

No Surrender by Dan Jacoby

As negotiations (such as they are) between George W. Bush and the Democratic leaders in Congress for our continued occupation of Iraq drag on, the only “progress” that seems to be made is in the rhetoric being spouted by Republican talking heads. The latest phrase they’ve come up with is calling any withdrawal a “surrender date.”

The implication of this phrase is that anyone who favors pulling our troops out of Iraq is somehow un-American. But the Republicans who use this phrase are once again ignoring the facts, and they are putting America in greater danger than ever.

As I wrote three years ago (#30, “Who’s the Sorcerer” – March 30, 2004), “Instead of making the world safer, President Bush has made the world more dangerous... Thanks to Bush’s lies and arrogance, people are signing up with terror organizations around the world.” George W. Bush has become the poster child for Al Qaeda recruitment. In the meantime, today’s New York Times reports that we have sent over \$5 billion to Pakistan to pay for a fight against Al Qaeda and the Taliban that they are not fighting (“U.S. Pays Pakistan to Fight Terror, but Patrols Ebb”).

The essential fact is, every day we occupy Iraq while ignoring what is happening (or not happening) in Pakistan strengthens the terrorists and weakens America.

Which brings us back to those Republican talking heads. They don’t appear to realize that their position, and their rhetoric in support of that position, is hurting America. If this is the case, then they are too stupid to represent us in Congress or the White House.

But that’s far from the worst possibility. We have endured incompetent leaders many times in our history, and managed to recover and rebuild. What is worse than the possibility of incompetence is the far more frightening possibility that those Republicans know they are hurting America – and don’t care.

People like Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and Vice President Dick Cheney aren’t stupid. Their records of accomplishment prove that they are quite capable of gathering the facts, understanding them, and making decisions based on an accurate appraisal of the true situation. So the idea that they are just too stupid to understand what they are doing now is ridiculous.

We also know that Dick Cheney and George W. Bush have ignored the facts before. Their lies about Saddam Hussein, intended to convince America that we should invade Iraq even though that country was never a threat to us, are ample proof that they are willing to ignore facts in order to further their agenda.

We can only come to the terrifying conclusion, therefore, that Republican leaders are perfectly willing to hurt America in order to satisfy some hidden agenda. If this is the case, and all the facts seem to point that way, then the true threat to America is not in Iraq, Pakistan, or Afghanistan, but in Washington, DC.

And we cannot surrender to them.