



# Turning Point

Physicians for Global Survival • Médecins pour la Survie Mondiale

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

### *With gratitude to you all ...*

Dear PGS People,

What a hard time for all of us! A tough thing about being an engaged global citizen is how much we suffer when events take a really bad turn – distress for current suffering, anxiety for future suffering, and perhaps, for some, a feeling of responsibility that one's efforts did not avert the suffering.

I was reminded of the importance of acknowledging our feelings very recently when discussing these issues with my undergraduate class in Conflict Transformation. I remarked in passing that I wished journalists wouldn't ask me how I was *feeling* about the war, because what I wanted to tell them was what I was *thinking* about it. As we continued in our discussion, several students began to weep. These were Anglo students with no personal connexions to the Middle East; this was empathic distress. Then students told me how sad they were, and how helpless and lonely they felt about it all. They derived great relief and comfort from the spontaneous generation of a 'peace village', open 24 hours a day in the student centre, where people could find others and share their distress. From there, they could acquire greater knowledge of the issues, and discover ways to act. I found myself going out of my way to walk past the 'peace village', with its pup tent and piles of sleeping bags, so I could give them a thumbs up and receive in turn a lift to my spirits from these fervent and caring young people.

I am so grateful for the 'peace village' that is PGS, and for the global 'peace village' of IPPNW. It is so supporting to act from within this caring community, so actively generating ideas and actions. PGS members and staff people have been amazingly hard-working and creative in response to war events, as have IPPNW people throughout the world. Many of you have fitted media

interviews into already overfull schedules, and added more public speaking into demanding lives. Others have been writing for newspapers and journals, collecting material to share with us on e-mail, generating petitions and so on.

We had a very important success. We contributed to keeping our own country from joining the US/UK coalition. That will not make the lives of war-affected Iraqis better, but may be very important for the longer-term implications of this situation.

What are these broader implications? Dispensing with the air-brush and taking up a big black crayon, they are firstly, a severe assault by the US on the long, slow, difficult evolution of international law as our prime strategy of war prevention. As people will know, this is but the last in a series of such assaults on agreements to act in the common global interest, rather than competitive, narrow, short-term interests of the powerful and greedy. The UN as the implementing institution of international law has suffered a terrible blow. The second implication is that we are seeing merely part of a long-existing plan to establish US global dominance, to be accomplished by threat and force of arms, in the opening decades of this century, as documented clearly in the writings of members of the US administration.

Will the UN and the structure of international law come crashing down like other towers fatally struck? Those in whose name they were built, *We, the Peoples*, may well have the strength to support them in this dangerous time, and to rebuild them stronger than before. In the darkness of this time, something new and potentially very good has happened – a huge, global, public conver-

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*"Because of our concern for global health, we are committed to the abolition of nuclear weapons, the prevention of war, and the promotion of non-violent means of conflict resolution and social justice in a sustainable world."*

1985 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE



*« En raison de nos préoccupations pour la santé mondiale, nous sommes déterminés à faire interdire les armes nucléaires, à prévenir la guerre, à promouvoir des moyens pacifiques de résolution de conflit et à instaurer la justice sociale dans un monde viable. »*

PRIX NOBEL DE LA PAIX 1985

Affiliate of / Filiale de :  
International Physicians for  
the Prevention of Nuclear War

## Letter from the President

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sation about the legitimacy of war, and the largest concerted actions in history, occurring *before* the war occurred. We ourselves have been a significant part of this, especially participating in the health-based action of well-founded predictions of mortality, morbidity, nutritional status and population movement issues as part of advocacy against the war. This global brain has been evolving over decades. The electronic nervous system has never before been seen in such action as this recent conversation. Global public opinion overwhelmingly said *NO* to war. But, we pause sombrely, the men with tanks and bombs overrode us. What about that?

Dichotomization is a dangerous game, but I am going to play it. There are two views of how to live with others on this earth. On the one hand there is the view that *Our lives and wants are more important than all others. Might (hurting, killing, threatening) is*

*right as a means to get our way. Competition is our mode. The smaller and weaker need to subserve the mighty to get some of the benefits of competition.* On the other hand is the view that *All lives are equally important. Hurting, killing and threatening to get your own way is wrong. Conflicts can be resolved nonviolently. Cooperation is our mode.* Listening in to the global conversation, I get the impression that a great many people align themselves with the equitable, nonviolent, cooperative view. Children, in particular, seem strongly aligned this way. Will this view prevail over the men with tanks and bombs? We don't know. We can see some of the tasks ahead of us to help this happen; PGS exists as a 'peace village' for this purpose alone. After we shed our tears, we can recover our joy in working together for these goals.

*With gratitude to you all,  
Joanna*

PGS A GM and  
BOARD MEETING  
May 2-4, 2003  
in Ottawa  
at Parkdale Clinic Campus  
of Ottawa Hospital  
Start Time:  
9 am - Friday, May 2, 2003

## Right to Peace

The General Assembly of the 57th session of the UN adopted a new resolution last fall, declaring that the people of the planet have a sacred right to peace, and reaffirming the close relationship between disarmament and development. The text proved unacceptable to many governments; some said a "right" had to be formally negotiated and agreed. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 116 to 54 with 14 abstentions.

Source: *Disarmament Times*, Winter 2002

## Turning Point

Physicians for Global Survival (Canada)

Médecins pour la Survie Mondiale  
(Canada)

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All contributions are tax-creditable. Any items for publication such as articles, cartoons, photos or advertisements, should be submitted to the National Office for consideration (in English or French). Manuscripts should be relevant to the above Mission Statement, but do not strictly have to conform to present PGS policy. They must be typed and double spaced or transmitted via e-mail to pgs@web.ca. Gov't Registration No. BN10784-2684-RR0001



# LETTRE DE LA PRÉSIDENTE

## Chers membres de Médecins pour la survie mondiale,

Que les temps sont difficiles pour nous tous! Ce qui est difficile lorsque l'on s'engage sur la scène internationale, c'est que l'on souffre énormément lorsque les choses prennent une mauvaise tournure : la détresse en raison des souffrances actuelles, l'anxiété à propos des souffrances à venir et – qui sait? – le sentiment d'avoir une certaine part de responsabilité, dans la mesure où les efforts que l'on a déployés n'ont pas réussi à éviter ces souffrances.

Très récemment, je me suis souvenu combien il était important de reconnaître ses sentiments, alors que je discutais de ces questions avec mes étudiants de premier cycle, dans le cadre de mon cours sur la transformation des conflits. J'ai fait un commentaire en passant, disant que j'aimerais que les journalistes arrêtent de me demander ce que je *ressentais* à propos de la guerre parce que ce que voulais leur dire, c'était ce que j'en *pensais*. Alors que nous poursuivions notre discussion, plusieurs étudiants se sont mis à pleurer. Il s'agissait d'étudiants anglophones, sans aucun lien personnel avec le Moyen-Orient. Ils ressentaient une douleur empathique. Puis les étudiants me dirent combien ils étaient tristes et combien ils se sentaient impuissants et seuls face à tout cela. Ils ont été grandement soulagés et réconfortés par la création spontanée d'un village de la paix ouvert 24 heures sur 24 dans un centre universitaire, où les gens peuvent se rencontrer et partager leur détresse. Grâce à cet endroit, ils pouvaient mieux se renseigner sur les enjeux et découvrir des façons d'agir. J'ai ensuite fait un détour pour aller voir ce village de la paix, sa mini-tente et ses tas de sacs de couchage, pour aller encourager et féliciter ces jeunes gens enthousiastes et pleins de compassion et pour me faire remonter le moral.

Je suis tellement heureuse que MSM soit un village pour la paix et que l'IPPNW soit un village mondial pour la paix. C'est vraiment un plus que d'agir au sein d'une collectivité qui a du cœur et qui donne naissance à tant d'idées et d'interventions.

Les membres de MSM et son personnel ont travaillé d'arrache pied et se sont montrés très inventifs face à la guerre, tout comme l'ont été les membres de l'IPPNW, dans le monde entier. Vous êtes nombreux à avoir accordé des entrevues aux médias, en dépit de vos emplois du temps surchargés, et à avoir pris la parole en public, malgré vos vies astreignantes. D'autres ont rédigé des articles pour des journaux ou des revues spécialisées, recueilli des documents pour nous les envoyer par courrier électronique, fait circuler des pétitions et bien plus encore.

Nous avons remporté un très franc succès. Nous avons contribué au fait que notre pays ne participe pas à cette guerre. Cela ne va pas faciliter la vie des Iraquiens affectés par la guerre, mais cela risque d'être très important pour les conséquences, à long terme, de cette situation.

De manière générale, quelles sont ces conséquences? Pour faire simple, il s'agit d'abord de l'agression, par les États-Unis, envers l'évolution longue et laborieuse du droit international à titre de stratégie principale de prévention de la guerre. Comme les gens le savent, ce n'est pas la dernière fois que l'on violera des ententes visant à agir dans l'intérêt commun international plutôt que dans l'intérêt des puissants et de ceux qui sont âpres au gain, qui ont l'esprit de compétition et qui ne pensent qu'à court terme et avec des œillères. L'Organisation des Nations Unies, institution chargée de faire appliquer le droit international, a encaissé un méchant coup. Deuxièmement, nous ne voyons se dérouler qu'une partie d'un plan de longue date visant à établir la dominance internationale des États-Unis, soit par la menace ou par la lutte, au cours des premières décennies du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle, comme l'indiquent clairement les textes des membres de l'administration américaine.

L'ONU et la structure du droit international vont-elles s'écrouler comme l'ont fait d'autres tours tragiquement frappées? Ceux au nom desquels elles ont été créées, *Nous, les Peuples*, avons peut-être la force de les soutenir en ces temps périlleux et de les rebâtir plus solides qu'avant. En ces temps obscurs, nous avons assisté à un

phénomène nouveau et porteur de très bonnes choses : un immense dialogue public international sur la légitimité de la guerre et la plus grande action concertée de l'histoire, *avant* le déclenchement de la guerre. Nous avons nous-mêmes joué un rôle prépondérant dans tout cela, surtout par le biais d'interventions dans le domaine de la santé, de prédictions justifiées en matière de mortalité, de morbidité, d'état nutritionnel et de mouvements de populations dans le cadre de la campagne contre la guerre. Ce cerveau mondial évolue depuis des décennies. Jamais n'a-t-on vu de système nerveux électronique aussi actif que dans le cadre de ce récent dialogue. Dans son écrasante majorité, l'opinion publique du monde entier a dit *NON* à la guerre. En dépit de tout, malheureusement, les hommes avec des chars d'assaut et des bombes l'ont emporté sur nous. Que dites-vous de cela?

Le jeu de la dichotomie est dangereux, mais je vais tout de même m'y prêter. Il y a deux écoles de pensée sur la façon de vivre avec les autres sur cette planète. D'un côté, il y a ceux qui pensent que *nos vies et nos désirs sont plus importants que tout le reste. La raison du plus fort (blesser, tuer, menacer) est toujours la meilleure. Notre devise : la concurrence à tout prix. Le plus petit et le plus faible doivent être asservis au plus fort pour récolter certains des fruits de la concurrence.* De l'autre côté, il y a ceux qui pensent que *nos vies ont la même importance. Il ne faut pas blesser, tuer ou menacer pour arriver à ses fins. On peut résoudre les conflits dans la non-violence. Notre devise : la coopération.* À entendre ce dialogue mondial, j'ai l'impression qu'il y a bien plus de gens qui partagent l'opinion de l'équité, de la non-violence et de la coopération. Les enfants, en particulier, semblent en être fermement convaincus. Cette opinion va-t-elle l'emporter sur les hommes avec leurs chars et leurs bombes? Nous ne le savons pas. Nous avons plusieurs tâches à accomplir pour faire en sorte que ça se produise. C'est pour cela que MSM existe à titre de village pour la paix. Une fois que nous aurons pleuré, nous pourrions redevenir joyeux et travailler ensemble pour atteindre ces objectifs

*Avec toute ma gratitude,*

*Joanna*

# Disarmament Inches Forward in a Period of Setback

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*By Jayantha Dhanapala United Nations Under-Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs.*

While 2002 has certainly had setbacks in disarmament, it is hope and not despair that must guide efforts in the coming year, for the road ahead is difficult, not impassable. There have been a number of modest achievements that indicate the way forward in this vitally important area of international affairs, and the world community should welcome these, just as a one-eyed man is hailed as king in a country of the blind.

## Achievements

The achievements of disarmament diplomacy deserving of recognition in 2002 are:

- The Moscow Treaty (essentially, a de-alerting agreement between the Russian Federation and the United States).
- Experts from five Central Asian States agreed on the text of a treaty for a nuclear-weapon-free zone (the first entirely north of the Equator).
- Cuba's decision to join both the nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty and the Treaty of Tlatelolco (on the Latin American Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone).
- The renewal of efforts to strengthen the biological Weapons convention (BWC) after the collapse of the 2001 Fifth Review Conference, which failed to cap six years of negotiations on a verification protocol. In agreeing to prepare for the Sixth Review Conference, States Parties could strengthen the BWC and set a foundation for verification arrangements.
- States parties to the convention on especially injurious conventional weapons have decided to begin negotiations on explosive remnants of war.

- The First Preparatory Committee meeting for the 2005 Review Conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty went smoothly.
- Groups of governmental experts on Missiles and Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education have submitted significant final reports.

## Setbacks

The setbacks have included the loss of the ABM and START II treaties and weakened prospects for the disarmament goals of START III. In addition, the world has witnessed the unveiling of a new doctrine rationalizing the use of nuclear weapons, along with a new strategy for preventive war that embodies a weapons-based approach to security, at a time when some 30,000 nuclear weapons remain in arsenals around the world. There is still no verification Protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention, and progress is very slow on efforts to eliminate chemical weapons. Missile production and proliferation are now growing *pari passu*, along with various missile defence ventures. There were new allegations of non-compliance with the key treaties on weapons of mass destruction. And chronic disagreements in various parts of the UN disarmament machinery including the Conference on Disarmament and the First Committee have prevented the forging of a new consensus on new disarmament initiatives; the Disarmament Commission was not even able to meet in the year of its 50th anniversary.

## Reasons for Hope

The reasons we must look ahead with hope despite these serious reversals are grounded on ideals, political will, and hard facts. For every trumpeted allegation of non-compliance with the key WMD treaties, there

is a plethora of evidence of general compliance. For every missile test, there are tests that never occurred because of the overwhelming number of states that have rejected such weapons. For every allegation of possible terrorist uses of weapons of mass destruction there are a multitude of efforts underway nationally and internationally to reduce that risk. For every unit of national currency not spent on weapons, States have found more productive investments.

## Nuclear Weapons

We should also take heart in the decline in the overall number of weapons of mass destruction. International leaders and civil society now have the job of working to ensure that the Moscow Treaty will lead to new agreements to eliminate weapons and their nuclear materials. Meanwhile, the IAEA has launched new initiatives to improve the physical security of nuclear materials and to reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism. UN efforts are well underway to confirm that Iraq has complied with its obligations to destroy all of its weapons of mass destruction and discontinue programs for their development.

## Funding

While funds for disarmament are scarce, more money is becoming available for non-proliferation. Last June, the G-8 States (the group of the largest industrialized countries); agreed to establish a global partnership that will allocate some \$20 billion to halt the global spread of weapons of mass destruction. By highlighting the dangers inherent in such weapons, this initiative helps reinforce the global disarmament norm.

## Missiles

A new International Code of Conduct on missiles was agreed upon by a large number of States in October. While it did not establish any legal requirements or dis-



armament obligations, it did recognize that the unfettered development and testing of missiles entailed some real security risks that must be addressed. In time, I hope states will view the ICOC as a first step toward the elimination of all nuclear-weapon delivery systems, a goal found in the NPTs preamble.

### Conventional Weapons

There has been steady progress in implementing the Program of Action of the 2001 UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. The number of countries supplying data to the UN Register of Conventional Arms (now marking its 10th anniversary) has increased steadily.

### The Year Ahead

Next year will be the 25th anniversary of the General Assembly's first Special Session on Disarmament. Anticipating that event, the General Assembly has created a working group to consider the goals and agenda for a future special session (the Fourth), including the possibility of establishing a preparatory committee.

The agenda for 2003 must keep its focus on eliminating weapons of mass destruction, curbing the production and sale of conventional weapons in excess of legitimate national needs, devising new ways to curb and eliminate delivery systems, reducing military expenditures (which are now approaching \$1 trillion a year), while expanding resources available to advance disarmament objectives. This is a time not for despair, but for hope and a renewed commitment throughout the world community to move this global disarmament agenda forward. Given existing and prospective threats to international peace and security, none of us can afford to lose a sense of urgency.

*Reprinted with permission from Disarmament Times Winter 2002, <http://disarm.igc.org/DTIMES.html>*

# For Heavens' Sake!

*by Barbara Birkett M.D.*

Convinced that there is imminent danger of an arms race in Outer Space, a number of groups, including PGS, have formed the No Weapons in Space Campaign (NOWIS). PGS has cherished IPPNW's vision of Satelife which allows 10,000 health professionals in 120 countries access to medical information via satellite on a daily basis, and abhors the idea of an arms race which could interfere with such vital operations.

The US Space Command's blatant aim to achieve "Full Spectrum Dominance", including space, to protect its interests, has become more threatening with the US abandonment of the ABM Treaty, the start of Ballistic Missile Defence sites in Alaska, and British permission to use sites in the UK. There is now no agreement which forbids components of Missile Defence which could be used in Space. The Outer Space Treaty only forbids the use of weapons of mass destruction in Space. Vast funding of \$60 to \$100 billion has already been spent on Star Wars, \$1.3 billion is earmarked for hit-to-kill vehicles and \$285 million for space-based laser weapons. The above-described hegemonous attitude can only lead to an arms race in Space, endangering peaceful uses of Space, blaspheming the heavens which have symbolized hope to people of all faiths and no faith. The use of global positioning systems for military purposes of bombing in the Gulf War, Kosovo, and Afghanistan shows that there is already militarization of Outer Space. The need for international co-operation regarding dual-purpose systems is thus apparent.

Since the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 people have recognized that co-operative efforts toward security and preserving space from weapons are essential. Canada has firmly stated "Humanity demands... that our heavens remain forever a sanctuary free of weapons of any de-

scription". Unfortunately progress in the UN Conference on Disarmament towards Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) has been stalemated for several years, although slight progress recently has been made with a new China-Russia proposal.

There is currently an \$80 billion commercial business in Space and it is growing. This would be greatly threatened by weaponization of space, with resulting interference with its satellites, damage from weapons debris, or electro-magnetic interference, and so forth.

The NOWIS Campaign supports an alternative, model, "Ottawa-type" Treaty, the Space Preservation Treaty, and calls upon Canada to convene a conference to get at least twenty nations to sign this alternative route agreement which would then be deposited with the UN. This alternative track could be pursued in parallel with the official CD track. US Congressman Denis Kucinich has introduced a companion Space Preservation Act to the US Congress. The proposed Treaty forbids the research, testing and use of Space-based weapons and weapons against objects in Space. It allows the use of Space for peaceful purposes, monitoring, and verification.

Senator Doug Roche has called for the Canadian government to lead an international effort for a binding international agreement against weaponization of Space. Some US military experts have called for diplomacy and a passive defence (hide and seek measures such as encryption, shielding) for protection of assets rather than weaponization.

Petitions have been presented to Parliament calling for a treaty.

A number of municipalities (Berkeley California, Bowen Island and Sparwood, BC), have declared Space above their jurisdictions as Space-based Weapons-Free Zones.

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# IPPNW STATEMENT ON THE OUTBREAK OF WAR ON IRAQ

The United States-led war against Iraq was launched despite overwhelming global opposition and a clear determination within the United Nations to continue and intensify the inspections-based process of disarmament in Iraq.

IPPNW and its 58 affiliates condemn this war as a violation of international law and the UN Charter. This unwarranted preemptive military assault against Iraq is also an assault against the UN system upon which the world relies for peaceful and just solutions to regional and global conflicts.

Now that the war has begun, its prosecutors — in particular the United States — must fully comply with and respect the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law and therein make every effort to protect civilians, the environment, and civilian infrastructure from harm. The Iraqi government and military, in defending Iraq against this invasion, has an equal obligation to do so within the norms of international law.

Any use of weapons of mass destruction or other weapons with indiscriminate effects must be avoided. This applies especially to nuclear weapons of any size or yield. Such weapons must never be used in war for any purpose. IPPNW also condemns any use of chemical or biological weapons (including chemical incapacitating agents and chemical riot-control agents, which have been banned under international law), depleted uranium weapons, cluster bombs, anti-personnel landmines, and massive conventional ordinance near civilian populations. All such weapons have contributed to or would contribute to large-scale civilian casualties, both during and after armed conflict, and we call upon the parties to the conflict to renounce their use.

Our overriding concern has always been and continues to be the health and security of the people of Iraq, who deserve neither the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein nor the massive show of military force against their country that has been undertaken without just cause by the Bush administration and

its allies in the war. The US cannot now walk away from its responsibility to help the Iraqi people rebuild a society that serves their needs and interests, whether or not those interests coincide with the Bush administration's ambitions for the region.

We urge the US — even at this late date — to call an end to this war and to return responsibility for the disarmament of Iraq to the UN where it rightfully belongs. Once this war has ended, the attention of the world must turn to repairing the damage that has been done not only to Iraq but to the UN system.

No one country — not even a superpower with a few reluctant partners — has the moral or legal right to determine what is best for the world and then use unmatched military force to impose its vision of a proper world order. A recommitment to — and a strengthening of — collective frameworks for peace, justice, and security in which all voices are heard and all interests are considered is the only acceptable outcome of this war.

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## PAX AMERICANA:

### The Imperial Plan of the Wolfowitz Intellectuals

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*by Graeme MacQueen  
Centre for Peace Studies,  
McMaster University*

People in the peace movement often deride members of the Bush administration as naive rustics who are capable of a quick grab for oil but not of serious planning. This is a dangerous mistake. The Bush administration includes, and is deeply influenced by, a group of academics and intellectuals with a very clear, long-range vision for the United States. This group, represented in part by a private think tank called The Project for the New American Century, and associated closely with Wolfowitz, Cheney and Rumsfeld, wants to strengthen and maintain a U.S. imperial order that is global in scope, brooks no rivals, suppresses even regional powers, and is prepared to take preventive action to eliminate military competition. U.S. military domination is to extend to space, cyberspace and all aspects of the "art of war," including nuclear and biological weapons. In this vision, global cooperation in the area of security is derided; the UN is treated with scorn; and treaties are regarded as an impediment.

Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century (RAD),

published one year before the events of 9/11, gives us access to the plans of this group of academics and intellectuals and forces us to consider the possibility that the terrorist attack on New York was less a cause of subsequent U.S. military action than it was an opportunity to proceed with an already existing plan.

Iraq is a minor concern of the 40,000 word document, but, given the likely invasion of that country in the near future, it is important to compare the treatment of Iraq in RAD with its treatment now.

#### What was in store for Iraq in September, 2000?

The Persian Gulf region is a "region of vital importance" to the United States, say the authors of RAD. Iraq, located in this "energy-producing region," is not compliant with an imposed American order (called Pax Americana or American Peace in RAD), so Iraq may have to undergo forcible "regime change" followed by "post-combat stability operations." Removing Saddam will by no means allow the U.S. to relax its vigilance or presence in the Middle East: on the contrary, new military bases will be needed even after his departure. Removing Saddam is merely the most

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## The Threat of Low-Yield Earth-Penetrating Nuclear Weapons to Civilian Populations:

# Nuclear “Bunker Busters” and Their Medical Consequences

*In March IPPNW released a study of the medical consequences of low-yield nuclear earth-penetrating weapons (EPW).*

*The Iraq war fits the description of situations for which Nuclear EPWs have been designed. The US has refused to remove the “nuclear option” from its war plans and has hinted that it is prepared to use nukes if Iraq uses chemical or biological weapons. War is unpredictable and we have no way of knowing at what point, if at all, a decision might be made to use nuclear EPWs or other nuclear weapons. If nuclear EPWs were to be used, the consequences would be as described in the paper. IPPNW’s purpose in releasing this paper is not to predict whether they will be used or not but to ensure that they are not used.*

*The report’s executive summary appears below. The full report is available on [www.pgs.ca](http://www.pgs.ca) or [www.ippnw.org](http://www.ippnw.org)*

### Executive Summary

Nuclear weapons advocates in the Bush Administration and the Congress wish to introduce new low-yield nuclear weapons into the US arsenal — part of a growing trend to lower the nuclear threshold and to make the use of nuclear weapons more acceptable. A very low-yield nuclear earth-penetrating weapon (EPW) exploded in or near an urban environment, however, will disperse radioactive dirt and debris and other radioactive material over several square kilometers. A nuclear EPW with a yield less than one-tenth of that of the nuclear weapon used on Hiroshima or Nagasaki, if detonated in an urban environment, could result in fatal doses of radiation to tens of thousands of victims.

### Key Points

- The United States currently deploys both conventional and nuclear EPWs, including about 50 nuclear-tipped B61-11s, which can penetrate 2-3 meters and have reported yields between 0.3 kilotons and 340 kilotons. The 2003 Department of Energy (DOE) budget specifically requests funding for a “Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator” (RNEP) that would be more effective than the B61.

- Even a very low-yield nuclear weapon used in an urban environment would risk producing tens of thousands of civilian radiation casualties. Casualties of this magnitude would overwhelm even the most effective medical care system.
- A nuclear EPW explosion will inevitably breach the ground surface and throw out radioactive dirt and debris over an area of several square kilometers. Radiation is invisible and, without radiation monitors, civilians would be unaware of their exposures and consequent risks. Those within about 1 kilometer of the epicenter would receive fatal doses of radiation within 1-5 hours; others with acute radiation sickness would suffer from protracted vomiting, diarrhea, fluid and electrolyte loss, profound anemia, hemorrhaging, infection, and other symptoms; those exposed to lethal doses could take several days to a week or more to die.
- Infants, children, the elderly, and the chronically ill are especially vulnerable.
- Hazardous materials stored in underground bunkers are unlikely to be incinerated by an EPW; there is a high probability that biological and chemical agents against which nuclear EPWs are targeted would be disseminated to the ground surface and to the atmosphere, causing additional deaths and illnesses.

- There are no specific therapies for acute radiation injury; supportive treatment (intravenous fluids, blood transfusions, antibiotics) is crucial in permitting survival through acute illness and may lead to eventual recovery, but such care is unlikely to be available in Iraq or in other places where use of nuclear EPWs has been proposed, such as North Korea and Iran.
- Most of the total radiation dose received from fallout occurs in the first few hours after the detonation, making rapid evacuation essential. A low-yield nuclear EPW detonated in a crowded urban area such as New York City would require the rapid evacuation of millions of people. Because Baghdad, with 5 million people, has a greater population density than New York, even more people would have to be evacuated from any affected area.
- The use of low-yield nuclear weapons would cross the nuclear threshold for the first time since the US used nuclear weapons on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki more than 50 years ago and may weaken the restraints against the use of nuclear weapons of greater yield.
- Further development of EPWs may require underground nuclear testing, breaking the current world moratorium and destroying prospects for eventual universal accession to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).
- Both the resumption of nuclear testing and the production of new nuclear weapons will fuel global nuclear weapons proliferation.

*Authors: Victor W. Sidel, MD, H. Jack Geiger, MD, MSHyg, Herbert L. Abrams, MD, Robert W. Nelson, PhD, and John Loretz*



# Cuba

It is incredible how much this four letter word means to us, what sort of thoughts and emotions it stirs within us, and how in so many ways it has come to change us. Arriving in Santa Clara on June 15th shortly after our grueling first year medical school exams we were struck by the raw beauty of the tropical landscape and the abundant political propaganda. Our home for the next five weeks was to be El Instituto Superior de Ciencias Medicas, Villa Clara, an enormous medical school training thousands of students, hundreds being international students from Africa, Central and South America.

Under the care of the Department of General Integral Medicine we took part in an inaugural program set to provide us with a general overview of the Cuban medical system with a specific focus on the delivery of primary care. We were each paired with a family doctor whom we would shadow at their neighbourhood consultorios and their daily afternoon visits to their patients homes. With only 700 patients to each doctor, we observed how thorough and familial the patient-physician interaction could be. We also spent time in the next organizational level of health care delivery, policlinicos, centers with all the various medical specialties including naturopathy, physi-



*Typical Cuban apartments in the city of Nueva Gerona on the Isla de la Juventud.*

otherapy and public health programs, as well as in an hogar materno, a maternity home for women with high risk pregnancies, and in an emergency department of a major trauma center. In addition we participated in a support group for adolescent alcoholics, and took day trips to the countryside and factories to study their rural and occupational health practices, respectively. As we became more exposed to the various aspects of their medical system, we could not help but appreciate how highly organized, all-encompassing, integrated, well-trained and staffed this system is. All the more astonishing was how this was

made possible with such relatively minimal resources ranging from decrepit facilities to a lack of equipment and pharmaceuticals. Yet some of our greatest learning came from the people we met, the conversations we had and our growing insight into what it meant to be Cuban. As each day passed we gained a deeper understanding of the complex, passionate, politically, culturally and historically rich, though many times conflicting country that is Cuba. Imagine a place where doctors earn \$17US a month and a waitress in the beach resort makes \$20US a day, though both will pass the air-conditioned stores stocked full of goods and furnishings set at North American prices.

This summer we became part of a society built on sharing and giving, though they have very little material wealth, and where the greatest importance lies in ones family, friends, health, education, recreation, sport and culture. Back in North America, we will continue to practice and apply these fundamental values of life in our careers and in our lives as future health care providers.

Thank you to PGS and the Tom Perry Educational Fund for supporting such an incredible experience.

*Erin Adams, Sanja Karalic,  
Elizabeth Kenward, Arlene MacDougall  
Class of 2005, UBC Faculty of Medicine*



*Patient, doctor and nurse outside the Hogar materno*

## Flower of Summer

by Tamika Hara

This is a human being?  
Look how the Atom bomb changed it.  
Flesh swells fearfully  
All men and women take one shape.  
The voice that trickles from swollen lips  
On the festering, charred-black face  
Whispers the thin words,  
Please help me.  
This is a human being.  
This is the face of a human being.

In February of 2003, I participated in the Forum Against Weapons of Mass Destruction hosted by Japanese Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. Four Canadian medical students from UBC, Dalhousie and McMaster presented on the Canadian students activities with Physicians for Global Survival. Our trip was funded by a grant PGS received from the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE). Meeting the Japanese medical students and physicians, and participating in the Forum was a wonderful opportunity. In particular, as I prepare to say the Hippocratic Oath in May, and before I embark on my pediatrics residency training; my experience in the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where the first two atom bombs were dropped on human beings, was very sobering.

Reading the inscriptions on the dozens of charred school uniforms, which are all that is left of thousands of children from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, was quite moving. Imagine being a child riding your tricycle. Suddenly you are burning, your skin is melting, and your mother is dead. Your father is alive and must bury you, or what is left of you. He decides to bury you with your charred tricycle, because he cannot help but think that you are too young to die without a toy. There was another story about a young schoolboy who was so dehydrated that he was sucking on his wounds. After he died, his mother kept his nails and skin that had fallen off to show his father who had not re-

# Remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki: To witness and testify

turned yet. There was the story of a young girl pinned under a large beam that three wounded men could not remove, and as her older sister watched on, their mother, who was also injured from the explosion came and lifted the beam herself. She managed to free her child, but her skin tore under the weight of the beam and she died soon after. These are the stories we saw and heard. I don't know if I can ever fully convey the pain and suffering of the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Beyond learning about medical effects of the bomb, of the thousands who developed leukemias and other cancers related to radiation, those stories affected me the most. The impact of the bombs continues to this day. In fact, the cancer rates in both cities are still disproportionate to that of other places.

It was horrific to learn that the bombings were not necessary, and that it was essentially an experiment on the part of the 'allies' to test out their new weapons. Why use two different types of bombs? Why not warn the Japanese government about the atomic bomb, and give them a chance to surrender? Why haven't we learned from history?

The cruelty - the horror of the bombing and the pain of survival for the people in Japan must be shown over and over, because we must never forget. The first hand experience allowed me to recognize the brutal power of nuclear weapons. It is not some abstract concept in our history or science books. The fact that there are still nuclear weapons testing, and that so many countries have nuclear capacity (USA, UK, Russia, India, Pakistan, etc) means that the reality of the suffering from the bombings of Hiroshima & Nagasaki still elude the majority of governments. We cannot sit by and do nothing, especially as physicians. The argument that nuclear weapons are needed

for defense is pathetic - you cannot rationalize inhumane slaughter of fellow human beings - and that is what these weapons are capable of. This is the ultimate threat to health.

Being a medical student, it was most poignant for me when I read one particular Japanese physician's thoughts, How easy I would have felt were I not a doctor. But I am a doctor. The hospitals have been gutted, medicines and equipments destroyed, but as long as there are patients, I am a doctor." Now, as students, health care workers, teachers, lawyers, and citizens of the world, during this current period, where a war seems inevitable, we are faced with a moral obligation to stand up and let our voices be heard alongside the people who suffered and died in Hiroshima and Nagasaki; Palestine and Iraq; Bosnia and Sierra Leone. As one inscription at a memorial read:

War is the work of man

War is the destruction  
of human life

War is death

To remember the past is  
to commit oneself to  
the future

To remember Hiroshima  
is to abhor nuclear war

To remember Hiroshima  
is to commit oneself to  
peace

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# TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT THE WAR

By Joanna Santa Barbara M.D.

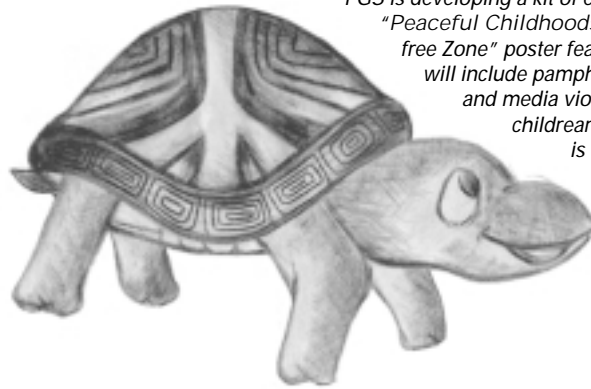
In this discussion, I won't dwell on process issues such as listening to children carefully, taking them seriously, using age-appropriate language, etc.. I'll focus on content issues about the War against Iraq likely to be raised by children.

- Simple anxiety about getting hurt or losing loved ones.
- Altruistic anxiety for Iraqi children or older people.
- Negative attributions to the perceived "other", who may be Arab, Muslim, Iraqi, Palestinian, Middle Eastern, Jewish, etc. This may result in teasing and bullying.
- Enjoyment of the war as a war-game on TV.
- Thinking about war and violence as a solution to problems

**Anxiety:** Happily, this is fairly easily dealt with by reassurance about very low probability of destructive events in Canada. We can say, "I think you are just as safe now as you were before."

**Altruistic anxiety:** We are generally pleased with the moral development of a child who feels empathic concern for others. Probably we share the same concern. "I'm also worried about the children and adults in Iraq. After the war is over, Canada has promised to help people." Parents may need to make sensible judgments about exposure to TV images for sensitive children.

**Teasing and Bullying – for the child being teased:** The child needs to have their worth affirmed and to be told that no one should be treated disrespectfully. Sometimes ignoring transient teasing is best. If it persists, it is better for a child to be assertive. The child's reply might be "You have no right to speak to me like that. If you want to have a decent conversation, I'll explain



PGS is developing a kit of educational materials called "Peaceful Childhoods". In addition to a "Violence-free Zone" poster featuring this little turtle, the kit will include pamphlets on such topics as children and media violence, war toys and peaceful childrearing. The package of materials is expected to be available from PGS in the early fall.

the difference between being Iraqi and being a terrorist. If not, please keep your comments to yourself." Such lines have to be modified according to the age of the child. It sometimes helps to rehearse such lines with a victimized child, coaching them to be assertive.

**Teasing and Bullying – for the child doing the teasing or bullying:** It is useful to begin with questions to elicit their fears and their stereotypes. Then raise questions about the stereotypes. It may be helpful to get the child to recall being bullied or teased themselves, to elicit empathy for the victim. If possible, it would be good to have the child apologize to the victim.

**Talking about diversity:** Principles one would like to convey to children are:

- Everyone is different and this is wonderful.
- Everyone must be treated with respect.
- Everyone has different ideas; all opinions should be respected even when we disagree with them. We can learn a lot by respectfully asking others to explain their opinions.

**Enjoyment of war as a war-game:** This is a very good opportunity to help the child understand how media "construct reality" by choosing to show some things and not others about war. What else could the TV show us to give us a more complete picture?

**Talking about war as a solution to problems:** Children are taught at home that they must not bully their siblings. At school, they learn that violence will not be tolerated. They are expected to collaborate in talking over their conflicts. If this becomes difficult, in many schools they have access to student mediators to help them. If this fails, (which rarely happens) there are teachers available. Children are learning these important lessons and are simultaneously exposed to the most powerful and influential country in the world resorting to killing to deal with an ostensible problem.

Children are learning about democratic functioning, perhaps in their own classroom and school, and about the importance of the UN as a body in which the world's voices may be heard. Yet they see the UN and global public opinion being overridden by two countries.

They see the enactment of 'might is right'. This, to say the least, could be confusing. It deserves careful discussion. War might be seen as a failure to work out problems in nonviolent ways.

Thoughtful children, like thoughtful adults, may be concerned about the recent abundant attention to Saddam Hussein's human rights abuses. There is much to be said on this topic, including an examination of its use as a 'cause of war'. It would be well to introduce a thoughtful child to the strategy of nonviolent struggle in overthrowing despotic rulers from within a country.

*Joanna Santa Barbara is a child psychiatrist in Hamilton.*

# Conference Report: Today's Militarism, Tomorrow's Health: The Role of the Physician

by Erin Adams, Jay Aiken, Liam Brunham, Naomi Dove, Arlene MacDougall and Jesse McLaren, University of British Columbia

In November of 2002, a group of medical students from The University of British Columbia presented a symposium entitled, "Today's Militarism, Tomorrow's Health: The Role of the Physician". The one-day event brought together over 100 medical students from both UBC and the University of Washington's Physician for Social Responsibility (PSR) group, physicians and members of the community to explore issues surrounding the health effects of war, militarism and terrorism, and how health professionals can begin to approach these causes of ill-health. As medical students interested in applying health approaches to broader issues of social justice this conference was a powerful illustration of the intersection between health and conflict, and may serve to energize a growing movement to bring medical knowl-

edge and perspective to bear on discussions of war. The quality of discussion was extremely high.

Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford, a palliative care physician from Victoria, BC, and former co-president of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, delivered the day's final address. Dr. Ashford began by questioning what is meant by 'militarism'. In order to mount a coherent alternative to militarism, there is a need to be clear about what it is we are dealing with. The best definition of militarism that Dr. Ashford has encountered stems from the United States Space Command vision for 2020. It states: "US Space command—dominating the space dimension of military operations to protect US interests and investment. Integrating Space Forces into warfighting capabilities

across the full spectrum of conflict." This is precisely the kind of irrational, financially-motivated and dangerous militarism that organizations like IPPNW and PGS find so threatening to global health. Whereas militarism has historically resulted in loss of life predominantly among combatants, today 90% of people killed in wars are civilians. This has led some to remark that, in the event of a war, the safest place to be is in the military.

Militarism further compromises global public health by strategies that systematically and deliberately target public health infrastructure. The effects of such a strategy are sadly exemplified by the last war on Iraq. That militarism is often given more priority than health is clear from the finding that more than one half of all governments spend more on the military than on health.

Dr. Ashford concluded with a discussion of the role of that civil society-based non-governmental organizations can play in promoting health. She left us with the hopeful reminder that, according to former president of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachav, among the most significant events in his decision to ultimately move against nuclear proliferation were his repeated meetings with U.S. and Soviet physicians discussing the health consequences of nuclear war. This is a powerful reminder of the role that physicians can play in addressing health threats posed by militarism on a global level.

Equipped with knowledge of the devastating health consequences of war and sanctions, the role of physicians in opposing, or at least debating, these abuses of global health seems clear. For the attendants of this day's symposium, these discussions were powerful illustrations of both the need and the opportunities to incorporate peace into health, and recognize war as the burden to global health that it is.

Full report of this symposium is available on [www.pgs.ca](http://www.pgs.ca)

The poster features the title "TODAY'S MILITARISM, TOMORROW'S HEALTH" in large, bold, sans-serif font, with "THE ROLE OF THE PHYSICIAN" in a smaller font below it. The date and time are listed as "SAT. NOVEMBER 23, 9:00am - 4:00pm (8:00am-9:30 am)". A list of speakers and their topics is provided under the heading "FEATURING:". At the bottom left, there is a graphic of a globe and a stethoscope.

Physicians and Medical Students for Global Survival Present:

## TODAY'S MILITARISM, TOMORROW'S HEALTH

THE ROLE OF THE PHYSICIAN

SAT. NOVEMBER 23  
9:00am - 4:00pm  
(8:00am-9:30 am)

FEATURING:

- Dr. Aileen Connolly, MD  
president elect, PGS Canada
- Dr. Soren Aker, PhD  
"Geopolitics of global health"
- Dr. Lynn Kantor, MD, PhD  
"Catastrophic effects of war and sanctions in the  
Mts. Sverdlovsk Lens, MPh"
- Dr. Robert Gossig, MD, MPh  
"Health effects of the occupation in the Gaza strip"
- Dr. Robert Gossig, MD, MPh  
"Biological weapons and terrorism in relation to  
public health"
- Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford, MD, PhD  
"Alternatives to bombing"

UBC Medical Students Poster Presentation

# A Gift of Hope for Peace

By Kim Boucher and Robyn Brasell

In 1971, still living in New Zealand, Ken was one of the many people who protested nuclear testing in the Pacific. Huge efforts were made at the time to educate Australasia about the health and environmental hazards of the nuclear age, and to promote the fact that changes must be made to stop environmental destruction. As an avid outdoors person, the nuclear threat to the environment presented a cause that stayed with Ken all his life.

When Ken moved to Vancouver, Peace Marches and Earth Day Awareness were part of daily culture in the 1970s and 1980s. At this time, Dr. Helen Caldicott was working to raise public awareness about the dangers of the nuclear arms race and Ken took to heart the message of her book and film *If You Love This Planet*. It was the connection to Helen Caldicott that brought Ken and Robyn to Physicians for Global Survival.

Ken had a passion for travelling and sports, particularly sailing. He loved relaxing with friends, good food and wine. And he had a generous spirit that wished to give, in return for the fortunate life that he embraced to the end.

Ken was diagnosed with cancer in 1998 and was left paralyzed on one side after treatments. He faced his rehabilitation with resolve, and at the same time decided to direct his considerable commercial talent to creating a legacy through a private charitable foundation. He selected two major areas - privately initiated programs for education, on the basis of "helping others to help themselves" and continuing public education against environmental destruction through the auspices of PGS. Ken's bequest to PGS, made through his Will, was a final statement of his values. This generous gift will provide hope to future generations for a more peaceful world. His wife Robyn Brasell is actively involved in making this gift truly reflective of Ken's interests.



**Ken Cummane**  
(February 5, 1941 - July 21, 2002)

## Planning a Bequest

Anyone can arrange for a bequest to PGS. A bequest is simply a gift to a particular beneficiary that is planned during your lifetime through your Will and given after your death.

Although it's a subject many prefer to avoid, we all know that you can't take your assets with you. As such, you have to decide in advance what will happen to your property. A Will provides direction for the handling of property and family matters after your death. It's strongly suggested that you finalize your Will with qualified legal counsel. But your Will is much more than a legal document. It's a testimony of your values and commitments. Ken Cummane provides a wonderful example of this.

Once you decide that you want to arrange for a bequest you need to decide on its amount and its type. There are several types, which your lawyer or financial advisor can explain as you consider what is in the best interest of your own situation. There are important benefits in making a bequest, including substantial tax savings that may affect the type and amount of bequest you choose. This can reduce your taxes and maximize death benefits, providing added peace of mind to you and your loved ones.

But in the end, the most important benefit of leaving a bequest to PGS is knowing you're making a lasting difference to our ability to speak out for the abolition of nuclear weapons and the prevention of war. PGS is committed to ensuring that your gift is treated with care and accountability. We encourage you to let us know if you've already arranged for a bequest to PGS, or if you're considering it. Informing us puts you under no obligation, but allows us to work with you to ensure your gift will leave the kind of legacy that is important to you.

For more information about how to remember PGS in your estate planning or to discuss a bequest that you've already arranged, please call Kim Boucher at (613) 233-1982.

# IPPNW and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)

*Mary-Wynne Ashford M.D. Past Co-President International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War*

After several years of physician visits to and from North Korea, IPPNW planned a regional North Asia meeting in Pyongyang for October 2001. The meeting was cancelled following the Sept. 11 attacks in New York and Washington. Since that time, George W. Bush has labeled North Korea as part of the "Axis of Evil" and has cut oil shipments to the country. As the last, closed, Marxist-Leninist society, North Korea has suffered fuel shortages since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the shift of Russia to a US dollar economy. With almost no ability to raise US dollars, North Korea has managed to import modest amounts of oil from China, but has otherwise struggled with desperate power shortages. At the same time, North Korea suffered a series of catastrophic floods and crop failures that resulted in the deaths of nearly 2 million people. Food aid from UN agencies, particularly UNICEF, has kept the tragedy from being even worse.

Both North Korea and the US reneged on their agreement that the US would supply fuel and build a nuclear reactor for North Korea in exchange for that country giving up its nuclear weapons program. The North Koreans would not permit full inspections, and the US did not supply the needed fuel or build the reactor.

When I led an IPPNW delegation in 1990 and 1991 we found the health care system staggering because of lack of electricity. Doctors had been forced to switch to Traditional Korean Medicine (TKM) from modern Western medicine, which had previously been supported by the USSR. CT scanners, Xray departments, and laboratories sat in semi-darkness and shortages of drugs and reagents meant that little could be offered but TKM.

Talks initiated under the "Sunshine Policy" of President Kim Dai Jong of South Korea were making progress toward the peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula, when Sept. 11 led to a change in US

policy. Today, North Korea is using escalating provocation in an attempt to force the US into bilateral talks to replace the 1953 ceasefire with a permanent peace accord. As the war on Iraq intensifies, North Korea has announced that it will neither give up its nuclear program nor permit IAEA inspectors into the country because it would then be in the same position as Iraq is now.

This dangerous situation makes a continuation of our exchange visits and Track Two diplomacy more urgent than ever. We

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## **PAX** continued from pg.6

publicly visible excuse for military control of the region.

### **What is missing in the September, 2000 plan?**

The description of Iraq's regime change in RAD contains no reference to "terrorism" or "human rights." In fact, neither expression occurs a single time in the 85 dense pages of the document.

What about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMDs.)? RAD's authors are worried about weapons of mass destruction, but they express no concern that Iraq, Korea or other weak states will initiate violence against the U.S. with their WMDs. What worries RAD's authors is that WMDs will give these and other weak states the power to deter the U.S. from intervention and global military domination. This is said very frankly: "In the post-Cold War era, America and its allies, rather than the Soviet Union, have become the primary objects of deterrence and it is states like Iraq, Iran and North Korea who most wish to develop deterrent capabilities. Projecting conventional military forces or simply asserting political influence abroad, particularly in times of crisis, will be far more complex and constrained when the American homeland or the territory of our allies is subject to attack by otherwise weak rogue regimes capable of cobbling together a minuscule ballistic missile force."

in PGS are in the beginning stages of work with other interested groups in Canada to explore possibilities for a health education program that we hope could be offered in North Korea. We welcome doctors and health care workers interested in joining in this effort to use health as a bridge to peace.

Meanwhile, it is essential that we advocate for an immediate reduction in the rhetoric and tensions between the US and North Korea, and the commencement of talks to end the unstable situation. It may be that a third party such as Canada and/or the European Union could help to advance progress toward resolution. This is another situation where the people of a country must be protected, regardless of the political conflicts of its government.

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## **Conclusion**

It is common for journalists and political figures to decry the "unilateralism" of the current U.S. administration. Two comments are in order. First, RAD indicates how deep this unilateralism is: the Bush intellectuals represented by the Wolfowitz faction passionately believe in, and have prepared for, the unilateral assertion of U.S. power in the world for the foreseeable future. Second, "unilateralism" is a euphemism. Any state, including Cameroon and Guinea, can act unilaterally, but few states can aspire to empire. There was a time when the use of the term "imperialism" was controversial, and was seen by many as indicating that the user of the term had a narrow left-wing agenda. Since the authors of RAD are perfectly frank about the global domination they seek to achieve, and since they see no difficulty in evoking the image of the Roman empire when they describe this global domination (Pax Americana is modeled on the term Pax Romana), I believe it is time to take the term "imperialism" out of the closet and quietly insist on its use. At the same time, the peace movement must come to grips with the fact that the institutions of global cooperation achieved in the 20th century, however flawed they may be, are better than the likely alternatives and must be defended.

We may be about to learn once again that you don't know what you've got till it's gone.

*Ed. Note: This article was originally written prior to the US-led attack on Iraq. For a more detailed discussion of RAD see [www.pgs.ca](http://www.pgs.ca)*



# STATEMENT OPPOSING WAR ON IRAQ

Physicians for Global Survival (Canada) is concerned with human health, well-being and security. We assert that the planned attack on Iraq is inconsistent with international law designed to protect vulnerable populations, is inhumane and is unconscionable because there are alternative ways to achieve any legitimate goals in this conflict. We are opposed to this war, and therefore call on the Canadian government not to provide military, material or moral support for it.

## Contrary to International Law

There is increasing awareness of the rights of children, and particularly the plight and rights of children in armed conflict. The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child applies under all circumstances – peace or war. The child has a right to life, to a family, to adequate nutrition, to education, to health care and to play. Usually non-governmental organizations are called into action after a war has been waged, when the lives of thousands of children have been lost or blighted. In this case we look ahead to try to prevent this deliberate attack.

Any likely attack scenario in this war will be inconsistent with the obligation of states, under the Geneva Conventions, to protect the lives of civilians. US-prosecuted or led interventions in the recent past have cost the lives of thousands of civilians. This war will result in tens to hundreds of thousands of civilian casualties. Half the population of Iraq is under 18. There is no way to predict the course of this war; uprisings of Shiite and Kurdish populations are quite probable. Civilians, likely half of them children, will be slaughtered in such events. Even some of the military casualties may be children.

Populations may move as refugees, and we can predict high mortality of children in such migrations. We cannot accept this. Waging this war, indeed any modern war, is

inconsistent with the promises we have made as a state to protect the lives of children.

The life of each child is precious, but so is each human life, at whatever age – the lives of mothers, grandfathers, poets and gardeners. The lives of men and women in the armed forces matter too, whether US, UK or Iraqi. We know that many of them will die or suffer injuries or poisonings. Recent Canadian experience tells us that many will be incapacitated by the psychological aftermath of the horrors of armed conflict. We do not accept this unnecessary suffering.

We are concerned that the lives of ordinary Canadians will be placed at greater risk of terrorism if our government participates in this planned war. Far from seeing this as a war to counter terrorism, we see it as a war to provoke terrorism.

Violation of a country's sovereignty with pre-emptive war is frankly illegal under the UN Charter. Furthermore President George Bush, on December 10<sup>th</sup>, reiterated the threat that the US would consider the use of nuclear weapons against Iraq if Iraq uses chemical or biological weapons. The destructive power of nuclear weapons is orders of magnitude greater than chemical and biological weapons. If used on Baghdad, the death toll alone could be as high as three and a half million people followed by long term suffering and environmental degradation. Use of a nuclear weapon by the US would mean responding to a gross moral wrong by Iraqi forces with an even more heinous moral wrong. Canada must not even contemplate giving support to such an act.

Additionally, the International Court of Justice advised in 1996 that use and threat of nuclear weapons is generally illegal. The strictest interpretation of "threat" in the ICJ's advisory opinion included the threat to use nuclear weapons against a specific country under specific circumstances.

In Afghanistan US Forces dropped thousands of cluster bombs dispersing hundreds of thousands of cluster bomblets. Even using a conservative estimate of 5 percent fail-

ure rate, the cluster bombs dropped by the United States likely left more than 12,400 unexploded bomblets that threaten civilians and require clearance. Cluster bombs have high failure rates and lay waiting for the touch of civilians, predominantly curious children, to trigger their explosion.

It is highly probable that the US will use cluster munitions in Iraq. Iraq is already severely affected by landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) as a consequence of the Gulf War, the Iran-Iraq War and two decades of internal conflict with civilians, a majority of them children continuing to be maimed and die in mine/UXO incidents. The US continues to use cluster bombs in disregard of their impact on civilians and increasing concern about their use under international humanitarian law.

## Humanitarian Consequences

The efforts to unseat Saddam Hussein through sanctions and the last war have already cost the lives of well over a million Iraqis. These efforts have also caused the destruction of civilian infrastructure, including water purification, sewage treatment, electrical and power generation. The complete destruction of any sort of independent civilian economy has removed the possibility of gainful employment for more than half the population and made the Iraqi people dependent on the Oil for Food Programme for their meager survival. The impact of the sanctions contributes to damage to the social fabric through an increase in crime and family disruption. Together with direct effects on the health care system and punitive blocking of medical supplies and information technology, there is a high toll on the physical and mental well-being of Iraqis. The fragile food distribution system which is the lifeline for the majority of families in Iraq under sanctions would be shattered in the event of a war. Iraqis are even less prepared to deal with the consequences of war than they were prior to the last Gulf War.

We cannot accept this, and as health professionals, we strongly resist Canada's involvement in this contemplated war.

## There Are Alternatives

- There is a UN inspection process which should be supported, not undermined, in its efforts to detect development of prohibited weapons in Iraq. Thus far it appears that Iraq has been cooperative with the extreme demands of the US crafted resolution.
- The inspection process would also gain enormously in moral strength from genuine moves on the part of the Nuclear Weapons States to follow through on their own promises to abolish nuclear weapons, to get rid of biological and chemical weapons and to support inspection and verification regimes to monitor these processes. Similarly, efforts demanded by previous UN resolutions to achieve a Middle East region free of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons should be supported
- Sanctions affecting the basic needs of the Iraqi population and the economic development of Iraqi society should be discontinued forthwith, not as a bargaining chip, but because they are and always were inhumane. Such action could lay the ground for internal efforts toward a regime change and would likely change significantly the climate for diplomatic solutions of the conflict
- Convene a regional conference jointly by the UN and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, a body representing 56 Islamic states, to examine security and cooperation in the Middle East. Peace in the Middle East will take at least as long to establish as peace in Europe, and may learn lessons from that process. Ultimately, all nations in a region benefit from cooperation, trust and trade. After two appalling wars in Europe, there has been the slow evolution of the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Peace in the Middle East would be no more miraculous than this.
- Nurture democratic movements within Iraq. Democratic development cannot be imposed by outsiders or conferred by war. Numerous examples of strenuous nonviolent movements exist in many countries. Marcos, Milosevic, Suharto, military regimes in Latin America and communist governments in the Eastern Bloc were deposed without military intervention. Such nonviolent movements can best be supported by both regional and international non-governmental organizations.

*This statement was released at a press conference on January 15, 2003.*

## Space

continued from pg.5

The Canadian government has some concerns about trying an 'Ottawa-approach', similar to the way that the landmines treaty was achieved, when the major players (i.e. the US) might not be involved. If, however, the Conference on Disarmament felt the clamour for an alternative and more comprehensive treaty, there might be more push there for a satisfactory conclusion. It might be noted that the US did not sign the Land Mines Treaty either.

The NOWIS campaign has received start-up funding and has co-ordinators in Vancouver and Toronto. It has been holding information sessions at the University of Toronto and is preparing information kits for members of Parliament and the public. A web site will soon be available at [www.nowis.org](http://www.nowis.org)

If you believe that IPPNW's vision of Satelife is better than Star Wars and wish to help write, contact

No Weapons in Space  
489 College St.#303,  
Toronto,ON. M6G 1A5  
e-mail : [info@nowis.org](mailto:info@nowis.org)  
phone:416 927-7686  
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## Mordechai Vanunu Denied Parole

On January 16 2003 Mordechai Vanunu, who in 1986 blew the whistle on Israel's secret nuclear weapons arsenal, was denied early release by the District Court of Beersheba. This ruling means that Vanunu, who spent 11 1/2 years of his 18 year sentence in solitary confinement, will have to complete his entire term in prison. Vanunu is scheduled to be released in April, 2004. While the Court made its ruling public today, the reasons behind the ruling will remain secret, until the security establishment censors the text and decides what parts, if any, will be made public. There is little doubt among Vanunu's supporters in Israel, that the Court's ruling, while partially an act of vindictiveness on the part of the security establishment, is mostly motivated by the fear of the Israeli government, that Vanunu's release at this time would inevitably lead to increased international attention to Israel's weapons of mass destruction. Like other states that are termed "rogue nations," Israel maintains facilities for manufacturing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, as well as a huge stockpile of nuclear weapons, yet it has not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty and refuses to allow any independent inspection of its facilities. Despite the Court's disappointing ruling, Vanunu's message was present at yesterday's historic 3,000-strong antiwar demonstration in Tel-Aviv; several demonstrators held placards reading: Blix, come to Israel; U.N.: Inspect Dimona; Disarm Israel; and We also have Weapons of Mass Destruction.

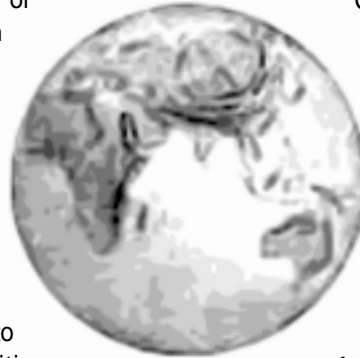
*From report by Rayna Moss, Tel Aviv*

## Doctor Activism Down Under

Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford has been on a speaking tour of Australia, from March 11th to April 10th, sponsored by the Medical Association for Prevention on War (MAPW), the Australian affiliate of IPPNW. Australian public opinion was running about 70% against sending Australian troops to participate in the coalition bombing of Iraq and has shifted gradually to reflect support for troops, but continued opposition to the war. MAPW is extraordinarily active in opposition to the war, and has a rapidly increasing membership.

Dr. Ashford presented Grand Medical Rounds, lectures to medical students, health care workers and students of peace and conflict studies, in Sydney, Newcastle, Melbourne, and Brisbane. She met with MPs and senior officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Canberra, and participated in the annual MAPW meeting in Adelaide.

The Adelaide conference was an enthusiastic gathering of some hundred doctors. Dr. Ashford, Dr. Ron McCoy, President of IPPNW, Dr. Robert Gould, Presi-



dent of PSR/USA, and Dr. Livtar Chowla, President of the Indian affiliate of IPPNW, addressed the meeting, among others. A media advisor recommended that doctors focus on talk radio as the most effective way to get our message heard. TV, radio and print coverage of the various meetings was excellent.

The urgency of the present situation and the deep concern of doctors were reflected in the large attendance and interest in all the gatherings, with Grand Rounds consistently being standing room only.

Dr. Ashford's powerpoint presentations are available to PGS members wanting to present educational lectures on

1. the medical consequences of bombing Iraq,
2. the case for the abolition of nuclear weapons,
3. health and environmental consequences of militarism, and
4. getting started as an activist group.

Available from [mashford@uvic.ca](mailto:mashford@uvic.ca) or [pgs@web.ca](mailto:pgs@web.ca)