



## Straight Talk

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## Does Freedom Really Work?

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### Greetings, Gentle Reader,

Is it going to do the world – and especially us – any good, if we succeed in establishing freedom in Iraq? Will it change Iraqis' thinking? Their behavior? Freedom has changed Americans and Canadians. It's even changed Western Europeans. Will it change Iraqis?

Let's analyze freedom: Why do we, the most powerful nation in the world, not annex Mexico? It could only redound to their good. They are an economic, social and governmental basket case. Kidnaping and extortion are thriving businesses. Corruption is ubiquitous. An overwhelming percentage of the people are undernourished, ill-clothed, mired in abject hopelessness. So, why don't we invade them and improve their lot?

In our hemisphere, only America and Canada are healthy, functioning nations, but if we wanted, we could take Canada down. They have a minute military and couldn't defend themselves if they had to. The only reason they sass us as they do, considering how weak they are, is because they know we would never attack them and would annihilate any other country that so much as contemplated doing so. They're like a smartalecky kid brother. He can say almost anything to anyone, as long as his king-sized big brother is standing right behind him.

We could take Cuba out in almost no time, if we wanted to, but we don't. Why? Because we choose not to subjugate other people. It has become a mindset, embedded in us by more than 200 years of freedom. With every fiber of our being we know that freedom is not a privilege; it's a right. It cannot be an exception to the norm; it must define the norm.

So, back to our question: Will freedom help Iraqis? Will the effects be evident to the world?

Not in one year, nor one decade. Why? Because freedom demands a people take responsibility pro-actively, and those who have been savagely subjugated are uneasy with both responsibility and pro-activity. They fear for their lives and their families, and their fear is bone-deep.

It will take a generation.

Freedom requires a people to permit a weaker neighbor to remain independent and unmolested. It requires thinking of terrorists as unconscionable criminals, not freedom fighters. It requires a gradual, growing demand – not a wish, not a hope, but a demand – for law-abiding attitudes and behaviors. Especially, it requires Muslims to allow people of other religions to practice their religion unabused, which at this time, they refuse to do.

If we establish freedom in Iraq, neighboring nations will move in that direction, slowly, unwillingly, against the will of their governments to be sure, but toward freedom, nonetheless. Zarqawi has expressed fear of that very thing, in his quest to recruit young terrorists. Monsters of his type have a horror of freedom, because it threatens their very existence. Free people target terrorists rather than bow down to them!

Is Iraqi freedom achievable? Allawi says it is. He insists Middle Easterners have as much right to freedom as others, but because he's lived in Britain for years, he has a vision most Iraqis don't have. Most only know the unrelenting horror of Saddam's regime.

Freedom is essential for progress toward societal health. Iraqis must make their own changes, and they can if they are free, rather than living under an oppressive Middle Eastern dictatorship. Israel, as the only free country in the Middle East, is a poster child showcasing that concept.

If the Iraqis willingly fight for freedom – and fight they must – the entire Middle East will follow their lead, especially nuclear-weapon-wannabe Iran, where the people crave freedom.

Let us hope and pray for that. The alternative is never-ending war – perhaps nuclear war – on all the world, including us.

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