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SHOE REVOLUTION

Therapeutic Great Fun in the Cyber-Democracy

If a tiny force achieving a vast result makes a hero, a small result from a grandiose effort makes a fool. (Orien E. Klapp, Symbolic Leaders: Public Dramas and Public Men, 1964)

INTRODUCTION: Internet has become a vital encompassing force for instant messaging and free and creative expression. Thanks to electronic communication, the Iraqi journalist's action has instantly become a major hit in the media and thereby in the public sphere. From shoe-ing President George W. Bush to the Garden of Eden where God spoke to Adam about the forbidden fruit, we human beings are exposed to the prominent German philosopher Hegel's idea that the only thing constant is change; namely, we are constantly changing. American novelist, essayist, and social critic William S. Borroughs (1914-1997) wrote that "illusion is a revolutionary weapon." (The Electronic Revolution, Part 2, 1970). Canadian sociologist Marshall McLuhan coined the term "global village" forty-six years ago in 1962—an illusion at that time! "We can now live, not just amphibiously, in divided and distinguished worlds, but pluralistically in many worlds and cultures simultaneously....The electro-magnetic discoveries have created the simultaneous 'field' in all human affairs so that human family now exists in a 'global village'." (The Gutenberg Galaxy, 1962) American science-fiction writer William Gibson said that "our stuff is out there somewhere" in cyberspace where "information is extra-geographical." Gibson interviewed in Simon Dwyer (ed.), Rapid Eye 3 (1995). The coinage "cyberspace" originated in Gibson's science-fiction book (Neuromancer, 1984). To him, cyberspace was a conceptual space.

TWO FAMOUS POLITICACL SHOE INCIDENTS: I know two famous political shoe incidents: (1) Printed accounts- without picture of the scene-claim that the former Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev took his shoe and "slammed it on the desk" at the UN General Assembly Conference in New York in October of 1960. Most recently, Jacob

Heilbrunn of the liberal Huffington Post (December 14, 2008) writes: “Not since” that incident “anyone has had the effect” which Iraqi journalist al-Zaidi created by throwing his shoes at the outgoing U.S. President Bush. The Soviet leader’s shoe pounding story, however, is more likely invented rather than document by a picture. Nina Khrushcheva, the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev’s granddaughter came in her research article to the following conclusion: Her grandfather’s shoe event was a “physical symbol of the cold war....a potent symbol” of that war, “was an anecdote created by public demand, consistent with the political needs of the socialist-capitalist division....I searched the contemporary press for the fullest coverage of the famous assembly....And still there was no shoe.” (Nina Khrushcheva, “The Case of Khrushchev’s Shoe”, Newstatesman.com, October 2, 2000. [Dec. 31, 2008]).

The Shoe throwing is an outstanding method of nearly-nonviolent resistance commensurate with the destructive dimensions of the aggression launched by President Bush in the emotional-loaded environment of the 911 tragedy. Shoe-ing Bush is just as well a powerful symbol for international rage against the intolerable U.S. imperial hegemony, deceptions, and manipulations disguised as “liberation” and “democracy.”

Seeking to solidify his foreign policy legacy, President Bush made surprise valedictory visits to Iraq and Afghanistan in the middle of December, 2008-just 37 days before leaving office in January 2009. But surprisingly his visit to Baghdad has been ridiculed by a signature event in which two “great shoes” were launched at Bush. During a joint news conference (Sunday, December 14, 2008) by Bush and Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in Baghdad’s heavily fortified Green Zone, Iraqi TV journalist Muntadar al-Zaidi hurled both of his shoes, one after another, at President Bush. Twenty-nine-year-old al-Zaidi stood up and shouted “This is a goodbye kiss from the Iraqi people, dog”, before throwing a shoe at the President Bush, which narrowly missed him. With hurling his second shoe, which the President also managed to dodge, Mr. al-Zaidi shouted “this is for the widows and orphans and all those killed in Iraq.” This way, the instantly mythic moment was created in which al-Zaidi was catapulted from obscurity to international hero. He became a hero because he instantly degraded and lowered with his two “great shoes” along with his two “great shoutings” the monstrosity of militarist Bush in front of the whole world. Since that incident President Bush’s “image has been associated with shoes across and around world” and his national security adviser and current secretary of state Condi Rice “has been given the particularly insulting first name Kundara-meaning shoe.” (“clifylq: America wishes farewell to a dog called....” posted on supportbordercontros.blogspot.com).

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES: Shoe-ing Bush was a scene of powerful sentiments, as well as a “therapeutic great fun” (Egan Orion, “throwing shoes at Bush games online”, theinquirer.net, December 17, 2008). On Wednesday, December 17, the ABC’s “Nightline” co-anchor Terry Moran classified the event as “shoe sensation” and “an instant pop culture classic.”(ABC is an American TV channel.) Mahbub from Bangladesh called the shoe saga “surprise visit for surprise attack or surprise attack on surprise visit.” (Feedback on “shoe attack mars Bush’s Iraq visit”, english.aljazeera.net, December 15, 2008).

The detention of al-Zaidi sparked the resignation of the Iraqi Parliament’s speaker. The newly resigned Sunni speaker of Parliament Mahmoud al-Mashhadani praised “brave” shoe-hurler al-Zaidi and said (December 24, 2008) the legislature should have supported him. Iraq’s fractious parliament squeezed its “abrasive” speaker out of a job on Tuesday, December 23, 2008. He resigned under heavy pressure from Shiite and Kurdish lawmakers. But thousands demonstrated in support of the shoe-hurler in the Sadar City,

the sprawling Shiite Muslim slums of Baghdad. U.S. protests embraced al-Zaidi. Dwight Rousu (progressive patriot affiliated with Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Greenpeace, Environmental Defense, and retired engineer) asks: "Can we have a delegation of sympathetic Americans pitch their shoes onto the White House lawn for the next week?" Molly from U.S.A. said: "The only thing" about shoe-ing Bush that made him "sad is that no one from the American press corpse threw anything at him[Bush]when he started pushing" the Iraq war in March 2006. (Feedback/comment on "shoe attack mars Bush", english.aljazeera.net, Dec. 15, 2008).

"War criminal!" shouted a man as he tossed a black loafer in front of the White House. "I have been waiting eight years", proclaimed a woman as she threw her shoe at an effigy of President Bush. "It is outrageous that al-Zaidi could get two years in prison for insulting George Bush, when he is directly responsible for the deaths of 1.5 million Ireqis and 4,200 U.S. troops, and five million displaced Iraqis", said Benjamin. The one "who should be in jail is George Bush and he should be charged with war crimes." Quoted in "US Protest Sympathize with Shoe-thrower," en.timeturk.com (18-12-2008). Benjamin shall remind Barack Obama, after becoming President, not to pardon Bush for all crimes which he committed during his presidency.

According to International Herald Tribune, al-Zaidi is accepted as "a symbol of Arab outrage". In Saudi Arabia, newspaper "reported" that a man is ready to pay \$10 million just one of "the world's most famous pair" of shoes.(Timothy Williams and Abeer Mohammed, "Shoe-throwing journalist embraced as a symbol of Arab outrage", iht.com,December 16, 2008). In Syria, al-Zaidi's picture was shown "all day long" (15-12-2008). A prominent Saudi Arabia columnist Daud al-Shiryani wrote in the pan-Arab daily Al-Hayat that the al-Zaidi's goodbye to Bush was a "Shoe Intifada": Uprising (Magda Abu-Fazel, "Shoe Haida? The Shoe Saga Snow Ball Rolls on", Huffington Post, 22-12-2008).

Listen to Arab-American journalist, opinion writer, stand up comedian and Chicago radio talk show host Ray Hanania. In his insightful mini-article "Shoe Throwing Incident Exposes Western Failure to Understand Arab World" (posted on December 19, 2008 in Huffington Post), Hanania writes: In that week the President of the Society of Professional Journalists [SPJ] asked him to "remove a post from a blog" in which he "defended" al-Zaidi. In the next paragraph Hanania continues: "You might think journalist would be more willing to discuss these issues. The reality is that this topic is being discussed more openly and with less inhibition in the 'oppressed' Arab world than it's is in the 'Free' America." Hanania wrote to the President of SPJ: " I viewed the shoe-throwing incident as representing a form of free speech that is not violent...I also think that mailing my shoes to President Bush as an Arab-American journalist and opinion writer is an appropriate form of protest against the repression his administration had come to symbolize not just in the Arab world but in the Arab-American community." Mr. Hanania removed the posting "because SPJ has done so much to work with Arab-American journalists." At my request, Ray Hanania kindly emailed me the post that he had removed at SPJ's request. Herein the beginning sentence reads: "I just came from the post office and mailed an old pair of shoes to President Bush at the White House in protest of his policies." In the second paragraph, he compares Iraqi journalist al-Zaidi with the respected African-American rapper Kanye Omari West: This Iraqi journalist, "the Kanye West of the Arab world, has started a trend that... is great. Let's face it, he didn't go there to blow himself up." Hanania considers this as "progress in a region where violence becomes the protest form of choice....Instead of violence," al-Zaidi "used a cultural form of protest that is popular in the Arab world." Hanania exemplifies this form of protest which " many Americans came to know when American soldiers during the invasion of Iraq[in 2003],

pulled down the statue of Saddam Hussein in front of one of the dictator's palaces in Baghdad, (trying to make it like the 'people' did it) and then those civilians who were brought there by the military started to express their disdain for Saddam Hussein in the way they knew best, by throwing shoes at the statue." Here Hanania is using a literary style employing ironic contrasts for humorous or rhetorical effect: "How ironic that more than five years later, Iraqis are now throwing their shoes at President Bush?"

Shoe-ing Bush is regarded as the most humiliating blow to the outgoing U.S. leader and his policies in the Muslim world. Al-Zaidi's unique "farewell gift" to Bush has inspired a storm of political jokes in the world. "First of all", Bush said, "it's got to be one of the most weird moments of my Presidency." This inspired 24-year-old British student Alex Tew to launch a shoe-throwing internet game site "Sock and Awe" (www.sockandawe.com; visit: <http://www.aksalser.com/games.htm>). The name of the site reflects the U.S. military doctrine "Shock and Awe" used in the invasion of Iraq in March 2003. This post-cold war military doctrine was introduced by James P. Wade and Harlan K. Ullman in a report to the United States' National University in 1996. The full-scale strike was intended, according to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (2001-2006), "to indicate to Iraqis" the end of Saddam Hussein's leadership (CNN). On Wednesday, December 17, 2008, millions of people participated in Alex Tew's internet game in which player has 30 seconds to "take a virtual swipe" at the outgoing U.S. "Liar-in-Chief" George W. Bush. On that date the site reported that more than seven million "shoes have successfully hit" him. According to Lexton Snol, President Bush was "hit in face 50 million times." (PC World India, December 23, 2008). The top ten "Bush-whacking" countries are: (1) U.S.A., (2) France, (3) Australia, (4) United Arab Emirates, (5) Saudi Arabia, (6) Turkey, (7) Egypt, (8) United Kingdom, (9) Germany, and (10) Pakistan. Ironically, the top on the Top Ten Nations list is the United States. Once again, the United States is superpower in the top ten Bush-shoe-ing countries list. Another, apparently Norwegian, website had received almost 11.5 million hits on its dodging and weaving Dubya when I viewed it <<http://www.kroma.no/2008/bushgame/>> on January 1, 2009, around 12PM California time: Starting date 15-12-2008; total hits 11,428,460; total throws 91,427,680; time elapsed 16 days 19 hours 6 minutes 50 seconds.

Malaysia's Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Rais Yatim is the first foreign minister in the world to have openly praised al-Zaidi and his shoe-tossing at Bush although "throwing shoes at someone is a sign of deep disdain" in Malaysia's culture, as Malay Mail.com registers (December 22, 2008). The shoe-throwing internet game created by Alex Tew was copied by Bosnians: "If you cannot do anything to politicians in real life, you can in the virtual", the BH Raja website said of its game targeting the top Serb leader (Prime Minister Milorad Dodik).

Listen to what the American elite of humorists said about shoe-ing President Bush: "We finally found something the President is good at", said NBC's Jay Leno: "Dodgeball." The news "coming out of the Middle East is that Iran is developing a long-range loafer." (David Letterman). "Some people are criticizing the [President's] Secret Service, because the shoe thrower caught them off guard. The man was able to throw a second shoe. A Spokesman of the Secret Service said, <Sorry, but we were laughing our asses off>." (Conan O'Brien). Al-Zaidi who planned his shoe attack for months "is being called hero in the Arab world. So, he has this plan and it's a failure [because he missed both times]. And he is a hero. You know, if that is the standard, Bush would be the biggest hero in the Arab world." (Jay Leno). "As you know, yesterday [December 14, 2008] in Iraq President Bush was attacked by a <shoe-icide> bomber." (Jay Leno). On CNN "they brought in an expert on Iraqi culture. And he said, <Let me clarify what happened here.> He said, < In the Arab world throwing your shoes at someone's head is considered an insult.> Oh, really?"

As opposed to here in America, where it is a huge compliment.” (Jay Leno). “ Bush is 62 years old, but he still has the reflexes of a cat. Mind you, I think his head has been on a swivel ever since [vice –President Dick] Cheney shot his lawyer[and his hunting companion in the face on February 11, 2006].” (Craig Ferguson). The White House acknowledged the accident two days later on February 13, 2006.

As reported by Magda Abu-Fazel and Sana Abdallah, Egyptians are known among Arabs for having a strong sense for clever jokes. Here are a few examples: (1) A man wearing a shoe-belt around his waist was arrested by a U.S. patrol as a would-be shoe-icide bomber. (2) Washington adds footwear to its terror list and passes a bill allowing wiretaps on shoe stores and factories. (3) Bush asked Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and his accompanying delegation to remove their shoes in the White House, and provides them with soft long-haired bunny slippers. (4) An emergency Arab League meeting decided to shut down all shoe stores when Western officials visit. (5) By presidential decree, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak now holds all his press conferences inside mosques[where shoes are taken off]. Sana Abdallah, “Shoe-Throwing Journalist Inspires Arab Jokes”, in Middle East Times, January 3, 2009, printed December 17, 2008, < metimes.com>.

After discovering “Shoes of Mass Destruction” in Baghdad, President Bush left for Kabul, Afghanistan. Aboard Air Force One, President Bush ordered his Afghan counterpart Hamid Karzai to hold press conference with him in Karzai’s presidential mosque. Karzai gladly executed the order and gave Bush in the mosque two awards: one for his “first ever smart order” and the second for “successfully ducking flying shoes”-Mission Accomplished! Interviewed by USA Today (16-12-2008), First Lady Laura Bush told that she has seen the tape of the shoe-throwing saga in Baghdad: “Of course, he [her husband] is very quick”, she said. “That was one of things I saw-he is such a natural athlete.” First Lady Laura Bush emphasized that “As a wife, I saw this [incident] as an assault.” She added: “And so I didn’t laugh it off like he[her husband] did.” She praised her husband’s record in Afghanistan and Iraq. She will be actively defending those actions (policies): “Fifty million people are free from tyranny because of the United States and because of my husband’s policies.” (David Jackson, “First Lady Laura Bush on shoe-throwing”, usatoday.com, Dec. 19, 2008). First Lady, can you take a look at your husband’s conduct of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the impact they have had on the people of the two countries? Did you hear your husband’s political agent Hamid Karzai expressing his “first demand” of President-elect Barack Obama to bring an end to “civilian casualties”? Who would dare to say that First Lady Laura Bush’s husband never had an exit strategy?! Outgoing President Bush saw the sole of two “great shoes” thrown at him as an exit-gift. He dodged the shoes with a “dexterity that conjured comparisons to Keanu Reeves in The Matrix.” [The Matrix is 1999 science fiction-martial-arts-action film, and Reeves is Canadian-American actor]. But the U.S. comedian David Letterman criticized: “Too bad he [President Bush] did not react that way with Ben Laden or Katrina, Ben Laden or the mortgage crisis, Ben Laden or Afghanistan, Ben Laden or the Lehman Brothers.” Also, best epitaph on Bush years: In his parting words at his final G-8 Summit, President Bush ended a private meeting with world leaders by saying, “Goodbye from the world’s biggest polluter.”

According to reports on December 21, 2008, cobblers from China, Turkey, and Iraq claim that al-Zaidi’s shoes were created in their country. Lebanon’s widely-circulated daily al-Safir implies that al-Zaidi might have purchased the shoes in Beirut when he was visiting the city in November of 2008. Al-Zaidi’s brother Udai said that “one hundred percent” the shoes were manufactured in Iraq. A Turkish cobbler Ramazan Bayden claimed a boom in his sales of the shoes, formerly known as Ducati Model 271 and since renamed “The Bush

shoe”. He is thanking Bush for doing him a favor.”(New York Times, December 21, 2008, reported in Arab-American National Newspaper Watan).

COMPARED WITH OTHER POLITICAL ACTIONS: Can al-Zaidi’s action be compared to other political actions in the history? Democratic Underground.com has shown “five historical parallels to the Iraqi shoe thrower” posted by Time for Change’s Journal (December 17, 2008): (1) America’s prominent founding father General George Washington and other leaders from the colonies launched a violent rebellion, in fact a treason against their mother country England. If they would have lost the fight for independence (or rebellion), Washington and his crew would have been executed for treason. The author of the article who shows his picture but not his name, considers General Washington’s and al-Zaidi’s actions violent which were taken against tyrannical occupying governments. He admits that Washington’s actions were more violent than those of al-Zaidi. The other difference was that General Washington had a whole army behind him while journalist al-Zaidi had his two shoes only. Thus, al-Zaidi’s actions (two shoe throws and two shoutings) were “much less extreme than were Washington’s, but perhaps more courageous.” (2) Aboard the Slave Ship called Amistad, 53 African slaves rebelled (1853) and killed its captain and cook. Second U.S. President John Adams’ (1797-1801) “heroic efforts” in court were successful in freeing 35 slaves to return to Africa. The author compares and contrasts the similarities and differences between the slaves’ and al-Zaidi’s actions and concludes that they were “very similar to the similarities and differences” between Washington’s and al-Zaidi’s actions. (3) Lieutenant colonel in German Army Claus Graf von Stauffenberg attempted to assassinate Adolf Hitler (July 1944). The bomb hidden in his suitcase exploded, but failed to kill Hitler. The motives of both Graf von Stauffenberg and al-Zaidi were similar: They were organized around outrage over what they “considered to be a needless and terribly destructive war.” The author points to “ the main difference” between the actions of Graf von Stauffenberg and al-Zaidi’s: The actions of the German lieutenant colonel were “intended to be much more definitive” than Iraqi journalist al-Zaidi’s-though none of them hit the goal. (4) On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a black 42-year-old seamstress refused to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus. This way she committed a taboo act. She was arrested and was found guilty of violating the Segregation law. Consequently, Rosa Parks was fined. Also, she lost her job. This event touched the American conscience, stirred people’s sympathies with the plight of African-Americans, and contributed to the creation of a fertile ground for the emergence of the nonviolent Civil Rights movement in the United States. In an interview by Howell Raines for the book (My Soul Is Rested, 1977), Rosa Park said that as citizen she was here “to transform democracy from thin paper to thick action....and to get the situation corrected.” Although Rosa Parks’ act was nonviolent, the principle behind the actions of Rosa Parks and al-Zaidi’s was similar: President Bush tried to sell his aggression and occupation as “liberation” and “democracy”. But al-Zaidi’s actions threatened to “call for world-wide attention” to the plight of Iraqi people. “If given enough publicity or repeated enough times”, al-Zaidi’s actions have the potential to “alter the course of events in Iraq by helping to turn world and U.S. opinion against the U.S. occupation.” (5) The social rule “not to cross the line” and to respect “the Office of the Presidency” in reference to the shoe-throwing saga reminds us of the courageous former Congresswoman and recent (2008) Green Party candidate for U.S. President Cynthia McKinney. Nobody in the U.S. Congress has the audacity to cross the line in a highly emotion-loaded environment of the 911 tragedy and to show more disrespect for Bush than she. In her remarks on September 14, 2002, at the reception of Congressional Black Caucus, McKinney said: “I am most proud of my work to hold this [Bush] administration accountable to the American people....What did the Bush

Administration know and when did it know. Now against this backdrop of so many unanswered questions, President Bush wants us to pledge our blind support to him. First for his war on terrorism [in Afghanistan] and now for his war in Iraq. How can we, in good conscience, prepare to send our young men and women back to Iraq to fight yet another war....” (Counter Punch, September 18, 2002). Cynthia McKinney was the most prominent political figure among the 15 others aboard the boat to deliver medical supplies to the embattled Gaza Strip. The yacht was “rammed three times” by Israeli naval vessel (December 30, 2008) and “our mission was thwarted by the aggressiveness of the Israeli military.” Both McKinney’s and al-Zaidi’s actions were similar because both protested against Bush’s aggressive war and occupation. Her “courageous actions” against U.S. President Bush were nonviolent and more “proper” than al-Zaidi’s shoe-ing Bush.. But we must distinguish between the opportunities available to both antagonists of Bush: McKinney, as a U.S. Congresswoman, “had the opportunity-which al-Zaidi did not-to bring widespread attention to Bush’s misdeeds without resorting to physical aggression[like al-Zaidi’s shoe throwing].” The abuser of the Office of the Presidency deserves no respect. It is the manner of the office holder(in which that person carries out the responsibilities of the office) that counts, not the office “in the abstract.” The writer concludes: What all the actions in the five cases have “in common is that they were directed against what the perpetrators (or heroes) consider to be a tyrannical person or organization, at great risk to their career of physical safety.” The first three actions, namely General Washington’s rebellion (or resistance) for independence, the slaves rebellion (or resistance) for freedom, and German Army officer Graf von Stauffenberg’s attempt to kill Hitler were “much more violent” than al-Zaidi’s shoe-ing Bush. The two other actions (Rosa Parks’ refusal to release her seat to a white man on the bus, and Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney’s verbal courage to hold the Bush Administration accountable to the American people) were “not physically violent at all. But the purposes were similar-to fight against tyranny.” By failing to remove from office the aggressive and abusive President George W. Bush, the U.S. House of Representative “demonstrated a lot more disrespect for the office of the Presidency and its obligations than al-Zaidi did.”

CONCLUSIONS: Iraqi 29-year-old journalist Muntadar al-Zaidi’s unique “Goodbye kiss” to U.S. President Bush might have been inspired by three prominent nonviolent soldiers in Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity: the Indian Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), the Pashtun/Afghan Badshah-Khan (1890-1988), and the African-American Dr. Martin Luther King (1929-1968). An American professor emeritus at Cal State East Bay, social thinker, writer, and critic Theodore Roszak argues in his anguished, impassioned book (“World Beware! American Triumphalism in an Age of Terror”, 2006) that America under President Bush is trying to gain the whole world at the cost of its soul. He claims that that attempt is doomed to slide rapidly into the thrall of an “Axis of Evil”: triumphalists, “corporados”, and fundamentalists whose idea of freedom is a worldwide market economy under corporate control. Namely, no debate, no dissent, only profit. Prolific American journalist and writer on current Afghan affairs Bruce G. Richardson points to the center of gravity of the U.S. militarism by quoting former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark: The “greatest crime since World War II has been U.S. Foreign Policy.” (“The Hypocrites”, in The Afghan Post, Issue 112, August 2008, p.33).

While Bush is a symbol of monstrosity, al-Zaidi’s shoe-ing Bush in the age of cyber-democracy has become an “instant” and worldwide symbol of resistance. “Symbolic statements such as this are very important. When you get a powerful and universally-understood symbol, you mobilize people around it. Because of this symbol, and this one courageous man’s act..., I believe the days of U.S. Imperialism’s hegemony in the Middle East are to be cut even shorter.” (Iraq Rally for Bush Shoe Attacker” by B Mutiny?,

care2.com, comment #390, (December 15-2008). Someone with abbreviated name (WP) has started a website: "Finger Salute to Bush.org". Its application was filed on December 18, 2008, while its "informal concept" had taken place 23 days before the shoe saga in Baghdad. The mission of this website is "to acknowledge PEACEFUL DIS-RESPECT (in the form of raised middle fingers) on a MASSIVE SCALE as American President George W. Bush ascends by helicopter from the White House on his return to private life following the inauguration of a new President" on January 20, 2009. People across America and around the world are encouraged to join in on giving Bush a parting salute. For more information, and perhaps you would like to participate in this, visit the website: <http://www.fingersalutetobush.org/newrecord.html>

The outgoing President Bush's image is associated with the shoes thrown at him, as well as with his Bushism, words and phrases created by the "decider" himself. In other words, Bushism is a neologism referring to the peculiar and confusing linguistic constructions used by Bush during his public statements. Bushisms reflects the intention to ridicule and caricature President Bush. (Watch a 9 minute video: "Best of Bushism [Letterman]", <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsNBZwRxy4>). Instead of the word underestimate, Bush used the term "misunderestimate" in the immediate aftermath of the disputed 2000 election, on November 6. Paul JJ Payack, president and chief word analyst of the Global Language Monitor, suggests that the term misunderstand "tops list of all-time Bushisms" and is "one of the first and perhaps most iconic Bushisms." Shoe-ing President Bush seems to be "the visual equivalent of spoken Bushism-inappropriate, surprising, embarrassing yet compelling to repeat." Payack has compared Bush and Barack Obama: "The era of Bushism is now coming to an end, and word watchers worldwide will have a hard time substituting Barack Obama's precise intonations and eloquence for W's [George W. Bush] unique linguistic constructions."(<http://www.languagemonitor.com/>, January 9, 2009).

The eloquent President-elect Obama is not only left with three Vietnams (Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine), but with the sinking ship of free market economy nurtured by good old greed and corruption, and in need of help from government that does not and should not know economy as capitalists do. What an irony!/? Now the people of "the government of people, by the people, and for the people" must give according to their abilities, to give the companies according to their needs.

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