



A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance -

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

Is there not some chosen curse, Some hidden thunder in the stores of heaven,
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin?

— Joseph Addison

THE LEAKER-IN-CHIEF: "I don't know of anybody in my administration who leaked classified information," said George W. Bush on September 30, 2003. "If somebody did leak classified information, I'd like to know it, and we'll take the appropriate action."

"If someone leaked classified information," said White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan on October 7, 2003, "the President wants to know. If someone in this administration leaked classified information, they will no longer be a part of this administration, because that's not the way this White House operates, that's not the way this President expects people in his administration to conduct their business."

"I'd like to know if somebody in my White House did leak sensitive information," said Bush on October 28, 2003. On this same day, Bush said, "I have no idea whether we'll find out who the leaker is, partially because, in all due respect to your profession, you do a very good job of protecting the leakers."

The Valerie Plame Case: To refresh readers' memories: *On Target* wrote of the 2003 "outing" of undercover CIA analyst Valerie Plame in earlier issues. Valerie Plame is the wife of a former American ambassador by the name of Joseph Wilson. Special prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald has been investigating the matter for the last two years.

Just recently Patrick Fitzgerald stated in a court filing that his investigators have obtained evidence during the course of the two-year-old probe that proves several White House officials conspired to discredit former Ambassador Joseph Wilson, a critic of the administration's pre-war Iraq intelligence. Read on:

Americans have found out who the leaker is: *TruthOut* investigative reporter Jason Leopold wrote in the first of two reports that, "Attorneys and current and former White House officials close to the investigation into the leak of covert CIA operative Valerie Plame Wilson said that President Bush gave Vice President Dick Cheney the authorization in mid-June 2003 to disclose a portion of the highly

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sensitive National Intelligence Estimate to *Washington Post* reporter Bob Woodward and former *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller."

In the second of Leopold's reports, he writes, "Special Prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald stated in a court filing late Wednesday in the CIA leak case that his investigators have obtained evidence during the course of the two-year-old probe that proves several White House officials conspired to discredit former Ambassador Joseph Wilson, a critic of the administration's pre-war Iraq intelligence. This is the first time the special counsel has acknowledged that White House officials are alleged to have engaged in a coordinated effort to undercut the former ambassador's credibility by disseminating classified intelligence information that would have contradicted Wilson's public statements."

So there it is: We have Bush authorizing the disclosure of classified information, and we have that disclosure taking place for no other reason than to discredit an administration critic. Bush is often fond of defending his wildly inappropriate and often illegal activities by claiming that he has every right to do whatever he wants because America is "at war".

Never mind that no war has actually been declared. If we take his premise that we are in fact at war, then the disclosure of classified information for political gain must be defined simply and directly.

It is treason: Representative Jane Harman, ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, made the following statement on Thursday. "Leaking classified information to the press when you want to get your side out or silence your critics is not appropriate. The reason we classify things is to protect our sources – those who risk their lives to give us secrets. Who knows how many sources were burned by giving Libby this 'license to leak?' If I had leaked the information, I'd be in jail. Why should the President be above the law?"

"The President has the legal authority to declassify information," continued Harman, "but there are normal channels for doing so. Telling an aide to leak classified information to the *New York Times* is not a normal channel. A normal declassification procedure would involve going back to the originating agency, such as the CIA, and then putting out a public, declassified version of the document. I am stunned that the President won't tell the full the Intelligence Committee about the NSA program because he's allegedly concerned about leaks, when it turns out that he is the Leaker-in-Chief."

We can even take this a step further. The name of covert CIA operative Valerie Plame was all over the classified National Intelligence Estimate Bush ordered to be leaked.

The pertinent text of the 1947 National Security Act reads as follows:

SEC. 601. (50 U.S.C. 421)

(a) Whoever, having or having had authorized access to classified information that identifies a covert agent, intentionally discloses any information identifying such covert agent to any individual not authorized to receive classified information, knowing that the information disclosed so identifies such covert agent and that the United States is taking affirmative measures to conceal such covert agent's intelligence relationship to the United States, shall be fined under title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.

(b) Whoever, as a result of having authorized access to classified information, learns the identity of a covert agent and intentionally discloses any information identifying such covert agent to any individual not authorized to receive classified information, knowing that the information disclosed so identifies such covert agent and that the United States is taking affirmative measures to conceal such covert

agent's intelligence relationship to the United States, shall be fined under title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(c) Whoever, in the course of a pattern of activities intended to identify and expose covert agents and with reason to believe that such activities would impair or impede the foreign intelligence activities of the United States, discloses any information that identifies an individual as a covert agent to any individual not authorized to receive classified information, knowing that the information disclosed so identifies such individual and that the United States is taking affirmative measures to conceal such individual's classified intelligence relationship to the United States, shall be fined under title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned not more than three years or both.

George W. Bush and his people:

- lied with their bare faces hanging out about the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.
- lied about connections between al Qaeda and the Iraqi government,
- lied about Iraqi connections to September 11, and further
- lied about the threat to America posed by Iraq.
- made a decision to invade that had nothing to do with those weapons, and even conspired with their British counterparts to goad Hussein into a war regardless of whether the weapons were there or not.
- used September 11 against the American people to frighten them into a fearfully subservient acceptance of the invasion.
- bypassed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act in order to spy illegally on thousands of American citizens.
- leaked classified intelligence information in order to destroy a political foe, and in the process annihilated an intelligence network run by Valerie Plame. That network, it should be noted, was dedicated to tracking any person, nation or group that would deliver weapons of mass destruction to terrorists.
- Every time they broke the law, their cronies in Congress manipulated those laws to make the actions taken legal.

Lies have consequences:

- Tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians are dead.
- Tens of thousands more Iraqi civilians have been maimed.
- Millions of Iraqis live with the wretched deprivations caused by this war.
- The new Shia-dominated government wants no part of American involvement in this, and their so-called armed forces are in truth death squads masquerading as police and soldiers.
- 2,345 American soldiers have been killed in Iraq, with 17 of those deaths coming in the first six days of April alone.
- Tens of thousands more American soldiers have been grievously wounded; nearly two thirds of all injuries suffered by American soldiers in Iraq are brain injuries, and amount to permanent debilitation.

We will be generations digging out from under the vomitous refuse left behind by this administration. From this day forward, any politician who claims that censure is not appropriate and impeachment is a waste of time should have their head examined by a whole team of medical experts. Bush and his people have committed treason, and did so for the lowest of reasons: personal gain and political protection.

"The dead cannot cry out for justice," said Lois McMaster Bujold. "It is a duty of the living to do so for them." **So very many have died at the hands of this administration, its lies, and its crimes.** If there is to be no reckoning for this, even after all this time, there will never again be a person in America who can speak of justice while keeping a straight face.

From truthout/Perspective 7/4/06 by William Rivers Pitt: William Rivers Pitt is a *New York Times* and internationally bestselling author of two books: "*War on Iraq: What Team Bush Doesn't Want You to Know*" and "*The Greatest Sedition Is Silence*".

LOOKING BACK TO TRASH by James Reed: *The Weekend Australian Magazine* (18-19/3/06, p.6) devoted an article to *Oz* magazine which in 1971 featured in Britain's longest obscenity case. In the middle of the "sexual revolution" *Oz* magazine was typical of the counter culture of the time. All of this doesn't concern me as much as the spirit behind *Oz*. Here is the opening paragraph of *The WEA Magazine* article: "*Oz* was born in the bland, conservative world of the early '60s. it was the Menzies era: Australia was white Anglo Saxon, culturally barren and very, very insular. The Queen, the Church and the RSL ruled the day. If you did anything radical, you were a communist. To call for the White Australia policy to end was a betrayal of our boys killed by the Japanese. Like lots of young people, we wanted to take the place by the scruff of the neck and change it."

Change it they, and others like them, did. Now we are the fringe dwellers and the dispossessed majority. As I pen this article I have before me an email about some of my criticisms of women. Although I have responded to this in another article, ladies may like to consider this offering from *The Weekend Australian*, 18-19/3/06, in an article by Gary Shteyngart, celebrating the literary works of Jewish writer Philip Roth. Here are the opening paragraphs:

Shiksa (shik' suh) n. "gentile girl", from Yiddish *shikse* from Hebrew *siqsa*, from *sheqes*, "a detested thing" + fem. suffix-a.

To fly away on the wings of a *shiksa*. To be near a *shiksa*, hold her, feel the warm downy mouth of one traditionally detested by my own people. To touch a *shiksa*, there, there and especially there. To be beloved by another kind. Essentially, to be free.

I read Philip Roth's "Portnoy's Complaint" as a teenage member of the last Jewish migration to America (the Soviet one) and came down with *shiksa* fever the same night I got the humour, believe me, the humour nearly gave me a kidney infection. But what I remember most was the longing. The longing of a 15-year-old boy educated at a Queens Hebrew school, taught not to eat his beloved ham, to tie phylacteries around his arm and head and thank the Lord each day that he was not born a woman, a longing for what my college professors would later tell me was "the other". There they were, alive, real and oh so fleshy on the page. Kay Campbell, the Antioch College *shiksa* of Alexander Portnoy's youth, "a robust genial, large-hearted, large-assed girl with a sweet baby face". Eventually I went to a college in Ohio just to find her (and find her I did). Then there was the angry, abusive working-class parents (she spells the word "dear" d-i-r): how many Monkeys I try to save and reform a la Portnoy?

There you have it: cultured writing for today. That is how far we have come, when an author whose key work focuses primarily upon such grotty themes is hailed as a genius. Give me the bland, conservative world of Anglo Saxon's of old, any day.

And by the way, did any gentle ladies see the above paragraphs and make the appropriate complaints? Remember, criticism and debate, as well as complaint, is the lifeblood of democracy.