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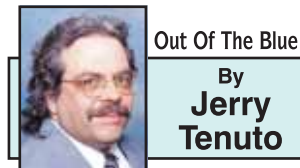


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The Pentagon says that Star Wars will be the largest industrial project in the history of planet. They are letting them freelance. There is very little monitoring. Their testing programs are a joke. The whole thing is a massive, massive intentional thievery, and disguised as defense, disguised to protect us from attack by rogue states, disguised as a post-9/11 watching out for the American people. They use all that fear stuff to basically rob the nation.'

— Bruce Gagnon



Don't Be Tricked By Your Halloween Treats, Says Global Exchange

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — This Halloween we have a tremendous opportunity not only to bring an enormous amount of pressure to bear on big companies like Nestle that continue to refuse farmers a fair price for their cocoa, but also to celebrate the enormous success of their fairly traded competitors, says Global Exchange.

Fair Trade Chocolate is now available in over 1,200 retail outlets across the country and three major supermarket chains including Safeway, Whole Foods and Tulleys. Every day more consumers are making the switch to the only chocolate that can be proven not to have been produced using abusive child labor or forced labor — that which is Fair Trade Certified.

To highlight both the great success of our movement and the patent failure of leading chocolate companies like Nestle to embrace fair trade as the most comprehensive and proven solution to child labor on coca farms, we are asking that our friends and allies join us in making

Samsung Pleads Guilty To Price Fixing, Must Pay \$300M Fine

WASHINGTON — U.S. officials announced last week that the world's largest maker of memory chips for computers — Samsung — must pay a \$300 million fine on felony charges of price-fixing with industry rivals.

Samsung's two leading rivals — Seoul, South Korea-based Hynix and Infineon Technologies AG of Germany — earlier pleaded guilty for their involvement in the secret scheme and paid fines totaling \$345 million.

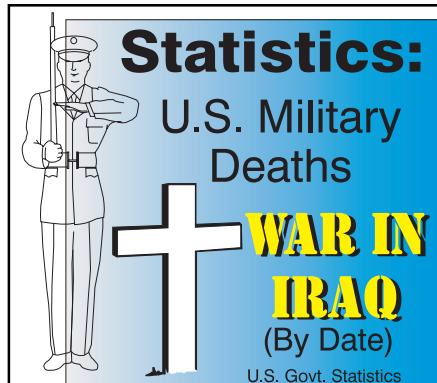
A third competitor, Micron Technology Inc. of Boise, Idaho, will not face charges due to its cooperation with prosecutors.

The Justice Department indicated that seven Samsung employees might individually face criminal charges. The employees' identities were not revealed by either the Justice Department nor Samsung.

The South Korea-based Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd. and its U.S. subsidiary, Samsung Semiconductor Inc., holds a \$7.7 billion market in the United States

Samsung is expected to pay the second-largest criminal antitrust fine ever, behind Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd. which paid a \$500 million fine in 1999.

the switch to Fair Trade in their homes this Halloween and write and call Nestle on Oct. 31 encouraging them to do the same. Nestle USA's phone number is 1 (800) 225-5570.



Period Deaths Days

Oct-05	37	15
Sep-05	49	30
Aug-05	85	31
Jul-05	54	31
Jun-05	78	30
May-05	80	31
Apr-05	52	30
Mar-05	36	31
Feb-05	58	28
Jan-05	107	31
Dec-04	72	31
Nov-04	137	30
Oct-04	63	31
Sep-04	80	30
Aug-04	66	31
Jul-04	54	31
Jun-04	42	30
May-04	80	31
Apr-04	135	30
Mar-04	52	31
Feb-04	20	29
Jan-04	47	31
Dec-03	40	31
Nov-03	82	30
Oct-03	44	31
Sep-03	31	30
Aug-03	35	31
Jul-03	48	31
Jun-03	30	30
May-03	37	31
Apr-03	74	30
Mar-03	65	12
Total	1,970	941

For more information on how your school, church or community group can get involved or to order additional materials to promote fair trade in your home this Halloween, contact Jamie Guzzi, Fair Trade Cocoa Campaigner, at (415) 575-5538 or email (Jamie@globalexchange.org).

Global Exchange is a non-profit research, education, and action center

working for political, economic, environmental, and social justice on a global scale. GE works to increase international awareness among the U.S. public emphasizing struggles for peace, justice, and equality while building meaningful international partnerships.

INFO

Action Kit
www.globalexchange.org/halloween

Bush Fakes Talk With Soldiers

WASHINGTON — It was more like Swan Lake than a scene from your family's personal home video.

The Bush administration staged a televised conversation via satellite between President Bush and U.S. troops in Iraq last week.

Prior to going live, 10 soldiers from the Army's 42nd Infantry Division and one Iraqi soldier were prepped to generally answer the President's pre-selected questions on last Saturday's vote on Iraq's new constitution.

From Washington, Allison Barber, deputy assistant defense secretary, was

seen coaching the soldiers in Tikrit before Bush arrived.

"And then if we're going to talk a little bit about the folks in Tikrit — the hometown — and how they're handling the political process, who are we going to give that to?" she asked.

During the "interview," all the soldiers painted a positive picture of the current events in Iraq for Bush.

An October AP-Ipsos poll showed that less than 40 percent of Americans approved of the President's job in Iraq. A little over half think the U.S. made a mistake in going to war.

Peacemaking Seminar In Omaha Set Nov. 17, 19

OMAHA, Nebr. — Two non-violent peacemaking seminars will be held one on Thursday, Nov. 17, and another on Saturday, Nov. 19, at St. Bernadette Hall, in Omaha, Nebr. Both seminars occur between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

"You can spend an enjoyable day with

folk like yourself who long for a more peace-full world and want to help make it happen," said a spokesperson.

There is a \$50 registration fee that includes lunch. For a registration form and mailing instructions, visit the Progressive Omaha website (www.progressiveomaha.com/peacemaking.html).

INFO

www.progressiveomaha.com

CIA Spy To Oversee New U.S. Spy Network

WASHINGTON — Referred to as "Jose," a current undercover CIA spy will soon be the director of the new National Clandestine Service, a post-Sept. 11 position that will oversee the spywork for U.S. government's entire intelligence community.

Jose's job is to lead operations for the CIA, FBI, Defense Department and other agencies involved in gathering information by people, not technical means, and making sure the intelligence operations don't conflict with one another.

The NCS, formally called the Directorate of Operations, is under the chain of command of CIA Director Porter Goss, which is said to be a victory for the CIA.

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The Lone Star Iconoclast

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WASTED IN SPACE



U.S. Government Compromises Social Spending For Space Weapons

Interview With
BRUCE K. GAGNON

BY NATHAN DIEBENOW
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CRAWFORD — Twenty-eight years ago, a motion picture was released that changed the way the United States thought about outer space.

Now, yes, *Star Wars* and its many sequels introduced new creatures and fantastic visuals into our lives. Little teddy bears called Ewoks danced with princesses. Big teddy bears called Wookies piloted pirate space cruisers. And weird looking lizards like Jar Jar Binks made us ask, "What the hell was George Lucas smoking?"

But while millions of youths were discovering "The Force," pro-military forces in the United States had another plan when they co-opted the space-fantasy brand to describe the so-called future of military technology — the Strategic Defense Initiative — to the public.

Enter Bruce Gagnon, the Coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, an organization he co-founded in 1992.

Gagnon's fight against the armament of outer space began in the early 1980s and has taken him on speaking tours all over the world.

Along the way, he has helped organize several high-profile peace protests, most notably in 1987 when over 5,000 people marched on Cape Canaveral in opposition to the first flight test of the Trident II nuclear missile and again in 1997 when 72 pounds of plutonium were launched into space.

Project Censored in 1999 recognized Gagnon's story on space weaponization as the 8th most censored story, and again in 2005 as the 16th most censored story of the year. In 2003 Bruce was appointed by Dr. Helen Caldicott as a Senior Fellow at her Nuclear Policy Research Insti-

tute where he also serves on her advisory board.

Prior to his activism against weapons in space, Gagnon, the Vietnam-era veteran and former organizer for the United Farmworkers Union in Florida, led campaigns in Florida and Maine around the issue of civil liberties and was vice-chair of the Okaloosa County (Florida) Young Republican Club in 1968 while working on the Nixon campaign for president.

Gagnon's new book *Come Together Right Now: Organizing Stories from a Fading Empire* is available online <www.space4peace.org>.

The ICONOCLAST's Nathan Diebenow caught up with Gagnon by phone last Thursday morning to talk about the new arms race in space.

.....

ICONOCLAST: How did you decide to get involved in speaking out against nukes in space and the corruption in the military-industrial complex?

GAGNON: It goes back to when I was in the Air Force during the Vietnam War and experiencing that whole tragic event. So, you know, I think my first motivations began then. Then in 1982, living in Florida, by that time, out of the Air Force, of course, just becoming an activist, and a few years before that working for the Farm Workers Union in Florida, organizing fruit pickers.

I was already on my way, and by '82, I was seeing that they were increasing cutting, cutting, and cutting social spending, and they were being defunded to build up the military at the end of (President Jimmy) Carter's term, when he was running for reelection, and the beginning of (the presidency of Ronald) Reagan.

Then, in 1982, they had this huge demonstration in New York City. Almost a million people were there, and I watched it on C-SPAN, the rally and all the speakers. Afterwards, they switched to a right-wing conference and the speaker there was Lt. General Daniel

It is my own belief that just as we see this madness and chaos in the Middle East today that's come from arming all sides and creating this massive tension and escalation in conflicts around the region, who will benefit from all of that? Of course, the weapons corporation does from endless war and so now we want to model by selling everything we can to the Asian-Pacific region, arming the hell out of everybody, making it more unstable, and then creating a justification that we've got to go in there and kind of stabilize everything, "My God, it's a mess! We've got to go in there because we're the good guys." It just creates this perpetual cycle of chaos and instability.

— Bruce Gagnon

Graham. He was Ronald Regan's head of the FBI and Star Wars.

Someone said to him, "General Graham, aren't you worried about that demonstration in New York today? There's almost a million people there." He said, "No. I think it's fantastic. They are out there protesting against inter-continental ballistic missiles, and we're moving into space, and they don't really have a clue, so let them keep doing what they're doing."

So at that moment, I said, "Okay, I've got to go look into this space stuff more." (laughs) And of course, living in Florida with the Space Center there was quite an easy thing to do. The next year, in 1983, I went to work as the state coordinator of the Florida coalition for United Peace and Justice, so I began to talk to people about "Hey, let's look into the space program." And I've been doing that ever since.

ICONOCLAST: I saw you on Free Speech TV on their program called "Keynote" a few nights ago, and during your address *The Battle for America's Soul*, you said that the military-space establishment is funding programs to educate youths about Mars in hopes to win future votes and manpower with which to colonize the Red Planet. This scenario reminded me of two movies of my youth: Space Camp and Real Ge-

nius. Real Genius, as you probably know, well you didn't know that it stuck out in my mind —

GAGNON: No, I don't know anything about that movie.

ICONOCLAST: It's one of my favorite movies. It's a comedy that focuses on a group of college students that are bamboozled into creating a laser powerful enough to kill people from space. It's a Val Kilmer movie, made in the mid-80s. I was wondering, though, how close is the U.S. military in using lasers in space?

GAGNON: I think they are still a few years away. They are testing them now. They are beginning to have some success with them. They are working on lots of different — this is real key, I think — they are working on lots and lots of different "applications," as they call them, situations, you know, technologies.

So they are a few years away, but the one that is ready to go, if you will, is what they call Kinetic Energy ASAT, or Kinetic Energy Anti-Satellite Weapon. Kinetic energy just means something that smashes into something else, and the idea of launching this Kinetic Energy Anti-Satellite Weapon that would go up — satellites are in very predictable orbits. You

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Bruce K. Gagnon

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know where they are and where they are going to be tomorrow, so they are easy to identify. You go up and smash into it and destroy it. This technology, most people agree, is pretty much ready to go, and (President George) Bush is just now getting ready to give the Pentagon permission to deploy offensive weapons in space.

What is important that is that the Pentagon says today all warfare on the earth is coordinated by space technology and if we can do that, so can somebody else theoretically, and we can't allow anyone else access to space, that the United States has to be able to destroy everyone else's satellites, so we can be the master of space — control and dominate space — and, thus, the earth below, so this elementary technology — the kinetic energy anti-satellite weapons — would be the likely first deployment made. More difficult ones are still farther down the road but are still being developed. A lot of money is being spent to develop them now.

ICONOCLAST: Talking about other nations developing this technology, China is celebrating the success of its second manned space launch which happened this week. I assume that China is using the launch as a propaganda tool to inspire the youths there. AFP reported that this whole situation is causing worry for Pentagon officials and Washington-based think tanks because they feel that China and Russia will inevitably use their technology someday to destroy our satellites, and I suppose hold the U.S. hostage with their own weapons in space. But are these worries legitimate in your opinion?

GAGNON: No, but the Pentagon is using that to create fear about China as

justification for United States' own massive efforts.

Let's be real here. The United States has been into space technology stuff since right after World War II when the Nazi scientists were brought over to create our space program. We are so far ahead of everyone that it's ridiculous. Russia used to be in the game, but now because of their massive investment in the military over the years, the collapse of their economy, life expectancies in Russia today are 49 years old for males, so they are really out of the game now. Their satellites are so old and they can't afford to replace them. The satellites used to detect if we the United States would launch a nuclear attack on them are now so old that they are basically blind. They put their missions on launch on warning status because they can't really see our missiles coming until the last minute or two.

China has one military satellite in space today that they use to keep an eye on us. As according to the WASHINGTON POST, they are now doubling our military presence in the Asian-Pacific region beginning with an encirclement of China. Since 9/11 we've been putting these bases in Central Asia right on China's border, Afghanistan, Kurdistan and other countries along there. Now we're deploying Aegis Destroyers right on China's coast that are outfitted with theater missile defense systems, interceptors on this ships that would be able to take out China's 20 nuclear missiles that they have today, a very small deterrent capability. So China has this one satellite up there watching this going on while we surround them.

That same WASHINGTON POST story

‘You know, the oil in Iraq isn't really for our economy. We get our oil from Venezuela, from Canada, from our own sources. The oil in Iraq actually goes to China, and if the United States can control that oil, then we hold the key to China's economic engine. So that's really what its about. People in the Middle East know that. We're thieves, so they are fighting back. As long as we continue to do that, there's likely to be more terrorist attacks.'

— Bruce Gagnon

says that we're going to "manage" China in the coming period. China is not anywhere near in the ballgame that we are. We're moving so far ahead with developing all these technologies, but the strategy of U.S. military and the aerospace industry is to being to create this propaganda that China is becoming a massive space competitor and they're going to take out our satellites, and we've got to, therefore, get weapons in space before they do. It's crap.

In fact, I was on the radio the other day and someone called in saying, "Is it true that China has military bases in southern California?" No, that's utterly ridiculous, but these are the lies and rumors being spread really through the Christian fundamentalist community. My sister was one of them. She showed me a book recently when I visited her that is being passed through their community. It's all about "China is going to take over the world," "They are going to hit us with nukes," all this kind of stuff.

This really models what they did during the Reagan years when the Christian fundamentalist community were the first people that were used to become the support base for Reagan's FBI. So they are modeling that again with this China thing by trying to create this fear of China as justification of our own control and domination of space.

ICONOCLAST: This military not occupation of China but containment of China, is that helping our economy because we have China and Japan and the European Union funding our governmental spending? Is that playing a key role in this?

GAGNON: It's a real schizophrenic policy that the United States is adopting. On the one hand, like you say, we have this massive debt to China and the corporations want to go in there and extract their labor and it's a huge market, so they want to exploit China in that sense. On the other hand the United States fears China and fears their ability to become a massive economic competitor to us, so we want to militarily control them which will only anger China and force China — you know, it's a little schizophrenic. Which way are we really going?

But on the other hand, if you think about it — I think I talked about this in the video — that if you force China to build up more military, number one China is already signing contracts with U.S. weapons corporations. They benefit both parties. They benefit our build up surrounding China, and then when China responds with contracts of those same corporations, they make money on both sides of the street, so it's a win-win for the weapons industry.

It's just like what we saw in World War II when during the war, Ford Motor Company's auto plants — they weren't really auto plants, they were military

truck and tank plants in Germany — were there during the war, and American pilots flying over Germany on their bombing runs were not allowed to bomb those Ford Motor Company plants because Ford was making money on both sides of the war. So was Pratt-Whitney that was making engines for the Facky-Wolf, the Germany fighter planes, and at the same time, making engines for American planes. It's an old game they have been playing for a long time where they make money on both sides, so if you can create tension in China, it really benefits the whole military-industrial complex.

It is my own belief that just as we see this madness and chaos in the Middle East today that's come from arming all sides and creating this massive tension and escalation in conflicts around the region, who will benefit from all of that? Of course, the weapons corporation does from endless war and so now we want to model by selling everything we can to the Asian-Pacific region, arming the hell out of everybody, making it more unstable, and then creating a justification that we've got to go in there and kind of stabilize everything, "My God, it's a mess! We've got to go in there because we're the good guys." It just creates this perpetual cycle of chaos and instability.

ICONOCLAST: Going on a different tangent, in light of the screw ups in the federal emergency management system and the lack of disaster preparedness plans seen as a result of Hurricane Katrina, how worried should everyday Americans be about a terrorist detonating a nuclear device in downtown New York or any other city in the United States?

GAGNON: I don't know. I don't know any more than you do. I don't really know, but I will say that we certainly do create the preconditions for people wanting to do that by the way we treat people all over the world, by the way we go grab people's oil and set up military bases throughout the Middle Eastern region from Saudi Arabia right on down the line. That really does create a situation where we have a lot of people who don't like us, who hate us, and who want to attack us as a result, so to me if you really want to deal with making us safer from those kinds of terrorist attacks, whether its nuclear or anything else, then you've got to deal with the overall reason behind it all and that's the fact that we're trying to grab a diminishing resource in the world.

You know, the oil in Iraq isn't really for our economy. We get our oil from Venezuela, from Canada, from our own sources. The oil in Iraq actually goes to China, and if the United States can control that oil, then we hold the key to China's economic engine. So that's really what its about. People in the Middle East know that. We're thieves, so they

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• **WASTED IN SPACE ...** Continued From Page 4

are fighting back. As long as we continue to do that, there's likely to be more terrorist attacks.

ICONOCLAST: I read a story you wrote on CounterPunch.org about you being temporarily detained for a misunderstanding at an airport after 9/11. What I remember is that you were at the airport talking on your cell phone to a reporter about nuclear weapons in space, and someone probably overheard you and called the police on you, thinking you were a terrorist. You were later released after you explained your side and had the cops call the reporter to verify your story. Has your behavior changed as a result of that experience?

GAGNON: My behavior?

ICONOCLAST: Yeah, I mean have you gone to airports and kept your mouth shut. (laughs)

GAGNON: (laughs) I'd say no, but at the same time, I probably look around a little more if I'm on the phone. So in a sense, no but yes.

ICONOCLAST: Have there been any more incidences where you have spoken in a restaurant and people have misunderstood you?

GAGNON: No.

ICONOCLAST: A GAO report — *Defense Space Activities: Management Guidance and Performance Measures Needed to Develop Personnel* — came out recently. It criticized Department of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's lax management of the DoD's space defense programs since 2001 <www.spacewar.com/news/abm-05zd.html>. From what I gather, it seems different branches of the military are receiving more funds than others for space-related defense projects, and there are redundancies of resources among the military branches. Have you heard about this report?

GAGNON: I don't think so.

ICONOCLAST: Basically, it criticizes Rumsfeld for not keeping up with these defense programs. Is there a method to Rumsfeld's behavior, you think?

GAGNON: Basically — maybe this is what you're talking about — every single one without exception, every single one of the Pentagon's space research and development projects are two to three to four and more times over budget. But at least two to three times over budget. Every single one of them, and the key here is that space technology research and development is the most costliest of all.

The Pentagon says that Star Wars will be the largest industrial project in the history of planet Earth. Knowing that, yeah, absolutely, they are letting them freelance. There is very little monitoring. Their testing programs are a joke. The whole thing is a massive, massive intentional thievery, and disguised as defense, disguised to protect us from attack by rogue states, disguised as a post-9/11 watching out for the American people. They use all that fear stuff to basically rob the nation.

What I think is very important is the whole Republican-Bush team has always said they don't like all these social-spending programs. They want to get ride of them and everything else. Well, some years ago, Congress created a firewall around the Pentagon saying, "In times of mass budget crisis, yeah, we cut, but we can't cut the military." And so guess what? There's only one place to cut, so now they followed the

Reagan model so when he came into office, they massively increased military spending, tax cuts to the rich — "Oh, guess what? We've got a budget crisis. Oh gee, well, we have to cut. Where are we going to cut? Well, we can't cut Pentagon, so we have to cut social spending."

They are doing the same thing, and so by allowing the Pentagon space budget to just free-wheel and go with the wind, they create enormous, enormous debt situations, over-spending the Pentagon, and now we have to cut, so I think it's a part of this intentional thievery and also intentional process to destroy the budget knowing then that they will have to get rid of social spending. That's one of their major goals. At the same time, they redistribute wealth to his small cadre of very wealthy investors and corporations.

ICONOCLAST: Going off on corporations for a second, the last time I heard, there were 2,100 super wealthy elites in the United States and 87 million or more of us little guys. What do these elites get out of having all this build-up of the military industrial complex? Are a majority of these folks right on board with Bush and the conservatives or are some of them scratching their heads not really liking this?"

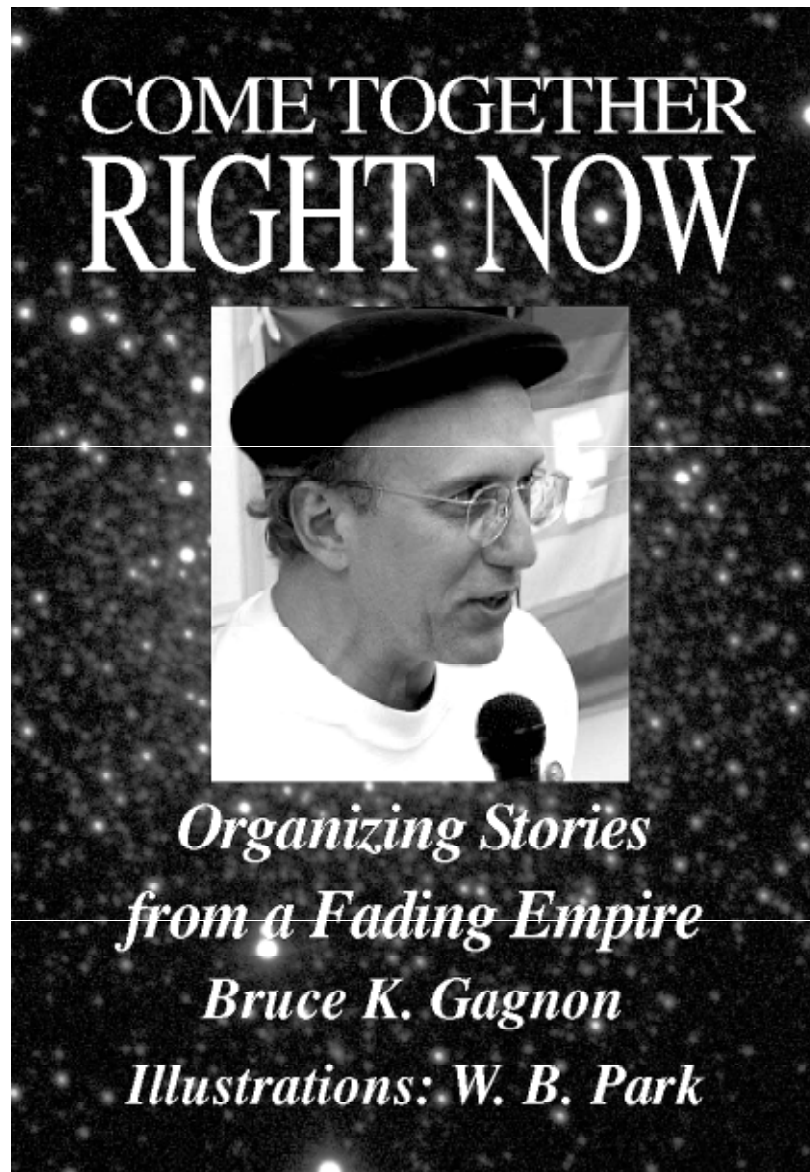
GAGNON: The figure I use is 2,900 at the top of the pyramid and 96 million Americans at the bottom, so the 2,900 Americans at the top own the equivalent of the 96 million at the bottom. That figure is about two years old, and I'm sure it's even more stark now, but I haven't seen it updated.

I call it the oligarchy. The oligarchy doesn't believe in democracy, doesn't believe in social redistribution, doesn't believe in social programs. I call it 21st Century Feudalism. I just returned from a 10-day speaking trip in England. All over the country, they really understand about feudalism when I talk about this 21st Century Feudalism. They are real clear on what that means because they lived through the king and the queen for a long time. They've had a lot of peasant revolts over many, many, many years, so they are real clear over what that means.

That's what I see going on. The people that are in control, they want to make it more so and it's an international corporate elite, and they don't care about countries. Corporations don't care about countries. Their job is to maximize profits internationally, and to do that you have to extract people's labor. You have to extract their resources without fair compensation, and in order to do that, you keep the boot on their neck because people will inevitably resist exploitation.

So then you need a global military machine that can go in and quickly put down any uprising against this misappropriation of their resources, and so that's what the Pentagon's job is today. It is to be the military arm of corporate globalization, as corporate globalization goes out to extract resources.

One of our problems within our movement is we're all working separately. There's anti-globalization over there.



Gagnon's Book

The United States ain't going to do treaties anymore, and there is this guy named Thomas Barnett. He's what they call Donald Rumsfeld's strategy guy. He's a futurist, former professor at the Naval War College. I saw him on C-SPAN last year on a three-hour presentation to a bunch of military officers. His whole thing was that we're not going to do treaties because treaties restrict our ability to pre-emptively attack other countries. He said, "Adolph Hitler never had to ask for permission."

— Bruce Gagnon

There's anti-militarism over there. Some of the anti-militarism is even dissected into your war in Iraq, for your space, or your this and that. So all these different movements ought to be all connected, all sharing this description, all describing this puzzle to the American people to show them the pieces to how this all fits together. It's one power structure with one strategy and many different arms like an octopus, but it's all one octopus.

Our movements are so broken down and dissected, and we really adopt the business model where we're in competition with each other: "Oh, my God! Woe the day if one part of the movement gets more money or recognition or publicity than another." You know, we've become, sort of, hiding from each other, hiding in competition with each other in the business model. But it's really about expanding corporate feudalism all over the globe, so we've got to begin to get people to see that all this stuff is connected, coming from the same source.

ICONOCLAST: You were talking on Keynote about Peace Action Maine and a transformative budget, I think.

GAGNON: It wasn't a budget but a

campaign.

ICONOCLAST: Okay, a campaign.

GAGNON: To educate the public about, yeah.

ICONOCLAST: Well, it was about energy policy and transforming the economy from a military spending economy to a social spending economy, and you were talking about renewable energy and windmills and stuff like that. It reminded me of the Apollo Alliance.

GAGNON: Yeah, exactly.

ICONOCLAST: Talking about bringing movements together, are you guys connected in some way with the Apollo Alliance? My impression was that you guys were thinking in the same terms.

GAGNON: Yeah, well, Peace Action Maine was really influenced by the Apollo Alliance model. One of the things that Peace Action did was to reach out to environmental groups and labor in the state to talk to them about this whole situation. So, yes, very much so. Seeing that connect with other parts of the movement is important because obviously it makes sense that if we cut military spending, then we create sustainable technology that helps the

Continued On Next Page

• WASTED IN SPACE ... Continued From Page 5

environment and helps labor, etc. etc. so we want to talk to them so that we can build a united campaign over time. It's never easy, but that's the winning strategy. It's like a basketball team. You can have the greatest plays in the world, but unless the team really learns them and works together as a team then you're not going to win. So that's our strategy. We've got the plays, but now we have to implement it.

ICONOCLAST: Talking about alliances, the Bush administration opposes the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which bans nuclear testing, and it has been U.S. policy, I think for some time, to advocate not disarmament of nuclear weapons but for curtailing their proliferation. Is that true?

GAGNON: Yeah, yeah, we want to make sure that everyone else doesn't have them, except our friends. It's okay for England, for Israel, for France, etc. But we don't want the "terrorist states" to have them, and of course, we can build new generation bunker busters, Star Wars, and everything else. That's okay. We're God's chosen people.

ICONOCLAST: (laughs)

GAGNON: The key phrase that you used about treaties. The United States ain't going to do treaties anymore, and there is this guy named Thomas Barnett. He's what they call Donald Rumsfeld's strategy guy. He's a futurist, former professor at the Naval War College. I saw him on C-SPAN last year on a three-hour presentation to a bunch of military officers. His whole thing was that we're not going to do treaties because treaties restrict our ability to preemptively attack other countries. He said, "Adolph Hitler never had to ask for permission."

ICONOCLAST: Wow! That guy has balls. (laughs)

GAGNON: His job is to teach military transformation which is more than the war. Donald Rumsfeld's main job is this whole military transformation, and so in his three-hour presentation he really laid out what this thing is going to look like and how its going to work, and then he told all these people, and they were high-level officers, he said, "If you want to get promoted, you're going to have to teach this to your underlings, all about first-strike, remodeling your military into a endless war machine." He said, you know, we're not going to have jobs in American any more. The industrial jobs. Forget it. Why pay somebody \$20 an hour in the U.S. when you can go to China and pay a couple dollars a day to make TVs? We're not going to be doing that here. "Under corporate globalization, every country is going to have a different role and our rule is going to be security export." He said, "Give me your angry, young 18-19-year-olds who like to play video games." The inference was they're not going to have jobs. They're going to be angry. They're going to be disconnected from society. They're going to wallow away their time playing video games. "We're going to take them, and go in and kick ass."

The parts of the world — what he called the non-intergrated gap — the parts of the world that are not submitting to corporate globalization, and we're going to go in there in an endless war and beat them down until we control them — "we" being the multi-national corporations, and so that's what we're working for. That's why I come

back to this military arm of corporate globalization. That's going to be our job in the new world order. America's job is to be the arms of corporate globalization. That's going to be it.

When you don't have jobs in America, you don't have a local tax base. When you don't have a local tax base, you don't have education. You don't have health care. You don't have clean drinking water. You don't have social progress. What you have is a third-world country. The physical infrastructure, the roads, the bridges, the water systems collapse. Human infrastructure collapses because you don't have health care. You don't have public education. You don't have treatment for decreasing depression. So the whole infrastructure collapses.

ICONOCLAST: My question, though, was leading to who are political leaders that you look to for support in the United States and abroad against this corporate feudalism?

GAGNON: I look to local activists. I don't look to the Democratic Party because, by-and-large, with a couple of noble exceptions, they are under the control of the same corporations. That's why they are so resoundingly silent as we see the complete breakdown of American society and they just go along for the show.

I don't look to major national, D.C.-based, so-called "progressive" organizations because number one, they are on the money chase from the foundations, and if you track them, they are ultimately by-and-large allied to the Democratic Party and fund groups that will get lost in the D.C. swirl and they will spend their time not challenging authority and not challenging the power structure, but try to run around chasing politicians down the halls and build compromises on top of compromises on top of compromises, and get lost in that whole world, in the vortex, as I call it, of Washington.

So I've seen in my many, many years working in the movement how this continually over and over again leads us astray. Just one contemporary example is the war in Iraq. The Democrats don't oppose the war. They don't want to bring the troops home. The Democrats say, by-and-large, as their sort of unofficial official Iraq policy — because they don't have the guts to announce an official policy — is you can't cut and run. If we leave, there will be a civil war. If we leave, it will be chaotic there, so we gotta stay, even though the war was a mistake, Bush lied, na-na-na, but we got to stay.

Right now in the peace movement, there is a debate going on whether or not we should get out of Iraq and all that kind of crap. It is in the Democratic Party's interest to see peace movement groups support as kind of "Well, we really shouldn't say we should get out now." The Democratic Party encourages plenty of groups to take that more moderate position, so there is a war going on in the peace movement in some circles over that position.

But what I look to is people on the local level, and I've been able to identify them over many, many years and work with them because they are more independent. They are cutting edge. They

But what I look to is people on the local level, and I've been able to identify them over many, many years and work with them because they are more independent. They are cutting edge. They are ahead of the game. They're not locked into the system. They're not locked into the funding system that locks you into position.'

— Bruce Gagnon

are ahead of the game. They're not locked into the system. They're not locked into the funding system that locks you into position. Within the nuclear disarmament movement, there are now some so-called progressive foundations that won't fund groups that talk about disarmament. You can't only talk about nuclear security, which means: "We have to have some nuclear weapons. We can't take this position and get rid of all the nuclear weapons because it will anger the Democrats and that's not an attainable position in Washington."

So nuclear disarmament groups are being defunded now, and money is being transferred to groups that take a more accommodating position. Again, I look for people who are playing it straight. Generally, they are more local and regional groups than national. It's the old bumper sticker, you know, "If the people lead, the leaders will follow."

ICONOCLAST: Coincidentally, a few hours before watching you on FSTV, I watched a program on the History Channel on Dr. Oppenheimer, the man credited for creating the first atomic bomb. From what I understand, he took the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki personally and later called for the control of nuclear weapons. But even after his stand, we still have scientists that work for the military-industrial complex. Why do you think that is? Is it a money game like you described some anti-war groups?

GAGNON: I'll give you an example. One time I was speaking at Cornell University, and this radio reporter was interviewing me. Afterwards he told me that the President of the Union of Concerned Scientists at the time was from Cornell, a professor. He said his position on Star Wars was that the Union of Concerned Scientists supports the research and development funding because it means jobs for the university departments that work on all this kind of stuff.

The problem with that is once you support the research and development funding, it never stops, and it grows year-in and year-out in local communities to be dependent on it. Politicians get contracts in their districts and they become more dependent upon it. Before long you have system and now you have to apply it and there you go. Next thing you know, you have an arms race in space. The whole cycle continues.

But today the Union of Concerned Scientists runs around saying its opposed to Star Wars' deployment, but it doesn't take a position on resource and development funding. And then what happens is that the Democratic Party, funders, etc. say, "These people are the peace movement. These are the people we talk to. They're scientists. They know what they are talking about. They're not emotional. They're rational, and everything else, so they're the ones that when it comes time to make a decision, they are the ones that get brought in, and they cut the deals.

That's how it works when it's really

the grassroots people that do all the work. You're out there really working your butt off, and then you get your legs cut out from under you, and the "people in power" decide. That's how the system works.

ICONOCLAST: What's next for Global Network? I saw that the first week of October was devoted to education campaigns and rallies —

GAGNON: Keeps Space For Peace Week. We've been doing it for about five years. We have one strategy, basically, and that is right now not enough people know about this, and there's no way we can stop it until we create an international base constituency that can call for the protection of space from a new arms race, and until we create that, we're not going anywhere.

Our entire lifeblood and meager resources is spent trying to expand the consciousness of people so since 1999, I travel for two weeks each month on the road on speaking tours, going out like with the speech you saw. That was our second video on FSTV, so we work every angle we can, and we have a really great board of directors made up of activists all over the world who are working on this. We get together once a year for a meeting in a different part of the world where this kind of stuff is going on. We share with each other the latest and support each other. We do that in the spring, and in the fall, we have Space For Peace Week. The rest of the time we through our listserv and newsletter and mailings stay in touch, and I travel like a spider doing the web connecting everyone. It's all about building, building, building all the time, little by little.

ICONOCLAST: I had read somewhere that you had spoke in front of a group that included Bob Edgar, the director of the National Council of Churches. How connected is Global Network to religious leaders? Are they afraid to latch on to you guys?

GAGNON: Yeah, I was speaking at a religious leaders conference, and he came into our workshop and made a nice contribution. He is very aware of the issue, and they don't really work on it much. It's spotty. Again, it's local. You know, like I was just in England and stayed in the home of Bruce Kent, who is a former Anglican minister and one of the main leaders of the entire peace movement in Britain, known all over the world, very much respected in the religious community in England, and been on this issue for years. There we have someone who is really great, but it's local, or national, if you will.

Around the country I've spoken at many churches, know many ministers, and that kind of thing, but in terms of national group that really behind it, they know of it but it's not a priority. A lot of it has to do with, well, in Florida, where I've worked for so many years, a lot of ministers, good-hearted progressive ministers got people in their churches who work on this stuff, and if they bring it, they're going to lose their job. People will stop putting money in hat when they

Continued On Next Page

Statistics:
U.S. Military Deaths
WAR IN IRAQ
(By State)
U.S. Govt. Statistics

California	210
Texas	176
Pennsylvania	102
New York	93
Ohio	92
Florida	84
Illinois	79
Georgia	59
Michigan	59
Virginia	54
Arizona	48
Louisiana	48
Tennessee	46
Wisconsin	46
Washington	40
Indiana	39
New Jersey	37
North Carolina	37
Alabama	34
Oregon	33
Kentucky	32
Oklahoma	32
Mississippi	31
South Carolina	31
Massachusetts	30
Arkansas	29
Missouri	28
Maryland	26
Minnesota	26
Colorado	25
Iowa	24
Nebraska	19
Connecticut	18
Kansas	18
West Virginia	14
Idaho	13
Nevada	13
Vermont	13
New Mexico	12
Maine	9
Montana	9
North Dakota	9
South Dakota	9
Utah	9
Delaware	8
Rhode Island	8
New Hampshire	7
Wyoming	6
Alaska	5
Hawaii	5
District of Columbia	3

• **WASTED IN SPACE ... Continued From Page 6**

pass the hat around, so they've got to keep their mouth shut. That's the reality. In a lot of places, they'll tell you privately, "Oh, we're really so proud of you, the work you're doing. (whispers) Sorry we can't really say too much about it, though, but keep doing what you're doing."

ICONOCLAST: (laughs) Right. Well, what can people do?

GAGNON: One is, obviously, learn more about this. Visit our website <www.space4peace.org>. Teach others about this, and most importantly, make connections. Let me tell you a story to illustrate.

When we did the "Shock and Awe" attack of Iraq a couple of years ago, 70 percent of the weapons used in that attack were directed to their targets via military satellite, so whether you are on the ground, in a tank, or in a plane, all

warfare is coordinated through space technology.

That's why you come back to the U.S. military saying, "Jesus Christ, if we can do this, so can somebody else. We can't allow anyone else to have access to space."

We've got to control space and deny them access to space. We have to be the master of space."

So what activists need to do is not suggest the business model: "Oh, drop what you're doing! This is the most important issue in the world!" No, what I suggest, what we suggest, is that people make the connection and show people how space technology is used to fight the war in Iraq, how today these UAV (unmanned ariel vehicles) are flying over Afghanistan and Iraq outfitted with cameras connected by satellite to U.S. troops sitting in America looking at a screen all done in real time.

Predator and GlobalHawk, these UAVs are called, are also outfitted with missiles, machines and guns and they can fly over an area for hours looking

for people on the ground. "Is it Taliban? Is it Al-Qaeda? Is it a wedding?" And then a person in the United States sitting in a computer on a real time signal via satellite fires at the target on the Earth oftentimes killing innocent civilians. All warfare today is coordinated by space technology.

So if peace activists begin to incorporate that reality into their articulation against the war, we expand the level of consciousness of the American people and, most importantly, show how enormous amounts of money are being wasted on space technology, how a new arms race is being created, how then we have to cut social spending — you know the whole picture.

I think that if we all begin to incorporate this broader articulation into our existing peace work, I think we'd dramatically expand the movement.

ICONOCLAST: Are there any videos that people can order that explain what you are describing?

GAGNON: We have a video called *Armsenal of Hypocrisy*. A to Z, it tells this whole story. It's available through us for \$23. It includes postage.

Million Man March Jams Washington

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan on Saturday said the federal government should be charged with "criminal neglect" for the lax treatment of the overwhelmingly black New Orleans victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Keynoting the Million Man March, which was mastered from a similar march in 1995, Farrakhan spoke for 77 minutes to the crowd estimated between hundreds of thousands in attendance to two million.

Goal of the march was to persuade minorities to band together to become a more substantial political force.

Among the speakers Saturday were the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rev. Al Sharpton.

Rep. Danny K. Davis (D-Ill.) likened Saturday's event to a "national town hall meeting."

Smurfs Get Killed In UNICEF Ad

BRUSSELS, Belgium — The lovable blue cartoon characters from the hit 1980s show *The Smurfs* were bombed in an television advertisement in Belgium to raise awareness of UNICEF's humanitarian projects in Africa.

UNICEF Belgium spokesman Philippe Henon said last week that the ad campaign has already struck a chord with the viewing audience: "It's working. We are getting a lot of reactions and people are logging on to our Web site."

The characters of late Belgian artist Peyo were used to shock an indifferent public into supporting its fund-raising efforts for ex-child soldiers in Africa, said officials in UNICEF's Belgium office.

Due to graphic scenes, the 20-second ad shown after 9 a.m. is intended for an adult audience. The Smurf ad-campaign ends in April.

INFO

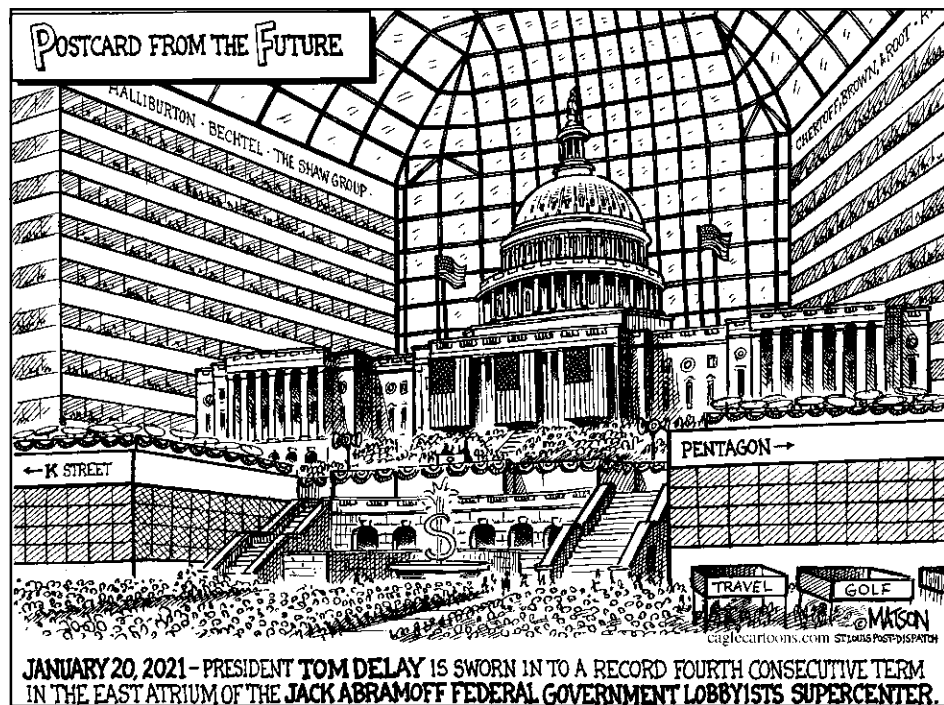
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Plastics Plant Fire Out; Cause Of Initial Blast Still Unknown

LAVACA — A Point Comfort industrial plant reported that the last fire from an unexplained Oct. 6 explosion, which put two workers into a hospital in Galveston and injured at least 11 others, was put out last week.

While Formosa thinks a forklift hitting a propylene line caused the explosion, the U.S. Chemical Safety Board has yet to release the findings from its investigation.

Diane Wilson, an activist whose protests against the company caused her arrest in 2002 after she chained herself to a tower, explained that she was not surprised the blast occurred because of the plant's "shoddy" design.

The Formosa explosion, the second to the Taiwan-based company's U.S. facilities in 17 months, was the latest of three blasts that have rocked Texas industrial facilities in the last year.

One of the two hospitalized workers was released, announced Formosa Plastics Corporation, U.S.A. in a press release Thursday. The other workers were treated and released soon after the initial blast, according to news reports.

Across the street from the plant, Formosa's largest, which employs about 1,500 people, was an elementary

school with about 50 students inside.

The Point Comfort plant has a history of violations of air pollution laws, the last

fine from Texas Commission on Environmental Quality totalled \$150,000. Five of 12 inspections of the plant by the

U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration resulted in violations over the past 10 years.

Iraqis Go To The Polls To Decide Constitution

IRAQ — As of presstime, the results of this past weekend's constitutional referendum were unknown.

Passage of the federalist charter would set the stage for establishment of a post-Saddam Hussein government in a country that many believe sits on the verge of a civil war.

Failure of the vote would require the drafting of a revised charter, to again be considered by the populace.

According to sources, the turnout appeared to be heavy and calmer than expected, with some areas polling 80 percent of the registered voters.

Tom DeLay Says Indictment Was 'Manufactured'

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Texas) has taken to the Internet to plead his case and to bash Travis County District Attorney Ronnie Earle, whom DeLay claims is playing partisan politics.

DeLay and two associates were recently indicted by a Texas grand jury for allegedly conspiring to funnel \$190,000 of corporate campaign contributions to Republican candidates for the Texas legislature in the 2002 elections.

DeLay notes on his website,

<tomdelay.com>, that Earle manufactured the indictment.

After being charged, DeLay resigned

his position of House Majority Leader in the Congress, pending the outcome of the charges.

Read 'The Iconoclast'
Online At
www.lonestaricon.com

Judge Hodges To File For 414th District Court

WACO — Judge David L. Hodges has announced that he will file as a candidate in the Republican primary for the newly created McLennan County 414th District Court.

Judge Hodges was elected and served for 20 consecutive years on the McLennan County Court at Law bench from 1982-2002.

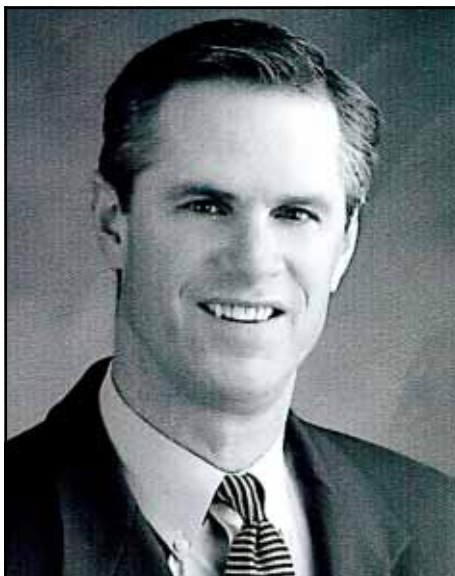
“Now, I am excited about the opportunity of asking the voters to allow me to serve as Judge of the newly created 414th District Court,” he said. “Since this is a newly created court with unlimited jurisdiction, including family, criminal, and civil cases, I think my judicial experience in presiding over thousands of cases of all types for the last 20 years will be a real asset that I can bring to this bench.”

In an interview with The Iconoclast, Hodges reiterated that he will bring true-life experience to his candidacy, since he has presided over many thousands of diverse cases.

“Over the last 20-plus years, I presided over the disposition of in excess of 50,000 cases, including civil, criminal, mental health, and probate matters,” he said. “In addition to non-jury trials, pleas, motions, and hearings, I presided over approximately 300 jury trials.”

Hodges graduated from Baylor Law School in 1973, practiced two years as an Assistant District Attorney and was in private practice six years before being elected to the County Court at Law. He is currently sitting as a visiting Judge and is counsel to the law firm of Amsler & Amsler, PC.

Hodges is the past chair of the Judicial Section of the State Bar of Texas and has served as past chair of the Texas Center for the Judiciary, as well as the president of the Texas Association County Court at Law Judges.



Judge David Hodges

He has also served as President of the McLennan County Bar Association, the McLennan County Young Lawyers

Association, and has served as an adjunct professor of law at the Baylor Law School.

Hodges is also a past President of the McLennan County American Heart As-

sociation and the McLennan County American Cancer Society.

He is married to Tamara and has one grown son. Hodges is a member of Calvary Baptist Church.

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Rove Questioned Fourth Time In Grand Jury Probe

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Karl Rove, President George W. Bush’s top political adviser, testified before a grand jury Friday for the fourth time regarding the leak of a covert CIA operative’s identity.


In question is whether the grand jury will bring charges against Rove in connection to the leak.


Rove was told prior to his testimony that the grand jury could not guarantee that he would not be indicted.

According to Valerie Plame’s husband, Joseph Wilson, administration officials outed his wife, which damaged her ability to work undercover as retaliation against him for publicly questioning President Bush’s justification for invading Iraq in March 2003.

Bush has suggested that he will discharge anyone on his staff who commits a crime.

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Time For 'Tricky' To Embark On A Real Evacuation Plan

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "You get what you pay for, but you come out better if you can git away with stealin' it."

So Lying Texas Governor Tricky Ricky Perry won't give up his Suburban to save fuel, hunh?

I believe one of his toadies said Texas' emptiest haircut wasn't interested in symbolic gestures to solve the nation's energy problems.

Nope. He believes in real gestures. Like not wasting fuel on hurricane evacuations.

And, other than that one burning bus, we saved a lot.

Think of all the fuel saved by those people who ran out of gas on I-45 in *Runaway Scrape II: Rita Rocks Beaumont*.

Okay, for all you Yankees out there, in the spring of 1836 our revolution wasn't really working out.

We had about 1,500 or so men in arms. The Mother Country had about ten times that.

In two engagements Texas lost a little over a third of the army.

One of our commanders left a secured position to march his 400 troops out into an open field and surrender.

Whereupon they were shot. Santa Anna knew how to conserve resources, boy.

The Battle of the Alamo lasted about as long as it takes a fat man to shave.

Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



I know, *Thirteen Days to Glory* and all that, but Santa Anna spent the better part of two weeks smoking dope and stumbling over his own army.

The actual battle lasted about three hours.

Okay, so I had to heat the water on a cold wood stove before I shaved.

The rest of the citizenry did as any red-blooded/-necked Texan would do when faced with insurmountable odds and hopeless conditions.

They ran like deer on Opening Day.

Lord, I hope I don't have to explain Opening Day to you liberals who believe Tom DeLay should face the bar of justice.

No. DeLay should face the bar of rebar. And if you don't kill deer and eat them, they starve. And if you want increased predators to even the score instead of drunks in camo and orange who buy out Wal-Mart, feed nature's unlicensed hunters YOUR livestock.

And children. Those of us who live

among panthers and alligators think we have plenty of them already, thank you. But I digress.

The flood of refugees heading for the Louisiana line like they were running out of gumbo was called The Runaway Scrape.

Sam Houston handled evacuations better than Tricky Ricky.

There are no accounts of burning old people in the first Runaway Scrape.

And no bus companies cashing in on government contracts.

And Houston did not drive around the state in an 11 mile-per-haybale buggy while Jim Bowie was attacking Santa Anna's fodder train.

It was called the Grass Fight.

See, Bowie thought he was attacking the paymaster, but the mules turned out to be loaded with hay . . .

Never mind, it's just an allegory to our guys making the world safe for Exxon in Iraq and Tricky's tax-supported ride.

Look it up. You'll get the joke, I promise.

Anyway, Tricky says he'll make everything clear in his cunning plan, which he will divulge just before the 2007 Legislative Session.

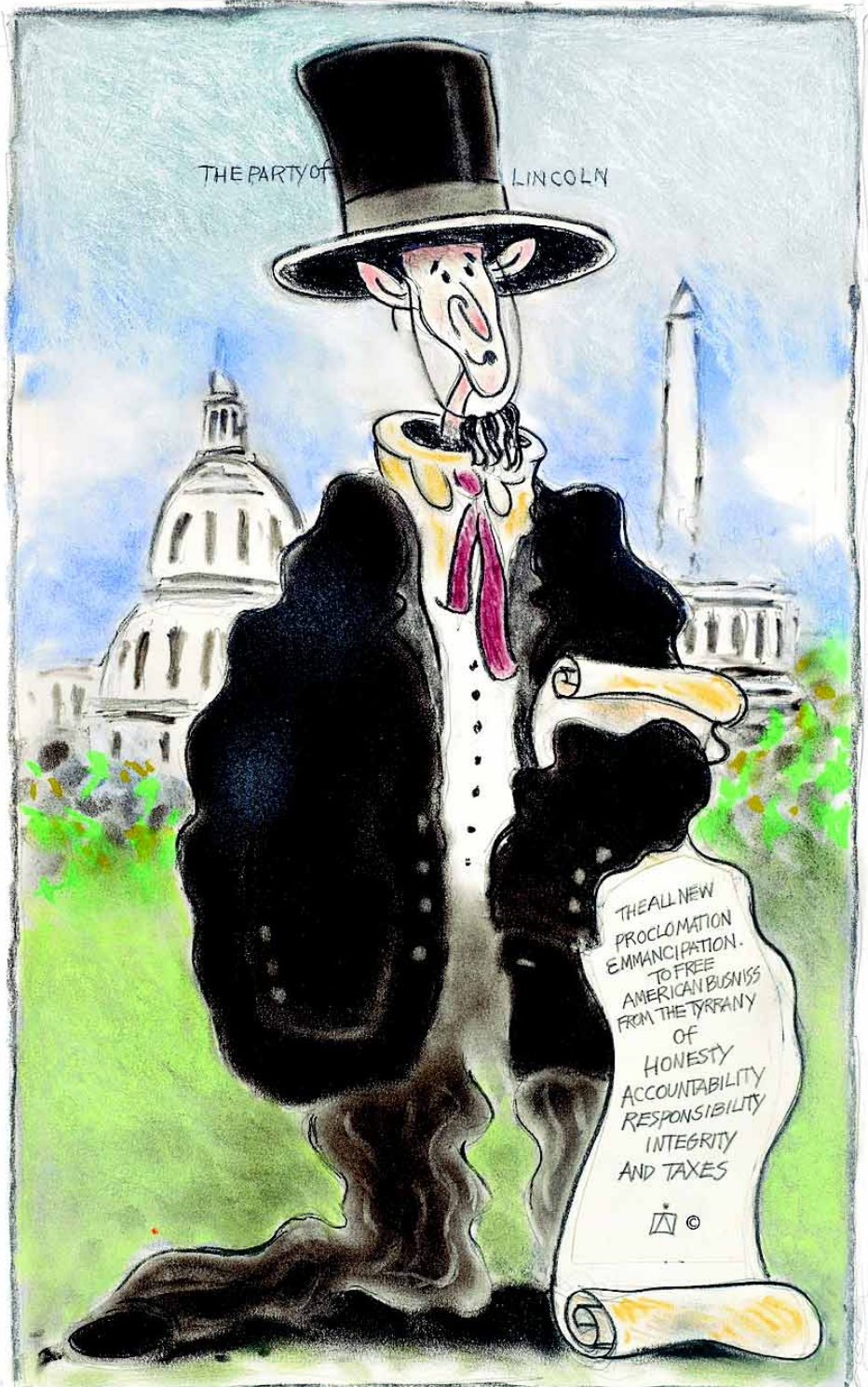
Meanwhile, the plan seems to be that we should take neighbor Bush's advice, bestowed from his Air Farce Won flight to SUV motorcade down his private drive from Waco to Crawford.

Pretty good advice from a guy whose country picks up his courtesy card bills.

But while the rest of us pour \$40 to \$50 per tank into our compacts and hybrids, the price of gasoline will diminish somewhat through supply and demand, and it won't cut too far into the hyper-inflated incomes of 50-year-old execs with \$25 haircuts so their hooker-looking trophy wives can continue Expediently running us off the road on the way to the nail salon. (Get your nails at Home Depot like the rest of us, floozies!)

And we can only hope that come the 2007 Legislative Session, we won't have to listen to Gov. Tricky's new plan.

Because Tricky will be driving around in his Suburban looking for a job.



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Editorial

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OP/ED

— Editorial —

DeLay Trying To Subvert Texas Legal System

In answer to recent grand jury indictments, U.S. Rep. Tom DeLay wasted no time in attempting to quash the true-bills.

DeLay unleashed his attack-dogs.

Delivered last week was a subpoena calling for Travis County District Attorney Ronnie Earle to testify about how the indictments were garnered.

The Texas prosecutor had led the Texas campaign finance investigation that resulted in the indictments of DeLay and two political associates. DeLay's defense attorney, Dick DeGuerin, has suggested there was misconduct by prosecutors.

Grand juries in Texas look at evidence and decide whether a matter warrants a trial, hence a true bill if members of the grand jury give the nod, which they did. As this is an on-going investigation, perhaps there will

be additional endictments, perhaps not.

Most dope-dealers, murderers, and rapists dislike having to go to trial, but it is how the system works. They don't have the political clout, however, to attack the prosecutors in an attempt to subvert the Texas system of jurisprudence.

Conspiracy and money laundering, in violation of state law, are hefty charges. If a grand jury thinks these charges warrant a jury trial based on the evidence presented, then one should be held. That's the way it works in Texas.

The Fox News Network and Austin television stations have been airing attack ads against the Travis County DA as a response to his investigation. The Bush/Rove/DeLay power machine is chugging at full throttle. According to a spokesman for the Free Enterprise Fund, the group is attempting to change people's opinion about the case, to educate them. The group denies that this is an attempt to influence a potential jury.

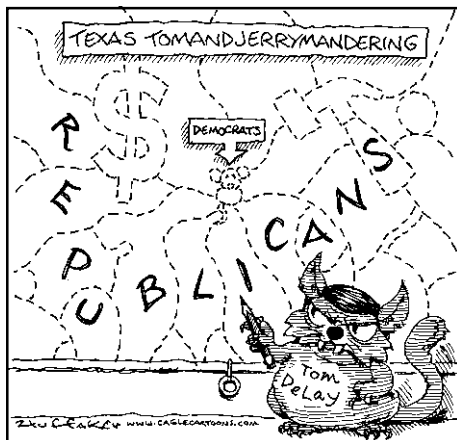
Bull corn.

This is definitely new-age jury tampering, launched prior to the jury being seated.

Whether intended or not, the subversion of the Texas judicial system is serious. If DeLay has done nothing wrong, then what is there to fear?

Or is it the truth?

— W. Leon Smith



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Attorneys Spring Austin From Mexican Jail

Reaching Mexico City on Oct. 15, 1834, attorneys Peter W. Grayson and Spencer H. Jack got right down to the legal business of ending Stephen F. Austin's nine-month nightmare.

The cause of the confinement was a letter Austin wrote in the heat of the moment the previous October. Exasperated by the refusal of the central government to grant Texas statehood, the *empresario* encouraged the San Antonio Ayuntamiento, or city council, to lay the groundwork for the forbidden regime in open defiance of the short-sighted policy.

Austin had forgotten all about the controversial communication by the time a copy crossed the desk of the acting president of Mexico. Gomez Farias was infuriated by the seemingly seditious statement and issued orders for the immediate arrest of the American colonizer.

Apprehended at Saltillo on Jan. 3, 1834, Austin was taken to Monterrey, where he spent the next two weeks before being transferred to the capital. More concerned with the reaction of fellow Texans than his own fate, he stated for the record his fervent hope that "there will be no excitement about my arrest."

Confiding in a Mexican senator he had known for years, Austin expressed his true feelings. "I was not born in a wilderness, and have not the patience of those inhabitants, who are daily enduring the same dangers and annoyances that their fathers and grandfathers and perhaps their great-grandfathers suffered without advancing or thinking of advancing. Death is preferable to such stagnant existence, such stupid life."

Austin picked the wrong man to trust. The politician betrayed his old friend by turning over the incriminating correspondence to the authorities.

Arriving at Mexico City on Feb. 13, Austin expected the comparatively comfortable accommodations customarily afforded prominent prisoners. To his horror, he was housed in a 13- by 16-foot cell and denied visitors as well as reading and writing materials.

Austin did manage to keep a diary on smuggled scraps of paper. During his third and last month of solitary confinement, he scribbled an agonizing entry. "What a system of jurisprudence is this! I do not know of what I am accused. How can I prepare my defense?"

Slipping into a deep and protracted depression that summer, Austin bared his soul in bitter letters to unresponsive acquaintances back home. Had he been left to rot in a distant dungeon, and was there any truth to his captors' claim that longtime critics were responsible for his continued incarceration?

Moved by the pitiful plight of the prisoner, Peter W. Grayson decided to intercede on his behalf. Accompanied by Spencer H. Jack, also a renown lawyer, he set out for Mexico City.

Though weary from their long journey, the Texans immediately called on their client. "The delight he experienced upon seeing us," Grayson later remembered, "may be more easily imagined than described."

Following a much-needed exchange of morale-boosting pleasantries, the

This Week In Texas History

By Barte Haile



visitors asked Austin for the list of charges lodged against him. They were flabbergasted by his reply. After nine months in custody, he was still completely in the dark.

For days Grayson and Jack pestered uncooperative officials for an explanation of Austin's indefinite detention. Their persistence seemed to have paid off when "a huge mountain of documents" was delivered to their hotel room.

Sorting through the avalanche of papers for evidence of the alleged transgression and a formal accusation, the eagle-eyed attorneys found nothing more than rumor and hearsay. Austin's apparent crime was his criticism of the government position against statehood for the northernmost province.

Turning to a local lawyer for a crash course in Mexican law, the Texans were told that mere suspicion of seditious conduct was sufficient to keep the *empresario* behind bars until he was old and gray. The authorities were under no obligation to give Austin his day in court, even though he was presumed guilty until proved innocent.

Clutching at the only available straw, Grayson and Jack worked to have their client released on bail. When a wealthy Mexican agreed to guarantee a high

bond, the overjoyed prisoner was freed on Christmas Day.

Austin was, however, kept on a very short lease and restricted to the city limits of the capital. Seven tense and tedious months would drag by before he was finally allowed to return to Texas under the terms of a general amnesty.

The lesson of the nightmarish ordeal was not lost on the Anglo-American colonists. If Stephen F. Austin, who had bent over backwards for more than a decade to get along with the Mexican hierarchy, could be subjected to such arbitrary abuse, what chance did the ordinary Texan have?

"Outlaws & Lawmen" - "Best of This Week in Texas History" Vol. VI now available for \$10.95 plus \$3.25 postage and handling from Barte Haile, 1912 Meadow Creek Dr., Pearland, TX 77581.

Don't We All Have Compulsions?

My last column was about compulsions. A lively discussion of this led to other thoughts of counting and germ phobia, some spin-offs of the compulsion thing.

I decided I would probably be a counter if I weren't so dyslexic at math. I couldn't be a counter if I tried. (Not only do counters count, but they also multiply and divide in their heads. That's way beyond my limited mathematical abilities). I have other foibles.

I think Zack counts some things, but certainly not all. Some people count because they're bored or they just like math or are good at it. (Not me). Zack could probably tell you exactly how many steps there are in stairways leading to offices where he has worked. But I don't think he's really a counter. His memory is just much better than mine, and his IQ higher. He keeps his mind occupied in ways I do not. I can just let mine go blank very successfully from time to time and not feel as if I have missed a thing. It's like a mini mental vacation. And people think I'm ditzy.

And now for a timely commentary on fast approaching cold and flu season. . . . Germ phobia! — I won't usually touch certain things if I have a choice, especially at the doctor's office. . . .but when I invariably do (break down and read a magazine if I can find one that isn't about golf or finance), I try to remember to use the antibacterial stuff I always keep in my truck*. I use it after shopping, too. (Of course, I'm sure I rubbed my eyes or nose while I was still in the store. By the time I reach my truck, it's probably too late to save myself from whatever disease was circulating at that particular moment).

I never touch a bathroom door handle when exiting a public restroom, always use a paper towel or tissue as a barrier between my hand and the door, then discard the paper. If I can push through the door with my shoulder or backside, so much the better. (A physician taught me that years ago, and I even saw someone do it on HBO once. The character was a psychiatrist. She exited a restroom (at a party in a private home) and used

a tissue when she grabbed the door-knob. I wonder how many other people even noticed it. —Guess the writer was a little nutty like me. —Or just grew tired of always catching everything and being sick.

I don't even like to shake hands if I can avoid it. Of course, I can't. I want to be polite. And I can always wash my hands later, which I most certainly do. I'm big on hand washing. My kids think I'm a fanatic, but the bottom line really is that I simply don't like to be sick. Lots of research is done about the way illness is transmitted. Sometimes I wish people would stop writing about all this. Maybe it's better not to know.

When my children were small and still listened to me, I drilled into them never to drink or eat after anyone. They could play in the dirt all they wanted, eat it if they were so inclined, but they weren't allowed to share another kid's cup, straw, or utensils. The only time my daughter drank after a friend, she came down with mono. At least that's how she said she caught it. Hmhmhmhm.

*When I subbed at the high school, I always kept that antibacterial stuff on my desk. I brought my own pen or pencil when I taught and used it exclusively. And I washed my hands between every class. Usually I managed to stay well, probably because I would NEVER, EVER touch the hall pass. The kids are forced to use it when they exit class for the restroom. Everyone knows those things are germ magnets. If I were a kid, I would probably refuse to use it, get suspended for noncompliance, end up having to sue the school district to avoid the hall pass, something about my civil rights probably.

When I traveled in the Orient many years ago, I noticed several people wearing surgical masks. I learned that it was a matter of courtesy for a sick person to cover his mouth and nose when in public. It seemed odd at first to me, but for people who practiced the custom, it was normal. And considerate. The practice was polite to the extreme, and I respected and appreciated it.

I once had the nerve to ask my kids' pediatrician to wash his hands before he examined them. I thought that was

Rustic Ramblings

By Gene Ellis



Gene Ellis, Ed.D. is a Bosque County resident who returned to the family farm after years of living in New Orleans, New York and Florida. She is an artist who holds a doctoral degree from New York University and is writing a book about the minor catastrophes of life.

something they all learned in med school, but he was skipping that particular routine. I didn't like it one little bit. No telling what the previous patient had been afflicted with. Another time I instructed that same young pediatrician to provide both sick and well waiting rooms when he redesigned his office. (And he took my advice). If he couldn't figure that one out on his own, someone certainly needed to explain it to him. (And people say I'm outspoken. Go fig).

I hate to even touch the carts in the supermarket but have yet to figure a way to buy groceries without this necessary evil. Gee, reading over this, it occurs to me that I may truly be some sort of germ phobic. I don't even think of this stuff most of the time, but during cold and flu season, I seem to become very aware of it. (And when I'm sick, I stay home as much as possible, try to keep all my nasty little germs to myself. One of my big pet peeves is folks who go out and sneeze all over the rest of us when they're ill. Schools and employers should insist that sick people stay home. Instead, they are encouraged to come on in and infect everyone else. And people who don't go to work don't get paid or lose a precious sick day. So infectious or not, they go to work or school).

I'd actually like my own private oxygen supply for travel on airplanes — to avoid the recirculating air that is so laden with all manner of germs. I wish studies weren't printed on these subjects. Perhaps I should simply stop reading so much. I mean, what can we do about it anyway except be paranoid? If I could just figure out how to stop breathing on airplanes, that would solve that sticky little problem. So far, no luck with that one. And I'm guessing the result would be far worse than a cold.

— Electronic Horizons —

RFID: Reasonable Fear of Information Disclosure

By STEPHEN WEBSTER
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

*"There's something happenin' here
What it is ain't exactly clear
There's a man with a gun over there
Telling me I got to beware
I think it's time we stop, children,
What's that sound,
Everybody look what's goin' down"*
— Buffalo Springfield

Keep those tin hats on, campers. America just got another big dose of Big Brother's Good Medicine, and it's not going down so easily.

RFID, or Radio Frequency Identification, is a no-so new technology that is pervading our society at an alarming rate. And depending upon what your news outlets are, you may not have ever heard of it. Similar to the barcode, RFID is a system of identification that, originally, would have allowed large companies to maintain more orderly, accurate inventories of products.

Devices carrying this technology come in a range of sizes from a 1 in. x 1 in. square chip to a transmitter half the size of a grain of sand. These microchips do not carry an electric charge or battery, instead relying on a scanner to issue a radio frequency which it converts into a charge, enabling it to issue a respond broadcast carrying its unique ID signature. Believe me, corporate America, especially IBM, Wal-Mart and BellSouth, is cheerleading the effort to tag every item of material value on the face of the earth. Even the Pentagon is championing the new tech, slapping RFID chips on practically everything in Iraq.

To be sure, RFID is a double-edged sword. It has the potential to strengthen supply chains, increase inventory efficiency, reduce product shrinkage. One company offers RFID-enabled pajamas for parents concerned about their children's security. Yet another firm is embedding RFID chips in prescription pill bottles given to seniors with limited vision. A handheld reader announces the contents of a scanned bottle, time of last consumption, and the expected date of refill. If you have a Mobil Speedpass for refilling your gas tank, a toll tag to cruise unimpeded on the pay-way, or a pet-chip in your dog, RFID is already a part of your life. And the further applications are nearly limitless.

But many privacy advocates deride the use of RFID as a marriage of convenience and corporate greed. Wal-Mart is already testing RFID in its Texas stores. Chances are if you shopped at the big blue in Big Tex, you are already broadcasting. Retailers have started imbedding the chips in products *en masse*. Many have not, and will not, disclose if their swag has RFID. IBM has already patented means of tracking consumers both in and out of stores. BellSouth, the Texas phone company, has devised a means of scanning trash to determine how consumers use disposable goods. Others are working on alternate uses, such as RFID ink that tracks the location of a document, and badge systems to identify employees.

There is currently no law regulating the use of RFID. There is, however, a



new book on the subject. *Spychips*, by Katherine Albrecht and Liz McIntyre details how the powers that be plan to track everybody. It is a grim prediction of the neigh-inevitable Orwellian society. The authors also plan a revision of the book, detailing why Christians should be concerned about RFID and its potential for "Mark of the Beast" status. Could the Christian Right be on course to side with the "evil" ACUL? Stranger things have happened.

Imagine this scenario: you are an underprivileged member of society, living on a severely limited budget. Since second-hand material goods are the most viable option to you, a slightly worn jacket at a thrift store finds its way into your closet. A few days later, wearing the jacket in public, cadre of law enforcement officials close in and pin you to the ground. An hour later you sit in a cell, waiting for DNA results to return from a crime lab. It turns out the previous owner of your jacket killed a child, but the authorities, well intentioned as they may be, nabbed you by pinpointing the RFID signal coming off your clothes. By the time your DNA is analyzed and verified, a week has passed. Finally emerging from the cell, your entire life has been altered by the assumption that you may have been a child murderer.

Or worse! Imagine an electronic marauder armed with a \$20 RFID reader, ganking consumer info on the low. Walking past you on the street, a simple press of a concealed button would si-

lently nab RFID numbers from every chip within a broadcast radius. That hacker could then easily uncover, or even legitimately buy, your personal information from companies that associate RFID's with consumer data. If you thought the corporations knew a lot about you already, just wait until the RFID flood gates are opened.

Oh wait, they already have been. Dead bodies found in the wake of Hurricane Katrina now have implanted RFID chips for easy identification. At least we'll know which mass grave they were buried in.

*"Paranoia strikes deep
Into your life it will creep
It starts when you're always afraid
Step outta line, the man come and take you away*

We better stop, hey, what's that sound,

Everybody look what's goin' down"

Citizens not looking forward to the age of spychips have few options. For one, if you want to ensure that an RFID chip has been disabled, the only way to be certain is to microwave the item. Since these chips can be as small as, or smaller than, a flake of pepper, most of the time you cannot detect their presence. The only other option is to create a *transient electromagnetic device*, such as an explosively pumped flux compression generator, which delivers a single, devastating electromagnetic pulse that disables these chips and other electronic equipment within the pulse radius. On the downside, the gov-

GUEST COMMENTARY

ernment considers devices like this to be objects of cyber warfare, and likely illegal. Turn off the spychip and you'll get popped by the man!

Welcome to the REAL dawn of the information age. If you think supermarket membership cards are annoying, just wait until personalized advertising, a la *Minority Report*, shows up at Macy's. It is coming, much sooner than you think. Call it whatever you want; this technology is one beast that needs to be corralled.

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Iraqi Insurgency: Terrorism or Outrage?

By KARL W.B. SCHWARZ
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

I cannot say for you, but if the Iraqis invaded the United States and started privatizing the assets of my home state, literally stealing what is the economic backbone of my state and my nation, I think I would be inclined to pick up a gun and be an "insurgent."

You see, there is a big difference in a Patriot standing up for his nation, and a "terrorist insurgent" when the nation has been invaded by a trespasser, a thief. The more I look at what Bush-Cheney are up to, the more I am coming to the conclusion that most of the Iraqi insurgency is a legitimate opposition to our occupation of their nation and systematic theft of their national assets by deceit and subterfuge. I do not think it is the presence of our military that is the problem. I think it is the robber barons of this nation, what I call Financial Terrorists that are carving up Iraq like they carve us up that are driving the insurgency.

The Iraqis are quite glad to be rid of Saddam, but the untold part of that story is that the United States is viewed as more despicable than Saddam. What a legacy we are leaving behind in a nation we purportedly freed from oppression and offered them freedom and democracy. The Iraqis know quite well what a lie that is.

Now, before you wig out on that statement, understand that I am a very Conservative Republican, a devout Christian, I am not an anti-war person in the least bit, but I have very clear [black and white clear] principles on the proper use of our military. Additionally, I demand truth from our elected leaders and I cannot remember the last time I have seen the truth from George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, or George W. Bush.

My son spent a year in Iraq attached to 1st Calvary Division and saw it all up close and personal. He made many friends in the Iraqi people and listened, key thought — listened, to what the Iraqis had to say about what Bush and his thugs were really doing to Iraq and its valuable assets.

The power grid and electrical generation stations are being privatized into the hands of Bush backers, as is the oil, the natural gas, the water, and just about anything else where American companies that back Bush see "gold in them thar deserts." More than a few Israeli companies have moved in to set up shop, too, now that the doors have been literally blown wide open with use of American military firepower.

Are you aware of Israeli firms that are setting up shop in Iraq? With the hatred towards Israel, what role do you think that lunacy would produce in a nation that does not like Israel at all? The only reason Is-

rael is there is because we are there and think we can change 1,000 to 2,000 years of seething hatred with the wave of a Bush or Rumsfeld wand.



Karl W.B. Schwarz

GUEST COMMENTARY

I see many lies coming out of our government, no truth. It does not matter how Bush — Cheney spin it, thievery is still thievery and it really angers people.

People resent being robbed and plundered. You would, so put yourselves into the shoes of others and look at things from both sides before making up your mind. We are not hated for our freedoms; we are passionately hated for the policies of our government and the wealthy elite that pull the strings in Washington, D.C.

Aiding and abetting theft of property is not one of those proper uses of our military in my mind. We have done it in Afghanistan in the military forced removal of the Taliban and Bidas Corporation of Argentina to get control of a pipeline that is necessary to make the landlocked Caspian Basin un-land-locked \$10 trillion oil deal and about \$3 trillion in natural gas, and we are now doing it in Iraq on a national basis.

In a little reported event, President Bush appointed *Tom Foley of Connecticut as the Privatization Czar of Iraq* and although most Americans have not followed that trail as I have, and our media has completely kept this quiet, our President is privatizing the Iraqi power, oil, gas, water and other national assets of Iraq straight into the hands of his wealthy elite campaign backers. It is — in a word — a despicable and systematic act of theft [grand larceny] from the Iraqis.

From the linked Tom Foley article announcing this appointment of a "Chief Thief" that is loyal to the Bush Lies:

"Thomas Foley, 51, who said he befriended Bush in 1974 when they both attended Harvard, will report directly to the top U.S. administrator in Iraq, Paul Bremer, the GREENWICH TIME reported.

Foley is chairman and founder of the NTC Group, a private equity investment company. He was chairman of Bush's Connecticut campaign finance committee in 2000, after raising more than \$100,000 for his college friend.

Foley plans to leave for Iraq early next week and stay in Baghdad for nine months. He was appointed to the post last week during a visit with the president in Washington.

He will be in charge of 200 state-owned enterprises, including mining, chemical, cement and tobacco companies. Oil production and two state-owned banks are the only industries that will not be under his supervision, he said."

One has to dig deep into the Bush — Cheney web of lies to even begin to unravel what is really going on and shine the light of truth on their actions.

If You Want To Pay Costly, Infinite Tolls On Texas Roadways, Then Vote FOR Props. 1 & 9

By PETER STERN
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Despite the fact that most Texans don't want toll roads, the "brain-child" of Gov. Rick Perry, alias, "The Trans-Texas Toll Corridor" is being pushed onto Texas families swiftly and quietly via the next election's Propositions 1 & 9. Unless voters get out there and vote-down these two propositions, Perry's "dream" will become the "nightmare" of our children's children — generations of future Texans will pay endless toll taxes.

Proposition 1 is a proposed constitutional amendment on the Nov. 8 ballot that would establish a fund through which taxpayers would help pay for relocating freight rail lines from congested urban areas. Hailed by the governor and proponents as a needed safety measure and for easing traffic congestion in and around Texas cities, in truth it is a special interest power-play to add new taxes under a GOP platform of "No New Taxes." In addition, Proposition 1 includes no predefined funding and doesn't specify how much should be set aside for the effort. If voters approve the amendment, the legislature would have to provide initial funding in 2007. The rail proposition ties into *The Trans-Texas Corridor* plan, Perry's long-range proposal for a "dedicated transportation network" stretching across Texas.

Perry's agreements with the railroads, however, didn't say how the relocations, which could cost untold millions of dollars, would be paid for, except that the agreement with Union Pacific ruled out additional taxes or fees on the railroad industry. Railroad companies are known wealthy special interest contributors to Perry's campaign efforts. **Proposition 1 is NOT in the best interests of most Texas families.**

Proposition 9 actually was proposed and approved during the previous legislative session that authorized the legislature to increase the term for board members of a Regional Mobility Authority from two years to six years. The Texas Supreme Court recently declared the approved legislation unconstitutional; consequently, Proposition 9 is really "an end around run" by special interests to ensure a pro-toll longer term membership on RMA's.

Instead of toll taxing Texans, gasoline taxes are supposed to go into a fund used for building and maintain-

GUEST COMMENTARY

ing our roadways. For the past decade the Texas gasoline tax has been frozen at the same rate. In addition, a large part of the collected gas taxes is diverted to higher education institutions. The governor and legislators have ensured that the large percentage of gas taxes channels to higher education institutions despite the fact that recent legislation was approved to deregulate tuition costs of higher education. By the way,



Peter Stern

as soon as deregulation became law, tuition costs have continued to increase, yet the large chunk of collected gasoline taxes still is provided to higher education.

Furthermore, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is "sitting on" taxes already paid by Texans. Instead of building, maintaining and improving roadways with those dollars, TxDOT has been ordered by the governor to find alternate "creative approaches" to develop the financing for new roadways, namely, Perry's desire for Texas Toll Corridors. TxDOT is hoping that the ongoing deterioration of well-traveled roads along with increasing traffic congestion will push most Texans to agree to toll roads. **Proposition 9 is NOT in the best interests of most Texas families.**

In conclusion, regarding Propositions 1 & 9, the governor and pro-toll advocates are hoping and trusting for a small voter turnout and that the majority of voters on Nov. 8 will not see the "veiled back-door" propositions for what they are — a massive push by special interests to bolster a lock-in on toll roads designed to push-through additional future toll road legislation. Consequently, it is imperative that Texans recognize the truth and vote-down Propositions 1 & 9 with a vengeance unless they want infinite open-ended toll road taxes for our children's children.

Peter Stern, of Driftwood, Texas, grew up in New York City and holds three post-graduate degrees in English and Writing (New York University), Administration & Supervision (Queens College), and Computer Science (Nassau College). He is a Disabled Vietnam-era Veteran. His job experience highlights 15 years in Education as a university professor, school administrator, and public school teacher; 10 years in the computer field as Director of Information Services.

Civil Rights Pioneer Vivian Malone Jones Dies

ATLANTA — Civil rights pioneer Vivian Malone Jones, 63, died last Thursday at Atlanta Medical Center.

Jones, one of two black students to enroll at the University of Alabama, be-

come the first black to graduate from the school.

Their action led to George Wallace's infamous "stand in the schoolhouse door" in 1963.

Jones graduated in 1965.

Who Is Harriet Miers?

Most of us know who Harriet Miers is. She's the woman President Bush wants to be the next Supreme Court Justice. But how many of us know who she really is?

She's never been a judge, and many people worry about this. How can we tell where she stands on issues? How can we know what kind of judicial reasoning she will use? Is she a maverick or does she like to be part of a consensus? If the other judges order bagels, will she order a donut?

Like the President, I believe there are other ways of telling about a potential Justice than looking at a judicial record. The most logical thing is that if people aren't sure about her stance on the issues, just ask her.

When she's called before the Senate Committee, all the Senators have to do is ask her how she feels about Roe Vs. Wade, or the Separation of Church and...Oops! I forgot. When potential Justices are asked how they stand on the issues, they don't answer the question. Forget the direct questioning approach.

Let's look at her background. She used to be a Democrat, then she switched and became a Republican. In fact, she gave money to Al Gore's 1988 Presidential campaign. Either her switching parties demonstrates a lack of rigidity and that she's not an ideologue, or it says she's wishy-washy.

She was the head of a law firm that represented such clients as Microsoft, the Walt Disney Company, and SunGard Data Systems, Inc. So, she might be pro-business. On the other hand, she was President of the Texas Bar Association, so she may be pro-trial lawyer.

Some conservatives and some liberals oppose her nomination. Either this is a good sign, meaning that she doesn't have a blind allegiance to any ideology, or it means she's so bad that neither side likes her.

Her personal biography says that she is "very close to her family." That's nice. But does it really tell us how she feels about the legal issues of the day?

So, how can we find out what Harriet Miers is really like and what kind of Justice she will be? Perhaps to learn what makes Harriet Miers tick, we have to go outside traditional areas of inquiry. Some might suggest numerology. I think you add up the number of letters in her name, then add them together, and that's supposed to mean something. But that sounds a little frivolous for something evaluating a possible



Modern Times
By
Lloyd
Garver

Supreme Court Justice.

So, let's turn to astrology. It's not anything I believe in, but millions of people do. And there's a tradition of astrology in politics as anyone who remembers the Reagan administration knows.

Born Aug. 10, 1945, Ms. Miers is a Leo. According to the astrology site that I went to, Leos are "generous and warm-hearted, creative and enthusiastic, broad-minded and expansive as well as faithful and loving." Sounds pretty nice, but it still doesn't tell us what kind of Justice she'd be. However, the possible negative qualities of a Leo are "pompous and patronizing, bossy, dogmatic, and intolerant." Uh-oh.

But don't despair. When I ran her exact birth date on another astrology site, I came up with some very positive things: "You need to put your personal stamp on whatever you do." That seems okay for a Supreme Court Justice. And finally, "You tend to be very good at what you do and critical of others' work if it does not meet your high standards." That might work for a Justice.

Another way to get some insight into Ms. Miers might be to look at some other Leos. Perhaps her character is similar to theirs. Other Leos include Monica Lewinsky, Martha Stewart, Loni Anderson, and Hulk Hogan. Oh yes, and Bill Clinton.

I guess it boils down to we really don't know that much about Ms. Miers. I realize that using astrology to try to find out about her is absurd. But is it any more absurd than simply taking the word of the politicians pushing for her to be the next Justice?

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

It's Not Easy Being A 'Liberal' ©

By L.B. PARR
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Ever since Ann Richards lost the race for governor to George W. Bush, being a Democrat in the state of Texas hasn't been easy. Thanks to that cataclysmic snafu in history, Texas has been producing Republicans at a prodigious rate. They're everywhere!

These aren't your run-of-the-mill Reaganite Republicans either. These Republicans are the result of Newt Gingrich's Extreme Makeover - G.O.P. Edition. When Newt snagged the Christian-right, he gave his party the goose that lays golden eggs.

That brilliant move completely changed the public perception of the Republican Party. It transformed itself overnight into the perceived defenders of people of faith (well, as long as they are of the Christian faith) and the guardians of moral and family values. Now, it is whither thou Christian-right and their millions of votes and millions of dollars goeth, so shall George and his gang followeth!

When the President boldly pronounced to the world if you aren't with us, you're against us; the ultra-conservatives adopted those words as their mantra. They applied them to every facet of every issue, not just the war on terror that Bush was referring to. For the Bushies, there are no shades of gray. They are right, you are wrong. The end. Period.

Because I dare to oppose President Bush's agenda on, well, just about everything, I am immediately labeled by conservatives as an obstructionist and against people of faith. The Bush Patrol is determined to put an end to my tree-hugging, pro-choice, ACLU card-carrying, caribou-loving degenerate way of life. All these years I have been proudly proclaiming to one and all that I am a down-to-my-piggy toes Democrat with nary a thought that I would be considered by some as an unpatriotic, murderous, heathen with the morals of an alley cat!

Whatever happened to "judge not, lest ye be judged"? Was there a memo from on high I missed that declared all Republicans have a free pass to heaven and all Democrats are spawns of the devil? Where did this sense of entitlement among Republicans concerning moral and spiritual superiority come from? Better yet, why are we Democrats letting them get away with it?

It is way past time for the Democratic Party to eat their Wheaties and come out fighting. We need to show Americans that once you wipe the lipstick off that pig, the Republican Party is not the warm & fuzzy, we-love-Bubba Party it

GUEST COMMENTARY

professes to be. The G.O.P is, and always will be, the party that worships at the Altar of Corporate USA and the almighty corporate dollar.

Christian conservatives have been brainwashed into believing that "liberals" are out to destroy all that they hold sacred and force them to live in a godless, toga-party type society. Democrats aren't against religion and people of faith; we just believe that one's spiritual preference is a private matter and should be free of government oversight. It's fine with us if people want their kid to learn about intelligent design (the theory which states that life is too complicated to have developed through evolution alone and that a higher power must be involved). Just go talk to the Sunday school teacher, not the public school teacher.

Mr Bush and his conservative crusaders need to think twice about their campaign to blur the line of separation between church and state. What they need to remember is that Christianity is not the only religion and that Christians aren't the only ones who pay taxes and vote. If the Morals Police want Christian ideologies and icons in public schools and public areas, they had better be prepared to give equal time and space to other religions as well, Christian or not, Hindus, Moslems, Buddhists and Wiccans - it could get downright crowded on the courthouse lawn!

I know this sounds so Polyanna-ish, but instead of spending so much time and effort stressing the difference between the parties concerning their religious ideologies, we should try celebrating the commonalities. In the aftermath of the devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the unbelievable hardships they caused and with the sacrifices being made every day by our troops in Iraq and Pakistan and their families, wouldn't it be nice if the Republicans and the Democrats could sit down together and, in the true spirit of compromise, come up with solutions to our nation's problems? Problems that affect all of us, regardless of our religious beliefs. It was a leader from another era, a leader who took a lot of flak for being a Roman Catholic, who reminded us of the interlocking mutuality of our problems and of our need to cooperate to solve them. In the last year of his short life, John F. Kennedy observed, "For in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal."

George W. Bush, for heaven's sake, listen!



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Ad-Liberal

I'm a commercial aficionado, a connoisseur of mass-marketing legerdemain and enchantment.

I love commercials. Television commercials, radio commercials... even certain print ads.

I'm hooked on them.

Commercials are an art form unto themselves; when properly conceived and carried out they can be as aesthetically pleasing as a painting by Monet, as moving as a Beethoven symphony. Or side-splittingly funny enough to rival a Marx Brothers movie.

Yeah, commercials can be a pain in the hindquarters, but without them there ain't no free television shows, nor music on the radio, nor sports on neither.

But they sure beat the alternative – I spent three years in Germany before the advent of satellite dish receivers, when Die Stadt controlled each and every channel (all three of 'em), and payment of the "viewing tax" was a requirement. For this mandatory tariff you got to revel in soccer; news; talk (mostly political); more soccer; cop shows with lots of discussions about crime but no depictions thereof; more news and talk; badly-dubbed episodes of "Columbo" and "Kung Fu"; still more soccer...

And this could all be enjoyed from 6 until 10:30 or so each evening, Monday thru Friday: 3 to 11 on weekends.

Wow!!

At that, many Germans considered there was far too much watching of television going on.

Germans, and Europeans in general, never got to realize as did we North Americans that a good commercial is to be appreciated, savored like a fine wine.

Okay, so I have a peculiar personal affinity for advertising; after all, I used to write and produce commercials, plus sell and design print ads.

Still, in addition to not being able to have a pizza delivered right to their front door, enjoy Major League Baseball, or go out in the middle of the night for a sackful of White Castles, anyone who's been away from the North American continent over an extended period of time will actually miss *commercials*.

They are as ingrained into our psyches as coffee in the morning, the Sunday funnies, and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Even my Masters Thesis was titled, "Intentions and Perceptions in Children's Television Commercials." (Although a small sampling, I found that virtually across the board children aged 10-11 were too savvy to buy into the claims of commercials aimed at children 10-11 years of age.)

I've always been fascinated by commercials. It truly is artistry to take a message, and in 30 or 60 seconds on the nose keep it interesting for the listener or viewer while making the client (advertiser) happy.

The really great commercials are, like DaVinci's *Mona Lisa*, memorable.

Who can forget the guy that couldn't sleep, rolling in bed and repeating, "I don't believe I ate the whole thing..."

Then his wife's sarcastic, "No, Ralph, I ate it."

Of course, he took two Alka-Seltzer tablets.

What would any Holiday Season have



Out Of The Blue

By
Jerry
Tenuto

been without those glistening Kodak commercials showing the perfect Christmas tree, a box marked "Open Me First" atop the huge stack of presents. We all knew that one was the latest model of Kodak camera, and unwrapping it would guarantee the most wonderfully ideal Merry Christmas morning any family could ever want or have.

Cleverly constructed 30-second tearjerkers, abetted by the perfect music.

To this day, even in an era of digital photography, we think of precious times as "Kodak moments."

And jingles! One of my good buddies and I used to drive our German friends crazy by singing:

"Have aaaa-nother Nutter Butter peanut butter sandwich cookie!"

They had absolutely no concept of what we were singing.

Today's commercials don't have the same fun quotient, lasting appeal, or warmth. But then, what does? We've been programmed to accept that most of what's being sold has built-in obsolescence.

For example, one very economically-produced commercial shows a chicken standing all alone. An off-camera voice is speaking nicely to it, as if it's a dog. Several items, such as a rubber ball, juggling clubs, and office papers are tossed toward the chicken accompanied by commands. It just stands there and clucks.

Eventually, the voice says, "All a chicken is good for... is to eat."

The commercial is for Hardee's Chicken Club sandwich, an item that may or may not be temporarily on their menu.

Now, in all likelihood I'm not going to eat one of the aforementioned sandwiches (no offense to Hardee's), but I find the commercial not without humorous value.

Another spot features complex sets, special effects and a cast of several. Two physics geeks are debating the uses of different abbreviations in sandwich ads, while concurrently averting a meltdown at the nuclear plant where they work.

Not only are we viewers astounded at their ability to multi-task with such alacrity, we expect a fast food plug.

It never comes – the advertiser is Sprint.

On the sweet and sappy side, Prego sauces like to show kids and old folks, supposedly Italians, happy families in bucolic settings sitting down to big meals – while the warm and fuzzy music warms the cockles of the viewer's heart.

Nice sentiment, but it's not making me run out and buy a jar of their sauce. (I don't know any real Italian who would.)

One commercial style depends upon aggravation. We all know that most spots intended to sell cars or trucks, whether on the national or local level, will be loud, brash and obnoxious. As will those for furniture stores. They're meant to appeal to the lowest common

denominator among the audience, employing the "sucker" factor.

Vehicle and furniture salespeople often have a very low opinion of the buying public.

Another type of aggravating commercial is exemplified by certain Excedrin ads. These open with a close-up of the actor/actress who rambles on about getting headaches all the time; as he drones on and on the camera keeps moving in till the frame becomes an extreme close-up. If you actually watch the spot while listening to the actor's whining, I promise you'll have a headache by the time its 30 seconds have passed.

I couldn't imagine this one on a big screen, 50" high-definition television.

Generally speaking, though, the reaction to most commercials, even for a student and lover like me, is little more than, "Ogodisthiscommercialbreakevergonnaend?"

What about commercials that are blatantly offensive, Jerry?

I know you've seen or heard a few of them.

Hell! I'm sure that I've written some... occasionally on purpose.

Take the perfectly-shaped woman selling hardcore diet pills at \$150 a bottle to viewers who are "morbidly obese."

Or the twenty-something, multimillion-dollar actress whose career depends upon the fact that she has perfect skin and hair – and a legion of caretakers therewith 24/7 – being paid more millions to sell miracle make-up and hair care products.

How about those Bowflex models? Don't they seem to be just a scoshe genetically-enhanced?

Pushing the envelope is fine, but every now and then some tyro Yuppie ad executive crosses the line and goes beyond the pale. (Remember the JCPenney ad that was pulled a few years ago because it featured a mother allowing her obviously below consent age daughter to go out dressed like a streetwalker?)

Currently airing nationally, there's one commercial that I'm really pissed off about – as a writer, ad producer, veteran, and American.

(Don't give me that First Amendment stuff. I love it and have studied it; however, some years back the Supremes decided that the standard for Freedom of Expression in advertising is different than that of regular, everyday real life.)

It opens up with a trash collector in a nice suburban cul-de-sac. Playing on the soundtrack is "The Colonel Bogie March" from the great motion picture, *THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI*. Suddenly, through the magic of television the guy's garbage truck takes off all on its own.

Okay, fantasy is good.

Then, we see a Nissan pick-up truck pulling a boat trailer. Trucks of all shapes and sizes are pulling away, driverless, from parking spaces as a graphic appears onscreen: "Trucks of America Unite."

The commercial ends with the Nissan leading an endless convoy of trucks down the road to the tune of "Col. Bogie."

Does anyone remember *THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI*? What about the significance of "The Colonel Bogie March?"

Let me refresh some memories, or perhaps inform the uninitiated: *BRIDGE* is a classic movie, based on true incidents, of the horrendous living condi-

tions and atrocities forced upon British, Canadian and American POWs by the Japanese in World War II Burma. The prisoners, contrary to the Geneva Convention, were subjected to the grueling task of building a bridge for use by the Japanese military.

"The Colonel Bogie March" was the cadence tune the POWs whistled as they marched to and from the deathly slavery of bridge building.

Considering the tune's meaning and source, its utilization in any commercial should have been considered very gingerly.

To use it while American and British troops are engaged in warfare on dual fronts, not all that distant from Burma, is rather callous.

For a Japanese automaker to use this tune, in a commercial aimed at hard-working Americans and Canadians, is an outrage!

Nissan, which was around early enough to have played a role in fighting Allied troops during WWII, has a lot of damned gall using a song that evokes memories of such atrocities.

This particular slap in the face carries even more sting when one considers the company has been managed for some 10 years by French automaker Renault, and these trucks are built in Smyrna, Tennessee.

I can see the ad consultant giving his presentation in a conference room filled with French and Japanese executives – and they're all laughing their asses off.

The biggest affront is the garbage man being the only person visible in the ad, symbolic of the lowest rung in working society's ladder, and an expression of utter disdain for Americans.

(PLEASE don't take me wrong... I am in no way disparaging the Reclamation and Recycle Specialist, nor his or her industry. I'm pissed off at their depiction.)

As a young trooper stationed in South Korea, my Korean girlfriend and I went to see *TORA! TORA! TORA!* at an off base theatre. During the attack on Pearl Harbor the predominantly Korean audience was laughing, as though we were watching *The Three Stooges*.

Afterward, I asked her why they had laughed. She said it was because Americans were stupid and lazy. All we wanted to do was get drunk, smoke "happy smoke" and cavort with "business women."

That's why the Japanese were able to bomb the snot out of us on December 7th, 1941.

She also told me that the Japanese had won the war.

I asked how she could say that.

Her response was that I should wait and see.

That was Summer, 1971.

From the day of my arrival I respected the Koreans, for their warmth and friendship, their centuries old culture, the world's oldest written language, their determination and industriousness, their wisdom.

Since that day, I have elevated my level of respect for the Korean people to a lofty new height.

As we all know, my young Korean friend was painfully correct.

And the more it runs, the more foul that commercial stinks!

The other day I watched *A FACE IN THE CROWD* (Andy Griffith, 1958). Written by Budd Schulberg and directed by Elia Kazan, it was the first movie to warn us

Continued On Next Page

• **TENUTO....AD-LIBERAL** ... Continued From Previous Page

about the power of television, the danger of marketing, entertainment and political ideology being manipulated to meld together into one blurred picture. Much as Herr Karl Rove has done during his takeover of the U.S.

This morning, CNN teased an upcoming "teleconference" between Fearless Leader George W. Bush and actual living, breathing soldiers in Iraq.

I was compelled to watch.

This waste of taxpayer money might have worked if it hadn't been done in such an amateurish fashion.

First, there were but 10 American soldiers seated on a bleacher-type platform in Tikrit. From what I could tell, the lowest ranking person was a Master Sergeant. This (obligatory) woman was there apparently because she had been present in New York City when Bush #43 visited its Rainbow Division.

The other nine participants all seemed to be officers - hardly the "soldiers" as advertised.

There was a guest Iraqi Sgt. Maj. whose sole contribution was, "I like you" to Bush #43.

Despite having a script directly under his nose on the podium, Fearless Leader was exceptionally nervous and tongue-tied during his opening comments; he was extremely uncomfortable the entire 10 minutes, actually.

He began with the standard talking points about how what the military is doing there will bring peace and democracy to the Middle East; they're keeping America safe; how proud we all are; America's never going to back down as long as he's Commander in Chief; and blah-blah-blah.

He asked several softball questions,

and received obviously scripted responses.

According to these handpicked, exceedingly loyal officers, everything is a big "go" with the Iraqi Army; they assured Bush #43 and America that the upcoming Constitutional Election will come off just swimmingly.

Funny how Bush #43 only engages in crap like this when there's nobody available to watch between pre-school and retirement ages.

This entire exercise was so ostentatious in its phoniness, only a moron or true believer would have bought the bullshit. It was even wretchedly obvious that Tikrit was chosen for its political value, as Bush #43 forced in several clumsily dropped snide remarks about it being "Saddam's ol' stompin' grounds."

The inimitable stamp of RoveCo was all over this production, with participants that were not at all convincing.

The most frightening part of all was that afterward, the four wimps who get paid by CNN to be "reporters" covering this convoluted mess gushed about how it was such a wonderful event. Not one of them had enough backbone to call it what it was - pig slop.

Horse dung.

One big ol' fat Turd Blossom!

To think, a screenwriter and movie director, scarred in the Senator Joseph "Tail-Gunner Joe" McCarthy Communist Witch Hunts of the late 1940s, nearly blacklisted by the Hollywood establishment, predicted this kind of lackadaisical abuse of the system from politicians and willingly compliant broadcast news people 45 years ago.

It's times like these when we shall truly miss Peter Jennings.

Let's Expand Equal Rights, Not Vote To Limit Them

By **VIVIAN GREENTREE**
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Last Sunday at church my friends Beverly and Jennifer had a re-commitment ceremony to celebrate their one-year anniversary. They reread old vows and renewed old pledges. And best of all, their church family was there to be a witness to it.

With the impending November vote that proposes a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage in Texas, my friends Beverly and Jennifer spring to the foreground of the debate for me. After all, these are two people, a family, that are affected by such bigotry every day.

I have to laugh (sadly) at one newspaper's summation of the amendment's outcome, "Political prizes and penalties abound for those who are vocal on gay marriage, but the biggest effect could be on Republican Gov. Rick Perry's bid for re-election."

Seriously?

The biggest effect of whether gay marriage is legal or not is going to be on Rick Perry?

I beg to differ.

The biggest, most invasive effect is going to be on the gay and lesbian couples who cannot carry out the mundane details of their lives without the interference and temerity of what would be a socially and morally repugnant law. Rick Perry will still be straight and married after the vote is decided. Either way, he will retain the right to have access to his wife should she be placed under medical supervision and will also be able to include her on his insurance policies. He will certainly continue to be allowed to apply to be a foster or adoptive parent (not that he has done that in the past, but just in case).

My friends Beverly and Jennifer - well, they won't be so lucky.

They will have to prepare for the future like other conscientious gay and lesbian couples do by filling out forms and forms of legal documents that give each other the most basic rights that any heterosexual married couple already has. Oh, they will still not be welcomed in most houses of worship. What is perhaps the most

backwards of this whole gay marriage vote is that if it passes, and gay marriage is made illegal in Texas - what does that solve?

Does it rank Texas any higher in environmental matters?

Will it do away with unemployment and resolve the educational issues that continually plague this state?

Will it produce anything concrete that its champions can point to and say, "See, we have saved lives and made this state a little better?"

It has been said that in Texas, gay marriage is already illegal and that this amendment is just a smokescreen to take voters' minds off the real problems like healthcare and education.

It has also been hypothesized that, given its strict wording, if this amendment were to pass, it would have sweeping effects on legal protections currently afforded to couples in domestic partnerships and common-law marriages.

These are not the reasons why I would vote against the ban, though. To me, those arguments, while totally valid, miss the major significances that we should be focusing on.

I agree with Rabbi Saulson, president of the Atlanta Rabbinical Association, who believes one's religious beliefs should not restrict another's civil rights, especially when the restriction would have the government intrude into affairs of the church. Furthermore, our constitution, at both the federal and local levels, is for all citizens. These documents, and the spirit behind them, is to safeguard our liberties, not diminish them.

The next amendment to our constitution - federal or state - that our prestigious public servants should be enthused about is one that fundamentally expands "equal rights" to all our nation's citizens - and yes, for all the ambitious GOPers out there, that does include the gay ones.

Vivian Greentree graduated from the University of Georgia with degrees in Political Science and Public Relations. After serving as a Supply Officer in the U.S. Navy for four years, she is currently pursuing her Masters degree.



Vivian Greentree

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LETTERS
TO THE
EDITOR

To The Editor:

Back in the day, I used to do construction. Invariably there would be one guy on the crew who thought himself a comedian. Every time somebody picked up a board that was too short for the task, he would say, "Well, just cut off what you need from one end and put it on the other, then it'll be long enough," and he'd laugh and laugh.

President Bush and much of his administration must have done construction too. Invariably, whenever there's a budget shortfall — usually caused by a poorly conceived piece of legislation, hurricane relief that was too little too late, or the odd invasion — their solution is to whittle benefits from the little end of the stick and paste it onto the wealthy end. And then they laugh and laugh.

The gag is no funnier when they say it than when the guy on my crew did. But inexorably, bit by bit, that's exactly what's taking place, led by the culture that this administration has bred. Medicare Rx benefit costing too much? Don't raise the income threshold; make that worker stay on the job a couple more years. Where to get the \$200B for Katrina relief? Delete even more benefits from veterans, children and Medicare/Medicaid recipients.

I'll sure be glad when George Bush and his cronies stop 'helping America to grow'. This 'growth' is killing us with declining environmental quality, an economy backsliding for all but the highest earners, a Supreme Court soon to be packed with personal friends of this country's worst president, and the rabid righteous right wants schools to teach religion (only their religion, of course) just as though it were science. I think we've had more than enough 'help', thank you very much.

Tim Slack. Celestine, IN

To The Editor:

Your article about the investigation of Agent Orange and Purple being sprayed on Camp Gagetown, New Brunswick, Canada is only partially correct. A lot of American soldiers trained at CFB Gagetown over the years, including the Maine National Guard, so you should investigate this further and publish the information for your military.

I think you're following the "official" version by the Canadian government but they're not telling the whole story! The official version lists only the Agent Orange spraying in 1966 and 1967 by the American military but that's blatant misrepresentation.

As you can see from the attached documents, various chemicals, including Agent Orange, Agent White, and Agent Purple, were sprayed on Camp Gagetown, NB from 1956 to 1984. (There is no information on what has been sprayed from 1985 to the present.) The information was obtained from the Government of Canada's own documents, applied for under Freedom of Information.

My first husband and I lived in Camp Gagetown during the 1960's and our two daughters were born in Fredericton, a short distance from Gagetown. My ex-husband is dying of leukemia. Despite being a life-long non-smoker and only an occasional social drinker, I have lung and liver disease, bladder and bowel disease, plus a host of other problems, including frequent pneumonia and bronchitis. I had three miscarriages, numerous D & Cs, pulmonary embolism when I was 26, and a hysterectomy at 31 because of endometriosis. In my late 30s, I developed

cataracts in both eyes. I'm now 62 but have had many of these problems since I was in my twenties.

With the exception of the embolism, all the other problems I've had can apparently be linked to exposure to Agent Orange. But at least one other woman who lived at Gagetown during the same years we were there died from pulmonary embolism at age 27. So there may be a link to Agent Orange with this disease.

Our oldest daughter, now 43, has health problems that we believe are also linked to Agent Orange. Her doctors are now investigating.

Agent Orange is one of the most toxic substances known to humans and lingers for decades after its use. Our men were crawling through the bush, bringing that contamination home with them, and they were eating the berries and drinking the water. Our children were playing in the sandboxes and we swam in the lakes on the base.

We were all being sprayed with Agent Orange due to 'mist drift'. A November 8, 1967 memo from Eugene M. Locke, deputy US ambassador in Saigon, states that "mist drift" from Agent Orange ranges from negligible drift to distances of up to 10 kilometers or more, depending on weather conditions. After Mount St. Helen's volcano erupted in 1980 in the US, the ash spread all around the world. So no doubt the mist drift was much more far-reaching than was recognized in 1967!

Agent Orange is a mixture of equal parts of two chlorophenoxy herbicides, 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T, both herbicides developed in the 1940s. However, 2,4,5-T can contain a contaminant dioxin, generally known as TCDD, which is formed as an ineradicable impurity during manufacture and which is known as one of the most toxic man-made chemicals. Agent Purple is similar in composition to Agent Orange, but with higher levels of cancer-causing dioxins and is considered at least three times more toxic than Agent Orange.

In an AP article, "Dioxin form most toxic", on December 18, 2004, it states that Ukrainian opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko was poisoned by TCDD, the most harmful known form of dioxin and a key ingredient of the Vietnam-era herbicide Agent Orange. Abraham Brouwer, professor of environmental toxicology at the Free University in Amsterdam, the scientist who conducted tests on the presidential candidate's blood, said the dioxin was pure TCDD, or tetrachlorodibenzoparadiioxin.

In a Dow Chemical of Canada June 24, 1965 confidential memo from V.K. Rowe, Biochemical Research Laboratory, he states, "we had a serious situation in our operating plants because of contamination of 2,4,5-trichlorophenol with impurities, the most active of which is 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzodioxin. This material is exceptionally toxic; it has a tremendous potential for producing chloracne and systemic injury." It would seem that scientists knew how toxic these chemicals were but it certainly didn't stop them either producing or selling them!

In a May 7, 2003 letter from Lane Evans, Ranking Democratic Member, to the Honourable Donald Rumfeld, Secretary, Department of Defense, The Pentagon, he requests "an assessment of the use, testing or storage of Agent Orange, Agent Blue, Agent Purple, Agent White, or other herbicides which contain dioxin, including the locations, amounts and relevant

dates" at various locations in the US and other countries, including Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.

Apparently there is uranium and other unknown ingredients buried at Gagetown as well. CFB Gagetown was placed on the Federal Contaminated Sites list because of its known carcinogens, states Gloria G. Paul in her article, "Hidden Toxins", which appeared in the spring 2001 issue of *Heaven and EARTH*.

At least 18 members of my Canadian and Scottish families have served in the military since the Boer War in 1899. My family, and countless other families, did not sacrifice lives or years of their lives and/or their health so that the Canadian government had the freedom to poison untold numbers of Canadians as well as soldiers from other countries!

Please try and get this information to the American military because all of these men will have been exposed, to some degree, to these poisonous substances. Many may be suffering with health problems, as completely unaware of their exposure as we were until May 15th this year.

If you need more information, I'll help in any way I can. Please contact me at the address above or at <gradfordross@shaw.ca>.

Gail Radford-Ross, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

To The Editor:

George W. Bush has become, to his nation's abject chagrin, Osama Bin Laden's chief of public relations, for not only the entire Islamic World Media, but for the World News Media en toto.

It seems that George is trying to dodge his general overall dismal failures which spotlight his general pervasive incompetence. And the main threadbare Rovian tactic hasn't changed much of late but simply been retread as of George's recent anti-terror speech.

That retread of the administration's tired position now simply and shamelessly lionizes Osama Bin Laden for all of the world to see which presumably elevates old George to the epic position of Archangel Michael fighting Satan in the form of the overfunded thug Osama Bin Laden. George is obviously a legend in his own mind.

But the most ominously dangerous backlash of this Bushian theatre of farce is that he is painting Osama to the entire Islamic World as a fantastic world class hero that in their eyes elevates him to the biblical hero proportional status of God's anointed David taking down Goliath, played by the Great Satan United States. To an ardent Islamic this is heady stuff. And a more wonderful image to recruit an endless river of recruits to come and battle the U.S. and coalition infidel invaders in Iraq could not be imagined by Al Jazeera's biggest Osama fan.

Of course George is a bloody fool and the more outrageous in that he is spilling American and innocent collateral blood to gain a PR political advantage. George W. is playing a reverse Neville Chamberlain and especially in having elevated an international criminal to the status of a thug Gumbah Third Reich Fuhrer. It must be that G.W. he sees himself as a modern Winston Churchill. Fat chance of selling that to a public that is finally wising up now by leaps and bounds.

But there is a darker cloud looming that George is attempting to lead his nation into. The daily bloody images of collateral carnage and daily running Abu Ghraib type humiliations of Iraqis that are not making it to the TV screens of America much, are being plastered in bold type across the TV screens and News Papers of the Mid East and the entire world daily. And defacto censure of American audiences is blinding us to the tsunami that is building against us in world opinion.

Two days ago I beheld on satellite TV

the tragic absurdity of an American Abrams tank firing at suspect insurgents presumed to be hiding in an adobe building. The obvious result was that the round passed right through the structure and went on to kill and maim a large notable number of Iraqi everyday collateral family types. The images were more than disturbing. I myself was startled and outraged, and I am a fairly toughened ground combat veteran. That final scene there in that instance which was but one of a daily litany of bloody serial fiasco was this; a split screen showing a dead limp baby girl toddler with a gaping schrapnel hole in her forehead / and a grim and grime streaked dead eyed face of the American soldier from that tank. Double heart ache for me was not just the dead child among the screaming maimed and other dead, but also that the American soldier looked like my son; and he may have indeed been my son. And in reality they are all our sons and daughters thrust into that tragic mistake of George's, lie motivated, invasion of Iraq.

Clueless George wants to stay the course and win, while he hasn't got the least notion of exactly what winning in Iraq is supposed to look like, and never has had. And we are supposed to trust this administration pack of incompetents, and liars, and worse? I think not.

The question is not just of what America has lost in moral authority and credibility worldwide in Iraq, and also in our dead and maimed soldiers. But what are we bringing home in the maimed hearts and souls of our service people who will come home seeming whole in body but devastated in heart and soul and spirit? We learned well in Vietnam that fighting popular insurgencies are a wasted and wasting losing proposition.

And that darkest of developments will be when we discover that the anti invasion recruits fighting in Iraq against our forces will begin to include ever increasing numbers of non Islamic volunteers from other nations of the world, and even the western world, much as was the complexion of combatants in the Spanish Revolution. Will it have to come to this until we begin to get the clue that George W. Bush ridiculous PR antics are poisoning and damaging America's future in the world by exponents more than any thug terrorists could ever hope to do?

After Spain's commuter train version of 9-11 the Spanish Police Rapid Reponse Anti Terror squads hunted down the terrorists and dispatched them with admirable efficiency. Notably the Spanish authorities did not need to mobilize their military to invade Libya to get the job done. And if we had to invade a threatening nation why haven't we invaded the home of all of the 9-11 NYC terrorist hijackers, Saudi Arabia. Oh I forgot, the Saudi and Bin Laden Wahabis are the George Bush Family friends and business partners from way back, my mistake.

Gabe Hirsch-Trenton, N.J.

To The Editor:

Research Funding – Little or None for Lung Cancer

About 50% of new lung cancer patients are former smokers. So, if you smoke or are an ex-smoker you need to know that the survival rate for lung cancer has not increased much in the last 30 years. It is still 10-15 percent. In contrast, there has been enormous research and progress for breast cancer victims. The current survival for breast cancers is around 88 percent. There are two primary reasons for the lack of research and progress on lung cancers; no commitment and no funding.

Even though lung cancer takes more American lives each year than breast, prostate, colon, liver, kidney and pancreas cancers combined; congressional leaders,

Continued On Next Page

MAILBAG ICONOCLAST LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued From Previous Page

especially Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX) and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), have done their best to push cancer research funding focus elsewhere. Why do you think these two consistently “push off” on the funding of lung cancer research? The answer is simple.

If lung cancer was to get the attention it deserves, so would tobacco. Both of these corporate congressmen are big tobacco supporters. They continually fight for the right of the “poor tobacco farmers” to raise a crop that kills 400,000 Americans and costs \$100 billion in medical costs per year. But why would they consistently back tobacco when Texas is not a tobacco growing state? Again, the answer is simple.

Most career politicians know that if you, at least, do not vote against tobacco, your chance of re-election is multiplied many times over. The tobacco industries own most U.S. food industries (re: RJR-Nabisco, Kraft/Phillip-Morris, etc). Supporting tobacco gets you a ton of donations and more campaign money means more votes. Want to stop this trend, lower medical costs and get a start on winning the fabled “War on Cancer”? The solution is simple.

Don't vote for Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX) or Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX).

The solution to ending big tobacco's hold on American health and our health care system is just that simple.

Leonard D. Jensen, Fort Worth, Texas
Dear Editor;

Boston University officials admitted that the workers handling the tularemia vaccine did not follow safety procedures. They removed the principal investigator, Dr. Peter A. Rice, from his post as chief of infectious diseases but he's still hanging around looking for a handout. Rice was supposed to be the one training workers for a new high-security laboratory that will work with much more lethal creatures — right in Boston.

The tularemia vaccine researchers thought they were working with a harmless “vaccine strain” of the Francisella tularensis bacterium but was really a manufactured mutant that was combined with a dangerous bacteria.

Dr. Thomas J. Moore, acting provost of the university's medical campus did not report anything to state health authorities until Nov. 9 even though infection was confirmed on October 29, a delay he said he could not explain. But he defended the decision not to tell the public.

“I feel comfortable about the decision not to make a public announcement because there wasn't a public risk, since tularemia can't be passed from person to person.” Dr. Moore said. The only problem with that statement is it wasn't tularemia but a mutant that had infected the workers.

It is my opinion that Dr. Thomas J. Moore is an incompetent who has placed not only the campus of Boston University at risk but the entire city of Boston and indeed the United States. His immediate resignation would be welcomed and his retirement is recommended.

He obviously demonstrates no concept whatsoever of the imminent dangers posed by microbial, viral and recombinant work.

Thank you

Alfred Brock, Canton MI

To The Editor:

President G.W. Bush's war on terror is comparable to fighting a war on ghosts, which is like trying to find the source of a rumor, which has been made comparable to goosing a ghost. G.W. is goosing us and we are not paying attention, we are acting like a bunch of fools, pretending we do not know we are getting/being goosed or that we do not feel the goose.

We should not have been in Iraq and we are ashamed to admit it. We need to convert whatever is going on in Iraq back to a war, get it on, and get it over with.

We look silly with our marines or soldiers picking off an insurgent here or an insurgent there and they and the Iraq citizens getting bombed by the numbers. If we are not capable of an all out war we need to send in Colonel North's mercenaries and clean out and clean up that insurgency mess.

We have spent enough time effort, money and American and Iraqi lives there. We must get over it and provide the Iraqi the life we promised them. A Viet Nam nor a cold war is out of the question, we are not talking about anything as near of a problem or of a

disaster. We are talking about the size of California with more open space in Iraq so it should be much simpler to clean up. Let's get it on.

Louis (Low) Freitag, Carbondale, IL
To The Editor:

Follow the law as shown here and you can get him for not only obstruction, but possibly Jury Tampering, as a reward for running non-stop media ads in the Travis County Jury district.

<<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0510/S00166.htm>>

His life story has been a sad, pitiful disgrace for a man.

<<http://www.buzzflash.com/analysis/05/03/ana05006.html>>

Tom Delay is a disgrace to Texas. We just want to move him out of here. He doesn't represent anybody but thugs and crooks.

Dismiss the subpoena and consider filing Jury tampering charges in the District he's running advertisements non-stop.

He has no shame.

Roger Rancourt, Dallas

To The Editor:

Yea, it's going to be a beautiful Fall this year, but hittin' bottom for Rove & Libby will likely be a rude awakening. I don't know about what the conditions are in like Club Fed these days, but maybe they need to ask Dr. Dobson what the Lord thinks about back-door intimacy issues. Abu Ghraib, Abu Ghraib, Abu Ghraib & Guantanamo, Guantanamo, Guantanamo; I guess what goes around really does come back around! I wonder how many lies old Rummy would tell if he got called up in front of judge Fitzgerald? Da ya think that old Gen. Jeffrey Miller was in on the CIA leak scam too? That would be just too poetic.

Now Judge Fitzgerald is one ole' boy that ya really don't want to be fibbin to; right Karl? And right Scooter? And George; remember when Langtry Texas had ole' Judge Roy Bean? Oh yea; he was before yer time. But somethin's tellin me that you just might get lucky and feel some of the old 'Bean Heat' in front of Judge Fitzgerald's questioning. That's if ya've got the guts. But you can get Dick to hold

yer hand; but he might be wantin to stay clear of Judge Fitz his own self. I guess you say old Club Fed is exactly a retirement resort; huh Dick?

But seriously folks, I saw on the satellite 'Military Channel' the other day how the Dept. of the Navy says that they can dispatch a full Naval task force with a full complement of Marines and Aircraft etc. at a moment's notice and be across the Atlantic ocean and literally be hitting the beaches in 4 & 1/2 days. That's really impressive.

Yet George W. Bush somehow can't get a few Chinooks with a few pallets of food & water with a small complement of per-

sonnel to get to New Orleans within more than a full week after Katrina.

Is that sorry or what?

I noticed that many more than a few Chinooks and relief aid personel got over to Pakistan from Afghanistan within about 3 & 1/2 days to help after their big quake. Not bad, and really good for our sagging image over in that area!

But mostly Black Americans down in the Big Easy don't likely vote neocon so screw'em; right George?

And How's come nobody has mentioned that little disparity on the News?

How's about it guys & gals?

Ted Olafsen, Santa Teresa, N.M.

Called For Jury Duty? Bring Your Tinfoil Hat.

There comes a time when we, as U.S. citizens, are called to step forward and — just as Americans have been doing for over 200 years — devise a lame excuse to get out of jury duty. This time-honored tradition dates back to the very first jury pool, which John Hancock was excused from after complaining of hand cramps “of the severest nature.” As it stands, I've been excused from jury duty twice, despite expressing my willingness to serve. For as long as it took. Even if it meant contacting the Mother Ship to ask for more time.

So when my latest summons came in the mail, my first instinct was to make a tinfoil hat with the words, Hello: My Name Is Quandar written across the front, which, along with my silver jump suit, can usually get me dismissed in under 30 minutes (depending on how quickly my tinfoil hat clears security). But this time something was different. Maybe because I'm older, maybe because my daughter is studying the U.S. Constitution, or maybe because we're out of tinfoil — whatever the reason — I've decided to dress appropriately, show up for jury duty, and take a chance on being sequestered with 11 others to determine, by way of evidence and testimony, who is at fault when someone burns themselves with a hot pickle slice.

Admittedly, I once found myself driving down the road with an 800-degree onion ring searing my flesh. My wife and I had just left a Burger King drive-through and, after maintaining our composure long enough to exit the parking lot, pounced on our sack of combo meals like a pair of hyenas at a gazelle feed — laughing and eating, laughing and eating.

So, when I ripped into an enormous onion ring and felt the breading fall away into my lap, I had no one but myself to blame when my appetizer became a sizzling, onion-flavored chin strap that turned my frenzied laughing to screaming on I-5. But I never once thought of calling a lawyer in an effort to seek damages against Burger King (and the onion growers of America) for supplying me the means with which to be an idiot.

As we're all aware, this isn't always the case.

I believe stupid lawsuits are the rea-



By
**Ned
Hickson**
Siuslaw News

son a lot of people aren't willing to serve as jurors. For example, a study conducted in California found that of the 4.4 million people summoned for jury duty in Orange County last year, only 9 percent actually participated in the judicial process. Of course, this doesn't include those who became part of that process after being fingerprinted.

In all fairness, I should mention that not every potential juror would've qualified for duty anyway. That's because there are strict guidelines in place for the initial phase of the jury selection process — the first of which is that you actually have to be ALIVE in order to render a verdict. In spite of these stringent guidelines, a report commissioned by the American Tort Reform Association discovered that Los Angeles County not only summoned dead people for jury duty, but also people's pets. While this is certainly shocking, there is some good news in that none of these pets were dead.

While the study was able to determine that absolutely no pets had played a part in the final outcome of any cases, according to the bailiff in one case, “It was only because that little cockpoo couldn't read the darned verdict.”

The only way to increase participation in the jury process is to restore the respectability of the judicial system by eliminating stupid lawsuits that waste everybody's time. How? By requiring the people who file them to serve as jurors.

In the meantime, I'll be on my way to court next week.

Assuming I don't burn myself on a hot pickle.

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

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Annual Christmas Tour Of Homes Set In Crawford

CRAWFORD — The Prairie Chapel School Association will be having its annual Christmas Tour of Homes at Crawford on Dec. 3.

Hours are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased from area businesses in Crawford or

through the Association at P.O. Box 64, Crawford, 76633.

For more information, call 254-722-7332.

2005-2006 Music Series Begins In Waco

WACO — The Unique Music Series, Sunday Sounds, presented by the Waco Symphony Association, Inc., will perform its first concert of the 2005-2006 season, beginning at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 30, at the Carleen Bright Arboretum's Whitehall Center, 9001 Bosque Blvd.

Ludwig von Beethoven's "A Sunday Septet," the first of four performances in the Sunday Sounds series, features woodwinds and strings from the Waco Symphony Orchestra. Sunday Sounds offers audiences the opportunity to visit with musicians and enjoy delicious refreshments provided by the Waco Symphony Council.

Performing "A Sunday Septet" will be Eka Gogichashvili, violin; Kathryn Steely, viola; Gary Hardie, cello; Chris Buddo, string bass; Richard Shaley, clarinet; Jeffrey Powers, horn; and Matt Morris, bassoon.

The series, which begins with the Oct. 30 concert and concludes with three concerts in January and February 2006, is sponsored by Central Texas Pathology Lab, in Honor of Dr. and Mrs. S. Milford Bunn, Jr.

General admission tickets are \$10 or \$5 for students and are available at the door immediately before the concert. For additional information about Sunday Sounds and other concerts presented by the Waco Symphony Orchestra, call 254-754-0851 or visit the symphony's Web site at <www.wacosymphony.com>.

DATELINE:

Crawford

Hometown of the President of the United States

ACVR's 'Voting Rights' Spokesman Now Working For Dick Cheney

LOS ANGELES — Last week, The BRAD BLOG reported that one of the co-founders of the self-described "non-partisan" group calling themselves the American Center for Voting Rights (ACVR) was "boning up on his non-partisan creds" by being employed by the White House to sell George W. Bush's Harriet Miers nomination to the American press and public.

This week, the voting rights champion who swore nonpartisanship, Jim Dyke, has been promoted according to a report from TIME magazine filed last week. His new job will be to "take up the slack" for Steve Schmidt, "counselor to Vice President Cheney and one of the White House's most aggressive strategists."

Schmidt is suddenly heading to Iraq for the next month, where he will, according to a report by RAW STORY, be unavailable to take any questions regarding the mounting charges that sources within Cheney's office may have been at the heart of the outing of CIA operative Valerie Plame.

Dyke was RNC Communications Director for years, before becoming "non-partisan" enough to join with the "non-partisan" Mark F. "Thor" Hearne (National General Counsel for Bush/Cheney '04 Inc.) to found the new tax-exempt, "non-partisan" "Voting Rights" organization.

As BRAD BLOG reported some months ago, the Internet domain registration for ACVR claims to be located somewhere in Dallas, Texas, despite Hearne's residence in St. Louis, Mo., and Dyke's in South Carolina. At the time of initial investigation, Dyke reported that the Dallas address given for ACVR was that of the company that created their website. He had forgotten the name of the company, despite the website having been created just days before BRAD BLOG's interview with him.

Why precisely, Dallas is given as the lo-

cation of ACVR remains somewhat of a mystery, as is the name of the party funding the organization. The address comes up as a postal box.

Amongst ACVR's "non-partisan" work has been testifying before a U.S. House Administrative hearing, led by Rep. Bob

German Society Meets Oct. 25th

WACO — The Heart of Texas Chapter of the Texas German Society will meet on Tuesday, Oct. 25, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Waco McLennan County Library.

The library is located in downtown Waco at 1717 Austin Ave., and the meeting will be held downstairs in the genealogy department.

Visitors are welcome.

For questions, call Betty Hubbard, 662-0116, in Waco, or Emma Conrad, 675-3364, in Clifton.

The Heart of Texas Chapter includes Bosque, Coryell, Falls, Hill, and McLennan counties.

Ney (R-OH) on election irregularities in Ohio during the November '04 presidential election. At that hearing, held three business days after ACVR appeared for the first time on the Internet, Hearne testified to being a "long time voting rights advocate." He didn't mention his ties to Bush/Cheney '04 Inc.



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