

The Iraq Litmus Test

With the Iraqi election looming, the predictable violence by anti-democratic forces inside that chaotic country is causing angst among many loyal Americans. On the one hand, most of us want the USA to prevail in Iraq; to succeed in seeding democracy there. On the other, it is tough to watch young Americans get killed on a daily basis.

Opposition to the war in Iraq should, of course, be respected. But that opposition has to be responsible in order to deserve respect. Let's look at two examples.

First, former Presidential candidate George McGovern, an ardent anti-Vietnam War opponent, is continuing his dovish philosophy. Writing in The New York Times, McGovern states, "Once we left Vietnam and quit bombing its people, they became friends and trading partners. Iraq has been nestled along the Tigris and Euphrates for 6,000 years. It will be there 6,000 more, whether we stay or leave..."

With all due respect, Senator McGovern's view is naive at best, dangerous at worst. He conveniently forgets that, according to an analysis by The Los Angeles Times, more than 900,000 South Vietnamese were sent to concentration camps after the North Vietnamese violated the U.S. negotiated peace treaty and overran the South in 1975. McGovern also fails to mention that communists in neighboring Cambodia slaughtered two million human beings after the USA withdrew its forces from Vietnam. Trading partners indeed.

From the very beginning, Senator McGovern and many other Americans played down the evil that is communist totalitarianism, just as many anti-Iraq war people are diminishing the evil of the Saddam loyalists and Zarqawi terrorists inside Iraq today.

It is true that fighting evil in Iraq may not be feasible. To

be successful in any war, you must choose your battles wisely. But to actually think the North Vietnamese and Iraqi “insurgents” are some of kind of reasonable opposition is nuts.

Which brings us to the second example of war dissent, those Americans who actually want the USA to lose in Iraq. They are out there, and they are shameless.

On December 17th, I interviewed Professor Jeffrey Stone who teaches law at the University of Chicago on my television program. The topic was whether one could be a loyal American and want to see the USA defeated militarily in Iraq. Stone said yes:

O'Reilly: “I want to make sure you want to stand by your statement, that you can be a loyal American rooting for your country to lose militarily in Iraq. Do you stand by that?”

Stone: “I stand by that. One can be a loyal American and still root against the country.”

Stone went on to say that wanting the USA to lose in Iraq could save lives in the long run. I said that any military loss would have to mean more casualties for the U.S. military, which is absolutely true. You don't lose militarily without taking casualties, so how could any loyal American want that to happen?

Subsequently, Professor Stone wrote an op-ed in The Chicago Tribune accusing me of, among other things, spewing “ugly invective” and “inflaming my audience.”

Well, here's some more gas for the fire. Believing that the Iraq War is wrong is legitimate dissent, and you might even be right—this may be an unwinnable situation. But feeling any kind of joy or satisfaction when you hear of victories by the “insurgents” means you have crossed the line from dissent into

disloyalty.

Rationalizations walk. If you are rooting for the insurgents, you are one.

War Party

You don't have to be a soothsayer to figure out that in 2005 two stories will continue to bedevil America: the war in Iraq and the culture war raging throughout the USA.

On the Iraq front, every American should be hoping that democracy will take root and that terrorism will be defeated in that chaotic country. If you are not hoping that, there is something very wrong in your outlook. It is simply disgraceful that so many in the free world cannot put aside political differences and help the USA defeat the brutal villains who are creating mayhem in a country that has suffered for decades.

The world is a screwed up place these days, and the terrorists know it. The United Nations has allowed thousands of innocents to be slaughtered in Darfur, and has turned its back on the suffering Iraqi people. The U.N. is impotent, and there's not enough Viagra in the world to reverse the condition.

Back home, we are coming off of a Christmas season where the federal holiday was bruised and battered by secular forces that see any Christian public display as an affront. Writing in Newsweek Magazine, the liberal columnist Anna Quindlen extended sympathy to those offended by Christmas: "It has little to do with separation of church and state or liberal politics and everything to do with the way the blunt cudgel of Christianity has been heedlessly used, the tyranny of the

majority.”

To Ms. Quindlen, I ask just one simple question: What tyranny? Last time I looked, every form of spirituality was alive and well in the USA. Am I missing some kind of Christian persecution going on? Is Jerry Falwell holding witch trials or something? What exactly is Anna Quindlen talking about?

The answer is she's blowing smoke. If you are offended by the image of a baby in a manger displayed in front of public building, you don't need reassurance by a PC columnist, you need therapy. The heroic Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Christian minister whom we will honor with a federal holiday on January 17th. Should we not see pictures of Dr. King displayed on public property?

The unbelievable nonsense surrounding the culture war is not going to end anytime soon. Billionaire secularist George Soros is pouring millions into the ACLU so it can sue your butt off if you step out of the politically correct progressive line. The defamation pipeline that extends from libelous liberal internet sites to carefully selected newspaper columnists to radio and television talk shows is designed to defame and destroy any high profile person who dares fight the progressives. Talk about a cudgel!

Of course, intimidation tactics also extend to the right, which often smears liberal politicians and commentators. The big difference, however, is that conservatives don't have access to the elite media, and progressives do.

Unfortunately, I am a warrior in this take-no-prisoners culture war, and it is a brutal occupation. As you may know, I have been slimed every which way for taking a traditionalist stand. When I defended public displays of Christmas, I was branded an anti-Semite. When I pointed out the deleterious effect “gangsta rap” has on children, I was called a racist. After arguing for border controls, I was labeled anti-

Hispanic. But the topper was an accusation that I “despised the Pope” because I criticized him for not being proactive enough during the priest scandals.

In the coming year, I expect things to get even worse. I truly hope I am wrong. In open defiance of the ACLU, I am praying things improve dramatically in Iraq and that the culture war dissolves into a discussion of the issues, rather than the carnival of slander we have today.

So Happy New Year America, and keep fighting the good fight. And pray the good guys win.

Sergeant Courageous

The first thing you notice about Army Sgt. Manuel Mendoza is his charismatic smile—Tom Cruise would be envious. The second thing you notice as he lies in his hospital bed is that half his body is missing, blown away by a roadside bomb that destroyed the Armored Personnel Carrier he was commanding in Sadr City, Iraq.

Mendoza’s life was altered forever last October 3rd. Within a week of his injury, he was under treatment at the Walter Reed military hospital in Washington, DC. Now he spends his days coming back. He undergoes rigorous physical therapy and exercise sessions designed to strengthen his upper body and his will. Sgt. Mendoza will soon be fitted with artificial legs and will need all the determination he can muster to regain his mobility.

I’m betting Mendoza will do it because he is a special guy. Born in Los Reyes, Mexico in 1981, he and his family legally entered the United States, four years later becoming resident

aliens. His father worked as a logger in Northern California and the little boy and his two siblings barely had a slice of the American dream. Mendoza's family struggled with dignity.

After graduating high school, Manuel Mendoza did what so many poor young men before him had done: he joined the military to secure educational benefits and discipline. Mendoza loved the army, quickly moving through the ranks. As a sergeant he was in charge of men years older. He told me he was proud to serve in Iraq, believing America is trying to bring freedom to that chaotic country.

Mendoza's wounds are terrible. He lost one leg all the way up to the hip, the other above the knee. Other men sink into depression when faced with that kind of catastrophe; Mendoza did not. He joked with the doctors and nurses. He encouraged his depressed mother, brother and little sister. He did not complain and did not feel sorry for himself, although he had a perfect right to do so. He did, however, ask his government for one favor. He asked to be made an American citizen.

And so in early December, Manuel Mendoza took the oath of citizenship. He is now a full-fledged American. But those who know Manuel also know he is much more than that. He is a symbol of what America is at its core: generous, optimistic and tough. Sgt. Mendoza's face should be on a stamp.

Often it is difficult for strangers to talk with wounded military people. You want them to see your respect and your sympathy, but not too much of the latter. You want them to talk about themselves, but you don't want to intrude on their suffering. You want to help them, but you really can't outside of the conversation, and perhaps a gift or some letters.

But talking with Sgt. Mendoza was easy. He vividly remembered his time in Iraq and was clearly proud of his service. He overwhelmed me with his positive outlook and hope for the future. Mendoza wants to attend college, marry, have children,

and have an exciting career.

And he will. I do not doubt this for a moment. For sitting and working out in Walter Reed hospital right now is a man every bit as heroic as any American icon. A man who was willing to sacrifice everything so that people half way around the world could have a shot at freedom. A man who is challenged every second of every day and meets the challenge with true grit and an uplifting smile.

On paper, Sgt. Manuel Mendoza may be one of the newest Americans. But in his heart and mind he has always been one. We fellow Americans salute you, sir.

Judges to Parents: Mind Your Own Business

Just in time for the holidays, the Washington State Supreme Court has ruled that children have an expectation of privacy at home and parents cannot eavesdrop on phone conversations.

The case involved a 17-year-old boy who told his 14-year-old girlfriend that he mugged an old lady, knocking her to the ground and stealing her purse. The mother of the girl, Carmen Dixon, was listening on another phone line and called police. Oliver Christensen was subsequently convicted of a felony and served nine months in prison before the judges overturned the conviction, saying: "The right to individual privacy holds fast even when the individuals are teenagers." The court also said the mother was acting as an agent for the police.

So now parents in Washington State cannot snoop around, even if a child is having a phone conversation with a mugger, dope

dealer, or child molester. Listen up, Seattle parents: You have no right to know.

The Associated Press, no bastion of conservative analysis, called the ruling “a victory for rebellious teenagers.”

Of course, the American Civil Liberties Union loves the ruling. ACLU Attorney Douglas Klunder filed a brief, saying “I don’t think the state should be in the position of encouraging parents to act surreptitiously and eavesdrop on their children.”

Of course not. Why would any parent want to know their 14-year-old daughter was chatting up a 17-year-old criminal? Parents shouldn’t be proactive in scrutinizing their children in this age of internet sex, drug dealers in school hallways, and alcohol-fueled sleepovers. Better to let the teens crash and burn instead of keeping a close eye (ear) on them, right, ACLU?

This is yet another intrusion by the American courts into the parent-child relationship. Traditionally, the state ceded all child raising responsibilities to parents except in cases of child abuse and neglect. But that is changing. Now your offspring have rights, and you’d better not violate them.

Interestingly, it is the totalitarian societies that historically have interfered with the parent-child relationship, something the ACLU might want to ponder. In Nazi Germany, parents were encouraged to turn their kids over to the “Hitler Youth.” In the Soviet Union, Red China and Cuba, children were taught in school to inform on parents who spoke disparagingly of the government. Breaking down parental influence makes it easier for the state to “persuade” young people to be loyal.

This case is yet another example of how American society is changing rapidly and drastically. Judges in liberal areas like western Washington State often have a social agenda, and make

rulings based upon their vision of a “just” society. No longer can we count on the courts to uphold traditional law, or even to respect the intent of the law. Now we are faced with rulings that come down to “improve” the law.

Today, American children are subjected to more temptations at an earlier age than ever before. Machines filled with harmful material dominate their lives. Instant messaging and cell phones have created opportunities for mischief only dreamed of in years past.

But don't you listen to any of that. The Washington State Supreme Court says you can't.

Take Your Christmas and Stuff It

“Christmas with the Kranks” is not only the name of a holiday movie this year, it is also a national trend. Once again, Christmas is under siege by the growing forces of secularism in America. Put these facts in your stocking:

- Federated Department Stores, which includes Macy's, has suggested that managers avoid displaying “Merry Christmas” banners and have ordered employees not to talk about it.
- In Denver, a church was banned from the “Festival of Lights” parade because it wanted a religious theme to its float.
- The Maplewood, New Jersey school board has banned all religious music from “holiday” concerts. (Would somebody please tell me exactly what holiday this is?)
- And New York City Mayor Bloomberg insists that the

lighted tree outside City Hall is not a Christmas tree, it's a "holiday tree." (What holiday, Mr. Mayor?)

Surveys show that more than 90% of Americans celebrate the Federal holiday of Christmas, signed into law by President Grant in 1870. Despite that overwhelming number, the tradition of Christmas in America continues to get hammered.

The anti-Christmas forces say it's all about diversity, protecting the sensitivities of those Americans who get offended by the mere mention of the birth of Jesus. Somehow, I haven't been able to locate any of these people—folks who find a baby in a manger so off-putting, it ruins their day.

So the diversity excuse is a bunch of bull. What's really going on here is a well-organized movement to wipe out any display of organized religion from the public arena.

The secular-progressive movement understands very well that it is organized religion, most specifically Christianity and Judaism, that stands in the way of gay marriage, partial birth abortion, legalized narcotics, euthanasia, and many other secular causes. If religion can be de-emphasized in the USA, a brave new progressive society can be achieved.

It has happened in Canada. Once a traditional religious country, Canada has become like Holland in its embrace of the secular movement. Some facts: In 1980, 79% of Canadians said that religion was important to the country. That number has now fallen to 61%, according to an Environics Focus Canada poll.

In 1971, less than one percent of the Canadian population reported having no religion whatsoever; now that number has risen to 16%.

The fall of religion in Canada has corresponded to a change in public policy. Unlike Americans, Canadians have legalized gay marriage and any kind of abortion. Also, the age of consent

for sex up north is just 14 years old. Can you imagine American adults being allowed to fool around with children that age? I can't.

Even drug legalization is close to being a reality, as the city of Vancouver is developing a heroin give-away policy, and pot has been largely decriminalized across the country.

The Canadian model is what progressive Americans are shooting for, and so religion must be dealt with. Since Christmas is the most demonstrative display of organized religion, the strategy of minimizing the birth of Jesus makes perfect sense.

I know this sounds kind of conspiratorial, but it really isn't. Most of those marginalizing Christmas have no idea about the big picture I've just presented. They simply think they're looking out for the minority of Americans who don't celebrate the birth of Christ.

But committed secularists in the media, in the courts, and in the education system know exactly what's going on. And now so do you. Merry Christmas!