

**January, 2005**

**Oh To Have My Security Clearance Updated**

Having been unemployed for almost five months last year and, accordingly, having perused the Washington Post employment classifieds religiously, I know that if I had been able to have my security clearance from my time as a Navy intelligence analyst updated, I would have been unemployed for probably a month at the most. Check the Sunday Washington Post Employment section to see how many job fairs and job openings are available only for individuals with active security clearances. This seems to me to be a form of discrimination. You could argue that many jobs require a college degree. That is true but a college degree is generally available to anyone that can pay for it. That is not the case with getting a security clearance.

First of all, I know of no way that an individual can initiate the process of getting a security clearance let alone afford for it. I was told more than twenty years ago when I filled out the paperwork for my security clearance that it would take at least six months and cost upwards of \$50K. Now, due to a lack of investigative personnel and the demand for cleared individuals, a clearance investigation can take up to two years and who knows how many dollars to complete. The majority of, if not all, clearance investigations are requested and paid for by a government agency or government contractor for a proven employee. Forget about getting a job and bouncing around from uncleared administrative position to uncleared administrative position for two years before getting a clearance even if you are ultimately qualified for the job. No, someone with a clearance and/or military background will get that job. In most cases, it is cheaper to train someone to do the job than it is to get a clearance for someone who is already trained for the job.

This bothers me a bit, and this is a whole other rant, but under these circumstances, most of the government secrets will be held by military, ex-military, and government employees working directly for the government or government contractors. Everyone will have been trained to toe the line and produce the desired intelligence product rather than producing the product that is warranted from the intelligence gathered. So, in this case, the Bush administration not only has all his cabinet, major department heads, and now the lowliest intelligence analyst and IT professional in his pocket. We need to have a more open mind about collecting and evaluating our intelligence product to be able to respond aptly to our ever changing world. This means that more job seekers should be able to apply for jobs that require security clearances even if it means moving those individuals into higher security positions as parts of the background investigations are completed.

Just to show that this rant is not totally unfounded, check out the following article written by Christian Davenport, Washington Post staff writer, published in the Washington Post on January 3, 2005: Terrorism Fight Prods NSA to Look Beyond Its Fortress. Here are a few supporting quotes:

"...headhunting agency that serves only clients with security clearances is seeing double-digit growth every month."

"He's so sought after that he doesn't even have to hold down a steady job in one place. Instead, Derek, who would not provide his last name for security reasons, does freelance information technology work for the government and private companies looking for someone trusted to keep secrets. Derek, 34, earns about \$170,000 a year, jumping from project to project."

"The overall demand for cleared people . . . is up significantly since 9/11," he said.

"And the forecasted demand is not projected to abate for the foreseeable future."

Rant off.

**US Losing It's Concentration Camp**

Read it and weep:

"The Pentagon and the CIA have asked the White House to decide on a more permanent approach for potentially lifetime detentions, including for hundreds of people now in military and CIA custody whom the government does not have enough evidence to charge in courts."

"As part of a solution, the Defense Department, which holds 500 prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, plans to ask Congress for \$25 million to build a 200-bed prison to hold detainees who are unlikely to ever go through a military tribunal for lack of evidence, according to defense officials."

From a Washington Post article by Dana Priest, Washington Post Staff Writer, dated Sunday, January 2, 2005: Long-term Plan Sought for Terror Suspects.

Let me think about this without the benefit of a law degree let alone experience in international or war crimes law. "...does not have enough evidence to charge in courts." That sounds to me like lack of evidence to indict. Accused should go free. "...unlikely ever to go through a military tribunal for lack of evidence." That sounds to me like lack of evidence. Accused should go free!

If we imprisoned everyone we thought might commit a crime, even heinous crimes, we would have have to imprison probably ten per cent of the world's population. We might as well kill all the Jews. Oh wait a minute. That has been tried by the Nazi's. Okay, let's just separate them from most of society. Oh wait a minute. That was done by Stalin. This is what the U.S. government is suggesting and condoning. I cannot agree that there is a good reason to imprison indefinitely an individual on evidence so scanty that it cannot meet the standards of U.S. or world courts. We could set a terrible example here for behavior that we have historically condemned and persecuted other nations for.

Check the definition from Wikipedia, the Free encyclopedia, of concentration camp: "A concentration camp is a large detention centre created for political opponents, aliens, specific ethnic or religious groups, civilians of a critical war-zone, or other groups of people, often during a war. The term refers to situations where the internees are persons selected for their conformance to broad criteria without judicial process, rather than having been judged as individuals. Camps for prisoners of war are usually considered separately from this category, although informally (and in some other languages) they may also be called concentration camps."

#### **Follow Up to Concentration Camp**

I forgot to mention that I was pleased that some prominent politicians, including Senator Richard Lugar (R-Indiana) and Sen. Carl M. Levin (Mich.), senior Democrat on the Armed Services Committee spoke out against the "imprisonment for life" proposal. See what they had to say in this Washington Post article: Lugar Condemns Plan To Jail Detainees for Life

#### **Thank God Hanging Chads Were Not Hanging Richards**

I love the name Richard. Take for example Richard Lugar, referenced in the previous post. If you shorten his name to Dick Lugar do you get a German penis gun? I saw another Richard name the other day: Richard Fork. If you shorten that to Dick Fork do you get a utensil with which you can eat hot dogs? The classic Richard is Richard Marx, the musician. I remember hanging out in the clubs in Thailand years ago when they were playing all these Richard Marx songs. They sucked but the name was hilarious. Do women rate men by the "Richard Marx" scale?

#### **U.S. and Screwed Up Priorities**

See the Washington Post article Funds Ready for Tsunami Aid, but Hill Seeks to Do More. The U.S. government has pledged approximately \$500 million, including \$100 million in assistance from the military, for Asian tsunami survivor assistance. In contrast, President Bush is pushing for emergency funds for the Iraqi war totalling \$100 billion. Get your calculators out...no wait...I'll do the math for you. The funding requested for the war in Iraq is 200 times that of the funding promised for Asian tsunami survivors!

Who says war doesn't pay? Where will that money wind up? In the hands of big business government contractors who make war munitions and supplies. Old Dub and his cronies are laughing all the way to the bank. I bet ole Dub is just salivating over the money he will reap in after he dumps the presidency. He has and is making more money for big business than any other president in history. And he will surely be repaid, probably not on the lecture circuit w/o teleprompters, but on the boards of many a corporation.

## **Banished Word List**

At the beginning of the new year, Lake Superior State University publishes a list of words that they think should be banished. Click here to see this year's list. This year's list includes the term "enemy combatant." The individual that submitted the term questions what combatants are not "enemy" combatants. So did radio DJ's on both D.C.'s 94.7 - The Arrow and Baltimore's 98 Rock. I find it difficult to believe that people are so stupid that they do not know that a "combatant" is simply a fighter, most often armed. For a more detailed description, select "combatant."

## **Guns, Roses, Iraq, and Civil War**

I am not going to cite any articles in this rant. I do know a good song about civil war...by Guns & Roses. I do know a good place for a civil war...Iraq. I have read too much about insurgents, terrorists, maggots, etc., killing Iraqi civilians, police, politicians, civil administrators, and military as well as U.S. (and other non-Iraqi nation's) military and civilian personnel.

One, the non-Iraqis cannot do it all. Two, they cannot do anything if the Iraqis don't help. And three, if the Iraqi's aren't proud enough and don't have the balls (which I don't believe) to fight against the insurgents, terrorists, and other maggots, the U.S. and other coalition forces have no justification for being in Iraq.

This war/conflict is not going to be won by foreign or occupation forces. It has to be won by Iraqis. Iraqis have to want to be free, have to want to have some form of democratic government, have to be able to practice their religions without persecution, and have to risk their lives to kill the maggots that threaten these freedoms.

If the Iraqi people cannot or do not want to stand up for their way of life, then the occupation forces should leave the heartland...seal the borders, deny international air service, and impose a realistic economic embargo that forces the Iraqis to take some responsibilities for their lives and livelihood!

The pen is not mightier than the sword. Violence begets violence. Take that one weapon that the occupation forces left with every adult male and go out and kill a maggot. Problem solved. That is what I would do if I were in their position. There have got to be a hell of a lot more Iraqis who want peace than their are maggots who want to fight for some ideal. It is a civil war of numbers. Those desiring a life of family, religion, peace, and prosperity should vastly outnumber those that desire conflict for the sake of conflict.

Rant off.

## **11 x 44 The Symmetry of Numbers**

Oh, it's my freakin b'day. 44 today. Don't you want to go my way?

## **Social Security Revamp**

It seems to me that we should leave Social Security as it is and find ways to fund it by repaying the fund what the government has borrowed from it and modifying the plan to meet future needs. Privatizing puts too much responsibility for the future in the hands of people who probably cannot manage the responsibility. The government will wind up paying anyway...with less money than they would have had were Social Security intact as we imagine it now.

## **Oh the Commute**

I have worked late every day so far this week. One would expect that the rush hour would not be quite so rushed. That has generally been the case but Murphy's Law must state somewhere that the less traffic there is during rush hour the slower some maggots have to drive and the higher the percentage of maggots there are on the road. Three days in row I am cruising along nicely until I hit a certain point on Route 15 North where I encounter the following: a Subaru (not the same one) on two different days the driver of which seemed to feel that it was his destiny to set the speed limit at 5 to 10 miles below that which was posted, a tractor trailer blazing down the road at just below the speed limit (as I passed I noticed it said "Eggs" on the side), and truck driving ahole who

forced me off the road to get in front of me at a merge and then, even though he won the battle and should have yielded, thought it was cool to periodically hit the spray wash on his windshield and speckle my car with it. This is a pretty good feat because I am not one to tailgate!

P.S. I'll save my Subaru rant for another day.

### **The Weight Is Over**

I feel sorry for this guy so no ranting will be tolerated. See this article about Patrick Deuel, his weight, and his weight loss. Here is an excerpt from the article:

"A group known as the League of Human Dignity helped arrange for Deuel to be driven to a local livestock scale, where he could be weighed."

Unmentioned in this article but noted in others and on the television news is the fact that this dude weighed 240 pounds in the sixth grade. When I was in seventh grade, I was as tall as I am now...5'9"...and weighed 150 pounds. Ah for the good old days! Nevertheless, I was a pretty big boy for my age but not that big....

Listen to what he has to say about it.