



November 2, 2005

Ambassador Spogli
United States Embassy
via Vittorio Veneto 119/A
Rome, Italy 00187

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

It has been a month since we last wrote inviting you to dialogue with us about our demands to end the war in Iraq, bring home the troops and to leave no bases behind. That letter was sent in conjunction with the protest rally that occurred outside our embassy here in Rome on Saturday, September 24th simultaneously with protests in major cities in the U.S. and throughout the world. We are still awaiting your reply and would welcome a chance to meet with you.

Our group sponsors a documentary films series. The last film we screened and discussed was, "Hidden Wars of Desert Storm", directed by Gerard Ungerman and Audrey Brohy. As an outcome of our deliberation, we have additional questions we would like to pose to you. This, our second letter, is being sent at the same time that people at home are holding vigils in their communities and places of worship to commemorate the milestone of 2,000 U.S. lives lost in Iraq. According to an article by Thomas Wagner of the Associated Press, "Some Iraqis sympathized with U.S. forces on Wednesday (October 25th) after hearing the American death toll in the Iraq war had reached 2,000. But others noted that many more Iraqis had died (estimates between 30,000 and 100,000) in the conflict and said they hope the U.S. occupiers will soon go home."

We would like answers from you as to:

Who does the U.S. military try to keep "out of harm's way?"

Certainly not Iraqi civilians, when an estimated 25,000 out of the 40,000 civilian casualties have been caused directly by U.S. military forces and not the insurgents.

Certainly not the U.S troops who have been ill trained (many are recruits from the National Guard or reservists units) and over stretched (as all too many have been asked to sign on for a second or third term of duty) to fight this unnecessary war.

Certainly not those U.S. troops and Iraqi civilians who have been exposed to radiation from our own weapons of depleted uranium, for which Department of Defense officials continue to deny any adverse health and environmental effects.

Why has the U.S. military been allowed to send such a strong message to the world (hardly diplomatic in our view) that if a country wants to maintain its sovereignty, then in fact, it really does need to develop weapons of mass destruction, preferably nuclear ones, or run the risk of being invaded?

Certainly this is the message that Iran, North Korea, India, Pakistan...have gotten and acted upon. What happened to the U.S.'s support for the goal of nuclear non-proliferation?

How amid all the evidence and criticism (ie., Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib) can Vice President Dick Cheney propose that it be legal for the Central Intelligence Agency to use torture when deemed necessary for national security?

Certainly Senator McCain's proposal, which won the votes of 89 other senators this month, to require the civilized treatment of prisoners at camps run by America's military and intelligence agencies is preferable.

We look forward to the opportunity for dialogue with you about these critical matters and those contained in our last letter.

Sincerely,

U.S. Citizens for Peace & Justice, Rome