History Repeats Itself in Iraq

Description

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

We invaded Iraq, and it was difficult, yet we managed to militarily subdue a nation is a very short time. The troops fought well gainst some dedicated opposition.

We had seen the amount of conflict reduce as time went on. In reading blogs from those on the front lines, I noticed fewer entries about VBIEDs going off, and more posts that were substantive reports on getting to know the local population, helping out injured Iraqis, doing community projectsâ€¦

The in recent weeks, the number of attacks by the terrorists ramped up, and we began losing increased numbers of service members.

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As a result, members of our Congress began calling for a a timeline to pull out of Iraq, and began pronouncing the entire effort as the now well worn out word â€œquagmire.â€•

Whatâ€™s happening? The opposition is taking some shots at us.

Where have we seen this before?

In the center of Europe in late 1944, the was a little shoot-em-up recorded in history as â€œThe Battle of the Bulge.â€•

> â€œThe Battle of the Bulge which lasted from December 16, 1944 to January 28, 1945 was the largest land battle of World War II in which the United States participated. More than a million men fought in this battle including some 600,000 Germans, 500,000 Americans, and 55,000 British. The German military force consisted of two Armies with ten corps(equal to 29 divisions). While the American military force consisted of a total of three armies with six corps(equal to 31 divisions). At the conclusion of the battle the casualties were as follows: 81,000 U.S. with 19,000 killed, 1400 British with 200 killed, and 100,000 Germans killed, wounded or captured.
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> In late 1944 Germany was clearly losing the warâ€¦.â€•

We had breached Fortress Europe on the beaches of Normandy, fought across France and entered Belgium, enroute the invasion of Germany.

Iâ€™m sure if you had been with the troops surrounded at Bastonge, you certainly wouldnâ€™t conceive that the Germans were, as the last line of the except above properly presents being characterized as â€œclearly losing the war.â€• It was a last gasp for Hitler, hoping heâ€™d make a big enough dent in the pending invasion to regain the offensive. Since we are so lucky to know the end of the story, we know his gambit failed. The Third Reich was crushed within the next 7 months.

I think we are in this circumstance once again. The terrorists, like Hitler sense the end is near and need to score some big points and hope weâ€™ll go defensive and possibly have the will of the people broken.

At the Battle of the Bulge, the situation for our troops was far more desperate, and there was a reasonable probability of them being overrun. How did the on scene commander respond? When asked by the German Commander to surrender, Gen McAulffie responded with a one word, famous answer: â€œNuts!â€•

A commander surrounded, using cooks and clerks and anyone else with a uniform, to hold off the Wermacht troops, stood his ground. Pattonâ€™s Army did a â€œleft faceâ€• and sped north to relieve the troops at Bastonge, no small feat for an entire Army.

The outcome? Stunning defeat for the enemy.

I once heard courage defined as hanging on for 10 seconds more than anyone else. I think that definition tends to fit will into this discussion of a battle 61 years ago. I think itâ€™s a thought we need to hold onto for today.

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My take is, like sharks, who can sense 2 parts per million of blood in the water, the terrorists have heard the cries from our own Congress, and are making an all out effort to make a splash. They want us to perceive they have been resurrected, and this spate of attacks is a foreshadowing of what is to come. It defies logic to believe an enemy, who has no â€œhome courtâ€• at all, is composed of various competing groups, loosely held together by a hatred for the allied forces, with no effective means of secure communications, facing a well equipped and well trained military, armed with technological marvels to augment boots on the ground cannot have gathered the resources to mount a sustained offensive capable of dislodging our forces.

On the other hand, having learned the lesson of both Vietnam and Mogadishu, know if they can spill some US soldierâ€™s blood and get Congress to begin howling for a pull out, there is a chance we will leave, only to later find out they were on a tactical â€œsprint,â€• designed to appear as a strategic offensive. We also need to hold to these lessons.

They are on the ropes, the country of Iraq is coming along well, we need to steel ourselves hang on for â€œ10 more seconds.â€•

We have been here before, facing much worse at the Alamo, Gettysburg, at the Chosin Reservoir, in the Pusan Perimeter, and during the Tet Offensive. In each case, the US military stood up to the task with incredible dedication to a cause greater than themselves, and, while men were lost, the long term battles were won.

To pull back now is to admit defeat and go home, not only dishonoring the sacrifice of the 1700+ service members lost in this war, but the loses of all before them on the battlefields here and abroad where we have fought to defend freedom.
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The enemy of today isnâ€™t anywhere near the caliber of the other amred forces we encountered in those battles. Our forces are today every bit as good as thier predecessors wearing the uniforms of the United States.

This entire push by the left is what we used to call a â€œbanana.â€• Put something stupid in your staff work, near the front, to catch the bossâ€™ eye, let him harange you for it, correct that and come back to get it signed out â€œbecause it reads much better now.â€• Donâ€™t buy into it, â€œreadâ€• their entire messageâ€¦

To pull back now is to admit defeat and go home, not only dishonoring the sacrifice of the 1700+ service members lost in this war, but the loses of all before them on the battlefields here and abroad where we have fought to defend freedom, particularly in desparate circumstances.

Update 6/30/2005: Reference my speculation above, see what Major K has to say about the terroristsâ€™ huffing an puffing (before being smoked like a cheap cigarâ€¦.)

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admin