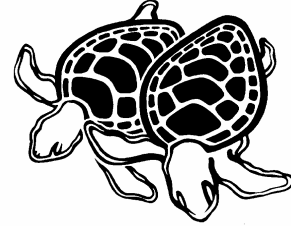


# The Environment Centre N.T. Inc

GPO Box 2120 Darwin NT 0801 98 Wood St, Darwin NT 0800  
Telephone: (08) 8981 1984 Facsimile: (08) 8941 0387  
ecnt@octa4.net.au http://www.ecnt.org



Monday 21 November 2005

Mr George Bush  
President of the United States of America  
c/o- U.S. Embassy, Canberra  
Australia  
By email: [info@usembassy-australia.state.gov](mailto:info@usembassy-australia.state.gov)

Dear Mr Bush

As you may be aware, representatives of your administration and the Howard government have recently agreed to allow US B52, B1 and Stealth bombers to fly over Australia and drop live bombs on an area of savanna woodland near the town of Katherine in the Northern Territory.

Your defense officials may not be aware – and may not have been told - that this bombing site is not in some remote, people-free region, but is in fact surrounded by working cattle stations, national parks, Aboriginal lands and communities, and popular fishing destinations. It is also not far from a site designated by the Howard government as a possible radioactive waste dump.

As a strong supporter of democracy you need to be aware also that no consultation with the Northern Territory community was entered into by the Australian (or US) government in making this announcement.

Given the frequency with which US bombers have accidents and mistakenly drop bombs on people and places that were not intended as targets, we are very concerned that this operation places people and sensitive environments at risk. This risk would be compounded if the bombers were to be dropping bombs containing depleted uranium or other long-lived toxic materials. Can you please inform us as to what types of bombs would be dropped if the bombing activity proceeded?

We know the US would never allow a foreign power, even a supposedly friendly one, to fly bombers over the US and drop live bombs on your country, placing your citizens at risk.

**ECNT is a member of the IUCN World Conservation Union**  
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We apologise on behalf of the Australian government and Senator Robert Hill for not taking a similar position in relation to the territorial integrity of Australia and the safety of Australian citizens. We urge you not to take advantage of their weakness and lack of principle.

We respectfully ask you to withdraw this proposed bombing operation and convey your change of policy to the Australian government. No doubt Mr Howard and Defence Minister Robert Hill will be only too pleased to comply with this new US policy of not bombing Australia and putting at risk the people and environment of the Northern Territory.

Yours faithfully

*Peter Robertson*

Peter Robertson  
Coordinator

cc John Howard; Robert Hill