

THE NOT-BUSH PRIZE

Spencer's take on Obama's selection as the Nobel Peace Prize winner is one of the most reasonable. As Peterr has noted, the committee has emphasized the direction Obama intends to take (particularly on nukes), and there is a history of giving the prize to encourage particular initiatives. So let's hope that with this recognition, Obama achieves some of his more laudable goals, starting with peace in the Middle East, and including a drawdown of nuclear weapons.

That said, I wanted to emphasize the degree to which this is the not-Bush prize. Gore invoked his de-selection in 2000 in his own Nobel acceptance speech in 2007. Observers sure read Krugman's Nobel prize in economics as a rebuke of Bush. But more importantly, remember that Mohammed el-Baradei—who tried to prevent war in Iraq, and who has been central to preventing war against Iran—won in 2005. Baradei's win, even more than the other two, was a critique of Bush's (and Cheney's) aggression and violence.

Until Obama, of course.

Yes, the Committee focused on Obama's work with nukes, one of his few legislative accomplishments as a Senator. Yes, we have seen initial steps on the Middle East, Iran, and (to the extent Obama intends to close Gitmo) the worst—but not all—of our human rights abuses. But this is really a reward and encouragement for Obama's efforts to engage where Bush refused to engage. This is, as much as anything else, a carrot designed to keep the US on its more constructive path internationally.

All of which makes me more amused by Jeb Bush's complaint yesterday, in which he called on the country to stop picking on his brother.

KILMEADE: It's been 10 months. Should Leader Hoyer be looking backwards, and is he accurate?

BUSH: I was on the plane coming up to Washington yesterday, and I heard someone complaining that their child's acne was because of George Bush. Of course, last week the Olympics didn't come to Chicago – that was my brother's fault. And at some point, people are going to have to put on their big-boy pants and assume responsibility for the great challenges and opportunities our country has. I don't know how much longer leaders – responsible leaders in Congress – can continue to say these things.

The day after Jebbie's complaint, the Nobel Committee effectively awarded the third Nobel Peace prize for being Not-Bush.

So as much as I'm curious how Clinton, the sole living Democratic President (yeah, I'm including Gore there) who hasn't won this—and no slouch on international engagement—feels, I'm even more interested in how Jeb Bush feels about this.