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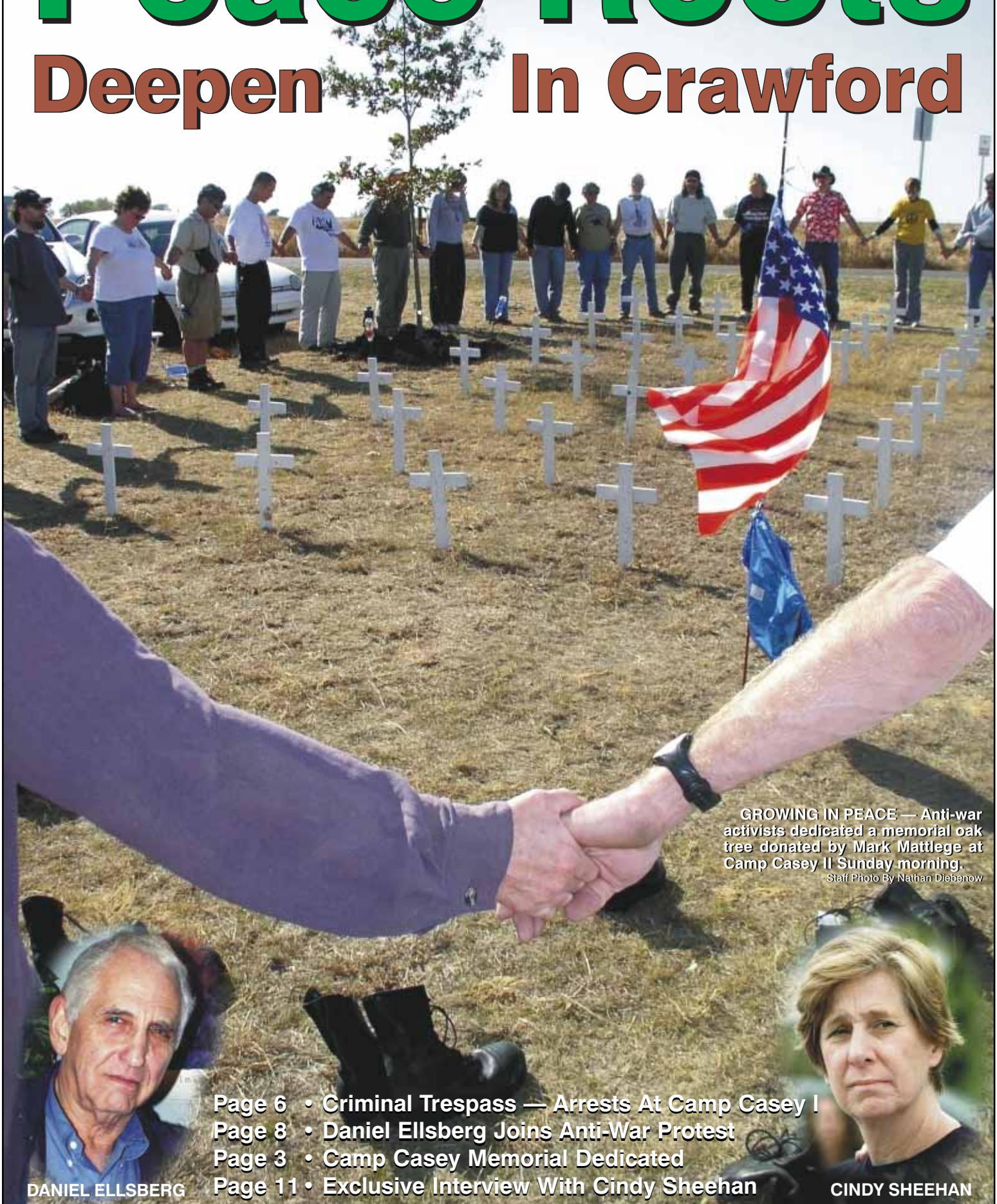


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Peace Roots Deepen In Crawford



GROWING IN PEACE — Anti-war activists dedicated a memorial oak tree donated by Mark Mattleige at Camp Casey II Sunday morning.
— Staff Photo By Nathan Diebenow

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CINDY SHEEHAN

Big Oil Execs May Have Lied To Congress

WASHINGTON — During a joint hearing of the Senate Energy and Commerce committees in mid-November, four of five big oil executives may have lied during the question-and-answer segment, according to Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.).

A document obtained by THE WASHINGTON POST reveals that officials with Exxon Mobil Corp, Conoco (prior to its merger with Phillips), Shell Oil Co., and BP America Inc. had met in the White House complex with aides of Vice President Dick Cheney who were developing

a national energy policy in 2001.

Lautenberg had asked the executives during the hearing, "Did your company or any representatives of your companies participate in Vice President Cheney's energy task force in 2001?" at which the responses were negative. He has indicated that he will now ask the Justice Department to investigate.

Democrats had protested Commerce Chairman Ted Stevens' (R-Alaska) decision to not to require the testimony of the executives to be taken under oath.

House To Consider SHIELD Bill

WASHINGTON — The U.S. House of Representatives will consider a bill that prohibits domestic violence shelters from sending personal information about women with a history of abuse to a new federal database.

The identities and locations of hundreds of thousands of women could be compromised to violent perpetrators if the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) McKinney-Vento Act is not amended, said Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI), who introduced the Safe Housing Identity Exemption for the Lives of Domestic Violence Victims (SHIELD) Act last summer.

Currently, victims of domestic violence are exposed to potential dangers because employees of federal, state and local agencies have access the new Homeless Management Information System, a database in which all shelters receiving funds from McKinney-Vento must submit the names and other information — like Social Security number, date of birth, ethnicity and race — of those who seek help in such facilities.

As an alternative, the SHIELD Act proposes using non-personal identifying information for data collection. Then, HUD would still be able to perform statistical analysis of those benefitting from its services in order to measure the effectiveness of McKinney-Vento Act programs.

The Committee on Financial Services unanimously approved the SHIELD Act with a favorable recommendation on Nov. 16. The new legislation (H.R. 2695) is cosponsored by Ranking Committee Member Barney Frank (D-MA), Katherine Harris (R-FL), and 24 other co-sponsors.

NASA's Pluto Mission Too Risky, Says Anti-Nuke Group

BRUNSWICK, ME — An anti-nuclear weapons group says that NASA's planned space mission to Pluto that is to carry 24 pounds of highly toxic plutonium early next year wastes taxpayer money and threatens the lives of people living in Florida.

In its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the New Horizons mission to planet Pluto, NASA admitted that there is a one in 300 chance of an accident resulting in release of the plutonium, said a spokesman for Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space.

The mission to Pluto is set to launch around Jan. 11, 2006, from the Kennedy

Space Center. The plutonium will be used in a Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator (RTG) to convert the heat from the radioactive decay of the plutonium into on board electricity.

If an accident occurs, the EIS says that the deadly plutonium could be carried by winds for a 60-mile radius throughout Central Florida, costing up to \$1.3 billion per square mile in clean up.

"At a time of major fiscal crisis in the U.S., why is NASA using public tax dollars to put the lives of the people on Earth at risk?" asked the spokesman.

For more information, contact Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space.

News Item: Big Oil execs go back before congress after 4 of the 5 lied about a meeting with Cheney on energy policy.



CIA Head Mum On Torture Ban Restrictions

WASHINGTON - CIA head Porter Goss told USA Today last week that a Senate bill passed last month banning the torture of suspected terrorists in U.S. custody would restrict some intelligence gathering methods. He declined, however, to describe what methods would be restricted.

Goss, echoing the Bush administration's stance on combating the terrorism, said that his agency's in-

terrogation methods do not constitute torture.

"This agency does not do torture. Torture does not work," Goss said.

Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), a former prisoner of war in Vietnam, sponsored the Senate bill banning torture which passed by a huge margin, 90-9.

Goss did not comment on allegations that the CIA uses secret detention centers scattered around the world.

Protestors Stop 'Nuke Train' Bound For Germany

DANNENBERG, Germany — Anti-nuclear protestors temporarily stopped a 170-ton shipment of radioactive nuclear power plant waste headed by train from re-processing in France back to Germany where it was originally produced early last week.

A nuclear expert with environmental activist group Greenpeace said the cargo's radioactivity was two and a half times higher than Chernobyl, a nuclear power plant that accidentally exploded in the former Soviet Union in 1986.

More than 700 activists participated in stopping the train twice on its 370-mile journey to a storage facility. Some staged sit-ins and parked 160 tractors on the tracks while others set fire to hay bales near the tracks.

To ensure the safety of the convoy, around 15,000 police officers were on duty in Germany. About 40 demonstrators were detained during the controversial trip.

While activists there argue that the radioactive waste could enter the region's water supply, they also tested the newly elected government led by Angela Merkel to continue a 20-year timetable that ends Germany's use of nuclear power.



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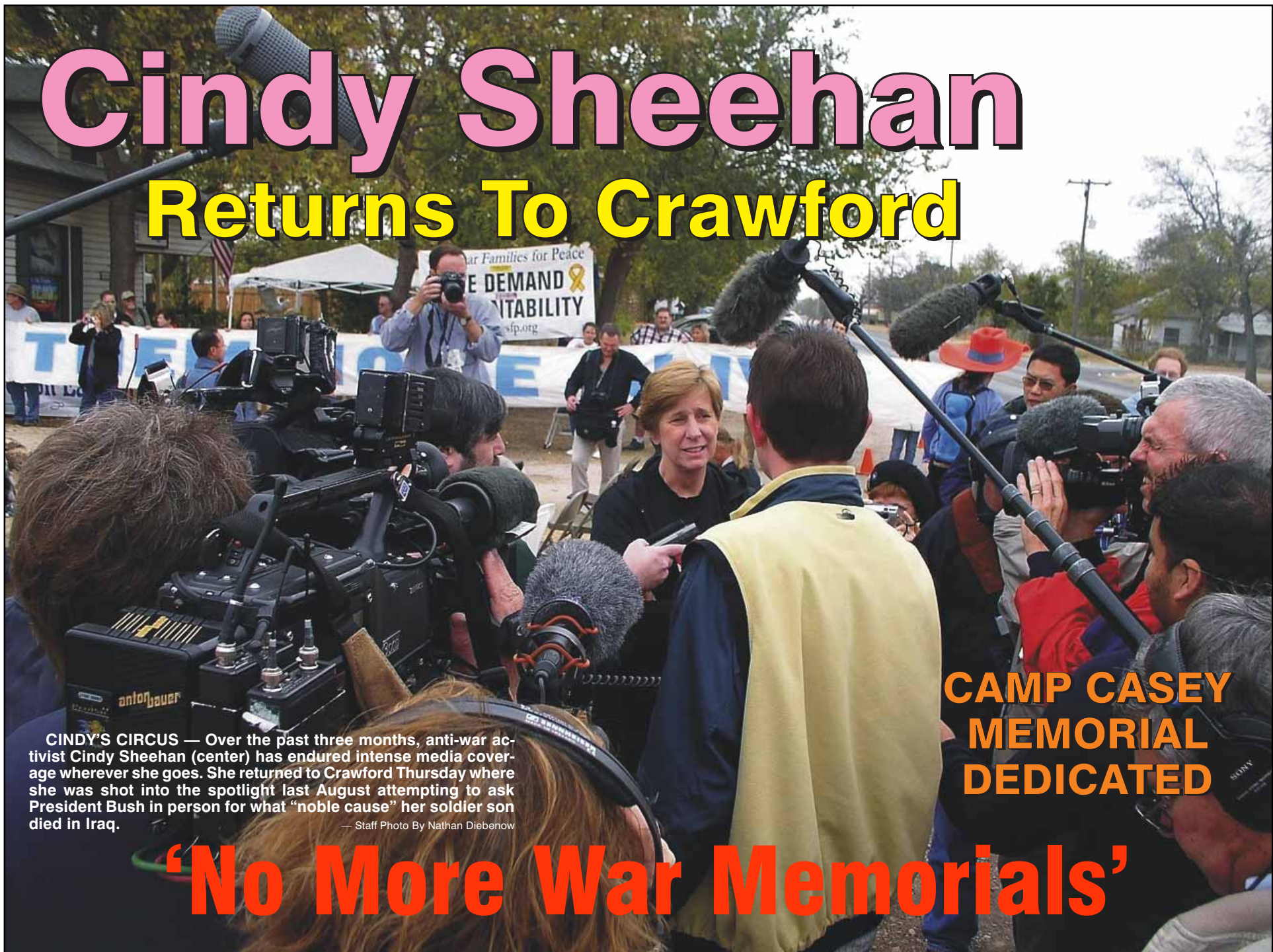
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Cindy Sheehan Returns To Crawford



CINDY'S CIRCUS — Over the past three months, anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan (center) has endured intense media coverage wherever she goes. She returned to Crawford Thursday where she was shot into the spotlight last August attempting to ask President Bush in person for what "noble cause" her soldier son died in Iraq.

— Staff Photo By Nathan Diebenow

**CAMP CASEY
MEMORIAL
DEDICATED**

'No More War Memorials'

By NATHAN DIEBENOW
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CRAWFORD — Anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan made her first public appearance back in Crawford since her 26-day vigil last August at a memorial dedication at the Crawford Peace House Friday afternoon.

The unveiling of a monument entitled "Sheehan's Stand" drew about 100 activists from around the country to pay honor not only to Sheehan's attempt to meet with President Bush in person but also the lives of the 2,105 military personnel who died in Iraq since March 2003.

"Killing is barbaric, and we're here to make sure this doesn't happen again ... no more war memorials," said Sheehan, whose 25-year old son, Casey, passed away in Iraq last April.

Casey Sheehan's name is inscribed on the 900-pound sandstone along with the names of other dead soldiers belonging to members of Gold Star Families for Peace, said John Teska, a stone cutter from Wind Ridge, Penn. who was inspired to create a memorial for Sheehan and the soldiers.

Teska said that this "living memorial" will be completed when workers glue "memory medallions" next to the names of the fallen soldiers. When a computer crosses over these points, pictures of

these soldiers and their parents talking about them, he explained.

Johnny Wolf, the owner of the Crawford Peace House, explained that this new memorial sits in the facility's garden, which was originally intended as a gift of goodwill to Crawford. Wolf also thanked Kay Lucas of Waco Friends of Peace for being the backbone of the facility since its inception.

The ceremony was interrupted a few times by people in pick-up trucks drove passed the Peace House honking their horns and shouting rude remarks. At one point, an Amtrak train also contributed to the noise level as it passed by not 50 yards away from the event.

The interruptions, however, failed to stop the flood of emotions from the members of the Gold Star Families for Peace present. After thanking Teska and the crew of the Crawford Peace House for their support, Juan Torres of Chicago, Ill. and Dede Miller, sister of Sheehan, broke down while talking about their dead relatives.

"Tell President Bush this is not a game. This is the life of all kids," said Torres, the father of a slain soldier, John M. Torres. "It's not about how many soldiers died. It's about how many families died."

The ceremony itself was delayed for
Continued On Next Page



SUPPORTER AND SISTER Dede Miller stood side-by-side with Cindy Sheehan at the dedication of the stone marker honoring the 26 day vigil in Crawford.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



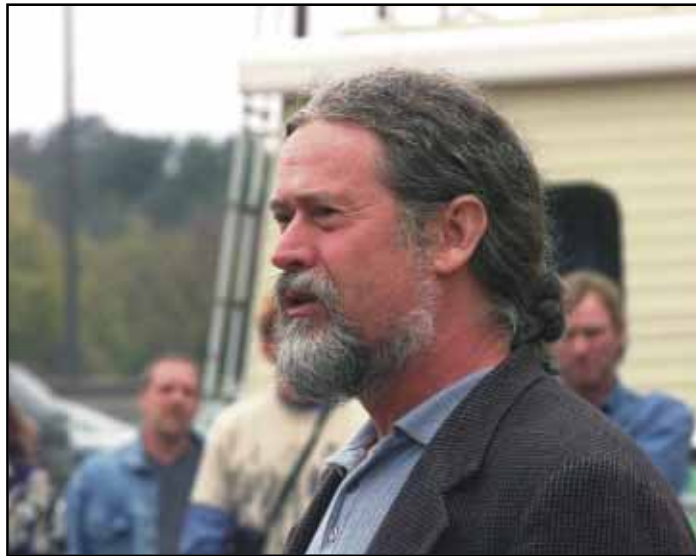
BILL MITCHELL, father of a slain soldier in Iraq, (from left) spoke at the dedication ceremony of a anti-war memorial at the Crawford Peace House Friday afternoon. With him at the ceremony were other parents of dead soldiers, Cindy Sheehan, Dede Miller, and Juan Torres.

— Staff Photo By Nathan Diebenow



A DEDICATION CEREMONY was held today at the Crawford Peace House, with media out in full force. The hand-carved stone created by Ron Teska was unveiled before Cindy Sheehan. Here, Peace House curator Hadi Jawad addresses the group.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



ACTIVIST JOHN WOLF was on hand to speak at the dedication ceremony of the stone marker bearing the words "Sheehan's Stand." Wolf owns the Peace House in Crawford where the large stone was permanently placed.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews

• **MEMORIAL DEDICATION ... Continued From Page 3**

about 30 minutes due to the breakdown of a bus carrying volunteers from Camp Casey II, located on private property near the Bush Ranch roughly 10 miles from the City of Crawford. As the wait dragged on, Sheehan greeted other volunteers holding a banner that read "Bring Them Home Alive" which served as the backdrop for the media event.

Since Sheehan became the so-called "face of the peace movement" last August, the Crawford Peace House has undergone a facelift of its own. A new brown picket fence there now parallels the street and surrounds a courtyard laid with concrete tile flooring. A lattice-work trellis serves as an entry way to this courtyard leading to the facility which has a new welcome sign. A big white dove is also displayed.

Since the Peace House's founding over three years ago, its attempts to reach out to the Crawford community in solidarity have been futile. The majority of people in Crawford have given CPH the cold shoulder with the exception for two high school

classes visiting the facility.

The Peace House has served as a staging base for more than a handful of anti-war rallies and marches, including the showing of Michael Moore's controversial movie *Fahrenheit 9/11* at a local park the summer before the 2004 presidential elections.

Due to thousands of dollars in donations while serving as Sheehan's base last summer, CPH emerged from a financial slump in which it was down to only a few dollars in the bank.

More Photos, Next Page



THE CHICKEN MAN, Terry Levan of Lexington, Texas, (right) spoke with a reporter about the significance of his humorous headgear Friday afternoon in Crawford. Levan and his wife, Jane, served chickens, which they farmed organically, to Cindy Sheehan and her supporters during the her August vigil. The Levan's returned to Crawford to serve more bird to the protestors.

— Staff Photo By Nathan Diebenow



MASTER STONE CUTTER Ron Teska spoke briefly at the dedication ceremony of his hand-carved marker honoring the vigil in Crawford in August.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



"GO HOME HIPPIES" WAS JUST ONE OF MANY signs seen being carried near the Crawford Peace House during the dedication ceremony of the memorial marker.
— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



BRING THEM HOME ALIVE was written on a banner held on one end by Terry Perry of Levittown, Pa. (right). The banner served as a backdrop to the dedication of anti-war memorial at the Crawford Peace House.
— Staff Photo By Nathan Diebenow



CINDY SHEEHAN took time prior to the dedication ceremony of a stone marker honoring her August protest in Crawford to visit with volunteer supporters.
— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



THE UNVEILING of an anti-war memorial at the Crawford Peace House occurred Friday afternoon. Present were the memorial's sculptor, Ron Teska, owner of the Peace House Johnny Wolf and anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan (from left).
— Staff Photo By Nathan Diebenow



SURROUNDED BY CAMERAMEN, Cindy Sheehan holds the hand of Juan Torres, the father of a slain soldier in Iraq, John M. Torres, before a dedication ceremony for a memorial marker Friday afternoon.
— Staff Photo By Nathan Diebenow



WHETHER HUGS OR TEARS, the crowd of supporters gathered for the dedication of the "Sheehan's Stand" stone at the Peace House in Crawford displayed great emotion.
— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews

Criminal Trespass

Anti-war Protestors Arrested In Crawford Ditch

By DEBORAH MATHEWS
STAFF WRITER

CRAWFORD — Arrests began about 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, Nov. 22, at the site of Camp Casey I outside of Crawford. Protestors including Ann Wright and Daniel Ellsberg were arrested by McLennan County Sheriff's deputies after being warned to remove the tents that had been erected. Claiming that the recently approved ordinances prohibiting the activity is a violation of the First Amendment, those taken into custody stated that they had a right to be there.

Earlier in the morning, shuttle buses transported media and protestors from both the Peace House in Crawford and Camp Casey II to the original site. Around 6:15 a.m. with the sun just coming up, supporters began singing at Camp Casey I.

Shortly thereafter, McLennan County Sheriff Deputy Kenneth Vanek arrived at the site to speak with the protestors. Explaining that having the tents in the ditch was a violation of the county ordinance, he said, "If you don't remove them, you'll be arrested for criminal trespass." After answering some questions about the logistics of the planned arrests, he left saying that they would arrive around 8 a.m.

Wright said, "On behalf of the people of Camp Casey and America, we certainly are here to be able to point out the ordinance that we think is restrictive to free speech and we'll be here waiting for your deputies"

Vanek responded, "Okay. That's your right."

Facing up to a \$2,500 fine or 30 days in jail, the protestors settled in to wait the arrival of law enforcement.

Shortly after 9 a.m., nearly 20 police cruisers, Secret Service, and McLennan County Sheriff Department vehicles arrived. At 9:11 a.m., Officer Janet Smith read the following to the group:

"The property on which you have erected a tent is in the right-of-way of a McLennan County road. By order dated Sept. 27, 2005, in the McLennan County Commissioners Court, by virtue of its general authority over county roads prohibit the erection of shelters in the right-of-way of county roads. The county has control over the county roads, gives it superior right-of-possession. Your use of the right-of-way in violation of the county's regulation is a trespass. Therefore, please be warned that you must immediately remove from the right-of-way, the tent which you have erected. If you refuse to do so you may be arrested for criminal trespass in accordance with 30.05 of the penal code. In addition, the public easement upon the property is limited to travel and the incidence thereof. The underlying legal title belongs to the adjoining landowners who have informed the Sheriff's office that they object to the erection to such items on their property and consider it to be in excess of the public easement. . . we'll



ACTIVIST LEE STANLEY allowed law enforcement to carry him off during his protest of the ordinances of McLennan county at the site of the original Camp Casey.

— Staff Photo By Michael Harvey

give you ten minutes to comply with this warning. . . Folks, I just want to give you your five minute warning. . . this is your final warning. Does everybody understand that we will be conducting arrests at this point?"

Protestors were given ample opportunity to remove the tents and all refused. When the arrests began, the clapping and cheering began. Those who chose not to be arrested hugged those who stayed and moved to the other side of the road.

A group of eight were taken into custody and transported to McLennan County Jail. They were later released to their own recognizance.

Those arrested later spoke of the absolute professionalism of the McLennan County Sheriff's Department.

More Photos
Of Arrests, Protest
At Camp Casey I
On Next Page



AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, political activist Ann Wright was arrested at Camp Casey I on Thanksgiving Day.

— Staff Photo By Michael Harvey



PROTESTING THE NEWLY PASSED ORDINANCES of McLennan County, Camp Casey supporters placed tents and the site of the original camp. Waiting for law enforcement to arrive, they sang and cheered.

— Staff Photo By Michael Harvey



ACTIVIST CARL RISING-MOORE held the flag at the site of Camp Casey I in Crawford while waiting for arrests to begin for criminal trespass.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



DEDE MILLER was arrested alongside several other activists at the site of Camp Casey I on Thanksgiving day.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



LAW ENFORCEMENT removed all of the tents that had been erected in the ditch which had been Camp Casey I.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



DANIEL ELLSBERG examines "tags" worn by activist Christa Allen in the early hours of the morning on Thanksgiving Day. The two joined others to protest the newly passed ordinances restricting activities in the ditches of McLennan County.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED was one of the many signs protestors displayed at the site of Camp Casey I during their protest on Thanksgiving day.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews



SECRET SERVICE BARRICADE has been placed now that President Bush is in residence at the Crawford ranch. Anti-war protestors marched just outside the block on Thanksgiving day.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews

'It Gives Me Hope For America'

— Daniel Ellsberg Joins Camp Casey —

By DEBORAH MATHEWS
STAFF WRITER

CRAWFORD — Political activist famous for the Pentagon Papers Daniel Ellsberg has joined the anti-war protest movement begun by Cindy Sheehan. Joining supporters in Crawford at Camp Casey, Ellsberg was arrested on Nov. 23, along with several other protestors, at the site of Camp Casey I, for violation of the newly passed ordinances.

In 1971, Ellsberg released the Pentagon Papers and succeeded in substantially eroding public support for the war in Vietnam. Believing that the current war in Iraq shares parallels with the Vietnam era, he chose to become involved with those who speak out against America's occupation of Iraq.

Having been arrested more than 70 times, Ellsberg is no stranger to civil disobedience. Following his arrest, Ellsberg allowed an exclusive interview with the *ICONOCLAST*, in which he had much to say about the war in Iraq, the administration, and the similarities to Vietnam.

ICONOCLAST: What brought you out here?

ELLSBERG: I really wanted to come out and meet the people who have been doing this since August. I didn't come out for me to send a message to Bush. He doesn't know who I am and if he did, he would know what I thought. I wanted to tell the people that have been doing this, Thank you. They've really given me more hope than I've had. Not only for what they did, but the response that they've gotten to it. It's very, very gratifying. It gives me hope for America.

ICONOCLAST: It is phenomenal. It started so spontaneously and grew into this. I don't think anyone expected that.

ELLSBERG: It's always the individuals who are willing to do something courageous and out of the ordinary. Usually you don't hear about it. One doesn't hear of it and it doesn't catch fire, but she started a spark here.

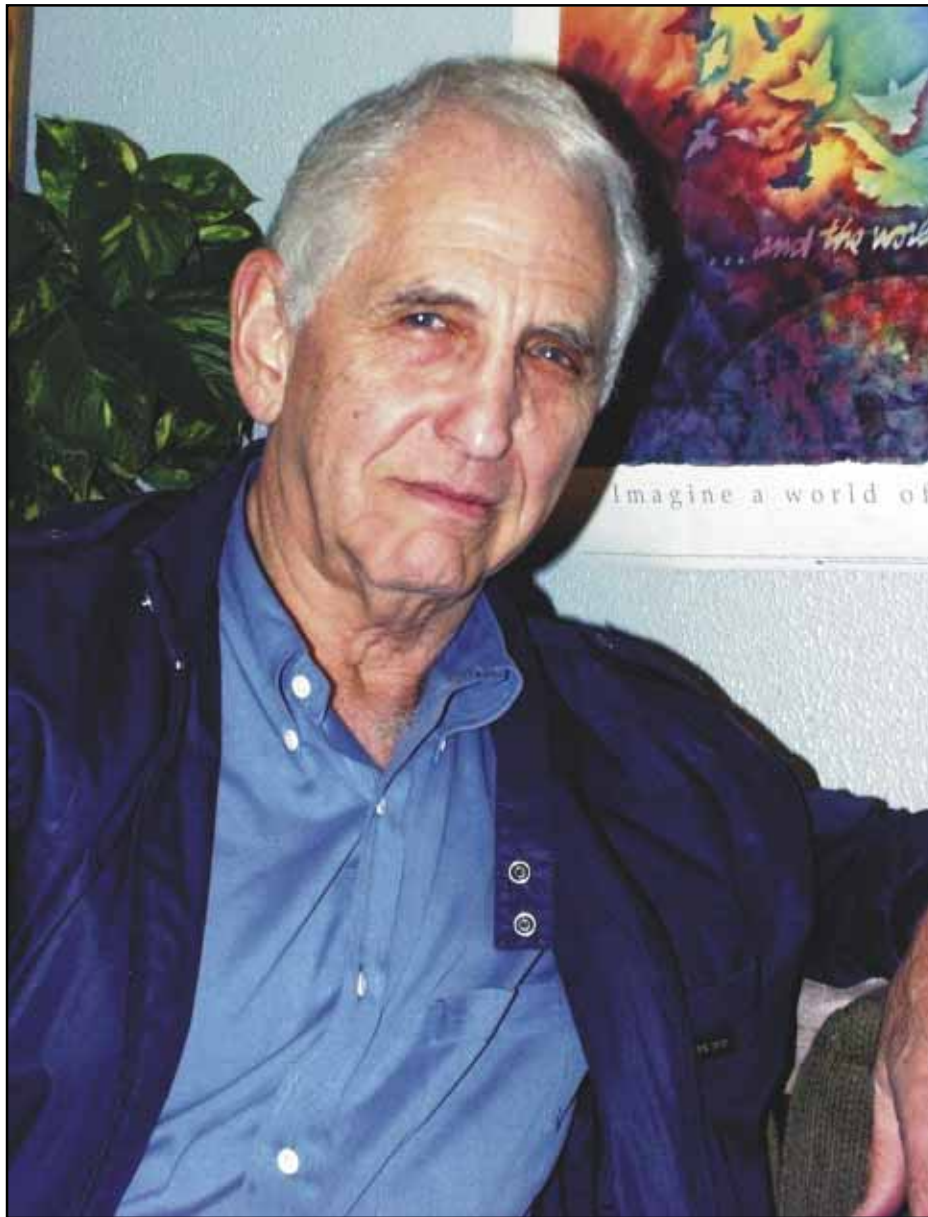
ICONOCLAST: How so?

ELLSBERG: There are a couple of things to factor into it. The biggest thing is who she is. I first met her on Saturday. We flew to Los Angeles together side-by-side on Southwest. I did get to know her.

ICONOCLAST: Was that arranged?

ELLSBERG: Yes. We were both getting honored that night by the Office of the Americas. That's why we were going. They were having a fund-raiser and they were honoring her, me, Dolores Huerta, and Jodi Evans of Code Pink. I got to meet all of them, so I knew she was going. I arranged it. I knew she was going from Oakland, because she lives in Berkeley now, and I live in North Berkeley—so I called her sister and we arranged it.

I was very, very impressed by her because on the one hand she was eloquent and smart, which was already clear from her writing and speeches. But she is such a marvelously ordinary looking person and ordinary talking person, the way she speaks. She's everybody's mother. Of course, everybody's mother is not that smart, I'm sorry to say, or politically aware. She, herself, blames herself for not being political before the war. But, she is an American mother who has woken up in her tragic reasons. She was clear on the war before her son went in, but like she said, she didn't do all that she could have done.



ACTIVIST, LECTURER, AND WRITER Daniel Ellsberg has joined the war protest of Cindy Sheehan in Crawford, Texas.

— Staff Photo By Deborah Mathews

Now, she is doing everything she can do. So that's very admirable, but I could see right away that she's the perfect spokesperson for a movement. I think that's part of it. People could see her and hear her. I hadn't seen her on television. What she was saying and what she was doing impressed me so much that I wanted to talk to her. When I heard that she was coming out here, I asked her if she would mind if I came with her for Thanksgiving. She was going to come on Tuesday. The reason that I asked was that back in August, people called me up in that first week, not at the center of the group, but others. They said that they would pay my way out to Texas if you want to go join Cindy. I said that I not only think that's a bad idea, I don't want to do it, but I question the judgement of anybody who thinks that is a good idea.

It was so clear that she had something new here. A mother with no past baggage of anti-war protest. No association with protest movements, which I am a very associated with. I thought that for me or Tom Hayden or any of the people that I admire from past work were to go out that it could only lessen her message and I said who should be out there is other mothers and fathers and vets — Iraq vets. I associate the war very strongly with Vietnam,

but she was condemning it on its own terms, not because of any association with Vietnam, but because of what it is.

I thought that's a very powerful movement and I didn't want to distract from that, so I didn't want to go near her. Even if she'd asked me, I probably would have said no.

By now, it's different. She's not just speaking for Iraq mothers, she's speaking for a nation, half a nation.

ICONOCLAST: More than half, I think.

ELLSBERG: She said to come out, there are lots of people. Actually, I'm one of the oldest people. There are one or two that are almost the same age.

ICONOCLAST: How old are you, by the way?

ELLSBERG: I'm 74. I'm very glad to be here. . . you asked what else there was, well, there was the happenstance. Her idea was to come out and speak to Bush, here. I don't know whether she thought through the fact that that meant the press corp was out here without much to do except to cover Bush cutting brush and having a five-week vacation while the war was going on. They had nothing to do. Someone new was coming out.

Frankly, say if it had been me coming out, I wouldn't have attracted the press

even if they didn't have much to do. But to have somebody really come out from middle America, from the heartland, and to do this on her own and got their attention. So she did attract that kind of attention.

ICONOCLAST: Do you feel like any of that was planned?

ELLSBERG: No, I doubt it. I've been around a long time and it wouldn't have occurred to me. For example, I do know that when people say that there is going to be a convention in Boston, there is going to be a convention in New York, there will be press there. We'll go there and we'll take advantage of that press presence. I didn't even bother, I've been through that many times. You know, they're there for something else. They're not there to hear us. So you just started something. I don't think it would have occurred to me that these people don't have anything to do out here. They're just sitting around.

Are you here locally. So you might have known that the press was here. But, it wouldn't have occurred to me that there was something special here. It was just great PR, a public relations kind of coo here that she got all that attention. There was no better person to get that attention. She was fabulous. Her instincts seem entirely right. Incidentally, I don't know if I should say this or not, but I'm going to, I am glad to hear that she agreed with me about last August. She said the other day that I was right. It was not the right time for me to come. So she has very good instincts.

I think that virtually every point, even the things that people criticize her for, the fact is that she's so really authentic. Somebody was saying the other day that people hunger for authenticity. There's an old saying . . . people hunger for authenticity and if you can fake that, you've got it made. She isn't faking anything. So if she uses profanity or whatever, it doesn't matter. She talks the way that she talks. She just talks. She talks the way that other Americans talk, although they're not always on television. Here you have a regular American whose on television.

ICONOCLAST: My first interview with her was done at about 60 miles per hour in my car heading back to the camp from the Peace House. She had been notified by someone that was there that they were being removed from the original site. She was upset. She had noticed me waiting for days to talk with her and she recognized that I had been there. She asked if I could take her out there and I said, of course. We did the interview in the car. She would apologize for her choice of words. It was all natural and real. Nothing planned or staged about it. It was how she felt at the time. She's an engaging person.

ELLSBERG: Right. Also, she's almost nobody that's talking frankly about what many people know. There are many in Washington. They're cowardly, calculating careerists — I'm talking mainly about Democrats. I don't know many Republicans and they're just following the leader on this I presume. But, why the Democrats are acting like Republicans, I don't know. I've asked people what's going on. Nobody has given me a good answer. What I do feel I know is that there's a lot of Democrats who know better than what they're saying. There's all these Democrats who dumped on Murtha the other day. A lot of them have to know that Murtha is exactly right. It's not just that he's a good guy, he's right. Even if he was

Continued On Next Page

• DANIEL ELLSBERG INTERVIEW ... Continued From Page 8

a bad guy, he'd be right. They know that and so they dump on him. I don't get it. The fact is that she came around and she said it. She said not two years out. Not let's have a gradual, graceful exit. No, we've got to succeed. No, we can't leave now that we're there and so forth. She just said our place is out. Get the troops home.

Another thing that I think people recognize is that she was not and I would say is not a pacifist — well, she may have, in the last year or two have become very close to being a pacifist. She certainly didn't start out that way. Clearly, this was a reaction to this war. You can be a hawk, in general terms and still say that this is a disaster. Murtha is a hawk, as far as I'm concerned, by most standards. I don't know much he's rethought his older position, but up until, as everybody knows, he's very pro-military, defense budget minded and so forth. You can look at this war and the honest thing to say is that we are doing no one any good by being there. We are not protecting our security, at all. We are endangering it. We're not just distracting money from the war against terrorism, as some people say. It's not just that. We are sabotaging the war on terrorism. We're making it not only unwinnable, but we can't even make Congress in the war on terror while we occupy Iraq. While we are killing Arabs in Iraq, Al Qaeda can only grow. We are acting on the interests of Al Qaeda, inadvertently. And Al Qaeda, of course, is acting in Bush's interest, I presume, inadvertently. But, the two of them are doing this dance that favors them and nobody else. She's simply right about them.

ICONOCLAST: 100% pullout then?

ELLSBERG: Get 'em out, now. Of course, they want to hang on her some kind of an image, and on Murtha. They changed his six-month withdrawal, that's what he said, six months, an orderly phased withdrawal over six months. Now, six months is plenty of time for a very deliberate, orderly withdrawal. Six weeks would also be possible. Six months is plenty of time. What did they change that to, immediate withdrawal. Now, immediate is codeword to America. It means Marines leaving in helicopters off the roof of the Embassy, like on April 30, 1975. So, they want to stir up this image that the people who are against an indefinite stay want scramble, while being shot at in our backs while we leave, leaving behind all the collaborators who worked with us, as we did in Saigon. That was actually shameful. There was no need to leave Saigon that way. It should have been done much differently. That's what they want to suggest. She knows that. When she says immediate, she is not saying next week, we should all be out.

ICONOCLAST: You're saying six months?

ELLSBERG: I'm saying that six months is much longer. A lot of people can die in six months. If you say now, there will be fallout in six months and you start withdrawing now and steadily withdraw. Then the people, which is the major part of the resistance, who above all, want us out, that's their nature, will not, I think, be so stupid to as to enrage us and provoke us by shooting us as we leave. In other words, that should remove most of the violence right there. It wouldn't be all of it, because that's the part that represents Al Qaeda, which is more than five percent, under Zarqawi, assuming there is a Zarqawi. There are some Al Qaeda

representative there. Unlike four years ago, or three years ago when there were none, essentially, now there are some Al Qaeda. They want us to stay. They have no desire to see us leave. Iraq is great for them. It can't be better. In fact, when people say why aren't they killing us here, one answer could be, why bother? They're doing fine in Iraq. They don't have to cross the ocean.

ICONOCLAST: Can I interrupt you? When you talk about violence, if we were to pull out now . . .

ELLSBERG: I've got to say, I don't think all shooting would stop.

ICONOCLAST: I understand, but . . .

ELLSBERG: It's just that there is an element of civil war going on right now and that could well continue. I was asking myself the other day what I really think about time table, if I was asked about the Murtha proposal. I would say six months is certainly better than seven months. Six months is better than seven

to improving the neighborhood in the Middle East, the U.S. is a combination of Katrina and FEMA. It's a one-two punch. It's kind of lethal. First the wrecking ball. Then, the incompetence, the corruption, the lying, the chaos — get the U.S. out of there. I would say, even for diplomacy, let other people do it. We're not the ones.

ICONOCLAST: Just become uninvolved altogether?

ELLSBERG: Except for money. We do owe them an awful lot of money. However, it should not be funneled through Halliburton. The U.N. has shown that they're not ideal, no doubt, better than we are. When you talk about corruption or incompetence, the oil for food thing may be very faulty. Compare it to what we've done. Nobody has accused the U.N. of misplacing \$9 billion in aid.

ICONOCLAST: Let's talk a little bit about Bush. I want to tie together what is going on now with your past with Nixon.

ELLSBERG: I'll just say, there are

the course of one day, to a large extent, after the Reichstag Fire on Feb. 27, and by June, it was a one party state. That was it from then on — no more elections. No more freedom of speech. No more freedom of association, which had existed in January when Hitler was made Chancellor. And it was really a very free democracy at that point, with great troubles, from the Depression, like other countries. I think these people will use the next 9/11 like the Reichstag Fire, to close down the core principles of our democracy.

ICONOCLAST: When you say use the next 9/11, do you mean use or cause?

ELLSBERG: That is not impossible, unfortunately? I don't know. I've studied it pretty closely and friends of mine who have studied it much more have made a very strong case that this administration not only knew that something was coming, but may well have known pretty much what was coming and what day it was coming.

“You changed that constitutional system in the course of one day, to a large extent, after the Reichstag Fire on Feb. 27, and by June, it was a one party state. That was it from then on — no more elections. No more freedom of speech. No more freedom of association, which had existed in January when Hitler was made Chancellor. And it was really a very free democracy at that point, with great troubles, from the Depression, like other countries. I think these people will use the next 9/11 like the Reichstag Fire, to close down the core principles of our democracy.”

— Daniel Ellsberg

months. Nobody is proposing, and I'm not proposing, that we're all out by next week. That's not feasible. It's not the right thing to do. Something between one and six months is, in fact, what I would like to see. Six months is the farther end of that and it's definitely better than a year-and-a-half, which is Feingold's proposal, you know, by the end of next year. That is definitely better than anybody else's proposal. If he'd said three months, I'd be a little bit happier. A lot can go wrong. It will be terrible to think of all the people who will die, on both sides, during those six months. But, there are lots of considerations.

We should, as a secondary objective to being out, explore every way, and I think we could find it, to avert civil war there without our presence. Who wants civil war? How many factions in Iraq really want a civil war? Which regional neighbors really want a civil war? The U.N. does not want a civil war. Get the U.N. in there or get the Arab League, as they are speaking now, they called for a time-table just the other day. Talk to all the factions. We are not a good mediator for that. We can take part, maybe, but I am so sceptical. The guys who had the judgment to get us in there have no call to be listened to on the subject of the Middle East by anybody in the world — Americans, Iraq — why should they listen to their judgement? They should accept our money. We ought to give them a lot of money. We should give them an enormous amount of money for reparations, which would be a tiny fraction of what we're spending on the war.

Cindy really caught my attention with her phrase, it was so good. I asked her if she invented that and she said yes. I think it sums everybody up. She said, “You can't clean up the china shop while the bull is still in it.” That's a great statement. I told her that she was absolutely right and that the bull is not the one to do it. We're as well suited to straighten out a country in the Middle East as a bull in a china shop.

In fact, I was thinking of other metaphors and I realized that when it comes

people like my now friend, John Dean of Watergate fame, who really think this is the most secretive administration that has ever been.

He was inside the Nixon administration. I find it, frankly, hard to believe this one is actually more secretive, but he says so. He also feels that it is more corrupt. Many people think that it's far more wild and antidemocratic than anybody else, including Nixon. I am skeptical of that on this ground — Nixon was facing a Democratic Congress, House, and Senate and not only that, but a much more liberal Congress than the Democrats are now. He inherited that.

So, he looks more liberal in his policies, Nixon, than Clinton, that's true. He was more liberal in his policies than Clinton. If Clinton had had a fully Democratic Congress, I'm sure he would have looked different than he did.

Nixon, if he had this Congress, I think, would look about as bad as Bush, at least. How bad is that? I think we've got a pre-fascists regime here, with the inclinations and the readiness to shift it to a totally authoritarian police state, if they get the opportunity.

Another 9/11 will give them that opportunity. I have to say, unlike some people, that I think that there will be an attack, another terrorist attack in the next three years, despite the fact that we haven't had one in the last three years. I think there will be and I think they will use that the way the Reichstag Fire was used in Germany.

It is better to avoid the word Nazi because that has so many associations. People recoil from it immediately. I've been reading about Germany in '32 and '33 in a book that I picked up in Berlin just a month ago, called *Defying Hitler* by Sebastian Haffner. It's very chilling to read now.

You had then a minority government that didn't have a plurality, not a majority, but it was obeying the constitutional rules. You changed that constitutional system in

There's really a lot of evidence for that. To go beyond that and say they did it themselves or that they planned it is another matter and I haven't seen convincing evidence of that. There is quite a bit of evidence that deserves closer investigation, which requires a Democratic House and or Senate. It's understandable that the Republicans have not investigated that; nevertheless, we need that investigation. I won't prejudge.

Unfortunately, I can say that it's definitely not impossible. I know that because I worked for a president who put American destroyers in harm's way off the coast of North Vietnam. I'm saying, by Aug. 4, not Aug. 2, perhaps, of 1964 when I was working for him. And definitely in Feb. of '65, he put those destroyers there with the intention and hope that they would be attacked. Meaning that American sailors could die and even, unlikely, but possible, those destroyers would be sent to the bottom if the torpedoes did not all miss.

He was doing that in order to get us into a war that he couldn't get us into otherwise. Not because the American people demanded it or not because he loved war. It is because he was afraid of the image consequences and the political consequences of being seen as a loser, a defeatist.

I think the key thing from Johnson was that he didn't want to be called the names by anybody that John Murtha has been called in the last week. He didn't want to hear, even from a Republican minority, and that's all there could have been after '64. There's no chance of a Republican majority. He didn't want to be called by a minority, cowered, cutting and running, weakling, unmanly — weak on communism like weal on terrorism. He honestly couldn't stand the idea of being called those names.

ICONOCLAST: Are those factors with Bush?

ELLSBERG: No. I think that is the difference. I do think it's a factor with the

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Democrats. The Senate and the House are filled with Democrats who voted against the Patriot Act. Democrats who can't stand the thought of being called names like that even if they couldn't lose their state elections or their district elections. There's so many in there, there's just no way they could loose the next election; yet, they will not have to explain that they're patriotic or that they're traitors and that they're not cowards.

They've just given everybody a demonstration of what they will get. You can be paraplegic like Max Cleland, or another amputee veteran like Cahill or — we saw what happened to McCain — remember the slander that he had fathered a black child, when in fact, he had adopted one.

They'll say anything about anybody. What they tried to say about Murtha. Of course, they don't all have Mertha's record, two purple hearts — which did nothing, of course for Kerry. He had purple hearts and a silver star. What did that do for him? Obviously, if you can do that to Kerry and you can do that to Murtha, you can do it to anybody. Of course, Cheney is not vulnerable. Cheney doesn't have to worry about being swift boated because he has no service comrades to bad mouth him. He hasn't been near a military vehicle of any kind, let alone a swift boat.

The key is that these people are afraid of being called names. Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld, unlike Johnson and his aides, seem to have convinced themselves of a near insanity — that this would, in fact, be an easy, quick, cheap victory. They were pulled ahead by that.

To ignore all the evidence from their own intelligence people who said that that was not the way that it was going to be and that it could be done with less than 150,000 troops. They actually thought what nobody thought on Vietnam, that this was going to be quick and easy.

ICONOCLAST: What you're saying sounds like, for lack of a better word, stupid.

ELLSBERG: It's interesting that you say that. I was reading Cheney's comments to the American Enterprise Institute just two days ago, where he said that we were mislead, everybody was mislead. He also said that anyone who suggests that the President deliberately deceived or manipulated or distorted the intelligence is reprehensible and outrageous.

Apparently, they believe they'd be much better off if the American people regarded Bush as a fool, rather than a liar.

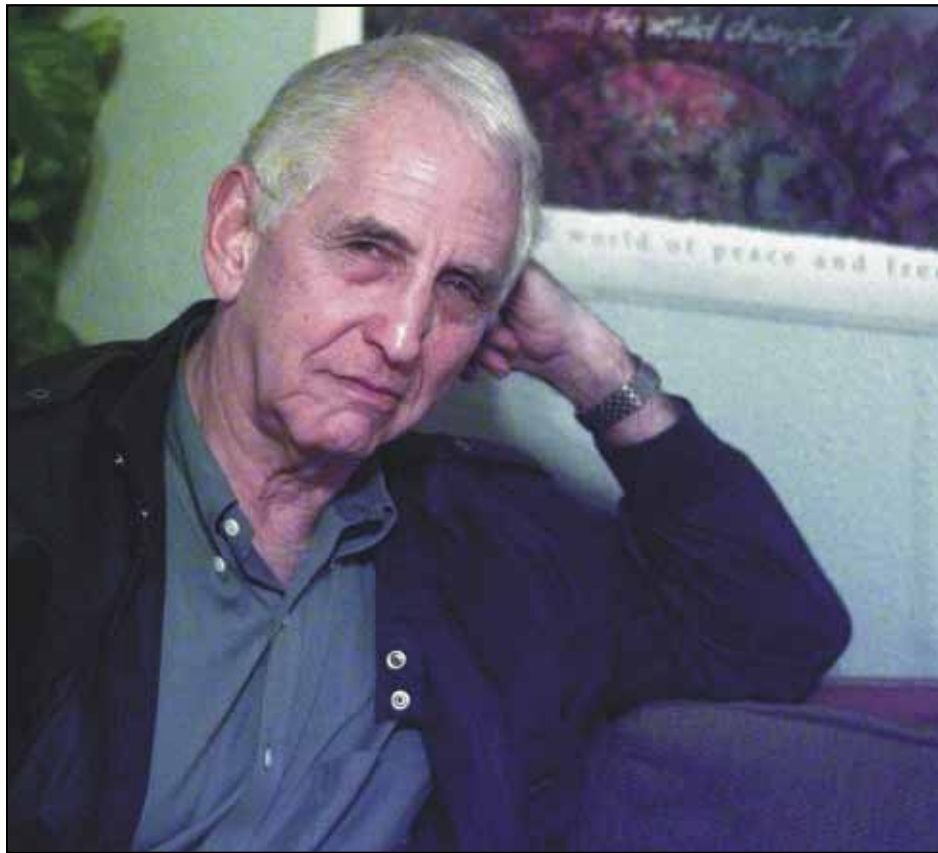
Actually, those aren't contradictory at all. You can be a fool and a liar, and that's what we've got. Smart fools up there, like Wolfowitz, are certainly also foolish, like my colleagues and myself in the Vietnam war.

Nobody is smarter than McNamara. These guys are no less smart than the people who got us into Vietnam. They seem to believe this mass delusion. If I know something at 74 that I've learned later in life — smartness can coexist with stupidity in the same head. I think every wife knows that. I don't mean just with ignorance. So that seems to be the way that it is.

Bush, I don't judge in these respects because I can't make out his mind at all. I can't get inside his mind. He's an enigma to me.

Cheney just seems like a smart fool. I'm increasingly more cautious in assuming that he is so smart. What has he been successful at? Running the government? Running it into the ground? He ran Haliburton into the ground with his purchase of Dresser Industries. As far as I know, Rumsfeld is smart enough, and yet he obviously believes in stupid things. That's not so different from the administration I served.

ICONOCLAST: Going back to that, I



Daniel Ellsberg

want you to help me understand what occurs to you when you decide to act?

ELLSBERG: See, I reached, after two years in Vietnam, first a year in the Pentagon, I reached the point that nearly every American reached — that it was a hopeless, unwinnable war. We should get out of it. Nearly everybody I knew believed that. There were some military then who believed it could be won, but not cheaply or quickly. They believed that it had to be a massive increase in the war to win it. They wanted to blow North Vietnam to pieces.

I never believed and I don't believe that we would have won. That would have just killed a lot more people. Nearly everybody else didn't want to do that, including McNamara. By the time Nixon got in, it was too late for them to do it. I think he would have done it if he had been in '64. If there had been an honest count in Texas and Illinois in '61, Nixon would have been President and we would have been heavily at war with Vietnam and probably China. So, I realized that the way we were doing it was wrong.

The question becomes what do you do about that? There, I think I could have gone a long time the way, let's say a Powell or Wilkerson has, staying in, giving my advice, talking to insiders. I did meet people like the people here, people like Cindy Sheehan, people who were actually going to prison for uncooperation with the draft. There are people here who would do that in a minute. When I met this one man, in particular, who was going to prison, it hit me very hard, emotionally that day, that I should ask myself the question what should I do to help end this war. Am I willing to go all the way?

That meant, as it does for Cindy Sheehan, all the way, nonviolently. Going all the way to a lot of people means using violence. That can only help keep us in the war. Another 9/11 will not blow us out of Iraq, and Al Qaeda doesn't want us out of Iraq. If we stay there, they'll put in a draft and we'll send hundreds of thousands of people to Iraq, which is fine for Al Qaeda. They'd let us occupy Iraq and kill Iraqis for the rest of the century. The more the better. It's good for their recruiting.

Putting aside violence then, adopting a Ghandian point of view, which I think is

right on this, sacrifice your own right, your own freedom, pay costs to your own family, and don't use the excuse of my children's education. I'm not criticizing.

After all is considered, rightly or wrongly, I was not deterred. The idea, then, of risking not so much prison, but your career, status, and association, was brought home to me by these Americans.

I think Cindy conveyed that spirit 100 percent to the people around her. She's doing everything she can truthfully and nonviolently and all the people around her are the same. That's what's needed.

It was basically meeting them. Then there was an occasion of lying by the White House. I just said that I'm not going to be part of the lying anymore. I was already ready to do whatever it took. For what it's worth, I'm going to expose these guys.

ICONOCLAST: How long did this take?

ELLSBERG: One day. It was, unfortunately, a little late. But, I've been telling people for years now, don't do what I did. Don't wait until the war is over. If you know that it is a disaster, then don't keep that to yourself. Do what I wish I had done. Go to the press now.

Richard Clark is now telling us, which I'm glad he did, that he knew that they were going to use 9/11 as an excuse and an opportunity to attack Iraq. That not only had nothing to do with 9/11, but which was going to make it impossible to make progress against terrorism.

If he had told us that with documents, I believe he would have prevented the war. If Wilkerson had told us what he knows now, that would have meant, not only giving up his career, but splitting from his boss, Powell. That's a reasonable concern. The fact remains that if they had left they could have stopped the war. Actually that was pretty foreseeable.

One person like Cindy, inside the government, with the documents, could have stopped that war. What I'm asking is something that's almost never been done, but Cindy shows that it's not beyond human possibility to do this.

ICONOCLAST: Are there any other actions planned during your stay in Crawford?

ELLSBERG: I don't know, but if there are, I'll be in them.



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'Peace Mom' Reflects On Anti-war Activism

Interview With Cindy Sheehan

BY LONE STAR ICONOCLAST STAFF
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

CRAWFORD — Cindy Sheehan woke up the Saturday morning after Thanksgiving still tired after a night filled with homecoming cheer.

Instead of preparing for a full day of bargain hunting at the mall like other American parents, this anti-war activist sat in her trailer readying herself for a rally scheduled that day.

Breakfast was gravy over sausage and biscuits. She loves gravy, she said, and before long, the gravy and everything else on the plate were consumed along with her coffee. All that awaited was for her PR manager/sister to summon her for a press conference. But 20 minutes later, there was no call.

"Maybe the press are all over at Wal-Mart watching people get crushed or something," wondered Sheehan, in a trailer at Camp Casey II a few miles from the Bush Ranch. "It's weird. People care more about bargains than they do about somebody falling on the floor and getting trampled, and this is the way to start the Christmas season, the birth of the Prince of Peace?"

Before the press finally showed up, three staff members of the LONE STAR ICONOCLAST snuck time to talk with Sheehan about her experiences since her transformation into the "Peace Mom" last August.

ICONOCLAST (Deborah Mathews): How has your life changed since you came to Crawford last August? I imagine you can't even go to the grocery store without people recognizing you.

CINDY SHEEHAN: You know, things really haven't changed that much because I was always really busy. ... was gone three weeks out of the month. After the Downing Street memo hearings ... the email and the hate mail... I was like in huge demand on March 19 and 20, the second invasion of Iraq. I would have spoke at 30 different places. The one thing that has changed is, yeah, I can't go anywhere without being recognized.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): What has been the response to you?

SHEEHAN: Overwhelmingly positive. I've only had two negatives, once right after Camp Casey in the airport and another time in my own home town. This man walked by said (made a sound with his mouth).

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): There wasn't anything physical?

SHEEHAN: No, but you know, people come up to me and go, "Are you 'The Mom'?" And I sign autographs or whatever.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): I had heard that when you called Camp Casey I during the arrests to talk to Dede, she said, "Hey guys, it's Cindy." And everyone responded, "Hey Mom!" How do you respond to being called "The Mom"?

SHEEHAN: "Yeah, I'm the Mom. ICONOCLAST (Mathews): How about now? Is there any?"

SHEEHAN: No.
ICONOCLAST (Mathews): This is 24-7?

SHEEHAN: Yeah, even when I'm home. I'm either writing or doing interviews. I write articles and things like that.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Still the blog?

SHEEHAN: Well, I was too busy to keep up with it for a while, but I started it back up.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): When you said hate mail, are you still getting it?

SHEEHAN: That's really slowed down because not many people have my e-mail address, but for some reason, they got it. I didn't have any hate mail until I came back this time. I hadn't had hate mail for a long, long time. I don't know how they got my e-mail address. Yesterday, I got one that said, "Thrown the bitch in the ditch."

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): I'm curious as to how this happens. There are U-Haul trucks, food aplenty, all of the base equipment, and everything. How does all of that come about?

SHEEHAN: I think that the Peace House handles everything. They've been asking for money for this for a few weeks, you know, on different websites and things like that. Yeah, the Peace House got lots of money during the first Camp Casey. They finished with over a \$100,000 after they paid for everything. They're the ones who paid for the tents, for the supplies. It was all through grassroots.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): You must have a huge cell phone bill. I knew last time you were constantly on the phone.

SHEEHAN: Well, my cell phone bill gets paid through my organization, Gold Star Families for Peace, because I have one personal cell phone and then I have my interview/business cell phone. They pay for my interview and personal cell phone.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): What about back home?

SHEEHAN: I have two daughters and a son.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): You spent Thanksgiving with them?

SHEEHAN: Yeah, I left Thanksgiving morning to come here.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Was that a nice break?

SHEEHAN: Yeah, it was. I was home from Sunday to Thursday, so I got to sleep three nights in my own bed. (laughs) That's the longest I stayed in my own bed. (laughs) But then Wednesday night I spent the night with my daughter.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): How are they with this?

SHEEHAN: They're doing a lot better.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Was it hard the first time, just them getting used to you being—

SHEEHAN: Well, it went from nothing to overwhelming in the space of a couple of days. My daughters were in Europe when it started, so they didn't get the brunt of it that my husband and son did. It was like literally people camping out on the front yard waiting for them to come out of the house.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Really?
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Cindy Sheehan



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Interview With Cindy Sheehan

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SHEEHAN: Yeah, and that's not right.

ICONOCLAST (Nathan Diebenow): Who were they?

SHEEHAN: It was the media. They really were like vultures. I felt bad for them because they're not the ones down here.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): So you weren't expecting this kind of stuff?

SHEEHAN: Oh, hell no. Heck no. Not at all.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): What about now? Do you expect that it will continue to grow? Or do you think that the anti-war movement has leveled off?

SHEEHAN: No, no, I think the momentum is growing upward. Definitely upward.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): There was a gentleman at the Peace House talking about you considering running for president. Is that something that's in the works?

SHEEHAN: For me? No. Oh, no. There's a lot of people that want me to. People want me to run for Senate against Hillary Clinton. A lot of people want me to run against Diane Feinstein, but I've spent a lot of time in D.C. and those people don't do anything. I'm not like that. I'm an active person. (laughs)

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Well, what do you want to do?

SHEEHAN: No, I'm not going to run for anything because I think I'm more effective not in the system because you can actually do things, and look at what's been happening since August. It's incredible, and I don't think this stuff would have been happening if we didn't have Camp Casey.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): Do you think you had anything to do with Rep. Murtha coming out for the six-month withdrawal of our troops in Iraq?

SHEEHAN: A lot of people said that it was Camp Casey. When he did that, I got an e-mail from somebody close to him that said, you know, you gave him the courage. Some people said I gave Henry Reid the courage for what he did, but it's not me. It's me with millions of Americans. Look at the polls. The poll numbers are hard to ignore.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): So it's not that you're speaking to him. It's the people in his district.

SHEEHAN: I'm speaking to America and America is the one that is pushing the representatives.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): So it's a grassroots fight.

SHEEHAN: Yeah, of course. People always say, "Do you want to talk to the president?" And I say, "No, because I don't think anybody could ever change his mind or make him change course."

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): But you believed that originally.

SHEEHAN: Oh, no, I never believed that. I did it to call attention to the fact that he's lying, and that there's people in this country that know he's lying. I never really expected him to meet with me. I had a tiny bit of hope. (laughs) I still do. It's not over until the fat lady sings.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): So we pull out tomorrow. What then?

SHEEHAN: Well, we stay involved in the peace movement, and make sure this doesn't happen again. We make sure our leaders represent us and our values. There's a whole lifetime to stay

involved. Every time we've had relevant change in this country, it's come from the bottom up. It doesn't come from the top.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): Let me ask you this. You're the second Catholic that has stirred up a lot of stuff here in Crawford. I don't know if you remember Michael Moore coming down here with his movie Fahrenheit 9/11.

SHEEHAN: Did Michael Moore actually come down?

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): No, he didn't, and I would say you have more balls than Michael Moore because you came down here twice. Do you think that females are more or better activists than males in politics or do you think it has more to do with money? I mean, let's face it, Michael Moore has a lot more cash than you do, at least when you started last August.

SHEEHAN: I definitely think that women are much stronger and not afraid to be strong, and to me, it's a mother thing. It's like, you know, I don't have anything to be afraid of and I'm not afraid of anything because I've already experienced the worst thing that could happen to anybody. I buried my son, so anything else after that, I just keep things in perspective.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Tell me your thoughts on how your presence has disrupted the lives of the people of Crawford. I mean, how do you feel about that?

SHEEHAN: Is it disrupting their lives? We're here. We're not bothering anybody. We're not noisy or rude or anything. August was probably the best month they ever had at the stores here.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): I mean, more of the people outside of town.

SHEEHAN: Well, I think, for instance, when we had to leave the triangle earlier, we found out that that lady doesn't really own it. I believe that if there wasn't any pressure from over there (pointing to the Bush Ranch), we could get along great with our neighbors. We've had a lot of the neighbors come over here and welcome us and thank us for what we're doing.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Crawford residents?

SHEEHAN: Yeah, I mean, somebody that lives five miles down the road came here to meet us and thank us for what we're doing. We have tons of Crawford people come out here last time, you know?

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): You'd say more than opposed you?

SHEEHAN: I don't know. I don't know about that, but I just know that we at first had an adversarial relationship with the sheriff and then ... it really hasn't been a problem. People do go by and yell things, but it's mostly kids.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): But you're in a rural area, and people aren't used to the activity and a line of port-o-potties.

SHEEHAN: Well, when the people say that want me to leave, I say, "Well, then get the president to meet with me." This is private property, and we've leased it for a year.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Who is responsible for installing the electric and water? I know that he said he was willing to do that but he couldn't pay for it.



CINDY SHEEHAN (right) is interviewed by the Iconoclast's Deborah Mathews (left) and Dr. Gene Ellis (center), along with Nathan Diebenow, who took this photo, during breakfast Saturday morning.

SHEEHAN: I don't know. Talk to the Peace House. I didn't know we had electric and water. We should live here. (laughs) I can put my trailer here. I'll just have to order my groceries online. I could never go to town. (laughs)

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Do you not feel that that's a hindrance as much as anything? I mean, don't you want a

little bit of privacy from us right here in your face? Would you not like a minute to eat your breakfast and be left alone?

SHEEHAN: I get lots of those. I think working and doing whatever we can to bring attention to the war is the most important thing.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): I under
Continued On Next Page



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Interview With Cindy Sheehan

Continued From Page 12

stand, but it feels like you don't have your own life anymore, that no matter how you break this down you're a celebrity. You're known throughout the world. We've got people calling from across the country: "How do we get in contact with Cindy?"

SHEEHAN: I could live for all of next year in Europe and Asia. They really want me to.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Are you going to that?

SHEEHAN: I'm going to do some of the important things here and there. I've been invited to speak in front of the European Union Congress in March. I can't spend a whole year.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): Who pays for that?

SHEEHAN: They do. Now, see, that's the thing. Whenever I travel anywhere, they pay for my travel.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): How available are you to just anybody? You said a neighbor stopped by. He can come up right to you?

SHEEHAN: This time is so much better. I have more time to stay and talk to everybody. Last time I felt so bad because people were coming to see me and I hardly had any time to meet with the people who came. I mean, when there were thousands of people here the last day, it became a security issue. We don't frisk everybody. We don't make people walk through metal detectors here.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): Have you ever felt your life threatened? You mentioned that you had two negative reactions, but do you ever feel like you going to be knifed or something?

SHEEHAN: It's been weird, like in D.C. on Sept. 24, I was crushed. I couldn't even move. I was a little worried there. I did have four bodyguards, and the head of that group said he could have used 20. Nothing happened, but I almost got my arm ripped off by Jesse Jackson. He was pulling my arm, and he wouldn't let go, and people were moving me that way, and I'm screaming, "My arm! My arm!"

ICONOCLAST (all): (laughs)

SHEEHAN: So I just thought, "Well, I can't really do anything about it." Sometimes I think that I'm really vulnerable, but you can't worry about it. I was speak-

ing last week and my son was there, and somebody asked, "Are you afraid for your life?" I looked at him and I said, "I don't want to die. I don't really want to put my family through this, but I'm not afraid."

There were a couple times, too, when my guys mostly from Iraqi Veterans Against the War said, "Cindy, This is very weird. You need to go back into town. Don't stay here tonight. They couldn't say why they felt weird, but I just tell them, "I don't want anything to happen to me, but I don't want to lose you, but just think that if something happens to me, I'll be with Casey, and we'll be waiting for you."

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): You must have met so many different kinds of people. Tell me about that.

SHEEHAN: It's hard to really now look at somebody and know what their politics are or whatever. In the summertime, I'd be at Camp I and these old people would come up dressed in red, white, and blue.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): I interviewed this woman last August here and she said, "I can still be patriotic, and I am, and I can still believe what is happening here."

SHEEHAN: That is the thing. We are patriotic, and we really are the true patriots, just because we don't dress up in red, white, and blue, but you know, at D.C. on Sept. 24, there were people from all over; but most of them just looked like us. They were all American people. They had babies in baby carriages tell me it was the first protest they had ever been to. It's not what you'd say was a lunatic fringe. This man kept on driving by and he'd say (in a mocking voice), "I wanna be a hippie. I wanna be a peace-loving hippie!" They're just trying to marginalize.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Do you not on some level consider yourself a celebrity?

SHEEHAN: No, I don't really ... Once in a while I just get blown away by a situation like when Daniel Ellsberg and I flew from Oakland to Los Angeles. It's so funny because we're on the airplane and people would go, "Is that Cindy Sheehan?"

ICONOCLAST (all): (laughs)

SHEEHAN: And then that day, we

were over at Jodie's House in Venice, and I was sitting on the back porch, checking my e-mail, just chatting with Daniel Ellsberg and Tom Hayden. We're talking about politics and the war and everything, and I'm talking like I really have something to contribute, and they're listening. (laughs) All of a sudden, I just got a little dizzy, going "Whoa! I am sitting on my friend's porch with Daniel Ellsberg and Tom Hayden. You know, this is not real."

You know, I majored in History, and I just want to go back and tell all my professors about all the stuff that is going on and who I got to meet. I want to go back to my high school reunion and go, "Ha!"

ICONOCLAST (all): (laughs)
DEDE MILLER: The only other notable one is Chris Carter who created the X-Files.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): (To Cindy) He was in your class?

SHEEHAN: No, him and DeDe were in the year after me. They're starting to have the reunion together. But I had a friend of mine joke with me. He goes, "Yeah, I bet in your senior yearbook under your picture, it says, 'Cindy Miller: Most Likely To Grow Up To Be Cindy Sheehan.'"

ICONOCLAST (all): (laughs)
MILLER: And she was the shy one.

SHEEHAN: I was not shall you say "motivated" in high school.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): The response I had gotten from most people was they were taken aback by your demeanor; that you are natural and normal.

SHEEHAN: Yeah, no matter how much they try to paint me, "Liberal" or "Left."

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Did you find yourself losing focus here last August?

SHEEHAN: No, but for a short time, I thought I was out of control.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Did you have people pushing you?

SHEEHAN: I was so busy. Yeah. I was running around and I had Michelle from Fenton say, "Don't say this."

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): From Fenton?

SHEEHAN: It was the publicist company that MoveOn.org paid for to come out. I didn't have time to think about it, and when I had time to think about it, I said, "It's time to bring the troops home now."

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): That's right. MoveOn has a totally different approach to ending the war than you do.

SHEEHAN: Yeah, MoveOn stopped supporting me when I wouldn't support Dennis Kucinich's resolution. They are very middle of the road. They kind of go with the DLC (Democratic Leadership Council) approach to things.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): Right, the DLC are the Democrats that take corporate money.

SHEEHAN: I struggle with them all the time.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): What about now? Is it just volunteers that are coordinating?

SHEEHAN: Dede is our only full-time paid employee.

MILLER: I do fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants P.R.

SHEEHAN: I really could use a professional P.R. director. We have somebody, she works hourly, like if she writes a press release, she charges us \$50. We really could use the money to hire not only somebody who does press releases, but someone who can help us plan. This summer, it was really sophisticated and coordinated. It's a little bit easier now, too, because I've been through all the smears.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Are you expecting that anymore?

SHEEHAN: What are they going to say? I'm a traitor? Or that I'm anti-Semitic? (laughs) They've already said all that crap. Somebody said last night, "If you run for office, you've already been through all the smearing." (laughs)

ICONOCLAST (Dr. Gene Ellis): Now, Bush is at the ranch, so have you encountered the Secret Service?

SHEEHAN: Well, the Secret Service was really heavy when we got arrested. I don't understand why they were. Why were they out there?

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): I don't know, but they were there before the county was there. They were there an hour at least before the county guys showed up.

SHEEHAN: I'm really interested in finding out about the triangle because that day when they pushed us out of there, they said it was private property. I told them, "You can't tell me that yesterday it was county property, and today it's private property because this is the street that the President of the United

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Interview With Cindy Sheehan

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States drives on. You can't tell me you don't know who owns every inch of this property." They apparently think we're stupid, that we have to go along — actually, we had to go along. There was nothing we could do about it, but I never believed that.

I've seen so much evidence of pressure from the White House. The people who live next door to the triangle toward Crawford, they were so nice and then all of a sudden they turned and had these big signs in their yard. And then Gary Cross. One day he's my best friend, telling me he loves me, and the next day, I'm another evil person.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): And that's caused by the White House.

SHEEHAN: Directly, indirectly, you know I think all the attacks were, of course, generated from Karl Rove. And they always are. The Right have their talking points. It's very interesting that something happens that egregious in the war and the next day, every single right wing person talks about the bird flu. (laughs) It's like they've have their little directors telling them what to say, and people who track them see that they are all talking about the same thing every day. I'm sure all these smears and about-faces come from the White House, not directly, but indirectly. That's how they work.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): But what about the local people who were getting a little tired of the vigil.

SHEEHAN: I'm talking about the dramatic changes.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): But there are some grievances that locals have like Larry Matlaga and the portable toilets.

SHEEHAN: That's not really true because he hates George Bush. You know, he rode with (VANITY FAIR magazine). He wasn't a dramatic twist.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Well, Larry said he was worried that he would run over a dog or a kid on the road. He said he didn't want to live in the country and see toilets.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): To me, it goes back to the lawsuit the demonstrators fought over the new no-parking laws out here. The citizens here wanted the law, they said, for their protection.

SHEEHAN: Were the citizens ever in danger? Don't dogs run around in the country? We were very careful. We stayed out of the road. We cooperated with the sheriff. We tried to make everybody as safe as possible. I apologized for all that, but I said, "Why don't you ask your neighbor to meet with me? I won't stop the war. I didn't lie to the American people. Somebody has to hold him accountable, and I am uncomfortable everyday of my life. There's tens of thousands of people in this world who he's made uncomfortable. These people want to support him and have a war, but they don't want to be uncomfortable. You know, fuck them. For me, it's an issue of stopping murder.

ICONOCLAST (Diebenow): So you're also talking about sacrifice.

SHEEHAN: This country is not asked to sacrifice anything, and there are over 2,100 families that have been ask to pay too much for the lives.

ICONOCLAST (Mathews): Do you believe that there really are 2,100 dead U.S. soldiers?

SHEEHAN: It's probably more but people say 9,000, but I can't say that because it's not substantiated. I know it's more than 2,100. So they have to drive a little bit slower for a couple of weeks. So they have to look at port-o-potties for a couple of weeks. I have to live my life with a whole life for the rest of my life. We tried to be the best neighbors we could be. We're very cognizant that we were disrupting these people's lives.

Leges Must Fix School Tax System By June, Or Else

AUSTIN — The Texas Legislature has until June 1 to fix the state's unconstitutional public school financing structure, ruled the Texas Supreme Court in a 7-1 decision last Tuesday, or the state must cease funding its 1,037 public school districts.

The local school property tax rate cap is a make-shift state property tax and therefore unconstitutional, but the financial inequality among the school districts is not, according to the state's highest court.

Gov. Rick Perry, pleased that current funding levels are constitutional, plans to call a special session of the Legislature after the March primary elections. Lawmakers were surprised with the court's do-it-or-else ruling, though they applauded their new deadline and the court's nod to get the job done.

With no Supreme Court mandate during its last regular session and two special sessions this year, the Legislature remained deadlocked on proposals to cut school property taxes and raise state sales taxes, while only minimally increasing districts' funding. School districts and business groups opposed such proposals that only modestly increased funding and increased taxes.

Top lawmakers have already promised to not raise the tax rate cap while cutting property taxes. Heads of property poor school districts still worry that revenue streams will remain dry, and their districts will continue to be short changed, even as the state's share-the-



wealth program dubbed "Robin Hood" is still on the books.

Lawyers for the property poor districts say that the court's ruling leaves the door open, however, for more lawsuits that attempt to force the Legislature to provide an adequate level of

funding for all districts.

Public education in Texas accounts for about \$33 billion a year, mostly through local property taxes and state aid. Texas ranks in the bottom third of U.S. states in spending per student with more than \$7,000 per pupil.

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The Greatest Insult In The War In Iraq

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "Most politicians know what's good for you. Some way or 'nother it always seems to go along with what's good for them."

Yet another demonstration, with its attendant celebrities, carefully choreographed spontaneous outrage and orchestrated arrests, has departed the world's most exclusive dude ranch.

Welcome to Crawford, Mr. Ambassador. Here's your complimentary colonial cowboy hat.

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Very highly defined. Look for it in the comedy section. I mean, did they have a script?

OFFICER: Freeze! You, traitorous leftist vermin, are under arrest for violation of the divinely inspired McLennan County Bor' Ditch Ordinance, to wit: Constraining our beloved Lord President to unavoidably view, observe and otherwise acknowledge those who would intentionally and with malice aforethought malign, denigrate and demean his august (and Thanksgiving holiday) policies and procedures against the peace and dignity of the State of Texas.

DEMONSTRATOR 1: This must not be in a land of freedom and home of the entitlement.

DEMONSTRATOR 2: See how I resist you, Gestapo-like running dog of the oppressive racist, sexist, homophobic, privileged class... Okay, cut. Listen, can we re-shoot that as a two-shot? The close-up doesn't work for me. I'm just not getting my motivation without an antagonist in the scene.

OFFICER: How about a pan? A two-shot will show you're taller than me.

DEMONSTRATOR 1: Can we do this after lunch? I'm hyperglycemic.

It was, as billed, a demonstration.

How to establish a court challenge to a First Amendment issue.

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Hardly a revolution.

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Oh, yeah.

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War feeds on blood and sorrow.

The only way to stop it is to drown it in pain and grief.

Pain and grief don't happen on schedule.

Thing is, the Fascist-Republicans have used blood more effectively than the comfortably reasoned opposition.

They have an all-volunteer military to play for suckers, and the vast majority of us don't hurt when they do.

So it's easy to praise their sacrifice.

As long as most of us don't have to do any sacrificing.

And most of our warriors will, of course, praise their own war effort.

Nobody wants to die for a political scheme.

Fear that one is going in harm's way on a fool's errand could be fatal.

Nor are they on such an errand.

At least not for them.

It is a melancholy fact that American soldiers have hardly had the notoriety their efforts should demand.

As it has ever been.

It is better to live in Bonn today than

Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



in 1937.

They are protecting Iraqis from traditional smoldering animosities and creating amenities previously unknown, from sewerage to elections, however corrupt in the installation.

An overpriced toilet is better than a hole in the ground.

A rigged election is, at least, some kind of sovereignty.

This presidency was stolen at the ballot boxes of Florida and Ohio.

Want to cancel future elections because the last two didn't work?

American khaki brings a way of life, a culture that is the envy of most of the world, whether the rest of the world really wants to admit it.

They bring it in the same way they brought it to the natives of this continent or any other people we have conquered or fought.

Tools against the struggle to survive were, historical revisionists to the contrary, met with greedy acceptance.

But for every iron pot, warm blanket or sharp knife, there went a piece of their tradition, their thinking, their soul.

Not to mention their lives.

I remember a conversation with the late Chief Dan George in which he said Native Americans readily took the scholarships, vocational training, housing, or any other assistance from the government, but that they are not grateful.

Those were not gifts, not charity.

They paid for them with their culture, their land, and their lives.

So now are the people of Iraq paying the same wages.

We should remember those American soldiers and their allies have killed more than five times as many Iraqi civilians as have suicide bombers.

Are we committing "atrocities?"

God, I hope so.

Against a faceless enemy, if there is any doubt about who is who, only a fool begrudges a grunt his decision to light up the night and come home alive.

But getting through one day to the next, there should be no question that individual American soldiers are striving for decency.

It does not matter, in that sense, that the Fascist Republicans only want the oil.

What we leave will be no worse than what Iraq had.

We, and they, will have paid the butcher's bill that was being tallied before Xerxes.

For some Iraqis it will be better.

For most it will simply be different.

It is not that American soldiers will not leave nobility and compassion in their wake.

It's that they can do the same in almost any direction on the compass.

So why there?

We want the oil.

And this government is sending a clear Persian message from Maracaibo to Masulé.

We want it all.

Perhaps that is the greatest insult of all to those who go up to the line each day.



Editorial OP/ED Opinion - Columns - Letters

— Editorial —

Tax Reform Commission Actually Governor Contributors Who's Who

It was ballyhooed as a bipartisan commission appointed by Governor Rick Perry to draft a new state tax system for the good of the state.

When it came time for appointments, the blanks were filled with the names of political contributors.

According to a copyrighted article in THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE, when the dust had settled, the appointees included "several who directly or through associates have given him (Perry) almost \$1.4 million during the past five years."

The list includes big business and oil, along with individuals with insider political connections. Strangely missing are educators and economists, not to mention representation from labor.

The blue-ribbon commission is actually a blue-blood commission, exempt of input from the group that really matters the most and could offer the most — grassroots educators.

Perry's attachment to political machinery, and political chicanery, is exactly what this state does not need. Playing political games with our children's educations is a vile endeavor to which he is an addict, and the latest revelation as to how this "demission" is structured reveals aces and eights.

For a long time, state government has been owned by lobbyists. As long as Texans keep electing the same tricksters over and over, this will not change. And, in the interim, our children will continue to suffer.

— W. Leon Smith



Workin' the Propaganda RailRoad

The Rove/Bush Propaganda Spinmeisters have my head reeling.

Last week anyone who dared to publicly disagree with the current Fascist Regime was essentially a traitor.

According to the Rove/Bush/Cheney talking points, Democrats were giving that gift that keeps on giving, "aid and comfort to the enemy."

It was wrong to question the veracity of the Stepford president, seated in the Oval Office through deceit in the first place.

Therefore, by doctoring yet more facts, George W. Bush accused some Senate Democrats, and former duly-elected Presidents, of re-writing history in our own time.

While accepting no accountability for any possible errors in judgment, Bush #43 spent over a week tossing the responsibility for all of America's Middle East troubles into the laps of these aforementioned Democrats and Bill Clinton.

You remember Bill, the last real President? He chose to keep Saddam Hussein contained rather than invade Iran and slaughter tens of thousands of innocent people in a ludicrous effort to locate WMDs that existed only in the dreams of Neo-con fanatics.

It was bad enough that Duck-and-Cover Georgie chose to slam his political opponents, among them numerous decorated veterans, on Veterans' Day proper and its corresponding day of observation.

He then decided to increase America's embarrassment, packed up the sniping and brought it along with Laura to Asia.

All the while the Dick Cheney, our Five-Deferment VP, snarled his way through speech after speech — usually in front of some Right-wing extremist organization of 1%ers — declaring how these Democrats are "opportunists."

Like it's any of *their* companies making billions in no-bid contracts (can you say Halliburton)?

Good gravy, I love the Dick's vile wording, because the reality of it is the adjectives all apply to him. He calls the Dems' accusations of White House perversions of the truth in its rush to invade Iraq "dishonest and reprehensible," a political stratagem.

The Five-Deferment VP actually said that Dems were utilizing "cynical and pernicious falsehoods" — using the deaths of our troops in Iraq for political advantage.

(You think maybe the Dick got to use these particular adjectives because Georgie was confused by their multi-syllabic pronunciations and meanings?)

The Nixon White House provided us with a lot to dislike, distrust, even hate. When the Trickster finally packed up and went back to California, still in denial of his personal black mark on America that shall never be erased, he left behind a bad taste that has yet to go away.

Still, the guy was a statesman, able to accomplish positive reforms and transitions with Congress. Lots of good stuff occurred for the common American during the period, even if Nixon was a slim character.

Dick also knew how to play nice with the other kids on the block, er, Planet.



Out Of The Blue

By
Jerry
Tenuto

He went about making friends, not demands, unlike the current aggravator of world leaders.

Even Spiro Agnew's misdeed was a mere tax-evasion case based upon a paltry \$29,500 in bribes he accepted as Governor of Maryland. Hardly worth the effort, and it sure didn't result in people dying. Plus he seemed like a pleasant enough fellow. (Poor Spiro later said Dick threw him to the IRS as an attempt to deflect attention from his own problems.)

Yes, the Nixonites attacked his detractors. He had his infamous "Enemies List." They came up with all forms of conceptual methodologies to discredit or do away with those who disagreed with policy, such as columnist Jack Anderson.

The U.S. Air Force was tapped to monitor communications of unsuspecting citizens who may or may not have been engaged in some activity of which the White House did not approve. (Nobody would have suspected the USAF of being engaged in such a nefarious operation.)

However, duly-elected members of Congress were never called names, nor was it suggested that they silently kowtow to whatever demands emanated from the West Wing.

When the Dick Cheney, the erroneously empowered Five-Deferment VP, starts giving the Senate public lessons on how to conduct its business, the time has come for regime change.

Because the Fascists are already in our White House.

We really don't need them in the Legislature.

So, just as all this vitriol was proving to be detrimental to the Bush #43 cause, Georgie changed his song.

Sort of.

Thus the headlines I read in three different and varied newspapers on Monday, Nov.21, said the same thing: Bush eases his attacks on critics. I'm paraphrasing, of course, from THE WASHINGTON POST, THE NEW YORK TIMES, and THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES.

Even the British papers had similar reports, but they're somewhat more insightful and don't buy the horse dung quite as readily.

Of course, it was all smoke and mirrors.

Just as Nixon did with Agnew (ever so temporarily), every time the heat begins to get turned up on the Bush #43 White House Cabal, Rove maneuvers a distraction into the camera's eye.

This day, Nov. 22, 2005, following 1,292 days in captivity (three years, six months, two weeks, and three days) without being formally charged, U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales announced the Department of Justice had taken over the prosecution of Jose Padilla from the military.

The excuse was that the military fi-

nally admitted it had no jurisdiction over Padilla, a civilian U.S. citizen.

Wow! It only took them three-and-a-half years of solitary confinement to figure that out!

The initial charges were something like trying to build a dirty bomb and blow up several apartment buildings.

The Government never could prove those charges, but the Bush #43 Regime had declared Padilla, aka Abdullah el-Muhajir since converting to Islam, an "enemy combatant."

He was originally detained by the FBI in May, 2002 at O'Hare Airport, Chicago, as a "material witness" and transferred to New York.

The day prior to a court appearance contesting his incarceration on those grounds, George W. Bush determined Padilla was a "grave threat" to national security, and he's been locked away ever since.

An American citizen whose right to a fair and reasonable hearing was just whooshed away on a whim.

Georgie must have been concerned the Court would have been one of them pesky activist judges, someone who may have used wisdom and common sense.

Well, since none of the original charges had any basis in fact, Padilla is a civilian, and a citizen, let the DOJ come up with some charges.

Besides, there just happens to be a petition pending before the Supremes questioning the Constitutional legality of holding people such as Padilla under the blanket designation "enemy combatants" through accusations only, while not leveling any viable charges.

You could hand the ball to Jim Brown and it couldn't be more obvious this was an end run around that petition to save face for the White House Fascists.

Now, Gonzales has heaped 11 counts onto the Padilla indictment, stemming back some years with four others — Canadian national Kassem Daher, Adham Hassoun, Mohamed Youssef and Kifah Jayyousi: "Conspiracy to murder, kidnap and maim persons in a

foreign country... for the purpose of opposing existing governments and civilian factions and establishing Islamic states under Sharia (Islamic law), and material support for terrorism..."

According to Gonzales, the five are allegedly members of a violent terrorist support cell that operated in the United States and Canada.

So this was known to the DOJ for some time. Kind of shady timing-wise that it waited until last Thursday to get a grand jury indictment.

Then, they're making Padilla wait nearly another year (September, 2006) for his trial to begin.

Why all the delays?

I am in no way going to go out on a limb and say Jose Padilla is a model dude. He's been known to have some gang association. He's done hard time.

From all appearances he's not the most glowing candle on the Menorah.

Apparently he's one of these people who's never found a place to "fit in," and the most recent stop seems to have not just Islam but, if you can believe the DOJ, al Qaeda — more specifically, one of its hate-training camps.

That's still no excuse for any American, or any human being, to spend one thousand, two hundred, ninety-two days in captivity — *in solitary confinement* — because George W. Bush decrees it shall be so.

Without any opportunity to defend himself in court.

Then, to be charged and told he will still be incarcerated another 10 months before his trial even begins.

And on the 42nd Anniversary of the Murder of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.


The Cabal has respect for nothing or no one.

George W. Bush, you and your scuzbucket cronies have brought the most foul of blights upon our Great Nation.

Nov. 22, 2005: Day 1806 of AMERICA HELD HOSTAGE by the Karl Rove-led Neo-con Fascist Regime that overtook our White House and Executive Branch.

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What Are You Thankful For?

Ah, another Thanksgiving, another cliché column topic. What are you thankful for? I am certain you have already glanced across 20 headlines with the very phrase – if you are a news junkie like I am, anyway. Oh, and if you did not notice, I have changed the title of this column to *The Webster Retort*. It was the feeling of the staff that a new moniker would allow more perceived freedom of topic. So be it.

Last week, the Republican congress gave its self a pay raise and cut taxes for the upper class. The Administration also threatened to veto a bill increasing taxes on oil companies. As if supporting torture were not bad enough. They already struck down an increase in the current minimum wage. I have lived on minimum wage. It is not easy, and the winters are colder than I can tell you. So thanks Republicans. Another slice of the pie is on the Democrat's plate for 2006. Warm, steaming, Impeachment Pie.

As for Democrats, I am thankful the party of quiet dissent is finally getting around to unfinished business, albeit three years too late. By the time you read this, I am certain you will have been exposed to at least five misrepresentations of Democrat John Murtha's recent suggestion on Iraq. First of all, Murtha is a veteran of the Marine Corps. He gave 37 years of his life in service to this country. After fighting in Vietnam, he was awarded a bronze star, two purple hearts, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. Without knowing *anything* else of this man, he draws immense respect from everyone, and rightfully so. I am thankful for his service, and the service of all our veterans and soldiers.

I am not happy to see the smear machine wind up once again. I am just waiting for Rove to screw up again and accidentally reveal confidential information in an attempt to crush Murtha. He did the same thing to Joe Wilson, a man Bush Sr. called a "hero." The trend of smear, I believe, is to misrepresent the other side's argument to cement people against something, rather than being for something. This is rampant on both sides of the isle.

John Murtha relies on the realistic leadership of our military commanders on the ground in Iraq. "General Casey said in a September 2005 Hearing, "the perception of occupation in Iraq is a major driving force behind the insurgency," explained Murtha. "General Abizaid said on the same date, "Reducing the size and visibility of the coalition forces in Iraq is a part of our counterinsurgency strategy." Diplomacy, he says, and international involvement will bring Iraq the democracy and peace it deserves.

So, if what Murtha has called for is what the armed forces are already doing, why all the Outrage and Insanity? Because of the Republican bill demanding an immediate withdraw of our presence in Iraq. Murtha suggests the president bring 160,000 soldiers home "at the earliest predictable date." The Republicans then rushed out legislation which offered another alternative, that "the deployment of United States forces in Iraq be terminated immediately." The bill was struck down by both parties, and for good reason. It was intended to be.

Political opportunism is an ugly thing. It has long been a pastime of Republicans and Democrats. Regardless, Murtha is a man of honor, intelligence and experience who deserves to have his opinion



The Webster Retort

By Stephen Webster

seriously considered. He is not the "coward" that Ohio Republican Jean Schmidt said he is. While Cheney waited for confirmation of his five deferments, and Bush was AWOL from the Texas Air National Guard working on a political campaign of all things, Murtha was staring the horror of man's folly in the face.

Meanwhile, the only people affected by this war are the soldiers and their families. As George Washington said, "To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace." Okay, so Murtha said that, too. They were both right, and Bush was wrong. Still is. I am thankful for John Murtha's dissent.

But with all of the politics and Killing and Maiming and Death, I am thankful I can still be with those I love. I am particularly thankful for my beautiful fiancée Alison, who made it possible for me to be here today.

Mahalo.

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Evidence Links Nacho-Flavored Doritos And Crazy Squirrels



By Ned Hickson
Siuslaw News

Several years ago while visiting the Grand Canyon, my chance to enjoy one of the world's greatest natural wonders was marred by an unprovoked squirrel attack. Anyone who's been there can tell you that the park is completely over run by hordes of crazed, hyperactive squirrels. It's gotten so bad that the park service installed coin-operated food dispensers, the idea being that tourists could feed the squirrels while remaining blissfully unaware that the pellets were, in effect, simply a diversion meant to save their lives.

The problem is that the squirrels are now SICK of these pellets, which tourists still purchase, but now hurl directly at the squirrels while fleeing back to their cars. In most cases, they never get to see the Grand Canyon at all, choosing instead to escape by turning their windshield wipers on high and dislodging enough squirrels to navigate their way into the nearest Sequoia patch.

(Movie note: Thelma & Louise originally ended with them eluding the police, then tragically plunging into the Grand Canyon in a hail of gun fire, food pellets, and flailing squirrels.)

I bring this up because of an e-mail I received from Janet Blevons of Kalamazoo Mich., who sent me an Associated Press news story headlined:

Squirrel terrorizes Town

According to the article, residents of Brixton, England are living in fear following several attacks from "rogue squirrels" that are apparently attracted to (and who isn't) nacho-flavored Doritos.

This proves what I've known since that fateful day at the Grand Canyon — which is that squirrels can't be trusted.

I know what you're thinking:

As long as I stay away from Doritos, I won't become a victim.

I'd like to say yes.

But the fact is, I'd probably be sued by Frito-Lay.

Besides, there were no taco chips involved when a wet squirrel leaped

into a 10,000-volt power station in France, knocking out electricity to 5,000 homes and causing hundreds of injuries as French residents, in a wide-spread panic, all rushed into the streets at the same time to surrender.

Scare tactic, or stupid squirrel?

We'll never know for sure.

What I do know is that if you're serious about protecting yourself and the ones you love, then it's time to start thinking about wolf urine. That's right. For some reason, squirrels really hate this stuff. There are several ways to go about obtaining it. For the frugal-minded who refuse to pay in-store prices, there's always the option of going out and getting it yourself. Needless to say, this presents several challenges, including — but not limited to — being eaten alive.

Another option is to leave urine gathering to the professionals and simply purchase one of the many squirrel repellents now available without a 10-day waiting period. One such product is Shake-Away, which only sounds like a new weight-loss program.

Actually, it's a repellent made from dried fox urine that supposedly offers 6,000 square feet of protection in each 20-ounce bottle. Since the product is all-natural, it's completely non-toxic, which means it can be sprinkled around gardens, doorways, or even directly onto things you wish to protect.

Nacho-flavored Doritos lovers, you're way ahead of me.

(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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The Governor's "Same Ol' Dirty" Clothes

It's about time that the people of Texas view the REAL Governor Rick Perry for the incompetent, special interest "sidewinder" he is. Once again, like the Portuguese Blowfish, when backed into a [political] corner after hearing the findings of the Texas Supreme Court on school finance, the governor puffed-up his chest and proclaimed in his 11/22 Press Statement he's been on the side of Texas families all along — and THAT, fellow Texans, *is a blatant lie.*

As recently as *three* years ago (2002) when questioned about it, the governor stated emphatically that there was no school crisis regarding the financing and well-being of the Texas Public School system. Two years later, finally after agreeing that there was a crisis, he promised Texas taxpayers to replace the inadequate school financing system and to decrease the sky-rocketing cost of home property taxes. History shows that during Perry's five-year tenure as governor, virtually nothing positive has been accomplished for the Texas community on the issues of school financing and property taxes.

The Governor's Business Council and the Texas Association of Business, headed by CEO Bill Hammond, both tried to persuade legislators to INCREASE classroom size [as a means to cut costs] and to develop a school voucher system [to enable parents who could afford to send their children to private schools a refund in their paid school taxes that would be transferred directly to the cost of the private school tuition]. *Is that the way to help the education of most Texas children?*

Furthermore, our special interest governor lobbied to deregulate the tuition of higher education, saying that it was to permit competition to reduce tuition for all Texas children. After voting for the deregulation, Texas families saw an *immediate* increase in tuition costs from most higher learning institutions. Currently, another tuition increase has been approved by UT and other institutions.

The governor in his press statement tried to assure Texans that he's on their side, that it's really the legislators who are the bad guys. Then why is it that the primary reform proposed by the Governor in cutting property taxes was to charge an en-



Commentary

By
Peter
Stern

tertainment tax on Gentlemen Clubs throughout the state? *Is that reality-based?*

Also, taxpayers need to ask why the state continues to permit big business to circumvent its responsibility in paying the Business Franchise Tax? Millions in state tax dollars meant to go to financing education are lost in the loophole. While many legislators proposed a change to ensure that business pays its fair share, the governor refused to support the legislation, the reason being that large businesses in Texas pay huge contributions to the Perry's campaign efforts. The governor won't cross them.

Gov. Perry will continue to point the blame finger at legislators; however, with strong leadership the governor could have pressured legislators to do what is right for Texans and their children. He opted NOT to do so.

Truth is that during the past five years Gov. Perry has failed Texas families MANY TIMES, and the 2006 Gubernatorial Election will be PAY-BACK time for tax-paying voters. It's time to get rid of Perry. Currently, the most viable candidate for Governor is current fellow-Republican and Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn. Texans needs a REAL Governor who will do what's right for the entire community, NOT just for special interests!

Peter Stern is a political writer well-known and published frequently throughout the Texas community and nationwide. He holds three post-graduate degrees. During the past seven years Mr. Stern has studied and followed legislative politics in Texas and writes prolifically about various urgent issues and proposed legislation to inform the community without political bias or affiliation. He is a life-time member of the Republican Party but does NOT support the party's current platforms, philosophies and actions. He maintains he is an "intelligent" Republican with a conscience — a minority branch of the ruling party.

The Inbox Is Full

It's time once again to share with you some of the responses I've gotten to recent columns.

In my column about email etiquette, I said, "with apologies to Tivo and the cotton sweater," e-mail might be the greatest invention of the past 50 years.

MARCIA disagreed: "I vote for Viagra."

In my discussion of Daylight Saving Time, I talked about having Daylight Saving Time in the summer when there's already plenty of daylight:

JO ANN — "DST has no real effect on anyone except to annoy the hell out of them when it changes back to standard time. And vice versa."

EDWARD — "If God had intended us to work in daylight, He would have made days differently, and who are these impudent legislators to go about rearranging God's time?"

After results of the President's physical were published, I discussed his calmly low pulse rate and how it worries me that he isn't worried enough about things for it to be at least a little higher. Many people responded. In fact, Rush Limbaugh read my column on his show, and said he didn't know what to make of it. Readers had no problem understanding it:

ROGER: "It is to Bush's credit that he takes his work seriously enough to remain at peak physical condition."

LARRY: "Bush's great health and sharpness has led him to pick a vice president with a bad heart."

GEORGE: "Your article about Bush's heartbeat assumes that he has a heart." I talked about the "Intelligent Design Theory:"

MIKE: "Evolution completely contradicts the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics and cannot be proven, experimented, or repeated."

JOHN: "Thank you for putting into words what so many of us in the scientific field have been feeling for so long. The entire idea behind the "theory" of Intelligent Design is a farce."

KENBET... "Your (column) was wonderful, and so precise. ... But I'm afraid all the religious nuts... will be banging your door down. Thanks for being so brave."

CHRIS: "One day you will believe in the Bible."

MARY: "The bigger question is, how could we possibly have allowed one of these people to run this country? How #*%&@

stupid are Americans?"

I wrote about TV newscasters seeming to only want to talk about extreme or "bad" news:

AMANDA/TERESA: "This is why we turned off our TV about 4 years ago."

CARL: "Am I the only one sick of the morons on the Weather Channel standing outside in a hurricane telling us that you'd have to be an idiot to be there standing in a hurricane?"

I spoke about the movement to allow kids to hunt at a younger and younger age since a growing number of people think having age 12 as a minimum is too old:

EMILY: "As a mother who has always hunted, and now we support my children with hunting, I find your story outrageous.... these parents are spending time with their kids and teaching them along the way. That makes a good parent no matter what the hobby is."

JAMES: "... at the young age some



Modern Times

By
Lloyd
Garver

people are suggesting... no way. And that is the opinion of an outdoorsman/hunter with over 50 years experience."

MARIE: (who had had a gun accident in her family) "Your column today brought tears to my eyes, and my heart aches. ... I only wish more people would read your columns. You have a way of writing which should get some results.... I hope!"

ROBERT: "Fear is a terrible thing, especially coupled with an agenda."

BRIAN: "I hope my two sons can hunt someday, but it's an uphill battle with all the electronic play toys that either their mother brings home, the relatives send us, or the neighbors have."

JOE: "Accidental shooting of kids while hunting is very rare."

DAVID: "If liberals think it's ok for six, seven, and eight-year-olds to be taught about "my two dads" in public school under the guise of diversity, then it should be okay for conservatives to teach six, seven, and eight-year-olds about gun safety and hunting."

PAUL: I just read your article and have changed my mind. I was waiting until my boy turned 12 to take him hunting, now I know he is ready now!"

As I noted here recently, I got more emails on my column about the "English only" movement than on any previous column. However, the next week, when we printed some of your responses to that column, readers broke that record by sending me more responses to the responses to the original "English only" column:

DAPHNE: "I have found that compassion, kindness, and a smile are understood by all humans regardless of culture, native tongue, religion, and color."

REGAN: If we can't speak to one another, we can hardly be friends now, can we?

DC: "I definitely believe people who choose to live in this country should speak English. Think (sic) it is ridiulace (sic) to have schools teach alternative languages."

MARCIA: "I am sick and tired of seeing subtitles everywhere, when I'm in America!"

LIZ...: "Where in the Constitution does it make it mandatory to speak English?"

Philip: "It's bad enough when they enter illegally, but when they go to the store, they should try to speak the language of the country they are breaking into."

Keep reading and keep writing — Lloyd

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

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**LETTERS
TO THE
EDITOR**

To The Editor:

The people of the 12th Congressional District are (and should be) so very proud of our distinguished representative, Jack Murtha. His courage and patriotism are second to none, both militarily and on the floor of the House of Representatives. I was glued to the TV as the recent events concerning the war in Iraq unfolded, watching first on public TV, then switching to C-Span. He received several standing ovations from both sides of the aisle, which was quite an honor, considering the booing and jeers that some other congresspersons prompted.

Amidst a session that was sometimes quite chaotic, each time Congressman Murtha spoke, one could hear a pin drop. It was evident that he has, through the years, gained the total respect and admiration of his colleagues, regardless of their party affiliation. They did not all agree with him, but they certainly do respect him.

Vice President Cheney's comments (accusing Murtha of losing his memory and his backbone) were reprehensible, especially considering that when he was selected by George H.W. Bush as Secretary of Defense in 1989, he told Murtha, "I'm going to need a lot of help. I don't know a blankety-blank thing about defense." It seems as though Cheney is the one who has lost his memory.

I also took exception to Scott McClellan comparing Mr. Murtha to Michael Moore. Although I know nothing of the military record of the White House spokesman, I do know about Cheney's deferments. How dare they question the bravery or patriotism of the most respected member of the U.S. House of Representatives, to say nothing of his long and distinguished military career?

I thank God every day that we have a man of Congressman Murtha's stature representing our district.

Sincerely,

Janet Berkey Vatavuk, Windber, PA
To The Editor:

Cindy Sheehan is the inarticulate and irritating poster girl of the anti-war movement. Her son died in combat, so she now stalks the president in an effort to get our troops out of Iraq. Perhaps her son knew what Cindy fails to understand. As Casey Sheehan and those of us who've served in the armed forces know well, when a man picks up a rifle and stands the watch, he not only gets the perks, college money, training and adventurous travel, but he agrees to help defend this nation.

Soldiering has never been easy and can be a very risky business, but somebody has to do it. If we Iraq leave without accomplishing our national objectives, 2,000 Americans, including Sheehan's son, will have died for *nothing* - exactly like 58,000 American soldiers did in Viet Nam.

Moreover, it would put another stain on our national reputation, cause our allies not to trust us and confirm to radical Islam that, even though they can't beat us militarily, they can make us quit and go home creating greater dangers for us all.

Mrs. Sheehan needs to shut up, go back to her baking, leave national policy and military decisions to more qualified people and be proud of her son's sacrifice regardless of its nature or cause.

Joe Putnam, U.S. Army (Ret)

Letter to the Editor,

One would think that the hometown of

a U.S. President would be a bastion of civil rights. Instead, the home of Bush Jr. is the opposite. Had our forefathers chosen to deny citizens the opportunity to speak in dissent of the government, this would be a very different country indeed, as the majority of our founders were not Christian, but rather Metaphysicians with open minds and hearts. I wonder what Crawford would be like if Christianity had been banned in the United States? I find it deeply disturbing that "W" supports the silencing of thinking that differs from his. I am very grateful that I live as far away from your little, closed minded town as possible. I attach the definition of fascism below.

Fascism

A system of government marked by centralization of authority under a dictator, stringent socioeconomic controls, suppression of the opposition through terror and censorship, and typically a policy of belligerent nationalism and racism. A political philosophy or movement based on or advocating such a system of government. Oppressive, dictatorial control.

Nancy Lee Potter, Maui, Hawaii

To The Editor:

Should Bush be impeached? Consider the latest revelations about Bush's conduct as "Commander in Chief."

According to a Downing Street "Top Secret" Memo, US President George W. Bush planned to bomb the headquarters of Al-Jazeera, an Arab television broadcaster located in Qatar. Reports about the memo published in major newspapers, say that Tony Blair had to dissuade Bush NOT to carry out plans to bomb the headquarters of Al-Jazeera because of their opposition to his war policies.

Quoting an article in the LONDON MIRROR: "The 'Top Secret' memo is explosive and hugely damaging to Bush: Bush made clear he wanted to bomb Al-Jazeera in Qatar and elsewhere. Blair replied that would cause a big problem. There's no doubt what Bush wanted to do — and no doubt Blair didn't want him to do it. Bush was deadly serious, as was Blair. That much is absolutely clear from the language used by both men."

Al-Jazeera was harshly critical of Bush and his war policies. Almost everybody in the Middle East listened and watched as Al-Jazeera again and again accused Bush as the one person responsible for the bombs being dropped on innocent Iraqi civilians. Unquestionably Bush wanted to pull the plug on Al-Jazeera satellite TV broadcasts, and suggested a terrorist strike against them.

If Bush conspired to commit an act of terror to intimidate the Al-Jazeera, and attempted to enlist Blair as a co-conspirator, should he not be brought to account as a terrorist?

I believe that as the public learns more about Bush's lies regarding Iraq's threat to our national security, his wanton disregard of the Geneva Conventions, and his incompetent mismanagement of domestic and foreign affairs, Americans will surely demand his impeachment. However, to impeach Bush, voters must return the Congress to control by Democrats in 2006. Only then, with the Democrats in the majority, will the House of Representatives be able to begin the impeachment process that could be expeditiously completed by the Senate.

To impeach Bush is the right thing to

do!

Harold S Kramer, Marblehead, MA
To The Editor:

I am really getting tired of hearing about cindy sheehan. Why don't she listen to the troops in Iraq they want to finish the job, so they don't have to go back a year later. She needs to quit trying to force her selfish will on the rest of America.

Sure maybe Saddam didn't have anything to do with 9-11 or Al Qaeda, but you can bet your bottom dollar if he could have killed as many americans as he could, he would have.

In case she forgot, Al Qaeda is the group that killed almost 3,000 people for going to work, and that's who we are fighting in Iraq now. You don't have to be real smart to figure that one out. I would rather fight them on their home field as ours.

I am really sorry that she lost a child over in Iraq, but by god she isn't the only one.

I would dare say that her child is embarrassed in heaven that she is trying to make money from a book due to his or her death.

Kyle Miller

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Troop Levels Might Drop After Iraq Election

WASHINGTON — Pentagon officials said last Wednesday that although decisions are not final, about 17,000 of the 155,000 U.S. troops currently stationed in Iraq are planned to be withdrawn from there after the Iraqis vote for their new parliament representatives on Dec. 15.

Another Pentagon plan still under review calls for cuts in troop levels to reach 100,000 in Iraq next summer. There are also options for smaller cuts or for no reductions, according to an anonymous defense official. All plans are based on political and security conditions in Iraq as well as the strength of the Iraqi military.

The Pentagon has fluctuated troop levels since the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003. Before the Iraqis approved their constitution last October, U.S. troop levels increased and peaked to about 161,000.

After months at lower levels, U.S. forces are now once again increasing ahead of the December elections. This also comes at a time when more and more critics of the United States' in-

volvement in Iraq has arisen at home.

Rep. John Murtha (D-Pa.), 73, a former Marine decorated for his service in Vietnam who voted for the war in Iraq, suggested last week that the U.S. should withdraw its forces there in six months. A nonbinding resolution for immediate withdrawal was overwhelmingly voted down in the House, 403-3, and Murtha's GOP critics have since toned down their attacks.

Rep. Jean Schmidt (R-Ohio), who apologized to Murtha after being booed off the House floor for indirectly calling the ranking Democrat on the House Appropriates defense subcommittee a coward, said that her intention was to not personally attack him.

"While I strongly disagree with his policy, ... I ever wished to attack Congressman Murtha," she said in a statement. "I only take exception to his policy position."

The White House, including Vice President Dick Cheney, has praised Murtha's character since spokesman Scott McClellan compared him with

anti-war activist filmmaker Michael Moore.

"He's a good man, a Marine, a patriot — and he's taking a clear stand in an entirely legitimate discussion," said Cheney at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank.

While Murtha says that he has received support for troop withdrawal from the public including e-mails from World War II veterans and parents of

Korean Farmers Turn Violent At Trade Summit

BUSAN, South Korea — Thousands of protestors, mainly farmers, violently expressed their discontent with the recent Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit.

Riot police with water cannons eventually beat back about 300 malcontents attempting to crash the free trade forum armed with bamboo sticks and metal pipes. Injured were at least two protestors, one of which was carried out unconscious, according to one report.

Earlier in the week, two farmers committed suicide after downing weedkiller to protest a decision to open the local rice market to free trade operations. Also, prior to the summit, 12,000 farmers in Seoul fought riot police and chanted anti-U.S. and anti-APEC slogans.

The city of Busan was described by some as a "fortress." About 30,000 police officers and naval forces behind a "security wall" guarded President Bush, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Hu Jintao and the 21 other Asia-Pacific leaders who attended the two-day summit.

At its completion, the leaders released a declaration calling for a quick settlement of negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda, a plan to implement more use of the World Trade Organization.

The WTO and its 130 members are scheduled to convene in Hong Kong the week of Dec. 13-18 to settle DDA negotiations, which have remained locked for two years over the issue of agricultural commodities between poor and rich countries.

American soldiers in Iraq, the defense officials said that decisions on troop levels are not based on political debate.

U.S. military deaths reached 2,108 in Iraq last Wednesday since war began there in March 2003. Those wounded in action include another 15,804 troops, according to the Pentagon.

So far, at least four military personnel from Texas have died in Iraq in November. About 180 have died since March 2003.

Texas Nabs Sony BMG With Spyware Law

AUSTIN — Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott is going after Sony BMG Music Entertainment for installing technology in music CDs that compromises the security of consumers' computers.

The XCP technology, which was the cause for Sony's recall of millions of discs recently, was intended to limit the number of copies a disc could be copied to three.

Abbott's lawsuit accuses Sony BMG of "hiding secret files" on computers that open them to viruses and other security problems.

To prosecute, Abbott is using the state's new anti-spyware law. The term "Spyware" generally refers to programs installed without users' full knowledge and permission, regardless of whether the programs record the users' habits.

Abbott noted that Texas has experienced thousands of violations, each of which could amount up to \$100,000 in damages to the state according to the new law.

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