

The octopus' head is filled with garbage. Why don't we expose it?



by Lev Tsitrin

The comparison of Iran to an octopus' head, and the militias it equips and funds that operate in Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Gaza to its tentacles, is both obvious and ubiquitous – and is invariably made in the context of asking a big question: isn't it the time to turn from fighting octopus' tentacles, to hitting the octopus over its head?

The latter option is tempered by the wish to avoid yet another major war in the Middle East which – given the experience of Afghanistan and Iraq – many think would be a yet another unwinnable quagmire. And so the strikes hit the tentacles rather than the head: Houthies' munitions stores get blown up by Americans and the Brits to make it harder for Houthies to attack shipping in the Red sea; Iraqi militias got hit in response of the killing of three US service members in Jordan; and Israelis are fighting Hamas in Gaza.

There are occasional exceptions – once in a while, Iran itself gets a flick on the nose. Four years ago, the US killed their top general, Quasem Suleimani; hitmen rumored to be Israeli took out several nuclear scientists and intelligence officers. As of late, this activity seems to have picked up in tempo: about a month ago, four top-tier Iranian military advisors got killed in a missile strike in Damascus; a week ago, Iranian ship that transmitted targeting information to Houthies got hit by an American cyberattack; and just the other day, Iran's extensive network of gas pipelines was hit by several

explosions that the [New York Times blamed on Israel](#).

But exceptions only prove the rule. Clearly, those were carefully-calibrated warnings rather than instances of warfare. Americans signaled that they won't tolerate messing with them in the Middle East. The attack on Iran's pipelines is as clear a hint to Iran as possible that it too has vulnerable logistical networks – so the Red sea shipping lanes should better be left alone. Even the attack in Damascus seems to have been timed closely to Iran's own missile attacks on Pakistan and Iraqi Kurdistan that left Iranians riding high – for a day; the Damascus attack deflated Iranian elation and put Iranians a few pegs down – in fact, prompting them to withdraw their higher-ranking military and intelligence officers back to Iran to cut their losses, even at the expense of military effectiveness – for whoever struck Damascus (fingers instantly pointing to Israel) could strike again. So, all the messaging seems aimed at reminding Iranians that they also live in a glass house – something they should keep in mind before getting too full of themselves and start throwing bricks around the broader Middle East.

Thus, the military activity directly impacting Iran is not really “striking the octopus' head” – it just reminds the Iranian octopus not to get too uppity.

So is there a way to hit the octopus' head without a massive military action?

Yes – by simply examining the contents of this head.

We in the West are extremely reluctant to do it. We never did it in Afghanistan; we never did it in Iraq – and it is not likely that we'll do it in Iran. This is a shame – because such an inspection would instantly show that what fills the the octopus' head is just garbage – of a kind that the [religious call “idolatry.”](#) I keep repeating this ad nauseam – but this is worth being repeated over and over again: there is

not a single person in the world who has the ability to know whether God ever talked to Mohammed. Yet the Taliban regime, and that of the ayatollahs, as well as their Shia and Sunni ilk are all based on an unspoken, and factually wrong premise that such knowledge is possible. Islamists confuse and conflate two completely different things: an emotional and intellectual appeal of a theory, and its factual truth. Putting the equal sign between them is clear-cut act of idol-worship.

Expose this error in ayatollahs' and mullahs' reasoning, show that what fills the octopus' head and motivates its hateful and destructive action is merely idolatrous garbage of the very same kind that, two millennia ago, filled the heads of the worshipers of Moloch and inspired them to offer human sacrifices (nowadays called, in Islamism-speak, "martyrdom operations") – and you will deal the octopus' head a blow that will be far more effective than anything that can be done using the force of arms.

Unfortunately, even the people who talk of "hitting the head of the octopus" as the solution to the Iran problem are unwilling to consider this way of doing it. Their terms of reference are strictly military. Apparently, the idea that "a pen is mightier than a sword" and that reason is powerful enough to force a change in thinking that would cascade to the change in behavior, is long passe. I find this negation of the power of reason to be deeply unfortunate – though I admit that it does follow logically from our present-day religion of "multiculturalism" and "political correctness" that emasculated reason – the two stumbling blocks we in the West set for ourselves to stymie rational thought.

As a result, Iran's ayatollahs have many more allies than just Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthies, and their ilk. Western media, academe, and the political class who disarm us using "multiculturalism" and "political correctness," form Islamists' first line of defense right here in the West – and

these oppressors of freedom of thought and speech must be fought and defeated first.

Free thought is ringed with enemies – some sitting in Tehran, but many in the Western capitals and universities. They mutually reinforce each other by erecting the “politically correct” taboos on what can be thought, and spoken publicly. Fighting them is tough – but the battle for freedom needs to be fought and won if we are to win in the battle of ideas that is, ultimately, the only one capable of defeating Islamism’s deadly idolatry that fills the head of Tehran’s octopus – and energizes its tentacles, both Sunni and Shia.

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