

The Islamic State (ISIS), The Boogeymen of Our Times: Justifying US Hegemony and “Humanitarian Warfare”

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When faced with the prospect of analyzing the current rise of ISIS, or the [misinformed](#) albeit widely accepted and perceived threat of Russia, or that of [Iran](#), it is imperative that we keep in mind a few key points.

One of these is the US foreign policy strategy of containment, or more aptly, the strategy of limiting the power of anyone who challenges the United States’ hegemony on the global chessboard. The memo depicting this strategy was penned under the supervision of influential neo-conservative statesmen Paul Wolfowitz in 1992, thus dubbed the “Wolfowitz doctrine,” and was not intended for public release. I would argue strongly that the evidence of the past decades suggests that this is still the dominant foreign policy doctrine that has been followed under both the Bush and Obama administrations.

The preeminent strategy goal [outlined therein](#) is to “establish and protect a new order,” that accounts for “the interests of the advanced industrial nations to discourage them from challenging our leadership or seeking to overturn the established political and economic order.” The goal is to protect a world order in which the United States is the supreme power, and to stop any nation who seeks to challenge this dominance and overturn America’s preeminent position.

The memo states that the US, accompanying the role of global hegemon, should engage in “convincing potential competitors that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests,” and this requires that we, “endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to general global power.”

Key considerations are therefore that the US should prevent any power from dominating a region whose resources would generate for them global power in order to prevent a challenge to America’s leadership, and that this should be done even if these nations are protecting legitimate interests.

Given that it is true that America’s foremost goals are to protect its status on top of the global order, and also to halt any challenger or competitor (one may argue this point, or the relevance of the Wolfowitz doctrine today, but I think the US’ recent aggressive actions towards Russia, the continual expansion of NATO bases and their encirclement of Russia, coupled with the observations outlined in the Wolfowitz doctrine that, “Russia will remain the strongest military power in Eurasia and the only power in the world with the capability of

destroying the United States,” provides stark evidence against this counter-argument.

Not to mention the imperialistic military adventurism aimed at controlling regions “whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to general global power,” such as was done in Iraq, Libya, and Syria, all of which attacked challengers to US hegemony and fostered US consolidation of Middle-Eastern oil resources.).

It is therefore important that we understand something that was eloquently, and correctly I feel, stated by the former National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter Zbigniew Brzezinski, one of Obama’s main foreign policy advisors, a man whom Obama praised as being “[one of our most outstanding thinkers](#).” Brzezinski stated that, “the pursuit of power is not a goal that commands popular passion,” and therefore, in order to pursue this goal of power acquisition there is necessity for “conditions of a sudden threat or challenge to the public’s sense of domestic well-being.”⁽¹⁾

Therefore, in order to protect this new order and to discourage challenges to US leadership, an outside threat is necessitated in order to foster domestic popular support for the pursuit of power which the general public are usually apathetic towards.

This point is further illustrated by the esteemed former Professor of the Science of Government at Harvard University Samuel P. Huntington, who described the policy the US used during the Cold War in which military interventions were legitimated by creating the false impression that the US was defending against the Soviet Union, “you may have to sell [intervention or other military action] in such a way as to create the misimpression that it is the Soviet Union that you are fighting. This is what the United States has been doing ever since the Truman Doctrine.”⁽²⁾

It should be noted that the Truman Doctrine was enunciated back in March of 1947.

The US has been misrepresenting its pursuit of global preeminence and containment of challengers by exploiting fake external threats since as far back as 1947; the misimpression of an external threat has been a key US foreign policy doctrine for over half a century.

Enter the threat of ISIS, whom now even Vice President Joe Biden [concedes](#) that America’s allies,

“The Saudis, the Emiratis... were so determined to take down (Syrian President Bashar) Assad and have a proxy Sunni-Shia war, [that] they poured hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of tons of weapons into anyone who would fight against Assad. Except that the people who were being supplied were (Jabhat) al Nusra and al Qaida, and the extremist elements of jihadis coming from other parts of the world.”

Biden also quoted Turkey’s President Erdogan as saying, in reference to accusations that Turkey had allowed thousands of extremists jihadists, including those associated with the Islamic State, through its borders in order to fight against Syrian President Bashar al Assad, that “You were right. We let too many people through. So we’re trying to seal the border.”

Former CIA Station Chief Graham Fuller recently [elucidated further](#) on the US’ role alongside its allies in generating the conditions for ISIS’ rise, “I think the United States is one of the

key creators of this organization. The United States did not plan the formation of ISIS, but its destructive interventions in the Middle East and the war in Iraq were the basic causes of the birth of ISIS.”

Britain’s leading national security scholar Dr. Nafeez Ahmed further clarifies the United States’ role in [actively coordinating the financing and arms shipments](#) to the most virulent elements of the Syrian opposition, including al Qaeda linked groups al Nusra and ISIS, citing leaked Stratfor documents, Rand Corporation reports, mainstream media journalism, and Israeli intelligence as evidence.

The Islamic State, home-grown through US foreign policy actions aimed at consolidating control of regions/resources conducive to generate global power (Iraq) and containing any power that challenges US leadership (Syria), accounts now for the modern “threat or challenge to the public’s sense of domestic well-being,” that will “sell intervention or military action,” abroad in order to “protect a new order,” and discourage others from “challenging our leadership or seeking to overturn the established political or economic order.”

A direct external threat is necessitated in order to justify and sell US military aggression abroad, and the so called “Global War on Terror,” a perpetual military doctrine aimed at fostering continual and never-ending war abroad, continues to deliver on this necessity.

Critics of this analysis will argue that Obama is sincere in his stated goal of dismantling and disintegrating the extremist terrorist organization, however as leading Middle-Eastern correspondent Patrick Cockburn has [pointed out](#),

“The US campaign against ISIS is weakened not so much by lack [of] ‘boots on the ground’, but by seeking to hold at arm’s-length those who are actually fighting Isis while embracing those such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey who are not. There is a similar situation in Iraq, where most of the fighting against Isis is by the Shia militias from which the US keeps its distance.”

Cockburn is referring to the US’ non-strategy of fighting ISIS by embracing key creators of the terrorist group such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey, while distancing itself from those who are and have been fighting against ISIS, such as Syria, Hezbollah, Iran, and Russia. “President Obama promised less than a month ago “to degrade and destroy” the fundamentalists with air power, but Isis is still expanding and winning victories,” Cockburn concludes.

Further skepticism of Obama’s stated goals are posited by former British Army and Metropolitan Police counter terrorism intelligence officer [Charles Shoebridge](#),

“For the US and UK, to find an answer as to a way out of the mess that is now the Islamic State one must first ask whether for their foreign policy it’s actually a mess at all. Certainly ISIS remains a potent and useful tool for key US and UK allies such as Saudi Arabia, and perhaps also Israel, which seek the destabilisation of enemies Syria and Iraq, as well as a means for applying pressure on more friendly states such as Lebanon and Jordan. It’s understandable therefore that many question the seriousness of US and UK resolve to destroy ISIS, particularly given that for years their horrific crimes against civilians, particularly minorities, in Syria were expediently largely unmentioned by the West’s governments or media.”

ISIS has also allowed for other stated US foreign policy goals in the region: mainly the breaking up of Iraq into separate factions under the control of pro-US forces, and the justification of a long-term US military presence in the region. According to US private intelligence firm [Stratfor](#) in late 2002, then Vice President Dick Cheney and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz had co-authored a scheme which depicted the strategic advantages of an Iraq partition focused on US control of oil:

“After eliminating Iraq as a sovereign state, there would be no fear that one day an anti-American government would come to power in Baghdad, as the capital would be in Amman [Jordan]. Current and potential US geopolitical foes Iran, Saudi Arabia and Syria would be isolated from each other, with big chunks of land between them under control of the pro-US forces.

Equally important, Washington would be able to justify its long-term and heavy military presence in the region as necessary for the defense of a young new state asking for US protection – and to secure the stability of oil markets and supplies. That in turn would help the United States gain direct control of Iraqi oil and replace Saudi oil in case of conflict with Riyadh.”

“The expansion of the ‘Islamic State’ has provided a pretext for the fundamental contours of this scenario to unfold, with the US and British looking to re-establish a long-term military presence in Iraq in the name of the “defense of a young new state,” Dr. [Nafeez Ahmed](#) determines.

Given this, coupled with Vice President Biden’s and former CIA Station Chief Graham Fuller’s concessions that US policy in Syria of arming rebel oppositions was one of the lead causes of the rise of ISIS, Obama’s tactic of continuing this disastrous policy by funneling more aid to non-existent moderate rebels, utilizing key al Qaeda-linked extremist funder Saudi Arabia to train such an opposition, further belies the stated claims of the Obama administration of acting to destroy the ISIS.

When analyzing these policies we should understand that the pursuit of power and the containment of challengers to America’s global preeminence are key US foreign policy goals, and that the pursuit of these goals has been justified through misrepresenting foreign threats to the US homeland since as far back as 1947; and perhaps most importantly, we should recognize that it is

“only in folktales and children’s stories and the pages of journals of intellectual opinion that power is used wisely and well to eradicate evil in the world, the real world teaches quite different lessons, and it takes willful and dedicated ignorance to fail to perceive them.”

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Notes:

1.) Zbigniew Brzezinski, “The Eurasian Chessboard,” *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy And It’s Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York, 1997), pg. 35-36.

2.) Samuel Huntington, *Vietnam Reappraised*, 6.1 INT'L SECURITY, 14 (Summer 1981).

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