

Attacking the Islamic State: Henry Kissinger's World Order Recipe

By [Dr. Binoy Kampmark](#)

Global Research, September 14, 2014

Region: [Asia](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#),
[USA](#)

Never one to believe in the shackles of legality, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has decided to give advice entirely free of it. It is comforting to know that a man who was instrumental in illegal, unauthorised operations in Cambodia and Laos, among other things, should find it appropriate to advise the stumbling Obama administration where it might go next.

For Kissinger, the forces of the West better up and at them – the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq are no longer matters of sideshow amusement or ceremonial fanfare. “There can’t be any more debate about fighting them.”[1]

The moment any former Secretary of State reaches for the lexicon of international relations terms, and nabs the first one that comes to mind, you know you, and the rest of the world, may be in for some trouble. This is particularly so when terms such as “new order” make their way to the front page of supposedly wise counsel. The creators of such orders tend to be fundamental wreckers in the bargain. “We don’t have the power to impose our preference, but without us, and without some leadership from us, the new order cannot be created. That I think has not (been) understood.”

This does not stop such terms as having currency, even if that currency is counterfeit. World Order talk is simply fanciful costumery on the political non-science circuit. There is nothing orderly about it, and its seeming breath of scope is merely cigar room speculation about what intervention comes next. Nonetheless, Kissinger has decided to use the term World Order as the title of his latest book, again using a host of limp terms that anyone wishing to construct the world from an armchair wishes for.

“When ‘the international community’ is invoked perhaps more insistently now than in any other era,” writes Kissinger, “it presents no clear or agreed set of goals, methods or limits.... Chaos threatens side by side with unprecedented interdependence.” If you want the language of empty, non-committal consultancy, than this is it.

John Micklethwait, in his review for the *New York Times* (Sep 11) doesn’t have much time to question the very term World Order, let alone the premise: “if you worry about a globe spinning out of control, then [Kissinger’s] *World Order* is for you. It brings together history, geography, modern politics and no small amount of passion.”

Kissinger is a man who primarily sees himself as realist in chief, the Metternich of the twentieth century (when in office), and modern consultant in an age when consultancy counts as work as supposed to mere sophistry. Think clearly about a state’s interests, count the chips, draw up the balance sheet, do the sums, and attack. Air strikes on IS positions

should be of “limited duration as a punitive measure” and “not make any distinction between Syria in Iraq.” How positively Indochina-like and so very 1970s – make few distinctions in a geographical belt, and cause some creative disruption.

While Obama’s rival, Hillary Clinton, has happily sought nuggets of wisdom from the Bavarian-born sage, Obama has conspicuously left him off the payroll. Such snubs are bound to get any strategist, especially one so self-esteemed, knotted and irritated. Obama, he claims, “has not understood all the currents that need to be dealt with.”

The recipe of intervention this cobbled coalition (more NATO than not) are coming up with stress the need for various Iraqis to do the dying, while the United States and its allies do the surgically directed bombing. The Iraqi state, and Syrian state, are patients about to be opened up, though the pundits are suggesting that this will be key-hole surgery at its finest, a non-intrusive, but still effectively intrusive enough, to get the job done.

This, according to President Barack Obama, has been the working formula in such places as Yemen and Somalia – remotely directed bombing from afar, with the use of local government forces on the ground. He doesn’t mention, of course, the extent that such a tactic has actually worked – these are not quantifiable in states that are failed or still in conflict.

British Foreign Secretary, Philip Hammond, has come out with a sketch of “comprehensive” plans to defeat IS.

“This will involve a mix of humanitarian, military and diplomatic efforts with different nations making contributions including: training and advising the Iraqi security forces; arming, training and advising the Kurds; technical and political support to an inclusive Iraqi government, reinforcement of neighbouring countries against Isis and continuing surgical strikes on Isis.”

Such positions – be it between Hammond, Obama or Kissinger, do not vary enormously. All want to attack and “degrade” the capability of a force that has its complex roots in the historical meddling of foreign powers and opportunistic demagogues. The “realist” tag, as any, tends to be just that. It can be snipped off the product at any given moment, leaving no one the wiser. A chaotic environment won’t cease being chaotic, and the demon slayed will simply be another resurrected.

For someone so steeped in that tradition, Kissinger had a habit of getting it spectacularly wrong, suggesting that either the label, or the man, were monstrously faulty. The Cambodian bombing venture, apart from being illegal, also paved the way for the orgy of murder that became Pol Pot’s regime. Kissinger’s bloodied fingerprints tend to find their way on every Latin American regime which had an anti-socialist axe to grind. Wherever there was popular will for a progressive government in the Americas, Kissinger’s consultancy went into adamant overdrive – direct the people’s wishes; they don’t know any better.

Fitting now that this legacy has turned states and regimes through the south against the United States, a sort of sweet vengeance for murderous wishes. If this is the sort of realism Kissinger is proffering, then his fees should best be cut.

Dr. Binoy Kampmark was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He lectures at RMIT University, Melbourne. Email: bkampmark@gmail.com

Notes

[1]<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/launch-all-out-blitz-on-jihadists-henry-kissinger-advis-es-obama/story-fnb64oi6-1227050441091>

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Dr. Binoy Kampmark](#), Global Research, 2014

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Dr. Binoy
Kampmark](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca