

Setting The World To Rights

Ideas have consequences.

John Kerry Doesn't Get It

John Kerry made a **speech** at the Democratic Convention last night. In it, he demonstrated that he does not understand the War on Terror:

Let there be no mistake: I will never hesitate to use force when it is required. Any attack will be met with a swift and certain response. I will never give any nation or international institution a veto over our national security. And I will build a stronger American military...

We will add 40,000 active duty troops not in Iraq, but to strengthen American forces that are now overstretched, overextended, and under pressure. We will double our special forces to conduct anti-terrorist operations.

The purpose of the War on Terror is not to go after terrorists who have attacked America. The purpose is not to deter future attacks by assuring prospective perpetrators that they would suffer a "swift and certain response". Both these approaches are ineffective in an era of suicide-terrorism, proliferating weapons of mass destruction, and terrorist-supporting states. Worse than ineffective: they are invitations to attack.

The terrorists are driven by evil ideologies, especially (though not exclusively) Islamism. These ideologies are based on **conspiracy theories** that furnish blanket justifications on demand for unlimited, savage violence against anyone who does not submit to their narrow and twisted vision of how people, and governments, ought to behave. These ideologies do not promise their followers life, so threats of retaliation are ineffective against them. But they do promise the satisfaction of inflicting suffering in the short run, and they promise that in the long run they will prevail by being intrinsically more willing to die. It is only by refuting those promises that the civilised world can end the fear, suffering and poisoning of our political cultures that are brought about by the terrorist threat. Every time a terrorist dies before hurting innocent people, these promises are refuted. Every time a terrorist, and especially a terrorist leader, surrenders in disillusionment with the attractions of death, these promises are refuted. Every time a terrorist-supporting regime ends, and its subjects embark on a decent way of life with life-affirming aspirations, these promises are refuted.

So long as those promises are not refuted, terrorists will hurt and kill innocent people in America and other free countries. It is not a question of if, but of when, how often, and how badly.

The War on Terror is not about responding to terrorist attacks, but putting an end to them. It is not about training special forces to hunt down perpetrators one at a time. It is about destroying the terrorist organisations, the terrorist-supporting regimes, and the evil ideologies that drive them. Anyone who does not understand that is not fit to be President.

Fri, 07/30/2004 - 14:58 | [permalink](#)

how many ppl know this, in the USA?

nt

-- Elliot Temple
<http://www.curi.us/>

by **Elliot Temple** on Fri, 07/30/2004 - 16:07 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Excellent Post

I think it's possible that John Kerry knows that it would be good to refute these theories, but he doesn't know of a way to do this that would be acceptable to the left.

I think he hopes that a broad western alliance will make this possible. I don't think so. An alliance that opposes terrorism on paper but is unwilling to take effective action to prevent it will not help us. And, I think the alliance he envisions will be unlikely to agree on effective steps to take.

And, rather than discouraging terrorists from attacking such an alliance, I think it might just create a more ambitious target.

I don't think they attacked the United States because they thought it's a weak enemy. They attacked the United States because it's a strong enemy and they think such an attack makes them great, or seem great to followers.

Gil

by **Gil** on Fri, 07/30/2004 - 18:25 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Very well said

Now lets hope the American people will make the right choice in November.

AIS

by a reader on Fri, 07/30/2004 - 19:08 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Deterrence could work

The enemy does not believe that he can get to heaven without

sacrificing himself for ends that are both feasible and forewarded by the sacrifice. He has aims on earth, even if those are ultimately only means to get to heaven. If we loom over the clerical regimes and threaten their destruction if terrorists attack, it may deter them. The only way to deter those willing to die is to threaten that which they are willing to die for.

by a reader on Sat, 07/31/2004 - 02:03 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Rabin's assasin was driven by an evil ideology.

This ideology is based on a conspiracy theory that furnish blanket justifications on demand for unlimited, savage violence against anyone who does not submit to the assasin's narrow and twisted vision of how people, and governments, ought to behave.

by a reader on Sat, 07/31/2004 - 03:38 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

readers

That a reader @23:03 has difficulty trying to "infer" who the World thinks doesn't get it from a post entitled "John Kerry doesn't get it" is quite puzzling. Reader, the evidence that John Kerry does not understand something crucial is, his words. If that is not good enough evidence for what he does and does not understand then what is?

Reader @2:03 fantasizes that deterrence could work by, I think, threatening to nuke Iran (?) under all circumstances involving a terror attack. That is wrong in general. Reader's post is also wrong in detail; this is wrong - "The enemy does not believe that he can get to heaven without sacrificing himself for ends that are both feasible and forewarded by the sacrifice." What "feasible ends" were forwarded by the 9/11 hijackers' sacrifices? The theory seems to have been that, You strike America at its core, then magically (or, Allah intervening?) America topples. There is also a healthy dose of naive semi Marxist type thinking about how key events can manipulate classes of people whose actions are somehow pseudo scientifically predictable (such and such will "inflame the Muslim world", and then... magically, or Allah intervening, we win (somehow)). So is this wrong - "He has aims on earth, even if those are ultimately only means to get to heaven. If we loom over the clerical regimes and threaten their destruction if terrorists attack, it may deter them." It is true that the Islamofascist has aims on earth, and that these aims involve a global Islamist state, but threatening to attack "the clerical regimes" (Iran..) will not accomplish what you think/imagine. First it would merely prove the Islamofascist correct that we are the Great Satan. Second the Islamofascist cannot but know that Allah would intervene on the side of the faithful and not allow us to carry out the proposed threat, or if he did, it would be part of a larger plan involving bringing about the world under Islam, some other way (i.e. that "the Muslim world gets inflamed, and then magically, because of this, wins" jazz). There is no real deterring someone who is secure in the knowledge that God is on his side and that for their cause to

lose - not just have setbacks, but lose - is metaphysically impossible, a denial of everything they know about their God.

Anyway, I'm not too keen on placing all my chips on a lame "may deter them" construction. "May" doesn't cut it for me, sorry.

This is the type of thing John Kerry does not seem to get.

--Blix

by a reader on Sat, 07/31/2004 - 14:24 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

There is no real deterring

someone who is secure in the knowledge that God is on his side and that for their cause to lose - not just have setbacks, but lose - is metaphysically impossible, a denial of everything they know about their God.

How is there real refuting of someone like this?

by a reader on Sat, 07/31/2004 - 22:14 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Invalid inference

"If he has not made sure that everyone knows that he does get it, then, under the circumstances, that is in itself evidence that he does not."

No, that is not evidence. First it is a convoluted way of getting to reinforce your own ideas of what you appear to believe. Second, the 'if' in your statement is not based on anything particular other than your inferred ability to read one's mind, or at the least every past and future word. The campaign is young, there are many words to be spoken before its over. I get it. Is that enough to make you sure?

I also read in another post that someone infers that I fantasize that deterrence could work by nuking Iran. Hah. Of course you didn't mean that and I might infer that it was just wild speculation for effect. Otherwise I am sure you are mistaken.

What other inferences would you, Blix, wish to make that are unfounded? My only hope is to make sure that you know that I support George Bush in his divinely guided mission which apparently ensures that all his words show that he is divinely guided. How could he be wrong?

The fact that John Kerry has some experience in war where 'terrorists' wanted to sink his boat and were unsuccessful because he acted correctly both with aforethought and response, however, is of course meaningless. These are surely different times.

Regardless, your inferences about his understanding are nonsense.

A general guideline if you want to convince someone of the strength

of your argument: Stop inferring if you aren't going to make sure that you have ample evidence to back up your allegations. If you don't have ample evidence, make sure that everyone gets your drift, your bias.

What is your drift by the way?

by a reader on Sat, 07/31/2004 - 22:52 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Correction

Blixa, upon rereading I see that you did not infer that I in particular, but rather another reader fantasizes that threatening to nuke Iran could be a deterrence. I stand corrected of that misreading by my own second reading.

Other than that, my post stands.

by a reader on Sat, 07/31/2004 - 23:01 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

stop saying infer

Reader who uses word "infer",

The only one "inferring" here is you. Or I should say, failing to "infer". Let us recap: **The World** writes a post "John Kerry Doesn't Get It", using John Kerry's words to show that he indeed, doesn't get it. You comment saying that (unbelievably) you find it difficult to infer who **The World** means (and also using "infer" in places where you mean "imply", I think).

You have now been answered: **The World** means John Kerry. Ok? **The World's** evidence for what John Kerry does and doesn't get is, the words of John Kerry. Got a better suggestion? If not, what's your point?

--Blixa

by a reader on Sun, 08/01/2004 - 00:07 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

arg does work

part of Getting It is realising how important it is. if Kerry got it, he would understand it should be the first thing he says, the last thing he says, the thing he says the most, etc, and we would have heard it more times than we heard he served in Vietnam.

-- Elliot Temple

<http://www.curi.us/>

by **Elliot Temple** on Sun, 08/01/2004 - 00:39 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

George Bush does not really get it either

"It is about destroying the terrorist organisations, the terrorist-

supporting regimes, and the evil ideologies that drive them."

In this regard, Saddam's Iraq was a but a little league player. And by committing a major part of America's resources to the overthrow of Saddam's regime *at this time* shows that George Bush does not really get it. The major terrorist organisations and terrorist supporting regimes have not been destroyed. The year 2003 was a **21 year high for terrorist attacks. And even in Iraq there is no evidence that terrorist attacks are on the decline. Take a look at the casualty count. You would expect coalition casualties to be on the decline this year. They are not. Rather, 2004 has been a worse year than 2003. Why? It is because Iraq's neighbours are the true hot-beds of terrorism, and these regimes have not been dealt with. The war in Iraq should have been an all out war against Iran, against Pakistan, against Saudi Arabia, and against Israel's enemies in Palestine. These are the countries where Islamism is at its hottest. George Bush never had the balls to tackle such a war, however, preferring the much easier target of Iraq.**

by a reader on Sun, 08/01/2004 - 09:59 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

sorry, not that easy

sometimes tactics don't dictate attacking the hardest target first. often tactics dictate only attacking one target at a time.

it would take a very extensive argument to be persuasive that you understand the relevant tactics better than our military planners.

on the other hand, I'd be happy to see Iran attacked approximately now, and I admit I don't know why they don't start. but that doesn't mean they haven't got reasons! I'm out of that loop.

-- Elliot Temple
<http://www.curi.us/>

by [Elliot Temple](#) on Sun, 08/01/2004 - 16:03 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

silly

Let's use reader's logic elsewhere--

Big losses at Normandy (a much lesser threat than Berlin BTW - why didn't they attack Berlin first?? who the f**k cares about Normandy??) demonstrated that FDR and Churchill DID NOT GET IT!! ;-)

by a reader on Sun, 08/01/2004 - 17:50 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

"Anyone who does not understand that is not fit to be

President.

Blixa, this is the inference, pertaining to John Kerry, that I find galling. "Anyone who does not understand that is not fit to be President."

For example, "When did you stop beating your wife?"; you would have certainly made sure prior to this that I knew that you don't beat your wife anymore if you no longer beat your wife. Therefore, since you didn't make sure I knew that, you must by your silence on the specifics of this topic have beaten your wife, and now please tell me when you stopped doing this.

You and the World or anyone can state what you think. However **The World** by its use of the inferring statement at the end of the post, John Kerry Doesn't Get It, "Anyone who does not understand that is not fit to be President." juxtaposes lack of evidence in words to infer not 'getting it'. That I can deal with. People do that all the time, base conclusions on insufficient evidence or marginal excerpts.

However, to infer that John Kerry is unfit to be President in the same post by a blanket closing inference is neither reasoned or warranted. It reads like the commentary for a thirty second attack ad. The effect of an attack ad is to bias. Often the intent is to smear. I cannot know that the intent is there, however the effect is certainly one of saying:

A) Words were not spoken to satisfy, "make sure" that **The World** and everyone in it knows that preemptive destruction will be used.

B) Therefore it is a foregone conclusion that John Kerry 'does not get it'. Preemptive destruction must be used when it is warranted.

C) Anyone who does not get it, that preemptive destruction must be used, is unfit to be president of the United States.

D) Inference: therefore John Kerry is unfit to be president.

Biased Attack ad evidence: Invalid inference. Sound reasoning does not work by invalid inference. John Kerry may choose on good evidence when he becomes president to use justified preemptive destruction. It would be most illogical to not consider preemptive destruction as a means where warranted. This falls within the powers of the president. We have no reason to declare that he would not.

by a reader on Sun, 08/01/2004 - 19:33 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

side note: reader@17:50 was

side note: reader @17:50 was me. I want the credit for a good point! ;-)

reader who likes the word "infer" writes:

Blixa, this is the inference, pertaining to John Kerry, that I find

galling. "Anyone who does not understand that is not fit to be President."

Why do you call that an "inference"? Who's inferring what from what? The quote you cite is not an "inference", it's an assertion, a statement, or something like that. You can disagree with that assertion (in which case an argument for why you disagree, might be nice). Or, you can disagree that John Kerry falls into that category (in which case, you have a lot of his own words to explain away). You have done neither.

[wife beating example which I had to read 3 times]

Does not apply. See Elliot's response to you. Me not beating my wife does not require me to convince you I don't beat my wife; it's possible for me to do the former without doing the latter. But in this context (the assertion is..) it's NOT possible to Get It without at the same time understanding the importance of Communicating It.

Anyway, at the very best you're left arguing that *perhaps* John Kerry *does* Get It internally, he's just chosen to say words which convey a failure of Getting It. This would be bad enough on its own - why would he do that? It's also a theory in search of evidence. ("John Kerry Gets It, even though there's no actual evidence that he Gets It from any of his words" is not all that comforting.)

*However **The World** by its use of the inferring statement at the end of the post, John Kerry Doesn't Get It, "Anyone who does not understand that is not fit to be President." juxtaposes lack of evidence in words to infer not 'getting it'.*

There's not a "lack of evidence in words" [that Kerry Gets It]. It's a different situation: there is a *definite wealth of evidence in his words* that he *doesn't* get it. Get it? ;-)

. The effect of an attack ad is to bias.

I suspect **The World** would admit to having a bias. What's your point.

*(A) Words were not spoken to satisfy, "make sure" that **The World** and everyone in it knows that preemptive destruction will be used.*

Again, that's not quite all. In fact words were spoken to indicate that preemptive destruction will NOT be used.

B) Therefore it is a foregone conclusion that John Kerry 'does not get it'.

It's not a "foregone" conclusion. It's a conclusion which follows from his actual words. You're left arguing that at best his words do not indicate his "real" thoughts. Well, let's hope!

Biased Attack ad evidence: Invalid inference

In a sentence please? To the extent I can parse this you're saying

that **The World's** "inference" (conclusion) that John Kerry doesn't Get It is invalid. You haven't explained why however.

John Kerry may choose on good evidence when he becomes president to use justified preemptive destruction.

He "may" choose to nuke the moon, but there's no evidence for either. All we have are his words to go on, and his words indicate that his approach to terrorism will be reflexive and reactive. Do you seriously dispute that? then what?

It would be most illogical to not consider preemptive destruction as a means where warranted.

The question is what qualifies for "warranted". All indications are that Kerry's bar is extremely high.

We have no reason to declare that he would not.

Yes we do. We have the words spoken by John Kerry, which are (usually) in the English language, and thus can be read, understood, and interpreted by people conversant in that language. I still can't figure out why you seem to think his actual words convey nothing about what he thinks or will do. Maybe your contrary position in this thread is really that it's not that John Kerry doesn't Get It, it's that he's a big fat liar and phony? Let us know,

--Blix

by a reader on Sun, 08/01/2004 - 23:58 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Re:Good point

The editor's comparison of Norway and Iraq may be very appropriate. The Nazi's discovered Britain's plans to invade and invaded as well. Britain lost, and Norway went from a neutral state to a member of the Axis. The particulars may be different in Iraq but the results may be similar i.e.: a strengthening of the enemy. This time in the form of an Iraqi theocracy.

by a reader on Mon, 08/02/2004 - 00:53 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Normandy comparison invalid

The comparison with Normandy is invalid because there is no evidence that Iraq is being used as a platform in the larger war on terrorism in the way that Normandy was used as a platform for taking Berlin. Where is the big military build-up in Iraq in preparation for, say, the invasion of Iran? Tactics may dictate that only one target be attacked at a time, and I can appreciate that, but Iraq is clearly not being leveraged for military advantage elsewhere. This should be a matter of urgency, and not something that is done if and when the peace is won in Iraq. The Allies did not dither around in Normandy before pressing on. Elliot, I think you are being disingenuous when you say you don't know why the invasion of Iran has not been started. I think you know why and the

reason has nothing to do with tactics. It is because GW does not take the war on terrorism seriously enough.

Reader @09:59

by a reader on Mon, 08/02/2004 - 01:32 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

errr

I'm disingenuous if I don't agree with you and think Bush is doing the war wrong and unfit to be president? Are you kidding? That's no way to argue.

-- Elliot Temple

<http://www.curi.us/>

by [Elliot Temple](#) on Mon, 08/02/2004 - 04:22 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Well, has it not crossed your mind that...

... there may be a lack of political will to invade Iran?

Reader @09:59

by a reader on Mon, 08/02/2004 - 05:50 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

if i don't put something in the Subject line it'll look weird

The comparison with Normandy is invalid because there is no evidence that Iraq is being used as a platform in the larger war on terrorism in the way that Normandy was used as a platform for taking Berlin.

So the invasion of Iraq could become justified (via becoming analogous to Normandy), though it is now (presumably) not so, but only if the US were to use it to stage an invasion of somewhere else. Fascinating! One answer to you is "stay tuned". (Unless Kerry is elected, presumably.)

Tactics may dictate that only one target be attacked at a time, and I can appreciate that, but Iraq is clearly not being leveraged for military advantage elsewhere.

Not yet (stay tuned), although it has been and is being leveraged for (a) military advantage *in Iraq* ("flytrap" for "foreign fighters") and (b) nonmilitary advantage elsewhere (cf. Libya).

The Allies did not dither around in Normandy before pressing on.

So? I never said the situations were identical thus the idea that all analogous events would occur on precisely analogous timescales, or even that it was meant to be an event-for-event analogy, is rather silly. I freely concede that World War 2 is not a literal blow-by-blow

allegorical template for the current war, if that's what you're

saying.... --Blix

by a reader on Mon, 08/02/2004 - 06:59 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Where is the urgency in "Stay tuned"?

"So the invasion of Iraq could become justified (via becoming analogous to Normandy), though it is now (presumably) not so, but only if the US were to use it to stage an invasion of somewhere else"

Well, according to the World, the war on terrorism is about destroying terrorist organisations, terrorist-supporting regimes, and the evil ideologies that drive them. I agree with this 100%. But Saddam's Iraq constituted a *possible* future threat. The clear and present danger lay - as it still does - elsewhere in the Middle East (and I applaud GW for taking out the Taliban, for they were one of these dangers). So although Iraq deserved to be taken out, it cannot be the primary objective and the war on terrorism will be lost if it is an end in itself. "Stay tuned" is not a good enough answer, and I'm wondering on what basis you say it. The war on terrorism is not something that can wait. The invasion of Iran should be well underway already. What reason can there be for holding back? Flypaper is all well and good, but flypaper does not win wars.

Sure WWII is not a literal blow-by-blow allegorical template for the current war, but strategy is strategy and I would have thought that, as in Normandy, speed and follow-through are essential in the war on terrorism. Dithering will cost lives.

by a reader on Mon, 08/02/2004 - 09:01 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

I merely said "stay tuned" wa

I merely said "stay tuned" was a possible answer. I don't know what is in the heads of either Bush (..or his neocon puppetmasters as the case may be ;-). For all I know there will be no more invasions due to skittishness caused by fallout from the Iraq war that he "lied us into". A better phrasing of that explanation is that a decision was made to eschew high profile military use "until the election" due to political considerations. If so, that is the reason holding them back (public opinion). That's a shame but cannot be unexpected in a democracy.

That being said I don't know that Invading Iran per se is the clear-cut necessary thing to do in the first place. Yes I would be all in favor of an invasion of Iran to destroy that regime. However I am aware that there is an alternate view than invading Iran would be counterproductive because it is "ripe for revolution" due to all the young people etc. and some kind of undermining the regime/aiding the rebels strategy would be better. Sounds plausible to me *shrug* If you have some sort of Urgency-Of-Invasion calculation device which allows you to make these sweeping proclamations of who must be invaded before whom thus second-guessing more

professional strategists, please share it with the rest of the class. (In arguments like these, a lot of people seem to have such a device but won't show it to me. So frustrating!)

I also am not as convinced that "speed" is as necessary as you are. Strategy does not always or uniformly dictate speed. If you are holding a position of strategical strength, enemy forces attacking from weakness idiotically, and you are destroying them with high ratios, I would think that strategy could in that case dictate that you stay put as long as possible.

The caveat there is Iran's rush to go nuclear, and I admit to hoping for an Osirik-like attack to stave that off, because there is little else that seems likely to work.

No, "flypaper" does not win wars. A single battle does not win wars. A maneuver does not win wars. Soldier #XYZ taking his ABC'th step will not win the war. This is a silly way to speak; parsing the events and circumstances of a war, and viewing each one in isolation, you can always make the case that such and such (by itself) "will not win the war". That doesn't mean it can't be part of a larger strategy which will win the war. This is a global war but that does not mean we can or that it is even desirable for us to rush from front to front as quickly as possible. In fact, it is in our interest to serialize our enemies as much as possible, not openly starting a fight until we are ready to do so and/or until we need to.

Again, I agree this all goes out the window if Iran does indeed go nuclear and becomes "untouchable". If this comes too close to happening this could certainly place Iran into that "need to" category, but if you have some definite knowledge that it's there right now, on 8/2/2004, you're better informed about the progress of Iran's nuclear program than I am.

by a reader on Mon, 08/02/2004 - 16:07 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

A Blix-style non-empty subject line so it won't be all wierd

"For all I know there will be no more invasions due to skittishness caused by fallout from the Iraq war that he "lied us into". A better phrasing of that explanation is that a decision was made to eschew high profile military use "until the election" due to political considerations. If so, that is the reason holding them back (public opinion). That's a shame but cannot be unexpected in a democracy."

Which is just a polite form of my argument. But to let the politicians off with an "that's a shame but cannot be unexpected in a democracy." doesn't cut it. If it is just a matter of time before the next 9-11, then time is a luxury we do not have, and that is why I believe speed is necessary (tho' I don't have some magic urgency-of-invasion calculator). There may be tactical and strategic reasons I am unaware of for not invading Iran - and I do understand the

points you have made, but I don't think it is that subtle. And if the

reason is indeed political skittishness, then GW's war on terrorism will turn out to be no better than JK's. For what sort of war on terrorism do you have if you allow fear of the consequences of your past mistakes ("lying" etc) to dictate the future cause of the war?

BTW, I see that "stay tuned" was a just a possible answer, but I'm still wondering if you know something I do not. If "stay tuned" is just a desire on your part for action, then it is no argument for why GW's future war on terrorism would be any better than JK's.

Reader @09:59

by a reader on Tue, 08/03/2004 - 01:16 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

An Obervation On War Strategy

There's an excellent reason for taking Iraq first. Oil. (Keep reading, god dammit)

Since the dawn of war, prime targets have **always** been those that in some way pay for the operation needed to take them. In times long past this often meant striking at weak agrarian areas (for food) before moving on to hit other, more important (from a military perspective) targets.

It follows that, in a long-term military campaign against terrorism, it would be beneficial to strike at weaker targets with greater payoff.

This appears to be sound military strategy... to this untrained strategist, anyway.

And no, I have nothing to say on Kerry. Everyone else is doing fine in that department.

-Dan

by a reader on Wed, 08/04/2004 - 16:54 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

Russia

On the question of oil, watch Russia. She recognizes the economic threat of China and the developing Far East to crude oil, refining, and energy access in the future. She is silently positioning herself to control not only her oil reserves but access to all other available oil resources around the world. This has been done without war, but rather with careful political maneuvering within the economic and capitalist centers of the country and with quiet strategic alliances outside the country but in related and nonrelated states and regimes. That is all I wish to say on Kerry and Bush. Putin is one smart cookie.

by a reader on Thu, 08/05/2004 - 11:46 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

You know, whether or not Bush

You know, whether or not Bush made a valid decision in striking

Iraq was an issue, right? Offering a theory on why it was a useful military move was actually on topic. Really, it was.

-Dan

by a reader on Fri, 08/06/2004 - 02:26 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

9/11 Three Years On - The State of Things

Here is a link to Mark Helprin's column in today's WSJ. This type of clear, thoughtful and informed analysis is not something that we see much nowadays. It shows that one's thinking can be decisive without falling into the trap of being overly simplistic in the effort to make a point.

<http://www.opinionjournal.com/columnists/mhelprin/?id=110005589>

by **Michael Bacon** on Fri, 09/10/2004 - 21:04 | [login](#) or [register](#) to post comments