

When Will America Wise Up?

When will America realize that the infidel by any name is still an infidel?

We have poured trillions of dollars into Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Egypt, to say nothing of what is more precious than money—the blood of the brave men and women of the United States military. And for what?

To watch Iran's influence permeate Iraq? To see the butcher of Teheran hold and raise hands with the propped-up presidents of Afghanistan and Pakistan? If there is a picture worth a billion words, that is it. That picture of Islamic unity is like using American sacrifice and tax dollars to jab a finger in America's eye.

Some misguided policymakers in Washington, D.C. actually think we can do good in **Syria** by supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and al-Qaida types against Bashar al-Assad, the Shiite dictator and ally of Shiite Iran. Those policymakers will say we need to abide by our humanitarian principles and support the revolutionaries, regardless of their Islamic stripes.

However, helping one **Islamic militant faction** against another is a huge mistake. They know how to use America to serve their long-term purposes, and the ultimate outcome will backfire against us just like it did in Egypt and Libya.

Although history repeatedly shows how our good intentions in the Middle East go awry, we are apparently so desperate for our enemies' approval that we will abandon knowledge altogether.

What happened to wisdom? What happened to statesmen who take into account historic and sectarian divisions? What happened to judicious diplomacy? Jesus speaks of being wise as serpents and gentle as doves, yet when I look at our foreign

policymakers, I see very little serpent-like sagaciousness.

There is a saying in the Arab/Muslim world that truly reflects how various Islamic factions view one another: "My brother and I against my cousin, but my cousin and I against the stranger."

Shiites and Sunnis in Iraq and Pakistan may bomb each other, but we will always be the stranger, the infidel. The holding and raising of those three leaders' hands is like a middle-finger salute to America and the West. They proclaim that "my cousin and I are against you."

No matter how many trillions of dollars we pour into those countries, they will always hate the infidels. If the riots and the killing of two American soldiers in Afghanistan last week do not convince our policymakers of the desperate need for wisdom, then even the threat of our demise may not do it.

Our citizens and leaders who truly understand that religion must not surrender to the abandonment of wisdom. We must change our approach and return to judicious diplomacy. The protection of our tax dollars, the lives of our soldiers and ultimately, our very survival depends on it.

Knowing that part of the world as I do, and having confidence in the principled core of some American leaders, I will keep on pleading for real change as long as I live.

Michael Youssef's expertise on the Islamic culture and the Middle East in today's post-modern world is actively sought by hundreds of thousands of followers around the globe. With a Ph.D. from Emory University in social anthropology, his Egyptian heritage gives him particular insight into the cultural and religious entanglements of international affairs. It is estimated that over 10 million viewers/listeners around the world are tuned in every week through an international Christian media ministry founded by Youssef, . It broadcasts via radio and television to over 200 countries and in over 20

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