Rough Times Demand Tough Men

Description

Consensus? Youâ€™ve got to be kidding me. Maybe I can give John Gruden a call and offer my services, and those of several of my friends, who think his record this season sucks, so we can have a commission to tell him how to do it â€œin a different direction.â€•

Oh, yeah, I was tall and skinny. I never played football, but I did swim, play baseball and basketball. Much like the Baker Commission, I complee people to look upon me as qualified to discuss detailed NFL lavel football.

And, like a snowballâ€™s chances in hell, Iâ€™m sure Iâ€™ll get a call back from ~~my buddy~~ Johnâ€¦..

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I have come to pretty much emlininate profanity from my discussions, but this entire set of current events has me toying with dusting off the mental bookshelf that holds some more of the more choice sayings I learned in many years as a sailorâ€¦.

Pardon me, but times like these demand those people, who are so unpolished in polite company during peacetime that they are excluded, passed over and shuffled off to assignments far from where they can embarass the â€œchosen ones,â€• who will one day be admirals and generals. I had a few friends like this during my service time. Brutally effective as leaders in the simulated combat conditions we could muster, and constantly considering the options/scenarios for war at sea. They stayed near the waterfront when not on sea duty, in jobs to helpp the fleet get better, and turned their noses up at Pentagon assignments. They knew the profession, on itâ€™s worst day, would require every bit of sea going and combat/damage control/engineering experience they could immerse themselves in, and thatâ€™s what they did, to the detriment of their careers.

One man, a mentor to me, who could tell you when you screwed up and make sure you understood the newest tactics, had played many sports, including football and baseball, and it was always with a go for broke, victory if the goal attitude. He carried that attitude into everything he did. He made O-4. He was shuttled off to the side. He retired and, having been noticed by a reservist who drilled with them, was sought after for that very spirit, and now he does in the business world what his senior officers thought was too much out of the question.

Look at the changes of command at the outset of WWII? Those who had grown up and comfortable in the extended peacetime were tossed out to the curb and the agressive, loud, weâ€™re here to kill the enemy and break things crowd was installed. Yep, you need those guys when the light is dim and the casualties are high, caused by the lack of understanding of those who got you there in the first place. But then, after the conflict, the war fighters are, once more, pushed aside and the politicians rise again.

One man I worked for was the most brilliant tactician, in both exercise, and also in a real world multi-month operation, but his â€œinterpersonal skillsâ€• left just about everything to be desired. Iâ€™d go to war with him in a heartbeat, but count me out if he need administrative support. Itâ€™s men like this that carry the day in the times of challenge, not those who refuse to get their hands dirty in

understanding our enemy, much less history.

Take your stinking â€œconsensusâ€• and stuff it. Get me a hard nosed, hard driven, focused person, who will lead and make the hard decisions, knowing full well the gravity of the situation. Side Note: Dr. Gates sure isnâ€™t striking me as one of these guys, no matter how many Aggies had has run with and talked to. Being a friend is one skill set, being a leader is another altogether. You can be both, but the leader aspects need to be exercised first.

We donâ€™t need smooth and polished, with the right color tie, and a manicured metrosexual type running the show right now. We most certainly donâ€™t need unelected people to demand the President take orders from them.

We need Bucks and Bills to be put in place, with orders to â€œretake the Falklandsâ€• type direction from the Commander-in-Chief. Along the way, the rules of armed conflict and rules of engagement will be followed, because those seemingly troglodytes are the consumate professionals. But if they need an ROE changed, theyâ€™ll be stating their case.

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Better yet, men like Bill and Buck would come home victorious, with a simple request: â€œWhat next?â€•

Update 12/11/2006: Looks like Rick Santorum and I are of one mindâ€¦

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