Wesley Clark for President?

What types of characteristics represent a great leader? A leader must exemplify the qualities of honesty, integrity, charisma, being a good speaker, and be able to show leadership within a group; qualities of such nature can not be seen in Wesley Clark.

Wesley Clark was born in Chicago, IL on December 23, 1944. He graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point; where he served thirty-three years in the United States Army; during which he rose to the rank of 4-star general. He served as Director for Strategic Plans and Policy for the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1994, and in 1996 he was Commander in Chief of the United States Southern Command in Panama where he was in charge of returning the Panama Canal back to Panama in Latin America. However, while commanding our forces in Panama he failed to alert the country and the congress to the implications of the US leaving the strategic waterway unprotected, with Panama mostly defenseless and a narco-financed Marxist insurgency active in neighboring Columbia. The Chinese communists quickly filled the strategic void, and now control key services in Panama, creating a national security dilemma which is still unaddressed (Fielder, 2003). In 1997, Clark became NATO Supreme Allied Commander and Commander in Chief of the United States European Command. Clark was in charge of the 75,000 troops from 37 NATO and other nations participating in ongoing operations in Bosnia and Kosovo including the aiding 1.5 million Albanians from the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. However, the NATO Commander at one point handled reports poorly when he reported that one of his jets had mistakenly attacked a refugee convoy. Clark told a news service he had "strong evidence"
that Serb forces had fired at the refugee column. By the next day, embarrassed NATO officials admitted that their first claim was wrong and that an American F-16 had indeed attacked civilians (Time, 1999). Throughout his military service, Clark received many awards including the Silver Star, Bronze Star, and Purple Heart from his so called experience. Clark’s experience as Commander in Chief in Bosnia is depicted in his best-selling book “Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Combat” (published by Public Affairs, May 2002). At the present he is the Managing Director for the investment firm, Stephens Inc.

In 1993, Clark was named Commander of the 1st Calvary Division III Corps at Fort Hood southwest of Waco, Texas. In fact, Clark gave the command to lend the armor and personnel which was behind the attack that killed 82 men, women, and children by fire. The U.S. is prohibited from using its arms against American citizens within our borders according to the Posse Comitatus Act, but Clinton signed a wavier to allow Clark to supply the tanks and equipment for the attack at WACO. Immediately after WACO, Wesley Clark’s flat career began a quick rise which is when he received his awards and his ranked positions (Ponte, 2003).

Clark is new to the race for president and it is quite understandable since he has no experience in office. He just recently decided to be Democrat even though his views tend to lean towards republican. Why the decision to run as a Democrat?

Clark’s hatred towards Bush only appeared after not being enlisted in the War on Terror. In a speech from the online magazine The Palestine Chronicle before Clark’s fallout with the Republican Party, Clark states, “We're going to be active; we're going to be forward engaged. But if you look around the world, there's a lot of work to be done.
And I'm very glad we've got the great team in office: men like Colin Powell, Don Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Condoleezza Rice, Paul O'Neill -- people I know very well -- our president, George W. Bush. We need them there, because we've got some tough challenges ahead in Europe (Palestine Chronicle, Oct 15, 2003).

Clark’s anger towards the Republican Party is shown in a speech reported by the Washington Post. “Clark vowed to "hold this administration accountable" for the 2.7 millions jobs lost during Bush's tenure, the ballooning budget deficits and the loss of respect for the United States by "so many people around the world (Washington Post, Oct 12, 2003).” From his point of view, the war in Iraq was completely unnecessary. We, as a country, had no right to rip apart the Iraqi government in order to kick Saddam Hussein out of power. In other words, the only reason for the U.S. intervening in those affairs was to maintain a stable oil supply and to set up a military base. In this way, the United States has a way of preventing future attacks on the U.S. by stopping them before the enemy reaches the U.S. border.

On other major topics Clark is extremely bland when it comes to explaining his views, such as the environment, Clark feels that, "Environmentally, it means that we must do more to protect our natural resources…” We should find efficient ways to maintain fossil fuels as well as finding other types of energy sources so as not to deplete the earth of its resources and have no source of fuel to turn to. Clark’s beliefs for the economy are to increase incentives for more employment for Americans as well as attract interests of businesses abroad. On matters such as National Security, Clark assures in, “meeting the near term challenges of the day - whether they be terrorism or something else - that, we
don't compromise the freedoms and rights which are the very essence of the America we are protecting.”

As stated earlier, Clark plans to balance the federal budget and reduce the long term public debt. He also wants to make health care and education available to everyone. In my opinion there are no facts which place Clark as a good candidate for this position.

Wesley Clark doesn't have much of a campaign or even experience in governmental positions. He is depending on his military experience to boost his campaign and attract popular votes. The outcome of the election is hard to determine since it is still early in the campaigning process. Clark needs to raise about $20 million dollars before the preliminaries in order to try and get states such as Florida to win votes.

Clark doesn't have many qualities which make him stand out from the rest of the crowd. His lack of experience in governmental positions and no campaign leaves him nothing to fall back on. He shows major immaturity on his reasons for becoming a Democrat. He looks like a little boy who likes to blow things up such as in WACO. His laziness and lack of effort in salvaging the Panama Canal prove that this general is in no way capable of leading his own troops let alone a country.

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