

## A 911 Parable: The Wise Man and the Fool

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If over the past five years many of us in the United States have had the sense the inmates are running the assylum, it is because they are.

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In order to test this sense, I chose to consult a Chinese war manual written more than 2000 years ago, which at the time of writing had been traditional military wisdom compiled over many centuries previous and passed within the ranks of great military generals orally. The manual is \"Sun Tzu The Art of War\". According to the translators at Sonshi.com, itself a very educational web site, this translation is the most accurate of all to date. The following are excerpts from the first 3 very short chapters of 13 total. I highly recommend the book to all people whether hawks or doves. It is a standard against which we can measure the very words of leadership:

{bot\_wrgoogle} A general who listens to my calculations, and uses them, will surely

be victorious, keep him; a general who does not listen to my calculations, and does not use them, will surely be defeated, remove him.

When doing battle, seek a quick victory. A protracted battle will blunt weapons and dampen ardor. If the army is exposed to a prolonged campaign, the nation's resources will not suffice. When weapons are blunted, and ardor dampened, strength exhausted, and resources depleted, the neighboring rulers will take advantage of these complications. Then even the wisest of counsels would not be able to avert the consequences that must ensue. Therefore, I have heard of military campaigns that were clumsy but swift, but I have never seen military campaigns that were skilled but protracted. No nation has ever benefited from protracted warfare. Therefore, if one is not fully cognizant of the dangers inherent in doing battle, one cannot fully know the benefits of doing battle.

Those skilled in doing battle do not raise troops twice, or transport provisions three times. Take equipment from home but take provisions from the enemy. Then the army will be sufficient in both equipment and provisions. A nation can be impoverished by the army when it has to supply the army at great distances. When provisions are transported at a great distance, the citizens will be impoverished. Those in proximity to the army will sell goods at high prices. When goods are expensive, the citizens' wealth will be exhausted. When their wealth is exhausted, the peasantry will be afflicted with increased taxes. When all strength has been exhausted and resources depleted, all houses in the central plains utterly impoverished, seven-tenths of the citizens' wealth dissipated, the government's expenses from damaged chariots, worn-out horses, armor, helmets, arrows and crossbows, halberds and shields, draft oxen, and heavy supply wagons, will be six-tenths of its reserves. Therefore, a wise general will strive to feed off the enemy. One bushel of the enemy's provisions is worth twenty of our own.

Mix the captured chariots with our own, treat the captured soldiers well.

Generally in warfare, keeping a nation intact is best, destroying a nation second best; keeping an army intact is best, destroying an army second best.

Therefore, there are five factors of knowing who will win: One who knows when he can fight, and when he cannot fight, will be victorious; one who knows how to use both large and small forces will be victorious; one who knows how to unite upper and lower ranks in purpose will be victorious; one who is prepared and waits for the unprepared will be victorious; one whose general is able and is not interfered by the ruler will be victorious. These five factors are the way to know who will win. Therefore I say: One who knows the enemy and knows himself will not be in danger in a hundred battles. One who does not know the enemy but knows himself will sometimes win, sometimes lose. One who does not know the

enemy and does not know himself will be in danger in every battle. (End of Excerpts)

Five years past Osama and George to war did go. Both promising victory, not necessarily in their lifetimes. Based on ancient military wisdom, one follows the calculations of victory, one follows the calculations of defeat. One is wise. One is a fool. Can you now tell which is which? Then you can trust your sense the inmates are indeed running the assylum.

Ed Howes sought and found, knocked and entered. Now he sees things differently. To see more of what he sees, please visit <http://www.justanotherview.com> or read other of his essays here at Webraydian. Readers grow: wiser, better, faster.