



CONSIDER THE “OBAMA DOCTRINE” - IF THAT AIN’T SCARY, NOTHIN’ IS!

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First, a Brief Look at the Bush Doctrine

We hear so often the term “doctrine” with a link to our Presidents. There was the **“Bush Doctrine,”** a phrase coined by Charles Krauthammer. **This generally described the “post 9/11” policy of acting proactively, preemptively, and unilaterally in the international security interest of the United States.** As with other “doctrines,” the term is seldom if ever coined by the individual to which it is associated. This type of “doctrine” generally refers to dealing in the international arena regarding national defense, trade, and other relationships.

The Obama Doctrine

In the case of Barack Obama, the **“Obama Doctrine”** (sometimes referred to herein as “OD”) has evolved following numerous Obama statements and actions including: **propensity to apologize to other countries; inclination to “speak loudly and carry a small stick”; policy of disarmament as a gesture of “good will” and “good example”; and what I would call a reaction to anything that smacks of “aggressive U.S. leadership in the world.”** In other words, Barack Obama sincerely seems to prioritize our “world citizenship” status above our

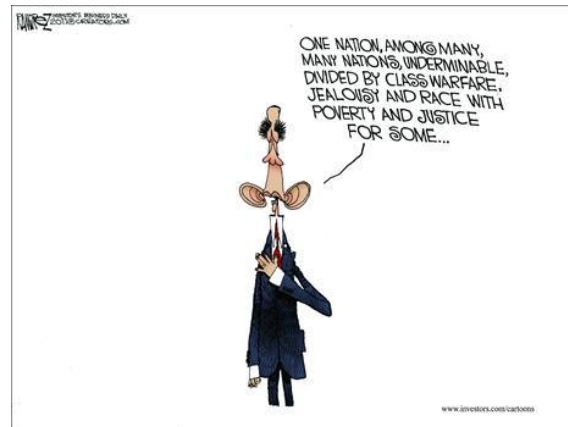
once-valued military and economic “world leadership” capabilities.



Describing the Obama Doctrine in the words of more scholarly pundits, some prefer to refer to it as a group of “unifying principles” or “general style.” I guess that is less ominous for those in Obama’s “camp.” Anyway, OD has been described by political experts, from both ends of the spectrum, as:

- Collaborative in approach and multi-lateral in developing policies;
- Problem solving through negotiation rather than influence or intimidation;
- Humble and restrained;
- All international partners occupy places at the same level of importance;
- Non-confrontational;
- Exercising “soft power” rather than more traditional “hard power”;
- “Leading from behind”;
- Shying away from an “out front” leadership role;
- Very inclined to defer to the United Nations, or global government, as almost an ultimate authority;
- Comfortable looking for and promoting “moral equivalence,” i.e.

- the basic issues on all sides of the question have relatively equal merits;
- Less inclined to be laying claim to America’s “greatness” or in continuing the traditional U.S. responsibilities of leadership in the international arena.



This attitude and approach appeals to many!

So What’s the Problem?

Well, just to name a few:

- Optimal national defense must come from a sense of pride in our country and a recognition of uniqueness or exceptionalism – otherwise, why bother?!
- I believe the entire Obama Doctrine smacks of being satisfied with mediocrity and a lack of confidence in America and its people.
- Without the very important traditional “attitude” of America, combined with pride, I believe we will experience a very real and increasing “creeping mediocrity.”
- Many consider OD to be emboldening to our enemies.
- Many feel OD displays a lack of commitment and of weakness, which invites aggression.
- Many consider OD to have a general “tenor” of diminishing the traditional relationship with our allies.
- Many feel that we have regrettably distanced ourselves from Israel, our traditional ally.
- OD has resulted in the Palestinians effectively “poking a stick in our eye” at the U.N., while exhibiting confidence the U.S. won’t be able to (or won’t really want to) muster serious opposition to consideration of a Palestinian state.
- Many feel the international implications of OD to be creating a more dangerous place for the U.S. and for other “friends of freedom.”

- Our international policies have, in the opinion of many, deteriorated into a meaningless never-ending display of rhetoric, and little else.
- Failure to “step up” and support the popular uprising in Iran was one of the last chances we will have to effectively “stand athwart” the ever expanding movement toward Iran dominating the Arab world and the Mideast.
- And Libya, Egypt, Syria, and



And the Real “Biggy” Is?!

The Obama Doctrine, in my opinion, by necessity relies on the “opposition” (Obama might call this “our negotiation partner”) doing the right thing for the right reasons – and it’s naïve to think that’s likely, or even possible in the world we live in! Remember “Trust but Verify”? That has no place in OD!

Mallard Fillmore by Bruce Tinsley

