

Unmasking the White Helmets

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British government official agencies are the patrons, managers and funders of the White Helmets, who have been the go-to source for the mainstream Western media reporting on the ongoing Syrian war. For good measure, the U.S. State Department's Agency for International Development (USAID) has kicked in \$23 million to finance Mayday Rescue, the cutout between the White Helmets and the British Ministry of Defense, the Home Office, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and 10 Downing Street. This is all a matter of public record, yet no Western major media outlet has bothered to include these "data points" in their lavish coverage of the White Helmets.

Mayday Rescue was founded by **James le Mesurier**, who founded both Mayday Rescue and the White Helmets after "retiring" from the British Army and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Mayday Rescue has its headquarters in Istanbul, Turkey, where it runs a training program for the White Helmet recruits. Mayday Rescue's annual budget is \$35 million, with the funds coming from USAID, the UK Conflict Security and Stability Fund, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. To date, an estimated 3,000 recruits have been through the Mayday Rescue training programs and deployed into 120 different locations in rebel held parts of Syria.

Another element of the British government flowchart backing the White Helmets is the communications and media firm Incostrat, founded by **Paul Tilley**, another British Army veteran, who ran the Ministry of Defence's Strategic Communications for the Middle East and North Africa. Tilley ran British government communications during the Libya invasion, working directly out of 10 Downing Street. In November 2014, soon after le Mesurier was founding Mayday Rescue and the White Helmets, Tilley "retired" from the British service to found the strategic communications firm. Incostrat provides the social media and other communications services for Mayday and the White Helmets.

All very neat.

In January 2015, the British Ministry of Defence renamed its Security Assistance Group (SAG) the 77th Brigade. The name change was in honor of the legendary World War II era British special warfare operator **Orde Wingate**, who as a Major General in the British Army founded the 77th Indian Infantry Brigade, which conducted "long-range penetration" operations in the CBI theater. The renamed current 77th Brigade, according to its own website, conducts "non-lethal engagement and legitimate non-military levers as a means to adapt behaviors of opposing forces and adversaries," including information activities and outreach. By its own public description, the 77th Brigade is "an agent of change." They are nowadays referred to as "Twitter Troops" and "Facebook Warriors."

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