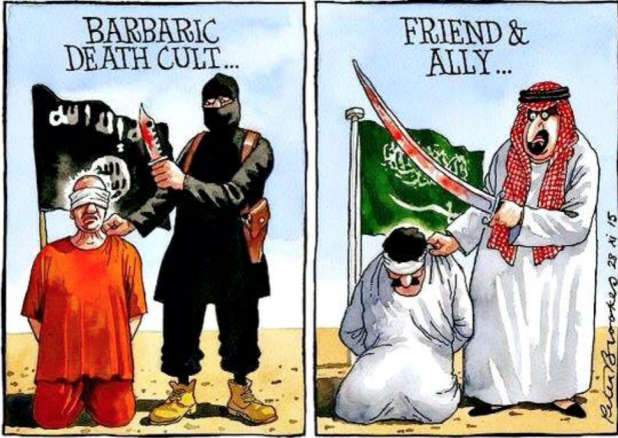


With Friends Like These... Who Needs Enemies

By ROBERT GORE, *Financial Editor*



mires of its own making in Afghanistan and Iraq; it was creating more, not less, terrorism across the Middle East and northern Africa; and the pinnacle of perversity had been reached in Syria, where the US and its allies were aiding and abetting an offshoot, ISIS, of the group, al Qaeda, behind the 9/11 attacks.

ISIS was the love child between the government's military intervention in Iraq and its support of Syrian rebels seeking to depose Bashar al-Assad (see "A Perfect Time to Leave the Middle East"). Iraq ISIS obtained much of its weaponry from American-trained Iraqi soldiers, who ran at the first sign of trouble and left their weapons behind, while Syria ISIS got much of its supply from "moderate" Syrian rebels who volunteered themselves and their US-supplied armaments to their fellow moderates.

Thanks to a Judicial Watch Freedom of Information Act lawsuit, it came out earlier this year that the Defense Intelligence Agency contemplated the formation of an extremist Sunni, or "Salafist," group back in 2012, which it felt would be useful in the government's long quest to rid Syria of Assad. ISIS fit the bill, so while ostensibly waging one of those "limited" wars so beloved by presidents since Truman (you have to look like you're doing something against a group linked to al Qaeda that beheads people on YouTube) the Obama brainless trust (also bereft of integrity) looked the other way while ISIS received funding and tactical support from the US's Sunni allies Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States, and while the US's "moderate" Syrian rebels flocked to ISIS like freshmen flock to fraternities during Rush Week. The loyal opposition stayed loyal. Republicans have long wanted to get rid of Assad, too, so they did nothing to expose the administration's perfidy.

That role was filled by Putin, after Assad publicly admitted that the ISIS-led rebels were getting the best of his army. Assad is Russia's ally, and Russia has its only naval base on the Mediterranean at Tartus, Syria. While Syria is not a next door neighbor, it's a cruise missile's throw away, and Russia has its own Muslim extremist problems that might be exacerbated by an ISIS takeover. At Assad's invitation, Russia began moving troops, planes, and ships into Syria and Syrian waters. In a memorable and important speech to the UN General Assembly on September 28, Putin also launched a massive counterattack against the US government's war on truth.

We should all remember the lessons of the past. For example, we remember examples from our Soviet past, when the Soviet Union exported social experiments, pushing for changes in other countries for ideological reasons, and this often led to tragic consequences and caused degradation instead of progress.

It seems, however, that instead of learning from other people's mistakes, some prefer to repeat them and continue to export revolutions, only now these are "democratic" revolutions. Just look at the situation in the Middle East and Northern Africa already mentioned by the previous speaker. Of course, political and social problems have been piling up for a long time in this region, and people there wanted change. But what was the actual outcome? Instead of bringing about reforms, aggressive intervention rashly destroyed government institutions and the local way of life. Instead of democracy and progress, there is now violence, poverty, social disasters and total disregard for human rights, including even the right to life.

I'm urged to ask those who created this situation: do you at least realize now what you've done? But I'm afraid that this question will remain unanswered, because they have never abandoned their policy, which is based on arrogance, exceptionalism and impunity.

Power vacuum in some countries in the Middle East and Northern Africa obviously resulted in the emergence of areas of anarchy, which were quickly filled with extremists and terrorists. The so-called Islamic State has tens of thousands of militants fighting for it, including former Iraqi soldiers who were left on the street after the 2003 invasion. Many recruits come from Libya whose statehood was destroyed as a result of a gross violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1973. And now radical groups are joined by members of the so-called "moderate" Syrian opposition backed by the West. They get weapons and training, and then they defect and join the so-called Islamic State.

In fact, the Islamic State itself did not come out of nowhere. It was initially developed as a weapon against undesirable secular regimes. Having established control over parts of Syria and Iraq, Islamic State now aggressively expands into other regions. It seeks dominance in the Muslim world and beyond. Their plans go further.

The situation is extremely dangerous. In these circumstances, it is hypocritical and irresponsible to make declarations about the threat of terrorism and at the same time turn a blind eye to the channels used to finance and support terrorists, including revenues from drug trafficking, the illegal oil trade and the arms trade.

It is equally irresponsible to manipulate extremist groups and use them to achieve your political goals, hoping that later you'll find a way to get rid of them or somehow eliminate them.

I'd like to tell those who engage in this: Gentlemen, the people you are dealing with are cruel but they are not dumb. They are as smart as you are. So, it's a big question: who's playing who here?

The recent incident where the most "moderate" opposition group handed over their weapons to terrorists is a vivid example of that. We consider that any attempts to flirt with terrorists, let alone arm them, are short-sighted and extremely dangerous. This may make the global terrorist threat much worse, spreading it to new regions around the globe, especially since there are fighters from many different countries, including European ones, gaining combat experience with Islamic State. Unfortunately, Russia is no exception. (Continued on page 2).

The US government is engaged in an epic, generational battle; its very survival might be at stake. That would be its battle against the truth. What it has never been engaged in is a war against terrorism, in particular, a war against state-sponsored terrorism. That would be because its allies are prime sponsors, and the biggest sponsor of all has been...the US government! The world owes an incalculable debt to Vladimir Putin for deftly illustrating both facts.

The US government's battle against the truth kicked into high gear after 9/11. Wars were launched against Afghanistan and Iraq. The Patriot Act launched a nonstop expansion of the surveillance state. Echoes of that famous Vietnamese village: freedom could only be saved by destroying it. Edward Snowden briefly interrupted America's television and gadget viewing (but not the march of the surveillance state), with his disclosures in 2013.

Had Americans looked up from their screens earlier, they might have noticed a few things that weren't exactly classified information: the government was mired in quag-

That Is Not Who We Are

By T. L. Davis



Blaming guns for the murderous impulses of terrorists is not who we are. We are Americans and we believe in self-defense. Lying prone on the ground hoping people will not murder us is not who we are. The sudden eruption of gun purchases, or at least the background requests in order

to do so, was as American as it gets. That is who we are, we are not dependent on the government to protect ourselves or our families, we'll handle that.

When Americans recognize that the enemy is within the gates, they prepare to defend themselves, especially when it has become openly apparent that the government is complicit in holding the gates open for the enemy to pass through. The government is not on the side of the American citizen. It has been a long time since the government felt a duty to protect and defend the citizens of the nation. We are basically ATM's for their political supporters. If this were ever disputed it was made clear with the passage of the Stimulus Act, which did nothing else, but fund political supporters. Without our consent, they bailed out the banks, bought up toxic assets, purchased shares of bankrupt auto companies. All they had to do was go to the citizen ATM and put us further in debt. That might be how Chicago politicians do business, but that is not who we are.

Now, they have dropped the pretense of caring and simply tell us to shut up and go away, but not before we pay our taxes. This is what happened during Obama's interruption of the Sunday football games and don't think that was on accident, either. The biggest ratings in television are the weekly football games. Where else would Obama get an audience? It was a capitulation that it was orchestrated between the end of the afternoon games and before the Sunday night game. Pathetic, but I don't think he really wanted to trot out his gun-grabbing agenda in front of the football audience. That was a miscalculation, in my opinion. Commandeering an audience might be the only way Obama can speak to more than a few hundred people, but it is not who we are.

The fact that his suggestion that anyone on the No-Fly list should be made to surrender their weapons was as unconstitutional as it gets. Of course, that has never been a deterrent to Barack Obama. His absolute disregard for the Constitution is so widely documented it barely justifies recognition. But, just as an exercise, I would like to point out that the deprivation of life, liberty or property without due process of law is patently unconstitutional, and that is not who we are.

We are a nation of laws, respecting individual life, liberty and property. We are a nation of citizens who understand that they have certain inalienable rights that no government can violate without the resentment of the people rising up against it. That is who we are.

We are not the type of people who watch the government invite terrorists among us, with no serious will or ability to properly vet them prior to entry and then sit back and wait to be massacred. That is not who we are. We know who is abetting the enemy, who is trying to use charges of racism to allow a further infiltration into our society of terrorists and we will arm ourselves against the threats the government has encouraged among us. That is who we are.

I am sorry we have elected a president who does not know who we are as a people and sends his minions out to publicize that we are something we are not, or are not something we are, but I hope I cleared it up.

Of course, I am not talking about Muslims in general, I am speaking of those radicalized Jihadists who are infiltrating our nation with fake passports from Greece. Fake passports our government agencies seem incapable of identifying as such.

With Friends Like These...

(Continued from page 1)

From that speech alone it is obvious why the US government has tried so hard to hamper, harass, and, were its dream to come true, depose Putin. The Russians and their allies—the Syrian army, Iranian-led Shiite militias from Iraq and Iran, and Shiite Hezbollah units from Lebanon—have taken the fight to ISIS, exposing the US's sham war. Nothing is more telling than the US refusing Putin's invitation to join them. That the Russian alliance is drawing blood may be inferred from the recent ISIS terrorist bombing of a Russian civilian plane, and bombs and shootings in Beirut, Paris, and San Bernardino.

United States ally and NATO member Turkey, perhaps with the blessing of the US, shot down a Russia military jet for—if Turkey is to be believed—violating its airspace for 17 seconds. *The Wall Street Journal*, a valuable government ally in its war on the truth, mocked Putin for his “stab in the back” rhetoric against Turkey and his restrained military and diplomatic response, calling him a “paper tiger.”

Outsmarting the government and *The Wall Street Journal* isn't hard these days. Putin saved his fire for the most important war, that US war on truth. He called out the Gulf States, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey for aiding ISIS. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said he would resign if anyone could produce conclusive evidence that Turkey was aiding ISIS. Russia responded with maps showing the routes used to smuggle ISIS oil to Turkey, and pictures and videos of lines of tanker trucks moving across northern Iraq, eastern Syria, and the Turkish border, some just before they were hit by Russian bombs (LINK). There have been a number of stories linking Erdoğan's sons and son-in-law to ISIS smuggling, and Iran has also offered to show what it terms “irrefutable evidence” of Turkey's role. There has been no resignation announcement from Erdoğan.

Putin and his allies have also won military victories in the war the US refuses to fight. Russian bombs have scored significant hits against ISIS oil convoys and storage facilities, which until recently the US would not bomb. Embarrassed, the US has bombed some convoys (after giving the truck drivers 45 minutes warning) and storage tanks. The lame excuse for not doing so earlier: the Obama administration was worried about environmental damage and killing non-ISIS truck driver (this from an administration that had just bombed a Doctors Without Borders hospital in Afghanistan). Islamic and Hezbollah militias have won the majority of their battles against ISIS ground forces.

If, way back in 2001, the Bush administration had been serious, as it said it was, about going after “state sponsors of terrorism,” the first front should have opened against Saudi Arabia. Most of the 9/11 jihadists and suspected mastermind Osama bin Laden were from Saudi Arabia, and there is strong suspicion that 28 pages of the Senate report on its investigation of 9/11 that has still not been publicly released (notwithstanding an Obama promise to do so) contain damning evidence of wealthy Saudis' and the Saudi government's involvement.

The Saudis and the US had supported the Afghan Mujahideen—led by bin Laden—who bedeviled the Soviets in the 1970s and 1980s (see “A Perfect Time to Leave the Middle East”). The 9/11 attacks were neither the first nor the last time that the US government's designs to “use” Islamic extremist group have blown up in its face. As Putin noted: “Gentlemen, the people you are dealing with are cruel but they are not dumb. They are as smart as you are. So, it's a big question: who's playing who here?”

Nobody has played the US like Saudi Arabia. Its variant of Islam, Wahhabism, is one of the most extreme proponents among Islamic sects of jihad and Islamic domination. Saudis have long funded madrasas—educational institutions that indoctrinate their students in Wahhabism—all over the world. ISIS is one among many Islamic extremist groups that have received money and arms from Saudi Arabia. At home, the Wahhabism version of Sharia, or Islamic law, is the most repressive and discriminatory in the Islamic world, and cartoonists—perhaps the last serious mainstream journalists—have made grisly sport recently comparing Saudi and ISIS beheadings (the Saudi government recently threatened to sue a Twitter tweeter making the same point). The Saudis may be even more cruel than ISIS, if that's possible. Juveniles and poets have lost their heads for “subversive” activities like protests and poems.

To all this Washington has turned a bipartisan blind eye for over four decades. In exchange, Saudi Arabia has kept the price of oil affordable, supported and recycled petrodollars, bought US armaments, backed US interventionist policies in the Middle East, and since the first Gulf War, allowed US military installations to operate in Saudi Arabia proper (this is reportedly what turned Osama bin Laden against the US). The Gulf States with which Saudi Arabia is allied have mostly hewed to the same policies.

The rapid expansion of US oil extraction has thrown a spanner in the works. Saudi Arabia announced in November, 2014 that it would not limit its oil production in response to a declining oil price, and the price has crashed since then. It is strongly suspected that they want to drive US frackers out of business, and also inflict pain on oil colossus Russia, which has opposed its designs in Syria. Those designs are to depose Assad and get a natural gas pipeline built from ally Qatar through Syria to ally Turkey, where it could then be shipped to Europe. A new source of natural gas for Europe would diminish Russia's stranglehold on that market, yet another reason Putin is aiding Assad.

US politicians say pathetically stupid things all the time, but nothing rivals the stupidity of cheerleaders for war on ISIS chirping that our Turkish, Saudi Arabian, and Gulf State allies—Sunnis all—will help us take out the Sunni extremists they have supported for years. If it's not stupidity it can only be mendacity. *The US is not going to wage the “serious war” on ISIS that the US public is bleating for unless it breaks with its longstanding Sunni allies in the Middle East. What the millions clamoring for the government to “get tough” on ISIS either fail or refuse to comprehend is that ISIS has been our ally with Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States in the rebellion against Assad.*

That truth has not permeated the mainstream media in this country. If the US breaks with the Sunni alliance, it becomes a de facto ally with Russia and Shiite Assad, Iran, Iraq, and Hezbollah. Assad and Putin are loathed; Iran has been non grata since Bush's axis of evil speech; Iraq is in Iran's orbit and now rejects further US military involvement in Iraq's war against ISIS, and Israel hates Hezbollah. It would be a good idea, if getting rid of ISIS is the goal, to ditch unstable Erdoğan, who wants to drag NATO into a war with Russia, and repressive, terrorism fomenting, extremist Saudi Arabia and the Gulf State monarchies, and ally with the side that actually wants to fight ISIS. It would be a better idea to get out of the Middle East entirely.

Neither the good nor the best idea is going to happen. Stoked by the Paris atrocities and the San Bernardino shootings, and the ensuing media feeding frenzy, Americans are screaming for blood. They don't know which flavor they want—Sunni or Shiite—but it doesn't matter as long as it's Moslem blood. Throw out that damn Constitution while we're at it; no price is too high for ephemeral “safety.” Most Americans can't find Syria, Iraq, Iran, or even Russia on a map, and they won't get their war with ISIS. Obama's will drop a few more bombs until the furor dies down while the Russian-Shiite alliance continues to do the real work.

The powers that be are never going to abandon the Sunni alliance, especially Saudi Arabia; there's way too much money and power at stake. Things have gotten really weird at *The Wall Street Journal*, a powers' propaganda organ (SLL subscribes to it for its business stories, and because it's good to keep track of the opposition). It has virtually ignored the Sunni alliance's support for ISIS, peddling the bizarre theory that ISIS and Assad really have a symbiotic relationship. Assad is supposedly buying all that oil from ISIS, thus funding the group trying to depose and behead him. The Journal's policy prescription: the US should take them both out. Of course there would be no blowback from taking out both the Sunni side and the Shiite side, and no possibility, with Russia and Iran as potential opponents, of unintended consequences.

You never know, the US public just may be ignorant, gullible, stupid, deluded, rabid, and bloodthirsty enough to go for it; doubling down on a strategy that has produced nothing but failure and disaster. If they do, the overwhelming favorite as an outcome will be World War III. And if they do and a global conflagration ensues, how can anyone argue that America won't deserve exactly what it gets?



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan 12—Cherokee NC ARES Formal Meeting, Murphy, NC, 7 pm. Our regularly scheduled second Tuesday meeting at the Robert Penland Senior Center, 69 Alpine Street (behind the courthouse) in Murphy.

Jan 14—The Well Armed Woman, Murphy, NC, 6 p.m. A women's group dedicated to educating, equipping & empowering women gun owners. Meeting at Christian Martial Arts Center, 56 Valley River Ave, downtown Murphy.

Jan 16—Cherokee NC ARES Social Brunch, Murphy, NC, 10 am. Our regularly scheduled meeting on the 3rd Saturday each month. This is an opportunity for a social gathering and it will not involve any formal presentations or training. All those interested in amateur radio or just a good meal and fellowship are invited to attend. XYLs welcome! Meeting at Main Street USA, Hiwassee St., downtown Murphy.

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