

By Debra Sweet

Dangerous arguments and actions came this week from both President Obama, who plans to increase airstrikes on Iraq & Syria and announced drone surveillance (as if that has not been happening for years), and from John McCain, leader of the “US has to get back in Iraq” cabal. **“Limited” airstrikes**

by the world's most powerful military combined with U.S. more troops going into this extremely volatile region

**will**

**not**

**bring peace, stability, or safety.**

If you want to shake your head and give up on the situation as beyond understanding — *don't!* There are some basic concepts that are not that difficult to grasp.

If you view the region through the eyes of the U.S. empire, with its national interest as primary, it's immediately clear that the lives and cultures of people living in that region are of concern only in relation to strengthening, or at least holding onto, U.S. domination of the region. The rulers of the U.S. are not starting from the needs of the people in those countries; “human rights” are a public relations explanation used to shut critical voices down.

Larry Everest looks at the turmoil of this moment in [Iraq Background: What's Behind the Escalating Sectarian War and U.S. Intervention?](#)

*“It could develop into a major turning point—fracturing or breaking national boundaries and ruling structures which have existed for nearly 100 years, since World War 1. These structures and relations have been key components of 70 years of U.S. domination of the Middle East, which has been crucial to the functioning and power of U.S. imperialism globally and domestically.”*

Further, Larry explains the roots of ISIS, and that **everything the U.S. has done in the region with its unjust occupations has** [strengthened ISIS.](#)

The U.S. government has finally ditched Iraq's brutal President Maliki, whom it supported through a decade of occupation, in favor of someone more openly compliant with U.S. interests. Surprisingly (or not) the U.S. seems to have made up with Syrian President Assad, their old ally in the global war on terror's secret rendition program who in 2013 they came close to intervening to overthrow. They're now actively sharing intelligence with the aim of saving Syria for Assad, as opposed to another illegitimate force, ISIS.

Glenn Greenwald captures this sordid history, and the contradictions the U.S. is up against, in

[The Fun of Empire: Fighting on All Sides of a War in Syria](#)

:

*“Nobody disputes the brutality and extremism of ISIS, but that is a completely different question from whether the U.S. should take military action against it. To begin with, the U.S. not only ignores, but [actively supports](#) , all sorts of [brutal and extreme parties](#) in the region.”*

Vijay Prashad provided an [informed overview on Democracy Now](#) about the contradictions the U.S. is running into, and takes us back to a key point:

***The Islamic State has its roots fundamentally in the destruction of the Iraqi state by the American invasion in 2003. You know, it's very easy to destroy a state. It took the Iraqi people over a hundred years to build institutions; that was destroyed by the Americans in an afternoon. Once you destroy the state, you create a vacuum.***

[Protest the US Bombing Iraq](#)

[Download fliers and posters](#) to get the message out that war on Iraq has never helped the people of Iraq, and won't help Syria.