

More Lies About Syria's "White Helmets"

Is resettling a terrorist front group in the West a good idea?

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When is a terrorist group not a terrorist group? Apparently the answer is that it ceases to be terrorist when it terrorizes someone who is an enemy of the United States.

The most prominent recent example is the Mujaheddin e Khalq (MEK), a murderous Iranian cult which assassinated five Americans in the 1970s as part of its campaign against the Shah's government. It was removed from the State Department terrorist list in 2012 by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton after it had promised not to kill any more Americans but really because it had bought the support of prominent politicians to include Elaine Chao, Rudy Giuliani, Newt Gingrich, and John Bolton.

It also had the behind the scenes endorsement of both the Israeli Mossad and CIA, both of whom have been using it in their operations to kill Iranians and damage the country's infrastructure. Someone high up in the federal government, perhaps Hillary or even President Obama himself, must have decided that terrorists who kill only Iranians deserve a get out of jail free card from the State Department.

There are other examples of cynical doublespeak from the Syrian conflict, including labeling rebels against the Damascus government "freedom fighters" when in reality they were as often as not allied with the al-Qaeda affiliated group Al-Nusra or even with ISIS. Frequently they received training and weapons from Washington only to turn around and either join Al-Nusra and ISIS as volunteers or surrender their weapons to them.

But perhaps there is no bigger fraud making the rounds than the so-called White Helmets. The recent media coverage derives from the documentary *The White Helmets*, which was produced by the group itself and tells a very convincing tale [promoted as](#) "the story of real-life heroes and impossible hope." It is a very impressive piece of propaganda, so much so that it has won numerous awards including the Oscar for Best Documentary Short last year and the White Helmets themselves were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

More to the point, however, is the undeniable fact that the documentary has helped shape the public understanding of what is going on in Syria, describing the government in Damascus in purely negative terms.

The fawning Hollywood and Congressional depictions of the group go something like this:

“the White Helmets are an ‘heroic’ impartial non-government humanitarian volunteer group that engages in ‘first response’ emergency rescue and medical treatment for all those who have been impacted by the fighting in Syria. The Syrian government hates the group because it assists victims of the fighting who are either rebels or living in rebel held areas. Recently, with the Syrian Army closing in on the last White Helmet affiliates still operating in the country, the Israeli government, assisted by the United States, staged an emergency humanitarian evacuation of the group’s members and their families to Israel and then on to Jordan.”

Virtually all the mainstream media coverage of the White Helmets is bogus, but by far the most ridiculous account of the Exodus from Syria came from the BBC. For those who are not familiar with it, the BBC, which once upon a time had a reputation for journalistic integrity, has become one of the worst pro-government propaganda shells of all time. Reading its articles is even worse than having a similar go at *The Washington Post*, which is the prime newspaper exemplar of fake news and phony journalism pretending to be a respectable news source in the United States. Let’s face it, Donald Trump has a point. Nearly all of the mainstream media lies persistently these days but some sources are worse than others. People complain about Fox, and rightly so, but CNN is the absolute pits when it comes to slanting its coverage, as is MSNBC.

BBC’s [article](#) is entitled *Syria conflict: White Helmets evacuated by Israel*. It makes the following statements, many coming directly from Israeli official sources, regarding the White Helmets, its activities and the group’s relationship to some governments, to include Britain:

- “The IDF said they had ‘completed a humanitarian effort to rescue members of a Syrian civil organization and their families’, saying there was an ‘immediate threat to their lives.’ The transfer of the displaced Syrians through Israel was an exceptional humanitarian gesture.”
- “Although Israel is not directly involved in the Syria conflict, the two countries have been in a state of war for decades. Despite the intervention, the IDF said that ‘Israel continues to maintain a non-intervention policy regarding the Syrian conflict.’”
- “A statement from Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt and International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said: ‘White Helmets have been the target of attacks and, due to their high profile, we judged that, in these particular circumstances, the volunteers required immediate protection. We pay tribute to the brave and selfless work that White Helmet volunteers have done to save Syrians on all sides of the conflict.’”
- “Their official name is the Syrian Civil Defense and it began in early 2013 as an organization of volunteers from all walks of life, including electricians and builders. Its main task soon became to rescue civilians in war zones in the immediate aftermath of air strikes, and it says its volunteers have saved the lives of more than 100,000 people during the civil war.”

The BBC story could have been written by the White Helmets themselves or by their press department. Or alternatively by the Israeli Foreign Ministry. First of all, the Israelis do not do humanitarian gestures. They helped bail out the White Helmets at the request of the U.S. because capture by the Syrians would have produced embarrassing revelations about how the group was funded and what its affiliation with terrorists was all about. And Israel’s denial of involvement in Syria is nonsense, unless one considers demonstrated collaboration with

the terrorist groups punctuated by nearly weekly bombing and missile attacks to be non-involvement.

The British too are into the deception up to their eyeballs. The comment by Hunt and Mordaunt is complete fabrication regarding what the White Helmets represent. The same goes for the BBC account of how the group developed, which comes directly from the White Helmet's own propaganda division as amplified by Hollywood and the U.S. and U.K. governments.

Just as important as what is said about the White Helmets' activities is the exclusion of a great deal of credible negative reporting on the group. The carefully edited scenes of heroism under fire that have been filmed and released worldwide conceal the White Helmets' relationship with the al-Qaeda affiliated group Jabhat al-Nusra and its participation in the torture and execution of "rebel" opponents. Indeed, the White Helmets only operate in rebel held territory, which enables them to shape the narrative both regarding who they are and what is occurring on the ground.

Exploiting their access to the western media, the White Helmets thereby *de facto* became a major source of "eyewitness" news regarding what was going on in those many parts of Syria where European and American journalists were quite rightly afraid to go. It was all part of a broader [largely successful "rebel" effort](#) to manufacture fake news that depicts the Damascus government as engaging in war crimes directed against civilians, an effort that led to several attacks on government forces and facilities by the U.S. military.

The White Helmets travel to bombing sites with their film crews trailing behind them. Once at the sites, with no independent observers, they are able to arrange or even stage what is filmed to conform to their selected narrative which consistently promotes tales of government atrocities against civilians to encourage outside military intervention in Syria and bring about regime change in Damascus. The White Helmets were, for example, the propagators of the [totally false](#) but propagandistically effective claims regarding the government use of so-called "barrel bombs" against civilians.

Peter Ford, British Ambassador in Damascus from 2003-2006, recently described the group in [an audio interview](#) saying,

"The White Helmets are jihadi auxiliaries. They are not, as claimed by themselves and by their supporters... simple rescuers. They are not volunteers. They are paid professionals of disinformation."

He noted particularly the large size of the organization's "press department", saying,

"This gives us an idea what the priority is for this very dubious organization... All their activities are directed at mobilizing Western opinion behind the jihadis with whom they associate. They co-locate their centers with the Al-Qaeda organization known as Al-Nusra and with other militant groups such as Jaish al-Islam. They have in the past been shown associating with and waving the flags of ISIS."

The group is currently [largely funded](#) by a number of non-government organizations (NGOs)

as well as governments, including the United States, Britain and some European Union member states. The U.S. has directly provided \$23 million through the USAID (US Agency for International Development) as of 2016 and almost certainly considerably more indirectly. Max Blumenthal has [explored in some detail](#) the various funding resources and relationships that the organization draws on, mostly in Europe and the United States.

Perhaps the most serious charge against the White Helmets consists of the evidence that they [actively participated in the atrocities](#), to include torture and murder, carried out by their al-Nusra hosts. There have been [numerous photos](#) of the White Helmets operating directly with armed terrorists and also celebrating over the bodies of execution victims and murdered Iraqi soldiers. The group's jihadi associates regard the White Helmets as fellow "mujahideen" and "soldiers of the revolution."

So Israel's celebrated rescue of the White Helmets was little more than a theatrical performance intended to perpetuate the myth that the al-Assad government was thwarted in an attempt to capture and possibly kill an honorable non-partisan group engaged in humanitarian relief for those caught up in a bloody conflict seeking to oust a ruthless dictator. The reality is quite different. The White Helmets were and are part and parcel of the attempt to overthrow a legitimate government and install a regime friendly to western, American and Israeli interests. For Israel in particular the ongoing chaos in Syria was and is part of its plan for dividing all of its neighbors into warring ethnicities and sects, making them less viable as threats to the Jewish state.

The 800 White Helmets rescued reportedly will be resettled in the U.S., Britain and Germany. One hopes those coming to America can end up in Los Angeles, where they would presumably mingle with Hollywood big shots and the usual snowflakes while working on their next documentary. As some of them are most certainly radical Jihadists, it will be interesting to observe exactly how that will play out.

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