

Mythology and The Islamist State

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You can't believe a word the United States or its mainstream media say about the current conflict involving The Islamic State (ISIS).

You can't believe a word France or the United Kingdom say about ISIS.

You can't believe a word Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, or the United Arab Emirates say about ISIS. Can you say for sure which side of the conflict any of these mideast countries actually finances, arms, or trains, if in fact it's only one side? Why do they allow their angry young men to join Islamic extremists? Why has NATO-member Turkey allowed so many Islamic extremists to cross into Syria? Is Turkey more concerned with wiping out the Islamic State or the Kurds under siege by ISIS? Are these countries, or the Western powers, more concerned with overthrowing ISIS or overthrowing the Syrian government of Bashar al-Assad?

You can't believe the so-called "moderate" Syrian rebels. You can't even believe that they are moderate. They have their hands in everything, and everyone has their hands in them.

Iran, Hezbollah and Syria have been fighting ISIS or its precursors for years, but the United States refuses to join forces with any of these entities in the struggle. Nor does Washington impose sanctions on any country for supporting ISIS as it quickly did against Russia for its alleged role in Ukraine.

The groundwork for this awful mess of political and religious horrors sweeping through the Middle East was laid – laid deeply – by the United States during 35 years (1979-2014) of overthrowing the secular governments of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. (Adding to the mess in the same period we should not forget the US endlessly bombing Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen.) You cannot destroy modern, relatively developed and educated societies, ripping apart the social, political, economic and legal fabric, torturing thousands, killing millions, and expect civilization and human decency to survive.

Particularly crucial in this groundwork was the US decision to essentially throw 400,000 Iraqis with military training, including a full officer corps, out onto the streets of its cities, jobless. It was a formula for creating an insurgency. Humiliated and embittered, some of those men would later join various resistance groups operating against the American military occupation. It's safe to say that the majority of armored vehicles, weapons, ammunition, and explosives taking lives every minute in the Middle East are stamped "Made in USA".

And all of Washington's horses, all of Washington's men, cannot put this world back together again. The world now knows these places as "failed states".

Meanwhile, the United States bombs Syria daily, ostensibly because the US is at war with ISIS, but at the same time seriously damaging the oil capacity of the country (a third of the Syrian government's budget), the government's military capabilities, its infrastructure, even its granaries, taking countless innocent lives, destroying ancient sites; all making the recovery of an Assad-led Syria, or any Syria, highly unlikely. Washington is undoubtedly looking for ways to devastate Iran as well under the cover of fighting ISIS.

Nothing good can be said about this whole beastly situation. All the options are awful. All the participants, on all sides, are very suspect, if not criminally insane. It may be the end of the world. To which I say ... Good riddance. Nice try, humans; in fact, GREAT TRY ... but good riddance. ISIS ... Ebola ... Climate Change ... nuclear radiation ... The Empire ... Which one will do us in first? ... Have a nice day.

Is the world actually so much more evil and scary today than it was in the 1950s of my upbringing, for which I grow more nostalgic with each new horror? Or is it that the horrors of today are so much better reported, as we swim in a sea of news and videos?

After seeing several ISIS videos on the Internet, filled with the most disgusting scenes, particularly against women, my thought is this: Give them their own country; everyone who's in that place now who wants to leave, will be helped to do so; everyone from all over the world who wants to go there will be helped to get there. Once they're there, they can all do whatever they want, but they can't leave without going through a rigorous interview at a neighboring border to ascertain whether they've recovered their attachment to humanity. However, since very few women, presumably, would go there, the country would not last very long.

The Berlin Wall – Another Cold War Myth

November 9 will mark the 25th anniversary of the tearing down of the Berlin Wall. The extravagant hoopla began months ago in Berlin. In the United States we can expect all the Cold War clichés about The Free World vs. Communist Tyranny to be trotted out and the simple tale of how the wall came to be will be repeated: In 1961, the East Berlin communists built a wall to keep their oppressed citizens from escaping to West Berlin and freedom. Why? Because commies don't like people to be free, to learn the "truth". What other reason could there have been?

First of all, before the wall went up in 1961 thousands of East Germans had been commuting to the West for jobs each day and then returning to the East in the evening; many others went back and forth for shopping or other reasons. So they were clearly not being held in the East against their will. Why then was the wall built? There were two major reasons:

- 1) The West was bedeviling the East with a vigorous campaign of recruiting East German professionals and skilled workers, who had been educated at the expense of the Communist government. This eventually led to a serious labor and production crisis in the East. As one indication of this, the *New York Times* reported in 1963: "West Berlin suffered economically from the wall by the loss of about 60,000 skilled workmen who had commuted daily from their homes in East Berlin to their places of work in West Berlin."

It should be noted that in 1999, *USA Today* reported: "When the Berlin Wall crumbled [1989], East Germans imagined a life of freedom where consumer goods were abundant and hardships would fade. Ten years later, a remarkable 51% say they were happier with

communism.” Earlier polls would likely have shown even more than 51% expressing such a sentiment, for in the ten years many of those who remembered life in East Germany with some fondness had passed away; although even 10 years later, in 2009, the *Washington Post* could report: “Westerners [in Berlin] say they are fed up with the tendency of their eastern counterparts to wax nostalgic about communist times.”

It was in the post-unification period that a new Russian and eastern Europe proverb was born: “Everything the Communists said about Communism was a lie, but everything they said about capitalism turned out to be the truth.”

It should be further noted that the division of Germany into two states in 1949 – setting the stage for 40 years of Cold War hostility – was an American decision, not a Soviet one.

2) During the 1950s, American coldwarriors in West Germany instituted a crude campaign of sabotage and subversion against East Germany designed to throw that country’s economic and administrative machinery out of gear. The CIA and other US intelligence and military services recruited, equipped, trained and financed German activist groups and individuals, of West and East, to carry out actions which ran the spectrum from juvenile delinquency to terrorism; anything to make life difficult for the East German people and weaken their support of the government; anything to make the commies look bad.

It was a remarkable undertaking. The United States and its agents used explosives, arson, short circuiting, and other methods to damage power stations, shipyards, canals, docks, public buildings, gas stations, public transportation, bridges, etc; they derailed freight trains, seriously injuring workers; burned 12 cars of a freight train and destroyed air pressure hoses of others; used acids to damage vital factory machinery; put sand in the turbine of a factory, bringing it to a standstill; set fire to a tile-producing factory; promoted work slow-downs in factories; killed 7,000 cows of a co-operative dairy through poisoning; added soap to powdered milk destined for East German schools; were in possession, when arrested, of a large quantity of the poison *cantharidin* with which it was planned to produce poisoned cigarettes to kill leading East Germans; set off stink bombs to disrupt political meetings; attempted to disrupt the World Youth Festival in East Berlin by sending out forged invitations, false promises of free bed and board, false notices of cancellations, etc.; carried out attacks on participants with explosives, firebombs, and tire-puncturing equipment; forged and distributed large quantities of food ration cards to cause confusion, shortages and resentment; sent out forged tax notices and other government directives and documents to foster disorganization and inefficiency within industry and unions ... all this and much more.

The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, of Washington, DC, conservative coldwarriors, in one of their Cold War International History Project Working Papers (#58, p.9) states: “The open border in Berlin exposed the GDR [East Germany] to massive espionage and subversion and, as the two documents in the appendices show, its closure gave the Communist state greater security.”

Throughout the 1950s, the East Germans and the Soviet Union repeatedly lodged complaints with the Soviets’ erstwhile allies in the West and with the United Nations about specific sabotage and espionage activities and called for the closure of the offices in West Germany they claimed were responsible, and for which they provided names and addresses. Their complaints fell on deaf ears. Inevitably, the East Germans began to tighten up entry into the country from the West, leading eventually to the infamous wall. However, even

after the wall was built there was regular, albeit limited, legal emigration from east to west. In 1984, for example, East Germany allowed 40,000 people to leave. In 1985, East German newspapers claimed that more than 20,000 former citizens who had settled in the West wanted to return home after becoming disillusioned with the capitalist system. The West German government said that 14,300 East Germans had gone back over the previous 10 years.

Let's also not forget that while East Germany completely denazified, in West Germany for more than a decade after the war, the highest government positions in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches contained numerous former and "former" Nazis.

Finally, it must be remembered, that Eastern Europe became communist because Hitler, with the approval of the West, used it as a highway to reach the Soviet Union to wipe out Bolshevism forever, and that the Russians in World War I and II, lost about 40 million people because the West had used this highway to invade Russia. It should not be surprising that after World War II the Soviet Union was determined to close down the highway.

For an additional and very interesting view of the Berlin Wall anniversary, see the article "[Humpty Dumpty and the Fall of Berlin's Wall](#)" by Victor Grossman. Grossman (née Steve Wechsler) fled the US Army in Germany under pressure from McCarthy-era threats and became a journalist and author during his years in the (East) German Democratic Republic. He still lives in Berlin and mails out his "Berlin Bulletin" on German developments on an irregular basis. You can subscribe to it at wechsler_grossman@yahoo.de. His autobiography: "Crossing the River: a Memoir of the American Left, the Cold War and Life in East Germany" was published by University of Massachusetts Press. He claims to be the only person in the world with diplomas from both Harvard University and Karl Marx University in Leipzig.

Al Franken, the liberal's darling

I receive a continuous stream of emails from "progressive" organizations asking me to vote for Senator Franken or contribute to his re-election campaign this November, and I don't even live in Minnesota. Even if I could vote for him, I wouldn't. No one who was a supporter of the war in Iraq will get my vote unless they unequivocally renounce that support. And I don't mean renounce it like Hillary Clinton's nonsense about not having known enough.

Franken, the former Saturday Night Live comedian, would like you to believe that he's been against the war in Iraq since it began. But he went to Iraq at least four times to entertain the troops. Does that make sense? Why does the military bring entertainers to soldiers? To lift the soldiers' spirits of course. And why does the military want to lift the soldiers' spirits? Because a happier soldier does his job better. And what is the soldier's job? All the charming war crimes and human-rights violations that I and others have documented in great detail for many years. Doesn't Franken know what American soldiers do for a living?

A year after the US invasion in 2003, Franken criticized the Bush administration because they "failed to send enough troops to do the job right." What "job" did the man think the troops were sent to do that had not been performed to his standards because of lack of manpower? Did he want them to be more efficient at killing Iraqis who resisted the occupation? The volunteer American troops in Iraq did not even have the defense of having been drafted against their wishes.

Franken has been lifting soldiers' spirits for a long time. In 2009 he was honored by the

United Service Organization (USO) for his ten years of entertaining troops abroad. That includes Kosovo in 1999, as imperialist an occupation as you'll want to see. He called his USO experience "one of the best things I've ever done." Franken has also spoken at West Point (2005), encouraging the next generation of imperialist warriors. Is this a man to challenge the militarization of America at home and abroad? No more so than Barack Obama.

Tom Hayden wrote this about Franken in 2005 when Franken had a regular program on the Air America radio network: "Is anyone else disappointed with Al Franken's daily defense of the continued war in Iraq? Not Bush's version of the war, because that would undermine Air America's laudable purpose of rallying an anti-Bush audience. But, well, Kerry's version of the war, one that can be better managed and won, somehow with better body armor and fewer torture cells."

While in Iraq to entertain the troops, Franken declared that the Bush administration "blew the diplomacy so we didn't have a real coalition," then failed to send enough troops to do the job right. "Out of sheer hubris, they have put the lives of these guys in jeopardy."

Franken was implying that if the United States had been more successful in bribing and threatening other countries to lend their name to the coalition fighting the war in Iraq the United States would have had a better chance of WINNING the war.

Is this the sentiment of someone opposed to the war? Or in support of it? It is the mind of an American liberal in all its beautiful mushiness.

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