

THE PRESIDENT AND HIS TRIALS

LAST YEARS OF THE BUSH PRESIDENCY HAD GOOD MOMENTS AND BAD. COUNTER-INSURGENCY (INVEST – HOLD-STAY-AND BUILD) WAS SUCCESSFUL IN BAGHDAD AND ENVIRONS AND PROVIDED IRAQ WITH QUASI-SECURITY AND CONFIDENCE ABOUT THE FUTURE; TOO AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN, THOUGH POSING NEW THREATS FROM AL-QAEDA AND THE TALIBAN, RECEIVED NEW EMPHASIS. ROGUE NUCLEAR NATIONS (NORTH KOREA, AND BUDDING IRAN) POSE UNCERTAIN CONCERNS FOR THEIR NEIGHBORS AND THE WORLD. AN UNSTABLE ECONOMY IN RECESSION, WITH A HINT OF WORSE AS FINANCIAL MARKETS STRUGGLE AND UNEMPLOYMENT ROSE, IN TRANSITION, HAVE POSED CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW PRESIDENT.

SIX MONTHS INTO HIS PRESIDENCY, OBAMA HAS APPOINTED ENVOYS TO OVERSEE THE AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN THEATERS TO INCLUDE NEW TROOP DEPLOYMENTS AND REQUEST FOR MORE NATO HELP. ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN FOR RECONCILIATION AND PEACE, AS WELL AS OPENINGS FOR DIALOGUE WITH IRAN AND OTHERS IN THE MIDEAST AIMS AT DISPELLING THREATS AGAINST ISLAM, PER SE. VISITS TO EUROPE, RUSSIA INFERRING PAST TRANSGRESSIONS AND OFFERING APOLOGIES. WITH A ROOSEVELTIAN FLAVOR OF ECONOMIC REVIVAL, STIMULANTS, BAIL-OUTS OF BANKS, INVESTMENT FIRMS AND THE AUTO INDUSTRY HAS LONG RANGE SUGGESTION OF SUCCESS BUT SADDLED WITH ASTRONOMICAL DEBT, HIGHER INFLATION AND NO CERTAINTY OF JOB INCREASE IN THE NEAR TIME. ON TOP WE HAVE AN ENERGY SAVINGS PLAN CALLED CAP AND TRADE AND NATIONALIZED HEALTH – THAT MANY WOULD ARGUE, SOCIALISM PERSONIFIED, AND POTENTIAL FOR TURNING THE ECONOMY AROUND.

TROUBLE LOOMS FOR THESE AMBITIOUS PLANS WITH MONEY EVERYWHERE, PRINTED, BORROWED FROM OTHERS, THE WONDER WHO WILL PAY FOR IT ALL. PERHAPS MOST OMINOUS IS STEALTH HEALTH PROGRAM THAT LEADS TO SPECULATION, FEAR, AND COLLECTIVISM – IF

NOT SOCIALISM, DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROVERBIAL 'BIG BROTHER' OF GEORGE ORWELL LOOKING OVER OUR BACKS. THIS AND THE REAL SERIOUS THREAT OF A NEW BREAKOUT OF WAR IN THE MIDEAST AS ISRAEL WONDERS AND WAITS – BUT NOT INEVITABLY- FOR IRAN'S NUCLEAR PLANS.

TO THIS OBSERVER THE LATTER IS MORE SERIOUS THAN THE HEALTH PLAN ROLLER COASTER!

PRESIDENT NETANYAHU HAS OFFERED A PLAN FOR A PALESTINIAN STATE A CHANGE FROM HIS EARLIER RELUCTANCE: THE NEW STATE WOULD HAVE TO BE TOTALLY DEMILITARIZED, AND THAT ITS AIRSPACE WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO THE ISRAEL AIR FORCE, THAT JERUSALEM WOULD BE UNDIVIDED AS THE CAPITAL OF THE JEWISH STATE, THAT PALESTINIAN REFUGEES COULD RETURN TO THIS NEW STATE, BUT NOT TO ISRAEL. SETTLEMENTS NOW BEING BUILT IN JUDEA/SAMARIA(THE WEST BANK)-ANCIENT BIBLICAL HOMELAND OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE- WOULD NOT BE DISMANTLED AT THIS TIME, AND THAT THE PALESTINIANS ACKNOWLEDGE ISRAEL'S STATE AND RIGHT TO EXIST. THIS HAS COME ABOUT WITH RECENT PRESSURE FROM THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION. TO DATE THE PALESTINIANS HAVE REFUSED THE OFFER.

AS ABBA EBAN, ISRAEL'S FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY PUT IT: "THE ARABS WILL NEVER MISS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MISS AN OPPORTUNITY." THIS ISRAEL OFFER HAS BEEN ON THE TABLE OFF AND ON FOR OVER SEVENTY YEARS, BUT NEVER FROM NETANYAHU. ARIEL SHARON'S OFFER OF GAZA, AND THE MOVEMENT OF ALL JEWS THEREFROM DID NOT BRING JUBILANCE BUT MISSILES FROM THE NEW OCCUPIERS SOON TO BE HAMAS WHOSE PLATFORM NEVER ACCEPTED ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO BE THERE AND EXIST.

LEST WE FORGET, ISRAEL'S PATIENCE IS A NON-SEQUITUR! IT KNOCKED OUT IRAQ'S NUCLEAR REACTOR IN OSIRAQ, 1981 AND NOT SO LONG AGO, IT HIT A SIMILAR NUCLEAR STORAGE AND REACTOR IN SYRIA. AND OBAMA NEEDS TO REALIZE THIS AND QUIT THE AMBIVALENCE.