

**NOT EVEN REAL**

The Defense Intelligence Agency has primary responsibility for questioning of Iraqi prisoners. It also has the responsibility for questioning your friends, neighbors, employers, clergy and teachers, should you have, or request for, or are ordered into, a position of responsibility in the Defense Dept. or associated agencies.

Inevitably, the DIA agent asks the question of your acquaintance: "Do you know of communists at the [nearest] university?"

As an instructor of students going into defense agencies, I have been asked numerous times by DIA agents, "Do you know of communists at [nearest] university?" Once, in particular, my department had an exchange program with Communist China, sponsored by the U.S. State Department, bringing scientists to the U.S. in exchange for American scientists going to Communist China. I had to say, "Yes," and then explained where they were from.

I was corrected by my DIA interviewer. "No, no, I mean 'real' communists!" If a communist from the largest communist country in the world is not a "real" communist in the eyes of the DIA, who the heck is a real communist? It must have showed on my face.

"I mean, 'American' Communists!" my interviewer enlightened me.

Until I saw pictures of the Iraqi prisoners, I did not understand what the DIA investigator was talking about. If you are not an "American," you are not "real" in the eyes of the DIA.

*Prof. Paul Engelking  
Lowell*

**NATURAL DISASTER**

Last night on OPB, I heard one commentator say in regard to the moral blight that the recent Iraqi prisoner abuse brings to the U.S., "It's not in our nature; it's not in our history." Umm ... excuse me! Not in our nature? Not in our history? What about how this country was taken from Native Americans who'd lived here for thousands of years? What about slavery and how we've treated African Americans? What about the Japanese internment camps? What about how we treated the Chinese who built our railways? What about the boat people we turned away? Not in our nature? *Please!*

*Bobbie Ingersoll  
Eugene*

**ALL OVER AGAIN**

The Cold War was ultimately won, not by armies marching, but by triumphant democratic ideals that proved superior to every competing ideology. Democracy, the rights of men and women, and the power of free markets are proving themselves around the world.

We see it in Latin America, Asia, parts of Africa and wherever else these principles have the opportunity to take root. In this new world, economic strength will be more relevant than military strength.

The new order will be defined by trade relations, by the flow of information, capital, technology, and goods, rather than by armies glaring across borders. Nations seeking power through military strength, the development of nuclear weapons, terrorism, or tyrannical governments are mining "fool's gold." They can never hope to match or challenge the military and economic power of

**TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN** BY SHANNON WHEELER



the free world, led by the U.S. Despondent regimes, and will come to realize it in due course when they find themselves left behind while free nations prosper and provide a better life for their people. One only has to look at China to see a nation slowly finding a place in the world, not through the strength of its vast military or Maoist philosophy, but through the release of the creative entrepreneurial power of the Chinese people.

Only Marxist Cuba and North Korea still

cling to old politics and ideologies, perhaps hoping for protection under the Endangered Species Act, but they cannot escape the tide of history, and I sincerely believe this challenging new era in the world holds out a promise of a bright new beginning.

*Tom Bush  
Eugene*

**NONVIOLENCE NEEDED**

The Eugene Middle East Peace Group

**KUMBAYA DAMMIT** BY DAN CAROL

**Bush's War**

So how can I not write about the mess in Iraq?

**W**here shall we begin? With ... beheadings? Or the newspaper headlines like "U.S. Strikes Mosque" that quickly follow? Yikes. This is *not* good.

We already have both sides saying openly – openly! – that "God's will" compels their cause. Brothers and sisters, I'm afraid we're looking at New Crusades material here. Welcome to a new chapter in a thousand year cycle of violence ... a history I sure don't know chapter and verse about without first a skim read of The Idiot's Guide to the Crusades. It all makes me want to cry – except I am too busy fighting my anger.

Those fools in the White House – that is exactly what they are, fools – have dropped a huge damn boulder in the pond of history. For what? Oil? A "surgical" chess experiment in geo-diplomacy (remember when they thought we'd just zip into Syria right after Iraq)? Fools! Bush and his fools and liars sat at their war table and Colin Powell bit his lip. They were fools and by the way we're still in Afghanistan – do you think they even think about that? Do the fools goddamn remember we are still in freakin' Afghanistan? Hello, is anyone home? Those poor kids over there deserve better.

So what next besides being angry? I reflect upon the smartest thing I have heard about what this election means, and I heard it months ago. It was attributed to George Soros and paraphrased, it goes like this: If America re-elects Bush, the world will come to see the war in Iraq not simply as Bush's War, but as America's War.

If healing is to begin at all, this chapter – Bush's War – must end. Beyond that, it isn't clear to me what we need to do. I am not a pacifist – and neither are the terrorists who hate us. If we leave, they still hate us. They'll still attack.

Bush and his fools disturbed a hornet's nest in Iraq we could have left alone. Now we'd better expect to get stung.

So I take exception with anyone on the left who wants to test Kerry on his future war stance via timelines and specifics, who stays mad at Kerry for his war vote for another day, or asserts they have "the answer" to the mess we are in. Brothers and sisters, nobody can read the water now. There's too much blood in it. In short, we need to lighten up on Kerry.

Duh, of course, he isn't the answer to our prayers; we're all past Clinton '92 puppy



love aren't we? As Arianna Huffington nicely puts it, "We've got to put out the fire before we start remodeling and fixing the house." Kerry is our firefighter. That's enough. Even if that's *all* we ever get from him.

It was tragic and stupid to invade Iraq, but I don't see a slam dunk strategy lying around. So smacking Kerry around for not having "an answer" to this unbelievable mess is just harsh. Yet that's what folks are starting to do. Robert Scheer, writing for Alternet, recently offered this:

"Today, however, Kerry seems unable to admit that the war he voted to authorize in Iraq has been such a disaster, arguing only that we must 'stay the course.' To have a real choice in this election, we need to hear the voice of that young Navy hero who once warned us that murderous meddling in other countries' affairs will never win the hearts and minds of the people."

Do we really need to hear that voice before the election? I don't. I just need a little bit of vision, a dash of hope and some smart-sounding ideas that point us in the right direction for building global tolerance in an era of rising hatred – not a just-add-water solution that doesn't exist.

Is a call for a smarter war on terrorism and finishing the job in Afghanistan good enough? Is a JFK-style call upon the American can-do spirit for a Manhattan/Apollo-style project to reduce U.S. oil dependence and create new U.S. jobs enough? Well, it is for me – and I'd wager, the average voter we need to win over.

**S**hort of troop withdrawals, can progressive forces get a commitment from Kerry for specific and massive investments in girls' education in Afghanistan? Can we add a healthy dash of smart Kucinich policies that would put the UN – and not Halliburton – in charge of Iraqi assets and contracts? Good stuff. We should definitely petition Kerry to take these steps.

But if he doesn't inch our way, don't get mad at him. Get even later. Whatever disappoints, just mark it down on that progressive "to-do list" we'll be working on starting Nov. 3, come rain or shine. But the day before, we need to get it right – or the world will think this was America's War.

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