

IGNORE THIS.... AT YOUR OWN PERIL

Today, it is not just sole super power in the world. The USA spends more money on "defence" than the total spent by all other nations on earth combined. (Source: BBC, HARDTALK). Any other "power" such as the Commonwealth of Dominica may ignore this fact at its own peril.

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

There are millions of pacifists who are not nominated as candidates for the Nobel Peace Prize. President Bush seems determined to be a "war - time president". Yet he was nominated, perhaps by someone who confused the criteria for candidacy. Happily, Jimmy Carter won the coveted prize for 2002. Congratulations President Carter.

The mere fact that Mr. Bush was among the nominees, however, is instructive.

NAKED POWER

By it's course of conduct in recent times, it is clear that the American government respects nobody even when it has no moral authority to so disrespect.

At times, the USA makes one believe that it is involved in an exercise of naked power; a situation where might is right and reason does not matter.

It follows that the USA can kick our butt if we provide legal reason: e.g., if we sign an international treaty and refuse to uphold the terms and conditions which we have signed.

RIGHT AND WRONG

Did Dominica breach the extradition treaty, which it contracted with the USA? Former A.G., Mr. David Bruney thinks "No". Legal advisers to the Hon. Prime Minister say "Yes". Both sides cannot be right. One is wrong, the other is right.

We who pontificate on that matter in the media seem most incompetent to resolve it. I would strongly recommend that we take it away from our preferred media methods and shift it back to the dimension where it belongs.

Advice, guidance and decisions on this issue may be sought by all parties from:

- *The UWI Law Faculty*
- *Hugh Wooding Law School*
- *Other Commonwealth Legal Institutions and Jurists, and especially*
- *The courts.*

This simple analysis assumes:

- *Willingness on all sides to resolve the issue*
- *Commitment to respect the rule of law*
- *Rationality to accept legal/authoritative decision(s).*

By the way, rational behaviour assumes that "big, big men" will abandon their current penchant to be mean by media, one to the other. Centipede attitude or mutual exchange of vituperation will not help anybody's cause.

AFRAID TO MAKE SENSE?

I have long been lamenting how many mad men and women make petty political division an occupation as well as a pastime. But the rest of us should not be afraid to make sense.

NOT A PARTISAN ISSUE

Some have attempted to make Mr. Isidore's issue a party political one. Good sense suggests that it is not. Here is why.

Assume a case scenario where another party, say the "blue" party takes office tomorrow; by legitimate means. Bet your money that the States Department of the United States would quickly tell the new administration:

"Your predecessors in office left some unfinished business". The States Department would repeat the seriousness of the allegations. Because they are diplomats they would probably not mention that they consider the frivolities on our local talk shows to be at once unnecessary and irrelevant.

They would reiterate their belief that Dominica is in flagrant breach of the extradition treaty between Dominica and the USA. They would insist that we uphold the terms of the treaty and send back our citizen to be tried.

There may be a few among us who believe the new administration will be able to respond:

"HELLELUIA..... WE WILL NOT SEND HIM BACK.... COUNT US WITH THE RENEGADE STATES THAT YOU CALL THE AXIS OF EVIL!!!"

FOOL'S PARADISE

In fact, the new administration of whatever colour, would inherit the issue and would have the obligation to resolve it. I am convinced that anyone hoping to the contrary is living in a fool's paradise.

ALTERNATIVE OUTCOMES

That is why the parties should face reality and seek the guidance and solution as already suggested. I see two possible outcomes.

- 1. First, there may be a decision not to extradite. The learned jurist(s) making the said decision would have the responsibility to convince the State Department. It would be a Cinderella finale for the accused and his family.*
- 2. Alternatively - and there was always the risk - there may be a decision to extradite. Then all parties would have the responsibility to ensure the physical protection of our citizen. And we would have to cure our foot-in-mouth disease by a doze of money; to engage a formidable legal defence.<*

Names such as Johnnie Cochrane come to mind.

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