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Newsmaker Commentary

Post U.S. Elections - Special Report & Commentary: The war in Iraq, what happens now?

What happens if we fail in Iraq? It has been 3 1/2 years since the fateful day when President George W. Bush announced the start of the Iraq war. Winning the war and taking over Baghdad was the easy part, holding onto it and keeping the country stable was another matter. While there remained some factions to be weeded out, little did we know that we would be facing a relentless barrage of murderous attacks that employed terrorist tactics. The worst part is not immediately realizing that the adversaries we faced were not really the remnants of the Iraqi regime, but foreign terrorist that came pouring in to undermine our efforts.

(<http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/09/20/britain.allawi/index.html>)

It is not that we underestimated our enemy, but that we failed to notice the non-stop flow of weapons and terrorist insurgents crossing the border from Syria and Iran. Had we been able to truly secure the Iraq borders and stop this inflow, we might have had better results. Thus said, securing a border can also be a daunting task. Among those who crossed over included the leftovers from Al Qaeda who organized and conspired to incite a civil war between the known conflicts of Sunnis and Kurds. Now, in addition to the vicious attacks, there is also atrocities and infighting between ethnic groups that seems to be escalating into a civil war. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunni>)

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurdish_people)

What does all of this mean? Was this our U.S. President's tragic flaw and faulty vision? What if Al Gore had been sitting in the White House and received the same intelligence about 'Weapons of Mass Destruction'? What do we supposed he would have done? Would he have taken the same action? While many contend that the world would be better off had there not been a second Iraq war, there are those who believe that war with Muslim extremists in any one of the Arab countries was inevitable. People of faith from all walks of life everywhere believe that unrest in the middle east signals that we are now in the end times. "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." John 14:29. Matthew 24:4-8 (NIV) "4Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. 5For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ, and will deceive many. 6You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. 7Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. 8All these are the beginning of birth pains. Are we heading towards a global crisis where the middle east is just destined to explode?"

Iran was cited by President Bush as part of the "Axis of Evil" post 9-11, not because they burned U.S flags and openly chanted "death to America" for decades, but for their continuing efforts to fund fledgling terrorist organizations and regimes sponsoring groups like Hezbollah & Hamas. It is no secret that they, along with other Arab countries are

induced into a culture of hatred towards America and Israel from the time they are born until they reach adulthood. How can a civilized world overcome radical militants that are literally hell-bent on destroying the stability of the world? It is a known fact that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has openly vowed to “wipe Israel” off the map. His plans: nuclear proliferation. He along with other rogue states are seen as contributing to the destabilization of the middle east. His goal consists of creating a global chaos that would then usher in the Islamic Messiah. (<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3327251,00.html>)
(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hezbollah>)
(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamas>)

There is a big difference with what we believe we are doing in Iraq vs. what our enemies think we are doing there. “THE followers of Moqtada al-Sadr believe that the US invaded Iraq to prevent the return to Earth of their sect’s messiah-like figure, the Mahdi, or 12th imam” as reported by "The Times" website from the United Kingdom. We fight for stability, and they strive for chaos. In times like these we can only watch and pray and be wary in well doing. (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7374-2385384,00.html>)

Many extend their hatred to the United States for being allied with the Nation of Israel. Although many erroneously believe that Israel stole the land from Palestinians, the history of this region would disprove that. (<http://www.sunyaprajna.com/Worldview/Israel.html>)

Increasingly the world persecution of Christianity is at an all time high. Matthew 24:9-13 - 9Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. 10At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, 13but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.” In a world where Islamic Extremist don’t mind killing innocents, their demonic indoctrination makes this verse very plausible.

The situation in Iraq is very delicate and requires careful considerations and that our leaders not act too hastily. There are two mentalities: One supports total withdrawal stating that it would deescalate hostilities and the other view is that it will represent a victory for insurgents and embolden our enemies to attack us in the future. Though it is hard to predict what the outcome will be in each scenario, we live in the fact that these are perilous times. We as a people should be recognize that. The whole future of the civilized world hangs by a thread. Will our leaders make the right decisions? While many believe the withdrawal option is plausible, some believe that option would be catastrophic. The scenario in which this would represent a victory for and embolden our enemies is very possible and here is a compelling reason that we should stay in Iraq: No matter what the reason is for going in, we better make sure that we understand our exit strategy and the consequences for leaving. If our country's objectives are not met, there is a growing consensus that our withdrawal would lead to a bloody civil war that would devastate the region. The effects would then spread around creating a vacuum of power that terrorist militants would eagerly exploit.

(http://www.norcalblogs.com/post_scripts/archives/2006/10/what_happens_if.html)

As Christians we should be mindful to pray for the will of God and the our purpose in the region. We should never underestimate the hour in which we live and need to also be prepared. Are the end times here? Could be. We live in a time where biblical prophecies are emerging. (NIV [Matthew 24:34](#) I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.) There does appear to be signs that our time is short!

.(http://www.preteristarchive.com/PartialPreterism/brown-phillip_ca_01.html)

We should all be reminded : “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back--whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!' (Mark 13:32-37)