



My Thoughts On...

"Commemorating" 9/11, Bush's Trade Victory, the Clinton Menace, and Jim Traficant

"Commemorating" 9/11

Sept. 11, 2001, is a date that will be forever etched into America's collective memory. Some 3,000 people lost their lives that day in the most violent act of war committed on U.S. soil since the War Between the States nearly a century and a half ago. Nobody can have anything but sympathy for those who lost their lives and their loved ones. Nobody can feel anything but pride for the brave firemen, police officers, rescue workers and ordinary citizens who risked and, in some case, gave their own lives to try to help others escape the carnage of that day.

I am both sad and outraged, though, that much of the reflection and pomp over 9/11 fails to address the "why" and "how" of that terrible day. Instead – in an exercise both morbid and Orwellian – Americans are being led on a mental odyssey designed, in the end, to further turn their brains into jello.

Yes, people are still grieving. We all should be. And – to truly honor the memories of all those whose lives were snuffed out – we must be courageous enough to ask the hard questions, and demand answers. If we don't, and if we allow the same foreign and immigration policies to be carried out which invited the 9/11 attacks, we will merely be setting the stage for a repeat performance.

Most of those orchestrating the 9/11 commemorations, of course, don't want to address these causes of the attack. Instead, they want mushy-headed, "feel good" types of thoughts and activities to prevail. See your psychiatrist to better cope. Join a support group and process your feelings. Put your arms around your neighbors and sing Kumbaya. Wave the flag and be a docile "patriot" as Big Brother tells you that, in order to keep you safe, he needs to watch YOU more closely. But whatever you do, don't you dare say, "Yes, but..."

I'm not buying this bunk from the smug functionaries who pretend to have sympathy for the deaths they allowed. I have more respect for the dead than that, as well as for those still alive who were most closely affected. Because I do, I refuse to engage in this exercise; and I – and this magazine, will continue to say "Yes, BUT!"

Bush's Trade Victory

On August 6, President Bush, flanked by congressmen and senators from both parties, signed into law legislation granting him broad trade negotiating authority. The so-called "fast track" legislation allows the president to negotiate trade agreements with foreign countries, which the Congress cannot later amend.

"Trade expands choices for American consumers and raises living standards for our families," Bush said just before signing the bill. "And now, after eight years, America is back in the business of promoting open trade to build our prosperity and to spur our economic growth."

Even if the Bush administration had the best interests of American workers and industries at heart, new efforts to both gain a bigger market share for U.S. exporters and cut back on our burgeoning imports will fail on two counts:

First, in 1995, conscious decisions were made by the Clinton Treasury Department and the Federal Reserve that resulted in a multi-year bullish run for the U.S. dollar. This policy was implemented, in part, in order to help *foreign economies*, even though it came at the expense of American workers and industries.

The increasingly strong dollar helped these other nations sell more of their surplus production of goods to the U.S., since their own currencies and, thus, products became less expensive relative

to those produced here. As a result, our trade deficit has exploded, and yet more manufacturing jobs have been lost in this country.

Now, folks – though they may be accused of it at times, our leaders aren't *that* stupid. The same people who sold us NAFTA and membership in the World Trade Organization were responsible for later creating and endorsing the Rubin/Greenspan strong dollar policy. They knew this would put U.S. manufacturers on an uneven playing field, and make them less competitive. And still – having to know the ultimate outcome – they sold us a bill of goods that has gutted once-vibrant domestic industries and destroyed hundreds of thousands of good jobs.

Second, we are experiencing a growing chance of a more prolonged recession. In that environment, consumers here – and around the world, for that matter – will soon be cutting back at least somewhat on their spending. This will make an already competitive environment even more so, as overcapacity combined with weakening demand create a dog-eat-dog world. I for one hold no illusions of how foreign governments and companies will behave. Deals or no, they will continue to seek the easiest ways to sell their surplus production to gullible Americans – while protecting their own industries. It will be time to look out for "Number One." And with the sorry track record of this country's leaders being unable or unwilling to do this themselves, we are likely to come out on the short end of the stick again.

The Clinton Menace

Bill Clinton has been out of office for a year and a half. Hillary Rodham Clinton is now in the U.S. Senate, where she is arguably less harmful now than she was as a self-made co-President. Yet

in some quarters, you would think they still constituted the two greatest dangers to what's left of the Republic.

A number of publications, as well as professional fundraisers, continue to beat the drums over the purported Clinton menace. Sure, I also wish that the former president had been dealt with appropriately while he was still in office for as many transgressions, including his gutting of our defensive capabilities, campaign finance chicanery, selling out our security to the highest bidders and more. And yes, there are a lot of excellent books and videos out there that give the details of this; details that history one day will finally get around to chalking up against Slick Willie.

But enough already!

It is not President Bill Clinton who has for the first time in generations suspended the Writ of Habeas Corpus. Nor is he the one floating trial balloons to modify or repeal the Posse Comitatus Act. Neither is it the former president who has in recent months been signing off on a variety of measures that further erode the constitutional liberties of America's citizens while at the same time refusing to address the root causes of the danger we find ourselves in. It is not Clinton who is attempting to turn Americans against one another with his new Citizen Corps (see www.citizen-corps.gov).

President George W. Bush is doing these things. In fact, I would argue that, cloaking these measures in pseudo-patriotic blather, Bush is actually getting away with more along these lines than any Democrat president would.

I don't know about you, but I think it's time we get off the Clintons for a while and worry about the current inhabitant of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Jim Traficant

As you already know, former Ohio Congressman James A. Traficant, having a few days earlier been booted out of the House of Representatives, was sentenced in federal court to serve eight years in federal prison. By the time you read this, he is expected to be at the government's minimum-security federal prison camp in Allenwood, Penn.

Those of you who stayed up late for several evenings to watch Traficant's hearing before the House's ethics committee know – if you did not already – that the wheels had already been

greased for him to be tossed out of Congress. In my view, Traficant became a target for federal prosecutors due not to his admittedly questionable financial transactions with certain parties, but because of what he stood for.

Yes, Jim was usually irreverent. Yes, he often reveled in antagonizing his own political party. Though most members obviously got a kick out of his antics, deep down many did not like the Member from Ohio who usually seemed unwilling to play the Washington game.

Thus – and likely under pressure to do so, lest their own minor and/or innocent transgressions be seized upon some day – virtually every member gave Jim Traficant the boot.

Meanwhile, Sen. Robert Toricelli (D-NJ) remains in the Senate, though many argue that his financial shenanigans were more serious – and certainly could be better proven – than those of Traficant. Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.) remains in the House, even after being caught years ago for allowing a queer whore house of sorts to be run out of his Washington, D.C., apartment. These days, I guess that's not a serious enough breach of ethics to lose your seat.

Just as history will one day deal more justly with Bill Clinton, it will also deal justly with a man who, flamboyant and caustic or not, was one of America's only real statesmen of his time. Jim Traficant dared to challenge the accepted order of politics in Washington, even when it involved the foreign financing of his own party's campaign coffers. He regularly gave voice not only to his own loyal constituents, but to all Americans who have watched our country be destroyed from within.

As Idaho Congressman George Hansen before him, Traficant has paid dearly for his convictions. But as Hansen, Traficant will go down in history as one of a precious and unfortunate few who dared to think and act outside the box, and had the courage to warn their fellow citizens of the enemies within our own nation. ■

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Big Brothers Big Sisters Force Affiliates to Accept Homosexual Volunteers

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) has ordered their local affiliates to accept open homosexuals and lesbians who volunteer to work with the children served by the organization. It is ironic that at the very time the Catholic church is taking great strides to keep homosexuals away from children, Big Brothers Big Sisters is mandating that homosexuals be allowed in a position of trust and authority.

The mandate was relayed in a memo from Clay Brewer, executive vice president of the Philadelphia-based organization. According to the memo, "Volunteer Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and Board Members are not excluded on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation..."

Several local affiliates are upset with the requirement that local groups must accept homosexuals who volunteer to work with the children. It is shocking that BBBSA would force local groups to accept homosexuals in light of recent problems the Catholic Church has had with homosexual priests molesting children. Some researchers have found that 73 percent of the homosexual men they surveyed had engaged in sex with boys aged 16 to 19 or younger. One study of 229 convicted child molesters found that 86 percent of offenders who molested boys described themselves as homosexual or bisexual.

BBBSA has made the decision that being politically correct is more important than the safety of the children they serve.

Send your email urging Big Brothers Big Sisters of America to rescind the policy that forces all its affiliates to accept open homosexuals who want to become mentors of the children. You may edit it or rewrite it as you desire. But send it today!

This article brought to you by a project of the American Family Association. ■