

**THE BLOG**

Oh! What a Lovely (Civil) War

By Marty Kaplan06/02/2006 12:52 pm ET | **Updated** May 25, 2011

Neo-con sage Edward Luttwak's call for a nice, cleansing bloodbath in Iraq has finally hit the Los Angeles Times op-ed page, having already appeared in Tel Aviv, London, Toronto and who knows where else.

Its thesis is that the best course in Iraq is to pull out our troops, except for the Green Zone and our swell new superbases out in the desert, and let the Kurds, Sunnis and Shiites slaughter one another until natural partition boundaries emerge from this constructive carnage.

As evidence of the virtues of fratricide, Dr. Luttwak cites the U.S. example (good thing the European powers didn't stop us from fighting it out), the 17th-century civil war in England (look at the stable parliamentary system that emerged), and Switzerland in 1847 (now there's a Jeopardy factoid for you). I'm not sure why he also didn't make the case for the upside of Milosevic's ethnic cleansing, or why he neglected Rwanda, where the Hutus killed a million Tutsis without any NATO busybodies getting in their face. Come to think of it, wasn't the Nazis' extermination of the Jews kind of, you know, a civil war inside Germany?

Luttwak's argument, of course, telegraphs the neo-cons' neo-rationale for Bush and the rest of their fifth column in this administration to pull out of Iraq. It certainly flies against their paleo-rationales (we're spreading freedom and fighting terrorists), and their critique of Murtha et al (What? Cut and run? You must hate America!). But it does avoid embracing a draft (the inevitable consequence of urging the deployment of enough additional troops to conduct a genuine occupation), and it's the first sign of the protective cover the right is now weaving in order to retroactively depict their staggering hubris and criminal bungling as the very plan they had in mind all along.

Anyone with half a brain knows there are no good solutions to Iraq. But as our country figures out the least bad way to pay the terrible price for the tragedy that BushCo has inflicted on us, the last thing we need is a revisionist neo-con job that portrays internecine savagery as the freedom-lover's new best friend.

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