

One Front: Two Wars

**Author: James A. Bowden
JFL contributor
E-MAIL: jatticus@aol.com
DATE: November 2, 2001**

1

The first front of the World War against International Terrorism (WW-T), our American Homeland, is remarkably united - today. Getting nine out of ten Americans to agree to anything is heady stuff. Yet, the adrenaline cocktail of shock, fear and anger intoxicates only for a season. Someday soon enough Americans will waken with headaches and ask themselves 'Why'. Will the hangover of a patriotic binge be worth it if war and its consequences become a daily, lifelong addiction? Or, will the glum awakening, even on the brightest of mornings, be the residue of restless nights worrying over our resolve? Our America shall have many, many nights of anguish as we struggle with the 'war questions' Americans always ask - during a war of ever changing dimensions, consequences and demands for commitment.

Americans will speak to the dark hours of legitimate doubt with characteristic straightforwardness:

- 2 Who are we fighting?**
- 3 Why? What are we defending?**
- 4 What will be victory?**
- 5 How much, how long, what risk will war cost?**
- 6 What must I do?**

The answers to these questions over time will result in two wars being waged for our Homeland Defense. The first, the WW-T, will lead to another, but different, Civil War in the U.S. Prayerfully, hopefully, the severity of both wars- the consequence management - will be minimized. Regardless, the nature of both conflicts merits the name - war - and will be fought to the ultimate ends of any and every war - peace through victory or defeat.

When WW-T expands beyond the destruction of one species of terrorist vipers - the Al Qaida organization - the coalition will devolve. The best efforts and high purpose of the magnificently experienced and talented Bush team can not stop shifting tectonic plates of history, culture and the clash of civilizations. Sooner or later, WW-T will be the West and its shifting Moslem Allies vs. Raging Islam.

Then, Americans will realize some fuzzy, global, generic, secular human 'freedom' is not under attack, but the West - Western Civilization - is the enemy of the resurgent Islam that breeds radicals and rage. What is the American Civilization worth defending for long decades? What must be preserved at all costs? Who will bear any price for what liberty? These questions will split the unity of our nation along the fault lines of our American Culture War.

Americans with different worldviews will seek alternatives for peace. Some will be happy to defeat one group of terrorists and pretend there are no more until another bright September morning explodes in a new terror attack. Some will shake in fear and shout 'stop' when an Islamic country turns on us as we pursue the next den of snakes or when a radical Islamic coup topples some friendly despot. Some will stay the course to defeat the enemy, and their means of attacking the West, everywhere and suppress their successors' ability to attack ever again - for decades and succeeding generations to come. The nation will divide between those who seek peace at any price - because they don't see the ultimate destruction of America and the West - and those who know that a hostile ideology - a vigorous, aggressive theology - must be defeated utterly and completely.

WW-T will be waged on the terms of the old Roman Empire. Our enemies will fight us for generations - even centuries - until they change their way of thinking or are conquered or we are defeated from within. Our America, as the leader of the West, has imperial responsibilities without imperial ambitions. Moreover, our nation faces its greatest test since the American Civil War (ACW I). Can a nation so powerful, so rich, so hated remain a Republic with the protected individual freedoms endowed by our Creator? The American Culture War will become ACW II. WW-T and ACW II will be fought on the same front - our American Homeland.

The distinctions between today's liberals and conservatives will change as WW-T progresses. When ACW II heats up - may it be a war of words and battles at the ballot boxes only - the two primary sides of the conflict will shape up in new alignments of allies, perhaps with new political labels.

One side will be soldiered largely by citizens who know that since 1776 America is the country where it is safe to be a believing, practicing, proselytizing Christian and Jew. Their troops will advocate the big ideas, the worldview supporting American Civilization and the West, namely, Judeo-Christian thought. This side will show tolerance for the Moslems, the pagans, the atheists among us, but not cede the nation to their hyphenated ideas of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

America faces a long, long perilous WW-T and ACW II indeed. May the God of America's Founders, the God of Jesus Christ and Abraham, have mercy on us all. May God Bless America. In God We Trust.

James Atticus Bowden