

Banning Cluster Bombs

WHEREAS the use of cluster bombs is a military strategy directly targeting civilian populations, particularly small children, contravening the Third Article of the Geneva Conventions;

WHEREAS one sort of cluster bomb, the CBU (cluster bomb unit) 26, widely used by the United States in Laos, is an anti-personnel fragmentation bomb consisting of a large bombshell holding 670 tennis ball-sized bomblets, each of which contains 300 metal fragments. If all bomblets detonate, some 200,000 steel fragments will be propelled over an area the size of several football fields, creating a deadly killing zone. B1 bombers can carry enough cluster bombs to turn an area the size of 350 football fields into a killing zone;

WHEREAS because cluster bombs have a high dud rate, estimated to be 10 to 30 percent, unexploded cluster bombs lie on the ground becoming, in actuality, super landmines which can explode at the slightest touch. These "duds" are a serious, long-lasting threat to civilians, soldiers, peacekeepers and bomb clearance experts. Children, who are attracted to the bomblets' bright colors and interesting shapes, are especially vulnerable and represent a high percentage of victims;

WHEREAS one hundred and eleven nations belonging to the civilized world have signed on to a treaty banning cluster bombs because of these bombs' harmful effects upon civilian populations; and

WHEREAS the United States has refused to ratify this treaty;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington State Democratic Party shall work to bring about the United States' participation in banning cluster bombs and to use that power to bring about worldwide banning of cluster bombs; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Washington State Democratic Party distribute copies of this resolution to all Democratic members of the Washington State Congressional delegation and Democratic Presidential Candidates Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

Submitted by the King County Democrats to the Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its June 14 convention in Spokane. (Date Submitted 4/21/2008)

The Resolutions Committee "AMENDED THIS RESOLUTION AND RECOMMENDED A PASS" at its May 31, 2008 meeting in Ellensburg.

The Washington State Democratic Convention "PASSED" this resolution at its June 14, 2008 meeting in Spokane.