

connections

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March 2005

SAVE THE DATES

Thu, Feb 24

"A Force More Powerful" Four-part film series and discussion on nonviolent conflict resolution (see page 1).

Sun, Feb 27

PJN Annual Meeting & Potluck. All invited (page 1).

Sat, March 5

Poets for Peace (page 18)

Fri, March 18

Vigil for Peace (see page 3).

Fri, April 15

Tax Day Vigil (page 1)

Sun, April 17

Earth Day

Sat, May 7

Banquet with Medea Benjamin, keynote

IN THIS ISSUE

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL..... 3

IRAQ: A WAY OUT .. 7

SOC. SEC. TRUTH .. 9

GLOBAL WARMING— REAL HOT!..... 12

ALT FUELS 13

FRAMING THE ISSUES 15

Make anti-war demands real

Medea Benjamin

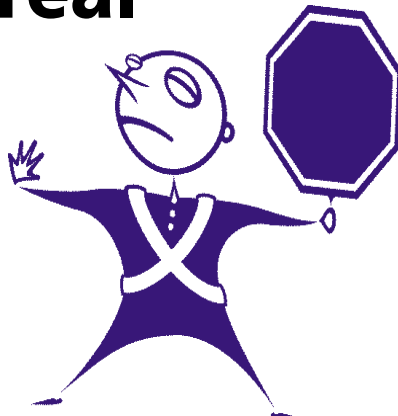
So how do we build a peace movement that can put forward our demands in an effective way? Here are some practical things we can do.

1. Make real the human cost of the war on both U.S. and Iraqi lives

Since the US invasion in March 2003, the public in most countries throughout the world has seen the horrible pictures of Iraq war victims. The big exception is the US public, which has seen a sanitized version of the war. CNN International regularly shows footage of war victims in its worldwide broadcasts but not on domestic CNN. The world community demands to know the truth, and we should too. Write letters, call and email your local media demanding that they cover the victims of war. If they fail to respond, organize a community delegation to visit them. If they fail to respond to that as well, organize protests at their offices.

Regarding the cost of war for US soldiers, ask your local media to read or print a daily casualty toll. Do screenings in your school, church or houseparty of videos about US casualties. Two forceful videos are Arlington West (www.arlingtonwestfilm.com) and The Ground Truth (www.thegroundtruth.org).

If the public were able to see, on a sustained basis, the gory reality of this war—the



children without limbs, the wailing mothers, the shivering refugees, the US soldiers coming home in body bags or incapacitated for life—support would plummet and the war would end.

2. Support military families who are speaking out against the war

Military Families Speak Out (www.mfso.org) is a group of over 1,000 families with loved ones in the military. Help get their voices out on the media or invite one of them to speak in your community. Some of them are parents of fallen soldiers, such as Fernando Suarez or Lila Lipscomb of Fahrenheit 911 fame, and their testimonies are heart-wrenching and compelling.

In the case of Vietnam, dissent within the armed forces itself was critical in ending the war. There is now a new group of soldiers called Iraq Veterans Against the War (www.ivaw.org) that deserves our support. So do the soldiers who are refusing to serve. Over one-third of some 4,000 combat veterans have resisted their call-ups. One of the

(continued on page 4)

It's that time again!

PJN Potluck / Annual Meeting



All are invited to the PJN Annual Meeting and Potluck on Sunday, February 27, from 4–7 pm. This is the time to visit with old and new friends, and eat, and celebrate our accomplishments, and eat, and make plans for the year...and eat. Bring some food to share, plus your issues and ideas.

NOTE: This year the annual meeting will be held at the **First Unitarian Church** (not Central Methodist) at 2737 Pacific Ave, in Stockton. Don't miss it. For more information, call 467-4455.

The Peace and Justice Network proudly presents:

A Force More Powerful

How do people's movements succeed against powerful regimes? The Peace and Justice Network will sponsor a series of four films entitled *"A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict"* that can help answer that question. Each film is 30 minutes in length and will be followed by group discussion.

These films feature the dramatic stories of how four countries used nonviolent power and overcame oppression and authoritarian rule. It is the story of millions who chose to battle the forces of injustice with nonviolent weapons. In this difficult time in our country's history, it is inspiring to remember that nonviolence can accomplish great changes.

The Program:

Thursday, February 24: **"India: Defying the Crown"**

Facilitator: John Morearty

Thursday, March 3: **"Chile: The Defeat of a Dictator"**

Facilitator: Christie Kelly

Thursday, March 10: **"South Africa: Freedom in Our Lifetime"**

Facilitator: Jean Marie Velikovic

Thursday, March 17: **"Nashville: We Were Warriors"**

Facilitator: Linda Whittock

Thursday, March 31: **Local Community Organizing: Panel**

The Time: 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

The Place: Central United Methodist Church (Fireside Room), 3700 Pacific Ave. across from the University of the Pacific.

The Cost: FREE

Light refreshments will be served. Info: please call Linda, 465-4043.

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A liar, a fake and a cheat

Bruce Giudici

A sucker born every four years. Let's see—if Bush were to accurately describe his Social Security scam, it might go something like this: first, we Republicans boosted your taxes in the 80s to save up for when the boomers retire. Then, we Republicans spent all those savings on things like bombs and tax cuts for our rich friends. And now, since we Republicans claim all the Social Security money will be gone in about 40 years (because we Republicans spent it all on bombs and tax cuts for our rich friends), we Republicans will flush away all that tax money you poor folks have been sending in and we Republicans will give you an IRA to bet on the stock market. Good luck with your personal account.

Problem is, as with none of Bush's previous bluffs, this time, people will call him on it. This isn't some neighbor's kid who

volunteered to die for a rich corporation's oil. Nor is it a forgotten deficit number printed on some newspaper's back section. This is grandma's rent payment, daddy's heating bill in winter and a part of the financial security every young American rightfully expects to be there in the not-so-distant future.

With an all-Republican line-up, however, Bush sees this as his last best chance to destroy the greatest of the New Deal programs. A willing media reports the bluff as a plausible story, while right-wing pundits (on or off the White House payroll) speak of Bush's grand vision. Will an uncertain public take another leap of faith with this puffed up charlatan? Or will we finally, at long last, see this man for what he is: a liar, a fake and a cheat?

We are coming upon the second anniversary of the cursed Iraq war—and we need to be reminded that this man is a liar? We hear this

pious man's speeches praising God as he daily breaks the commandment "thou shalt not kill" condemning thousands to their deaths in Iraq—and we need to be reminded that this man is a fake? And we are presented a budget so slanted to the rich and powerful that, if unveiled before the election, would have given us a President Kerry—and we need to be reminded that this man is a cheat?

Yes. We need to be reminded—daily. This is an evil to be fought, a charade so great that it can bring this nation to its knees. How? As an economist, I see a declining value of the dollar as a result of our twin deficits (trade and government), higher interest rates (to attract the money China and Europe is lending to us to finance our debts), and a future of higher oil prices, resulting in more bankruptcies as over-borrowed consumers and governments slow their spending. The result, my friends, won't be



Bruce Giudici

a 1930s depression—but it won't be milk and honey either. Turning around such improvident practices by this dry drunk president won't be easy—the choices he presents us ask only to borrow more against a future for which he has no use. But we must make a start.

First and foremost is to stop this Social Security Scam in its tracks. Not only is Social Security a fair way to treat our senior population. It makes good economic sense to put money in the hands of low income people who need to spend it to survive. It keeps the economy alive, sustainably.

This year we must turn our ship around. Social security is the issue. Talk to a stranger about it—it's that important. And see you at our annual meeting, February 27—a good time with good people for a good cause.

Feedback

Reasons to move to Canada

Editor:

I am inspired by your feature on "10 reasons not to move to Canada" (Dec/Jan *Connections*) to respond. I very much like Canada, having lived there while I earned a graduate degree in Toronto a few years before the Vietnam debacle led some Americans to move north. Having just made a post-election reconnaissance trip to Vancouver to look at property, I have a duty to write to you.

As a life-long liberal, I have contributed my energy and my votes throughout my adulthood to making this a country with generous social programs and a responsible foreign policy.

When others said they could not vote for the lesser of evils—whether in the Nixon or Reagan or Bush I or Bush II eras—I always decided that I could not throw my vote away on a third party candidate. However attractive that candidate, I felt I could not be irresponsible and help pave the way for disastrous social policies (such as the Nader supporters did in 2000). After all, I reasoned, as a middle-class American, I could

probably live comfortably despite the retrogressive social policies one or another of these figures might introduce, but the working class and the jobless cannot afford them. So I always voted for the lesser of evils when faced with that dilemma.

As a teacher, I have tried my best to educate my students to be citizens with a social conscience who would vote to benefit their fellow Americans and to avoid a jingoistic foreign policy.

In all these efforts, I have apparently been a failure. It is especially hard for me to bear as an educator, to see that efforts have not led to an enlightened populace. Our system of education somehow has resulted in a public easily led and deluded by slick, conniving politicians.

Now we are to witness the undoing of social policies that date back to FDR, or even before. This planned rollback, accompanied by the breaking of the budget, means that it can be argued that we can no longer afford even the anemic social policies—compared to other western countries—that we have had. OSHA and many other programs either are or will be relics of the past.

In this recent visit to Vancouver, it felt wonderful to be in a country that lacked expansive, imperial ambitions and that has humane domestic policies. Moreover, the city of Vancouver, unlike Ottawa which your article mentioned, has a pleasant climate with only occasional dustings of snow and with winter temperatures not too much cooler than those of the Central Valley.

Stay and fight? I have done that for decades. For my older years, I think I have earned a more benign environment, if the details of a move can be worked out....

Sally Miller

Take responsibility for injustice

Editor:

I am a great student of war-and I think everyone should be. What started was my direct and indirect experience: Pearl Harbor, the death march in the Philippines, and then having my family experience both WWI and WWII. In fact, an aunt experienced all three—including Bismarck versus Napoleon III.

WWII was probably the most tragic. The people of Germany

(even the good) and the great nations (even Pope Pius XII—I still feel he was a saint) were deceived by the man Hitler. The next four years brought immeasurable killing of both civilians and military, rape, stealing, injustice—and many people lived an almost animal existence—first under a misguided dictator and then with the total loss of all that was of value in their life.

All of this my German family endured—my mother was from the first strongly anti-Hitler. She escaped from the East (Danzig, where I was born), first under Russians and then Poles and arrived penniless 4 years later in Western Germany to gather up what remained of her family. This tale is just minutely what happened to people all over Europe. Children suffer no matter what side they are on. I have translated many letters and feel almost as if I had been there. No one should forget.

War brings out hatred against people. Many good people are instilled with the idea of "no war". But evil lurks up and today, we call it terror.

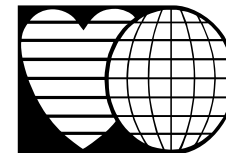
The US and the great nations

(continued page 7)

Connections

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"The Peace and Justice Network is a nonprofit educational organization committed to the vision of a world in which the equality of all persons is achieved, basic needs are met, conflict is resolved nonviolently, and the earth's resources are shared responsibly for the well-being of all her inhabitants and all future generations."

Cheer up with CHIRA

Real health care for all in state

Health care help is on the way! CHIRA, the California Health Insurance Reliability Act, is now on the agenda in the California legislature. CHIRA is a family-friendly, family-values insurance plan.

CHIRA details:

- Covers health care for every single resident of California. Whether you're an employee, self-employed, out of a job, between jobs, retired, disabled, a newborn baby or 100 years old—if you meet the minimum California residency requirement, you're covered
- NO deductibles, NO co-pay.
- Choose your own primary provider, HMO, clinic etc. Your primary refers you to specialists.
- Covers specialists, prescription drugs, doctors, hospitals, out-patient care, dentists, chiropractors, eye care, hearing aids, wheelchairs, mental health counseling, in-home care, recovery in nursing homes, adult day care, prevention and much more—every health professional licensed by the state.
- No profit gouging, less fraud, tons less paperwork.

Paid for by:

CHIRA's predecessor, SB 921, passed the California Senate and most Assembly committees last year before the term ended. We

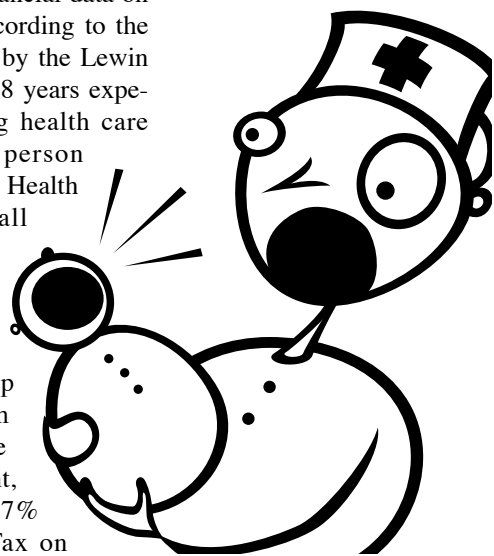
don't have exact financial data on CHIRA yet, but according to the analysis of SB 921 by the Lewin Group, which has 18 years experience in analyzing health care proposals, every person would pay a 3.78% Health Premium Tax on all net income above \$7000 a year, up to \$200,000.

Every employer, from mom-and-pop to Wal-Mart, from school districts to the sheriff's department, would pay an 8.17% Health Premium Tax on all payroll (between \$7000 and \$200,000 per employee per year).

The wealthy would pay a 1% Health Premium Surtax on their income above \$200,000 a year.

In sum, everybody pays a health premium tax, based on income—and we all get premium care. This is improved high-quality Medicare for all, from birth to death. California gets:

- Better workers with less worry and more money = improved business productivity.
- \$1 billion savings to state and local governments = lower taxes.
- \$8 billion health care savings statewide.



How can CHIRA save all that money?

1. \$5.2 billion on bulk purchasing of medicines, hearing aids etc. by the state, in competitive bidding.
2. \$19.9 billion on administrative costs, by doctors, hospitals and HMOs.
3. Medicare, Healthy Families etc. all get folded in = less paperwork.

Why should struggling small businesses support this plan? Because the statewide playing field will be level, and because their employees will be healthy and productive, and not tempted to quit just to get health care.

CHIRA is in the California legislature NOW. Already, it's drawing heavy opposition from those one might expect: insurance companies, big pharmaceuticals, and big employers who offer crummy health insurance or none at all.

Convince your assemblyperson and state senator, and of course convince Arnold Schwarzenegger. Don't be talked out of this one! We all pay, and we all benefit. Isn't it time?

SOURCE: For 100 pages of economic analysis of last year's SB 921, see the January 19, 2005 study by the Lewin Group. Available on-line at <http://www.healthcareforall.org> To get involved with the campaign for CHIRA, contact (in Stockton) Jerry or Carol Bailey, (209) 951-0499.

Concerned Citizens gala

On Friday March 18th, the Concerned Citizens Coalition of Stockton (CCCoS) will hold its 2nd Gala Dinner at the China Palace Restaurant. Get your tickets early; the last CCCoS dinner was a sold-out affair.

In the CCCoS tradition, there will be a mixture of good food (including vegetarian), music, dancing and a raffle for wonderful prizes. All the "movers and shakers" for a more democratic community are expected to be there.

The League of Women Voters of San Joaquin County and Sierra Club are members of CCCoS and are co-plaintiffs along with the State Attorney General's office who joined us as amicus curiae in the lawsuit against the City of Stockton & OMI-Thames contract

to privatize Stockton's municipal water system. The case will be heard this spring in the California State Court of Appeal, and we are in great need of donations to support our legal efforts. If you are unable to make the dinner, please consider a donation. If you request a ticket, you will still be eligible for the raffle prizes.

Tickets are \$35 which will include an opportunity to win great raffle prizes.

6:00 to 7:00 p.m.	No host bar
7:00 to 8:00 pm	Dinner
8:00 to 8:30 pm	Raffle
8:30 to 8:45 pm	Short Program
8:45 to 11:00	Music/ Dancing

Call our Hotline: 465-3948 or email sylwv@aol.com or write to CCCoS at P. O. Box 4548, Stockton 95204

A Benefit for the Women's Center of San Joaquin County

UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC Pacific Theatre

Fri. Feb 25 8 pm
Sat. Feb 26 8 pm
Sun. Feb 27 2 pm

tickets available @ Pacific Box Office 946-2UOP

call ASuop @ 946-2233 for more info

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

performances FEBRUARY 25-27

Inauguration vigil opens year of protest

John Morearty

Seventy-five of us wearing black, holding candles, lined Pacific Avenue by the Delta campus at rush hour on George W. Bush's second Inauguration Day. We wore black to treat it like the funeral that it was: 1,500 dead Americans, perhaps 100,000 dead Iraqis. We carried candles for the light of hope, for the better world we know is possible.

We carried an earth flag and a UN flag, and a US flag upside down (the symbol of distress, known to every sailor). We held huge banners—"NO WAR ON IRAQ," "PEACE NOW." A Burma Shave parade of signs stood on wires in the grass: Immoral War, Change Course, Withdraw, Troops Home Now, No Blood for Oil, Hands Off Social Security, Support Schools, Homes for All, Justice for All, Feed the Hungry, Heal All the Sick, God Says Not in My Name, One Earth, Save the Earthlings. One woman union trucker carried a sign that said "Killing for Peace is like Fornicating for Virginity."

Many of those rolling by supported the protest—smiles, waves, peace signs, honk honk, beep beep. There were a few curses and middle

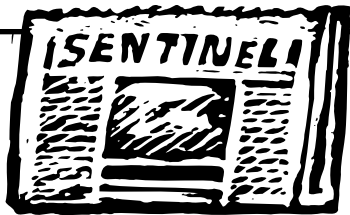
March 18 War protest vigil

A vigil is being called for Friday March 18, the eve of the second anniversary of the US invasion of Iraq. 4:30-5:30 PM, just north of the stoplight and bus bench at Yokuts and Pacific, across from Lyons. Wear black, bring a candle and three friends. Info: 464-3326, 467-4455.

fingers; one young white male hollered, "Is it worse to kill Iraqis than to kill children in the womb?"

A silent vigil we'd said, but there was a steady murmur. Old friends caught up on news, strangers greeted each other. A veteran activist limped up on his cane, friends welcomed him and his wife. A young woman who'd just enlisted in the military asked for help, and was steered to draft counseling. Half a dozen UOP students said they were protesting in Stockton for the first time—"we're glad to find you people out here, we'll be back."

So come back, everybody, and bring three friends!



Mainstream press = truth? Get alternatives & decide.

If you tap in to some of the alternative media, you will get a very different perspective on events. Especially now, when the mainstream media often acts as a cheerleader for whatever the administration does, it's necessary to go a little further to get your news. An internet connection is helpful.

KPFA (94.1 FM) provides extraordinary coverage of issues. There are short news reports most hours and longer news programs at 3 and 6 pm. You can listen on the internet at <http://www.kpfa.org>

Listen to **Democracy Now!** on KPFA, 94.1 FM at 6 & 9am, on KVMR, 89.5 at 7pm or on the web at: <http://www.democracynow.org>

Common Dreams News Center: <http://www.commondreams.org/>

Truth Out: <http://www.truthout.org/>

AlterNet.org: <http://www.alternet.org/>

Free Press <http://freepress.net>

<http://www.reclaimthedia.org>

Media Tank, <http://www.mediatank.org>

Counter Punch <http://www.counterpunch.org>

MediaChannel: <http://www.mediachannel.org/>

Independent Media Center: <http://www.indymedia.org>

Black Voices for Peace: <http://www.bvfp.org/>

Hightower Radio — <http://www.webactive.com/hightower/>

B-Tselem—<http://www.btselem.org>

A Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP): www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org

Other places for news and information

The Nation—<http://www.thenation.com/>

Mother Jones—<http://www.motherjones.com/>

In These Times — <http://inthesetimes.com/>

The Progressive — <http://www.progressive.org/>

Z Magazine—<http://www.zmag.org/>

Tom Paine.common sense — <http://www.tompaine.com/>

Institute for Global Communication — <http://www.igc.org/igc/gateway/index.html>

Corporate Watch — <http://www.corpwatch.org/home/PHH.jsp>

MoveOn.org — <http://www.moveon.org/>

Global Alliance Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space — <http://www.space4peace.org>

Angry Arab News Service—<http://www.angryarab.blogspot.com/>

The Guardian: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/>

We're on the web too!

The Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County (pjnsjc) website is back with information, calendar, media links, and more. Under construction and growing. Share your ideas on how the website should evolve.

<http://www.pjnsjc.org>

Real anti-war demands *(continued from page 1)*

most public soldiers who refused to return to fight in Iraq is Camilo Mejia (see www.freecamilo.org), who is serving a one-year

prison sentence after being convicted of desertion. "I witnessed the horror of war," said Camilo at his trial, "the firefights, the ambushes, the excessive use of force, the abuse of prisoners. Acting upon my principles became incompatible with my role in the military. By putting my weapon down I chose to reassert myself as a human being."

We also need to support counter-recruitment efforts, efforts that provide young people—particularly in poor communities—with a truthful picture of the risks of joining the military and of their other options for employment and education. See www.objector.org for a list of groups doing counter-recruitment, general support for soldiers (including a GI Rights Hotline), and advice for those who want to apply for conscientious objector status.

3. Pressure Congress to stop further funding, investigate war profiteering and cut Halliburton and other contractors from the government dole.

A December 8, 2004 Associated Press poll found that the majority of Americans don't believe there will be stable, democratic government in Iraq and disapprove of George Bush's handling of the situation. More and more Americans are recognizing that this war is unwinnable and don't want to see billions more of our tax dollars wasted. We must now convince our Congressional representatives. In February, the Bush administration is expected to request an additional \$80 billion for the military.

This massive request includes money for building dozens of military bases in Iraq and the most expensive U.S. embassy in the world, as well as money for more troops. We must demand that our representatives oppose funding that further entrenches the U.S. presence in Iraq.

We must also call on Congress to stop government agencies from giving contracts to U.S. companies for "rebuilding" Iraq. Iraqis have some of the best engineers and builders in the world, and are

totally capable of rebuilding their own country. The U.S. contractors in Iraq are plagued by incompetence, waste, corruption, cronyism and lack of accountability. They also take jobs away from Iraqis, contributing to the catastrophic unemployment rate of about 70% and the increasing Iraqi bitterness against Americans.

We must demand that Congress stop giving new contracts to U.S. companies and that it investigate more fully the charges of war profiteering against companies that have been awarded high-dollar contracts, particularly Halliburton. In fact, there is an on-going FBI probe of Halliburton for war profiteering. We should demand that Congress stop all monies to Halliburton while charges are pending and if found guilty, ban Halliburton from receiving any future government contracts.

We should also demand a freeze on contracts to companies whose employees are accused of being involved in human rights abuses, such as CACI and Titan in the case of the Abu Ghraib prison.

4. Strengthen local peace work and bring the cost of the war home

The anti-war coalition must reach out to broader sectors of the community, especially religious groups, labor, communities of color and students. We must make clear the connections between the \$200 billion squandered on Iraq and the cuts that communities across the US are facing in health care, education and vital social services. The amazing website www.nationalpriorities.org will give you an estimate of the cost of the war for your city and state.

Get local churches, labor unions, student governments and city councils to pass resolutions against the occupation. Hundreds of such resolutions were passed before the war began; we need to revive that energy in the call to bring the troops home. In November 2004, the city of San Francisco had a "Bring the Troops Home" measure on the ballot, and it passed by an overwhelming 63 percent. Similar ballot initiatives or resolutions could be passed in cities all over the country. For the text of the resolution, see <http://www.smartvoter.org/2004/11/02/ca/sf/meas/N/>.

It is also time to ramp up the anti-

war activism with non-violent civil disobedience.

This could include sit-ins at the offices of military recruiters or congresspeople or military contractors, blockades at military bases, or "sleep-ins" at schools or libraries to demand money for books, not for war. A great model is the "sleep-in" staged by students at the Boulder High School until they secured a meeting with their congressional representative to express their concerns about a draft (see www.commondreams.org/headlines/04/11/05-21.htm). Another great example is when the Kensington Welfare Rights Union took over their local Army Recruiters

Office calling for "Money for Housing, Not for War!" (see www.kwru.org).

5. Build the global coalition

February 15, 2003 was indeed an amazingly powerful day when "the world said no to war." We need to strengthen the global anti-war coalition and not just organize joint rally days, but joint campaigns. These could be campaigns against companies profiting from war, or campaigns to get countries that are still part of the "coalition forces" to withdraw (by the end of 2004, at least 15 of the original 32 members of the coalition had either left Iraq or had announced their intention to leave).

We should consider a global campaign to push the United Nations—both at the Security Council and the General Assembly—to call for a swift timeline for the withdrawal of foreign military forces from Iraq.

6. Support efforts to decrease our dependence on oil

While the U.S. invasion of Iraq was not solely about oil, it is certainly true that if broccoli were Iraq's main export, we would not have invaded. It's also true that until we get off our dependence on oil, we will continue to have policies in the Middle East that tie us to undemocratic regimes like Saudi Arabia or push us to invade countries like Iraq to control their oil.

There are plenty of ways to start breaking our oil addiction, including investing significant resources in solar and wind power

(continued next page)

Time for Congress to speak up

President Bush used his televised State of the Union address to argue his unilateral, military policy is spreading freedom and democracy across the world. The elections in Iraq, he said, are the latest proof of this thesis.

But the militarization of U.S. foreign policy is putting freedom at risk. The long term peace that we seek can only be accomplished by addressing the root causes of this violence.

The elections in Iraq were an important first step toward returning full sovereignty to the Iraqi people. But the lack of an explicit declaration that it is the policy of the United States to withdraw all military troops and bases from Iraq is contributing to the violence and uncertainty that is endangering the transition in that country.

There is a growing belief among Iraqi that the U.S. has imperial ambitions in that country and in that region, and this impression has been fueled by reports that U.S. troops are building 14 permanent military bases. Several voters going to the polls last Sunday in Iraq suggested to reporters that they

believed they were voting to have U.S. troops leave.

Now is the time for Congress to take the next step. Urge your members of Congress to support a resolution declaring that "It is the policy of the United States government to withdraw all military troops and bases from Iraq."

Advocates of an immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq will argue that this is too little, while supporters of the current policy may argue that such a statement reduces U.S. options and could undermine security at a delicate moment. But FCNL believes that this congressional statement, if approved by both the House and the Senate, could reconcile these positions, help unify our divided nation, and send an important signal to the people of Iraq.

ACTION: Talk to your representative. Members of Congress will be returning home to their districts from February 19 to 27 to meet with constituents and hear

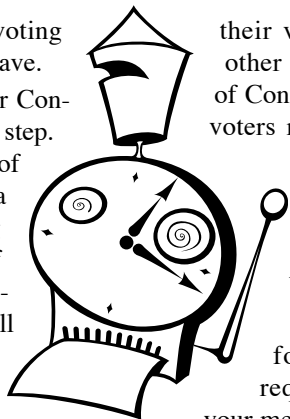
their views about Iraq and other key issues. Members of Congress tell us that three voters meeting with them in their home district is more important than 50 people meeting with them in Washington.

For more information on how to request a meeting with your member of Congress, for talking points, and to learn about others in your area who may want to participate in such a meeting go to the new FCNL web site at www.fcnl.org. Follow the first link under "Get Involved in the Campaign" to sign up for the lobby days.

Go to <http://www.fcnl.org/smith/stateofunion05.htm> to read a commentary on the president's State of the Union address by Col. Dan Smith, the FCNL senior fellow on military affairs.

Source: FCNL 2/3/05 release, Friends Committee on National Legislation, 245 Second St. NE, Washington, DC 20002-5795

fcnl@fcnl.org * <http://www.fcnl.org/> (800)630-1330



Bush supporters— now you know

John Morearty

The following corporations and their executives gave at least two-thirds of their political contributions to the Bush Republican party in 2004:

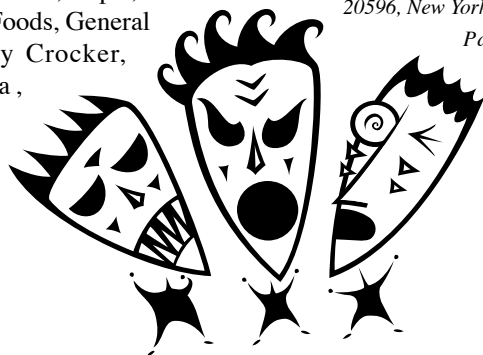
Home Depot, Target, Sears, Amway, Circuit City, JC Penney, SBC, Dell computers, Marriott, Outback, Wendy's, McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Safeway, Albertsons, Univision (channel 19), General Electric, 3M (Scotch tape), Proctor and Gamble, Hallmark, Goodyear, Dow, Monsanto, Dupont, Curves, Scotts lawn care, Kodak, Kohler plumbing, Coke, Pepsi, Coors, Dean Foods, General Mills/Betty Crocker, Chiquita, Nestle,

Krispy Kreme, and Marie Callenders. The champion was Walmart, with over \$1,600,000 given to the Republicans. Get the full list in detail from Jim Hightower.

Remember, it was an economic boycott that brought the grape and lettuce growers to sign union contracts, a boycott that made Nestle stop selling infant formula in the third world, and a boycott that broke the apartheid regime of South Africa.

Source: Journalist Jim Hightower reports fine-print research in the January 2005 issue of his invaluable Hightower Lowdown. (Only \$15 a year-seniors and students \$12-from The Hightower Lowdown, PO box 20596, New York NY 10011.)

Part two of the boycott list will appear next month-along with corporations to support.



(continued from page 4)

(see www.appolloproject.org), promoting fuel efficient vehicles (see www.jumpstartford.org), and focusing on conservation and efficiency (see www.rmi.org).

George Bush took the 2004 election as a mandate to continue this illegal, immoral war in Iraq. It is up to us, the American people, to rebel against Bush's arrogant empire-building. It is up to us-as caring, compassionate Americans-to force the Bush administration to stop the killing, start respecting international law, and assume our rightful place as one among many in the family of nations.

Medea Benjamin is co-founder of the human rights group Global Exchange (www.globalexchange.org) and the women's peace initiative Code Pink (www.codepinkalert.org). She has led numerous delegations to both Iraq and Afghanistan, and started the International Occupation Watch Center (www.occupationwatch.org). Media Benjamin will be the featured speaker at the PJN banquet on May 7 (details in future issues.)

University of the Pacific presents

Black History Month 2005

Black History Month Events:

February 15:

- Pacific Women Connect presents: "African American Women in Higher Education"; 12:00 pm-1:00 pm, Bechtel Center, Free
- Delta Sigma Theta presents: "Soulstice Lounge Poetry Slam: Prentice"; 8:00 pm-11:00 pm, The Summit, Free

February 17:

- Soul Food; 11:30-1:30 pm, The Redwood Room, \$8.50
- "High School Talent Show"; 6:00-8:00 pm, Grace Covell Dining Hall, Free

February 17-19:

- Movie: "Jay-Z: Fade to Black"; 8:00 pm, Pacific Theatre, \$5

February 18:

- Elementary School Event; 9:00 am-1:00 pm, AG Spanos Center, Free

February 19:

- African American Student Union/Delta Sigma Theta Formal: "Step in the Name of Love"; 6:30 pm-1:00 am, Raymond Great Hall, Free

February 22-March 25:

- "The Return to Africa Art Exhibition"; Reynolds Art Gallery, University of the Pacific, Free

February 24:

- Soul Food; 11:30-1:30 pm, The Redwood Room, \$8.50

February 25:

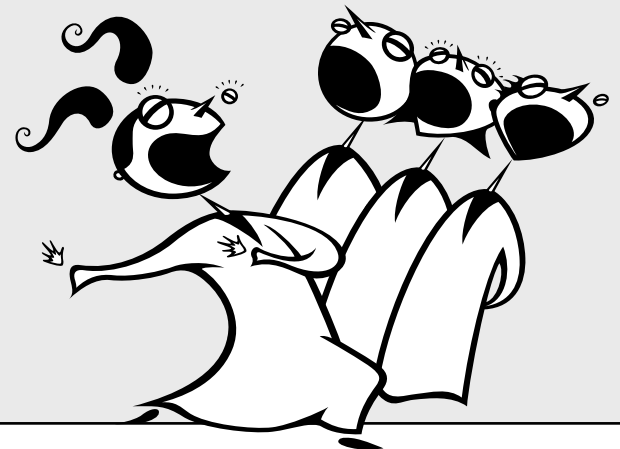
- "Market Place Vendors"; 12:00-3:00 pm, McCaffrey Center
- African American Alumni Reception at "The Return to Africa" Art Exhibition; 6:00-8:00 pm, Reynolds Art Gallery, University of the Pacific, Free

February 26:

- African American Student Union Third Annual High School Conference; 9:00 am-4:00 pm, Grace Covell Dining Hall, University of the Pacific, Free

Black History Month 2005 is sponsored by The African American Student Union, ASUOP, The James Irvine Foundation, The Office of the Provost, The Black History Month Committee at Pacific, The Division of Student Life, The Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Office of University Advancement.

For more information, please contact Dr. Heather Knight, Associate Provost, University of the Pacific at (209) 946-2166.



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"Together, we will walk the pathway to health and wholeness."

Dear Mr. President

I am a serious procrastinator. I have been meaning to write and alert you to the latest ranting of a fellow Texan, Jim Hightower. Very much in the vein of Molly Ivins, another disagreeable Texan, Hightower never forgoes the opportunity to take pot shots at your foreign and domestic policies, never mind your recognized achievements by such objective analysts as William Kristol, David Brooks and old reliable, George Will. A world class ax grinder is ole' Jim Hightower.

Your resounding second term election speaks volumes of what 51 percent of the electorate think about the "weapons of mass destruction" ruse. It troubles them not that you exercised your prerogative to alter the rationale for invading Iraq as many times as necessary if, in the end, it resulted in the riddance of the infamous Sadaam Hussein, and ushered in a new era of freedom and democracy, the ongoing insurgency notwithstanding.

There are those, mainstream church leaders among them, who continue to harp on the ancient "ends and means" rationale for war-making and, in the case of Iraq, pre-emptive war-making. They maintain that even worthy ends such as freedom and democracy do not justify the means of making war on a sovereign nation with the consequent slaughtering of innocent civilians and the wholesale destruction of a country's infrastructure. These religionists and pacifists are tightly bound in, what some consider to be, an ethics straight jacket that is no longer applicable in the present era of international terror and suicidal madness. In the words of Bob Dylan, "the times they are a changin'".

The anti-war crowd need a serious reality check as they cling to the notions that brutal dictators can be pacified through endless rounds of diplomacy and conflict resolution. On the other hand, the warriors among us, as yourself, have put their faith in military might to vanquish the enemies of freedom. Even though as many as 100,000 Iraqi civilians have been slaughtered in the process of freedom making, it is believed by many that they died in a just cause as have the 1,450 American service men and women. These are the unintended consequences referred to as collateral damage or fall out. As in our own revolution, many sacrificed their lives on the

bumpy road to freedom. Bear that in mind and your conscience won't trouble you for a minute.

Most theologians, moralists and ethical scholars of today hold the view that the centuries-old doctrine on means and ends is as relevant today as it has been over time. On the other hand, you're in good company with evangelicals like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson who have spoken not a word contrary to your Iraqi war policy. You may take some comfort and solace in the knowledge that legions support your bellicose, er, strong leadership. While your antagonists lament the carnage and ravages of a war-torn Iraq, not a single protagonist ever doubted that at the end of the freedom tunnel is the shining light of democracy. Many political observers agree that the successful outcome of the recent election has advanced Iraq on its march to freedom.

It has not escaped my attention that none of your critics have conceded that you are guided in spirit by your heavenly father. It may seem passing strange to some that the messages you receive from on high are somewhat at odds with the messages you received from Pope John Paul before and since the war on Iraq began. Bear in mind that he is quite old, frail and set in his ways.

Language is everything and, perhaps, your most powerful tool in shaping public opinion. Example: the estate tax on inherited wealth has been an important source of federal revenue for many decades. Absolutely impregnable. Affluent Americans have never accepted that a portion of their inherited wealth goes directly to the U.S. treasury as a source of revenue. This changed when a majority in the congress, mostly fellow republicans, changed the wording of "estate tax" to a "death tax." Fast forward to your social security privatization scheme, er, proposal. After four years of "private accounts" language, pollsters discovered that the term scared the bejesus out of the fixed income elderly living on the margins. So, what to do. Change the wording. Presto! "Private accounts" morphs into "personal accounts." Clever by half.

Finally, you have gained a modicum of credit for your selections for Secretary of State and Attorney General. Neither Condaleeza Rice

nor Alberto Gonzalez enjoyed smooth sailing at their senate committee hearings. Condi successfully dodged the "mushroom cloud smoking gun" bullet, as did Alberto in his much publicized memo on the Geneva Convention's "quaint" rules on the torture of prisoners. They weathered the storm of a few hard hitting demos with pugilistic skills not unlike your own. Some observers found it ironic that as a staunch anti-affirmative action proponent, you selected a woman and a Latino for the two highest cabinet offices. Politics without irony would be like Washington without lobbyists, if you get my drift.

The soup's on. Gotta go. God speed on you barn storming forays for Social Security reforms a la "private, er, personal accounts."

*Reid Cerney
 Barbara Boxer constituent*



Feedback (continued from page 2)

must realize they still have a responsibility (as Christians do) to recognize (not ignore) and fight injustice. First to recognize, then to negotiate and finally show real leadership and sacrifice or the whole world will become possessed. The future must allow free mingling of people all over the world...and allow each nation to retain their culture.

Our purpose must remain steadfastly responsible for injustice today—and we cannot forget WWI and WWII.

Margaret Fleming

A way out of Iraq

Patricia Daugherty

As the numbers of American and Iraqi wounded and dead mount daily, the words “quagmire” and “colossal error” are used more frequently to describe our government’s occupation of Iraq. Many Americans are increasingly troubled by the carnage and destruction but remain conflicted about how to stop it. Some argue that United States can not pull out of Iraq because it has a responsibility to restore security and help stabilize the country it invaded and occupies. At the same time, many recognize that continued U.S. military presence and operations are the greatest threat to Iraq’s future.

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), a Quaker lobby in the public interest, addresses this paradox while pushing forward an outline for U.S. troop withdrawal from Iraq. FCNL offers the six steps below as a constructive alternative to President Bush’s failed formula that is not geared toward peace.

Meeting U.S. moral and legal obligations to restore security and rebuild Iraq requires the removal--not build-up--of U.S. forces. FCNL calls on the Administration and Congress to:

* *Cease fire: Halt U.S. military actions immediately;*

* *Declare withdrawal policy: Congress should pass a “leave no bases behind” resolution, declaring that U.S. policy is to withdraw all U.S. forces and bases from Iraq;*

* *End the occupation: Withdraw immediately U.S. forces from major population centers to remote temporary bases and shift to a limited role of providing border control and assuring Iraq’s territorial integrity until other security forces can take over;*

* *Support Iraqi sovereignty: Fund Iraqi efforts to re-employ ministry staff, train new police and security forces;*

* *Nationalize reconstruction: Give Iraqis control over reconstruction funds, terminate contracts with U.S. contractors and turn projects over to Iraqis, and provide transparent accounting of all U.S. contracts;*

* *Stabilize Iraq: Commit to long-term U.S. financial support for Iraqi-led reconstruction.*

For more: (www.afsc.org/iraq/guide/board-statement.htm); also (www.afsc.org/iraq/guide/position-qa.htm) and (ga3.org/campaign/iraq_peace).

Suggestions for U.S. troop withdrawal are not limited to the FCNL. Recently, U.S. Representa-

tive Howard Coble, a Greensboro Republican and close ally of President Bush, stated that troop withdrawal from Iraq ought to be an option placed on the table for consideration.

On January 24, twenty - five House Democrats introduced HCR 35, which calls for immediate troop withdrawal. It also calls for the administration to develop plans to address reconstruction of Iraq and for an “emergency meeting of Iraq’s leadership, Iraq’s neighbors, the United Nations, and the Arab League to create an international peacekeeping force in Iraq and to replace U.S. military forces with Iraqi police and National Guard forces to ensure Iraq’s security.”

These are hopeful signs. More Congressional leaders should be encouraged to demand immediate withdrawal. As the aggressor, the U.S. has the responsibility to admit to the failure of our policy, but we cannot turn our backs on the suffering and economic dislocation our foreign policy has wreaked upon Iraq. Our government should expect to pay war reparations

just as Iraq paid Kuwait after invading that country. Imagine the billions now being spent to occupy Iraq instead spent on reconstructing Iraq. A reconstruction managed by Iraqis, for Iraqis. Moving from spending on war to spending on

Peace booklet inspires

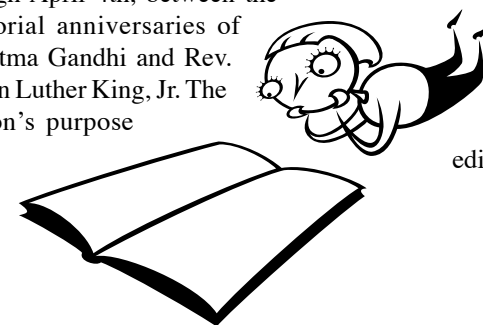
As part of the Fifth Annual Season for Nonviolence being celebrated all across the world, the Circle of the Feminine Divine is proud to offer a booklet entitled 64 Ways in 64 Days to any individuals or groups who are interested in raising their awareness of nonviolent principles. The booklet is intended as a daily guide with a short meditation for each day. The booklets are provided free of charge.

Convened by the Association for Global New Thought, and co-founded by Dr. Arun Gandhi of the Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, The Season for Nonviolence commemorates the 64 days, January 30 through April 4th, between the memorial anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Season’s purpose

is to create an awareness of non-violent principles and practice as a powerful way to heal, transform and empower people’s lives and their communities.

Through an educational and community action campaign, A Season for Nonviolence honors those who are using nonviolence to build a community that honors the dignity and worth of every human being. The goal is to demonstrate that every person can move the world in the direction of peace through their daily nonviolent choice and action.

For information of how you can be involved, or to obtain copies of the 64 Ways in 64 Days booklet, contact Rick Nafzinger at 467-4866 or at femininedivine@comcast.net



peace would begin to salve the wounds we have opened with our guns and bombs.

Our government will take these positive actions only if we speak out to end this “quagmire” and “colossal error.” The FCNL has developed a proposal to do this. The

25 Representatives have introduced legislation and others need to join in the push, including our own Rep. Richard Pombo. Our responsibility for the well-being of Iraq and US service people begins by demanding immediate withdrawal from this occupation and war.

Human rights watch

Iraq: new gov't continues torture

Iraqi security forces are committing systematic torture and other abuses against people in detention, Human Rights Watch said in a late January report.

The 94-page report, *The New Iraq? Torture and Ill-treatment of Detainees in Iraqi Custody*, documents how unlawful arrest, long-term incommunicado detention, torture and other ill-treatment of detainees (including children) by Iraqi authorities have become routine and commonplace. Human Rights Watch conducted interviews in Iraq with 90 detainees, 72 of whom alleged having been tortured or ill-treated, particularly under interrogation.

While insurgent forces have committed numerous unlawful attacks against the Iraqi police,

this does not justify the abuses committed by Iraqi authorities, Human Rights Watch said.

“The people of Iraq were promised something better than this after the government of Saddam Hussein fell,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, executive director of Human Rights Watch’s Middle East and North Africa Division. “The Iraqi Interim Government is not keeping its promises to honor and respect basic human rights. Sadly, the Iraqi people continue to suffer from a government that acts with impunity in its treatment of detainees.”

Methods of torture cited by detainees include routine beatings to the body using cables, hosepipes and other implements. Detainees report kicking, slapping and

punching; prolonged suspension from the wrists with the hands tied behind the back; electric shocks to sensitive parts of the body, including the earlobes and genitals; and being kept blindfolded and/or handcuffed continuously for several days. In several cases, the detainees suffered what may be permanent physical disability.

Detainees also reported being deprived by Iraqi security forces of food and water, and being crammed into small cells with standing room only. Numerous detainees described how Iraqi police sought bribes in return for release, access to family members or food and water.

Human Rights Watch said its investigations in Iraq over a four-month period between July and Oc-

tober 2004 found the systematic use of arbitrary arrest, prolonged pre-trial detention (up to four months in some cases) without judicial review, torture and ill-treatment of detainees, denial of access by families and lawyers to detainees, improper treatment of detained children, and abysmal conditions in pre-trial facilities. The report does not address

the mistreatment of persons in the custody of U.S. or other multinational forces in Iraq.

“The Iraqi security forces obviously face tremendous challenges, including an insurgency that has targeted civilians,” Whitson said. “We unequivocally condemn the insurgents’ brutality. But international law is unambiguous on this point: no government can justify

torture of detainees in the name of security.”

Human Rights Watch called on the Iraqi government to promptly investigate all allegations of torture and ill-treatment and bring to justice officials responsible for the abuse of detainees. The government should take urgent steps to ensure compliance with its domestic and international legal obligations that would afford better protection for detainees from abuse,

and give serious consideration to granting access to detention facilities under Ministry of Interior authority to independent human rights monitoring groups.

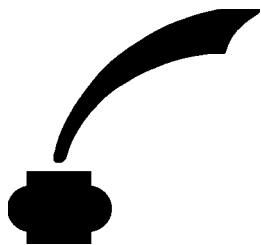
Source: Human Rights Watch release 1/25/05 <http://hrw.org/reports/2005/iraq0105/>

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Sen. Barbara Boxer, 1700 Montgomery St, Ste 240, San Francisco, CA 94111. 415-403-0100; 112 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3553, senator@boxer.senate.gov

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, One Post Street, Ste 2450, San Francisco, CA 94104. 415-249-0707; 331 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3841, senator@feinstein.senate.gov

Rep. Dennis Cardoza (R-District 18) 445 West Weber Ave. Suite 240, Stockton, CA 95203. 209-946-0361, 503 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-6131.

Rep. Richard Pombo (R-District 11), 2321 W March Lane, Ste 205, Stockton, CA 95207. 209-951-3091; 1519 Longworth Bldg, Washington, DC 20515. 202-225-1947, rpombo@mail.house.gov

Rep. John Doolittle (R-District 4), 2130 Professional Dr, Ste 190, Roseville, CA 95661. 916-786-5560; 1524 Longworth Bldg, Washington, DC 20515. 202-225-2511

Secretary of State Colin Powell, 2201 C St, NW Washington, DC 20520

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-445-2841

State Sen. Michael Machado (D-District 5), 31 E Channel St, Room 440, Stockton, CA 95202. 209-948-7930; State Capitol, Rm 4035, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-445-2407

Assemblyperson Barbara Matthews (D-District 17), 31 E Channel St, Room 306, Stockton, CA 95202. 209-948-7479; State Capitol Room 5135, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-319-2017

Bush hit list: class action suits

A key part of President Bush's agenda for his second term is "legal reform." As part of this drive the Senate will vote the week of February 7 on the so-called "Class Action Fairness Act" (S. 5). There is nothing fair about this proposed law. It is simply a way for corporations to restrict the legal rights of ordinary citizens to fight unscrupulous companies that sell unsafe products, rip off consumers, pollute the environment and employ unfair labor practices.

What is at stake

Class action lawsuits are an effective legal remedy for average citizens to confront large companies. Rather than pursuing an impossibly expensive and difficult individual legal battle against a large corporation, class action lawsuits allow a large number of similarly injured or otherwise impacted citizens (a "class") to join together in a common lawsuit. Class actions have been one of the single most effective methods of enforcing corporate accountability and improving business practices when unscrupulous companies sell unsafe products, rip off consumers, pollute the environment or employ unfair labor practices. Class actions have been used in recent years to stop insurance companies from illegally raising customer premiums, to stop auto giants like Ford from knowingly installing faulty engine parts that caused multiple injuries and deaths, and to stop mega-employers like Wal-Mart from making employees work overtime without pay.

The Bush Administration wants to destroy the class action system. Parroting inaccurate information and downright fabricated stories about "frivolous lawsuits," "judicial hellholes" and the supposed cost of our legal system to business, the Republican leadership of the U.S. Senate is poised to pass the misnamed "Class Action Fairness Act."

The bill is designed to allow defendant companies to move class actions filed in state courts, where they have traditionally been tried, to federal courts. Once in federal court, which is much friendlier to business interests than state courts, cases are far less likely to even get certified - thereby blocking a trial over the merits of the case. What's more, the federal judiciary

is so overburdened already, that throwing class actions on top of its workload virtually guarantees that any justice from a class action suit will be delayed by years - and as we all know, justice delayed is often justice denied.

Of course industry knows all this, and that is why business interests have had a small army of lobbyists pushing this bill, which is supported by every major industry group and opposed by a large coalition of consumer, civil rights, labor and environmental groups.

To be done

The bill should be soundly defeated for the sham "reform" that it is. But while it could be challenging to stop in the Republican-dominated Senate, we have a good chance to amend the bill and fix its most dangerous aspects. Specifically, we urge you to demand that your Senator vote for two amendments to the

bill:

- Sen. Bingaman's consumer amendment, which will give federal judges the tools to certify state law class actions on a nationwide basis so that consumers across the country can hold companies accountable for wrongdoing.

- Sen. Kennedy's civil rights and worker protection amendment (which carves out state law civil rights and wage-and-hour cases from the scope of the bill) is needed to ensure that ordinary working men and women will continue to have access to their own state courts for cases brought under their own state law.

ACTION: Please contact your Senators now to let them know that you want the class action system to remain intact - and fair.

Source: Public Citizen Member Services release 2/1/05 <member@CITIZEN.ORG>

Who files frivolous lawsuits?

Jim Hightower

Look for a big push by Bush this year to restrict your right to sue corporations that harm or cheat you.

George claims that you unruly citizens are treating big corporations unfairly, constantly filing "frivolous lawsuits" against them. So, to protect the poor corporations, Bush says he must limit your access to America's courts.

But here's a dirty little secret that Bush doesn't mention: By far the biggest filer of frivolous lawsuits are not We the People—but corporations! The consumer group, Public Citizen, has done a survey of cases in Arkansas, Mississippi, Chicago and Philadelphia—four places alleged to be hotbeds of what Bush and his corporate backers like to call "lawsuit abuse" by us little folks.

The cases reveal that, contrary to the propaganda, American businesses file about four times as many lawsuits as do individuals—even though there are 40 times more individuals in America than businesses. Also, the survey finds that corporations and their

legal beagles file frivolous lawsuits 69 percent more often than individuals do.

Big companies keep a bevy of attorneys on staff or on retainer, and they routinely unleash them on their customers, competitors, suppliers, workers, and anyone else standing between them and another dollar bill. Regular folks, however, count on a system of trial lawyers to help us when we've been wronged. These lawyers pay for all of the up front costs of us going to trial, and they only get paid if we win. This democratic, entrepreneurial system gives poor and middle-class families access to the judicial system—not just the rich.

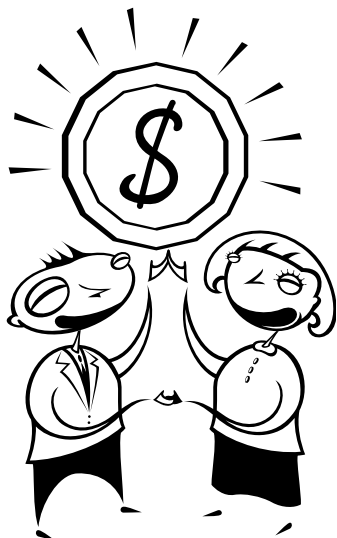
It's this access that Bush & Company want to take away. Yet, the corporations pushing Bush's hokey "reform"—the very corporations that are so quick to run to the courthouse with frivolous suits—are demanding that they be exempted from the law to shut off access to the system. To get Public Citizen's report and fight for your rights call 202-454-5104.

Source: Jim Hightower 1/5/05 report, Hightower & Associates, 1802 W. 6th St, Austin, TX 78703; info@jimhightower.com stuff

Clearing up some confusions about social security

Paul Krugman

Summary: There is a lot of confusion in the debate over Social Security privatization, much of it deliberate. This is part 2 of a 3-part essay that discusses 1) the meaning of the trust fund, which privatizers declare either real or fictional at their convenience; 2) the likely rate of return on private accounts, which has been greatly overstated; and 3) the (ir)relevance of putative reductions in far future liabilities. (*Connections* will publish the final part in the April issue).



Rates of return on private accounts

Privatizers believe that privatization can improve the government's long-term finances without requiring any sacrifice by anyone—no new taxes, no net benefit cuts (guaranteed benefits will be cut, but people will make it up with the returns on their accounts.) How is this possible?

The answer is that they assume that stocks, which will make up part of those private accounts, will yield a much higher return than bonds, with minimal long-term risk.

Now it's true that in the past stocks have yielded a very good return, around 7 percent in real terms - more than enough to compensate for additional risk. But a weird thing has happened in the debate: proposals by erstwhile serious economists such as Martin Feldstein appear to be based on the assertion that it's a sort of economic law that stocks will always yield a much higher rate of return than bonds. They seem to treat that 7 percent rate of return as if it were a natural constant, like the speed of light.

What ordinary economics tells us is just the opposite: if there is a natural law here, it's that easy returns get competed away, and there's no such thing as a free lunch. If, as Jeremy Siegel tells us, stocks have yielded a high rate of return with relatively little risk for long-run investors, that doesn't tell us that they will always do so in the future. It tells us that in the past stocks were underpriced. And we can expect the market to correct that.

In fact, a major correction has already taken place. Historically, the

price-earnings ratio averaged about 14. Now, it's about 20. Siegel tells us that the real rate of return tends to be equal to the inverse of the price-earnings ratio, which makes a lot of sense.[1] More generally, if people are paying more for an asset, the rate of return is lower. So now that a typical price-earnings ratio is 20, a good estimate of the real rate of return on stocks in the future is 5 percent, not 7 percent.

Here's another way to arrive at the same result. Suppose that dividends are 3 percent of stock prices, and that the economy grows at 3 percent (enough, by the way, to make the trust fund more or less perpetual.) Not all of that 3 percent growth accrues to existing firms; the Dow of today is a very different set of firms than the Dow of 50 years ago. So at best, 3 percent economic growth is 2 percent growth for the set of existing firms; add to dividend yield, and we've got 5 percent again.

That's still not bad, you may say. But now let's do the arithmetic of private accounts.

These accounts won't be 100 percent in stocks; more like 60 percent. With a 2 percent real rate on bonds, we're down to 3.8 percent.

Then there are management fees. In Britain, they're about 1.1 percent. So now we're down to 2.7 percent on personal accounts - barely above the implicit return on Social Security right now, but with lots of added risk. Except for Wall Street firms collecting fees, this is a formula to make everyone worse off. Privatizers say that they'll keep fees very low by restricting choice to a few index funds. Two points.

First, I don't believe it. In the December 21 New York Times story on the subject, there was a crucial giveaway: "At first, individuals would be offered a limited range of investment vehicles, mostly low-cost indexed funds. After a time, account holders would be given the option to upgrade to actively managed funds, which would invest in a more diverse range of assets with higher risk and potentially larger fees." (My emphasis.)

At first? Hmm. So the low-fee thing wouldn't be a permanent commitment. Within months, not years, the agitation to allow "choice" would begin. And the British experience shows that this would quickly lead to substantial dissipation on management fees.

Second point: if you're requiring that private accounts be invested in index funds chosen by government officials, what's the point of calling them private accounts? We're back where we were above, with the trust fund investing in the market via an index.

Now I know that the privatizers have one more trick up their sleeve: they claim that because these are called private accounts, the mass of account holders will rise up and cry foul if the government tries to politicize investments. Just like large numbers of small stockholders police governance problems at corporations, right? (That's a joke, by the way.)

If we are going to invest Social Security funds in stocks, keeping those investments as part of a government-run trust fund protects against a much clearer political economy danger than politicization of investments: the risk that Wall Street lobbyists will turn this into a giant fee-generating scheme.

To sum up: claims that stocks will always yield high, low-risk returns are just bad economics. And tens of millions of small private accounts are a bad way to take advantage of whatever the stock market does have to offer. There is no free lunch, and certainly not from private accounts.

Source: *The Economists' Voice*, Volume 2 Issue 1 2005

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Earth Day Festival

Earth Day is coming

Earth Day, Victory Park, Stockton, April 17

The 17th annual Earth Day Festival will return to Victory Park on Sunday, April 17. The Festival will be held from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be food, entertainment, information booths, displays, and exhibits regarding stewardship of our environment. Booth fees: \$100 - businesses; \$50 - for-profit; \$25 - nonprofit; school displays are free. There will be no admission charge. For more information on the event or booth registration, call 937-8791.

Calaveras Earth Day, Murphys Park, Murphys, April 24

The 4th annual Earth Day celebration will return to Murphys Park on Sunday, April 24. The Festival will be held from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be food, entertainment, information booths, displays, and exhibits regarding stewardship of our environment. Booth fees: \$35 - for-profit; \$15 - nonprofit; school displays are free. There will be no admission charge. For more information on the event or booth registration, call 786-3109.

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The imminent demise of the Republican Party

David W. Orr

Following the election of 2004, much has been made of the weaknesses of the Democratic Party, even its possible end. But it has escaped the notice of our blow-dry television pundits and political observers alike that the Republican Party, in the full blush of triumph in control of all the branches of government and large sections of the media, stands on the edge of certain extinction. The reasons grow daily more evident. Over the past three decades, the moderate, business-oriented party of Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Dwight Eisenhower was captured by its extreme right-wing - thereby becoming a party dominated by ideologues, increasingly divorced from unmovable facts. But no organization, political party, or nation can long survive by ignoring realities of ecology, social justice, law, economics, and true security. Sooner or later, it will step off the proverbial curb into onrushing traffic of events, forces, and trends that it refused to see.

The Republican Party has already stepped into the road. The question is not whether it will survive as presently constituted, but what else will be destroyed as it collapses in ruin and ignominy, sooner than later. Beneath the noisy spin of its media echo chamber, the true platform of the Republican Party, its future epitaph, is founded on denial. The rules of the Republican Party of George Bush, Dick Cheney, Karl Rove, Tom Delay, and their brethren are these:

- Deny science when its findings are not agreeable to your base. Republicans, notably, are on the wrong side of the largest issue in human history: human driven, rapid climate change. They've chosen instead to live in a Crichton-esque science fiction fantasy in which real science has no standing and human actions have no tragic, irreversible, and global ecological consequences. This is not just boneheaded; it is a form of criminality for which we have, as yet, no adequate words.
- Deny the looming approach of peak oil extraction thereby advancing the potential of economic, political, and social chaos

when global oil supply and demand diverge as soon they will.

- Deny the proven potential of superior technologies, design strategies, and policies that would move the country toward energy efficiency and a secure energy base of solar and wind power as well as the reasons of self-interest and economic advantage for doing so.

- Deny the true costs of air and water pollution thereby undermining the health of Americans.

- Deny the human and economic effects of pandering to the wealthy, thereby undermining social cohesion and the sense of fairness - historically, often a prelude to societal breakdown and revolution.

- Deny any and all mistakes, bad judgment, and corruption, relying on spin not truth and thereby building a solid reputation for mendacity and incompetence.

- Deny the limitations of military power to impose order on a recalcitrant world and thereby condemn the U.S. to a future of international isolation, conflict, and endless terrorism.

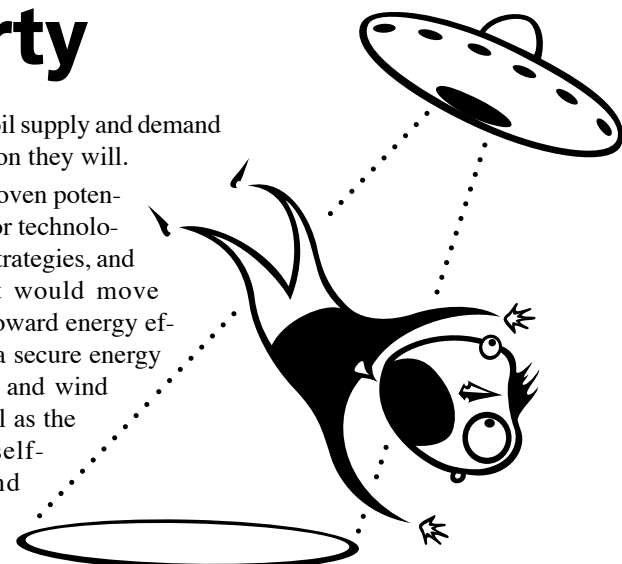
- Deny the great vulnerability of the American infrastructure to malice, malfeasance, and acts of God, thereby laying the groundwork for a future of recurring disasters.

- Deny the necessity for civil discourse, honesty, and transparency in the conduct of public life, thereby holding the citizenry in contempt and promoting a spirit of meanness.

- Deny without admitting it the democratic values of the country enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and Bill of Rights, the Gettysburg Address, and the Four Freedoms of Franklin Roosevelt, thereby undermining democracy at home while purportedly fighting for it in Iraq.

Denial's consequence

The Republican Party has chosen to deny social, ecological, cultural, religious, and economic realities which are unavoidably complicated, complex, diverse, ironic, and paradoxical. Instead,



they have chosen to make their own simplistic, ideological, and chauvinistic fantasy world that has little affinity for law, science, a free and independent press, fairness, true security, ecological sustainability, and the accountability that is requisite for genuine democracy.

That fantasy is on the cusp of becoming a real-life nightmare. Having made the United States a large bulls' eye for terrorists and malcontents, it may implode catastrophically taking much else with it. It may come undone more gradually, but no less catastrophically, as the economy sinks under the weight of war debt and foolish tax cuts. It may be overthrown if and when thoughtful conservatives (disturbed by fiscal recklessness and imperial pretensions), all honest persons (offended by mendacity, bombast, criminality, conniving, and diversion), and all Christians (sufficiently alert to notice the discrepancy between the words and life of the "Prince of Peace" and our foreign and domestic policies) finally shift alignments.

It may take longer, as the die of climate change and ecological deterioration is finally cast and we trigger adverse global changes of which we have been often warned. Unlikely as it seems, in a different scenario, the Republican nightmare still could be averted by an effective, committed, agile, and strategic opposition smart enough to recognize the historic convergence of opportunity, patriotic duty, sheer necessity.

David Orr is a Paul Sears Distinguished Professor at Oberlin College. Author of *The Last Refuge* (Island Press, 2004). David.Orr@oberlin.edu

Take the Constitution back

Ramsey Clark

We're the ones that are here really to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. We have to take the Constitution back. Back from Crimes Against Peace, from War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity. You know the Nuremberg Tribunal called the War of Aggression the supreme international crime, and it is. And George W. Bush has waged a war of aggression against Iraq. He's killed more than 100,000 people. Were their lives worth nothing? Can we have a moment of silence in memory of all the people who died in Iraq because of the criminal acts of George W. Bush in waging this war of aggression.

Every moment of their lives is fraught with danger right now because of us. The world is the most dangerous place it's ever been now because of what our country has done and is doing. And we have to take it back. We can't wait four more years.

There can't be any more Fallujahs. Fallujah is the 21st century

equivalent of Guernica. We just went in and destroyed that city. Drove the people out, killed them, thousands, we don't know how many. They won't even bother to count whose been killed or how many or estimate how many. They just keep killing. Almost every day we're reading about another check point where some family got wiped out cause they didn't do what they were supposed to do according to the military there.

Abu Ghraib is unbelievable... that we would torture people that way and on the instructions of the President of the United States and his highest legal advisors. Torture is okay, they said, go for it fellows. If we can't renounce that and remove it from office, then the Constitution doesn't work anymore.

We've got to do more than take back the Constitution. There has to be accountability for what has happened. The Constitution says that the President, Vice President and other officials of the United States shall be removed from office upon impeachment for and conviction of

high crimes and misdemeanors.

If you care about the Constitution you'd better start talking to your member of the House of Representatives and say impeachment now is essential to the integrity of the United States government and to the future of the United States. We've had more than 500,000 people sign on to ImpeachBush.org/VoteToImpeach.org. We need to get 5 million and we need to get 5 million on there quick.

And then the Congress will react. The Congress understands something when the people demand it. And the power is in the people. It always has been. The question is whether the people have the will to exercise it.

I think the imperative challenge of the American people now is to live up to the Constitution and demand the impeachment of George W. Bush and other officials of the government who are responsible for these crimes.

Source: Source: Ramsey Clark's 1/20/05 address, CounterInaugural demonstration, 4th St. and Pennsylvania Ave, Washington DC ImpeachBush/VoteToImpeach.org 1/21/05

Safe, clean nuclear power...NOT!

In his State of the Union Speech, President George Bush called on Congress to enact legislation to support his energy program, including "safe, clean nuclear power."

- Where Bush sees "safe, clean nuclear power," we see construction of new pre-deployed weapons of mass destruction to be used against us. Every community near a reactor would be at risk.
- Where Bush sees "safe, clean nuclear power," we see an unsolved legacy of lethal radioactive waste. This waste will continue to pile up at reactor sites, even if the proposed Yucca Mountain waste site-which does not and cannot meet federal regulations-were to open. Building new reactors would exacerbate the problem, and force the U.S. to find yet another national dumpsite, probably in the eastern U.S.
- Where Bush sees "safe, clean nuclear power," we see the proliferation of nuclear weapons-usable technology across the globe. Bush should have taken the courageous lead of International Atomic Energy Agency chief Mohammed ElBaradei, who has called for a five-year

moratorium on construction of new uranium enrichment facilities to help prevent nuclear proliferation. Instead, the administration supports construction of such plants in New Mexico and Ohio.

- Where Bush sees "safe, clean nuclear power," we see the diversion of scarce resources from sustainable technologies that should be used to combat the global climate crisis to the most expensive, least effective technology available to address the overriding environmental issue of our times.
- Where Bush sees "safe, clean nuclear power," we see an industry that spews radiation into the air and water on a daily basis from all of its reactors, mines, processing plants, and other facilities, and poses the constant threat of atomic meltdown.

Nothing safe or clean

There is nothing "safe" or "clean" about nuclear power. The first generation of atomic reactors brought us bankrupted utilities, Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, the threat of a nuclear waste transport

accident-a "Mobile Chernobyl," and the existing 103 reactors scattered across our nation that can provide nuclear dirty bombs for the enemy.

The Bush Administration's energy bill has failed for the past four years for good reason. Its support for the polluting nuclear, coal and oil industries offers mid-20th century solutions to 21st century problems.

Rather than rewarding the Bush Administration's energy industry friends with taxpayer dollars, the Congress can—and should—develop an energy policy that will lead the world in efficiency and sustainability, provide millions of new jobs in progressive new energy industries, and take effective steps toward ending the global climate crisis.

The Bush Administration's energy policy can, should and will be rejected by the American people and their elected officials.

Source: NIRS Statement on State of Union Address, 2/3/05, Nuclear Information and Resource Service, 1424 16th Street NW, #404, Washington, DC 20036 www.nirs.org

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Global warming: record high

In 2003, carbon emissions from the burning of fossil fuels climbed to a record high of 6.8 billion tons, up nearly 4 percent from the previous year. Global emissions of carbon have been rising steadily since the late eighteenth century—and rapidly since the 1950s. In fact, annual emissions have quadrupled since 1950.

Three fourths of global carbon emissions come from the burning of fossil fuels, namely coal, oil, and natural gas. The rest come largely from deforestation. Of the four major sectors contributing to these emissions, electricity generation accounts for the largest share—35 percent. Transportation and industrial processes each account for 20 percent, and the remaining 25 percent comes from residential and commercial buildings.

Two thirds of the carbon emissions from fossil fuel combustion are produced by just 10 countries. The United States, with 5 percent of the world's population, is the largest contributor, accounting for nearly one quarter of global emissions. China is second, with nearly 14 percent. Other major polluters are Russia, Japan, India, and Germany.

Most of the growth in emissions in the coming decades, however, is expected to come from developing countries. While overall global carbon emissions have risen 13 percent since 1990, those in China have increased 47 percent, for example. Indeed, this one country accounted for nearly half of the global increase in emissions in 2003.

As a result of the steady increase in carbon emissions, the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere has increased by 31 percent since 1750—a rate unprecedented in the past 20,000 years. Nature usually absorbs a large portion of carbon emissions in oceans and forests, known as “carbon sinks,” thereby slowing the rate of accumulation in the atmosphere. But recent trends suggest that emissions are outpacing absorption. Over the past two decades, atmospheric CO₂ concentrations rose each year on average by 1.5 parts per million (ppm). But the last two years have seen unexplained and alarming jumps of 2.04 ppm and 2.54 ppm. This suggests that the ability of the earth's natural systems to mitigate the rise in carbon emissions is weakening.

As concentrations rise, CO₂

and other greenhouse gases trap the earth's heat, causing temperatures to rise. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projects that global average surface temperatures will rise 1.4–5.8 degrees Celsius (2–10 degrees Fahrenheit) above

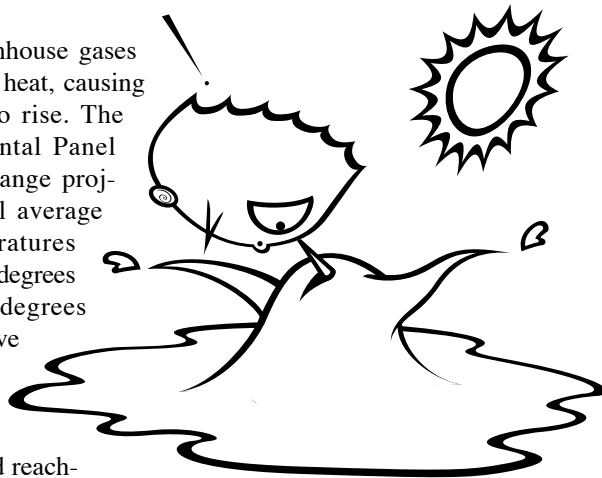
1990 levels by 2100. If the world's carbon sinks are indeed reaching a saturation point, actual temperature rises could be even greater.

Solutions

The good news is that we have the technologies to cut carbon emissions. Switching from a reliance on carbon-intensive fuels like coal and oil to renewable energies and lower-carbon natural gas can greatly reduce emissions. Wind energy, for example, currently produces enough carbon-free energy to provide electricity for 24 million people worldwide, and the potential is much greater. People are beginning to recognize the benefits of this energy source, and the use of wind power is growing at 31 percent a year.

Using more-efficient industrial and household appliances and setting new efficiency standards for industrial processes or retrofitted buildings will also pay off with reduced carbon emissions and lower energy bills. When mass transit is not available, gas-electric hybrid vehicles provide a low-emission transport solution. The highly efficient Toyota Prius, for example, uses less than half as much gasoline—and therefore emits less than half as much carbon—as the typical gasoline-powered car.

At the policy level, a government commitment to reducing carbon emissions through regulatory and market-based policies is vital. This can include energy-efficiency incentives like increased carbon taxes and removal of subsidies for carbon-intensive sources of energy, along with more investment in research and development of emissions-reducing technology. Denmark has raised taxes on carbon-intensive cars while reducing registration fees for purchases of energy-efficient vehicles. The Netherlands is requiring six of its coal-fired power plants to reduce



their carbon emissions by 6 million tons between 2008 and 2012. And Japan is encouraging government officials to replace their existing fleet of cars with 10 million low-pollution vehicles and 50,000 fuel cell cars by 2010.

The Bush response

In the United States, the Bush administration's Global Climate Change Initiative aims at reducing not carbon emissions but carbon intensity—the amount of carbon emissions per dollar of GDP. Under this plan, carbon intensity would decrease by 18 percent over the next 10 years. Yet with the economic growth that is expected, emissions of greenhouse gases would increase by 1.9 billion tons, rising 40 percent above 1990 levels by 2020. The administration's initiative incorrectly assumes that measures to curb carbon emissions will hamper economic growth. This not only ignores the societal costs of rising carbon emissions, it also overlooks the financial advantages of investing in an eco-economy. A recent study by Redefining Progress, for example, maps out a plan for investing in clean, energy-efficient technologies that would create 1.4 million high-quality jobs and save the average U.S. household \$1,275 a year in energy costs by 2025.

Despite the lack of leadership from the world's leading carbon emitter, the global community is determined to move away from carbon. Russia recently ratified the Kyoto Protocol, which commits industrial nations that have signed it to reduce their emissions by at least 5 percent below 1990 levels by 2012. The signatories of the protocol now account for 61 percent of the CO₂ emissions of industrial countries—well above the 55 percent required to bring the protocol into effect. So the Kyoto rules will be

Urban waterways council starts up

Is it possible for a small group of concerned citizens to come to the rescue of local urban waterways? Stockton is situated at the eastern edge of the unique ecosystem we call the San Joaquin Delta. The city of Stockton was founded on the banks of the San Joaquin river making it the terminus for the gold miners and their suppliers. The city is laced with seasonal streams, sloughs, and two rivers.

Development has rearranged many of these waterways. Where a meandering river flowed, there is now a straight, deeply dredged shipping channel. Where spring-time floods were part of the historic downtown, New Hogan Dam now protects the city from the Calaveras River floods. Levees were built to keep the excess water in a confined channel.

Newcomers to this region brought with them new plants, many of which are both aggressive and invasive, which out-compete the native flora. One example is the giant reed, *Arundo donax*, an extremely aggressive weed, which is rapidly populating much of the riverbanks. In the waterways, water hyacinth, a plant native to tropical

America, floats in large mats with each incoming tide making vast stretches of waterways completely overgrown.

In an effort to restore these urban waterways to a more natural state, a group of concerned citizens are now meeting on a regular basis to share concerns and information. They call themselves SUWAC, Stockton Urban Waterways Council. The group draws on the experiences of successful locals, including The Friends of Smith Canal (who have struggled to improve this stagnant waterway to a fish-friendly habitat) and Fourteen Mile Slough residents united to clean and to maintain improvements to the former creek.

Educating neighbors, friends and persons who use these areas for personal dumping of trash and yard waste is a necessary step to reduce pollution from yards and storm drains. As the efforts begin to produce cleaner waterways, the process that leads to success is shared with the concerned SUWAC members. Watch for future meeting times for a group determined to enhance our local waterways.

in place by early 2005. The United States and Australia—although they refused to sign on—are certain to be influenced by this, as an internationally uniform emissions trading program will be implemented and new competitive markets will open for efficient energy and technology.

Even with the Kyoto Protocol in effect, current projections show continued rapid increases in carbon emissions as countries move up the economic ladder and burn more fossil fuels. Scientists believe that an immediate 70–80 percent reduction in current carbon emissions is necessary to mitigate further climate change. Countries recognizing this have already moved beyond the 5-percent reduction goal outlined in the protocol. Germany has lowered its emissions by 9 percent since 1991 and is discussing the possibility of another 40-percent reduction by 2020. The United Kingdom, which has cut emissions by 8 percent since 1990, aims to reduce

them 60 percent by 2050 and is urging the rest of the European Union to do the same. A report from the David Suzuki Foundation and the Canadian Climate Action Network sets out a plan to halve greenhouse gas emissions in Canada by 2030. And where national governments fail to act, local governments have stepped in: More than 600 cities worldwide have developed their own plans to reduce carbon emissions.

While the Kyoto Protocol provides a crucial starting point for reducing carbon emissions, efforts over the long term will be futile without a commitment from the United States as well as from developing nations like China and India. Curbing carbon emissions and avoiding damaging changes in climate will require moving beyond the Kyoto Protocol with significantly lower emissions everywhere.

Source: Earth Policy Institute release, 1/10/05 www.earth-policy.org/Indicators/CO2/2004.htm

Stockton water... running on empty

Beth Luna

Is it right for the City of Stockton to pump so much underground water northeast of Stockton to support new subdivisions that existing residents who depend on that supply are adversely affected?

Is it right for the City of Stockton to permit developers to continue building when the groundwater that supplies existing wells serving all of the City is being depleted?

Is it right for the City to drill new wells in northeast Stockton, so that subdivisions on the west side of Stockton, which do not have usable well-water available, can continue to be developed?

What can existing residents do to protect their water supply?

I wish I had a really good answer to all of these questions. All the communities in northeastern San Joaquin County (including Stockton, Lodi, Acampo, Woodbridge, Morada, Linden and Colleeville) share the same groundwater aquifer that is being depleted at an alarming rate by existing users. The City of Stockton is making this problem even worse because of population growth and pressure from developers to approve new subdivisions.

Like surface water, water available from wells in the Stockton region is limited. As a matter of fact, more water is being taken from the underground aquifer serving all Stockton residents than is being naturally replenished. The groundwater basin in the Stockton region has been identified by the State to be in a critical condition of overdraft. Therefore, the water level in wells is declining and salty. San Joaquin County says that the difference between what is taken out and what is being recharged (either naturally or artificially) is at least 160,000 acre feet per year. This is equivalent to the amount that 350,000 typical households would use in the same period.

The well water in Spanos Park West is so poor in quality that it cannot be used as drinking water. Therefore the City has constructed a large pipeline to convey water from several large wells near Hwy 99 to Spanos Park West. This is a very real threat to the residents of Morada, which rely entirely on the same groundwater. There is a very real possibility that the City's ex-



portation of groundwater from here will reduce or eliminate water supply for Morada residents.

Taking this a step further, supplying water to Spanos Park West, Cannery Park, Empire Ranch and other developments in the Stockton area now (before additional surface water is available) threatens the water supply of all existing Stockton area residents and businesses. This is because drilling new wells and pumping the ground water to serve new subdivisions worsens the groundwater overdraft (the difference between water taken out of wells and what is recharged to the groundwater basin) and makes it more likely that Stockton will lose this source of supply. In effect, supplying water to new subdivisions reduces the amount of water available to existing residents.

A Town Hall meeting was held in the Morada area on January 11th to discuss problems resulting from rapid subdivision development. Morris Allen, former public utilities director for Stockton, explained the seriousness of water situation. As a direct result of that meeting, a coalition has been formed. It includes Linden, Waverly, Waterloo, Woodbridge and Morada and—on the west side of Stockton—Waller Rd., Childress Rd. and Moorland Rd. It is called the Eastside Coalition, even though the membership already is reaching beyond its title. Others may join.

As Morris Allen commented, "What the people of this region need to do, is to demand that political representatives stop the infighting and parochialism, to delay any further development approvals, and get moving on solutions to our water shortage problem before it is too late." Perhaps the Coalition is a step in the right direction.

Do it Yourself Alternative Fuels. NO MORE WAR

By Chris Kovac

Every day, millions of Americans (well aware of the corruption and devastation of the oil industry) spend millions of dollars on gasoline as fuel. The dollars out of our pockets help to create global warming, income inequality, dictatorships, environmental catastrophes, and worst of all, war. The people of the Middle East and other oil rich nations receive the brunt of this punishment. It's time that we stand up to this oil market that has captured our hard earned money, our government and so many lives.

Breaking our dependency on oil may be easier than one might think. There are many well-funded myths about petroleum that need to be unraveled.

Myth number 1: Hydrogen, ethanol and bio-diesel are new technologies, and like the solar industry, they are waiting to see new innovation that will allow them to compete with the superior product, oil.

This myth is false. The first gasoline vehicles on the market were designed to run on ethanol, and the first diesel vehicles were designed to run on vegetable oil or bio-diesel. Hydrogen was also used in the first vehicles experimentally. These are not new technologies; these are suppressed technologies.

Myth number 2: We need automobile manufacturers and their teams of brilliant scientists to produce these new super vehicles of the future.

This myth is false. Personally, I have very little automotive skills and I have converted my 1979 Volkswagon Rabbit to run on bio-diesel and straight vegetable oil. The conversion is simple and is covered in the book referred to below. Converting a vehicle to run on ethanol is a little more complicated, but when I say a little, I mean a little. It is very easy to purchase a used vehicle and convert it to run on ethanol. It's a matter of adjusting the compression ration, fuel to air mixture and a few other minor adjustments. And it doesn't need to be E85—you can run a vehicle on 100% ethanol if converted properly.

Myth number 3: The oil industry has amassed wealth that will inevitably be reinvested to suit our post-oil transportation needs.

This myth is false. The royalty in Saudi Arabia, the Bush family, Ken Lay and other oiligarchy figures are not interested in the transportation security of the United States. It is false to believe that the oil industry is a dual industry, that of oil and renewable energies. The dual industry that they represent is oil and arms. The Carlyle Group is an investment group which holds much of the Bush family and some of the Saudi family wealth. They invest heavily in oil, and are the 11th largest defense contractor in world. We know where they have taken us; why do we want to continue down that road?

Myth number 4: The oil industry rose to dominate the market by fair market practices.

Again, false. The oil industry's rise to power in the United States was not achieved by fair market practices. When the first vehicles hit the road, Henry Ford was a proponent of an ethanol-based transportation fleet, John Rockefeller and Standard Oil were proponents of an oil-based transportation fleet. If it wasn't for Rockefeller's contribution of two million dollars to the women's temperance movement and alcohol prohibition which ensued, we would be driving vehicles that run on ethanol to this day. Rockefeller alone was responsible for prohibition. The oil and automotive companies then teamed up to bribe and influence local governments, to disassemble light rail, and of course, their corruption and dominance continues to this day.

As a community, San Joaquin County can follow the lead of Sacramento County and form a bio-diesel co-op. We can follow the lead of Marin County and form an ethanol co-op, sharing skills, purchasing bio-fuels and or production equipment cooperatively. Not only is it simple to convert vehicles to run on bio-fuels, it is easy to make your own fuel. Making ethanol is as easy as brewing your own beer, and making bio-diesel is even easier. The following is a list of books if you are interested. With grain corn products, you can produce a gallon of ethanol for 90 cents a gallon; using used waste products it is even cheaper. Bio-diesel can be produced from used restaurant grease for as little as 70 cents a gallon.

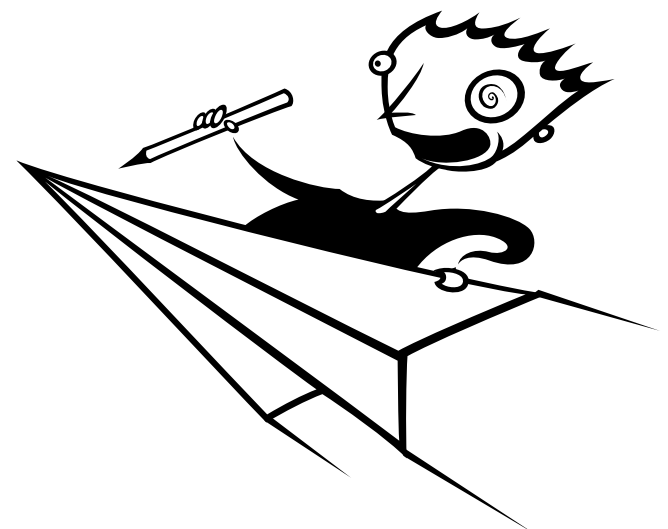
If you truly believe in putting an end to the oil industry's tyranny over this nation, please read the following books and continue to read *Connections* for further opportunities to organize. Learn the basics about producing your own fuel and converting your car to run on it and we will provide opportunities to learn from experts, organize purchasing coops, networking and more.

Resources:

From the Fryer to the Fuel Tank: The Complete Guide to Using Vegetable Oil as an Alternative Fuel by Joshua Tickell

The Secrets of Building an Alcohol Producing Still. By Vincent R. Gingery

Alcohol Can be a Gas. by David Bloom



Why protest the 2004 vote?

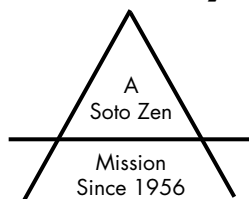
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SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

**CONNECTIONS. TALKING IT THROUGH.
KPFA (94.1).**

The inaugural confetti has been swept away and with it, the last quarrel over who really won the presidential election.

But there is still unfinished business that can't be swept away. After taking his oath, the president called for a "concerted effort to promote democracy." The president should begin with the United States.

More than 133,000 votes remain uncounted in Ohio, more than George W. Bush's supposed margin of victory. In New Mexico, the uncounted vote totals at least three times the president's plurality — and so on in other states.

The challenge to the vote count is over, but the matter of how the United States counts votes, or fails to count them, remains.

The ballots left uncounted, and that will never be counted, are so-called spoiled or rejected ballots — votes cast by citizens, but never tallied. This is the dark little secret of U.S. democracy: Nationwide, in our presidential elections, about 2 million votes are cast and never counted, most spoiled because they cannot be read by the tallying machines.

Racism

Not everyone's vote spoils equally. Cleveland State University Professor Mark Salling analyzed ballots thrown into Ohio's electoral garbage can. Salling found that, "overwhelmingly," the voided votes come from African American precincts.

This racial bend in vote spoilage is not unique to Ohio. A U.S. Civil Rights Commission investigation concluded that, of nearly 180,000 votes discarded in Florida in the 2000 election as unreadable, a shocking 54 percent were cast by black voters, though they make up only a tenth of the electorate. In Florida, an African American is 900 percent more likely to have his or her vote invalidated than a white voter. In New Mexico, a Hispanic voter is 500 percent more likely than a white voter to have her or his ballot lost to spoilage.

Unfortunately, Florida and New Mexico are typical. Nationwide data gathered by Harvard Law School Civil Rights Project indicate that, of the 2 million ballots

spoiled in a typical presidential election, about half are cast by minority voters.

The problem is that some officials are quite happy with the outcome of elections in which minority votes just don't count. They count on the "no-count."

Before last November's election, the American Civil Liberties Union sued five states for continuing to use punch-card machines, those notorious generators of "hanging" chads and "pregnant" chads that disproportionately disenfranchise black voters.

Four of those states settled with the ACLU by adopting simple fixes to protect voters. One state, notably, refused: Ohio, which forced 75 percent of its voters to use punch-card machines. In minority and low-income areas, these old machines on average spoil an unacceptable 8 percent of the votes cast on them. In high-income white districts, spoilage is typically 1 percent.

In Ohio, the decision to keep the vote-destroying machines in place in African American districts was made by the state's Republican attorney general, Jim Petro, and its secretary of state, Kenneth Blackwell. Blackwell, not incidentally, co-chaired the Bush-Cheney re-election committee. The election in Ohio was fundamentally flawed, a fact compounded by the widespread use of electronic voting machines susceptible to manipulation and hacking.

Provisional ballots

This election saw an explosion in a new category of uncounted, ballots: rejected provisional ballots. In Ohio alone, more than 35,000 of these votes were never tallied. Once again, the provisional ballots were cast overwhelmingly in African American precincts.

Why so many? In November, for the first time since the era of the Night Riders, one major political party launched a program of mass challenges of voters on Election Day. Paid Republican operatives, working from lists prepared by the party, fingered tens of thousands of voters in Ohio, Florida and elsewhere, questioning their right to a ballot.

One of these secret "caging lists" was obtained by BBC Television

from inside Republican campaign headquarters in Florida. Every one of the voters on those sheets resided in African American neighborhoods, excepting a few in precincts of elderly Jewish voters.

These lists helped Republican poll workers challenge voters on the basis of an alleged change of address. An analysis of one roster showed that several of those facing challenge were African American soldiers whose address changed because they were shipped overseas.

Challenged voters were shunted to "provisional ballots," which, in Ohio and elsewhere, were not counted on the flimsiest of technicalities.

Who won the presidential race? Given the millions of ballots spoiled and provisional ballots rejected, the unfolding mystery of the exit polls and widespread use of electronic voting machines, we will never know whether John Kerry or George W. Bush received the most votes in Ohio and other swing states

But we can name the election's big winner: Jim Crow.

Last Thursday, the president said, "Our country must abandon all the habits of racism."

From benign neglect of the voting machinery to malign intent in challenging minority voters en masse, the United States is turning that ill habit into an electoral strategy.

In 1965, Congress gave us the Voting Rights Act, promising all people the right to cast a vote. It is now time to making counting that vote a right, not just casting it, before Jim Crow rides again in the next election.

Rev. Jackson is founder of Rainbow Coalition/ People United to Save Humanity (Operation PUSH). Greg Palast, author of the New York Times bestseller, The Best Democracy Money Can Buy, investigated the election for BBC Television.

To sign up for Palast's columns, go to <http://www.gregpalast.com/> Catch Greg Palast's documentary, "Bush Family Fortunes."

Why progressives lose: its how issues are framed

Frances Moore Lappé

George Lakoff's new best-seller *Don't Think of an Elephant* has been heralded as the "bible" for battered progressives searching for direction in the post-election doldrums. Lakoff himself has become the Left's answer to Frank Luntz, the focus-group genius behind the branding

of Bush's "death tax," "Clear Skies" and "Healthy Forests" initiatives.

"Frames," according to Lakoff, are the key to understanding how political ideas are received. Human beings don't absorb information as raw material; we sift input through frames of meaning carried in the language we use.

Lakoff's central idea is that conservatives see the world through a "strict father" frame emphasizing discipline, self-reliance, forceful defense, while progressives see the world through a "nurturant parent" frame-supportive, nourishing, emphasizing mutual responsibility. Lakoff claims that thirty-five to 40 percent of Americans fall into each camp, although most are some sort of mix.

The Right, Lakoff points out, is extremely good at selling their policies in clear, easy to understand "strict father" frames. Progressives, on the other hand, too often seem to offer laundry lists of issues lacking any overarching moral framework.

So, it's easy to see why progressives are rallying around Lakoff's call to arms. Since polls show majorities actually agree with the progressive agenda on many key issues, including corporate

power, the environment and abortion, focusing on "framing" issues in ways that Americans can understand them seems like the answer they've been praying for. Certainly, much of Lakoff's advice about communicating progressive ideas is powerfully insightful and right on target. But two big dangers loom.

Beyond getting the frame right

Too narrowly focusing on getting the frame right might delude progressives into believing that's all they need to win, since we all share a common, democratic playing field.

No. The radical Right plays by different rules. In this, David Brock's book *Blinded by the Right* was my wake-up call. Because Brock was not so long ago a radical right-wing insider himself, his experiences inside this mean-spirited, ends-justify-means mindset of this group is—chillingly—convincing. He depicts people willing to go to any lengths, including lying (as did Brock himself in his character assassination of Anita Hill) in order to vanquish enemies. (See his new book: *The Republican Noise Machine*)

In 2000, leading Republican Congressman, Majority Whip Tom DeLay distributed a pamphlet to all his Republican colleagues entitled *The Art of Political War: How Republicans Can Fight to Win*. Its author David Horowitz writes, "Politics is war conducted by other means. In political warfare you do not fight just to prevail in an argument, but to destroy the enemy's fighting ability. In political wars, the aggressor usually prevails." (Read more in *Banana Republicans*.)

On his final episode of *Now*, Bill Moyers spoke with Richard Viguerie, a founding father of the modern conservative movement and author of *America's Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power*. Viguerie couldn't have described the Right's Machievellian outlook more succinctly, speaking about the vicious pre-election attacks on Kerry:

"I just wish he [Bush] could have done a little bit more [against Kerry]. I thought it was just great. And we're not gonna play, Bill, by the liberal establishment's rules. They say, 'This is acceptable and

this is not acceptable.' Those days are gone and gone forever."

Most Americans would be appalled—if they knew: There's no evidence the majority of Americans approve this ends-justify-means, destroy-the-enemy approach.

Beyond the nurturant parent image

The frame Lakoff identifies with progressives—"nurturant parent"—itself needs critical thought. In times of war, when fear is being consciously stoked to keep a populace in "freeze" mode, the Right's strict father frame carries strong appeal. And this is precisely why progressives must not fall back on nurturing themes. In addition to holding the radical Right accountable for its mean-spirited, anti-democratic outrages, we must get tough in at least two other ways.

First, we must more effectively show just how our security is threatened, not secured, by today's strict-father "protectors." We can show how dreadfully ill-prepared to defend ourselves we are when anti-government ideology has its hold on Washington, leading to under-funding our "first responders"; to 15,000 highly vulnerable private chemical plants in charge of their own security; and to health care dependent on giant drug companies.

Progressives can also show that society is weak and vulnerable when we are divided, rich against poor, white against Black, Evangelicals against other faiths. Americans intuitively know that divisions weaken us; it's one reason we've responded throughout our history to calls for basic fairness, such as the Civil Rights movement.

Second, in a positive vein, progressives can show that the more engaged and just a community, the stronger and safer we all are. The more we know that we can count on our neighbors, our schools, our health care providers—because we know them and because they are adequately funded—the safer we feel. Immediately after 9/11, a public health expert pointed out an obvious link between fairness and community safety. With over 40 million people lacking health insurance, if there were an act of biological warfare against us, an infectious agent could spread swiftly, he pointed out. For how could it be contained if millions of



uninsured delayed seeking medical attention? Obviously a case in which unfairness—the fact that so many can't afford insurance-threatens everyone's safety.

A "strong communities" frame might require progressives to stop, for example, talking about the "environment," which non-progressives can hear as a "soft" distraction in war time, and frame ecological challenges as threats "to safe air and water and food." We might stop talking about poverty, and alleviating it, which evokes images of do-gooders, and talk about "fair-chance communities." Stop talking about reforming criminal justice and talk about results-based crime prevention.

Let's salute George Lakoff and his colleagues for rallying progressives to frame our "issues" in a compelling moral vision. But rather than reacting to the "strict father" frame by searching for a better use of a "nurturant parent" frame, let's reframe the entire conversation to one that begins with a definition of citizens as responsible grown-

ups, not helpless children. In this progressive moral vision we strive to live in strong communities—safer and more viable than ones that rely on a strict father, who on deeper examination may turn out to be only a stubborn loner, a bully bringing on the very threats from which he claims to protect us?

Let's choose frames that capture what most people intuit: We all share one small - shrinking - planet, and our real hope therefore lies in creating strong communities.

Frances Moore Lappé is the author or co-author of 14 books, most recently You Have the Power: Choosing Courage in a Culture of Fear (Tarcher/Penguin 2004). Her books are widely used in college courses and have been translated into over a dozen languages. She's now at work on a book about taking democracy to its next historical stage - democracy as a living practice that embraces economic and social as well as political life.

*Source: The Metaphor Project 1/1/05
www.metaphorproject.org*

That's (y)our problem

Dear Abby,

My husband has a long record of money problems. He runs up huge credit card bills and at the end of the month, if I try to pay them off, he shouts at me, saying I am stealing his money. He says pay the minimum and let our kids worry about the rest, but already we can hardly keep up with the interest. Also he has been so arrogant and abusive toward our neighbors that most of them no longer speak to us. The few that do are an odd bunch, to whom he has been giving a lot of expensive gifts, running up our bills even more. Also, he has gotten religious in a big way, although I don't quite understand it. One week he hangs out with Catholics and the

next with people who say the Pope is the Anti-Christ. And now he has been going to the gym an awful lot and is into wearing uniforms and cowboy outfits, and I hate to think what that means. Finally, the last straw. He's demanding that before anyone can be in the same room with him, they must sign a loyalty oath. It's just so horribly creepy!

Can you help?

Signed,

Lost in DC

Dear Lost,

Stop whining, Laura. You can divorce the jerk any time you want. The rest of us are stuck with him for four more years!

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—George Orwell



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Human Rights Watch

The problem with Attorney General Gonzalez

As Counsel to the President, Mr. Gonzales helped lay the faulty legal foundation of the Bush Administration's detention and interrogation policies in Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay, Iraq and secret locations abroad. Ignoring the advice of U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and the United States' top military leaders, he urged President Bush not to apply the Geneva Conventions to the armed conflict in Afghanistan.

He also wrote or requested legal memoranda that untethered U.S. treatment of detainees from its traditional moorings, leaving U.S. soldiers and interrogators without clear limits on their conduct. The theories these memos advanced provided the basis for the approval of interrogation methods the United States has long condemned as torture, including binding prisoners in painful positions, threatening them with dogs, extended sleep deprivation, prolonged exposure to extreme heat and cold, and reportedly simulated drowning. Whether giving advice to the President or reviewing the opinions of government lawyers, Mr. Gonzales never said "no" to extreme legal theories when "no" was legally and morally required.

The Attorney General must scrupulously enforce the law and lead a Justice Department that is committed to ensuring that no one - not even the President - is above the law. Sadly, Mr. Gonzales's statements to the Senate indicate a continuing willingness to bend the law in service of a desired policy outcome, rather than an unbending commitment to respecting the law.

President above the law

In his hearing, Mr. Gonzales was asked about a memo that he requested from the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, which redefined torture to exclude conduct that unquestionably constituted torture. That memo also made the radical claim that President, as commander in chief, was exempt from laws prohibiting torture.

When Senators asked Mr. Gonzales if he believes that the President could lawfully order a prisoner to be tortured, Mr. Gonzales repeatedly refused to say, simply, "no." Instead,

he argued that the Congress could, theoretically, pass a law that is unconstitutional, which the President could, hypothetically, ignore. But the laws against torture, like the laws against murder or rape, are not hypothetical; they are real and unconditional. The United States should not have an Attorney General who refuses to say whether the President is bound to obey specific, existing laws that reflect its most fundamental values as a nation.

CIA torture OK overseas

Mr. Gonzales's written responses revealed another aspect of the Bush Administration's deliberate strategy to circumvent legal prohibitions against mistreatment of detainees. Administration lawyers have invented a geographic limitation to the United States' obligation not to engage in cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment under the Convention against Torture.

Mr. Gonzales told the Senate that this obligation does not apply to non-Americans held outside of U.S. territory. Here he failed to acknowledge the principal effect of refusing to honor this treaty obligation abroad: it leaves the CIA with a free hand to engage in the very cruel and inhumane treatment that the United States pledged to prevent when it ratified this human rights treaty. In effect, Mr. Gonzales said that no law would prohibit the CIA from engaging in the same degrading conduct revealed by the photographs from Abu Ghraib.

Misguided advice to Bush

At his oversight hearing, Mr. Gonzales also demonstrated a lack of understanding of the most basic concepts of the Geneva Conventions. He repeatedly argued that had the Geneva Conventions been applied to al Qaeda members captured in Afghanistan, the United States would have had to give them all the privileges of prisoner of war status. In fact, the Geneva Conventions do not require that all captured belligerents be granted POW status—but they do require humane treatment of all captives, whether soldiers, insurgents, or civilians.

He also said more than once that had the Geneva Conventions been

applied to al Qaeda members, they could not have been prosecuted for war crimes. This is an elementary misstatement of the law. The Third Geneva Convention confers immunity only for lawful acts of combat—the act of taking up arms—and only on POWs.

The Geneva Conventions do not grant immunity for war crimes to anyone. Given that President Bush relied on Mr. Gonzales's legal advice in deciding not to apply the Geneva Conventions to al Qaeda, it is deeply troubling that Mr. Gonzales appears to have misunderstood such a fundamental principle of the laws of war.

In his written responses, Mr. Gonzales also demonstrated a lack of knowledge of the U.S. military's fundamental rules on the treatment of detainees, stating that the U.S. Army's interrogation manual (FM 34-52) only protects prisoners of war from mistreatment. In fact, the manual, like the Geneva Conventions, explicitly protects all detainees, whether POWs, insurgents or civilians.

Torture OK if Bush says so

Mr. Gonzales began his testimony by asserting that he shared the commitment of America's founding fathers to a government of laws, not of men. His position on torture cannot be squared with that principle. By stressing that the President's rejection of torture is simply a choice, not a legal obligation, he has endorsed the position that governments are bound not by law, but by presidential policies that can be made and unmade as presidents wish.

If widely adopted, such a view would grant license to the leaders of all nations to order the torture of anyone they deem to threaten their national security. It would provide U.S. adversaries with a justification for the torture of American soldiers and civilians. The assertion of such a radical view by the Attorney General of the United States would undermine President Bush's stated intention to promote liberty and law around the world. An administration that preaches moral clarity to others should not tolerate moral ambiguity in its top law enforcement official.

Source: Human Rights Watch release 1/25/05
<HRWpress@hrw.org>

Guantanamo: Three Years of Lawlessness

Detainees held indefinitely, with no rights

Three years after it was created, the U.S. prison camp at Guantanamo remains an enclave outside the law, Human Rights Watch said early January.

As the Pentagon prepares to build a permanent prison at its Guantanamo naval base, the U.S. government continues to detain people indefinitely without charge or trial or without applying the Geneva Conventions. The Bush administration still rejects any serious inquiry into the mounting evidence that U.S. officials have tortured or mistreated prisoners at Guantanamo.

"Guantanamo has become the Bermuda Triangle of human rights. Basic rights vanish there," said Wendy Patten, U.S. Advocacy Director at Human Rights Watch. "By flouting international law in its treatment of detainees, the Bush administration has drawn worldwide criticism and undermined support for U.S. counterterrorism efforts."

The United States currently holds some 550 people as "enemy combatants" at Guantanamo. Although gathering intelligence has been a central U.S. justification for the detentions, some U.S. officials say most of the detainees are no longer considered of intelligence value. Recently, senior administration officials have indicated that the Pentagon intends to move away from regular interrogation of most detainees, and to provide less restrictive conditions of detention for many of those whom the U.S. government does not want to release.

Three years on, the U.S. government still ignores the need to provide legal justification for those who remain in detention. The Pentagon evidently intends to hold detainees at Guantanamo for years to come without charge or trial. The Pentagon has constructed a permanent high-security prison at the base and plans to build another

permanent prison for 200 medium-security detainees.

"The Bush administration is claiming the power to lock people up without due process, possibly for the rest of their lives," said Patten.

There is growing evidence that detainees at Guantanamo have suffered torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Reports by FBI agents who witnessed detainee abuse have recently emerged, adding to the statements of former detainees describing the use of painful stress positions, extended solitary confinement, use of military dogs to threaten detainees and prolonged exposure to extremes of heat, cold and noise. Some of this ill-treatment included interrogation methods previously authorized by the U.S. Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld.

Source: Human Rights Watch 1/11/05 release <HRWpress@hrw.org>

Sudan: US stops int'l court

The Bush administration is creating a deadly delay for the people of Darfur by attempting to block the U.N. Security Council from referring Darfur atrocities to the International Criminal Court, Human Rights Watch said in a letter to U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Late January, one day after the Sudanese military reportedly killed or wounded nearly 100 civilians in an air strike in southern Darfur, the United States put forth a time-consuming, costly alternative for justice to the already functioning International Criminal Court (ICC): that the Security Council set up a new ad hoc tribunal for Darfur and house it in Tanzania, using the facilities of the international court that is currently prosecuting perpetrators of Rwanda's 1994 genocide.

"The delay involved in setting up a new tribunal would only lead to the loss of more innocent lives in Darfur," said Richard Dicker, director of the International Justice Pro-

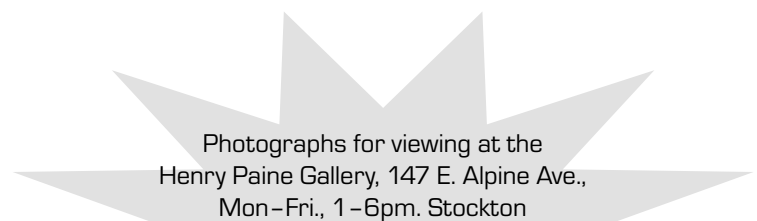
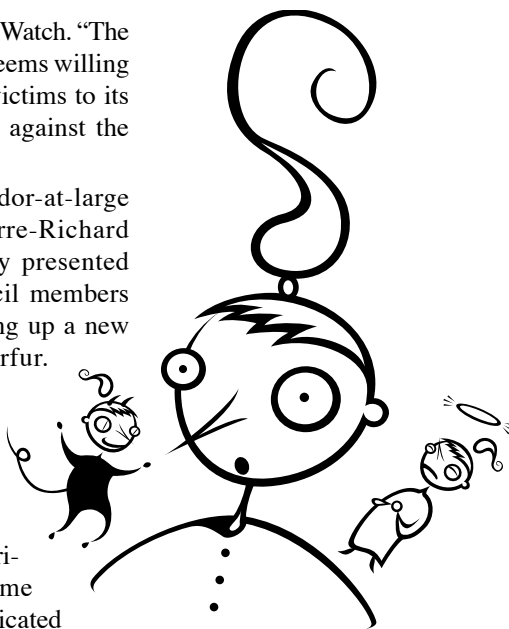
gram at Human Rights Watch. "The Bush administration seems willing to sacrifice Darfur's victims to its ideological campaign against the court."

The U.S. ambassador-at-large for war crimes, Pierre-Richard Prosper, on Thursday presented other Security Council members with the idea of setting up a new ad hoc court for Darfur. Explaining the U.S. rationale, he said, "We don't want to be party to legitimizing the ICC."

Setting up a new tribunal would be a time consuming and complicated process. Establishing a new court requires creating a new statute and rules, recruiting staff, and electing judges. It could take more than a year to get the new tribunal off the ground. By contrast, the ICC is already up and running as a permanent criminal tribunal. It could

promptly open investigations of those most responsible for serious crimes in Darfur. This would maximize the deterrent value, thereby helping to save lives.

Source: Human Rights Watch 1/31/05 release <HRWpress@hrw.org>



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Artists included in this exhibition:

Mildred Howard, Stephanie Johnson, Renee Billingslea, Susan Matthews, Dawn Mabalon, Derek Jackson, Milton Bowen

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Closing Reception: Friday, February 25, 2005, 6-9 pm

Project Space 2: UNCOVER! The Secret Places of Pulp Fiction

Exhibition Dates: April 7 – April 28, 2005

Closing Reception: Saturday, April 9, 2005, 6-9 pm

Project Space 3: New Work by Mary Beth Heffernan

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Closing Reception: Saturday, April 9, 2005, 6-9 pm

LECTURES

Feb 17

Graphic Design Lecture Series

Ellen Lupton, Curator Of Design, Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum, NY

Feb 24

Artist Lecture Series

Brett DeBoer, Graphic Design/Public Art

Mar 9

Artist Lecture Series

Merrill Schleier, Professor of Art History, University of the Pacific

March 30

Artist Lecture Series

Gil Dellinger

April 14

Artist Lecture Series

Ron Pecchenino

Saturday, March 5

Poets for Peace Celebration

The Mediation Center of San Joaquin County and The Rytstk Group will host Stockton's 1st Poet's for Peace Celebration on March 5, at The Mediation Center's facilities at 829 Rose Marie Lane in Stockton at 7:00 PM. The celebration will entail poetry readings from local poets, including nationally known poets such as Brandi, RAW, and Yaddos, who have performed on HBO's Def Poetry Jam.

Poets for Peace is a component of International Day of Poetry Against the War. This international grassroots event features readings in more than one-hundred cities across the United States and in nations around the world. Some participating cities include Washington DC, New York, Los Angeles, London, and now Stockton.

This event sprouted after First Lady Laura Bush planned to host a celebration of American poetry at

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Admission: \$32.50 (Orchestra) and \$25.00 (Balcony).

Featuring:
Bobby Hutcherson
Nicholas Payton
Renee Rosnes
Joshua Redman
Eric Harland
Isaac Smith
Matt Penman
Miguel Zenón

the White House on February 12, 2002. However, the event was canceled after several prominent poets declined her invitation in protest against the U.S. push toward the war in Iraq.

The Mediation Center is a non-profit public benefit corporation dedicated to increasing the use of mediation to resolve disputes. The Center has no political affiliations

and does not endorse any particular agenda, but believes that lasting peace can only be achieved through understanding and acceptance of differences.

Poet's for Peace 2005 is open to the general public. Admission is \$10. For more information contact Derrick and/or Maggie at 209-474-8794 or rytstkproductions@yahoo.com.

McCutcheon lights up the night

Folksinger, songwriter, storyteller, musician, magician-John McCutcheon was all that at Stockton's Central Methodist Church on a cold January night. Two hundred people laughed, cried, clapped, and sang along at his glorious two hour concert, sponsored by the Peace and Justice Network and this newspaper. They bought every CD in sight, and begged when he'd be back. (Wednesday, January 18, 2006-already booked.)

Magician McCutcheon reached deep into the black hole of his guitar, into the hidden depths of piano, banjo and autoharp, and pulled out rabbits, peace doves, hummingbirds, rainbow silk hankies. He sang his "Children of Abraham"- "We are Muslim, we are Jew, we are Christian, we are just me and you." He belted out his "Not in My Name"- "I am Allah, I am Yahweh, I am Jesus...what part is it of 'love your enemies' that you

people don't understand?" And we chanted in reply, "Not in my name! not in my name! Not in my name, not in my name."

He had us grandparents misty-eyed with his song to his teenage son finally leaving the nest-and then laughing when he moved back in, "just for a month or two, dad." Diehard baseball fans were nodding "oh yeah" at his hymn to those who live for "just one good swing." And he summoned up youthful memories of Dick Tracy Secret Decoder Rings, eyepatches and trenchcoats with his theme song for John Ashcroft's citizen spy program, TIPS. We're told that one nine-year old McCutcheon fan now goes around the house chanting "I wanna be in Ashcroft's Army, I wanna be a spy!"

With two tiny wooden mallets, McCutcheon pinged and boinged an eerie sliding whale song on the hammered dulcimer. On that same

little instrument, he loosed a torrent like a harpsichord trio. He was sweating; I hardly breathed.

We fell silent as he sang his famous "Christmas in the Trenches." It's the true story of the spontaneous Christmas eve truce between Germans and British, on the bloody battlefield of Flanders, Belgium, in December 1914. When he finished, he said, "That amazing event was 91 years ago. 2014 will be the hundredth anniversary. I intend to be in Flanders that Christmas eve, with as many musician friends as I can round up, and I hope hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world. Save up your frequent flier miles! Pack your boots and long underwear!"

My wife wants to go. How can I say no?

John McCutcheon's website is www.folkmusic.com. How's that for being on top of the game?

RICHARD H. & MARJORIE M.
Reynolds Gallery

EXHIBITIONS | ART LECTURES | HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

The Return to Africa
Feb 22 – Mar 25

UNCOVER! Secret Places of Pulp Fiction
Apr 7 – Apr 28

New Work by Mary Beth Heffernan
Apr 7 – Apr 28

UNIVERSITY OF THE
PACIFIC
College of the Pacific

1071 Mendocino Ave, Stockton, CA
www.pacific.edu/reynoldsgallery
EMAIL: reynoldsgallery@pacific.edu
TEL: 209-946-7323

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February Calendar

Black History Month

Jan 9 - Mar 6

Stockton Speaks! A photo essay by Stockton photographer Sophoan Sorn. Images of 18 Stockton families from 9 ethnic groups. Haggin Museum, Victory Park. 940-6315.

Sat, Feb 12

Chinese & Vietnamese New Year's Parade 4703 (Year of the Rooster), 12 pm. Starts at Sutter & Washington St.

Sun, Feb 13

UOP Symphony Orchestra concert: Rimsky-Korsakov, Scheherazade. 2:30 pm, Concert Hall, UOP. 946-2474

Tue, Feb 15

Susan B. Anthony Banquet to honor Women of Achievement, 5 pm, Elkhorn Golf Club, 1050 Elkhorn Drive, Stockton. 948-5062

Thu, Feb 17

San Joaquin Delta College Big Band Jazz concert. 7:30 pm, Atherton Auditorium, SJDC. \$7/\$5. 954-5110

Fri, Feb 18

UOP Jazz Ensemble. 7:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, UOP. 946-2474

The H2O Jam, poetry and more 9 pm. Latte Lounge, 235 E Miner St, Stockton. \$5 all ages.

Fri-Sun, Feb 18-20

Black History Month Celebration - Creative Journey 2005. 10 am - 9 pm, Sun 11 am-6 pm. Central Valley African American artists feature painting, photos, sculpture, more. Sherwood Mall, 5308 Pacific Ave.

Tue, Feb 22

Candlelight vigil for Peace, Annunciation Catholic Cathedral, N. Lincoln at Rose. Bring a candle; all welcome. 7-7:30 PM. 462-3340, 464-3326.

Feb 24-26, Mar 4-6

How I Learned to Drive, 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. Studio Theatre, San Joaquin Delta College, \$12/\$10. 954-5110

Thu, Feb 24

A force more powerful film series, discussing the power of non-violent social change in 4 countries. Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton 7-8:30 pm. (see page 1).

Fri, Feb 25

UOP Symphonic Wind Ensemble. 7:30 pm, Concert Hall, UOP. 946-2474

Feb 25-27

Vagina Monologues (see ad page 3)

Sun, Feb 27

PJN Annual Meeting/Potluck. First Unitarian Church, 2737 Pacific. (see page 1 for details.)

Tue, Mar 1

UOP Concert Band concert. 7:30 pm, Concert Hall, UOP. 946-2474

Wed, Mar 2

Peace & Justice Network meeting, First Unitarian Church, 2737 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 7 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Thu, Mar 3

A force more powerful film series, discussing the power of non-violent social change in 4 countries. (See page 1).

Thu, Mar 3, Sat, Mar 5

Stockton Symphony Orchestra concert: Classics V- Beethoven, Chaitkin, Strauss. Thu 8 pm, Sat 6 pm, Atherton Auditorium, San Joaquin Delta College. 951-0196. www.stocktonsymphony.org

Fri-Sun, Mar 4-6

Pacific Opera Theatre presents Purcell: Dido and Aeneas & Gluck: Orfeo ed Euridice. Long Theatre. 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. 946-2474

Sat, Mar 5

Poets for Peace (see page 18)

Sat-Sun, Mar 5-6

Chinese New Year Festival, Sat 11 am, Sun 9 am. Stockton Civic Auditorium 478-8612.

Thu, Mar 10

A force more powerful film series, discussing the power of non-violent social change in 4 countries. (see page 1).

Spring Festival of Bands, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, Delta College. \$7/\$5. 954-5110

Fri, Mar 11

High School Concert Band Festival, Atherton Auditorium, Delta College. Free. 954-5110

Sat, Mar 12

Stockton Concert Band performance, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, Delta College. \$7/\$5. 954-5110

Sun, Mar 13

Soweto Gospel Choir Ambassadors of Good Will Tour, 2:30 pm. Fox Theatre downtown. Troup of 35 artists perform traditional/popular African gospel music. \$29-\$45, \$22 under 12. 337-HOPE.

UOP Conservatory Choral Ensembles: The Music of England. 2:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, UOP. 946-2474

Thu, Mar 17


A force more powerful film series, discussing the power of non-violent social change in 4 countries. (See page 1).

Spring Festival of Choirs, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, San Joaquin

(209) 946-2233

ALL SHOWS \$5.00

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



PACIFIC THEATRE
CINEMA ONE

ART - INDEPENDENT - FOREIGN

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">JANUARY</p> <p>13-15 Supersize Me! 27-29 The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">FEBRUARY</p> <p>3-5 Ray 10-12 I (Heart) Huckabees 17-19 Fade to Black 25-27 The Vagina Monologues, Live!</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">MARCH</p> <p>3-5 The Motorcycle Diaries 10 The Slow Century 11 Bittersweet Motel 12 I'm Trying to Break Your Heart 17-19 Tarnation</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">APRIL</p> <p>7-9 Sideways 21 Two or Three Things I Know About Her 22 Weekend 23 Notre Musique 28-30 The Yes Men</p>
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FOREIGN FILM SERIES

JAN. 20-22: DJOMEH
MAR. 3-5: THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES
MAR. 3/APR. 1-2: GHOST IN THE SHELL 2
APR. 21-23: FRENCH CINEMA FESTIVAL
THE WORK OF JEAN-LUC GODARD
WEEKEND TWO OR THREE THINGS I KNOW ABOUT HER
NOTRE MUSIQUE
Sponsored by the Pacific Humanities Center
<http://www3.uop.edu/humanities>

ROCK & ROLL PICTURE SHOW

The Slow Century
March 10
Bittersweet Motel
March 11
I'm Trying to Break Your Heart
March 12

All Film Titles, Dates, and Times are subject to change.

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3601 Pacific Ave. • University of the Pacific • Stockton, CA

Talking It Through

Talking It Through is hosted by John Morearty

Every Wednesday evening at 10 PM

Repeated on Monday at 6 PM

SJTV: Stockton, Lodi and Manteca cable channel 26

EDUCATION • ENVIRONMENT • POLITICS • CULTURE

Sponsored by the Peace & Justice Network, InterFaith Council of San Joaquin County, Pacific Complementary Medicine Center

Check the TV page of Wednesday's Record for latest info.

Talking It Through Schedule:

JFeb 16/21: David Bacon, prominent labor journalist with Stockton bus company union leaders, who were fired.

Feb 23/28: Adults Learn to Read. Lodi Library's literacy director, tutors and students.

Mar 2/7: Health Insurance for All Californians (see article on CHIRA, page 3).

Mar 9/14: Black History is American History. SJTV programmer Vic Harris talks with John Morearty.

New Feature: HOT NEWS! Bruce Giudici joins host Morearty in the second half of most shows for reports and analysis.

Studio volunteers wanted! All ages...we'll train you.
Call John Morearty, 464-3326.

Delta College. \$7 adult, \$5 student/senior. 954-5110

Fri, Mar 18

Iraq War commemoration Vigil in Black, for peace and a better world. Delta College lawn facing Pacific, just north of the Yokuts bus stop. 4:30-5:30 PM. Bring friends, candles, signs. Info: 467-4455, 464-3326. (see page 3)

Concerned Citizens Gala Dinner (see page 3)

Valley Concert Band, 7 pm. Scottish Rite Auditorium, 33 W Alpine Ave, Stockton. 462-2536. www.musicalchairsconcerts.org

Sat, Mar 19

Iraq war 2nd anniversary protest march, San Francisco, Dolores Park 11 am; Civic Center 1pm.

Sun, Apr 17

Earth Day Festival, 11 am-5 pm. Victory Park, Stockton, Free admission. 937-8791

Sun, Apr 17

Earth Day Festival, 11 am-5 pm. Victory Park, Stockton, Free admission. 937-8791

Sun, Apr 24

Calaveras Earth Day celebration, 11 am-5 pm. Murphys Park, Murphys. Free admission. 786-3109

Weekly

Tuesdays

Stockton City Council Meeting, every

Tuesday at City Hall, 5:30 pm. <http://www.stocktongov.com/clerk/pages/CouncilAgenda.htm>

TaiChi, 6-8 pm, Northeast Community Center, 2885 E Harding Way.

Wednesdays

Live Jazz, 3-5 pm Latte Lounge, 235 E Miner Ave. 466-6224.

Fridays

Poetry, 8:30-10:30 pm Latte Lounge, 235 E Miner Ave. 466-6224.

Saturdays

Birding Field Trips with S.J. Audubon Society. www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org

Tai Chi Chuan at the Confucius Church on Lafayette St., Stockton, 8:30 am-11:00 am. (209) 952-8582.

Sundays

TaiChi, 2:30-4, Northeast Community Center, 2885 E. Harding Way & Golden Gate.

Monthly

Second Mon

PFLAG meeting, 7-9 pm, Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 209-870-3339.

Second Tues

Audubon Society, 7:30 pm, St. Paul's Church, 2220 W Alpine Rd, Stockton.

Third Thur

Hispanics for Political Action meeting, 6:30-8:30 pm. Cancun Restaurant, Weber St, Stockton.

To the citizens of the United States of America,

In the light of your failure to elect a competent President of the USA and thus to govern

yourselves, we hereby give notice of the revocation of your independence, effective today.

Her Sovereign Majesty Queen Elizabeth II will resume monarchical duties over all states, commonwealths and other territories. Except Utah, which she does not fancy.

Your new prime minister (The Right Honourable Tony Blair, MP for the 97.85% of you who have until now been unaware that there is a world outside your borders) will appoint a minister for America without the need for further elections.

Congress and the Senate will be disbanded. A questionnaire will be circulated next year to determine whether any of you noticed. To aid in the transition to a British Crown Dependency, the following rules are introduced with immediate effect:

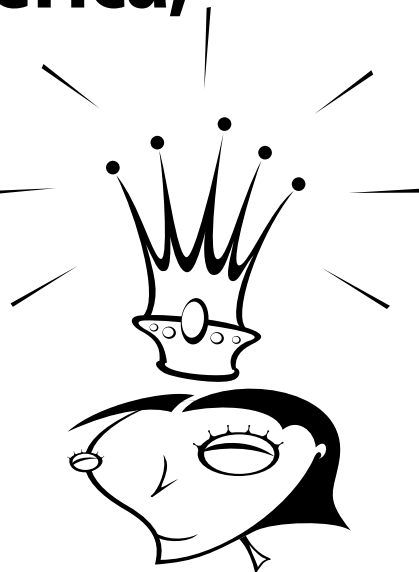
1. You should look up revocation in the Oxford English Dictionary. Then look up aluminium. Check the pronunciation guide. You will be amazed at just how wrongly you have been pronouncing it. The letter 'U' will be reinstated in words

such as 'favour' and 'neighbour', skipping the letter 'U' is nothing more than laziness on your part. Likewise, you will learn to spell 'doughnut' without skipping half the letters. You will end your love affair with the letter 'Z' (pronounced 'zed' not 'zee') and the suffix 'ize' will be replaced by the suffix 'ise'. Using the same twenty seven words interspersed with filler noises such as like and you know is an unacceptable and inefficient form of communication. Look up interspersed.

2. There is no such thing as US English. We will let Microsoft know on your behalf. The Microsoft spell-checker will be adjusted to take account of the reinstated letter 'u' and the elimination of '-ize'.

3. You should learn to distinguish the English and Australian accents. It really isn't that hard. English accents are not limited to cockney, upper-class twit or Mancunian (Daphne in Frasier). While we're talking about regions, you must learn that there is no such place as Devonshire in England. The name of the county is Devon. If you persist in calling it Devonshire, all American States will become shires e.g. Texasshire, Floridashire, Louisianashire.

4. Hollywood will be required



occasionally to cast English actors as the good guys. Hollywood will be required to cast English actors to play English characters. British sit-coms such as Men Behaving Badly or Red Dwarf will not be re-cast and watered down for a wishy-washy American audience who can't cope with the humour of occasional political incorrectness.

5. You should relearn your original national anthem, God Save The Queen, but only after fully carrying out task 1. We would not want you to get confused and give up half way through.

6. You should stop playing American football. There is only one kind of football. What you refer to as American football is not a very good game. The 2.15% of you who are aware that there is a world outside your borders may have noticed that no one else plays American football. You will no longer be allowed to play it, and should instead play proper football. Initially, it would be best if you played with the girls. It is a difficult game. Those of you brave enough will, in time, be allowed to play rugby (which is similar to American football, but does not involve stopping for a rest every twenty seconds or wearing full kevlar body armour like nancies).

7. You will no longer be allowed to own or carry guns. You will no longer be allowed to own or carry anything more dangerous in public than a vegetable peeler. Because we don't believe you are sensible enough to handle potentially dangerous items, you will require a

March 19, Anniversary of Invasion

Global Day of Action

The ANSWER coalition-Act Now to Stop War and End Racism-is sponsoring another huge peace march in San Francisco on Saturday March 19.

The march convenes 11 AM at Dolores Park, 18th and Dolores, and winds about two or three miles to Civic Center Plaza for a rally at 1 PM. The rally, as always, will feature speeches, music, info booths, buttons and bumperstickers galore, food and drink, and long but cheerful lines at the porta-potties (both at Dolores and Civic Center).

The easy way to go is carpooling to Antioch or Dublin/Pleasanton and then BART to 16th and Mission. Walk up the hill to Dolores and 18th. Coming home, take BART from the Civic Center.

Enjoy San Francisco! Stand up and make a joyful noise for peace!

permit if you wish to carry a vegetable peeler in public.

8. July 4th is no longer a public holiday. November 2nd will be a new national holiday, but only in England. It will be called Indecisive Day.

9. All American cars are hereby banned. They are crap and it is for your own good. When we show you German cars, you will understand what we mean. All road intersections will be replaced with roundabouts. You will start driving on the left with immediate effect. At the same time, you will go metric with immediate effect and without the benefit of conversion tables. Roundabouts and metrication will help you understand the British sense of humour.

10. You will learn to make real chips. Those things you call French fries are not real chips. Fries aren't even French, they are Belgian though 97.85% of you (including the guy who discovered fries while in Europe) are not aware of a country called Belgium. Those things you insist on calling potato chips are properly called crisps. Real chips are thick cut and fried in animal fat. The traditional accompaniment to chips is beer which should be served warm and flat. Waitresses will be trained to be more aggressive with customers.

11. As a sign of penance 5 grams of sea salt per cup will be added to all tea made within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, this quantity to be doubled for tea made within the city of Boston itself.

12. The cold tasteless stuff you insist on calling beer is not actually beer at all, it is lager. From

November 1st only proper British Bitter will be referred to as beer, and European brews of known and accepted provenance will be referred to as Lager. The substances formerly known as American Beer will henceforth be referred to as Near-Frozen Knat's Urine, with the exception of the product of the American Budweiser company whose product will be referred to as Weak Near-Frozen Knat's Urine. This will allow true Budweiser (as manufactured for the last 1000 years in Pilsen, Czech Republic) to be sold without risk of confusion.

13. From November 10th the UK will harmonise petrol (or Gasoline as you will be permitted to keep calling it until April 1st 2005) prices with the former USA. The UK will harmonise its prices to those of the former USA and the Former USA will, in return, adopt UK petrol prices(roughly \$6/US gallon - get used to it).

14. You will learn to resolve personal issues without using guns, lawyers or therapists. The fact that you need so many lawyers and therapists shows that you're not adult enough to be independent. Guns should only be handled by adults. If you're not adult enough to sort things out without suing someone or speaking to a therapist then you're not grown up enough to handle a gun.

15. Last but not the least, and for heaven's sake.....it's Nuclear as in clear NOT Nuclear.

Thank you for your co-operation and have a great day.

John Cleese

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