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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE TIMES

Bush, Rumsfeld and Journalistic Negativism

In "Bush Points Out Lesson in Prisoner Abuse Scandal" (May 15), President Bush is quoted as saying, "In Iraq, the cruelty of a few has brought discredit to their uniform and embarrassment to our country. The consequences of their failures of character reach well beyond the walls of a prison."

I would like to suggest that in failing to reprimand Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld for the abuse scandal, in forging an ill-planned war on false pretenses, in stubbornly "staying the course" in this disastrous effort to bring democracy to Iraq, Bush has failed to learn his own lesson. His failure of character reaches well beyond the walls of the White House and has brought discredit and embarrassment to our country.

JOHN BALMA
Los Angeles

The Army now bans interrogation methods in Iraq that clearly defy the Geneva Convention (May 15). Maybe in a day or two, Rumsfeld will be forced to resign. But if we really want to restore our status in the world community, we must stop trying to evade the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. It is a shame that 89 countries have



MICHAEL RAMIREZ

Donald H. Rumsfeld

been pressured into signing agreements that allow us to handle our war crimes by ourselves. Clearly, we need international supervision to convince our policymakers and individual soldiers to observe the Geneva Convention.

ANNE EGGBROTEN
Santa Monica

The report that indicated Rumsfeld ordered prisoner abuse in Afghanistan and Iraq (May 16) should make it clear to Americans what the world al-

ready knows: America is simply a brutalizing occupying force seeking to bring oil-rich nations to heel, personally enriching Bush and his friends. America's wars against the Arab world rightfully bring to mind the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The world has every reason to hate us.

WINSTON STEWARD
Los Angeles

Another day of letters, almost all anti-administration and against American involvement in the establishment of freedom for the Iraqi people (May 17). All of the good our brave service people are accomplishing is never mentioned. All of the work to politically stabilize that volatile area of the world goes unnoticed, and only journalistic negativism is printed. I talk to returning service people, and they are a credit to all of us. They tell of reaching out to the Iraqi people and of the fine work they are doing to rebuild that country's vital services.

The media in our country do us a great disservice, and it is a disgusting situation for any of us who want to find out facts and make our own decisions.

JAMES F. WILSON
San Diego