

The Killer on the (Saudi) King's Highway

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There's danger on the edge of town
Ride the king's highway, baby
Weird scenes inside the gold mine
Ride the highway west, baby
The Doors, The End

The killer awoke before dawn. He put his American desert boots on. He took a knife from the ancient gallery. And he walked on down the hall – bathed in desert sunlight.

The killer spoke with a British accent (London's East End?) Father (Saudi), I want to kill you. Mother (Langley?) I want to...

yeeaaaahh, c'mon!

Then the sartorially composed Man in Black beheaded American photojournalist James Foley.

This is not the end, beautiful friend. It's just a new beginning in the never-ending Global War on Terror. Now starring Papa Saud's brand new bag – The Caliph and his goons. This is the way Shock and Awe morphs into "Assad must go" morphs into Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, morphs into The Caliph's Black Britannia goon responding to "humanitarian" bombing. I'm my own baby now. Watch me work. Bring it on.

Choice scenery. Good sound and vision production values. Careful editing. No unnecessary gore. No blood splattering. No *Allahu Akbar* shrieks. "A Message to America", indeed – but most of all a message to the Ummah. As in we're the Men in Black badasses. We run The Caliphate. We're no mere death cult; we're winners. And we take no prisoners.

And why did Islamic State, formerly ISIS, become winners? Because the "West" regimented, schooled, trained, logistically helped and weaponized most of IS's Takfiri goons with a mission at hand: to destroy Syria. The "West" lauded them as "Syrian rebels". Freedom fighters.

Washington even promoted Jabhat al-Nusra (the official al-Qaeda franchise in Syria, and a "terrorist organization", according to the State Department) as "good" jihadis, as well as the preferred Saudi combo, the Islamic Front.

No wonder after photojournalist James Foley was kidnapped in November 2012 the Washington-sanctioned version was that he was being kept by "Assad must go" forces in a prison near Damascus.

Slouching towards Mecca

The House of Saud, directly and indirectly, and the proverbial wealthy Gulf Cooperation Council donors are the Mom and Dad of ISIS. All duly vetted/approved by the industrial-military-Orwellian-Panopticon complex.

And yet “Assad must go” had other ideas for Syria. He didn’t go. He and his army resisted and counter-attacked. So the original mission in Syria morphed across the (non-existent) desert border towards Iraq. ISIS kept expanding – via extortion, kidnapping, captured oil fields, tribal smuggling networks.

The killer spoke with a British accent. Yet he may not be just a well-paid mercenary (500 from Britain, 700 from France, 500 from Belgium€). He’s most certainly a true believer in the wider IS medievalist ideology as well as its no-holds-barred sectarian methods.

How convenient that IS strategy is totally divide and rule. Totally balkanization of Iraq. Totally mum on Israel’s slow-motion ethnic cleansing of Gaza. Totally useful in wagging the (beheading) dog to make the world forget about Gaza.

Moreover, IS/ISIS strategy, stripped to the bone, is Pentagon manual; clear, hold and build – then expand (to an area larger than Great Britain). It’s even Pentagon manual redux – as in building “coalitions of the willing” (see the alliance with “remnants” – Rummy talk – of the Saddam regime propelling their northern Iraq summer offensive.)

How convenient that the mighty Orwellian/Panopticon complex satellite maze could not identify a long convoy of gleaming white Toyotas crossing the desert towards their summer conquests. And how convenient that a Briton beheading an American – what a “special relationship” plot twist! – fully sanctions the Return of Iraq Bombing (“for months”, in Obama’s words); more strikes; more drones; perhaps more boots on the ground; perhaps, in the near future, a Syria extension.

IS also took over Tikrit, the birthplace of Saddam, in their summer adventure. Now Baghdad’s military are trying to take it back. IS welcomed them with minefields, booby-trapped buildings, an array of snipers and hardcore mortar fire. How convenient that Obama’s “humanitarian” bombs are not involved in R2P (“responsibility to protect”) Saddam’s birthplace. What really matters is the US consulate in Erbil, scores of CIA operatives and vast Big Oil interests in Iraqi Kurdistan.

And then there’s this ultimate plot twist; a pearl by a dissident Saudi researcher (in Arabic). He [argues, in detail](#), that IS is essentially a revival of “pure” Wahhabism; not only that IS comes from outside the House of Saud’s dominions – in Iraq and the Levant – but tries hard to shatter the monarchy’s legitimacy.

The House of Saud’s counterpunch to the Arab Spring was (and remains) all about destroying or at least isolating the Muslim Brotherhood as an alternative Islamic rule/role model. Yet now comes IS – brimming with religious justification (however warped); military know-how; and an army of true – and well paid – believers.

Ride the king’s highway, baby. No staged/not staged beheading could possibly top the ultimate blowback: the “West” nurturing the Beast who would slouch towards Mecca to finally behead the House of Saud. And those killers shall also speak with a British accent.

Pepe Escobar is the author of [Globalistan: How the Globalized World is Dissolving into Liquid War](#) (Nimble Books, 2007), [Red Zone Blues: a snapshot of Baghdad during the surge](#) (Nimble Books, 2007), and [Obama does Globalistan](#) (Nimble Books, 2009).

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