

DAVID MICHAEL GREEN

**JUST FOR
THE SAKE OF
ARGUMENT,
WHAT WOULD
IT LOOK LIKE
IF A PRESIDENT
DIDN'T GIVE
A DAMN ABOUT
TERRORISM**

ColdType

DAVID MICHAEL GREEN

**JUST FOR
THE SAKE OF
ARGUMENT,
WHAT WOULD
IT LOOK LIKE
IF A PRESIDENT
DIDN'T GIVE
A DAMN ABOUT
TERRORISM**

ColdType

David Michael Green is a professor of political science at Hofstra University in New York. He is delighted to receive readers' reactions to his articles (mailto:dmg@regressiveantidote.net), but regrets that time constraints do not always allow him to respond.

More of his work can be found at his website, <http://regressiveantidote.net>

© David Michael Green 2007

ColdType

WRITING WORTH READING FROM AROUND THE WORLD
<http://coldtype.net>

One thing all Americans can agree on, that's for sure: terrorism is bad news. Yep – left, right and center – we all want protection from bad people who possess even badder weapons. (Sorry if that comes as a shock to the certifiables of the Ridiculous Right, but it's true. Even we lefties don't want to die, nor do we hate America – though if there's another Republican presidency next term, we may have to reconsider that last part.) So, given that desire we all share for security from political violence, it sure is a good thing that ol' W is in the White House, isn't it, riding shotgun on the ship of state (forgive the mixed metaphor, but it seemed particularly appropriate considering the subject)? I mean, he talks about terrorism all the bloody time! Plus, he's tight with Jesus. That's gotta mean something, don't you think? Surely – like Con Ed – he's "On it!" when it comes to terrorism, and we can all sleep better knowing that.

If you doubt for a minute how crucial this is, imagine how bad things would be if some other Joe Bob was in the Oval Office, instead of Steady George. Rudy Giuliani got it, and right away too. He claims to have said to Bernard Kerik as the buildings came down on 9/11, "Thank God George Bush is our president". I don't know if they were in their secret taxpayer-funded Manhattan love-nest where they used to like to bring the babes or somewhere else when he said this, but you get the point. And, hey, where could you ever find a more knowing trio on the subject of political crime than Georgie, Rudy and Bernie, eh? These cats know their stuff!

Imagine if an incompetent and insufficiently masculine boob like Al 'Sore Loserman' Gore or, gulp, French-speaking John Kerry had been at the helm these last years. Or Hillary! Ack! Talk about your scary scenarios. Things might have really gone awry.

To begin with, a wimpy Democrat president probably wouldn't have paid any attention at all to the terrorism question during his or her first months in office, even if the alarm bells were going off like crazy that a big attack was planned. Probably a Hillary type would have been all obsessed about Iraq, instead, her cabinet refusing to even meet on the terrorism question until a week before 9/11.

JUST FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT | DAVID MICHAEL GREEN

And even had they been warned in a Presidential Daily Briefing that the attack was imminent, these slouches would have been likely to have spent the month before 9/11 on vacation, as part of a wider and quite successful effort to set the all-time presidential record for most days spent screwing off (and that's only the officially acknowledged ones).

And just as Bush and Cheney had once slogged their way through the mud and the jungles of Vietnam while Gore and Kerry were home hiding out and partying, no doubt the latter two would have been equally hard to find on 9/11. You could just imagine them flying off to – oh, I don't know, Nebraska! – in the face of national danger. Or sitting in a grade school classroom reading children's books. Or both.

I'm sure that's what Rudy meant when he supposedly spoke those famous words on 9/11 about Bush being president. (Less well noted was the sentence he uttered right before: "Shit, why didn't I give those first-responders the radio equipment they kept asking for – there go my presidential plans". Or the one right after: "Jesus Christ, whose idiotic idea was it to put the emergency response command center in the twin towers!!")

But what Rudy really had on his mind as he was thanking the deity whose house he hadn't visited for quite some time (until his presidential campaign began, of course) was that we should all be thankful to have a president with the wisdom and the seasoned foreign policy experience of George W. Bush, a guy who would therefore know what to do next (I mean, he had actually been to Mexico once, and to China as a kid!).

Rudy knew that Bush could be counted on to nail the folks accused of doing 9/11, bringing them in "dead or alive". If there was one thing that this ruthless former prosecutor knew for sure it was that there was no way that Sheriff George would let, say, six whole years (that's two thousand one hundred and ninety-one days, in case you're wondering) go by and the perp bastards who did this crime remain untouched, plotting the next attack. No way!

Moreover, there's more than one way to screw-up national defense, and lord knows the Dumb Dems would have found them all if they were still in the White House having their heterosexual love affairs and stuff like that. For example, what Bush understood and no Democrat ever would have is the importance of the commander-in-chief keeping his eye on the ball. When you're trying to win a war against the terrorists who attacked you, you can't be running around indulging your personal whims and invading other countries that had nothing to do with attacking America, y'know? And you especially can't do it when the result would be to tie down all your land forces in a war that bears no relationship to the greater goal

JUST FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT | DAVID MICHAEL GREEN

whatsoever, other than that it is breaking your military to bits and leaving it incapable of fighting anywhere it might actually be needed.

And it could actually get worse from there. Remember how Lyndon Johnson, that loony liberal par excellence, used to stay up at night selecting bombing targets in Vietnam and otherwise micromanaging his military? Not George Bush! No way. He just decides the big decisions, then leaves management to his talented stable of pros like Rumsfeld, Cheney, Tenet, Wolfowitz and Bremer. That's how he could avoid stupid Democratic mistakes like sending in too few troops, or dismissing the local army and sending them home armed, unemployed and angry, or allowing looting and chaos from Day One. Maybe "stuff happens" on the Donkey watch, but not when the grown-ups are in charge. Without this kind of GOP, private sector, MBA-style management know-how, heck, we could've gotten stuck in a protracted war with no end, no exit, and no relevance to our real national security concerns.

No relevance, that is, except that it would absolutely alienate our allies and inflame an entire region of people who would otherwise be neutral or perhaps even friendly toward us. Such a dumb Hillarywar would not only fail to eradicate terrorists, but would undoubtedly result in creating them by the thousands. You wouldn't need the unanimous opinion of America's sixteen intelligence agencies to clue you in on that one, fella!

Another thing about Bush that's cool is that the guy's just plain smart. You can tell, even without the eloquence that infuses so much of his rhetoric. This dude is truly one of the brightest presidents yet, and he's not afraid to show it. I imagine if John Kennedy was still around he might say of Bush that "There has never been a greater concentration of intellectual power here at the White House since Thomas Jefferson's cat dined alone". Bush knows that America is still highly vulnerable to attack, unlike those latter-day Chamberlains of the Wussy Party. That's why he's blown right past the entrenched interests of the monied class and forced them to take care of business in order to insure our national security, like inspecting shipping containers and reinforcing security at nuclear energy and chemical plants. No doubt a wimp like Hillary would have let them just pocket the money and continue leaving the public at risk.

And, you know, what's really sickening about liberals is how hypocritical they can be. You could readily imagine them running all over the world lecturing other countries on fighting terrorism – "You're either with us or you're against us!" – while at the same time harboring a known terrorist like, say, oh, I don't know, Luis Posada, here at home and protecting him from extradition to face justice at the scene of his crimes. Bush knows well that no one would take us seriously if America were to do

JUST FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT | DAVID MICHAEL GREEN

something as ridiculous as sheltering a guy who blew up an airliner full of civilians, just because they happened to be Cuban. He knows that terrorism is terrorism, regardless of the politics involved or who the victims are.

And even if Bush were to be that hypocritical – but he couldn't! – he surely wouldn't compound the lunacy of such an affair into some sort of hypocrisy-cubed exercise in exponential idiocy by, for instance, claiming that this terrorist could not be extradited because of fears of torture in Venezuela (a country whose government does not have any record of doing so), at the same time his own administration was writing memos on how to legally torture at Abu Ghraib or Guantánamo. I mean, how lame can you get?!

And don't even get me started on human rights! Bush would never contemplate sacrificing our human rights and civil liberties to fight a war against terrorism, or even a fake one. Bush has wisdom way past his years (even if most of those were spent as a drunk and a personal, academic, business and family failure). He knows that if you start dismantling habeas corpus, if you deny people legal representation, if you spy on your own citizens without obtaining a warrant, if you aggregate excessive powers into the hands of the president and blow off Congress – if you keep doing all kinds of stuff like that, that you're no better than the people you're fighting (who, after all, hate us for our freedoms, don't forget). So he would never harm the Constitution or sacrifice our liberties in any way, even while fighting a tough war on terrorism. You can rest easier knowing that.

The other thing about Bush, too, is that he's courageous. No, really! He was courageous being raised in opulence, and he was courageous screwing around in school knowing his real potential would someday take him to the top, whatever they were saying behind his back. He was courageous being a forty year-old drunk when everyone said he was wasting away in Margaritaville, but he knew better. He was courageous taking all those business ventures on the basis of his family's name and money when others laughed at him for doing so. So freakin' what if they all went bust?! He was courageous in frying all those Texas death-row inmates after extensively reviewing their cases with Alberto, and in mocking Karla Faye Tucker's plea to live. Man, that takes stones!

He was courageous when he went to Nam even though his Daddy had arranged a cushy stateside gig for him flying old jalopies – assuming he even bothered to show up for it. And he was courageous when he flew straight to Washington and New York on 9/11 to manage the crisis, instead of running in the other direction. With so much courage, no wonder he's had the guts to look the American people in the eye and raise their taxes and draft their sons in order to support a necessary war. Other presidents (you know who) might have tried to get away with this the easy way, say

JUST FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT | DAVID MICHAEL GREEN

by balancing the war effort on the backs of run-down Guard and Reserve units, or regular forces on their fourth and fifth tours, and by buying the public off with a tax cut. Not our Jorge. The guy's got guts, man.

Which is precisely why we can never trust some Democrat like Hillary with the presidency. First of all, she's a woman! I mean, come on. But even apart from that, this stuff is way too critical to leave it to somebody so incompetent.

If Hillary had been president these last seven years, we would have been grossly unprepared for 9/11. Heck, she probably would have been on vacation for a month before it, and running away from it afterwards. Then we would have attacked the wrong country in response, and made a hash of it to boot. We would still be completely vulnerable to a domestic terrorist attack, while the perpetrator of the last one would be running around free as a bird. The whole world would be furious at us, acts of terrorism would have increased seven-fold, and our military would be bogged down in some completely irrelevant war, with no end in sight. Meanwhile, our cherished Constitutional liberties would be in the garbage can.

It's all true.

Except for one minor detail. The hated Hillary hasn't been our president these last seven years. Another person has.

You want to know – just for the sake of argument – what it would look like if we had a president who really didn't give a damn about terrorism? Look no further.

I'm with Rudy – thank god we've had George W. Bush in the White House. Otherwise, how else would we know?



READ MORE POLITICAL ESSAYS AT COLDTYPE.NET

Download political essays by many of the best and brightest commentators from around the world, plus books, booklets, essays, newspapers and magazines – all in pdf format – all free of charge, at

www.coldtype.net

(Click on this link to enter web site)



ColdType

WRITING WORTH READING FROM AROUND THE WORLD