

ALAA/UAW 2325
Executive Board Agenda

January 14, 2002

Estimated length: 2 hours

1. Postponed: LAS Funding/Budget (with Theresa De Leon).
 - 1.1. General.
 - 1.2. Comp Day Change.
2. Draft Statement in Defense of Civil Liberties (attached).
3. Meeting Schedule for 2002.

Proposed ALAA Statement in Defense of Civil Liberties
January 11, 2002

As a labor union whose members fight each day for the statutory and constitutional rights of indigent New Yorkers, The Association of Legal Aid Attorneys, UAW Local 2325, is deeply opposed to the Bush administration's broad assault on precious civil liberties and democratic rights.

This assault mirrors other shameful periods of racial, ethnic and/or political hysteria in American history, among them the Alien and Sedition Acts (1798), Asian exclusion (1880s-1890s), "Sedition" prosecutions (World War I), the Palmer Raids (1919-1920), Japanese-American internment (1940s), McCarthyism (1950s), the FBI's COINTELPRO war on dissent (1960s), and exclusion of Haitian and Central American political refugees (1980s).

Today, these policies are reflected in the:

- "USA Patriot Act," which authorizes the government, without meaningful judicial review, to: designate domestic groups as "terrorist organizations"; indefinitely incarcerate or detain non-citizens based on mere suspicion; deport immigrants for innocent association with others; and violate confidential financial, medical, educational and other records without probable cause. (First, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth amendments).

- Mass detention of more than 1200 foreign nationals--almost all of them from the Mid-East and South Asia--about whom the government has refused to provide information, who have often been denied access to legal counsel or consular officials, who suffer inhumane conditions of confinement--and virtually none of whom have been charged with terrorist acts. (Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Eighth amendments.)

- Detention and deportation hearings before secret immigration courts hearing secret evidence. (Fifth Amendment.)

- Coercive and discriminatory questioning of 5,000 young male legal immigrants men, mostly of Middle Eastern descent, without probable cause. (First and Fifth amendments.)

- Deportation campaign against men of Muslim and Middle Eastern origin. (Fifth Amendment.)

- Authorization by the attorney general--without judicial review--for eavesdropping on confidential attorney-client communication. (Sixth Amendment.)

- Trial of non-citizens accused of terrorism before secret military tribunals which deprive the

accused of an independent forum, their chosen attorneys, the presumption of innocence, proof beyond a reasonable doubt, confrontation of evidence, exclusion of hearsay, a unanimous verdict, and habeas corpus review by civilian courts. (Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth amendments; Geneva Convention).

- Heightened FBI spying on domestic religious and political organizations. (First Amendment.)

- Open consideration of torturing prisoners suspected of terrorism. (UN Convention Against Torture, Fifth and Eighth amendments).

History teaches that our civil liberties and democratic rights are most endangered--and most essential--during times of crisis. ALAA, therefore, supports and endorses all efforts to defend these freedoms against the attacks discussed above.

Proposed 2002 ALAA Meeting Schedule
January 14, 2002

[NB: Checked for conflicting Jewish holidays, per <<http://bnaibrith.org/caln.html>>]

Tuesday, January 9: EB
Monday, January 14: EB
Thursday, January 24: DC

Wednesday, February 13: EB

Tuesday, March 12: EB
Tuesday, March 19: DC

Wednesday, April 10: EB

Tuesday, May 7: EB
Tuesday, May 14: DC

Wednesday, June 12: EB

Tuesday, July 9: EB
Tuesday, July 16: DC

Wednesday, September 11: EB
Tuesday, September 17: DC

Tuesday, October 8: EB

Wednesday, November 13: EB
Tuesday, November 19: DC

Tuesday, December 10: EB