



ST. OLAF COLLEGE

# Peace and Justice News

## President Jimmy Carter to visit St. Olaf

Nobel Peace Prize Forum set for February 20-21

By Amy Gage

The Honorable Jimmy Carter, 39th President of the United States and 2002 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, will visit St. Olaf College on Sat., Feb. 21, for the 16th annual Nobel Peace Prize Forum.

Carter will address an anticipated crowd of over a thousand students, faculty and distinguished guests who will assemble for the two-day event, which begins Friday, Feb. 20.



Peace and Justice presents...

### Jimmy Carter Teach-In

Thurs., Feb. 12  
5:00-6:00 pm  
Viking Theater

Join Prof. Eric Fure-Slocum and Ambassador Robert Flaten for an enlightening look at Jimmy Carter's life and work.

Each year, the Nobel Peace Prize Forum bases its theme on the accomplishments of the laureate. The theme for this year's conference, "Striving for Peace: Roots of Change," emerged from Carter's frequent references to the root causes of violence around the world, especially the economic disparity between rich and poor.

Carter won the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize "for his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development."

The author of 17 books and University Distinguished Professor at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, Carter is the co-founder of The Carter Center, an organization working to prevent and resolve conflicts, enhance freedom and democracy, and improve health.

"President Carter's life exemplifies the theme of the conference, Striving for Peace: Roots of Change," said St. Olaf College President Chris-

topher Thomforde. "He has shown that an individual can bring constructive change in the world through his work as a military officer, a public official and a private citizen."

Other speakers at the Nobel Peace Prize Forum will include Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, director-general emerita of the World Health Organization and former prime minister of Norway, and Dr. Eboo Patel, executive director of the Interfaith Youth Core in Chicago.

The Forum offers an opportunity for Nobel Peace Prize laureates, diplomats, scholars and the general public to take part in a conversation that examines the underlying causes and manifestations of conflict and war in modern society, as well as the dynamics of peacemaking.

The two-day event will consist of plenary sessions, small-group seminars and peace-skills workshops.

For more information or to register for the Forum, visit [www.stolaf.edu/nppf/2004](http://www.stolaf.edu/nppf/2004).

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## Building a Better World

Erik Cleven, class of '87

• Active Among Us •

By Carl Schroeder '05

A global journey of social activism has come full circle for 1987 St. Olaf graduate Erik Cleven, who returned to campus last month to teach an Interim course called "Peacebuilding and Conflict Management."

Cleven, who has taught similar courses in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, former

Yugoslavia, Denmark and Norway, believes that teaching people to be "future-oriented" is the first step to a better society.

"Part of building peace is the ability to envision a peaceful future," said Cleven. "The goal is to get people to think 'How can I make a positive change in the world?'"

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Photo courtesy of Margaret O'Leary

Prof. Erik Cleven,  
St. Olaf class of 1987

Peace and Justice News is a monthly publication of the Peace and Justice Resource Network, an official student organization at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.

The views expressed in this newsletter do not implicitly or explicitly represent official positions and policies of St. Olaf College.

## State of the Union Address: A Perspective .....

By Gloria MacWilliams-Brooks '06

As President George W. Bush launched into his State of the Union Address, he began by patting his own administration on the back for all it has done in the Middle East.

A few highlights include his response to those that were reticent about the United States' preemptive action, in which he said that we "will never seek a permission slip to defend the security of our country." This sounds noble, but let's be honest: the United States was defending our economic interests and political image. Doing this without the support of the United Nations alienated us from an international institution that has the potential to be one of the world's greatest tools for securing human rights and building peace.

Bush also made a disconcerting pledge, declaring, "Congress and this administration will give you the resources you need to fight and win the war on terror." I'm sure the 40 million Americans who can't even afford basic health insurance are thrilled to hear the President's plan to continue his policy of spending billions on an ambiguous war that has questionable objectives and no clear end in sight.

President Bush devoted a full 25 minutes to the war on terror, but I would like to address some of the other issues that he skimmed over.

First, he credited his tax cuts with what he identified as the improving state of our economy, which he claimed is "strong and growing stronger!" While Bush noted that jobs are on the rise, he did not go on to explain that, when considered in proportion with the millions of jobs lost in the past three years, the rate at which jobs are now being created is abysmal and nowhere near sufficient. The recent decrease in the unemployment rate was due not to a significant number of jobs being created, but instead to hundreds of thousands of discouraged people dropping out of the workforce.

In light of this, Bush's later comment about his plan to match immigrant workers with employers who can't find American workers to fill empty positions sounded not only ridiculous, but also downright illegal. What kinds of conditions and wages would such jobs entail in order for American workers to be refusing them? Bush's proposal has drawn outraged reactions from immigration reform groups, among others.

Next President Bush briefly foraged on to the topic of education, trumpeting the success of his No Child Left Behind program; the irony of this name is that leaving children behind is exactly what this program does in schools that lack the initial resources to prepare their students to do well on Bush's standardized tests and thus don't receive increased funding. He also failed to point out that many of the schools that have met the standards

have yet to receive the promised additional funds.

Bush said that we need to expand Advanced Placement programs in low-income schools, increase Pell Grants and provide greater support for community colleges, all of which sound great yet stand in contradiction with all of his administration's current policies on education.

Legislation to "modernize electricity" and make the U.S. less dependent on foreign sources of energy nabbed a few seconds of Bush's time, although he disappointingly (but not surprisingly) made no mention of future support for groups working with alternative sources of energy.

I'm sure the unspoken words "drilling in AN-WAR" loomed ominously in the minds of many wary citizens.

The speech took on its most glaringly duplicitous tone when Bush extolled the benefits of discount drug prescriptions for seniors in his new Medicare bill. The proposed Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act (HR-1) pits Medicare against government subsidized private programs. It offers prescription drug benefits to seniors only if they leave their guaranteed Medicare program and switch to a private health care insurance plan. After this bill draws out wealthier seniors who can afford to make this switch (which may or may not be to their long-term benefit), it leaves seniors who are obligated to remain with Medicare faced with higher premiums. The bill also prohibits government negotiation of lower drug prices and reduces coverage for low income and disabled seniors under the "dual eligibles" stipulation. As ever, the ones who are really winning in this picture are the insurance and pharmaceutical companies.

Bush closed his address with a few words on the war on drugs, federal funding for abstinence programs, his personal opinion on the sanctity of marriage and a prisoner re-entry program that he did not explain in any detail. Notably missing from his comments were the environment and women's health care choices.

As I watched the President of the United States take his leave of the podium, I felt depressed that at the elections four years ago, so many Americans were deceived into thinking that this man's leadership would improve the quality of life for the average American. I found myself fervently hoping that our nation's people will not be duped a second time into voting for an administration whose policies are so clearly detrimental to our nation's children, our foreign relations, the working class and the elderly, just to name a few. In the wise words of B.B. King, "Fooled me once, shame on you. Fooled me twice, shame on me."

Don't be fooled twice, America.

### - Opinions Page -



President George W. Bush delivers his annual State of the Union address in Washington, D.C. on January 20, 2004.

### Recommended Reading

#### February 2004

\* Jimmy Carter, *Talking Peace: A Vision for the Next Generation*. An overview of Carter's work and advice for young adults about how to create peace.

\* John Cavanagh, *Alternatives to Economic Globalization*. A collection of essays by a wide variety of thinkers who propose alternatives to current international economic practices.

\* Bryan Lindsley '03, *St. Olaf Activist Manual*. Ideas and resources for action from a St. Olaf alumnus. Online at [www.stolaf.edu/depts/cis/wp/lindsley/](http://www.stolaf.edu/depts/cis/wp/lindsley/).

\* Paul Rogat Loeb, *Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in a Cynical Time*. A writer and social commentator presents a new modal for bringing about social change in our jaded society.



# Active Among Us: Erik Clevén

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Currently, Clevén manages the Russia/Chechnya project of the Center for Conflict Management (CCM), a Norway-based peace-building organization.

“We go into areas where there has been violence,” Clevén explained, “and train people how to make peace.”

Through the CCM, Clevén has visited Chechnya’s neighboring regions to teach conflict resolution skills to various groups. His organization also coordinates local projects aimed at defusing the conflict, while facilitating dialogue between ordinary Russians and Chechens.

Over the years, Clevén has learned to deal with a resistant Russian political system and a disinterested public. “The powers-that-be are not exactly standing there with open arms,” he said. “There also tends to be a lot of apathy until you work with the people and they find out they can make a difference.”

Clevén’s activist roots extend back to his time as a student at St. Olaf. During the 1980’s, he was involved in a campus movement to boycott corporations with ties to South Africa’s apartheid regime.

Since those years, Clevén’s idealism has been both bolstered and tempered by world events. “Change was a lot more inevitable than we might have thought,” he said, citing the collapse of apartheid and Soviet communism.

However, he described the current war on terror as a major setback for peacebuilding, saying it has created “a culture of fear.”

“I would encourage Americans to look at themselves from the outside,” said Clevén, noting that modern technology gives us easy access to newspapers from around the world. “That way we can get at the roots and causes of some of these conflicts.”

Clevén said he tries to think globally while focusing on small, specific ways of bringing about a better world. “Peace isn’t just a lofty vision,” he said. “It’s something that ordinary people can concretely build.”

Next month, Clevén will resume teaching peacebuilding courses in Norway, where he resides with his wife, also a graduate of St. Olaf.

**“Peace isn’t just a lofty vision. It’s something that ordinary people can concretely build.”**  
- Erik Clevén ‘87

**• Active Among Us •**

*Active Among Us* is a series profiling St. Olaf students, faculty, alumni and Northfield community members who have been active in peace and social justice issues.

Do you know someone you’d like to see featured in a future edition of *Active Among Us*?

E-mail your suggestions to the *Peace and Justice News* team at [pjnews@stolaf.edu](mailto:pjnews@stolaf.edu).

*Striving for Peace:  
Roots of Change*

**“Imagining a Culture of Peace”**

Friday, Feb. 20  
3:00-4:15 and 4:30-5:45 pm  
St. Olaf College, location TBA

Join Erik Clevén for this Nobel Peace Prize Forum peace-skills workshop, featuring a creative simulation to explore what is meant by cultures of peace.

## Focus on: Russia/Chechnya .....

Chechnya, an oil-rich southwestern Russian republic, has been engaged in a political and military struggle for independence since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

The Russia/Chechnya conflict has its modern roots in a post-World War II mass deportation of Chechens, whom Stalin accused of Nazi collaboration.

In recent years, the conflict has peaked twice, first during a failed 1994-1996 Russian invasion that resulted in 80,000 deaths, and again in 1999 during a second Russian invasion. Today, a bloody guerrilla war continues between Russian and Chechen forces.

- Carl Schroeder '05



## *Peace and Justice News*

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*Peace and Justice News* welcomes peace and justice-related articles, article ideas, news items, book reviews, commentaries and other contributions. Contact the P&J News team at [PJNews@stolaf.edu](mailto:PJNews@stolaf.edu).

VISIT THE PEACE AND  
JUSTICE WEBSITE AT  
[WWW.STOLAF.EDU/ORGS/PJRN](http://WWW.STOLAF.EDU/ORGS/PJRN)

*The St. Olaf Peace & Justice Resource Network is an awareness-raising organization whose goal is to educate ourselves and others about issues of peace and justice. Through monthly newsletters, speakers, and campus-wide events, we explore both global and local topics of concern. The Peace & Justice Resource Network also helps integrate the efforts of other campus and community groups to promote peace and justice through co-sponsorships, advertising, and participation in local events. It is affiliated with Student Peace Action Network, a national network of campus peace and justice groups.*

*We meet each Tuesday during the school year at 8:00 p.m. in Buntrock Commons room 142 (on the way to the library). New members and curious bystanders are always welcome! Our office is located in the Student Organization Resource Center. Contact Peace and Justice Coordinator Elizabeth Henke at [henke@stolaf.edu](mailto:henke@stolaf.edu) for more information or to be added to the St. Olaf Peace and Justice e-mail alias.*



**Thursday, Feb. 12**  
**6:00-7:00 pm**  
**Viking Theater**

Last month, Peace and Justice co-sponsored a screening of *Uncovered: The Whole Truth about the Iraq War*, a controversial new documentary that details the lies, misstatements and exaggerations that served as reasons to fight a “preemptive” war in Iraq.

For those who missed their first chance to view this stunning 57-minute film, Peace and Justice is co-sponsoring an **encore showing** on Thurs., Feb. 12 at 6:00pm in Viking Theater.

**Watch for our next issue**  
**around March 2, 2004**

## **Upcoming Peace and Justice events In Northfield and the Twin Cities**

Events in **boldface type** take place at St. Olaf College.

### **February**

- Thurs., Feb. 5 — Wellstone Civic Dialogue Project. Visit [www.wellstone.org](http://www.wellstone.org).  
Tues., Feb. 10, 8-9pm — **Peace and Justice meeting: Buntrock Commons, Room 142**  
Thurs., Feb. 12, 5-6pm — **Peace and Justice Teach-in on Jimmy Carter, Viking Theater**  
Thurs., Feb. 12, 6-7pm — **Film: “Uncovered: The Whole Truth about the Iraq War,” Viking**  
Thurs., Feb. 12, 7pm — People for Peace and Goodwill meeting: 313 ½ Division St., Northfield  
Tues., Feb. 17, 7pm — **Black History Month keynote speaker Teja Arboleda, The Pause**  
Tues., Feb. 17, 8-9pm — **Peace and Justice meeting: Buntrock Commons, Room 142**  
Thurs., Feb. 19, 7pm — People for Peace and Goodwill meeting: 313 ½ Division St., Northfield  
Fri., Feb. 20, 10:10am — **Gro Harlem Brundtland Honorary Degree Ceremony, Boe Chapel**  
Fri.-Sat., Feb. 20-21 — **Nobel Peace Prize Forum**. Visit [www.stolaf.edu/nppf/2004](http://www.stolaf.edu/nppf/2004).  
Sat., Feb. 21, time TBA — Presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich addresses Carleton College  
Sat., Feb. 21, 1:30-3pm — **Former President Jimmy Carter addresses St. Olaf, Skoglund**  
Tues., Feb. 24, 8-9pm — **Peace and Justice meeting: Buntrock Commons, Room 142**  
Thurs., Feb. 26, 7pm — People for Peace and Goodwill meeting: 313 ½ Division St., Northfield  
Fri., Feb. 27, 10:50-11:50am — Environmentalist David Helvarg addresses Carleton College

### **March**

- Tues., Mar. 2, 8-9pm — **Peace and Justice meeting: Buntrock Commons, Room 142**  
Thurs., Mar. 4, 7pm — People for Peace and Goodwill meeting: 313 ½ Division St., Northfield  
Tues., Mar. 9, 8-9pm — **Peace and Justice meeting: Buntrock Commons, Room 142**  
Thurs., Mar. 11, 7pm — People for Peace and Goodwill meeting: 313 ½ Division St., Northfield  
Tues., Mar. 16, 8-9pm — **Peace and Justice meeting: Buntrock Commons, Room 142**  
Thurs., Mar. 18, 7pm — People for Peace and Goodwill meeting: 313 ½ Division St., Northfield  
Sat., Mar. 20 — International Day of Action: First Anniversary of Iraq War  
Thurs., Mar. 25, 7pm — People for Peace and Goodwill meeting: 313 ½ Division St., Northfield