

‘Friends, Not Masters’: Is Biden a Frenemy of Islamic World?

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*During the presidential debate alongside **Donald Trump** in September, Democratic presidential candidate **Joe Biden** uttered the invocative Islamic expression “**Inshallah**,” meaning “God willing,” to woo the Muslim American voters, which was cheered by Democratic supporters across the Islamic World.*

Being misinformed viewers of the Western mainstream media, however, **the Democratic Party-leaning Muslims didn’t realize that all the missiles the liberal interventionist Obama-Biden administration deployed to bomb eight Islamic countries during its eight-year tenure were also inscribed with “Inshallah.”**

Empty rhetoric, no matter how bombastic and noble-sounding, is never a substitute for tangible benevolent deeds. If nurturing patron-client relationship with autocratic rulers of the Islamic World is the touchstone for being an Islamic sympathizer, then the Trump administration has forged friendlier relationships with absolute monarchs of the Gulf States, the military dictator of Egypt and the populist demagogue of Turkey.

All Joe Biden did for the Islamic World in his over forty-year political career, first as a longtime senator from Delaware and then as Obama’s vice president, **was to underwrite the Machiavellian policy of the US national security establishment to train and arm Islamic jihadists and use them as proxies against strategic adversaries** in regions as disparate as the Af-Pak, Chechnya in the North Caucasus, Bosnia and Kosovo in the Balkans, Libya in North Africa and Syria in the Near East.

Before being elected as Obama’s vice president in 2008, as a senator and subsequently as the member and then the chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Joe Biden, alongside inveterate hawk Senator Joe Lieberman, was one of the principal architects of the Bosnia War in the Clinton administration in the nineties.

Naively giving credit to former Senator and Vice President Joe Biden for his supposed “humanitarian interventionism” and for creating a catastrophe in the Balkans in the nineties, Paul Richter and Noam N. Levey, [writing for the LA Times](#) [1] in August 2008, observed:

“Biden has frequently favored humanitarian interventions abroad and was an early and influential advocate for the US military action in the Balkans in the

1990s.

“Biden considers his most important foreign policy accomplishment to be his leadership on the Balkans in the mid-1990s. He pushed a reluctant Clinton administration first to arm Serbian Muslims and then to use U.S. air power to suppress conflict in Serbia and Kosovo.”

Biden’s belligerent militarism, however, didn’t stop in the Balkans, as the head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Biden said in 2002 that Saddam Hussein was a threat to national security and there was no option but to eliminate that threat. In October 2002, he voted in favor of the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq, approving the US invasion of Iraq.

More significantly, as chair of the committee, he assembled a series of witnesses to testify in favor of the authorization. They gave testimony grossly misrepresenting the intent, history of and status of Saddam and his Baathist government, which was an openly avowed enemy of al-Qaeda, and touting Iraq’s fictional possession of weapons of mass destruction.

Writing for The Guardian’s “Comment is Free” in February, [Mark Weisbrot contends](#) [2] that Joe Biden was at the forefront of mustering bipartisan support for the illegal Iraq War and it would come back to haunt him in the forthcoming presidential elections like the criminal complicity of Hillary Clinton in lending legitimacy to the Bush administration’s unilateral invasion of Iraq had thwarted her presidential ambitions, too, in the 2016 presidential elections.

Weisbrot observes:

“When the war was debated and then authorized by the US Congress in 2002, Democrats controlled the Senate and Biden was chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations. Biden himself had enormous influence as chair and argued strongly in favor of the 2002 resolution granting President Bush the authority to invade Iraq.

“‘I do not believe this is a rush to war,’ Biden said a few days before the vote. ‘I believe it is a march to peace and security. I believe that failure to overwhelmingly support this resolution is likely to enhance the prospects that war will occur ...’

“But he had a power much greater than his own words. He was able to choose all 18 witnesses in the main Senate hearings on Iraq. And he mainly chose people who supported a pro-war position. They argued in favor of ‘regime change as the stated US policy’ and warned of ‘a nuclear-armed Saddam sometime in this decade.’ That Iraqis would ‘welcome the United States as liberators’ and that Iraq ‘permits known al-Qaida members to live and move freely about in Iraq’ and that ‘they are being supported.’”

When the ill-conceived invasion and occupation of Iraq didn’t go as planned and the entire region slipped into myriad ethnic and sectarian conflicts, including the spillover of militancy across the porous border in neighboring Syria in 2011, Biden sought refuge in “plausible deniability” and blamed Syria’s neighbors Turkey, Jordan and the Gulf States for fueling the conflict.

Addressing a seminar at Harvard in 2014, [Joe Biden said](#) [3] that Saudi Arabia and the UAE

had transferred hundreds of millions of dollars and large amounts of weaponry to a variety of Islamist militias inside Syria, including at least one with ties to al Qaeda.

“The Turks were great friends, and I’ve a great relationship with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, ... the Saudis, the Emiratis, etc. What were they doing? They were so determined to take down Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and essentially have a proxy Sunni-Shia war. What did they do?” Biden asked, according to a recording of the speech posted on the White House’s website.

“They poured hundreds of millions of dollars and tens of thousands of tons of weapons into anyone who would fight against Assad, except that the people who were being supplied were al-Nusra, and al Qaeda, and the extremist elements of jihadis coming from other parts of the world.”

To his credit, despite being a warmonger masquerading as “a pacifist,” former President Obama was at least smart. Having graduated as one of the poorest student from the law school, then-Vice President Biden didn’t realize the irony of his remarks.

The Gulf States, Turkey and Jordan didn’t funnel money and weapons into Syria’s proxy war without a nod from Washington. In fact, the CIA’s Operation Timber Sycamore to train and arm Syrian militants battling the Bashar al-Assad government from 2012 to 2017 in the border regions of Jordan and Turkey was approved and supervised by the Obama administration of which Biden was the vice president and second-in-command.

Regarding the creation and composition of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, apart from training and arms which were provided to Syrian militants in the training camps located in the Turkish and Jordanian border regions adjacent to Syria by the CIA in collaboration with Turkish, Jordanian and Saudi intelligence agencies, another factor that contributed to the success of the Islamic State when it overran Raqqa in Syria in 2013 and Mosul and Anbar in Iraq in 2014 was that its top cadres were comprised of former Baathist military and intelligence officers from the Saddam era.

Reportedly, hundreds of ex-Baathists constituted the top- and mid-tier command structure of the Islamic State who planned all the operations and directed its military strategy. The only feature that differentiated the Islamic State from all other insurgent groups was that its command structure which was comprised of professional ex-Baathists and its state-of-the-art weaponry that was provided to all militant outfits fighting in Syria by the intelligence agencies of the Western powers, Turkey, Jordan and the Gulf states.

In fact, Washington exercised such an absolute control over Syria’s theater of proxy war that although the US openly provided the American-made antitank (TOW) weapons to Syrian militant groups, it strictly forbade its clients from providing anti-aircraft weapons (MANPADS) to the militants, because Israel frequently flies surveillance aircrafts and drones and occasionally conducts airstrikes in Lebanon and Syria, and had such weapons fallen into the wrong hands, they could have become a long-term security threat to the Israeli Air Force.

Although ostensibly fighting a “war on terror” for the last couple of decades, the American deep state and political establishment have clandestinely nurtured Islamic jihadists and used them as proxies in myriad conflict zones of the Middle East to achieve “strategic objectives.”

If we take a cursory look at the history of the recent US administrations, the Carter and Reagan administrations trained and armed Afghan Mujahideen against the former Soviet Union during the Cold War in the late 1970s and 80s, those same “freedom fighters” later mutated into al-Qaeda and Taliban; the Clinton administration used Islamic jihadists to break up former Yugoslavia in the 1990s; the Bush administration invaded Iraq in 2003 that gave birth to al-Qaeda in Iraq; and the Obama-Biden administration initiated proxy wars in Libya and Syria in 2011 to topple Arab nationalist governments of Gaddafi and Bashar al-Assad that gave birth to extremist groups such as Ansar al-Sharia in Libya and Islamic State and al-Nusra Front in Syria.

Karl Marx famously said that history repeats itself, first as tragedy and then as farce. The only difference between the Soviet-Afghan jihad back in the 1980s, that spawned Islamic jihadists such as the Taliban and al-Qaeda for the first time in history, and the proxy wars in Libya and Syria 2011-onward was that the Afghan jihad was an overt jihad: back then, the Western national security establishments and their mouthpiece, the mainstream media, used to openly brag that the CIA provides all those rocket-propelled grenades and stingers to the Afghan so-called “freedom fighters” to combat the Soviet troops in Afghanistan.

After the 9/11 tragedy, however, the Western deep states and corporate media became a lot more circumspect, therefore this time around, they waged covert jihads against the Arab-nationalist Gaddafi regime in Libya and the anti-Zionist Assad government in Syria, in which Islamic jihadists (aka terrorists) were sold as “moderate rebels” with secular and nationalist ambitions to the Western audience.

Since the regime change objective in those hapless countries went against the mainstream narrative of ostensibly fighting a war against terrorism, therefore the Western national security establishments and the corporate media tried to muddle the reality by offering color-coded schemes to identify myriads of militant and terrorist outfits that operated in Syria: such as the red militants of the Islamic State and al-Nusra Front, which the Western powers wanted to eliminate; the yellow Islamic jihadists, including Jaysh al-Islam and Ahrar al-Sham, with whom the Western powers can collaborate under desperate circumstances; and the green militants of the Free Syria Army (FSA) and a few other inconsequential outfits, which together comprised the elusive “moderate” Syrian opposition that existed only in the mainstream media’s fictional narrative of Syria’s proxy war but was nowhere to be found on the ground.

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Notes

[1] On foreign policy, he’s willing to go his own way:

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2008-aug-24-na-foreignpol24-story.html>

[2] Joe Biden championed the Iraq war. Will that come back to haunt him now?

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/feb/17/joe-biden-role-iraq-war>

[3] Joe Biden is the only honest man in Washington:

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/10/07/joe-biden-is-the-only-honest-man-in-washington/>

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