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Think Kerry Is Not Involved In This Fight? Think Again  
by Betsy R. Vazquez

NOVEMBER 10, 2004 - When Senator John Kerry (D-MA) talked about how his policy would be different in Iraq, he kept saying, in effect, 'It's the how, stupid.' He said repeatedly he would fight a "smarter" war.

Flash forward to today. Following the election, there was a problem apparent. The exit polling didn't match the ballot count, and many reasons for that began to become apparent.

John Kerry was faced with three options. One, fight on publicly rather than conceding and put the nation into a media frenzied limbo. Two, concede and go on with his life, turning his back on his promise to his supporters to ensure that "every vote will be counted."

Most people are assuming that John Kerry opted for the second of these while John Edwards, his running mate, opted for the first, and since Kerry was the big dog, he won out. But people who think this are thinking in Bush terms, all or nothing, either you are for the war or against it, that either Senator Kerry was for recounting the votes or he was against it.

The reality is, John Kerry has chosen a third, much smarter course - just as he said he would all along.

John Kerry realized that to launch a public campaign calling the vote into question would be disastrous. In fact, he likely realized he would be walking right into a Bush-set booby trap.

In particular, during our election coverage we talked about the pending battle of Fallujah, about the timing of it being an election ploy, about how it was following in the constant Bush pattern of creating a media event to sway the election, as he did last time by making the run up to the Iraq invasion come to a head exactly on election week.

Well, the battle in Fallujah began hitting the media hard in the week before the election, right on cue. Of course it was billed as the solution, the battle that - if you just keep Bush in office - will wipe out those insurgents and solve the problems over there. This was yet another obvious use of our nation's troops by President Bush as if they were campaign volunteers rather than non-partisan volunteers to defend our nation.

But Fallujah, it turns out, seems to be even more than that. Fallujah, in effect, was the get away car for an election heist.

Following the fiasco in Florida in 2000, Gore was able to battle on for 30 days to try and get a fair accounting. All the while, the Bush camp claimed he should just stop and give up because his delaying of what they were saying was the inevitable end was threatening the nation's security and stability. They said the stock market was suffering, the nation was unstable, and so Gore should just give up and accept the result as is.

This time, John Kerry had made clear he was prepared to fight 100 times as hard and long as Gore did if necessary. In fact, he had solicited funds just for that eventuality so he could battle all over the nation if necessary to ensure that every vote was properly counted.

Enter Fallujah. As we know - and saw on election night, as Bush's people beg! an calling Networks and demanding they call Ohio for their camp - the Bush team's strategy was to try and force all questions to be closed ASAP. Last time, they weren't prepared for that part. This time, they were.

Picture if John Kerry had chosen to call the election into question. Immediately, the Bush camp would talk about how 50,000 of our troops are just about to launch the biggest military operation since the invasion of Baghdad. And, just a couple of days after the election, it was launched.

You can imagine the arguments from the Bushies: "How could Senator Kerry undermine our security while our troops are in the midst of battle." Fallujah was to be the pressure point that would, if not stop Kerry from uncovering all the dirt and getting a fair election count, would at least tarnish his name with much of the nation and, as importantly, create something for the right-wing dominated media to hammer away at him on, making it seem as if he is only caring about himself and not the nation.

It was quite a well-crafted plan. Completely amoral, but smart.

Unfortunately for them, John Kerry was smarter.

As Keith Olbermann of MSNBC, who has been about the only mainstream journalist to actually follow up on the many serious problems with regard to the integrity of the election, has pointed out, a concession speech, in effect, means nothing. It is not legally binding.

So, if you were thinking like a Bush goon, you would expect that either Kerry would stand up to the mischief that went on, not conceding in the meantime, and so your booby trap would work perfectly, or that he would just

give up and let it go, as wimpy Democrats are prone to do.

But John Kerry chose a smarter course. Ask yourself the question, what if John Kerry ! were to do both, concede publicly but, at the same time, look into every instance of mischief, and see if in fact the election was fair or fixed.

This would be a no lose situation for him. The booby trap set up for him would become irrelevant, as he would have done the right thing for the nation, not putting it into turmoil while its troops are in battle.

But at the same time, he is still just as free to look into any voting irregularities as he would have been had he not conceded. Even better, he could do it without the press going insane and the nation being kept on tension-creating edge. All of the lawyers he could have sent to look into things still could be sent to look into things, and if the election is truly called into question, he could then, with ample justification so as to make it legitimate, come out publicly and retract his concession. It is the prosecutor, also one of Kerry's previous jobs, who knows well enough to thoroughly prepare and investigate his case be leveling charges. You may have a real hunch that someone is responsible for a murder, but until you believe you can win that case in court, you do not make the allegation.

This is called fighting smart. And the Bushies, in the same way they failed to plan for the subtleties of doing battle in Iraq, haven't even caught on yet that this is what is occurring, that they are, in fact, being outflanked and attacked after being tricked into looking the other way.

And just in case you don't quite believe John Kerry is on the case, and instead think he just turned out to be a wimp who didn't live up to his word, take a look at this letter from his brother, released privately to his supporters:

#### CAM KERRY'S LETTER

I am grateful to the many people who have contacted me to express their deep concern about questions of miscounting, fraud, vote suppression, and other problems on election day, especially in Florida and Ohio. Their concern reflects how much people care about the outcome of this election. I want to you to know we are not ignoring it. Election protection lawyers are still on the job in Ohio and Florida and in DC making sure all the votes are counted accurately. I have been conferring with lawyers involved and have made them aware of the information and concerns people have given me. Even if the facts don't provide a basis to change the outcome, the information will inform the continuing effort to protect the integrity of our elections.

If you have specific factual information about voting problems that could be helpful to the lawyers doing their job, please send it to (e-mail removed for the story) rather than to me. The election protection effort has been important to me personally, and I am proud of the 17,000 lawyers around the country who helped. It's obvious that we have a way to go still, but their efforts helped make a difference. Their work goes on. Thank you, Cam Kerry

Notice that he chose to have his brother, who is not well-known to the public, sign the letter. As far as the public is concerned, John Kerry has conceded at that is that.

But now you know that that is not truly the case.

Make no mistake, he will never publicly call the election into question unless enough fraud turns out to truly challenge the end result. And so, in effect, he is not at this point contesting the election. But in reality, he is like the DA who says, "At this time we are not charging President Bush with anything." Evidence first. It is the best strategy for him personally, the best strategy politically, and the best strategy for the nation.

And now stepping in to help is the man who was supposed to be the spoiler, Ralph Nader. As the Washington Post reports (see article: Losing by 335,000 in N.H., Nader Demands a Recount), Nader is using New Hampshire as a staging ground to call the Diebold machine-recorded electronic votes into question.

Why is he doing it in New Hampshire, which Kerry won? Does this mean he is going after Kerry?

Not at all. It is tactically brilliant. In New Hampshire, any candidate can call for a recount as long as he offers to pay for it. And that cost in this small state is only \$2,000 dollars. So Nader is choosing to challenge the results there, but only to make the case that, if there turns out to be a problem with the machines there, the votes must be challenged everywhere.

As the Washington Post reports, "We have received reports of irregularities in the vote reported on the AccuVote Diebold Machines in comparison to exit polls and trends in voting in New Hampshire," Nader wrote Secretary of State William M. Gardner. "These irregularities favor President George W. Bush by 5% to 15% over what was expected."

So you see clearly he is charging that the machines skewed in favor of President Bush. New Hampshire was just the easiest, smartest, and cheapest

place to get a first crack at making the case, and so opening a Pandora's Box that will spread out across the nation.

So enjoy the non-Moderate Independent media's coverage of Fallujah and ignoring of the recount. But rest assured that people are on the case, and that Kerry is taking the fight to them - in such a smart matter they don't even know what's hitting them. And remember, Watergate didn't break the week after the election. No one knew anything was even fishy, but in the end, the devil go his due.

And on another note, the non-M/I media should be given some credit. As one Washington Post reporter told me, you can bet they are looking into all of this. And, as you see with the above Washington Post story, when they get something concrete they are going to print.

But it is the new media - the blogs - that are powering this one as much as the mainstream media.

So rest assured, and feel free to help out in anyway you can. We are the eyes, ears, and analysts of our nation. Support Olbermann at MSNBC, and rest assured, Kerry is on the case.

And lest you not realize what exactly is going on, this today from Olbermann: "With news this morning that the computerized balloting in North Carolina is so thoroughly messed up that all state-wide voting may be thrown out and a second election day scheduled, the story continues."

And, even better, this from a first-hand witness' e-mail being circulated among Kerry supporters:

**Subject: Basic report from Columbus**

I worked for 3 days, including Election Day, on the statewide voter protection hotline run by the Ohio Democratic Party in Columbus, Ohio. I am writing this because the media is inexplicably whitewashing what happened in Ohio, and Kerry's concession was likewise inexplicable.

Hundreds of thousands of people were disenfranchised in Ohio. People waited on line for as long as 10 hours. It appears to have only happened in Democratic-leaning precincts, principally (a) precincts where many African Americans lived, and (b) precincts near colleges.

I spoke to a young man who got on line at 11:30 am and voted at 7 pm. When he left at 7 pm, the line was about 150 voters longer than when

he'd arrived, which meant those people were going to wait even longer. In fact they waited for as much as 10 hours, and their voting was concluded at about 3 am. The reason this occurred was that they had 1 voting station per 1000 voters, while the adjacent precinct had 1 voting station per 184. Both precincts were within the same county, and managed by the same county board of elections. The difference between them is that the privileged polling place was in a rural, solidly republican, area, while the one with long lines was in the college town of Gambier, OH. Lines of 4 and 5 hours were the order of the day in many African- American neighborhoods.

Touch screen voting machines in Youngstown OH were registering "George W. Bush" when people pressed "John F. Kerry" ALL DAY LONG. This was reported immediately after the polls opened, and reported over and over again throughout the day, and yet the bogus machines were inexplicably kept in use THROUGHOUT THE DAY.

Countless other frauds occurred, such as postcards advising people of incorrect polling places, registered Democrats not receiving

absentee ballots, duly registered young voters being forced to file provisional ballots even though their names and signatures appeared in the voting rolls, longtime active voting registered voters being told they weren't registered, bad faith challenges by Republican "challengers" in Democratic precincts, and on and on and on.

I was very proud of the way so many Ohioans fought so valiantly for their right to vote, and would not be turned away. Many, however, could not spend the entire day and were afraid of losing their jobs, due to the severe economic depression hitting Ohio.

I do not understand why Kerry conceded and did not fight to ensure that all Ohioans would have a chance to vote, and for their vote to be counted.

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If he is an M/I reader, now he will know.