

## IRAQ POLICY: POST VICTORY EVALUATION HELLLLOOOOOOOO VIETNAM II

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( written 3 months after the invasion of Iraq)

*“ No one starts a war—or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so — without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it... The former is the political purpose; the latter its operational objective. This is the governing principle which will set its course, prescribe the scale of means and effort which is required, and make its influence felt throughout down to the smallest operational detail.”*

Carl Von Clausewitz On War

**Comment:** The current United States Government’s (USG) choice of the “Militaristic/Force” option instead of the Diplomatic arm in the conduct of its foreign policy—and notably Iraq—has dangerously isolated it in the most sensitively strategic regions of the world and alienated it amongst its most pragmatic allies. The long-term consequences for the US geopolitical and strategic question important to its National Security may, therefore, face serious and costly reverses abroad as well as at home, if the USG persists on the same course and fails to address its foreign policy shortcomings on the scene of International Relations and its market place of conflicting exchanges and interests.

The following brief reflection is an attempt to establish within the current, primarily US policy in Iraq; and generally speaking the Middle East/Persian Gulf context of a varying foreign policy option – with the purpose of less orientated conflict and better utility elements for both the US and overall international system.

1. The best way to begin the theoretical and intellectual debate underlined above is to clearly explain, understand and consequently agree upon the establishment of the hypothesis and parameter that shall be at the root of the analysis to follow – i.e., the Military versus Diplomatic option in the conduct of any foreign policy. Thus, the reflections of the late and respected foreign policy analyst, Hans J. Morgenthau, is an enlightening point with which to begin:

*... In international politics in particular, armed strength as a threat or a potentiality is the most important material factor making for the political power of a nation. If it becomes an actuality in war, it signifies the substitution of military for political power. The actual exercise of physical violence substitutes for the psychological relations between two minds, which is of the essence of political power, the physical*

*relations between two bodies, one of which is strong enough to dominate the other's movements. It is for this reason that in the exercise of physical violence the psychological element of the political relationship is lost, and that we must distinguish between military and political power.*

This paradigm, in its simplicity, certainly demonstrates the dilemma as well as the path chosen by the Bush administration from the very beginning. Thus, if the assertions stated at the outset above are considered to be relevant as the root cause of the current conduct of the US foreign policy's short- as well as long-term crisis in Iraq – and, therefore, around the world – a radical change of course should be applied, as proposed by this essay.

2. No, absolutely, NO change in the conduct of the actual US foreign policy is possible – without a *complete* overhaul of ALL the administration's senior officers who have been at the origin of the "Militaristic Doctrine" since the very beginning. Hence, the National Security Advisor, the Secretary of Defense, and influential people such as Richard Pearle – as well as the highly ineffectual Secretary of State, must all be replaced with new blood that not only portray but also are *actually* willing to sacrifice and above all APPLY a true varying vision. Apart from the very pragmatic nature of this house cleaning – it will:

- (a) Signal a TRUE CHANGE in the administration's thinking and conduct of foreign policy in the eyes of allies and adversaries – necessary for a new rejuvenating foreign policy along the lines of REALPOLITIK. Because, as I have never ceased to repeat and underline the most important stated expression in the domain of political analysis: In politics, PERCEPTION IS REALITY.
- (b) Open a FACE-SAVING exit out of the current negotiating deadlock both for alienated allies and, politically speaking, hesitant adversaries of the current US foreign policy who are unwilling to follow the US "adventuristic/bullish" appearing compartment. The next natural step would be to delineate common grounds of practical and appeasing modous oprendi by first the Iraqis and then the "International System" for the very complex short- and long-term socio-

cultural/political/economic problems – through the establishment of a rough Iraqi political landscape and forces influential in its current development.

3. The domestic and foreign forces with “influencing” or “pretending Influence Objectives” can generally be categorized into the following, no matter how rough, elements; as demonstrated by the following tables:

Table 1

EXTERNAL Medium / Long-Term Politico-Military Exerted Influence<sup>1</sup>

Group(s) / Countries	Overall Influence
US Coalition	50%
Iran	50%

Table 2

EXTERNAL Exerted Long-Term Grass Root Influence

Countries	Overall Influence
Iran	80% (90%)
US Coalition	20% (10%)

Table 3

Long-Term Domestic Political Influence by Iraqi Religious/Ethnic Categories

Groups	Overall Influence
Shi'ite	80%
Sunni	10%
Kurds	10%

<sup>1</sup> The above table's assumptions, valid also for table 2, are that:

(a) All US coalition and allies supporting or aiding in any way – such as Turkey, NATO, etc. are focused through the “US Coalition.” By the same token, Syrian, Taliban, all other Rouge states or groups are assumed to have been focused through the Iranian influence and interferences – NOT debating the existence of a disciplined hierarchical command system for the latter coalition.

(b) In the Medium Term, it is assumed that the Iranian political influence and its eventual subversive aiding of “armed groups” resisting the US coalition occupation – substitutes for its direct military presence in Iraq.

Table 4

Medium / Long Term Domestic Political Affiliation

Groups	Overall Influence
Islamic Inspired:	75%
Ba'th	10%
Communist	10%
Others	5%

4. Based on the above assessment, it is evident that the United States must **pay a costly price in the long-run for the political stabilization of Iraq** – particularly if it resists any fundamentally implemented changes in its *perception and conduct* of foreign policy. Thus, a political, rather than a military solution in the long-run becomes a more urgent and relevant vision absolutely necessary for a long-term US foreign policy interest in Iraq and the Persian Gulf / Middle East region – precisely in that order.

5. The ONLY proper, legitimate and above all practical manner acceptable to the International Community as a whole to deal with “After The Saddam” era is the United Nations. In that respect, the need for support and ACTIVE participation of France and Germany is crucial. But the US policy makers must be highly aware of the fact that despite “Their” victory in Iraq – they should not even think about dictating “Their Vision” of an “After The Saddam” plan to the U.N. It will simply, like the first round, completely and miserably backfire. What the US must understand is that both France and Germany represent the interface and the software language in the region – which has been enhanced through their strong stance in the U.N. The COMPLETE overhauling of the US foreign policy apparatus leadership suggested earlier will greatly enhance the US / France-Germany rapprochement – releasing all the existing tension.



6. More concretely, short of a miracle, the International Community must prepare itself for a VERY long-term baby-sitting session in Iraq. There has been much bad blood with diversified cultural and religious schism in Iraq, which has also been further peppered with the Anglo-American invasion, to expect an overnight solution. **Furthermore, the basket of “political leadership” in today’s Iraq is as bankrupt as it was during Saddam Hussein; and as for the institutions, whatever little existed have all been destroyed.** The International Community must begin by:

- (a) Putting Iraq on a descent and minimum of economic development path – under the U.N. banner;
- (b) Build or RE-build the Institutions for Iraq – with the direct help of Iraqi’s. Even aiding and encouraging what is left of the remaining Ba’th’s Party infrastructure to operate within a democratic framework.

- (c) Parallel, try to nourish the proper environment for the creation and development of an Iraqi elite apt to eventually take the helms of the country into their own hands.

Obviously, the above prescription shall take time. **Kosovo was supposed to be a two-year proposition, but now six years later, is still not finished.** It is not at all an exaggeration to designate at least a decade and a half to two for the attainment of this foreign policy objective – which nevertheless, despite all good faith efforts, remains uncertain. Thus, the US cannot afford to pay the political price of occupying Iraq militarily that long.

7. But, with charity beginning at home, the Bush administration must begin the RECONCILIATION effort that it has so ARROGANTLY refused since the beginning. The domestic source of foreign policy, the backbone of US foreign policy must be consulted. Instead, what should loosely be labeled as the “American Foreign Policy Process” -- during this administration, along with its diversified interest groups, have all been blocked, blacklisted (see the recent blacklisted book by Kristina Borjesson), duped, bribed, propagandized and briefly, voluntarily or otherwise, silenced. Thus, the very first task should be to open up those channels for a national consensus in dealing with the first major US foreign policy challenge at the beginning of this new century.

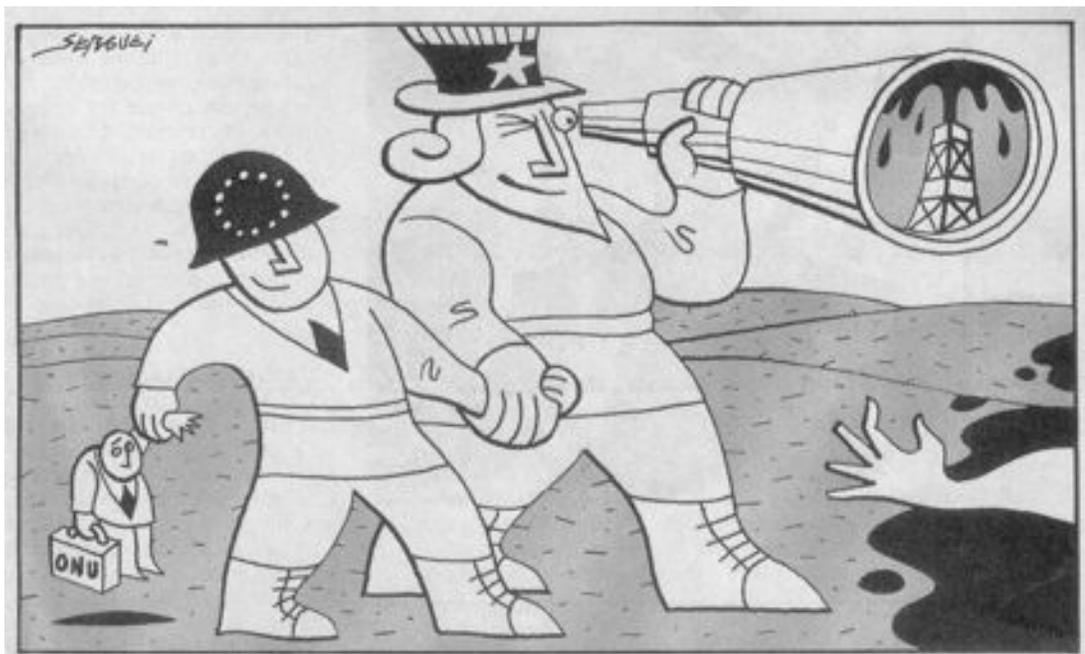
Summary: In view of the above, following are the steps and remedies in establishing a better utility course for US foreign policy that shall encompass and complement conceptions of security policies for this and other vital parts of the world:

- (a) ALL top foreign policy executives, along with their influential advisors, must be removed and replaced by new players who are in accord with a radical shift of policy towards a “Diplomatic Negotiations” orientation. The US has already demonstrated military might and determination, which has played its role and must pass the torch to the complementary and parallel Diplomatic

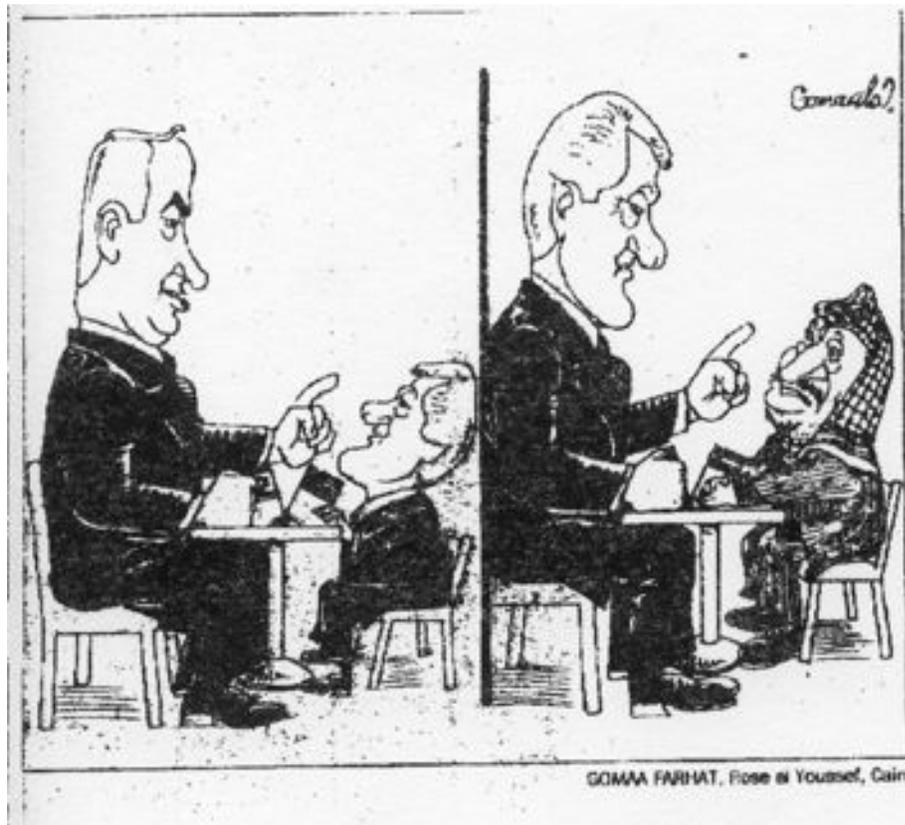
Arm of the US foreign policy. But, again, all the top executive changes are imperative to the cornerstone of a new vision and attitude towards the making of foreign policy, the International Community and its order. In fact, the current US foreign policy officers are too set in their thinking to initiate and, still less, maintain the course of a new varied and thus new Diplomato-political foreign policy. “You can take the horse out of the stable but you can never take the stable out of the horse.”

Thus, the need for new blood.

- (b) The sooner Iraq and the Iraqi dilemma is turned over to the U.N. with the full cooperation of France and Germany – the less regrettable it will be for ALL concerned. A second role for other Western Allies, and a Fig Leaf third place for the UN will not drastically change the US current position or dilemmas in Iraq.



(c) **In the long run,** Iran and all other anti-American groups or anti-Anglo/American forces occupation of Iraq (but particularly Iran), can exercise an upper-hand in influencing and manipulating all the local forces at the Grass Roots level. A recently interviewed American officer admitted that when there are any problems they “would go and talk to the local Imam (religious) leader.” Iranian Mullahs and all other hard-line religiously armed groups can talk better to the local Imam and even, if need be, use intimidation tactics. Therefore, the removal of the current Iranian regime – through strong support of legitimate Iranian opposition, should also be an IMPERATIVE PRIORITY of a new orientation towards the Persian Gulf / Middle East policy. The current Iranian regime, i.e., the Mullahs, shall be a very thorny problem and an obstacle towards a new Iraqi development-- not to mention the region. The situation in Iraq and Saddam’s overthrow has made the Iranian Mullahs into *Reloaded Mullahs* (if I may use the name of the new Matrix movie!). What Khomeini and the Mullahs in Iran could not achieve in Eight years of costly and devastating bloody war with Iraq i.e. the removal of Saddam Hussein, the US has realized it for them in few months -- THANK- YOU VERY MUCH. Thus the Mullahs are right now more than EVER BEFORE at home in Iraq and on their own turf. The US is not. It is important to recall that in 1920 an uprising against the British Imperialism was organized by an Iranian Ayatollah Shirazi and that the current Mullahs in Iran celebrate it on the Iranian calendar. Because of space limitations, it is suffice to state that no fundamental changes and peace in the region shall be possible with the current thugs remaining in power in Iran.



- (d) The Palestinian question must be settled through a *forceful* and very determined US intervention (although unfortunately the Israelis have already begun breaching their JUST signed Road Map to Peace on the question of the Jewish colonies by announcing new constructions). The Israeli influence through the highly efficient and un-bashful American Jewish lobby has been GREAT for the Israeli National Security and extremely damaging to the US interests in the Middle-East and other Third World Muslim countries. Over the past three decades, voices of respectable former Washington insiders such as George Ball, critical of the Israeli influence, has never been heard. Israeli manipulation of the “Iran Gate” events has only been one such example. The Iraqi invasion is certainly another, where; the Israeli lobby has been as active as the oil lobby.



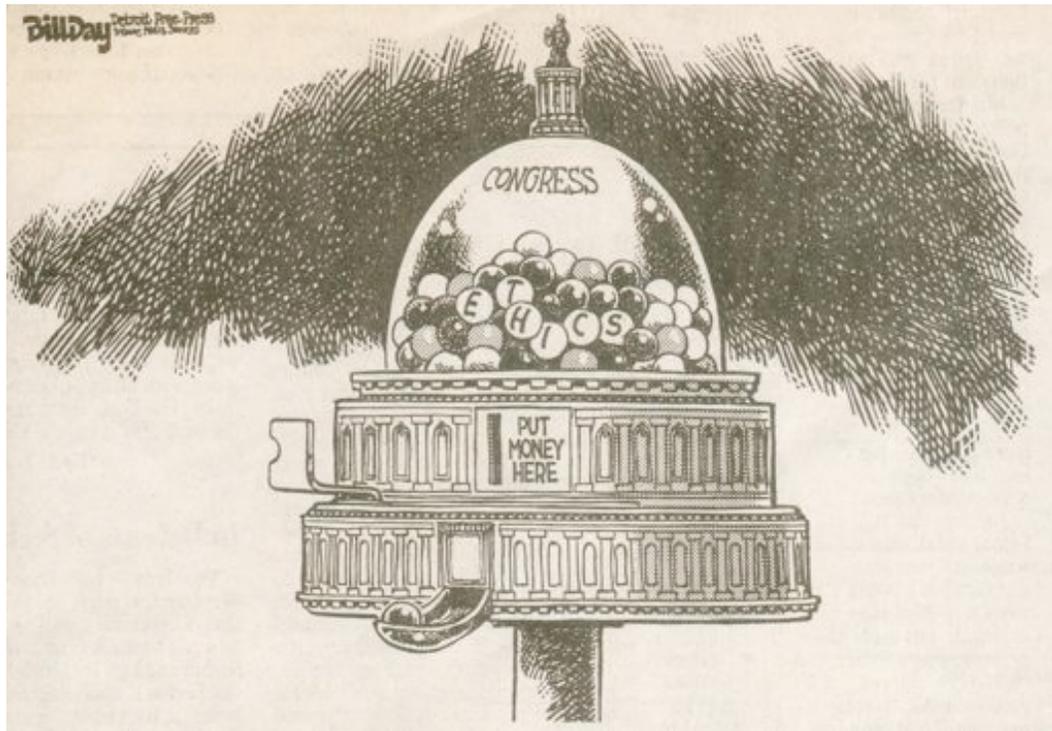
- (e) The US must continue to accept, honor, reinforce, build upon and work through the international bodies and organizations – instead of breaching every major international law in the book. By setting bad examples, the US has devastated the respect for the rule of the law and given good excuses and signals to others that the only way in resolving ANY international crisis and injustice is through rule of the jungle. In the pertinent words of William Pfaff:

*The new U.S. National Security Strategy document, issued on Sept. 20, is an implicit American denunciation of the modern state order that has governed international relations since the Westphalian Settlement of 1648. That agreement, which ended the Thirty Years' War, recognized the absolute sovereignty and legal equality of states as the basis of international order. These principles of sovereignty and equality have been generally recognized ever since, if often in the breach. The consensus among governments and jurists has been that without acknowledging national sovereignty as the foundation of law, the world risked anarchic power struggles. The National Security Strategy statement is thus a radical document, whether Condoleezza Rice, reputedly its main author, understands this or not.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>2</sup> William Pfaff, "A Radical Rethinking of International Relations, National Security Strategy," International Herald Tribune, October 3, 2002, p. 6.

The fact, therefore, is that Ms. Rice and the US have declared war on the world. Instead of “speaking softly and carrying a big stick” as suggested by Theodore Roosevelt, Bush has continued to use this stick while yelling. Hence, the world is fighting back. In the pertinent words of Carl Von Clausewitz, quoted at the outset of this paper: “In war , the will is directed to an animated object that reacts.” Thus Condoleezza Rice and all other executives of this administration , have all woken-up, activated, and at the end of the day invited EVERY possible existing forces into a military confrontation that they must now “direct their will towards those that they themselves have animated.” There are of course other very serious drawbacks to the current US Iraq policy – as follows briefly:

First, all wars being the continuation of a political decision – in democracy this is very much an interplay between the Executive, the Legislative and the Grass Root i.e., the people – in controlling and guiding the military. As explained earlier, the Grass Root level “American Foreign Policy Political Process,” along with a very shy status quo legislator had been numbed at the start on the Iraq policy; the executive itself has also failed miserably in providing any true leadership role for its military’s political needs. **Thus now the military has been asked to provide and regenerate the economic, social and political institutions in Iraq – which is far beyond its abilities. Hence, total confusion of the current policy with regards to the military.**



**HISTORY SHALL RECALL THE OIL, MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AND THE JEWISH LOBBY AS THE ROOT CAUSE OF A VERY PASSIVE AND INDIFFERENT CONGRESS IN DEALING WITH AMERICA'S MOST CHALLENGING FOREIGN POLICY NATIONAL SECURITY DILEMMA AND DISASTER IN THIS CENTURY**

Second, the Bush // Blair duo is the most despised leadership not trusted either at home or abroad. At home, the lies of both governments on the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), the pretext for attacking Iraq and the supposed suicide of Dr. Kelly (even the British public has been VERY skeptical expecting only a white wash investigation) has evaporated any CREDIABILITY for both governments to the point that the “discovery” of new evidence promised by the Bush administration will no longer be thought of as credible enough with its current record. In fact it would resemble a ridiculous evidence provided AFTER a judge’s sentence. Thus in the eyes and court of public opinion Bush/Blair governments and associates are drawn in a sea of dishonesty, moral bankruptcy, selfishness, greed, lies and consequently – down right ARROGANCE. The recent Total Information Awareness program at the Department of Defense under Admiral Poindexter with the purpose of generating investment and profit out of

American public misery and BLOOD – is just one more, but certainly not the last proof of the Bush/Blair administration’s unscrupulous behavior and overall nature – whereby the END JUSTIFY THE MEANS .The non-renewal of the Special Counsels Law or other channels , such as the recent failure of the General Accounting Office -- the investigative arm of Congress -- to look into Vice President's Cheney's energy task force -- are all unequivocal evidence of the very corrupt attitude by this administration that -- again, strongly believes , the END JUSTIFY THE MEANS. Briefly, despite former President Clinton's domestic and personal problems--he had successfully managed to construct and portray a very positive image of US and its foreign policy--which the Bush administration has so willingly and CARELESSLY destroyed overnight and replaced it--with TOTAL RESENTMENT SENTIMENT OF THE US ALL OVER THE WORLD.

Third, one of the US’ worst mistakes has been to join forces with Britain. This country to this date carry too much baggage for its past imperialistic and pretentious history--certainly in the Middle-East/Persian Gulf region. Hence the liabilities of a burdening history without the least politico-military assets brought into this partnership.

**Conclusion:** Short of a drastic change in the current US foreign policy, the US must be prepared for major disastrous consequences – both at home and abroad. At home, when the negative politico-economic effects of the current policies finally begin to reach the bone (and the process has started) these will be crucial upshots with adverse effects on any US foreign policy posture.

Unemployment, recession, homelessness, public debt, social security, taxes, education, etc., have ALL been critically neglected in favor of one obsession – oil. But, as important as oil is for the current as well as future of US National Security – the price of TRULY MISHANDLING its acquisition has been very high both politically and economically. The real price of oil for the US tax payer, due to the current US military adventures, must by now be estimated at a minimum of \$600 per barrel (no one of course can really be sure at this stage how much it has or will cost). Thus, it is only a matter of time before the domestic sources of American foreign policy shall wake up and revolt against the status-quo’s vision.

Meanwhile, the recent suicide bombing attacks in Saudi Arabia, Morocco and eventually ALL other Arab-Muslim states – has only JUST BEGUN. **Faced with tremendous economic problems and long-term humiliation** – the man in the street in these countries does not trust anymore its corrupt, dictatorial leaders and is therefore (if it is not an understatement) more and

more susceptible to the forces of EXTREMISM. But, persistence on the same path by the US, calling the whole world Terrorists and trying to fight them – won't cut the mustard.

France and Germany, with their large Arab/Turkish Muslim immigrants and minorities have understood this and have shown restraint in their action. The US, too, must understand that if France or Germany, for any legitimate reasons, had to attack Mexico – the US would have also resisted such a move due to its large Latino community. Another regrettable damage by the US policy has been to weaken the NATO alliance and certainly its special relationship with Turkey – NATO's southern flank. In retrospect, these countries fault has been that the bad news they were preaching in warning and deterring the US against the costly errors of an invasion (which is what this war has been and certainly shall be registered as such in the history books) – has become true.

In fact, the American policy in Iraq has already had far reaching effects ALL OVER THE WORLD. In Southeast Asia, for example, China, Japan and both Koreas are all very skeptical of the US posture. In view of seemingly US absence from that area, China has certainly increased (and shall continue to) its influence in the region. Japan and South Korea don't want US military presence, and as for North Korea – it has simply mocked the US. Finally, moderate Japanese leaders are also talking seriously about proper army and even nuclear force – probably in trying to release themselves from adventurous US foreign policy.

In short, the Bush administration has only created highly potent time bombs because of a very SHORTSIGHTED and certainly SIMPLISTIC vision of the world. A few years ago, Robert S. MacNamara, Kennedy's Secretary of Defense, wrote a book publicly admitting that the US intervention in Vietnam was an error. It is ironic that the US intervention in Vietnam, like today's US invasion of Iraq, was enormously and deliberately downplayed in its political, economical and above all, human costs. As we approach Three hundred US casualties, only Three months after the supposed "US Victory" – it is pertinent to wonder what the US casualty number would have to be before the "Vietnam threshold" begins to sink in – triggering domestic opposition as the Bush's Iraqi adventurism begins to manifest its costly economic and HUMANLY errors and bill for the Grass Root US citizens . **The worst and most unfortunate mistake** would be to waste good critical time and wait for a new administration in order to clean up the current dilemmas, which continue to brew without any safety-valve at home or abroad.

Ever seen a pot boil over?

THIS PAPER AND ITS CONCLUSION WRITTEN --- **ONLY 3 MONTHS** --- AFTER THE U.S INVASION IN 2003