

*speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury.*² How do we value these rights of ours? These freedoms, and how do we weigh them against or next to that of the safety of our nation? Would we be willing to have our rights restricted in order to 'ensure peace'? The US PATRIOT Act, (HR 3162 RDS) calls for the US government "*Authority to intercept wire, oral, and electronic communications.*"³ The document goes on into detail on funding for FBI and CIA measures to acquire "*Modification of authorities relating to use of pen registers and trap and trace devices*"⁴ and other means to spy and conduct surveillance on not only foreign nations as called for in Sec. 206 enumerating Foreign Surveillance Acts of days past, but also in the United States against both Americans (Sec. 222) foreign, but also nationals or non-American citizens (Sec. 207). Not only do these proposals endanger the rights of American citizens to privacy as pertaining to Amendment Four of the Constitution, unwarranted searches and seizures, they also do harm to the trust bond between the United State government and foreign citizens and governments.

Acts such as the PATRIOT Act are radical measures drawn up in times of unease and uncertainty that, instead of solidifying nations, often draw factions within the country further apart. To reinforce our security by sacrificing the freedoms we stand to defend? That is not the course and goal of a wise and democratic nation. That is a path of traditionalism and an unwillingness to change with the progression of the times, to accommodate new circumstance and remain true to our values and ideals in all aspects of our lives and national policies. To balance freedom and security we cannot revert to principles of the past, and restrictive acts such as the Alien and Sedition Act and the debate on whether to bring points back into mainstream political policy, exemplify the sort of ingrained traditionalist thing that can only lead to disaster. Acts such as these actually inhibit the relationships between two governments as well as limit wrongly the rights of the American people at large.

Freedom, as it is used and referred to in United States history, is in fact the liberties and rights presented and exercised by the people to ensure that the government and fellow citizens will not gain unfair or underhand advantage

in a despotic fashion. Security is the state of being physically safe from harm from a foreign nation or power, whether in a time of war or otherwise. Due to the recent outbreak of American action in Iraq, President Bush and his Republican administration have implemented a series of movements to bring back principles from such outdated and openly authoritative acts as the Alien and Sedition Acts of the late 1700's; reborn in the PATRIOT Acts. In a time of crisis it is easy to forget our principles and let things slip, but there are throughout history politicians and people ready to make use of the lack in judgment of the people at every turn, and we must remain critical and careful in our time.

To balance Freedom and Security we must not only reinforce our rights of free speech, assembly and due process, along with the Bill of Rights entitlements, but we must also make sound, reasoned judgments in decisions to take military action abroad or in the international arena. Ill-advised or unreasoned action can lead to widespread discontent in the international community and cause huge anti-American campaigns, as we are witnessing with the UN in our current Iraq invasion fiasco. President Bush, justifying the war on the principles of halting Iraq's development or use of existing weapons of mass destruction (though his sources were heavily criticized and many found untrue), invaded and took the country under US control without popular UN support and a small coalition of inactive parties. Now, having proven a false lead; no weapons of mass destruction have been found to date, and suddenly President Bush's mission in the country has become one of humanitarian interest. The international community sees these sorts of fallacies and fabrications of hindsight and this is what motivates much of the animosity towards the United States for its policies abroad. "*We consider that all military action not endorsed by the international community...was both illegitimate and illegal, is illegitimate and illegal. And we have not changed our view on that*"⁵ said French President Jacques Chirac in a recent summit meeting where the future of international intervention in Iraq was discussed.

In order to ensure a world of relative security and freedom for both our citizens and foreign peoples we also must care for, there needs to be

unilateral cooperation on issues on the scale of the Iraqi invasion. If the United States refuses to work through a system it has helped to set up and endorse through the years, and acts against the UN's better judgment, tensions will form and people of particularly disposed nations will see our solitude and take advantage of it. We need to pull our resources with our foreign allies in the UN and work diplomatically through problems to find solutions suitable for the general community and with a broad consensus, so as not to present terrorist agents with a solitary target, or worse a reason to engage in hostilities against us.

To strike out, independent of international consensus and act against the general desires of the international community puts us at risk of losing important allies in this time of terror and debate on the issue causing outbreaks. We also must be wary not to limit our own freedoms for the cause of increasing our security. The United States government is based on the principles outlined in the Declaration of Independence in 1776, "*That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving the just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it.*"⁶ and the principles of for and by the people. To subject to laws limiting the principles of democracy would be political suicide for our system of freedom, as we know it; just as to exempt ourselves from the just laws of the international community we are a part of would be, *is becoming*, a large-scale problem of trust and peaceful discourse between us and our neighbors, our allies.

In this, our ever expanding globe of political and social connections and debates, we the American people need to both acknowledge our past for the lessons it has taught us and develop from these lessons new and innovative approaches to the problem of balancing the freedoms we enjoy here and the security we all so desperately crave the world over. We as a people must realize that to subject ourselves to foolish laws limiting our rights in a time of crisis to an authoritarian degree; this democracy calls for a level of knowledge of issues and a high level of participation and discussion to create general consensuses among the people;

not a single source. Expanding this to a wider scale, we must learn to cope with dissent from our neighbors and see it not as useless criticism, but as valuable advice to help us make better decisions with the majority of the people behind us and do the maximum good in our unilateral actions.

¹ US Constitution; Bill of Rights; Amendment One

² US Constitution; Bill of Rights; Amendment Six

³ USA Patriot Act; HR 3162; Title II, Sec. 201

⁴ USA Patriot Act; HR 3162; Title II, Sec. 216

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<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2959602.stm>

⁶ Declaration of Independence of the Thirteen Colonies in Congress, July 4, 1776



Resolutions accepted at the 19th Annual Peace and Justice Conference

I. President Bush's Nuclear Weapon's Policy

Whereas the single nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and on Nagasaki have shown that nuclear weapons can destroy civilizations and have the potential to wipe our humanity, and

Whereas the World Court has declared that the use or the treat of use of nuclear weapons violated international law, and

Whereas Pres. Bush wants to restore the U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons, and

Whereas he would make the use of nuclear weapons part of his foreign policy, and

Whereas the U.S.A. would develop new nuclear weapons, and

Whereas this policy would remove the main bulwark against the spread of nuclear weapons:

Therefore **be it resolved that**, Maryland United for Peace and Justice, Inc. and the participants of the 19th Annual Maryland Peace and Justice Conference reject Pres. Bush's new policy. We call for the U.S.A. to continue a policy that has been in effect for nearly half a century:

- A moratorium on any new weapons
- A repeal of any laws allowing research on new nuclear weapons
- A ban on underground tests

and low yield weapons

- Support for nuclear non-proliferation
- Support for a comprehensive test ban.

And furthermore be it resolved that, MUPJ will distribute this resolution to relevant elected officials and media outlets.

II. Call for Protection of Constitutional Rights and Repeal of the PATRIOT Acts

Be it resolved that Maryland United for Peace and Justice, Inc. and its friends and supporters call upon local law enforcement officials to decline to participate in or cooperate with any activities conducted by federal law enforcement agencies such as surveillance, investigation, arrest, detention, which these local law enforcement officials know or reasonably should know are directed against constitutional protected conduct.

Be it also resolved that we urge all Congressional representatives to decline to follow the lead of the Bush Administration to "renew" the USA PATRIOT Act by repealing the existing automatic sunset provisions of Title II of the Act set for December 31, 2005, and we also urge our representative to ensure that Congress approves the joint resolution to inactivate Title III of the USA PATRIOT Act scheduled for October 1, 2005.

And be it further resolved that we call on our Congressional representatives not to enact or approve any portion of the proposed Domestic Security Enhancement Act (PATRIOT Act II) either in whole or in part, whenever and however the Bush Administration submits it to Congress.

And be it further resolved that we call upon our Congressional representatives to seek and act upon all opportunities for Congressional hearing, review, and oversight of federal agency and law enforcement activity of all types conducted under the USA PATRIOT Act, and to ensure that the American people are fully informed of these activities.

III. Inhumane treatment of "war on terror" detainees

Be it resolved that Maryland United for Peace and Justice write the proper Congressional Committees to request an investigation of the manner in detainees in the "war on terror" are being incarcerated, in the U.S.A., Guantanamo Bay and other places. We request an investigation into the procedure of

sending prisoners to other countries to be interrogated without our oversight.

Be it further resolved that MUPJ in these letters express our displeasure of American troops and interrogators' treatment of other human beings in such a deplorable manner.

IV. Violations of Human Rights in Israel/Palestine

Be it resolved that Maryland United for Peace and Justice, Inc. and the participants of the 19th Annual Maryland Peace and Justice Conference condemn the violations of human rights in Israel/Palestine, including extra-judicial assassinations, home demolitions, and other collective punishments, suicide bombings, and the imprisoning "Security" wall.

Be it further it resolved that we call for an end to the use of our U.S.A. tax dollars to fund illegal Israeli military operations.

And be it further resolved that we call for Israel to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and to open its doors to upcoming United Nations inspections.

And be it further resolved that, MUPJ will distribute this resolution to relevant elected officials and media outlets.

V. Human Rights Violations in Iraq

Be it resolved that Maryland United for Peace and Justice, Inc. and the participants of the 19th Annual Maryland Peace and Justice Conference condemn the human rights violations of Iraqi prisoners taking place in the Abu Ghraib prison. While we recognize that it is a small minority of American troops who are participating in this torture and humiliation, nonetheless, those taking part need to be tried for their crimes.

Also be it resolved, that we call for an open Congressional inquiry into the causes of these incidents, who ordered them, and full prosecution of all of the commanding officers involved.



2004 Legislative Wrap-up

The MD League of Conservation Voters kept the environment front & center for lawmakers despite a looming budget crisis & other legislative battles. Check www.mdlcv.org for the 2003-2004 Environmental Scorecard due out later this summer. Here are some highlights (and a few lowlights) of the 2004 legislative session:

Energy Efficiency Veto Override

The General Assembly voted to override Governor Ehrlich's veto of the

MD Energy Efficiency Standards Act which sets minimum energy efficiency standards for nine products sold within Maryland, selected because they use significant amounts of energy & are now commercially available. The measure will save Maryland consumers an estimated \$600 million over the next 20 years while reducing air pollution and energy demand.

Clean Energy

Clean Energy took a huge step forward with the passage of legislation that requires Maryland to derive 7.5 percent of its electricity from clean, renewable power, like solar and wind power within the next decade. (SB 869/HB 1308)

Chesapeake and Coastal Bays Restoration Fund

Dubbed the “flush tax” or “flush fee,” this legislation establishes a \$2.50 monthly surcharge on public sewer users & a \$30 annual charge to septic users dedicated millions of dollars for sewage treatment plant & septic system upgrades. (SB 320) was introduced by the Governor to strengthen the nitrogen standards plants must reach & to include septic, thereby reducing the amount of nitrogen pollution entering the Chesapeake & Coastal Bays & their tributaries.

Budget

There was less funding to enforce environmental laws than was appropriated for last year. The tough fiscal situation facing the General Assembly reduced the funding even further. Program Open Space again took a major cut, with the governor’s budget.

Greening the Budget

At the beginning of session the Maryland LCV Education Fund & allied organizations released a “Greening the Budget” report highlighting fiscal ideas to close the budget gap & help the environment. Many ideas offered in the report were introduced & debated but were ultimately defeated. Look for those ideas to be discussed again next year.

Land Conservation

As previously mentioned, Program Open Space was reduced in Governor’s Ehrlich’s budget, also cutting funding for Program Open Space by a staggering 75%, diverting over \$115 million in dedicated funds away from critical land conservation efforts. Additionally, no action was taken on House Bill 880 which would have required the state to repay any funding that has been

diverted from Program Open Space.

Big thanks to you for taking action to save Program Open Space. Over 24,000 letter and emails were sent to key decision makers through our online action network opposing the huge cuts to our critical land conservation programs. With your help the MD LCV & other conservation groups will be continuing to fight for full funding for land conservation.

Stopped Subsidies for Air Polluters

The MD LCV & other groups opposed an agency bill that would have returned penalty monies back to large air polluters. Environmental groups negotiated with the Department of Environment but the agency ultimately pushed for the original bill. Fortunately, the House Environmental Matters Comm. defeated the measure. (HB1441)

Critical Areas Protections

The General Assembly passed legislation intended to bolster the critical areas protections for our shorelines. Current penalties were not strong enough & recent court cases have chipped away at the critical area protections. (HB 1009/SB 694)

Office of Smart Growth

The House Environmental Matters rejected legislation from the Ehrlich Administration to abolish the Office of Smart Growth & roll back the state’s commitment to smart growth. The functions of this office are critical to working efficiently and effectively on the often-complex issues of smart growth. (HB491)

Energy Savings Investment Program

The Senate passed this bill to re-establish an important energy efficiency program that would have saved consumers millions of dollars in energy costs, reduced pollution, & increased energy reliability. Unfortunately, the House Economic Matters Committee killed the bill in the final week of the session. (SB 654)

Clean Cars

This bill would strengthen MD’s auto emissions standards to require a small percentage of new cars sold in the state meet more effective emissions standards starting in the 2010 model year. The measure was defeated by the House Environmental Matters Committee & withdrawn in the senate. (HB 314/SB 563)

Power Plant Pollution

Maryland’s 10 dirtiest power plants are responsible for the vast majority of the

state’s power plant pollution. A loophole in clean air laws allowed these plants to pollute at extreme levels – five times the standard that newer plants must meet. House Bill 1172 would have required power plant operators to install modern pollution controls to diminish the effects of their pollutants. This bill also was defeated by the House Economic Matters Committee. (HB 1172)

Transportation

Language included in the budget passed by the General Assembly increased the amount of money that can be spent on the ICC through highly questionable GARVEE bonds. These bonds rob future federal dollars from other transportation projects & are forced, instead, to put the money toward payment of the amount of the bond & its interest. Stand alone bills to stop the ICC were defeated.

On the positive side, a bill to keep transit affordable & maintain the farebox recovery current percentages passed. In addition, the Administration moved closer to committing to funding the Baltimore Regional Rail Plan. Smart Growth advocates joined forces with labor unions to stop the Public Private Partnership bill which would have allowed local zoning & environmental laws to be bypassed for certain transportation projects.

Other Important Bills

The legislature passed a revolutionary & environmentally important bill that takes the first steps towards recycling computers in Maryland. Less than 4% of 84 million tons of computers in our state are properly & safely disposed. Computers are a mega-toxic waste problem, threatening human health due to lead, cadmium, plastics, & other materials linked to diseases of all types.

The General Assembly made strides towards promoting green buildings, labeling & disposal requirements for products containing mercury, as well as increasing penalties & enforcement for wetlands & water pollution violations. Lawmakers also bolstered laws to promote Brownfield clean up & redevelopment. No movement was made on legislation to protect MD’s forests.

Thanks to the MD League of Conservation Voters, which supplied this wrap-up to us. Visit www.mdldcv.org, or contact:

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PIT CLEANUP DONE, DETRICK PROJECT TO TACKLE NEW SITES

*by Elizabeth Williamson
Washington Post Staff Writer
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(modified)*

The Army's Fort Detrick is entering a new phase in an effort to clean up environmental hazards it created in Frederick County during years of biological weapons research. The estimated \$50 million cleanup & restoration, now three years old is scheduled to finish in 2008 & is the biggest & most expensive such project in Fort Detrick's history.

This month, Fort Detrick finished a three-year cleanup of several waste pits. Officials will soon choose a contractor to assess & contain contamination at 10 other sites, including a former ammunition-storage area & an old painting shed, in Area B.

The cleanup of the 10 sites will prevent potential contaminants from migrating & ensure that groundwater contamination, first detected in 1992, does not exceed federal limits, Detrick officials said. The project follows a cleanup that began in 2001, when Detrick began excavating a series of waste pits whose contents, including vials of nonvirulent anthrax, surprised the Army & unnerved the community.

"This was a very complicated [&] technically challenging cleanup," said Col. John Ball, Fort Detrick garrison commander. He said the cleanup is also "a cooperation & working-together story."

Area B used by Fort Detrick as a testing, storage and landfill area during the Cold War. For two decades beginning in the late 1940s, Detrick led the United States' secret venture into biological & chemical weapons production, its scientists brewing and testing such substances as anthrax and was the Vietnam War-era defoliant Agent Orange.

Until the weapons program was dismantled in 1969 by President Richard M. Nixon, few knew what Detrick was doing, & fewer still wondered about the program's impact on the environment.

In 1992, two carcinogenic agents -- trichloroethylene, or TCE, and tetrachloroethylene, or PCE -- turned up in residential & Army water wells near Area B. After years of testing and investigation, the Army found a monitoring well near a series of defunct

waste pits that was so polluted with PCE, a degreasing compound, that investigators could smell it. The pits, in a section called B-11, had been used heavily in Detrick's bioweapons work.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers & a private contractor began emptying the pits in 4/01. They expected to find industrial solvents & refuse. Instead, they uncovered a trove of biological waste.

For three years, workers wearing respirators & digging inside a sealed tent removed 2,005 tons of hazardous waste & contaminated soil. They found more than 100 vials of nonvirulent anthrax & other disease pathogens, drums of chemicals, gas cylinders, even four dead laboratory rats floating in formaldehyde-filled jars. The cleanup budget soared from \$5 million to \$26 million.

Scoop by scoop, soil from the site was cleaned and sanitized with bleach, then packed into room-sized containers for travel to a licensed hazardous waste dump in Texas.

Through a community advisory group, media visits & contacts with the Frederick Mayor & other local leaders, Detrick officials updated the community on the progress.

Lt. Col. Donald Archibald, Detrick's director of safety, environment, and integrated planning said that when that work is finished, environmental workers will test wells near Area B, to ensure that groundwater contamination -- which dropped significantly after the recent three-year cleanup -- poses no health risk. Although the Army's cleanup will meet federal standards, the water flowing below Area B probably will never be completely free of the toxins.

"There are no absolutes in our business," Archibald said.

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