

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—September 18, 2001

**NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD URGES GOVERNMENT
TO PROTECT CIVIL LIBERTIES, PUNISH BIAS CRIMES AND REFRAIN
FROM BOMBING CIVILIAN POPULATIONS
DURING NATIONAL CRISIS**

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The National Lawyers Guild is shocked and saddened by the criminal acts of violence on September 11 that have claimed the lives of untold numbers of people. Our deepest sympathies and condolences go out to the families of those whose lives have been destroyed by these recent events.

As we mourn, we also fear for the safety of Arabs, Muslims and immigrants. There have already been documented cases of violence against Arabs, Muslims, South Asians, North Africans and members of other ethnic groups. We call on the government to send a strong message to the people of this country that engaging in hate crimes will be punished to the fullest extent of the law.

Recent statements by the political leaders of the United States, both Democratic and Republican, raise the specter of an escalation of world violence and heightened risk of war. We urge the United States government to support national and international legal systems to bring the perpetrators and their co-conspirators to justice without the bombing of civilian populations.

We must be particularly vigilant during times of national crisis to protect civil liberties, including First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and assembly and the Constitutional rights of political and ethnic minorities. Guild members nationwide are committed to providing support to those who oppose racism and war, and those who would assemble to call upon our neighbors and government to respect our most sacred principles of equality, justice and peace.

The National Lawyers Guild is an 64 year old association of lawyers, legal workers, law students, and jailhouse lawyers, in the service of the people to the end that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property interests. Those in need of assistance are invited to contact us. For a list of legal and other resources, please refer to our website, www.nlg.org.