



During the 2000 Presidential campaign we were told that G. W. Bush would approach the presidency as a CEO, he would be the first with an MBA to hold the office, and would bring to it the discipline of a business leader. That the people bought in to this to any extent speaks more to the salesmanship of Karl Rove and the echo chamber of the main-stream media than it does to any sound reasoning.

The myth of the CEO Presidency has a corollary, that Bush was a good businessman. He wasn't. With the exception of his ownership of the Texas Rangers baseball franchise he was a failure. But in his involvement with that team we can see the kind of business acumen he brought to the White House: cronyism.

Bush was supported and ultimately bailed out in the Rangers by cronies in much the same way that cronies have supported and bailed him out in his Presidency. Time and time again his administration has been marked not by shrewd, decisive actions of a Chief Executive but by the old-boy-network inculcated in college fraternities. From Brownie at FEMA to Gonzales at DOJ, we see the same effect time after time.

An important book which shows just how devastating the effects of cronyism are is [Babylon By Bus](#), by Ray LeMoine and Jeff Neumann. A chronicle of the radical adventures of two buddies who decide to go to Baghdad on a lark to see if they can get involved in the early days of the American viceroyship following the cessation of major combat operations. They soon takeover an American administered agency which provides aid to Iraqi NGOs. In between their often hilarious antics and drug and drink fueled adventures there is much pathos as they and the Iraqis and American servicemen they befriend try (often in vain) to make a new functioning civil society.

They are bereft at the treatment of those they see as trying the hardest to improve their lot, and are constantly frustrated by the power that be within the viceroyship; L. Paul Bremer and the National Endowment for Democracy and State Department political hacks. Many of these people were in Iraq not because they had specific skills, but because they had worked on Bush's campaign, or the campaigns of other influential Republicans.

The inept and ultimately severely damaging decisions made by the CPA (as the viceroyship was commonly called) have left as their lasting legacy a badly broken country in the heart of the most fragile region in world politics today.

George Packer, in a recent *New Yorker* article ["Betrayed: The Iraqis who trusted America the most"](#), examines in-depth the horrendous treatment of the Iraqi civilians hired as translators and aides by the American military, diplomats and civilians. The same theme rings out here, as well: Incompetent cronies making bad or entirely political decisions, leaving in their wake a frustrated and embittered people.

In the current DOJ/US Attorney scandal we see again the actions of political hack employees breaking an otherwise honorable institution, the US Attorney's office. Or, as revealed by *The Washington Post* [in this article](#), we have political hackery at the GSA leading to seminars and

video conferences instructing GSA administrators on how they can help Republican candidates in the next elections.

Its time for the shareholders in this democracy, the American people, demand that our CEO President stop filing false quarterly reports and take some responsibility for this disastrous modus operandi.