

Administration's Offenses Impeachable

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Let's consider an item from the news of about two weeks ago

A British citizen leaked a memo to London's Sunday Times. The memo was of the written account of a meeting that a man named Richard Dearlove had with the Bush administration in July 2002. Dearlove was the head of the England's MI-6, the equivalent of the CIA. On July 23, 2002, Dearlove briefed Tony Blair about the meeting. He said that Bush was determined to attack Iraq. He said that Bush knew that U.S. intelligence had no evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and no links to foreign terrorists, that there was no imminent danger to the U.S. from Iraq. But, since Bush was determined to go to war, "Intelligence and facts are being fixed around the policy." "Fixed" means faked, manufactured, conjured, hyped - the product of whole cloth fabrication.

So we got aluminum tubes, mushroom clouds imported from Niger, biological weapons labs in weather trucks, fear and trembling, the phony ultimatums to Saddam Hussein to turn over the weapons he didn't have and thus couldn't. We got the call to arms, the stifling of dissent, the parade of retired generals strategizing on the "news" shows, with us or against us, flags in the lapel, a craven media afraid to look for a truth that might disturb their corporate owners who would profit from the war. Shock and Awe. Fallujah. Abu Ghraib.

It was all a lie. Many of us have said for a long time it was a lie. But here it is in black and white: Lies from a president who has taken a sacred trust to uphold the Constitution of the United States.

So, what does it mean? It means that our president and all of his administration are war criminals. It's as simple as that. They lied to the American people, have killed and injured and traumatized thousands of American men and women doing their patriotic duty, killed at least 100,000 Iraqi civilians, destroyed Iraq's infrastructure and poisoned its environment, squandered billions and billions of our tax dollars, made a mockery of American integrity in the world, changed the course of history, tortured Iraqi prisoners, and bound us intractably to an insane situation that they have no idea how to fix because they had no plan, but greed and empire, in the first place.

What does it mean? It means that everyone in this administration should be impeached. It means that our Maine Sens. Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins and our Congressmen Tom Allen and Mike Michaud should call for immediate impeachment. They were lied to by their president, voted for war, and are thus complicit in the multiply betrayals of the American people unless they stand up now for the truth.

Richard Nixon was impeached for a cover-up of a two-bit break-in. William Cohen, a young Maine Republican, played an important role for the prosecution in those proceedings. Bill

Clinton was impeached for lying about sex with an intern. Now we have the irrefutable evidence that George W. Bush lied about the reasons for taking the United States to war. The intelligence wasn't flawed. The weapons weren't hidden. Our elected leaders were lying.

Democracy, like any sound relationship between people, is built on trust. We trust our leaders to tell the truth so that the consent that we give them is honestly informed. If the consent is won through manipulation, propaganda, fear, or lies, the basis of our democracy has been subverted. It is no longer democracy at all, but we continue to call it that because we have not the courage or stamina to demand its overhaul.

We live a lie when we fail to hold leaders accountable for their lies. By not calling now for impeachment, we are saying that we condone hypocrisy, pseudo-democracy, and murdering thousands of Americans and Iraqis for strategic control of energy resources that we have no right to. Patriotism demands that we insist on the ideals of democracy, not that we support the "leaders" who cynically destroy them.

What's curious is why anyone like me should have to even point this out. Don't our senators and congressmen feel betrayed? Are they content to continue the murdering rather than do what truth demands? Do they think they can lie to history, too. Do they think that this little Iraq problem will somehow just go away, that the courageous resistance to the United States occupation will give up and hand Bush the keys to the oil wells? Do they think that any of the grave crises facing the world now – energy consumption, global warming, species extinction – can be solved by lying about them?

We are living in an age of no accountability. It's also an age upon which may hang the survival of human life on this earth. One should not bet one's future on people who abjure responsibility.

The first courageous step is to come to terms with what we know is true: America's president lied to America's people to create an unnecessary war. I ask Sens. Snowe and Collins, Reps. Allen and Michaud to take that step. Begin impeachment proceedings. It's really no more or less than their duty. It's also the first step toward restoring America's integrity.

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