

## FIVE CRITICAL FAILURES OF PRESIDENT OBAMA'S WAR POLICY

A peace dove's 2008 election victory over a hawkish Republican successor to George W. Bush represented a pivotal point in the 9/11 War when the United States was saved from Al Qaeda machinations. A substantial restoration of global faith in America's good intentions helped to reject the characterization of the superpower as a "Great Satan Empire". Beyond restoring the reputation of the United States, the election of President Obama severely hampered Al Qaeda's efforts to goad U.S. militarism into triggering the climax of the doomsday plot initiated on 9/11. The fundamentally dovish disposition of the war policy executed by the Obama administration has solidified this victory over Al Qaeda's campaign to escalate the 9/11 War into a doomsday event. With an unquestioned commitment to concluding rapidly the Bush-era wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, in step with a refurbished diplomatic campaign to win the battle for Muslim hearts and minds while broadly restoring U.S. alliances with countries around the world, President Obama has laid a foundation to rebuild America's post-9/11 campaign in the wake of the country's most disastrous presidency. By dispelling Al Qaeda's messianic characterization of Bin Laden's millennialist war, Barack Obama has protected the world from the Great Extinction plot that propels the 9/11 War.

As with any attempt to salvage a war after nearly a decade of catastrophic mismanagement, the about-face in the 9/11 War ordered by President Obama produced substantial

collateral damage. Absent a diplomatic miracle encapsulated in an information operation targeting Al Qaeda, the Obama administration pursued a war policy fundamentally sound but nevertheless structurally flawed. Five critical deficits in the strategy have significantly damaged America's campaign against Bin Laden's global insurgency.

*1. The Obama administration has continued and even intensified some of the most unpopular policies of the Bush doctrine.*

President Obama has instituted an amalgam of dovish and hawkish war policies. Dovish elements of the Obama war policy have included

- Rapid conclusion of the two primary war theaters
- Broadly based diplomatic outreach to the Muslim world
- Rebuilding America's role as a trustworthy mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- Rejection of widely detested Bush-era policies that exempted America from the U.N. charter's prohibition of preemptive warfare, nuclear arms nonproliferation pacts and the Geneva Conventions

Juxtaposed to these laudable efforts at defeating Al Qaeda

on the ideological front of the 9/11 War, an escalation of some U.S. belligerencies has included

- Increased drone-bombing campaigns in Northwest Pakistan, Yemen and parts of North Africa
- Intensification of the U.S. diplomatic standoff and covert warfare operations targeting Iran
- Perpetuation of the unresolved status of Guantanamo Bay and rendition detainees

These belligerencies have countermanded the fundamental principal of the Petraeus doctrine on counterinsurgency that famously quelled the Al Qaeda-incited civil war in Iraq by forging amity and partnerships with the local populations. By amplifying certain aspects of the U.S. military campaign in the Muslim world, the Obama administration has partially counteracted its attempt to defeat Al Qaeda in the central battle for hearts and minds. Only a concerted ideological campaign can eliminate the Al Qaeda threat by inciting mutinous insurrection against its leadership.

*2. President Obama has validated Al Qaeda's casus belli by apologizing for U.S. conduct in the 9/11 War.*

The act of acknowledging the legitimacy of Muslim grievances against U.S. war policy does represent a critical foundation for diminishing the ideological appeal of Al Qaeda's anti-American insurgency. However, assigning

blame to the United States undercuts this initiative by corroborating Bin Laden's case for war. An honest and effective narrative of the 9/11 War must acknowledge the transgressions of U.S. war policy while implicating Al Qaeda itself as the party responsible for manufacturing these grievances by rigging U.S. presidential contests in 2000 and 2004 in favor of a war hawk that it willfully proceeded to goad into a doomsday conflict.

*3. The Obama administration has misrepresented the Al Qaeda syndicate as nearly defeated.*

Although traditional doctrine does champion the use of war propaganda that characterizes the enemy as weak and declining, evidence to the contrary can discredit the propaganda organ as a reliable source of information on the conflict. While President Obama has highlighted the elimination of Bin Laden and some of his army's top commanders as evidence of Al Qaeda's decline, a series of well documented facts contradict this claim. The marginalization of Bin Laden before his death, the continued reign of Al Qaeda's supreme commander Ayman al-Zawahiri, and the organization's regenerative command structure designed to replenish inevitably assassinated leaders all refute the contention that the Obama administration has neutralized the Pakistani-based high command. Further refutation of this boastful contention exists in the classification of the Bin Laden syndicate "as strong as ever" by the 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate on Al Qaeda and the subsequent rise of Al Qaeda affiliates throughout the Muslim world, from the Afghan

Taliban and Pakistani Taliban to Pakistani-based Lashkar-e-Taiba to Al Qaeda branches in Yemen, Somalia, Algeria, Tunisia, Nigeria, Libya, Syria, Lebanon, Gaza, Egypt and elsewhere.

By validating the image of Al Qaeda as the underdog in the 9/11 War President Obama has helped to vivify another element of the Sunni Mahdi prophecy, diminish Al Qaeda's responsibility for continuing to provoke the 9/11 War, discredit the Obama administration's veracity, and allow Al Qaeda to proceed with its doomsday agenda largely unfettered by local Muslim populations in its safe havens. Contrarily, recognizing Al Qaeda's role in perpetuating the 9/11 War and its ambition to trigger a doomsday event holds the potential to inspire mutiny inside the syndicate that peacefully terminates Bin Laden's millennialist conflict.

*4. President Obama has falsely represented the Arab Spring as a defeat for Al Qaeda.*

Perhaps the most dramatic instance of President Obama discrediting his veracity with false claims about Al Qaeda's imminent demise has involved his administration's characterization of the 2011 Arab Spring revolution as a strategic defeat for the Bin Laden syndicate. The toppling of Western-backed dictatorship's throughout the heartland of the Muslim world has eliminated Al Qaeda's principal enemies in the region and fomented political chaos ideally suited for the rise of well-organized Islamist political parties and safe havens for the Bin Laden network. Al

Qaeda's dream of a pan-Islamic empire actually required the Arab Spring to occur, topple the Western-backed regimes and germinate popular anti-Western sentiment amidst the failures of fledgling democracies and the eruptions of Western-backed civil wars. Two decades of political messages (collected in such books as Bruce Lawrence's *Messages to the World* and Raymond Ibrahim's *The Al Qaeda Reader*) attest to the fact that the Bin Laden syndicate has long aimed to inspire mass Islamic revolution to topple the Western-backed governments of the Muslim world. The triggering of anti-American protests throughout the Muslim world by Al Qaeda-orchestrated violence against U.S. embassies in September 2012 demonstrated the boon to Al Qaeda from the Arab Spring. An honest assessment of the Arab Spring that traces the revolution's roots back to an Al Qaeda plot to provoke the U.S. invasion of Iraq has the potential to neutralize the syndicate's bid to hijack the mass movement by exposing the apocalyptic cult's machination to vivify doomsday prophecy.

##### *5. Bin Laden's assassination benefited Al Qaeda.*

Quite apart from a victory for the United States, the assassination of Osama bin Laden helped to fulfill an Al Qaeda plot aimed at duping followers into believing the cult leader to be the awaited Sunni Muslim Messiah. Critical elements of the Sunni Mahdi prophecy vivified by the Navy Seals operation included

- The apparent martyrdom of the vanguard for armed resistance against the alleged "Great Satan Empire"
- The assassination of the Muslim leader by a head wound inflicted by soldiers of the alleged "Great Satan Empire"
- His death in battle soon before the climax of the war tentatively scheduled to occur on December 21, 2012

The Sunni Mahdi's martyrdom at the hands of the "Great Satan Empire" represents a defining criteria for the prophesied leader's identification. Beyond helping to fulfill the Islamic apocalyptic prophecy driving the 9/11 War, the Bin Laden raid served to consolidate the power of Al Qaeda's operational commander, Ayman al-Zawahiri, by ending an eight-year schism between he and the marginalized Bin Laden. Strengthening Al Qaeda's operational command while vivifying a critical event of the Sunni Mahdi myth, Bin Laden's assassination marked a distinct setback in America's effort to defeat his doomsday cult and global insurgency. Contrarily, an information operation that highlights the Bin Laden assassination as an Al Qaeda charade to vivify the Sunni Mahdi prophecy holds the promise of discrediting this alleged prophetic fulfillment along with Bin Laden's righteous identity as a martyr.

## *Invalid Criticisms of the Obama War Policy*

While overlooking some of President Obama's mistakes, partisan propaganda has fixated on a series of invalid criticisms designed to discredit the Democratic president's record in prelude to the next election.

*1. The relatively dovish approach of the Obama administration benefits Al Qaeda by rallying supporters who would otherwise decline to join Bin Laden's insurgency against perceived Western imperialism based on a fear of U.S. military reprisals.*

The assertion that the American superpower is a "paper tiger" has served as a basis for Al Qaeda propaganda that seeks to frame Bin Laden's war as a defensive insurgency. However, insurgencies do not arise as a reaction to passivity, but rather to military transgressions. Beyond the traditional dynamics behind insurgencies, Al Qaeda's secret offensive goal of inciting a Great Extinction event as a prelude to world domination by nuclear terrorism requires military reprisals in order to vivify prophesied battlefields and portray the United States as the "Great Satan Empire". Al Qaeda recruitment has historically multiplied after U.S. military reprisals and dwindled when the superpower appeared less belligerent.

Contrary to the Republican talking point, a dovish U.S. commander-in-chief represents a disaster for Al Qaeda's efforts at both recruiting supporters and provoking the superpower. After eight years devoid of a single serious



plot by the Al Qaeda leadership to assassinate President Bush, the onset of Barack Obama's presidency persuaded Osama bin Laden to advocate the assassination of the U.S. president in order to prompt the succession of Joe Biden as a commander-in-chief less diplomatically adept and more belligerently inclined. The "paper tiger" argument appears persuasively discredited in the context of George W. Bush's service as Al Qaeda's greatest recruitment tool who single-handedly inflated a marginalized doomsday cult into a global insurgency. The Bin Laden syndicate's inclination to empower American war hawks exhibited in its biennial pattern of October Surprise operations has conclusively revealed the importance of U.S. military aggression to Al Qaeda strategy.

*2. During the weeks before his reelection, President Obama failed to publicize the fact that Al Qaeda orchestrated the three-pronged attack targeting U.S. diplomatic missions in the Arab world on the 9/11 anniversary.*

Rather than deviating from accepted counterterrorism doctrine, this nebulous characterization of the directed mob violence and guerrilla ambushes against U.S. targets reflected standard practice in deflating the short-term terror value of Al Qaeda attacks. Whenever the vague presentation of a successful terrorist operation allows authorities to overlook or otherwise mute its stated political objective in public discourse, even just for the short term, officials reliably seize the opportunity to deny the terrorists the ability to influence politics by manipulating public

opinion. From Madrid to London to a host of other major international terrorist attacks by Al Qaeda, authorities have always tried to delay attribution to the syndicate's Pakistani-based leadership. Although the reality of the high command's role in these incidents eventually emerged in the public consciousness, the temporary omission of this fact by counterterrorism officials helped to diminish the potential of the successful guerrilla operations to guide the course of the 9/11 War with short-term psychological shocks to the electorate. In the most extreme case of an October Surprise before a national election, the act of delaying official confirmation of the stated political agenda for the terrorist attack until after the election can represent a vital defense against the psychological operation.

Although the Obama administration did not emphasize Al Qaeda's case for war against America when framing the public's conception of the three-pronged embassy attacks in September 2012, the oval office did parrot Al Qaeda propaganda justifying the attacks as retaliation for an anti-Islam Youtube upload made in America by an obscure filmmaker. In helping to portray the terrorist operation as a popular Muslim response to another in a series of grievous transgressions by the superpower, the Obama administration has unwittingly validated Al Qaeda's image as a righteous Muslim insurgency supported by much of the Islamic world. Perhaps a more effective explanation for the embassy attacks could have defused the short-term terror value of the strikes without corroborating Al Qaeda's case for war or discrediting the veracity of President Obama's public statements. Identifying the assaults on U.S. targets

as preliminary operations for the syndicate's October Surprise in 2012 could have neutralized the psychological operation by exposing the incident as a ruse to rig the imminent U.S. presidential election in favor of Republican war hawks inclined to launch excessive military reprisals in response to terrorist attacks. The Republican-led congressional inquiry into the Benghazi assault that figures to alter President Obama's cabinet appointments in such a way as to increase the Republican control of the Senate would quickly lose momentum if the investigation concluded that Al Qaeda has sought to rig every U.S. election since the millennium in favor of Republicans.

*3. President Obama failed to provide a sufficiently strong U.S. military force to guard the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya from the Al Qaeda attack on the 9/11 anniversary of 2012.*

Ironically, this criticism that dominated the Republican-backed Fox News coverage of the 2012 presidential campaign precisely fulfilled Al Qaeda's objective for the psychological operation executed in the weeks before Voting Day. By swaying a critical fraction of undecided voters to cast their vote as a mandate for a stronger military response to the Al Qaeda threat, the preliminary October Surprise operations targeting U.S. diplomatic missions in Libya, Egypt and Yemen served to sway the election in favor of the more hawkish candidate better suited to facilitate Al Qaeda's covert strategy for escalating the 9/11 War into a doomsday event. However, the Obama administration's public refusal to acknowledge Al Qaeda's

direction of the attacks blunted the force of the operation, an effect compounded by the syndicate's inability to hit the U.S. homeland with a follow-up strike in mid October. This confluence of events successfully diminished the ability of the October Surprise scheme to dominate the swing vote for the 2012 election.

Aside from the boon to the Bin Laden syndicate arising from this criticism of President Obama as a weak commander-in-chief, the logic of the critical analysis itself appears unsound. The political chaos in the Middle East generated by the Iraq invasion has mushroomed into the Arab Spring and today represents an impossible military challenge to U.S. targets in the region that no amount of armed security can overcome. Considering the depth of anti-American sentiment generated in the Muslim world during the Bush years as well as the prospect of the Bin Laden syndicate hijacking the Arab Spring, it is a miracle that only four died in the concerted Al Qaeda attack on three U.S. diplomatic missions. Certainly, the need to establish a formal diplomatic presence in the Arab Spring nations that does not appear to be a series of U.S. military bases must be balanced with the need to protect U.S. diplomats. But any solution to this tenuous balance will cause collateral damage either to the security of the diplomats or America's reputation -- that is the nature of the diplomatic dilemma presented by the Arab Spring.

During the Clinton and Bush years, major Al Qaeda attacks outside of war zones demonstrated the continued threat to U.S. diplomatic missions across the Muslim world.

- The August 1998 twin bombings of U.S. embassies in east Africa
- The December 2004 guerrilla assault on the U.S. consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- The July 2008 guerrilla assault on the U.S. consulate in Istanbul
- The September 2008 guerrilla assault on the U.S. embassy in Yemen

The vulnerability of U.S. diplomatic stations in the Middle East has figured as a perennial vulnerability in American security that has only intensified with the political unrest arising from the Arab Spring.

Even prior to the 2011 revolution, military disasters like the U.S. marine barracks bombing in 1983 Beirut and the Black Hawk Down incident in 1993 Mogadishu demonstrated that military reinforcements to protect U.S. targets from guerrilla attacks in an urban setting can easily magnify the U.S. death toll to catastrophic proportions and enhance anti-American sentiment in the Muslim world.

- If President Obama had ordered U.S. security reinforcements to defend U.S. diplomatic personnel in Benghazi, how would Fox News have reacted if the event turned into another Black Hawk Down and a large number of the American troops along

with Libyan civilians were killed in addition to the four American diplomats?

- In the historical context of President Reagan's bombing of Tripoli and the ensuing two-decade U.S. standoff with Qaddafi's Libya, what if the inevitable civilian casualties from a U.S. military assault on urban targets incited a surge of anti-American sentiment that helped to transform Libya -- with its pivotal position in the Arab world and unsecured armaments -- into a far greater safe haven for Al Qaeda?
- Prior to the attack, how would the act of converting the country's U.S. diplomatic missions into U.S. military bases have augmented anti-American sentiment in Libya?
- In the regional context of the Arab Spring, would a U.S. military retaliation inside an Arab nation for an assault on a U.S. consulate have augmented the anti-American manifestations of the mass revolution and Al Qaeda's prospects of hijacking the movement -- much like President Clinton's retaliation on the Sudan and Afghanistan for the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies generated a surge of popular support for the then-obscure apocalyptic cult?

The Republican-generated inquiry into the Obama administration's response to the Libyan attack has

conspicuously overlooked these glaring questions, as well as the role of Libyan security forces in finally repelling the assault.

Considering the predominant source for criticism of the U.S. security failure on 9/11 in 2012, the attempt to disparage President Obama appears very disingenuous. For over a decade the Fox News network has avoided serious criticism of the Republican administration responsible for the security failure of the 9/11 attack. While a flood of intelligence on an imminent mega-terrorist attack by Al Qaeda forced U.S. counterterrorism officials to cancel summer vacations for their offices in August 2001, President Bush vacationed for virtually the entire month. Early in his vacation on August 6, 2001, he received a daily presidential intelligence brief entitled "Bin Laden Determined To Strike Inside the United States" that highlighted Bin Laden plots to hijack commercial airliners and strike known Al Qaeda targets inside New York City. Bush continued his vacation for three more weeks and ordered no substantial counterterrorism measures to defend against the threat. He even refused to convene a meeting of his principal cabinet advisors on the subject of Al Qaeda for the first eight months of his presidency. The eventual meeting on September 4, 2001, the only such conference that Bush ordered before 9/11, had to wait until after his vacation. Bush's predecessor, on the other hand, regarded the Al Qaeda threat so seriously that he held Principal meetings on the subject on a biweekly basis. In the 2012 context of a Republican presidential candidate who did not view Al Qaeda as America's chief foreign adversary, public

scrutiny should focus not on four Americans killed amidst the Al Qaeda-influenced Arab Spring in Benghazi, but on the incredible incompetence behind the U.S. security failure responsible for the death toll of 3,000 in an unprecedented attack on the U.S. homeland.

Despite a series of missteps in the Obama war policy, the foundation it constructed on the ideological battlefield for terminating the 9/11 War represents a preferable alternative to the Republican leadership's hawkish proposal to escalate the conflict with a reversion to the Bush doctrine.

President Obama's diplomatic outreach to the Muslim world and his commitment to conclude the 9/11 War rapidly signify historic achievements in the fundamental contest for hearts and minds. From this launching pad built by President Obama, an information operation targeting Al Qaeda holds the potential to collapse both the terrorist syndicate and the greater movement in a rapidly developing mutinous insurrection against the Pakistani-based leadership.