
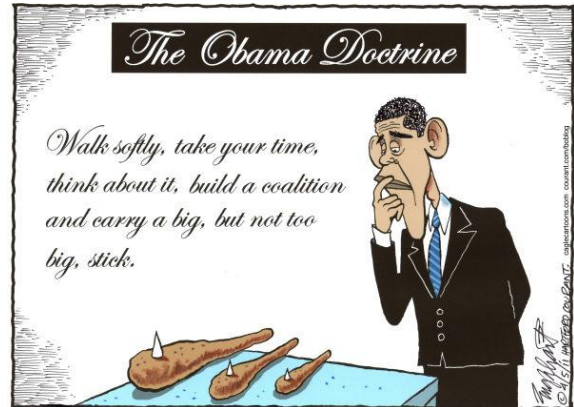


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 **THE OBAMA DOCTRINE:**
Leading from (the) behind ☹
- or perhaps
from the closet!
- Part One -



Stephen L. Bakke  July 15, 2014

Hey SB! You asked me to define the Obama Doctrine! Well, I'll give you some hints, but I'm not going to do all your work for you! As you develop this topic, remember these "Bamyisms": 1) Obama doesn't believe that America has the moral right to be the leader of the world. 2) Majority rules in his world view - can you say U.N. and NATO? 3) He has a handbook of moral equivalencies which he keeps real handy. 4) As a result of #3, he sees no clear cut right or wrong in international activities and relations across cultural lines. 5) He believes in the naïve goodness of human nature - very unlike our founders' highly informed collective opinion. 6) Withdraw is the rule and he isn't talking about birth control! Now, with those points provided to you as "raw material" up front, you come up with what comes out the other end as a foreign policy structure? - Stefano Bachovich - obscure curmudgeon and wise political pundit - a prolific purveyor of opinions on just about everything - SB's primary "go to guy."

Some schooling on presidential foreign policy "doctrines."

Over the life of the United States, there have been a number of presidents that had a certain foreign policy approach identified with their presidency and went so far as to have it labeled a "doctrine." Here is a list of some more noted doctrines:

Monroe Doctrine (1823) - Drafted by John Quincy Adams and delivered in a State of the Union Address, it gave a serious "hands off" warning to any country intending to colonize or re-colonize the Latin American republics. The "Americas" were to be considered generally "off limits" to all countries entertaining expanding their empires in this direction.

Truman Doctrine (1947) - This is the first incarnation of a modern "doctrine." In an effort to counter Soviet aggression and contain other attempts at subjugation, President Truman expressed the following: "I believe it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." Historians often consider this doctrine the origin of the "Cold War."

Carter Doctrine (1980) – During his State of the Union Address, President Carter announced that the United States would defend its national interests in the Persian Gulf, using military force if necessary, to safeguard those interests. This was a remarkable turnaround for a man who came into office believing that his own good will and friendly intentions would lead America and the world into harmony and peaceful co-existence. He left office just shy of a year later.

Reagan Doctrine (1981) – President Reagan effectively committed the U.S. to support anti-communist resistance movements. Remember the “peace through strength” declarations and the “evil empire speech. “Overt and unashamed” were the adjectives he used as he proclaimed our obligation to make this commitment. He wanted to roll back the frontiers of the Soviet Empire. He felt that the West could win the struggle, if they had the stomach to fully engage. For the most part it worked. He brought the Cold War mostly to conclusion through the breakup of the Soviet Union and armament agreements. These efforts included covert operations which led to some uncomfortable situations – witness the Iran-Contra affair.

Bush Doctrine (2001) – This doctrine was not stated in a speech or formal document – rather it is a compilation of his Administration practices and their arguments defending related actions. Charles Krauthammer is laying claim to first using and defining the “Bush Doctrine.” This doctrine is that the United States has the right to proactively intervene in foreign countries and depose regimes that pose a threat to our country, and to advance freedom and democracy in those areas. This was intended to be preemptive and preventative interventions.

And here comes Obama, with his “coefficient of caution” (I made that term up).

In an attempt at establishing a bold doctrine Obama stated he would authorize military force if American core interests were threatened. This has been described as a dramatic statement of the obvious. Absence of that as a policy would be a violation of his Constitutional responsibilities as President. He also set out to reset our international relationships because, in his opinion, Bush had driven our reputation into a toilet somewhere.

Obama started by “dissing” Israel repeatedly! He agreed with Russia to “step aside” in our defense agreements with other nearby countries – witness the unilateral and surprise withdrawal from missile defense agreements with Poland, Czech Republic, and Hungary. He insulted Britain by rudely returning a portrait of Winston Churchill – It had been a gift from Tony Blair to George W. Bush. Has there been well conceived policies guiding our conduct in Iraq and Afganistan? And we saw his vascillating, tentative, uncertain, inconsistent, petulant and confusing conduct regarding the import events in Libya, Egypt, and Syria – and how about Korea and China. **So, what type of doctrine can be inferred from all of this? STAY TUNED!**

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Stay tuned for Part Two!