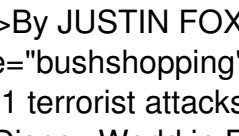


By JUSTIN FOX

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, President Bush didn't call for sacrifice. He called for shopping. "Get down to Disney World in Florida," he said. "Take your families and enjoy life, the way we want it to be enjoyed." Taken on its own, this wasn't such a horrible sentiment. But Boston University historian Andrew Bacevich has made a convincing case that it was part of a broader pattern of encouraging financial irresponsibility. "Bush seems to have calculated cynically but correctly that prolonging the credit-fueled consumer binge could help keep complaints about his performance as Commander in Chief from becoming more than a nuisance," Bacevich wrote in the Washington Post in October. Now we're paying the bill.