

December 9, 2005

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

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

This, our third letter to you, is being sent just weeks after the Italian documentary film, "Fallujah: The Hidden Massacre" was released by RAI News 24 on Tuesday, November 8th. The film documents the reality of the use of white phosphorous, through graphic visual images and an interview with U.S. military personnel, including former Army Specialist in Iraq, Jeff Englehart who was present during the November 2004 attack on Fallujah.

Initially, the U.S. military denied its use and then subsequently admitted it since a report had appeared in a military publication, "Field Artillery Magazine", March/April 2005. They then claimed it was "only to illuminate the night sky", to reveal an enemy's position. The properties of white phosphorous are that these balls of flaming chemicals rain down and dissolve the flesh, to the bones, upon contact, but leaves clothing intact. Perhaps there were present in Fallujah "insurgents" that the U.S. military was supposedly targeting, but non-combatants (women, children, the elderly...) were the victims as well of this heinous act.

According to an editorial entitled "Shake and Bake" published in the New York Times of November 29th, 2005, "The United States restricted the use of incendiaries like white phosphorous after Vietnam, and in 1983, an international convention banned its use against civilians. In fact, one of the many crimes ascribed to Saddam Hussein was dropping white phosphorous on Kurdish rebels and civilians in 1991."

The editorial concludes by saying, "The United States should be leading the world, not dragging its feet, when it comes to this sort of issue - because it's right and because all of us, including Americans, are safer in a world in which certain forms of conduct are regarded as too inhumane even for war. That is why torture should be banned in American prisons. And it is why the United States should stop using white phosphorus."

On Monday, November 14th, we, U.S. Citizens for Peace and Justice-Rome, were among the several hundred protestors outside the U.S. Embassy, yet again, calling for the end to the war in Iraq, to bring home the troops, and leave no bases behind. But this time another call was added and that was to prosecute President Bush and his military advisers for war crimes. If the maltreatment of prisoners in the detention center in Guantanamo Bay and the chronicled abuses at the Abu Ghraib prison were not enough, the use of a chemical weapon outlawed by several international treaties and rules of

warfare against civilian targets should be sufficient material to raise the call for an independent inquiry into these accusations, which if found true, should lead to the impeachment of President George W. Bush. If these crimes against humanity are not enough, add to it the continued endangering of the lives of those in the U.S military. Why isn't the U.S. government leading the world in compliance with these international rules of conduct?

We are demanding that an independent inquiry occur into these accusations, as the U.S. military has stated that it does not intend to investigate them: which includes the use of a chemical weapon whose use is banned against civilians; a military operation not concerned about civilian casualties; the U.S.'s lack of participation in international arms control.

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