

# Opinion

## Treat the world equally in foreign affairs

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Change is here and now seems to be a time of reflection. Hopefully an improvement in the mindset of others has gotten us to the point of this fevered expectant change. Having a new president is grand and all, but I'm thinking more of the changes that we haven't been hearing about on the news.

There is so much that has polarized the nation of late, from the beginning of the Former President Bush's "election" to the closing of Guantanamo Bay in Cuba eight years later. Looking back I have to ask myself, since when have we been a nation of fearful, sheepish bullies?

I remember learning in school that America was the last great bastion of freedom and liberty in the world, but all I can see are the

negatives that have tarnished our image.

It's funny how we're always told that bullies in school are just insecure and afraid, because when it comes to the U.S., that's dead on. I completely understand the view of many around the world that America has become a bully, and a tyrant. We let our fear of terrorism overcome what should have been our better judgment.

I love when conservative Americans say Barack Obama is using our fear of the economy to push his legislation through. Where were the conservatives when Bush used the fear of weapons of mass destruction to invade Iraq, a country with no evident connection to terrorists? How were we convinced that doing something that illegal in America would be okay somewhere else in the world?

These are the questions this

"War on Terror" is raising. The fact that there has not been another attack on the U.S. and there have been no reports of imminent attacks being foiled- I do not believe in the threat of terrorism.

If the terrorists were truly committed to the destruction of the American way, there would be nothing to stop them from taking out Americans in the most heinous of ways, yet we put that thought out of mind and believe what we are told. What is to stop them from attacking some random middle school in Anywhere, America? Nothing.

There is no security. One random school attack and every institution of learning would be on guard, costing millions in new security and parents everywhere pulling their children out of school!

We are no safer now, even as we let foreign civilians rot away in

prison. Who are we to decide who is an American hating terrorist and who is defending their home and family against an army from around the world?

If America were occupied I guarantee that we would not react peacefully, yet we expect that when we do the same? When did we decide that the rights we as Americans all hold dear do not apply to non-Americans? There seems to be debate over this and I cannot understand why!

What has made America so great is the fact that we have laws we follow, even when they get in the way, to ensure that all people are treated the same way. If we capture one of Americas Most Wanted, we don't make exception so we can torture them!

We follow due process, build a case, and then they are tried by their peers. It's incredibly hypocritical to think that we

should do it any other way outside of the United States.

These are just a few of the questions that we need to ask ourselves; are we really doing all that we can to spread a positive message to the world, or are we acting selfishly and out of fear with disregard for other people?

We seem to have forgotten that individuals living in different countries and cultures are just as entitled as we are. Our actions have spoken of arrogance and indifference, and this is what I hope changes the most.

We are all cosmopolitans, all citizens of the universe. We are all human and we are all equally important (or unimportant). To deny anyone the rights we ourselves expect is to cast aside all that will help us reach peace. Peace- the thing we seem to fight most for yet cannot seem to find...

## Obama is no panacea

By **CHRIS VARMECKY**  
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A gargantuan crowd masses on the footsteps of the Washington Mall. Admits the frigid temperatures synonymous with late January, a diverse rabble of nearly 2.5 million people gather to share in what was to be the preface to a newfound era of hope, progress, and Americanism. As the promise of change lingered in the air along with the pungent odor of sewage, emanating from the largest gathering of porta potties in contemporary history, the gleeful masses clamored anxiously to hear the preordained orator consummate his presidency.

Barack Obama's ascension to the White House, culminating in his long-awaited inaugural address to the nation, was portrayed by the media and perceived within the minds of many Americans as an end-all be-all to the dire disposition of the tumultuous last eight years.

With the evil George W. Bush now disposed, the crowning achievements of his presidency left at the mercy of international scorn, Obama's North Korean-esque personality cult appropriated a full scale onslaught of lefty celebrity to partake in his triumphant moment. Ranging from the androgynous Jonas Brothers to the world's most infamous cougar Demi Moore, an ungodly slew of Hollywood royalty flocked upon Washington DC for the historical inauguration.

Obama's cult following, comprised mostly of brain-dead celebrities, impressionable college students, and race baiters, is something unprecedented amongst political figures of this day and age. Transcending ideology, race, and most palpably, common sense, Obama's election is seen by many throughout the world as a parting from the arrogant fascism harbored by the warmongering Bush administration. Instead of hiding behind a façade of moral exceptionalism in order to advance

America's supremacy, Obama intends to extend the olive branch and initiate a massive public relations campaign to revamp the nation's ailing reputation.

No, America's extreme makeover won't be through a series of "make-nice" press releases or arbitrary ceremonial gestures, but it will come through a radical shift in policy, hell bent on chipping away at America's capitalistic foundations and parlayed with an ineffective, softball approach toward combating Islamic extremism.

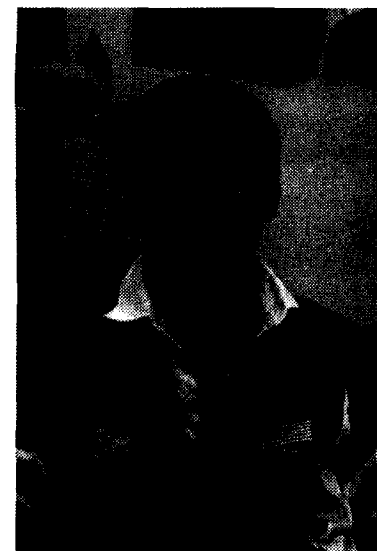
Despite the naivety of some conservative commentators and/or authors who contend that Pres. Obama will maintain Bush era policies when dealing with counterterrorism efforts and curtail his massive increases in government spending to coincide with reality, Obama's constituents, the newly emboldened left wing of the country, demanded change and elected Obama on the promise of change.

Uproarious backlash would

plague the newly elected president if he simply were to neglect his campaign rhetoric of change in place of a pragmatic presidency akin to that of Bush-like Policies. Hinting at his divergence from the policies of the last eight years in his inaugural address and then taking immediate action on them during his first days in office, Obama is sprinting to appease his cohorts on the left.

During his address, Obama spoke of "rejecting as false the choice between our safety and ideals." His disapproval of America's interrogation tactics when dealing with suspected terrorists and of the need for secret CIA prisons and facilities like Guantánamo Bay were unequivocally the targets of this statement. Within the coming days, an executive order disbanded Guantánamo and outlawed the use of enhanced interrogation techniques, including the practice of waterboarding.

While there has yet to be an investigative task force looking into the matter, there is the



eerie possibility that habeas corpus would apply to unlawful combatants detained overseas and their fates would be left at the mercy of a criminal trial rather than a military tribunal.

We are at war with a faceless ideology whose sole objective seeks to wipe Western civilization off the face of the earth, and in its place institute a great Islamic empire governed under Sharia Law. This is not a matter that should be left up to our already

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