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Quantico, Virginia 22134-5068*

MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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**TITLE: Combatting the Islamic State: Countering the Islamist Ideology**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

**AUTHOR: Major Thomas J. Foley**

AY 14-15

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## Table of Contents

|  | Page  |
|--|-------|
| DISCLAIMER .....                                 | iii   |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....                          | iv    |
| LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .....                      | v     |
| LIST OF TABLES .....                             | v     |
| PREFACE .....                                    | vi    |
| REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE.....                   | vii   |
| INTRODUCTION .....                               | 1     |
| BACKGROUND .....                                 | 1     |
| UNDERSTANDING THE ENEMY .....                    | 5     |
| Mohammed’s Guidance .....                        | 6     |
| <i>Jāhiliyah</i> , Jihad and the Caliphate ..... | 7     |
| The Battle of Ideologies.....                    | 10    |
| THE RISE OF THE ISLAMIC STATE .....              | 12    |
| The Collapse of Al Qaeda in Iraq .....           | 12    |
| Iraq, Syria, and Beyond .....                    | 14    |
| Exploiting the Net.....                          | 16    |
| DEFEATING THE ISLAMIC STATE .....                | 17    |
| U.S. / Muslim Coalition Partnership.....         | 18    |
| Targeting Financial Capabilities .....           | 20    |
| Providing the “Right” Support.....               | 21    |
| MISO/CA Capabilities.....                        | 23    |
| Empowering the Coalition of Muslim Nations.....  | 24    |
| SUMMARY .....                                    | 25    |
| CITATIONS AND FOOTNOTES .....                    | 27-31 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY.....                                | 32    |

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## Executive Summary

**Title: Combatting the Islamic State: Countering the Islamist Ideology**

**Author:** Major Thomas J. Foley, United States Army

**Thesis:** The inability of the United States to correctly identify the Islamic State (IS) threat as radical Islam prevents the United States from developing a successful long-term strategy to defeat the ideology of radical Islam and global jihadism.

**Discussion:** The United States continues to struggle with a strategy to “degrade and destroy” the Islamic State, and currently, the international demand for accountability has prompted the Obama Administration to take action. The last 6 months of precision air strikes have generated tactical wins; however, the Islamic State continues to build strength in its desire of establishing a regional caliphate. While military force is an operational goal to prosecute key targets, the primary obstacle facing US leaders remains identifying the root cause of the jihadist ideology. The Islamic State is brutal, and well-funded, and it controls a vast array of resources to fight the fledgling Iraqi army and the fragmented Syrian forces. IS exploits social media to broadcast the beheadings of Western journalists and the mass murders of Iraqi army Soldiers. The Islamic State threatens U.S. interests at home and abroad. The gruesome beheadings and mass murders committed by the Islamic State in the last 18 months State instantly gained the world’s attention, exposing the fact that U.S. foreign policy fails to address the overarching issue facing not only the West, but moderate Muslim countries as well: Global jihadism.

**Conclusion:** The United States’ strategy to “degrade and destroy” the Islamic State fails to address the center of gravity of the jihadist threat doctrine. To more effectively combat global jihadism, the United States must acknowledge that it is indeed fighting a religious ideology based on doctrine established in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and continued into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The modern global jihadist fails to acknowledge secular governments, territorial boundaries, and most importantly, non-Muslim societies.

*List of Illustrations*

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| Figure 1. ISIS Regional Map .....       | 4    |
| Figure 2. Al Nusra Front .....          | 13   |
| Figure 3. Jordanian Pilot Footage ..... | 15   |
| Figure 4. IS Recruits Children .....    | 18   |

*List of Tables*

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| Table 1. CENTCOM Target Assessment..... | 21   |

## *Preface*

The Islamic State presents a substantial threat to the stabilization of the Middle East, but also serves as a lingering wound to the many Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, and Airmen who have spent the last 12 years fighting in Iraq. The swiftness with which the Islamic State rise to power undermines the efforts of the United States and Iraqi governments and reinforces the need to study why the Islamic State is successful. Having spent years in the Middle East fighting many of the same fighters who have taken up arms with the Islamic State, I chose this topic to provide answers as to why Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and other global jihadist groups are able to exist and operate through acts of terror, oppression, and corruption. More simply put: Why is a super power such as the United States unable to employ its full military might to defeat this unconventional threat? Furthermore, why do Muslim nations provide a seemingly permissive environment for such groups to operate in? Over the course of the past year, my research focused less on the enemy and more on the ideology of the global jihadist.

I would first like to thank my wife and daughters for their tireless support during this process. Without their love and support, I would not be the Soldier I am today. Next, I would like to thank Dr. Gorka for his mentorship and keen insight into the mind of the global jihadist, which assisted in framing this project. Finally, I would like to thank all of the Soldiers who I have had the honor of serving in combat with over the course of the last 12 years. It is because of these brave Soldiers that I am here today.



## Combatting the Islamic State: Countering the Islamist Ideology

*"[F]ear Allah as he should be feared and do not die except as Muslims.... Go forth, O mujahidin in the path of Allah. Terrify the enemies of Allah and seek death.... for the dunyā [worldly life] will come to an end, and the hereafter will last forever." — Abu Bakr al-Husayni al-Baghdadi, Caliph, "The Islamic State" [aka IS]*

### Introduction

The Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL), or currently known as the Islamic State (IS), continues to destabilize the Middle East, brutalizing the region and seizing large swaths of territory enroute to establishing the caliphate. The idea of the caliphate, or a concept of a single, theocratic one-world government directed by the Muslim prophet Mohammed, uses jihad as justification to destabilize and, ultimately, overthrow regional governments. Historically, Islamic extremists tout the words “jihad” and “caliphate” to motivate and recruit fighters, while subjugating the local Muslim population. The ultimate goal of the jihadist supplants moderate non-religious based governments with a purist perception of Islam that follows the teaching of the Qur’an. IS enforces this government through implementing *sharia* law, which combines religious direction and violent enforcement to maintain its power. The Islamic State takes a methodical approach, much like the Nazi and US military doctrines, to frame offensive and information operations based on the demand signals of the Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, Infrastructure, Physical Environment, and Time (PMESII-PT) domains.<sup>1</sup> This approach results in the establishment of a religious ideology used to gain regional support of the people, which creates a base to conduct attacks and train new recruits, while promoting the Islamic caliphate. The United States and its regional partners remain conflicted on a cogent strategy to combat IS, and as the Islamic State grows in strength, the Coalition must realize that a comprehensive strategy requires a holistic understanding of the threat it faces. Additionally, the

re-establishment of the caliphate presents a unique challenge that further destabilizes the Middle East, while demonstrating an increased threat to the national security interests of the United States.

The United States has struggled with the development of a strategy to “degrade and destroy” IS, and currently, the demand signal for accountability has prompted the Obama Administration to modify its impromptu strategy to degrade the Islamic State through leveraging long range strike capabilities. While the use of military force is a viable option for prosecuting targets, this challenge requires US leaders to understand the culture of radical Islam and study the enemy threat doctrine that drives its actions.<sup>2</sup> *Jihad* is not a new concept; however, IS uses social media to sensationalize the gruesome beheadings, mass murders, and incessant threats to the United States and the West, which causes its audience to question what is new and what is rhetoric. The 2014 mass executions of Iraqi soldiers instantly gripped the world’s attention and exposed the fact that the world is dealing with an ideology, culture, and enemy that it clearly does not understand. The Islamic State’s operational reach is not limited to Iraq and Syria. IS’s continued expansion into Libya, Afghanistan, and Egypt further illustrates that aerial strikes cannot defeat a growing regional acceptance of radical Islam, or deter those who fight to establish the caliphate under the direction of their prophet. The Obama Administration abstains from identifying IS as radical Islamists; rather, it maintains that the United States is fighting a war against violent extremism. In a world where words matter, the Islamic State does not deviate from its message of establishing a global Islamic caliphate. The US government hesitates to commit “ground forces” to combat IS, which demonstrates a lack of commitment to defeat it. This hesitation causes our Middle Eastern partners’ resolve to weaken. Although the Coalition remains vigilant in its support of the aerial campaign, the United States must realize, as the leader of this Coalition, that the Coalition’s dependence on the United States to

provide increased military capability prevents fractures within the Coalition. The United Arab Emirates, one of the first Arabic nations to join the fight against the Islamic State last September, pulled out of an air campaign against the terrorist group after the capture of a Jordanian pilot in December.<sup>3</sup> The subsequent withdrawal was not due to lack of resolve, but a lack of confidence in the ability of the United States to provide Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) capabilities to rescue downed pilots before they are captured and executed on live television.<sup>4</sup> The Islamic State's ability to understand the fragility of the Coalition lends context to its violent actions provoking and terrorizing Muslim nations to exit the Coalition. The inability of the United States to correctly identify the threat as radical Islam prevents the United States from developing a successful long-term strategy to defeat the ideology of radical Islam. Steven Lambert states, "The struggle with revolutionary Islam will only be won when the West begins to methodically analyze the ideological religion that empowers it and forms its basis."<sup>5</sup> This paper discusses the history of global jihadism, diagnose the rise of the Islamic State, and recommend a National strategy to more successfully combat IS and radical Islam.

## **Background**

The 2011 U.S. withdrawal from Iraq formed a generated a void of security for the Iraqi government that facilitated the rise of the Islamic State. The Islamic State (IS) quickly evolved as an influential organization pressuring Western leaders to re-commit military resources to a war that President Obama had pledged to end.

"The last American soldier[s] will cross the border out of Iraq with their heads held high, proud of their success, and knowing that the American people stand united in our support for our troops. That is how America's military efforts in Iraq will end."<sup>6</sup>

IS's ability to conquer key infrastructure in Iraq and Syria, recruit Sunni Muslims and jihadists worldwide, and intimidate the government of Iraq (to include military and police), Arab Christians, and Shia Muslims solidifies its legitimacy enroute to establishing a global caliphate.

The Islamic State is one of the world's strongest terror groups, and its ferocity and brutality overshadow that of Al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and other well-known organizations in the Middle East and North Africa. IS's ability to harvest international support forms the underpinning for a long-term, well-defined strategy of establishing a global caliphate. Its comprehensive strategy includes an unwavering theme of brutality and religion as its means in recruiting Sunni Muslims, while subjugating non-Muslims and "fake Muslims" who refuse to follow its ideology. IS's short-term accomplishments reveals its near-term goal of attaining power, wealth, and notoriety, further swelling the organization's capabilities, while its long-term goal remains establishing Mohammed's directed caliphate.

IS wages its violent offensive campaign using surprise, speed, and audacity to defeat and destabilize the fledgling Iraqi government and is indoctrinated in the teachings of the prophet Mohammed and support based on the direction of *Jihad* as interpreted in the Qu'ran. Figure 1 illustrates the change of IS controlled territory from 2014 to 2015. As with AQ, the Islamic State

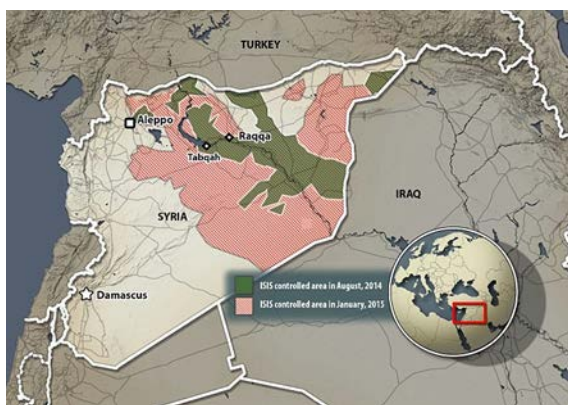


Figure 1: (ISIS Territory, Daily Mail, January 2015)

follows the Sword (violent) verses of the Qu'ran to promote its message of a global caliphate for *true* Muslims (Sunni Muslims); however, unlike AQ, IS capitalizes on the failed nation state governments of Iraq, Syria, Libya, and most recently, Egypt.<sup>7</sup> IS is brutal, well-funded, and wields a vast array of heavy weapons and soldiers to fight the larger, more lethargic Iraqi and Syrian armies. IS's leadership

utilizes social media to broadcast the beheadings of Western journalists, mass executions, and propaganda to threaten the United States at home and abroad as it increases its footprint throughout the Middle East.<sup>8</sup> The gruesome events of 2014 and 2015 instantly arrested the world’s attention and exposed deficiencies in current U.S. strategy of conducting aerial strikes as an instrument of power to combat this determined and formidable threat.

### Understanding the Enemy

Before the United States and its partner coalition may successfully defeat IS, a fundamental understanding of the enemy’s goals, related grievances, and strategy must be achieved. Moderate Muslim states contend that the Islamic State is nothing more than a terrorist group conducting attacks on targets of opportunities (mainly regional Shia Muslims); however, the IS caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, dispels that assertion through his incessant rhetoric. At Mosul’s Great Mosque in July of 2014, al-Baghdadi announced the re-establishment of the caliphate, while professing himself as its *caliph* with the goal of conquering

“Rome and the whole world.”<sup>9</sup> While the message of a caliphate lacks synchronization among the Al Qaeda affiliates and secondary terrorist networks, the one constant that binds all



(ISIS Demonstration in Mosul, BBC, 2014)

jihadi groups is the call to attack the Western *infidel* and those cultures and religions that are “impure” or counter to *Sharia* law.<sup>10</sup> *Sharia* law is typically followed by Sunni Muslims who impose strict religious parameters guided by the Sword scriptures of the Qur’an with interpretation that *jihad* is a requirement, not an option, to the “true” believer.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, *sharia* law integrates a feudal of class system, which prioritizes “levels” of Muslims and classifies “non-Muslim” as second class

citizens. In March 2014, al-Baghdadi reinforced his intent of establishing the caliphate by creating the “imposition of the *dhimmi* pact [second-class, "tolerated" non-Muslim residents] pact on Christians in Raqqa, Syria,”<sup>12</sup> which outlines the Islamic State’s goals of further expansion of a *sharia* state into the West.<sup>13</sup>

### *Mohammed’s Guidance*

The teachings of Islam’s Prophet Mohammed in the Qur’an are generally confused by the Western non-Muslim world, which compounds U.S. strategists and military leaders’ frustration in developing a long-term strategy capable of defeating radical Islam. Like radical Islamists, Christian radicals have a history of conducting attacks in the name of Jesus Christ, referencing scriptures from The Holy Bible to justify their violent actions. One example is the January 29, 1998, abortion clinic bombing in Birmingham, AL. Eric Rudolph cited Psalms 144:1 of the Holy Bible as justification for the bombing that killed a security guard.<sup>14</sup> The Holy Bible’s teachings are, in many cases, left up to the interpretation of the pastor, deacon, or priest delivering the message. Religious writings, which are translated and updated over time, have a propensity to create a skewed view of what is right,

*"They try to portray themselves as religious leaders, holy warriors in defense of Islam. We must never accept the premise that they put forward because it is a lie."  
Barack Obama, CVE Summit, 2015*

wrong, or uncertain, and ultimately, lack historical context and disregard the evolution of modern society. Militant Islamists “cherry pick” violent verses of the Qur’an to recruit young Muslim men and women, while disseminating an imperfect message to those in the Muslim society who seek to follow the true words of Mohammed.<sup>15</sup> Although many verses are twisted to promote global jihadism, the verses used by the Islamic State, and more so by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, reinforce the legitimacy of *jihad* and vilify the West. The concept of *jihad* scripturally connects Islamic scripture to the threat doctrine of the global jihadist.

"Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed. And surely Allah is able to assist them - Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah. And if Allah did not repel some people by others, cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, in which Allah's name is much remembered, would have been pulled down. And surely Allah will help him who helps His cause",<sup>16</sup>

The moderate Muslim community and the Obama Administration avow that radical Islamic groups such as Al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and IS are not Muslims, but terrorists; however; the continued struggle in Iraq, Syria, and increase of "lone wolf" attacks in the West paint a different picture.<sup>17</sup>

Conservative Muslim leaders contend that:

"Declaring Jihad is the responsibility of the Imam and is his independent legal judgment." Al-Dardir says, "Proclaiming Jihad comes through the Imam's assignment of a leader." Abu Bakr Al-Jazaa'iri states that the pillars of Jihad are: "A pure intention and that it is performed behind a Muslim Imam and beneath his flag and with his permission. ...it is not permissible for them to fight without an Imam."<sup>18</sup>

The contention that jihad must have parameters is a viable one, but also one subject to a multifaceted perception of obligatory requirements for a group to mobilize and fight. Supporting this rationale, the Islamic State fighters obediently follow the word of their *caliph*, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, and wave the flag of Islam as a means to serve under its execution.<sup>19</sup> A second contention by moderate Muslims is that the Qur'an prohibits Jihad between Muslims; however, this contention is false.<sup>20</sup> After the Islamic prophet Mohammed's death in the year 632 A.D., a schism over

succession as the caliph of the Muslim community developed.<sup>21</sup> Islamic jihadists follow Abu Bakr, the second prophet of Mohammed, while Shias follow

"Then shall We certainly drag out from every Shia (sect) all those who were worst in obstinate rebellion against (Allah) Most Gracious."  
(Qur'an Mariam:69)

the prophet Ali, which illustrates the divide between the two sects of Islam.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, Islamic jihadist view Shias as heretics or apostates who are worse than non-believers, citing the Qur'an as justification for their attacks.<sup>23</sup> The assertion that the contemporary "Islamic" groups are adapting to a Marxist or Socialist concept of class revolt aimed at overthrowing the authority of the state is

inaccurate as well. IS's primacy is not driven by a feudalistic class system caused by a government entity, but an overarching ideal of a "pure" Muslim world following *Sharia* (Islamic) law in an all-encompassing political system.<sup>24</sup>

The message of the global jihadist portrays a divergent view, which clashes with that of moderate Muslims. The hesitation of moderate Muslim nations to counter the messaging of radical Muslim groups further confuses Western understanding of the Muslim culture, while increasing the divide between moderate and conservative Muslim nations. As seen in the 2014 aerial campaign by the United States, any Western attack on a militant terrorist group can be construed as an attack on Islam if the proper message is not disseminated to Muslim nations countering the radical Islamic leader rhetoric.

#### *Jāhilīyah, Jihad and the Caliphate*

The Western notion that *jihad* is a relatively new concept is inaccurate. Sayyid Qutb, the Egyptian bureaucrat and strategic master of the Muslim Brotherhood, reaches back to 7<sup>th</sup> Century in his 1950's book, *Milestones*, to discuss the ideology of *jāhilīyah*, or a world of pagan ignorance.<sup>25</sup> In 1966, Qutb exploited the words of Mohammed and catapulted the idea of *jihadism* from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to reinvigorate the cleansing of the world of *jāhilīyah* through *jihad*.<sup>26</sup> The term *jāhilīyah*, when referencing jihad, is an all-encompassing term that includes Christianity, Judaism, and Catholicism, but also, the apostate or fake Muslim, which is the worst group of people in the eyes of the jihadist.<sup>27</sup> Fast forward to 2003, Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), initiated a two-pronged war attacking both the U.S. military fighting in Iraq and the country's Shia population. In the height of attacks in 2007, AQI and Iraqi jihadists bombed Samarra's al-Askari Mosque, sparking a sectarian war between Sunni and Shia.<sup>28</sup> These events led to the shift of US foreign policy, orchestrated by General David Petraeus, which would eventually be labeled "the

surge.” Prior to the escalation of US troops in 2007, President George W. Bush asserted that Zarqawi’s attacks against Shia Muslims were not Islamic, but simply a part of an evil strategy based on a skewed view of Islam.<sup>29</sup> This assertion was wrong. Prior to the rise of the Islamic State, AQI implemented a Draconian version of *sharia* law where violations of women’s rights were not only tolerated, but promoted, and repression of groups that were non-Muslim or “fake Muslims” was violently enforced. The words of Qutb and actions of Al-Zarqawi play a critical role in the strategy that the Islamic State uses to constrict information from the public, while enforcing *sharia* law regionally.<sup>30</sup> While AQI was eventually dispersed during the American “Surge”, the idea of establishing a new Caliphate never vanished from the minds of the AQI fighters.

The western translation of a caliphate is “government under a caliph or spiritual leader of Islam who claims succession from Mohammed.”<sup>31</sup> The caliphate grew rapidly during Muslims conquests in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries of Islam; however, it ceased to exist with the Mongol destruction of Baghdad in 1258.<sup>32</sup> Though the caliphate fell with the Mongols in 1258, the re-emergence of the Islamic caliphate is linked to the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is linked to the ideology of Global Jihad.<sup>33</sup> The fall of the Ottoman Empire is less about the government collapse and more about the exchange of the caliphate for a secular government led by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.<sup>34</sup> Overnight, Muslim Turks’ Arab script and traditional dress were made illegal, and most importantly, the traditional government, which was governed by Islam, had been replaced by a secular form of government.<sup>35</sup> Ataturk’s decision psychologically shocked traditional Muslims, and as Dr. Sebastian Gorka asserts, “...would later help engender an ideology of jihad.”<sup>36</sup> Over the course of the next 100 years, Islamism and the Sunni desire to re-establish the caliphate expanded throughout the Middle East. The root causes of the expansion of the caliphate can be attributed to Muslim grievances on the growth of Western influence and oppressive apostate governments;

however, the continued desire to suffer war in the name of Allah is ordered by Mohammed.<sup>37</sup> The Islamic State leverages the concept of the *ummah* (global Islamic community), or the idea that all Muslims, regardless of location, are bound together through a common faith that transcends all geographical, political, or national boundaries.<sup>38</sup> Although *takfiri* Muslims exploit technology for the purposes of the organization, its traditional belief transcends the evolution of mankind in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Katherine Gorka further clarifies the relationship between Islamism and Jihad by stating,

“Jihadism is neither flimsy nor merely a modernist by-product of 20<sup>th</sup> century stresses, but rather makes a point of rooting itself deep within the body of Islamic traditions and is very adept at negotiating the seams. By understanding the potency of its attraction and taking it seriously as an intellectual movement, the hope is that a more thorough groundwork can be laid to the construction of a consistent counter-message to the Islamist radicalism, one that will benefit from greater penetration and higher precision.”<sup>39</sup>

The caliphate synthesizes the ideology of Mohammed with the violent depiction of sharia law, and provides a “cause” for citizens of impoverished countries and governments to support. Western strategists assert that the establishment of the caliphate is not a viable goal, as it is void of a strong, government support model, but the destabilized countries of Iraq and Syria provide a perfect environment to obtain, equip, and train recruits while strengthening support of the caliphate.

### *The Battle of Ideologies*

Making uninformed assumptions is a recurring mistake that has plagued US leaders in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) during the last 13 years. The notion that the GWOT began with the attacks of 9/11 is not only misguided, but ignorant. Islamic militant groups have attacked the United States and its Western alliances since 1979, beginning with the Iranian seizure of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. The common thread among the attacks is one thing: the offenders are radical Muslim groups. Since the founding of the United States, Americans have been committed to protecting citizen’s freedom of religion, and while the commitment to the protection of basic rights is granted to all, the U.S. concept of freedom of religion fails to resonate with Islamic terror groups.<sup>40</sup> In

reality, the U.S.'s religious tolerance is chastised by many hardline Muslim groups. Additionally, understanding the enemy includes correctly classifying and naming it. In the case of the Islamic State, "Islamism" is the enemy's proper name. The overarching question is not how can a terrorist group be defeated, but how can the ideology of Islamism be contained or defeated? The problem of combatting radical Muslims in an insurgency without disparaging the millions of peaceful Muslims in the process presents a conundrum.

Theorists such as Jomini, maintain that only offensive actions may bring true victory.<sup>41</sup> John Shy reinforces this idea in his addition to *Makers of Modern Strategy*,

"The competing principles of "offensive" and "security" were left without satisfactory resolution exacerbated by uncertainty about the operational meaning of a third principle, that of the "objective."<sup>42</sup>

Conventional warfare follows the traditional model where two armies or coalitions fighting one another results in the destruction of the losing country's army and government with a physical and emotional surrender of one side. Fighting an insurgency is not as clear or finite. For example, during World War II, Americans generally believed that the war in Europe would end if Allied forces killed or captured Adolph Hitler. However, the death of Hitler failed to destroy the Nazi ideology. of the German government and infrastructure to prevent destabilization in the region and strengthen U.S. trade relationships with Europe. By way of comparison, during the last 13 years of protracted warfare, the United States has neutralized key Islamic group leaders, including Osama bin Laden (AQ), Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (AQI), and Harakat al-Shabaab al Mujahedeen (Al-Shabaab); yet we have seen the Islamic State emerge, the Boko Haram strengthen, and Al Qaeda continue attacks. While the desired endstate of killing the militant leader may be perceived as "winning the battle not the war", the actual result is only a temporary containment of the problem until a suitable replacement fills the leadership void to continue the war. Unlike AQI and Al-

Shabaab, IS does not fit the Clausewitzian model for terrorism. The late Colonel Andrew N. Pratt rationalized that terrorism is based on three important elements: 1) the aim of the action is always political in nature; 2) the essence of the action is to use violence to influence a broader audience; and 3) the target is civilians in order to destabilize the area of interest.<sup>43</sup> The Islamic State practices terrorism as a tactic, but terror, as a tactical means, makes up only one-third of the overall objective of establishing the caliphate. Terrorism operates in the first two phases (exhaustion and savagery) of the grand strategy in the evolution of establishment of the caliphate as revealed in Abu Bakr Naji's book, *The Management of Savagery*.<sup>44</sup> Radical Islam's strength originates from a centralized belief of a "pure" society; however, the idea depends on one set leader or *caliph*, which further frustrates counterterrorism experts on a long-term strategy to defeat Islamist groups. Until the radical Islamic ideology can be defeated, the West will continue to waste money on flawed strategies fighting emerging threats...not the long-term threat. Presently, the U.S strategy to defeat IS remains dependent on the ability of political and military leaders to elucidate the complexities of the problem. The Islamic State is not a Westphalian state, but demonstrates the capability to seize and hold ground, garner support of the people, conduct effective kinetic and non-kinetic (information operations), and destabilize the Middle East. While the air campaign produces immediate affects with precision air strikes, the strategy does not address the overarching problem of global jihadism. IS capitalizes on the inability of the United States to discern from the immediate threat and the long-term threat or to address the grievances generating the sectarian divide. U.S. reluctance to approach a strategy of defeating the ideology of global jihadists is based on a similar hesitance of Muslim nations to confront the divergence within its own religion.<sup>45</sup>

## The Rise of the Islamic State

### *The Collapse of Al-Qaeda in Iraq*

The conception of the Islamic State is not a surprise to many in the international community.

The 2011 U.S. withdrawal from Iraq, coupled with the destructive variables of a fragile government,



Figure 2: Al Nusra Front(Jabhat al-Nusra , Reuters, 2013)

fostered the perfect environment for the appearance of IS. While the Islamic State may seem like a new threat to Western nations, the present caliphate is the second attempt in recent years of jihadists attempting the establishment

of the caliphate. In 2007, AQI attempted to establish the caliphate in the Diyala Province under the name of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), and although it controlled much of province, the movement was defeated in by 2008 U.S. “surge” and Sunni Awakening.<sup>46</sup> From 2009 to 2012, the ISI rebuilt its power by exploiting the weaknesses of the Iraqi government, and exploited Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and government mistreatment on the Sunni minority. To further escalate sectarian tensions in the region, ISI targeted ISF and Iraqi government officials and buildings. These initial attacks proved that the fledgling Iraqi government lacked the capability to effectively combat medium size military formations without the military support of the United States.<sup>47</sup>

On May 16, 2010, IS named Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi al-Husseini al-Quarashi and Abu Abdallah al-Husseini al-Quarasshi as the group’s leaders following a raid that killed their predecessors and a series of crucial defeats during American and Iraqi combat operations.<sup>48</sup> Al-Baghdadi’s goal to establish the caliphate clarified in July of 2012 with the initiation of a year-long IS offensive named “Breaking the Walls.” This operation was intended to secure the release of prisoners and reclaim territory lost in Iraq from 2008.<sup>49</sup> The Sunni offensive targeted mainly Shiite civilians, while

releasing previously captured AQI fighters.<sup>50</sup> In 2013, IS announced a merger between IS and the Jabhat al-Nusra Front, an AQ affiliated jihadist group, currently fighting the Assad regime in Syria; however, the fragile partnership disintegrated due to a difference in priorities, goals, and plan on how to wage *jihad*.<sup>51</sup> Al-Nusra, which is widely regarded in Syria as a moderate Sunni movement, focused its efforts on overthrowing the Assad regime, while the hard-lined Islamic State sought to remove governmental and territorial constraints in the entire region.<sup>52</sup>

A common media misconception is that the goals of IS and AQ are synonymous; however, IS believes that its successes in northern Iraq and southern Syria provide the means needed to establish the regional caliphate. The difference in ideologies eventually led to the two groups severing ties from one another in February 2014; however, AQ's eventual separation from the Islamic State presents a unique problem for the organization: Al-Qaeda no longer has representation in Iraq.<sup>53</sup>

#### *Iraq, Syria, and Beyond*

The Islamic State's strength lies in its ability to exploit the weaknesses of the Iraqi Army and capitalize on the destabilization in Syria caused by a persistent insurgency aimed at overthrowing

*“Slavery, crucifixion, and beheadings are not something that freakish [jihadists] are cherry-picking from the medieval tradition. Islamic State fighters “are smack in the middle of the medieval tradition and are bringing it wholesale into the present day.”*

*Bernard Haykel  
The Atlantic, 2015*

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Additionally, exploits its success through robust information operations (IO) campaign leveraging social media as a means to distribute the message of the caliphate.<sup>54</sup> The thousands of people who travel

into Iraq and Syria daily to take up arms with the Islamic State validates the success of a strong messaging campaign.<sup>55</sup> While politicians in Washington maintain the notion that the Islamic State is *un-Islamic*, those reporting on the ground or managed to escape execution counter this narrative.

Furthermore, moderate Muslims hesitate to classify IS as an Islamic group, neglecting to

acknowledge the historical and philosophical requirements directed by the Mohammed and Allah.<sup>56</sup>

Bernard Haykel, a Princeton scholar who is a leading expert on the theology of global jihadism diverges from the Obama Administration's assessment of the Islamic State: "Many denials of the Islamic State's religious nature are rooted in an 'interfaith-Christian-nonsense tradition'."<sup>57</sup>

The paradigm of defining IS perpetuates international confusion as to quickness its rise to power. How can such a small group of idealists paralyze an entire region of such historical resolve and cultural rigidity? The answer is neither complex, nor long. The Islamic State remains unwavering on its message of instituting sharia law, attacking the apostate, and vilifying the West. Its swift version of "justice" against apostate Muslims and Christians is nothing short of gruesome; however, IS's strict following of jihadist threat doctrine reflects the actions of jihadists and crusaders of the medieval times and is followed without deviation or concern for moderate Muslims or "western" retaliation. The June 16, 2014, slaughter of over 1,000 Iraqi Soldiers exemplifies the resolve of the Islamic State and subjugates the idea that the IS cause is fleeting.<sup>58</sup> While the June 16 slaughter is only one example of IS's determination, the tenacity and quickness in the 6 months of its campaign to effectively seize much of Syria and Iraq forces a pause of reflection by US policymakers to address the question of whether the Islamic State is capable of posing an existential threat the domestic security of the United States? While President Obama characterizes IS as the "J-V team" (reference a junior varsity sports team), the Islamic State demonstrates that it can destabilize the Middle East as it expands its influence into Jordan, Afghanistan, Libya, and Egypt.<sup>59</sup>

The United States and its allies' visceral reaction to the Islamic State's increase of power is best defined as belated. The group's ambitions should not come as a surprise to any strategist who understands and studies the political and cultural paradigms that paralyze the region. At all junctures

of the Islamic State’s savagery, the United States and its Coalition of Muslim nations remain unable to interdict the violence or to counter the message of the caliphate. In the last several months, the



Figure 3: Jordanian Pilot (ISIS, NBC News, 2015)

group continues to upset regional stability through the execution of 21 Egyptian, Coptic Christians in Libya and the globally viewed burning execution of Jordanian pilot

(see figure 3), Moath al-Kassabeh.<sup>60</sup> These attacks

received worldwide condemnation and immediate

retaliatory strikes by Jordan and Egypt; however, the attacks failed to bait the Coalition into

conducting an ill-planned ground assault in IS controlled areas. Presently, the Islamic State

continues to provoke the United States to deviate from its current “air campaign” strategy to

“degrade and ultimately defeat” by expanding attacks regionally and inciting “lone wolf” attacks

globally.<sup>61</sup>

### *Exploiting the Net*

The Islamic State uses social media and the “24 hour news” cycle to promote its operational successes, while exploiting the ineffectiveness of the current US military strategy.<sup>62</sup> IS integration

of social media is unique in that its strategy is separate and distinct from Al Qaeda. The Islamic

State and AQ diverge on employment of social media as a weapon to defeat larger, more

cumbersome government institutions; however, the content of attacks distributed to the media

polarizes the divide in strategy between the two.<sup>63</sup> The Islamic State is more successful at utilizing

social media to recruit members, glorify extreme violence, and leverage new media platforms to

maintain relevancy with the global audience.<sup>64</sup>

“The group’s use of Twitter has been particularly effective. Its Arabic-language Twitter app, ‘The Dawn of Glad Tidings’ (or simply ‘Dawn’), is advertised as a way to keep up with what the group is doing (ISIS members have used Twitter to document their experiences and talk to other

fighters), but it also allows the group to enlist apparently thousands of activists to repeatedly tweet hashtags so that they trend on the social network.”<sup>65</sup>

The Islamic State leverages Twitter and Facebook to recruit, while AQ relies on “older” platforms such as websites and forums to distribute its propaganda.<sup>66</sup> Groups such as AQ and Al-Shabaab utilize social media to intimidate, mock, and brag about operations, while IS employs social media as delivery system to distribute its message and narrative of violence.<sup>67</sup> Additionally, IS capitalizes the United States’ lack of access to Syria and Iraq to control messaging capabilities through the use of cellular technology and mainstream media reaching global audiences, influencing adversaries, and recruiting fighters.<sup>68</sup> The Islamic State media strategy integrates Naji’s guidance as he directs in the savagery phase the need to “develop the media strategy in such a way that it reaches

*Much of ISIS's online strategy stems from lessons learned while its members were still in al-Qaida's fold. But when the groups split apart, their online strategies diverged as well—especially in how they use social media.*

*Laura Ryan, National Journal, 2014*

and targets the heart of the middle leadership of the armies of apostasy in order to push them to join the jihad.<sup>69</sup>” Naji later emphasizes the need to “raise” the reputation of the *mujahids* to

skew its enemy’s concentration of forces preventing the ability of the coalition to mass against their formations.<sup>70</sup> IS continues to use deception to recruit children, women, and jihadists around the world. The ease with which the Islamic State mutually supports its military objectives through its IO campaign can be attributed to a weakness of regional government and leadership in Iraq and Syria. While the US continues to promote the coalition of Muslim nations to address the threat, the strategy must assume that the Muslim nations truly understand the enemy facing them as well. As Dr. Gorka testified to House Armed Service Committee on June 22, 2011, “...without an understanding of the Enemy Threat Doctrine, victory is likely impossible.”<sup>71</sup>

## Defeating the Islamic State

On September 14, 2014, President Obama announced a series of actions to address the persistent threat. In his speech, Obama prioritized the security of the American people as the nation's number one priority, and then added, "At this moment, the greatest threats come from the Middle East and North Africa, where radical groups exploit grievances for their own gain."<sup>72</sup> While marginalizing the idea that the Islamic State is Islamic, Obama outlined his administration's strategy to "degrade and ultimately defeat" the group through a comprehensive, sustained counter-terrorism strategy. While Obama's strategy does not succinctly identify the threat, it does address the United States military role in the overall strategy, the desire for a coalition of Muslim nations, and the importance of providing humanitarian assistance.<sup>73</sup> The 2015 National Security Strategy (NSS) indicates that the Obama Administration is committed to the fight against IS; however, the commitment reinforces the necessity of maintaining strategic patience to further develop the coalition and allow the aerial campaign to generate the intended outcome.<sup>74</sup> A sound US strategy must 1) bridge diplomacy gap between the United States and our Muslim partners to support a nation state with similar religious and cultural beliefs to confront the Islamic State, 2) target IS financial capabilities; and finally, 3) provide the "right" support to assist the coalition of Muslim nations in the fight against the Islamic State.

*With our partners in the region and around the world, we are leading a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL. At the same time, we will continue to pursue a lasting political solution to the devastating conflict in Syria.*

President Barack Obama, 2015,  
National Security Strategy

## *U.S. / Muslim Coalition Partnership*

The political divide of military and civilians policy has amplified over the past 5 years, creating frustration with US combatant commands. Ranging from the dismissal of Admiral William Fallon and General Stanley McChrystal to the stepping down of Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, our military leaders at the national level remain conflicted on how to run the defense department,



Figure 4: Child Recruits ISIS, Fox News, 2015

while garnering the support of the pundits in Washington.

As the average U.S. citizen witnesses a widening gap between the federal civil military relationships, our enemies abroad capitalize on the weakness to exploit the divide to further their respective political causes.<sup>75</sup> A

quick snapshot of global emergencies illustrates the importance of a strong U.S. civil-military relationship, but also, the importance of partnering with the “right” nation to address the threat.

Currently, the Obama administration faces multiple transnational threats in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Russian President Vladimir Putin continues to expand Russian territories through a “covert” war using separatist rebels as this tool of military power, while terror groups such as Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab continue to destabilize the Nigerian and Somali governments as they expand their footprints in Africa. AQ and AQAP continue to demonstrate tactical patience by maintaining its organizational messaging of promoting attacks on the West; however, the unsettling truth is that the radical Islamic groups cannot be confronted using the traditional Westphalian approach.<sup>76</sup> The “right” strategy must address the religious and cultural domains that form the ideology of the global jihadist. Furthermore, the United States is not the right nation to address the Islamic State.

Although the threat of global jihadism appears to be a complex problem, its simplicity is the driver that underpins IS success, can Islamic State success be predicated on the inability of US strategists to

buy into the belief that the solution of confronting IS is too complex? Capt Mike Gallagher disagrees with the complexity argument stating:

*“Even as today’s invocations of complexity are descriptively misleading, they are also normatively dangerous. Succumbing to complexity does not tell us how to react; indeed, if anything, it dissuades us from reacting at all, out of fear that we cannot possibly know what to do. And, at best, it dictates a reactive stance, because pursuing an affirmative vision is deemed foolhardy amidst a turmoil that we cannot even comprehend.”<sup>77</sup>*

Civil-military relations critically align policy with strategy. In the last several months, the Obama Administration has taken steps to bridge the civil-military gap at the national level by submitting a war draft to Congress for review and vote; however, the language within the draft imposes several military restrictions that infuse further “complexity” in the overall war strategy.<sup>78</sup> Although the solution may be unpopular to many US military minds, the Islamic State must be confronted by a conservative Sunni nation state, such as Saudi Arabia, with similar religious and cultural ideals as the Islamic State. To illustrate, if a large coalition of Southern gentlemen had confronted Klu Klux Klan’s (KKK) racist ideology, then regional acceptance of that belief would have been degraded well ahead of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. The power of peer-to-peer confrontation is that it forces an organization to assimilate to basic societal norms in the face of isolation by the rest of the Muslim world. In understanding this paradigm, the United States must resist the urge to westernize the formulation of its strategy against IS. Additionally, the restrictions limit flexibility for “unforeseen” circumstances giving credence to CPT Gallagher’s assertion that operational paralysis is caused by bureaucracy at the National level; however, the truth is that overall strategy depends fully on the success of clear strategy as it pertains to identifying the threat and developing a clear policy to address it.

### *Targeting Financial Capabilities*

The United States is pursuing a policy to reduce the financial means of the Islamic State to fund its war in three separate ways. First, the strategy focuses on the Department of Treasury to disrupt IS revenue streams by “targeting those who refine, transport, and handle IS oil.”<sup>79</sup> Second, the Departments of Treasury and State are partnering with Iraqi authorities, banks, and the international financial community to prevent IS from using locally controlled banks under its control.<sup>80</sup> Finally, the US-imposed sanctions against IS officials and their external financial backers are generating significant gains in preventing IS from establishing a foothold in formal financial markets.<sup>81</sup> Although limiting funding does not completely prevent IS from maintaining its operational tempo, the impact of these efforts influences the stabilization phase of the establishment of the caliphate. On February 12, 2015, Al-Baghdadi published a 17-minute audio recording in which he announced the launching of its new currency “as a way to separate its self-declared proto-state encompassing northwest Iraq and northeast Syria from the tyrannical financial system imposed on Muslims”.<sup>82</sup> Simply stated, the long-term effect of the imposed financial strategy is indeed having the desired effect. The inability of IS to establish controls, coupled with recent defeats in Kobani and Samarra, continue to deteriorate its base of support.<sup>83</sup>

### *Providing the “Right” Support*

The use of force as an instrument of national power is an appropriate strategy in total war; however, fighting an insurgency requires a different approach. The last 13 years of protracted warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrate that the US military is capable of fighting all types

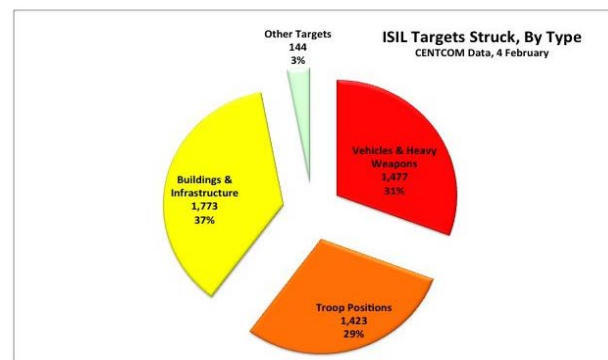


Table 1: (US Airstrikes, CENTCOM; 2014)

of warfare; however, simply because the US military can provide such a capability, does not mean that it should. Table 1 illustrates the frequency of air to ground attacks conducted by the coalition as of February 4, 2015. Conversely, the Obama Administrations limited airstrike strategy, as a means of defeating IS, proves to lack depth of military capabilities and breadth of operational planning. In six months of airstrikes, the United States and its coalition conducted over 1,500 strikes prosecuting 4,817 targets; however, these attacks are failing to prevent IS from expanding its footprint in the region.<sup>84</sup> While these strikes are undeniably making an impact on IS, the unstated question is, “if the strikes are having the intended effect of destroying the critical infrastructure, command and control nodes, and fortified troop positions will that prevent further IS expansion?” The answer is “yes” and “no.” Realizing the impact of air strikes is predicated on the ability to receive accurate reports by forces on the ground. The United States’ fires capability is extremely effective operating from the perspective of joint fires when a U.S. service member is controlling fires; however, the absence of U.S. joint fires observer/controllers to accurately place fires limits the accurate reporting of effects.<sup>85</sup> Presently, the United States is providing a ground combat capability in the form of adviser/trainers; however, President Obama’s December 2014 order to send an additional 1,500 “advisers” to assist in current operations further illuminates the need for an increased ground presence to coordinate fires for the *pershmerga*, Iraqi army, and Free Syrian Army.<sup>86</sup>

President Obama’s war draft to Congress demonstrates a major shift in the strategy to fight IS; however, the reluctance to put “combat units or boots on the ground” remains a major source of contention between the Obama Administration and Congress.<sup>87</sup> Currently, the strategy is based on a fight to “not lose” as opposed to winning. So how will victory look? From a ground perspective, the overall strategy must lift the prohibition on US “boots on the ground” to allow critical combat enablers such as US Special Forces and forward air controllers to embed themselves with the ground

units (Kurdish *persmerga*, Iraqi Security Forces, Free Syrian Army, etc.) to provide a like combat capability as demonstrated with the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan.<sup>88</sup> The utilization of special operations and joint fires observer/controllers to provide an improved reconnaissance, intelligence, and surveillance (ISR) capability, as well as reduce the communication barriers between units on the ground and aviators prosecuting the described targets. As Dr. Gorka testified to Congress in 2011,

“...we now need to transition away from concentrating on dismantling and disrupting al Qaeda’s network, to undermining its core strategy of ideological attack. We need to employ much more the indirect approach made famous by our community of Special Forces operators of working “by, with and through” local allies and move beyond attacking the enemy directly at the operational and tactical level to attacking it indirectly at the strategic level.”<sup>89</sup>

### *MISO / CA Capabilities*

The US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) reinforces the need to add value to activities and operations that are population or threat focused using restraint, perseverance, and legitimacy.<sup>90</sup> The strategy to defeating IS includes the use of special operations; however, Military Information Support Operations (MISO) and Civil Affairs (CA) capabilities that are nested within SOCOM provide a direct bridge to civil-military operations in support of Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Unconventional Warfare (UW), Counterterrorism (CT) and other SOF core operations.<sup>91</sup>

“MISO operations convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in a manner favorable to the originator’s objectives.”<sup>92</sup>

“CA operations (1) enhance the relationship between military forces and civil authorities in localities where military forces are present; (2) require coordination with other interagency organizations, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, indigenous populations and institutions, and the private sector; and (3) involve application of functional specialty skills that normally are the responsibility of civil-government to enhance the conduct of civil-military operations.”<sup>93</sup>

The communication flow in Iraq and Syria is limited to those that have control of the area. The Islamic State has cut many communication lines of effort (LOE) in Northwest Iraq, while two-way communication in Syria is limited to those reporters embedded with IS or the Free Syrian Army, which further yield IS successes in the information domain. MISO operations provide a capability to counter the IS information operation campaign, informing coalition commanders on the disposition of IS leadership, soldiers, and civilians under IS control. Additionally, increased CA operations bridge the communication gap between the civilians displaced by IS, and coalition forces conducting operations. Regarding the increase of assets, the capabilities that MISO and CA operations provide in irregular warfare target critical capabilities and vulnerabilities of the Islamic State then exploits to assist in rebuilding the forces in both Iraq and Syria. Furthermore, the goals of MISO and CA operations must be clear in the US strategy to distribute the message of removing Islamic militants from the equation of regional stability among Iraqi and Syrian civilian, military, and political domains.<sup>94</sup>

The ability of US forces to bankrupt the message of the Islamic State is critical to the overall success of the regional stability; however, the United States must refrain from injecting nationalism, which would further increase the cultural divide between Muslim nations and the West.<sup>95</sup> If history is a guide to success, then understanding the necessity of providing the “right” types of forces to support the coalition leading into Phase IV stability operations is critical. Unlike the Iraqi model, circa 2006, the current environment and strategic objectives of the coalition demand that the U.S. maintains a supporting role in the fight against the Islamic State. For the strategy to be effective, our partners in the coalition of Muslim nations must understand, approve, and lead ground combat efforts in concert with US support.<sup>96</sup>

## *Empowering the Coalition of Muslim Nations*

The call for Muslim nations to lead the fight against IS echoes through the media streams, the US government, and much of our military; however, the caution, demonstrated by our Muslim partners, to lead the fight against the Islamic State is not without merit. The Muslim nation understands that fundamentally the Islamic State cannot be allowed to advance its goal of establishing the caliphate; yet, Western intervention in Muslim affairs poses a counter threat to that of the Islamic State. Additionally, when describing the threat of radical Islam, the West must act as a supporting voice instead of directing the coalition of Muslim nations against IS. “Non-Muslims cannot tell Muslims how to practice their religion properly.”<sup>97</sup>

The Arab world is at an ideological and fundamental crossroads; Muslims killing other Muslims, as part of a Western coalition, is counterintuitive to the teachings of Mohammed. Although many Muslims will never conduct *jihad*, a Muslim should never side with the non-believer (Westerner) as this act would make him an apostate (fake Muslim).<sup>98</sup> Conversely, the risk of living in a destabilized state forces the hand of regional actors to address the threat. The political, financial, and military reach of the United States provides a capability unmatched by Arab nations; however, the critical capability of understanding the enemy possessed by the West, prevents a larger, more powerful US government from achieving a decisive unilateral victory against the Islamic State and undermines the strategy to defeat radical Islam.

### **Summary**

The strategy on the war against the Islamic State and global jihadism paints a picture that it is unwinnable; however, the reality is that victory will not resemble that of the US Civil War or World War II. The United States must face the fact that in this victory, there will be no unconditional surrender of the Confederate Army or the German Reich, no rising of the US flag as pictured in Iwo

Jima, or increased US nationalism from a glorious victory against the brutal jihadist. Instead, the United States must accurately frame the problem for the Muslim coalition, provide civil-military capabilities to the commanders on the ground as needed, and be prepared to assist these nations in providing humanitarian, political, and military support once the battle has transitioned into stability operations.

The Islamic State represents a portion of the larger problem that faces the United States and its Western allies. The ideology of Islamism presents a significant threat to all non-Muslims, apostates, and those Muslims who follow sharia law. While jihadist terror groups like Boko Haram, AQ, and Al-Shabaab destabilize their respective regions, IS possesses the capability to mobilize, fight, and seize swaths of land, while using *takfiri* ideologies to expand the sphere of influence across the periphery nations of Jordan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Afghanistan. Expansion of control in these nations further educates the West on the dedication possessed by the Islamic State. The last 13 years of protracted warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan polarized the United States against the idea of a prolonged military presence in the Middle East; however, IS's expansive goals, coupled with an evolving, present an opportunity for the United States to support the nations with whom our popularity has waned over the course of the last 10 years.

The United States and its coalition of Muslim nations must be prepared to commit to using forces on the ground for the near-term in order to establish a foothold in Iraq and gain momentum in the fight. Utilization of US brigade combat teams (BCTs) in a supporting role provides a capability that immediately impacts the Islamic State's freedom of maneuver, and provides critical combat enablers needed to degrade IS military capabilities. The goal of US ground combat operations is to allow the Muslim coalition to regain the initiative against IS and support ISF and Iraqi police to re-establish control of Islamic State controlled areas. Finally, the US must be prepared to conduct

stability operations once the combat operations are complete. If the plan is to succeed, then the coalition must set the conditions to prevent the Islamic State or other terror groups return to destabilize the region again. Success must be event driven and will require US political restraint to withdraw forces before success has been achieved.

If the United States truly commits support to combating the Islamic State, then that commitment must come with a restraint from US nationalist tendencies. Furthermore, allocating resources to provide a better, more holistic capability to the Muslim nations combating IS generates a visceral response from both the coalition of Muslim partners and the Islamic State that the world cannot and will not tolerate the brutal subjugation of humans, regardless of religious affiliation. The desired response is that the United States 1) understands the Muslim culture and becomes more of a partner as opposed to a superior and 2) commits to dislodging the Islamic State from power, thus allowing the Arab nations to eradicate the problem known as the Islamic State.

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<sup>1</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army. *ADP 3-0: Unified Land Operations*. (HQDA, 2011), pg. 2, [http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/dr\\_pubs/dr\\_a/pdf/adp3\\_0.pdf](http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/dr_pubs/dr_a/pdf/adp3_0.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Sebastian L. Gorka. "The Enemy Threat Doctrine of Al Qaeda." In *Fighting the Ideological War: Winning Strategies from Communism to Islamism*, edited by Katharine C. Gorka and Patrick Sookhdeo, 195. McLean, VA: Isaac Publishing, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> "UAE Pulled Out of ISIS Bombing After Jordanian Pilot Captured in December", Brendan Bordelon, National Review, February 4, 2015, <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/397911/uae-pulled-out-isis-bombing-after-jordanian-pilot-captured-december-brendan-bordelon>.

<sup>4</sup> "UAE Pulled Out of ISIS Bombing After Jordanian Pilot Captured in December", Brendan Bordelon, National Review, February 4, 2015, <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/397911/uae-pulled-out-isis-bombing-after-jordanian-pilot-captured-december-brendan-bordelon>.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen P. Lambert, *The Sources of Islamic Revolutionary Conduct* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic Intelligence Research, Joint Military Intelligence College, 2005), p. 171.

<sup>6</sup> Barack Obama. "Remarks by the President on Ending the War in Iraq", *the White House*, (October 21, 2011), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/10/21/remarks-president-ending-war-iraq>.

<sup>7</sup> Sebastian L. Gorka. "The Enemy Threat Doctrine of Al Qaeda." In *Fighting the Ideological War: Winning Strategies from Communism to Islamism*, edited by Katharine C. Gorka and Patrick Sookhdeo, 195. McLean, VA: Isaac Publishing, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> "Revealed – how the threat of ISIS is spreading: Extremist group has DOUBLED the land it controls in just a few months despite more than 800 coalition airstrikes," Flora Drury, *Daily Mail*, last modified January 17, 2015, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2914475/ISIS-expand-control-Syria-American-airstrikes.html>.

<sup>9</sup> "Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's Message as Caliph", Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, Gatestone Institute, last modified July 2, 2014, <http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4387/baghdadi-isis-caliphate>.

<sup>10</sup> Sebastian L. Gorka. "The Enemy Threat Doctrine of Al Qaeda." In *Fighting the Ideological War: Winning Strategies from Communism to Islamism*, edited by Katharine C. Gorka and Patrick Sookhdeo, 187. McLean, VA: Isaac Publishing, 2012.

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