

Progressive Ponderings: More of the Same

"Until we turn our struggle to our own personal demons, the hunger for peace and justice will stay on the stage of imagination."

by Joe Mayer

Some people have spent six and a half years ruining this country, leading to the loss of civil liberties, disrespect of human rights, secrecy in government, election fraud; widening the income/wealth gap; encouraging corruption, environmental devastation and the politics of fear and money; promising perpetual war, rejection by world opinion and a crumbling infrastructure; creating a legacy of obscene debt to our heirs and rule by capitalism in place of democracy.

Without rejecting the disastrous consequences or accepting any responsibility, presidential candidates from both parties promise more of the same. Any attempted analysis of America's problems, foreign and domestic, places self-introspection "off-the-table." Should a candidate of either major party suggest fault with our own policies, the right-wing hate mongers move into action. The diatribes are echoed throughout the media as a warning that campaigning on the main issues of public despair means political suicide.

The political sphere now panders to the religious sphere. Today's so-called Christian sphere is not recognizable in the life and teachings of the man it pretends to follow. Compassion, reaching out to the downtrodden, and "love neighbor as self" are condemned as signs of weakness. In place of Jesus' true nature, an ideology of hatred, violence, self-indulgence and wealth is substituted.

Regrettably, mainline Christianity observes in self-muted silence this new celebration of the crucifixion.

A government that ignores the will and rights of its citizens will ignore the will and rights of other peoples, nations and cultures.

A government that suppresses the public opinion and needs of other nations and peoples will suppress the opinion and needs of its own people.

A government that manipulates its own people through secrecy, fear and hatred will do the same to other peoples and nations.

A government that lies to the world will lie to its own people. Patterns of governing stay consistent regardless of what constituencies are victimized.

Fear, hatred, secrecy, lies and violence will never achieve peace. Peace is never an objective of power. The only path to guarantee peace — domestic and international — is respect for the human and civil rights of all peoples.

In this age of staged reality television, our politicians create a public relations scenario. Only power — theirs — can correct the devastation they have created. Only more of the same will bring about different results.

The public, citizens and taxpayers behind these schemes are both the victims and the enablers. Public relations drowns out reality as politicians reinvent themselves to accommodate a make-believe democracy. The cause of our problems has no role in this script. The corporate sponsors of unreality pay for only profitable pseudo-solutions. Real solutions that improve the lives of real

people are never cast in this script.

The main enemy today is our own bad traits: pride, selfishness, indifference to the common good, inner aggression and violence, creating a God in our self-image. Until we turn our struggle to our own personal demons, the hunger for peace and justice will stay on the stage of imagination.