Violent Extremism

The foundation of most of today's violent extremism is modern technology in the midst of ignorance, in combination with a variety of individual and cultural insanities as people become lost in the vast sea of information and misinformation of the internet.

The mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan were places of relatively stable, isolated cultures with little access to knowledge from the outside world. The Russian war in Afghanistan was a violent intrusion of first world technology that left a legacy of extreme poverty, a culture of war with lots of weaponry, large numbers of orphans, and a massive disruption of education for children in general. Into this void stepped the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

In Iraq, U.S. sponsorship of Saddam Hussein led to the Gulf War, which left poverty, lots of orphans, and seriously disrupted and distorted education for the children. The genocide on the road from Kuwait City left a generation without fathers. The second war in Iraq further disrupted the educational system and left the Iraqi people without effective government. Into this void stepped a variety of violent extremists.

In the U.S., three generations ago, the use of birth control became widespread. In its first generation, birth control spread predominately to educated liberals. 'Make love not war' was really about make love not babies. Birth control also spread amongst people with the wisdom and ability to raise the next generation of teachers. It did not spread widely amongst the poor, the illiterate, the ignorant, the unintelligent, the misguided, and the fearful. A generation later, this resulted in a serious imbalance in the wisdom of the community. In the third generation of birth control we see an already imbalanced educational system further displaced by virtual entertainment, and levels of effective education have dropped to the point where we see the rise of violent extremism in America. Most of it is simmering just below the surface.

When a sufficient percentage of the population have a lot of time to think, not much accurate knowledge to think about, and easy access to wide scale communication, false assumptions proliferate and collective insanities evolve. The behavior of the Radical Right is becoming increasingly similar to the behavior of the rest of the world's violent extremists; based in ignorance, false assumptions, fear, and misguided religion.

In Afghanistan and Iraq, a new generation is regaining access to knowledge, and a long, slow, and brutal rise to peace is beginning. In the U.S., however, levels of general intelligence and education are still falling, and violent ideologies are on the rise. Large groups of people are brandishing guns, talking revolution, and buying many billions of bullets. As their level of discontent rises due to the coming decline of the conventional economy, the occurrence of overt violence will correspondingly increase. Any severe disruption of their way of life could provide the fear that would trigger an attempt at violent revolution.

In the U.S. we've allowed a large number of ignorant people, many of whom firmly believe in revolution, to buy an immense amount of weaponry and

bullets, while our military is constrained elsewhere. This is not wise. We live in a country born of one of the very few violent revolutions in human history that did not end in disaster. The American Revolution succeeded because we had lots of resources, lots of room, a generally competent population, and the oppressing government was a month away. The assumption that we can do it again in the midst of all the challenges we face and responsibilities we bear is madness born of ignorance and fear.

We're about to get a revolution of some sort because our systems of government and money are not working, but a violent revolution of fools and madmen is certainly not the revolution we need.