

Maintaining the Nonpartisan Message of NP

One of the basic principles of the Nonviolent Peaceforce is non-partisanship. NP Peace Teams do not "take sides" within any conflict; they are present to protect the human rights of all parties while they resolve the conflict themselves. This is true in Sri Lanka, and will also be true of any regional peacekeeping efforts by NP affiliates. (Within North America, NP Canada, for example, has been discussing creating Peace Teams to function in violent or potentially violent situations.) In addition, it is relevant to the work of NP groups within the United States that the NP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

It is extremely important that NP local groups refrain from the appearance of endorsing or supporting political candidates. For example, many of you who are active in United States NP groups are also strong supporters of one or another Presidential candidate-which is fine, but it is important to keep these activities completely separate. While it is OK for a US-nonprofit organization to seek and publicize the endorsement or support of a politician, it is not OK for that nonprofit organization to appear to endorse that politician, to publicize an event where that politician is making a campaign-type speech, to share a table with that politician, and so forth. In other words, it is OK to have an NP table at an event where Dennis Kucinich is speaking, and to have a sign on that table that states: "Dennis Kucinich endorses the Nonviolent Peaceforce." (Which he has for several years.) It is not OK to say the opposite, to wear a Kucinich button while staffing an NP table, or to send an e-mail to an NP mailing list about a Kucinich or any other election-related event. In addition to the importance of safeguarding our nonprofit status, we want to invite supporters of all candidates to support our mission!

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