

And Justice for All

—Jedediah Bowles

Five decades and five major military operations after becoming the "pre-imminent" power among the world's nations, the United States has experienced great loss and gained little from conflict. With the world's largest military and defense budget, you would more than likely come to the rational and intelligible conclusion that we should have easily swept away our enemies and lost few casualties, if any. But that's not really how things turned out. We have lost an estimated 105,000 brave and loyal sons because of cowardice and weakness on part of the political leaders who are unable to do all that is necessary to achieve a permanent victory, maintain full-spectrum dominance, and keep the villains of this world at bay.

On December 7th, 1940, my Grandfather's enlistment in the navy expired. He decided to leave the service and try the civilian world again. Oddly enough, and exactly one year later, he was called back into the United States Navy following the attack by Imperial Japan on the US Navy base, Pearl Harbor. With great pride and honor, he, and thousands of other service members, went bravely head-on into the most devastating conflict in world history. The sole reason I joined the service was to make him proud. I believe I accomplished that goal.

After he passed away, nothing was the same. As a result, I separated from the service three years later. Looking back, I can say I spent my time in the Navy without regret. I spent many days, months, and years supporting the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Many times, however, I would think to myself and wonder, "Why are we fighting this war with such a love for humanity?" or "Why do these brave men and women have to put their lives at risk, when, in actuality, they don't have too?" This is war. It's not fair. And it's not supposed to be. The means of the conflict—the brutality therein—is justified by the victors when goals are

achieved for the betterment of the winner. Another frequent question that I seemed to continually ask myself was this: “Is one American life is more important than one hundred of our enemies?” Of course it is. War is a horrible thing; but in *this* world it is a necessary thing.

If our country had leaders committed to our wars—to the ultimate destruction of the enemy and the annihilation of all that is his, or, forcing complete surrender without a chance of insurgence due to a direct threat of finality upon he and his countrymen—would we be cowardly assailed during our occupation? We would still have brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers. How many sons wait in vain for their father's return? I believe the blood of the soldiers lost in these wars should and will be on the hands of those that could have prevented this. I will add, to avoid any possible ambiguity, that my anger is not roused at those that have been called upon in these wars. My contempt is for those that would decry the use of deadly force to bring about justice and righteous action. Prussian General, Carl Von Clausewitz, compared the act of war to a duel between nations on a much larger scale. Granted, the scale is greater; but the purpose of both is to resolve a matter that, from a diplomatic and peaceful standpoint, is un-resolvable. So, looking at the situation following the events of 9/11, it must be understood, that, just as we would pursue, capture, and convict an individual who committed a heinous crime of tragic result, we must pursue these villains to the ends of the Earth. Sheer numbers should never detract from the price that must be paid for taking American lives.

Thinking back into history, I cannot think of one civilization that has defeated its enemy and then rebuilt their homes, protected their lands, and gave them money for damages. In fact, when in history did a great power of the world ever let its economy drain from a lack of resources when its weaker neighbor had plenty? Instead, we try to figure out where ELSE we can get the resources from. We, as a country, ask too much of ourselves. We cannot maintain such a magnificent society and culture without a unilateral understanding of the fact that

we must expand and increase our subsistence based off of the requirements of our own needs. I, for one, do not see a contradiction between this kind of justice and righteous action. I believe that to continue to do our duty to our country and protect the interests of the world as a whole, we must do first what is in the best interest of ourselves. Through blood and iron we can hammer the righteous laws of our will into the template of this world's future. We lack only the leaders who are willing to make examples of our enemies and prevent the deaths of our own—leaders that will help us take what we need and use it to strengthen and nurture our great nation—so that we will always deliver liberty, freedom, and justice for all.

