Just a few things to think about today:
Chris Patten, the last British Governor of Hong Kong, and current European Union External Affairs Commissioner, recently appeared on Charlie Rose (March 4, 2004). Among his insightful comments:
We do fairly well when we wage wars against proper nouns – countries, alliances. Any war against a collective noun such as “terrorism” or “drugs” is a bit dodgy and unlikely to be won or lost in the classical sense.
A discussion board about his appearance on the show may be read here:
http://boards.charlierose.com/board/topic.asp?ti=6154
An interesting interview with Patten may be found here:
http://mathaba.net/news/print.shtml?cmd[40]=i-42-495ad5d77e996cc9824ae0363aab5bc3
He has a few things to say about the recent bloodletting at the BBC.
A similar point is made in the speech “TERRORISM AND THE RULE OF LAW” by Nicholas Cowdery AM QC (President, International Association of Prosecutors Director of Public Prosecutions, NSW, Australia) at the International Association of Prosecutors 8th Annual Conference
Washington, DC – 10-14 August 2003
Instead of following the criminal justice path, the war paradigm was invoked – the war on terrorism – and it has continued. It is, however, difficult to control and direct. As will be seen, it has enabled the rule of law to be bypassed in a number of respects. By definition, such a war may have no end and the measures introduced along the way may be with us forever. Although war was declared on an abstract noun, real places and real people were attacked, including sovereign states. On the military front Afghanistan was overcome and a new government installed; Iraq was later invaded and occupied.
Where does the war against terrorism head next? What consequences is it having for the rule of law?
Oh that we had such critical thinkers presenting these this kind of analysis to American audiences.
Oh that we had American audiences that would listen if they did…
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