

A Poisoned Victory

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{styleboxop}What will, or can, the Democrats do with their new-found congressional power?{/styleboxop}

On 11/7 the Democrats took back control of the House and the Senate. The European press greeted this victory with a mixture of euphoria and relief. It's clear most of us were fed up with a lying, warmongering and bullying American government. But the main question now is: what will, or can, the Democrats do with their new-found congressional power?

The question is not a simple one. America is in debt to the tune of 8 trillion dollars (and counting) and the prestige of the nation is at an all-time low. Virtually all gratitude, respect and goodwill the United States had accumulated since WW II has been squandered by an irresponsible Bush administration. Although few dare say it aloud, America is widely regarded as a slightly retarded but physically powerful bully. It is very difficult to reason with such people, so you try to ignore or avoid them as much as possible while, for obvious reasons, staying distantly polite. Very distantly.

In these circumstances the Democrats have to clean their own house (and the Senate, which is also their own now), while at the same time trying to restore the prestige of the USA among the civilized nations. And what is more: they will have to do this with not much financial leeway. The sad truth is that ordinary American citizens will have to pay dearly, for decades to come, for the follies of this disastrous president, who still has two years left to wreak havoc if not carefully kept in check. There is also the small matter that America, thanks to the so-called Patriotic Act, is but barely a democracy anymore. Last but not least there is the Gordian knot called Iraq.

Interesting times ahead -- that much is sure.