

A WALK THROUGH CENTRAL AMERICA FOR HEALING & PEACEMAKING

Planning and Preparation Letter number zero

Two workshops on Central America were held at the 13th Annual Rainbow Healing Gathering for World Peace in the Modoc National Forest in California in July, 1984. From these workshops and initial discussions between Carmen Boutet and Arun Toke came a proposal to walk through Central America as a peace group.

This letter is an outline of the project with some questions that need to be considered. Your help and participation in the planning of this project is invited. As a first step, we are circulating this letter and talking to people whom we think would be helpful. Specific comments, suggestions, and excerpts from letters received will be put into the next letter which will be sent to all who have indicated an interest in the project. With each subsequent letter, a clearer focus of the project and identification of those who are committed to it will be reached. At a later time, possibly in the fall, all these people will meet together and complete final preparations.

Proposal:

To walk through Central America as a peace group.
The walk would go from village to village through the countryside meeting and greeting people along the way with a prayer for peace and understanding.

Plan:

To form a core planning group to consider all questions and arrange for what work needs to be done.

Purpose:

To enhance the possibilities for peaceful co-existence in Central America.
To open up channels of communication.
To increase cooperation in and amongst the communities.
To reduce armed conflict and U.S. military involvement.
To exchange cultural pluralism.
To listen and learn directly from those whom we meet of their needs and concerns.
To assist in increasing self-sufficiency in each country.
To spread an understanding of non-violence and "new age" ideas and concepts.

Time frame:

To start when organized and ready to go.
Time period of walk depends on total length, number of miles walked per day, number of days in each place, problems and delays, etc.
Individual commitment: flexible, week, 2month, 6 month, year, or 2 years.

Route:

Tentative suggestion: Start in San Jose, Costa Rica and go north, but not necessarily following the Pan American Highway. Go through Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and ending just across the border in Mexico.

Walkers:

Persons talented in music, dance (ethnic), spanish fluency desirable, public speaking, special skills, organizational and coordinating ability, non-violent commitment.

Resources:

Money and equipment for the walk. Identifying clothing or ethnic clothing from the various countries and cultures.
Two four-wheel-drive trucks for transporting gear.
Hispanic contacts, organizational contacts, human rights contacts, diplomatic and governmental contacts.
Media, international coverage
Tools, amateur radio equipment, cameras, tape recorders, video cameras, camping equipment.
Push carts, back packs,
Identifying banner, literature, etc.

Questions:

When do we start?
Size of group?
How do we decide who can be on the walk?
What about sponsorship by organizations?
Are we publically non-political and non-partisan?
Do we send a scouting party ahead to coordinate the project locally and arrange contacts?
How much should we carry on our backs and how much should we depend on vehicles to carry?
Do we do constructive or healing work along the way?
Do we leave people behind to work locally?
Do we stay as one group as we go?
What is the attitude and purpose of each participant?
What are some funding resources?
What are the areas that need work?
Who will do this work?
What preparatory training program should the walkers participate in prior to the Walk?
How should decisions be made?
Do we need an administrative committee?
A steering committee?
Support teams for each walker?
Does the walk have a coordinator or leader and who is she?

These are some of the questions we are beginning to consider. We invite your advice. We think it is important for the Walk to be composed of people from many countries with a wide diversity of religious and ethnic cultures. We want it to be as international as possible (less than half North American). Please send us the names and addresses of people and organizations you think would be interested in this project and could help us.

Correspondence for the next Planning and Preparation Letter can be sent to:

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