

Iraq and the “American Dream”

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All Stars

My son Sam’s team, the 12- year-old Kearsarge Mountain All Stars lost their last game at Bambino field in Jaffrey.

They did their best, but came up short. Coach Toro gathered the team and offered each player praise.

The way it should be, America’s kids, pinstriped pants covered with infield dirt from desperate slides hauling away equipment bags with their wonder boy bats and oiled gloves.

But unfortunately, other images punctuate our American dream. Our kids also haul duffel bags packed with field gear, not bats, onto commodious transports. The night I told my friend about Sam’s losing game, we spoke about her son’s coming deployment.

The day Sam started his fall term at Kearsarge Middle School, my friend’s son was in route to Iraq. Now, I can check Sam’s math homework and then read perceptive and often humorous e-mails from Iraq about base life and a trip for mandatory convoy training.

For the educated and professional classes, it’s usually somebody else’s kid headed toward Baghdad. It’s the secretary’s son or the mechanic’s daughter who signed up after high school; or, it’s the past forty dad, set up man at the plant, who once upon a time joined the Guard.

There is almost no good news from the front, just the steady drip of reports of American casualties, or bulletins of Iraqis slaughtering Iraqis. The conservative chattering classes and liberal war apologists still offer justifications, but even their ranks are thinning.

It’s time for us to stop paying allegiance to some American rituals. The heroism of our sons and daughters in arms, the spilled blood upon the sands, the inevitable alteration of history’s course by war’s destructive energies are not justifications for even more killing.

If the Iraq war was about the danger of weapons of mass destruction, we found they didn’t exist. If the Iraq war was about democracy, the Iraqis are about to vote on a constitution. If the Iraq war was about fighting terrorism, the war is making the terrorists stronger, not weaker, and has become the jihadists rallying point and training ground.

It’s time to declare victory and bring our soldiers home with all deliberate speed. That doesn’t mean overnight. It does mean turning the fate of Iraq over to the Iraqis, their Arab neighbors, and the United Nations. Yes, the United States should provide logistical support

for the Iraqis, and aid in the reconstruction of their country, which, after all, we bombed and invaded.

It's time to ask ourselves a few gut questions?

Would you send your son? Would you send your daughter? Many American mothers and fathers are being asked to do just that. Why?

I listen to sports radio. There are public service ads reminding 18 year old boys to sign up for Selective Service, in case Uncle Sam wants to get in touch...

There's a great silence from most of the Democrats who apparently see little political advantage in standing up to the Commander in Chief. But I have a few questions, I'd like answered.

What if the U.S. had not invaded Iraq? What if UN inspectors were still combing every last sand dune looking for non-existent weapons of mass destruction? What if we spent money on levees in New Orleans and not bombs in Baghdad?

Thousands of Americans and Iraqis were not killed or wounded? What if Iraq had not served as a flash point for jihadist suicide terrorism? And most importantly, why don't we turn over the fight for democracy in Iraq to Iraqis and bring our sons and daughters home?

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