

Why Corporal Pat Tillman Died

Corporal Pat Tillman, U.S. Army Ranger, died on a worthless piece of dirt that means nothing to him, his family, or his Nation. Yet, his death was a priceless sacrifice because he was fighting the right enemy in the good war. Pat Tillman died fighting Islamists in the opening battles of WW IV. Ranger Corporal Tillman is an early entry in what will be a long list of heroes during the coming decades of Global War On Islamist Terrorism (GWOT = WW IV). Pat Tillman died for the security and stability of our American Imperial Republic.

Most Americans, Liberals and Conservatives, hate the idea of American Empire. Yet, it's a statement of fact, not intent. Just like Bush I's New World Order described geo-political reality, not some nefarious scheme. The USA has imperial responsibilities without imperial ambitions. And, there're barbarians beyond our borders, and at home, threatening American Civilization at its foundation – ideas.

Face it, we're an Imperial Power because we're such a super power. The trick, and our future lies in its exercise, is how wisely and with what willpower shall we use and restrain our power. This shifting of the tectonic plates of geo-political power isn't a surprise.

I wrote a strategy paper while still on active duty in the Army in 1992 called "The Centurion Strategy". I said our strategic situation was the same as Rome after the fall of Carthage. No power could destroy us, but many threats remained. Furthermore, someday a 'Gandhi with Guns' would articulate grievances as powerful as Anti-Colonialism. But, this ideology would be violent. It would motivate the Have Nots against the Haves of the world. Frankly, I thought it might spring from Islam, but I didn't know that it would be so deeply intertwined with fundamentalist Islam.

I argued the need for a sufficient Army – of 48 to 60 brigades (today's Army is 33 active brigades) and vastly improved and expanding human intelligence (HUMINT) capabilities. My General Officer boss was polite and uninterested. Likewise, when I created the enemy for the Army After Next Wargame in 1997, I was told to tone down the Islamic nature of the transnational organization. So it goes. At least *Atlantic Monthly* published my letter explaining this research – as it was validated by Robert Kaplan's writings.

Later, I wrote that the greatest challenge was translating the essence of our national security – security and stability – into words worth dying for. Americans don't want a square foot of foreign dirt. Yet, they must send their sons to die there, if we're to be protected at home. Pre-emptive attacks and punitive expeditions are necessary for an Imperial power to stay on the strategic offense and survive. The strategic defense, like Rome's, might buy time, but it guarantees certain defeat from internal and external enemies.

Staying on the strategic offense for decades is a tough sell to insular America. The Bush administration can't do it, because they're wrong on the reality of transplanting democracy. Our democracy doesn't grow in the soil of foreign – non- (no, they're actually anti-) Judeo-Christian, capitalist, Anglo-Protestant ideas. The exceptions of Turkey and Japan prove the point. Liberal democracy was imposed by absolute power backed by total will which persevered for many years – and their democracies are uncomfortable to us and still tenuous.

The American Imperial Republic's strategic imperatives are

Hunt down the Islamists and destroy them in their snake pits.
Contain or destroy rogue powers with Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).
Encourage 'moderate' Islamic autocrats to contain the Islamists on their own.
Engage the barbarians in ideas – like religious tolerance... including the free expression of Christian evangelism, individual freedoms, and capitalism.
Maintain our Will to fight - and suffer - casualties for decades until all Islam has a Reformation and Enlightenment, converts or renounces violent Jihad.
Distribute our prosperity, our munificence, where there is security and stability with capitalist investment and development.
Only fight where we have to do it – like Iraq. Spend years suppressing local and foreign insurgents until the power we broke is replaced, stable and secure enough. Expect it to go to pieces again sooner or later.

What words make Pat Tillman's death in the Ranger Legion seem "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori." (sweet and honorable to die for country)? American Civilization?

Meanwhile, the American Imperial Republic's National imperative is to be the Republic of the Founder's vision. Godspeed Conservative victory in ACW II (Second Civil War).

James Atticus Bowden

James Atticus Bowden has specialized in inter-disciplinary long range 'futures' studies for over a decade. He is employed by a Defense Department contractor for the Future Combat Systems. He is a retired United States Army Infantry Officer. He is a 1972 graduate of the United States Military Academy and earned graduate degrees from Harvard University and Columbia University. He holds two elected Republican Party offices in Virginia.