

It's the end of the world as we know it.

Well it has been a strange week in the world of politics. It's easy to think that down here in the far corner of the globe that the political decisions of the mainstream world pass by like so many ships in the night. Oh contraire, the comings and goings of the US, Israel and the Sudan are the fodder of our world too. As the US election approached I watched the news with one simple emotion, hope. Hope that the citizens of the United States would follow my political ideal and decide to make a fresh start and elect John Kerry. But as we all know my horse didn't come through, and with the dull ache of election hangover we are left with what has become status quo. What it comes down to is fundamentalism.

The people of the Arab world are a large and diverse group. Religion is the dominant force in many of their lives, much like religion is the guiding light for people of all faiths around the world. Most of these individuals are moderate practitioners of their chosen religion. Islam does not endorse or promote war, violence or martyrism. But there are a select few on the outer reaches of the faith that choose to follow the Koran by the letter of the law. They read the words of the book and take them as the words of Allah, words that are to be followed with every fibre of their being. This climate breeds violence, radicalism and ultimately terrorism. They have a sworn enemy in Israel and its allies, namely The United States. These select few who act in aggression towards the US and others in the western world have painted the remainder of their fellow practitioners with the same bloody brush.

But something curious has happened in the US, it isn't something new, just more noticeable. In the world of exit polls, hyper accurate analysis and 24hr news we have become keenly aware of voter statistics. In the past we knew who won an election and by how much. Now we know who voted for each candidate, and more aptly, what religion they are.

Post 9/11 Bush took the staunch stance that the US was at war, a war on terror. That Islam had waged war against all that Americans hold dear. They were out to destroy their way of life, their homes and their religion. And this is where the fundamentalism comes into play. The word gets used to excess when describing terrorists and their allies, no god fearing Christian would ever dare to use the same term to describe the Christian Right. The very same Christian Right that just helped Mr. Bush outstay his old man in the Oval Office. Christian fundamentalists that only represent a small portion of Christians, zealots who take the word of the Bible as 'the word' of god. Not as most Christians who take it as a guideline to living ones life, not the instructions.

This small portion that don't believe in abortion, Gay Marriage or gun control are a very powerful group within the United States. They have come to realize that religion is the ultimate political party. If God can get behind a

candidate and tell the followers to go and make sure they vote for that guy then there is a potential for tens of millions, yes millions of votes. And in the best trick since kissing babies the modern Republicans have keyed into the idea that if they follow the ideal of the far, far Christian right then they will get the endorsement of 'god' and then the troops will mobilize and the Southern Baptist brigade will march into the voting booth and before you can say jihad, Bush is a twotermer.

By taking the quick easy path of being the ultimate yes-man to the fundamental Christians Bush has become the shape of god in their eyes. And as he pushes the ideals forward he has set America and ultimately the world on a collision course with the other side of the coin. With the fringes of these two opposing religions pulling all of the strings the world has suddenly become a very frightening place. As scary as it is that some crazy fucker is chopping people's heads off on TV, something must never be forgotten. The US has thousands of nuclear bombs. Russia has thousands of *unaccounted for* nuclear bombs. India has the bomb, Pakistan has the bomb there is a plethora of weapons of mass destruction out there, obviously not in Iraq but that is another story altogether.

With the fringes controlling the mainstream political climate and the scariest people in the class having the biggest stick on the playground we are left with one rather big, rather messy holy war. I have no idea how it will ever stop, how it will end in any of our lifetimes. In everyone's life there are points that we will never forget JFK, King, 9/11 and now this moment, when the US has taken the first step down the dark path. The post 9/11 reaction was excusable, they got beat down like a nark at a biker rally and their response was reactionary at best and just plain random at worst. But now to take that reaction as policy and to continue that policy as a gospel is beyond excusable. To be duped before is understandable, but to choose that stooge again is scary.

I once thought that if Bush were to be re-elected I would lose my faith in America forever. But that thought has changed now. 'America' is the ultimate underdog, the idea of America, the 'give us your sick, your poor' and so on is on the brink of extinction. It is at war from within. A war with both sides on the side of god. But I have hope, hope that god will save us from those who have taken his name in vein and threaten the lives of us all.