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Como Hitler y Brezhnev, Bush está en la negación. Like Hitler and Brezhnev, Bush is in denial

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Por Robert Fisk

[The Independent](#). Londres, 1º de diciembre de 2006.

Más de medio millón de muertes, un ejército atrapado en la mayor debacle militar desde Vietnam, una política para Medio Oriente que ya está enterrada en las arenas de Mesopotamia, y aún así George W. Bush está en la negación, ¿cómo lo hace ? ¿Cómo logra convencerse -como lo hizo aparentemente el jueves en Amman- de que Estados Unidos permanecerá en Irak "hasta que la labor quede concluida". La "labor" -es decir, el proyecto de Washington de reformar a Medio Oriente a su propia imagen y a la de Israel- murió hace mucho tiempo, pues ya hasta los neoconservadores que lo originaron están negando la autoría de esos objetivos políticos sin esperanza y culpando a Bush y, por supuesto, también a los iraquíes, del desastre.

Las personas que niegan la historia abundan y todas son víctimas del mismo comportamiento absurdo : al ser confrontadas con evidencias insuperables de una catástrofe se refugian en la fantasía ; desestiman la evidencia del colapso e insisten en que esto es sólo el síntoma de un breve tropiezo militar, y se aferran a la idea de que mientras sus generales prometan victoria -o porque ellas mismas han estado prometiéndola- el destino será compasivo.

Bush -o Lord Blair de Kut al Amara, para el caso- no deben sentirse solos. Medio Oriente ha producido fantasías a montones en las últimas décadas.

En 1967 el presidente egipcio Gamel Abdul Nasser todavía insistió en que su país estaba ganando la Guerra de los Seis Días, horas después de que los israelíes habían destruido a toda la fuerza aérea egipcia. El presidente estadounidense Jimmy Carter exaltó al Irán del Sha como "una isla de estabilidad en la región", sólo días antes de que la Revolución Islámica del ayatola Jomeini derrocará al régimen. El presidente, Leonid Breshnev declaró la victoria soviética sobre Afganistán al tiempo que sus tropas estaban siendo expulsados de sus bases en Nangahar y Kandahar por Osama Bin Laden y sus combatientes.

¿No fue Saddam Hussein quien prometió "la madre de todas las batallas" por Kuwait antes de la gran retirada iraquí en 1991 ? ¿Y no fue también Saddam Hussein quien nuevamente predijo una derrota estadounidense en las arenas de Irak en 2003 ?

El leal acólito de Saddam, Mohamed Sahaf, fantaseaba sobre el número de soldados estadounidenses que morirían en el desierto. Después se supo que Bush a veces se escapaba de reuniones en la Casa Blanca para ver por televisión las ridículas actuaciones de Sahaf y reírse de las fantasías del ministro de Información iraquí.

¿Quién se está riendo de Bush ahora ? El primer ministro iraquí, Nuri Maliki, un sirviente casi tan leal a Bush como lo era Sahaf de Saddam, recibe del presidente estadounidense los mismos falsos elogios que Breshnev y Nasser obsequiaban a sus generales. "Aprecio mucho el valor que muestra usted durante estos tiempos difíciles, a la cabeza del país", le dice Bush a Maliki. "El es el hombre que necesita Irak", nos dice a nosotros.

Y el primer ministro iraquí que se esconde en la zona verde de Bagdad (jamás se ha ideado mejor nombre para una fortaleza cruzada) protegida por los estadounidenses, nos anuncia que "no hay problema". El jueves se nos informó que los poderes deben ser transferidos a Maliki con mayor celeridad. ¿Por qué ? ¿Eso es lo que salvará a Irak ? ¿O más bien porque esto permitirá a Estados Unidos afirmar, como lo hizo al salir de Vietnam abandonando al ejército del sur para que éste luchara solo contra Hanoi, que Washington no tiene la culpa de la debacle que siguió ?

"Una de las cosas que lo tienen frustrado sobre mí es que él cree que hemos sido demasiados lentos al darle las

herramientas necesarias para proteger al pueblo iraquí". Eso es lo que dice Bush. "El no tiene la capacidad de respuesta y por lo tanto, queremos acelerar esa capacidad". ¿Pero cómo puede Maliki tener cualquier tipo de "capacidad" cuando controla sólo unos cuantos kilómetros cuadrados del centro de Bagdad y un puñado de ruinas de ex palacios de los baazistas ?

Probablemente la única declaración cierta pronunciada en Amman el jueves fue la observación de Bush en cuanto a que "hay mucha especulación en Washington en torno a estos reportes y se habla de que habrá una especie de salida decorosa de Irak, pero este asunto sobre una graciosa retirada no es realista".

No puede haber una salida decorosa de Irak ; sólo un aterrador y sangriento colapso del poder militar. El que ministros chiítas hayan abandonado el gabinete de Maliki es un reflejo de la renuncia de ministros chiítas de otra administración apoyada por Estados Unidos en Beirut, donde los libaneses temen un conflicto igualmente apabullante sobre el cual Washington, en realidad, no tiene el menor control militar o político.

Bush, al parecer, nunca ha visto el actual mapa sectario de Irak. "El primer ministro ha dejado claro que separar este país en partes, como han sugerido algunos, no es lo que quiere el pueblo iraquí, y que cualquier partición de Irak sólo incrementará la violencia sectaria, y yo estoy de acuerdo", señaló.

Pero Irak ya está "separado en partes". La fractura es prácticamente completa y sus grietas están chupando cadáveres en cantidades que llegan a ser de mil por día.

Hasta Hitler se reiría de este baño de sangre ; el mismo que en abril de 1945 proclamó que Alemania aún podía ganar la Segunda Guerra Mundial, alardeando porque su enemigo, Roosevelt, había muerto ; alardeando de una manera muy similar a la de Bush, cuando mataron a Zarqawi, al tiempo que exigía saber cuándo el mítico ejército del general Wenck iba a rescatar a la gente de Berlín. ¿Cuántos Wencks serán invocados desde la Unidad 82 aerotransportada y la marina para salvar a Bush de Irak en las próximas semanas ?

No, Bush no es Hitler. De la misma forma, Blair alguna vez pensó que él era Winston Churchill, un hombre que nunca -jamás- le mintió a su pueblo sobre las derrotas de Gran Bretaña en la guerra. Pero la fantasía no conoce fronteras.

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LIKE HITLER AND BREZHNEV ? BUSH IS IN DENIAL.

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More than half a million deaths, an army trapped in the largest military debacle since Vietnam, a Middle East policy already buried in the sands of Mesopotamia - and still George W Bush is in denial. How does he do it ? How does he persuade himself - as he apparently did in Amman yesterday - that the United States will stay in Iraq "until the job is complete" ? The "job" - Washington's project to reshape the Middle East in its own and Israel's image - is long dead, its very neoconservative originators disavowing their hopeless political aims and blaming Bush, along with the Iraqis of course, for their disaster.

History's "deniers" are many - and all subject to the same folly : faced with overwhelming evidence of catastrophe,

they take refuge in fantasy, dismissing evidence of collapse as a symptom of some short-term setback, clinging to the idea that as long as their generals promise victory - or because they have themselves so often promised victory - that fate will be kind. George W Bush - or Lord Blair of Kut al-Amara for that matter - need not feel alone. The Middle East has produced these fantasists by the bucketful over past decades.

In 1967, Egyptian president Gamel Abdul Nasser insisted his country was winning the Six Day War hours after the Israelis had destroyed the entire Egyptian air force on the ground. President Carter was extolling the Shah's Iran as "an island of stability in the region" only days before Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution brought down his regime. President Leonid Brezhnev declared a Soviet victory in Afghanistan when Russian troops were being driven from their fire bases in Nangahar and Kandahar provinces by Osama bin Laden and his fighters.

And was it not Saddam Hussein who promised the "mother of all battles" for Kuwait before the great Iraqi retreat in 1991 ? And was it not Saddam again who predicted a US defeat in the sands of Iraq in 2003 ? Saddam's loyal acolyte, Mohamed el-Sahaf, would fantasise about the number of American soldiers who would die in the desert ; George W Bush let it be known that he sometimes slipped out of White House staff meetings to watch Sahaf's preposterous performance and laugh at the fantasies of Iraq's minister of information.

So who is laughing at Bush now ? Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, almost as loyal a retainer to Bush as Sahaf was to Saddam, receives the same false praise from the American president that Nasser and Brezhnev once lavished upon their generals. "I appreciate the courage you show during these difficult times as you lead your country," Bush tells Maliki. "He's the right guy for Iraq," he tells us. And the Iraqi Prime Minister who hides in the US-fortified "Green Zone" - was ever a crusader fortress so aptly named ? - announces that "there is no problem". Power must be more quickly transferred to Maliki, we were informed yesterday. Why ? Because that will save Iraq ? Or because this will allow America to claim, as it did when it decided to allow the South Vietnamese army to fight on its own against Hanoi, that Washington is not to blame for the debacle that follows ? "One of his frustrations with me is that he believes that we've been slow about giving him the tools necessary to protect the Iraqi people." Or so Bush says. "He doesn't have the capacity to respond. So we want to accelerate that capacity." But how can Maliki have any "capacity" at all when he rules only a few square miles of central Baghdad and a clutch of rotting ex-Baathist palaces ?

About the only truthful statement uttered in Amman yesterday was Bush's remark that "there's a lot of speculation that these reports in Washington mean there's going to be some kind of graceful exit out of Iraq [but] this business about a graceful exit just simply has no realism to it at all." Indeed, it has not. There can be no graceful exit from Iraq, only a terrifying, bloody collapse of military power. The withdrawal of Shia ministers from Maliki's cabinet mirror the withdrawal of Shia ministers from another American-supported administration in Beirut - where the Lebanese fear an equally appalling conflict over which Washington has, in reality, no military or political control.

Bush even appeared oblivious of the current sectarian map of Iraq. "The Prime Minister made clear that splitting his country into parts, as some have suggested, is not what the Iraqi people want, and that any partition of Iraq would only lead to an increase in sectarian violence," he said. "I agree." But Iraq is already "split into parts". The fracture of Iraq is virtually complete, its chasms sucking in corpses at the rate of up to a thousand a day.

Even Hitler must chuckle at this bloodbath, he who claimed in April 1945 that Germany would still win the Second World War, boasting that his enemy, Roosevelt, had died - much as Bush boasted of Zarqawi's killing - while demanding to know when General Wenck's mythical army would rescue the people of Berlin. How many "Wencks" are going to be summoned from the 82nd Airborne or the Marine Corps to save Bush from Iraq in the coming weeks ? No, Bush is not Hitler. Like Blair, he once thought he was Winston Churchill, a man who never - ever - lied to his people about Britain's defeats in war. But fantasy knows no bounds.

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