

# On Modern Warfare

By : whammybird

Just a short essay on conflict in the middle east I did for college, I thought I would share it here and hopefully receive some feedback.

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The hallmark of a people becoming civilised, in the modern sense of the word, presents itself when it reaches a point where policy is decided by the people, for the people. No dogmatic institution should dictate what should be done in the name of any one person or divine being.

For many decades a tragic tale has been played out, time and time again, across the middle east. The people of Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan have feared for their lives and homes as dictators, religious fundamentalists and corrupt governments fight holy and political wars. They fight for the resources of the land, territories and the minds of the masses. All the while putting the welfare of the people at the bottom of their list of priorities.

First world countries see freedom of the press, this freedom of expression and information is a double edged sword. Whilst we are kept informed about the world, the politics and economics of other countries, we have given great control and power to the media. The basic truth of power is that it corrupts. In giving great power to the media, we allow them to edit the reality of a situation.

Great coverage is allowed to evil men, the leaders of oppressive regimes and groups are given air time to attempt to justify their heinous actions. We can be forgiven for reaching the conclusion that the majority of citizens in war torn areas are opposed to occupation. After all, the preaching of the extremist or the power hungry war monger make for a great news story, if we bear in mind that the media is still a business.

But what of the humble shop keeper ? The rational, concerned doctor ? The many stifled voices of those that live in these lands. The idea that the people do not want peace, an end to tyranny and control, is falsehood. The conflicts in the middle-east that we as a nation witness, however skewed our notion and understanding of it, show an effort of humanity, not cruelty.

We as a society, and many societies like ours, have heard the calls of the meek and suppressed. We have answered it with action and not just contemplation or prayer. We have offered up our sons and daughters as heroic guardians of freedom and democracy, some lose their lives and some, their minds. Is it worth it though ? Why should a country sacrifice its resources and souls for lands and people they owe no obligation to ? Because it is the just and moral thing to do.

Morality. Morality is something that fundamentalist organisations say democratic countries lacks. They say we are selfish, cold and disillusioned. But what does that make them ? They do not allow equality between the genders, sexuality is a distasteful subject and no contraception is offered to the people, leading to disease and a lack of choice of when to have a child. They hold true religious doctrine, ancient words skewed for their purpose. They do not wish to see their people freed of western oppression, they wish to oppress their people themselves.

We come to the main argument humanist and liberal groups in democratic countries use in opposition of occupation. 'No blood for oil'. This means do not invade a country and then take control of their resources. If we take a step back and look at this rationally, we could use a metaphor. Our combating oppressive governments and groups is an investment in the welfare of the people being oppressed. Like any investment, our occupation costs us considerable money. We need to see a return on this investment, so trade and commerce steps in to claim its reward for the huge sums war costs us.

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This is where the metaphor stops. War costs money and without funding for military efforts we could not afford to spare the resources to help these people. A trade of welfare, protection and liberation for material wealth is a sensible choice any nation would pay.

The element a dictatorship or terrorist group lacks is the one thing that sets us apart from the animals, the very essence of enlightened humanity, compassion. Whatever 'evil' thing it seems like a government is doing, any wrongs committed by those attempting liberation, are far outweighed by the real results the freedom of a nation show.

Whichever side of the fence you sit on, whether you are anti or pro war, just take a second to consider the following. If England was under the control of a group of uneducated (only religious texts and education are allowed amongst fundamentalist groups), violent and controlling men. That dictated everything you did in life and hurt you and your family for opposing them or their ideas. Would you not give everything you own to once again be free to make your own choices and live in safety and health without fear ? I think it would be a far easier choice.

Forget about the end result, forget who profits, just spare a thought for the starving, uneducated children who are denied freedom, food and rights. For the women that are attacked, raped and killed daily en-mass and for those that don't want the pain and suffering any more. For they are the ones who should decide if war is justifiable, not us.

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