

The ghost of the betrayal of Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam, 1963, is rattling the old chains of Jacob Marley's Democrats in Kabul, 2010.

We have heard recently how the Obama Administration and Hamid Karzai's Afghan government are at increasing logger-heads. Washington drones on about Karzai's lack of democratic operation and transparency (re: corruption) while Karzai continues to fume about the killing of innocent Afghans by US/NATO forces. This ugly, and near terminal process, warrants serious consideration because it bears an uncanny similarity to what happened with Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963.

Ngo Dinh Diem, the President of South Vietnam, brought much official American opprobrium down on his head for not 'being democratic,' for governmental 'corruption and nepotism,' and for not being aggressive enough in prosecuting the war against the Viet Cong Communists. The Democrat administration of President John F. Kennedy lost what little patience they had with Diem and his non-compliant un-puppet-like ways. They could not understand why he was so worried about killing Communists because they were Vietnamese [re: Diem was always reluctant to see his countrymen killed, Communist or not] and why he was continually grumbling about there being too many Americans in the country and that this, in turn, was getting him labeled as 'My-Diem,' meaning 'America's Diem'. In other words, they failed to realise that they, the Kennedy administration, were the ones who were undermining Diem as a Vietnamese nationalist and leader of considerable political. Washington's compulsive need to micromanage the independent leader of a sovereign nation was never seen as a problem in the Kennedy White House or the State Department. Diem pleaded with them over these issues. He also warned them that security at that stage in South Vietnam's development was far more important than voting, especially if such voting was subject to local fraud and communist intimidation. Diem also pleaded with Washington for patience and time, the two most valuable commodities required by all fledgling governments. Sadly, President Ngo Dinh Diem discovered too late that Kennedy's men had lots of money, just as much engineering know-how and no inkling of what the virtue of patience looked like. The failure of Diem to perceive this lack of virtue in his erstwhile supporters from Washington cost him his life, and the lives of many other good men when the Kennedy administration opted for an illegal and murderous coup d'état in November of 1963.

Moving forward to early 2010 in Afghanistan what do we see inherent in the Obama administration's treatment of President Hamid Karzai? Not to put too fine a point on it, however, but only the pure blind could fail to perceive the parallel in how these two leaders have been poorly used and misunderstood by Democrat administrations in Washington. In many ways, Hamid Karzai's position has always been far more politically tenuous than Diem's. For from the very inception of his insurgent government, Karzai was forced by his American benefactors to incorporate lawless and treacherous warlords into his Kabul regime. To state plainly that any true Pashtun or broader Afghan political legitimacy was undermined for Karzai right from the beginning is to make a rather innocuous but obvious understatement. President Karzai has had to struggle just to make it to the start-line of political legitimacy. Even so the Obama administration has insisted that he have proper elections, no corruption, equal rights for females, etc. This is the equivalent of piling a massive superstructure on top of a very shaky foundation that was already sinking into a bog of political illegitimacy. Frankly, this analyst is surprised that Washington has

not demanded that Karzai walk on water. That Karzai has not already been murdered, given the ever violent and duplicitous nature of Afghan politics, has to be seen as nothing short of a miracle in and of itself. Lest the current pack of liberal do-gooders in Washington forget, it needs to be pointed out that every single Afghan leader who held power in Kabul prior to Karzai, good, bad or ugly, and who moved to promote women into positions of political power paid for this colossal vanity with their lives [re: the mullahs always win in the end]. Yet, the Obama White House and State Department, seemingly unaware that they are shortening the life of their prodigy with their constant harangue over 'women's rights,' do even more injury to the beleaguered man every day that they publicly rebuke him and pile on their own objectives onto his increasingly bowed shoulders. Washington liberals seem to swagger on blithely and blindly in creating nearly the exact same conditions that the Kennedy administration did all those years ago in South Vietnam. Those conditions can only lead to a coup, a political vacuum, and increasing violence that only serve the goals of America's enemies. Even now, even today, we can see in the news media the same sorts of shoddy vilification and unworthy accusations that were heaped on Diem being heaped on Karzai: i.e. such as using drugs, being irrational, consorting with and giving comfort to the enemy, etc.

The stupid, childish, and petty nonsense about Karzai loading the government with family and friends has to stop: of course he loads the government with such people and why shouldn't he? Did it ever occur to the 'brite-lites' in DC that, in countries that have no democratic traditions and plenty of intrigue, murder and revenge, the only way to ensure that your throat is not quite literally cut in the middle of the night is to surround yourself with those who have a vested interest in you remaining alive for another day?

For any American of goodwill with the eyes left to see, ears to hear, or the nose to smell the same rot and decay emanating from the lies coming out of Washington now as they did all those years ago under the Kennedys, it is painfully manifest that the ghost of failed policies of treachery and betrayal toward Ngo Dinh Diem is now rattling its chains far louder than any Dickensian figure such as Jacob Marley's specter. The war in Afghanistan may well be lost but why lose it in such a base and unmanly fashion so hauntingly similar to how the war was lost, politically, in Vietnam?