

## ***ECONOMY AND WAR – THE DILEMMA***

***LET ME INVITE YOU TO A DISCUSSION ON THE KEY PROBLEMS FACING THE TWO SELECTED CHOICES FOR PRESIDENT AND WONDER IF EITHER IS UP TO THE TASK? OH YES, THERE ARE OTHER PROBLEMS THAT SPIN-OFF, AND POSE CHALLENGES BUT IF THE ECONOMICAL SHIP CONTINUES TO FLOUNDER, AND THE ‘WAR AGAINST TERRORISM’- UNDECLARED, STRATEGICALLY MARRED, AND AIMLESSLY SEEKING A FINITE ENEMY AND END-GAME-STUMBLES, THE REST IS SUPERFLUOUS.***

***ADAM SMITH SAID A MARKET SYSTEM, ANALYZED, COULD COMBINE THE FREEDOM OF INDIVIDUALS TO PURSUE THEIR OWN OBJECTIVES WITH THE EXTENSIVE COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION NEEDED IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD TO PRODUCE OUR FOOD, CLOTHING AND HOUSING. BOTH SIDES TO AN EXCHANGE CAN BENEFIT AS LONG AS IT IS VOLUNTARY. MILTON FRIEDMAN, A MONETARIST ARGUED THAT THE COUNTRY’S ECONOMY CAN BE CONTROLLED THROUGH ITS MONEY SUPPLY AND FOUND SOLACE IN THE WORK OF FREDERICH HAYEK, AUSTRIAN-BORN ECONOMIST WHO WAS A BRITISH SUBJECT AND TAUGHT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO WHEN FRIEDMAN WAS THERE. ‘ROAD TO SERFDOM’ WAS THE CRY OF HAYEK AGAINST THE SOCIALISTS FEARING THE INDIVIDUALISTS WERE COMPROMISED BY COLLECTIVISM IN THE GUISE OF HELPING EVERYONE, OFTEN FALLING UNDER THE CONTROL OF GOVERNMENT. HITLER’S GERMANY AND STALIN’S RUSSIA FIT THE MANTLE.***

***KEYNES HELD THAT FULL EMPLOYMENT AND A STABLE ECONOMY DEPENDED ON A CONTINUAL GOVERNMENTAL STIMULATION OF SPENDING AND INVESTMENT THROUGH ADJUSTMENT OF INTERST RATES AND TAX RATES, DEFICIT SPENDING, ETC WHILE LAFFER THEORIZED WITH GRAFTS SHOWING THAT INCREASING TAX RATES BEYOND A CERTAIN POINT CAUSED A REDUCTION IN REVENUES AND DISCOURAGED PRODUCTION AND INVESTMENT.***

***OBAMA CLAIMS TO BE A PRO-GROWTH, FREE-MARKET GUY YET HIS MESSAGE AND SUPPORT SEEM TO BE PARLAYED BY ECONOMISTS WHO AID HIS STATIST PLATFORM, PROTECTI-ONISM AND BIG GOVERNMENT. HEALTH CARE FOR ALL AP-PEARS EXCITING BUT WHO WILL PAY FOR IT, PERHAPS A PORTION BY OVERTURNING THE BUSH TAX CUTS –AT LEAST FOR THE RICH. MCCAIN ARGUES FOR LESS GOV-ERNMENTAL INTERFERENCE AND TALKS OF HIGH DEDUC-TIBLES IN HEALTH CARE AND HEALTH DEPOSIT PLANS MUCH LIKE INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTS IN SOCIAL SECURITY. HE WOULD KEEP THE BUSH TAX CUTS IN PLACE.***

***THIS WRITER HAS CONTINUED TO ARGUE FOR A STRATEGY THAT DEFINES THE ENEMY AS MILITANT ISLAM, A MOVE-MENT AND NATION INSPIRED BY ISLAMIC THEORISTS AND WOULD DISCARD THE MISNOMER(WAR AGAINST TERROR). THIS WOULD REQUIRE THE NEW PRESIDENT TO VISIT WITH THOSE NATIONS WHO CONTINUE TO HARBOR, FINANCE AND OVERLOOK THE RADICALS IN THEIR MIDST. IF THEY CANNOT CLEAN HOUSE, THEN A DECLARATION OF WAR MAY BE REQUIRED. IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN MUST BE TIED TOGETHER AS PART OF THE STRATEGY AND MUST BE CONSIDERED AS FRIEND OR FOE. INCLUDING IN THE MIX WOULD BE MILITANT IRAN(AND HEZBOLLAH) AND HAMAS WITH TIES TO SYRIA AND PALESTINIANS. PAKIS-TAN –THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE TALIBAN BEFORE AND NOW- MUST JOIN WITH THE UNITED STATES AND THE COALITION TO OUST THE ISLAM INSURGENTS IN THE SANCTUARIES ALONG THE PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN BOR-DER, SEEK OUT LEADERS AND BIN-LADEN.***

***NEITHER OF THE PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFULS HAVE REALLY SPOKE IN EXACTITUDE AS TO THEIR WAR STRATEGY TO TAKE ON ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS. OBAMA SPEAKS OF IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN BEING SEPARATE AND REMINDS HE WAS ALWAYS AGAINST THE WAR, SEEKS EARLIER WITHDRAWAL OF US FORCES IN IRAQ, AND A SHIFTING OF MORE TROOPS TO AFGHANISTAN. HE NEVER MENTIONS THAT ISLAM IS THE PROBLEM. HIS DISCUSSION OF THE WAR TENDS TO BE A PROFESSORIAL DEBATE BETWEEN***

*SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM RATHER THAN ANY SPECIFIC STRATEGY. MCCAIN, TOO, TALKS OF 'ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS' BUT DOES NOT REALLY PRESENT IDEAS OR A POTENTIAL STRATEGY FOR FIGHTING A CONTINUING ISLAMIC ENCROACHMENT IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD. HE TAKES CREDIT FOR 'THE SURGE' (ALONG WITH BUSH) BUT DOES NOT DEFINE IT. THE SURGE IS AN INCREASE IN TROOPS TO SUPPORT A TACTICAL MISSION SUCH AS COUNTER-INSURGENCY. THUS, THE SURGE IS NOT A STRATEGY, PER SE.*

*'WAR AND DECISION' - THE CHRONOLOGY HIGHLIGHTING THE BATTLES BETWEEN THE DEFENSE AND STATE DEPARTMENTS AS TO THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM- HAS BEEN SET FORTH BY DOUGLAS FEITH, UNDERSECRETARY FOR POLICY BETWEEN THE YEARS 2001-5 AND CONTRADICTS THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM IN BOOKS ABOUT THE WAR, BUSH, TERRORISM. THE SUBSTANCE OF THE BOOK'S TALE AUGURS BADLY FOR THE AMERICAN FUTURE. IT REEKS OF HIGH-LEVEL BUREAUCRATS WHOSE ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, THOUGH FORMED IN THE IDIOM OF THE NATIONAL INTEREST, MOST OFTEN REFLECT OFFICE PREJUDICES, PARTISAN COMMITMENTS AND PERSONAL RIVALRIES. THEY DISSIMULATE. COMING IN FOR HEAVIEST CRITICISM ARE SECRETARY OF STATE, COLIN POWELL AND HIS ASSISTANT, RICHARD ARMITAGE WHO 'SUBVERSIVELY' TENDED TO OBTAIN AND THEN TO UNDERMINE THE PRESIDENT'S DESIRE TO UNDO THE REGIMES OF AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ WITHOUT ARGUING EXPLICITLY FOR THAT POSITION. THE REAL PROBLEM WAS HOW TO DEFINE ALL THE STATES THAT HARBORED THE TERRORISTS (IDEOLOGICALLY, SAFE HAVENS, FUNDS, ETC) AND DECLARE WAR AGAINST THE MANY, SOME WHO WERE ALLIES? THEREIN LAY THE RUB AND HAUNTS US TODAY.*