

Gen. Michael Flynn, Benghazi, and Why Obama Must Be Removed

by Michele and Jeffrey Steinberg

August 16—In an interview aired on July 31 with Al-Jazeera's program, Head to Head, Lt. General Michael Flynn, the former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), made an unprecedented, blunt accusation that the rise of the Islamic State (ISIS) was the result of a “willful decision,”—not an intelligence failure—by the Obama Administration.

The Flynn revelations put even more pressure on former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to “come clean” on what she personally knows about President Barack Obama’s “willful” lying cover-up of the al-Qaeda attack in Benghazi on Sept. 11, 2012, in which U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other American officials were killed. The issue on the table, now, with the Flynn revelations on top of the ongoing Benghazi probe by a Congressional select committee is: When will President Obama be held accountable for his lying to the American people? When will he be forced out of office?

Speaking to Mehdi Hasan, the host of “Head to

Head,” Flynn went further than any other recently retired U.S. military official in condemning the policies of President Barack Obama. Flynn did so, not only in highlighting the August 2012 DIA report (only released to the public in May 2015) that warned the Obama Administration about the rise of the “Islamic State,” and the creation of a “caliphate” by Syria-based Islamists and al-Qaeda,—but also in identifying that arms shipments in Libya that had gone to jihadist “allies” of the United States and NATO in the overthrowing of Col. Muammar Qaddafi, were shipped to Syria and became the arsenal that allowed the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), and other jihadist rebels to grow.

Questioned by Hasan, Flynn directly accused the Obama Administration of making a “willful decision” to back the jihadis:

Hasan: You are basically saying that even in government at the time you knew these groups were around, you saw this analysis, and you



Jabhat al-Nusra, one of the jihadist groups the Obama Administration made a “willful decision” to support in Southwest Asia.

were arguing against it, but who wasn't listening?

Flynn: I think the Administration.

Hasan: So the Administration turned a blind eye to your analysis?

Flynn: I don't know that they turned a blind eye, I think it was a decision. I think it was a willful decision.

Hasan: A willful decision to support an insurgency that had Salafists, al-Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood?

Flynn: It was a willful decision to do what they're doing.

Later in the interview, Hasan brought up arms flows to the rebels. Another DIA memo from October 2012, released in May 2015 through a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit brought by Judicial Watch, detailed the flow of weapons, grabbed from Qaddafi's vast arsenal, from Benghazi to two Syrian ports under the control of Syrian rebel groups.

Hasan: In 2012 the U.S. was helping coordinate arms transfers to those same groups [Salafists, Muslim Brotherhood, al-Qaeda in Iraq], why did you not stop that if you're worried about the rise of quote-unquote Islamic extremists?

Flynn: I hate to say it's not my job ... but that ... my job was to ... was to ensure that the accuracy of our intelligence that was being presented was as good as it could be.

In effect, Gen. Flynn confirmed that the United States was fully aware of weapons trafficking between Benghazi and Syrian jihadists, but either allowed it to happen, or actively participated in the trafficking. President Obama, in mid-2011, had already stated that U.S. policy was for the Assad government to be overthrown.

What Were the DIA Reports?

When the watchdog group Judicial Watch received a series of reports through Freedom of Information Act lawsuits (FOIA) in May 2015 that forecast the creation of an Islamist caliphate that would target Mosul and Ramadi in Iraq (among other sites in Syria), the State Department, the Administration, and various media outlets—especially those friendly to the White House—trashed the reports as insignificant, unreliable, and virtually unknown. That was a lie. In addition, less publi-

cized FOIA releases of the DIA reports to Judicial Watch in the May 2015 timeframe, show that a ratline of weapons traffic was going directly from the U.S.-installed jihadists in Libya to Syria. Again, the Administration lied and dismissed the reports as insignificant.

But with the on-the-record remarks by Gen. Flynn about how the DIA's warnings about the impending "caliphate" were dismissed because of a "willful decision," these reports are placed in a context that shows that Barack Obama has compromised U.S. National Security with his support for Islamist extremism, including the Muslim Brotherhood. Furthermore, according to years-long investigations by *EIR*, these reports are merely the tip of the iceberg. They should open the door to a full investigation of Obama's pro-Islamist regime-change policy that overthrew Qaddafi and led to the travesty in Libya that killed Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans on September, 11, 2012. It was the same regime-change policy supporting the Islamists, nurtured by the Kingdoms of Britain and Saudi Arabia, which was behind Obama's declaration that Syria's elected President Bashar al Assad should be removed.

Another of the FOIA-released DIA documents from Sept. 16, 2012, provides a detailed account of the premeditated nature of the 9/11/12 attack in Benghazi, saying it was planned for ten days, detailing the groups involved, etc. This further buttresses the case that Obama committed impeachable crimes by falsifying what was a major terrorist attack against a U.S. target on the anniversary of 9/11, and lied to cover it up.

Building the Case for Obama's Impeachment

U.S. intelligence community (USIC) sources have emphasized that the release of the DIA documents, combined with the Flynn interview to Al-Jazeera, represent a clear statement that segments of the Pentagon and USIC believe that President Obama has committed clear impeachable crimes against the U.S. Constitution. They point out that the DIA could have stalled the release of the damning documents, by invoking various security considerations. Instead, the documents were released, making the clear case that the Obama Administration had willfully carried out a policy that gave material support to terrorist organizations, despite clear warnings from official U.S. agencies that the policies would severely jeopardize U.S. and allied national security.

Taken together, the DIA documents made clear that: The Obama Administration proceeded ahead with support for anti-Assad forces, knowing full well that the



The Lebanese Army captured this ship full of arms being sent from Libya to Syrian jihadists in April 2012. As documented in EIR's "Obama's War on America: 9/11 Two," there is considerable evidence those arms came with the blessings of the Obama Administration.

policies would lead to the creation of a terrorist haven, "a jihadist caliphate" on the border region of Iraq and Syria; that the very groups receiving support from the Obama White House, had carried out the premeditated terrorist attacks on the U.S. mission in Benghazi on Sept. 11, 2012, resulting in the murder of Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other American officials; and that the United States continued to sanction arms trafficking to the al-Qaeda-linked Syrian rebels even after the 9/11/12 attacks. Furthermore, President Obama knew full well that the Benghazi attacks were pre-planned, pre-meditated and heavily armed attacks, carried out by al-Qaeda, in revenge for the killing of a top al-Qaeda leader of Libyan descent, and on the anniversary of the original Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

In effect, the DIA reports fully corroborate what Hillary Clinton personally knows about the lying cover-up ordered by President Obama, to hide the essential facts of the Benghazi attacks, to secure his re-election in the Nov. 2012 presidential vote.

General Flynn Speaks Out

The major U.S. media, for the most part, blocked out the significance of the May 2015 DIA documents' release, compounding the earlier crimes by allowing Obama to continue pursuing the same Syria "regime change" policies, without being held accountable. Had the truth been widely exposed back in May, President

Obama would never have dared to issue his early August order for U.S. forces to attack Syrian government forces if they interfered with the American "vetted, trained and armed" forces. Now, the so-called U.S. approved Division 30 Syrian rebel group has formally announced its alliance with the Nusra Front, the formal al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria.

It is against this backdrop that Gen. Flynn gave his interview to Al-Jazeera on July 29. Gen. Flynn has vast experience in the Middle East and in the war against al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. Before being named head of the Defense Intelligence Agency in April 2014, Gen. Flynn served as Director of Intelligence for the Joint Staff, as Director of Intelligence for the U.S. Central Command, and as Director of Intelligence for the Joint Special Operations Command. In September 2011, im-

mediately prior to being nominated to head the DIA, Gen. Flynn was assigned to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, as liaison to the international intelligence community.

Gen. Flynn earned the wrath of key Obama advisors at the White House in August 2013, when DIA's intelligence assessments buttressed General Martin Dempsey's intervention, as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to force President Obama to cancel orders to launch a massive bombing campaign against the Syrian government and armed forces. Flynn and DIA argued, forcefully, that the overthrow of Assad, which would have resulted from the U.S. military intervention, would have created a jihadist stronghold on the eastern Mediterranean coast, bordering on NATO territory.

According to DIA sources, Gen. Flynn also provided critical intelligence to Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, prompting Hagel's early October 2014 private email to National Security Advisor Dr. Susan Rice, blasting the Obama White House's failure to devise a coherent strategy for dealing with Syria.

By the time the Hagel memo was written, Gen. Flynn, along with his top deputy, had been fired from the DIA. In Feb. 2015, Hagel himself was asked by President Obama to resign, after the Oct. 2014 communique to Rice was made public.

The ouster of Gen. Flynn, the dumping of Secretary of Defense Hagel, and the imminent retirement of Joint

Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey, have greatly increased the danger that President Obama will go flight-forward into war either in the Middle East, or directly against Russia and China.

It is in this context that the full import of the Flynn Al-Jazeera interview must be seen. In his contentious exchange with Al-Jazeera's Mehdi Hasan, Gen. Flynn went far beyond his indictment of President Obama for ignoring warnings about the rise of the Islamic State, the arms flow from Benghazi to Syrian rebels, and the truth about the 9/11/12 attacks. He called for a top-down overhaul of U.S. strategy, particularly in the Middle East.

Asked to comment on President Obama's accelerating drone warfare, his policy of targeted killings, including of American citizens, and the overthrow of Qaddafi, Flynn responded:

I think he's too tactical. So, the examples that you just gave, Mehdi, those are all tactical examples. And I think drone strikes is a tactic. We need big leadership and we need big strategic vision right now. Strategic vision that, I believe, only the United States can provide, frankly, because just the scale of what the United States can offer the rest of the world—and we need big strategic visionary leadership that solves a problem in the Middle East that the rest of the world is part of. You know, the word “abandonment” has been used by multiple people from multiple countries about the United States. “We feel abandoned.” That's not a good place for us to be. And those are pretty senior people from these governments.

So if we're dropping drones, and we're killing this guy, and that guy, training 60 guys, those are tactical, narrow things that will never,—those are investments in conflict, in greater conflict. They are not investments in real strategic solutions, and there are strategic solutions for this region.

Frankly, an entire new economy is what this region needs. They need to take this 15-year old, to 25 to 30-year old in Saudi Arabia, the largest segment of their population; in Egypt, the largest segment of their population, 15 to roughly 30 years old, mostly young men. You've got to give them something else to do. If you don't, they're going to turn on their own governments, and we can solve that problem.

So that is the conversation that we have to have with them, and we have to help them do that. And in the meantime, what we have is this continued investment in conflict. The more weapons we give, the more bombs we drop, that just fuels the conflict. Some of that has to be done, but I'm looking for other solutions. I'm looking for the other side of this argument, and we're not having it; we're not having it as the United States.

Earlier in the interview, in response to a question about Israel's nuclear arsenal and the prospects for regional total nuclear disarmament, while Russia is selling nuclear power plants to several countries in the region, Flynn noted:

It now equals nuclear development of some type in the Middle East, and now what we want,—so what we're going to see,—what I hope for is that we have nuclear (energy) development, because it also helps for projects like desalinization, getting water. Nuclear would be great if that was nuclear energy.

Asked if he would like to see Israel give up its 200 nuclear weapons, Flynn responded:

I would love to see it, but it's not practical because, actually, nuclear energy is very clean, and it actually is so cost effective, much more cost effective for producing water from desalinization.

Flynn emphasized that the expansion of nuclear energy, while assuring non-proliferation of nuclear weapons “has to be done in a very international, inspectable way.”

General Flynn's call for a new strategic vision must start with a clean-out of those individuals responsible for the “conflict only” policies of the past two presidencies of Bush and Obama. In particular, the urgently needed starting point is a top-down house-cleaning, starting with President Obama himself. The evidence presented in the DIA documents and in Gen. Flynn's recent interview, is the crucial starting point for just such a top-down overhaul. If Hillary Clinton takes advantage of Gen. Flynn's courageous and outspoken intervention, she can finish the job and assure that the United States does not trigger a global war that leads to thermonuclear extinction. Those are the real stakes.