

A Late Summer Hiatus

We may not be filing our usual allotment of stories through the end of August due to vacations. So we invite readers to look back at earlier Consortiumnews.com stories, including those highlighted in our latest [“In Case You Missed”](#) posting for July.

In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories in July focused on the ongoing crisis in Ukraine (especially the shoot-down of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17), the Israeli war on Gaza, and the real history of Thomas Jefferson.

[“The Risk of a Ukraine Bloodbath”](#) by Ray McGovern, July 2, 2014

[“Itching for a Genocide”](#) by Robert Parry, July 3, 2014

[“Thomas Jefferson: America’s Founding Sociopath”](#) by Robert Parry, July 4, 2014

[“An Insider’s View of Nixon’s ‘Treason’”](#) by Robert Parry, July 5, 2014

[“NYT Dishes More Ukraine Propaganda”](#) by Robert Parry, July 6, 2014

[“Escalating Domestic Warfare”](#) by Brian J. Trautman, July 8, 2014

[“Plunging toward Armageddon in Israel”](#) by William R. Polk, July 9, 2014

[“NYT Protects the Fogh Machine”](#) by Robert Parry, July 9, 2014

[“The US Persecution of Sami al-Arian”](#) by Lawrence Davidson, July 10, 2014

[“The Brutal Failure of Zionism”](#) by John V. Whitbeck, July 11, 2014

[“No Lessons Learned at the NYT”](#) by Robert Parry, July 11, 2014

[“The Back Story of ‘Citizen Koch’”](#) by Jim DiEugenio, July 14, 2014

[“The Human Price of Neocon Havoc”](#) by Robert Parry, July 17, 2014

[“What Is Israel’s End Game in Gaza?”](#) by Dennis Kucinich, July 18, 2014

[“Facts Needed on Malaysian Plane Shoot-down”](#) by Ray McGovern, July 18, 2014

[“Airline Horror Spurs New Rush to Judgment”](#) by Robert Parry, July 19, 2014

["What Did Spy Satellites See in Ukraine?"](#) by Robert Parry, July 20, 2014

["Kerry's Latest Reckless Rush to Judgment"](#) by Robert Parry, July 21, 2014

["Kerry's Poor Record for Veracity"](#) by Ray McGovern, July 22, 2014

["The Kurds Eye Long-Desired State"](#) by Andres Cala, July 22, 2014

["The Mystery of a Ukrainian Army 'Defector'"](#) by Robert Parry, July 22, 2014

["Hiding War Crimes Behind a Question"](#) by Daniel C. Maguire, July 24, 2014

["US Complicity in Israeli War Crimes"](#) by Paul Findley, July 25, 2014

["Blaming Russia as Flat Fact"](#) by Robert Parry, July 27, 2014

["Obama Should Release Ukraine Evidence"](#) by Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, July 29, 2014

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Forgetting Cheney's Legacy of Lies

The neocons aided by their "liberal interventionist" allies and the U.S. mainstream media are building new "group thinks" on the Middle East and Ukraine with many Americans having forgotten how they were duped into war a dozen years ago, writes ex-CIA analyst Ray McGovern.

By Ray McGovern

As the world marks the centennial of World War I, the guns of August are again being oiled by comfortable politicians and the fawning corporate media, both bereft of any sense of history. And that includes much more recent history, namely the deceitful campaign that ended up bringing destruction to Iraq and widened conflict throughout the Middle East. That campaign went into high gear 12 years ago with a preview in late August before the full-scale rollout in September.

On Aug. 26, 2002, Vice President Dick Cheney who remains something of a folk

hero on Fox News formally launched the lies leading to the U.S.-UK attack on Iraq seven months later. And on Aug. 30, 2013, another late-summer pitch was made for war on Syria, which came within 20 hours of a major U.S. aerial assault after Secretary of State John Kerry claimed falsely no fewer than 35 times to “know” that the Syrian government was responsible for using sarin nerve gas in an attack outside Damascus on Aug. 21, 2013.

Unlike 12 years ago, however, when the Pentagon was run by Field Marshal Donald Rumsfeld and the military martinets who called themselves generals but danced to his tune, war with Syria was averted last year when Joint Chiefs Chairman Martin Dempsey talked sense into President Barack Obama who was on the verge of bending to the Cheney-esque hawks still perched atop the U.S. State Department.

Now, in late August 2014, as if to mark Cheney’s day of deceit a dozen Augusts ago, the Washington Post editorialized: “Stepping back into the fray: Stopping the Islamic State will require ‘boots on the ground.’” As is its custom, the Post offered no enlightenment on what motivates jihadists to do unspeakably evil things in other words, “why they hate us” or why Gulf allies of the U.S. fund them with such largesse.

Sadly, the thinking of Establishment Washington is no more refined today that it was on Jan. 8, 2010, when the late Helen Thomas asked then-White House counter-terrorism czar and now CIA Director John Brennan why the “underwear bomber,” who on Dec. 25, 2009, tried to down a U.S. passenger plane, did what he did. [See Consortiumnews.com’s [“Answering Helen Thomas on Why”](#).]

Hardwired to Hate

Thomas: “And what is the motivation? We never hear what you find out on why.”

Brennan: “Al Qaeda is an organization that is dedicated to murder and wanton slaughter of innocents They attract individuals like Mr. Abdulmutallab and use them for these types of attacks. He was motivated by a sense of religious sort of drive. Unfortunately, al Qaeda has perverted Islam, and has corrupted the concept of Islam, so that he’s (sic) able to attract these individuals. But al Qaeda has the agenda of destruction and death.”

Thomas: “And you’re saying it’s because of religion?”

Brennan: “I’m saying it’s because of an al Qaeda organization that used the banner of religion in a very perverse and corrupt way.”

Thomas: “Why?”

Brennan: “I think this is a, long issue, but al Qaeda is just determined to

carry out attacks here against the homeland.”

Thomas: “But you haven’t explained why.”

Neither has President Obama or anyone else in the U.S. political/media hierarchy. All the American public gets is boilerplate about how al-Qaeda evildoers are perverting a religion and exploiting impressionable young men. There is almost no discussion about why so many people in the Muslim world object to U.S. policies so strongly that they are inclined to resist violently and even resort to suicide attacks.

It is the same now. Lacking is any frank discussion by America’s leaders and media about the real motivation of Muslim anger toward the United States? Why was Helen Thomas the only journalist to raise the touchy but central question of motive? But I digress.

The Almost-War on Syria

Why did Kerry mislead the world last Aug. 30 in professing to “know” that the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad was responsible for the chemical attack near Damascus nine days earlier when Kerry and other senior officials knew there were doubts and dissension within the U.S. intelligence community over who was responsible for the incident? It is crystal clear now that Kerry did not know with any certainty whether the army or the rebels fired the one missile that UN inspectors later found to have carried sarin.

Typically, Kerry adduced no verifiable evidence, and what his minions leaked over the following weeks could not bear close scrutiny. [See Consortiumnews.com’s [“The Collapsing Syria-Sarin Case”](#)] (Parenthetically, Kerry also does not know what he professes to know about the shoot-down of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 on July 17.)

The key question today is whether Gen. Dempsey can hold off the hawks at the State Department again, as he did a year ago to prevent another ready-to-go U.S. attack on Syria ... or maybe Iraq again ... or how about Ukraine.

A Reluctant Soldier

Late last summer, Dempsey had the good sense to be a reluctant soldier. He had already told Congress that a major attack on Syria should require congressional authorization and that he was aware that the “evidence” adduced to implicate the Syrian government was shaky at best.

Besides, British intelligence had obtained a sample of the sarin used in the Aug. 21 attack and analysis demonstrated that the gas used didn’t match the

batches known to exist in the Syrian army's chemical weapons arsenal.

The British warning that the case against Syria wouldn't hold up was quickly relayed to the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. According to journalist Seymour Hersh, American officers delivered a last-minute caution to the President, which they believe led to his cancelling the attack. [See Hersh's "[The Red Line and the Rat Line.](#)"]

Actually, it was no secret that Dempsey helped change President Obama's mind between when Kerry spoke on the afternoon of Aug. 30, all but promising a U.S. attack on Syria, and when Obama announced less than a day later that he would not attack but rather would seek authorization from Congress. Obama was explicit in citing Dempsey, [saying](#) on the early afternoon of Aug. 31:

"Our military has positioned assets in the region. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs has informed me that we are prepared to strike whenever we choose. Moreover, the Chairman has indicated to me that our capacity to execute this mission is not time-sensitive: it will be effective tomorrow, next week, or one month from now."

The failure to stampede Obama and the U.S. military into a bombing campaign against Syria was a major defeat for those who wanted another shot at a Mideast "regime change," primarily the neocons and their "liberal interventionist" allies who hold sway inside the State Department, not to mention in much of the U.S. mainstream news media. By happenstance, I was given a personal window into the neocon distress over the Syria bombing that wasn't when I found myself sharing a "green room" with some of them at CNN's main studio in Washington. [See Consortiumnews.com's "[How War on Syria Lost Its Way.](#)"]

How About Ukraine?

Many neocons fumed about Gen. Dempsey's role in pulling the plug on their Syrian war plans. And, if the world is lucky, the neocons may have more reason to grumble about Gen. Dempsey if he deters direct U.S. military involvements in one or another of their hoped-for wars now, especially their reckless efforts to escalate the confrontation with Russia over Ukraine. It is a safe bet that Dempsey is again warning the President that there are risks that the Russian bear will do more than just snarl if it continues to be poked by the U.S.-installed coup government in Kiev.

One can hope that at the Sept. 4-5 NATO summit in Wales, Dempsey and other cool heads, who have had some experience in war, will again be able to head off the hotheads advocating gratuitous threatening gestures toward Russia.

This will take courage and stamina, since ill-informed “group think,” aided and abetted by the mainstream media, has taken hold in Washington in a way reminiscent of this same time 12 years ago. Sadly, there was no Martin Dempsey at hand then.

The malleable careerist generals whom Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld picked to serve him like JCS Chairman Richard Myers could be counted on to salute smartly to all of the boss’ decisions even on torture. Ex-General Colin Powell who was Peter-Principled up to be Secretary of State was cut from the same cloth. So Rumsfeld together with his partner-in-crime Vice President Dick Cheney had a free hand.

By all appearances, except for Dempsey and his immediate staff, hawkish “group think” continues to reign supreme in the foreign policy and defense councils of Establishment Washington. It is as though nothing was learned from the destruction and chaos left behind after the U.S./UK invasion and occupation of Iraq beginning in March 2003.

Anatomy of a Consequential Lie

With Rumsfeld controlling the Pentagon, Vice President Dick Cheney led the charge exactly 12 years ago. Addressing the Veterans of Foreign Wars on Aug. 26, 2002, Cheney launched the propaganda campaign for war on Iraq, falsely claiming, “We now know that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. ... Many of us are convinced that Saddam will acquire nuclear weapons fairly soon.”

Cheney went on to warn that UN inspectors were worse than useless since they fostered a false sense of security.

Cheney’s speech provided the recipe for how the intelligence was to be cooked in September 2002. In effect, the speech provided the meretricious terms of reference and conclusions for a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) requested by Congress a few weeks later and completed on Oct. 1.

We now know that Robert Walpole, the intelligence official selected to chair the NIE, was receiving guidance from Cheney during the record-short drafting period. We also know that the NIE was wrong on every major judgment. Its purpose, though, was to deceive Congress out of exercising its constitutional prerogative to declare or otherwise authorize war. And the stratagem worked like a charm.

To their discredit, many in the intelligence community knew of Cheney’s and Walpole’s playing fast and loose with the evidence and the White House’s determination to pave the way to war. Those intelligence officials, however, simply held their noses. No one spoke out. Careers of bureaucrats were placed

before lives of soldiers and civilians.

The whole orchestration was a fairy tale, and Cheney and his co-conspirators knew it full well. A leading spinner of such tales, Iraqi National Congress leader Ahmed Chalabi, later bragged about his role in facilitating the spurious claims of WMD in Iraq. He said, "Saddam is gone. ... What was said before is not important. ... We are heroes in error."

Keeping Mouths Wide Shut

Back to the VFW convention on Aug. 26, 2002: sitting on the stage that evening was former CENTCOM commander Marine Gen. Anthony Zinni, who was being honored by the VFW. Zinni later said he was shocked to hear a depiction of intelligence (Iraq has WMDs and is amassing them to use against us) that did not square with what he knew.

Although Zinni had retired two years before, his role as consultant had enabled him to keep his clearances and stay up to date on key intelligence findings. Zinni is among a handful of senior officials, active duty and retired, who could have obstructed the path to war, had they spoken out at the time.

Three and a half years later, Zinni told NBC's "Meet the Press" that "There was no solid proof that Saddam had WMD. ... I heard a case being made to go to war." Zinni had earlier enjoyed a reputation as a straight shooter, with occasional displays of actual courage. And so the question lingers: why did he not make inquiries and if necessary go public *before* the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq?

It is an all too familiar conundrum. In such situations, when there is powerful political momentum for war, senior military leaders, like Bre'r Fox, usually don't say nuthin'. And, almost always, their reticence comes out badly for everyone else, but they still get to sit on corporate boards and make a ton of money.

It is a safe bet Zinni now regrets letting himself be guided or misguided – by what passes for professional courtesy and/or slavish adherence to classification restrictions, when he might have prevented the U.S. from starting the kind of war of aggression branded at Nuremberg as the "supreme international crime."

Tenet Completely Complicit

Zinni was not the only one taken aback by Cheney's words. Then-CIA Director George Tenet recounted in his memoir that Cheney's speech took him completely by surprise. Tenet wrote, "I had the impression that the president wasn't any more aware than we were of what his number-two was going to say to the VFW until he said it."

Tenet added that he thought Cheney had gone well beyond what U.S. intelligence was saying about the possibility of Iraq acquiring a nuclear weapon, adding piously, "Policy makers have a right to their own opinions, but not their own set of facts. ... I should have told the vice president privately that, in my view, his VFW speech had gone too far." Tenet doesn't tell us whether he ever summoned the courage to tell President George W. Bush, although he briefed him several times a week.

Actually, Cheney's exaggeration could not have come as a complete surprise to Tenet. We know from the Downing Street Minutes, leaked to the press on May 1, 2005, that on July 20, 2002 – more than a month *before* Cheney's speech – Tenet himself had told his British counterpart that President Bush had decided to make war on Iraq for regime change and that "the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy."

When Bush's senior advisers came back to town after Labor Day 2002, the next five weeks were devoted to selling the war, a major "new product" of the kind that, as then-White House chief of staff Andrew Card explained, no one would introduce in the month of August. Except that Cheney did.

After assuring themselves that Tenet was a reliable salesman, Cheney and then-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld allowed him to play a supporting role in advertising bogus claims of yellowcake uranium from Niger, aluminum tubes for uranium enrichment, and mobile trailers for manufacturing biological warfare agents, in order to scare Congress into voting for war. It did on Oct. 10 and 11, 2002.

Bush's Knowledge

Was President Bush not warned of the likely impact of his attack on Iraq? He had been earlier, but the malleable Tenet opted to join the "group think" and told his minions that, if the President wants to make war on Iraq, it's our duty to provide the "evidence" to justify it. Forgotten or suppressed were earlier warnings from the CIA about how an attack on Iraq would mean a growth industry for manufacturing terrorists.

In a major speech in Cincinnati on Oct. 7, 2002, four days before Congress voted for war, the President warned that "the risk is simply too great that Saddam Hussein will use instruments of mass death and destruction, or provide them to a terror network."

In a sad irony, on that same day, a letter from the CIA to the Senate Intelligence Committee asserted that the probability is low that Iraq would initiate an attack with such weapons or give them to terrorists, UNLESS: "Should

Saddam conclude that a US-led attack could no longer be deterred, he probably would become much less constrained in adopting terrorist actions.”

In a same-day assessment of Colin Powell’s deceptive speech at the UN on Feb. 5, 2003, we Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS) warned the President to beware of those who “draw a connection between war with Iraq and terrorism, but for the wrong reasons. The connection takes on much more reality in a post-US invasion scenario. Indeed, it is our view that an invasion of Iraq would ensure overflowing recruitment centers for terrorists into the indefinite future. Far from eliminating the threat it would enhance it exponentially.” We continued:

“We recommend you re-read the CIA assessment of last fall [2002] that pointed out ‘the forces fueling hatred of the US and fueling al Qaeda recruiting are not being addressed,’ and that ‘the underlying causes that drive terrorists will persist.’ We also noted that a “CIA report cited a Gallup poll last year of almost 10,000 Muslims in nine countries in which respondents described the United States as ‘ruthless, aggressive, conceited, arrogant, easily provoked and biased.’”

But the “group think” had already set in. And courage at senior ranks in the military was in short supply. No one had the guts to properly discharge the responsibility of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the principal military adviser to the President. This is the role that Gen. Martin Dempsey stepped up to a year ago and, in the process, prevented wider war in the Middle East.

One can only hope that President Obama, in current circumstances, will keep listening to military advisers who know something about war – and why it should never be casually commenced.

Ray McGovern works with Tell the Word, a publishing arm of the ecumenical Church of the Saviour in inner-city Washington. He was an Army infantry/intelligence officer and CIA analyst for 30 years and is co-founder of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS).

Washington’s Latest War Fever

War fever is running high again in Official Washington with pols and pundits demanding that President Obama order a major military intervention in Iraq and Syria to stop the violent jihadists of ISIS, a group that got its start with the

U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, as ex-CIA analyst Paul Pillar recalls.

By Paul R. Pillar

Americans, following a long tradition of finding monsters overseas to destroy, are now focusing their attention and their energy on a relatively new one: the group variously known as ISIS or ISIL or the Islamic State. The group has become a major disruptive factor in the already disrupted internal affairs of Iraq and Syria, and it is legitimately a significant object of concern for U.S. policy as far as instability and radicalism in the Middle East are concerned.

The outsized role that this group has come to play in discourse about U.S. foreign policy, however, including hyperbolic statements by senior officials, risks a loss of perspective about what kind of threat it does or does not pose to U.S. interests, and with that a possible loss of care in assessing what U.S. actions in response would or would not be wise.



Several attributes of ISIS have repeatedly and correctly been identified as measures of the group's strength, and aspects of the group's rise that are worthy of notice. These include its seizure of pieces of territory in both Iraq and Syria, acquisition of financial resources, and enlistment of substantial numbers of westerners.

Although these are impressive indicators of the group's success, none of them is equivalent to a threat to U.S. interests, much less a physical threat to the United States itself, at least not in the sense of a new danger different from ones that have been around for some time.

Money, for example, has never been the main determinant of whether a group constitutes such a danger. Terrorism that makes a difference can be cheap, and one does not need to rob banks in Mosul or to run an impressive revenue collection operation in order to have enough money to make an impact. Even a terrorist spectacular on the scale of 9/11 is within the reach of a single wealthy and radically-minded donor to finance.

The involvement of western citizens with terrorist groups has long been a focus of attention for western police and internal security services. To the extent this represents a threat, it is not a direct function of any one group's actions or successes overseas, be they of ISIS or any other group.

Several patterns involving westerners' involvement with foreign terrorist groups are well established. One is that the story has consistently been one of already radicalized individuals seeking contact with a group rather than the other way around. If it isn't one particular group they seek out, it will be another.

A further pattern is that, despite frequently expressed fears about westerners acquiring training overseas that they then apply effectively to terrorist operations in the West, this hasn't happened. Faisal Shahzad and his firecracker-powered attempt at a car bomb in Times Square illustrate the less ominous reality.

Yet another pattern is that apart from a few westerners whose language skills have been exploited for propaganda purposes, the westerners have become grunts and cannon fodder. They have not been entrusted with sophisticated plots (unsuccessful shoe bomber Richard Reid being the closest thing to an exception), probably partly because of their evident naiveté and largely because of groups' concerns about operational security and possible penetration.

Dubious Value of Land

The control by a group of a piece of territory, even if it is mostly just sand or mountains, is what most often is taken mistakenly as a measure of the threat a group poses, and this phenomenon is occurring in spades with ISIS. Probably seizure of land is interpreted this way because following this aspect of the progress of a group is as simple as looking at color-coded maps in the newspaper.

The history of terrorist operations, including highly salient operations such as 9/11, demonstrates that occupying some real estate is not one of the more important factors that determine whether a terrorist operation against the United States or another western country can be mounted. To the extent ISIS devotes itself to seizing, retaining, and administering pieces of real estate in the Levant or Mesopotamia, and imposing its version of a remaking of society in those pieces, this represents a turn away from, not toward, terrorism in the West.

Significant friction between ISIS (then under a different name) and al-Qaeda first arose when the former group's concentration on whacking Iraqi Shias was an unhelpful, in the view of the al-Qaeda leadership, digression from the larger

global jihad and the role that the far enemy, the United States, played in it.

Traditionally an asset that non-state terrorist groups are considered to have, and a reason they are considered (albeit wrongly) to be undeterrable is that they lack a "return address." To the extent ISIS maintains a mini-state in the Middle East, it loses that advantage.

Any such mini-state would be more of a burden to the group than an asset, beyond whatever satisfaction the group gets from installing its warped version of an Islamic order in its little piece of land. Maintaining and exerting power in the mini-state would be a difficult, full-time job. The place would be a miserable, ostracized blotch on the map with no ability to project power at a distance. It would be a problem for the immediate neighbors, and even more of one for the governments out of whose territories the mini-state had been carved, but its existence would not make ISIS any more of a threat to the United States than it otherwise would be.

Introspection Needed

We Americans need to exercise some introspection regarding how and why we are reacting to the ISIS phenomenon the way we are, beyond the way we interpret shadings on a newspaper map (and beyond the usual politicized biases that infect any policy discussion in Washington).

To some extent the group is filling a need for a well-defined, personified adversary. We don't have Osama bin Laden to fight anymore, but now we have Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. We also are reacting quite understandably to the group's methods, which are despicably inhumane, and to its objectives, which are disgustingly medieval.

The burst of attention to the group over the past week clearly results largely from the grisly killing of a captured American photojournalist. We all abhor that event, and we should. But we also should bear in mind that an emotional reaction to such an incident produces the wrong frame of mind for debate, and cool-headed deliberation, about public policy.

What may be most disturbing about the tenor of current discourse on the subject is how much of it is expressed in absolute terms, with many proclaiming that ISIS "must be destroyed," or words to that effect. Such absolutism undermines the consideration that should be given to other U.S. interests and objectives (as there always will be) affected by pursuit of that one objective, and consideration of costs as well as benefits (there always will be both) of any U.S. action taken in pursuit of that objective.

We have heard similar absolutism before, and we have seen the results. We heard

it with the post-9/11 false syllogism that if terrorism is considered a serious problem then we must recognize that we are at "war," and if we are at war then that means we must rely principally on military force. We heard it also in the dictum that if there is even a one percent chance of something awful happening to us, then we must treat that as a certainty.

The absolutist approach leads to inappropriate derision and dismissal of policy steps as "half measures" when they may in fact be, considering the costs, benefits and other U.S. interests at stake, the most prudent steps that could be taken. Some actions that would set back ISIS may be, given the circumstances, sensible and cost-effective. Other possible measures may seem aimed more directly at the goal of destroying ISIS but, given the circumstances, would not be sensible.

And what does "destroying" the group really mean? Our experience with al-Qaeda should have taught us to ponder that question long and hard. We killed innumerable "number three" leaders of al-Qaeda, we killed bin Laden himself, and we have rendered Ayman al-Zawahiri a largely irrelevant fugitive. We have in effect destroyed the organization, or at least as much as can be expected from more than 13 years (yes, the process started before 9/11) of destruction.

But the methods we really were worried about lived on through a metastasis that led to the emergence of other organizations. ISIS is one of those organizations. If ISIS is "destroyed," there is little reason to believe that the methods we most worry about, and associated ideologies, will not take still other forms.

The seeds of the death of ISIS lie within its own methods and objectives, which are as abhorrent to many of its would-be subjects as they are to us. The group rode to its dramatic gains, in both Iraq and Syria, on larger waves of opposition to detested incumbent regimes. Its losses can be just as dramatic if the political circumstances that led to such opposition are changed. They already are changing in Baghdad, and it still is possible for political change of some sort, which excludes any groups as extreme as ISIS, to take place in Syria.

The extent of any terrorist threat to the United States does not depend on killing any one organization. It will depend partly on those political processes in countries such as Iraq and Syria. It also will depend on how well the United States, in going after any one monster, does not create other ones.

In that regard we cannot remind ourselves often enough, especially because this fact seems to have been forgotten amid the current discussion of ISIS, that ISIS itself was born as a direct result of the United States going after a different monster in Iraq.

Paul R. Pillar, in his 28 years at the Central Intelligence Agency, rose to be one of the agency's top analysts. He is now a visiting professor at Georgetown University for security studies. (This article first appeared as a [blog post](#) at The National Interest's Web site. Reprinted with author's permission.)
