

Mission Ready

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Why We Support the President

We trust the fans of Mission Ready will forgive two former Marines for weighing in on the issue of war in Iraq. With the spotlight on so many who are against the war, we just have to raise a couple of points.

For one thing, times sure have changed. Does anybody remember the complaint against Ronald Reagan raised so frequently by his detractors? "He is an actor," they derided, and therefore not qualified to take up the serious business of leading the nation. Yet, today, we are supposed to take seriously the foreign policy pronouncements from the likes of Martin Sheen, George Clooney, Barbara Streisand, Mike Farrell, Sean Penn and Cheryl Crowe, while the earnest, informed warnings from people like Colin Powell and Henry Kissinger are tossed aside. In an era of sound-bite journalism, what reporter wants to sit through an erudite explanation? Better to broadcast the impassioned slogans of celebrities and human shields.

It positively amazes us how many people, in and outside of the media; seem to have forgotten what happened to our country on 9/11. Some of our readers may be old enough to remember the political cartoons immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor, which portrayed an enraged Uncle Sam, sleeves rolled up and fists clenched, glaring with hatred at the retreating Zero fighters. That desire for revenge fueled a massive national effort for nearly five years. But today, only a short time after an attack upon this country much more devastating than Pearl Harbor, there seems to be little anger in the media. Hatred for the enemy, we are told, interferes with the national healing process. Sorrow is OK, but outrage, and hatred, and a desire for revenge, are emotional relics of the past.

Even during the actual attack on the WTC, there was a conspicuous absence of rage in the voices of our anchormen and women; it was as if they were reporting upon an incident taking place in another country. Within days, David Weston,

president of ABC News, pulled the footage of the collapsing towers because it was, in his judgment, "too upsetting" for the American public. Weston, in an address to the graduating class of the Columbia School of Broadcasting weeks later, could not even (in response to a question) agree that the attack on the Pentagon was a "terrorist act." Tom Brokaw rejoiced because NBC refused to allow its news people to wear American Flag lapel pins, on the grounds that it would jeopardize their objectivity. Reuters News Agency would not permit its reporters to use the term "terrorist," because one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter—even after four of their own correspondents had been machine-gunned, execution-style, by Taliban "freedom fighters." And, only days ago, Dan Rather provided an international forum for Saddam Hussein to propagandize against the West, treating "President Hussein"—who rose to power through murder, repression, and torture—with far more courtesy than many in the media have ever accorded George Bush.

Doesn't our media realize that freedom of the press is not an iron-clad absolute, existing in nature as a universal human right? Freedom of the press is as fragile as a snowflake; it exists—to the degree that it does exist—only because of American military might. Were it not for the American sailors, soldiers, airmen and Marines, there would be no freedom of the press anywhere in the world. The global dark shadow of totalitarianism and terror is held back only by the threat of American retaliation. These two former Marines are proud to have been, at one time, part of that threat. We know the current generation of fighting men and women will make it clear to the world, perhaps within days, that the American people—if not their televised media "representatives"—are not bashful about preemptive strikes to ensure the security of their country and of their loved ones.