

Democrats: Snatching Defeat From The Jaws Of Victory

Having Brought Us The Vietnam War, The Democrats' Blind Hatred Of George W. Bush Has Been Causing Them To Seek A Retreat From Iraq And Afghanistan Too, Which Would Produce A Defeat More Devastating Than Vietnam And Untold Violence Against Americans

July 21, 2005

by **Timothy D. Naegele**

Very soon, the recent attacks in London will recede from the world's attention—and certainly that of the media—just as the earlier bombings in Madrid are now yesterday's news. Even the Democrats are temporarily distracted from criticizing American war efforts in Iraq, because of the President's nomination for the Supreme Court; however, it is only a matter of time before they turn their focus on Iraq once again, as a means of savaging the Bush Administration's handling of the war. Thus, the momentary respite allows all of us to reflect on what is at stake, not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, but in the broader War on Terror as well.

The Democrats brought us the Vietnam War, yet they are hoping that we are unsuccessful in both Iraq and Afghanistan, which would be a catastrophe for this nation—eclipsing what happened in Vietnam. Our repute as the world's only superpower would fade, and our enemies would be emboldened to attack us at home and abroad, and it would be open season on Americans wherever we are. Tragically, the Democrats' hatred of George W. Bush knows no bounds, which has been blinding them from understanding the consequences of their rhetoric and actions.

Like many others, I began as a registered Democrat, having grown up in a devoutly Republican family—which believed both Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman were “the enemy” for spreading socialism in this country and for sacking the legendary General Douglas MacArthur in 1951 during the Korean War, respectively. I listened to what John F. Kennedy preached in the months leading up to the 1960 presidential election—and was present in the Los Angeles Coliseum for his acceptance speech at the Democratic convention, even though I was not old enough to vote—and I became a Democrat because of him, much to my parents' consternation.

I served as an Army officer for two years during the Vietnam War, and I switched parties and became a Republican because JFK had initiated the war that became a tragedy under

Lyndon Johnson and his Defense Secretary Robert McNamara. I blamed the Democrats for the senseless loss of friends and other brave Americans in a distant war where this nation's leadership lacked the will and determination to win. Fast-forward to today, and there is no lack of will or determination on the part of George W. Bush to win in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and to win the War on Terror.

I went to Capitol Hill after the Pentagon and worked for the only African-American Republican senator since Reconstruction, and then worked with both Democrats and Republicans for many years after that. I became a registered Independent because neither the Liberals nor the ultra-Conservatives represented my political point of view. As more details of JFK's sordid life and character became available, any fascination with the man or the tug of his legacy disappeared; and I voted for Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan and both Bushes, and was very comfortable doing so. I am convinced that because of Reagan, the Berlin Wall fell and the "Evil Empire" and the Iron Curtain are gone, and the peoples of Eastern Europe are free—miracles which Reagan's critics denounced as fantasies before they became reality.

Like Abraham Lincoln before him, Reagan often adopted controversial positions that were unpopular domestically; and support for both war presidents—during the Civil War and the Cold War—ebbed and flowed dramatically. Yet, in a recent Discovery Channel straw poll, they ran neck and neck for the honor of being considered our greatest president, with Reagan edging Lincoln by a miniscule margin. Greatness is often achieved in times of war; and as with Lincoln and Reagan, George W. Bush's greatness may not be recognized fully until long after his second term ends.

I supported George H.W. Bush's Gulf War and the liberation of Kuwait, as well as George W. Bush's toppling of the Taliban in Afghanistan. However, I had strong reservations about another war against Iraq, because I believed Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and would not hesitate to use them against our military forces. Also, I believed we would be fighting to make the Middle East safe for Israel, which I did not feel was worth the loss of American lives or the likely quagmire that would result from our invasion.

When the war began, even its critics praised the brilliance of our war planners and the speed with which Baghdad was reached and Saddam's forces were routed. Thank God WMDs were never used. Because many Bathists went underground and joined foreign forces in fighting us, few Americans doubted that it would take time to pacify a country that is the size of California. Despite having been an opponent of the war, at least in often-heated debates with my very conservative son, I came to believe that we were there to win and were making steady progress in achieving our goals. Also, the Middle East—including Israel—would be safer because of what we were doing.

Like Reagan, I left the Democratic Party and never looked back. Every time I think about voting for a Democrat, he or she falls into lock step with the Party's leadership and espouses views that border on being treasonous, such as Senate leader Dick Durbin's recent statements comparing American practices to those of the Nazis and the Soviets and

the Khmer Rouge under Pol Pot in Cambodia. What he neglected to mention was that the latter mass murderers were responsible for more than 40 million deaths, while our military has conducted itself laudably.

Many would argue that the Democrats are desperate because the Republicans control both the executive and legislative branches of government, and they are simply trying to establish some political traction before the 2006 elections—or to position various candidates for the 2008 presidential election, or to gain advantages given seemingly waning support for our efforts in Iraq and President Bush’s sagging poll numbers. However, the ugly head of our defeat in Vietnam is emerging again, despite the fact that it took years to bury its ghosts. Gone from Capitol Hill is any notion of bipartisan civility, which existed when I worked there. Replacing it is open political warfare that puts individual political ambitions above this nation’s long-term best interests, and augurs for return to the Vietnam era, with its divisiveness and tragic legacy for this country.

Only the truly naïve believe that our enemies around the world are not gloating at what they are witnessing, and licking their chops for the battles ahead—including the recent bombings in London. An America that regresses to a Vietnam-like mindset is not a country of which we can be proud. It took Reagan to bring us out of the post-Vietnam malaise, and the Democrats seem determined to take us back to those times, which is why I do not envision voting for a Democrat again, and I regret coming to that conclusion. I agree with both Reagan and former U.S. Senator Zell Miller, a Democrat from Georgia, that the Party left me long ago; I did not leave the Party.

I believe we will prevail in both Iraq and Afghanistan ultimately, and that those two democratic nations—albeit not necessarily fashioned in the image of our own democracy—will be positive influences in the region. Already Iraqi and Afghan women are asserting themselves as never before; 50 million people in both countries are free now, and democratic elections have been held; recent developments have been encouraging in Libya and Lebanon; and there is reason for hope and optimism.

Perhaps the bottom line is that those who are serving with our military in Iraq and Afghanistan volunteered to do so, and they support our efforts; whereas, the “armchair soldiers” at home—who are risking nothing—pontificate about withdrawal or an American retreat just as they did in the Vietnam era. We will surely fail if we lose our resolve and allow our enemies to defeat us, which this time might mean that the ravages of Vietnam come to our shores, more brutally than 9/11 and the attacks in Madrid and London combined.

[Timothy D. Naegele](#)

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*Mr. Naegele was counsel to the U.S. Senate Banking Committee, and chief of staff to former Senator Edward W. Brooke (R-Mass). He practices law in Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles with his firm, Timothy D. Naegele & Associates (www.naegele.com). Also, he served as a Captain in the U.S. Army, assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency at the Pentagon, where he received the Joint Service Commendation Medal. Mr. Naegele is an Independent, and has written extensively over the years, with two articles appearing in the *Banking Law Journal* and the *American Banker* earlier this year (see www.naegele.com/whats_new.html#articles).*

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