

Local Progressive News from the **Nashville Peace & Justice Center**

Rice-a-Phony: Condi does Vandy

Condoleezza Rice's speech at Vanderbilt Thursday [May 13] blended snippets of personal narrative with tepid commencement platitudes into a package that was superficially articulate, but really quite banal in substance and unexpectedly flat in delivery. Perhaps this marks it as a fairly typical commencement address (although this one was pre-commencement at Vanderbilt, where a tradition of no outside speakers at the actual graduation endures). As Rice observed, recalling her own college graduation, "I do not...remember a single word that the commencement speaker said, and you won't either."

Bruce Barry - Vanderbilt Sociology Professor

But Rice's speech is worth remembering—not just because she's a key mouthpiece for the Bush-Cheney war machine, but for its memorable elevation of hypocrisy and disingenuousness to a rhetorical art form. Although rooted in a few compelling anecdotal references to Rice's early upbringing in the pre-civil-rights movement South, the speech arrived at the kind of fatuous, blinkered perspectives on 21st century America that are the stock and trade of Bush White House propagandists.

Let's go to the transcript:

"Merit alone did not see you to this day. There are many people in this country, many from your hometown, some even from your own high school, who are just as intelligent, just as hard-working, and just as **cont. on page 6**

Letter from the Center

It's been a busy couple of months. Since May 1, the NPJC community has welcomed two new summer interns, a Pastors for Peace caravan, President Bush, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, a statewide Fair Trade Conference, and Michael Moore's Fahrenheit 911. However, as we prepare to welcome more activity, we're also preparing to say goodbye

Christina Van Regenmorter ~ NPJC staff

to some important parts of our community.

Two of the NPJC community's most faithful volunteers, Benjamin Kite and Jeanne Rewa, will be leaving for China in August. They were integral parts of TCASK, Fair Trade Nashville, the Scarritt Bennett Center Diversity Dialogues, the SOA Watch, and the Board Retreat committee -- trading hats quickly and adeptly. In their time at the NPJC (since Ben cooked an Iraqi feast for 600 people in February of 2003), they have served us in many, many different ways -- as facilitators, organizers, educators, painters, chefs, and friends.

Rojean Cadieux, an amazing musician and Tikkun supporter, and her husband are off to the peace corps in Jamaica the first week in July.

Hibbard Thatcher, longtime board member and member of the personnel committee, also resigned at the end of June -- recognizing his need to spend more time caring for his beloved wife, Ruby.

And, I will be leaving the NPJC staff as well -- taking a sabbatical from activism in order to dance and write and work with my hands and figure out what I'm supposed to do in the next stage of my life.

Hibbard, Rojean, Ben, Jeanne, and I leave the NPJC in good hands -- *your* hands.

I cannot speak for others, but I trust your hands. In my time here, I have seen them giving gifts of time and money, bicycle repair and surplus food, garden expertise and academic knowledge. Thank you for it. I, and many others, have received your gifts with gratitude.



Anita Subsidy and Iwanna Yat stood up in the middle of Dr. Rice's speech to affirm her presence on Vanderbilt's campus. Regarding the war in Iraq, Ms. Subsidy said was supportive. "Freedom for all, billions for me." Photo by Al Levenson



Reversing the Patriot Act

It's about time we had a concrete target to get back our civil liberties, and, thanks to some brave members of the US House and Senate, we now do. Call your senators and representative TODAY and schedule a meeting with them during their summer recess, asking them to pass the Civil Liberties Restoration Act of 2004 (CLRA). In the Senate, it's "S 2528," and in the House, it's "HR 4591."

CLRA would roll back the most egregious and ineffectual federal post-September 11, 2001, immigration policies, calling for basic rights and fair treatment under the law. It's not perfect, but it's the best thing we've got in DC right now. CLRA would:

- * Reverse the Administration's blanket order for secret deportation hearings, while permitting closed hearings to be ordered on a case-by-case basis based on the need for confidentiality of asylum applications or national security interests;
- * Provide important due process safeguards for individuals detained on immigration violations (timely notice of the charges; fair, individualized bond determinations);
- * Establish an independent immigration court within the Department of Justice and promote fair hearings by an impartial, independent, and competent tribunal;

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Nashville Peace and Justice Center

A community-based, multi-issue center for the Middle Tennessee region seeking to promote peacemaking, social justice, and environmental issues in our society and the world.

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- Americans United for Separation of Church and State
- Amnesty International
- Bring Urban Recycling to Nashville Today
- Common Cause
- Cumberland Greens Bioregional Council
- The Emma Center
- Earth Matters
- 1st Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville
- Greater Nashville Unitarian Universalist
- Homeless Power Project
- Interfaith Alliance of Middle Tennessee
- Latin American Central American Solidarity Association
- Living Wage Campaign of Nashville
- Middle Tennessee Presbytery / Peace With Justice Committee
- Mideast Peace Coalition
- Nashville Friends Meeting
- National Organization for Women
- Pan Africa
- PeaceRoots Alliance
- Radio Free Nashville
- The Scarritt Bennett Center
- Tennessee Coalition to Abolish State Killing
- United Nations Association
- Veterans for Peace
- War Resisters League

ALTERNATIVES

is the official bimonthly publication of the Nashville Peace & Justice Center

EDITORIAL COLLECTIVE

Christina Van Regenmorter, Jean Lynch-Thomasen, Al Levenson, and Gene Kelly

SUBMISSIONS

We seek cartoons, articles, letters, and photos related to peace and justice issues relevant to the Tennessee progressive community. We will try to respect the integrity of your submissions, but we reserve the right to edit for clarity, grammar, spelling, and length. Objections? Write us a letter.

Fax: 615-320-8897 P: 615-321-9066

christina@nashvillepeacejustice.org

Calendar July August Summer 2004

NPJC Summer Interns

The NPJC is extremely honored to welcome our 2004 Summer Interns, James Ch'ng and William T. Young. They will be working with NPJC staff members Christina, Matt, and Jen on a project this summer. They will develop and facilitate workshops on issues of corporate globalization for a variety of Nashville communities.

The nature and focus of each workshop will be tailored to its audience (including clergy, congregations, small business owners, staff of social service agencies, and small farmers) to help participants make connections between their own circumstances, the effects of NAFTA, and the ways in which CAFTA and the FTAA may change all of our lives in the future. This "popular education" approach (focusing on group participation, imaginative activities and personal stories) will work in collaboration with state-wide and local campaigns on Fair Trade.

If you know of a group of people that might be interested in hosting one of these workshops, or if you'd like to learn more about this project (or about globalization issues in general) please contact Jen: jen@nashvillepeacejustice.org, (615) 321-9066.

James Ch'ng is a graduate of University School of Nashville, and has just finished his first year at the University of California at Los Angeles. He is interested in deepening his understanding of corporate globalization, learning ways to inspire others on the issues, and gaining experience in the fields of popular education and campaign organizing. He hopes to take these skills back with him to UCLA in the fall, and integrate them with his work as a volunteer with the California Students for Sustainability Coalition.

William T. Young is a graduate of American Baptist College and an ordained minister, finishing up his Masters thesis at Vanderbilt. He is an active member of the Interdenominational Ministerial Fellowship (IMF) and has chronicled that organization's role in local Civil Rights struggles. He has spoken to numerous audiences on topics of prophetic faith, social responsibility, ethics and globalization. His studies on globalization's interface with religion and culture have taken him to Thailand, Mexico, and Cuba. He is exploring ways for faith communities to respond to corporate globalization and is hoping to translate his academic knowledge into popular education and dialogue with local clergy and congregations.

July 9-10: Celebration of Cultures Food, culture, music, dancing. Held at Scarritt Bennett Center (across from the NPJC).

July 13: Radio Free Nashville Gathering. Guess who's bringing Democracy Now! and other progressive news, views, and music to Nashville area radiowaves? That's right... Radio Free Nashville.

July 17: Sandinofest 3pm-onwards. Come to Sandy Hepler's farm for a peaceful revolutionary tribute to the 25th anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution and a lot of fresh, home-grown sweet corn. Call 931-621-3474 for directions.

July 26: Nashville NOW 7pm at the NPJC. Join the local branch of the National Organization for Women as they plot ways to support women candidates for office, protect women's rights, and have fun. For more information, contact Cynthia Bennett at: 615-385-0053

Aug 14: Is Constitutional Democracy in Iraq Possible? Judge Gilbert Merrit, fresh from a trip to Iraq, will be the featured speaker of the United Nations Association's Summer Luncheon. From 12-2:00pm at Belmont UMC (Acklen & 21st). RSVP 615-321-1200 for \$12 tickets.

Aug 23: Nashville NOW 7pm at the NPJC. Join the local branch of the National Organization for Women as they plot ways to support women candidates for office, protect women's rights, and have fun. For more information, contact Cynthia Bennett at: 615-385-0053

Weekly Activism

Sundays: Food not Bombs 1:30-3:00pm at Legislative Plaza (between from Capitol and Sheraton, at 6th and Union). Contact beckyr@riseup.net for more information.

Wednesdays: Peace Coalition 6-7:30pm at NPJC*. Join the 2 year old NPJC Peace Coalition as they plan protests and educational events.

Thursdays: Women in Black 12:00-1:00pm on Broadway between 12th and 11th. Silently Stand in Black: to Mourn, to Remember, to be a Presence for Peace.

* NPJC offices and board room are at 1016 18th Avenue S. / Nashville, TN. 37212. Call 615-321-9066 for directions.

www.nashvillepeacejustice.org

Crying out to be Saved

Analyzing the Project for a New American Century

In their 2003 book, *An End to Evil*, David Frum (a former assistant to President George W. Bush) and Richard Perle (served as chairman of the Defense Policy Board under the current President Bush) write about:

...a world at peace; a world governed by law; a world in which all peoples are free to find their own destinies. That dream has not yet come true, it will not come true soon, but if it ever does come true, it will be brought into being by American armed might and defended by American might, too.

Note: "American armed might."

Norman Truxton - NPJC Board Member Emeritus

What about the power of love, reason, persuasion, compassion, justice, community, coordination, multilateralism, goodwill?

Going back a few years from this 2003 book, one is reminded of the "Project for a New American Century" (PNAC). After the first Gulf War, Paul Wolfowitz, then undersecretary of defense for policy, drafted a defense planning document that laid out the core ideas of what was to become PNAC's vision. Preemption and unilateral military action were promoted. According to *Sojourners* magazine, the Bush Sr. administration officials rejected the PNAC as too radical.

President George W. Bush, with Richard Cheney (one of the Project's founders) as vice-president, has bought into the PNAC. The following nine key participants in the Project for a New American Century have positions in the Bush administration: Richard Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Peter Rodman, Richard Armitage, John Bolton, Elliot Abrams, James Woolsey, and Lewis Libby.

In September, 2000, the Project released its grand plan for the future in a report titled, "Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces, and Resources for a New Century." The report itself admitted that the process of accomplishing this transformation (a global Pax Americana) was "likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event - like a new Pearl Harbor."

Well, along came September 11, 2001. Only days after 9/11, the Project released a letter arguing that "even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the attack, any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq."

The US now has its troops in 130 countries around the world, with permanent bases in 40 of those nation-states, and a growing number of others providing basing rights. We all know who has the most weapons of mass destruction in the world by far. We all know which nation is the leader in providing weapons to the rest of the world.

The *New Republic* of November 28, 1914, contains an article by George Santayana, titled, "The Inhumanity of Fanaticism." It refers to Germans who then claimed the highest Kultur. It is applicable to the United States almost 90 years late. I quote:

...the maturer and disillusioned portion of mankind are hardly wrong in smelling a danger whenever an absolute and supreme end is proposed and pursued to the serious inconvenience of everybody. [Read thousands of casualties on all sides, many tens of billions of dollars that could be better used, more enemies and a more dangerous world.]... The pursuit of any single end, ravishing and incomparable as it may seem to the enthusiast, strains and impoverishes human nature, and sometimes, by detaching it too much from common and humble feelings, actually debauches it... Men presently will cry out to be saved from that salvation and enlightened out of that truth; they will gasp to escape from the heavy regime of that Kultur, so as to see this green world for themselves, and live and learn after their own fashion.... Nothing will repay a man for becoming inhuman. The aim of life is some way of living, as flexible and gentle as human nature; so that ambition may stoop to kindness, and philosophy to candor and to humor. Neither prosperity nor heaven can be worth winning at the price of a virulent temper, bloody hands, an anguished spirit, and a vain hatred of the rest of the world.

Let all who believe in peace, in justice, in kindness, in arms control, in generosity of spirit, in saving the planet, in conservation, in hope, in alleviating world suffering UNITE in a mighty movement -- a movement that promotes REAL security in other ways than via armies, counterviolence, threats, and fear. ○

Volunteers Needed

Want to serve the Peace and Justice Center, dust off some computer skills, and enhance your resume? Call 615-321-9066 to interview.

Alternatives Editor

The Nashville Peace and Justice Center is seeking an editor for its bi-monthly newsletter, *Alternatives*.

This position requires a time commitment of 10-12 hours a month (in or out of the office) and some familiarity with desktop publishing (we currently use Adobe Pagemaker).

We are seeking creative, word-friendly individuals who enjoy writing, editing, and creating a community-supported alternative print media source.

Training in Adobe Pagemaker provided upon request.

Web Editor

www.nashvillepeacejustice.org

The Nashville Peace and Justice Center is seeking a weekly editor to update its website.

This position requires a time commitment of 2 hours a week (in or out of the office) and some familiarity with computers.

We are seeking committed and driven individuals who have familiarity with the web and word processing. Web-editing expertise is not necessary.

The NPJC's website is on a user-friendly content management system for which training will be provided.

Reagan, Race, and Remembrance

Tim Wise - Fisk Race Relations Inst.

If one needs any more evidence that whites and people of color live in two totally different places, politically and psychologically, one need only look at the visual evidence provided by the death of Ronald Reagan. More to the point, all one needs to know about this man's Presidency can be gleaned by looking even haphazardly at the racial makeup of the crowds flocking to his ranch, or his library, to pay tribute. So too will it be apparent from the assemblage lining the streets for his funeral procession, gathering in the Capitol Rotunda to pay respects to their departed hero.

They are, and will be — in case you missed it or are waiting for the safest prediction in the history of prognostication — white. Far whiter than the nation over which Reagan presided, and even more so than the nation into whose soil he will be deposited within a matter of days.

While persons of color make up 30 percent of the population of the U.S., the Reagan faithful look like another country altogether. As they gathered in Simi Valley — home of the 40th President's library, and the jury that thought nothing of the police beating of Rodney King — one wonders if they noticed the incongruity between themselves and the rest of the state in which they live: a state where people like them are slightly less than half the population now.

Doubtful. Most of them are quite used to never seeing black and brown folks, since the vast majority of whites live in places with virtually no people of color around them. That the mourners wouldn't notice the overwhelming monochromy of their throng is no surprise. But it's interesting that no intrepid reporter — or someone pretending to be such — has thought to ask the obvious question about the racial makeup of those losing sleep over the death of Ronald Reagan, versus those who frankly aren't.

After all, there are really only two possible interpretations of the sanguine reaction by people of color to Reagan's death: namely, either black and brown folks are poster children for insensitivity, or perhaps they know something that white folks don't, or would rather ignore.

The former of these is not likely — millions of black folks actually forgave George Wallace for God's sake when he did a partial mea culpa for his racist past before his death — but the latter is as certain as rain in Seattle.

What most white folks ignore, but most blacks can never forget, is how Reagan opposed the Civil Rights Act at the time of its passage, calling it an unwarranted intrusion on the rights of businesses, and never repudiated his former stand. Or that as Governor of California, Reagan dismissed the struggle for fair and open housing, by saying blacks were just "making trouble" and had no intention of moving into mostly white neighborhoods.

Perhaps they have a hard time forgetting that of all the places Reagan could have begun his campaign for the Presidency in 1980, he had to choose Philadelphia, Mississippi: a town famous only for the 1964 murder of three civil rights workers. And perhaps they recall that the focus of his speech that day was "state's rights," a longstanding white code for rolling back civil rights gains and longing for the days of segregation.

Maybe they have burned in their memories the way Reagan attacked welfare programs with stories of "strapping young bucks" buying T-Bone steaks, while hardworking taxpayers could

only afford hamburger, or how Reagan fabricated a story about a "welfare queen" from Chicago with 80 names, 30 addresses, and 12 Social Security cards, receiving over \$150,000 in tax-free income. That Reagan picked Chicago as the site of this entirely fictional woman, and not some mostly white rural area where there were plenty of welfare recipients too, could hardly have been lost on African Americans.

Perhaps people of color remember the words of former Reagan Education Secretary Terrell Bell, who noted in his memoir how racial slurs were common among the "Great Communicator's" White House staffers, including regular references to Martin Luther Coon, and "sand niggers." Perhaps they recall that Reagan supported tax exemptions for schools that discriminated against blacks.

Perhaps they recall how his Administration cut funds for community health centers by 18 percent, denying three-quarters-of-a-million people access to services; how they cut federal housing assistance by two-thirds, resulting in the loss of 200,000 affordable units for renters in urban areas.

Or how Reagan opposed sanctions against the racist South African regime, and even denied that apartheid, under which system blacks could not vote, was racist, noting that its policies were "more tribal than racial."

And it isn't surprising that few if any Salvadorans or Guatemalans, who came to the U.S. in the 1980s, fleeing from violence in their countries, were to be seen placing flowers outside Reagan's library either.

After all, the former were forced to seek refuge here precisely because Reagan was intent on funneling money and arms to the murderous death-squad governments responsible for killing so many of their countrymen and women; and the latter recall how Reagan brushed off the genocidal policies of Guatemalan dictator Rios Montt — whose scorched earth tactics, especially against the nation's indigenous resulted in at least 70,000 deaths — by saying he was getting a "bum rap" on human rights, and was instead a man of "great personal commitment," who was dedicated to "social justice."

That whites would view much of this as irrelevant, even sour grapes on the part of communities of color, is only proof positive that for many if not most such folks, the opinions and even humanity of black and brown persons with whom they share a nation is of secondary importance to the fact that Reagan — as many have been gushing these past few days — "made them feel good again."

But how can healthy people feel good about a leader who does and says the kinds of things mentioned above? Obviously the answer is by denying that racism matters, or that its victims count for anything. Even more cynically, it is no doubt true that for many of them, it was precisely Reagan's policy of hostility to people of color that made them feel good in the first place.

By 1980, most whites were tiring of civil rights and looking for someone who would take their minds off such troubling concepts as racism, instead imploring them to "greatness," however defined, and "pride," however defined, and flag waving.

Whites have long been more enamored of style than substance, of fiction than fact, of fantasy than reality. It's why we have clung so tenaciously to the preposterous version of our national history peddled by textbooks for so long; and it's why we get angry when

anyone tries to offer a correction. It's why we choose to believe the lie about the U.S. being a shining city on a hill, rather than a potentially great but thoroughly flawed place built on the graves of Native peoples, built by the labor of enslaved Africans, enlarged by theft and murder and an absolute disregard for non-European lives. As Randall Robinson points out in his recent book, *Quitting America*, when such subjects are broached, the operative response from much of the white tribe is little more than, "Oh, that." Yes, white man, that. That thing we were raised to speak of in hushed tones, as if by our failure to audibilize it, it will go away; that perhaps they will forget about it, and instead join with us in praise of our country, since that is most definitely how so many of us envision it.

White people, especially those who are upper-middle class and above, have no reason on Earth to be aware of the truth, let alone to dwell on it. The truth is so messy, littered with dead Nicaraguans, and dead Haitians murdered by Duvalier while Reagan stood by him; so soiled by his support for Saddam Hussein. Better to ignore all that, and to go mushy before the pictures of Reagan in his cowboy hat, to remember a President who, for all of his murderous policies abroad and contempt for millions at home, at least never got a ----- in the Oval Office.

This is the twisted psychosis of growing up privileged, as a member of the dominant group: a group that must view their nation as fair and just, as a place struck off by the literal hand of God, as a place where "average" guys like Ronald Reagan can become "great leaders." As a place where an "aw shucks" smile, and a profound lack of knowledge about the details of public policy (or even the names of foreign leaders) is not only not cause for embarrassment, but yet another good reason to vote for someone; where refusing to read up on important policy

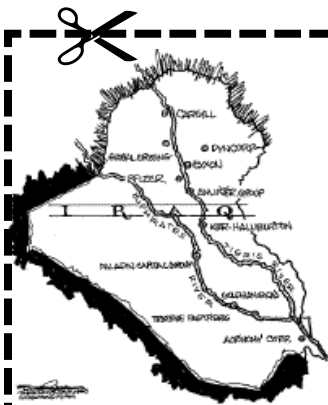
details prior to a key international meeting so one can watch *The Sound of Music* on TV, is seen as endearing rather than cause for a recall.....

Having to grapple with the real world is stressful, and people with relative power and privilege never deal with stress very well. As such, they long for and applaud easy answers for the stress that occasionally manages to intrude upon their lives: so they blame people of color for high taxes, failing schools, crime, drugs, and jobs they didn't get; they blame terrorism on "evil," and the notion that they hate our freedoms: a belief one can only have if one really thinks one lives in a free country in the first place.

In other words, delusion is both the fuel that propels people like Ronald Reagan forward in political life, and then makes a rational assessment of his legacy impossible upon his death. I think this is why so many white people remember him fondly, and are truly crestfallen at the thought of his physical obsolescence: simply put, much of white America needs Ronald Reagan; a father figure to tell us everything is going to be O.K.; a kindly old Wizard of Oz, to assure us that image and reality are one, even when the more cerebral parts of our beings tend towards an opposite conclusion.

With Reagan gone, maintaining the illusion becomes more difficult. But knowing white folks — I'm one of them and have been surrounded by them all of my life — I have little doubt that where there's a will to remain in la-la land, we will find a way.

Reagan has been released from the lie, finally, and may his soul find peace among the millions of dearly departed victims of his policies around the world. Meanwhile, the rest of us must pull back the curtain on all phony heroes, Reagan among them, lest we create many millions more. ○



Is Constitutional Democracy in Iraq Possible?

Judge Gilbert Merrit
Sat. Aug 14, 2004
12-2:00pm
Belmont UMC (Acklen & 21st)

Join the United Nations Association of the United States of America Nashville Chapter for their annual **Summer Luncheon**, featuring Judge Gilbert Merrit from the US Court of Appeals, sixth circuit.

Judge Merritt was part of a 13 member delegation by the U.S. Justice Department which traveled to Iraq to assess and help rebuild Iraq's judicial system in May-June 2003.

Belmont United Methodist Church is on the corner of Acklen Avenue and 21st Ave S. in Nashville, TN, 37212 -- right in Hillsboro Village, north of the I-440 Hillsboro Rd/21st Ave exit.

RSVPs Requested: Call the UNA-USA Nashville Chapter at 615-321-1200 for a reservation by August 10.

Sandinofest

Sat., July 17, 2004
3pm to Late
Sandy Hepler's Farm

Celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution

Revel in our ongoing involvement with friends in Nicaragua.

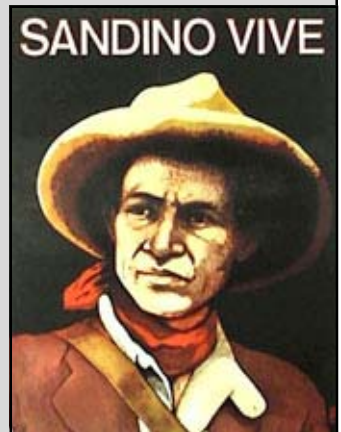
Enjoy the bounty of beautiful Jackson County.

Eat homegrown Veggies, apples, cantalope, barbeque and all the sweet corn you can eat!

Camping available overnight.

Free to all Peace-and-justiciers.

For **directions**, call Sandy at 931-621-3474 or email jhepler@twlakes.net.



Rice-a-Phony... continued from page 1

deserving, but for whatever reason, they didn't have that one teacher that inspired them, or parents who made it possible, and they didn't enjoy the opportunities that came your way."

Yes, it is a deep mystery why so many people fail to achieve the successes of Vanderbilt graduates. But let's not fret about that, or try to understand "whatever reasons" might explain it. Way too complicated. Besides, Vandy grads, a goodly number of those people who "don't enjoy the opportunities that came your way" are instead enjoying the opportunity to be killed or maimed in Iraq, and we certainly wouldn't want to dwell on that unpleasantness.

"America and Americans are willing to embrace all that is good in the world, in art and science and culture, while maintaining the basic principles of American liberty as enshrined in our Constitution and Bill of Rights."



Bill Harkey stands up in the middle Dr. Rice's speech. Over 100 members of the Vanderbilt community joined Bill, Ed Belbusti, and Jane Hussain delivered letters to Chancellor Gee, protesting his selection of Dr. Rice for the medal.

This is quite a somersault of self-delusion from a woman shilling for a president who sees evolution and creationism as having equal scientific credibility, for a White House that persistently downplays legitimate science on environmental protection and medical research, for a party would rather defund the arts, and for an administration that thinks "maintaining liberty" means diluting the Bill of Rights by extending and expanding the Patriot Act.

"A first generation American has as much claim to the legacy of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln as those who can trace their roots to the Mayflower."

Rice failed to elaborate on how and why this excludes individuals unlucky enough to be detained (and presumed guilty) as suspected enemy combatants, or on why the administration she represents will go all the way to the Supreme Court to ensure that no obligations of due process or constitutional protection (those pesky legacies of the founders) are forced upon it.

"Thanks to the courage of many, some famous and some who history will never record, America had a second founding, and in that second founding, the old South passed away.... You can see it here in Nashville, with its nationally influential health care and music industries, its economic growth and its diverse neighborhoods. America is finally becoming whole."

Yep, that's us, great health care, diverse neighborhoods. You can tell she's in touch with our community. Most Vanderbilt undergraduates and their parents aren't either, so she can get away with making up stuff like this.

The education you have had has privileged you to be with those who are unlike you."

Perhaps she wrote this line for her commencement speech last week at Michigan State, but inadvertently used it at Vanderbilt instead.

"Your third obligation is to work to further the same democratic progress here and abroad that has made your own opportunities possible."

Now would that be the same obligation your fellow Republicans in Texas and Pennsylvania are meeting when they blatantly abuse the redistricting process to undermine democracy in favor of gaining a few more congressional seats?

"We should never indulge in the condescending voices that allege that some people are not interested in freedom, or aren't ready for freedom's responsibility. That view was wrong in 1963 in Birmingham, and it's wrong in 2004 in Baghdad."

A cheap applause line, and classic sophistry. Who are these voices making such allegations about Iraq? Can you



As Dr. Rice bows her head on the wide screen, the Peace Coalition's Pam Beziat and Karl Meyerraise their cloth banners. Dressed like proud parents of a graduate, Pam and Karl got into the audience. Photos by Al Levenson.

name...um...one? Does it make a disastrous war-making foreign policy seem more successful when you invent opposing "voices" that don't actually exist?

"With all of the images of troops and tanks and military operations, it's hard to remember that this is primarily a war of ideas, not armies."

What "ideas" would those be? The ones about imminent threats from nonexistent weapons that trumped up a war? The ones about how to extract information from imprisoned Iraqis? The ones about crumbling U.S. diplomatic credibility worldwide?

As expected, Rice's speech mostly steered clear of direct references to difficulties in Iraq and Afghanistan, and many would call this a prudent strategy for a commencement gig. But Rice was invited, and her presence was big news, because she is an architect and spokesperson for the antagonistic U.S. role in the most provocative events of the day. Yet the war in Iraq, the prisoner abuse scandal, tenacious global terrorism, the unrelenting Israeli-Palestinian powder keg—these were the unmentioned elephants in the middle of Vanderbilt's Alumni Lawn.

When Rice was finished, I felt not so much disappointed that she sidestepped the big issues as just plain insulted. The Bush administration's essential and consistent political strategy is to hide the truth, obfuscate when possible and pretend on all occasions and in the face of all evidence that things are just peachy. Condoleezza Rice came to town and showed us how it's done. Vanderbilt gave her a medal for it.

This piece originally appeared in the Nashville Scene on-line late edition. Reprinted with permission.

End The War, Bring the Troops Home

a Peace Coalition position paper on Iraq

It is time for the United States to initiate a cease-fire in Iraq and to announce a schedule for phased withdrawal of United States military forces, leading to the total withdrawal of all U.S. troops and bases by the end of 2004.

The United Nations Secretary General should facilitate and mediate discussions among all Iraqi social groups and parties for a transitional government leading up to an elected government for Iraq. There should be no U.S. interference. If major elements of the Iraqi population request it, there should be a transitional United Nations peacekeeping force, under United Nations command, separate from U.S. military forces, with major participation from Arabic speaking countries. This force would accept responsibility from U.S. troops as they withdraw.

The Bush administration should issue an apology, make amends, and return Iraqi resources to Iraqi control. The United States government should fund reconstruction efforts under Iraqi leadership and utilizing Iraqi expertise.

The U.S. occupation policy in Iraq is already a disaster and could become a quagmire similar to the Vietnam War. Hundreds of U.S. troops have been killed, with thousands of others wounded. Thousands of Iraqi civilians and combatants have been killed as a result of the occupation and of Iraqi resistance to it. We don't know how many, because occupation authorities claim that they don't keep track of Iraqi casualties.

U.S. taxpayers are providing billions of dollars for the war and occupation, and multi-national corporations are collecting huge profits. Iraqis continue to die because of the destruction of their infrastructure and healthcare, while federal and local governments in the United States are not able to meet the healthcare, social, and infrastructure needs of our own people. This causes uncounted casualties and deaths among our own civilian population.

The Bush administration used the excuse of

fighting terrorism as a reason for invading and occupying Iraq, but it is clear that the occupation adds to threats of non-governmental attacks on US military forces abroad and the possibility of attacks within the United States. Non-governmental attacks on US citizens are obviously correlated with levels of frustration and rage among people in countries occupied or exploited by US power. Experienced students of Iraqi politics, such as former weapons inspectors and aid workers in Iraq, said throughout the lead-up to the war that the Bush administration claims about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and Iraqi ties to Al Qaeda were probably false and at best grossly exaggerated. Subsequent revelations show that Bush administration spokesperson lied about weapons of mass destruction, and about their own neo-imperial goals in Iraq.

Even participants in the previous Bush administration and the First Gulf War, such as former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, warned that Iraq would be expensive, difficult, and dangerous to govern after an invasion. Unlike the present Bush administration, they were realistic in their assessment of the situation. That is why they withdrew quickly after the invasion phase of the First Gulf War.

The Nashville Peace coalition opposed the Iraq War vigorously from the beginning, because we believed that the rationalizations for the war were false, and that the costs of the war would be destructive to us and the international community.

The Bush administration is unable to establish peace and good order in Iraq. Growing resistance shows that many Iraqis are unwilling to be governed by any American occupation structure, or to have their national oil resources turned over to foreign corporate control.

It is time to get out of Iraq and to use our resources for economic, healthcare, and social needs in our own country, and for constructive aid and investment in Iraq and other countries, winning friends by peaceful cooperation.

In Loving Memory

Victor Horton ~ Homeless Power Project

June 6th would have been Victor's 42nd Birthday. In May, Victor obtained Section 8 housing and claimed his own home for the first time in his life.

Immediately, he opened his home to others when in need and shared his vision for making it a community center with the Power Project.

More than two years clean, Victor was filled with hope and a growing community. A leader in the Power Project, he had spoken publicly twice in the last few months and had taken charge of the group when we needed direction. Victor was sweet and gentle.

Even with all this hope and love around him, Victor graciously battled several illnesses. With fragmented health care and too many ailments, Victor left this World the last week of May. We are thankful that he died in his own home.

Thank You Victor for the time we had with you. We love you, miss you, and will feel your spirit with each step we take toward equality and justice.

Reversing...cont from page 1

- * Terminate the troubled National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) while encouraging fairness and permitting focused attention on those who pose a threat to national security or safety;
- * Assign reasonable penalties commensurate with the technical nature of immigration violations for non-citizens' failure to register or provide timely notification of address changes (rather than draconian punishments, such as deportation);
- * Require minimum accuracy requirements for the National Crime Information Center database relied upon by national, state, and local law enforcement officials;
- * Ensure that those charged with a crime based on national security surveillance under the USA PATRIOT Act can review the evidence against them in the same manner as those charged with a crime based upon other kinds of evidence;
- * Mandate public reports to Congress about data-mining activities, to protect privacy and due process rights and ensure the accuracy of collected information;
- * (House version only) Amend the USA PATRIOT Act to limit the secret seizure of private databases and individual records to cases where the government has shown there is a reasonable connection to a suspected terrorist or terrorist group.

PEACE AND JUSTICE CAN'T WAIT JOIN NPJC TODAY

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Citizen Comment: (202) 456-1111

(A 1-minute call before 8 am costs 29 cents)

Congressional Switchboard:

1(800) 648-3516

U.S. Senator Bill Frist

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(202) 224-3344 senator@frist.senate.gov

U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander

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(202) 224-4944 senator@alexander.senate.gov

U.S. Representative Jim Cooper

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TN Senator Joe Haynes

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TN Senator Douglas Henry

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Take Action

US Congress

S 2528 and **HR 4591** The Civil Liberties Restoration Act of 2004 is in both the House and the Senate. Call to repeal the Patriot Act and restore our rights!

HR 1258. Bill to stop funding School of Americas. Needs 12 more co-sponsors to get 150. Contact Gordon & Cooper.

CAFTA and **US-Australia** trade deals

TN Legislature Out of Session until January!

Davidson County

No Spray: More concerned with cancer than the West Nile Virus? Call **340-5653** to opt your house out of getting sprayed with toxic chemicals. Protect your health, our environment, and join the "No Spray" campaign. Contact BURNT at 615-327-8515 to get involved.

Recycling: If anyone in the Nashville Metro Urban Services District wants a Curby recycling cart for their home or business, call Sherry Sloan at 615-862-4067.

Getting Results

TN Legislature

SJR 127 (the anti-privacy bill for women regarding abortions) failed in the Public Health and Family Assistance subcommittee, despite many attempts to revive it. Kudos to NOW and five brave Democratic women representatives.

Davidson County

Congratulations to the Homeless Power Project's Howard Allen and Kevin Barbieux. Mayor Purcell appointed them to be on the Mayor's Taskforce to End Chronic Homeless.