

Deeper issues in the War on Terror

By Rick Maier

I'd like to add some balance to the Telegraph's coverage of the War on Terror. The issues are more serious and complex than treatment of prisoners or popularity polls by the LA Times. Here are some highlights and quotes from Larry Abraham's very informative article at www.insiderreport.net/clash_1-2.

The War on Terror is different than past conflicts because we face extremists who come from more than a dozen different Muslim countries plus the Emirates. Never at war with Iraq, we're at war in Iraq. Future conflicts could be on Iranian or Syrian soil. The War "did not begin on Sept. 11, 2001, nor will it end with transition to civilian authorities in Iraq."

These radicals "will stop at nothing to destroy us and all we stand for...they are not like us, nor most of their fellow Muslims." But some Americans "simply refuse to believe there is evil in this world and are willing to grant moral equivalence on any human action. Unless the crime is personalized such as in the case of Lacy Peterson, we lose interest quickly and become bored or at least not involved."

The goals of the Jihadists are clear: take over the governments in Muslim countries including Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan; eliminate US and western influence in the oil-rich Middle East region; annihilate Israel.

The terrorists kicked us in the teeth on 9/11. We responded by shoring up our relationship with the major Muslim powers, especially Pakistan with its nuclear weapons, then taking out the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein in Iraq. The administration has prevented further political and economic destabilization since 9/11.

Why invade Iraq? Thanks to the dismantling of the human assets factor of the CIA in the 1970's, no one knew how much collaboration existed between Saddam Hussein and the terrorists except that he was funneling money to families of suicide bombers. Establishing a base of operations in Iraq put us in great strategic position and sends a loud and clear message that we're in the region to stay.

"What surprised the Jihadists following the 9/11 attack was how American sentiment mobilized around the president and a profound sense of patriotism spread across the country. They were not expecting the reaction, based on what happened in the past, nor were they expecting the determined resolve of the President himself." However, Osama and his extremists know that many Americans lack the patience or fortitude for a long messy conflict.

Expecting the UN to wage the War on Terror is wishful thinking. "There is no such thing as the 'international community'. There are only individual countries each with its own agenda which is always self serving." The corruption of the "oil for food" program and sexual misconduct of UN peacekeepers in the Congo (not reported by the US press)

demonstrate the weakness of this assembly of mostly tiny countries. The UN can help, but only when the developed countries lead the charge.

The War is messy and at times discouraging, but we have made terrific progress since 9/11. We can't ignore or try to appease the terrorists. Twenty years from now I think we'll look back at this period as one of painful sacrifices necessary to protect the principles we hold dear.

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