

# FROM TRUTH TO JUSTICE



by Doris Sage

Other books in this holiday series:

**Daniel Moy Sage, 1993**

**The Bug Jar on Grandma's Breadboard,  
1994**

**Rose Jade, 1994**

**Waiting for Baby Sister, 1995**

**Staghorn Fossil Soup, 1996**

Each year, for the past 5 years, there has been a Grandma story for Daniel, Katie and Alina under the Christmas tree. This year Grandma and Grandpa may have to go to jail and there is only enough time to explain to their grandchildren why they may not be able to celebrate holidays and birthdays with them for a while.

**Doris Sage**

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Three years ago, Grandma went to Central America to visit some small villages in the mountains of El Salvador. They were people who were very poor. They said: "Tell your government to stop sending planes, guns, and bombs to our country. Stop training soldiers from this country, and **close the School of the Americas**. We need jobs, land to farm; we need houses and food. We want the war to stop so we can live in peace.



Grandma and Grandpa went to Washington D.C. to demonstrate on the Capitol Steps. They visited people in Congress to ask them to close the School of the Americas. The School of the Americas is at Fort Benning, Georgia. It is where our government trains Central American soldiers to fight wars against the poor people in their own countries.

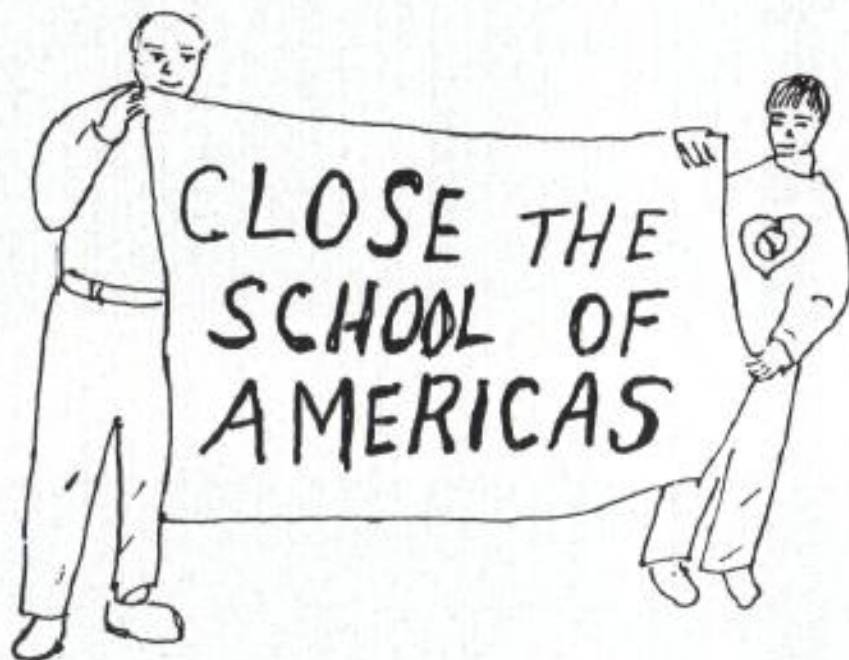




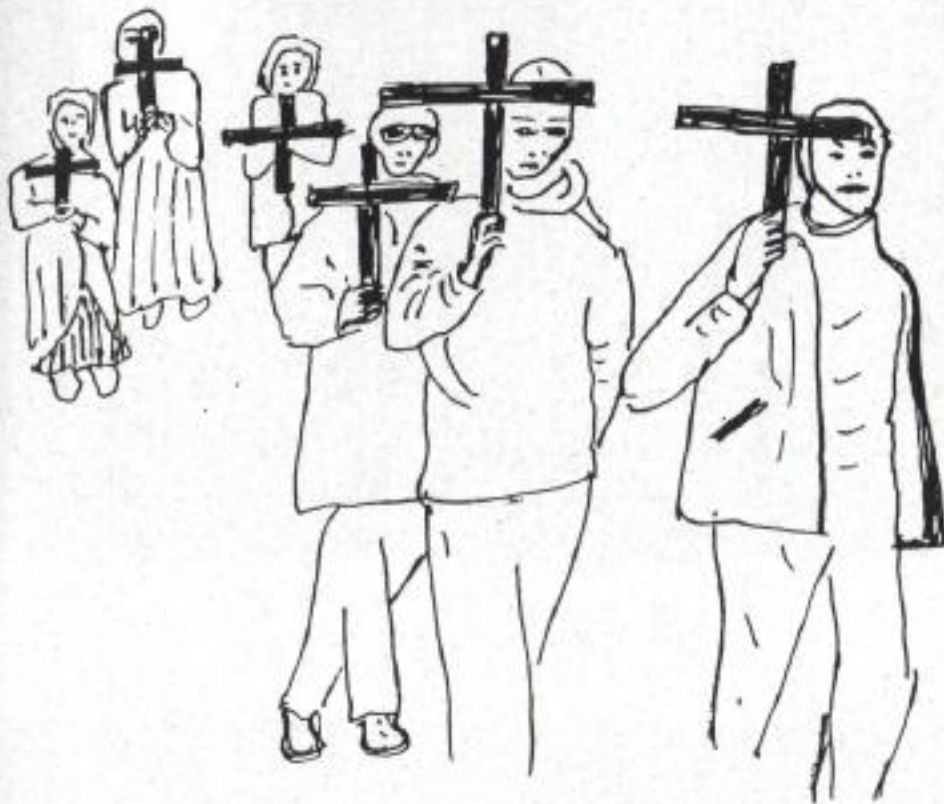
They got to visit with Daniel, Katie and Alina while they were in Washington and that was fun. One day Mommy brought Daniel and Katie to the Capitol so they could sit on the steps too. They saw the people holding signs that said: "Close the School of the Americas." But this did not close this terrible school and it did not help the people in Central America.



So Grandma and Grandpa went to Georgia and demonstrated at the Fort Benning Army Base with 2,000 other people who also wanted the school closed. They asked again for the Army to close the School of the Americas.

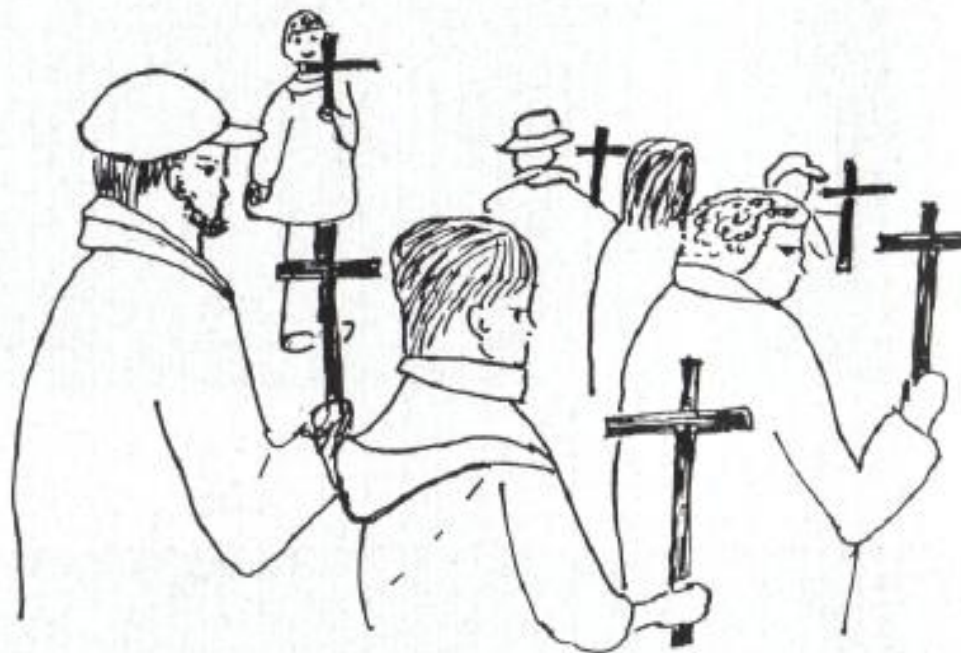


The Army listens to the people who say that the School of the Americas should train Central American soldiers. The Army does not listen to people who believe that they should close this school. The Army said we would be arrested, fined and would go to jail if we crossed through the Fort Benning Gates to ask them to close this school.

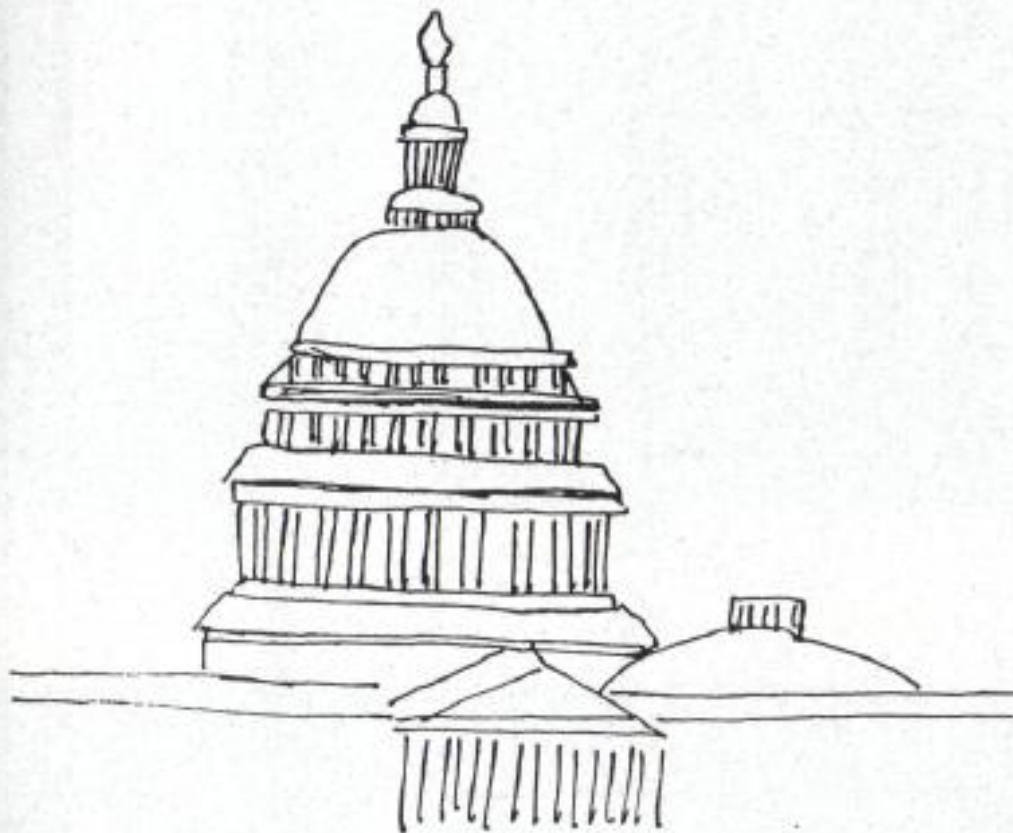


Grandma and Grandpa and 600 other people marched across the line onto the army base to deliver hundreds of thousands of signatures of people who were also asking that the School of the Americas be closed. We carried white crosses that had names on them of Central American people who have been killed in this war. We were all arrested because the military people did not want to see this happen or to hear what we had to say.





When Grandma and Grandpa went to school we learned that we live in a free country that has a democratic government. This means, that citizens of our country can peacefully speak about what they think is wrong, and can try to change things to make them right. This is called "freedom of speech", which comes first in our Bill of Rights.



The Bill of Rights says that the Military is not more powerful than our government. That would not be a Democratic Government; it would be a Military Dictatorship Government -- like some foreign countries have.



Grandma and Grandpa may go to jail along with a lot of other good people who believe as we do -- so our children and grandchildren will be free to speak for what they think is right.

**TELL THE WORLD \***  
(Addendum)

By Doris Sage

Copies of this book were wrapped as gifts and placed under the tree on Christmas day. The children were excitedly opening presents as the adults opened and read the story. There was some talk about Grandma and Grandpa and prison. I didn't think the children heard any of it.

The day after Christmas, I asked Daniel if he knew we might go to jail. He said, "Yes."

I asked if he wanted to read a story about it. He said, "No."

The next day Katie, age four, said to her mother: "I don't want Grandma and Grandpa to go to jail." So I suggested we read the story together. Daniel admitted he had already read it (which was why Katie knew about jail.) Daniel, just seven, read the story fluently, and with understanding, to his sisters.

Katie said again: "I don't want Grandma and Grandpa to go to jail."

I assured her we wouldn't be there for very long and that we would write to her. "But you won't have anything to eat," she said.

After I explained to her that we would have regular meals, she asked: "Will you write to me *before* you go to jail?"



Alina, age two, listened attentively as her brother read. She has learned to repeat the words she hears spoken - and she clearly articulated words, such as: "government, democratic and justice."

She may not understand the concepts but she is learning the vocabulary.

A few weeks later I was with them again, baby-sitting, when Katie asked again why we were going to jail. I told her that the graduates of the School of the Americas return to their country and make war -- "and they kill people," I said.

She said: "That's not nice."

To Daniel's questions, I explained that if 25 *good* people went to jail for their beliefs, people all over the United States would hear about it.

He said: "Grandma, you should *tell the whole world!*"

I'm proud of my grandchildren. I hope they can grow up in a country where they can speak for justice and against injustice without fear they will be thrown into jail for expressing their beliefs.

\* This title is by Daniel Moy Sage, my seven year old grandson.