

Utter Corruption 2-2-98

Whether or not the president is forced to resign, the real lessons of his current scandal have already been taught. And it is not without irony that the second week of the president's most serious scandal was also a week in which a former and a current cabinet member were denying other allegations of official misconduct.

Henry Cisneros and Bruce Babbitt have come under fire for paying hush money and influence peddling, respectively. Cisneros, it seems, paid off a former mistress to keep her quiet. And Babbitt made a decision in line with the wishes of large donors to his political party – it is unclear if the donations motivated the decision or were merely coincidental. No matter, we all know that money talks.

Right-wing political activists may be on the verge of an orgasmic experience of their own over the possibility that the president will be forced from office as a result of sexual misconduct in the White House. The American people don't really care who is blowing the president, and have grown accustomed to the fact that presidents are not renowned for their personal values. Presidents are traditionally the kind of people who do what they are expected to do, without regard for ethical norms or human decency.

Take Richard Nixon, for example. This was a man who ordered the mass murder of as many as two million Vietnamese innocents and 55,000 American youth. Nixon was a man who lied, cheated, stole, conspired to commit various felonies, and God knows what else. He was sleaze embodied.

So, the Democrats do not have a lock on personal values problems. Although, it did appear that the Republicans used to. Remember Reagan? At one point there were over 230 different individuals in his administration who were in prison, under indictment or investigation for criminal wrongdoing or ethics violations. And four separate special prosecutors had to investigate his Attorney General -- the highest so-called law enforcement officer in the land.

These are the representatives of the corporate ruling class chosen to preserve their interests – their best and brightest!

The actual issue with our president concerns perjury. It is alleged that he urged others to lie under oath, and possibly that he lied under oath. How many of us believe that any U.S. president has gone through their career without regularly perjuring themselves, if not under oath then at least in remarks to the American people? That is what they do, that is what they are paid to do, and a penchant for lying to the American people is why large corporate donors support their campaigns.

Cheating, lying, and murder are the values of capitalism, and it would be naïve for anyone to suppose that a representative of the capitalist class could rise to power without a personal willingness to commit these crimes on command.

I don't really care if the president is proven to have perjured himself, lying is a petty crime. What concerns me these days is the slaughter of the innocents he is perpetuating in Iraq. The issue with sanctions is not whether or not someone like Saddam Hussein should or should not be President of Iraq. He shouldn't. But Saddam got where he is because of his history of service protecting the interests of global finance capital. The chemical and biological weapons Iraq had, perhaps even has, are the result of the propping up of his regime by presidents prior to the current one.

And these days, Iraqi children continue to die from starvation and disease because of sanctions which any impartial observer has to admit have been applied one-sidedly and

with no hope of ending. When Iraq says that it sees no value in participating in the charade that is the U.N. investigation, their position is utterly reasonable.

When the president says that we need to prepare for the bombing of Iraqis – again -- and the poisoning our own youth – again, he is conspiring to commit genocide. The president supports the murder of hundreds of thousands of innocent children, as well as saturation bombing, while pretending to be enforcing something resembling the democratic will of world opinion. But world opinion on Iraqi arms is virtually the same as world opinion on Israeli arms. Where is the president's outrage over Israeli refusals to allow U.N. arms inspectors to check out their nuclear weapons program?

Lying is about the pettiest of the crimes committed by this president, and by his predecessors. It is now undeniable – if it ever was -- that both of the corporate funded political parties are utterly corrupt servants of the enemy.

The real issue is for how much longer will the American people tolerate the abuse and insult heaped upon us year and after year by an ever richer, ever crueler ruling class and its puppet politicians?