

This war is winnable – here's how

Caution: This article is not for the faint-hearted or for those who have difficulty facing reality. Serious side effects may include hand wringing, head-in-sand posture and *angst*.

America is at war, a war we did not start, but one that we must finish decisively and victoriously. This is not the time for half measures. We have been attacked. We cannot delegate our security to some foreign agency or international bureaucracy. Nor can we simply be nice to our avowed enemies in the vain hope that they will eventually go away.

We must win. Failure is not an option. How can we win?

First of all we must **stop living in denial**. “They don’t really mean all these mean things.” “Islam is peaceful.” “We all pray to the same god.” These are deadly deceptions. We must tell it like it is, even if that message is unpopular.

Secondly, we must **stop being naïve**. This is not the time to be *politically correct*. That is a formula for disaster. Militant Islam is evil. It must be labeled so. It is a religion of hate and death based upon a lie. [By contrast, Christianity is a religion of love and life based upon the Truth.] We must not shrink from drawing the comparison between good and evil. Tell it like it is – your life depends on it.

Thirdly, we must **expand our outreach evangelism to the Islamic world**. Begin with some countries in Africa and Europe where there are growing Islamic populations, but where there is still freedom of speech and assembly. Then, move into or send into totalitarian Islamic lands.

This will be a long war, but it can be shortened significantly if we employ the all-out determination to win that motivated us in World War II.

America won the Cold War because President Reagan understood that we could out-spend the Soviets. Our economy was stronger so we could build a more powerful military force and provide smart weapons that would intercept their ICBMs, thus neutralizing their numerical advantage.

Today, the same logic that guided Reagan to victory might lead to our downfall because to support our security (at the level of intensity needed) over a prolonged period could bankrupt our economy. Osama Bin Laden knows that economic freedom is power. That is why he sought to destroy our economic foundations by attacking the WTC in New York on 9/11/01.

Supporting our security is one thing. Confronting our enemy is another. The terrorists can pick and choose the time and place of their attack. Understandably

we want to be safe everywhere all the time. That’s expensive. It doesn’t cost the terrorist anything to threaten, but costs us billions to put security in place and maintain it in order to face those threats. This could lead to economic collapse.

It is easier to destroy than to create and build. This is a day when unknown men can strike unexpectedly from the shadows and demolish, in one-hour, architectural landmarks that took ten years to plan and construct and in the process kill over 3,000 innocent civilians. They have the advantage of surprise.

This is a different kind of war. Terrorists choose the time and place for their next outrage. They do not wear identifiable uniforms. They seldom confront our military directly, but prefer civilian soft targets. Thus they have disqualified themselves from being covered by the regulations of the Geneva Convention.

The Articles of War (laws and legal procedures of the U.S. Army and Air Force) was replaced in 1951 by the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Perhaps the UCMJ needs some fine-tuning now in light of new realities in the war on terrorism.

Generally speaking the media overreacted to the hazing in Abu Ghraib. Our soldiers had seen abundant evidence of inhuman Islamic disrespect for human life, including beheading, amputations and mutilations. They had seen their colleagues bullet-ridden bodies, burned and hanging from a Baghdad bridge while jeering mobs danced in approval. Of course we must establish a higher standard and set a better example, but to equate humiliating detainees with decapitation of hostages is both unrealistic and ludicrous.

During an interfaith meeting in Turkey recently, a respected Muslim cleric told the crowd: “Thanks to your democratic laws we will invade you. Thanks to our Islamic laws we will conquer you.” As a former Algerian President told the UN in 1974, “The wombs of our women will give us the victory.” It’s called demographic preponderance. The West’s inability to even acknowledge this aggression is disconcerting.

This war cannot be fought with carnal weapons only. We cannot delegate command of our US armed forces to the UN, or to timid former allies (with Veto power) each with his own personal agenda. This is a job for men and women with courage and character and above all Christian conviction and determination. It will be a long, tough fight – but we can and must win.

Bill Bathman – Tempe, Arizona