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(2 of 2, due to a mistake, two Column Lefts were published on December 30)**

COLUMNLEFT

America Love It or Leave It!

BY LARRY CABALLERO

What does it mean to be a patriotic American who loves his country? I would hope it means that he will be fair and just at all times, and he will especially support our troops in times of war. I also hope that he would be able to question or even protest a decision made by a government leader if he feels that it is a wrong decision. This doesn't mean that he loves his country any less.

Unfortunately, that is not always the case. I still can't get over the verbal attacks on John Kerry about his war record of over 30 years ago. Whether he deserved all four of his Purple Hearts or only three, makes no difference. He was a war hero, who loved his country, and served his country with honor during a time that many government officials chose to stay home.

Now we are listening to critics of yet another war. They feel that the intelligence

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received was flawed, that government officials knew it was flawed, and they chose to go to war on false pretenses anyway. They also are critical of the president's decision to wiretap the telephones of American citizens. Many legal experts think Bush has broken the law, and the critics think it may be an impeachable offense.

Only two presidents have been impeached by one house of Congress, and the only one who could have been impeached by both houses and removed from office was Richard Nixon. He chose to resign first. Both Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton faced impeachment proceedings because they had angered members of Congress – Johnson for supporting Southern interests after the Civil War, and Clinton for having consensual sex with an intern and then lying about it.

Compared to the present allegations against Bush, the previous allegations of Johnson and Clinton seem tame.

Today's critics certainly don't want to embarrass us around the world, but there is enough doubt in the minds of enough people that an investigation is warranted. If the allegations are proven true, then Bush should be impeached. That would be the fair and just thing to do.

No one is above the law, and no one can break the law because he's the president. He may be the president, but he's not king. Our country can survive the findings of an impeachment hearing. We have survived tyranny, revolution, wars, natural disasters, and terrorist attacks. We can survive this, too.

I only hope that the government won't start the name-calling and begin questioning the patriotism of its critics in order to confuse or distract the American people. First of all, we have already given Bush the benefit of the doubt on several occasions, and he's disappointed us. It's time he tells the whole truth.

These critics are not only Democrats or liberals. There are now Republicans and conservatives who are questioning the president's motives and intentions. They are all Americans who love their country. Deceit and lies are what no one should tolerate or love.

Text of Article

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Larry Caballero

Newsletter Editor, Hubert Humphrey Democratic Club

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