

....OF GODLIKE STATURE

“The battle royal over the Constitution exposed such glaring rifts in the country that America needed a first president of unimpeachable integrity who would embody the rich promise of the new republic. It had to be someone of godlike stature who would seem to levitate above partisan politics, a symbol of national unity as well as a functioning chief executive. Everybody knew that George Washington alone could manage the paradoxical feat of being a politician above politics.”
-from Alexander Hamilton by Ron Chernow.

Perhaps it is a stretch to imagine that either of the two presidential candidates have Godlike stature yet the times of unending war and economic malaise cries out for example, leadership and integrity...and know-how! If only one could be certain of both, or one or neither? Both seem to fall far short of a Washington. Let's take a closer look.

People who know me say ‘like McCain you are older than dirt’, an old soldier and combat veteran, a quasi-conservative, and one who is proud to be an American who flies the Stars and Stripes from a flag pole on his front lawn. Hence a McCain supporter. I confess I am and recall a visit with military friends in Arizona to push McCain for the Senate years ago. At the moment I think McCain has the mettle both physically and mentally to do the job. In a prison camp he found the will and fortitude to endure, something he could draw on in times of stress and challenge.

As I mentioned in an earlier article in praise of Colin Powell as a military commander and strategist-perhaps a quiet voice in post-operational phase of the Iraq war as Secretary of State-one I could have voted for as President. With his eloquence, intelligence, and charisma, a seeming voice for all seasons and positions, like Kerry, Obama, has run a professional campaign, yet remains an enigma to me and others. What is his core, the real essence of his mind and soul?

As president what are the challenges? At the top of the list is the 'war' undeclared and unending. Again a new strategy is needed: to define its parameters and goals. One says to remain and win, and the other says we shouldn't have been there in the first place. Both are nebulous and vague. We must put away the misnomer 'War against Terrorism' and define the enemy as Islam. It's range should include Afghanistan and Iraq with a warning to Iran—all of which have an Islam flavor and influence. Like the resurgence of the Taliban—a step-child of the Pakistan madrassas—Iraq is like a benign volcano potentially unstable. Should we reinvent the wheel, remain, and pose the threat of a wider war or redeploy Iraq forces elsewhere while maintaining Mid-east stability? Or set a date and get out? Daunting decisions in the mix!!

Next the energy crisis where oil sits on the powder keg. Gulf One had the impetus of stopping Iraq and Saddam Hussein from moving from Kuwait into Saudi Arabia and oil monopoly. Islam strategists must view the rise of gasoline prices in the United States a part of the potential fall of this decadent empire. So there is a need to stop day-dreaming and get on the road to independence from foreign oil. All energy sources to include nuclear should be entertained and the strategic reserve, in part, applied. Oil drilling an interim must. Like puppets McCain and Obama will have a dance on this one.

Economists rile over recession or not, and an icon, Milton Friedman, now gone must wonder who is at the controls. Trade, falling dollar, too little or too much finesse by the Federal Reserve questionable and the mortgage mess continues with greedy ones alert. Entitlements on the table and the gamblers argue that Social Security and Medicare will endure while others decry the potential for bankruptcy. Health care has all

the earmarks of socialized medicine and its shortfall or health programs selected by individuals with high deductibles and some employer/government aid. If this isn't enough to ruin your day, what about the immigration dilemma, cultural and religious disparities and the paradox of patriotism often argued in a relative way by conservatives and liberals.

So you want to be President? Good Luck!