



Australia Signs Up For Star Wars

The Howard Government announced on 4 December its decision to join the United States in developing the controversial "missile defense" or Star Wars program. The Federal Government is dragging us into a massively expensive, controversial and still-experimental system, which will make Australia complicit in US plans to turn space into new arena of war.

The decision to involve Australia in missile defence research and development will mean massive government investment and mega profits for the Australian aerospace industry. "The Bush administration is finding the ultimate cost of Star Wars so great that they are working overtime to convince allies to help with investments in the research and development phase of the project," says Bruce Gagnon, Coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space.

Pine Gap

Australia has been involved in Star Wars for over a decade through the US spy base at Pine Gap near Alice Springs. The newest radomes built at Pine Gap are for the latest satellite system called SBIRS (Space-Based Infra-Red System) which is expected to be operational by 2004. SBIRS is a new space based missile tracking system and is a key element of missile defence. Further evidence that Pine Gap's missile detection role is being upgraded are media reports that the US is building 50 new homes in Alice Springs for Pine Gap staff.

Theatre missile defence

The Howard Government had already signed up for theatre missile defence (TMD). It announced on November 7 that work would start on three new air-warfare destroyers by 2006. It is expected that the US Aegis radar and missile

systems. It is expected that they will be equipped with the US Aegis radar detection and missile systems. The US is pushing for early deployment of TMD which will be used to virtually surround China with US deployments in Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea and on ships and planes throughout the region.

We are now witnessing the creation of a new arms race that could ultimately carry warfare into the heavens. The US plan for Star Wars is dangerous, destabilizing, and enormously expensive.

Arms race

In February 2002 the Office of National Assessments warned the Federal Government that the US missile defence system could provoke a regional arms race and "would not be in Australia's diplomatic or security interests".

China has repeatedly warned that US plans for missile defence will be destabilising and will provoke a new regional arms race.

"There is no benefit for Australians in the Howard Government's decision. We will suffer economically, our security will be damaged, trade and diplomacy will be undermined, relations with our regional neighbours will be negatively affected and our sovereignty will be diminished," says Dr Hannah Middleton, Stop Star Wars campaigner for the Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition.

US tentacles tighten around Australia

The decision to become involved in missile defence is the latest in a series of Howard Government moves to bring Australia ever closer into the US military's lethal embrace.

Australian Defence Minister Robert Hill announced in Washington on November 20 that joint exercises and other measures will be taken to ensure "seamless interoperability" between the United States and Australian military.

WA activists have called interoperability "shorthand for the gradual fusion of the Australian Defence Force into a de-facto arm of the United States military".

The United States is clearly intent on upgrading and expanding its military capabilities in Australia and this process is being organised and promoted by Deputy Sheriff John Howard and his subservient, conservative government.

Other examples of this process are given in three articles in this issue of the AABCC Bulletin – a new US military base in Darwin (page 3), Australia's role in TMD (page 5) and the US Navy's Sea Swap program in Fremantle (page 2).

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CANADIAN DEBATE ON STAR WARS

A Canadian federal cabinet decision could trap Canada into permanently supporting the US military's missile defence scheme. And Canadians won't know what hit them because Defence Minister John McCallum is keeping the negotiations under wraps.

In May, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien promised, "There will be a debate in the House of Commons ... we want to know everyone's position."

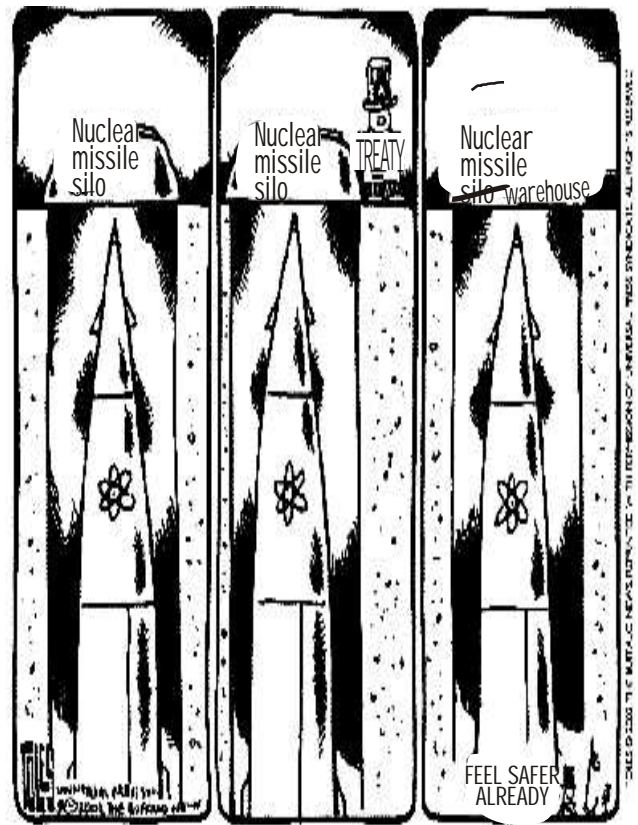
Without public protest, Chrétien will let McCallum get away with quietly locking Canada into George W. Bush's missile defence program. They will forge ahead knowing full

well this military extravaganza will be more costly, more dangerous, and just as grotesquely unworkable as the original Ronald Reagan Star Wars scheme.

The decision will be made in secret because the government knows that Canadians oppose missile defence. Canadians are well aware that this US military program endangers their security and will waste billions of dollars - money that needs to be allocated to social programs like health care, housing and alleviating poverty.

20 November 2003

For more information visit www.ceasefire.ca



The Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, signed by Presidents Bush and Putin on May 24, 2002, requires the USA and Russia to limit strategic nuclear warheads (the term is not defined) to 1,700 to 2,200 by 2012. However, the treaty does not require destruction of delivery systems or dismantling of warheads. Washington is instead putting excess warheads in storage.

STOP THE SWAP

Sea Swap is an agreement between the United States Navy and the Australian Government to allow the rotation of US Navy crews in the Port of Fremantle, Western Australia.

The arrangement is being trailed in 2003 and involves the complete change over of warship crews. At roughly six monthly intervals ships taking part in the trial will arrive in Fremantle and the crew will hand over to a completely new crew flown in from the US, before returning home themselves.

The trial is designed to save fuel, money and time, keeping the ships on station for longer and reducing the amount of time taken returning to the US. It has been predicted that each swap will save the US Navy roughly US\$9 million in fuel and overheads.

If the trial is a success, it is likely that many more ports will host swaps as the US Navy expands the concept.

There is no doubt that sea swaps present a lucrative financial opportunity for some industries in WA, but we also need to look at the costs, risks and ethical issues arising from such activities. Not all of these costs can be measured in dollars.

There are serious environmental concerns regarding sea swaps, ranging from accidents involving nuclear weapons or reactors to other toxic chemicals in munitions, fuel, paint and thinners, greases, heavy metals, acids, PCBs, oils and solvents.



Continued page 7

US BASE IN DARWIN A THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY

Despite Australian Government denials, it is clear that a US tank unit will be based in Darwin, probably transferred, perhaps with additional marine units, from Okinawa (Japan).

In a press release, Anti-Bases Campaign Co-ordinator Denis Doherty said: "A new United States military base or staging post in Darwin will undermine Australia's security and add even more to the already out of control Australian military budget.

"The US alliance hinders us and costs valuable trading opportunities and political contacts and influence. Australia is regarded as being too close to the US to be independent.

"It has already cost us wheat and sheep sales to the Middle East."

"In the current international climate, Australian Government backing for a new US military facility in Darwin increases the potential for Australians to become a terrorist target.

"The Governor of Okinawa said yesterday that the US bases on his island brought a major increase in the crime rate. It has increased levels of prostitution, drugs, alcoholism, rape, sexually transmitted diseases, abuse of women and children and other social problems.

"There are also major dangers of pollution from repairs and maintenance programs.

"This is not what we want for Darwin.

"Our security cannot be enforced by ever greater numbers of weapons. Security comes with jobs, homes, education and health care, democracy and human rights. Australia's current military spending of over \$43 million a day steals the resources needed to provide these necessities.

"Australia needs an independent, non-aligned foreign policy which is efficient, affordable and genuinely serve the defence of our country and the need for peace and stability in our region."



Abrams tank of the type that the United States may base in Darwin. The Australian Government intends to buy new tanks in the near future and the US is pushing for it to chose the Abrams, offering its own tanks at the Darwin base for Australian training and use. This would also contribute to another aim -- improving interoperability, the operational integration of Australian and US forces, under US command, for more "coalition of the willing" conflicts.

US CONGRESSIONAL REPORT CRITICAL OF MISSILE DEFENCE DEPLOYMENT PLANS

The Bush administration's push to deploy a \$22 billion missile defense system by this time next year could lead to unforeseen cost increases and technical failures that will have to be fixed before it can hope to stop enemy warheads, according to Congressional investigators.

The General Accounting Office, in a 40-page report, said the Pentagon was combining 10 crucial technologies into a missile defense system without knowing if they can handle the task, often described as trying to hit a bullet with a bullet.

The report especially criticized plans to adapt an early warning radar system in Alaska to the more demanding job of tracking enemy missiles, saying it had not been adequately tested for that role.



The overall uncertainty, the investigators said, has produced "a greater likelihood that critical technologies will not work as intended in planned flight tests." If failures ensue, they added, the Pentagon "may have to spend additional funds in an attempt to identify and correct problems by September 2004 or accept a less capable system."

Some critics say the timetable is devised to field a missile defense system before the 2004 election so President Bush can point to it as a fulfilled campaign pledge.

Source: "Report Sees Risks in Push for Missile Defense" by William J Broad, New York Times, 24/9/03

INUIT BATTLE TO SHUT STAR WARS BASE

Inuit hunters have asked Denmark's Supreme Court to close down one of America's most secretive and strategically important military bases.

The Inuit claim they were illegally evicted from traditional grounds in northern Greenland and they are demanding the right of return.

The US would like to use Thule surveillance base as a site for the controversial Star Wars National Missile Defence System.

Lawyers representing the Inuit claim that their very survival is at stake as the territory to which they were exiled no longer has sufficient food stocks to sustain them.

In 1953 the Danish authorities forcibly evicted the Inuit from their ancestral lands in Northern Greenland where for

thousands of years they hunted whales, polar bears and other arctic creatures.

Their removal enabled the Americans to establish the base. Thule's location allows the Americans to monitor Soviet military activities and, most importantly, to give early warning of any possible first nuclear strike.

Four years ago, a Danish High Court ruled that the Inuit had been illegally exiled but denied them the right of return. The Supreme Court justices now have to decide whether or not they have the legal right to go home.

The Inuits' lawyers believe if they win the Danish authorities may have to order the Americans to move their base.

Source: "Inuit battle to shut US air base" by Malcolm Brabant, BBC correspondent in Copenhagen, 3/11/03

THE MOST MILITANT ANTI-BASES CAMPAIGN IN THE WORLD

Foreign military bases in Australia are spy bases, centres for developing weapons systems, and staging locales for troop movements and exercises. In some parts it's a damn sight more offensive than that.

At this moment in history, the most offensive foreign military bases are located in a relatively small country 5,000 kms from the nearest Australian shore. The government there didn't approve of foreign forces and fought to keep them out. The country has been occupied by military conquest.

Since invasion and occupation commenced, the forces have launched military raids and patrols through the suburbs, towns and villages. Suburbs have been pounded by missiles and tank shells, destroying homes, commercial premises and community facilities. Deep in the dead of night foreign forces launch house to house sweeps rounding up thousands of locals. The occupiers set up a puppet government and pronounce sagely that they are taking the views of local people into account.

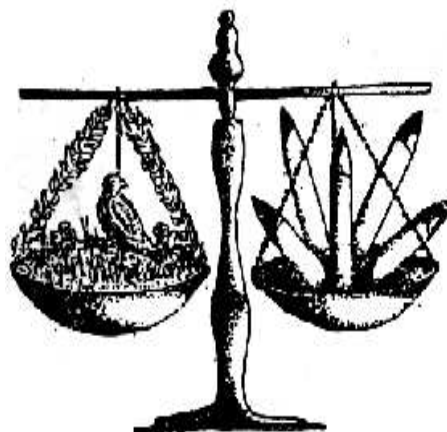
All this has gone down against a wave of protest that is a little different to that with which we are familiar. It is not just protest gatherings and appeals to the authorities for the foreign military to leave their bases in the country, as the anti-bases campaign does here and many other countries. It is a little more than distribution of literature exposing the nefarious activities of foreign forces, breaches of international agreements, arms races and militarisation of space. The campaign against foreign military

bases in Iraq is running a campaign at another level altogether.

Foreign military bases and their headquarters routinely come under fire from mortars, rockets, grenades and ground fire. Troops patrolling the districts are fired on and bombed. Several hundred have been killed in the anti-bases campaign over 6 months.

Of course the anti-bases campaign in Iraq has some other agenda items too, but many of the core demands remain from the agendas of anti-bases groups around the globe. Their actions are against the projection of power by the mighty, who seize the sovereign rights of independent peoples, harbour aggression and war, and engage in a build-up of capacity threatening further aggression and war.

In Iraq that war is real.



The military-based foreign-administrator of the Iraqi occupation dictates national policies and has vetoes over human rights of the occupied. Marshall law prevails over local rights.

The tactics of the Iraqi anti-bases campaign may be remarkably different to those used here, but the goal of independently deciding national policies free of interference from big powers, and refusing to be part of the strategic aggression of a major power, remain.

SPACE RIGHTS PROPOSAL TO BE LAUNCHED AT LUNAR CONFERENCE

The International Lunar Conference 2003 was held in Hawaii from November 16 to 22. As well as its stated purpose of getting back to the Moon, the conference saw the launch of a proposal dealing with extra-terrestrial property rights.

If the United States is to achieve its aim of dominating earth from space, then the issue of international rules for the use of lands beyond Earth is crucial.

According to the United Nations "Outer Space Treaty", the Moon and other worlds "shall be the province of all mankind". The "Moon Treaty" says it cannot be anyone's property.

American entrepreneurs, opposing these treaties, have taken the matter in their own hands and registered entire worlds as being their own property.

Dennis Hope of the Lunar Embassy claims to be the owner of the Moon, and Gregory Nemitz of Orbital Development claims to own asteroid Eros, simply because they say they were the first.

In addition, the Lunar Embassy is even selling off small pieces of the Moon to people around the world, stating that the buyers actually own their lands.

Many people condemn these sales as a fraud. You can't own the whole Moon, nor refer to American constitutional rights, nor sit behind your desk and claim these ownerships without having been there, they say.

The new proposal presented at the Hawaii conference tries to find a way out for US business interests by "harmonizing" commercial rights in space with existing treaties, suggesting a shift in approach from "Property Rights" to "Usage Rights".

source: <http://www.spacedaily.com/news/spacelaw-03a.html>

AUSTRALIA'S THEATRE MISSILE DEFENCE

The Howard Government's Defence Capability Review, released in early November, gave the green light for Australia to join the US missile defence program with three new RAN warships, something the US has been demanding for some time. The purchase of the ships has little to do with defending Australia and a lot to do with the aggressive star wars program.

Earlier this year a senior Pentagon official visiting Australia spoke about the value of ship-based systems in Australia.

"Three ships could do a pretty good job of covering against some types of long-range threats against the west coast of the US.

"An Australian ship-based radar in the right place might be just the thing to defend some other piece of territory," he said.

Defence Minister Robert Hill responded by saying that any decision to join the US project was "logical".

"The more likely progress will be through a ship-based scheme that won't be specifically designed to protect continental Australia," Senator Hill said in May.

On November 7, the Defence Minister announced that the ships will be built.

Bowing once again to US pressure, Australia will spend millions to join the controversial, expensive and experimental US plan to put weapons into space and to control the earth from the heavens.



BUSH'S BATTLE TO DOMINATE SPACE

The United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva adjourned in September, completely deadlocked. This is the body that since 1959 has hammered out the great arms control and reduction treaties.

Now the issue is the grave question of weapons in Space. For several years, while China and other nations have pushed for an agreement aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space, the United States has insisted that no such treaty is necessary. Last August China offered a compromise in its demands, hoping for a US moderation of its refusal, but no progress was made.

The 1967 Outer Space Treaty governs the military uses of space, but China argues that strategic plans openly discussed in the Pentagon, including the Missile Defense Program, involve deployments that will violate the treaty.

The Chinese were particularly alarmed by a 1998 long-range planning document which outlined a combination of global surveillance, missile defense, and space-based strike capabilities that would enable the United States to undertake effective preemption anywhere in the world and would deny similar capability to any other country. Today preemption and permanent global supremacy have become official Bush policies.

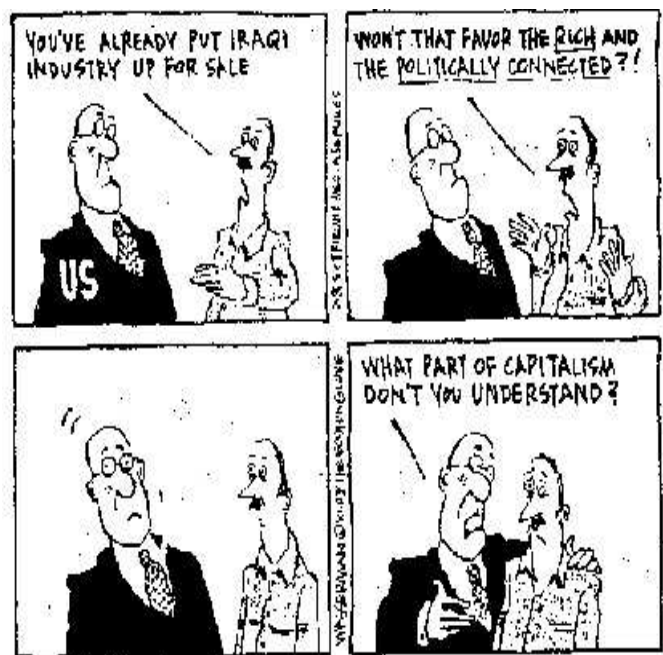
When it comes to space, the Chinese have good reason for thinking of themselves as the main object of such planning, which is why they are desperate for a set of rules governing military uses of space.

In October China put a man in space. Beijing has invested heavily in commercial development of space and will become a significant economic competitor in that sphere.

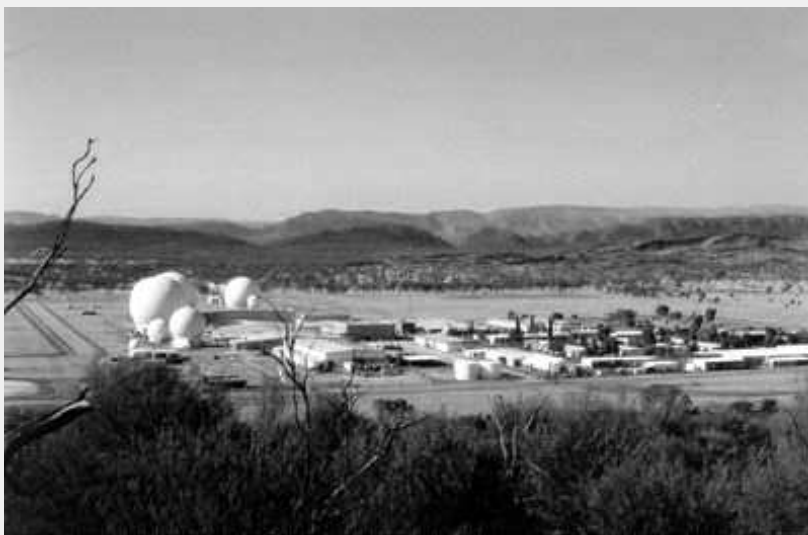
But such peaceful competition presumes a framework of stability, and it is inconceivable that China can pursue a mainly non-military space program while feeling vulnerable to American military dominance.

America's "high frontier" weapons capacity will put Chinese commercial space investments at risk. No nation with the ability to alter it would tolerate such imbalance, and over the coming decades there is no doubt that China will have that capacity. Washington's refusal to negotiate rules, while seeking permanent dominance and asserting the right of preemption, is forcing China into an arms race it does not want. Here, potentially, is the beginning of a next cold war, with a nightmare repeat of open-ended nuclear escalation, a situation made more ominous by the Pentagon's aggressive strategic planning for space and the Bush administration's rejection of treaty restraints.

Source: "Bush's battle to dominate in space" by James, Carroll, The Boston Globe, 28/10/03



Wasserman Tribune Media Services International



The US Pine Gap base outside Alice Springs is already being used for the Bush administration's plans to militarise space and dominate the earth from the heavens. The Australian Government has now decided to build an Australian ship-based missile defence system as an element in the US Star Wars program.

STOP THE SWAP

continued from page 2

There is not a US military base in the world that does not have some soil and/or ground water contamination.

There are also significant social implications, including an increase in anti-social behaviour, crime and sexual related illness, plus an increased threat of terrorist attack.

The US Navy has a long history of operating in areas outside the US, leaving behind a trail of destruction, pollution and negative social impacts within communities.

The WA State Government wants people to believe that this is a minor extension of the hospitality Fremantle has shown US warships here on R & R over the last 100 years.

However, the WA Government sent a delegation headed by Mark McGowan MLC to Washington DC to lobby the US Navy to make Fremantle a permanent sea swap port.

Source: *Fremantle Anti-Nuclear Group*
For more information and to help with the campaign to stop sea swap, go to: www.seaswap.org

QANTAS CLAIMS ADDED SECURITY IS TO PROTECT SPACE BASE, NOT PEOPLE

QANTAS has blasted the Federal Government for making the airline foot the bill for extra security around the top-secret US military base at Pine Gap.

An airline executive has written to a parliamentary inquiry into aviation security, claiming they were led to believe the beefing-up of security at Alice Springs and Ayers Rock airports was to ward off possible terrorists.

Qantas stopped paying for the Australian Protective Service (APS) officers in June last year, when it says it became clear there was more concern about US interests at Pine Gap than passengers.

"The Government was unable to demonstrate to Qantas a benefit linking the deployment of these officers with a reduced threat to aviation," Qantas security manager Geoffrey Askew said in a submission to the inquiry.

"It is assumed that the actual purpose of these officers was protection of a facility of political and legal sensitivity in the vicinity."

A spokesman for Justice and Customs Minister Chris Ellison denied the claims. "The presence of APS officers has nothing to do with Pine Gap," he said.

The APS officers remain at Alice Springs and Ayers Rock, but are being paid for by taxpayers. Pine Gap is 20km south of Alice Springs and is the country's largest and most secretive military base.

Its official name is the Joint Defence Space Research Facility and virtually nothing has been known of its day to day operations since it began feeding intelligence back to the US in 1969.

Source: "Extra security for US benefit, not passengers", by Luke McIlveen, *DailyTelegraph*, Sydney November 26, 2003

BUSH WANTS MOON BASES NEXT

The Bush administration is developing a new strategy for the nation's space program that would send American astronauts back to the moon for the first time in more than 30 years, according to administration and congressional officials who said the plan includes a manned mission to Mars.

A new mission to the lunar surface -- possibly establishing a permanent base there -- is the focus of high-level White House discussions on how to reinvigorate the space program following the space shuttle Columbia accident earlier this year.

"NASA, along with other agencies, has been providing the administration with information about these long-term objectives," Robert Jacobs, a NASA spokesman, said. NASA officials are meeting in Washington this week as part of a national space policy review prompted by the Columbia disaster, which killed all seven astronauts aboard.

Officials said President Bush is expected to soon unveil a new strategy that would include manned missions to the moon and Mars. A return to the moon -- then possibly moving on to a nearby asteroid and, in the longer term, Mars -- would bring with it significant technical risks and tremendous costs.

A moon mission would help NASA make the technological advances needed if humans are to ever embark on interplanetary travel, such as developing non-chemical propulsion systems and systems that would enable human survival in deep space for months or years at a time.

It would take at least six months to travel to Mars, specialists said, and astronauts might have to wait more than a year before returning to Earth, depending on Mars's orbit.



John:

"According to the latest estimate we've killed 55,000 Iraqi's, a high proportion of whom were children and old people....".

Tony:

"And there's the wounded John, don't forget the wounded, maybe ten times as many!."

Leunig

In the scientific community, the discussion revolves around the value of the current manned flight program. Robotic missions can often accomplish as much scientifically than manned flights can, and at much lower costs. "Anything that we want to do in space today we can do more cheaply, more safely, and much more effectively with automated spacecraft than sending people," said Alex Roland, professor of history at Duke University who studies the space program.

source: www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2003/12/05/us_looks_to_push_space_exploration

LETTER TO BUSH FROM THE YORKSHIRE MOORS

Dear George,

I wish you had the time to visit us here in North Yorkshire. I am writing this letter as I travel on the bus from our village - Goathland - into Whitby, on the North Sea coast. Although a small, relatively isolated village, it receives a disproportionate amount of publicity, mainly because it is the nearest village to the base that houses the tracking system for America's missile defence project.

As I look across the moors towards the sea I cannot avoid the looming shape of the grey truncated pyramid that houses the phased-array radar. Whenever we go for a walk we have to face this reminder of our intimate links to this scheme, designed to protect America. We can't escape the logic that if anyone wished to attack America, we ourselves could become a target. Then there are the health risks. In Cape Cod (Ma.), people like us, living near to phased-array radar, suffer from higher rates of certain types of cancer.

I really don't want to spend my time learning about interceptor missiles, booster rockets or kill-vehicles. But we feel we have to do all we can to alert people to what might happen once our delicate (and, admittedly, imperfect) international system of checks and balances is shattered.

Yours,
Jackie Fearnley
"Son of Star Wars" protester.

(Australian Anti-Bases Bulletin Ed:
If only imperialism and Bush worked that way)

Source: www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,3604,1087774,00.html



PICK THE TURKEY!

NOTICE

The anti-bases office has moved!

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(02) 9698 2954

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*AABCC
sends best wishes
to all our readers for a
Peaceful 2004*



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