

Is Another Civil War Really Possible?

The past few presidential elections—and the partisan divisions they highlight—have had the effect of raising talk of “America’s next civil war.”

There has been [chat](#)ter in California and Oregon about the possibility of secession.

Just yesterday, a CNN video was posted of a woman protesting Donald Trump’s election with the following rhetoric:

“People had to die for your freedom where we’re at today. We can’t just do rallies, we have to fight back,” the protester said. “There will be casualties on both sides. There will be, because people have to die to make a change in this world.”

But is another civil war in America really possible?

Most people quickly dismiss the idea because we don't have the same identity between battle lines and regional lines as in 1861. However, as David Kilcullen, former Chief Strategist in the State Department's Office of the Coordinator of Counterterrorism [recently told Cracked](#), that may not matter as much today:

"David Kilcullen doesn't expect a modern Civil War would be nearly that simple, 'One of the lessons we found in Iraq ... is it's actually a lot harder to fight a disunited and fragmented insurgency, than to fight a united one ... at one point when I was in Iraq I counted 170 groups that were fighting us.' Yeah, it turns out all those 'Join or Die' flags were lying to us. Uncle Sam is real good at throttling enemies. He's less skilled at Whack-A-Mole."

And as the same article explains, the nature of social media today now makes coordination between various regions much easier:

"Colonel Couvillon [a Marine Reserve officer who governed the Wasit province of Iraq after the start of the occupation] explained that on a tactical level, the existence of the Internet gave any insurgent group an incredible advantage. '...The lack of effective real time communication' was one of the hallmarks of old school guerilla groups, but 'today's social media' would make coordinating a guerrilla movement 'much easier.'"

Social media will also make demonizing the other side (or sides) much easier. Internet access alone has been found to increase partisan hostility. And the kind of bickering people do on the Internet tends to cause a feedback loop, which makes them even angrier."

Now, this is not to say that another civil war in America is likely. Personally—in spite of the increased gap between the

rich and poor, and the decline of the middle class—I think that most Americans today are still relatively comfortable. Take that comfort away, or severely threaten it (i.e., with another, greater recession), and maybe then there would be a shot at widespread violence. But most people still have too much to lose.

Also, too, I don't think there is the ideological clarity on either side of the political aisle right now that could catalyze violence. Before the election, it was predicted that the losing side would commence engaging in an internal civil war, and that seems to be [what's happening now](#) in the Democratic Party. With Trump's election, one could also claim the same thing is happening among Republicans.

What do you think? Is there a possible scenario that could lead America into a second civil war?