

Bad Bush Go

That the US stay!

It was a relief to discover the US government has realised that the war in Iraq is not over, and that US soldiers have returned to the offensive. What an impossible situation to stand guard over what is not theirs while being plucked off by fedayeen and jeered by Iraqi rabble and Islamic clergy. That either of these latter would have dared to raise their voices while Saddam Hussein was still in power! How these same soldiers must anguish over world news portraying their government as a mountebank of international diplomacy and domestic national interests -- news that rings so deplorably true, many US soldiers would sooner hide behind their flag in embarrassment, than wave it in honour of their president and nation. The drums of foreign liberation and homeland security have once again been pierced by the blaring bugles of presidential deceit, and it is time that the Bush administration step down.

That US soldiers can once again stand proud, and share their flag with those whom they sought to liberate from the horrors of Saddam Hussein and his Baathist thugs!

That President Bush would suddenly awake from his daily prayer, announce that he will not seek re-election, and hand the White House over to a new presidential team in 2005!

No longer would USAmericans have to listen to rumours of imminent resignation of key staff. No longer would USAmericans be troubled by escalating foreign misgivings toward their flag, their nation, and their own security. No longer would USAmericans have to watch as their president preaches about the benefits of free trade, the rule of law, and government transparency overseas, only to return home and sign into law agricultural subsidies that spell doom for free traders the world over. No longer would USAmericans have to read about US support for foreign leaders, who deny their own citizens free speech and non-violent political dissent. No longer would USAmericans have to hide in shame as their president makes a mockery of transparent government through legal subterfuge, feigned security needs, and relentless war propaganda.

No, President Bush need not apologise for having misled USAmerican and world opinion; nor would he have to face a humiliating defeat in the next presidential election. One could even hope that Osama bin Laden is captured before the president leaves office, so that USAmerica might have something to thank him for. Being President is not an easy task for anyone, and we should be thankful that USAmericans volunteer and participate in presidential elections. Notwithstanding, a new president with a new team would mean a better world for everyone. A new government could move forward without having to look behind for new excuses to cover up old mistakes and could better concentrate on correcting them.

The United States no more needed to bring down Saddam Hussein in

Iraq for its own security than Osama bin Laden needed to destroy the World Trade Towers to secure the future of the Islamic faith. The United States' massive display of power in Bagdad was to show that the war on terror, if it must continue in its present form, will continue on Arab, or other primarily Islamic turf, rather than US soil. It was meant to intimidate the governments of other Islamic states -- not to make safe the future of oppressed Iraqis.

Islamic terrorists are not limited to a few rogue Arab states, however. Their rank and file are recruited in Rabat, Cairo, Riyadh, Islamabad, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Manila, and just about any other major world city including New York, Moscow, Paris, London, Madrid, and Berlin. Islam is a world religion under siege, and its faithful will not stand idle, as they are driven to the wall by US acrimony and belligerence.

Terrorism is nurtured in the soil of poverty, ignorance, and despair by the hypocrisy, greed, rivalry, and arrogance of those who would rather exploit than foster, manage than lead, and oppress than enlighten. Terrorism is the natural release of built-up human capacitance brought about by these blatant contradictions and those who are caught between them. It can only be removed by reducing the degree of contradiction -- not increasing its charge. The current Bush administration is aggravating these contradictions; it is not alleviating them.

Bringing down the Taliban and Iraqi Baathists from their thrones of power were pretty smooth moves. Rebuilding these fallen pavilions of political oppression as bulwarks of democratic freedom has proven far more daunting; keeping the peace in the absence of a civil society is obviously more difficult than blowing up infrastructure and routing poorly equipped enemies. Though the Bush administration appears committed, little progress has taken place in Afghanistan. Already the US desire to remain in Iraq is under debate and waning, and the recent Israelo-palestinian truce appears as fragile as ever. In Kandahar the Taliban are killing muslim clerics who support democracy, and the infighting among leaders of Afghanistan's many autonomous political regions -- the trouble that gave rise to the Taliban -- continues. In Iraq the hatred for the US presence is far beyond what most imagined for the post war period, and Israeli government intransigence appears as strong as ever.

After Saddam's statue was pulled down, the average Iraqi citizen was forced to look helplessly on, while his own countrymen pillaged his country's national treasures, pride, and infrastructure on world television. Rather than acting quickly to end the chaos Donald Rumsfeld, President Bush's Defense Secretary, sought to explain it away as the natural result of a power vacuum -- a vacuum that could have easily been filled, if both he and the president had been more concerned about the safety of average Iraqi citizens and their national heritage,

than holding down defense spending, while the national budget went into a tailspin as the result of congressional tax deductions encouraged and approved by the president.

In just two years the US budget has gone from a surplus of 334 billion US dollars to a deficit of 455 billion. Next year the deficit is expected to rise to 475 billion. This 800 billion dollar swing from a positive to negative annual surplus in just three years is a national tragedy of inordinate proportion. Remarkably only a quarter of this amount is attributable to President Bush's war on terror -- including both the Iraqi and Afghani conflicts, as well as the newly created Office of Homeland Security. The remaining 75 percent, no matter how it is allotted, classified, or apportioned, is attributable to a poorly managed economy. If having mortgaged the future of US American children to stoke the greed of US America's wealthiest individuals were not bad enough, US America's over consumption of our world's scarce resources has never been higher and is likely to get worse. In May of this year the United States registered its third largest monthly trade deficit on record -- 42 billion US dollars. If sustained, the US will owe somewhat less than an additional one half trillion US dollars by the end of the year. The US spends somewhat under 5 billion per month on military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; these expenditures together accounted for only a tenth of the United States' May trade deficit; the rest was over consumption.

During the past two years the number of travel alerts posted by the US State Department have exploded, and US citizens are shunning those areas where US overseas travel and investment could best alleviate the conditions that nurture organised world terrorism. A slow growing economy already deep in debt does not bode well for US America's future, and there are plenty of other safe places in the world ripe for investment that are not targets of Islamic terrorist aggression. That US America not fool itself into believing that it is the only *paradise on earth*. The price of freedom is far higher than the cost of war waged in others' backyards. Few people overseas view US America's many single parent homes with favour, and US American crime rates are the envy of many fewer. What US America has that others want are its technology and capital -- not its people, racially torn society, and individual freedoms run amok.

During the Cold War the United States never supported the same system it was trying to defeat the way it supports oppressive Arab, Israeli, and non-Arab Islamic governments today. Under Ronald Reagan extravagant federal spending habits were justified by a golden opportunity to bring down the Iron Curtain and an obvious means to finance its removal -- namely, a burgeoning Japanese economy and Japanese banks to absorb new US American bond issues. Japan's bubble disappeared more than a decade ago, and most Japanese banks are still in the red. From where will the capital come this time around? Western Europe is turned inward

and toward the east, and China is still 90 percent underdeveloped.

The US government has begun calling on the rest of the world to provide a protective cosmetic front to protect its own troops, rather than pushing through on its own. What the United States needs is a strong democratic Arab friend, neither a UN basket case to which it can point years down the road as still another UN failure, nor another US puppet of democratic hypocrisy. Certainly the Iraqi people would embrace the United States, if only the US government and the USAmerican people would show the stamina required to bridge the cultural, racial, religious, linguistic, and political divide that stands between them.

Alas, there are plenty of good USAmericans that can replace the current president, if USAmerica would only stand behind them for something other than growing imperial chauvinism. Make USAmerica a model at home worth emulating abroad, and the world will follow. There will be no need to fear the Islamic world, because it will discover in USAmerica much of what it seeks at home, but cannot find. It will learn from the United States -- not because it is told, but because it truly wants to be taught.

This time we must clean up the havoc that President Bush has wrought, must there be a next time, as well?

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