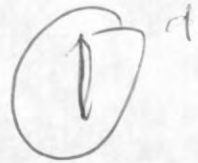


Washington, D. C. 3/5/03
Women for Peace



Thank you for that fine introduction.

The man in the White house believes that, ^{Now THAT HE} ~~when he~~ ^{is} starts dropping bombs on some other people, we will fall in line behind him.

But America must become a beacon of justice and peace in the world; it is to this idea that we are patriots, and as patriots we say NO to Bush. No, to ^{THIS} ~~an~~ unnecessary war. For an unnecessary war is, by definition, a war crime. And crimes should be prosecuted.

The man in the White House believes that, when our American soldiers start coming home to our communities in their body bags, that we will rally around him—that we will forget what he did to our budget surpluses, our social security funds, our Medicare, our pensions and stocks. Merciless rulers from time out of mind have tried that bloody distraction. We are not distracted by the blood of our own sons and daughters, Mr. Bush. Each drop of that precious blood leads us to an election next year and we are an army of people who come against you at the

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ballot box. Bush's war will be the sorry end of your family's long black mark on American history.

Mr. Bush is counting on our patriotism. He is correct in assuming that we are patriots and that we will take our stand for America and for American Values. He will be surprised, however, how it plays out for him. Mr. Bush has done some remarkable things. He may yet earn the Nobel Peace Prize; who else could bring France and Germany together? Who else could bring together, as we are indeed coming together, American Liberals and American Conservatives - indeed we will lay down our old arguments for awhile as, together, we fight to save our Constitutional Bill of Rights and fight to save America's honorable position in the world.

Mr. Bush believes that, when the dust settles and the bodies of children are quickly trucked away, long before the war-profiteering news networks turn on their cameras, we will be satisfied that it is over, that a tyrant has been removed and a people freed.

Saddam is one of the leftover Cold War puppets, now getting his walking papers. Is he being replaced in favor of justice and democracy? Will the people of the region now have the ability to control their own

destinies? Is that the purpose of our proposed permanent military bases there? Is that the objective of all the oil executives preparing to arrive in all their little jets? Or is this simply the beginning of another era of repression and exploitation? The people of the Middle East have no illusions, nor should we. The difference is, we the people of America have full responsibility for the actions of our government, and we must remove the present gang of oily men who have wrested moral control over us.

MOAB ^{10 tons}
They are all so proud of their new toy that they are other of bombs

Mr. Bush knows that one good missile attack on the world's most historic city is good for an immediate boost in the overnight ratings. He knows that, when the games begin we have to choose which side of the stadium to sit on, and we will sit with the Americans and wave our flag. The problem is, Mr. Bush, that this is not a game, and what you are ~~proposing~~ ^{doing} is unlike anything America, though we are no angels, has ever done or ever wanted to do. We are not with you sir, and you bring shame upon our flag and our traditions and our dreams of a better, safer, more peaceful and prosperous world.

Let him assume that we are patriots, for we are. We pledge our patriotism today. Let him tremble as we do so.

Yours may be the most privileged generation to ever have lived upon earth. I don't mean that you have soft advantages, but that you find yourself in a time when your individual contribution will have an heroic importance to the world. This may sound overblown. It may make no sense to you for an old woman to stand here and tell you that you, personally, are the hero or heroine whose actions will decide things for a troubled world. But I think that may indeed be the case.

You must become the hero or heroine of your own life in any case, and that is enough for your happiness, regardless of your degree of extension into the world.

When you are my age you will understand that the voice you must listen to is that small one within you telling you to save our planet. To leave a legacy to the generation to come after you that will bless you and not curse you because you did not do enough to save our Democracy from the Corporate World that America is fast becoming.

In a world where the polar ice is melting and atmosphere ozone levels are thinning daily, and in a world where one child in five goes to bed hungry and two out of five children if they are Afro-American, we

must assume responsibility. We must take our place at the table of power. Be involved. Stay involved. Understand what it means to be an American. It means to take responsibility for mature self-governance.

I hope you all have a high opinion of yourself, and that you will understand that you are worth the trouble you have invested in yourself so far, and that you are worth even more effort in the future that begins always at this moment.

You, personally, have an important role to play in this greatest drama of our times. I hope you enjoy the fight and will have success after success.

Thank you.