

## **APPEASEMENT**

*The year was 1938 and though many of us did not realize or recognize its significance –I was thirteen caught in the labyrinth of the times, in military school-but the world was teetering on the brink of war. Adolf Hitler, fresh from diplomatic triumphs in the Rhineland and the Anschluss-the annexation of Austria-he now had his sights on the Sudetenland, a predominant German area within Czechoslovakia. Meetings were held in Berchtesgaden and Munich, Germany with representatives from GB, France, Germany and the Czechs. The die was cast as Hitler promised ‘my last territorial claim’ and won the day. Neville Chamberlain, then Prime Minister of GB went home with the bromide, “Peace in our time” and the word, ‘appeasement’ became household.*

*Appeasement- the policy of giving in to the demands of a hostile and aggressive power in an attempt to keep the peace-was born. Much like the infamous word, ‘quisling’ from Vidkun Quisling, a Norwegian politician who betrayed his country to the Nazis, became a puppet leader – a traitor. These were the moments leading to WWII.*

*Recently while speaking to the Israeli Knesset, President George Bush used the word appeasement in comparing any dealings with terrorist organizations or states sponsoring terrorism. He was alluding to Hamas(perhaps Carter)and Hezbollah as well as their sponsor, Iran. Inference seem to point to Barack Obama whose mention of meeting with Iran and others without preconditions had surfaced in debates. Obama and a host of Democrats assumed he was the target and they came to his side. Obama vehemently denied he would appease anyone and believed Bush to be taking political license. Though Hillary was mute*

*many recalled her taking issue with Obama over his naivete in foreign policy and his desire to meet with all states and leaders without pre-conditions in a few contentious debates. John McCain has reminded of 'an apparent naivete' in this regard and has questioned Obama's judgment.*

*Merrily we roll along, roll along, as the jingle goes and many wonder what will be the strategy for taking on the enemy(whoever that is), the dimension of the Iraq war, and its consequences, as well as in what part of the strategic picture is Afghanistan? Many of us have questioned the never-ending war in Iraq and would argue it has become separated from the so-called early strategy of 'war against terror'. McCain recently laid out a myriad of things and argued that by the end of his first term, the war will be over, and bin-Laden in custody. This may be naive, but certainly hopeful. Other than the proposal to 'end our involvement in Iraq, bring the troops home or redeploy elsewhere, and turn the responsibility over to Iraq' Obama and Clinton offer no certain panacea or strategy. As the debacle of the post-operational phase became clear, too few troops, no apparent plan to secure, police and occupy the whole country, it was easy to visualize a never-ending war lacking strategy and purpose. Early withdrawal before the counter-insurgency plan is completed is defeatist and a return to insurgent civil war and a continuing cauldron in the Middle East.*

*Because of the failure of the occupation/security portion of the war, it is difficult to reinvent the wheel. But only McCain has the real opportunity(and will)to develop a strategy that defines the enemy, place pressure on the moderate Islam states, and recognize that this war of shadows and ghosts will continue as long as the dream of pure Islam permeates the atmosphere.*