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Created *Mar 30 2011 - 7:00am*

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What guides the Decider? In the speech he gave on Monday night, the president explained that, had he not gotten kinetic when he did,

...Benghazi – a city nearly the size of Charlotte – could suffer a massacre that would have reverberated across the region and stained the conscience of the world.

It was not in our national interest to let that happen. I refused to let that happen

Our Constitution empowers Congress to raise an army and maintain a navy for "the common defence... of the United States." In President Obama's worldview, that constitutional purpose is far too crabbed and selfish. The U.S. military has another vital purpose: preventing "stain[s] to the conscience of the world." America as Tide Pen for the Globe.

In this role, it seems, we (er, he) can act preemptively:

Some nations may be able to turn a blind eye to atrocities in other countries. The United States of America is different. And as President, I refused to wait for the images of slaughter and mass graves before taking action.

In describing the "Bush Doctrine" Obama's predecessor famously said, "If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long." Some of us thought that revealed a hair-trigger approach to foreign danger that would have us fighting many more wars than we should. But however implausible some of the allegedly emerging threats were, at least the putative goal was the protection of American national security. Not so here.

Beltway Confidential

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