

A MONTAGE OF WAR

War is an enigma! It is said war is armed conflict between countries and between factions within a country. This certainly fits Afghanistan and Iraq yet - in the former from its outset it had a touch of the conventional to oust a fanatic Islamic terror group (Taliban) now returning as guerrillas. Iraq appeared as Gulf One revisited with a combination of conventional means described as 'shock and awe' then becoming part insurgency and part sectarian civil war - historical Sunni versus Shiia - as US led coalition attempted to push Iraqis to take back their country with political and military teeth. The new counter insurgency plan with the mission to clear, hold and build, will operate separately on two axes: Abood (Iraqi) Petraeus (US) on either side of the Euphrates River. Increase of 20,000 soldiers and marines will participate in Baghdad and Anbar Province. Started!

Recent Presidential press conference of note: the incongruity of Congress supporting Petraeus nomination to full General and commander of the new counter-insurgency plan despite placing restrictions against the troop surge and plan; agreement by North Korea to allegedly delay and stop nuclear program - a financial incentive (food for the population) proffered; Quds, Iranian Republican Guard special unit, accused of sending EFPs (Explosive Fire penetrator) to insurgents in Iraq - said to be more lethal than IEDs while leadership denies. New intelligence estimate suggests WMD threat overblown and administration targeted - in retrospect as 'cooking the books'.

Reasons for war in perspective: Gulf One found evidence of WMDs, destroyed some and highlighted a

nuclear program and CW(Chem wpn)BW(Bio wpn) used against Iran in the 1988 war and Kurds. Inspectors inferred nuclear program re-started after Gulf One; they were kicked out in 1998 and defectors said program ongoing. US Congress and UN supported the operation against Iraq based on the ultimatum for Saddam to step down or suffer consequences; Added to this was failure to comply with Gulf One UN sanctions and evidence of oil smuggling and exploitation of the humanitarian Oil for Food program. Deterrence in the form of overflights, and successful defeat of Kurdish/Shiia coup attempts collectively were found wanting. Continuing threats to Kuwait, the Emirates and Saudi Arabia included oil fields and possible attacks. A tie between Saddam and al-Qaeda based on terrorist ideology was tenuous at best....but put in the mix.

Presidential aspirants, like puppets dance and perform with a menu of appetisers: Lady Clinton rationalizes her vote for war in Iraq-if she had known then as now, she would oppose; Edwards parrots his erstwhile running mate,"I voted for the war before I was against it." Springfield, was locale, like Lincoln for Obama whose charisma bemuses the wiser heads perhaps seeking the 'beef'. Voting against the war he would bring troops home now.

Hero of New York, Giuliani the crime fighter and man in the 'arena' when terrorists struck, along with war-hero McCain whose sense cries out for more troops see great potential in the new operational plan. Republican revival guru, Gingrich brings ideas to the table while Mitt Romney -in the shadow of Massachu-

**setts mafia(Kerry and Kennedy)-speaks of morality,
ethics and promise.**

Send in the clowns....maybe next year!