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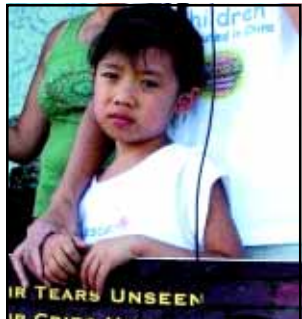
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“Our mission here is to create a more ethically-aware kind of cool and show everybody that if you really want some kind of integrity, individuality, and self-worth, the way to do it is by being ethical and pursuing ethical alternatives.”
—Sharon Cohen

Bush's 5-Day Media Blitz Focuses On Iraq War

CRAWFORD — With opinion polls noting the public's increased doubt on his handling of the Iraq war, President Bush launched a 5-day media offensive Saturday to counter the lack of trust by explaining his reasons for continued U.S. involvement in the troubled Middle East region.

"Our troops know that they're fight-

ing in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere to protect their fellow Americans from a savage enemy," the president said in his weekly radio address. "They know that if we do not confront these evil men abroad, we will have to face them one day in our own cities and streets, and they know that the safety and security of every American is at stake in this war,

and they know we will prevail."

Bush's comments come in the middle of his August-long vacation at this ranch as pro-peace demonstrators have camped near there since Aug. 6. when Cindy Sheehan, a mother of a slain U.S. soldier started her vigil to meet with the commander-in-chief face-to-face. President Bush has repeatedly noted, through his aides and in speeches, that although he grieves for each fallen soldier, he disagrees with Sheehan's urge to return the U.S. troops from Iraq im-

mediately. Bush has made no move to speak with her in person, yet he did once over a year ago.

Democrats have backed alternative plans for Iraq. Former Sen. Max Cleland of Georgia, a Vietnam Veteran who lost three limbs in service, said in the Democratic radio address: "We need a strategy to win in Iraq or an exit strategy to leave. The present course will lead us to disaster. More of the same just means more precious blood spilled in the desert."

17-Mile 'Tour de Crawford' Meanders Around Bush Ranch

CRAWFORD — Seven-time Tour De France winner and cancer survivor Lance Armstrong had President Bush's ear during a 17-mile ride meandering around the Bush Ranch Saturday. Dubbed the "Tour de Crawford," the two-hour ride provided the famed bike rider a chance to lobby for more federal money to be spent on cancer research.

According to Armstrong, Bush is an accomplished biker and the two enjoyed the ride.

Following the ride, President Bush presented Armstrong with a red, white, and blue T-shirt emblazoned with "Tour de Crawford" as a keepsake.

Not far from the ranch, a pavillion was erected marking Camp Casey II. Cindy Sheehan, who had been camping out near the ranch seeking an opportunity to speak to the President, had departed for Los Angeles, Calif. to temporarily be

with her mother who had suffered a stroke earlier in the week. Sheehan is protesting the war in Iraq.

Although Armstrong has said that he is against the war, he noted that this subject did not come up during the ride with the President.

The riders were accompanied by presidential staffers and Secret Service agents. Also along was a film crew from The Discovery Channel which had exclusive media access for the ride. The channel was Armstrong's Tour de France sponsor.

Armstrong, of Austin, 34, says he is retiring from biking next month. He captured the imagination of Americans as a cancer survivor who fought against substantial odds to return to bike racing, winning the Tour de France and crusading for advancements in cancer research.

Agent Orange Investigation Opens At Canadian Military Base

OTTAWA — Investigation into the use of agents Orange and Purple will be conducted at a military base in Gagetown, Canada, said the Canadian government last week according to AFP.

The U.S. military requested tests of the extremely lethal defoliants and herbicides there in the 1960s during the Vietnam War. The toxins were used to uncover communist Vietnamese soldiers hidden in the jungles of their homeland then.

The point of Ottawa's probe is to figure out if people were affected by the lethal herbicides, said an official. The forests in New Brunswick resembled, according to the U.S. military, the thick vegetation in Vietnam. The province's forests were cleared with the toxic substances in 1966 and 1967.

The chemicals, which Ottawa admitted last year was perhaps the cause of health problems for military and civilian personnel, were released under a top secret operation over 0.03 percent of the military base in Gagetown.

Leukemia and diabetes and other severe health problems, like congenital malformations and miscarriage, are caused by the agents.

GOP House Members Sign Letter In Support Of ANWR Protection

CRAWFORD — BushGreenWatch reported last week that 24 Republican lawmakers, including three committee chairmen, signed a letter expressing their opposition to including language in the budget reconciliation bill that would allow for drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

The letter, addressed to Resources Committee chairman Richard Pombo (R-CA) and also sent to Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert (R-IL) and Budget Committee chairman Jim Nussle (R-IA) states, "We believe that the reconciliation process is an inappropriate venue to be debating this important environmental issue."

Leslie Catherwood of the Wilderness Society expressed her appreciation to the representatives in support of protecting the 19.6 million-acre ANWR

sanctuary: "We're happy that 24 members understand and know what a majority of Americans feel, that the budget is the wrong place to include provisions opening up ANWR."

Environmentalists say that drilling in the Refuge, which is home to a diverse array of unique species, including caribou, polar bears, musk oxen, arctic foxes, wolverines, grizzlies, and snow geese, is not worth the ecological devastation the development would incur because the area contains less oil than the United States consumes in a year and will do nothing to reduce high gas prices or the country's dependence on foreign oil.

The House has repeatedly passed measures to drill in the Refuge, but the Senate has defeated these efforts. The budget reconciliation document is not

subject to filibuster, and if signed by President Bush, it will become law.

This means House Democrats, who for the most part are opposed to development in ANWR, must get a substantial number of Republicans on board to successfully prevent drilling.

None of the 24 GOP lawmakers who

signed the letter revealed whether or not they would vote against the budget if an ANWR provision were included. Among the signers were Nancy Johnson (CT), Sherwood Boehlert (NY), Chris Smith (NJ), James Sensenbrenner (WI), Michael Castle (DE), Tim Johnson (IL).

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Responsible Kicks

Magazine Moves Shoe Business To The Left

BY NATHAN DIEBENOW
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CRAWFORD — The Texas sales tax holiday may have ended, but students can still invest in their future without having to compromise substance for style.

Kalle Lasn, 63, founder of Adbusters, the Canadian anti-consumerism organization, said that parents and kids alike can still look fly, feel rebellious, and save the planet, all at the same time, if they take a little time to *rethink the cool*.

This frame of mind, he said, arose from the ashes of a 10-year-old boycott of Nike, the shoe manufacturing empire known for sweatshop labor, environmental abuse, grotesque profit margins, gratuitous celebrity endorsements, and vapid slogans.

Although the no sweatshop movement “did some nice work, it didn’t quite finish the job,” said Lasn, the Estonian-

born CEO/publisher of social activist magazine Adbusters.

So instead of complaining to megacorporations and shunning capitalism, Lasn and his team decided to “think outside the old Lefty box and come up with a new strategy that makes some waves,” he said.

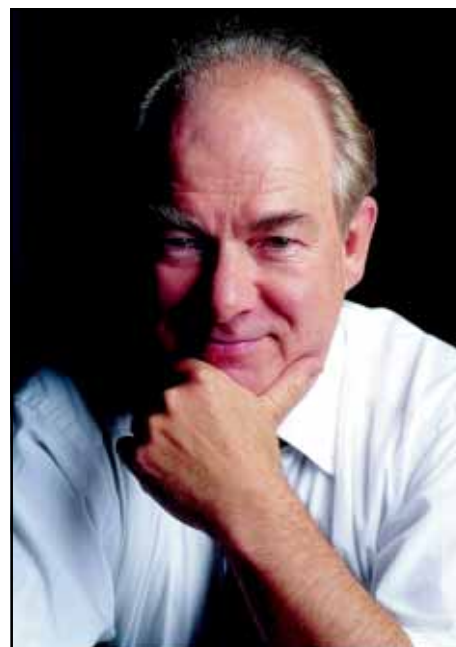
Sneakers With Soul

Enter the world’s first anti-brand and the V1 Classic Blackspot sneaker. Designed by John Fluevog and launched just over a year ago, the Classic Blackspot sneaker resembles Converse’s Chuck Taylor All Star model but is made in a Portuguese union shop with a rubber sole, a toe cap that is 70 percent biodegradable, and other vegetarian materials. The Blackspot symbol, a white dot, is handpainted on the side of the shoe. On the tip of the shoes is a handpainted red dot “for kicking corporate ass.”

With Blackspot’s launch in August 2003, Adbusters made no bones about it; they wanted to challenge Nike’s “bogus cool,” manufactured with the help of big-time celebrities and advertising agencies to persuade consumers, mostly teenagers, to buy their high-performance shoes.

“Our mission here is to create a more ethically-aware kind of cool and show everybody that if you really want some kind of integrity, individuality, and self-worth, the way to do it is by being ethical and pursuing ethical alternatives rather than following the pack of supporters of megacorporations and their excesses and abuses,” said Sharon Cohen, Blackspot Marketing Manager.

With \$250,000 to burn, Blackspot advertisements have nonetheless been extremely limited, though the group did purchase a billboard near Nike headquarters in Oregon just to rub it in. Word, though, has been getting out through the Internet, friendly conversations, and Adbuster’s culture jam-



Kalle Lasn, Founder of Adbusters

— Photo Provided By The Adbusters Media Foundation

mers network, a group of over 80,000 merry pranksters that subvert public display ads with anti-corporate slogans.

Start Up Challenges

Brainstorming for the Blackspot sneaker started three years ago, and its subsequent development took time because well, people with experience publishing a magazine were now suddenly figuring out how to run a shoe company from scratch. “We knew nothing,” said Cohen. “It’s been a huge learning curve for us. Everything has proved a challenge.”

Finding a factory was challenge number one. In fact, it took over a year to find one. “It’s so difficult to find a fair

Continued On Next Page



THE CLASSIC BLACKSPOT SNEAKER

100% ORGANIC HEMP

PORTUGUESE UNION SHOP

VEGETARIAN LEATHER

HAND-DRAWN ANTI-LOGO

1 SHARE = 1 VOTE IN THE ANTI-CORPORATION

DESIGN: JOHN FLUEVOG

HAND DRAWN TOP TIP (FOR KICKING CORPORATE ASS!)

THE V1 CLASSIC BLACKSPOT SHOE, although modeled after the Converse Chuck Taylor All Star, is manufactured in a Portuguese union shop from organic materials.

— Photo Provided By The Adbusters Media Foundation

• RESPONSIBLE KICKS — BLACKSPOT ... Continued From Page 3

labor factory which is an indication of how few there are out there in the world. That is distressing news," she said.

Sourcing materials not only with high environmental standards but labor rules as well proved difficult. "We know the workers at the Blackspot shoe factory are well treated. We need to know that the workers in the Romanian hemp field are well treated, too," she added.

What proved to be the biggest hurdle was distribution, how to get the shoes to the people. "That was the most complicated problem of all," she said. "You have to learn customs laws and export laws. As I say, nothing has been plain saving."

And the buyer feedback has been pleasant for the most part, Cohen said, although the distribution glitches have been a cause for consumer criticism.

Grassroots Capitalism

Adbusters is not actively seeking celebrity endorsements out of principle. Its campaign rests on a five-point approach to include more interest groups and movements like anti-sweatshop, anti-corporate, anti-logo, pro-environmental, and pro-grassroots capitalism.

"As far as we're concerned, if some celebrities want to wear our shoes, that would be great, but there is no way we would court them or woo them. That's too Nike-like," said Cohen, chuckling. "We're not looking for a poster boy. We kind of feel like we don't need to, either, because one of the main thrusts of this campaign is to promote grassroots capitalism. A form of capitalism where there's more power in the hands of the consumer and the people who use the services and products."

Cohen added that Blackspot welcomes other companies to the fair trade, anti-sweatshop arena as allies in the same fight. "The more people there are on board, the greater the sense of unity we can accomplish," she said. "There does seem to be a trend toward more ethical consumption, be it from supporters of fair trade, be it from the anti-sweatshop movement, whatever. It is becoming an increasing trend and that gladdens us. It's very positive. It's very encouraging. It's inspiring."

Shareholder Power

Purchasers of Blackspots not only receive their socially and environmentally responsible footwear, but they also become voting shareholders that have the power to develop the Blackspot Anticorporation. The first vote, which drew 95 percent participation in registered shareholders, showed that over 60 percent of them wanted the shoes to be affordable while the anti-business produces the cash to fund more initiatives that co-opt other industries, like entertainment, food, manufacturing, farming, etc. The second vote found that shareholders wanted to reinvest in Blackspot shoes with the anti-corp's profits and to sell pairs at a 10-percent discount.

Independent retail stores around Europe and the U.S., as well as online shops, sell the Blackspots, but Texans, if they want to physically try on a pair, must cross the Red River to Earth Friendly Goods of Tulsa, Okla., a three-week-old retail store that opened due to the high demand for its environmentally friendly products from its online store.

Amie Nguyen, 29, co-owner and manager of Earth Friendly Goods, said that the store recently ordered a dozen of the V1 Classic Blackspots, as well as Adbuster's newest model, a boot made from organic hemp and recycled tires



Sharon Cohen,
Blackspot Marketing Manager

— Photo Provided By The Adbusters Media Foundation

called V2 The Unswosher. She said she plans to keep a dozen of each Blackspot model in stock at all times in men and women sizes. The V1 retails for \$58.95, but the V2 will be priced as soon as they arrive at the store, she added.

"We've had a great response from the community," said Nguyen, whose store also sells locally-made products to help keep Oklahoma sustainable.

Tulsa's new culture jammer group, said Nguyen, is comprised mainly of young families with children like hers wanting to be good role models for sustainable living. "It's easier to follow the path to Wal-Mart, but we're trying to follow a more conscientious route," she said.

By Adbusters' standards, the Blackspot campaign has been a success, selling over 10,000 shoes and christening the "antipreneurial movement" for activists, like Nguyen, who have a bit of a business sense, said Lasn.

"We've got all sorts of business-type people talking about opening up Blackspot restaurants and Blackspot culture shops, and launching Blackspot t-shirts and so on," said Lasn. "They like the idea of opening up a culture shop in their town. It's part business, part changing the world."

But the Blackspots have had its share of naysayers, said Cohen. "Criticism has been leveled at this campaign in view that we as Adbusters are the quintessential anti-consumerists, and here we are launching a consumer product which does ostensibly seem out of character and somewhat contrary to what we stand for and what we're preached for the last decade plus," she said. "The fact remains that consumerism isn't going to go away. People are always going to need shoes. There's nothing wrong with that. Our take is basically to provide an ethical alternative to the ways people can be consumers."

"I think we've launched a very important debate in the Lefty community because half the Lefties came down hard on us: 'How come you suddenly sold out? You're going to get co-opted. You suddenly got a brand. What are you doing in the branding business? What are you do-

ing getting involved in the marketplace?'" said Lasn. "And the other half was saying, 'But hold on for a second. What's really wrong with that? What's wrong with a Blackspot shoe? All of us wear shoes and what would you rather wear? A pair of Nike shoes or a pair of Blackspots? What's actually wrong with what Adbusters has done?'"

Adbusters, the glossy bimonthly magazine, started publishing anti-corporate messaging when environmentalists, filmmakers, and media folks wanted to fight against a \$6 million ad campaign thrown by the forest companies in the Pacific Northwest.

"They were trying to tell us that they were doing a fantastic job managing our forests. Their slogan was 'Forests Forever.' We knew that this was a kind of a disinformation campaign because we were already down to 20 percent of the old growth forest left," said Lasn.

Lasn and his crew created a 30-second TV spot to counter the forest industry, but the TV stations there refused to air it. "For me and the group of people I was working with, this was a realization that there really is no democracy on the airwaves and that the people with the big bucks rule, and the little guys like us with \$50,000 to spare, we don't count," said Lasn.

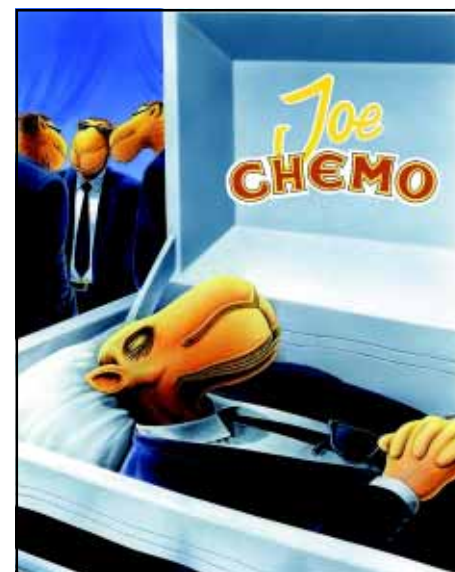
The 15-year-old magazine, which has attacked consumerism and companies, such as Philip Morris with its subversive "Joe Cemo" ads, now has a circulation of about 120,000 around the world and has since launched a website that gets about 15,000 people a day. Adbusters is also responsible for social marketing campaigns like Buy Nothing Day, TV Turnoff Week, Unbrand America, and Media Carta.

"Basically we've become one of the political players of the world. We're quite big now. We have a \$3 million a year that goes through us. There's 20 of us working here. We're quite a self-sustaining little activist group, an NGO," said Lasn.

Story Time

Lasn points to the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle as a defining moment for the media reform movement. However, he also thinks the media activist movement needs "a kick in the pants" with new blood taking the place of the old luminaries that have risen to the occasion now and again to battle corporate interests.

"We got together in St. Louis, but then St. Louis is over. We fly off again, and in a sense, not much has really happened, you know?" said Lasn, referring the 2005 National Conference for Media Reform this past May. "It's not as if we could muster an anti-trust movement against Time Warner. It's not exactly as if we are able to collect this passionate



JOE CEMO'S FUNERAL was one subversive advertising display that the Adbusters Media Foundation drew up to counter cigarette manufacturer Philip Morris in the 1990s. Although still sharp critics of megacorporations, like Nike and McDonalds, Adbusters has since changed tactics and started the Blackspot Anticorporation, which developed the first anti-brand, Blackspot shoes, manufactured by fair labor standards with organic and recycled materials.

— Photo Provided By The Adbusters Media Foundation

thing Bill Moyers has going and turn it into something mainstream American is listening to. It's almost like we're fucking around in the backwaters."

Lasn said that the Left's lack of imagination has aided in its 30-year downfall while the Right has captured the public's interest with succinct, savvy storytelling. Instead of blaming the media, Lasn suggested that the Left offer different stories than those it has told before, such as a movement based on the environmental movement of the 1970 that rejuvenates the "mental environment."

"Our mental environmental is now getting polluted, and we're getting sick and suffering from mood disorders and depression. There's a tragedy of the mental commons going on in which civil society has to take back from the corporations that constantly run our information systems," he said.

Defining Success

When asked if she thought it was possible to promote socially responsible products in a capitalist model, Cohen responded that generating Nike-like profits is not the point of the Blackspot campaign.

"Only if you don't measure success in purely financial terms, and I think in essence that's happening with our Blackspot campaign, too. We will make some money off this campaign but not huge money," she said. "If we can spread the word, get the message out there, present ethical choices, we have succeeded."

INFO

www.adbust.org
www.fluevog.com
www.earthfriendlygoods.com

THE V2 UNSWOOSHER, the Blackspot Anti-Corporation's second anti-brand shoe, was launched earlier this summer and is manufactured in the same way of its predecessor, the V1, in a Portuguese union shop from organic and recycled materials.

— The Adbusters Media Foundation



Baez Is Back!

Folk Singer Icon Joan Baez

Takes Camp Casey II By Storm

Iconoclast Photo
By Gene Ellis



State Dept. Reported Planning Gaps Month Before Iraq Invasion

CRAWFORD — Newly declassified documents written one month before the start of the Iraq war show that the State Department cautioned U.S. Central Command on “serious planning gaps” in postinvasion security there.

State Department officials in a memorandum dated Feb. 7, 2003, also noted that human rights abuses would result due to failures in short-term public security and humanitarian problems. Such failures “would undermine an otherwise successful military campaign, and our reputation internationally,” said the memo written by three State Department bureau chiefs for Undersecretary Paula Dobriansky.

George Washington University's National Security Archive under the Freedom of Information Act acquired the documents which were posted its website Wednesday. The authors of the February 2003 memo noted that top CENTCOM officials and the first U.S. administrator in Baghdad, retired Army Gen. Jay Garner, were informed of the planning gaps.

Another State Department report, dated Dec. 15, 2003, to Congress was more optimistic, saying that “Iraqis are playing an increasing role both in routine civil policing and in combating the terror and sabotage.... More and more Iraqis are coming forward with intelligence information that helps the Coalition conduct increasingly successful operations to prevent planned terrorist attacks, capture insurgents and seize weapons caches.”

The December report, however, also stated that “the insurgents have used more sophisticated tactics.”

By GENE ELLIS
ICONOCLAST REPORTER

CRAWFORD — Shortly after Joan Baez arrived Sunday afternoon at Camp Casey II, she gave a press conference with the Gold Star Families, all of whom have lost loved ones in the war. She talked with them, and she cried with them.

Ms. Baez returned to the trailer to prepare for her performance, speaking only in whispers when it was necessary to speak at all, saving her voice.

She gave a moving performance, peppered with energy, emotion, humor, and humanity. She even showed compassion for President Bush, although she disagrees with him. She said she doesn't make Bush jokes any more because they often offend more conservative folks, and that isn't helping anything.

At one point, she laughingly forgot the line “keeping things vague” in the song “Diamonds and Rust,” and the audience helped her out. When she consulted a paper during the performance, holding it at arm's length, she joked, “I get these brilliant ideas and then they fade from my mind, plus I can't read any more.” Despite her good humor about aging, time has been very kind to Joan Baez. She is a lovely, compelling woman.

Ms. Baez told the crowd that she had only picked up the guitar again a week and a half ago and will go on tour in September. She claimed her fingers were like spaghetti, and that she didn't remember words. “My mother says, ‘Did I take my ginko balboa today?’ and I say, ‘I don't remember!’”

She sang “Joe Hill” in response to a request. Saying that the phrase “in harm's way” was a euphemism for “sitting ducks,” she put down her guitar and sang “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” without accompaniment. Her voice rang sweet and true.

Ms. Baez suggested that if the mothers really wanted catharsis, they could sing along with her

“Where Have All the Flowers Gone?” Emotions ran high as many in the crowd of perhaps five or six hundred wept openly. At the end of the song, she said, “You know, I have to manage to get through it, too.”

Ms. Baez sang “Gracias a la Vida” and several favorites from her long career. She thanked the group for having her here, then admitted she purchased her ticket to Texas before the invitation arrived.

After her performance, she graciously talked with several individuals in a dark area near her trailer. Three of these were veterans. Two were mothers who had lost their sons in Iraq. She hugged them and cried

with them.

Camp bugler and Iraq war veteran Jeff Key, in an unplanned and completely spontaneous moment, took Ms. Baez's hand. He led her to a spot before the many crosses that have been placed at the front of the camp. She was beside him, a diminutive woman beside a tall, strong young man, as he blew taps in the moonlight to a large, respectful crowd.

He saluted. They hugged. And there was complete and total silence.

When Ms. Baez returned to her private area behind the trailer, she sat down at a table, dropped her head into her folded arms, and wept.

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'Rescue Falun Gong Orphans' Van Visits Crawford Sunday

By GENE ELLIS
ICONOCLAST REPORTER

A group of Chinese children, teens, and adults stopped in Crawford Sunday in front of the Amsler Building. Their demonstration was part of an American tour, begun last Friday. This day alone, they made stops in Houston, College Station, Waco, and Crawford. They are hoping to raise American awareness to the persecution of Chinese people who practice the ancient meditative process known as Falun Gong.

To the unpracticed eye, the exercises and meditation appear quite similar to

yoga or tai chi, and are certainly nothing that would be cause for arrest in the United States.

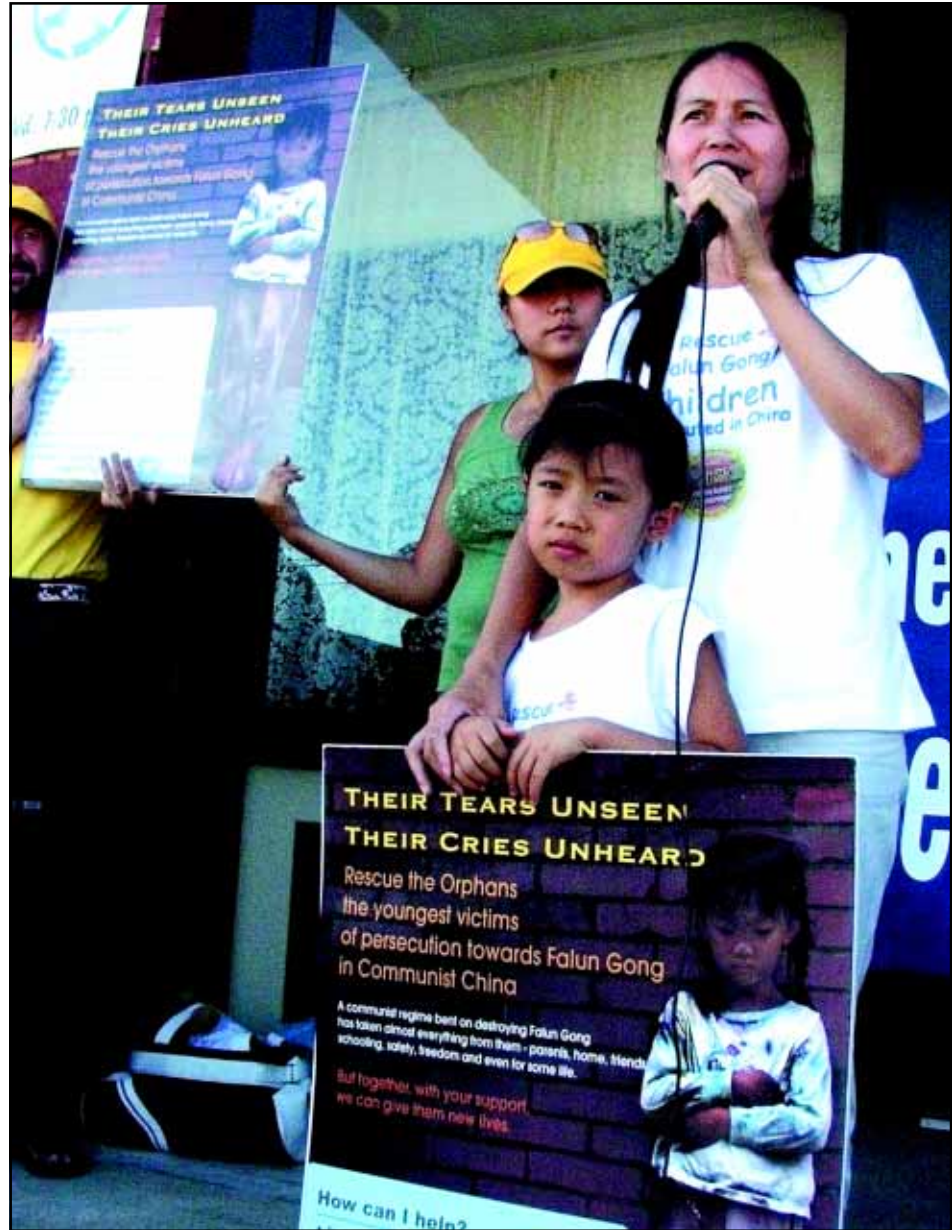
According to a brochure printed and distributed by this group, at the simplest level, Falun Gong is a way of life, a choice to be a good person with higher moral standards. The goal is to bring one towards wisdom and enlightenment through following the characteristics of the universe: truth, benevolence, and forbearance.

Practitioners give up selfish and harmful thoughts such as fame, wealth,

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HONGYI PAN stands behind a group of children who are learning Falun Gong. — Iconoclast Photo By Gene Ellis



HONG KIN WONG poses with her daughter, In Sin Cheong, who was rescued from China last month. — Iconoclast Photo By Gene Ellis

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• **RESCUE FALUN GONG ORPHANS ... Continued From Page 6**

and lust. There is, of course, more to it than that. And combined with five sets of gentle exercises, Falun Gong is said to improve health, morality, and purposeful living.

Falun Gong is practiced in more than 60 countries by over 100 million practitioners. According to Michelle Huang of Austin, "In China, this was an art quietly passed along from one person to another for years and years. It was introduced to the public in 1999 and immediately targeted by Communist leader, Zemin Jiang, for persecution."

The Communists in China do persecute many people for practicing their religions. "Although Falun Gong is not considered a religion, it is treated in the same manner by the government, its practitioners imprisoned, and persecuted, often to the point of death," said Hongyi Pan. Pan claims there have been over 3,000 cases of torture.

According to Pan and Victor Fong, two of the adults traveling with the Chinese children, 300 million disgruntled Chinese have resigned from the Communist party in that country, mainly over the persecution of these people.

Traveling with the group that brought their message to Crawford were Hong Kin Wong, whose husband is serving his fifth year of a 10-year sentence for practicing Falun Gong, her son In Wai Cheong, rescued from China several years ago, and her daughter In Sin Cheong, who was rescued only last month and joins her mother and brother in New York.

Next month when Chinese President Jintao Hu comes to the United States to visit President Bush, this group hopes Bush will urge the Chinese leader to stop what is being called a

genocide, to rescue the Falun Gong practitioners and their families. It is believed that at least 2700 prisoners have been killed thus far. As the Com-

munist party controls all news, it is difficult to calculate. This leaves many orphans who are often shunned. The group also hopes to encourage Presi-

dent Bush to make possible the American adoption of these orphans, so they may have a chance to live in the freedom of America.



THIS YOUNG WOMAN'S mother-in-law was persecuted for practicing Falun Gong.

— Iconoclast Photo By Gene Ellis

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Cindy Sheehan's Vigil Continues At Camp Casey II

CRAWFORD — Time marches on near Crawford, as several activist groups have been not only holding down the fort at Camp Casey, but have expanded it.

After Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a soldier killed in Iraq, suddenly left the camp last week to see to her own mother who had suffered a stroke in Los Angeles, her followers continued with plans to expand the ditch abodes by creating Camp Casey II on private property nearer President Bush's ranch.

Sheehan journeyed to Crawford on Aug. 6 with the mission of speaking directly to President Bush concerning the death of her son, Casey. Sheehan wanted to know "what noble cause" he died for and took issue at the President's using dead soldiers as a reason to continue with the war which quickly growing unpopular. The latest polls indicate that less than 40 percent of Americans now support Bush's stance to "stay the course" with the war.

The soft-spoken mother was accompanied to Crawford by several like-minded groups which have provided support and worked to bolster the personal mission of Sheehan's into a nationwide movement to end the war.

President Bush, who has been on his annual vacation, has not come out to speak with Sheehan, although he has acknowledged her presence and during the first week of the pilgrimage drove past her in a motorcade on his way to a Republican fund-raiser.

This past week, members of CodePink wrote letters to First Lady Laura Bush encouraging her to speak with the President and attempt to persuade him to hear their cause. Baskets of letters were delivered to a checkpoint, whereupon a member of the



Pavilion at Camp Casey II



An inter-faith service was held last week.

concessions became available. On Sunday, a bomb threat was called in at the Yellow Rose, which resulted in immediate evacuation of the gift store while law enforcement officers searched the premises but found no bomb.

Pro-Bush supporters have also been camped near Camp Casey I, posting signs and providing pro-war memorabilia. Approximately 60 motorcycle riders traveled Prairie Chapel Road in support of Bush on Saturday.

Continued On Next Page



STEVE BROOKS entertained the Camp Casey crowd Sunday with songs like "Bushwhacked," "Fever," and "This Land is Your Land."

— Iconoclast Photo By Gene Ellis

secretary's staff agreed to take the letters to Mrs. Bush.

Supporters of Bush's pro-war directives showed up in large numbers in Crawford during the week also, and a meeting post was set up near Bill

Johnson's Yellow Rose in downtown Crawford, where pro-Bush displays and



Motorcyclists supporting the war in Iraq buzzed down Prairie Chapel Road.

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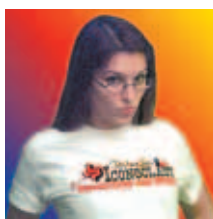
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• **CINDY SHEEHAN ... Continued From Page 8**

Mid-week, organizers for Sheehan erected a large pavilion at the new Camp Casey and set up for greater creature comforts and more people. An inter-faith service was also held last week that featured musicians and members of the area clergy.

On Sunday, musical performances and political speakers took to the microphones under the pavilion as what has been estimated at 500-600 visitors gathered inside.

Folk singer icon from the 1960s

and 70s Joan Baez made an appearance Sunday night and performed several numbers (see separate story).

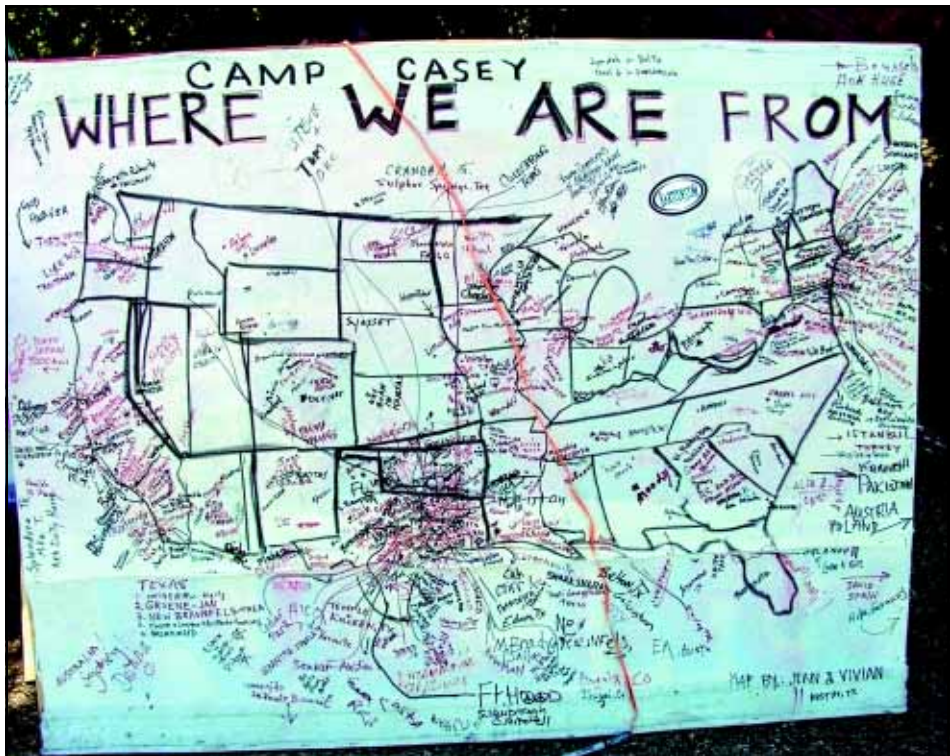
It was rumored that with Sheehan's mother apparently now stable, Cindy Sheehan is expected to return to Crawford early this week.

THE ICONOCLAST has continued its online coverage of Sheehan's visit to Central Texas and plans to update the website <www.iconoclast-texas> as often as possible.



THE CROWD under the tent at Camp Casey II was estimated at over 500 people to hear Joan Baez Sunday night.

— Iconoclast Photo By Gene Ellis



When visitors arrive at Camp Casey, they sign this map to show where they came from.

World Energy Engineering Congress To Gather In Austin Sept. 14-16

AUSTIN — The Association of Energy Engineers will host the World Energy Engineering Congress conference on Sept. 14-16 in Austin.

This event, in its 28th year, will have a multi-track conference agenda, with a full line-up of seminars on current energy-related topics and a comprehensive exposition featuring the most promising new energy technologies.

Also included will be no-cost technology workshops, held in the exhibit hall, and several tours of local energy installations.

Topics covered will include: renewable and alternative energy, combined heat and power generation, geo-exchange technologies, integrated building automation, lighting efficiency, HVAC systems and controls, fuel cells, and energy project financing.

For more information, contact Ted Kurklis, Association of Energy Engineers, 4025 Pleasantdale Rd., Ste. 420, Atlanta, GA 30340.

INFO

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LIZ CARPENTER, the first woman to become a Secretary of the Press (Under President Johnson) spoke in favor of ending the war. "We're in the worst position we've ever been in in this country today. We need to learn to manage peace".

— Iconoclast Photo By Gene Ellis



RAP ARTIST KING FLIPP, originally from the Memphis area, arrived from Berlin to insist through his strong piece "Overcome" that "We do not want bloodshed". He relaxed at Camp Casey II before his performance.

— Iconoclast Photo By Gene Ellis

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We're The Iconoclast, Not Just Another Pretty Face

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "Never try to speak for somebody else. Unless, of course, you're usin' them as an alias."

It was embarrassing.

To watch Cindy Sheehan's transition from a grieving mother to a political clown was pathetic.

To have taken part in that made-for-TV demagoguery, even to the limited extent that I did, is repugnant to me.

THE ICONOCLAST's histrionic pandering to these theatrics was dishonest, prejudiced and self-serving.

We crossed the line, fine though it may be drawn, between sympathetic observer and propagandist.

When we changed our news focus, or rather had it changed for us, we determined that we would seek out stories that do not earn play in other venues. We did not, and promised ourselves we would not, promote any cause, movement or point of view. We would merely be certain that those who did advocate such had a non-discriminatory, or, in the extreme, sympathetic forum for their ideas.

That does not mean an uncritical forum; that does not mean unreasoned proselytizing.

I was appalled at the "Cindy Watch" or "Support Cindy" or similar links on our web site. Not that those links are problematic for the adherents of this point of view; they just have no place in the editorial content of this publication except as advertisements. They were not labeled as such, and should have been.

Moreover, the tone and tenor or the ICONOCLAST's copy was clearly doctrinaire.

We became the mirror image of the intellectually narcissistic fascism that has become the broadcast standard in this country.

For about a week now I have felt like I needed a bath.

There are two issues that involved me in this perpetual error in news judgment.

First, there's the event.

The real value of Cindy Sheehan's vigil has been largely ignored.

Prior to the Cindy Circus, Neighbor Bush had been successful in keeping the First Amendment at bay.

As governor, he successfully ensured that only pro-Bush demonstrators were seen in front of the governor's mansion. He kept that up in the White House, and even had demonstrators beaten in Oregon during his second campaign.

Until a few days ago, the Secret Service had kept *anyone* away from the public right-of-way around the Bush Pile, restricting demonstrations to a park miles away from Little George.

The president of the United States, any president, gets paid to put up with demonstrations against his will.

It goes with the job.

Besides, it's our right-of-way, not his.

Yet we have concentrated on the show, on the woman herself.

She certainly paid for the right to call Neighbor Bush to task.

She had the opportunity to do that once and blew it, probably because of that thin veneer of civility that keeps us all from each others' throats on a daily basis.

But now, after reflection on everything she wished she had said at that first meeting, she does not really want

Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



to talk to the President.

She wants to urinate in his Post Toasties.

Much as we might all like that, we have no constitutional right to do so.

And it would serve no purpose, other than to further solidify those minds in which the intellectual cement has long since set.

Her personal position might be a little more credible without the sound bytes, the PR firm and the celebrity endorsements. She is no longer a grieving mother; she is a marketing scheme, and that leads us to consider why the product cannot simply sell itself.

So when Neighbor Bush said, in effect, "I've heard what she has to say from others, and I don't agree with her," it struck me that he had a point.

And that point was: there is no longer any point to all this.

All the minds that will be changed have been.

George Bush has shown what he is made of, and it is sorry stuff.

He will not listen to those who disagree with him, neither will his blindly obedient myrmidons and neither will those protesting his policies.

And while that is antithetical to everything Americans are all supposed to believe in, the point is taken. End of story. The big boar coon just drowned your best hound and it's a mile back to the truck. Call the fire and piss on the dogs.

Game over, man.

Anything else is just political masturbation.

Second, there's our part in all this.

I participated in a couple of editorial discussions about this, after which I kept myself at arm's length from the story.

Not that I really tried to get closer. I did consider interviewing Ms. Sheehan, but then, as events unfolded, thought better of it. I have a problem with anyone, even those with whom I agree, asking me to make them the news.

That would have the same effect as interviewing George Bush.

You've heard it all before.

But I feel about the treatment of this story a little as my conscience pricks me regarding the Bush election.

There must have been more I could have done.

As Hemingway once said, "If you're any damned good at all, everything is your fault."

We are all to blame for this war.

We were too silent during the clamor for vengeance after the World Trade Center attacks. We did not shout down the network info-ads billed as the nightly news. We did not throw ourselves in front of the gerrymandering train that gave fascism a permanent majority in the Congress. We have simply not cared that much about this war because the casualties aren't that high, and the absence of a draft brings it into

the lives of only a few.

Nothing to take to the streets about, anyway.

We have allowed a political faction to usurp patriotism and make militarism synonymous with courage.

We kept too quiet then and so have become too boisterous now.

Insofar as the ICONOCLAST goes, we have tried to curry favor, to say what our readers wanted to hear.

We failed you.

It does not matter whether you liked what the ICONOCLAST reported.

We have damaged our credibility, even if you did enjoy watching the wreck.

Frankly, I don't care what you think.

If I do, I am not a journalist. I become a sycophant with no voice and no vision.

And I leave you to face a dangerous world armed with nothing but the sound of your own voice.

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Ticking Timebombs

As the clock ticks, three torrents are awaiting a date with President Bush:

- Cindy Sheehan
- Depleted uranium
- The war in Iraq

All three have breached the back forty and are now on the front porch of public opinion.

Sheehan descended upon Crawford, Texas with the mission of obtaining direct and truthful answers from the President regarding the loss of her son's life on the battlefield of Iraq. Sheehan captured the hearts of not only mothers from throughout the world, but also like-minded members of organizations that had been separately seeking similar answers. The voice has grown into one that the majority of Americans now embrace.

Sheehan said on Saturday that the time has come to get off the fence: "If you fall on the side that is pro-George and pro-war, you get your ass over to Iraq, and take the place of somebody who wants to come home. And if you fall on the side that is against this war and against George Bush, stand up and speak out."

With nearly 1,850 U.S. soldiers now dead, less than 40 percent of Americans approve of Bush's handling of the war.

Depleted uranium is no longer a side issue. The use of radioactive munitions on the battlefield and the enormous environmental fallout has been challenged in both hemispheres. Finally, Americans are beginning to catch up with the rest of the world in acknowledging the prominence of birth defects and attacks on health that the use of DU causes, even to generations yet to be born. The President continues to

turn a deaf ear to these concerns and has no interest in testing soldiers as they come home. But the cloud is thickening as more and more proof of devastation and long-term consequences is being exposed.

After retired General Barry R. McCaffrey visited Iraq in June, he minced no words with the President regarding the war in Iraq: "It's a race against time because by the end of this coming summer we can no longer sustain the presence we have now." He went on to say, "This thing, the wheels are coming off it."

Even neo-con TV pundit Bill O'Reilly last Thursday, while defiling Cindy Sheehan, waffled: "It is true that most Americans now believe the Bush administration is fumbling the war, and that may well be true." He went on to say that President Bush made a mistake in keeping Donald Rumsfeld as Secretary of State and that "America made a mistake in underestimating the difficulty of imposing democracy in a culture that does not revere it."

Too, concerns are growing that soldiers are being thrust into the war not completely prepared and that there is no end-game in sight.

The public might think that with an executive branch out of control that awakening Congress is the answer.

But while the executive branch vacations and soldiers are dying in order to force democracy on a "culture that does not revere it," Congress has been quietly passing legislation to extinguish the possibility of victims' lawsuits against gun dealers that knowingly sell weapons to domestic terrorists and criminals.

There lies yet another hurdle.
— Written By W. Leon Smith



Apathy Conquered, Thanks To Sheehan

Cindy Sheehan will go down in history as the woman who, in a determined yet soft-spoken, dignified manner, stoked the fires of debate and made them hotter.

Uneasiness often results in mere apathy.

But to bring similar factions together to speak with one voice requires an icon to lead, and Sheehan has become that

With both sides of the Iraq issue now embroiled in debate, the United States cannot help but benefit, for overall, it is the people who are taking sides and ordering their political employees to act, not the other way around.

For too long, Americans have withered into complacency, which is a breeding ground for imperialism.

They now realize that one person can make a difference.

They are speaking on the sidewalks; they are speaking in coffeehouses. They are discussing politics in their homes.

They are identifying problems that, prior to the bold and courageous actions of Cindy Sheehan, they felt they could not change.

They now know differently.

They want their President, their Congressmen, and their Senators to come clean.

They want to know why gasoline prices continue to skyrocket.

The Trenchwalker



By W. Leon Smith

They want to know why President Bush lied about going to war with Iraq.

They want to know why the Federal government continues to eat away at the dignity of the Constitution.

They want to know why the environment is being shortchanged.

They want to know why lawmakers are spending the Social Security trust fund.

They want to know why the rich are getting richer and the poor poorer.

They are tired of being lied to.

They know, thanks to Cindy Sheehan, that the time has come for America to get back on track and for light to again shine on the so-called American dream.

Now that more than 60 percent of the American people want an end to the war in Iraq, what will our leaders in Washington do? Abide by the will of their employers or continue to hawk our rights to their own special interests?

That is where we are.
Where we go depends upon you.

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Horrific Moral Falsehoods Perpetrated Upon American People

By DANIEL J. SMIECHOWSKI
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

The U.S. occupation of Iraq has called in question a wide range of moral sources in legitimizing actions of the Bush Administration. There exists a broad consensus of public opinion outside the United States, depicting the Iraq quagmire as morally illegitimate.

Forces inside the United States, such as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, are equally critical of the Bush doctrine's policy of preemptive strike. Importantly, however, in evaluating the moral import of the Iraq war, both secular and non-secular sources are considered as wholly plausible. Public opinion in many foreign capitals runs counter to U.S. public opinion polls. According to Madame Faury, Adjoint de Maire du Havre in Le Havre, France, an overwhelming number of French citizens remain highly critical of the U.S.-led war effort. The same can be said of the entire European Union in criticizing the validity of invading Iraq.

While outside our borders much of the world condemns the actions of Washington, the comfort and warmth of nationalism pacifies America's heartland. This pacification, according to Freud, is to be expected. Nationalism like one's mother is nurturing. A baby is weak and dependent upon delivery as a nation's moral strength is weak and diminished upon threat. Without question, our culture's falsification of personal control and the concomitant myth of control drain our personal morality like sap from a tree. This philosophy of control was extraordinarily depicted in the French film "King of Hearts," where the perceived insane were victimized by the vagaries of war.

The concept of moral consequentialism cannot be overstated. This concept remains basic to the moral view of the Catholic Church with consideration to U.S. policy toward Iraq. The carpet bombings of Germany by U.S. fliers toward the end of World War Two has, in large measure, been reconciled by Catholic theologians. But, America's role in Iraq has not met this conceptual moral threshold, according to some Catholic clergy. Arguably, the Vatican remains mostly consistent with regard to life and death issues. It is most perplexing, then, to witness such moral uncertainty and inconsistency within the Catholic faithful, especially with regard to the war in Iraq. Again, deaf, dumb and blind nationalism trumps Catholic doctrine.

Catholicism's chief antagonist, Judaism, has within the moral framework altering rules with concern over the Iraq situation. Obviously, the stakes are higher and closer to home for most Jews. Witness the U.S. 2004 presidential election, where an unprecedented Jewish vote went for George W. Bush.

Within the confines of international law there must exist some

conceptual moral framework in foreign policy decision making, something akin to the Kohlberg stratification of moral development theory ought to predicate the morality of nations. For example, what exactly was the threat by Iraq to America's vital interests? Was the American response morally justified? Why was this military response found acceptable by a majority in Congress? Were these questions analyzed by American citizens? If not, why not?

According to Dewey, every situation ought to be judged on the uniqueness of the situation itself. There are no moral absolutes as with religious dogma. Dr. Dewey was a pragmatist, a democratic humanist who ironically saw a need for religious faith as a control for the masses. With the war

in Iraq, however, these opposing and seemingly contradictory statements seem to clash. What solves this moral paradox is the "intention result model" so common in philosophy. What was the intention of President Bush in ordering the invasion of Iraq? Now, what is the result of that intention?

Man is often corrupted by social forces, according to Reinhold Niebuhr. An infant sees light without absolutes in regard to moral reasoning. But after years of existence, the light turns dark as a shroud of social and cultural opinion arrest moral growth. Politicians by nature seek compromise whereas morality is uncompromising. Therefore, politicians are immoral. With regard to Iraq, perhaps the lowest level of moral stratification is reserved for those who seek only to democratize a sovereign state or prostitute its economy. Is this the morality of Christ?

In conclusion, there have been horrific moral falsehoods perpetrated

upon the American people by an administration many rank lower than that of President Warren Harding. But, just like sex, Christ sells in our great land. Christ is absolute and his teachings have been used as weaponry against perception. We have bankrupted our nation in a moral sense since liquid seeks its own level. As French President Jacques Chirac has said, "Iraq is the biggest mistake in the two hundred plus year history of the United States." And to that I say, oui, Monsieur le President.

Daniel J. Smiechowski is a columnist for the Hillcrest News in San Diego, Calif. He is a former public school teacher with a diverse academic background in Sociology, Politics, French, Linguistics and Education. He has traveled abroad 18 times including study at the University of Paris, France, "La Sorbonne." Smiechowski writes primarily on social philosophy and psychology and resides in San Diego.



Daniel Smiechowski

CINDY SHEEHAN IS A HERO



— NJ Mother

A Soldier Returns Home

"This isn't fair. He was supposed to come home next year and get married. "This isn't fair."

These are words which George W. Bush refuses to hear, or listen to, or heed.

Again and again and again.

They are the words spoken by the aunt of a fallen soldier from a lower-income neighborhood of Chicago.

Just days into his second tour of duty in Iraq the life was snuffed out of this exemplary young man, whom I will call "Martin." As the U.S. military unit sat unmoving, held up in Baghdad traffic, a fanatic drove alongside and detonated his bomb, disguised as a car.

Martin, positioned atop a Humvee manning its machine gun, ostensibly to protect the convoy from just such an attack, never had a chance.

But, how can you protect yourself from an attack when you have no idea what the attacker will look like?

And why are U.S. military convoys subject to being stopped in traffic where they become sitting ducks for anarchists?

Perhaps had Bush #43 or anyone in his inner circle actually served in Vietnam, or been properly trained in military tactics, they would comprehend such conundrums.

Or, maybe if these white-tie elitists had a plan...

The soldier known only to us as Martin shall remain otherwise nameless, in part to respect his family's privacy, but also because he is now a member of the Immortal Battalion.

Martin, of Hispanic descent, was orphaned in 1991 along with his younger siblings. From that time he had added to his role of big brother those of mother and father. His family resides in a reasonably nice west side Chicago area, where aunts and uncles helped nurture him, his brother and sister.

Wanting his sister to have the best opportunities, Martin was paying her way through college.

During a visit home last Christmas, he became engaged to his longtime sweetheart.

Martin made it through his first Iraq tour unscathed. However, while home on leave last month just prior to his second deployment, Martin confided an uneasy feeling to his fiancé about the forthcoming trip over there.

He was considered a good trooper, and was on the short list to be promoted Sergeant.

Instead, Martin returned to Chicago this past Tuesday in a flag-draped coffin.

And, in defiance of Bush #43's edict, WGN-TV dared to air video of his remains being loaded into a hearse by Army personnel.

Gutsy programming decision, Tribune Company, but you'd better watch out for backlash from the White House-friendly FCC.

Being a "SuperStation" with satellite transmission available nationally and anywhere else one has a good dish, I hope people all over the world picked up on WGN's story about Martin and his crestfallen family.

I'd like to see WGN take this story and expand it to special length, say at least 30 minutes, or make it part of a news special about Chicago-area sol-



Out Of The Blue

By
Jerry
Tenuto

diers and Marines killed or maimed in Iraq. Let's face it, generally speaking they aren't the privileged types; it's important that television and other media sources get their stories out.

However... speaking of soldiers from Chicagoland killed in Iraq, I did see one report that made the hair stand up on the back of my neck.

Recently, Wolf Blitzer made an attempt at CNN to balance out the Cindy Sheehan protest. Somebody in the Chicago bureau dug up a bona fide Bush #43 supporter whose son had joined the Marines, been sent to Iraq, and killed.

One look at Mrs. Sheehan shows a woman who is obviously not opposed to living in a tent or motor home, being outside and spending whatever time it takes exposed to the elements, getting not only her hands dirty but also continually subjected to Texas dust blowing around.

This woman from a Chicago suburb was her complete antithesis. She was well coifed, finely dressed, and gave her singular interview from inside an air-conditioned studio.

Hey, I am not an unsympathetic monster - I do not wish for anybody to be killed or wounded in combat; as a veteran and parent of a young adult, every casualty is painful to me. However, virtually everything this woman said sounded like a report on FoxNews or a RoveBush talking point (like there's any way to differentiate between the two).

Instead of doing what mothers of fallen soldiers should do and bond in their communal loss, this woman opted to belittle Cindy Sheehan and any others who showed the courage to take their pain to the world's public and chastise the ludicrous, murderous policies of Bush #43. In typical self-righteous neo-con fashion, she did so in a forum where the person(s) she attacked had no chance to respond.

At no point was there any hint of sorrow shown for the loss of her son. To her, it was pure blind allegiance to Bush #43 and the Right Wing agenda. I got the impression her son was just an acceptable sacrifice.

She was proud her son died to protect his country. The president sends our troops into battle because he knows best. The war in Iraq is a fight for freedom. The war in Iraq protects us against terrorism. She was proud that her son gave his life so Iraqis could vote, and when they ratify their constitution his sacrifice will be justified.

This pitiful, information-challenged woman even invoked Bush #43's favorite lame acquittal for not having a viable change in policy: "We must stay the course."

Let's look at the fallacies behind her convoluted logic, as manipulated by the White House: Her son did not die protecting his country, since no Iraqi soldier ever posed a threat to any of our

lands.

This president does not have the vaguest clue as to what is best for our military, in or out of combat. He has no experience in that field, refuses to listen to those who are the experts, and considers it all a glorious crusade.

The war in Iraq is anything but a fight for freedom, especially if you are of the wrong sect or sex. It is a fight for the glory of George W. Bush - and *oil*! Nor does this phoned-up war protect us against terrorism. We're still not certain if it's verity or balderdash that the 9/11/2001 attack on America really was carried out by fanatical Islamic terrorists.

When the Iraqis "voted," how can we be even remotely assured that their votes were counted with accuracy? After all, when was the last time we had a vote in this country that was on the up and up? Certainly none of the elections resulting in Bush #43 "victories," among others. Just who were the Iraqi people voting for, and who decided which candidates would run?

As for an Iraqi constitution, that's not something to be forced with an arbitrary completion date. The United States Constitution was written as an evolved document. What's being drawn up in Iraq is more of a "put one together or else."

Then there's the Conservative catch-all phrase when you've stepped into a mess of dung and the only way out is to leave your boots behind: "We must stay the course."

This is the pigheaded statement of a dimwitted individual who found a hornets' nest in the middle of an open field, then whipped it with a big stick before thinking on how there ain't nowhere to run and hide when them varmints get pissed off and mean.

Ya can't shoo 'em away with that stick ya begun the trouble with.

Yer jest gonna git stung over and over and over agin.

And, when the most powerful military in the world is losing troops over and over and over again, on a daily basis, to an enemy it can neither define nor locate, then it is high time to do more than STAY THE DAMNED COURSE!

We "stayed the course" in Vietnam for Tricky Dick Nixon and look where it got us.

Bush #43 is not the uniter of his claims - he is the most polarizing divider this nation and planet have ever experienced. The parents and other loved ones of fallen and

wounded soldiers are at odds with each other; in some cases, even within families. All because of idiotic Bush #43 ideologies.

However, those who are fed up with insane policies now outnumber White House supporters by a margin of two to one. Thanks to Cindy Sheehan's stand, and Bush #43's inexcusable posture of ignoring her, the groundswell is rising. Exactly how stupid and blind can he be? They're amassing right outside his Prairie Chapel Ranch, and still he doesn't see them. Now the good folks of America are converging on the White House.

I wrote a few weeks ago that Herr Karl Rove needed to be protected by the West Wing at all costs, because once he fell the entire RoveBush dictatorial regime would come apart at the seams. Anybody seen "Turd Blossom" around lately?

On an unrelated subject: It's been difficult for me to accept this, I guess a form of denial. I always enjoyed watching Peter Jennings, whether he was anchoring the evening news, hosting the Worldwide Millennium celebrations, or reporting from some far off hot spot. He was a large part of my information source on 9/11 and during the ensuing week.

More than enjoyment, I trusted Mr. Jennings, in part because he was a Canadian, but mostly because he was the smartest guy in the business. I saw what became his final farewell several months ago, and have missed him since he took that sick leave. Television news has lost one of a kind.

Godspeed to a friend and mentor I never met.

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— Guest Commentary —

Nine Miles to Crawford

By PAUL SAINT-AMAND
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

When the two Secret Service boys hopped out of their air-conditioned white Suburban, no doubt Gold Star mother Cindy Sheehan felt a sudden chill pierce the 100-plus degree heat in Crawford, Texas. Saturday afternoon's unrelenting sun washed over the roadway and spilled into the ditch where Cindy and an estimated 125 veterans and activists, including myself, waited for President Bush to acknowledge this anguished mother's right to ask why her son, Casey, was killed for a lie.

I stood behind Cindy with my cell phone on speaker mode so that my wife in Massachusetts could hear her conversation with the agents. After a brief warning about Cindy's intent to camp overnight on this lonely stretch of country road, the young agent hedged his concern for her safety with a final comment. "Well, ma'am. . . You have my condolences on the loss of your son." Cindy, near heatstroke, looked into his deadpan face said quietly, "I didn't lose my son. He was killed in Iraq. If I had lost him, I would go to Iraq and find him. He's dead. Do you understand what that means? Do you understand?"

We live in a time when our language betrays us. And that's certainly true for Cindy and the other Gold Star mothers who know the agony of burying a military son or daughter without having those deaths justified by facts. For Cindy, the deception never warranted sending her son to kill and be killed.

But on this weekend afternoon in Crawford, Texas, even the blazing sun and veiled threats by officials didn't stop Cindy and others from publicly seeking an audience with President Bush. Members of Veterans For Peace, Gold Star Families for Peace, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Military Families Speak Out, Code Pink, Crawford Peace House and other Texas peace groups led chants. "No Justice, No Peace" rolled across the expansive Texas landscape. On one side of the road we yelled "Had Enough" to the counter "No More War." We wanted to know why the president has put those most vulnerable into harm's way — military men and women who depend on us only to go to war as a last resort.

Sheriff's deputies had stopped us four or so miles short of the Bush Ranch, herding the group along a half-mile long overgrown ditch. The deputies told us that we could continue the march only if we kept off the tarmac. Evidently, traffic safety on the largely deserted road overshadowed the concern for potential snakebites or the disruption of fire ant nests that dotted the ditch. Angered that the authorities would not let us continue beyond the second roadblock, we mustered in front of sheriff's deputies and Secret Service men. Sensing the need for calm, fellow Veterans For Peace member Tony Flaherty, a retired Navy officer, led us in a recitation of the Lord's Prayer. Some two hours later, on the verge of dehydration because Sheriff's deputies would not allow us to bring fresh water forward once we returned to the first roadblock, most of the group had gone back to the Crawford. Cindy Sheehan and her remaining few supporters returned to the first roadblock to set up camp.

In her address the night before to the Veterans For Peace National Convention in Dallas, Cindy was determined to put herself on the line. "I have the whole month of August off, just like him [Bush]. . . So, I have a lot of free time on my hands, and I'm gonna stay until he comes out and talks to me. And if he quits his vacation and goes to D.C., I'll pull my tent up, follow him to D.C., and put it on the White House lawn, and I'll be waiting for you guys when you get there on September 24th." On that date, activists are

calling for an anti-war rally on the Washington Mall.

She continued her address, directing her comments to President Bush: "You tell me the truth. You tell me that my son died for oil. You tell me that my son died to make your friends rich. You tell me my son died to spread the cancer of Pax Americana, imperialism in the Middle East. You tell me that. You don't tell me my son died for freedom and democracy."

Cindy had come to Crawford in the red, white, and blue Veterans For Peace "Impeachment Tour" bus. I rode in a private car to Crawford with two whistleblowers — for whom telling the truth is a sacred oath. Ann Wright is a retired U.S. Army colonel, former diplomat, and peace activist who resigned her State Department position to protest the Iraq War. Jesslyn Radack is the Justice Department ethics lawyer who revealed that the FBI deliberately violated Taliban prisoner John Walker Lindh's civil rights during his interrogation. Jesslyn lost her job because she honored truth over lies. Both these women, intelligent, articulate, and steadfast in their belief in honor and duty exemplify the oath taken by veterans and elected officials who have served the country "to defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies both foreign and domestic." Both women know first-hand that moral courage has a price, and that it costs more than those who meekly follow the status quo will ever understand.

The opposite of good is not evil; it's apathy," Cindy cautioned us that evening. "And we have to get this country off their butts, and we have to get the choir singing. We need to say, bring our troops home now. We can't depend on the people in charge to bring our troops home. Because you don't plan on bringing the troops home when you drop so much of the reconstruction money into building permanent bases.

"I was hoping to come to the VFP banquet tomorrow night, but unless George comes out and talks to me, I'll be camping at Crawford."

Sharon, a single mom, and I put up Cindy's tent while we had our photographs surreptitiously taken by the two Secret Service men. Sheriff's deputies had us move the tent twice away from the large, flat, open piece of ground between the intersection of the two country roads where camping made sense. And once again, a weed-infested ditch was to be a "safer" area to house the mother of a fallen soldier. "But look out for rattlers," a friendly sheriff's deputy called out to us as he pointed to the open ditch.

We left Cindy and several others — like Amy Branham, another Gold Star mother that day — at Cindy's "Camp Casey" on that darkening roadside in Crawford. She seemed vulnerable and, yet fully committed to being heard. The Secret Service SUVs zoomed back and forth all afternoon.

Now they are telling Cindy that if she continues her peaceful vigil, she could be considered a security risk and may be arrested. Like many others who have stepped up to be counted, the fact that this Gold Star mother could find herself vulnerable against an administration and a president more interested in dogma than people, leaves me sad and, frankly, terrified.

On the drive down, the first road sign we came upon read "nine miles to Crawford." For Cindy Sheehan, it might as well be a million miles away from a real conversation with the president.

God bless you, Cindy.

Paul Saint-Amand teaches at the State University of New York, Potsdam, is a member of Veterans For Peace, Chapter 45, Ipswich, MA and chapter president of North Country Veterans For Peace, Chapter 121, Potsdam, NY.

Texan Packs A Lot Of Living Into 27 Years

Texans mourned the Aug. 17, 1840, passing of Henry Wax Karnes, though no one could deny that the red-headed Tennessean had squeezed several lifetimes of adventure into his 27 years.

Arriving just in time to join the fight for Lone Star independence, Karnes served with daring distinction as a scout and cavalry captain. Usually in the company of Deaf Smith, he flirted with death by slipping behind enemy lines to gather intelligence critical to the rebels' ultimate success.

Karnes' best known adventure began as a routine assignment in May 1836. Under the terms of the Treaty of Velasco signed by Santa Anna, he was sent to Matamoros to fetch those Texans taken prisoner by the retreating enemy.

Karnes and his companion, a spit-and-polish infantry officer named Henry Teal, entered the border town under a flag of truce. Their appearance on Mexican soil less than a month after San Jacinto infuriated those soldiers still licking their wounds from the humiliating defeat.

Other than whispered threats and curses, the survivors of Santa Anna's decimated divisions showed surprising self-control. They did, however, demand that the visitors remove all insignia and combat decorations from their uniforms, and the two Texans prudently complied.

Jose Urrea, the general who defeated Fannin's forces but did not take part in the mass slaughter at Goliad, refused to meet with the rebel representatives on the prisoner-of-war issue. His response to a written appeal was so ambiguous that Karnes and Teal decided to go home.

But on the eve of their departure, the central government repudiated the Velasco agreement. The Texans' travel documents were confiscated, and they became "prisoners at large" restricted to the city limits of Matamoros.

Overreacting to the Mexicans' tough talk about a punitive expedition against liberated Texas, Henry Teal wrote a secret letter to Gen. Thomas Rusk. "You must blow up San Antonio and Goliad!" he advised. In an equally irrational postscript, another prisoner suggested, "Shoot Santa Anna and his officers."

A Mexican youth smuggled the bizarre message across the Rio Grande in the hollow handle of a whip. The letter fell into the hands of a border patrol, resulting in the wide dissemination of the sensational contents.

The entire text was published two weeks later in a New Orleans newspaper, to which Gen. Urrea happened to subscribe. Moments after the incriminating edition hit his desk, Karnes and Teal found themselves under armed guard in a military barracks.

The generally eventually cooled off and changed the conditions of their con-

This Week In Texas History

By Barte Haile



finement to house arrest. Under this more lenient form of incarceration, the Texans were able to wander at will around town escorted by a pair of soldiers.

After four months in Matamoros, Karnes and Teal concluded their release could not be won through diplomatic channels. With the assistance of a sympathetic American hatmaker, they planned their escape.

Each evening before retiring for the night, the captives were taken under guard to the small pond behind their living quarters which served as a latrine. A local guide, who accepted a bribe from the hatmaker, would be waiting with two horses for a fast getaway.

The escape proved to be the easy part. Before their keepers knew what had happened, Karnes and Teal leaped on the waiting mounts and rode away into the sunset. Several tardy shots missed the mark leaving the guards to explain the embarrassing episode to a livid Urrea.

Far more difficult, not to mention uncomfortable, were the two miserable weeks the fugitives spent in a thicket hideout. Drenched by the annual autumn monsoon and eaten alive by insects, they waited for the Mexicans to call off the search before finally finishing their flight to freedom.

After a long and hard-earned rest, Karnes and Teal resumed their respective careers. The former devoted most of his energy and battlefield talents to waging war against the Comanches, while the latter remained in the peacetime army and continued to rise in rank.

From most accounts, Henry Teal was a haughty officer thoroughly detested by the troops. As a result, no one was particularly surprised when he was murdered in his sleep a year after returning from Matamoros.

Henry Wax Karnes, on the other hand, was the classic frontier hero. Ferocious in a fight, he was handsome, modest to a fault and the best friend anyone could ever want.

Bedridden with yellow fever in San Antonio, Karnes insisted upon keeping an appointment in Houston. Exhausted by the long wagon trip, he suffered a relapse and died three weeks shy of his twenty-eighth birthday.

Barte Haile welcomes your comments, questions and suggestions at haile@pdq.net or 1912 Meadow Creek Dr., Pearland, TX 77581.

CORRECTION, CLARIFICATIONS

O'Reilly Misquoted

CRAWFORD — In the Wednesday, Aug. 17th edition of the LONE STAR ICONOCLAST, an error was made in the article, "Peace Diva Meets Press, Not Bush." Bill O'Reilly of the Fox News television did not call Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a slain U.S. soldier, treasonous.

His comment referred to the supporters of an antiwar website: "I think Ms. Sheehan bears some responsibility for this, and also for the responsibility of other American families who have lost sons and daughters in Iraq, who feel that this kind of behavior borders on treasonous." He added, "I said some families who also lost loved ones in Iraq believe what she's doing borders on treason."

The ICONOCLAST apologizes for any harm this error may have caused. The correction was verified on Tuesday, Aug. 16.

The Bigger The Freezer, The Bigger The Avalanche

You may find it hard to believe, but I've come close to losing my life 23 times in avalanches. Each incident was absolutely terrifying. Each incident had me wondering if I'd be found in time.

And each incident occurred while standing in front of the refrigerator when the freezer door fell open.

The last time was less than a week ago, while I was looking for my water bottle. One minute, I was poised in the soft glow of the refrigerator light satisfying my thirst; the next minute I was buried beneath chicken drumsticks, hamburger patties, fruit-flavored Popsicles, and a frozen Tofurkey left over from our healthy food kick back in the late 1990s.

The reason for these recurring disasters is simple: Even though, before shopping, we measure the cubic inches available in our freezer, and factor in the rate of ice build-up in relation to our rate of consumption, it's impossible to pass up a sale on things like pre-breaded, microwavable okra sticks. As a result, my wife and I return from the grocery store and try to defy the laws of physics by stuffing what amounts to an entire side of beef into a freezer roughly the size of Barbie's Winnebago.

For this reason, after purchasing a full-sized, stand-up freezer, my wife and I immediately began measuring and calculating the dimensions of our new storage capacity. Needless to say, our conclusion was that we needed more stuff.

However, before embarking into the frozen food section of the grocery store, it was necessary to embark into the fro-



By
**Ned
Hickson**
Siuslaw News

zen tundra of our existing freezer — a job that required a blow torch, an ice pick, and more than one call to the Centers for Disease Control.

Though avalanches had emptied out most of our freezer's contents over time, in its farthest reaches were a number of unlabeled Zip-lock bags that had been lying dormant since the unit's first ice age. These items were no longer recognizable as animal, vegetable, mineral or, to be quite frank, earthly origin.

At least, not by me.

My wife, on the other hand, was able to identify all but one bag, simply by shape and whether the contents were light or dark — a labeling system similar to the one used by Hannibal Lector.

(For our friends who will be joining us for dinner this weekend, disregard that last paragraph.)

In the end, the sum total of our tiny freezer required only one shelf in the new unit, leaving a cavernous void of unoccupied space. We felt obligated to fill this void with pork, chicken, jalapeno poppers, shoe-string potatoes, a cow, assorted sea creatures, all members of the dairy family, 16 different kinds of

bread, two kinds of waffles, one Zip-lock bag of unknown origin, and an entire case of pre-breaded, microwavable okra sticks.

As we stood admiring our handiwork we suddenly realized there was a problem: our smaller freezer was now empty. So we went back to the store.

For my neighbors who heard that ter-

rible rumbling sound this morning, don't worry; I'm all right.

And by the way, you can now make that 24 avalanches.

(You can write to Ned Hickson at nhickson@oregonfast.net, or at the Siuslaw News at P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR. 97439. Visit his weblog at www.nedhickson.net)

Just Cloning Around

The big news in science this summer is that South Korean researchers cloned a dog. They created a genetic identical twin of an older donor dog. They claim their purpose is not to allow pet-owners to reproduce their pets, but to use their research to help cure human diseases. But if you think that pet-owners are not going to line up for "Xeroxing" their aging pet, think again. There's a company in Northern California (where else?) called Genetic Savings & Clone that's already cloning pet cats. If cats and dogs are being cloned, how big of a leap is it for people to clone their beloved Aunt Martha?

The South Korean cloned dog is an Afghan puppy. A Labrador was the surrogate mother. I wonder if they made the Lab sign a paper swearing she'd give up the baby even if she got attached to it. The puppy was delivered by Caesarian section, adding to the debate about whether there are too many Caesarians these days. For you dog owners who want to sign up to create a dog just like the loveable one who sheds all over your house, relax. It took these guys in South Korea three years, and cost about a million dollars. That doesn't even include the leash and collar.

Because of their unusual reproductive systems, dogs are considered to be the most difficult animal to clone. Apparently, cats are a snap. If you want to clone your cat, Genetic Savings & Clone recently lowered its price to a mere \$32,000. That's \$32,000 for an animal that doesn't even catch a Frisbee.

But will making a genetic copy of your pet really produce another pet with all the qualities you love? Most of us don't just like the way our pets look. We like their personalities. Is there a guarantee that a younger genetic twin will do all the exact same cute things that our beloved pet does?

When it comes to cloning, the big worry is always about whether human cloning is just around the corner. Do we really want to encourage a technology that will make exact copies of certain individuals? My feeling is that dogs might be the most difficult animal to clone, but people are the easiest. Our society already has too many cloned humans.

Go to a chain restaurant, and the food, the décor, and the servers seem the same as those in the chain's restaurant in any other neighborhood or city. If you're in a strange city, you know exactly what to expect from the local "Cheesecake Factory" or "McDonalds," and that's exactly what you'll get. Nothing more, nothing less. You might even forget what city you're in because there's no local flavor



Modern Times
By
**Lloyd
Garver**

there. It's a genetic copy of the original.

The world of entertainment has long been into cloning. If they can't afford Tom Cruise, they want a "Tom Cruise type." If they feel Stallone's too old, the call goes out for a "young Stallone" — just like that younger identical twin puppy. There are all those Law & Order and CSI clones. After the success of "Friends," all the networks rushed to get sitcoms on the air with twenty-somethings who sort of lived together and sort of dated each other but who definitely drank a lot of coffee. They might have been "genetic duplicates" of the originals, but they couldn't duplicate the size of the audience.

Walk by any high school and you'll see many kids who look exactly the same. They dress the same, their hair is the same, and they talk the same. To the outside observer, they appear to be interchangeable clones.

Go out to lunch and you'll see all those young executives wearing identical stylish clothes, eating identical salads, and talking on their identical cell phones. At first, it looks like they may be talking to each other, and then you realize they're talking to someone else who probably looks and acts just as they do. Many politicians seem interchangeable. They speak in the same intentionally unclear way, they take the same risks that their pollsters tell them to take, and they even wear the same kind of ties and hairstyles.

So, I'm not just against future human cloning, I'm against present human cloning. We have to make it desirable for people to be "different." Maybe our society should concentrate on how to create people who are individuals, not copies. The good news is, we already have the scientific technology to make that happen.

Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from "Sesame Street" to "Family Ties" to "Frasier" to "Home Improvement." He has also read many books, some of them in hardcover. He writes the "Modern Times" column for CBSnews.com's Opinion page and a weekly column for SportsLine.com. He can be reached at lloydgarver@yahoo.com

— Guest Commentary —

America, I Feel Your Pain

BY PETER STERN
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

During the past five years the America we've known has taken a turn for the worse, *down some long lonesome road*. Millions of Americans can't find work, nor do they have health insurance. Millions of American school children are getting an inferior education and as adults, won't be competitive in the job market with educated immigrants.

Aside from death, another by-product of the *Iraq war and reconstruction* is a shortage in the population of America's young men and women, and an increase in the numbers of post-traumatic stress disoriented returning-home Veterans, who will become a new *phantom-sector* of the population, much like the Veterans of Vietnam.

It is commonsense that the America recreated by the Bush administration in its own image cannot continue. It's a matter of reality and the evolution of time before the "new system" fails, much like the probability in modern times of a computer system crash.

The ancient Byzantine and Roman Empires fell over time. Alexander the Great, Caesar, Napoleon, Hannibal, Hitler — each insatiable leader's em-

pire fell over time.

Americans finally, yet slowly, are awakening to a new day of clarity. During the past five years many mistakes have been made and many have suffered for them. Never before, since the days of the Vietnam-era schism, have American citizens been so divided by the administration's foreign and internal policies and actions. While a few have prospered during this period, millions have lost their homes, jobs, loved-ones — and most importantly — their dreams.

A once great nation is *floundering* in its own existence.

Americans, *many unknowingly*, are living in a period of mourning. There is much to lament, to observe, to review, and to change. The American people are resilient; they will survive, they will live through the chaos, disruption and disenchantment. To quote Charles Dickens, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." Point of fact is that some folks "win" and "lose" in every era; however, the current political, economical and social *seesaw* significantly remains unbalanced.

Change is coming soon because *America the Beautiful* isn't so pretty right now. It'll just take some folks a bit longer to recognize that.



Peter Stern

MAILBAG

ICONOCLAST

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

THIS is the time, and Crawford TX is the place to protest against the war in Iraq. If your newspaper decides to establish a fund to give financial support to the protesters, then have at it.

Just tell me where to send the check!

Together we can stop this bloody and senseless war. Mrs. Candance Robison, whose son died fighting in Iraq has shown us the way. She is demanding that Bush face her and other anti-war protesters to explain why he ordered the invasion of Iraq - a country that was not a threat to our National Security. Bush's reckless decision has been tragic. Almost two thousand of our brave soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice, and countless numbers of innocent Iraq civilians have been slaughtered. Tens of thousands, both military and civilian alike, will spend a lifetime of suffering from grievous wounds inflicted in this war. Why?

I hope hundreds of thousands of protesters will go to Crawford, and remain there as long as Bush is "on vacation." I hope that members of Congress will join the anti-war protests. To those members of Congress who oppose this war, I say, "action speaks louder than words." I urge you to march with protesters, and show your solidarity with them. Call the coward Bush to account. Demand his impeachment. End this war!

Just tell me where to send the check!

Harold S Kramer, Marblehead, MA
Leon and the entire team,

Once again, you are doing such a great service to our country by reporting an important event, specifically the "ditching" of Cindy Sheehan by Crawford's resident Chicken Rancher.

You might not realize it at this time, but you are documenting HISTORY !!

Thanks,

Dan Gannon, Houston

Dear Editor:

I know I live far away, but distances are short these days with email. I am an admirer of your newspaper.

Attached (and printed below) is a Letter to the Editor ("Yellow Ribbons") that I am submitting for publication in your newspaper. I hope you will use it although I suspect I am preaching to the choir. No matter, here is reinforcement for "the cause"!

Yellow Ribbons

We meant well when we bought vinyl yellow ribbons and red/white/blue ones to put on our cars. We did so in support of our troops and to show our patriotism - our love for our country and all she stands for. Unfortunately the display of those same ribbons has taken on a sinister, unmeant, meaning - a CALLOUS DISREGARD for the troops. It is seen as a declaration that we SUPPORT THE WARS in Afghanistan and Iraq where we are mired in continuous partisan attacks that are daily maiming and killing our fine, dedicated young men and women.

I am writing to ask if you will do what I believe millions of patriots all across our beloved nation are doing: REMOVING THOSE RIBBONS or TURNING THEM UPSIDE DOWN as an indication that they do NOT support war, only the soldiers fighting them. Join me. Join them!

Monica Benderman, wife of Sgt. Kevin Benderman, heads up an effort to bring the American people to their senses. Sgt. Benderman has served on combat tour in Iraq and after seeing war firsthand he made the decision to file for Conscientious

Objector status in December 2004. His command refused the request and filed charges of Missing Movement and Desertion against him. Sgt. Benderman faced a second attempt at Courts Martial for charges on July 28 at St. Steward, Georgia. He was acquitted of Desertion, found guilty of Missing Deployment to Iraq, and sentenced to fifteen months in prison. Monica, through letters to newspapers and elected officials and through public appearances and her web site, has brought Sgt. Benderman's plight into public view. The group that formed around her to help in Kevin's defense and tell his story has adopted the slogan, PRO-SOLDIER/ANTI-WAR.

If you believe that this motto more accurately reflects your opinion today, please do as I am convinced millions of conscientious countrymen and women across America are doing - remove your ribbons, or turn them upside down. But don't stop there. Engage in some activity that will help bring our service personnel home. Donate monies to organizations such as MoveOn.org, True Majority, and Veterans for Peace. Become involved with party politics, donating time and money to elect people who represent YOUR interests and express your abhorrence for a White House that believes that the practice of perpetual, pre-emptive war is their God-given right.

Your prayers for an end to war are needed, but just as needed is your involvement in supporting causes and political candidates who REFLECT YOUR EVOLVED FEELINGS - humane and dedicated individuals who care about 1,800 dead Americans; who care about 120,000 dead Iraqis and Afghans; who care about the tens of thousands of seriously wounded on both sides; who care about the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan who will bear deformed children and develop disfiguring and deadly cancers and whose descendants will live in contaminated surroundings forever because we turned our heads as this administration deliberately, indiscriminately, and criminally polluted their lands and their bodies with tons of depleted uranium weaponry.

Joanne L. Storlie, Marshall, WI

Dear Editor:

Take Eminent Domain of The Bush Ranch and Evict George

If a majority of the Crawford residents vote to take eminent domain of the Bush ranch and turn it into a museum they can evict George.

This is only poetic justice since Bush used Eminent Domain to steal the land that the Texas Rangers Stadium was built on.

Anti Bush People could easily gain control of Crawford Texas. Just buy one farm and move 100 people in and declare residency.

Besides it will save the taxpayers hundreds of millions if Bush vacations at Camp David instead of Crawford Texas.

Howard Pearlman, Cherry Hill, N.J.

To The Editor:

You need to tell Cindy Sheehan that she needs to set up her vigil at the Alciada headquarters.

They are the ones that started all this. Her son is was a real hero. I thank the Lord for him and his service to this country, trying to stop the EVIL Alciada, so we are free to have vigils. We all need not to forget all the events of 9/11, it puts what we are doing now in perspective. Maybe

if someone would take her out a video of the awful events of 9/11 she will understand better. I feel so sorry for her, I cannot imagine what it would be like to lose a son. My son signed on to go to Iraq about 2 weeks after 9/11. He went over there for a you doing what he could to stop the EVIL Alciada for attacking us or any other country. Fortunately he came home okay, and proud of we are doing over there. God Bless her. Let us continue to support the troops and their families as we remember them in their efforts to defeat the Alciada.

Randy

To Whom It Concerns:

I wanted to say "Thank You" for the online coverage of Cindy Sheehan and the protest in Crawford. You are the best! You provide the quickest and most thorough information to which I am very Grateful. Deep Thanks for keeping me truthfully informed!

Sincerely,

Brenda Kele from N.J.

To The Editor:

Thank you for keeping the Cindy Sheehan story fair and balanced. Everyone appreciates your efforts in keeping the flame burning.

I just read a story on Daily Kos about the rancher near whose property Cindy's encampment is located. I think it's a tragedy that, while he agrees with what Cindy is doing, he feels he can't express it for fear of the government will consider him a security risk and take his property away via eminent domain. What kind of country are we living in? How sad for him and all of us.

Rebecca Bennett, Chicago, IL
Dear Editor,

As a regular member of the Democratic National Committee's blog, I thought you might find the following email posted on our blog of interest, as the gentleman says he lives near Bush. The conversation was centered on a Larry Matlage, who had put up a No Parking sign, and fires off his Shot gun from time to time to irritate the Cindy Sheehan protest.

I find his comments of great interest, as I live in Connecticut and can not even imagine such behavior and hatred coming out of men.

Poor Larry. I live near the ranch and know Larry. Actually he is a nice guy - a bit too much in bed with shrub but a nice guy. What you see on him is VERY typical here. There are a lot of folks who are anti-bush but a scared to death to speak out. What Larry did is just the tip of the iceberg as to what has happened to others who have spoken out. Why do you think Bush moved here? He can feed these folks a line of bull and say "Well this is Texas".

when Bush moved in many of us who had dealt with high profile politicians warned folks that things were going to change. As they have people have gotten madder and madder. Most will follow him like a lemming to the sea because he tells them what they want to hear rather than they think for themselves. Things are a bit crazy here but Cindy has kept people abreast of things plus has warned them each time they may be in danger. I would suggest hitting some of the right wing blogs. They are having field day slamming her so you might be able to shoot your own gun on a blog or 2. By the way if you think that things cannot get dangerous here - Texas is a concealed gun state. nearly anyone who is in this area has a gun in their vehicle or at home. Some of the locals have been getting worked up and do have access to firearms - so though it is very funny about Larry - you will probably see more of it.

Pam Bergren, Connecticut

To The Editor:

Wow! I can't believe there is actually a newspaper, right in Crawford Texas, that does something that no other paper in Texas does! And that is to show a differ-

ent view point to the people of Texas. You must get alot of hate mail from Texans. Texans seem to be living in their own little box and follow the Bush regime with the same commitment the Nazis did with Hitler. While the rest of the country actually asks questions about Bush, Texans take the hear no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil approach to their leader. I saw a Texas dad on the news, whose son is in Iraq, protesting Cindy Sheehan. At the same protest I saw a sign that said "Cut in run"...whatever that means...guess it must be a Texas thing.

Then there was a "Rancher" who fired off a shot from his shotgun to scare the protesters. Finally, I saw another man from Texas interviewed and he said "Hey, this is Texas, this aint San Francisco. She (Cindy) should just go back to California because we Texans support President Bush". What? No, sir, this is the United States of America. I understand that Texas isn't really a State (Since 1861 Texas has been considered to be apart of the Confederate States of America. Thats the real reason why your flag has only one star on it) but for the people of Texas to have this Nazi mentality, to only do what you're told, is un-American.

Wake up Texans!

Come join the rest of the America and start asking questions of your leaders, no matter who they are!

Thank you, Iconoclast! Keep up the fight to bring Texans out of the 19th Century and join us here in the present!

Thanks,

Robert Marsh

To The Editor:

It takes a lot of cojones to shoot at a 48-year-old grieving mother whose son, 4 months ago, gave his life for our country. I know I'm impressed. That's what America's all about, right?

Pat Coate

To The Editor:

As I've watched the events unfold in Crawford, Texas regarding Cindy Sheehan, a mother whose son lost his life while fighting in Iraq, I have to question the motives behind her campaign against President Bush.

To say that George Bush killed her son is just plain ignorance in my opinion.

For whatever reasons, Ms. Sheehan's son enlisted in the military to serve his country, with the knowledge, as any enlisted knows, he could reasonably lose his life in the throes of battle.

That is the consequence of serving during war time. Indeed, I sympathize with any mother who loses a child, whether by natural causes or otherwise. One can only surmise that upon the enlistment of her son, Ms. Sheehan fully supported his desire to want to serve his country in such a capacity, while also knowing the consequences of such a decision on his part.

It is certainly understandable to want to place blame for such a tragic loss, but Ms. Sheehan is tarnishing the legacy of ALL soldiers who selflessly gave their lives in support of freedom and democracy. So to in death, just as in life, should she honor her son, and this current vendetta is nothing short of dishonorable!

Cindy L. Schoppert, DeLand, FL

To The Editor:

We here in Chautauqua County in western New York are so appreciative that your paper is keeping the story of Cindy Sheehan and her protest in the news.

We have been protesting the war since the fall of 2002 when it became obvious to those who had access to the alternate media that Bush was going to invade Iraq no matter what, that he would drum up reasons that "the country could swallow," as the first step in his "New Century" program. In his usual blundering way he didn't get fool proof reasons that could withstand the test of time, and now he is in a quagmire worse than Vietnam. Let's

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hope he has the decency to have a meeting with Cindy and offer her his heartfelt sympathy for her loss.

Sincerely,

Zada, Bill Riordan, Cherry Creek, NY
Dear Editor-In-Chief Smith:

The United States government pays about \$100,000. to the families of those American servicemen killed during the course of our invasion of Iraq in the Middle East.

The Prime Minister of Israel is asking American taxpayers for one million dollars (\$1,000,000.) each for every family moving out of settlements established by Israel on lands confiscated from Palestinians in the Gaza.

First of all, our government pleaded and begged Israel not to establish those settlements. Israel thumbed their nose at our request, and they turn around and ask American taxpayers to come up with TWO POINT TWO BILLION DOLLARS in compensation for land that they confiscated at gunpoint, and occupied illegally.

We do not owe one penny to the shameless Government of Israel! It would show the extent to which Israel dominates Congress if we capitulated to this extortion. We have sided with the Israeli domination and exploitation of the dirt poor Palestinians for fifty years, and we have thereby earned the unified and bitter contempt of every Muslim on Planet Earth toward the United States.

Sincerely,

Bob Meshanko, former Republican
Bulverde, Texas

P.S. My wife and I spent a bunch of money on expensive gasoline and about 12 hours of our day off work this past weekend to make a statement of support for Cindy Sheehan. We just had to come because a lot of good Americans paid unbelievably for President Bush's rush to invade Iraq. He "cooked the books" to justify the invasion. He killed 120,000 Iraqis to oust one corrupt dictator, and he misled Congress and the American People with his claims on the "phantom" Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction. Who we elect clearly matters immensely.

To The Editor:

I did not realize that there was a paper in Texas, let alone Crawford, Tx, that had the guts to stand against George Bush.

My congratulations. If I weren't inundated with news here in NY I would subscribe to your paper. Thank you for being there.

Jim Anderson, Southampton, NY

To The Editor:

Corporations, businesses, industries, Conservatives, faith based units, and those that seek and worship the buck, warmongering profiteers, and selfish people don't care about the environment in which they live; as long they get what's best, for them, they do not care..

They're not going to listen to 900, or even 9,000 individual environmental groups pushing for their separate, cause/causes to care for mother earth. Environmentalist, fail to vote, notice our governments aren't improving the environment.

Environmental groups are thoughtful people that collect much money for the cause to promote their work but have little impact for the bucks they collect they need to be on the same page. They have to be as connected in saving the environment as those that are destroying the environment.

There's an old song entitled: "Dem Dry Bones," the head bone is connected to the backbone and backbone to the foot bone to connect the body. Environmental groups should be connected as a body. It's, important environmental groups connect the world to stop the destruction that is going throughout the world.

We need to start with the rainforest and restore it with the water it once had, a basic for life, water is one thing we can't manufacture. The world is limited to the water that we have thus we need to get serious about how we use it.

The rain forest was/is used to plant crops, harvest lumber for the (humanity) buck. Rainforest soil is fragile so tearing up rainforest leaves a space without value for anything, a desert maybe. Water stored there has been shifted.

How many "mergers" does it take to create/make a "monopoly?"

Louis Freitag, Carbondale, IL

Dear Sir,

It was with deep empathy that I read of Mr. Mattlage and his neighbors' plight. I also enjoy rural living and I can't even imagine the distress of discovering over 100 unwelcome "guests" camping in the ditches around my property. While I respect my fellow Americans' right to assemble peacefully, I remain unconvinced that 100 people could assemble near my home and remain peaceful, relative to the bucolic splendor I am accustomed to enjoying. So while I can certainly understand Mr. Mattlage's efforts toward warming up for dove season, I would like to offer the following suggestions that may help him get his point across in a clearer fashion.

Mr. Mattlage:

- 1) Contact the sheriff of McLellan county. Gently remind him who votes for him. Remind him it's not the folks camped in the ditches.
- 2) Your property line probably needs better lighting. Set up halogen lamps along the front. Power them from a large diesel generator.
- 3) Share your love for patriotic country music. Power the speakers off the generator, too. I recommend Toby Keith.
- 4) Install several roosters in pens along the length of your fence line. Ensure they have plenty of food and water and a clear line of sight to the halogen lights.
- 5) Invite your friends over to warm up for dove season.
- 6) Invite your local Civil War reenactors artillery unit over for some firing practice. Don't worry—they use blanks.
- 7) Invite your local Harley Owner Group to hold a rally at your place. At least you know they'll clean up after themselves.
- 8) Invite folks over for a dually drag race—in the field, of course.
- 9) Invite folks over for a tractor pull.
- 10) Invite all the stray dogs over.
- 11) Take on a lot of newly-weaned calves.
- 12) Install hogs in the front pasture.
- 13) Fertilize and weed-kill your pasture. Use the good stuff.
- 14) If it's hot and dry, disk your field.
- 15) If it's windy, have a bonfire.
- 16) Volunteer for the Fire Ant, Skunk, and Raccoon Relocation Program. If one's not available, start one.
- 17) Find out who's supplying water and port-a-potties. Gently remind them who their neighbors are.
- 18) Call and request that the port-a-pot-

ties be picked up.

That should get you started.

Best Wishes and My Sincerest
Condolences,
Julie Thomas, Elgin, TX

To The Editor:

As I read about the increasingly powerful explosives being used by insurgents in Iraq, I'm compelled to wonder if those higher-yield explosives are the very ones bypassed by our military on the headlong rush to Baghdad early in the war against Iraq? You remember – the explosives that were videotaped but not inventoried, noted but not protected, and then had disappeared by the time the Army (and those running the war) got back around to thinking about protecting our children-soldiers from? It's an extremely sorry and wholly inept administration that let explosives of this quality 'go around just to come back around'.

Tim Slack, Newburgh, IN

Hi, Sir:

I been reading news paper about Ms. Cindy Sheehan who son died in the war. I am and ex-E-5 SGT I came in when Vietnam was going on then I came back in the Army in 1979 Right I fighting my military case. Back to the story when you rise your right to protect the U.S. give up your life for your country. I thank she doing wrong thing by demonstrator what President Bush is doing I know he is doing the right thing thing. You know sir there more car accident on high-ways very two second there are life lost then war there more kill in accidents then any war this what I look at God tell you when you coming home he did tell you know long you are going to live.

Look at Iran and North Korea who building bombs the plutonium they can sell it to terrorist it better to attack them having the terrorist to do to us. I thank about the same thing about Saddam in Iraq. Look at those people he killed they found in mess gave that count for something. I know Presidents Bush is doing the right thing where is father did not do the first time.

I was station at Ft. Hood Tx in 1974 to 1975

Billy Hatcher, Augusta, GA

To the Editor -

While George W. Bush hides from Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a soldier who was killed in Iraq, our sons and daughters keep dying in his war. And for what? The longer Bush occupies Iraq, kills their people, and builds military bases there, the more Iraqis become terrorists. This is only creating a greater danger to us.

Bush once said "Bring 'em on". Well, here she is - if our troops have to face death every day, let's see if Bush has the guts to face one of the consequences of his deadly mistakes.

Sincerely,

Doug Long, Rio Rancho, NM

To the Editor:

I have just received my Aug. 10 issue of the Iconoclast which was anxiously awaited, as I had already read of Cindy Sheehan's vigil in the New York papers and knew you had the inside track on the Crawford event.

My first reaction to Sheehan's request that President Bush speak personally with her, was that it would "never happen". The first reason is that Mr. Bush is incapable of stringing two logical sentences together without referring to his teleprompter. Obviously he would find it embarrassing to have his aides haul such an item off the back of a pickup truck along with the necessary generator to power it up. Secondly, whatever Mr. Bush could possibly say would only parrot snippets from old speeches—you know—those catch phrases that he is so good at memorizing and pulling out of a hat whether or not they fit the particular occasion.

The truth is that this president seems incapable of expressing a genuine emo-

tion other perhaps than when watching the Texas Rangers ball club lose to the NY Yankees. But expecting him to emote or shed a tear for any of the 1,800 plus men and women who have lost their lives in Iraq for the likes of Halliburton and the major oil companies (waiting (im)patiently for the new puppet regime to cut them a share of the oil field), is expecting too much. This shallow, immature President appears to rely on the expertise of scoundrels such as Carl Rove to buoy up his flagging poll numbers as well as to ease his (Bush's) dirty hand out of the cookie jar when it's been caught (see the notorious Downing Street Memo); he counts on the same type of sorry folk that were The Swift Boat boys—those faux patriotic neocons who helped defeat John Kerry.

So surely you cannot be surprised that at least one CNBC television news commentator has brought to the attention of the public the fact that Cindy Sheehan "knows" Michael Moore, leaving the public to draw their own scurrilous conclusions as to Sheehan's worthiness to protest.

The bottom line for those who may be swayed by such accusation, is that Cindy Sheehan is a Gold Star Mother grieving for her son and seeking concrete answers as to why we are pursuing the "war" in Iraq. She and the other 1,800 plus families who have lost loved ones, along with the 20,000 plus who have had their children, husbands and brothers returned to them with often grievous wounds, deserve to hear the truth.

Sincerely,

Elaine Booth Selig, NY

Dear Editor:

Re: The knocking down of crosses at Ms. Sheehan's Vigil Site

I can't help wondering if the person or persons responsible for the knocking down of crosses representing the U.S. Iraq War Dead at Ms. Sheehan's Vigil Site realize that more than anything else, they've shown a total lack of respect for those unfortunate souls. Shame on them!

William Wilgus, Silver Springs, FL

To The Editor:

Why Won't the Chicken Cross the Road?

Last week I traveled to Crawford, TX to support Cindy Sheehan as she camps in a ditch along the road to Bush's ranch. Cindy Sheehan's soldier son, Casey, was slain in Iraq. Cindy is asking to meet with Bush so that he may explain the "noble cause" for which her son died. Bush is enjoying a five-week vacation. So far Bush has not found the time, courage or decency to cross the road to talk to her. He has, instead, gone bike riding with Lance Armstrong and attended a Little League baseball game and a fund-raiser that reportedly raised 2 million dollars. In the last few days, a land owner near Cindy's tent fired a shotgun, getting ready, he said, for "dove season". A pickup truck dragging a chain knocked down five hundred crosses that had been placed by the side of the road to honor fallen American soldiers. These are not threats to be lightly dismissed. Pickups with dragging chains are apparently a proud regional sport in east Texas, made notorious by the 1998 dragging death of a black man at Jasper.

As I left for Crawford, I called my Iraqi friend in Baghdad. A car she was riding in came under fire last month and her husband and daughter were shot; the driver was killed. During the US/UN sanctions against Iraq one of her sons was killed by an 'errant' American cruise missile and another nearly died from his injuries. Now three of her four children have been shattered by war, and her husband and sister have been shot since the American invasion. She is a teacher and lives in one of the poorest slums in Iraq. What hope can I offer

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ever help her family have a better life? I support Cindy Sheehan, and my Iraqi friend, in their common plea: mothers do not want their children killed in war. This unjustified war in Iraq has needlessly cost too many precious lives. The US military and US contractors should leave Iraq immediately.

Vicki Johnson, Claremont, CA
To The Editor:

Governor has credibility problem.

During the past five years Gov. Rick Perry has promised a lot of things. Most of the legislation and financial relief he provided was to his special interest big business campaign contributors. The people of Texas also were promised many things; however, the governor failed in establishing property tax relief, adequate public school financing, reduced health care costs, lower tuition costs of higher education, and to substantially decrease the cost of home insurance.

Furthermore, this governor has spent millions of taxpayer dollars wastefully in calling for two "special" sessions on redistricting when there were more urgent issues to resolve, and five more "special" sessions called, *without legislative support*, to finance public education adequately and to provide homeowners with substantial property tax relief — all but the redistricting legislation failed.

Currently the governor supports CINTRA and other pro-toll road entities because it's in his own best interests to do so. Ensuring toll roads throughout Texas authorizes a lifetime of toll taxes that will be paid by infinite generations of our children's children.

Does Perry sound like the governor Texas families need? *{rhetorical question}*

The "smart votes" should be on Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn by Republicans and Democrats alike. While only human and subject to mistakes like most of us, Strayhorn has a lengthy history of fighting for what is best for Texas families. Our children can't afford four more years of inadequate school financing AND inept governing.

Peter Stern, Driftwood, TX
To The Editor:

A Mothers Anguish Drives Cindy Sheehan

As a Gold Star Family member I know something about the anguish and senselessness of the loss that Cindy Sheehan is feeling.

I watched as two men in green uniforms appeared at our front door after work one day to tell us of death. I watched a Mother slump to the ground crying and screaming "No, No". I watched a Mother be medicated with what was then known as "nerve pills" to get through the day and sleeping pills to get through the night. I listened as her nightmare-induced screams pierced the night crying out for her son, not quite awake but not truly asleep. I listened as she repeated that she had just wished his life away as the family had been two weeks from meeting him in Hawaii for R&R. After enduring a two week wait for the body to be returned, I followed as a Mother in denial, believing there must have been a mistake, marched resolutely up the darkened chapel aisle to the casket bathed in a soft light. I watched as she screamed and cried "No, No" again and collapsed against the casket when she

saw her uniformed son lying under a glass partition. I listened as his sergeant who accompanied his body home told us the real story of how he died instead of the half-truths of the government. I watched as a Mother turned gray overnight, seemed distracted and far away, and never laughed anymore.

I listened as a Christian-conservative-Republican voting Mother wished that she had told her son to go to Canada to avoid the draft so he would still be alive. It was 37 years ago and those memories are as vivid for me as if they happened yesterday. The Bush Administration is filled with folks who avoided war through deferments and preferential treatment and who have no sense of what war and loss really means to a Mother. Cindy Sheehan wants the President to explain his statement that Casey and the 1800 other soldiers died for a noble cause. The President can't meet with her because he has no answer, or at least one that is worth the blood shed. All the answers given for going to war in the first place have changed as each excuse is proven false. Now we hear that even the "freedoms" we were supposedly bringing to Iraq may evaporate with a constitution that denies freedom to segments of society and that imposes Islamic tribal law instead of a uniform constitutional law. The President knows he can't answer the question, so he does not meet with Cindy Sheehan.

Sharon J. Howard, Mabank, TX
Dear Editor Smith:

We were all *Griff-ed!* I find it a tad interesting and refreshing to see that Texas bullies live to hide in the shadows, as did the "manly-man named Griff" who sent the following righteous and pompous "kick-ass", "Don't Mess With Texas" crapola about your newspaper airing only "Austin liberal views". All I can say is, "Whatta guy!"

Obviously "Griff" cannot see clearly from behind the closed curtain of his own imagination. Is "Griff" such a bully coward that he can't sign his last name and/or won't confirm it with you? But with all due respect, maybe "Griff" is the acronym "GRIFF" for a patriotic down-home Texas "good ol' boy" organization, like maybe, "*Goofy Rednecks Itching For a Fight*"?

Fortunately, the Iconoclast has evolved into the best newspaper forum currently available to express and discuss all sorts of viewpoints on a wide array of issues. I also gotta tell you that if y'all "*irked*" Griff, then y'all must be doin' somethin' right!

Keep up the good work! *Yee-ha!*

Peter Stern

To you all at the Iconoclast:

Thank you for showing the genuine American spirit, character, courage and intellectual integrity that I know still exists in some parts of this country.

I admire what you've done and so appreciate your not backing down even though there's not one doubt in my mind that a lot of Bush supporters have threatened and harassed you for some time, well before Cindy Sheehan came to town.

I have two sons in their 20s and can't imagine what Mrs. Sheehan and all mothers, both here and in Iraq, who have lost their children and entire families since this disgusting invasion began must be going through.

What you've done is what *real journal-*

ists do. They report the news..... good or bad. Those doing anything less are simply over paid tabloid whores for this corrupt administration.

Thank you, thank you, thank you all for your dedication and your journalistic integrity. America need more like you.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Devlin, Turner, Oregon
To The Editor:

Excellent Editorial.

Bravo! Excellent job, as usual.

Kathryn A. Stone, Charleston, WV
To The Editor:

Since some of George Bush's neighbors are angered at the inconvenience caused them by the Cindy Sheehan vigil, may I suggest that they take a good hard look at Iraq to see what REAL inconvenience is.

Furthermore, for those angry neighbors who support President Bush and this war; they should strongly encourage every member of their own families of military age to march straight to a recruitment office. And perhaps Mr. Bush might consider encouraging his daughters to do the same.

As the old saying goes, "If you are going to talk the talk, then walk the walk."

Emily Zermeno, Houston

Dear editor:

I want to thank you for your excellent coverage of the Cindy Sheehan story.

I realize that this must be difficult for President Bush and that this is supposed to be his vacation. I would like to remind you of another vacation that was interrupted not so long ago. As I recall, he was awakened in the middle of the night, and had to fly back to Washington to sign legislation in the Schiavo case. I guess he learned his lesson at that time and that is why he won't interrupt his vacation to speak to Ms. Sheehan. Even though she is only a couple of miles from his home and is willing to wait until it is convenient, if he does it for her, well he would just have to do it for everyone. We can't have that now, can we?

He needs to get on with his life.

D.L. Jackson, Huntsville, Alabama
Dear Mr. Smith,

Wednesday night I stood in one of the peace vigils in Houston with other patriotic Americans whose hearts are in Crawford, Texas with Cindy Sheehan and her supporters.

There is an old Texas Ranger saying that it is hard to stop a man who is in the right and keeps on coming. That goes for a woman too. You must be very proud that Crawford, Texas is the site of a movement to bring justice and integrity back to America after it was stolen by Bush and his handlers.

There is another Texas saying I am sure you know that describes a phony as "All hat and no cattle." Bush is also "All hat and no heart."

Barbara Duvall, Houston

Dear Editor,

The loudmouth chicken-hawks criticize Cindy Sheehan because her cause is being supported by pro-peace groups such as MoveOn.org, Democracy for America, and TrueMajority. When a person stands up on her own initiative, arising from her own pain and moral outrage, it is wonderful that other people respond and stand with her. We are all connected; our survival as Americans and as humans on this Earth depends upon our mutual compassion and support of each other.

If Cindy stood all alone, the hate-mongers would call her a "kook." If she stands with others, they call her a "dupe." Their hateful slurs show these media puppets to be hollow, cynical, limited individuals. Cindy is outraged at the callous and fatal exploitation of her son. She expresses what most parents feel, that Bush's government ruthlessly disregards the lives of our children.

Bruce Jaffe, Piedmont, CA

Hey, all you wonderful Texans!

You probably know this already, but just in case . . . there's a postcard campaign of support for Cindy Sheehan, so you just MIGHT want to check out the Crawford Post Office over the next couple of days. I've sent MY postcard, and I'd bet I'm not the only one!

Louisa Arndt, San Rafael CA

To The Editor:

What is a Liberal paper like this doing in the great Country of TEXAS.

Y'all should be ashamed of yourselves.

Poor Cindy Sheehan. :(Let her cry somewhere else. Our most honorable President, who was put there by a majority of the voters in America, deserves the allegiance and respect for not only him, but, for the decisions he makes for this Country. We do not need anymore Liberal Democrats criticizing one of the greatest Presidents the United States has ever known. We could still be on that immoral roller coaster Bill Clinton had us on. If you do not like the way this Country is being led, I have heard that this place called France is always looking for some more Leftists to come over there and criticize there existing government. Now about Ms. Cindy, why would she think that her son would be granted immunity from going to war, seeing as her enlisted and agreed to perform this duty in the event of War.? The Military should not be thought of as a place just to sign up for their great college education, to just refuse the honor to serve their Country when asked too. ! I am afraid that most of the folks crying about their boys and girls having to be over there, thought that the military was just one big coed frat party.

Iconoclast, shame on yall and your Liberal publisher!!

Sut this rag down, move from the Great Country of TEXAS and move in with John Kerry or Al Gore. Do not make us real Texans come over / down there and pack yalls bags ourselves. Sorry Cindy, but, God does everything for a purpose.

Jon Reeves (Texan)

Dear editor,

Thank you for your courageous reportig over the past years.

I find it ironic that Camp Qualls, supporting Mr. Bush, has the Ten Commandments proudly displayed. Isn't there a commandment saying "Thou shalt not Kill"?

Also, isn't the angel a "graven image"?

Thos Myers, Taos, N.M.

Dear Iconoclast Editors:

When Cindy Sheehan lost her son Casey to an unnecessary war, she turned grief into action to help prevent other needless deaths—a truly noble cause. We have Megan's Law and the Amber Alert to protect our children; I propose a Casey Doctrine, requiring a national vote and a mandatory draft before U.S. troops can be ordered into combat. This law might help insure that our young men and women are never sent to kill and be killed unless we are directly threatened and all nonmilitary options have been exhausted.

Casey Sheehan was willing to die to defend America, but he died for a pack of lies. Invading Iraq may turn out to be the worst foreign policy tragedy in our history; we must do everything possible to see that such a nightmarish blunder is never committed again.

We owe it to Casey.

Sincerely,

Ken Bash, Camarillo, CA

(PS.—I have a young son named Casey.)
To The Editor:

An open letter to those Crawford residents who feel so inconvenienced by Cindy Sheehan and the anti-war people:

Inconvenient? Because this administration lied and took us into an illegal war that has ignited hatred around the world

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MAILBAG ICONOCLAST LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued From Previous Page

against us and sent Al Qaida enrollment skyrocketing, making us less safe than ever, this is what the innocent Iraqi people have endured: perhaps up to 200,000 deaths, mostly women and children; countless more maimed and blinded; vast areas without clean water, electric power and food, not to mention astronomical unemployment. The new government is already harsher on women than the old regime, and may very well become a theocracy where women are treated as chattel. And they may form a bond with Iran, once sworn enemies. Yes, Hussein (whom, by the way, we propped up and gave weapons to) is gone, but living conditions are far worse and the entire area is a hotbed of violence.

As for us, the legacy of a healthy surplus has been turned into a staggering deficit. Thousands of our men and women have given their lives NOT because of WMDs; NOT because of 9/11 (That was the Saudis—but hey, the Bushes have been bedding the Royal family and its oil for decades) and not for any reasons other than power, oil and perhaps vengeance for papa Bush. Meanwhile, we have squandered all the post-9/11 sympathy we had with swaggering and bullying. Our own infrastructures and schools and hospitals can't be fixed because all our money is going to try to repair what we did in the Middle East, and help out Cheney's Halliburton buddies. Monies that could have been used to help social security and other programs—wasted in giveaways to big polluting corporations.

You should be grateful, there are people who actually inform themselves and take a stand against this corrupt, abusive administration and its devastating policies. You should be welcoming Cindy and her entourage, before the powers that be turn this country even further into something we no longer recognize, where money is stolen from the poor to give to the rich; your children are choking on the pollution cast by their anti-environment policies; and we are further indebted to the middle east because rather than finding new sources of energy they are trying to squeeze every last drop of oil so the oil industry can make even more obscene profits than they already do.

Wake up!

Linda Livingston, Ventura, CA
To The Editor:

In an Associated Press article by Michael Graczak in my local newspaper *The Oregonian*, rancher Keith Lynch of Crawford states that the protesters camped near George Bush's ranch are not showing him proper respect. I was always taught that you must earn respect and Bush has done nothing so far in his term of office to earn anyone's respect. His behavior prior to becoming president lacks any criteria for respect as well.

His actions, since becoming President, have been arrogant, egotistical and certainly without the compassion that he promised would be integral in his presidency. He walks on people who disagree with him as well as the entire international community. His administration is rife with corruption and the worst kind of favoritism. Underlings who engage in felonious behavior are not disciplined and, in fact, are often promoted. He does not govern, he rules by fiat, as though he was king by divine right, which in his own ego-

centric mind, he obviously feels he is.

Why he should expect even an iota of respect is beyond my comprehension - he is reaping what he has sown.

Dennis McNish, Lake Oswego, OR
Letter to the Editor
Gentlemen:

George W. Bush is Not "born again" in spite of the words of Billy Graham.

The mysterious "His Fathers seal" in their foreheads" is not a mystery at all. It is just that the mind of the Christian is too narrow. He does not see the whole picture. His Fathers seal (Rev. 14:1) is the "third eye" the common denomination of all of the great religions of the world. The Founding Fathers were Masons and designed it into the great Seal on the \$1 bill. Matthew 6:22, "The light of the body is the "eye" etc. God has one (Psalms 32:8). "I will guide you with mine "eye". We are His children and we have one too.

When you "make your mind like the mind that was/is in Jesus, your "eye" will open and you will know Truth and be enlightened. We call the area on either side of our eyes "our temple", do we not? Mahatma Ghandi said, "All religions are right." He also said, "I like your Christ but I don't like your Christians." At that time British Christians were colonizing India!

The center of our forehead is the common denominator of all the great religions of the world, barring none. The Catholic places his hand there when he says, "In the name of the Father" etc. "His Buddha eye opened and the Universe smite him with its Truth." The Hindu places a mark there and the Jew wears a little black box on his forehead. It has a prayer in it that says, "Keep your mind always on God." And last but not least, when the Muslim places his forehead on the ground, he is showing complete submission to the will of God. When I say, "Thy will be done," we both ask for the same outcome to the events on the earth. Islam means, "Complete submission to the Will of God."

Our Christianity is too small and as Erick Fromm says, "We worship Jesus as is He is an Idol instead of trying to be like Him." Do you see Jesus in George W.? More than likely he resembles the anti-Christ. Are you following a man with a big unsublimated ego? He loves to be worshipped, the applause!

Erick Fromm says that politicians are very immature men with very big eyes and they need the admiration of women. I believe that George W. does not want to be loved. He wants to be worshipped!! So does Satan. George craves attention! and power.

"We are separated from God but we can find our way back because that essence is still in us." (Martin Buber's *Tales of the Hasidim, Early Masters.*)

This essence is the searching feeling in the center of our chest, the feeling that we are yearning for love and acceptance. We search for God!

When you are "listening" you have two small lives between and a little above your eyebrows. This is where God speaks to us. George has a whole bunch of horizontal lives on his forehead. Pray for *his* enlightenment but listen to God in *your* forehead.

"The earth tremors on the wrath and indignation of God." Jeremiah 10:10.

These are the "end times." Try to listen to Him.

Your pastor loves to hear himself talk. He works all week on a sermon and will even sell you a tape. If they know so much, how come they are not like Christ? He said that "we can do the things that he did and even greater things will we do."

I believe that Benny Hinn's eye is opening and he is helping to bring the Holy Spirit here. Look at his forehead.

Yours in Truth,
Barbara F. Banis

We are just not "listening" in the center of our forehead. Prayer is a shutting our mind out and letting Him in.

"When they stop talking they'll all be out of a job" Ethan Allen.

You have been told nothing of the Founding Fathers and their plan for this country!

Read Matthew 23:9 for Catholics and 23:14 Blind guides.

Also Jeremiah 10:21 for Protestants and Jews.

Read about the "Christmas tree people." Jeremiah 10:3 through 10. A Doctrine of vanities

PS. If as Jesus said, "You can do the things that I do, and even greater things will you do because I go to my Father," why are the clergy who say that they can lead us, limited to rhetoric and selling tapes?! Why can they not raise men from the dead and heal the sick!?! They are "blind guides" and on a very big Ego Trip! and we are foolish enough to listen to them.

Dear Editor:

Crawford readers no doubt remember another occasion when a visitor waited in vain in the hot summer sun for an audience with the lord of the manor: Vietnam

Veteran and former congressman Max Cleland.

Then, as now with Cindy Sheehan, ANY president—and Texas—would have had the sense to tell him, "What's on your mind friend? Come on in for a col' one and we'll talk about it" rather than commit such a scandalous breach of traditional hospitality, one that would have stopped his campaign in its tracks if he had been running for governor.

This president probably suspects that his customary phony-folksy clichés wouldn't cut any ice with a mother grieving for her son, and so refuses to talk with her.

President Bush is a coward

Sincerely,
Barbara Shelby Merello, Austin
Dear Editor,

My heart goes out to Cindy Sheehan and the other mothers camped out at Crawford who have lost children in the Iraqi war.

My question is at what point did they realize that this was an unjust war? Was it only when their children died? Tragically, they did not see sooner the wrongness of this war; their kids might be alive today had they done so.

Those Crawford residents who continue to support Bush and disapprove of Sheehan's current actions must realize that slavish devotion to a president they cannot admit has erred in even one area are doing neither themselves nor their democracy any good at all and enhancing the self-righteous demagoguery of that president.

Yours sincerely,
Loretta Van Coppenolle

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Texas Groups Call On White House To Release Roberts Documents

Texas Coalition for an Independent Judiciary Sends Letters From Crawford Post Office

CRAWFORD, Texas — Members of the Texas Coalition for an Independent Judiciary met at the Crawford Post Office Wednesday morning to send empty boxes to the White House. Coalition members called on President Bush to fill the boxes with documents from Supreme Court nominee John Roberts' record as a deputy solicitor general in the first Bush administration.

The White House is currently refusing to release these documents, thereby denying the Senate important information it needs in order to conduct the thorough review of the Roberts nomination that the Constitution requires.

The Texas Coalition for an Independent Judiciary represents about 30 organizations from around the state. It was formed to preserve the constitutional independence of the judiciary and the integrity of the nominations process against attacks from extremist groups seeking to politicize the federal judiciary.

The coalition's action came after other documents from Roberts' record were released, raising serious concerns. In those already-released documents, Roberts wrote about ending the "abortion tragedy," argued that the Supreme Court should be stripped of its power to oversee desegregation and other issues, attempted to limit the Voting Rights Act, and mocked the very idea of a right to privacy.

"The White House needs to stop stonewalling and release the rest of the documents," said Deece Eckstein, director of People For the American Way's Texas office. "What we already know about John Roberts is extremely troubling. These documents could tell us a lot more. It begs the question: what is the White House trying to hide?"

In recent days, suggestions that Roberts' confirmation was all but assured have been rejected by leading Democratic senators, who insist they will withhold judgment until all of the re-



BOXES, BOXES, BOXES — On hand at the Crawford Post Office to mail empty boxes to the White House are (from left) Kathleen Green, Jess White, Eileen Rosen, Ellen Sable, Michael Litt, Deena Kalai, Deece Eckstein, and Anne Webb.

— Iconoclast Photo By Michael Harvey

quested documents have been released and reviewed. People For the American Way announced that over 17,000 people in four days had signed an online letter asking President Bush to release the documents.



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MEMBERS OF Texas Coalition for an Independent Judiciary put together boxes to mail to the President. They are outside the Crawford Post Office.

— Iconoclast Photo By Michael Harvey