

Obama/al-Qaeda Pact In Libya and Syria

by William Wertz

Dec. 18—While claiming credit for the killing of Osama bin Laden, President Barack Obama was forging an alliance with al-Qaeda, first, to overthrow the government of Libya, and now, the government of Syria. This reckless and lawless policy of allying with the perpetrators of 9/11/2001, and now, 9/11/2012, to conduct war without the consent of Congress, in violation of the U.S. Constitution, runs the immediate danger of leading to world war, which can only mean thermonuclear war.

This is “the elephant in the room,” which explains why the Obama Administration has lied and attempted to cover up the true facts about Benghazi. The policy of allying with al-Qaeda, and covering up that alliance and its consequences, is, indeed an impeachable offense. The question is whether members of Congress will have the courage to fight for the truth and for justice on behalf of the victims of this criminal policy.

This updated fact sheet presents the presently available evidence from the public domain. A serious Congressional investigation would uncover far more. Here are the facts known thus far:

The Case of Libya

In the case of Libya, the evidence is overwhelming. Under the guise of humanitarian interventionism, President Obama ordered American military forces to create a no-fly zone and provide close air cover for al-Qaeda groupings to overthrow Muammar Qaddafi.

The opposition in Libya was dominated by the

Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), which was created in the 1990s by Abel Hakim Belhadj, who had fought with al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, from 1988 to 1992. (On Feb. 15, 2011, the LIFG changed its name to the Libyan Islamic Movement for Change.) After Kabul fell in 1992, Belhadj moved to Sudan with Osama bin Laden.

In 1995, British MI6 approached the LIFG to carry out a coup against Qaddafi. After the coup and four assassination attempts against Qaddafi failed, many members of the LIFG were jailed in the Abu Selim prison in Tripoli. Others, including Belhadj, escaped.

In 2001, when the U.S. invaded Afghanistan, two members of the LIFG, who later participated in the Obama-led overthrow of Qaddafi, were arrested by the Pakistanis and handed over to the U.S.: Abul Hakim al-Hasadi and Abu Sufian bin Qumu, both originally from Derna, Libya. Al-Hasadi, who had fought for five years in Afghanistan against the U.S., was sent back to Libya and jailed. Qumu was sent to Guantanamo until he was later returned to Libya. Both were jailed in Abu Selim prison.

In 2004, Belhadj and Sami Al-Saadi, who also later participated in the Obama-led overthrow of Qaddafi, were captured by the CIA and MI6 in Bangkok, Thailand, and returned to Libya, where they were also imprisoned in Abu Selim. This was shortly after Tony Blair had organized the recognition of Qaddafi by the West. At the time, Blair stated that Qaddafi wanted to join the West in combatting al-Qaeda.

Al-Saadi, who Taliban leader Mullah Omar once called the Sheikh of the Arabs, was the author of a plan to overthrow Qaddafi. This plan was found in the home of Abd al-Rahman al-Faquih in Birmingham, U.K., during a police raid in the middle of the last decade. Al-Faquih had been convicted in absentia by a Moroccan court for complicity in the May 2003 suicide bombings in Casablanca. This same war plan would later be employed against Qaddafi, beginning in February 2011.

In March 2010, due to the intervention of Blair, Saif Qaddafi (Muammar’s son) announced the release of



White House/Pete Souza

President Obama announces the killing of Osama bin Laden, May 1, 2011.

Belhadj and 233 other members of the LIFG from Abu Selim as part of a reconciliation with the West. Less than a year after they were released, Belhadj and the other members of the LIFG became the core of the opposition to Qaddafi.

At the time of the operation to overthrow Qaddafi under the cover of a UN resolution, the LIFG was designated a terrorist group by the U.S. State Department, the U.K. Home Office, and the United Nations Security Council. An excerpt from the U.S. State Department report reads as follows:

“On November 3, 2007, senior Al Qaeda leaders announced that LIFG had officially joined al-Qaeda. Activities: Libyans associated with the LIFG are part of the broader international terrorist movement. The LIFG is one of the groups believed to have planned the Casablanca suicide bombing in May 2003. Spanish media in August 2005 linked Ziyad Hashem, an alleged member of the LIFG’s media committee, as well as the imprisoned amir Abdallah al Sadeq (Belhaj), with Tunisian Islamist Serhane Ben Abdelmajid Fakhel, the suspected ringleader in the 2004 Madrid attacks. Abdallah al Sadeq is the *nom de guerre* of Abel Hakim Belhadj.”

Excerpts from the UN resolution read as follows: “LIFG commanders, including Abu Yahya al-Liby and the now-deceased Abu al-Laith al-Liby, have occupied prominent positions within Al-Qaeda’s senior leadership. On 3 November 2007, LIFG formally merged with al-Qaeda. The merger was announced via two video clips produced by Al-Qaeda’s propaganda arm, Al-Sahab. The first clip featured Usama bin Laden’s (QI.B.8.01) deputy, Aiman Muhammed Rabi al-Zawahiri (QI.A.6.01), and the second featured Abu Laith al-Liby, who then served as a senior member of LIFG and a senior leader and trainer for Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan.”

The Perpetrators of the Benghazi Attack

After Qaddafi was overthrown by the al-Qaeda-affiliated LIFG, the Tripoli Military Council was initially run by Gen. Abd al-Fatah Yunis. However, he was assassinated by the military group Ansar al-Sharia on July 28, 2011, and the former emir of the LIFG, Belhadj, became the Council’s military commander. The Benghazi Military Council, in turn, was run by Sallabi, an ally of Belhadj.

Three of the military brigades operating in the Benghazi area—Ansar al-Sharia, Libyan Shield, and the February 17 Brigade, the latter two of which operate in coordination with the Libyan Ministry of Defense—participated in the attack on the United States mission

and a CIA annex in Benghazi, killing U.S. Amb. Chris Stevens and three U.S. diplomatic personnel, on the 11th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 al-Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. These three organizations were the chief American combat allies in the drive to overthrow Qaddafi.

To be specific: Ansar al-Sharia, led by Abu Sufian bin Qumu, a former al-Qaeda Guantanamo detainee; the Libya Shield, which met the Marines who came from Tripoli at the airport and accompanied them to the CIA annex, led by Wisam bin Hamid, identified by the Library of Congress as possibly the head of al-Qaeda in Libya; and the February 17 Brigade, which provided security for the mission, led by Ismail Sallabi, are all run by the al-Qaeda-affiliated LIFG.

Ansar al-Sharia: The leader of the Ansar al-Sharia group in Derna that actually carried out the assault on the U.S. mission and CIA annex in Benghazi on 9/11/12, is Sufian bin-Qumu. According to his Guantanamo detainee assessment report, Qumu received monthly stipends from one of the financiers of the original 9/11/2001 attack:

“Detainee’s alias is found on a list of probable Al-Qaida personnel receiving monthly stipends. His alias was found on al-Qaeda’s 11 September attacks financier Mustafa Al Hawsawi’s laptop as an Al-Qaida member receiving family support.”

The assessment continues: “Detainee is assessed as a former member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, a probable member of Al-Qaeda. The detainee is assessed as a MEDIUM to HIGH risk, as he is likely to pose a threat to the US, its interests and allies.

“Prior history: he served as a tank driver in the Libyan armed forces as a private. The Libyan Government states he was addicted to illegal drugs/narcotics and had been accused of a number of crimes including murder, physical assault, armed assault and distributing narcotics. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison. In 1993 he escaped and fled eventually to Afghanistan and trained at Osama Bin Laden’s Torkham Camp. After Afghanistan he moved to Sudan where he worked as a truck driver for one of OBL’s companies. He joined the LIFG and was assigned to the military committee. He left Sudan, allegedly withdrew from the LIFG in 1998 and returned to Afghanistan. Captured in 2001, he was sent to Guantanamo.”

According to the report, he has admitted associations with Ayyub Al Libi, al-Qaeda/LIFG facilitator, Abu Abdullah al Sadiq, which is the *nom de guerre* of Abdul Hakim Belhadj who is the leader of LIFG, and Abu Al Munihir, a.k.a. Sami Al Saadi, who drew up the

war plan to overthrow Qaddafi in the mid-2000s.

Libya Shield: The last signed diplomatic cable from Ambassador Stevens back to the State Department in Washington, dated Sept. 11, 2012 described a tense Sept. 9 meeting in Benghazi between U.S. security officials and two leaders of Libya Shield, Wissam bin Hamid (misidentified as Wisam bin Ahmed) and Shaykh Muhammad al-Garabi, in which they argued that if the Muslim Brotherhood candidate for Prime Minister, Alwad al Barasi, should win, he would appoint the commander of the February 17 Brigade, Fawzi Bukatif, as Minister of Defense.

“Bukatif’s appointment,” the memo says, “would open the MOD and other security ministries and offices to plum appointments for his most favored brigade commanders—giving February 17 and Libya Shield tacit control of the armed forces.” On the other hand, if Jibril, whom the U.S. government was supporting, won, “they would not continue to guarantee security in Benghazi, a critical function they asserted they were currently providing.”

According to al-Fetn.com, Bin Hamid fought against American forces in both Iraq and Afghanistan before returning to the Benghazi-Derna area of eastern Libya to “ally” with Washington to overthrow and execute Qaddafi. The same al-Fetn.com reported in late October 2011 that bin Hamid became the head of a newly formed “supreme board of the Libyan mujahideen.”

According to an August 2012 report from the Library of Congress, “Al-Qaeda in Libya: A Profile,” bin Hamid is widely identified as the actual head of al-Qaeda in Libya. He also held a demonstration in Sirte in March 2012, which was attended by the head of al-Qaeda in Magreb in Sahel, Mokhtar ben Mokhtar. Yet, his Libya Shield militia was entrusted with security for the U.S. mission in Benghazi, and the Sept. 9, 2012 meeting likely provided the group with the travel plans of Ambassador Stevens, who arrived in Benghazi on Sept. 10 for a scheduled ten-day visit. The attack on the CIA annex only began after Libyan Shield fighters escorted a Marine rescue team from the airport to the location hours after the initial attack on the U.S. mission, where Ambassador Stevens was killed.

February 17 Brigade: According to Joan Neuhaus Schaan, a fellow in Homeland Security and Terrorism at Rice University’s Baker Institute for Public Policy in Houston, the February 17 Brigade, which provided security for the U.S. Mission in Benghazi, was founded by Ismail Sallabi, a known member of al-Qaeda and the LIFG. A Brookings Doha Center policy briefing dated

May 2012, entitled “Libyan Islamists Unpacked: Rise, Transformation, and Future,” also reports that Sallabi heads the February 17 Brigade based in Benghazi.

On Sept. 16, 2011 the *Guardian* identified Sallabi as the head of the Benghazi Military Council, the counterpart to the Tripoli Military Council led by Abul Hakim Belhadj. According to Al Arabiya News, the commander of the February 17 brigade is Fawzi Bukatif.

According to al-Hayat, Belhadj was in Benghazi in April 2011, where he helped organize the February 17 Brigade. Included in the security force for the Benghazi mission proper, were four members of the February 17 Brigade, described by a State Department source as “a friendly militia which has basically been deputized by the Libyan government to serve as our security, our host government security.” An additional 16 militia members were part of the quick-reaction security team based at the CIA compound described as the mission’s “annex.”

Ismael al-Sallabi (who is the brother of Libya’s leading Islamist, Ali al-Sallabi) also leads the Martyr Rafallah Sahati Brigade, which began as a battalion of the February 17 Brigade. The Brigade’s commander, Shaykh Muhammad al-Garabi, met with U.S. officials on Sept. 9, along with Wisam ben Hamid of the Libya Shield.

Abdel Hakim Belhadj: Any serious investigation of Benghazi would have to look closely at the role of Abdel Hakim Belhadj, the founder of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and, after the overthrow of Qaddafi, the commander of the Tripoli Military Council. As such, he was given responsibility, as of Aug. 30, 2011, for the security of all foreign embassies in Tripoli, including the U.S. Embassy, until he stepped down as commander of the TMC to form his own political party (Watan) in May 2012. He was also put in charge of coordinating defense on a national level.

On Nov. 17, 2012, the Saudi-based publication *Arab News* published an article by Ali Bluwi, reporting that the attack on the Benghazi mission was carried out in revenge for the killing of Abu Yahya al-Libi, a senior Libyan member of al-Qaeda, killed in a U.S. drone attack in Pakistan in June 2012.

The article also reports that U.S. Amb. Chris Stevens “prevented Abdel Hakim Belhadj from assuming the portfolio of defense or interior in Libya.”

Furthermore, according to former Muslim Brotherhood member Walid Shoebat, Belhadj is the al-Qaeda operative that the Libyan expatriates claim was the principal organizer who directed the Sept. 11 terrorist attack in Benghazi.

Al-Qaeda in Syria: While Belhadj was commander

of the Tripoli Military Council, he deployed on behalf of Obama, the British Empire, and Saudi Arabia, to provide al-Qaeda military personnel and weapons in the attempt to overthrow the Syrian government. Numerous news sources, including the *Daily Telegraph*, have reported that, in November 2011, Belhadj traveled to Turkey to meet with the Syrian Free Army, to provide it with training and weapons to overthrow Assad.

According to Albawaba.com and thetruthseeker.co.uk, during that same month, some 600 LIFG terrorists from Libya entered Syria and began military operations. The individual who leads the Libyan fighters is Mahdi al-Harati, now head of the Liwa al-Ummah Brigade in Syria. According to an Aug. 9, 2012 article in *Foreign Policy* magazine by Mary Fitzgerald, entitled "The Syrian Rebels' Libyan Weapon," al-Harati is a Libyan-born Irish citizen, who was a commander of the Tripoli Brigade, run by Belhadj during overthrow of Qaddafi in Libya.

The Tripoli Brigade was one of the first rebel units to enter the Libyan capital in August 2011. After Tripoli was taken by the rebels, al-Harati was appointed deputy head of the Tripoli Military Council, serving under Abdel Hakim Belhaj. In late 2011, Harati stepped down as commander of the Tripoli Brigade and as deputy head of the Tripoli Military Council, and left for Syria.

According to Harati, more than 6,000 men across Syria have joined Liwa al-Ummah since its establishment. Harati stresses that 90% of its members are Syrians, the rest are Libyans, most of them, former members of the Tripoli Brigade, along with a smattering of other Arabs. According to Reuters, Liwa al-Ummah includes 20 senior members of the Tripoli Brigade.

One of the State Department documents released by the House Oversight Committee in October was from the Research and Information Support Center, dated March 1, 2012. It gives the following assessment of the presence of al-Qaeda in the Benghazi area:

"In late December 2011, reports indicated that the al-Qaeda leadership in Pakistan had sent experienced jihadists to Libya to build a new base of operations in the country. Between May and December 2011, one of these jihadists had recruited 200 fighters in the eastern part of the country. Documents seized in Iraq indicate that many foreign fighters who participated in the Iraqi insurgency hailed from eastern Libya."

According to the August 2012 Library of Congress "Al-Qaeda in Libya" report, the individual sent is believed to be Abd al-Baset Azzouz, who has been close to al-Qaeda head Al-Zawahiri since 1980. According to

the same report, he is likely located currently in Libya with another senior Libyan al-Qaeda operative Abd al Hamid al Ruqhay, alias Abu Anas al-Libi, who moved, in the late 1980s, living at various times, in Afghanistan and Sudan, where he is believed to have met Osama bin Laden and joined al-Qaeda.

According to documents released by former Muslim Brotherhood member Walid Shoebat, records provided to expatriates from sources inside the Libyan government establish that al-Qaeda operatives are facilitating the passage of jihadists through Libya to Syria. Specifically, Abdul Wahhab Hassan Qayad, whose brother, al-Qaeda leader Yahya al-Libi, was killed in Pakistan in June 2012 by a U.S. drone attack, now works in the Libyan Interior Ministry where he is in charge of Border Control and Strategic Institutions. The position allows him to arrange open-border passage for al-Qaeda operatives, facilitating not only the flow of terrorists into Libya, but also al-Qaeda efforts to transport terrorists and weapons into Syria from Libya via Turkey.

What Must Be Done

The LaRouche Political Action Committee (LPAC) has produced a detailed documentary on President Obama's filthy dealings with the very British and Saudi-backed jihadists who have the blood of American Ambassador Chris Stevens and countless others on their hands. Congressional demands for the creation of a select committee to get to the bottom of the Benghazi 9/11/12 attacks must begin with a thorough airing of the ongoing alliance between the Obama White House and al-Qaeda. Nothing short of a thorough probe will prevent a replay of the first two 9/11 attacks, perhaps on a far grander scale.

What makes this particularly urgent is that, in using al-Qaeda to overthrow Assad in Syria, the British Empire, Saudi Arabia, and their stooge Obama are pushing the world to the edge of a thermonuclear war with Russia and China. The crimes of Obama are much greater than failing to provide sufficient security to the mission, or not responding after the attack by providing military assistance.

The reason for this is that the killings of the Ambassador and three other Americans were carried out by the very terrorists Obama and his masters relied upon to overthrow Qaddafi, and are relying on now to overthrow Assad. The designation of al-Nusra as a terrorist organization is just a fig leaf. The entire Syrian opposition is al-Qaeda, as this fact sheet conclusively demonstrates, and the Syrian opposition itself has affirmed by proclaiming that they are all al-Nusra.