

Oh, Ye Masters of War: Marking 9/11 Again With A New Dragon To Slay

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Global Research, September 11, 2014

Region: [USA](#)
Theme: [Terrorism](#)

When will 9/9, the day of the release of the new iPhone and Watch replace 9/11 in the consciousness of Americans who put consumption way ahead of civil activism?

The wizards of Apple, who will soon have a device on the market to help you pay your bills, (and take a micro slice) must be aware that consumer borrowing has just seen its biggest hike since November 2001—just two months after the big event—and now stands at a whopping \$3.24 TRILLION. According to the Federal Reserve, there has been a hike of \$16.01 Billion in July alone.

When I made the film *In Debt We Trust* in 2006 about the immense debt burden of Americans, I didn't connect the phenomenon to hikes in federal borrowing to finance our other pre-occupation: war spending. Significantly, earlier in this same week, President Obama asked for another \$5 billion for a new costly counter-terrorism offensive to fight ISIS.

This came just a few weeks after the Administration said it didn't really consider ISIS a threat and had no strategy to fight it. Where might we ask was the National Security Agency with all its pervasive surveillance technology? Could they have missed its emergence because they are too busy sucking up metadata on our web and phone records?

Even superhawk Henry Kissinger downplayed ISIS, claiming Iran is a bigger threat—just before we learned that both Iran and the US are fighting ISIS, some say, together.

When did no threat become the biggest threat in the world?

Could the media have had anything to do with it? Kill a reporter or two and you are guaranteed massive publicity. These horror shows—and they are both, horrors and shows, rocketed the need for a global response of the kind Washington is now pushing up the escalation ladder.

For one thing, we now have a "terror threat" to be scared enough to throw money at, a response that delights the accountants in the military industrial complex who no longer fear their endless spigot of spending will be cut off or decreased.

So, after the next ritualistic 911eve speech to the nation, US bombers will be back in the air "degrading" ISIS and any civilians who happen to be too close for comfort. That old "bomb them back into the stone age" strategy that failed in Vietnam, failed in Afghanistan, and failed in Iraq as "Shock And Awe" is back because the Pentagon doesn't know what else to do.

Never mind that our dictatorial Royal Arab allies, with US help, have been funding their own

terrorist armies for “democracy” in Syria for years that have also failed miserably. What do you do when a “battle plan” fails? Try it again!

Loretta Napoleoni, the economist who has focused on financial frauds of all kinds has a brilliant book coming out on for Seven Stories Press to show us what we really have to fear.

“Many believe that the Islamic State, like al-Qaeda before it, wants to turn back the clock, and indeed in Western media Syrian and Iraqi refugees describe its rule in their countries as a sort of carbon copy of the Taliban regime,” she writes.

“...Paradoxically, to deem the IS essentially backward would be mistaken. Indeed, during the last few years the belief that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the group’s leader and the new Caliph, is a clone of Mullah Omar may well have led Western intelligence to undervalue him and his organization’s strength. ...What distinguishes the Islamic State from all other armed groups that predate it, including those active during the Cold War, and what accounts for its enormous successes, is its [modernity](#) and pragmatism.”

All we really know about their strategy is the tactic of beheading, a technique based on a desire to be feared because they know they will never be loved in the West. Western propagandists then echo and praise their propaganda including a savvy use of social media, (They rarely mention beheadings of dissidents by Saudia Arabia!)

Who is behind disseminating these beheading videos that has aroused Obama to “act.” The controversial investigative reporter, Wayne Madson, charges it is not a news organization, but a right-wing propaganda group, writing (and I have seen this no where else) “

“The most recent video images of orange jump suit-clad U.S. journalist Steven Sotloff being beheaded were released by the Search for International Terrorist Entities or “SITE,” which also initially discovered and released the video beheading of U.S. journalist James Foley of GlobalPost.com.

As with the Foley video, U.S. intelligence initially refrained from validating the authenticity of the Sotloff video ...Obviously, the CIA and other U.S. intelligence agencies are well-versed on SITE’s Israeli pedigree. As previously revealed by WMR, SITE is a Washington, DC-based research institute with links to Israeli right-wing Likud elements and Mossad.”

Hmmm! (Remember that the government did not do much, as their families have pointed out, to save them.)

True or not, it is irrefutable that the State Department has now been circulating its own video response to ISIS as a slick media war plays out on the Internet Each side is using these horrific images for their own reasons, one to boast, the other to roast. We are using the deaths of journalists as a pretext for more deaths.

Writes Napoleoni in the intro to the book, now on the SevenStories.com website, “No matter how barbarous their actions are or have been, their status as threats to national security, as warriors, will be beyond doubt.

As the Islamic State’s war of conquest progresses, it is becoming clear that since 9/11 the business of Islamist terrorism has been getting stronger instead of weaker — to the extent that now it has morphed into a state — by simply keeping abreast with a fast-changing

world in which propaganda and technology play an increasingly vital role. The same cannot be said for the forces engaged in stopping it from spreading.”

Perhaps that’s why new polls show that fear of ISIS is rising, in essence giving the Administration a blank check, the blank check it wanted all along. Whether they can be successful remains to be seen.

Speaking of business, did you know, or have you forgotten, the costs of 9/11? The New York Times reported that Al Qaeda spent only \$400,000 for its attack while the US has spent, in response, an estimated \$3.3 TRILLION. Don’t scoff, spending on that scale keeps the Pentagon and our economy humming by creating jobs and weapons, but not benefiting, of course, the 2,996 Americans who perished.

Sam Stein reports on Huff Post, “From 9/11 To Osama Bin Laden’s Death, Congress Spent \$1.28 Trillion In War On Terror.”

It is almost incalculable when you add it all up. The website of The Institute for Analysis of Global Security lists the costs in part:

- The destruction of major buildings in the World Trade Center with a replacement cost of from \$3 billion to \$4.5 billion.
- Damage to a portion of the Pentagon: up to \$1 billion.
- Cleanup costs: \$1.3 billion.
- Property and infrastructure damage: \$10 billion to \$13 billion.
- Federal emergency funds (heightened airport security, sky marshals, government takeover of airport security, retrofitting aircraft with anti-terrorist devices, cost of operations in Afghanistan): \$40 billion.
- Direct job losses amounted to 83,000, with \$17 billion in lost wages.
- The amount of damaged or unrecoverable property hit \$21.8 billion.
- Losses to the city of New York (lost jobs, lost taxes, damage to infrastructure, cleaning): \$95 billion.
- Losses to the insurance industry: \$40 billion.

And, on, and on. When you add it all up and then factor in what money did not go for—schools, healthcare, poverty alleviation etc etc—you realize how devastating it’s been. We do not have many bragging rights in this exchange, in the sense that with GITMO and our deadly torture program, we have tried to outdo our enemies.

The Financial Crisis, from which we have still not recovered, hit six years after the towers went down. It was a self-afflicted wound for which few were punished. (Remember the heavily-hyped and costly effort back then to get Wall Street reopen for business? Did It! And then what?)

As 911 makes its annual calendar turn, let’s understand who has benefited from the Terror wars and who hasn’t, and why our economy and political system needs external enemies to

fear, lest an angry public take a closer look at growing domestic economic inequality and its beneficiaries. No wonder Washington wants ISIS as the focus. And how do you think they present us to their supporters?

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