

THE ROAD TO MANDALAY

In WWII, this central Burmese city along the Irrawaddy River was an objective of British General William Slim's 14th Army in the opening of the Burma Road logistically and tactically pursuant to Japanese defeat there. Remembered in song and verse by Rudyard Kipling it became symbolic for victory for the Allies in that theater.

One could argue there is symbolism as to the road to the White House: victory is sought between two diametrically opposed ideologies and doctrines, and the die is cast.

President Bush asked us soon after 9-11-not to waver, falter, tire or lose patience until victory is achieved, dispelling the age of terror, for an age of liberty here and across the world. Scholarly Samuel Huntington argued that Latinos, Mexicans have not assimilated into mainstream US culture, "forming instead their own political and linguistic enclaves" and a "war of civilizations between Islam and the West a probable scenario". Norman Podhoretz believes we are in WWIV in transition from the US-Soviet confrontation despite ideological conflict over Korea/VN wars, a so-called Cold War between the major powers. Today we see the draw down of US forces in Iraq and a similar pattern charted for Afghanistan. Is this the correct road to take at this time?

Some argue the last 10 years has been democracy slugging it out alongside secular tyranny, brutal theocracy. Arab Spring seemed hopeful but recent election in Egypt reveals an anti-American flavor of Muslim Brotherhood and fanatic Islam rejecting any ties with Israel. Shi'ah and Sunni at odds in Iraq, as usual and the Syrian bloodletting continues. Haqqani Taliban and bin-Laden's Al Qaeda-bosom buddies against the Soviets and the United States alive and well, perhaps ready for re-conquest of Afghanistan. Was it all in vain there?

Obama doctrine set forth post George Bush world suggests US boldness and independence in time after WWII "traditional ideas of American leadership serving American interests have spawned crimes and blunders, ie, in Iran, 1950, Vietnam and recently in Iraq." This became the message of his 2009 speech in Cairo. Our bad behavior running amok! Those who find his foreign policy adrift are wrong; he has a clear agenda for change, but will the vast majority of Americans agree and wish to follow him?

Quoting Jefferson, Obama states, "I hope that our wisdom will grow with our power, and teach us the less we use our power, the greater we will be". He misquoted Jefferson here, that any restraint will be tended by increased naval power to counteract the British.

Those who would chase their Mandalay or symbol of victory would see Mitt Romney, the self-styled businessman whose personal resume exudes success, a squeaky clean family portrait, a suspect picture of health care, and some mystery in financial dealings, and his tax filings; then there is conservative evangelist Santorum, and Paul who infers we caused 9/11 and he would bring the military home, and get economy right....and Newt who would challenge Obama to several debates on his socialist ideology, weak foreign policy, and horrendous debt

*and leadership failings, a legacy as 'food stamp President rather than a paycheck one'
Nothing and no-one is sacred, like influence of Alinsky, his Pastor, and inability to peg Islam
as the chief world threat... "Faith is one of the forces by which men live and the total
absence of it means collapse."*