

Subject: RE: Crist: A message on the results of the American election.

Date: Thu, 4 Nov 2004 17:02:42 -0800

From: "Ernie Crist" <ernie_crist@dnv.org>

To: "Brian Platts" <bplatts@shaw.ca>, "Elizabeth James" <cagebc@yahoo.com>

CC: <fonvca@fonvca.org>

Dear Liz and Brian:

Thank you for your response:

I hope you appreciate that it is not my intention to devote my time or effort commenting or analyzing international affairs from now on. However, this was an unusual event and my better judgment was overruled by emotions - I simply felt the urge to express my opinion.

Having said this, I sincerely hope that I did not at any time convey even in the slightest impression that I was ever a friend of Saddam. This SOB never had my vote I can assure you. However, claiming as I do of taking a scientific measure of social phenomena, I am obliged to analyze a situation as part of a process in the evolution of any given society and indeed the world.

As far as the term "LEFT" referred to by Brian is concerned, it is a term which is so flexible and widely encompassing that it is virtually meaningless. There is the INFANTILE LEFT as Lenin called it, there is the UTOPIAN LEFT, which requires no comment, there is the LUNATIC LEFT which people of sound mind will avoid like the plague and which is just as bad as the LUNATIC RIGHT and there is the SCIENTIFIC LEFT.

I have discarded all of these except the last one a very long time ago. Indeed, come to think of it, I never subscribed to any one of them other than the SCIENTIFIC variety as do all persons of education much like Sir John Kenneth Galbreith was obliged to do when he acknowledged the validity of Karl Marx in his analysis of modern Capitalism which he so expertly described in his NEW INDUSTRIAL STATE.

Ernie Crist

From: Brian Platts [<mailto:bplatts@shaw.ca>]

Sent: Thursday, November 04, 2004 3:30 PM

To: Elizabeth James

Cc: Ernie Crist; fonvca@fonvca.org

Subject: Re: Crist: A message on the results of the American election.

Dear Liz,

Don't be too hard on yourself for being "fooled" over the existence, or lack-there-of, WMDs in Iraq. Remember, even countries opposed to military action -- those paragons of moral virtue, France, Germany, and Russia (whose interest was to continue doing business with Saddam) -- also believed that Iraq had WMDs. Those countries have their own intelligence agencies and don't just accept everything the US says is fact. Hans Blix himself said that he just didn't know. We also don't know if any WMDs were spirited away to Syria or Iran. Certainly it is a fact that Saddam had and even used chemical weapons against his own people and mass graves have now been uncovered containing the bodies of a quarter million Iraqis murdered by Saddam, the "Butcher of Baghdad". I am not about to suggest that Bush hasn't been a divisive President, but the left must share, in my view, a great deal of the blame for the polarization of American politics. Those on the left are just a little too convinced of their own moral and intellectual superiority over Bush and the Republicans. We see this a lot in Canada, but we have no reason to act so smug when we reward our own corrupt leadership with re-election.

-Brian

Elizabeth James wrote:

4 November 2004

Dear Clr. Crist:

Thank you for your message.

I, too, have many concerns about the manner in which the U.S. election was conducted, and about its results. However, while I respect the thrust of your opinions, I do not entirely accept your "take" on the matter.

As you know, you and I differed on the matter of Bush II taking the U.S. into war against Iraq. In the narrowest of terms, you were right and I was wrong. More broadly though, I believed - still do - that Saddam Hussein was a butcher of his own people who needed to be dealt with most severely. I would have preferred that the method by which that was to be accomplished be more precisely targetted at him, not the entire country. I also admitted to being disturbed that Bush was determined to go ahead, even though the U.N. could not be persuaded to support his actions.

Where my judgment was most severely flawed was that, like many thousands of others, I truly did believe it likely that Hussein was harbouring WsMD. As a result, I accepted the decision of the U.S. Government that a wider war was the only way of guaranteeing that the entire abcess was lanced. Silly me. It is now obvious that the intelligence was not only incorrect, it was non-existent at best and manufactured at worst.

Fast forward to the election....Some of the information revealed during the campaign and the media debriefings which followed, is extremely worrisome....particularly with respect to the campaign tactics of one Karl Rove.

Without going into anything more lengthy than the above, I agree that the results of Tuesday's U.S. election should give everyone - internationally - a great deal of concern. When the results were confirmed on November 3rd, I remarked to anyone within earshot that this was the worst of all possible worlds. I could not believe that, with all of the information made available during this past year, a majority of Americans could still vote for George Dubya and his cohorts.

I cannot put my feelings in any better way than does Neal Gabler at the end of the following essay: "We all have reason to be very, very afraid."

If one accepts what Neal Gabler has to say, then there is only one question that needs to be answered: Who is it who poses the greatest threat to democracy, to us, and to the world - is it Saddam Hussein or is it George Walker Bush and his cronies?

Liz James

POLITICS

Karl Rove: America's Mullah

This election is about Rovism, and the outcome threatens to transform the U.S. into an ironfisted theocracy.

By Neal Gabler

Neal Gabler, a senior fellow at the Norman Lear Center at USC Annenberg, is author of "Life the Movie: How Entertainment Conquered

Reality."

October 24, 2004

Even now, after Sen. John F. Kerry handily won his three debates with President Bush and after most polls show a dead heat, his supporters seem downbeat. Why? They believe that Karl Rove, Bush's top political operative, cannot be beaten. Rove the Impaler will do whatever it takes - anything - to make certain that Bush wins. This isn't just typical Democratic pessimism. It has been the master narrative of the 2004 presidential campaign in the mainstream media. Attacks on Kerry come and go - flip-flopper, Swift boats, Massachusetts liberal - but one constant remains, Rove, and everyone takes it for granted that he knows how to game the system.

Rove, however, is more than a political sharpie with a bulging bag of dirty tricks. His campaign shenanigans - past and future - go to the heart of what this election is about.

Democrats will tell you it is a referendum on Bush's incompetence or on his extremist right-wing agenda. Republicans will tell you it's about conservatism versus liberalism or who can better protect us from terrorists. They are both wrong. This election is about Rovism - the insinuation of Rove's electoral tactics into the conduct of the presidency and the fabric of the government. It's not an overstatement to say that on Nov. 2, the fate of traditional American democracy will hang in the balance.

Rovism is not simply a function of Rove the political conniver sitting in the counsels of power and making decisions, though he does. No recent presidency has put policy in the service of politics as has Bush's. Because tactics can change institutions, Rovism is much more. It is a philosophy and practice of governing that pervades the administration and even extends to the Republican-controlled Congress. As Robert Berdahl, chancellor of UC Berkeley, has said of Bush's foreign policy, a subset of Rovism, it constitutes a fundamental change in "the fabric of constitutional government as we have known it in this country."

Rovism begins, as one might suspect from the most merciless of political consiglieres, with Machiavelli's rule of force: "A prince is respected when he is either a true friend or a downright enemy." No administration since Warren Harding's has rewarded its friends so lavishly, and none has been as willing to bully anyone who strays from its message.

There is no dissent in the Rove White House without reprisal.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki was retired after he disagreed with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's transformation of the Army and then testified! that invading Iraq would require a U.S. deployment of 200,000 soldiers.

Chief Medicare actuary Richard Foster was threatened with termination if he revealed before the vote that the administration had seriously misrepresented the cost of its proposed prescription drug plan to get it through Congress.

Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill was peremptorily fired for questioning the wisdom of the administration's tax cuts, and former U.S. administrator L. Paul Bremer III felt compelled to recant his statement that there were insufficient troops in Iraq.

Even accounting for the strong-arm tactics of Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon, this isn't government as we have known it. This is the Sopranos in the White House: "Cross us and you're road kill."

Naturally, the administration's treatment of the opposition is

worse. Rove's mentor, political advisor Lee Atwater, has been quoted as saying: "What you do is rip the bark off liberals." That's how Bush has governed. There is a feeling, perhaps best expressed by Georgia Democratic Sen. Zell Miller's keynote address at the Republican convention, that anyone who has the temerity to question the president is undermining the country. At times, Miller came close to calling Democrats traitors for putting up a presidential candidate.

This may be standard campaign rhetoric. But it's one thing to excoriate your opponents in a campaign, and quite another to continue berating them after the votes are counted.

Rovism regards any form of compromise as weakness. Politics isn't a bus we all board together, it's a steamroller.

No recent administration has made less effort to reach across the aisle, and thanks to Rovism, the Republican majority in Congress often operates on a rule of exclusion. Republicans blocked Democrats from participating in the bill-drafting sessions on energy, prescription drugs and intelligence reform in the House. As Rep. George Miller (D-Martinez) told *the New Yorker*, "They don't consult with the nations of the world, and they don't consult with Congress, especially the Democrats in Congress. They can do it all themselves."

Bush entered office promising to be a "uniter, not a divider." But Rovism is not about uniting. What Rove quickly grasped is that it's easier and more efficacious to exploit the cultural and social divide than to look for common ground. No recent administration has as eagerly played wedge issues - gay marriage, abortion, stem cell research, faith-based initiatives - to keep the nation roiling, in the pure Rovian belief that the president's conservative supporters will always be angrier and more energized than his opponents. Division, then, is not a side effect of policy; in Rovism, it is the purpose of policy.

The lack of political compromise has its correlate in the administration's stubborn insistence that it doesn't have to compromise with facts. All politicians operate within an Orwellian n! imbus where words don't mean what they normally mean, but Rovism posits that there is no objective, verifiable reality at all. Reality is what you say it is, which explains why Bush can claim that postwar Iraq is going swimmingly or that a so-so economy is soaring. As one administration official told reporter Ron Suskind, "We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality.... We're history's actors."

When neither dissent nor facts are recognized as constraining forces, one is infallible, which is the sum and foundation of Rovism. Cleverly invoking the power of faith to protect itself from accusations of stubbornness and insularity, this administration entertains no doubt, no adjustment, no negotiation, no competing point of view. As such, it eschews the essence of the American political system: flexibility and compromise.

In Rovism, toughness is the only virtue. The mere appearance of change is intolerable, which is why Bush apparently can't admit ever! making a mistake. As Machiavelli put it, the prince must show that "his judgments are irrevocable."

Rovism is certainly not without its appeal. As political theorist Sheldon Wolin once characterized Machiavellian government, it promises the "economy of politics." Americans love toughness. They love swagger. In a world of complexity and uncertainty, especially after Sept. 11, they love the idea of a man who doesn't need anyone else. They even love the sense of mission, regardless of its wisdom.

These values run deep in the American soul, and Rovism consciously taps them. But they are not democratic. Unwavering discipline, demonization of foes, disdain for reality and a personal sense of infallibility based on faith are the stuff of a theocracy - the

president as pope or mullah and policy as religious warfare.

Boiled down, Rovism is government by jihadis in the grip of unshakable self-righteousness - ironically the force the administration says it is fighting. ! It imposes rather than proposes.

Rovism surreptitiously and profoundly changes our form of government, a government that has been, since its founding by children of the Enlightenment, open, accommodating, moderate and generally reasonable.

All administrations try to work the system to their advantage, and some, like Nixon's, attempt to circumvent the system altogether. Rove and Bush neither use nor circumvent, which would require keeping the system intact. They instead are reconfiguring the system in extra-constitutional, theocratic terms.

The idea of the United States as an ironfisted theocracy is terrifying, and it should give everyone pause. This time, it's not about policy. This time, for the first time, it's about the nature of American government.

We all have reason to be very, very afraid.

2 November 2004

Dear Editor:

A majority of American voters has returned George W. Bush to the White House.

To be sure, not all of those voters belong to the religious right. Enough of the sanctimonious among them, however, marked their X in support of four more years under the oxymoronic, gun-toting Texas Dubya, to swing the vote in his favour.

By so doing, they risk all of the dangers inherent in Bush's continued attempts at world domination - his personification, indeed, of the Ugly American so despised in the years following World War II.

Quite how such voters can square Christian sanctity with the lies they have been told by Bush - and by his Halliburton puppetmaster Cheney - defies intelligent explanation.

There is significance in these events, though, for those of us who live North of the 49th. We must learn from the past four years of this Presidency - learn and tread very softly for the next four years. We must work without pause to protect Canadian democracy - and for the continued sovereignty of this country, its laws and our freedoms.

Most of all, though, we must never allow fundamental ideology, whatever the stripe it may wear, to influence or interfere with the manner in which we elect our political administrations - flawed though they well may be.

Sincerely,

Liz James
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Ernie Crist <ernie_crist@dnv.org> <mailto:ernie_crist@dnv.org>
wrote:

A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

A Cross Canada poll by a Vancouver based Radio Station on the day of the American presidential election revealed the following surprising (but not to this Canadian) result.

The question was - if you were a US citizen eligible to vote in the US presidential election today, would you vote for Bush or Kerry? Keep in mind that this was on the day of the actual election.

45% of Canadians polled voted for Kerry and 55% for Bush whereas the actual results in the US showed that 48% voted for Kerry and only 51% for Bush. So much for the anti Bush and peace loving Canadians. As I said, I was not surprised - indeed I know that if Hitler had held an open and democratic election in Germany in 1944, that is when Germany was defeated, in tatters and its cities ruined, he would have won such an election and indeed much bigger than Bush did this week in the US. You don't believe me? ...well you should - I WAS THERE.

I have studied human psychology for a long time and know that the greater the duress of a people and the greater their doubts the more they will "rally around the flag" however tattered. It is in line with the "my country right or wrong" and they are the "out to get us" syndrome. It is an integral part of human psychology closely connected and intertwined with the "territorial imperative" factor of homo sapiens. It also has a great deal to do with the brainwashing of the masses which is conducted with great expertise by the corporate controlled media.

As to the US election? I see Bush has promised to solve the Iraqi and the Middle East problem. This is not possible and you have heard it from me first. He will do no such thing - he can't. To begin with he is not the one who makes the big policies, both foreign and domestic, though he may think he does. They are not made in the White House but in the corporate offices of America and their think tanks. The man in the White House merely carries them out more or less.

This is about Oil and the struggle for world domination. It is about American hegemony of the world. It is about control of the strategic areas in Central Asia as outlined in Briscinski's "The Grand Chess Board". It is about the poor of the world who are getting poorer, while determined to get a better life. And since there are so many of them they will not give up as the US and its Canadian sympathisers will find out.


The US is in a state of crisis and this is permanent. It's economic system based on the rich are getting richer and the poor, poorer is historically obsolete and moribund since it is based on exploitation not only of the poor people of the world but also on the most ruthless exploitation of the world's environment and resources. It is no accident that the US has failed to sign the KYOTO agreement, no more than it is an accident that it has broken the Missile and Outer Space Treaty.

The Moslem world, complex and contradictory in many aspects, is currently spearheading this struggle. The world is in a state of revolution which may extend over decades and will see fundamental changes in human relationship.

US Inc is in a quagmire from which it will not be able to extricate itself except after it has been totally defeated by the people of the world. Iraq is not the end but the beginning of a much wider conflict looming. Let's just hope Canada can keep out of it. It will be difficult, however, with the number of Canadians who, as suggested by the poll, appear to have difficulties determining their national identity and their moral obligations as peace loving citizens of the world.

Ernie Crist

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