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# Overwhelmed America Expects, Accepts a Parade of Deceptions and Disasters/The Bitterness of America after Eight Years of Bush

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## **Overwhelmed America Expects, Accepts a Parade of Deceptions and Disasters**

By Gil Villagrán

It's been seven years since America and the world witnessed with shock, fright and disbelief, the fall of the twin towers of the World Trade Center. For weeks after, as one nation, we remained numb as Ground Zero was picked over by first responders, seeking the remains of those missing, presumed dead, but actually annihilated. Months later we began to carry on with our lives, *almost*, but not quite as before. Our president and commander-in-chief stood on a pile of rubble vowing to *get* those who, in his words, "cowardly" attacked us, and we expected no less from those empowered to protect us. But we have not gotten them yet, and they tauntingly vow to hurt us much more.

Seven years later, with more than one million Americans serving in combat, some on their fifth deployment, more than 4,000 paying the ultimate price, 30,000 permanently disfigured, disabled and traumatized, and costing our nation almost one trillion dollars, we cannot see any conclusion to these two wars. One war, in Afghanistan was objectively necessary to retaliate against Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaida network--the self proclaimed culprit of the 9-11 attacks. Unfortunately, in spite of many deaths (theirs, ours, and the collateral-damaged people living in villages, dirt huts and caves; he got away from the most trained, equipped, and eager military in the world. Five years after the fall of the Taliban rule, the American installed president's rule is confined to his presidential palace and capital city defended by American military, as the country reverts back to subsistence farmers once again brutalized by warlords, opium traffickers, and Taliban clerics—often all three in one.

The other war, in Iraq, is a disaster without let up. Five years ago we delivered our own "shock and awe" with the most sophisticated weapons in the world, to a country we had de-fanged ten years earlier. Our military re-conquered an army that all but vanished as we moved into Baghdad. Now, our half million force (half poorly paid soldiers and half highly paid mercenaries) are landlords to 30 million Iraqis, many who are refugees and/or insurgents in their own nation—destroying their own infrastructure faster than we can say "nation-building." We now realize that killing suicide bombers

before they kill innocent civilians and our occupying army is very difficult. Our new strategy is to pay some militias to kill other militias with lots of cash, weapons and training. This may work for a while, but introducing even more weapons into this nation will ultimately bring even more tragedy to this land of more than one million deaths and even more displaced.

## **The Bitterness of America after Eight Years of Bush**

By Gil Villagrán

In mining, to get to the valuable ore you must dig up a lot of rubble, called tailings, which are then left behind for others to clean up after the mining company has run off with their profits. Some tailings, as they are called from uranium mines, are low level toxic, so they've been sold for low cost homebuilding for low-income renters and home buyers. After years of exposure, particularly the children get tumors and federal payment for their treatment until early death ends their suffering. It's been said, the poor suffer most, and no truer truth exists.

After almost eight years of the George W. Bush presidency, most Americans may not have tumors, yet, but a bitterness pervades the land. The top ten reasons that Americans are bitter:

1. **The war in Iraq:** after five years, 4,000 dead American soldiers, 40,000 injured, and this one trillion dollars war offers no end in sight. Our half million force (half poorly paid soldiers and half highly paid mercenaries) are landlords to 30 million Iraqis, many who are "renters" in a hell that is their own land—many destroying their own infrastructure faster than we can say "nation-building." We now realize that killing suicide bombers before they kill innocent civilians and our occupying army is very difficult. Our new strategy is to pay some militias to kill other militias with lots of cash, weapons and training. This may work for a while, but giving weapons to those eager to kill their own seems dangerous policy, ultimately harvesting more brutality.
2. **The war in Afghanistan:** Six years after the fall of the Taliban, the American installed government is confined to the presidential palace defended by American military, as the

country reverts back to subsistence farmers once again brutalized by warlords, opium traffickers, and Taliban clerics—often all three in one, as if we were never there.

**3. In the 2000 election:** Americans awoke to realize high school civic lessons in democracy were to a great extent fiction. When the Supreme Court selected George W. Bush as president of the republic, they left many citizens aware for the first time that “we the people” do not elect our president, but rather the Electoral College, which no high school graduate attends for higher education. We also learned that party officials doubling as election officials, design ballots, determine election policy, and most troubling--not all votes are counted.

**4. Torture—American Style:** Our national policy is that we do not commit torture, but we do kidnap suspected terrorists, fly them in secret flights to secret prisons, where they are interrogated until they admit their evil deeds. Our enhanced interrogation may include stress positions, loud music, extreme cold or heat, food deprivation, sleep deprivation, waterboarding (not to be confused with waterskiing, or skateboarding), and years of solitary confinement. Some might call these techniques torture, but the Bush State Department has determined it is not, and the Supreme Court is deaf and dumb on this question.

**5. The National Debt:** When Bush took office, there was a Bill Clinton budget surplus of trillions, now there is a debt of ????

**6. Health Care:** When Bush took office, 45 million Americans had no health insurance, there are 48 million Americans worried sick about getting sick.

**7. The Price of Gas:** When Bush took office gasoline cost \$1.46 at the pump, today in San Jose it has passed \$4 a gallon. When filling up, take your credit card, checkbook, be prepared to take out second mortgage on your auto.

**8. Our Prison Industrial Complex:** One out of 100 Americans is a resident of a criminal justice lock up, jail construction is a major industry, and the poorer you are or the darker your skin, the more likely you will join the American prison gulag—the highest rate of incarceration in the industrialized world.

**9. Our Military Industrial Complex:** Halliburton, VP Cheney’s former company, is just one of the best connected military contractor in these wars, supplying mercenaries (paid killers), meals, laundry service, road service for bombed tanks. The longer these

wars last, the greater the earnings for those with the contracts, not for the mutilated American soldiers.

**10. The Housing Mortgage Foreclosure and Gulf Coast hurricane victims** may have innocently thought that their elected legislators and government agency regulators were watching out for them, regulating banking practices and levy building and emergency services...but we now see that such trust in government was naïve and foolish. The elected officials were working the campaign fundraising circuit and their appointed officials were redecorating their offices while the people are losing their homes, being evicted, and hurricane refugees are now living in government provide toxic trailers.

After eight years of Bush, we have at least ten reasons to be bitter.