

Where's the Outrage?
September 2005*

I just spent a marvelous afternoon with two of my good friends. I have known one since college and the other since grade school. As it often does, the conversation wandered from one subject to the next. Politics, kids, parents, politics, music, aren't we getting old, politics, didn't we have hair, politics. As I did with my buddies, I would like to focus on some of the major failures of the Bush Administration. These failures all stem from arrogance and a complete lack of willingness to consider dissenting opinions.

9-11 Failures. Warnings *were* made. There was no need to have, as the 9-11 Commission suggested, an active imagination in order to believe that planes could be used as weapons of terror. All you had to do was read Tom Clancy or the CIA intelligence reports, which mention over twenty separate times that Al Qaeda said they wanted to use planes as weapons. Better yet, just listen to the Italian authorities who warned us that Al Qaeda wanted to fly a plane into the White House to kill Bush in the summer of 2001. The famous August 6, 2001, daily brief clearly stated that Al Qaeda wanted to kill Americans inside the US. But these and other warnings were ignored.

Al Qaeda. One of the phrases that Bush tends to use to firm up support for the War in Iraq is "we have to hit them over there so that they will not hit us over here." This statement completely ignores what we already know about Al Qaeda from the August 6th daily briefing and from the 9-11 Commission report. Both reports clearly tell us that al Qaeda members are already

here in the US. Why have there not been any significant arrests of Al Qaeda members in the US outside of that California jail ring?

Korea. Shortly after Mr. Bush became President Bush, without consulting any of our allies, he declared that the government of North Korea is a bunch of liars. President Bush said to a reporter in early 2001, "Part of the problem in dealing with North Korea, there's not very much transparency. We're not certain as to whether or not they're keeping all terms of all agreements. And that's part of the issue that the President [of South Korea] and I discussed, is when you make an agreement with a country that is secretive, how do you -- how are you aware as to whether or not they're keeping the terms of the agreement." Apparently with no discussion outside of Bush's inner circle of neo-cons, the President decided to pull out of all previously negotiated agreements with North Korea. President Clinton had just spent the last four years of his presidency working with North Korea to warm up the chilly air. If Clinton had not been completely engaged in trying to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there is a good chance that he would have traveled to North Korea to begin talks on how to open up North Korea's economy. Secretary of State Albright had been in North Korea to lay the primary groundwork for a possible Presidential visit. All of this came to a halt when President Bush blew North Korea a large raspberry.

So, we started six party talks with Russia, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, and China. Bush's rhetoric was particularly harsh. North Korea fought back with a promise to begin building nuclear weapons. Bam! They kicked out the nuclear inspectors. They invited journalists to see the reactor start up.

Last week after years of no progress, the Bush administration announced, on a slow-news Friday, that it had concluded a new agreement with North Korea. The North Koreans would

agree to stop making nuclear weapons, dismantle the nukes that they made, and let the inspectors back in. We would agree not to attack North Korea *and* discuss a light water reactor. Isn't this the exact same agreement that President Clinton made back in 1994?

Iraq. The ingredients of poor planning and not enough troops equals quagmire.

Katrina. No matter how you slice this tragedy, the Bush Administration dropped the ball. FEMA's experts on disaster management simply did not execute a plan of which the American people could be proud. When we remember that FEMA evacuated over a million people with Hurricane Floyd in September 1999 without a major issue, the problem comes into focus. Bush changed the agency. He downgraded its cabinet level status. He placed FEMA in the enormous, new Department of Homeland Security. To add to the mess, money allotted to disaster management was diverted to homeland security. Finally, the top directors at FEMA had no disaster management experience. Stir this up and you get the disaster that is the Gulf Coast.

What is the purpose of government? If the government is supposed to keep us safe from terrorists and help us in times of natural disaster, then our government has failed us. This failure is one of leadership. If, on the other hand, the government is supposed to look out for business and keep an environment in which big business can have double digit growth every year, then the Bush administration is a huge success.

What do you want from your government?

Recent News:

Karl Rove has been summoned in front of the Grand Jury for his fourth time. Wow, a fourth time? Maybe Special Counsel Patrick Fitzgerald just called Mr. Rove back to congratulate him on his earlier testimony. Maybe.

www.WhereIsTheOutrage.net
Dr. Thompson is available for lectures!

Michael Brown, former head of FEMA, was roasted in front a House Select committee. The hearing opened with Mr. Brown stating, “I don't want to make this partisan.” Later, he lashed out, “My biggest mistake was not recognizing by Saturday [August 27] that Louisiana was dysfunctional.” I do not think anything else needs to be said.

Harriet Miers is nominated to the Supreme Court. There is no doubt that Ms. Meirs is a capable attorney but should a Supreme Court Judge be more? Just as with Clarence Thomas the question arises – Is she the best person in the country for the job?

* with writing and editing assistance by **Catherine Ross, PhD.**