

CRAWFORD, TEXAS

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ANGEL'S NEST RETREAT of Taos, New Mexico, is the brainchild of Robert Plarr, a veteran sustainable home designer. It serves as a model for Plarr's aspirations to manufacture homes that incorporate cheap and efficient building methods that conserve energy and recycle waste materials such as sewage water.



**O**ur buildings are water resistant, fire resistant, hurricane resistant with these new materials, and if something happens like a power-outage, when you have a sustainable home you're not held hostage by terrorist attacks or natural disasters.'

— Robert Plarr

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# Interrogations, Eavesdropping Get Attention Of Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Both chambers of Congress were busy in the waning days before the pre-election recess. Among the most hotly debated topics were terrorism tribunals and interrogations, along with domestic eavesdropping.

With HR 6166 and S 3930, the House (voting 253-168) and the Senate (voting 48-51) voted to set rules for the interrogation of prisoners in the fight against terrorism, trying suspected terrorists before U.S. military commissions, and dealing with other unlawful enemy combatants who are in the custody of the U.S. but not charged. Opponents of the measure argued that to redefine elements of the Geneva Convention would open the door to other countries to do the

same and could, in effect, nullify the integrity of safeguards regarding prisoners of war.

With both the House and Senate approving a like bill, the measure is awaiting signature by the President to become law.

The Senate declined to establish a right to habeas corpus for terrorism prisoners, on a 48-51 vote.

In the House, a Republican-led charge to put into law President Bush's program of warrantless domestic eavesdropping was approved (232-191). If passed by the Senate after the recess, the law would allow warrantless eavesdropping outside the limits set by the 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) and permit surveillance for 90 days without

warrants. The bill also allows warrants to be issued for broad categories of spying rather than on a case-by-case basis, as is now required.

House Republicans also defeated a Democratic motion for a closed session to consider the latest National Intelligence Estimate on terrorism (voting 171-217), and passed a bill (S. 403) on a 264-153 vote to make it a federal crime to transport a minor across state lines for an abortion to evade a law in her home state that requires parental notification and approval of planned abortions. The bill sets a maximum penalty of \$100,000 in fines and a one-year jail sentence to those providing transportation and for providers who fail to notify parents 24

hours in advance of the procedure. It was noted that the bill would not apply if the abortion is necessary to save the female's life.

Another bill sent to the Senate after House approval was HR 2679 (on a vote of 244-173) that prohibits courts from reimbursing the legal costs of plaintiffs who prevail in lawsuits over taxpayer-funded religious displays.

The House approved, on a 394-22 vote, a bill appropriating \$447.6 billion for the Defense Department in fiscal 2007, including \$70 billion for at least six

months of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. War outlays include \$725 million for body armor, \$1.5 billion for countering roadside bombs, and \$5.6 billion for fully armored tactical vehicles. The appropriation brings the total expenditure approvals for Iraq and Afghanistan battles to at least \$397 billion since Sept. 11, 2001.

Congress is expected to be back in session on Nov. 13, after the mid-term elections, as many officeholders sought the time between now and the elections to campaign.

## AWOL Soldiers To Face Court Martial Tuesday

LEXINGTON, Ky. — A Purple Heart recipient is to face a court martial hearing in Fort Knox this Tuesday for going absent without leave for 18 months.

Darrell Anderson of Lexington, Ky. fled to Toronto, Canada after serving more than his one tour of military service in Iraq.

Anderson said that he decided to return to face his fate — either jail time or a dishonorable discharge — because he was tired of living in "limbo" and wants to raise awareness of war crimes being committed by American forces in Iraq.

Because he married a Canadian woman, Anderson is legally entitled to stay in Canada; however, his repeated attempts to gain refuge status have failed, so he is unable to obtain work privileges and health care benefits.

Anderson, who has been critical of Canada's participation in the so-called "war on terror," also noted that he prefers jail to another deployment to Iraq.

As the 24-year-old told CBC News last week, "It will be the freest time in my life, because I'm standing up for what I believe in."

Anderson said he suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, which is perhaps partly

due to the roadside bomb that wounded him while serving with the U.S. 1st Armored Division for seven months in Baghdad and Najaf, Iraq.

The U.S. Army reported that not more than 6,000 troops have gone AWOL since March 2003. Officials, though, think that personal problems led them to break military protocol.

The Veterans Health Administration study released last month said that about 64,000 of the 184,000 war veterans were diagnosed with possible symptoms of PTSD, drug abuse, or other mental conditions.

The number of those seeking treatment has risen 10 times over the last year and a half, according to the study. In February 2005, the Governmental Accountability Office report that only 6,400 "war on terrorism" veterans were treated for stress disorders.

In related news, the U.S. Army leveled a new charge the first officer to publicly refuse deployment to Iraq.

U.S. Army First Lieutenant Ehren Watada was charged with conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

The charge is based on a comment made at the Veterans for Peace convention two months ago.

## Ex-Enron CFO Shown Mercy At Sentencing

HOUSTON — Enron's former chief financial officer was shown mercy at his sentencing last week.

U.S. District Judge Kenneth Hoyt gave Andrew Fastow a 6-year prison sentence for helping shareholders, for being labeled a scapegoat, and for the jailing of his wife.

However, Fastow's sentence

was also limited due to his plea deal against Jeff Skilling and Ken Lay, the energy company's top chiefs.

Fastow, 44, reportedly wept before his sentencing, wishing that he could have changed his role that led to the company's demise.

Fastow's lawyer John Kecker called for a reduced sentence with probation, noting how his client had

changed his attitude since 2002.

Fastow hugged and kissed his wife, Lea, before being handcuffed and taken away from the courtroom.

His four days of testimony brought down Skilling, who intends to appeal his 20 to 30 years in jail, and Lay, who died July 5 of heart disease.

## 'Iconoclast' Hard Copy Now Monthly

CRAWFORD — THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST, which began publication in the winter of 2000, has altered the frequency of its hard copy (print edition) to monthly, while at the same time expanding material of its online edition.

According to publisher W. Leon Smith, "More and more readers are going online to read THE ICONOCLAST, while fewer are reading the print edition, which has prompted this change. After analyzing our product and our readership, it is our feeling that the wave of the future on publications such as THE ICONOCLAST is with the Internet."

Smith explained that many readers who subscribe to the print edition also read the pa-

per online, "because they don't have to wait sometimes two or three weeks to receive the hard copy in the mail. Once we post the latest edition online, it's available immediately," he said.

"We still want to maintain a hard copy presence, and there are some items that can perhaps best be handled with actual paper in hand," he said, "so we plan to revamp the content of the print edition in the coming weeks, while at the same time increasing material to be consumed online. Too, this allows us to shift more attention to a product people will be able to access sooner."

The subscription price of THE ICONOCLAST print edition

will be decreased to accommodate 12 issues a year while some content on the online edition will become fee-based to provide revenue to help pay expenses. Current subscribers of the print edition will have their subscriptions extended in time to make up the difference in number of copies received, unless they request a partial refund.

"We look forward to providing additional postings, perhaps daily," said Smith, "which should make for a fresher product."

The newspaper's online edition can be accessed at <[www.lonestaricon.com](http://www.lonestaricon.com)>.

This edition is the first monthly issue, Smith noted.



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# Home Sweet, Homeland Security

By NATHAN DIEBENOW  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

TAOS, N.M. — Robert Plarr is a doer.

Over the last 30-plus years, he has taken it upon himself to find ways in which humans can live in their environment without doing more damage to it.

His experiments in home design led him to build a passive solar underground home. At the time in 1976, the home featured the world's largest privately-owned wind turbine, a 45 kW Mehrkam design.

"We've been talking about this stuff for 40 years, and when you join our group, we actually make a change," Plarr told the *ICONOCLAST*. "The young people don't have time to wait around for another 40 years for some environmental movement. Change is now. They can join forces with us now, and we can start implementing it now."

As a response to the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, Plarr said he poured his energy into the Angel's Nest Retreat in Taos, New Mexico.

Billed as a model for sustainable-energy homes of the future, the 8,000-square-foot retreat is designed to be entirely self-sustaining with integrated solar and wind energy production systems, an internal sewage water recycling system complete with its own "rainforest," and an air-to-water system for fresh drinking-water.

"I started building a structure because I wanted to build truly a Homeland Security home," said Plarr. "When you have a home like this, you aren't held hostage by anyone or anything."

"I'd like to say to President Bush, 'Sir, I'm an ex-Marine — always a Marine. I reported for duty and did what you asked and we have a Homeland Security home now.'"

THE *ICONOCLAST*'S Nathan Diebenow spoke with Plarr recently about his successes and failures early on in his career, the design of his new home concepts, and the untapped opportunity and growing necessity to

## Interview with Robert Plarr, Green Home Builder

manufacture these concepts worldwide.

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*ICONOCLAST*: What is your critique of the environmental movement?

ROBERT PLARR: I don't know if you saw the website.

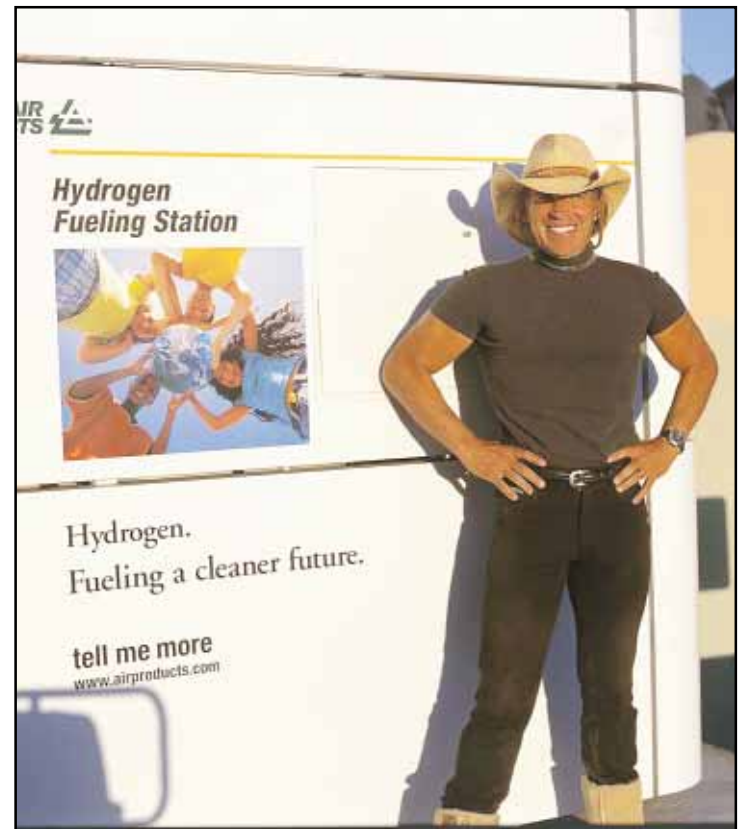
*ICONOCLAST*: Yeah, it's

pretty indepth.

PLARR: Yeah, it is indepth. It's one of the unusual things because we actually do something. The rest of the — what I call psychobabble, the environmental movement, has basically failed in the last 40 years because they dance in circles



AN INDOOR RAINFOREST (pictured below) is a part of the water recycling system at Angel's Nest Retreat in Taos, N.M.



ROBERT PLARR co-founded Angel's Nest Retreat as a model for sustainable-energy homes in response to the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

and they don't produce anything.

I believe in building things and working can actually change the world instead of just talking about it. Having grants, dropping theories, and getting paid for the rest of one's life does nothing. One of the things we do is have a research building that does the things we talk about. A lot of it is on the 99 yard line.

We actually have to build these things in the tens of millions, very inexpensively, to save this planet because this planet is finished. We're not sustainable. We're poisoning every well and stream in the country. Our country's collapsing under the weight of pollution and global warming, and we have a solution. We're not a flavor of the day environmentalist. We actually live it and actually do it, as you can see.

*ICONOCLAST*: How did you get the title of "father of sustainable energy"?

PLARR: I don't know why they call me that stuff. I don't know why somebody called me that. But I started building my first one in 1975 — a 6,000-sq.-foot earth shelter home and the world's largest wind generator. I've been doing this physically since 1975. There's probably nobody in the country that has made more mistakes than I have, I'm sure. There's a lot of stuff that you think is going to work, but until you actually build it, it doesn't.

The reason the new building works so well is because I actu-

ally lived in an earth shelter building since 1976. I did a lot of experimenting to see what would work past the solar greenhouse generational things through trial and error. Obviously, it wasn't very popular back then even though during the Carter administration when all the gas lines were long, gas became cheap again, so people forgot about it.

We're at a point now in our world where we have a building that is — well, I call every other home in the world "Katrina candy" meaning that once your electric goes out, you have a useless home. Our buildings are water resistant, fire resistant, hurricane resistant with these new materials, and if something happens like a power-outage, when you have a sustainable home you're not held hostage by terrorist attacks or natural disasters.

If every home is its own infrastructure where it has its own water plant, sewage plant, and energy plant, then you don't need to build these huge infrastructure systems that cost in the United States trillions of dollars that has failed over the last couple of hundred of years. We have the oil plants and the nuclear plants where you have to run lines thousands of miles. You have to run sewage lines, so if there is a disaster, you lose 100,000 people or a million people or five million people.

When everyone has their own individual system, no matter what happens out there, no one

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# Home Sweet, Homeland Security

From Previous Page is going to go down in a crisis. You don't have to build all this infrastructure. One of the things that is happening overseas that is great in China and Third World countries is that they don't really have the infrastructure and they can't afford the infrastructure. They can actually build these buildings now. The phone systems in China are terrific because they're using satellites. They didn't have the money to buy these phone lines like we had over the last 100 years.

**ICONOCLAST:** How cost effective are these individual dwellings?

**PLARR:** They are very cost effective. Obviously for me, doing it for 31 years, it wasn't cost effective because I'm in a research and development situation.

They are very cost effective because you're eliminating materials and labor, and, more importantly, you're not using the things that cost a lot of money; wood has tripled, steel has tripled, and concrete has tripled. They're unaffordable. They're junky. Anytime something happens, they fail, and you saw what happened to Katrina. All those homes fell down because they were built improperly with junk materials that can't withstand a Category 1 or a Category 2 hurricane.

We're using waste stream materials like volcanic ash, foam cups, and those kinds of things that are considered waste are really gold. When you put in little percentage points of concrete in mixing these products, they are very strong. They last forever. With the new materials, we can actually get a home up in a day — the shell, the roof, the walls — and we're looking at a seven- to 10-day home with putting in the prefab black-and-grey water system and the energy pod.

**ICONOCLAST:** So there are no plastics involved in the construction of these homes?

**PLARR:** Depending on the location and what your waste stream materials are, there could be foam cups; it could be one of the ingredients that you would use, like fly ash, volcanic ash, or anything like that. It's a blend. It's sort of like a concrete mix where you're blending all these materials together, and depending on your region — like in Scotland, they have a lot of granite, they call them crusher finds, available, and if you're in China or if you're in Arabia, there's a lot of sand, so it depends on your regional material. It's different mixes for



**BUILDING MATERIALS** used in the creation of Angel's Nest Retreat include adobe, but sustainable home designs can also incorporate waste materials such as foam cups and volcanic ash, according to co-founder Robert Plarr.

different sites.

**ICONOCLAST:** Inside these homes are little rainforests. Are they totally organic, pesticide-free?

**PLARR:** Of course. When you have your own rainforest in your house, and every building we have a rainforest of some size, it's your black-and-grey water system. It is your sewage system.

Basically, your building catches water. It recycles it six times, and at the end of the cycle, we use an air-to-water machine to take the water out of the air. There's nothing leaving the building for septic or sewage, so it's harvested, and if everyone did that, we wouldn't have the biggest problem in the world. Ninety-nine percent of the world's water is unpotable. In Mexico City, right now, they're telling you that you can't drink the water or shower in it. Most of the wells in the United States are poisoned with MTBE, and it's just getting worse by the day because seven billion people are dumping their sewage and chemicals and everything back in the ground water.

It's getting the point that even the water companies can't meet the federal mandates, so the point of it is that you're obviously going to have to take the water out of the air. There's three quadrillion gallons of water in the air because that's the cleanest form of water because you can

just use an air filter and a few other things to clean that water before you turn it into drinking water.

All of our ground water systems worldwide wreak havoc. Everybody dumps their stuff on somebody's neighbor, some river, or some sewage plant that dumps it in the ocean, so basically, once we flush the toilet, we don't want to know where it goes, and we're trying to push it on to someone else.

In each one of these buildings you don't do that. You're self-contained. Each structure cleans it. There's nothing to harm the planet. Our goal is for zero impact buildings. We're very close to that. We're very close to building them in mass. We know we can do them inexpensively. What our research center up there did was to prove systems for 30 years. Now our group is gearing up to implement this in mass.

One thing great about our building is that our products are on the 99-yard line, meaning that they're up, they function. Now we get them to a manufacturing plant, and we start marketing and implementing them. That's where we're at now. We have working prototypes, and now it's just a matter of getting them to the next level, which is very advanced. We're very excited about it.

**ICONOCLAST:** One of the interesting things I noticed was

your use of the polonia tree. They're used to cut greenhouse gas emissions and also to use as a cash crop. What type of tree is it? Is it the princess tree?

**PLARR:** It's a hybrid. It depends on where you get them from, but the nice thing about the polonia tree, especially with our situation is that it's all indoors, so if we build you an 800 sq.-foot guest house or house for you and someone else, probably a 100 sq. foot of that would be a nice little rainforest, so on the black water side we put polonia trees in which have big beautiful leaves and because of the climate control situation in your building, it's not going to get below 40 degrees in that room.

There's something that's always going to grow. You don't have to deal with being outside in 20-below zero or something like that in the winter time. When you have a rainforest in your structure connected to the house, it's a great medium for those to function very well, and grow and produce green sewage and a lot of oxygen.

So what happens is that you can't do anything about the outside. The world is chopping down the rainforests, but with every home we build, we replant a rainforest, an ecosystem, so you get oxygen, medicine, and food from your little rainforest. There's a tremendous amount of clean air. The banana leaf or polonia leaf is so powerful it

takes carbon fibers out of the air so you really have clean room no matter if you're in L.A. — the most polluted city in the country — as long as you're in your house, you have clean air and water.

My partner Victoria (Peters) made sure that it was acceptable to the general public instead of idealists — maybe one percent of the people who would stay in a caveman house, but we made them acceptable to the general masses.

**ICONOCLAST:** You mean the layout and design?

**PLARR:** Yeah, the layout and design has to be like a regular home. It has to function like a regular home. When you walk in, you have to flip the switches on. It has to do everything a typical home does, but the difference is you're off-grid and you're basically walking into a beautiful rainforest that gives you all this great sleeping because when you sleep in our place, you have a great environment because plants clean.

Right now most people live in a rug apartment. Indoors is 10 times more polluted than outdoors with all the glues and the dry walls and all the chemicals and the plastics and all these mixed materials, so people are living in toxic soups. When you have plants that are a part of your living space, they clean the air. They provide you with tremendous oxygen. You want things that are in the building that actually clean things for you.

**ICONOCLAST:** So this specific tree is a hybrid, but what I've read is that these trees can become like weeds if you don't take care of them.

**PLARR:** They can to some extent. You can groom them. If you're using them to clean sewage and toxic waste dumps and stuff, you don't really care. If you're using them for lumber, what you do is you plant 1,200 trees an acre, and then what they do is strip the leaves off every year.

The other things they're used for is cattle feed or to put in a gas fire to make hydrogen. But they groom them; they let the center root become a straight tree so every four to five years they can clip it off and sell it for lumber and it grows back up.

My understanding is that they have six to eight cuttings over its lifetime, so yeah, if you're using them for lumber, then you groom them in one way. If you're using them to just clean up toxic chemical areas, you can let them grow like weeds depending on what you're need is.

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ICONOCLAST: I see, I see. The other component to this is the hydrogen component, and this is where the Texas connection comes in. Can you explain to me how that process works?

PLARR: Hydrogen to us is going to be very critical because what is now coming into play is very inexpensive fuel cells that would run on methane and hydrogen. They are 50 to 60 percent efficient compared to batteries which are about 12 or 15 percent.

We have electrolyzers. I imagine we'll have 100 things operating in that building, but what we're looking at is that when you take electricity and you split water, you produce hydrogen.

You store that in a low volume under 200 psi like in a propane tank if you want to and you can store that as an energy source and then you can run that through a fuel cell that will run your electricity and hot water. It becomes 65 to 75 percent efficient. It's very inexpensive to run buildings like that. We're showing a different way.

The way they do it now is that they use solar, and I have that up there, too. I have the new and old ways where you have a solar bank and there are storage batteries which are very inefficient and expensive. Now, we are going to run our hydrogen through a plastic fuel cell which we are beginning in the next month or so.

We're going to work with a whole lot of fuel cell companies. As long as you have hydrogen to run it through these fuel cells it is very cheap and efficient. And you can store it in a propane tank like in a back yard and low psi, so it's very safe. This will be very common in the next few years.

ICONOCLAST: How do you create the hydrogen?

PLARR: What you have is excess electricity from wind or solar or high diesel which would be hydrogen mixed with diesel — all these kinds of things. You have this energy, and you run it in an electrolyzer, and the electrolyzer splits the water, so you use two or three kilowatts to split water to make this hydrogen. And you store it in a low volume tank.

ICONOCLAST: You're not going to need to transport any kind of fuel across state lines then, right?

PLARR: You make it onsite.

ICONOCLAST: But excess energy, are you going to pipe it?

PLARR: What's nice about this hydrogen is that you're storing excess energy. You can store a month's worth if you



**SPACIOUS LIVING QUARTERS** are another main design feature of Angel's Nest Retreat in Taos, N.M.

want depending on how many tanks you put in the ground. If you want three months worth of storage, you could store that excess energy that you're producing onsite.

ICONOCLAST: One of my concerns is — and this is from what I understand through reading about the work of your partner Chris Sanders — how to use microbes to extract more natural gas from the Burnet shale.

PLARR: This is exciting because, evidently, this has been out for a few years. I don't know technically how it works, but I understand there's a microbe under the ground, and that if you stimulate it with carbon dioxide, it makes natural gas and oxygen, so you can pump the oxygen into the air and replenish the atmosphere and also make sustainable natural gas.

This is exciting because you've got a double bonus here. You're solving two huge problems. Of course, that's one of the great solutions.

The cheapest form right now of making hydrogen is splitting natural gas products. They spend a couple of billion dollars a year making hydrogen from it and then they use it in the refineries to make fuel, which to me is a waste. And they use it to launch the space shuttle. But the nice thing is, we're going to come into the hydrogen era. It's very clean. The exhaust of hydrogen is water. We're going to move away from the old ways of doing things.

We're finding better and inex-

pensive ways of doing things. As gas goes up which it is — it's probably going to go up \$100 a barrel pretty soon — China and India are going to be more like America, using more fuel, so this is critical because we're running out of fuel from the standpoint where we can't make it in the U.S. Something like 60 to 70 percent of the fuel comes from overseas, so we are held hostage.

If we do energy through agriculture, if we do these energy pods and the way we are producing energy onsite, and then the oil companies combine with Chris on these energy ranches where there are big land tracks making gas and oil and then they can put (polonia farms) out there; we can build the air-to-water plants and produce a 100,000 bottles of fresh water a day or you can water the cattle with it.

You've got solar farms, so what happens is that you're forming a fully sustainable oil ranch platform, and if the oil runs out, then it doesn't matter. You've still got solar, wind, and water plants, and polonia tree farms. This is a very logical way to make money in five or six or seven different ways instead of just oil and gas. It just makes sense.

I know he's doing leases with farmers and ranchers that include solar and wind which is the same law as doing oil and gas and minerals. Now we're doing water and polonia trees, so it's terrific. It makes our world sustainable when you do

things like that and it helps clean the planet up at the same time.

This is exciting. It's something I think all the oil companies will jump right into because if they can make money in oil now and they can make money in gas and in polonia trees and in making fresh water ... and you put all these products on there that are cleaning the air and making the freshest water in the world — oil companies are going to love it because they're making money in all these other pieces, too. It cleans the planet, makes them heroes, and phases out all the oil and gas in 15 to 20 years.

I'm really pumped up about this the most because there's no doubt every oil company will jump on this. It's a money maker for them and it's not a threat to them. It's a terrific win-win. Nobody is going to be against us because everybody is making money. You're not putting somebody out of business.

This is seeding the greed. I'm an idealist. One of our homes is going to be 20 to 30 percent cheaper than any existing home and you live for free for the rest of your life, not worrying about natural disasters, what are you going to do? You're going to build it, so all we're doing with the oil companies is saying, "You're going to make twice as much money. You're going to clean the planet. And you're going to have great PR. What do you care? You're making twice as much money." And that's what they're in it for. It's great

PR, too. It really is. They need this stuff, and they have the infrastructure and manpower to do it.

ICONOCLAST: Just recently we saw BP's oil line break and now we understand that they're not reinvesting in their infrastructure, so how do you get the oil companies' attention to at least fix their own stuff?

PLARR: Well, that one is pretty expensive. That's about 2,000 miles of stuff that they — and I'm sure BP wasn't the first guy to have that place. It probably went through four or five company changes, but one of the problems was they knew about this 10 to 15 years ago, that the lines were deteriorating. It's an old story. Nobody puts the stop sign to the accident until it happens.

Do you know how much the Alaskan pipeline would cost if they built it today? Nobody would ever do it. What I'm saying is that this is very inexpensive what we're asking them to do on their rigs, and it would be sustainable. That's the key. When you run those pipelines, they're not sustainable. Everything they're doing up there, they need massive amounts of infrastructure and massive amounts of energy to run all these things and pump the oil through there.

What we'd do is basically when we build one of these sustainable ranches is ... we're going to make maximum use of the oil fields which you're probably aware is where most of the natural gas in the world get flared off. If you look at the Middle East and all these places, we could put bottling plants on Saudi Arabia next to the oceans in the humidity.

ICONOCLAST: Have your guys gone to Saudi Arabia to pick this idea?

PLARR: Yeah, in fact, they are very excited. In fact, I've been meeting with some people in L.A. that are involved with that and they are very excited because the biggest problem they have over there is that people are using desalinization which is very expensive and it's nasty water. They use RO water which for every clean gallon of water you have to throw away four gallons.

In our case, we take it out of the air very inexpensively, and like I said, there's three quadrillion gallons of water in the air. Obviously, you want a place that has relative humidity when you do that, but boy, you'll be making more water than you can dream of.

Let me tell you what's hap-  
Continued On Next Page



# Home Sweet, Homeland Security

From Previous Page  
pening. There's a revolution with air-to-water. Everybody in the world is going air-to-water because of one reason: the well water is poison. This is what everybody is interested in — can we provide you with a cheaper home that withstands earthquakes, hurricanes, and other natural disasters and terrorist attacks? Yeah. And the fact of the matter is, everyone wants what we just talked about. We're about to be able to deliver them.

ICONOCLAST: Where? I thought I saw something where you were in Michigan.

PLARR: There are a lot of places right now. Mexico, China, and Singapore — the Third World countries are much easier because they don't have infrastructure. It's easy. They just say, "We're going to do this."

In America, you have all this infrastructure. It's a problem. You've got zoning boards where three people come in and say, "I don't like clean water. I don't like clean air." They could pull it up, but in the Third World countries, they have to have it, so they are implementing it.

Right now, we're just putting it out to the zoning boards, and they're very interested. All of them say, "We're out of water." In fact, up in Taos, they're not letting new developments go up because there is no water, and you have to provide the water.

We have a way now to build these buildings in the middle of nowhere with no electric and no water and produce the stuff right out of the air, so it's going to be very inexpensive to do. You don't have to buy a \$25 billion sewage plant and road system and sewage lines and all that. You don't need that when you build these type of homes.

There's a lot of places in Texas and all over the country — I'm getting thousands of calls saying, "We can do it here." And the other thing that can happen is you can connect to the utility, but that means you'll be selling your excess power and you can connect to your sewage. The sewage line won't be used, but if you're in the city, you can still build one of these and not use the systems even though you're inner-connected. That means you make extra money selling your excess power to the power company, so you don't have to build these huge coal fire plants.

We're saying you can do it in any home. You can retro-fit or use one of our new designs. We've got a guy who is building a 12-acre facility out here in Malibu, Calif. There are going to be about 14 buildings in it. It'll

have the latest technology. It should start in about eight months, but this is going to take hold around the world because if you were staying in one of our places right now, you'd be going, "Oh, my God!" You'll feel secure. You're growing your food. You can fill your vehicles. If you want your own hydrogen fueling station, we're building one so you can fill it up overnight.

The young people today are very scared because they don't think there's a future. We call our buildings Homeland Security, Social Security, insurance, and wellness because all those things are your generation. You're never going to see health care or social security because 76 million Baby Boomers are going to wipe that out the first day they start collecting. There's just not enough young people to support one older person very well.

So the only way you can do it is to build a system of sustainable homes. I call it "currency" because that's the only currency in the world that will be worth anything. With the world filled with natural disasters, global warming, and terrorism, if you have a sustainable home, that is more precious than gold itself because you can actually live there no matter what happens and not be effected by the outside world because nothing can shut you down and that home will function.

ICONOCLAST: How many people must live in these houses in order for them to function?

PLARR: We're looking at building 750 sq.-foot homes starting with. That's the average Japanese size home. That's a great guest house and a house for a family of four and on up. Those will be very quickly and easily built, a pre-fab sustainable home. We're really pumped up about it. Once we get these going en mass — I can build one or two of them, but so what? We need tens of millions — hundreds of millions of these buildings.

ICONOCLAST: Are you working with organizations like green builders?

PLARR: Yeah, we'd love to. They're just finding out about us, and what we'll do is share what we do. We want to teach them all because our job is obviously to teach. We want to have a million contractors come out and learn this worldwide, so they can implement it.

That's the only way they can be built. It's not brain surgery. This is not some sort of secret to build these homes. It's general contracting practices. It's a better, cheap, faster way of

building, and once they learn how to do it, it's a no brainer.

All the contractors I talk to go, "Robert, steel has tripled, wood's tripled, and concrete you can't get it. There's a moratorium on a lot of it, so we don't want to build this way. This is all we have. This is all we know. It's just killing us." By the time they put a house out, their costs have gone up, so if they can do some-

thing like this, they're just thrilled.

ICONOCLAST: So you see the slowing down of the housing market as an opportunity?

PLARR: It's a great opportunity because obviously ours will be cheaper. And think about it. You can get a house, but can you afford to live in it with all the costs of air conditioning, of heating, and everything that goes

with it? People get in a house, and they find that it's a deep black hole. Costs, costs, costs, costs. Repairs and this and that. We try to design a home that is virtually zero impact on the planet and virtually maintenance free. We want something that lasts the test of time.

INFO  
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[www.angels-nest.org/](http://www.angels-nest.org/)

## Canada Apologizes To Torture Victim

OTTAWA, Canada — A Canadian citizen allegedly tortured by Syria after being mistakenly deported by United States forces finally got an apology.

But it didn't come from U.S. authorities.

Canada's police commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli issued an apology last week to Maher Arar, a 36-year old software engineer, and his family for

"whatever part" Canada's federal police took in the incident.

The Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police also said that the U.S. was to blame.

The White House denies any wrongdoing, as has Syria for claims of torture.

U.S. authorities picked up Arar in New York City on a trip to Tunisia in September 2002. He was later deported to Syria and tortured for over a year, according to a Canadian report.

The Syrian-born Arar was cleared in a 822-page report that

stated "inaccurate" Canadian intelligence likely caused U.S. authorities to link him to the al-Qaeda terrorist group.

Zaccardelli, however, noted that Mounties told U.S. agents of the mix up when Arar was still detained in New York.

The U.S. authorities have not given clue as to why Arar was sent to Syria.

U.S. attorney-general Alberto Gonzales has taken no responsibility for Arar's condition, explaining that he was simply deported.

### Texas Senate Debate Slated For San Antonio

HOUSTON — Barbara Ann Radnofsky, Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate, has accepted the invitation of the League of Women Voters of Texas Education Fund to participate in a debate among the candidates for the office of U.S. Senator.

The San Antonio debate will be at the television studios of KLRN on Oct. 19, and broadcast at 9 p.m.

Radnofsky's opponent, Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, has also accepted the debate, according to a story by Tara Copp in THE AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN.

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# FB President Prepares Members For Upcoming Legislative Session

AUSTIN — Texas Farm Bureau President Kenneth Dierschke said that the upcoming session of the Texas Legislature will be a landmark one for several key agricultural issues.

Dierschke, a grain and cotton farmer for San Angelo, spoke in Austin Thursday at the TFB Legislative Conference, addressing important issues in the 80th session, which begins Jan. 9, 2007.

Dierschke names hot-button issues such as water and property tax appraisals as deserving of farmers' attention. Additionally, Farm Bureau's support for renewable energy, such as wind power, methane gas from animal wastes, biodiesel, biomass and ethanol fuel, was another important issue.

"Farmers are ready to help

fuel Texas," Dierschke said. "This is an important investment, and government should participate in it and promote it at every opportunity."

Dierschke said the controversy over eminent domain and TFB's opposition to the Trans Texas Corridor was also on TFB's legislative agenda. Dierschke emphasized adequate compensation for the original landowners in eminent domain takings and "the concept of royalty payments for original landowners in the eminent domain discussion."

The TFB president also stressed Farm Bureau's support for a voluntary, market driven, animal identification program.

"The world beef market is de-

manding age and source verification," he said. "The evidence suggests that the day is coming when it will be hard for a calf to get in the feedlot without it." Dierschke said that opposing voluntary animal identification policies is to ignore the obvious signals the world marketplace is sending.

The bottom line of Dierschke's address was that Texas Farm Bureau is dedicated to supporting agricultural policies and encouraging member participation and lobbying.

"Involved and active members have been the secret to winning in previous sessions, this one will be no different," he said. "We'll see to it that the farm and ranch families of Texas are represented well in the 80th Legislature."

# Proposed Peru Deal Threatens Oxygen Supply

WASHINGTON — Friends of the Earth reported last week that over six billion lungs are quietly being placed on the chopping block.

In other words, the Bush administration wants a free trade agreement in place with Peru that would do harm to the Amazon rainforest.

This rainforest serves as a vacuum that sucks out of the sky carbon dioxide, a gas that contributes to global warming, and that releases a quarter of the oxygen that humans need to breathe.

This proposed Peru Free Trade Agreement threatens to destroy the rainforest by allowing multinational corporations to strip the countryside of its natural resources such

as oil and timber, the latter of which is imported to the U.S. illegally.

Already Peru's natural resources have been seized by these corporations using the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

This agreement values the corporation's financial profit over the nation's environmental and public health. NAFTA's tribunals have ruled in favor of the corporations most of the time.

For more information on the Peru deal before Congress, visit Friends of the Earth's website.

### INFO

[http://action.foe.org/campaign.jsp?campaign\\_KEY=5332](http://action.foe.org/campaign.jsp?campaign_KEY=5332)

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# Desert War Stress Patient Numbers To Rise Dramatically

WASHINGTON — Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans seeking medical treatment at VA hospitals have shown an tenfold increase in stress-related complaints.

A VA study released last week shows that one-third of those seeking treatment report symptoms of stress or other mental disorders. More troops are returning after serving multiple tours, one factor to which VA attributes more stress-related disorders.

Of 64,000 diagnosed with stress-related complaints - out of the more than 184,000 Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans were so diagnosed - close to 30,000 had possible post traumatic stress disorder, according to the report.

A previous study released by the Government Accountability Office in February, 2005, said

just 6,400 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans had been treated for post traumatic stress disorder.

According to VA's top doctor, Dr. Michael Kussman, acting undersecretary for health, reports of huge numbers of people reporting symptoms of stress probably represent a "gross overestimation" of those actually suffering from a mental health disorder. Most have "normal reactions to abnormal situations." These may include flashbacks to combat or trouble sleeping.

Returning Iraq war veterans represent just 3.5 percent of more than 5 million people seen by the VA each year, he said. The VA budget for post traumatic stress disorder is \$300 million for fiscal year 2006, to be matched by an equal amount in 2007.

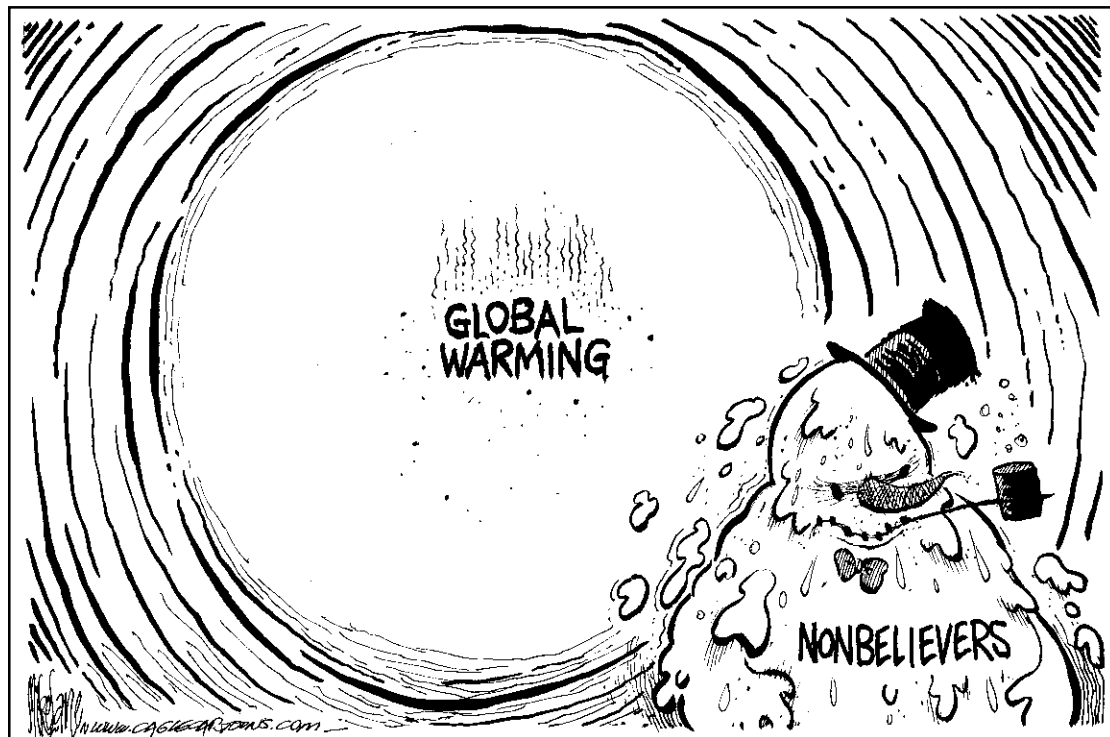
Paul Reickhoff, executive director of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, said, "If they're going to keep recruiting anywhere near where they need to be, they'd better take care of the young vets, because everyone is watching."

Another veterans service or-

ganization executive, Paul Sullivan, director of programs for the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, cited a projected increase of nearly a half million entrants to the VA system.

"If the VA is going to see 30 percent of the 1.5 million U.S.

service members who have deployed to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the VA may expect a total of 450,000 veteran patients from these two wars... This is a very ominous trend, indicating a wave of new patients coming, and the numbers could go up."



## Rep. Edwards Supports Military Commission Act

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Representative Chet Edwards (TX17) released the following statement today following the House passage of HR 6166, the Military Commission Act of 2006:

"I voted for this bill because it is time for terrorists such as Khalid Sheikh Mohammed who planned the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 to face justice. The American people deserve a process that respects the rule of law while protecting our nation from terrorists who seek to destroy our way of life.

"This legislation fulfills Congress' responsibility to establish a legal framework required by the Supreme Court to try enemy combatants who have been detained by the government in a court of law.

"Last year, I supported the Detainee Treatment Act advocated by Senator McCain which outlaws torture, and establishes the Combatant Status Review Tribunal. Today, I have voted to put in place the legal process to try those accused of terrorist acts and bring them to justice."

## Edwards Supports Terrorist Electronic Surveillance Act

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Representative Chet Edwards (TX17) released the following statement after the House approved H.R. 5825, the Electronic Surveillance Act:

"I voted for this bill because the federal government must have the necessary tools to track down terrorists who are plotting against America. The American people deserve a process that respects the rule of law while protecting our nation from terrorists who seek to destroy our way of life.

"This legislation gives the President the flexibility needed in times of national emergency to investigate potential terrorist acts while putting in place important judicial checks and balances to prevent future wiretapping abuses."

The bill would provide congressional authorization for President George W. Bush's warrantless domestic spying program but subject it to new rules. The president would be permitted to order warrantless surveillance, for example, after an "armed attack," "terrorist attack" or when the president deems there is an "imminent threat."

Rep. John Conyers, a Michigan Democrat, charged: "Hidden in the fine print are provisions which grant the administration authority to maintain permanent records on innocent U.S. citizens, granting the administration new authority to demand personal records without court review, and terminating any and all legal challenges to unlawful wiretapping."

## Newsweek Features Rove's 'Protégés'

DALLAS — President George W. Bush's chief advisor has been training a new group of operatives in the use of his Draconian campaign tactics.

Several of Karl Rove's protégés featured in the Oct. 2, 2006 issue of Newsweek magazine have taken jobs as admakers, strategists, direct-mailers, and consultants for various campaigns across the country as well as in the White House.

Those featured in the article "In Rove's Footsteps" included admaker Scott Howell, direct-mailer Todd Olsen, Terry Nelson, and chairman of the Republican National Committee Ken Mehlman, and White House political director Sara Taylor.

The article said that Howell, who worked under the notorious smear artist Lee Atwater, is now making attack ads for candidates in Missouri, Michigan, Minnesota, Tennessee, and Virginia.

Olsen is using microtargeting techniques for African-Americans running on the Republican ticket — Michael Steele in Maryland and Lynn Swann in Pennsylvania.

Nelson, a political director of the Bush '04 campaign, is senior

advisor for the political-action committee of GOP Presidential hopeful Sen. John McCain of Arizona. (Interestingly enough, McCain felt Rove's heat during the 2000 GOP presidential primary against then-Texas Governor Bush.)

Newsweek reported that Rove is minding his team very

closely before the '06 mid-term elections. Though their "war-on-terrorism" message is wearing thin on U.S. voters, these Republicans aim to retain control of Congress at almost any cost.

The other challenge for Rove is recruiting volunteers for congressional campaigns, according to the news magazine.



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# State Spends \$3.5 Million For TTC-35 Master Development Plan

## Study To Be Updated Next Year At Additional Cost

AUSTIN — Taxpayers are already paying for the Trans-Texas Corridor, whether they want it or not.

Last week, Cintra Zachry, the state's private-sector partner in the 370-mile Trans-Texas Corridor, submitted its 1,600-page plan for the project. At a cost of \$3.5 million, the master development plan has been 16 months in the making.

However, due to what Phillip Russell, director of the Texas Turnpike Authority division of the state transportation department says is a complex project, the state is in line to pay Cintra Zachry an undetermined amount of money to update the development plan next year.

According to the report, construction of the suggested \$8.8 billion project could begin by 2011 and first sections could open as soon as 2013.

In 2004, Cintra Zachry — a consortium led by Spanish and Texas firms — identified a plan to relieve congestion on I-35 by investing \$6 billion to build a state-owned toll road from east of San Antonio to the Dallas-Fort Worth area and to pay the state \$1.2 billion for the investment opportunity.

The Texas Transportation Commission authorized TxDOT staff to enter into discussions with Cintra Zachry to produce a master development and financial plan. Work on the plan has been ongoing separately, but parallel to, the environmental process.

Under the master development plan, Cintra Zachry now suggests that the toll road extend south of San Antonio, connecting to I-35. In North Texas, the toll road should connect to I-35 north of Dallas-Fort Worth and run all the way to Oklahoma, according to the plan.

Also included in the master plan is the southern section of Loop Nine around Dallas Fort Worth, a project that has been under study since the 1960s. The report indicates private investment could potentially be worth \$8.8 billion with additional concession fees to the state for other transportation projects possibly reaching \$1.9 billion.

The basic idea behind the Trans Texas Corridor, as promoted to Texans, is that motorists need a new north-south

alternative to the busy Interstate 35. However, the vision of a Mexico-to-Canada route through the United States as a key element of the American Union plays a role.

Much debate has been aired about which route the tollway would take. According to state officials, the final toll road route could be selected by next spring.

Cintra Zachry estimates that it or other highway builders would pay the state a total of \$2 billion to let them build the project. In return, they could collect toll revenue for the next 50 years to recoup their investment.

The use of private-sector money to help build toll roads is a cornerstone of Gov. Rick Perry's transportation policy, said Texas Transportation Commission Chairman Ric Williamson.

Cintra Zachry originally estimated the project would cost about \$6 billion and result in up-front payments of \$1.2 billion to the state, but both estimates have increased dramatically in two years, due to inflation and the addition of several new projects around southern San Antonio.

The master development report suggests that toll rates will

be set after the state negotiates contract terms on each section of the toll road, but predicts that cars and small trucks will pay about 15.2 cents per mile (or \$56.34 for the entire route), truckers will initially pay about 58.5 cents per mile (or \$216.45 for the entire route).

Cintra Zachry is a partnership between Cintra, a longtime Spanish toll road operator, and San Antonio-based Zachry Construction Corp., a giant in the Texas highway construction industry.

The company expects to contribute its own money to pay for up to 30 percent of the projects

it builds. It could also use special federal loans, revenue bonds and private investment.

Yet being debated is whether Cintra Zachry should divulge documents relating to financial and development plans that have been kept secret. Attorney General Greg Abbott has ordered the documents released, but Cintra Zachry and the transportation department have filed suit to keep them out of the public eye, claiming that they contain proprietary information. A court hearing is slated for Oct. 10 to resolve the matter.

# Guv Challengers Upset At Perry's Evasiveness To Debate

AUSTIN — Texans will have a chance to see four of five Texas gubernatorial candidates involved in a televised debate this Friday, but only if Texans forego their usual regimen of attending high school football games.

This has challengers for the top executive seat in Texas fuming, since Gov. Rick Perry has agreed to one and only one debate and his spokesmen say he could only work it in during a period when many Texans are attending high school football games. To add insult to injury, this is the weekend of the annual Texas-OU game, leaving Friday night as perhaps the least-viewed television night in the state.

The four-way debate, sponsored by Belo television stations and THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS, is scheduled for Dallas on Oct. 6. Excluded from the debate is one candidate, Libertarian candidate James Werner. In a joint letter to the editor to THE ICONOCLAST from Doug Reber, co-chair of the Green Party of Texas, Bryan Malatesta, chair of the Constitution Party of Texas, and Patrick Dixon, chair of the Libertarian Party of Texas, they wrote, "Do you want to walk into the voting booth after seeing four candidates debate on television and then see five on the ballot? Wouldn't you be upset

about this? Aren't you being excluded from seeing all the choices before you vote?"

They went on to write, "You as a voter are the one being excluded. You have the power to include yourself. You can contact the debate sponsors and demand inclusion of James Werner in the public debate. You can contact your legislator to reform the election code to be more inclusive of the concerns of voters instead of incumbent political parties."

According to Mark Sanders, representing Independent candidate Carole Keeton Strayhorn, "The governor's strategy is to have as few people as possible actually see this debate. This is the Friday night of Texas-OU, arguably the least-viewed television night in the state."

Sanders argued that Perry should have accepted a proposed Thursday night debate that was originally proposed by a consortium led by KERA-TV, but the governor claimed it posed a schedule conflict for him. Too, the governor has said that the rest of his campaign schedule is locked in, so this would be the only opportunity for Perry to debate.

Democrat Chris Bell also expressed displeasure with Perry's decision. According to

spokesman Jason Stanford, "None of this would be an issue if Rick Perry had the guts to debate more than once. Clearly his

entire strategy is to minimize his exposure and to have to defend his miserable record as little as possible."

## Texans To Participate In Mass Protests On Oct. 5

CRAWFORD — Citizens of major cities in Texas have scheduled events to coincide with a national day of mass protests on Thursday, Oct. 5.

The Texas protests, organized by local groups that are inspired by the World Can't Wait group, will be held in various locations, such as the state capitol building, a congressman's office, and a park.

Participants are encouraged to walk out of school and take off work express their feelings about the current activities of the U.S. federal government.

The number of nation-wide protests scheduled for next Thursday have increased three-fold over the last two weeks in response to the Bush Administration's foreign and domestic policies.

While the occupation of Iraq — whose own population wants the U.S. military to withdrawal immediately — has been seen as a major issue, the

administration's intent to legalize torture and restrict the basic right to legal redress in military tribunals now has U.S. citizens deeply concerned.

"Face it. The Bush regime is remaking the world, very quickly, in a fascist way and for generations to come," said WCW in a press release. "Denial won't help. And the Democrats aren't stopping them. But we must. And we can. There are millions of us..."

Locations of protests in Texas are as follows:

In Austin, protestors are to gather at the Capitol at 4:30 p.m. to prepare for a mass media event at 5 p.m.

For more information, visit the Austin Can't Wait website ([www.AustinCantWait.org](http://www.AustinCantWait.org)).

In Dallas, an event is scheduled for 7 p.m. at Dealy Plaza downtown. For more information contact ([rmclay@comcast.net](mailto:rmclay@comcast.net)).

In Denton, an action will take

Continued On Page 11



# Texas Hold 'em

By DIANA CLAITOR  
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Diane Wilson can't forget the women she met in the Victoria County jail earlier this year.

Four of the eight women who shared her cell had never seen a lawyer even though they had been incarcerated for weeks and even months. All were charged with misdemeanors—minor charges for writing hot checks or for possession of a joint of marijuana—but convicted of nothing. One clearly disturbed woman with both asthma and hives rocked back and forth. A young African-American named Jarena wrapped herself in her blanket and cocooned in a bunk, not getting up to eat or drink.

I was confused. Don't they always provide counsel when you can't afford to pay for it yourself? Aren't you normally granted bail for minor offenses and non-violent misdemeanors?

No and no, says Wilson, a fourth-generation Texas shrimper and mother of five. She herself had been convicted of criminal trespass—when she scaled a 40-foot tower at the Dow Chemical plant in Seadrift, Texas and unfurled a banner that read—“Dow Responsible for Bhopal”—protesting Dow's refusal to deal with the aftermath of the deadly gas leak in Bhopal, India.

Wilson was prepared to pay the \$2,000 fine and serve the 120-day sentence, but she was not prepared for the despair she encountered. When she encouraged the women to ask questions and find out where to write for information about their cases, a guard became furious and threatened to throw those asking questions into a “bad cell” with serious felons. Finally, Wilson wrote a seven-page letter to the local sheriff, calling attention to the sorry state of affairs in the Victoria County Jail and by extension, many of the state's 255 other locally run jails.

One of her more important points concerned pre-trial detention, a sort of CANNOT-get-out-of-jail card handed out to people lacking money or connections.

Since 1995, a trend toward pre-trial detention has resulted in an increase in jail populations across the country. In Texas, however, the numbers are startling: more than 48% of those being held in country facilities are awaiting trial, according to statistics pulled from the Commission on Jail Standards.

“Ten years ago, defendants would have been released on personal bond and taxpayers wouldn't have to pay to house them,” says researcher/writer Scott Henson, the creator of Grits for Breakfast, a blog about the justice system in Texas.

## GUEST COMMENTARY

“This knee-jerk reaction to lock even petty misdemeanants up before trial can't be justified based on what's best for public safety—it's just kind of mean-spirited and counterproductive showboating for gullible voters with little crime-fighting benefit.”

Diane Wilson's letter about her experience underscores the inherent bias of pre-trial detention in our two-tiered justice system.

“The women in this jail are predominantly African American or Hispanic and young and very poor,” Wilson wrote. “Most of their offenses are non-violent, for things like traffic tickets or soliciting or a line of cocaine—yet they are forced to remain in the cell without counsel for long periods of time.”

“No access to legal counsel” is a key part of the two-tiered system. There are many ways to herd people toward a prosecutor without giving them that lawyer we hear promised on TV shows. For example, Jarena (not her real name), the girl in the blanket, finally got a meeting with a clerk and explained that she was innocent and needed a lawyer. The clerk didn't mention he was from the prosecutor's office when he told her that the backlog would mean a long wait for a court-appointed defense lawyer—maybe as much as 60 days in that chaotic, noisy cell.

“That's how you get people to admit to things they didn't commit,” says Dominic Gonzales, director of the Fair Defense Project at the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition.

“The vast majority of jailable misdemeanor cases in Texas are resolved by uncounseled guilty pleas,” says Gonzales, “They use pressure and persuasion and coerce defendants to waive the right to counsel.”

Nobody advised Jarena that a conviction on her record would make it very risky for her if she was ever brought up on charges again, that probation was *very* difficult and that there were about half a dozen other serious consequences of admitting guilt. She was desperate to get out of jail, and so she pleaded guilty to a crime she didn't commit.

With many Texas counties struggling to pay for new staff and facilities, it seems illogical to hold more people for longer times, but logic doesn't always play a role, say Gonzales, who points to a multitude of reasons for the increase in pre-trial detention. One reason is a certain attitude—keeping people in jail proves that judges are tough on “crime,” always a good sell in Texas. Another reason is the high number of charges for small

amounts of drugs.

The magistrate is the judge who determines bail amounts, and if the magistrate in that particular county is hostile to defendants he will deny bond for any reason at all, despite the cost to the county. In too many counties, a magistrate will look at someone and say, “You don't look to me like you'll show up again, so no bail for you.”

Bail or release on personal recognizance seems to be reserved for someone with light skin and the markers of a certain class. A Houston woman I know was arrested for smoking marijuana outside a club at 2 a.m. and was released on personal recognizance the next day. Not surprisingly, she was white, mature, and affluent.

One reason for pre-trial detention is simple: those without a middle class income often find it difficult to come up with the

\$1,000 you need for a \$10,000 bond. In some counties, the bond bailsmen won't even handle bail for minor offenses, because they don't make enough money from them.

One way to reduce pre-trial detention is for a county to train staff to find alternatives to incarceration, like Bexar County's Pre-Trial Services program does, by using everything from electronic monitoring to various kinds of pre-trial bonds. Lubbock County devised a method by which the district attorney can refer misdemeanor cases that don't warrant full prosecution to the High Plains Dispute Resolution Center.

“Slashing a tire may be technically criminal, but it's not worth badging a person for the rest of their lives,” says Asst. Criminal District Attorney Jobe Rogers. In the dispute resolution model, the misdemeanor is required to go through mediation

and provide restitution, but the matter is worked out without lengthy incarceration, saving countless dollars and man hours for Lubbock County. This system, praised by law enforcement as well as county officials and the public, results in speedy disposition of cases and a chance for the defendant to start fresh.

Dispute resolution might have helped Ana, says Diane Wilson. The 22 year-old ended up in the Victoria jail after a neighbor filed charges on her, but the high school drop-out didn't get any advice or information and ended up serving 92 days for a 30-day crime. In that period of time, she lost her car, her job, and the custody of her children.

For no good reason.

*Diana Claitor is a journalist/historical researcher and co-founder of the newly formed Texas Jail Project.*



Photo By Diane Claitor



# Benjamin Franklin Would Puke Editorial

Idealism is dead. Or it is about to be. It did not breathe its last when planes struck the twin towers and a projectile made its way into the Pentagon in September 2001.

No, this deathbed scene came about through a series of events that followed.

The cancer was a misled U.S. government that championed lies, deceit, personal greed, and cowardice, and now, with the assistance of a flock of Congressional quacks, our democracy — the one created by Jefferson, Franklin, and Washington — is in doubt of recovery.

The idealism that became law in the form of our Constitution is being shattered.

The United States was once the voice of reason. It was the parent.

Now it has become a teenage thug.

Oh, even teenage thugs need love. But you don't have to love what they do.

The quacks in Congress have been passing abominable laws.

Then they cut and run.

Our wannabe dictator tells his subordinates to write new laws that will destroy the foundation upon which our country was built.

"Tell 'em it's for their own safety. They'll believe



anything." We've got a serious problem when legislators and the White House decide it's time to abandon the guidelines set forth in the Geneva Convention. It's a multi-edged sword,

guys. We're in more danger than ever when Congress jumps off the cliff in support of warrantless wiretapping and denies habeas corpus.

Now we are on the fringes of outlawing dissent of all kinds.

What does this say about democracy?

Is it no longer relevant? If it is not, then why pretend we have a Constitution? It is supposed to be an immovable force, the sanctuary for truth, and the backbone of our country.

A few bone-spurs here and there lead to paralysis, and that's where we are.

It is easy to love one's country, for it is part of us.

But it is not easy to love parasites and cancers that would destroy it.

Our founding fathers created the Constitution knowing that it would be challenged but hoping that Americans of the future would not, through apathy and fear, forfeit the idealism that is ingrained into its words.

But this is happening.

Actions last week by the Congress and Senate, and dictated by the Executive Branch, are dynamic symptoms that something is very wrong.

The question is, "How do we correct it?"

Or is it now too late?  
— W. Leon Smith



## Texans To Participate In Mass Protests Oct. 5

From Page 9

place on the corner of W. Hickory and Fry Streets at 11:30 a.m. Organizers say there will be guerrilla theatre but recommend more participants bring signs, be loud, and be seen. For more information, contact ([resistance.denton@gmail.com](mailto:resistance.denton@gmail.com)).

In Houston, participants will converge on Hermann Square and City Hall on Smith St. between McKinney and Walker. Flyers for the event are located at Corazon Fair Trade at 2318 Waugh Dr. at Fairview, in the Montrose, and at Sedition Books at 4420 Washington Avenue.

In Kingwood, a fun-filled day with informative speakers will start at 12 noon. For more information, contact ([enochianrain@hotmail.com](mailto:enochianrain@hotmail.com)).

In Lewisville, a protest will take place at the offices of Congressman Michael C. Burgess at 1660 South Stemmons Freeway at 2 p.m.

Participants are encouraged to bring signs and costumes. One confirmed speaker includes Tim Barnwell, running for the U.S. House of Representatives in the 26th district of Texas.

For a map of the location, visit (<http://gonzomuckraker.blogspot.com/2006/09/protest-war.html>) or contact ([swebster\\_bc@yahoo.com](mailto:swebster_bc@yahoo.com)).

In San Antonio, a protest will be held at Hemisfair Park, 200 S. Alamo, at 5 p.m. There will be a march to the federal building and an open microphone. For more information, contact

([sanantonio@worldcantwait.org](mailto:sanantonio@worldcantwait.org)).

For more information on nationwide protests, visit the World Can't Wait website.

**INFO**  
[www.worldcantwait.org](http://www.worldcantwait.org)

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# Trans-Texas Confidence Corridor Deals From Bottom Of The Deck

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "Highways is just naturally good for makin' clean getaways. They was built by thieves in the first place."

Lying Texas Governor Tricky Ricky Perry's Trans-Texas Confidence Game palmed another card last week, and I'll give eight-to-five you never knew you even placed a bet.

The Spanish grifter, Cintra Zachery, billed you \$3.5 million for a 1,600-page "master plan" to pour six lanes of pie crust cement from the Rio Grande to the Red at the price of gold bricks.

Now here's the switch: This "report" is printed with disappearing ink!

They ain't even sure which route this gravy train is gonna take?

Hell, there ain't even a train! The devilish details of the con won't be slipped in until next year, when the Iberians will get another three mil or so for a "final" report.

Note I said "Spanish" here, not "Mexican."

The closest Mexico will get to any of this cash is when the *Campesinos* mixing concrete and sweat send their \$10 per hour paychecks home to pay protection to the local Narco traffickers.

Nope, these guys are, as we used to say before the revolution, genuine *Penninsulares*, pure Castilian.

This report even reads with a lisp.

Okay, before the Revolution of 1810, Mexico was run strictly by those born in Spain, *Peninsulares*, those "of the Peninsula." You know, the Iberian Peninsula . . . Oops! Sorry, teaching has gotten to be a bad habit.

Anyway, Cintra does have its *criados*.

Zachery Construction has gotten rich under Neighbor Bush's privatization welfare program.

We used to pay highway department workers in overalls to lean on shovels by the side of the road.

Now we pay construction companies executives in ties to lean on topo maps in air-conditioned trailers.

There's a better-than-even chance the whole nine yards (give or take 370 miles) won't even be built.

That's another card that ain't in the deck: Cintra Zachery doesn't have to build one inch of highway.

They can cherry pick the most profitable construction, since they invented this game.

Who's going to be in a better

## Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



bidding position?

Somebody else can pick up the crumbs.

All Cintra Zachery has to do is pay the state \$2 billion for the right to skim the tolls off this lard barrel for 50 years.

With the option to extend to cover maintenance costs, naturally.

Guess who foots the other \$6 billion?

Oh, you thought the whole thing was only supposed to cost \$6 billion in the first place?

Hey, that was before you picked the deuce of clubs when we started this game.

But, tell ya what I'm gonna do, friend, since you're in this so deep already, I'll let you pick another card for only two billion more.

Found the queen yet?

By the way, right now, the trip from Laredo to Gainesville on this, the world's largest parking lot, will cost you a little less than \$60 bucks, or about 15 cents per mile. (Prices subject to change without notice, until voters start to squaw!)

Oops, not so fast Bucko!

See, truckers are gonna pay \$200 or so.

Which means the independents will save money by driving on the highways this scam is supposed to be relieving

Of course the big companies will be passing the cost on to you in higher prices at Wal-Mart.

But don't worry; you'll be too busy beating your kids to notice.

And all that light rail fluff they used to sell this pig?

Now they say it probably won't happen.

Better pay off Big Oil, or they'll send guys around bust up your fuel prices.

You'd think they'd be satisfied with the exclusive contracts for the only gas stations you can use without getting off, paying a toll and driving 30 minutes out of your way.

But no, there'll be no bullet trains until they imminent domain your gravesite for the

tracks somewhere after the middle of this century.

Now, here's the final bait-and-switch.

Tricky Ricky is going to waltz right out of this game.

See, when the bunko squad finally gets the chance to give him the televised debate third de-

gree, all the voters will be watching high school football or getting drunk in preparation for the OU game the next day!

You gotta hand it to him.

He knows a sucker when he sees one.

But then in this state, that ain't no real trick.

## Amendment To Warrantless Wiretap Law: Amnesty To All Government Officials?

### The Trenchwalker

By W. Leon Smith



*the enactment of this Act, in connection with any alleged communications intelligence program that the Attorney General or a designee of the Attorney General certifies, in a manner consistent with the protection of State secrets, is, was, or would be intended to protect the United States from a terrorist attack. This section shall apply to all actions, claims, or proceedings pending on or after the effective date of this Act.*

(b) JURISDICTION.—Any action, claim, or proceeding described in subsection (a) that is brought in a State court shall be deemed to arise under the Constitution and laws of the United States and shall be removable pursuant to section 1441 of title 28, United States Code.

Informed sources tell us that this same surveillance immunity language is pending for insertion into the Port Security Bill, another run-around to avoid prosecution for past and future errors in judgment and activity.

To the best of our knowledge this language is not presently included in the Senate versions (there are two) of the warrantless wiretap bill, but this does not mean last-minute inclusions won't be attempted.

The idea of retroactivity, back to Sept. 11, 2001, makes this bill

suspicious, in that Congress is attempting to dismantle authorities that should be the domain of the judiciary. Congress, in effect, is apparently attempting to provide absolute forgiveness — a blanket pardon — for errors related in any way to intelligence activities that might have been illegal, removing all involved parties from the possibility of prosecution and leaving victims stranded.

Just how far the language can be stretched is unknown, but we can see where lies based upon contaminated intelligence, or "created" intelligence, could fall into the mix and result in "vanishing evidence," such as happened in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and in the lead-up to them. Too, we question whether members of Congress actually have the authority to pardon themselves.

Is it a matter of "Get the pardon now, while you can? Come January you might not have the numbers?"

This Congress has been adamant in its desire to destroy the Constitution of the United States.

That's undeniable.

Rubbish like Sec. 10 is indicative of how low the cowardly House elite will sink to hide its members and the White House from the gallows of integrity and accountability.

Gone is real debate, and real dissent, in the halls of Congress.

And gone is the art of law in a "brave new land" where lawmakers deem ineptitude a virtue.

Want proof?

Read Sec. 10 again.



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# The Lone Star ICONOCLAST

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

The FBI just released video recordings taken on 9/11 by six security cameras located at the CITCO station overlooking the Pentagon. I find it incredulous that, according to the FBI, none showed any aircraft during the actual attack on 9/11. So far - six cameras - no aircraft - nothing! It's unbelievable!

There were video recordings taken by security cameras mounted on the rooftop of the Pentagon, as well as cameras at the nearby Double Tree Hotel, and the Maryland Department of Transportation buildings. Why won't the FBI release all of these videos? Will the videos show a passenger jet striking the building or, more likely, will they show nothing?

All the unedited video recordings confiscated by the FBI within minutes following the attack should be released before the election. I believe these videos could document conclusively that a missile, perhaps one armed with depleted uranium, struck the Pentagon. How much longer will the FBI be allowed to cover up this crime?

*Harold S Kramer,  
Marblehead, MA*

To The Editor:

### 'U.S. Forest Service promotes Wildfires':

I have discovered a root cause of our wildfire problem in America. In investigating the massive 'Day Fire' near Castaic, Calif. and wondering why it has burned into three weeks, destroyed over 80,000 acres including most of the condor reserve, causing mass evacuations and threatening many towns, we certainly must wonder: "Where are the Supertanker water bombing aircraft like the DC-10, 747, and Ilyushin-76 that could have stopped this terrible fire in one day at any time?"

The answer, I found out, is that the U.S. Forest Service refuses to employ the Supertanker aircraft on fires on federal land now and since 1995, thereby facilitating the horrible destruction of past fires nationwide including the Yucca Valley, Calif. "Old Fire," killing many victims, and recent 'Sawtooth fire' until it reached state property at Big Bear, Calif. when the DC-10 was brought in and stopped in one day the 'federally facilitated holocaust' that had horribly destroyed Pioneertown, killed a man, and almost destroyed my family!

The same is true of the 'Day Fire' threatening California towns as it is on federal land and the Supertankers are insanely prohibited by the Forest Service until the fire progresses to state property!

We should see at [www.jbs.org](http://www.jbs.org) (search: wild-fire) how our federal land is being mismanaged to CAUSE wildfires and demand the officials responsible for this, and deliberately stopping the use of Supertanker aircraft, be investigated and never see the outside of prison walls again.

We owe as much to the fire victims of the past decade who would otherwise have been saved from what objectively amounts to government domestic terrorism by fire.

Contact Congress to use Supertankers NOW!

Sincerely,  
*Ed Nemechek, Landers,  
Calif.*

Letter to the editor,

Bush apologists have wheeled out a straw man: a detainee possessing knowledge which if forced from his evil lips will save millions of lives.

Ooh, and in recognition of the president's infallible wisdom as great decider, Congress should enact legislation authorizing him to sanction the use of torture to secure information that will save these lives. To guarantee that torture is only used for this saving purpose, the law should also provide that following the use of sanctioned torture the president will provide "slam-dunk" proof that millions of lives had been saved. If the president were unable beyond all doubt to provide such proof, he would immediately be subjected to the same methods of torture that he had authorized.

By establishing accountability right at the top, underlings would be protected from prosecution for doing the dastardly deeds. This is what George W. Bush is most concerned about, isn't it?

This new torture law might also provide that on a voluntary basis avid Bush supporters would be permitted to demonstrate their undying faith in the president's judgment by willingly sharing in any excruciating discomfort that ensues from an errant use of torture—but this is only offered as a comfort-ing thought.

Lest we forget James A. Froude's reminder, "Fear is the parent of cruelty." So, who's

your daddy?

*Sam Osborne, West Branch,  
IA*

Hey, Folks,

Last week I received an urgent email from Connie Fogal, a leader in the Canadian Action Party, with details on the North American Union, i.e., the rolling up of the U.S., Canada, and Mexico into a single political and economic entity pattered after the European Union.

Yeah, the plan is part of that New World Order deal George Bush Sr. casually dropped on us Americans in a speech back in 1991.

But it has started in earnest down in Texas.

Check out that story (and a smidge more) at "Part IV: 9/11 Faux-Pas Reveals North American Union Highway Toll System" at <http://www.milkhouse-mouse.blogspot.com/>.

The word is that 1 million Texans will have property confiscated through a reworked "eninent domain" for the 600-mile leg of a proposed super-highway North American Union highway they claim will stretch into Argentina and Canada's frozen Northland when it is completed.

Take a gander. Pass it around.

*Joseph Taylor*

To The Editor:

### Am I Missing Something?

So, now our brilliant Neo-Conservative legislators are trying to promote the building of a 700-mile fence along our 2,000-mile-long southern border with Mexico.

What???

This has to be said bluntly. Isn't it a bit disingenuous, to say the least, for President Bush and his neo-con co-conspirators to go through the motions of wanting to build a fence (to placate opponents of illegal immigration), while at the same time Administration talks are going on concurrently with Mexico and Canada regarding a North American Union?

Yes, folks, once again we are being deceived.

For those of you who have not heard of the clandestine talks about a North American Union, take notice.

The North American Union concept allows for increased free trade and the unrestricted movement of citizens of all three countries within the continent of North America; in other words, NO BORDERS! Kiss United States Sovereignty goodbye!

To find out all you care to know about the North American Union, just do a Google search for: North American Union.

*Paul G. Jaehnert, Vadnais  
Hts., MN*

Dear Leon ~

Thank you for your thought-

ful article and interview with Byron DeLear. This is a man who truly needs to be a member of Congress. And all thinking progressives need a voice like Byron's to lead the way in taking back our country and our national integrity. Here is a citizen who has done much over the last many years to advocate for peace and justice, not only in California and the United States, but throughout the world. He has given of his talents, his time and his energy to lead us in the right direction. And, more than anything, we need real leadership to steer our ship of state out of the shark-infested waters of evil.

The voters of the 28th District of California have an opportunity to forge the way in replacing the corrupted Howard Berman with a true man of the people who has the ability and the strength as well as the necessary abundant positive energy to do the right thing in Congress in spite of the overwhelming evil that pervades the halls of Washington. If I lived in his district, I would be out knocking on doors night and day to get him elected.

Thank you and your fine magazine for bringing Byron DeLear to our attention. It is very uplifting to think that there are candidates of this caliber available to lead our nation and the Congress.

*Robert Jones, Las Vegas,  
N.M. (formerly of Austin,  
Texas)*

Letter to the Editor:

### Global Warming: Fact or Fiction?

In some court cases, particularly high profile ones, both the prosecutor and the defense attorney hire so-called experts to help win their cases. Today, we have experts claiming that our earth is in peril because of "global warming." There also are many experts who refute this claim, but they get much less media attention.

From about 800 A.D. to 1300 A.D. we had the Medieval Warm Period, followed by the Little Ice

Age from about 1550 to 1850. Dr. Philip Stott, professor emeritus of bio-geography at the University of London stated, "During the Medieval Warm Period, the world was warmer even than today, and history shows that it was a wonderful period of plenty for everyone." Go to [www.thenewamerican.com/article/4185.shtml](http://www.thenewamerican.com/article/4185.shtml) for details.

Dr. Richard Lindzen, a meteorologist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, stated, "there is no consensus, unanimous or otherwise, about long-term climate trends and what causes them.... Climate change is a complex issue where simplification tends to lead to confusion, and where understanding requires thought and effort."

Drs. Craig Idso and Keith Idso of the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide (CO2) and Global Change at Tempe, AZ have conducted thousands of experiments. They have proven beyond any doubt that with more CO2 in the air plants grow bigger and better in almost every way.

There is no solid scientific evidence to support global warming. Many distinguished scientists do not agree with global warming predictions. It would be tragic for our nation if we had to cut CO2 emissions (like the Kyoto Accords Treaty demands) to cure a non-existing problem.

*Dominick Odorizzi,  
Northridge, CA*

To The Editor:

### Common Ground on Electoral Inclusion

By end of this letter, I hope that you, the voter, agree with us: inclusion is better than exclusion.

We are referring to the Texas election code and the upcoming Nov. 7 elections. Exclusion is the common theme that voters encounter. In non-democratic governments, choices are restricted or don't exist. Our democratic process is intended

**Continued On Next Page**

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# Kay Bailey Sings The Death-Tax Blues

By L.B. PARR  
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

I am constantly amazed at just how far politicians will go to get what they want. When they don't get what they want, I am equally amazed at the speed at which they cast the opposing party as evil, unpatriotic obstructionists.

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison's (R-TX) participation in one of the latest of the Republican Party's bait-and-switch scams earned her a place of high honor on my list of Texas' who's who without a clue.

It wasn't so much the scam per se that propelled Ms. Hutchison's ascension, although it was pretty pathetic. It was her response after the scam was defeated that floored me and revealed just how far from reality the GOP has become.

For almost 10 years, Republicans have fought long and hard against any increase in the minimum wage. Suddenly, last month, the leaders of the party of the President were all over it and introduced legislation to raise the \$5.15-an-hour minimum wage by \$2.10-an-hour

over the next three years. Oh, by the way, since they were doing something that would actually benefit the poor people of America, they decided to throw in a little something that would benefit the really wealthy people of America — a huge cut in estate taxes, or as they gravely call it, the death-tax.

Senate Democrats said no thanks, blocked the legislation and unleashed the fury of Republicans scorned, which is when Kay Bailey put her foot in it.

"It is an excuse to make it a do-nothing Congress," snarled the senator from Texas, "And we are turning our back on the middle-class and poor people in this country who depend on the minimum wage and death-tax relief."

Go back and read that again. Her statement is a classic textbook example of political double-speak and a prime example of how politicians can obfuscate the truth with just a few, well-chosen words.

Rather than admit that, just maybe, packaging legislation that would kind of help the poor who earn minimum wage with

## GUEST COMMENTARY

a measure that would really help the richest 5% of taxpayers was a bit under-handed, the Republicans said the bill didn't pass because the Democrats were playing politics. Grow up!

Not only did Republicans try to slide in cuts to the estate tax, they added a provision that would allow employers in some states to begin counting employee tips against minimum wage increases. Not nice!

"And we are turning our back on the middle-class and poor people in this country who depend on the minimum wage and death-tax relief."

First off, middle-class people are not the issue here. They earn way more than minimum wage. Otherwise, they would be poor people, not middle-class people.

A person working full-time at the minimum wage of \$5.15-an-hour earns a little over \$10,000 per year, which is below the poverty level. Even if the modest \$2.10-an-hour increase (over

three years) had passed, it wouldn't have made a significant change in the poor people's standard of living. The buying power of the minimum wage is at a 50-year low and the cost of living has gone up 8.1% since President Bush took office.

According to the 2005 Census Bureau Report, of the 37 million people living in poverty, 43% of these live below half the poverty line (\$7,800 for a family of 3), the lowest number since the government started keeping track in 1975. Wages and salaries now make up the lowest proportion of the economy since 1947 while corporate profits have climbed to the highest share since the 1960's.

Now, about all those "middle-class and poor people who depend on...death-tax relief":

Currently, the estate tax exempts the first \$4 million of a couple's estate (\$2 million for individuals). The proposed legislation would have raised the exemption to \$10 million for a couple, \$5 million for an individual, by 2015.

Considering that only 1.2% of families in the United States pay any estate taxes whatsoever,

how many of all those middle-class and poor people are really counting on estate taxes being cut? I mean, really depending on it. Really!

Majority leader, Senator Bill Frist, who probably makes more money in a few days than someone earning minimum wage does in a year, stated that Republicans would not consider raising the minimum wage unless it was packaged with the cut in estate taxes, effectively killing the bill for this term, at least. In other words, raising the minimum wage a paltry \$2.10-an-hour over the next three years is only worth it if we can cut estate taxes of the richest 5% by \$268 billion over the next ten years.

I am not opposed to the rich getting richer as long as the poor aren't getting poorer, which is what seems to be happening under the current administration. President Bush claims to be on the side of middle-America, but I can't think of a single piece of major legislation that has been passed since he took office that has solely benefited the working class.

Not one.

From Previous Page



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

to give the people the power to choose. In practice, political parties are taking voting power away and restricting choices.

Consider the practice of gerrymandering. Instead of the voters choosing their elected representatives, an incumbent political party chooses the voters. Instead of representing compact regions of voters, the legislatures are composed of people that represent whatever voters the party chose when they redrew the maps. You as a voter are just a pawn on the chessboard, and the incumbent party can move you around wherever they like. Who is being empowered here? Clearly it is not the voter.

Consider Primary Screenout. Texas is alone in excluding a voter that votes in the Democratic or Republican primary from signing a petition to place another candidate or party on the ballot. The same incumbent legislators that take an oath to uphold the Constitution ignore the first amendment when they deny this right.

Consider the exclusion of candidates and parties from the ballot. We as leaders of political parties are well aware of how Texas is far more exclusive in ballot access than most states. We certainly congratulate Kinky Friedman and Grandma Strayhorn for raising the huge piles of money necessary to buy signatures and get on the ballot. However, consider that Ralph Nader collected over 80,000 signatures yet failed to qualify for the 2004 presidential ballot in Texas. Voters want choice, and the restrictions on choice give many of you nothing to vote for and you stay home. We recognize reasonable qualifications for appearing on the ballot, but the current law is clearly excessively exclusionary.

These are a few examples of the way in which you, the voter, are being excluded from making choices. These are issues that need to be changed in the law in next year's legislative session.

Yet, there is an exclusion that you can fix before Nov. 7.

Consider the public debate for

governor of Texas. Rick Perry, Kinky Friedman, Grandma Strayhorn, and Chris Bell have been included in the debate sponsored by the BELO network of television and radio stations to be held Oct. 6 and broadcast throughout the state. However, when you vote on Nov. 7 there will be five candidates on the ballot for governor of Texas. Who is being excluded?

In 2004, over 82,000 voters in Texas signed a petition to place candidates of the Libertarian Party on the ballot. In that election, 843,911 (over 16%) of the statewide voters selected Libertarian Quannah Parker for State Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals Place 2, clearly demonstrating the significance of that choice. However, Libertarian candidate for governor James Werner has been excluded from the public debate on Oct. 6.

We do not expect you to pity us. We the leaders of our political parties understand the challenges of competing against the incumbent parties.

What about you? Do you want to walk into the voting booth after seeing four candidates debate on television and then see five on the ballot? Wouldn't you be upset about this? Aren't you being excluded from seeing all the choices before you vote?

We began by asking whether

inclusion is better than exclusion. You as a voter are the one being excluded. You have the power to include yourself. You can contact the debate sponsors and demand inclusion of James Werner in the public debate. You can contact your legislator to reform the election code to be more inclusive of the concerns

of voters instead of incumbent political parties.

We want you included. We hope you do as well.

Doug Reber, Co-Chair, Green Party of Texas  
Bryan Malatesta, Chair, Constitution Party of Texas  
Patrick Dixon, Chair, Libertarian Party of Texas

Be Discovered



Lone Star Iconoclast



Greetings, from the bottom of the birdcage!



# King George Bush and the Tortured Truth

By CAPTAIN ERIC H. MAY  
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

## The Truth about Torture

Polls show that six out of ten U.S. citizens disapprove of George W. Bush, who has had one of the worst weeks in his six-year reign. Monday the National Intelligence Report — the consensus of his intelligence agencies' opinions — made it clear that his war in Iraq is a failure, which has created rather than conquered enemies in the Middle East. Tuesday the Associated Press released a poll pointing out that most Iraqi citizens are in favor of insurgent attacks against U.S. occupation forces, while two-thirds want those forces out of their country ASAP. Thursday Bob Woodward of the Washington Post, a former fan of the White House war, published his third book on the "war president," *State of Denial*, and made up for all his previous sycophancy with a hard-hitting description of an administration in turmoil, without clear goals, barely propped up by a well-known Rovean notion: *When in doubt, lie!*

For those of us who have been opponents of what we call the Bush League, everything above is good news, since it shows that reported reality is catching up to what we have known for years — but haven't been able to publish in the pro-war corporate media. What's below, though, is bad news that cancels out the optimism we would otherwise be feeling:

The Republican-dominated Congress has countered recent U.S. judicial branch attempts to limit the power of George W. Bush, whom his Neocon enablers call a "unitary executive," which his opponents translate as "dictator." Thanks to their efforts this week, he will soon no longer need to submit to the check and balance of judges; instead he will be free to rely on his own unchecked, imbalanced judgment. He will be able to engage in domestic spying, torture tactics, interminable internment or military kangaroo courts against those he accuses of terrorism, and he will be able to accuse anyone he wants, whether they be foreigners or U.S. citizens.

Legal scholars point out that these most undemocratic powers will defeat the U.S. constitution by demolishing its first and fourth amendments, and wreck the American Revolution by subjecting us to the whim of a new King George. Going further, they point out that the Cowards Congress has even given up *habeas corpus*, the

## GUEST COMMENTARY

salutary notion extracted by the English from King John on the field of Runnymede in 1215.

In reply to their immediate protest — and in anticipation of protests to come — Attorney General Alberto Gonzales warned a Georgetown judiciary conference Friday that federal judges had better learn their place in this brave new world of the "war president," and had better not buck his war-time dictates. Bush chose Gonzales well, knowing that he would need a Torquemada when he wanted to torture.

With great and abiding loyalty — to dictatorship, not democracy — the U.S. media has avoided all unkind recollection of the systematic torture exported from Gitmo to Abu Ghraib in 2003. Likewise they've avoided mentioning the allegations of Seymour Hersh, who broke the story of Abu Ghraib's war crimes in 2004, that the torture was ordered and protected by the Bush administration. This campaign of omission has effectively stopped the public from even considering that we just may have a sadistic leader, one who strongly believes in the terror of torture, and sells the policy by saying he only wants to torture terrorists.

### Twice-Told Truths

My interest in the Bush *modus operandi* is far more than merely academic, even though I learned the most about it because of my beloved mentor, Dr. Peter W. Guenther, from whom I studied classics and art history from him at the University of Houston before leaving college for a career in military intelligence and public affairs. He warned me about a man who had used the destruction of a national icon to establish new, radical powers of "protection" for the nation.

Dr. Guenther was most uncomfortable about five-year emergency powers — continued after the five years was over — and the establishment of a new national police force to guard the homeland. He abhorred the virulent "with us or against us" nationalism that defied both international opinion and international forums. He was horrified by the appearance of a government that accused those who disagreed with the new nationalism of treason, then began to set up prison camps for its enemies, where torture policies and torture chambers taught guards to become torturers. He swore that such a regime was

designed by war profiteers and dedicated to world conquest.

He never tired of saying all this over and over, without doubt. For my part, I never thought to doubt him, because he had seen it all before. You see, like me, Dr. Guenther had been a soldier, but unlike me, he had not served in the U.S. Armed Forces; rather, he had served in the German Wehrmacht, from 1939 - 1945. Born in 1920, he had seen each and every detail of the description above in his youth, beginning after the "German 9/11," which they called the Reichstag Fire.

He didn't at all think it coincidence that his second country, the United States, had taken on the appearance of his first country, Germany. He thought that the parallels were intentional, and that we were in the grips of a Fourth Reich, designed to carry out a Third World War. He didn't think there was a dime's worth of difference between Bush and Hitler, or between what Hitler's helpers called the Propaganda Ministry and what Bush's helpers call a patriotic media. In short, he wasn't particularly shocked by anything that was recurring. In his best professor's fashion, he explained to me that it's hard to be shocked by anything you've already seen before, and that even a quite scary movie isn't quite so scary the second time around. No, he wasn't particularly shocked, but he was profoundly saddened.

Dr. Guenther and I had many revealing talks about comparative politics and military history when I was publishing my early war analysis, written for the HOUSTON CHRONICLE, and it was thanks to his clear vision that I was confident when I predicted that we would lose the war in Iraq and likely end up in a world war. Those predictions seem obvious to readers in 2006, but they were outlandish enough to end my career in the mainstream shortly after I wrote them in 2003. The media in which I had been regarded as one of the brightest — including NBC and THE WALL STREET JOURNAL — blackballed me as too radical.

My mentor chuckled paternally at my professional plight and advised me to regard it as a high compliment to be called radical when the truth was that I was simply right when my nation's leader was wrong. Before he died, worn out with cur-



Captain Eric May

rent events as much as the cares of age, he agreed with me that I should continue to write the truth about our times and trouble, even if it meant living in the underground and writing for the Internet. Whenever I think of Dr. Guenther I always feel a pang, believing that part of the cause of his death was an acute case of *deja vu* brought on by our association and shared analysis.

### Truth and Consequences

In these last three years of underground writing, I've announced my work to my former commanders in the U.S. military as a mission of conscience, and in payment for that bit of patriotism have been threatened by a long list of officials, on behalf of a long list of agencies and armed services. An Army colonel at Ft. Stewart, Georgia, threatened me with death for investigating the truth about the Battle of Baghdad, which is what was really happening the weekend the media broadcast the propaganda of the Private Jessica Lynch rescue. An Air Force lieutenant colonel in Florida, who boasted of being a war planner, threatened me with prison for publishing the same Battle of Baghdad on line in late 2003. The Houston FBI threatened me with prosecution for predicting a market-busting explosion at British Petroleum's refinery in Texas City — I said it would happen on March 31, 2004, and it happened 24 hours earlier (like 9/11, it was an inside job). Even the police at my alma mater took their shot — or rather, promised it — when I reported that my wife had received a death threat from Army officers in its ROTC Department.

At present I'm under official attack by the U.S. Army's Signal Corps through its on line propaganda magazine, Signaleer. It accuses me of being the Lord Ha Ha and Tokyo Rose of the anti-Bush crowd, and has also gone after two prominent members of my group of compatriots dedicated to opposing the Bush League war of lies, Ghost Troop. The first, U.S. Ambassador Chase Untermeyer, served as the Ghost Troop chaplain from 2003 - 2006, while the second, Sergeant First Class Donald Buswell, is an active-duty Ghost Troop who questions the official 9/11 story. The recriminations against me and mine haven't always been mere words, though: Sergeant Buswell nearly died of

a pulmonary embolism within a month of joining Ghost Troop, something we believe was an assassination attempt. After surviving the embolism, he was soon put under investigation by his superiors at Ft. Sam Houston's Fifth Army in Texas, charged with disloyalty for asking questions and associating with others, like me and Ambassador Untermeyer, who do the same. I have reported both the assassination attempt and the administrative retaliation against Sergeant Buswell to the U.S. Army's Inspector General, who has done nothing to protect him, but at least hasn't issued threats or made assassination attempts in response to my entreaties.

Not that particular threats by the Department of the Army could distress those of us who dissent any more than the actions of Congress have done in these last days. The Cowards Congress has engaged in collective dereliction of duty in preparing to assign dark powers of terror to the man who stands behind all the men I've mentioned above. Without Congressional assent, there wouldn't be the many petty officials who have each been in dereliction of their duty in innumerable small ways, each doing his best to suppress truth and inquiry into truth at all costs, by any means necessary.

George W. Bush, who has long accused those of us who disagree with him of rendering aid and comfort to the enemy, will soon have a blank check to arrest and incarcerate us, and subject us to treatment that only he and his Neocon enablers would deny is torture. Whenever I think of Dr. Guenther, I recall a scholar and soldier of rare degree and pedigree, one who hated all that was false and uninspired, and whom I shall always strive to emulate. I'm glad my mentor didn't live to see the full obscenity of our shoddy imitation of the original under which he lived and served, our chutzpah Hitler, with his Neocon Neonazis and his Republican Reich.

# # #

Captain May founded Ghost Troop in response to the Battle of Baghdad cover up, which he published in his Ghost Troop Introduction in December, 2003: <<http://www.geocities.com/onlythecaptain/>>. For his more recent writings, refer to the archives at his most recent essay, *The Devil in George W. Bush*: <<http://www.thepriceofliberty.org/may.htm>>. He and Ghost Troop have been featured on the cover of the Lone Star Iconoclast in *Ghost Troop: The Art Of Info-War*: <<http://www.lonestaricon.com/absolutenm/annviewer.asp?a=402&z=52>>



# 'It Is Unacceptable To Think...'

The title is attributable to North American King George XLIII, aka George Walker Bush of Crawford, Texas by way of Kennebunkport, Connecticut.

His Excellency uttered this decree at a recent press conference in response to a letter from Colin Powell GEN, USA (Ret) to Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz). The former Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff excoriated his one-time boss with regard to the potentate's insistence upon re-defining Common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention.

The letter was an expression of Powell's disapproval of Fearless Leader's inane scheme. McCain, after more than five years as a guest of the North VietNameese, has an intimately personal relationship with torture. I'm sure he'd rather not be the Senate's pre-eminent expert on the subject, but that which is cannot be undone.

Powell went on to "fully endorse in tone and tint (the) powerful argument" of another retired Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Jack Vessey: "The world is beginning to doubt the moral basis of our fight against terrorism. To re-define Common Article 3 would add to those doubts. Furthermore, it would put our own troops at risk."

To this, Crawford's famous shrub clearer said, "It is unacceptable to think..."

So, there you... I... we have it. The man at the top has put it right out there for all of us to heed... "It is unacceptable to think..."

I suppose that's entirely true, because King George hasn't done any thinking for the past what, 60 years?

If the schmo in the Oval Office doesn't think, then it only serves to follow as unacceptable behavior for everyone else.

This is an Imperial Majesty wannabe, a mountebank who's only accomplishments in life include running numerous Daddy-funded oil-related companies into the ground, turning the once-great state of Texas into a junk heap, killing thousands of Americans (and exponentially more Middle Easterners) in falsified wars.

Colin Powell, conversely, is one of the most distinguished military leaders of our age, a lifelong defender of our Constitution, the very guy whom George hired as his Secretary of State then sent to sell the phony war plot to the UN — a mensch who exemplifies accomplishment and service to his Country.

Thus, by virtue of



## Out Of The Blue

By Jerry Tenuto

*Fuhrerprinzip* Fearless Leader gets to tell Colin Powell, and so every other American, that it is unacceptable to think.

There is no need to think when blind allegiance is all that the authoritarian Fascisti require.

Whenever blind allegiance won't suffice, "computerized" voting machines that leave no paper trail combined with Jim Crow voting restrictions in key states make oppression somewhat simpler.

Despite the warnings of Powell, Vessey and myriad career military people, experts in the field of warfare and its consequences, King George continued his brave charge up Capitol Hill. Once again, he's gotten his rubber-stamp House of Representatives to pass a bill redefining civility in the modern age.

I'd like to know precisely how many of the 219 Congressional Republicans and 34 Democrats who voted for this scheme had ever served in the military.

Anyone reading this might want to check out the Congressional Record to see which Democrats voted for HR 6166 as it was being ramrodded through the Legislature by the White House.

In yet another of his epistles to sanctify the King and propitiate George's every whim, House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill) again helped widen the divide in our Nation with these pearls: That the Democrats who voted against the measure "...voted today in favor of more rights for terrorists.

"So the same terrorists who plan to harm innocent Americans and their freedom worldwide would be coddled, if we followed the Democrat plan."

Speaking for House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Cal), Jennifer Crider said this measure could lead to loss of rights for captured American soldiers. Democrats feel the president would derive too much power to decide when a reasonable line of questioning morphed into torture.

Besides, how would a president know the precise status of a given interrogation? Would he actually go to the site and sit in on the operation of information extraction?

"Speaker Hastert's false and inflammatory rhetoric is yet another desperate attempt to mislead the American people and provoke fear," stated Ms. Crider. She added that Democrats are

committed to catching and punishing those who commit acts of terror against Americans.

As Democratic Rep. Dennis Kucinich of Ohio remarked, "This bill is everything we don't believe in."

Then, as dictated by Herr Oberst Karl Rove through his vassals the King and Dark Lord the Dick Cheney, the Senate version (S 3930) was passed by a 65-34 vote on Thursday, September 28, 2006. (Remember that date — it will go down in history as the day the United States of America officially became a terrorist nation.)

It will undoubtedly be signed into law by His Excellency before anyone can think the nuts and bolts through. Higher Authority help us.

The some and substance of these bills make rushing them through the Legislative Branch as King George is doing more wrong than their very essence and existence. The issues at hand are not simply "a bridge to nowhere" or "a gargantuan pig farm along a causeway."

These are serious questions with literally earth-shattering consequences. The results of what has transpired in these Congressional votes will have serious repercussions upon our military for decades, not to mention generations of our National honor and image.

The measure of what our little dictator has insisted our elected officials engage in — namely, treason — cannot be effectively gauged on any scale.

These bills should never have come up in the first place. However, once they had arisen the debate over their content should have been long, studied, and deep.

The hue and cry concerning these two bills should have raised the dome completely off the Capitol Rotunda; instead of kowtowing to His Excellency, the discussion should have turned to the Regime's incompetence and illegalities.

This is insanity of a global magnitude, and most of our Legislative Branch is allowing the King to run amok.

I can't believe Senators McCain, Warner and Graham folded so damned easily!

Why are these worthless oligarchs of the 21st Century Fascist Regime, the New World Order, the Fourth Reich, who wallow in their own greed and self-importance, once again being allowed to contort laws to suit their private fancies?

What would society be if every municipal leader simply made up the rules as they went along? Consider the mess were all 50 governors to bully the

statehouses into arbitrarily enacting statutes to suit their whims.

Every person on Earth with even the slightest modicum of common sense knows you get more results with honey than vinegar.

It's a proven fact that torture usually only results in false information.

So, if we've done such a great job at capturing, renditioning and extracting information, why are there only 14 "terrorist biggies" being brought to Guantanamo Bay for possible trial — as soon as this Regime's consigliere, Grand Inquisitor Alberto Gonzales can figure out how to get away with proceedings that don't include any semblance of American jurisprudence, of course?

As to the "Dirty Dozen," the turncoat Democrat Senators who spat in the faces of their constituents, went weak-kneed at the thought of a face-off with Dark Lord the Dick, and voted "Yea" to King George's anti-Constitution, inhumane "Bill of No Rights": Carper (DE); Johnson (SD); Landrieu (LA); Lautenberg (NJ); Lieberman (CT); Menendez (NJ); Nelson (FL); Nelson (NE); Pryor (AR); Rockefeller (WV); Salazar (CO); Stabenow (MI); to you I offer the following quote from the great philosopher and USMC veteran, G. Pyle of Mayberry, NC, "For shame, for shame, for shame."

This bill is a travesty of many things we Americans hold dear, certainly reasons I served seven years in the U.S. Army. Absent for these prisoners are Constitutionally-guaranteed rights, among others, of *habeas corpus* petitions — absolutely basic to any of our court procedures; hearsay and coercion will be acceptable as prosecutorial tools; limits will be placed on traditional rights to self-representation, making available only military defense attorneys. From square one any opportunity a defendant may have for a fair trial is reduced from slim to none.

The jury panel is to be made up exclusively of military officers. Add to that, the first appeal must go through a second panel of military officers.

Only then may any subsequent appeal be brought before a civilian Federal appellate court. This process can take years, perhaps decades.

That's perfectly okay, because the defendant is not privy to the right to a speedy trial. Therefore, an "enemy combatant," or someone simply tagged as a "suspected, dangerous terror evildoer" by King George (as is the case with American citizen Jose Padilla) can languish in Federal custody for countless years without actually being charged or going to court.

The real beauty in this bill is in its immunization for U.S. offi-

cial from prosecution for cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment of detainees captured by the military and CIA prior to the end of last year.

The best answer I can come up with for shredding our Constitution along with the Geneva Convention is so with a new set of "laws" in place it will be much more difficult for the World Court (remember, the one our Fascisti overseers refuse to recognize?) to prosecute King George and his Metricious Court.

Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy, top Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, summed the bill up thusly: "This is wrong. It is unconstitutional. It is un-American." In his opinion this was engineered to stifle access to Gitmo "to ensure that the Bush-Cheney administration will never again be embarrassed by a United States Supreme Court decision reviewing its unlawful abuses of power."

Hope springeth eternal, doth it not.

It seems fair to me that, in light of this new "law", those poor low-ranking reservists who were persecuted and imprisoned for "just following orders" at Abu Graib should receive "Get Out of the Stockade Free" cards, be reimbursed for their lost time, have their records expunged and lives put back in order.

What really riles me — and should peeve every American — about this continued journey our Nation is taking down the River Styx is it comes right on the heels of the National Intelligence Estimate. The report bears irrefutable evidence that terrorist activity has increased since 9/11/2001, strongly indicating that the World has been made less safe through the ineptitude of White House policies.

"Somebody has taken it upon themselves to leak classified information for political purposes," sayeth malevolent King George.

Continuing with the inanity: "My judgment is, if we weren't in Iraq, they'd find some other excuse, because they have ambitions. They kill in order to achieve their objectives."

Fearless Leader must have been looking into a mirror or monitor while reading that gem, because it sure sounded autobiographical to me.

"Some people have guessed what's in the report and have concluded that going into Iraq was a mistake," railed our King for a spell. "I strongly disagree.

"I think it's naive... I think it's a mistake for people to believe that going on the offense against people that wanna do harm to the American people makes us less safe."

Well, there's offense, and then there's offense. We bomb the

Continued On Next Page



## TENUTO...From Previous Page

feces out of everyone and come up with mostly unidentifiable dead bodies and more people trying to kill Americans. The Brits, for example, weed out those who would commit acts of terror by using brainpower, then actually capture suspects without violence.

I know, that would involve thinking, and the King has decreed it unacceptable to think...

I wrote right here when it happened that by making a martyr out of Zarkawi the U.S. Regime would only intensify the insurgency in Iraq and elsewhere. Damned if I wasn't right — and the NIE report bears out my assessment.

Along with countless other writers and people who find thinking to be a most acceptable enterprise, I've known, said and written that the utterly psychotic invasion and neverending occupation of Iraq was nothing more than a rallying point for anti-American jihadists and sundry other Islamic fanatics.

The Muslim people being incited to hate Americans and other "infidels" are not Fascists. Many of them have no idea what Fascism entails. They have no interest in big money controlling the little guy. It's all based upon religious ideology — even when the so-called leaders only use religion to further their self-serving agendas.

In much the same way as King George XLIII was elevated and made war with the world utilizing Herr Karl's ploy of twisted evangelical posturing.

Still, His Excellency and the rest of his Fascisti Gangsters either don't get it, or the lot of them simply doesn't give a damn. (Truth be told, I'm betting on the latter.)

The bullying nature seems to be endemic within the Bush household. Stumping for Joy Padgett, a Republican candidate for Congress in Ohio, Frost Lady Queen Laura made the following comment: "Joy, who as I just told you was a schoolteacher for 20 years, owns custom-made brass knuckles."

As a licensed educator and an unlicensed parent, I find that remark elitist, negative, disparaging, and wholly without merit. It is not a proper statement to come from the mouth of a First Lady. There's no level at which this could be considered funny or cute.

Nevertheless, this is a sterling example of how our self-righteous Neo-cons consider it's their entitlement to rule. If you're going to spend 20 years in a public school, you have to have brass knuckles to beat down the students... right?

Because it's unacceptable for schoolchildren to think.

Laura makes this incendiary remark and it goes virtually unnoticed. Let Bill Clinton put that FAUXNEWSCHANNEL WUSS Chris Wallace (definitely *not* a chip off the old block) in his place for ambushing him with a question that was somewhat less than "fair and balanced," the entire U.S. mainstream media gets tied up in knots for a week!

You go, Bill! That's the way to fire up the Democratic Party!

A real President who embraces thinking...

One last item: To see just one example of how low our own homegrown Christian evangelists can go, how an incredibly small group of good folks can spread lies, hatred and fear in the name of the Lord, visit [www.jesuscampthemovie.com](http://www.jesuscampthemovie.com) — it's more frightening than anything Halloween or Hollywood can serve up. Catholic school was merely indoctrination — this is total mind control. Compare their techniques to documentaries on Hitler Youth. Another variation on King George's doctrine of "it is unacceptable to think..."

Shalom, Good People.

*(Jerry Tenuto is an erstwhile Philosopher and sometime Educator. A veteran with seven years of service in the U.S. Army, he holds a BS and MA in Communications from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Visit his blog BLUE STATE VIEW at [illinoiscentral.blogspot.com](http://illinoiscentral.blogspot.com))*

## Cell Phone Wallet

I've been trying to flow with the times. I was one of the last to buy a microwave oven all those years ago. Then I was one of the last to purchase a cell phone. My kids finally talked me into getting high speed Internet last spring. My son Josh took me by the hand and sat with me while I signed up for a debit card. (He was afraid if he didn't accompany me, I'd never go). I've tried online bill paying and liked it, but I keep forgetting to do it.

Lately I've tried to stop carrying big purses. Bag fashion has become smaller and smaller over the last few years. Being a Big Bag person (and this has nothing to do with my cow of that name), this made me absolutely nuts. I like to carry items to cover every possible emergency. Tweezers, nail file, Band-Aids, extra pens, hair clips, crazy glue, magic markers, my trademark gargantuan shopping lists — the items I like to have available are many and varied.

My daughter explained to me that I could carry all that stuff in my truck (which drives Zack nuts because it's like a traveling warehouse most of the time anyway. I mean, who could do without wasp spray, binoculars, and a spotlight in their vehicle? — Or extra AA batteries, TV Radio, tissues. . . You never know. . .). Becca tried to convince me it was only necessary to carry on my person a driver's license, cell phone, debit card, lip-gloss, and keys.

Now being the uncool person I have become since I moved to the country, I have a slightly older model cell phone. (This didn't really bother me until recently. I'm considering upgrading to a jazzier model when I re-up with the company. Zack just did this, and I can't have him being cooler than I am. It would be unseemly).

My cell phone fits perfectly in the little (admittedly punk-

rocker or possibly Goth style) "wallet" I found on sale at Wal-Mart a couple of months ago. No one who's hip would be caught dead with this style any longer. That's why it was so cheap. All the cool people have smaller phones these days, and I think the black vinyl/ silver grommets/ shiny chain look has probably run its course for all but the most hard-core. But the little wallet has room to carry exactly what my daughter recommended, and is much easier on my shoulder than the big bag I throw into my truck every day.

I've been carrying a huge shoulder bag for years (except during the time back-pack styles were all the rage, but even those usually got slung over a shoulder). I have a permanent indentation from years of abuse. Try as I might to remember to alternate sides, it always ended up on my right.

Being a devoted and dedicated "Bag Person," I've tried a few new styles every season. I may have only two black suits to my name, but I own a whole wardrobe of bags. I won't stop buying them even though I've learned to carry something small with me into businesses and stores. I'll fill the stylish bag with necessities and throw it into my truck as I've been doing for two months now. I'll take the little thing with me when I shop.

Some bags in my collection aren't shoulder bags, but most are. And the more recently popular two-handled bags can usually be hefted over an arm as well. When women voted with their pocketbooks and the manufacturers found out no one wanted a bag with handles too short to fit over a shoulder, the handles lengthened and suddenly that style was perfectly acceptable and we all had to have it.

Fashion is so fickle. If manufacturers put things on the runways, let actresses wear

## Rustic Ramblings

By Dr. Gene Ellis



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

things to the Grammy's and Emmy's and Tony's or whatever, if they advertise in enough magazines and flood the stores with certain styles, they can make us believe we must have something positively hideous. I'm getting more resistant to this kind of pressure and brainwashing as I get older, but I'm not immune.

I remember when pointy-toe shoes became popular again a few years ago. I said I would never wear them. Now that I have a few pairs I love, being convinced by Madison Avenue that they are chic and sophisticated, I'm resisting the newer rounded toes. In a few years, you won't be able to give away a pointy toe shoe at a yard sale! This is how designers and manufacturers stay in business. God bless capitalism.

But back to the subject at hand. (Some of you are asking yourselves if there WAS actually a subject). I've heard of women incurring physical trauma to their necks, shoulders, and backs from too-heavy bags. So I figured, even though I love big bags, I had to make the effort to downsize.

I must report the little cell phone wallet is working out just fine. I thought if I didn't carry something hung onto a part of my anatomy, I'd put it down and forget it somewhere, but so far it hasn't happened. So what if it's out of style! So what if kids I encounter wonder if I'm a rocker or a Goth? But what will I do if I get a cute, new, little flip phone? I'll be forced to search for a new cell phone wallet. And worse yet, I understand that bag styles are swinging back to the large and voluminous again. Go fig. Timing is everything indeed.

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# Pets In Boxer Shorts Means It's Back-To-School Time

Now that school is back in session, we have settled into a routine here at the Hickson household. This routine is based on a strict time schedule that I have developed to ensure that, each morning at precisely 7 a.m., all hell breaks loose. This includes — but isn't limited to — at least one person (or family pet) running through the house in boxer shorts.

Though we know this pandemonium could be avoided by just getting up a little earlier, the fact is, I am the only true "morning person" in our family. As anyone in this situation already knows, this is sort of like being the only lamb at a coyote picnic.

In order to stay alive, you must keep moving while, at the same time, drawing as little attention to yourself as possible. What makes this especially difficult is



## Life Is A Funny Place

By Ned Hickson  
Siuslaw News

that, from time to time, I find it necessary to actually speak. Usually, I'm just trying to determine our progress by way of a simple question like: *Why is the dog wearing cowboy boots?*

That's when my children's eyes suddenly turn to me.

And these are not happy eyes. No.

These are the eyes of pod people.

They are hungry. They are confused. And they know I am not one of them.

Given that I have nothing to compare it to, I have no idea

whether our morning routine is considered "normal" by most standards. However, judging from the cereal commercials I've seen on television, I'd have to say no. That's because getting my son to eat a "well-balanced breakfast" isn't nearly as important to me as making sure he leaves the house without his pants on backwards. This often means deciding between making a nutritious breakfast of juice, toast, cereal and an egg, or tacking him when he least expects it so I can verify that his pants are in position and completely functional.

After looking through some self-help books and trying to pick up some tips, I came to the conclusion that these people are not single. I know this because of suggestions like:

Set aside some quiet time each morning for you and your children to talk about your goals for the day. This will help your whole family begin each morning with a clear direction!

Better yet, why not provide each reader with clear directions to your home so they can set aside time to come over and whack you with this book?

The only author who seemed to have a handle on things AND be an actual (living) parent was a retired lawyer who lived in a small town in West Virginia with her husband of 24 years, four children — and a full-time English nanny.

Of course, there was nothing in the book suggesting what to

do in case you couldn't afford a nanny, nor was there any indication that one would be appointed for me.

What this means is that we'll stick with the routine we already have.

At least until the dog stops wearing cowboy boots.

(You can write to Ned Hickson at the Siuslaw News at P.O. Box 10, Florence, Ore., 97439, or visit his website at [www.nedhickson.net](http://www.nedhickson.net))

## Proper Perry Pounces On Diversion Of Tax Dollars?

Where the heck has he been for the past five years?

So, one month before the elections our beloved and proper governor is concerned about how legislators take tax dollars collected from one issue and divert it to another? *How timely!*

For years legislative loopholes have enabled elected officials to take money they promised taxpayers would go towards, say, building and maintaining roadways (via gas taxes) and instead divert those tax dollars to higher education. *We're told it's perfectly legal, but is it ethical?*

Now some of you may say, "So what? Money for higher education is okay too." However, one year ago the governor and legislators pushed through a bill that deregulated higher education. Since then, institutions like UT have increased their tuition costs at least twice! Yet they continue to get diverted dollars collected from gasoline taxes and also from state lottery earnings!

BTW, with Perry's unreasonable and insatiable push for toll roads where do you think all THOSE toll tax dollars collected will be diverted to?

During the past 5 years I've been writing the governor and legislators about this loophole and that it is unconscionable that monies are diverted from what the taxpayers thought their tax dollars were going towards. I've also written to most Texas newspapers



## Texas Commentary

By Peter Stern

about this issue and most editors decided NOT to print commentaries on this issue.

One month before the elections Perry is doing everything and anything he can to prove to people that he's a great governor and good guy, and that he wants to do what's best for Texans and their families. However, if you review the governor's 5-year record he has done little to improve the quality of life for most Texans and their families. In fact, the truth is that most Texans are worse-off than they were 5 years ago.

Gov. Perry must think that most Texans are idiots.

Well, maybe he's correct if they still decide to reelect him in November.

**However, my bet is on Texans to see through the "smoke & mirrors!"**

*Peter Stern of Driftwood, Texas, a former Director of Information Services, University Professor and Public School Administrator, is a political writer well-known and published frequently throughout the Texas community and nationwide. He is a Disabled Vietnam Veteran and holds three post-graduate degrees. You may contact Peter Stern at: <pstern@austin.rr.com>.*

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# Austin Loses Vote But Wins University

As the second week of classes began at the University of Texas on Sept. 22, 1883, two towns could not believe their luck — one incredibly good and the other unbelievably bad.

A public institution of higher learning was a sacred promise made to the people of Texas in 1839 but repeatedly broken by the procrastinating legislature. Goaded into action by Gov. Oran Roberts and the teachers lobby, lawmakers in March 1881 finally okayed the creation of a state-supported university while predictably leaving the exact location up to the voters.

During the debate over the historic bill, a Galveston senator tacked on an amendment which offered the confusing option of putting the main campus and medical school in two different towns. If Texans decided to segregate future physicians, they would have to choose between Galveston and Houston.

The six sanctioned candidates for a “unified university” were Austin, Waco, Albany, Graham, Williams Ranch, and Matagorda. The nominees for a university minus the medical branch were Austin, Waco, Tyler, Lampasas, Caddo Grove, and Thorp Spring.

To a man the 11,000 residents of Austin understood the significance of the referendum scheduled for the first Tuesday in September. The presence of the state government and the coveted college would guarantee the permanent prosperity of their frontier community.

Under the gifted guidance of Alexander Penn Wooldridge, the capital city got the jump on the competition. The 34-year-old champion of public education, who had overcome stiff opposition to establish a free school system in Austin, quickly crafted a battle plan for the academic war.

At the annual convention of the state press association in May, Wooldridge obtained pledges of support from the majority of small-town and rural newspaper editors. His ace-in-the-hole argument was that, in calling for the construction of a college, the Third Congress of the Lone Star Republic had specified Austin as the site. In other words, history was on his side.

Another advantage was that Wooldridge was allowed to draw up the ballot. He shrewdly boiled the complicated question down to two simple though clearly loaded propositions: “for or against separation of the departments” and “for Austin for the Main University.”

## This Week In Texas History

By Barte Haile



The outraged representatives of the other cities bitterly protested Wooldridge’s brazen attempt to rig the election. Houston, Galveston, and Tyler joined forces in an anti-Austin alliance dedicated to denying the capital gang any part of the university.

Wooldridge also faced a revolt at home because of his willingness to give away the medical school in exchange for the central campus. By a 12-to-1 margin in a hastily held preference poll, hungry Austinites affirmed

their appetite for the whole enchilada, a greedy gesture that confirmed the worst fears of their critics.

If an election could be called off due to lack of interest, the university referendum on Sept. 6, 1881 surely qualified for cancellation. Poll workers must have struggled to stay awake as only 57,000 Texans, less than a fifth of the eligible electorate, bothered to register their opinion.

Officials undoubtedly hired armadillo-drawn carts to transport the ballot boxes to Austin for tabulation. That might explain why it took 41 days to count the miserably low turnout.

Opposed to one town having all the fun, voters went along

with the proposal to split off the medical school. In the head-to-head match to host the would-be doctors, Galveston decisively defeated its smaller neighbor on Buffalo Bayou.

The irrelevant race for the single campus was a runaway as Austin grabbed 14,607 votes. Second-place Waco finished far behind with a disappointing 7,167.

Aided by big bloc votes from Houston and Galveston, Tyler upset Austin 18,420 to 16,306 in the tight contest for the top prize. Thorp Spring, a village west of Fort Worth that today is smaller than most prairie dog towns, edged Waco for third followed by Lampasas, Caddo Grove (a ghost town by 1900), Graham, Matagorda, Albany,

and Williams Ranch (another ghost town), in that order.

But a controversial technicality spoiled the victory celebration in East Texas. Although Tyler had won the right to the main campus fair and square, the economic bonanza was awarded to runner-up Austin on the basis of its larger combined vote.

This bizarre and blatantly biased formula, which had the private blessing of the governor despite his East Texas roots, practically guaranteed the University of Texas would end up nowhere but Austin.

The capital gang had stacked the deck.

“Outlaws & Lawmen” - “Best of This Week in Texas History” Vol. VI is \$10.95 plus \$3.25 postage and handling from Barte Haile, P.O. Box 152, Friendswood, TX 77549. And don’t forget to visit [www.twith.com](http://www.twith.com).

## The Devil Made Me Do It

Whenever world leaders call their enemies “the Devil,” or lambast them as “evil,” it’s hard for me to take those charges seriously. When both sides engage in the same kind of name-calling, it’s not easy to view one side as taking the high road. So, when President Bush has played the “evil card,” or when our enemies have played the “Devil” or the “you’ll rot in hell” card, it’s been difficult to give those words much credence. And when we hear them over and over again, their power is even reduced further. So, we tend to ignore them when we hear those words in public discourse.

However, recently, when Hugo Chavez, the President of Venezuela, called President Bush the Devil at the United Nations, the decibels and the just plain weirdness of the rant were impossible to ignore.

I admit that Chavez added a clever twist when he said that he could “smell sulfur” as he stood at the same podium previously used by President Bush. But I still felt this was just immature name-calling. I guess I had two main reactions to his speech. The first was that I was appalled that a head of state would use such language and would rant and rave like that at the U.N. My second reaction was that I was pleased that there is still a place in the world where speakers are free to rant and rave and criticize other world leaders in any way they want, no matter how crazy they sound.

And I didn’t think much more about Chavez’ speech.

But I guess I was in the minority. In Boston, there is now



## Modern Times

By Lloyd Garver

a movement to remove the huge Citgo sign from Kenmore Square. Citgo is a subsidiary of Venezuela’s state oil company. The sign can be seen from Fenway Park, and some people propose replacing it with an American flag.

But their reaction is nothing compared to that of book buyers. If you saw Chavez’ speech, you couldn’t help notice that he was brandishing a book as he ranted. The book was Noam Chomsky’s “Hegemony or Survival: America’s Quest for Global Dominance.” When Chavez was waving the book, Amazon ranked it 20,664 in popularity. By the next day, it was ranked Number One. That’s right. It became Number One just because this guy was waving it around while he was screaming out his address.

I’ve decided to respond to Chavez in my own way. I’m not joining the “tear down the Citgo sign” crowd and I’m not ordering Chomsky’s book. Instead, I’m writing Chavez directly about his unseemly address. A copy of it is below:

Dear President Chavez:

I feel that your address to the United Nations was inappropriate and undignified. The art of diplomacy does not include name-calling. Furthermore, I never feel that one has to shout to get a point across. As Presi-

dent of Venezuela, you represent all the people of your country, and I doubt that they all feel as you do. Thus your verbal explosion did a disservice to your people in the eyes of the world.

Having said this, I would appreciate it if the next time you address the United Nations, you would please wave a copy of my column to those listening.

I don’t recall if any of my readers who have disagreed with me have called me “the Devil,” but they have certainly called me other names that are not printable here. I’ll bet you could say those names in the U.N. without getting into trouble. Feel free to say them as you help my column become the most popular in the world.

All I’m asking you to do is wave my column, and tell the people where they can find it. If you want to say the place smells like sulphur while you’re waving, that’s okay with me.

Meanwhile, I’m just going to sit back and relax, and watch my column go to Number One.

Sincerely,  
Lloyd Garver

I guess you could say I’ve decided to take a devilish approach on this issue.

*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](mailto:lloydgarver@yahoo.com)*

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# U.S. Occupation Of Iraq Fuels 'Jihadism': White House

GREENWICH, Conn. — The Bush administration admitted last week that the United States' occupation of Iraq is fueling "jihadism."

The comment made by White House spokesman Tony Snow came in response to a leaked spy agency report concluding that the threat of terrorism was spreading due to the role the U.S. is playing in Iraq.

Snow also noted that the National Intelligence Estimate report listed other factors that contributed to the increases in

the foreign terror responses.

These factors include "longstanding social grievances, slowness of the pace of reform, and the use of the Internet," he told reporters.

The NIE report — Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States — is a collection of findings from 16 U.S. intelligence agencies.

President George W. Bush was attending a political fundraiser the day after the report was leaked.

With less than 40 days left un-

til the November 7 mid-term elections, Bush has insisted that the war on Iraq has made Americans safer.

However, both the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan are now seen with even less regard by American voters.

Since no weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq, the Bush administration has changed its rationale for U.S.-led invasion of the Middle Eastern country to praising the removal Iraqi President Saddam Hussein from power.

The NIE report says that the war and subsequent occupation in Iraq have decentralized but spread Islamic terror networks across the globe. The Iraq occupation has also been used as a recruitment tool for terrorist groups, according to the report.

An official near to the leaked NIE document told the NEW YORK TIMES that "the Iraq war has made the overall terrorism problem worse."

Under conditions of anonymity, top U.S. military officials have expressed their qualms over the last month with the deteriorating situation in Iraq.

The latest of such appeals happened last Monday before the Senate Democratic Policy Committee by retired military

officers.

The officers — Ret. Maj. Gen. John R. S. Batiste and Ret. Maj. Gen. Paul Eaton — blamed Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld for the handling the conduct of the U.S. military in both wars.

Democrat candidates for Congress are framing the "war on terror" issue as one of a "change in direction" to keep Americans safe, while their Republican counterparts argue that doing

so would constitute a "cut and run."

A recent poll for a University of Maryland program showed that about 60 percent of Iraqis approve of the harm American troops face there. In January, 47 percent of Iraqis answered the same way according to a different poll.

The Iraq war and occupation has already taken the lives of more Americans than those killed in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.



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