

Uncle Sam's Support for Terrorism Laid Bare. There are No "Moderate Terrorists"

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The McClatchy news service [scoop](#) that Labib al-Nahhas, the Syrian foreign affairs director of al-Qaeda's ally Ahrar ash-Sham, visited Washington, DC in December 2015 should have created a huge political stir in a presidential election year.

However, the fact that the Obama administration has been consorting with terrorist allies of al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and other countries has received little to no coverage in the American media. More astoundingly, Ahrar ash-Sham, which, along with the al-Nusra Front [massacred](#) 19 Alawite Muslims in the Syrian village of Zara in May, is not designated a terrorist group by the US State Department.

The simple fact is that from CIA director John Brennan to national security adviser Susan Rice and US Central Command chief General Joseph Votel to Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Senator John McCain, the Obama administration and the Republicans who control Congress have consorted with Islamist terrorists. These groups have included those who have executed Americans and who help finance and plan terrorist attacks against civilians around the world. The visit of al-Nahhas to Washington follows a long tradition of the US government consorting with Sunni Mujahideen (called the «muj» by their CIA overseers), jihadists, and Salafists starting with the support for Muslim insurgents in Afghanistan and continuing with the provision of military training and weapons to Sunni Arab guerrillas in Iraq.

Votel, who paid a May visit to northern Syria, is not the first US official who entered Syria for a «get acquainted with» session with US-armed jihadist rebels, which was disguised as a «fact-finding mission». In May 2013, Senator McCain [entered](#) northern Syria and met with a man who strongly resembles Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. The more McCain's staff and his neo-conservative apologists tried to claim the man was not al-Baghdadi but an unidentified commander of the Northern Storm Brigade, a group linked to the practically non-existent Free Syrian Army, the more McCain's and the neocons' lies became apparent. Reports from Damascus, Baghdad, Tehran, and Hezbollah's media outlets in Beirut all confirmed that the CIA, along with the Israel Defense Force, were actively providing weapons, training, and logistics support to ISIL and allies units in Syria and western Iraq.

Ever since President Jimmy Carter's fervently anti-Russian and extreme nationalist Polish national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski began training and arming the most radical jihadist Sunni Pashtun and Arab fighters he could find to fight the Soviet army in Afghanistan, the CIA and Pentagon have maintained a problematic relationship with Islamist

radicalism. The CIA's own widely-used term, «blowback», is the only word that can adequately describe what Brzezinski's decision has cost the United States and the civilized world.

The CIA's recruitment of jihadist fighters from across the Middle East was so rampant in 1980s that [Michael Springmann](#), the US Vice Consul in Jeddah, reported that he was ordered by resident CIA officers at the consulate to grant US visas to individuals who Springmann said were jihadist recruits of Osama bin Laden. During the CIA's military operations in Afghanistan, Bin Laden was a trusted and much-valued US ally. For blowing the whistle on the visas for al-Qaeda, Springmann was fired by the State Department.

A December 1986 formerly Secret CIA report concluded that «well-educated» and «urban» Muslim fundamentalists were the best ranks from which to recruit a «charismatic leader» capable of galvanizing «an untapped pool of potential fundamentalists» from «the lower classes». Whether in Afghanistan in the 1980s or Syria today, the CIA and its Pentagon cohorts have followed the 1986 CIA template with regard to Bin Laden and Al-Baghdadi. These are but a few disgraceful examples of Brzezinski's, Henry Kissinger's, and current CIA director John Brennan's «realpolitik» in the conduct of American foreign policy for almost four decades.

The CIA report also stated that in 1986, with most Syrians «benefitting» from the rule of the Assad family, «radical fundamentalism» was «unlikely to gain a strong foothold in Syria». The US support for the «Arab Spring» in Syria changed all that and the destabilization of Syria by mostly foreign agitators saw a consequential erosion of popular support for the Syrian government, especially among Sunni tribes close to the porous border with Iraq.

By 1986, some Islamist radicals that were recruited to participate in the «jihad» against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan had committed their fair share of what the Pentagon calls «collateral damage». This included the 1981 [assassination](#) of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and early signs of trouble in Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, and Pakistan with recently-returned jihadists from Afghanistan clashing with police in street demonstrations held in Cairo, Amman, Tunis, and various Pakistani cities.

Financial problems caused by Western bankers at the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and the investment firms of Wall Street and the City of London brought on the initial stages of social upheaval in the Arab world. Thirty percent of Jordan's trained engineers and one-third of its medical doctors were unemployed. Rent-controlled apartments became scarce in Cairo, with only the wealthy able to afford to rent, let alone buy, a home. A breakdown in public services resulted in raw sewage flowing in the streets of Alexandria. Public transportation woes included overcrowded buses and inoperable trains. The danger of collapsing residential buildings in Algiers put 6000 people in mortal jeopardy. There is little wonder, therefore, that 90 percent of the jihadists in the 1980s were in their twenties and thirties. Fighting in a far-away battlefield was preferable to living in a slum.

These ready-made recruits were valuable fodder for the CIA in the war in Afghanistan. For the CIA, it also made sense to curry favor with and keep lines of communications open with fundamentalist groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, which the CIA sold to the American people and an international audience as «moderate» fundamentalists. Today, the CIA and Pentagon have done the same with regard to the jihadists in Syria. Some fundamentalists, like the terrorist Ahrar ash-Sham «foreign minister» al-Nahhas, are called «moderates».

One thing should be clear: there are no «moderate» Sunni jihadists, whether in Syria, Iraq, Libya, or Yemen today or Afghanistan and Pakistan in the 1980s. While there are moderate fundamentalist Shias, Ibadis, Ismailis, Zaidis, Ahmadis, Alevi, Sufis, Akhbaris, and Alawites in Islam, moderate Sunni fundamentalists, thanks to Saudi Wahhabist influence around the world, are as rare as hen's teeth. Wahhabism and its Salafist tenets have resulted in only two choices in the Sunni world: jihadism or secularism. Baathist or pan-Arab socialism, which the US has all-but-destroyed in the Arab world, placed secularism over Islam. There has been no other similar movement to fill the vacuum, especially in Syria, Iraq, and Libya. In any case, the CIA was never interested in «moderate» Sunni fundamentalists. The fools who ran and continue to run America's intelligence community wanted only those Sunni recruits who were willing to die in battle or commit suicide for their jihad, whether in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, or Libya. Unfortunately, for the civilized world, these jihadists went on to die for their jihad in places like Paris, Brussels, London, San Bernardino, Boston, Istanbul, Moscow, Ottawa, and Madrid.

Jihadist terrorists should pay for their crimes against humanity. But so should those whose policies enabled the rise of jihadist terrorists and trials for aiding and abetting terrorism for Messrs Brzezinski, Brennan, McCain, and Mmes Rice (Susan and Condoleezza), Madeleine Albright, Samantha Power, and Hillary Clinton should be seriously considered.

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