



**For immediate release
Feb 8, 2008**

Local Activist Ed Lewinson Sentenced to 90 Days for Protest at the School of the Americas in Georgia

Interviews with Ed Lewinson can be arranged by calling him at (973)374-1223 or on his cell phone at (973)222-2166. He will describe his reasons for crossing the line at the School of the Americas in November 2007 and his experiences at trial last week. As soon as we know when and where Ed Lewinson will be incarcerated, NJ Peace Action will help coordinate visits.

Ed Lewinson, 78, a member of the NJPA Board and co-chair of the Peace Education Committee, was sentenced to 90 days in Federal prison and fined \$500 last week for trespassing at Fort Benning, Georgia, in a November 2007 protest which demanded the closing of the School of the Americas (renamed Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation). This was the fourth time that Ed had been arrested, but his first conviction since in previous years the government refused to prosecute due to his blindness. Ten other protesters were also sentenced with Ed.

The School of the Americas is a military facility that has trained tens of thousands of South and Central American military officers, many of whom have been accused of using their training to carry out torture, murder and other atrocities on behalf of dictatorships against peasants, labor leaders and political opponents. Four countries have quit the SOA so far as a result of this history: Uruguay, Argentina, Costa Rica and Venezuela. It was reported in 2006 that the Chilean military officer who ordered the brutal murder of folk singer Victor Jara in 1970 during the Pinochet coup had just returned from training at the SOA (<http://www.commondreams.org/views06/0808-30.htm>)

<http://www.soaw.org/index.php>

Ed has taken part in many NJ Peace Action and South Mountain Peace Action events. He was usually accompanied by "Hooper," his golden-retriever seeing-eye-dog until two years ago when Hooper reached the age of retirement. Ed is a professor emeritus of history at Seton Hall University. He is also active in the South Orange Lion's Club and a member of South Mountain Peace Action.

Read more about each of the SOAW 11 at <http://www.soaw.org/article.php?id=1621>

NJ Peace Action

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