

The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

I, recently, made a bet with a girlfriend of mine that the West does not have the stomach for an all-out fight with the fundamentalistic Islamic nation of Iran. Conquering Iraq – I mean ‘the liberation of Iraq’, in the words of President George W. Bush of the United States of America – by the military might of the United States, backed up by a small contingent of the British militia, is one thing, but attacking Iran, whose fanatical army conscripts and recruits think nothing of giving up their lives for their country and Islam is an entirely different kettle of fish. Here are just a few facts on which, I would assume, the US Government has been chewing on of late:

1. Iran’s total human population:

Estimated to be not less than sixty eight million people;

2. Military expenditure, annually, as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product: Estimated to be not less than 3.60 percent;

3. Number of people, available for military service:

Estimated to be not less than 18.32 million men and women; and,

4. Number of people, fit for military service:

Estimated to be not less than 15.67 million men and women.

Comparing the above statistics in respect of Iran with just a few statistics from some of the biggest political and military powers of the world, today, the United States spends about 3.30 percent of its Gross Domestic Product on military expenditure while the People’s Republic of China spends about 4.30 percent of its Gross Domestic Product on military expenditure.

During the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-1988, in which more than one million soldiers on both sides lost their lives, Iran conscripted young boys as young as nine years of age to wear the uniform of the country and to carry guns into battle. Such actions used to be called, cannon fodder. Today, it is compulsory that boys, having attained the age of eighteen years, must serve one month for each year of life in the Iranian military forces. Conscription is obligatory. One has to wonder as to the reason that a country determines to conscript the cream of its population to serve in the military when it is not at war with any other country. It seems to me that Iran does not think twice about sacrificing its best men and women for the sake of the ideology of Islamic fundamentalism. This, in my opinion, is fanaticism, not theology. One could liken this attitude to that of the Imperial Japanese Army of World War II when the soldiers of Emperor Hirohito were willing to die for their Emperor rather than be captured or suffer defeat at the hands of the Allied Forces. Even the wives of the Imperial Army soldiers, living on islands in the South Pacific and North Pacific, when it was clear that the fight for a particular island had been lost, determined to commit suicide, along with

their children, some as young as three years, rather than be captured or live with the barbarian hords (as the Japanese propaganda described the Americans and British forces), which had thrashed the Imperial soldiers. The Iranian Government, without question, has ingrained in the youth of the country a very similar concept to that of the Divine One of World War II Japan. The main difference between the Imperial Army of Japan, during World War II, and Iran of today, is that Iran brainwashes its people that Allah commands this and that or that the Q'ran states this or that whereas the Japanese thinking of World War II was that it was glorious to die for the Emperor.

But Iran is not the only Islamic fundamentalistic country in the world; the West must realise this fact. Recently, HAMAS, the militant group of the Palestinians, which is, now, in political control of the West Bank by the popular vote, has vowed to sever all links with Israel. This includes cutting off all water, electricity and other amenities, linked with the Israeli State. The manifesto of HAMAS is the complete downfall of the Jewish State. The US has been advocating democratisation of the Middle East and, today, the US has an admitted terrorist group as the legal – and elected – government of the West Bank. By the way, there are more than two million men, women and children, living in the West Bank. HAMAS has, of late, been sending out its suicide bombers into towns and cities of Israel, killing and maiming scores of Israelis and tourists to the country, completely indiscriminately. The elections of the West Bank marked the first time that the Islamic militant group, HAMAS, has participated in the Palestinian political process. HAMAS, which has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against Israeli civilians and military targets, has been designated as being terrorist organisation by the US State Department. The policy of the US toward HAMAS is that it does not deal, or negotiate with, HAMAS because HAMAS, by its own admission, is a terrorist organisation.

In a December 28, 2005, joint statement, issued by the United Nations, Russia, the European Union and the United States, it was determined that HAMAS is a contradiction, presenting itself, on one hand, as being a political entity, while, on the other hand, it engages in violence outside the political process. It, also, continues to call for the destruction of a neighboring country: Israel. So, if the West determines to start a shooting war with Iran, that war may well extend to a number of territories and countries, around the world. During the American Civil War of 1861 to 1865, the call went out: 'Rally round the flag, boys!' If the West tries to apply the economic thumbscrews on Iran, it might well find itself, being pictured by Muslims, worldwide, as the Christian tyrant, trying to corrupt the nations of Islam.

A political solution has to be found by the West with regard to the Iran situation because, unlike the Iraq under President Saddam Hussein, the present Government of Iran is a fundamentalistic, hard-lined regime with a very itchy trigger finger.

Talk to you next week.

Chief Lady

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