On US elections, Indonesia and Iraq

12 November 1998

I have not read your reaction to the election results, and don't know if you're going to comment on it, but the media's response to the election returns is somewhat confusing. For the last 8 months or so, the press has considered the public's disgust with the Starr inquiry into the Clinton/Lewinsky affair as misguided and ignorant. In general, the media seemed to believe this story was important and continued to ignore polls showing the public wanted a quick end to the investigation and the reporting on the matter. In fact, many in the media felt the public did not understand the importance of this investigation and that it was the duty of the media to follow this story in the name of truth and justice despite public pressure to end it. Now, after post-election polls continue to show public disinterest in the investigation and a desire to see the impeachment proceedings ended, the press does an about-face and is clamoring to see a quick end to the Clinton investigation.

To be honest, I can't make sense of it. Since past polls were regularly, brazenly dismissed, why does the media consider these election day polls so significant? My only guess is that the media has been cowed by election results which can be interpreted to be a repudiation of extreme right-wing values and has backed away from its own extreme position on impeachment. I would be interested to hear if you had any thoughts on the media's seeming over-night conversion.

Thanks. And keep up the great work. Your site is an oasis of hope.

A

4 November

Dear Editor,

Compliments for your very realistic description in the article.

As someone living in Jakarta for almost 2 years I can recognize a lot of items of daily life in Indonesia nowadays in your article. I can only support you in publishing more of these kind of articles and try to let the outside world become aware of the dramatic time bomb ticking in Indonesia at this moment.

Regards

MO

3 November

Dear Editor,

I would be interested to hear more from you about the unending conflict with Iraq. My feeling is that forcing hardship on innocent people for so long for the good of the affluent countries is unreasonable. It seems that the US and its allies are unable to 'solve' the problem, so they continue the embargoes in order to avoid losing face, and losing power over part of the region.

While I cannot say I hold Iraqi leadership in terribly high esteem, I am inclined to say that the good of the many is better than the punishment of the few. I do not hold a high regard for American leadership, and I do not appreciate their development of weapons of mass destruction, but that does not mean I think that American families should starve.

Obviously I have some opinions on this issue--but I am very open minded and would love to hear more discussion of the topic.

RS

11 November

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