

IN MY OPINION**Caroline Porter****Bush has a record and it's broken**

In past years, John Kerry has gone to law school, served in Vietnam, been a prosecutor and elected to the United States Senate for three terms. On the other hand...

— let's review what Bush was doing in the years before he became president.

— A DUI in 1976, paid a fine and had his driver's license suspended for 30 days. His driving record has been conveniently "lost."

— Joined the Texas Air National Guard and went AWOL. Refused to take a drug test or answer any questions about drug use.

College: Graduated from Yale University where he was a cheerleader.

Past work experience: Ran for U.S. Congress and lost. Bought an oil business in Midland, Texas and the company went bankrupt after he sold all his stock. Bought the Texas Rangers baseball team in a sweetheart deal that took land using taxpayers' money. That venture didn't work either.

With the help of his father and friends in the oil industry, including Enron CEO Ken Lay, now under indictment, Bush was elected Governor of Texas.

The Governorship in Texas hasn't much power, but Bush managed to set the record for number of people executed during his tenure.

He changed Texas pollution laws to favor power and oil companies, making Texas the most polluted State in the country. Houston replaced Los Angeles as the most smog-ridden city in America.

He cut taxes and bankrupted the Texas treasury to the tune of billions in borrowed money. Sound familiar?

Bush was appointed President of the United States by the U.S. Supreme Court, even though he lost the election by half a million votes.

Accomplishments as president: The US invaded and occupied two countries at a continuing cost of over one billion dollars per week.

He and the Republican Congress spent the country's surplus and effectively bankrupted the U.S. Treasury, shattering the record for the largest annual deficit in U.S. history.

Bush lied about our reasons for attacking Iraq and then blamed the lies on our British friends.

His first year in office, over 2 million Americans lost their jobs and the trend continues.

He is the first president in history to have the United Nations remove the U.S. from the Human Rights Commission and not to abide by the Geneva Convention. The Bush administration just refused to join 85 other heads of state and governments in signing a statement that endorsed a 10 year old U.N. plan to ensure every woman's right to education, health care and choice about having children.

After tremendous world sympathy for the U.S. after the attacks of 9/11, less than a year later his administration made the U.S. the most hated country in the world — the largest failure of diplomacy in world history.

He failed to fulfill his pledge to bring Osama bin Laden to justice.

In the memoirs of former President George Bush, father of our current president, *A World Transformed*, he wrote the following to explain why he didn't go after Saddam Hussein at the end of the first Gulf War: "Trying to eliminate Saddam... would have incurred incalculable human and political costs. Apprehending him was probably impossible...we would have been forced to occupy Baghdad and, in effect, rule Iraq.....there was no viable exit

strategy we could see, violating another of our principles. Furthermore, we had been self-consciously trying to set a pattern for handling aggression in the post Cold-War world. Going in and occupying Iraq, thus unilaterally exceeding the United Nations mandate would have destroyed the precedent of international response to aggression that we hoped to establish. Had we gone the invasion route, the United States could conceivably still be an occupying power in a bitterly hostile land."

My dear readers, not only should the son have listened to his father, but Saddam Hussein is still alive and we have turned over his future to the Iraqis. We have absolutely no guarantee that he will not again come to power.

Meanwhile, while we concentrate on war in the Middle East, the president has issued executive orders to forbid public release of some data relating to unsafe motor vehicles, saying that publicizing the information would cause "substantial competitive harm" to manufacturers. At the request of lumber and paper companies, he gave Forest Service managers the right to approve logging in federal forests without

the usual environmental review.

He ordered a new regulation that would dilute the rules intended to protect coal miners from black-lung disease. The mine worker's union called the new rules, "extremely dangerous." In August 2003 the administration relaxed clean air rules by allowing thousands of corporations to upgrade their plants without having to install expensive pollution-control equipment. Utilities had lobbied for the change. In December, a three-judge panel temporarily blocked the rule, saying they doubted the administration had authority to modify the Clean Air Act by regulation.

Records and references: All records of SEC investigations into his insider trading and bankrupt companies are sealed and unavailable for public view.

All minutes of the meetings forming our country's energy policy, attended by the president and vice-president, are sealed and unavailable for public review.

Yes, we need to be reminded of Bush's lack of preparation or ability to be president of the United States, based on his dismal record, both before and during his presidency. The right-wingers will vote for the president, no matter what. But what in



the world are the "undecideds" thinking? What mysterious political philosophy would make the choice difficult between Bush and Kerry?

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