Itâ€™s About Being Your Own Accountability

Description

Bear with me for a few paragraphs, for I need to lay a foundation for my point, before I dive it.

Iâ€™ll admit, the public discourse is wearing me out. Quite honestly, it sickens me to listen to talking head after talking head, or products of the American public education system of the last two decades respond to serious questions with what their opinion is. I donâ€™t want an opinion when thereâ€™s truth to be had. The public educational system, however, has convinced people they need to respond to their feelings.

Hence, idiotic polls by agencies like CBS with this report as the outcome: â€œPoll: A Split On Confronting Terrorismâ€•. About a year ago, i spent some valuable time blogging about the difference between truth and an opinion. Itâ€™s in the junior blog somewhere, and it applies here, but I donâ€™t have the motivation to dig it up just now.

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Of course there will be differences of opinions in how to execute a war fighting strategy and, in lower levels, tactics of same will be addressed.

Peopel with high school educations feel empowered to call into talk shows and tell people who spend a better part of their waking hours studying the issues, and try to tell the host that the President is killing innocent people, he knew there were no WMD and he sent popel there anyway.

Give.me.a.break. I didnâ€™t have my â€œawakeningâ€• until the taxpayers sent me to 9 months of Command and Staff college. Not to say everyone needs an MA to speak on the topic, but it would be nice if they bothered to pull the iPod ear pieces out of their ears during the waking hours and took some time at the public library or local meag bookstore, doing some reading on the topic, before pretending they know whatâ€™s going on. I wish theyâ€™d do the wise thing and recuse themselves, much as is done in the legal system, if you are in a position to bias the outcome because of what you do/do not know.

My evidence is shown here, from the CBS article:

> THE U.S. WILL BE SAFER FROM TERRORISM IF ITÃ¢â‚¬Â¦
>
> Confronts terror groups and states in the Mideast: 47%
> Stays out of other countriesâ€™ affairs in Mideast: 45%

Just what, pray tell, do these valient individuals base their response on?

Which brings me to another point of ranting: Why canâ€™t our leaders do it, if the other leaders are (or the reverse case)? A few days ago, the President mentioned, to a group at a meeting that he wondered if the US was going to have a 3rd awakening. This drew comments from the press, and they feigned fear of a â€œtheocraticâ€• government. Frst off, people need to chill out. Second off: Presidents of Iran

and Venezuela stood before the world and prayed, one in the style of his Catholic heritage, the other in the Islamic faith. Not a peep out of the press, in fact, it looks like it was purposely ignored, so the press could always claim â€œplausible deniabilityâ€• for the time being.

Now, get this:

> IN TREATMENT OF POWs, THE U.S. SHOULDÃ¢â‚¬Â¦
>
> Follow international agreements: 63%
> Do what it thinks right, regardless of what other nations think: 32%

News flash: We are treating â€œPOWsâ€• (defined therein in the Geneva Coventions as military members of a nation). I wonder if they would choke in horror if they knew that illegal combatants (those who are not wearing said uniforms while engaging in combat) are subject to summary execution? I doubt it would happen, but the old line : â€œBe careful what you wish for comes to mind.â€• If DoD directed firing squads, the same 63% would howl, but it would only be a case of answering an importatnt question from their place of ignoranceâ€¦Iâ€™m glad we have a man at the helm with more compassion and sense than to give them what they ask for, for they donâ€™t know what it is.

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As far as the part about worrying about what others think, it seems to be, in my experience and opinion, that those who got me to â€œoutperformâ€• my self-imposed standards didnâ€™t get my love in several cases, until years later, when it became clear the value of their hard pressed teachings. Teachers, baseball, basketball and swim team coaches alike have had a place in my life in helping me achieve what was better, right and more successful. We didnâ€™t get to where we are as a nation because we copied the Euorpean ways an means of governance and social interaction for a reason: It had failed our forefathers. And, in my great admiration, they did what todayâ€™s protestors of our government should do when persecuted: Pack ther possesions you hold dear and go and build the country you define by your protestations. It should be easy to figure out: Just donâ€™t elect George Bush as your President and study him well, so you make sure whatever it is he does in a situation, you do the exact opposite, to remove any possible connection to the man you hate so much. Ohâ€¦in the stream of consciousness mode, this has great possibility for terrific satire potential, combined with analysis of what the most likely outcomes would be of no military, no oil, no greenhouse gas producing items, no aerosol powered deoderants, and only vegtables to eat, produced with the use of no pesticidesâ€¦but I digressâ€¦

Soâ€¦finally taking the long way around, the biggest bone I have to pick is those who act like they know what it is to be the final authority in matters of great gravity, the point of my title.

Take, for instance, President Clintonâ€™s Fox News interview. I began this post last week, but his response to the interview proves my point. At this point itâ€™s history, President Clinton. No matter what you think about it, it happened. His efforts to get Osama bin Laden, no matter how close he got, are now factually grounded by the fact that he did not. Thereâ€™s a saying, that goes something like this: â€œLifeâ€™s a â€¦â€• You know the restâ€¦

He was President, he didnâ€™t get OBL. OBL got the WTC, The Pentagon, and almost another major symbol of America, be it the White House or the Capitol. Yes, it was under the next president, but, sorry to say, weâ€™re all in this boat called America together.

For those who would chide me and say â€œWell, Bush hasnâ€™t found OBL!â€• Take a moment and look at the big picture and figure in the current straegic implications of going after OBL, with military forces, and not lawyers in the International Court system: OBL is out of play, dead or not, heâ€™s a mastermind, with the charisma to pull off major attacks together and he is marginalized. Better yet, he may be taking the dirt nap now, which is good news for the world as a whole.

In defense of President Clintonâ€™s terms in office, Right Thinking Girl had a post this month on â€œClinton is Not Responsible.â€• She takes a very good position, in my opinion, and I commented on it. The post made me consider the times I had been in situations where I was the final decision maker, and while the decisions never rose to the level of which I speak, they were important ones, and had consequences ranging from scrapped paint, the useless spending of possibly millions of taxpayers dollars, to possibly having to explain mangled and dead people as a result. It sobers you right up when you realize that no one is looking over your shoulder, and it sure had better focus you in your decision making. It did for me.

Right about the time I had found RTGâ€™s post, I had just wandered across a well written post by Instapunk titled â€œLuxury.â€• It discusses the luxury all of us do have, because we are not the president, then or now. Like I said, when no one is looking over your shoulder, itâ€™s an entirely different ball game. In the case of the sitting US Presidents since the Berlin Wall came down and the major purveyor of Communism was tossed on the scrap heap of history, the person sitting in the Oval Office is the person with the most power in the world. We are not. Cut them some slack, because we donâ€™t have a clue what it is to be them. All our postulations and sceanrio gaming are useless and a non-issue. Their decisions count for history, for us and the rest of the world, like it or not.

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Here are my comments from the post at RTG, for it tells a story of having been placed in a minute representation of what those well above my paygrade dealt with all the time:

In the aftermath of horrific things, the reality of the presented Ã¢â‚¬Å“signalsÃ¢â‚¬Â• then becomes clear, however, at the moment, it is not, for there is competing Ã¢â‚¬Å“noise,Ã¢â‚¬Â• some of which may also have merit, in the world of risk analysis.

I read the book of the Captain of the VINCENNES about the shoot down of the Iranian Airbus, and Capt Rodgers even said, as he watched the data extract tapes played in a shore based mockup of the AEGIS system, it was clear he made a bad call.

It took the tempering of the professional fire for him to see clearly, but he saw it in retrospect, not at the very moment when a decision to risk a $1B asset, with about 450 sailors, and the honor of the US as a nation, or pre-empt (as was allowed by rules of engagement of the theater) with the firing of mach 2.5 SM-1 missiles to make the threat go away, had to be made. Sadly, it also took the lives of the passengers him and his crew to see the truth. It is a lesson to those who have to make decisions of a life and death nature â€“ be wise and gain experience, for it is imperative that you make the call correctly in that brief moment of time.

The many hundreds of people who were involved in the ramp up to the attacks of 9/11/2001, who did not see them clearly, all did their best to make sense of the many bits of intell, buried within the haystack of other bits of intell, but as you say, they did not make it happen, 19 men in airplanes made a conscious decision to carry it out.

We regularly disregard the pleas of criminals who want to blame their anti-social to murderous behavior on their upbringing, knowing the act they carried out was, in fact, a personal choice. Why doesnÃ¢â‚¬â„¢t that apply in this larger discussion on those who attacked us 5 years and a day ago? They and their leaders also had the opportunity to engage us in discussions, as many tell us we are supposed to make the effort to do. They chose to stike first and many times later.

I found a very interesting post a few minutes ago that merits reading, for it discusses that not a one of us had the awesome responsibility of President Bush that day 5 years ago, the man, whether you voted for him or not, was who was sitting in the seat and required to make decisions. He did not have the luxury of avoiding the issue, as all of us did and do to this day, as the debate on who did what to who and how IÃ¢â‚¬â„¢d have done it differently takes center stage.

I know the feeling of being placed in charge of a ship, when the Captain was on leave. We were not at sea, but decisions were still there to be made. I considered my actions more carefully, for in those moments, I had the final sayÃ¢â‚¬Â¦.no one to back me up, nor to counsel me. I celarly reacall it was a very different feeling, which I could not appreciate until such a moment came along. I considered my words even more carefully the night he went to bed and told me to practice as the CO during an exercise throughout the night, for I needed the opportunity to see what is was like, in the event I had to take over. Maneuvering ships in close quarters on a moonless night, protecting the logistics ship is a tricky business, moreso when you are exercising weapons as part of your duties. No room for mistakes, but at least all the Ã¢â‚¬Å“firingsÃ¢â‚¬Â• were simulated. I chose my words carefully, yet made sure the decisions were handled with the timeliness they demanded. It wore me out, yet exilerated me at the same time.

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Here is a post by Instapunk titled Ã¢â‚¬Å“Luxury.Ã¢â‚¬Â• Read it and consider carefully how we all have been spared the weight of the world upon our shoulders, and also those things we have muttered/typed/debated or just thought about how it should have been doneÃ¢â‚¬Â¦.

My bottom line opinion? Itâ€™s tough at the top, and when there, things must be decided upon. You can cry about it all you want, but when the buck stops in your lap by the very nature of your position description, live up to it. For those who have never been there, have some grace for those who are, or have been.

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