

## **TROUBLE ON EARTH STREET**

by Jeff Newsome, California Law Enforcement Sergeant.  
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I am a simple country cop so I find it useful to reduce complex issues to their lowest common denominator and put things in easily grasped terms. Let's imagine you live in a neighborhood we'll call Earth Street. You have the largest house on the best end of the street. Immediate neighbors include the Brits, Germans, Canadians, French and a host of others with smaller up scale houses and immaculately manicured yards. At the other end of Earth Street is a ghetto. The Angolas, Zimbabwe's, North Koreans, and others live there. You send them a gift basket at Christmas, but otherwise pretty much stay out of there. You heard that the last owner of your house tried to go the that end of the street to help at the Somalia household and got his rear end kicked, so you are naturally cautious.

Also at that end of the street is Mr. Iraq. About ten years ago, Mr. Iraq went to his closest neighbor, Ms. Kuwait and demanded half her money. Ms. Kuwait had the money, but before she could fork it over, Mr. Iraq kicked in her door, raped her and her children, and looted her home. You and the other rich folks were so aghast, you banded together and went down to that end of the street. Well, Ms. Japan didn't go, but she did send some swell box lunches. Because there are no police on your street, you and the others had to throw Mr. Iraq out of Ms. Kuwait's home. Like all bullies, Mr. Iraq is a coward, and he wasted no time scurrying out the back door. You caught him on his doorstep and slapped him around. In the end, he signed a paper saying he would not hurt anybody again and gave you permission to come in his house to look around for weapons. He also said you could walk through his front and back yard anytime to make sure he was not warming up to kick in anybody else's door.

In the past ten years, Mr. Iraq has never honored your agreement. Soon after he signed the paper, he threw you out of his home. Every time you walk through his yard he throws rocks at you. All the neighbors, both rich and poor, have sent letters to Mr. Iraq asking him to behave. He has told you all to go to, well, you know where. Worst of all, you believe he is in league with some of the punks who knocked down your front wall and killed some of your children. Finally, exasperated beyond description, you say to yourself, "Someone has to stop this". You call a neighborhood watch meeting. The Brits, Aussies, and, surprisingly, the Spaniards think you are right and say so. Others are noncommittal. The Germans, Russians and French oppose your idea to march down there and clean Mr. Iraq's clock once and for all. You are pretty sure they are selling Mr. Iraq guns and buying his oil under the table, and are therefore opposed for the most bald faced and self centered of reasons. Whatever. Mr. French has lost every brawl he was in since some guy named Napoleon owned the place, so no big loss.

After many, many more meetings with the wealthy paper tigers you live beside, you are at the end of your rope. Someone has to show some spine or your neighborhood will never get any better. People at the other end of the block are doing awful things to each other and it seems to be getting worse. Almost everybody else seems satisfied if, as is the case with Mr. Iraq's place, all the raping, maiming, torture and murder of innocents stays within the walls of those impoverished homes. Amazingly, even twenty five percent of your family agree with that notion. While they deplore the abusive master of the Iraq household, they would not lift a finger to stop him. You find this aspect of your children disheartening but you respect their right to their own point of view. Their cowardice will not stop you however.

Because no sane person would tolerate the systematic abuse of a child and a clear and present danger to your own kids, even on lawless Earth Street, you find yourself once again walking cautiously into Mr. Iraq's front yard. You are by yourself except for Mr. Brit, your best friend and the only other guy around who seems willing to really hang his rear end out in the name of justice. You both know, come hell or high water, you are there to do the right thing. The terror will stop, and an example will be made.

Think about it folks. Would you tolerate Saddam Hussein living down the block from you?