue to actively seek press coverage for the campaign, especially as the International Commission prepares to attend the United Nations Session on Human Rights in Geneva in February. A videotape of the press conference, prepared by Gloria Williams, with sound tapes from Jesse Keyes of WBAI, will be ready for distribution shortly. We are happy with what we have achieved, but conscious of the distance to go before political prisoners in the USA get the attention from the press we need to bring amnesty.

Maggie Smith for the Communications Commission