

Three plans for Iraq.

In a February '07 Harpers Magazine article Edward Luttwak compares successful military occupations of conquered lands in the past with the present debacle in Iraq and he suggests two prerequisites for success:

1. The readiness and willingness to govern the occupied territory.
2. Greater ruthlessness than that of the occupied population.

He cites several successful examples including the Roman Empire, which subjugated an unprecedented area with relatively limited forces, and Nazi Germany which controlled most of continental Europe with few enough troops to allow it to conduct all-out war simultaneously on both its eastern and western fronts, as well as in North Africa. They did so by intimidation, systematic torture, and reprisals.

There are a lot of pro-war wimps from both parties in Congress but fortunately for the imperialist camp, they also have Dick Cheney, who would no more hesitate to authorize torture or murder of a perceived enemy than he did as a Congressman at denying free school lunches to poor children in Mississippi. No compassionate conservative, our Vice has never failed to heed the teachings of his role model; Hermann Goering, and if given unfettered control, could probably engineer an effective solution.

People ask for a plan. There are three basic options:

1. **The George W Bush Plan**, acquiesced to by the majority of Congress, is to continue the occupation indefinitely, hoping that something good will happen somehow, sometime.
2. **The Liberal Plan** is to just leave now. Wounds heal eventually, but not if you keep irritating them, and we're the irritant. It may take decades but eventually things will calm down. Meanwhile, we can renew the troops, rebuild a reasonable military and restore democracy in the USA. If Guantanamo is to remain, I agree that it would make a fine place for Vice to end his career.
3. **The Illiberal Plan**, as suggested above is to just go in and slaughter everybody who gets in the way. The Nazis would kill ten or fifty or 100 civilians when one of their occupiers was killed. They lost the war, but until then, the tactic worked very well for them. We might have a little problem with the Muslim population at home but a few detention camps in Idaho or North Dakota could probably take care of that. Back a little in history we managed to deal with the Indians in the country, so a few Muslims shouldn't be too much to handle. As far as domestic opposition goes, as long as Vice has Fox News in his camp, it's a slam dunk.

It seems that some well intentioned people are falling into the "blame the Iraqis" camp. That may be a politically (or tactically) correct way to gain support for ending the occupation but they didn't start the war; we did. Had we been invaded by an Islamic Army, ostensibly to free us from the Bush Regime and show us the way of Allah, I imagine many of us would have become "terrorists" and there would be a lot of blood-letting between the collaborators and the insurgents resisting the occupation and opposing the puppet regime. Do we expect something different from the Iraqis than we would from ourselves?