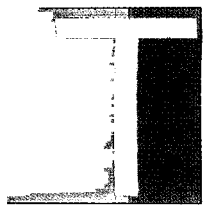


By Michael Ledeen



# We'll Win This War

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he conventional mantra is that today's war on terrorism is a new kind of war, unlike those we have fought in the past. But that's not true.

We are currently waging a very old kind of war, and, as luck would have it, one that fits our national character and our unique military and political genius to a T. This is a revolutionary war, right out of the eighteenth century. While we will have to act quickly and urgently against secret terrorist organizations and suicidal fighters, our ultimate targets are tyrannical governments, and our most devastating weapons are the peoples they oppress.

In the Second World War, we defeated Japanese kamikazes in two ways: by fending them off more effectively, and by destroying the Tokyo regime. In like manner, we must both dismantle the terror network and destroy the regimes that have enabled them to become so threatening. Those who talk in abstract terms about various "stages" in this war, as if the two objectives were logically or strategically distinct, miss the point. We cannot destroy the terror network without bringing down the regimes, just as we could not end the siege of kamikaze terror without bringing down Tojo and his murderous state.

We have almost all the necessary weapons at hand, from our brilliant technological network of eyes in the sky and ears embedded in the world's telecom networks, to smart weapons and high-radiation devices and stealth aircraft. We have excellent Special Forces who can operate under the most difficult conditions and respond to rapidly changing circumstances. Don't believe the stories about our inability to operate in an Afghan winter. This is not the Light Brigade.

Even more important—and this is a weapon that is greatly underestimated by many of our intellectuals and diplomats—we are an awesome revolutionary force. Creative destruction is our middle name. We tear down the old order every day, in business and science, literature, art and cinema, politics and the law. Our present enemies hate this whirlwind of energy and creativity, which menaces their traditions and shames them for their inability to keep pace. Seeing America undo old conventions, they fear us, for they do not wish to be undone. They cannot feel secure so long as we are there, for our very existence—not our policies—threatens their legitimacy. They must attack us in order to survive, just as we must destroy them to advance our historic mission.

Behind all the anti-American venom from the secular radicals in Baghdad, the religious fanatics in Tehran, the minority regime in Damascus, and the kleptomaniacs in the Palestinian Authority, is the knowledge that they are hated by their own people. How could it be otherwise? Their power rests on terror directed against their citizens.

Given the chance to express themselves freely, the Iraqi, Iran-

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ian, Syrian, and Palestinian people would overturn their current oppressors. Properly waged, our revolutionary war will give them a chance to achieve exactly this. You need only listen to the screams of the Middle Eastern tyrants to real-

ize that they fully understand the import of the struggle.

There is every reason to believe we will succeed in revolutionizing the Middle East, for we have always excelled at destroying tyrannies. The great democratic uprising at the end of the eighteenth century bore a clear American hallmark, and the entire twentieth century stands as tribute to the enormous power of our history-changing energies. Again and again we were dragged into war, and we invariably tossed our enemies onto history's trash heap of failed lies. We wage total war, because we fight in the name of an idea—freedom—and ideas either triumph or fail. Ask Mikhail Gorbachev.

We even overthrow tyrants when it is not our official aim. In the 1980s, President Reagan instructed the CIA to organize some Nicaraguans to disrupt the flow of weapons from Nicaragua to the Communist guerillas in El Salvador. The operation envisaged at most a few hundred people. But once American officials went into the field to recruit, thousands of anti-Communists, assuming this was the beginning of the end for the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, raced to volunteer. They ultimately forced the Sandinistas to fight for their survival, and in time the regime fell.

George W. Bush has understood the scope of our task from the first minute, and I have no doubt that the assault on the Taliban tyranny in Afghanistan, and on the other terrorist regimes in the region, will be total. This is not a manhunt, it is the opening salvo of a great revolutionary war that will transform the Middle East. The president has started well, combining the destruction of Taliban infrastructure with near-simultaneous air drops of food and medicine to the tens of thousands of suffering refugees. Our message couldn't be clearer: We offer succor to the suffering Afghan people, and death to their evil leaders. That's what revolutionary warfare is all about—encouraging a popular insurrection, then supporting it.

We do not have all the weapons, however. Revolution requires revolutionary leaders, and some of these are lacking. There seem to be at least the elements of a transitional regime in Afghanistan, including the Northern Alliance, some other anti-Taliban forces, and the long-suffering king waiting his call in Rome. I am one of those who thought we should have supported Massoud, the charismatic Northern Alliance leader who was assassinated by a suicide killer just two days before September 11, because he was the only one of the fighters who seemed to me to have the requisite leadership qualities. Lacking that kind of leader, the next Afghan government is likely to be transient.

There is no reason for us to be overly worried about that, though. Yes, I know that our diplomats hate "instability," but most Americans are not only able to cope with it, they go out of their way to create it. Stability is for those older, burnt-out countries, not for the American dynamo. And chaos is vastly

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preferable to the vicious tyrannical stability that has crushed and impoverished the people of Afghanistan.

In Iraq, we have long pretended to support the Iraqi National Congress and its leader Ahmed Chalabi, a man

at once democratic and tough-minded, whose family has played a major role in regional politics for nearly 500 years. The Clinton administration gave the INC some money and CIA advice, and promised to defend them if Saddam moved against their haven in the north. They did well enough to provoke Saddam into a risky throw of the dice: In the mid 1990s he sent the bulk of his tanks into the north, exposing them to our airpower. Clinton had plenty of advance warning, sufficient for the National Security Council to reiterate our promise to defend Chalabi, and he warned Saddam of a harsh response if Iraq invaded the north.

But at the moment of truth the Clinton administration abandoned our friends; the INC was massacred, and the survivors went into exile. The bad news is that we betrayed good allies. The good news is that a remnant of the INC force lived to fight again another day. And Saddam's risky strike against them shows that he takes their threat seriously.

Congress took up the cudgels and, toward the end of the Clinton years, appropriated money for the Iraqi resistance. One might have expected the new Bush administration to vigorously support this, but the State Department fought tooth and nail against commitments to the Iraqi National Congress, dribbling out a tiny fraction of the appropriated funds, and then only for administrative expenses and the production of a bit of propaganda. Moreover, our diplomats warned Chalabi against spending one penny for in-country activities. Those restrictions must be immediately removed; the Iraqi people need to see there is a real alternative, on the ground, to Saddam's grotesque regime.

Can a group like the INC, given American assistance, catalyze a successful insurrection against a murderous regime? This is

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the key question for our policy makers, and it applies to all the terrorist states. The answer is, we don't know. But our experiences in Central America in the 1980s give reason for optimism. The lesson from Nicaragua is that

the world changes quickly once people see that the United States is seriously engaged.

In Iraq, the spontaneous uprisings of diverse portions of the population at the end of the Gulf War—from the Kurds in the north to the Shi'ites in the south—are evidence that the oppressed people of that country would love to destroy Saddam's regime. There are similar indications elsewhere in the region.

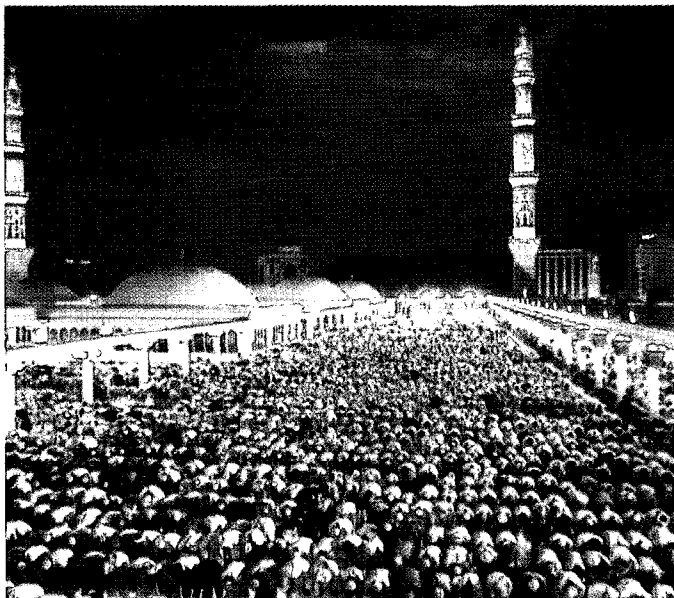
In Iran, there are many brave people who have risked, and often lost, their lives to challenge the mullahcracy, ranging from the outspoken students at Tehran University to the more cautious reformers who have taken shelter under the robes of President Khatami. We broadcast words of hope to the Iranian people from freedom-minded exiles through our Radio Freedom satellite, which greatly disturbs the ayatollahs. But this is not nearly enough. We must announce our support for Iranian democrats, and our unrelenting rejection of the theocracy that has, at least as much as any other, provided the wherewithal for international terrorism.

In Syria, too, there is every reason to expect great public support for a campaign to remove the Assad regime. Here again the evidence comes from the most reliable source: the regime itself. Some years ago, Hafez al Assad crushed dissent in the city of Hama, killing as many as 20,000 people, then bulldozing the evidence into the dirt. Any regime compelled to assert its legitimacy in such a violent manner is profoundly insecure, and that insecurity is invariably based on hard knowledge of popular discontent.

In Sudan, a nasty civil war has been raging for years, and our slowly increasing pressure on the Islamic regime in Khartoum—which has been killing the southern Christians and animists—seems to be working. It may be possible to impose an end to the north's military campaign, demand active cooperation in intelligence sharing, terminate Sudanese support for terrorist groups (and the surrender of any terrorists), and permit the creation of an independent state in the south, in exchange for a guarantee that we will not do to Sudan what we have done to Afghanistan.

If we had a CIA worthy of the name we would know more about the brave people in Iran and Iraq, as well as in Syria and Sudan, and of course the Palestinians who groan under Arafat's corrupt tyranny. All realize they can live better, and we should be supporting them in that quest. Alas, we are reluctant nation-builders. We had no alternative to Saddam during the Gulf War, just as we were unprepared for the political battles that followed the fall of Nazism, the Japanese warlords, and the Soviet Empire.

This time there is no excuse. There are people ready to fight for our common objectives behind enemy lines, if only we get to work. We must wage revolutionary war against all the terrorist regimes, and gradually replace them with governments that turn to their own people's freely expressed desires as the basis of their political legitimacy.



That leaves Saudi Arabia. Back in the 1970s, at the time of the fall of the Shah of Iran, our Middle East strategy was said to rest on two pillars: Iranian military power, and Saudi money. The Shah fell for two reasons. First, he lacked the will to fight for his own survival when challenged by religious fanatics. Second, he got caught in the transition between traditional society and a more modern one: Iran was insufficiently liberal to fulfill the desires of the westernizing middle class, and insufficiently hard-line to satisfy those who feared modernization. So the Shah pleased no one.

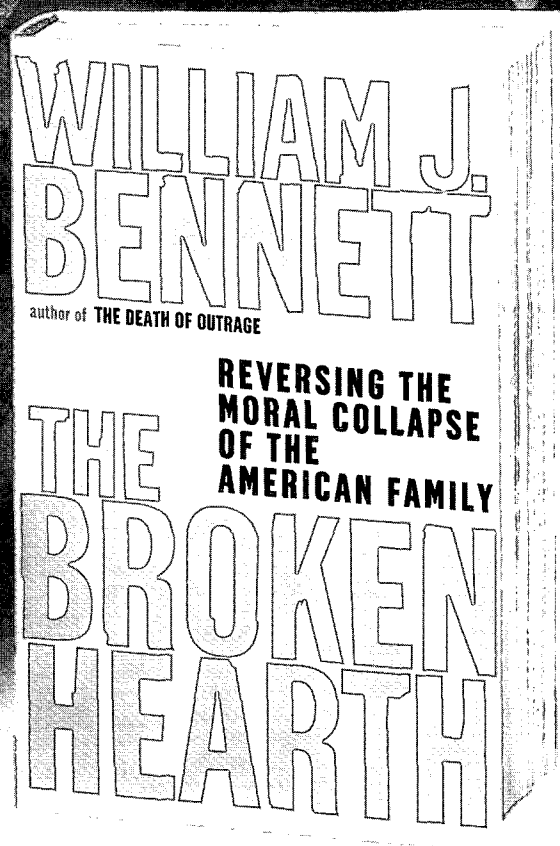
I have long argued that the United States is obliged to work with friendly dictators to achieve successful transitions to societies more in keeping with American values. We should insist on steady liberalization at the same time we provide full support to the friendly tyrants if they are challenged by forces that will make things even worse. Saudi Arabia offers us a great second chance to succeed in the region after our failure with the Shah. There is certainly a Westernizing middle class beneath the arch-reactionary veneer of the Wahabi tyrants who have been the primary source of funding and religious proselytizing for Islamic extremists in the Middle East. We should offer the Saudi ruling elite our support for their survival—provided they become a moderate Islamic regime in practice, not just words.

Saudi Arabia is the most difficult challenge, and the most important, and for those reasons it is the policy crisis that our diplomats most often decline to address. But if we pursue revolutionary war against terrorist regimes, our ability to influence events in Saudi Arabia will greatly increase. If we understand our mission rightly, we will find myriad opportunities to help the Saudis move in productive directions.

We have a glorious opportunity to improve life on our planet, and we are the right people, at the right time, to pull it off. The most dangerous threat to our success is limited vision and insufficient ambition. If we act like the revolutionary force we truly are, we can once again reshape the world, as we repeatedly did throughout the last century. But if we settle for token victories and limited accomplishments, we will permit our enemies to reorganize, and attack us with even greater venom in the future.

We do not want a replay of the Gulf War. This time we must fight for keeps.

**If we are to repair  
the social fabric, the work  
must begin at home.**



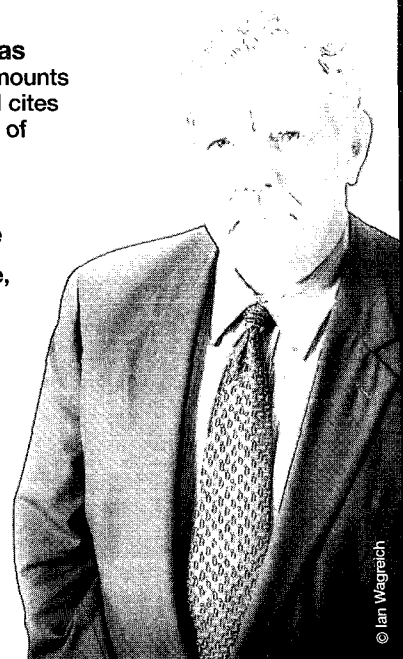
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## It's a Moral Clash

By Karina Rollins

In *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis sketches the existence of universally accepted notions of right and wrong—the moral laws of nature. Regardless of differing cultures, eras, and creeds, he argues, humans have always shared certain basic moral values. “Think of a country,” Lewis challenges, “where people were admired for running away in battle, or where a man felt proud of double crossing all the people who had been kindest to him. You might just as well try to imagine a country where two and two made five.”

September 11, 2001 has strained Mr. Lewis's theorem.

Major U.S. landmarks were attacked specifically for the large number of innocent people they housed, in an attempt to bring devastation to American soil and despair to the American soul. An unspeakable plan was carried out not by demented individuals but by disciplined representatives of a swelling cultural ideology that germinates hatred toward the entire free world. The numerous societies where this ideology has rooted now breed men filled with a loathing of such intensity, such scope, such depraved grandeur, that the human beings beset by it hardly seem to walk and breathe within the laws of nature that C. S. Lewis took for granted.

Since the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, politicians and editorialists have made it a point to assure Muslims around the world that the West does not blame them for the perversities carried out in their name. They are right to do so. Though few Muslims seem to be agonizing over America's grief, there is no reason to convict every Muslim of being hostile to Western lives.

It is a grave and dangerous mistake, however, to leap from the fact that most individual Muslims are innocent to the notion that the societies in which they live are benign. The record of

Muslim nations across the world is hardly one of peace and tranquility. As British historian Paul Johnson has noted, “Islam means ‘submission’...and one of the functions of Islam, in its more militant aspect, is to obtain that submission from all, if necessary by force.”

“Islam is not the enemy!” is the slogan Americans are forced daily. When President Bush spoke at the Islamic Center in Washington, D.C. shortly after the terror attacks, he said that America is “a great country because we share the same values of respect and dignity and human worth. And it is my honor to be meeting with leaders who feel just the same way I do. They're outraged, they're sad. They love America just as much as I do.”

But is this true? There is no evidence that the Muslims living in America are necessarily all great patriots. Indeed, we know that a number of poisonously militant Islamic congregations now meet on American soil in numerous locations. Even among the leaders of such moderate Muslim groups as the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the American Muslim Council (AMC), the main priority in the terrorist aftermath has been to protest “hate crimes,” some real, some imagined, against Muslims and Arabs in the U.S.

Nor did these mainstream Islamic organizations show much star-spangled patriotism in earlier terror incidents. As Jake Tapper reports in *Salon*, CAIR included the court conviction of Omar Abdul-Rahman (the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing) on a list of “hate crimes against Muslims.” In 1994, the director of the AMC expressed his views on the 1993 convictions in a letter to AMC members: “I believe that the judge went out of his way to punish the defendants harshly and with vengeance, and to a large extent because they were Muslim.” These words about terrorists who, as Tapper reminds, “differ

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