RIVERBEND: LEAVING HOME

Posted on May 8, 2007 by Eddie

Categories: Observations, Politics

Long time readers of this blog (if there is such a thing) will know that I've quoted from Riverbend from time to time. She is an Iraqi woman living in Baghdad who has had some trenchant things to say about the war and its aftermath. Lots of Riverbend's posts have moved me, none more so than the current one.

> *...On a personal note, we've finally decided to leave. I guess I've known we would be leaving for a while now. We discussed it as a family dozens of times. At first, someone would suggest it tentatively because, it was just a preposterous idea- leaving ones home and extended family- leaving ones country- and to what? To where?*
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> *Since last summer, we had been discussing it more and more. It was only a matter of time before what began as a suggestion- a last case scenario- soon took on solidity and developed into a plan. For the last couple of months, it has only been a matter of logistics. Plane or car? Jordan or Syria? Will we all leave together as a family? Or will it be only my brother and I at first?...*
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> *... On the one hand, I know that leaving the country and starting a new life somewhere else- as yet unknown- is such a huge thing that it should dwarf every trivial concern. The funny thing is that itâ€™s the trivial that seems to occupy our lives. We discuss whether to take photo albums or leave them behind. Can I bring along a stuffed animal I've had since the age of four? Is there room for E.'s guitar? What clothes do we take? Summer clothes? The winter clothes too? What about my books? What about the CDs, the baby pictures?*

Sue and I know what it's like to move from one country to another and I recognise the pain in the decisions that Riverbend is talking about. But our moves were always voluntarily, we didn't feel the need to flee anywhere because of violence and threats.

The links on Riverbend's blog are difficult, this particular post is April 26 2007 and entitled the Great Wall of Segregation. You might have to scroll to find it.