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Shucks, George W. is a man of such integrity that he deserves the benefit of the doubt

By Martin Heldt

July 19, 2000—One of George W Bush's staff recently said that Bush is a leader of "total integrity."

Okay. Maybe we're being too rough on George W. Bush. Let's give him the benefit of the doubt.

Maybe G W Bush really doesn't remember what he did as a member of the National Guard. His hunch that his mission was "paper pushing" could be right. I guess we just have to give him the benefit of the doubt even though his superiors reported that he never showed up. After all, a leader who has perfected integrity wouldn't lie to us.

Does it really matter if a key Bush adviser was caught trying to undermine the Mideast peace talks? They didn't catch Bush, just his adviser. Bush's no comment answer should be more than adequate, because a man of his supreme integrity should never have been asked such demeaning questions in the first place. I'm sure that those Israeli agents had a good reason to go to Houston the day after they met with Bush adviser Richard Perle.

Can anyone tell me what is wrong with Bush spilling out a number of rapidly changing answers to questions about his use of cocaine? First seven years, then eleven years, then fifteen years, then that he could say no drugs "since 1974."-- let us not forget that we are dealing with a creature of sublime integrity. He was probably just taken aback from the shock of such a line of questions.

It's most likely just another coincidence that Bush missed a mandatory drug test in 1972 and 1973 while in the National Air Guard. What choice do we have but to bestow upon Bush the benefit of the doubt here too?

Bush has given us several excuses about why he missed the drug screening. This brings up a good question, How many reasons should a man of his high standards be required to give? Wasn't G. W's first excuse, that he missed the drug test because his "doctor was back in Houston," plausible? Until someone proves that there were no military physicians in Alabama, we have no choice but to again give Bush the benefit of the doubt.

Bush's second excuse for missing the drug screening is equally credible. That this extraordinary individual was able to accurately predict that the Air National Guards paperwork wouldn't catch up with him in time for the August drug screening is proof only of his exceptional intellect. Bush himself has told of his remarkable premonition in May of 1972 that he "knew the suspension would have to take place" in August because the paperwork would never get from Texas to Alabama in time.

In advancing Bush the benefit of the doubt we must not forget that progress in technology has undoubtedly sped up the delivery of mail since Bush's Guard duty days.

It seems that we should save our most probing questions for those men of lesser degrees of perfection. Leaders of "total integrity" are so rare it just seems...unseemly.

Let's just keep giving Bush the benefit of the doubt.

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