



At the White House

Dead men have no victory . Euripides
He who is the author of war lets loose the
whole contagion of hell and opens the vein
that bleeds a nation to death. Thomas Paine

President Bush and other members of his Administration have adopted the Victory theme in their speeches and press conferences. The situation in Iraq however does not seem to merit such optimism.

“George, don’t you think that by hammering on the victory theme you are making things worse?”

“Would you mind explaining to me how? Here I am leading one of the greatest armies ever assembled in a ferocious war against a brutal and heartless enemy. And you express doubts about this moment in history?”

The First Lady was used to her arguments with a President that considered stubbornness a virtue. Most likely, he would only admit defeat when he saw the Iraqi Insurgents installed in the White House and Al Qaida in the Trump Towers, after having taken over the Vatican, the ranch in Crawford, the Elysee Palace, 10 Downing Street and the UN in New York. But she felt it was her duty to speak up. She replied:

“Georgie, cut the fiction, will you? The Iraq episode is not a war but a capricious invasion of a little country by a mighty nation”

“It is clear that you never wore a uniform and were never subjected to the rigors of military training. We are fighting a disciplined, well trained army that uses every known tactic to cause damage to our troops”

“That is plain bull George. The enemy is no such thing but a bunch of fanatics that do not mind blowing themselves up here and there and are using our presence in Iraq to promote their own agendas. Our troops were never trained to chase terrorists in dusty villages and even less to defend themselves against terrorists disguised as civilians.”

“That is where you are wrong First Lady. If you remember correctly, both Rummie and Chen had planned operations in minute detail.”

“I am sure they did. They would have the cavalry take the heights on the right and the infantry on the plain in the left, bayonets ready, forming a line in the sands along the Euphrates. The four Howitzers left over from the Kuwait campaign would be placed next to the main road to Baghdad cleverly camouflaged beyond the field kitchens behind the stables. Then, someone would blow the bugle and the Iraqi army would come out of the sands with their hands up in the air waving white surrender flags and would request asylum! So please do not talk about victory!”

“And what would you do, wise First Lady?”

“One, I would keep quiet and wait until after the Iraqi Government becomes a real government. Whether they do or not, I would declare that Iraq is now fully on the way to democracy, freedom and all that garbage you never fail to mention to those trained dummy soldiers that attend your press conferences. Then I offer, to whoever is around, the deal”



“What deal?”

“I take my troops back in thirty days and have the UN create a Commission to assist Iraq in getting their sewage system repaired and to turn on the lights again. Let the UN enlist the European Union, the Chinese Tongs and the Brazilian cozinheiras to help and send their own halliburtons there.. Then rush every American soldier home and put them to work.”

“What work? Where am I going to produce all the jobs needed?”

“Didn’t you agree with Lou Dobb that all the illegal immigrants in the country must be gathered and shipped back to their countries of origin? All 12 million of them?”

“Yes, but.. “

“Georgie, if they do, you’ll have 12 million jobs to fill!”

I can not say that I overheard this story; it is so rich in meaning however that I must pass it on to you:
A man walked to the top of a hill to talk to God.
The man asked, "God, what's a million years to you?"
And God said "A minute."
Then the man asked:
"Well, what's a million dollars to you?"
And God said: "A penny"
Then the man asked:
"God... can I have a penny?"
And God said:
"Sure... In a minute."

CUT AND RUN

"We're not looking for an exit strategy. We are looking for victory" Vice President Dick Cheney said in an interview with Time posted on the magazine's Web site a few days ago.

He added that there would be no departure from the administration's insistence that U.S. force levels be dictated by the security situation in Iraq, not subject to political expediency.

“That is great, Mister Vice President. It is always reassuring to hear our leaders define their objectives with such firmness. But my question is what do you call victory and how can it be achieved?”

For a moment there I thought the Vice President was going to ask me to do what he asked Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy to do (remember “Go f...yourself!?”) He controlled his temper and said:



“In this case, victory means the achievement of all the goals we set up before we entered into this conflict. It means the creation of a peaceful transition from chaos to political and social well being. It also implies the emergence in the Middle East of a strong democracy and its resulting impact in the policies and attitudes of the neighboring countries!”

“Sounds great Mister Vice President. The question is simply how?”

Again that look that could mean a suggestion to me similar to that made to Senator Leahy. But, again, he controlled himself as he got up and said:

“By doing what I am doing right now. We cut and run!”
