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**Note: All opinions expressed in this publication are those solely of their authors and do not necessarily reflect those of MUPJ and/or its members...as usual! Many thanks to Carol Solomon, Ron Solomon, and Paulette Hammond for help with this issue.**



**HIGHLIGHTS OF COORDINATING BODY MEETING**

The March meeting of the C.B. took place at Christ the King Episcopal Church in Woodlawn, on Sunday, March 12, 2006.

**Present were:** Victor Landa, Chuck Frascati, Dan Frasier, Mary and Phil Chenoweth, Nil Deo, Paulette Hammond, Carol Solomon, Bernie Brown, Ron Solomon, Ruth Bronstein  
**The Minutes of previous meeting, 12-17-05** were reviewed and approved as presented.

**Financial Reports**

**MUPJ, Inc.:** Chuck report that we have \$1300. Recent expenditures were: \$25 to GreenPeace, \$25 to Center for Health and Environmental Justice, \$25 to Children's Defense Fund, \$25 to Earth Action, \$45 for Disarmament Times, \$145 for website renewal.

**Institute for Positive Action:** still owes the Solomon's \$1000 loan plus some unpaid bills, Carol will get the amount later. The conference continues to be mostly self-sufficient; Adelphi Friends approved the \$500 grant. There was a discussion of emailing the calendar to reduce copying and postage. Decision deferred.

**Membership Committee Report**

We sent out membership forms with cosponsor letter, got about 5-6 new members in return. These people will be counted as a 15-month member (renewal 'til July 2007.)

**Caucus Reports**

**Baltimore:** demonstration in D.C., March to the Pentagon, 9 am, March 20 (Monday) Ron and Carol will be there and bring the puppets. Pledge of Resistance visited Cardin's and Ruppertsberger's offices; to ask them to sign on to the McGovern Bill (no commitments were made).

**Anne Arundel County Friends** are having a speaker on Afghanistan.

**P. G. County caucus** visited Steny Hoyer. Mt. Rainier Neighbors United for Peace and Justice are having panel discussions.

**MoCo Peace Action** is meeting with legislators: There will be a Senatorial Candidates Forum in LeisureWorld.

**Committee Reports**

**Benjamin Peace Awards 2006:** deadline was March 1st. We received 22 essays, 12

poems, 10 artworks, and 1 CD. Ruth's group will read the essays and shorten the list. Peter Benjamin will be at the conference to give the prizes; judges are picked by Carol, most from past years. They have sent an \$800 dollar check. We received entries on all three topics.

**Peace Conference 2006:** Dedication in brochure: Peter Molan (his wife will send us a short bio), note of Margie Smith's passing

See following article, and brochure (including registration form) on our website at: [www.mupj.org/pdfdocs/brochure2006-04-29.pdf](http://www.mupj.org/pdfdocs/brochure2006-04-29.pdf)

**Next meeting:**

Date: Sat., April 29, 2006 (Conference)

Time: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Place: 1201 Caton Avenue, Baltimore



**UPDATE ON THE 21ST ANNUAL MARYLAND PEACE CONFERENCE**

A Potluck dinner will be held on **Friday, April 28**, at Christ the King Episcopal Church, 1930 Brookdale Road, Baltimore

6:30 - 7:30 pm **Pot Luck Dinner, home hospitality arrangements**

7:30 - 9 pm **Informal Networking & Preparation**

**CONFERENCE:**

**Saturday, April 29** at Seton Keough High School, 1201 Caton Avenue, Baltimore

7:45 - 8:45 am **Registration (on site okay)**

Table set up, bagels, cream cheese, drinks

8:45 - 9 am: **Welcome**

9 - 9:45 am: **Opening Panel: Creating a Culture of Peace**

- Anti-war: Ray McGovern, Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity
- Developing and Negotiating Policies of Justice and Peace: Rev. Mac Legerton, Center for Community Action, North Carolina
- Counter-recruiting: Pat Elder, National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth
- Brother Michael Mohammed, Executive Director, Abundant Life Clinic, Committee on Reorganizing to Promote Inclusiveness
- Paradigm shifting: Bill Jenkins, Washington Buddhist Peace Fellowship
- Strategies for paradigm shifting to create a culture of peace: Dr. Francine Blume, Director of Experiential Education, Career Center, American University

9:45 - 10:30 am: **Audience Participation:** Questions and Answers

10:40 - 11:40 am: **WORKSHOPS I**

11:40 - 12:45 pm: **Vegetarian LUNCH provided by Whole Foods Market, Mt. Washington**

12:50 - 1:20 pm: **12<sup>th</sup> Annual Fred Benjamin High School Peace Awards Ceremony**

1:30 - 2:30 pm: **WORKSHOPS II**

2:40 - 3:40 pm: **WORKSHOPS III / ACTION PLANNING SESSIONS**

3:45 - 4:30 pm: **Plenary and MUPJ meeting**

- *Suggestions for next year*
- *Election of officers*
- *Resolutions to be adopted*

WORKSHOPS to be presented (once or twice each):

- Death Penalty: Sarah Craft, Equal Justice, Quixote Center and Jane Henderson, MD CASE
- Non-violence: Nancy Fayer, Nonviolence Training, Peace and Justice Committee of the Presbytery of Baltimore
- Counter-recruiting: John Judge, Committee for High School Options and Information on Careers, Education and Self-Improvement
- Aparigraha, A New Economic Paradigm: Eszter Szabo, Global Coalition for Peace
- Developing and Negotiating Policies of Justice and Peace: Rev. Mac Legerton
- The War on Terrorism 2006—Going to the Next Level: Chuck Michaels, Pax Christi
- Anti-war: Ray McGovern
- Women's, Human and Civil Rights: Lea Gilmore, MD Advisory Board, US Commission on Civil Rights
- Global Warming: Josh Tulkin, Chesapeake Climate Action Network
- The Department of Peace Campaign and Grassroots Activism: Ted Nunn, Peace Alliance
- Moving Maryland Towards a Reliable Voting System: Kevin Zeese, True Vote Maryland
- National Network of Spiritual Progressives: Nichola Torbit, TIKKUN Community

**Action Planning Sessions**

- Developing and Negotiating Policies of Justice and Peace, Rev. Mac Legerton
- Patriot Acts, Chuck Michaels
- Anti-war activities, Ray McGovern
- Statewide Counter-recruiting Planning
- Statewide Anti- Death Penalty Planning



**MUPJ CONFERENCE COSPONSORS**

**Thank you to the following (at press time):**

- Adelphi Friends Meeting
- Baltimore County Green Party
- Baltimore Ethical Society
- Baltimore National Organization for Women
- Benjamin Peace Foundation
- Committee for High School Options and Information on Careers, Education and Self-Improvement
- Committee on the Environment, Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
- DC Anti-War Network
- Forest Rivers Designs/WLP Consulting
- Generations for Peace and Democracy
- Global Coalition for Peace
- Global Consciousness Press, Inc.
- Grandmothers for Peace--Maryland
- Holistic Education
- Howard County Coalition for Peace and Justice
- Little Friends for Peace
- MD Chapter, National Association of Social Workers
- MD Conservation Council

MD Interfaith Coalition for the Environment  
 MD Universal Health Care Action Network  
 Murphy Initiative for Justice and Peace  
 Pax Christi Metro DC  
 Peace Action, Montgomery County  
 Peace and Social Justice Committee of  
 Bethesda Friends Meeting.  
 Peace Committee, Sandy Spring Religious  
 Society of Friends  
 Prince George's County Peace and Justice  
 Coalition  
 Talbot County Peace Education and  
 Community Effort  
 Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockville  
 Washington Area Clinic Defense Task Force  
 Women's International League for Peace &  
 Freedom—Baltimore Branch  
**We also thank the following for their  
 generous support:**  
 Arthur Milholland, MD & Luann Mostello, MD  
 William G. Wilson  
 Whole Foods Market, Mt. Washington  
 Giant Food Inc.  
 Panera Bread



**CHOMSKY: 'THERE IS NO WAR ON  
 TERROR'**

By Geov Parrish, AlterNet, 1-14-06

For over 40 years, MIT professor Noam Chomsky has been one of the world's leading intellectual critics of U.S. foreign policy. Today, with America's latest imperial adventure in trouble both politically and militarily, Chomsky - who turned 77 last month - vows not to slow down "as long as I'm ambulatory." I spoke with him by phone, on Dec. 9 and again on Dec. 20, from his office in Cambridge.

**Geov Parrish: Is George Bush in political trouble? And if so, why?**

Noam Chomsky: George Bush would be in severe political trouble if there were an opposition political party in the country. Just about every day, they're shooting themselves in the foot. The striking fact about contemporary American politics is that the Democrats are making almost no gain from this. The only gain that they're getting is that the Republicans are losing support. Now, again, an opposition party would be making hay, but the Democrats are so close in policy to the Republicans that they can't do anything about it. When they try to say something about Iraq, George Bush turns back to them, or Karl Rove turns back to them, and says, "How can you criticize it? You all voted for it." And, yeah, they're basically correct.

**How could the Democrats distinguish themselves at this point, given that they've already played into that trap?**

Democrats read the polls way more than I do, their leadership. They know what public opinion is. They could take a stand that's supported by public opinion instead of opposed to it. Then they could become an opposition party, and a majority party. But then they're going to have to change their position on just about everything.

Take, for example, take your pick, say for example health care. Probably the major domestic problem for people. A large majority of the population is in favor of a national health care system of some kind. And that's been true for a long time. But whenever that comes up - it's occasionally mentioned in the press - it's called politically impossible, or

"lacking political support," which is a way of saying that the insurance industry doesn't want it, the pharmaceutical corporations don't want it, and so on. Okay, so a large majority of the population wants it, but who cares about them? Well, Democrats are the same. Clinton came up with some cockamamie scheme which was so complicated you couldn't figure it out, and it collapsed.

Kerry in the last election, the last debate in the election, October 28 I think it was, the debate was supposed to be on domestic issues. And the *New York Times* had a good report of it the next day. They pointed out, correctly, that Kerry never brought up any possible government involvement in the health system because it "lacks political support." It's their way of saying, and Kerry's way of understanding, that political support means support from the wealthy and the powerful. Well, that doesn't have to be what the Democrats are. You can imagine an opposition party that's based on popular interests and concerns.

**Given the lack of substantive differences in the foreign policies of the two parties -**

Or domestic.

**Yeah, or domestic. But I'm setting this up for a foreign policy question. Are we being set up for a permanent state of war?**

I don't think so. Nobody really wants war. What you want is victory. Take, say, Central America. In the 1980s, Central America was out of control. The U.S. had to fight a vicious terrorist war in Nicaragua, had to support murderous terrorist states in El Salvador and Guatemala, and Honduras, but that was a state of war. All right, the terrorists succeeded. Now, it's more or less peaceful. So you don't even read about Central America any more because it's peaceful. I mean, suffering and miserable, and so on, but peaceful. So it's not a state of war. And the same elsewhere. If you can keep people under control, it's not a state of war.

Take, say, Russia and Eastern Europe. Russia ran Eastern Europe for half a century, almost, with very little military intervention. Occasionally they'd have to invade East Berlin, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, but most of the time it was peaceful. And they thought everything was fine - run by local security forces, local political figures, no big problem. That's not a permanent state of war.

**In the War on Terror, however, how does one define victory against a tactic? You can't ever get there.**

There are metrics. For example, you can measure the number of terrorist attacks. Well, that's gone up sharply under the Bush administration, very sharply after the Iraq war. As expected - it was anticipated by intelligence agencies that the Iraq war would increase the likelihood of terror. And the post-invasion estimates by the CIA, National Intelligence Council, and other intelligence agencies are exactly that. Yes, it increased terror. In fact, it even created something which never existed - new training ground for terrorists, much more sophisticated than Afghanistan, where they were training professional terrorists to go out to their own countries. So, yeah, that's a way to deal with the War on Terror, namely, increase terror. And the obvious metric, the number of

terrorist attacks, yeah, they've succeeded in increasing terror.

The fact of the matter is that there is no War on Terror. It's a minor consideration. So invading Iraq and taking control of the world's energy resources was way more important than the threat of terror. And the same with other things. Take, say, nuclear terror. The American intelligence systems estimate that the likelihood of a "dirty bomb," a dirty nuclear bomb attack in the United States in the next ten years, is about 50 percent. Well, that's pretty high. Are they doing anything about it? Yeah. They're increasing the threat, by increasing nuclear proliferation, by compelling potential adversaries to take very dangerous measures to try to counter rising American threats.

This is even sometimes discussed. You can find it in the strategic analysis literature. Take, say, the invasion of Iraq again. We're told that they didn't find weapons of mass destruction. Well, that's not exactly correct. They did find weapons of mass destruction, namely, the ones that had been sent to Saddam by the United States, Britain, and others through the 1980s. A lot of them were still there. They were under control of U.N. inspectors and were being dismantled. But many were still there. When the U.S. invaded, the inspectors were kicked out, and Rumsfeld and Cheney didn't tell their troops to guard the sites. So the sites were left unguarded, and they were systematically looted. The U.N. inspectors did continue their work by satellite and they identified over 100 sites that were systematically looted, like, not somebody going in and stealing something, but carefully, systematically looted.

**By people who knew what they were doing.**

Yeah, people who knew what they were doing. It meant that they were taking the high-precision equipment that you can use for nuclear weapons and missiles, dangerous biotoxins, all sorts of stuff. Nobody knows where it went, but, you know, you hate to think about it. Well, that's increasing the threat of terror, substantially. Russia has sharply increased its offensive military capacity in reaction to Bush's programs, which is dangerous enough, but also to try to counter overwhelming U.S. dominance in offensive capacity. They are compelled to ship nuclear missiles all over their vast territory. And mostly unguarded. And the CIA is perfectly well aware that Chechen rebels have been casing Russian railway installations, probably with a plan to try to steal nuclear missiles. Well, yeah, that could be an apocalypse. But they're increasing that threat. Because they don't care that much.

Same with global warming. They're not stupid. They know that they're increasing the threat of a serious catastrophe. But that's a generation or two away. Who cares? There's basically two principles that define the Bush administration policies: stuff the pockets of your rich friends with dollars, and increase your control over the world. Almost everything follows from that. If you happen to blow up the world, well, you know, it's somebody else's business. Stuff happens, as Rumsfeld said.

**You've been tracking US wars of foreign aggression since Vietnam, and now we're in Iraq. Do you think there's any chance in the aftermath, given the fiasco that it's been, that there will be any fundamental changes in US foreign policy? And if so, how would it come about?**

Well, there are significant changes. Compare, for example, the war in Iraq with 40 years ago, the war in Vietnam. There's quite significant change. Opposition to the war in Iraq is far greater than the much worse war in Vietnam. Iraq is the first war I think in the history of European imperialism, including the U.S., where there was massive protest before the war was officially launched. In Vietnam it took four or five years before there was any visible protest. Protest was so slight that nobody even remembers or knows that Kennedy attacked South Vietnam in 1962. It was a serious attack. It was years later before protest finally developed.

**What do you think should be done in Iraq?**

Well, the first thing that should be done in Iraq is for us to be serious about what's going on. There is almost no serious discussion, I'm sorry to say, across the spectrum, of the question of withdrawal. The reason for that is that we are under a rigid doctrine in the West, a religious fanaticism, that says we must believe that the United States would have invaded Iraq even if its main product was lettuce and pickles, and the oil resources of the world were in Central Africa. Anyone who doesn't believe that is condemned as a conspiracy theorist, a Marxist, a madman, or something. Well, you know, if you have three gray cells functioning, you know that that's perfect nonsense. The U.S. invaded Iraq because it has enormous oil resources, mostly untapped, and it's right in the heart of the world's energy system. Which means that if the U.S. manages to control Iraq, it extends enormously its strategic power, what Zbigniew Brzezinski calls its critical leverage over Europe and Asia. Yeah, that's a major reason for controlling the oil resources - it gives you strategic power. Even if you're on renewable energy you want to do that. So that's the reason for invading Iraq, the fundamental reason.

Now let's talk about withdrawal. Take any day's newspapers or journals and so on. They start by saying the United States aims to bring about a sovereign democratic independent Iraq. I mean, is that even a remote possibility? Just consider what the policies would be likely to be of an independent sovereign Iraq. If it's more or less democratic, it'll have a Shiite majority. They will naturally want to improve their linkages with Iran, Shiite Iran. Most of the clerics come from Iran. The Badr Brigade, which basically runs the South, is trained in Iran. They have close and sensible economic relationships which are going to increase. So you get an Iraqi/Iran loose alliance. Furthermore, right across the border in Saudi Arabia, there's a Shiite population which has been bitterly oppressed by the U.S.-backed fundamentalist tyranny. And any moves toward independence in Iraq are surely going to stimulate them, it's already happening. That happens to be where most of Saudi Arabian oil is. Okay, so you can just imagine the ultimate nightmare in Washington: a loose Shiite alliance controlling most of the world's oil, independent of Washington and probably turning toward the East, where China and others are eager to make relationships with them, and are already doing it. Is that even conceivable? The U.S. would go to nuclear war before allowing that, as things now stand.

Now, any discussion of withdrawal from Iraq has to at least enter the real world, meaning, at least consider these issues. Just take a look at the commentary in the United States, across the spectrum. How much discussion do you see of these issues? Well, you know, approximately zero, which means that the discussion is just on Mars. And there's a reason for it. We're not allowed to concede that our leaders have rational imperial interests. We have to assume that they're good-hearted and bumbling. But they're not. They're perfectly sensible. They can understand what anybody else can understand. So the first step in talk about withdrawal is: consider the actual situation, not some dream situation, where Bush is pursuing a vision of democracy or something. If we can enter the real world we can begin to talk about it. And yes, I think there should be withdrawal, but we have to talk about it in the real world and know what the White House is thinking. They're not willing to live in a dream world.

**How will the US deal with China as a superpower?**

What's the problem with China?  
**Well, competing for resources, for example.**

Well, if you believe in markets, the way we're supposed to, compete for resources through the market. So what's the problem? The problem is that the United States doesn't like the way it's coming out. Well, too bad. Who has ever liked the way it's coming out when you're not winning? China isn't any kind of threat. We can make it a threat. If you increase the military threats against China, then they will respond. And they're already doing it. They'll respond by building up their military forces, their offensive military capacity, and that's a threat. So, yeah, we can force them to become a threat.

**What's your biggest regret over 40 years of political activism? What would you have done differently?**

I would have done more. Because the problems are so serious and overwhelming that it's disgraceful not to do more about it.

**What gives you hope?**  
What gives me hope actually is public opinion. Public opinion in the United States is very well studied, we know a lot about it. It's rarely reported, but we know about it. And it turns out that, you know, I'm pretty much in the mainstream of public opinion on most issues. I'm not on some, not on gun control or creationism or something like that, but on most crucial issues, the ones we've been talking about, I find myself pretty much at the critical end, but within the spectrum of public opinion. I think that's a very hopeful sign. I think the United States ought to be an organizer's paradise.

**What sort of organizing should be done to try and change some of these policies?**

Well, there's a basis for democratic change. Take what happened in Bolivia a couple of days ago. How did a leftist indigenous leader get elected? Was it showing up at the polls once every four years and saying, "Vote for me!?" No. It's because there are mass popular organizations which are working all the time on everything from blocking privatization of water to resources to local issues and so on, and they're actually

participatory organizations. Well, that's democracy. We're a long way from it. And that's one task of organizing.

*Geov Parrish is a Seattle-based columnist and reporter for Seattle Weekly, In These Times and Eat the State! He writes the "Straight Shot" column for WorkingForChange. Noam Chomsky is an acclaimed linguist and political theorist. Among his latest books are Hegemony or Survival from Metropolitan Books and Profit Over People: Neoliberalism and the Global Order published by Seven Stories Press.*



**POLITICS OF HYPOCRISY**

by Meir Hajja, The Raging Liberal  
<http://www.ragingliberal.org>

As the world is coming to learn, the mantra of "fighting terror" does not necessarily mean avoiding participation in it. While the Bush Administration has convinced much of the American public that they are the antithesis of terror, a wanted terrorist is now comfortably resting under the bosom of the U.S., even with a sovereign democratic nation requesting his extradition. Fugitive terrorist, Luis Posada Carriles, mastermind of the October 6, 1976 Caracas-departed Cuban Airlines bombing that killed 73 now sits on U.S. soil, despite numerous legal requests by the Venezuelan government for his extradition. Thus far the White House has denied each of Venezuela's political and legal appeals to return Posada Carriles to Caracas to face trial.

One would think that the U.S. would welcome this extradition with fervor; after all, Posada Carriles is wanted for international terrorism and Venezuela has been trying to nab him since he escaped from a national prison in 1985. Unfortunately, this case isn't so simple. Posada Carriles has a long history of friendly ties with the U.S., most notably with the CIA. In the mid-60s Posada Carriles was a CIA operative in Venezuela while he simultaneously worked for the Venezuelan Secret Service. Throughout his initial CIA tenure he held clandestine positions in Guatemala, El Salvador, Chile and Argentina, all the while working as a U.S. operative.

Declassified CIA documents released by the Washington-based, National Security Archive, have directly linked Posada Carriles to the airliner bombing. In these documents it is written that Posada Carriles is overheard by a CIA source as stating, "We are going to hit a Cuban airplane." Posada Carriles' made this statement only a few short months before the Cuban Airliner was hit. Despite this forewarning given to the CIA there is also no indication within these declassified files that the U.S. made any attempts to alert Cuban officials of the threat of an attack to one of their civilian airliners. Posada Carriles was a known Castro opponent and many officials in the U.S. dismissed his attack on the Cuban civilian airliner as an act of political resistance rather than an act of terrorism.

Upon his escape from a Venezuelan prison Posada Carriles immediately found refuge and work as a CIA operative in El Salvador, helping channel money and arms to the U.S. backed Nicaraguan Contras, a pet project of the Reagan Administration that led to the Iran-Contra scandal. During the late 1990s Posada Carriles became troubled with the growth of the Cuban tourism commerce and in an effort to damage the industry he began organizing terror attacks on Cuban tourist sites, one which resulted in the death of an Italian tourist. In The New York Times

Posada Carriles boasted of his involvement in the attacks and told the reporter that he "slept like a baby" regardless of the damages and death that these attacks caused.

Despite all of this, the U.S. Department of Justice has repeatedly refused to arrest Posada Carriles on charges of terrorism, nor will they extradite him to Venezuela for arraignment. Instead the U.S. has directed the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) to detain Posada Carriles for entering the country illegally, allegedly by sneaking off of a fishing boat. Posada Carriles has requested that he be granted political asylum in the U.S. and for the time being his request is being granted.

An alarming precedent is being set here. While the U.S. and Venezuela's Hugo Chavez are not on ideal terms, Venezuela has made clear their commitment to fighting the war on terror and extraditing Posada Carriles to Venezuela is the only logical, ethical, and moral action for the U.S. to pursue here. Eradicating terrorism can not be achieved through a policy of political opportunism and aggression; it must be done through a system of consistency and universal ideals in cooperation with governments everywhere.

The case of Posada Carriles highlights an important difference between the terror that we justify war with, and the terror that is either tacitly or directly approved of by Washington. The U.S. stance on Posada Carriles is a blatant form of hypocrisy and arrogance that makes fighting all terror that much more difficult to succeed at. To continually surrender the moral high ground because the U.S. approves of some flavors of terror and declares war on others leads us not to victory, but to perpetual war with no clear objective, to a confused and divided world approach to terror issues, and to an alienation of potential allies.

There are means by which we can significantly reduce the incidence of terror that afflicts us, but somehow these strategies continually evade our policies. Terrorism must be defeated by simply avoiding any sort of participation in it. The terrorist ideology cannot be crushed through the show of military might or the favorite U.S. quick fix, pseudo-democracy. What is baffling is that many policymakers remain deaf to this argument. While the response, "fighting terror" seems to be the Bush Administration's answer to every question, the position taken in the case of Posada Carriles is undermining the U.S. terror policy in a most hypocritical manner.

*Meir Haija writes for The Raging Liberal on issues related to policy and government*



### **THIS ISN'T ISLAM VERSUS SECULARISM**

*By Robert Fisk, 04 February 2006*  
<http://news.independent.co.uk/world/fisk/article343111.ece>

So now it's cartoons of the Prophet Mohamed with a bomb-shaped turban. Ambassadors are withdrawn from Denmark, Gulf nations clear their shelves of Danish produce, Gaza gunmen threaten the European Union. In Denmark, Fleming Rose, the "culture" editor of the pip-squeak newspaper which published these silly cartoons - last September, for heaven's sake - announces that we are witnessing a "clash of civilizations" between secular Western

democracies and Islamic societies. This does prove, I suppose, that Danish journalists follow in the tradition of Hans Christian Anderson. Oh lordy, lordy. What we're witnessing is the childishness of civilizations.

So let's start off with the Department of Home Truths. This is not an issue of secularism versus Islam. For Muslims, the Prophet is the man who received divine words directly from God. We see our prophets as faintly historical figures, at odds with our high-tech human rights, almost caricatures of themselves. The fact is that Muslims live their religion. We do not. They have kept their faith through innumerable historical vicissitudes. We have lost our faith ever since Matthew Arnold wrote about the sea's "long, withdrawing roar". That's why we talk about "the West versus Islam" rather than "Christians versus Islam" - because there aren't an awful lot of Christians left in Europe. There is no way we can get round this by setting up all the other world religions and asking why we are not allowed to make fun of Mohamed.

Besides, we can exercise our own hypocrisy over religious feelings. I happen to remember how, more than a decade ago, a film called *The Last Temptation of Christ* showed Jesus making love to a woman. In Paris, someone set fire to the cinema showing the movie, killing a young man. I also happen to remember a US university which invited me to give a lecture three years ago. I did. It was entitled "September 11, 2001: ask who did it but, for God's sake, don't ask why". When I arrived, I found that the university had deleted the phrase "for God's sake" because "we didn't want to offend certain sensibilities". Ah-ha, so we have "sensibilities" too.

In other words, while we claim that Muslims must be good secularists when it comes to free speech - or cheap cartoons - we can worry about adherents to our own precious religion just as much. I also enjoyed the pompous claims of European statesmen that they cannot control free speech or newspapers. This is also nonsense. Had that cartoon of the Prophet shown instead a chief rabbi with a bomb-shaped hat, we would have had "anti-Semitism" screamed into our ears - and rightly so - just as we often hear the Israelis complain about anti-Semitic cartoons in Egyptian newspapers.

Furthermore, in some European nations - France is one, Germany and Austria are among the others - it is forbidden by law to deny acts of genocide. In France, for example, it is illegal to say that the Jewish Holocaust or the Armenian Holocaust did not happen. So it is, in fact, impermissible to make certain statements in European nations. I'm still uncertain whether these laws attain their objectives; however much you may prescribe Holocaust denial, anti-Semites will always try to find a way round. We can hardly exercise our political restraints to prevent Holocaust deniers and then start screaming about secularism when we find that Muslims object to our provocative and insulting image of the Prophet.

For many Muslims, the "Islamic" reaction to this affair is an embarrassment. There is good reason to believe that Muslims would like to see some element of reform introduced to their religion. If this cartoon had

advanced the cause of those who want to debate this issue, no-one would have minded. But it was clearly intended to be provocative. It was so outrageous that it only caused reaction.

And this is not a great time to heat up the old Samuel Huntington garbage about a "clash of civilizations". Iran now has a clerical government again. So, to all intents and purposes, does Iraq (which was not supposed to end up with a democratically elected clerical administration, but that's what happens when you topple dictators). In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood won 20 per cent of the seats in the recent parliamentary elections. Now we have Hamas in charge of "Palestine". There's a message here, isn't there? That America's policies - "regime change" in the Middle East - are not achieving their ends. These millions of voters were preferring Islam to the corrupt regimes which we imposed on them.

For the Danish cartoon to be dumped on top of this fire is dangerous indeed.

In any event, it's not about whether the Prophet should be pictured. The Koran does not forbid images of the Prophet even though millions of Muslims do. The problem is that these cartoons portrayed Mohamed as a bin Laden-type image of violence. They portrayed Islam as a violent religion. It is not. Or do we want to make it so?



### **THE FORGOTTEN WOUNDED OF IRAQ**

*By Ron Kovic, Wednesday 18 January 2006*  
Thirty-eight years ago, on Jan. 20, 1968, I was shot and paralyzed from my mid-chest down during my second tour of duty in Vietnam. It is a date that I can never forget, a day that was to change my life forever. Each year as the anniversary of my wounding in the war approached I would become extremely restless, experiencing terrible bouts of insomnia, depression, anxiety attacks and horrifying nightmares. I dreaded that day and what it represented, always fearing that the terrible trauma of my wounding might repeat itself all over again. It was a difficult day for me for decades and it remained that way until the anxieties and nightmares finally began to subside.

As I now contemplate another January 20th I cannot help but think of the young men and women who have been wounded in the war in Iraq. They have been coming home now for almost three years, flooding Walter Reed, Bethesda, Brooke Army Medical Center and veterans hospitals all across the country. Paraplegics, amputees, burn victims, the blinded and maimed, shocked and stunned, brain-damaged and psychologically stressed, over 16,000 of them, a whole new generation of severely maimed is returning from Iraq, young men and women who were not even born when I came home wounded to the Bronx veterans hospital in 1968.

I, like most other Americans, have occasionally seen them on TV or at the local veterans hospital, but for the most part they remain hidden, like the flag-draped caskets of our dead, returned to Dover Air Force Base in the darkness of night as this administration continues to pursue a policy of censorship, tightly controlling the images coming out of that war and rarely ever allowing the human cost of its policy to be seen.

Mosul, Fallouja, Basra, Baghdad, a roadside bomb, an RPG, an ambush, the bullets cracking all around them, the reality that they are in a war, that they have suddenly been hit. No more John Wayne-Audie Murphy movie fantasies. No more

false bravado, stirring words of patriotism, romantic notions of war or what it might really mean to be in combat, to sacrifice for one's country. All that means nothing now. The reality has struck, the awful, shocking and frightening truth of what it really means to be hit by a bullet, an RPG, an improvised explosive device, shrapnel, a booby trap, friendly fire. They are now in a life-and-death situation and they have suddenly come face to face with the foreign policy of their own nation. The initial shock is wearing off; the painful reality is beginning to sink in, clearly something terrible has happened, something awful and inexplicable.

All the conditioning, all the discipline, shouting, screaming, bullying and threatening verbal abuse of their boot camp drill instructors have now disappeared in this one instant, in this one damaging blow. All they want to do now is stay alive, keep breathing, somehow get out of this place anyway they can. People are dying all around them, someone has been shot and killed right next to them and behind them but all they can really think of at this moment is staying alive.

You don't think of God, or praying, or even your mother or your father. There is no time for that. Your heart is pounding. Blood is seeping out. You will always go back to that day, that moment you got hit, the day you nearly died yet somehow survived. It will be a day you will never forget - when you were trapped in that open area and could not move, when bullets were cracking all around you, when the first Marine tried to save you and was shot dead at your feet and the second, a black Marine - whom you would never see again and who would be killed later that afternoon - would carry you back under heavy fire.

You are now with other wounded all around you heading to a place where there will be help. There are people in pain and great distress, shocked and stunned, frightened beyond anything you can imagine. You are afraid to close your eyes. To close your eyes now means that you may die and never wake up. You toss and turn, your heart pounding, racked with insomnia ... and for many this will go on for months, years after they return home.

They are being put on a helicopter, with the wounded all around them. They try to stay calm. Some are amazed that they are still alive. You just have to keep trying to stay awake, make it to the next stage, keep moving toward the rear, toward another aid station, a corpsman, a doctor a nurse someone who can help you, someone who will operate and keep you alive so you can make it home, home to your backyard and your neighbors and your mother and father. To where it all began, to where it was once peaceful and safe. They just try to keep breathing because they have got to get back.

They are in the intensive-care ward now, the place where they will be operated on, and where in Vietnam a Catholic priest gave me the Last Rites. Someone is putting a mask over their faces just as they put one over mine in Da Nang in 1968. There is the swirl of darkness and soon they awaken to screams all around them. The dead and dying are everywhere. There are things here you can never forget, images and sounds and smells that you will never see on TV or read about in

the newspapers. The black pilot dying next to me as the corpsman and nurse tried furiously to save him, pounding on his chest with their fists as they laughed and joked trying to keep from going insane. The Green Beret who died of spinal meningitis, the tiny Vietnamese nun handing out apples and rosary beads to the wounded, the dead being carted in and out like clockwork, 19- and 20-year-olds.

There is the long flight home packed with the wounded all around you, every conceivable and horrifying wound you could imagine. Even the unconscious and brain-dead whose minds have been blown apart by bullets and shrapnel make that ride with you, because we are all going home now, back to our country. And this is only the beginning.

The frustrations, anger and rage, insomnia, nightmares, anxiety attacks, terrible restlessness and desperate need to keep moving will come later, but for now we are so thankful to have just made it out of that place, so grateful to be alive even with these grievous wounds.

I cannot help but wonder what it will be like for the young men and women wounded in Iraq. What will their homecoming be like? I feel close to them. Though many years separate us we are brothers and sisters. We have all been to the same place. For us in 1968 it was the Bronx veterans hospital paraplegic ward, overcrowded, understaffed, rats on the ward, a flood of memories and images, I can never forget; urine bags overflowing onto the floor. It seemed more like a slum than a hospital. Paralyzed men lying in their own excrement, pushing call buttons for aides who never came, wondering how our government could spend so much money (billions of dollars) on the most lethal, technologically advanced weaponry to kill and maim human beings but not be able to take care of its own wounded when they came home.

Will it be the same for them? Will they have to return to these same unspeakable conditions? Has any of it changed? I have heard that our government has already attempted to cut back millions in much needed funds for veterans hospitals - and this when thousands of wounded soldiers are returning from Iraq. Will they too be left abandoned and forgotten by a president and administration whose patriotic rhetoric does not match the needs of our wounded troops now returning? Do the American people, the president, the politicians, senators and congressmen who sent us to this war have any idea what it really means to lose an arm or a leg, to be paralyzed, to begin to cope with the psychological wounds of that war? Do they have any concept of the long-term effects of these injuries, how the struggles of the wounded are only now just beginning? How many will die young and never live out their lives because of all the stress and myriad of problems that come with sending young men and women into combat?

It is so difficult at first. You return home and both physically and emotionally don't know how you are going to live with this wound, but you just keep trying, just keep waking up to this frightening reality every morning. "My God, what has happened to me?" But you somehow get up, you somehow go on and find a way to move through each day. Even though it is impossible, you go on.

Maybe there will be a day years from now, if you are lucky to live that long, when it will get better and you will not feel so overwhelmed. You must have something to hope for, some way to believe it will not always be this way. This is exactly what many of them are going through right now.

They are alone in their rooms all over this country, right now. Just as I was alone in my room in Massapequa. I know they're there - just as I was. This is the part you never see. The part that is never reported in the news. The part that the president and vice president never mention. This is the agonizing part, the lonely part, when you have to awake to the wound each morning and suddenly realize what you've lost, what is gone forever. They're out there and they have mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, husbands and wives and children. And they're not saying much right now. Just like me they're just trying to get through each day. Trying to be brave and not cry. They still are extremely grateful to be alive, but slowly, agonizingly they are beginning to think about what has really happened to them.

What will it be like for them when one morning they suddenly find themselves naked sitting before that mirror in their room and must come face to face with their injury? I want to reach out to them. I want them to know that I've been there too. I want to just sit with them in their room and tell them that they must not give up. They must try to be patient, try to just get through each day, each morning, each afternoon any way they can. That no matter how impossible and frustrating it may seem, how painful, regardless of the anxiety attacks and nightmares and thoughts of suicide, they must not quit. Somewhere out there there will be a turning point, somewhere through this all they will find a reason to keep on living.

In the months and years that are to follow, others will be less fortunate. Young men and women who survived the battlefield, the intensive-care ward, veterans hospitals and initial homecoming will be unable to make the difficult and often agonizing adjustment.

Is this what is awaiting all of them? Is this the nightmare no one ever told them about, the part no one now wants to talk about or has the time to deal with? The car accidents, and drinking and drug overdoses, the depression, anger and rage, spousal abuse, bedsores and breakdowns, prison, homelessness, sleeping under the piers and bridges. The ones who never leave the hospital, the ones who can't hold a job, can't keep a relationship together, can't love or feel any emotions anymore, the brutal insomnia that leaves you exhausted and practically unable to function, the frightening anxiety attacks that come upon you when you least expect them, and always the dread that each day may be your last.

Marty, Billy, Bobby, Max, Tom, Washington, Pat, Joe? I knew them all. It's a long list. It's amazing that you're still alive when so many others you knew are dead, and at such a young age. Isn't all this dying supposed to happen when you're much older? Not now, not while we're so young. How come the recruiters never mentioned these things? This was never in the slick pamphlets they showed us! This should be a time of innocence, a time of joy and happiness, no cares and youthful dreams - not all these friends dying so young, all this grief and numbness, emptiness and feelings of being so lost.

The physical and psychological battles from the war in Iraq will rage on for decades, deeply

impacting the lives of citizens in both our countries.

As this the 38th anniversary of my wounding in Vietnam approaches, in many ways I feel my injury in that war has been a blessing in disguise. I have been given the opportunity to move through that dark night of the soul to a new shore, to gain an understanding, a knowledge, an entirely different vision. I now believe that I have suffered for a reason and in many ways I have found that reason in my commitment to peace and nonviolence. We who have witnessed the obscenity of war and experienced its horror and terrible consequences have an obligation to rise above our pain and suffering and turn the tragedy of our lives into a triumph. I have come to believe that there is nothing in the lives of human beings more terrifying than war and nothing more important than for those of us who have experienced it to share its awful truth.

We must break this cycle of violence and begin to move in a different direction; war is not the answer, violence is not the solution. A more peaceful world is possible.

*I am the living death, The memorial day on wheels, I am your yankee doodle dandy.*

*Your John Wayne come home, Your Fourth of July firecracker, Exploding in the grave.*



#### ALL THE NEWS THAT DOESN'T FIT

sent by Andy Pollack  
[You can't make this stuff up: a British government facility set up to monitor radiation levels discovers that depleted uranium levels have soared, probably because of DU left by US/Brit forces in the Middle East and blown on the winds. But the information was at first kept secret (in violation of the law) because the facility is run by -- Halliburton! Intro by Roland, from whom I got this:

In the early 1960s, Joan Baez sang a protest song, "What Have They Done to the Rain?" about "The gentle rain (nuclear fallout) that falls for years" The Depleted Uranium from the battlefield's of the Middle East and Kosovo will be "raining" on the world for years to come. Lyrics follow the story.]

San Francisco Bay View - Mar 8, 2006  
<http://www.sfbayview.com/030806/deathstar030806.shtml>

#### The Queen's Death Star

Depleted uranium measured in British atmosphere from battlefields in the Middle East

by Leuren Moret

"Did the use of uranium weapons in Gulf War II result in contamination of Europe? Evidence from the measurements of the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston, Berkshire, U.K.," shows such contamination, reported the Sunday Times Online, in a shocking scientific study authored by British scientists Dr. Chris Busby and Saoirse Morgan. ("UK radiation jump blamed on Iraq shells" <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-2047373,00.html>)

The highest levels of depleted uranium ever measured in the atmosphere in Britain were transported on air currents from the Middle East and Central Asia. Of special significance were those from the Tora Bora bombing in Afghanistan in 2001 and the "shock and awe" bombing during Gulf War II in Iraq in 2003.

Out of concern for the public, the official British government air monitoring facility, known as the Atomic Weapons Establishment, at Aldermaston, was established years ago to measure radioactive emissions from British nuclear power plants and atomic weapons facilities.

The British government facility was taken over three years ago by Halliburton, which refused at first to release air monitoring data to Dr. Busby, as required by law.

An international expert on low level radiation, Busby serves as an official advisor on several British government committees and co-authored an independent report on low level radiation with 45 scientists, the European Committee on Radiation Risk for the European Parliament. He was able to get Aldermaston air monitoring data from Halliburton AWE by filing a Freedom of Information request using a new British law which became effective Jan. 1, 2005; but the data for 2003 was missing. He obtained the 2003 data from the Defense Procurement Agency.

The fact that the air monitoring data was circulated by Halliburton AWE to the Defense Procurement Agency implies that it was considered to be relevant and that Dr. Busby was stonewalled because Halliburton AWE clearly recognized that it was a serious enough matter to justify a government interpretation of the results and official decisions had to be made about what the data would show and its political implications for the military.

In a similar circumstance, in 1992, Major Doug Rokke, the director of the U.S. Army Depleted Uranium Cleanup Project after Gulf War I, was ordered by a U.S. Army general officer to write a no-bid contract, "Depleted Uranium, Contaminated Equipment and Facilities Recovery Plan Outline," describing the procedures for cleaning up Kuwait, including depleted uranium, for Kellogg, Brown and Root, a subsidiary of Halliburton.

The contract proposal was passed through Madeleine Albright, then U.S. secretary of state, to the Emirate of Kuwait, who considered the terms and then hired KBR for the cleanup.

Aldermaston is one of many nuclear facilities throughout Europe that regularly monitor atmospheric radiation transported by atmospheric sand and dust storms, or air currents, from radiation sources in North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia.

After the "shock and awe" campaign in Iraq in 2003, very fine particles of depleted uranium were captured with larger sand and dust particles in filters in Britain. These particles traveled in seven to nine days from Iraqi battlefields as far as 2,400 miles away.

The radiation measured in the atmosphere quadrupled within a few weeks after the beginning of the 2003 campaign, and, at one of the five monitoring locations, the levels twice required an official alert to the British Environment Agency. In addition to depleted uranium data gathered in previous studies on Kosovo and Bosnia by Dr. Busby, the Aldermaston air monitoring data provided a continuous record of depleted uranium levels in Britain from the other recent wars.

Extensive video news footage of the 2003 Iraq war, including Fallujah in 2004, provided irrefutable documented evidence that the

U.S. has unethically and illegally used depleted uranium munitions on cities and other civilian populations. These military actions are in direct violation of not only the international conventions, but they also violate U.S. military law because the U.S. is a signatory to The Hague and Geneva Conventions and the 1925 Geneva Gas Protocol.

Depleted uranium weaponry meets the definition of a Weapon of Mass Destruction in two out of three categories under U.S. Code Title 50, Chapter 40, Section 2302.

After-action mandates have also been violated, such as U.S. Army Regulation AR 700-48 and TB 9-1300-278, which require treatment of radiation poisoning for all casualties, including enemy soldiers and civilians, and remediation.

Dr. Busby's request for this data through Halliburton from AWE and subsequently provided by the Defense Procurement Agency was necessary to establish verification of Iraq's 2003 depleted uranium levels in the atmosphere.

These facts demonstrate why Halliburton refused to release the 2003 data to him and it obviously establishes that weaponized depleted uranium is an indiscriminate weapon being distributed all over the world in a very short period of time, immediately after its use.

The recent documentary film "Beyond Treason" details the horrific effects of depleted uranium exposure on American troops and Iraqi civilians in the Gulf region in 1991, not to speak of those civilians continuing to live in permanently contaminated and thus uninhabitable regions.

Global increases since 1991 of melanoma, infant mortality and frog die-offs can only be explained by an environmental contaminant. Alarming global increases in diabetes, with high correlation to depleted uranium wars in Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan, demonstrate that diabetes is a sensitive indicator and a rapid response to internal depleted uranium exposure.

In 2003, Americans reported visiting Iraqi relatives in Baghdad who were suffering from an epidemic of diabetes. After returning to the U.S. following two to three weeks in Iraq, they discovered within a few months that they too had diabetes.

Japanese human shields and journalists who worked in Iraq during the 2003 war are sick and now have symptoms typical of depleted uranium exposure. Likewise, after the U.S. Navy moved depleted uranium bombing and gunnery ranges several years ago from Vieques Island in Puerto Rico to Australia, health effects there are already being reported.

The documentary film "Blowin' in the Wind" includes an interview with a family with two normal teenage daughters living near the bombing range where depleted uranium weaponry is now being used. The parents showed photos of their baby born recently with severe birth defects. The baby looked like Iraqi deformed babies and, like many of the Iraqi babies, died five days after birth.

Other than anonymous British government officials denying that Iraq was the source of the depleted uranium measured at Aldermaston by AWE and some unnamed "establishment scientists" blaming it on local sources or natural uranium in the Iraq environment, there is no one, as of this writing, willing to lend his name or office to refute this damning evidence reported by Dr. Busby.

All of the anonymous statements used by the media thus far are contradicted by the factual evidence found in the filters. All of it was

transported from the same region.

The natural abundance of uranium in the crust of the earth is 2.4 parts per million, which would not become concentrated to the high levels measured in Britain during a long journey from the Middle East. These particles traveling over thousands of miles would dilute the concentration rather than increase it.

The fact that there are no known natural uranium deposits in Iraq make it impossible for these anonymous claims to have scientific credibility. Unnamed government sources blamed local sources in Britain, such as nuclear power plants, for the contamination; however, that would also leave evidence in the filters of fission products, which were not in evidence. The lowest levels measured at monitoring stations around Aldermaston were at the facility, which means it could not be a possible source.

Atomic weapons facilities would be more likely to produce plutonium contamination, also not reported as a co-contaminant at Aldermaston. In other words, all factual evidence considered, the question must be asked, what were the media's anonymous experts and government officials basing their claims on?

Dr. Keith Baverstock exposed a World Health Organization cover-up on depleted uranium in an Aljazeera article, "Washington's Secret Nuclear War," posted on Sept. 14, 2004. It was the most popular article ever posted on the Aljazeera English language website.

Baverstock leaked an official WHO report that he wrote to the media several years ago after the WHO refused to publish it. He warned in the report about the mobility of, and environmental contamination from, tiny depleted uranium particles formed from U.S. munitions.

Busby's ECRR (European Committee on Radiation Risk) report challenged the International Committee on Radiation Protection standards for radiation risk and reported that the mutagenic effects of radiation determined by Chernobyl studies are actually 1,000 times higher than the ICRP risk model predicts.

The ECRR report also establishes that the ICRP risk model, based on external exposure of Hiroshima and Nagasaki victims, and the ECRR risk model, based on internal exposure, are mutually exclusive models. In other words, the ICRP risk model based on external exposure cannot be used to estimate internal exposure risk.

The report also states that a separate study is needed for depleted uranium exposure risks, because it may be far more toxic than nuclear weapons or nuclear power plant exposures. In July of 2005, the National Academy of Sciences reported in their new Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation VII report on low level radiation that there is "no safe level of exposure."

The BEIR VII report also finally admitted that very low levels are more harmful per unit of radiation than higher levels of exposure, also known as the "supralinear" effect.

This information on low level radiation risk is extremely alarming, since the AWE data from Aldermaston confirms that rapid global transport of depleted uranium dust is occurring.

Dr. Katsuma Yagasaki, a Japanese physicist

at the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa, has estimated that the atomicity equivalent of at least 400,000 Nagasaki bombs has been released into the global atmosphere since 1991 from the use of depleted uranium munitions. It is completely mixed in the atmosphere in one year. The "smog of war" from Gulf War I was found in glaciers and ice sheets globally a year later.

Even more alarming is the non-specific catalytic or enzyme effect from internal exposures to nanoparticles of depleted uranium. Soldiers on depleted uranium battlefields have reported that, after noticing a metallic taste in their mouths, within 24-48 hours of exposure, they became sick with Gulf War syndrome symptoms.

Who is profiting from this global uranium nightmare? Dr. Jay Gould revealed in his book, "The Enemy Within," that the British royal family privately owns investments in uranium holdings worth over \$6 billion through Rio Tinto Mines.

The mining company was formed for the British royal family in the late 1950s by Roland Walter "Tiny" Rowland, the Queen's buccaneer.

Born in 1917 of illegitimate German parentage, and before changing his name, Roland Walter Fuhrhop was a passionate member of the Nazi youth movement by 1933, and a classmate described him as "an ardent supporter of Hitler and an arrogant, nasty piece of work to boot."

His meteoric rise and protection by intel agencies and the British Crown are an indication of what an asset he has been for decades to the Queen, as Africa's most powerful Western businessman.

Africa and Australia are two of the main sources of uranium in the world. The Rothschilds control uranium supplies and prices globally, and one serves as the Queen's business manager. Filmmaker David Bradbury made "Blowin' in the Wind" to expose depleted uranium bombing and gunnery range activities contaminating pristine areas of eastern Australia and to expose plans to extract over \$36 billion in uranium from mines in the interior over the next six years. Halliburton has finished construction of a 1,000-mile railway from the mining area to a port on the north coast of Australia to transport the ore.

The queen's favorite American buccaneers, Cheney, Halliburton and the Bush family, are tied to her through uranium mining and the shared use of illegal depleted uranium munitions in the Middle East, Central Asia and Kosovo and Bosnia.

The major roles that such diverse individuals and groups as the Carlyle Group, George Herbert Walker Bush, former Carlyle CEO Frank Carlucci, the University of California managed nuclear weapons labs at Los Alamos and Livermore, and U.S. and international pension fund investments have played in proliferating depleted uranium weapons is not well known or in most instances even recognized, inside or outside the country.

God save the queen from the guilt of her complicity in turning planet Earth into a death star.

*[Leuren Moret is president of Scientists for Indigenous People, a City of Berkeley environmental commissioner and past*

*president of the Association for Women Geoscientists. Email her at leurenmoret@yahoo.com.]*



#### **ANTI-WAR DEMONSTRATIONS HELD IN BALTIMORE & D.C.**

[NOTE: Several MUPJ members and supporters took part in these demonstrations, including puppetmaster Lynn Robinson and her puppetistas.]

*March 20th, 2006 11:48 pm (WJZ/AP)* A small but significant protest was held in Baltimore today to mark the third anniversary of the start of the Iraq war.

Among those outside the War Memorial was the mother of 21-year-old Lance Corporal David Branning, who was killed in Fallujah in November 2004.

"I made two promises when David was killed one was that he would not be forgotten. the second was that he would not have died in vain and for me any effort I put forth that stands in the way of another family going through what I've gone through," Tia Steele tells WJZ's Mary Bubala. Meanwhile, another low-key demonstration moved within a few hundred yards of the Pentagon Monday, as marchers called for an end to the war.

A muffled drum and a ceremonial peace bell sounded along a route followed by about 200 protesters from the Lincoln Memorial to Defense Department headquarters, across the Potomac River in Arlington, Va.

"No Iraqi is our enemy," said Steve Cleghorn, 56, of Reynoldsville, Pa. He took part in the march on behalf of the group Military Families Speak Out.

Organizers worked with U.S. Park Police to select a route that allowed permitted demonstrations along a channel park just east of the Pentagon. But Cleghorn doubted the nonviolent demonstrators would be allowed to approach the building.

They were blocked by Pentagon Police officers standing behind a temporary barrier of five foot high steel fencing, set up on the edge of a parking lot just east of the Pentagon grounds.

Many demonstrators chanted "Peace now," as 51 people crossed the fence in an orchestrated act of civil disobedience. They were immediately taken into custody.

"They were each given a citation for failure to obey lawful orders," said Cheryl Irwin, a Pentagon spokeswoman. The misdemeanor charge requires a mandatory appearance in U.S. District Court.

The publicized goal of the demonstration was to deliver a mock coffin draped in black bunting and decorated with photographs of the war to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

"The coffin represents the massive casualties we're seeing in the war in Iraq," said Gordon Clark, 45, of Silver Spring, Md., with the group Iraq Pledge of Resistance.

"We were told at the beginning of the war, 'a few billion dollars and then Iraqi oil will pay for everything.' We're now looking at \$320 billion that have been spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan," said Clark.

"We're here to energize most of the people in America who are with us," said Cindy Sheehan, who last summer staged a month-long protest outside President Bush's Texas ranch. Sheehan was not among those who scaled the barrier.



(photos from March 8 Code Pink march in DC)

"We're out here representing millions of people around the world." said Sheehan, whose soldier son Casey died in Iraq in 2004.

Many of the demonstrators claimed ties to military personnel who have served in Iraq, including soldiers who have been wounded.

"You know what is happening to this beautiful generation of American men and women," said Katy Scott, 63, of Chicago. Her son, Peter, 29, enlisted after the Sept. 11 terror attacks. He lost an eye and an arm as a result of an Oct. 15 roadside bomb attack near Samara, Iraq.

"Stop the war and stop the killing. Find common ground for negotiation," said Eve Tataz, 74, of Washington, D.C.



### THE LIGHTER SIDE

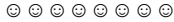
#### BUSH EXPLAINS MEDICARE DRUG BILL

Verbatim Quote: WOMAN IN AUDIENCE: 'I don't really understand. How is the new plan going to fix the problem?'

Verbatim response: PRESIDENT BUSH:

'Because the -- all which is on the table begins to address the big cost drivers. For example, how benefits are calculated, for example, is on the table. Whether or not benefits rise based upon wage increases or price increases. There's a series of parts of the formula that are being considered. And when you couple that, those different cost drivers, affecting those -- changing those with personal accounts, the idea is to get what has been promised more likely to be -- or closer delivered to that has been promised. Does that make any sense to you? It's kind of muddled. Look, there's a series of things that cause the -- like, for example, benefits are calculated based upon the increase of wages, as opposed to the increase of prices. Some have suggested that we calculate -- the benefits will rise based upon inflation, supposed to wage increases. There is a reform that would help solve the red if that were put into effect. In other words, how fast benefits grow, how fast the promised benefits grow, if those -- if that growth is affected, it

will help on the red.'  
*Forward this to others -- so they, too, can understand...*



#### CHERTOFF LOCKS HIMSELF OUT OF HOMELAND SECURITY HEADQUARTERS

Forgets Security Code, Secret Question

Homeland Security chief Michael Chertoff suffered another embarrassment today when he accidentally locked himself out of the Homeland Security Department's headquarters in Washington, D.C.

After security guards entrusted with protecting the Homeland Security building complained that the building itself was not secure, Secretary Chertoff ordered that the headquarters be outfitted with a new security system, but then forgot the security code necessary to gain entry.

"Unfortunately, Chertoff is the only one who knew the security code, and he forgot it," one source said. "He also had a secret question which could be used to retrieve the security code, but he forgot that, too."

As of late this afternoon, Mr. Chertoff was still standing outside the building waiting to gain entry after a locksmith who was called turned out to be from Dubai and had to be sent away.

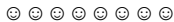
Mr. Chertoff also declined Vice President Dick Cheney's offer to shoot off the lock on the building for fear that Mr. Cheney might hit the Department of Agriculture building across the street.

On Capitol Hill, news that the nation's highest ranking homeland security official had locked himself out of his own building drew criticism from Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del): "Michael Chertoff's secret question should be, 'How the hell did I get this job?'"

For his part, Mr. Chertoff tried to put the best face on the situation, telling the reporters that the nation "might actually be safer" with him outside the Department of Homeland Security than inside.

Elsewhere, President Bush scrapped plans to send Americans to Mars after NASA's Mars probe failed to find signs of oil.

From: The Borowitz Report, 3-13-06



#### MEDAL OF FREEDOM FOR CHENEY?

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A white house source stated that Congress is considering awarding Vice-President Dick Cheney the Medal of Freedom, the national highest civilian commendation, for his act of bravery in shooting an attorney.

The source was quoted to say "All Americans have wanted to shoot a lawyer at one time or another and Cheney actually had the balls to do it".

In a related story, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, which issues hunting licenses, said that it will start requiring hunters, wishing to bag a lawyer, to have the new "lawyer's stamp" on their hunting license. Currently Texas hunters are required to carry stamps for hunting birds, deer, and bear, at a cost of \$7 annually. The new "lawyers stamp" will cost \$100, but open season will be all year long. The department further stated that although the "lawyers stamp" comes at hefty price, sales have been brisk and it is believed it will generate annual revenues in excess of \$3 billion the first year. Other states are

considering similar hunting license stamps.

Be sure to keep in mind the fair chase provisions of lawyer hunting.

No hunting within 100 yards of a traffic accident or job injury site as this is considered hunting over a baited field.

[From a lawyer friend of mine! Editor]



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