

10-23-2001

## **Morality, wise foreign policy both necessary**

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# Morality, wise foreign policy both necessary



Columnist

There is a small group of Americans, located principally on college campuses, who pride themselves on being cultural relativists and nonjudgmentalists.

Morality and knowledge are, to them, artificial constructs of those in power to victimize those without power.

Some people like to work in tall buildings, and others like to fly airplanes into them. It would be prejudicial and judgmental to assume that one side is right and the other wrong. They simply have different values.

## Blaming America

Despite this moral relativism, there is one shining beacon of truth in matters of foreign policy which they follow: America is always wrong.

One professor in New Mexico said, "Anyone who would blow up the Pentagon would get my vote."

Another professor in California said that "President Bush is using these attacks as a pretext to kill innocent people and colonize the Arab world to seize oil for the Bush family."

A Massachusetts physics professor said, "The American flag is a symbol of terrorism and death and fear and destruction and oppression."

At Berkeley, the city ordered firefighters to take American flags off their trucks out of fear that students would destroy the trucks if they saw the flags.

Many university presidents reacted to the Sept. 11 tragedy by banning display of the American flag on grounds their commitment to diversity was so great they feared foreign students and dissident Americans might be offended.

To find these academic opinions sick, however, is not to say that our foreign policy is flawless.

Muslims feel hostility toward America because they see us as the banker, armorer and protector of the state of Israel.

Israel is, to them, a neocolonial crusader state of Europeans who have invaded the Islamic world.

They see our war against Iraq in the same way. We have killed a million Iraqi civilians during and after that war, and our continued blockade and bombing, especially the presence of 20,000 U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, their holy land, are further fuel for terrorist fires.

## Choices to make

Given a choice, they would prefer to see Israel gone from the region, but they know that will not happen.

The best alternative hope for peace is a Palestinian state as part of a mutual security treaty with Israel.

And we must resolve the Iraqi problem: Either get out and declare victory, or go to Baghdad and remove Saddam Hussein. Then our troops can leave Saudi Arabia.

The demands of some to make war on every nation which has used terrorism is a nonstarter, and President Bush knows this. He has called only for action against terror "with a global reach" and which is "ongoing." At present, that means Afghanistan and the al Qaeda network, wherever that might lead us.

Much as we may deplore and protest what Iraqis do to Kurds or what Palestinians do to Israelis or Israelis do to Palestinians or what Pakistanis do to Indians or what Hutus do to Tutsis, these actions are regional, are not directed at America and are not global threats.

A wise and measured military response in Afghanistan, now underway, and a more constructive foreign policy are the best way to end terrorism and honor the memory of those Americans who died at the hands of terrorists.



David Bowen of Jackson is a former member of Congress who represented Mississippi's 2nd District. Bowen, a writer and consultant, is a regular contributing columnist to *The Clarion-Ledger*.