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From [Huffington Post](#) | Original Article



The administration's response to the conjunction of this weekend's People's Climate March and the International Day of Peace?

- 1) Bomb Syria the following day, to wrest control of the oil from ISIS which gained its foothold directly in the region through the U.S., Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and Jordan funding and arming ISIS' predecessors in Syria.
- 2) Send the president to UN General Assembly, where he will inevitably give a rousing speech about climate and peace, while the destruction of the environment and the shattering of world peace is on full display 5,000 miles away.

Nothing better illustrates the bankruptcy of the Obama administration's foreign policy than funding groups that turn on the U.S. again and again, a neo-con fueled cycle of profits for war

makers and destruction of ever-shifting "enemies."

The fact can't be refuted: ISIS was born of Western intervention in Iraq and covert action in Syria.

This Frankenstein-like experiment of arming the alleged freedom-seeking Syrian opposition created the monster that roams the region. ISIS and the U.S. have a curious relationship -- mortal enemies that, at the same time, benefit from some of the same events:

a) Ousting former Iraqi President Nouri al Maliki for his refusal to consent to the continued presence of U.S. troops in his country.

b) Regime change in Syria.

c) Arming the Kurds so they can separate from Iraq, a preliminary move to partitioning Iraq.

What a coincidence for war-profiteering neo-cons and the war industry, which has seen its stock rise since last week's congressional vote to fund the rapid expansion of war. We have met the enemy and he isn't only ISIS, he *is us*.

Phase two of the war against Syria is the introduction of 5,000 "moderate" mercenaries (as opposed to immoderate ones), who were trained in Saudi Arabia, the hotbed of Wahhabism, at an initial installment cost of \$15 billion. These new "moderates" will replace the old "moderates," who became ISIS, just in time for Halloween.

The administration, in the belief that you can buy, rent, or lease friends where they otherwise do not exist, labor under the vain assumption that our newfound comrades-in-arms will remain in place during their three-year employment period, ignoring the inevitability that those "friends" you hire today could be firing at you tomorrow.

One wonders if Saudi training of these moderate mercenaries will include methods of beheading which were popularized by the Saudi government long before their ISIS progeny took up the grisly practice.

The U.S. is being played.

Qatar and Saudi Arabia can now overtly join with the U.S. in striking Syria, after they have been covertly attempting for years to take down the last secular state in the region. We are now advancing the agenda of the actual Islamic States -- Saudi Arabia and Qatar -- to fight the ersatz Islamic State of ISIS.

Now U.S. bombs and missiles might inadvertently "make the world safe" for theocracy rather than democracy. Today we read reports that Israel has shot down a Syrian warplane, indicating the terrible possibility of a wider regional conflict.

What does this have to do with the security of the 50 States United? Nothing!

Last week Congress acted prematurely in funding a war without following the proscriptions of Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. (The day of the vote, [I urged Congress](#) to resist this dangerous and misguided legislation.) But even while the funding was given, the explicit authorization to go to war was not. To authorize a war, Congress must vote for war. It has not done that yet.

To sell its case, the administration is borrowing from the fear mongering tactics of the Bush administration. ISIS poses no direct, immediate threat to the United States -- [The White House even said so yesterday](#), just hours before bombing commenced - yet we are being sold make-believe about ISIS sleeper cells.

This attack on Syria, under the guise of striking ISIS, is by definition, a war of aggression. It is a

violation of international law. It could lead to crimes against humanity and the deaths of untold numbers of innocent civilians. No amount of public relations or smooth talking can change that.

And yes, members of this Democratic administration, including the president who executed this policy, must be held accountable by the International Criminal Court and by the American people, who he serves.

But as we know, war is a powerful and cynical PR tactic. I expect the bombing of Syria will momentarily boost the White House's popularity with self-serving heroic accounts of damage inflicted upon ISIS (and the U.S. equipment they use). Stuffing the November ballot box with bombs and missiles may even help the Democratic Party retain the Senate.

But after the election the voters will discover that the president played into the hands of extremists, hurt civilians, and embroiled our country deep into another conflict in the Middle East.

There were alternatives. The U.S. and the international community could have contained and shrunk ISIS by cutting off its funds and its revenue from sale of oil on the black market. We could have looked to strike a deal with Syria and Iran.

In foreign policy, the administration has failed. Congress has failed. Both the Democratic and Republican Parties have passed the national checkbook to their patrons in the war contracting business. And passed the bill to future generations.

The American people, who in 2008 searched for something redemptive after years of George W. Bush's war, realize in 2014 that hope and change was but a clever slogan. It was used to gain power and to keep it through promoting fear, war, the growth of the National Security state, and an autumnal bonfire of countless billions of tax dollars which fall like leaves from money trees on the banks of the Potomac.