

🇺🇸 **OBAMA'S FOREIGN  
POLICY:  
Counterintuitive,  
and  
DANGEROUS!  
Part Two**

By Stephen L. Bakke 🇺🇸 September 6, 2014



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*In Part One I enumerated some foreign policy decisions for which Obama has received the most consistent criticism, in particular I emphasized how his reticence has led to a vacuum in international leadership! Here I attempt to explain why Obama has chosen this pathway.*

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*Hey SB! Given the current status of U.S. foreign policy, either Obama has been terribly confused and frozen by fear, or his actions reflect a philosophy and thought process that has developed from his education and from individuals who influenced his world view. I have a hunch it's the latter, SB! Show me what you can do with that theory! – Stefano Bachovich – obscure curmudgeon and wise political pundit – a prolific purveyor of opinions on just about everything – SB's primary "go to guy."*

### **What in Obama's background and world view might have led to his reticence?**

Following Stefano's lead, I will give the President the benefit of the doubt and NOT simply attribute his attitude to incompetence, confusion and indecisiveness. My opinions on this developed gradually from studying curiously compatible observations by several historians, analysts and commentators including: Victor Davis Hanson, Jonah Goldberg, Star Parker, Mona Charen, Jay Cost, Michael Barone – and of course, good ol' Stefano. My question is "**What is Obama's thought process and why?**" Here is one of Obama's favorite quotes – this from Martin Luther King, Jr.:

*The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.*

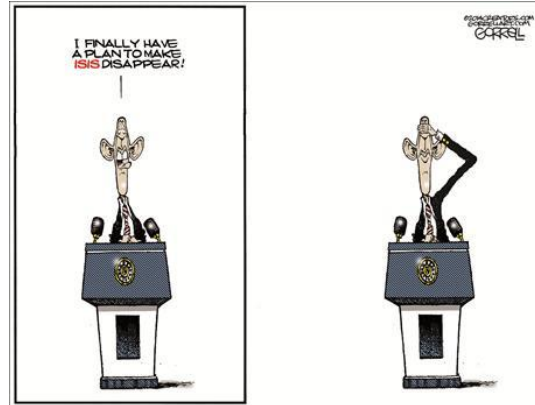
Obama seems to lean on the MLK quote in arriving at what Jonah Goldberg believes are two of Obama's favorite themes: 1) the idea that in the end the good guys win simply because they are good, and that 2) world opinion is a wellspring of great moral authority. **Obama therefore would not feel in any hurry to make these huge international policy decisions because "everything will work out in the end" – the Jihadists will ultimately fail. The mere passage of time drives positive moral evolution.** Why should Obama rush into a decision if this evil will ultimately fail?

A very compatible theory (from Star Parker) explains some of Obama's actions as the result of his "zero sum" world view. Therefore any gain for the rich must come from losses by the poor. In international policy terms this translates into a characteristic described by Tom Friedman (NYT),

about an interview he had with the President: “Obama made clear that he is only going to involve America more deeply in places like the Middle East to the extent that different communities there agree to an inclusive politics of no victor / no vanquished ..... we (America) will never realize our full potential unless our two parties adopt the same outlook we’re asking of Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds or Israelis and Palestinians: No victor, no vanquished and work together.” Also consider the following quote from a TV interview – it fits with Parker’s theory:

*I’m always worried about using the word “victory,” because, you know, it invokes this notion of Emperor Hirohito coming down and signing a surrender to MacArthur.*

Historian Victor Davis Hanson picks up on the MLK quote in describing Obama’s propensity to believe that history is following a predetermined course, as if things always get better on their own – that evil will ultimately fail – he permits a benevolent history to manage events. Hanson rebukes Obama’s motivations by stating “(Martin Luther) King used the metaphor as an incentive to act, not as reassurance that matters will follow an inevitably positive course.”



Notice how the MLK quote ties into the four bullet points I highlighted below! It’s easy to see how someone with Obama’s attitude could appear to be **passive, unconcerned, and disengaged.**

- *There’s no hurry to make policy decisions because “everything will work out in the end”!*
- *The proper goal in international relations is to have no victor / no vanquished!*
- *Evil will ultimately fail – if just left to its own devices!*
- *Leave it to a benevolent history to manage events.*

### Has Obama made the U.S. largely irrelevant in international affairs?

Don’t you think our enemies, when contemplating evil mischief, should at least consider the potential extent of the U.S. approval or disapproval, and its possible actions? It used to be that way! I contend that it no longer is. **Deterrence, embodied in the U.S., seems to be missing! Isn’t it important, in times of severe international crisis, that our enemies be terrified of us and not laughing at us?** It most certainly is!



*Disputes over honor or from fear do not always lead to war. Something else is needed – an absence of **deterrence** ..... (It is hard) for sophisticated liberal thinkers to admit that after centuries of civilized life, we still have no better way of preventing Neanderthal wars than by reminding Neanderthals that we have the far bigger club – and will use it if provoked.* – Historian Victor Davis Hanson

Obama’s foreign policy has been described as “ideal because it’s slow, cautious, collaborative and successful.” It’s anyone’s right to reject any attempt by the U.S. to assume a role of international

leadership – one that includes tough resolve, and a clear willingness to exert our influence in ways other than endless diplomacy. **But it's not fair or accurate to insinuate, at the same time, that Obama's passive foreign policy fits anything close to a classical definition of success!**

Since Stefano inspired me to this direction of analysis, I wonder if he agrees with what I presented. A couple of thoughtful and relevant quotes follow:

*Si vis pacem, para bellum – If you wish for peace, prepare for war!* – Latin phrase, with translation

*It is a principle incorporated into the settled policy of America, that as peace is better than war, war is better than tribute.* – James Madison, letter to the Dey of Algiers, 1816

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*Hey SB! Not a bad analysis! The domestic and international pressure that has been on Obama the last two weeks has been immense. Almost everyone, other than his most radical left wing base, has recognized the necessity of defeating this new face of evil within the extreme Islamist movement. Finally, Obama has spoken up! – Thank God! I predict he will claim the delay was to ensure an international coalition. But that's a huge spin! The coalition was there all along waiting for him to speak up! – Stefano Bachovich* – obscure curmudgeon and wise political pundit – a prolific purveyor of opinions on just about everything – SB's primary “go to guy.”