THE TRIAL OF VERN EHLERS
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INTRODUCTION

On Monday March 10 2003 a group of citizens in Grand Rapids MI attempted to hold their congressman, Vernon Ehlers, responsible for crimes against humanity. In accordance with international law, these determined citizens went to the Grand Rapids federal building which houses the office of Congressman Ehlers. The group, which consisted of approximately 30 people, were stopped as they tried to enter the building by the Security guards. After refusing to obey the security guards order to leave, the citizen activists decided to occupy the entry area between the doors and the metal detectors. Federal Marshals came down and confirmed the groups right to occupy the entrance way until 5pm, the closing time for the building. The group of citizens presented their evidence to the Federal Marshals and requested the Marshals help in arresting congressman Ehlers. The Marshals refused to assist in Congressman Ehlers apprehension claiming that they would need a warrant for his arrest.

A staffer from Congressman Ehlers office came out to inform the group that Ehlers was not present that day. The group presented their evidence to the staffer and explained their position that Ehlers was complicit in crimes against international law. The staffer replied that “If that is true then most of the House and Senate are guilty of war crimes also”. The group occupying the lobby did not argue with this point. As Five o’clock rolled around some of the group left the building to join the larger gathering outside. Six stalwart citizens stayed inside despite threats of arrest from the Federal Marshals. The Marshals pleaded with the group to leave, claiming that the group had made their point. The six occupiers disagreed and said that they would not leave. As the groups media representative explained to the press, “international law does not stop at five o’clock”. The marshals called the Grand Rapids Police Department and the six enforcers of international law were arrested.

They were taken to the county jail where they were processed and held for several hours. Five of the six posted bail and were released a few hours later although one of the group did not. He stayed in the jail overnight until being released on a personal recognizance bond. When arraigned several weeks later the group all plead not guilty. A month later the group refused the city attorneys offer of a plea bargain in exchange for a guilty plea. The group intends to go to trial and present their evidence to a jury. In the meantime, the group organized their own mock-trail of Vern Ehlers in order to get their message out to as wide an audience as possible. The following is the transcript of that trial.
The scene is a courtroom. There is some milling around. Suddenly the BAILIFF stands and speaks.

**BAILIFF:**
All rise for the Honorable Judge.

The gallery and all participants rise. The JUDGE enters dressed in his black robes. He sits and then the gallery sits.

**JUDGE:**
The following is The Trial of Vern Ehlers. It is a mock trial. As such the proceedings enacted here should not be misconstrued to represent an actual trial. Nor should they be thought to illustrate the full complexities of due process under Constitutional and International Law. My jurisdiction is limited to the confines of television and your conscience.

I am not a real judge, though I’m playing one on TV. Likewise, those involved in these proceedings are portraying the roles of expert witnesses, reporters, and other personages. Some performers are playing real people. Others speak with a combination of voices. In the absence of actual legal proceedings indicting United States lawmakers for their support of an illegal war with Iraq we are creating fictional proceedings. However, the voices and the stories you will hear are true. Those involved in this teleplay have done their best to document all claims made herein. Source materials are available upon request.

Turning to the BAILIFF.

Is the accused present?

**BAILIFF:**
The accused is not present.

**JUDGE:**
The accused was subpoenaed, was he not?

**BAILIFF:**
He was. However, today he is spending time with his family. He cites job stress and said he needs
some down time.

**JUDGE:**
Did the accused understand that he is charged with crimes against humanity?

**BAILIFF:**
I’m not sure. I only spoke to a staff person. She was very nice, though, and thanked me for calling.

**JUDGE:**
For the record, we are both referring to Congressman Vernon Ehlers of Michigan’s 3rd District?

**BAILIFF:**
Yes.

**JUDGE:**
And for the record this is the same Congressman Ehlers that swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America?

**BAILIFF:**
Yes.

**JUDGE:**
Well, that puts a damper in our proceedings.

**BAILIFF:**
He has sent along a videotape, though.

**JUDGE:**
Oh?

**BAILIFF:**
Yes. It’s only a still image but Mr. Ehlers hopes that it will suffice.

*The BAILIFF points to the wall where a monitor is seen. A still image of Ehlers is shown.*

He, or at least the staff in his office, sends regards.

**JUDGE:**
Well, I guess we can proceed. Let it enter the court record that the Defendant chose to represent himself without legal counsel. The charges being brought against Mr. Ehlers are as follows:

*Here the JUDGE reads.*

Congressman Vernon Ehlers, you are being charged in the High Courts with willfully and intentionally violating the Charter of the United Nations, the International Declaration of Human Rights, the principles of International Law as put forward by the Nuremberg Tribunal and the Geneva Conventions, as well as the Constitution of the United States of America.

How does the Accused wish to plead?

*The monitor of Ehlers is silent.*

Let it be entered into the court record that the Accused, Mr. Vernon Ehlers, remains curiously silent. The Prosecution may proceed.

**PROSECUTOR:**

Thank you, your Honor.

I would also like to have the following entered into the court record. This is a trial by jury. Today, at the end of this court session, those here in the courtroom audience will be asked to make a determination of the guilt or innocence of Congressman Vernon Ehlers. Those of you watching the proceedings from home will also be asked to take a position on the ideas and issues presented today.

The case against Mr. Ehlers will be presented in two parts. First, the Prosecution will argue that Mr. Ehlers, in his support of the Bush Administration’s push toward war with Iraq, has violated both International and Constitutional Law. Second, the Prosecution will make clear to the jury the humanitarian consequences of this unlawful aggression. This will serve to highlight Mr. Ehlers’ complicity in crimes against humanity.
The Prosecution would now like to call our first witness. Will Ms. Geneva Brown please take the stand?

The witness does so.

JUDGE:
I remind you that you are under Oath.

BROWN:
Yes, your Honor.

PROSECUTION:
Ms. Brown, you have been called into court today because of your expertise in International Law and Constitutional Law. In October of 2002 the Defendant, Representative Vern Ehlers, voted in support of the resolution granting President George W. Bush the authority to use military force against Iraq. This resolution gave President Bush the authority to attack Iraq regardless of whether or not the UN Security Council approved of it or not. Does this act by Mr. Ehlers violate International Law?

EXPERT:
It depends on a couple of things. According to Articles 41 and 42 of the UN Charter no member state has the right to enforce any resolution with armed force unless the Security Council decides there has been a breach of its resolution. The Security Council also needs to determine that all nonmilitary means of enforcement have been exhausted. At that point the Council must specifically authorize the use of military force.

PROSECUTOR:
And did the Security Council authorize the use of force in this recent war against Iraq?

EXPERT:
They did not.

PROSECUTOR:
Therefore Representative Ehlers’ support of the war on Iraq without the approval of the UN Security Council is a violation of the UN Charter Articles 41 and 42?

**EXPERT:**

Yes.

**PROSECUTOR:**

Does the UN Charter allow for any exceptions to the use of force?

**EXPERT:**

The Charter states that a member state can act in individual or collective self-defense.

**PROSECUTOR:**

Could it therefore be said that the recent US-led attack against Iraq is defendable by this clause?

**EXPERT:**

No. Iraq has not attacked this country or any other country in the past eleven years. None of Iraq’s neighbors have appealed to the Security Council to protect them from imminent attack by Iraq. The UN Charter makes it very clear that a pre-emptive attack is not self-defense if there is no imminent threat.

**PROSECUTOR:**

I want to now turn to the matter of the US Constitution. Is it defensible to say that Mr. Ehlers, in voting to support this war that violates International Law, was acting to protect American interests and fulfill his duties as put forward by the US Constitution?

**EXPERT:**

No. The UN Charter is a treaty, a treaty that the US Congress has authorized. According to Article 6, clause 2 of the Constitution, “all treaties made under the authority of the United States shall be the supreme law of the land.” By violating the UN Charter the Bush Administration, and in this particular case Mr. Ehlers, has violated the US Constitution.
PROSECUTOR:
The Constitution requires that the terms of all treaties entered into are obeyed?

EXPERT:
That's correct.

PROSECUTOR:
But what if Representative Ehlers felt it was important to support the President’s decision since he is the Commander in Chief?

EXPERT:
The decision of whether or not to go to war is not the President’s to make. Regardless of the fact that the Executive is Commander in Chief the Constitution clearly states in Article 1, section 8 that only Congress has the power to declare war. The Congress did not declare war.

PROSECUTOR:
And yet Congress did nothing when the Bush Administration started the war in Iraq without a formal declaration. I point out to the jury that Congress abdicated their power to decide on going to war to the Executive Branch, a clear violation of each Congressperson’s duty, including Mr. Ehlers’, as laid out in the Constitution.

In fairness I would like to take one more approach, Ms. Brown. Let me point out the fact that Representative Ehlers and the President are in the same party. By supporting the President’s drive toward war it could be said the Mr. Ehlers was simply following the party line. Certainly he cannot be held accountable. He was simply following orders. Is there a legal precedent for such an argument?

EXPERT:
Yes. We find a suitable example in International Law. According to the Nuremberg Tribunal Number 82, Principle IV, “The fact that a person acted pursuant to order of his Government or of a superior does not relieve him from responsibility
under international law, provided a moral choice was in fact possible to him.”

**PROSECUTOR:**
The prosecution suggests to the jury that Mr. Ehlers indeed had a moral choice available. Instead he followed the party line, in violation of the Constitution and International Law. Thank you, Ms. Brown. No more questions for this witness, your Honor.

**JUDGE:**
In absence of an attorney for cross-examination you may step down.

*BROWN does so.*

The Prosecution may continue.

**PROSECUTOR:**
Thank you, your Honor.

After making it clear that Mr. Ehlers has failed to uphold the US Constitution and the International Laws which are included therein under Article 6, clause 2, the Prosecution now turns to the humanitarian consequences of this illegal action against Iraq.

I must ask the jury and all present in this court to steel themselves. The accounts you are about to hear are, at times, undeniably horrific. It is, however, important to hear these stories to be able to fully understand the human ramifications of Mr. Ehlers support of the flight to war. The poor living standards and disease amplified by Ehlers supported sanctions before the war is compounded by the injuries, illness, and deaths of civilians caused by the war, specifically from US forces. These represent crimes against humanity.

I first turn your attention to hard numbers. Our relationship to numbers is such that we don’t have to get personal. They are, after all, only statistics.

I submit to the court record information regarding
the Iraq Body Count Project. Iraq Body Count “is a Human Security project to establish an independent and comprehensive public database of media-reported civilian deaths in Iraq resulting directly from military actions by the USA and its allies in 2003.

“Casualty figures are derived from a comprehensive survey of online media reports. Where these sources report differing figures, the range... are given. All results are independently reviewed and error-checked by at least three members of the Iraq Body Count project team before publication.”

The methodology, based on earlier work by Professor Marc Herold in producing a list of civilian deaths in the war on Afghanistan, makes it clear that the list is both accurate and verifiable. These numbers represent deaths that the Accused is charged to be complicit with because of his support of the US war on Iraq. As of today, May 3, 2003, the minimum number of civilian deaths has reached 2197. The maximum number or reported deaths is 2670.

JUDGE:
Mr. Prosecutor, in the interest of time we will need to move these proceedings forward.

PROSECUTOR:
Yes, your Honor.

The Prosecution will call its final witnesses momentarily. First, I wish to point out to the jury that the stories you will hear may be new to you. It is possible that they were either willfully withheld from you, somehow not considered news-worthy, or somehow presented a conflict of interest with the media corporation. Advertisers do not wish to follow images of headless children. Although it does seem that they are okay with armless ones tucked safely away in American medical care.

I turn to a statement submitted by Professor Herold in support of the Iraq Body Count project.
PROSECUTOR reads.

“The counting of civilian dead looms ever more importantly for at least two reasons: military sources and their corporate mainstream media backers seek to portray the advent of precision guided weaponry as inflicting, at most, minor, incidental civilian casualties when, in truth, such is not the case; and the major source of opposition to these modern ‘wars’ remains an informed, articulate general public which retains a commitment to international humanitarian covenants of war at a time when most organized bodies and so-called ‘experts’ have walked away from them.”

[Gives letter to BAILIFF.]

In the service of maintaining an “informed, articulate general public” the Prosecution calls Ms. Cathy Breen to the stand.

BREENS takes the stand.

JUDGE:
Ms. Breen, I remind you that you are under oath. Mr. Prosecutor, you may continue.

PROSECUTOR:
Thank you, your Honor. Ms. Breen, will you please state your occupation.

BREENS:
I am a registered nurse in New York City.

PROSECUTOR:
How have you come to witness the humanitarian consequences of the recent war in Iraq?

BREENS:
I’ve been working in Baghdad with the Iraq Peace Team.

PROSECUTOR:
Please give the court an account of what you saw in Iraq as a result of the US bombings.

**BREENS:**

I can “tell you about Amar, a 7 year old boy whom I saw in the hospital... He has an emergency chest tube to drain blood as he suffered multiple shell injuries. His mother, Hannah, died in the direct hit to their house... He is from a farming village on the outskirts of Baghdad.
“Then there is Mueen, 8 years old also the son of a farmer, but from another area. He is in the bed alongside Amar and also has a drainage tube. But his is from the abdomen. The doctor showed us a plastic bag holding parts of his small intestine which had to be removed during surgery in order to try and get to all of the shrapnel. His father died in that bombing, and his six year old brother Ali was wounded in the head. Shall I go on?”

PROSECUTOR:

Please.

BREENS:

“Ten year old Rusel was wounded in an explosion outside her door. We saw the shrapnel in her chest on the X-ray and she too has a chest tube. Her right hand is fractured... Her father said, “Bush said he’d bring democracy to Iraq. This is not democracy. This is terrorism!”

JUDGE:

I remind the jury that this is not a trial against President George W. Bush. This is a trial against Congressman Vernon Ehlers for his support of the Bush administration and the Congressman’s complicity in crimes against humanity. The previous statement will remain in the court records with this notation. Mr. Prosecutor, you may continue to question the witness.
PROSECUTOR:
I have no further questions, your Honor.

JUDGE:
In the absence of legal counsel for the Accused you may step down Ms. Breen.

She does so.

Mr. Prosecutor, please call your next witness?

PROSECUTOR:
Yes, your Honor. The prosecution calls Mr. Jonathan Steele to the stand.

STEELE takes the stand.

JUDGE:
Mr. Steele, I remind you that you are under oath. The prosecution may proceed.

PROSECUTOR:
Thank you, your Honor. Mr. Steele, you are a reporter for The Guardian, a newspaper based in the United Kingdom. Is this correct?

STEELE:
That is correct.

PROSECUTOR:
And you have been reporting on the war in Iraq from the field, so to speak?

STEELE:
Yes. Most recently I have been in Baghdad.

PROSECUTOR:
So the jury may better understand the humanitarian consequences of the military action supported by the Accused, will you please tell the court what you have seen in Baghdad hospitals, specifically the Central Children's Hospital.

STEELE:
“Children lying on dirty vinyl mattresses, desperate
mothers clutching whimpering infants, harassed doctors signing prescriptions that they barely have time to read…”

**PROSECUTOR:**
At what time in the conflict are you referring to?

**STEELE:**
This would be around the 18th of April, “a week after the guns fell silent.”

**PROSECUTOR:**
Mr. Steele, to the best of your ability as an objective journalist, please give the court your best sense of the humanitarian situation as you have seen in the Central Children’s Hospital.

**STEELE:**

“Ali Ismail Abbas, the boy who lost his parents and his arms in an American missile strike… was lucky to be flown to Kuwait. For Iraq’s other children the agony caused by war goes on. Doctors have not been able to keep count of the numbers of injured in the war: after the failure of the city’s telephone system no one was able to coordinate figures. Hospitals cannot contact each other except by sending messengers.”
PROSECUTOR:
In the current “post-war” situation please describe what you are seeing as far as the kinds of injuries.

STEELE:

Many of the injuries are from unexploded ordinances like Coalition Cluster Bombs. “At least six children were wounded by cluster bombs [the week of April 18th]. Ali Mustafa is one such victim. His]… head is half hidden by a bandage… The five year old was playing with his brother and two friends… when he picked up an odd round object. It was an unexploded cluster bomb, one of thousands that lie around Baghdad. It exploded in his hands, blinding him. His legs, scarred with shrapnel, will heal but Ali Mustafa’s sight will never return.”

PROSECUTOR:
For the benefit of the jury can you describe a cluster bomb?

STEELE:
I am not an expert in munitions but as I understand it, a cluster bomb is made up of many smaller bombs that get dispersed randomly.
PROSECUTOR:
Thank you. Please continue with your description of the scenes in the children’s hospitals in and around Baghdad.

STEELE:
“Even if they escaped direct injury from bombing, thousands of Iraqi children are continuing to suffer from the chaos created by war. Fuel shortages and the lack of electricity [because of the massive bombings] make it hard for hospitals to cope, leaving patients without proper care.”

The failure to prevent mass looting of the hospitals after the fall of Saddam Hussein’s regime has also left the hospitals ill-equipped, if equipped at all. Abdul Hamid al-Sadoon, a doctor at the Central hospital, told me that they need everything, “—gauze, cotton, gloves, silk for stitching, needles, x-ray film... Baghdad has 33 hospitals for a population of five million but several are closed because of power shortages or because transport problems prevent staff getting to work.”

PROSECUTOR:
Thank you, Mr. Steele. No more questions, your Honor.

JUDGE:
You may step down, Mr. Steele. Mr. Prosecutor, do you have other witnesses to call in this line of investigation?

PROSECUTOR:
Yes, your Honor. To clarify for the jury concerns about munitions I would like to call to the stand Mr. Steve Goose.

GOOSE takes the stand.

JUDGE:
You are under oath, Mr. Goose.

PROSECUTOR:
Mr. Goose, can you state your occupation, please?
GOOSE:
I am a weapons researcher for the New York City-based Human Rights Watch.

PROSECUTOR:
Can you please describe for the court what a cluster bomb is?

GOOSE:
Cluster bombs get their name from the fact that one large bomb canister actually consists of hundreds of smaller bombs. The type BLU 97, for instance, contains 202 bomblets the size of a soft drink can.

PROSECUTOR:
Are cluster bombs precision weapons?

GOOSE:
Well, depending on the delivery system you might be able to direct the actual canister close to a target but you can’t control the bomblets. See, “these cluster bombs scatter and spray over a large area about the size of two football fields.”

PROSECUTOR:
The US Central Command has made repeated statements that all means would be taken to prevent civilian casualties. However, US Central Command has also acknowledged that US Forces “have hit areas of Baghdad with cluster bombs” and that, here I quote, “We had to use them in an urban environment because that was where Saddam Hussein put…weapons.” Endquote. As a weapons researcher, Mr. Goose, how do you react to that statement given the situation at hand?

GOOSE:
I’ll be frank. It’s a disgraceful position to take. “These are not the kind of weapons you use in cities… From a humanitarian perspective you don’t use them because they are very hard to target.” They also have a high failure rate, up to 25 percent, leaving hundreds of bomblets “lying on the ground acting like little landmines.”
PROSECUTOR:
So, therefore, Mr. Goose, would you say that the use of such weapons in urban areas disregards the sanctity of innocent lives?

GOOSE:
Yes. International Law prohibits militaries from using weapons indiscriminately. These are weapons that can not distinguish between civilians and combatants. The use of cluster bombs in urban areas is a violation of those laws.

PROSECUTOR:
Thank you, Mr. Goose. No more questions, your Honor.

The JUDGE motions for GOOSE to step down.

It is clear the actions of the Accused, Congressman Vern Ehlers, in his support of this war in Iraq, have been in violation of International and Constitutional Law. The greatest horror, however, may be in the very real humanitarian consequences of these practices of unbridled support of the Bush Administration.

The Prosecution now calls the final witness, Mr. Robert Fisk.

FISK takes the stand.

JUDGE:
I remind you that you are under oath, Mr. Fisk.

PROSECUTOR:
Mr. Fisk, you are a reporter for The Independent and an established contributor with other publications, is this correct?

FISK:
Yes.

PROSECUTOR:
And you have been working from Iraq during the recent armed conflict supported by, among others,
Congressman Vernon Ehlers of Michigan’s 3rd Congressional district?

FISK:
That is correct.

PROSECUTOR:
Please describe then, for the jury, some of the details you witnessed during the war.

FISK:
Certainly. The wounded are everywhere. I remember “the car salesman who’d just lost his eye but whose feet were still dribbling blood, the motorcyclist who was shot by American troops near the Rashid Hotel, the 50-year-old female civil servant, her long dark hair spread over the towel she was lying on, her face, breasts, thighs, arms, and feet pock-marked with shrapnel from an American cluster bomb. For the civilians of Baghdad this is the real, immoral face of war, the direct result of America’s clever little ‘probing missions’ into Baghdad.”

“I’ll leave out the description of the flies that have clustered round the wounds in the Kindi emergency rooms, of the blood caked on the sheets, the blood still dripping from the wounds of those I talked to… All were civilians. All wanted to know why they had to suffer. All… talked gently and quietly about their pain.”

PROSECUTOR:
Mr. Fisk, these interactions were prior to the fall of Baghdad. Were you escorted by members of the Iraqi government?

FISK:
In this case, no. “No Iraqi government bus took me to the Kindi hospital. No doctor knew I was coming.” What I saw was not scripted in any way. What I saw was the real human consequence of war with Iraq.”

PROSECUTOR:
Please continue with your description of what you saw in the hospital, Mr. Fisk.
“Let’s start with Mr. Abdulrazek. He’s the 40-year-old car salesman who was walking [one morning]… through a narrow street in the Shaab district of Baghdad – that’s where the two American missiles killed at least 20 civilians… [in a previous air strike] – when he heard the jet engines of an aircraft.” He told me he was going to see his family because the phone exchanges had been bombed and he wanted to make sure they were okay. He added that there was a family, a husband with his wife and children, walking in front of him. In his words he said, “I heard this terrible noise
and there was a light and I knew something had happened to me. I went to try to help the family in front of me but they were all gone, in pieces. Then I realized I couldn’t see properly.”

The doctor told me quietly that Mr. Abdulrazek lost his eye. He was not yet aware that he would be half-blind for the rest of his life. The doctor told me that there was nothing they could, that his eye had been taken out by a piece of shrapnel.

PROSECUTOR:
Can you give the details of any other individual that you saw or spoke to, another civilian that has been wounded as a result of the war supported by Congressman Ehlers?

FISK:

Yes. There is Safa Karim. “She is 11 and she is dying. [At this point she may already be dead.] An American bomb fragment struck her in the stomach and she is bleeding internally, writhing on the bed with a massive bandage on her stomach and a tube down her nose and – somehow most terrible of all – a series of four dirty scarves that tie each of her wrists and ankles to the bed. She moans and thrashes on the bed, fighting pain and imprisonment at the same time. A relative said she is too ill to understand her fate. ‘She has been given
10 bottles of drugs and she has vomited them all up,' he said."

**PROSECUTOR:**
Thank you, Mr. Fisk. No more questions, your Honor.

**JUDGE:**
You may step down, Mr. Fisk. Mr. Prosecutor, you may now make your closing statements.

**PROSECUTOR:**
Thank you, your Honor.

Ladies and Gentleman of the jury. All trials must operate within a finite time. Today the Prosecution has done its best to bring you details of the war crimes that Mr. Ehlers has made himself an accomplice to because of his support of 1.) an illegal war, and 2.) the means of fighting this war regardless of humanitarian consequences.

I remind you that Saddam Hussein is not on trial here today. Let it be understood that the Prosecution in no way supports his series of crimes against humanity and we call and support a similar tribunal that will prosecute him and his supporters for actions before and during the war.

What is important to acknowledge is that the means of fighting this war are in question. The means of going against the Security Council is a clear violation of International Law. Congressman Vern Ehlers' record shows he voted for the use of military action against Iraq. His record clearly demonstrates his complicity in this unlawful act of aggression. And it has also been pointed out that Mr. Ehlers is in violation of the US Constitution, a document that he has sworn to uphold.

It may be said that if Mr. Ehlers is guilty than so is half of Congress. I do not argue with that point. There are clear consequences to the action to our proceedings today. There will be reverberations. Others will be held accountable. Even General Tommy Franks is having a complaint filed against
him by Iraqi civilians for war crimes. This is not being made up, ladies and gentleman. This has been reported by many major newspapers, including the Washington Times.

Today you are being asked to vote on the guilt or innocence of one man, Congressman Vern Ehlers. A vote of guilty means that you realize that Mr. Ehlers means of supporting the war is in violation of International and Constitutional Law. A vote of guilty also acknowledges that Mr. Ehlers is complicit in crimes against humanity.

Finally, in your decision either for or against Mr. Ehlers every one of you, every one of us, must take into consideration our own complicity. Are we to be one of the group that refuses to see the facts for what they are, or do we rather push to be part of that “informed, articulate general public” that Professor Herold has remarked on?

The Bailiff is passing out paper on which you will write “guilty” or “not guilty” as charged. As you hold the pencil above the page ask yourself to what extent is a citizen responsible for his or her own actions? “Does a citizen’s conformity with a prevailing social or political code of behavior absolve… [her] of individual responsibility? If… [a citizen’s] government, purporting to act for the good of the whole society, enforces a code that conflicts with his own convictions, should he resist – and when – and how?” These questions were raised 50 years ago at the Nuremberg Trials. Here, today, they are of vital importance to ask again.

Thank you.

The PROSECUTOR sits. The BAILIFF collects the votes and counts them. He writes a decision on a piece of paper and hands it to the COURT STENOGRAPHER that then hands it to the JUDGE. The JUDGE opens and reads.

JUDGE:
The jury finds the Defendant... guilty, as charged

-END-
Geneva Brown is a fictional character. She refers to the US Constitution (Article VI, Clause 2), the UN Charter (Articles 41, 42, and 51), and the Nuremberg Tribunal Number 82 (Principle IV).

The United States Constitution is available for review at: www.house.gov/Constitution/Constitution.htm

The United Nations Charter is available for review at: www.un.org/Overview/Charter/contents.htm

Nuremberg Tribunal Number 82 is available for review at: www.deoxy.org/wc/wc-nurem.htm

Information pertaining to the Iraq Body Count Project can be found at www.iraqbodycount.org. This site also has documentation of comments by Professor Marc Herold.

Cathy Breens statements used in the script can be read in full at: www.commondreams.org/views03/0326-02.htm

Jonathan Steele’s quotes are from his article “Bombs Silent, But the Children Still Suffer” printed in The Guardian; April 18, 2003. It can be accessed at: www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=15&ItemID=3483

Steve Goose’s comments regarding cluster bombs are found in an article by Thomas Frank entitled “Grisly Results Of U.S. Cluster Bombs.” The article was written for Newsday.com on April 15, 2003. It can be viewed at: www.newsday.com/news/nationworld/iraq/ny-woclus0415.story

The quote from the CentCom spokeswoman is also from the Newsday article available at the link above.

The technical information pertaining to cluster bombs of the type BLU97 is in a report from Amnesty International that pertains to International Law and casualties in Iraq. It can be read at: http://electroniciraq.net/news/597.shtml

For taping the character of Mr. Goose was omitted and the cluster bomb information was presented in the form of a letter.
Robert Fisk’s comments appeared in his article “Amid Jubilation A Child Lies In Agony” written for The Independent; April 8, 2003. It can be read at: www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=15&ItemID=3415

The Prosecutor’s closing argument refers to a suit being compiled against U.S. General Tommy Franks. An initial article was written by Jeffrey T. Kuhner for the Washington Times; April 28, 2003. It can be read at: www.commondreams.org/headlines03/0428-06.htm

The Prosecutor also uses a set of questions referring to the Nuremberg Trial. The questions appear on the back cover of The Investigation, a play constructed from the Nuremberg Trial transcripts by Peter Weiss and published by Atheneum in 1966.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY COMMITTED IN IRAQ BY US/UK FORCES

WEBSITES

Amid Jubilation A Child Lies in Agony
http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=15&ItemID=3415

Amnesty International Report on Civilian Deaths
http://electroniciraq.net/news/597.shtml

At least 10 Dead as US Soldiers Fire on School Protest
http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/story.jsp?story=401718

At least 10 killed in Mosul shooting, US troops blamed
http://www.spacewar.com/2003/030415124341.5yrh2mps.html

Bombs Silent, But the Children Still Suffer
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‘I Saw the Heads of my Two Little Girls Come Off’

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Killing a Child: ‘I did what I had to do’

The Killings at Fallujah
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Missile Strike Shatters a House, and a Family

Wailing Children, the Wounded, the Dead
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Iraq


International Law


CONTACT INFORMATION

The People’s Alliance for Justice and Change can be reached via email at info@mediamouse.org

Additional information on our ongoing campaign to hold Representative Vern Ehlers accountable for crimes against humanity can be found online at www.mediamouse.org/ehlers.shtml

For alternative viewpoints and news on the war on Iraq and the ongoing occupation, visit the People’s Alliance Daily News Bulletin at www.mediamouse.org/pab/

If you would like a copy of the televised production of The Trial of Vern Ehlers, please write to info@mediamouse.org

If you would like to get involved in local organizing around anti-war and other issues, please send an email to peoplesalliance-subscribe@grcmc.org in order to subscribe to the weekly email list of upcoming events sent out by the People’s Alliance for Justice and Change.