Talking points

Cartoonist Mike Ramirez attacks American voter turnout from different directions with the toons presented here.

1. Who is the 1775 patriot demanding liberty or death? What was the context of the quote? Are people as passionate today?

2. Is the 2004 couch potato also a patriot? If you don’t vote, can you consider yourself a patriot?

3. There is a concern that if Iraqis don’t trust the election process, they won’t participate in upcoming elections in that country. With that in mind, explain the Ramirez’ toon at right. Hint: Read the headlines.

4. Both these toons deal with voter turnout but each is dealing with a different issue. Which statement is persuasive and which is simply commentary?

Additional resources

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists
http://editorialcartoonists.com/

More by Michael Ramirez
http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-include-ramirez,1,2243700.ssipage

Tooning in the turnout

By American standards it’s typical for half of all eligible voters to stay home on election day. Even with a record turnout for the tightly-contested race of 2004, there will still be a large number of Americans who fail to participate. Is voting a right or a responsibility? Should voting be made mandatory? Some countries, like Australia, do have compulsory voting laws. Would that work for us here?