

OUR KINGDOM FOR A STRATEGY

By definition a strategy is a plan designed to achieve a particular long-term aim—the art of planning and directing military activity in a war or battle. Not to be confused with tactics, the movement of armed forces and equipment during a war or operation. The former is the plan while the latter is the implementation. Post 9/11 President Bush said and I paraphrase: “We will take the war to the terrorists and those who harbor them.” This seems to be a ‘strategy’ yet it lacks any formal ‘declaration of war’ and a Bush caution—“we are against radical Islamic terrorists, but not Islam per se.” Therein lies the rub!

Since that time, 9/11, 2001, we have had relative success in Afghanistan and Iraq; early success in the former has been blunted by a renewal of the Taliban and recent success in the latter poses the threat of resurgence. Thus past and present accolades can be easily placed in the labyrinth of a ‘never ending war’. So what to do?

In a nutshell we have no strategy of consequence as described: a War against Terrorism is ambivalent and seeks clarity as to meaning, concept, and target. Are we fighting terrorism in Afghanistan or is it a movement, an entity, a state? Taliban has its roots in true Islam, like Wahhabism and its fire gleaned from the Madrassas of Saudi-Arabia and Pakistan. Too, the so-called ‘surge strategy’ employed in Iraq is a misnomer: ‘a sudden large, temporary increase (of troops)’ or could it be, serge, a hard-wearing woolen or worsted fabric? Neither fits the bill. Our strategy there is a more refined counter-insurgency tactic that includes the capture, hold, remain and build of each province by US, coalition forces, and Iraqis. This is not a new strategy or tactic but has been used in wars past but now threaded with the expertise of Pe-

traeus and Marine General James Amos and others in a new combined service Field Manual. Even this ‘arm-chair general’ foresees the need for a strategy with teeth: Unconditional Surrender which brought the German and Japanese to heel in quiescence. No debate, time-tables, questionable diplomatic ploys – as Sergeant Friday would say, “just the facts, m’am”. There is true democracy in both of these countries and we remained to aid, support and advise. The Marshall plan rings out in eloquence and memory. We have to realize the ‘many faces of Islam’ must be addressed, advised, and, if necessary, warned that we will not accept the status quo. Moderates must control their fanatics within each of the Moslem nations, and requires a hard-look at our American citizens who profess to an Islam religion. True Islam leaders believe they conquered the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, and al-Qaeda (the base) lives on with or without Osama bin-laden. True Islam believes they are a nation and will prevail as their encroaching evidence shows in England, main-land Europe the Mideast, and, of course in Pakistan and environs. Cells abound here and internationally. Both old-timer and young-timer must address these issues and let us know where they stand and define with clarity what their war strategy will be or will it be a peace strategy with some naughty, naughty aspersions cloaked in diplomacy? Neither accepts the premise outlined above as I suspect they do not want to ‘ruffle feathers’ although every now and then the old-timer mentions ‘the fanatical Islam extremists’. What does the young-timer have to say other than the glittering generalities about protecting Israel, getting out of Iraq and sending more troops to Afghanistan?

