

ANNOUNCEMENT: The 1985 Vienna Peace Project Workshop

The Center for Studies of the Person (La Jolla, California, U.S.A.) and the University for Peace (Escazu, Costa Rica, C.A.) announce their co-sponsorship of a four-day invitational international workshop utilizing a new human technology for peace-making: a person-centered approach to the practice of peace. As theme or focus of the workshop, "The Central America Challenge" has been selected. The workshop will be held near Vienna, Austria, on Friday-Monday, November 1-4, 1985 - one week after the Fortieth Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. It will be an historic effort to explore how the person-centered approach to human relations can be brought to bear in a world involved in crucial encounters.

The person-centered approach seeks to bring together persons of differing, even opposed interests, ideologies and perspectives, and enable them to meet and engage each other personally in ways that support their carrying themselves beyond traditional roles and relations into new levels of human connection, understanding, and ways of viewing conflict.

Twenty-four distinguished persons from Latin America, the Developing and the Developed World will be invited. Participants will be chosen who will bring to the workshop diverse perspectives and experiences. They will be selected for their personal expertise and will not be viewed as spokespersons for, or representatives of, their offices or governments.

The workshop will be conducted as an off-the-record retreat in a comfortable modern hotel in a small community near Vienna. The hotel and village are favorably suited for special security arrangements if needed. Workshop activities will consist of plenary sessions and small group meetings plus substantial blocks of unscheduled time to provide opportunities for informal interaction. The workshop design seeks to cut through the formal constraints of conventional diplomatic meetings in order to maximize opportunities for thoughtful persons to engage in examination of complex issues. All sessions will be off-the-record, with no reporters or cameras or recorders permitted. There will be limited or no outside communication or contact during the four days of sessions.

The workshop seeks the meeting of minds, not the resolution of specific issues or the reaching of agreements--though these may occur as by-products. At the conclusion of the workshop, there is no intent to issue any formal policy statement or position paper or other product. Individual participants who wish to make public statements may do so as long as commitments to confidentiality are not violated.

The key strategy of the workshop is not simply to provide opportunities for person-to-person interaction; the strategy is direct personal interaction in the presence of professional facilitators skilled at understanding the frame of reference of each particular person, at insuring that everyone is heard, and at bringing to light misunderstandings whenever they occur. Facilitators will be associates of the distinguished American psychologist, Dr. Carl R. Rogers. Most of the

staff will have had prior experience facilitating with Dr. Rogers in either his successful ventures with a group of militant Irish Protestants and Catholics in Belfast, Ireland, and a mixed group of Blacks and Whites in the extremely tense atmosphere of Johannesburg, South Africa, or in other similar international contexts.

Dr. Rogers will be the Director and principal facilitator for the workshop. Dr. Rodrigo Carazo, President of the University for Peace, will be the Associate Director. At the Vienna meeting, they and their colleagues will utilize the Person-Centered Approach developed by Dr. Rogers, which has proven uniquely successful in transcending cultural and emotional barriers to communication. This workshop is anticipated to be a most significant segment of a long-term training program in person-centered approaches to peace directed by Dr. Rogers at the Center for Studies of the Person, and in association with the University for Peace and other institutes worldwide.

Participants will arrive in Vienna not later than the day before the start of the workshop and will commit themselves to remain for the full four days. Participants will also be asked to take part in an evaluation and follow-up of the workshop. This will include responding in a recorded interview designed to obtain subjective reactions to the experience. The follow-up will be intended to evaluate the contribution to the experience made by the facilitators.

Final decisions in the selection of participants and facilitators will be the responsibility of Dr. Rogers and President Carazo.