

# Oil, Blood, Confusion and Fear: Fuelling the Public's "Appetite for War"

By [Colin Todhunter](#)

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*Back in 2003, Tony Blair stated that Saddam Hussein could hit Britain with a missile within 45 minutes. He also said that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. The national security of Britain was said to be under threat. Subsequently, Britain took part in an invasion that had been planned long before the evidence had been cooked up to fit the policy, and over a million Iraqis lost their lives. Let's not forget, before that Britain was complicit in applying sanction that led to the deaths of around 500,000 children under five.*

Fast forward over a decade and British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond has said that Iraq Islamic State militants are turning large swathes of Iraq and Syria into launch pads to stage terror attacks on Western nations. In an article in the Sunday Times, he said that with the "barbaric ideology" of the Sunni insurgents, "sooner or later they will seek to strike us on British soil."

He went on to attack the British jihadist who allegedly killed US journalist Bernard Foley for undermining the values which British people stand for:

"It is horrifying to think that the perpetrator of this heinous act could have been brought up in Britain. It is an utter betrayal of our country, our values and everything the British people stand for."

Hammond and other government ministers have stated the threat from the Islamic State militants could last for several years.

The day before Hammond spoke, Home Secretary Theresa May announced she was preparing new laws to tackle Islamist militants at home and to stop them going abroad to fight. May went quite a bit further than Hammond by saying that that Britain faced a long struggle against a deadly extremist ideology that could take even decades. She added that new powers would be designed to restrict the militants' behaviour in Britain, ban involvement in groups preaching violence and require prisons, broadcasters, schools and universities to take a greater role in combating the radicalization of Muslims.

## **Foley video: A timely outpouring of outrage and fake morality**

The alleged murder of US journalist James Foley captured on video is causing a timely outpouring of anger in Britain. Such sentiment is being ignited courtesy of senior British politicians who it seems can always be relied on to beat the war drums on cue from Washington.

Hammond's statements are designed to garner mass support for a resurgence of Western military intervention across the Middle East, most notably possible direct intervention in Syria, which Washington has wanted for some time. What Hammond or May will not tell the British public is that the US has failed in its aim to use ISIS and other groups to defeat Assad and that Washington wants air strikes to weaken Assad under the pretext of destroying ISIS, the monster it created. Indeed, the US's top general, Martin Dempsey, has noted that ISIS could not be defeated without attacking their base in Syria.

We saw in Libya how NATO illegal air strikes and 'mission drift' allowed a path to be bombed to Tripoli to help its proxy forces oust Gaddafi. Tens of thousands lost their lives and Libya's social and political infrastructure now lies in ruins. US air strikes could this time open the path to Damascus for its (trained and bussed-in) militant forces in Syria, again, as in Libya, under the guise of rooting out barbarism and protecting lives.

What Hammond and May will also not tell the British public is that Western special forces on the ground have been directing the war against Syria and that the US, Turkey, France, Britain, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar have for a long time been heavily arming militants along both Syria's border with Turkey in the north and with Jordan in the south. Tony Cartalucci's recent article shows this to be the case and draws our attention to a number of news articles

[<http://www.globalresearch.ca/us-begins-selling-syria-intervention-using-isis-pretext/53969741>].

First, the Daily Telegraph's March 2013 article titled "US and Europe in 'major airlift of arms to Syrian rebels through Zagreb'" reported that 3,000 tons of weapons dating back to the former Yugoslavia had been sent in 75 planeloads from Zagreb airport to the rebels, largely via Jordan. The shipments were allegedly paid for by Saudi Arabia at the bidding of the US, with assistance on supplying the weapons organised through Turkey and Jordan.

Second, the New York Times March 2013 article "Arms Airlift to Syria Rebels Expands, With CIA Aid" stated that, with help from the CIA, Arab governments and Turkey had sharply increased their military aid to Syria's opposition fighters. This aid included more than 160 military cargo flights by Jordanian, Saudi and Qatari military-style cargo planes.

Third, the Washington Post's September 2013 article "U.S. weapons reaching Syrian rebels" reported that the CIA has begun delivering weapons to rebels in Syria, ending months of delay in lethal aid that had been promised by the Obama administration.

Where did all the equipment and money go to? Cartalucci provides details of how the West and its allies have been instrumental in organizing and funding the war in Syria and implies it is no coincidence that we now have a well-equipped and organised ISIS.

### **What Philip Hammond or Theresa May will not tell the public**

However, Hammond and May would never inform the public that the West funded and created ISIS to do its bidding in Syria and also to put pressure on an increasingly independently-acting government in Iraq, which refused the US to allow its troops to remain in the country with immunity from prosecution.

Sensationalist videos of decapitations of westerners serve a purpose. They manipulate public sentiment, stir up anti-Islamist sentiment and get a war-fatigued public to support

even more wars of empire under the lie of protecting civilians, a bogus 'war on terror' or rooting out barbarism and evil.

In turn, Muslims in Britain face further demonisation. Politicians and the media say their communities should be 'monitored' in the name of 'secularism' and ensuring liberal democratic 'freedoms' (while at the same time stripping away such freedoms, not least by mass surveillance of the entire British population and the over application of stringent anti-terror laws). Those who advocate this often tend to narrowly focus on issues of multiculturalism and Muslims' failure to adopt to 'our' way of life, while neatly sidestepping why it is that Muslims have become a such a key focus of concern in Britain: it is in Muslim lands that the machinations of empire and imperialist wars of occupation and intervention are being played out.

Hammond and May would not wish to draw the public's attention to the actual reasons as to why the US, Britain and other allied countries have actually attacked Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya or Syria. They will spin the public a yarn about women's rights or a war on terror in Afghanistan, removing despots from power in Libya or Syria or protecting human life - while then going on to attack or help destabilize countries, resulting in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives.

Not for a moment will they tell the public that their taxes are really being used to help rich, powerful corporations gain even greater riches and power by using emotive videos and the language of fear as a pretext to grab natural resources and destabilize regions and countries in order to do so.

Not for a minute would they admit that Washington and London's aim is to balkanise Iraq and to attack and weaken Iran and its allies in Syria, Lebanon, Gaza and across the region. Then after getting rid of Putin's allies in the region, proxy forces will be used to destabilise Russia via its borders to the south, just as is happening now to the north in Ukraine (under the lie of Russian aggression!)

Not for a moment will they tell the public that Britain has been involved in destabilizing countries or reveal the full extent to which it has helped in inflicting mayhem and terror on innocent populations via supplying arms, covert operations or direct military intervention. Not for a moment will they draw attention to the hypocrisy of huge arms deals Britain carries out with its despot allies (the kind it says it despises) in the Middle East which enriches (taxpayer-subsidized) British arms companies.

### **Keeping the public confused and ignorant**

Part of the battle for the public's hearts and minds is to keep people confused, to play on their ignorance and confusion by lying to them about what is happening and to ensure they continue to live in fear of a threat to 'national security'. Most of the public remains blissfully ignorant and easily manipulated by the psych-ops directed at them through the corporate media.

Hammond talks of 'British values' and how heinous, barbaric acts betray such values. What does Hammond perceive 'British values' to be?

The opposite of barbarity: compassion, caring, the compulsion to 'do the right thing'.

How best to assess values than by actions? Given the narrative thus far, we might conclude

that the actions of Britain as a state have very little to do with 'compassion' or doing 'the right thing'.

Moreover, if ordinary members of the British public think that Hammond or May really ultimately have their welfare or best interests at heart, they should think again.

BP, Goldman Sachs, General Electric, Bank of America, Chevron, Barclays, etc, are the ones that really set Anglo-US policy agendas via Brookings Institute, Council on Foreign Relations, International Crisis Group, Chatham House, etc. Ultimately, they are Hammond and May's constituents, not the voters.

The rich and powerful have off-shored millions of jobs as well as their personal and company tax liabilities to boost their profits and have bankrupted economies. They are driving the 'globalisation' agenda. There is little or no care for the plight of ordinary folk either at home or abroad.

What has this agenda resulted in? Austerity, unemployment, powerlessness, privatization, deregulation, banker control of economies, corporate control of food and seeds, the stripping away of civil liberties, increased mass surveillance, wars to prop up the US dollar.

Who has benefited? Monsanto, Occidental Petroleum, JP Morgan, Boeing and the rest of the corporate cabal centred on Wall Street and the City of London.

It's the ability to maximise profit by shifting capital around the world that matters to powerful corporations, whether on the back of distorted free trade agreements, which open the gates for plunder, or through coercion and militarism, which merely tear them down. Whether it is the structural violence of neoliberal economic policies or actual military violence, the welfare of ordinary folk does not enter into the equation. They are regarded as mere fodder and minds to be manipulated for the greater good of profit for the few.

Local people, local economies and self-sufficiency are being swept aside via a system based on high-energy input production, consumption and distribution that relies on oil. For example, small organic-based family farms are being cast aside in favour of giant agritech concerns where petro-chemical inputs are used on corporate-owned seeds for monoculture crops or commodities grown for shipment over long distances or for export. Oil is central. And this process is symptomatic of an environmentally unsustainable model of 'growth' and 'development' that seeks to 'structurally adjust' agriculture and economies by taking away control from people at the local, community level. It is also symptomatic of the fact that in a world of plenty, local food self sufficiency is being eroded and almost one billion people are undernourished because the bottom line is corporate profit, power, control and ultimately oil to fuel the system. And global capital's sacrificial pawns, whether small farmers, the hungry billion or ordinary families just trying to live and get by in geopolitically strategic locations like Syria, Gaza or Iraq are regarded as collateral damage.

In an oil-thirsty, oil-dependent, increasingly war-driven system of corporate-driven 'globalisation', the other bottom line is that ordinary folk do not count.

So we should not be fooled by made-for-media outpourings of fake concern for our safety or fake morality about good and evil that are designed to create fear, outrage and support for militarism. The result will be more war and slaughter for pipelines and power. The result will be further repression under the guise of preventing terror at home.

Politicians and government agencies should be held to account for their actions, for their funding of militant groups, for their wars, destabilizations and covert wars. Instead they try to get us to fall into line, to remain ignorant of their deeds, to believe 'there is no alternative' to 'what is' or to accept a pack of lies, deceptions and crimes under the guise of globalization or democracy.

US social commentator Walter Lippman once said that 'responsible men' make decisions and have to be protected from the 'bewildered herd' - the public. He added that the public should be subdued, obedient and distracted from what is really happening. Screaming patriotic slogans and fearing for their lives, they should be admiring with awe leaders who save them from destruction.

Hammond, May and politicians like them play their role well.

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### About the author:

Colin Todhunter is an extensively published independent writer and former social policy researcher. Originally from the UK, he has spent many years in India. His website is [www.colintodhunter.com](http://www.colintodhunter.com)  
[https://twitter.com/colin\\_todhunter](https://twitter.com/colin_todhunter)

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