

Re: [OT] Iraq

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- *From:* "Charles Hottel" <chottel@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sun, 23 Sep 2007 13:04:51 -0400
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"LX-i" <lx0007@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:SbadnSDaL696DmvbnZ2dnUVZ_qiinZ2d@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

docdwarf@xxxxxxxxxx wrote:

That is not 'moving the goalposts' Our definitions are rather different,
it seems.

Not the definitions, the framing. But yes, they are.

That's irresponsible – best
voiced by then Secretary of
State Colin
Powell. He called it the
Pottery Barn principle –
"you break it, you
buy it."

So... the United States brings it, the Iraqis
break it and it then
falls upon the United States to bring in more.
Seems more like 'they
break it, *we* buy it.'

We didn't break the democracy, we broke their existing
government. We
need to leave them with a functional, potent government.

We've established that already, there have been elections... remember the
happy purple thumbs? It is theirs to do with as they want.

So we should just pull out, and let the insurgent come in and kill
everyone associated with the new government? What does that benefit them?

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I saw a chart that the Iraqi parliament has accomplished 8 of 17 "benchmarks" suggested to them, while the Democrat Congress chiding them for missing benchmarks has accomplished 1 of the 7 things on which its candidates ran leading up to November 2006. Who's missing the target here?

I've seen charts that show the project I'm working on is on time, on spec and under budget.

Ah – but this chart was illustrating actual fact! :)

The chart I referred to was claiming to do just that, too... and perhaps it did, until a Corner-Office Idiot said 'Oh, and while you're at it, can you give us the inverse-barometric pressure sort, too?'

Sorry to hear that...

Not according to those whose assertion that the military's job is 'to kill people and break things'. You want training, hire DeVry Institutes.

So how do the people in the military know how to kill people and break things? Are they just naturally gifted in this area, and we've been oh-so-fortunate as a nation that they enlist? If you're training a *military*, it makes sense to use *military* trainers.

If military matters are all that are being taught then bring the folks who need training over to the USA... there are a bunch of closed and/or underutilised bases that can be used for this purpose.

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I don't think that would be effective. I've been there, and I've been to several bases, and I've yet to see a base that looks like the Middle East. Training them in the environment in which they're expected to perform is more effective. Plus, with the situation over there, a lot of it is OJT – they need security *now*.

I'd love to. But, I'd rather the bullets be fired at those who know how to evade and retaliate than for them to be directed at the Iraqi legislature. If unguarded, it would probably take very little time to assassinate every governmental leader over there now. We're back to buying what we broke...

Were that scenario to be played out... once again, *we* would not be the ones breaking the democratically–elected government of the Iraqis, *someone else* would be breaking that we installed by complying with our mission objectives.

As old as you are, I'm surprised you're being this naive. If I give you something that someone else comes and takes away the minute I turn my back, I haven't really helped you.

Government has no money
of its own.

This seems to be contradicted by the busily–humming presses of the Bureau of Printing and Engraving and the Mint. Governments say 'this is what will be accepted as money', make it and insure the circulation of it... or at least they've seemed to do so over the past few years.

If government has no money then how, pray tell, does a currency devaluation work?

The government prints the money – but if printing the money were the solution to funding the government, why have taxation at all? "Spend all you want, we'll print more!" would make a great political slogan...

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These questions are answered in most basic textbooks of Economics... do you really need them repeated here?

I've taken economics (recently, in fact). What stood out to me is the inefficiencies (AKA "deadweight loss") caused by government interference in the free market, through taxation, subsidies, regulation, and price controls. When people work, their earnings are given to them, for the most part, in money. That money is *theirs*, not the government's. For the government to be able to spend money, they have to either print it, or take it from their citizens. If they print lots of it, its value will decrease rapidly – so, they take it from their citizens.

Through withholding taxes, most people have no clue how much they actually pay in taxes. Just because they don't know it, though, doesn't make it any less morally wrong.

To have money, it has to take that money from its citizens; this taking of money, taxation, being done at the point of a gun. (You don't pay, you go to jail.)

Oooooo... guys with guns, the Libertarians (sometimes referred to as 'Jefferson's Mistakes') can be far away. Guys with guns take stuff that says 'this is a product of the Mint/BPE... but that's not government property, right?

Quibble over how I describe it, but it's true.

I have not quibbled, I believe I have shown the argument to be wrong.

No, you seized on the word "guns" and went off on Libertarians.

When the government takes *my* money to give it to someone else (not the aforementioned "common" things), *that's* socialism.

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Not according to the definitions cited previously about 'collective ownership of the means of production' and 'government administration of the distribution of goods'. Governments which have functioned on any decent-sized scale have always, to the best of my knowledge, have had the power to take a buck from over here and put it over there; if doing so is 'socialism' then all governments, by that criterion, are socialist... and that appears to be an absurdity.

Call it absurd if you want. It's not USSR-level socialism, but it is a form.

It does not fit any of the criteria given in the definition...

It **does** fit the criteria given in the definition. If you don't see that, or refuse to admit it, then this part of the discussion is going nowhere.

"Government administration of the distribution of goods."
When they take **my** money, and distribute it to **other** people, how exactly would you categorize that?

Not this again. 'Money', by definition, is 'something generally accepted as a medium of exchange, a measure of value, or a means of payment'; that kind of stuff, in the USA, is, usually, manufactured, controlled and distributed by the government.

I'm guessing that you feel the recent campaign finance reform restrictions are perfectly fine too, then, right? Since "money" is all the governments, they don't have to give us any! When money is part of your earnings, it becomes your property. Your definition does not take that into account, and is that omission (and I have to believe it's intentional) makes that partial definition irrelevant to this discussion. Personal ownership of property (whether real, intellectual, or monetary assets) is one of the founding principles of this country.

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Should I go across the street, take one of our neighbor's 5 cars, and give it to the folks two streets over who only have 2?

No more than you should be allowed to declare war, establish treaties, raise and maintain an army and other such Stately Matters. Some things a country does, some things an individual does... been that way for a while, too.

If it's immoral for a person to do it, then it's wrong for a group of people to do it as well. The things you listed at Stately Matters are the things I do think the government should be doing. But even if I were to raise and maintain an all-volunteer army, I wouldn't be taking it by force from people.

<snip>

I am tired of wars. I am tired of our leaders coming to us and saying "here is why we have to go to war, and here is why it is righteous, and will be different this time from all those other times when it didn't work out". I see war as a lose-lose proposition. No side wins, they may lose less, but they still lose and government reframes it as winning because they need people to support the next war, and the next.... Without knowing what the dead could have accomplished it is impossible to really know what was lost. How many potentially great contributors have been lost to war? Why can't nations stop acting like little children and act more like adults? Why can't we talk to each other and be as aggressive at preventing war as we are at fighting wars?

Given what happened in WWII it is difficult to see how all war could be abolished. Would Ghandi's method have worked against the nazis? I think not given their willingness to kill all who opposed them. If we must have war than I think it should only be for the purpose of saving lives. Only if more people will be killed by not going to war than by going to war. Maybe that is naive. Maybe we have to fight for things like freedom. I don't have and don't know all the answers, but I know I am sick of war and historically it does not seem to worked out well. We need to somehow evolve beyond it before our technology has eached the point where we cause our own extinction, and I think that time is approaching faster than we might like to think.

Thou shall not kill. Some say that is a mistranslation and should be thou shall not murder. I wouldn't like to bet my soul on it. I think God is sad when any human kills another for any reason, even if they are killing inorder to save lives. Life is precious and we should not be so willing to waste it. Perhaps I am prejudiced because of recent events in my life. I hope I can live my life without ever having to kill another person.

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Sorry I guess I am rambling. I am in a strange mood after seeing so many young babies in church today.

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