Subject: Bush Hates Elections
Posted by Manualblock on Fri, 27 Jan 2006 14:22:15 GMT
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Boy; you can't win with this guy. He bases his whole philosophy on free and open elections; then when the people don't elect the guys he likes he sulks and whines.Iraq is busy electing the wrong people and Palestine is electing the wrong people.Meanwhile we have marxists running half of South America; maybe he should get his eyes off the oil and do something.Remmember when presidents used to have summitt meetings that accomplished something; with world leaders?What a total failure. President smirk.

Subject: Nope, Again
Posted by elektratig on Sat, 28 Jan 2006 09:53:21 GMT
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There is nothing inconsistent with favoring and encouraging free elections, the one hand, and holding people accountable for the actions of their government, on the other. The Palestinians have made their choice. But if the government they have elected refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist, Israel, we and the rest of the world (I hope) have the right to refuse to deal with them. If that government harbors and encourages terrorists and takes steps to wipe Israel off the map, Israel, we and the rest of the world (I hope) have the right to take appropriate action.At all events, what is the alternative to encouragement of democracy? The left, at least in theory (I'll overlook the left's tacit and sometimes overt admiration of certain communist dictatorships), has always supported democracy and criticized the US's willingness to prop up dictatorships. Are you suggesting that we should we have somehow subverted the Palestinian election process to prop up Fatah? Are you suggesting that we should take out Chavez a la Allende?Democracy is a process; it doesn't promise particular results.As for Hamas, there is some good news. Sharon's policy of withdrawing from Gaza and walling off Palestine means that Israel can afford to ignore them unless and until they acknowledge Israel's right to exist. If Hamas encourages terrorism, Israel has tremendous resources at its disposal. Moreover, the Palestinians are flat-out broke. The country -- to the extent it is a country -- has remained viable only because the "international community" gave it billions in aid. We'll see what happens when that aid is cut off. I'm linking to the best article I've seen analyzing the situation.I don't think, by the way, that your assumption that the Iranian elections were a model of democracy is correct. As I understand it, a religious counsel approves all candidates who are permitted to run. The current Iranian leader was elected after that council rejected the candidacies of the "reform" candidates. "Reform" voters (and I understand that in Iran all terms are relative) boycotted, and Hitler (or whatever his name is) won as a result. The problem in Iran is not enough democracy, rather than too much.What are the summit meetings you are recalling with such nostalgic fondness? Arguably it was summit meetings such as those that produced the Oslo Accords that helped create this mess in the first place.
"Further Thoughts on the Hamas Victory"

Subject: Re: Nope, Again
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 28 Jan 2006 15:03:03 GMT
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Well; first let me say thanks for a thought provoking response. Gee; I am so used to responses full of invective, insults, quotes taken out of context, selective answers and links to propoganda blogs that this is like a breath of fresh air! The administration offered us the "Roadmap To Peace", predicated on fomenting free elections and Democratically defined govrnment. Even in this Palestinian Parlaimentary election we pumped a couple million dollars into the process trying to favor the Fatah candidates. Whether I or any of us agree; and I do, that Israel must have the right to peaceful co-existance and freedom from terrorist attack, we still have an obligation to deal with those democratically elected as we do in Beirut and their elected members of Hezbollah.The administration in proposing this roadmap assured the American people that following this protocol would insure a more stable and less violent environment for peace and prosperity. Based upon the administrations statement of purpose the American military invaded Iraq and attempted to establish a Democratically elected government in Afghanistan. We supported this initiative as Americans and agreed to use our military to enact these changes.This is the result. Radical islamic regimes in Beirut/Egypt/Iraq/Iran/soon Afghanistan/Palestine/and we can't trust Pakistan because they harbor Al Queada operatives.What would I do? Hold the military in abeyance as a threat and buy the oil. Worked for a couple hundred years so far with no American dead.

Subject: Re: Nope, Again
Posted by elektratig on Sat, 28 Jan 2006 22:01:34 GMT
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Geez, MB, aren't my responses always thought-provoking?I'm not sure that Hamas in power is any worse than Fatah. Fatah sorta kinda said for international audiences that maybe Israel was entitled to exist, but that's not the message it was conveying for home consumption, and that was certainly not consistent with the avowed aims and actions of its own paramilitary terrorist arms. Even assuming good faith by the Fatah political leadership -- which assumption I don't accept -- they did not have the political will or credibility with their constituents to bring meaningful peace even if they'd wanted to.Nonetheless, although the peace process was a joke, the US and others maintained it wasn't and continued to aid Fatah and treat it like it was a serious entity. I wish Bush had been more aggressive and called a spade a spade, but I can't blame him for publicly holding out the possibility that the peace process remained viable. Had he said anything else, the entire world would have started jumping up and down and screaming that yet again "Bushitler" was showing his true colors as a warmongering fascist lacky of Israel who hated Arabs and Islam, etc. No doubt, your friends John Kerry, Hillary, et al., would have been leading the chorus.Which brings us to Hamas, a terrorist organization that has now reaffirmed post-election that it is committed to the destruction of Israel. At least the cards are on the table. Having elected Hamas, the Palestinian electorate will now be held accountable for their decision. Refusing recognition, cutting off the flow of international aid, and Israeli completion of the Wall are the first steps. Then, as the article I linked to above shows, Israel has powerful weapons available in case of provocation, both peaceful (cutting off power and water, etc.) and military.In short, it seems to me

that Israel is no worse off or militarily vulnerable than it was before, and perhaps the election has brought a moral clarity and accountability that will, in the long run, eventually bring the Palestinian people to the painful realization that they need real peace.

Subject: Refreshing
Posted by Leland Crooks on Sat, 28 Jan 2006 23:43:24 GMT
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There's so much vitriol from both sidesout there that I just wanted to complement you guys on this thread. This is how we should argue. I tend to agree, that now it's out on the table. Israel can take action with at least a modicum of justification, although up to now their actions are nothing to be bragging about. Watched another special on Presidents. James Adams. Totally underrated power in the creation of our country.

Subject: Re: Refreshing
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 29 Jan 2006 00:52:15 GMT
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I gotta find these specials on James Adams you guys keep mentioning. Your point regarding the difference between Hamas and Fatah illustrates a simple example of the Taliban method of creating nation-states. Provide the people with the basic needs; food; shelter; then offer a ideology of hope and see them support you. Not a hard call considering the alternative. But what about taming the tiger through the demands of satisfying a constituency? Hamas has two wings; one outside Palestine headquartered in Damascus. With that bi-lateral control they have no real incentive to address ideology as much as to solidify their power base and use their prescence in the Muslim World to spread their philosophy. Regarding the Oslo accords Hammas never recognised them anyway. As far as whether Israel can survive the Palestinian elections; no-brainer, they aren't going anywhere.But I see that the general malaise infecting the Israeli's will to continue this endless siege state has our policy planners worried somewhat.The trend forming throughout the Muslim nations might create opportunity for our continuing occupation of the mid-east but at what cost?Tell me; disregarding my point that the Road to Peace is becoming a dirt path, even if our military could withstand the demands of a long and serious deployment you know the people won't tolerate it. When the congress is cutting the student loan program while building schools in Muslim Nations there will at some point be a reckoning. So to reiterate; what kind of planning produced this mess?What approach will we be able to muster in South America? Now that the military is behind in recruitment/lacking basic equipment repair facilities and any kind of real credibility with the world community.Thats the drawback to establishing a platform of ideas that don't work; and don't work in front of the whole world.Reagarding Kerry; he's another failure, couldn't get the job done. Hillary carries too much baggage and has tipped her hand in favor of policies that would benefit the middle class; a death knell in todays political climate.So what happens if during this upcoming election in Mexico that Vinceze Fox is deposed? Now we

have real problems on our doorstep.

Subject: John Adams
Posted by elektratig on Sun, 29 Jan 2006 10:58:26 GMT
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I've been meaning to read David McCullough's biography of Adams. Adams was truly a giant. The one significant mark against him is the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts, which were plainly unconstitutional and used by the Federalists to suppress free speech of the emerging Jeffersonian Republicans. Luckily, it didn't work, as Jefferson was elected anyway in 1800, making Adams a one-term president.All of which makes the later reconciliation between Adams and Jefferson all the more remarkable and significant. As you no doubt know, the two men wound up dying on the same day -- July 4, 1826, fifty years to the day after July 4, 1776. Adams's last words were supposedly, "Thomas Jefferson survives." He was wrong. Jefferson had died a few hours earlier.

Subject: Mexico and Vincenze Fox
Posted by elektratig on Sun, 29 Jan 2006 11:25:54 GMT
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Unfortunately, Mexico is already hopelessly corrupt and out of control. Have you seen what's going on in Nuevo Laredo? It makes Chicago during the 1920s look like a tea party. Elsewhere along the border, law enforcement officers have been confronted by smugglers who are either members of the Mexican army or at least using equipment (uniforms, vehicles) stolen or bought from the Mexican military, and extremely sophisticated tunnel systems. Fox is part of the problem, not part of the solution.
"Border face-off involved men in Mexican army uniforms"

Subject: Re: John Adams
Posted by Leland Crooks on Sun, 29 Jan 2006 11:38:25 GMT
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Adams was the burr under the saddle in the continental congress. He spurred them to action and was the driving force behind moving them to independence. I need to get that book also. Reading 1776 right now. Man these guys were truly giants. What a confluence of minds and history. I believe it shows the value of a classical education. Instead of being so focused as we are now, they were masters of many things, especially language.

Subject: Perceptions of Adams
Posted by elektratig on Sun, 29 Jan 2006 14:09:56 GMT
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I'm reminded that a couple of years ago a blogger conducted non-scientific surveys of left-of-center and right-of-center bloggers concerning their views of the 20 greatest Americans.Adams ranked eighth among right-of-center bloggers. Remarkably, he did not rank at all among left-of-center bloggers. I have no idea why. I can only speculate that the Alien and Sedition Acts played a large part.Left-of-center blogger survey results: http://www.rightwingnews.com/blogsel/leftgreatest.phpRight-of-center blogger survey results: http://www.rightwingnews.com/special/greatestfigures.php

Subject: Thanks for the link
Posted by Leland Crooks on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 11:55:41 GMT
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Interesting. MLK as #1 on the left?. I think those bloggers are pretty left of left. Top 10 sure. Reminds me of the recent show of the 10 greatest americans on history channel where Ronald Reagan was #1. Skewed by a concerted campaign. But I kind of like that site. I'm always looking for right wing sites with less invective and better articles and argument. As an old debater you had to know and argue both sides. There's a link there to a really interesting article. Starts out about the Middle East then rambles on to China. While I don't agree with many of the conclusions, his analysis is really interesting.
http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/006/649qrsob.asp?pg=1

Subject: Re: Thanks for the link
Posted by elektratig on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 20:36:03 GMT
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Leland,I've been reading Ralph Peters' columns for years, but hadn't seen that one. Thanks. Very interesting.On Top 10 (or Top 20) lists, I think they're unrealistic unless you exclude, say, the last 30 years or so. Reagan, Clinton are just too close (not that I'd include either). MLK's importance goes back some 40 years, so I'd say he can be considered. I've never made such a list, but he'd probably be in my top 20. Part of the problem is with the imprecision of the term "greatest". Does it mean most influential, or is there also a moral component? John Calhoun, Jefferson Davis and Eugene McCarthy profoundly affected the course of our nation's history, but I wouldn't consider them if "greatest" means most influential and admirable. Others in this category might include Alexander Hamilton and Andrew Jackson.