

LETTER TO THE EDITOR **SLOW, CAUTIOUS, AND** **COLLABORATIVE: NOT** **SUCCESSFUL IN RECENT** **FOREIGN POLICY!**



By Stephen L. Bakke  August 5, 2014

Here's what provoked me:

I read a "letter to the editor" which took issue with those who claim there is liberal media coddling of President Obama. As evidence the writer listed three recently published opinions, which he labeled as conservative, by well known nationally syndicated columnists. Two were clearly very factual articles and labeled as conservative because of their criticism of Obama. OK, I'll give him that claim of conservatism. But the third, by Steve Chapman, had me puzzled – it was very much in defense of Obama and I had to point this out to the world!

Here's my response:

Slow, Cautious, and Collaborative: Not Successful in Recent Foreign Policy!

John Sherman's letter of 8-5-14, "Critics aplenty, but Obama does all right," caught my attention for two reasons. First, his unexpected interpretation of Steve Chapman's 7-31 opinion and second, his surprising definition of an ideal foreign policy.

Sherman represents Chapman's article as an example of biased conservative opinions published in the media. He's attempting to refute the claim that liberal media coddles the President by ignoring conservative opinions. Sherman describes Chapman's defense as merely a "tempered view" from a critical conservative.

Sherman misses the fact that Chapman's article is an enthusiastic defense of Obama! Contrary to Sherman's insinuation, Chapman's message is not conservative and actually claims that Obama is innocent of causing strife in the world – that Obama could have done nothing to solve it. In fact, Chapman concluded: "If there are two ways to get a dismal result, maybe we should choose the one that doesn't cost us thousands of lives or billions of dollars."

Next, Sherman defines the Obama's foreign policy as being an ideal because it's "slow, cautious, collaborative and successful." It would have been fair for him to personally 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. It's totally fair for him to reject that role in our world. But it's not fair or accurate to insinuate that Obama's passive foreign policy fits anything close to a classical definition of success.

