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IT'S THE AMERICAN WAY NOW

By: Dorothy Anne Seese

The people get fooled every time there's an election. They must love it. There's a old tradition to being either a Republican or a Democrat that changing times have not changed, and the politicians do not wish to change because it keeps one of two facades in power. Changing parties is not changing directions, but the people in power want us, the American voters, to think it really matters.

The last man to run for president who really wanted to change things in America was Barry Goldwater and he was soundly beaten by socialist Lyndon B. Johnson. Some of Johnson's victory was attributed to sentiment over the loss of John F. Kennedy in the first presidential assassination in decades, something no one among the generally complacent public dreamed could happen, but it did.

In his time, which spanned the late 1950's into the 1970's, Barry Goldwater stood for nearly identical values to those that Rep. Ron Paul (R-Tex) stands for today and Americans will have none of it: abolishment of the nanny state and a return to liberty. Goldwater stated that he meant to downsize government, which was the same as swallowing political cyanide because people really, really feared a return to liberty after the Franklin Delano Roosevelt reign of socialist doctrine and programs. Actually, FDR's agenda was large but the actual programs put into effect were miniscule (except for Social Security) compared to the blanket coverage offered by gargantual government today.

John Kerry has won the presidential primaries in Iowa and New Hampshire, not exactly the most powerful states in the Union, considering California, Florida, Texas and New York, but still considered bellwether states for erstwhile presidential candidates. New Hampshire proved useless in 2000 to Senator John McCain (R-Ariz) but he was competing with a member of the Bush dynasty. Kerry is merely competing with some other Democrats for the privilege of challenging the Bush dynasty for the presidency. D versus R again, and either way the horse wins the race and the people lose.

The average American voter thinks that somehow the government has money, oodles of hard metal stashed in Ft. Knox. No one knows what is in Ft. Knox except the elite of government, but the United States "wealth" is based on only two things, the taxes it collects from the American workers

and businesses, and its full faith and credit or IOU power. We've been operating on funny money with no tie to hard currency since 1933 for gold and 1971 for silver. As more jobs go overseas, less tax revenue comes into the US treasury. The government can operate on that deficit longer and you and I could, but sooner or later our financial system will implode. Our government knows it, European and Asian bankers know it, and some astute financial analysts and traders know it, but the millions of Joe Average workers have no idea and could care less until it empties their lunch boxes.

The charade of "politics as usual" will come back to haunt us precisely because it *is* politics as usual, not realpolitik, not the stuff of which the government makes decisions and enacts policies, rules and regulations, laws and standards with which to control the American people. There's now a slight feeling of discomfort among some, who are feeling the water begin to heat up like the frog in the pot, but they refuse to jump out of the pot, or political hotbox, into a new line of thinking that would, might, oh scary thought, *change* things. The abused housewife syndrome, a known misery is better than an unknown challenge, has kept the potatoes on their couches while the government inspects the amount of fat in their chips and dips.

We cannot get used to this because we, the people, already have gotten used to it. We're not about to change. We want to vote the lesser of two evils and there is no lesser, simply Evil A and Evil B.

If John Kerry wins the Democratic nomination, we will hear grandiose speeches about how he will undo all that Bush has done and set America on a new track. (And I have a gorgeous bridge for sale in San Francisco.) The Democrats will whoop and holler and spend what they can at the conventions, contributions largely from others to delegates to go and make this whoopee, but that's American politics.

Who cares that John Kerry, like George W. Bush, is a Yale graduate who belongs to the Skull and Bones Society? Isn't that something like a Moose club or Historical Society? No. But never mind finding out what it is or what the ties with the occult are, just have a good time with the confetti and balloons at the national convention. This is about fun, this is an election year. The public won't see the bills start coming in until 2005 after the next presidential term of office has begun, no matter which candidate wins.

American politics has become a more elaborate circus, with more performers and wider media coverage than ever, but underneath it all, average citizens labor under more strenuous laws and restraints on use of private property, freedom of choice, the threat of gun confiscation, and domination by massive corporate and military interests that would have caused a shooting revolution in the 1940's. America didn't have the comfort zone it does now and government didn't cover everything from housing to healthcare in the nanny state.

Many of us will refuse to vote either D or R, and I quit R to sign on with the Libertarians. I feel that what Barry Goldwater stood for when I moved to Arizona in 1962 is now Libertarian, nowhere near Republican as it was in those days. We have a fairly satisfied public (other than those who are out of

work, cannot find a job and are no longer counted among the unemployed because their benefits have run out). Our people are more apt to be watching American Idol and the theatrical awards programs than serious discussions about politics. We're a big nation with a big government, who can do anything anyway? That must have been how Russians felt under Stalin. Or Germans under the Hitler regime. It must be how the Chinese survive under draconian laws. If there is enough bawdy entertainment, the people will eat and watch the fun.

And American voters will watch the conventions for the fun, the confetti and balloons, entertainers and speeches that promise a greater America than ever. Of course, some voters will be missing from the scene.

Killed in action or post-action guerilla hostilities in Afghanistan or Iraq.

No problem, we still have plenty of registered voters left over to make the circus fun and give the media a good race for ratings.

Rhinestone Politicians on a star-spangled stage, lots of noise, that's the deal. No one believes what Samuel Adams said so long ago:

"While the people are virtuous they cannot be subdued; but once they lose their virtue they will be ready to surrender their liberties to the first external or internal invader." ---Samuel Adams

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