

A Citizen's letter: December 2005

Dear Mr. President:

Please hear my Plea, Mr. President. My qualifications? As mother of two boys, diplomacy, budget management, and the steering of ships is just some of my business. Eruptions and skirmishes occur, but we strive for peace.

When my children hear fragments of news on the radio, I find it hard to explain to them your actions in the world without feeling considerable distress, a close relation to **stress** - one of the world's costliest health risks.

A few months ago, in reference to the Iraqi transfer of power you declared: "Now it's time to take the training wheels off." By invoking this parental sounding arrangement in the geopolitical arena, may we ask - where is the behavior here we would like to model for our children?

Last year, the kindergartners were having a safety presentation. When the "don't play with matches" subject was opened up to discussion, the children connected the dots like this: "don't play with grenades" - "don't play with weapons of mass destruction", said the five and six year olds.

Mr. Bush sir: as a parent, it doesn't feel so productive to invoke the "we told you so" mantra, but as a taxpayer I feel ok about saying it. "We told you so!" That is, we told you not to - start a war - but now our hands are so bloody we're floating in it.

Mr. President, let's say we transferred your behavior style in the global arena to a community playground (if you're lucky enough to have one). How would the pre-emptive strike "shock and awe" stunt go over there. The old hit-um-on-the-head-with-a-bigger-bucket or takeover-someone's-castle trick. You'd be in TIME OUT - Big TiME TIME OUT!

We ignore the advice and wishes of many friends, and yet we expect them to help us out after we go pick the fight anyway?

You guys expect your technologies and your dogmas to win over and pacify the subjects. Is this something you and George H cooked up at the dinner

table on vacation? Napoleonic and yet sort of coupdetat. Oops, got a neighborhood by accident. Pass out rebuilding contracts to friends. Pass out democracy pamphlets, candies, tanks and gobs of everybody else's cash. Good luck vacuuming up after this latest power vacuum.

With anger stirred and stirred in the pot, we seem ever so much more vulnerable now. "Embedded" and embalmed reporters wrapped in barbedwire "greenzone" relying on a few overstressed translators. Global is different now. Our toes and our eyes our air all overlaps. Everybody's seen the unflattering pictures now.

Sure -without any doubt, the bad guy did many rotten detestable things and the people deserve relief. So too do many people that live right at your doorstep. As Katrina painted a self-portrait of our country and underscored our lack of investment in our own infrastructure you really showed your true colors.

Carpooling along, I've witnessed young children in the backseat explaining world affairs to each one another.

First there was this one guy with a thing around his head and a long beard who they said did it, so we dropped a lotta bombs on the country where he was supposed to be hiding. But he made a city of caves inside a mountain to hide in so they never got him. ...

So we got tired of that war and then we decided to start this other war with this bad Dictator guy Saddam who they already had a war with while the president's dad was president. ...

Then we bomb all the new stuff like TV stations and computers and power and waterpipes and stuff, and while we're doing that, the 25,000 year old art treasures got jacked from the museums.

After that, we killed the king's two sons. And then we found Saddam, the badguy in a hole underneath a farm with a bag of money. His hair was all crazy. We got him in jail and Somebody took pictures of him with his underwear on.

Mr. President, home of the free and the brave - it appears that we're indebted to your debt until debt do us part - so many piggybanks into the

future have you reached. As the late Susan Sontag¹ so aptly put it, “you’ve signed us up for Endless War”. Using their children and ours, theirs and our brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers. How can a war on terror be winnable anyway when this war you started is itself terror on a grand scale.

Oh and you know that guy with the long beard and the thing around his head, who they said started it, well he’s still missing ...

On the school playground this afternoon, a minor skirmish occurred. The adult in charge intervened, asking a child; “Would you like it if someone came up to you and hit you over the head with a shovel?”

Mr. President - as I try to orient my two sons in this world, I stand by my principles: “Two wrongs don’t make a right Even ... Do unto others”

Ah kids - if only we could go back to talking about the shapes of the clouds.

Sincerely yours,
Mother/Artist at large

¹ New York Times Magazine - May 23, 2004, “