By Tom Palaima
SPECIAL TO THE BEE

In many ways, challenges have changed little since ancient times

In Act 1, Scene 2 of Shakespeare's "Henry V," King Henry, contemplating committing soldiers to a war in France, cautions his advisers, the archbishop of Canterbury and bishop of Ely, to know and know deeply the consequences of the advice they are asked to offer.

They will wake the "sleeping sword of war" and each drop of soldier's blood will be an indictment against those who incite "such waste in brief mortality." Somberness of purpose over the prospect of going to war is what citizens of most nations, when their thoughts are not clouded by fear, patriotic fervor, hatred and other strong emotions, demand of their leaders. In Shakespeare's play, decisions are in the hands of a king and an inner circle of nobility and high clergy.

Things are different in a democracy. Or are they? The presidential and vice-presidential debates and the campaign strategies of both parties have concentrated on the question of leadership. What does it take to be president of our democratic government during large-scale military operations overseas — notice I do not say war — when we are also facing major economic and social problems at home? Do President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney and Sens. John Kerry and John Edwards have the personal qualities and skills necessary to be chief executive and commander-in-chief or a heartbeat away from being so?

These are important questions, and it is natural to focus on them in times of crisis. But they are distracting us from historical perspectives on what overall leadership a democracy like ours needs in troubled times like these. And these questions are framed as if we had the form of government Aristotle thought ideal: a single ruler.

Kerry in the debates has stressed that he supported giving our president unilateral authority to take military action in Iraq because he believes "it was the right authority for a president to have." But is it? If it is, what qualities of leadership should a president have in order to be given the most fearsome powers any national leader can possess? Kerry maintains that President Bush rushed to war incautiously and impatiently without exhausting international sanctions and weapons inspections, without building strong international support and without working out a plan for peace after the major combat phase was over. He also thinks the president misled the American people on the reasons for going to war. So he at least thinks that honesty, a strong grasp of the tools of international diplomacy, patience in
leaders: Classical examples

FROM PAGE 11

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid, as I think. The historian that I think is the best one is Thucydid, that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

Keep in mind, though, that when Pericles spoke to citizens, he was speaking to citizens who were also the soldiers, legislators and active voters. Pericles understood that to affect their effects within the framework of a full democratic process.

Thucydid's conclusions are valid. We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.

We have a wise conservative voice from the period, the Greek historian and general Thucydid. I think that he had the knack both of calming the Athenians when they got too worked up and for restoring their confidence when they turned defeatist.