

Searching for a Strategy

Another week, another ISIS atrocity. And President Obama has finally taken off the gloves... kind of.

After confirmation that still another American, 26-year-old aid worker Kayla Mueller, had been killed by the savages, the president defined the killers as a "hateful and abhorrent terrorist group."

More importantly, the president asked Congress to endorse the use of military force against ISIS, although he seems to maintain that the battle can be won without employing ground troops. Right after the president's brief speech Wednesday, Fox News White House correspondent Ed Henry summed up the commander-in-chief's overall war strategy:

A, I'm not George W. Bush. B, no endless ground wars.

Despite the fact that his message was intentionally ambiguous, President Obama is sure to find resistance on both sides of the aisle. Some dovish Democrats are wary of any military force whatsoever, while some Republicans say the request is too vague, too limited, and does not lay out a concrete strategy to fight the terrorists. Of course, there are also those in the GOP who will oppose anything the president suggests, whatever the merits.

Washington's wise elders are fairly consistent in their views. Robert Gates, the former Pentagon boss who is anything but a partisan bomb-thrower, said this a few months ago: "There will be boots on the ground if there's to be any hope of success." And just days ago, Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency said our strategy is "clearly not working ... you can't defeat an enemy that you don't admit exists."

It now seems that President Obama is admitting that an enemy

exists, a dangerous enemy that is eager to kill Americans – whether in Syria or in Iraq or in the USA. They are not a jayvee team, and tens of thousands of eager jihadists from all over the world are joining their ranks. These barbarians will stop at nothing in their quest to establish a new Islamic caliphate.

Stopping the killers will require a long-term and coherent strategy, one that could include some U.S. ground forces. So far President Obama has scoffed at that idea, preferring to believe that a weak coalition and continued air strikes will be sufficient.

It's worth keeping something in mind: This is a man who won election in 2012 after boasting about having ended the war in Iraq, a man whose trophy case includes the Nobel Peace Prize. It is not hard to imagine how painful it must be for him to see Thursday's banner headline: OBAMA ASKS FOR WAR POWER

The president's longtime friend and confidante David Axelrod visited the No Spin Zone this week – like his former boss, he seems to believe we are pursuing the right strategy and that air power will eventually be enough "degrade" the savages. Secretary of State John Kerry actually claims "we are on the road" to defeating the Islamic State, while President Obama says ISIL is plagued by "sinking morale." But even Pollyanna knows that the ISIS crew will not go gently.

This is a pertinent time to recall a famous quote attributed to Leon Trotsky: "You may not be interested in war, but war is interested in you." It is obvious that President Obama came into office without any interest in waging war – he preferred to pursue "social justice" through income redistribution and an expansion of the welfare state. Unfortunately for him, and for us, is equally obvious that the butchers of ISIS have given him absolutely no choice. War is very, very interested in President Obama.