

Obama's Mideast Fiasco: '100% Guaranteed To Fail'

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Oct. 5—Vice President Joseph Biden told an embarrassing half-truth about the Obama Administration's doomed strategy for defeating the Islamic State, in a speech at Harvard University on Oct. 2. He lamented that American allies, including Saudi Arabia and Turkey, were responsible for assisting in the rise of the Islamic State (IS) through arms and funds to the radical jihadists. Biden's candid admission drew an immediate reaction from Turkish President Recep Erdogan, who publicly called out the American VP, and accused him of lying about a personal conversation that Biden recounted to the Harvard audience, in which he said the former Turkish prime minister had lamented that Turkey had inadvertently aided in the rise of IS.

By the morning of Oct. 4, the White House issued a "clarification" of Biden's remarks, essentially apologizing to Erdogan and, by implication, to the Saudis as well.

Biden was telling the truth when he named Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Kuwait as boosters of the Sunni faction of radical jihadists. But he failed to acknowledge that the Obama Administration has been boosting the very terrorists that the United States is now fighting in both Iraq and Syria. From at least 2011-13, the U.S. was itself running a weapons-smuggling operation out of Benghazi, Libya, funneling arms to Syrian rebels seeking to overthrow the Bashar al-Assad government in collusion with Turkey and Qatar.

The United Nations has published a series of reports on violations of the Libyan arms embargo, detailing the

weapons flows. Up until the Sept. 11, 2012 assault on the U.S. mission and CIA compound in Benghazi, the CIA had a team of operatives working the arms route out of Benghazi, using Qatar military cargo planes to funnel all varieties of weapons to the Syrian rebels through Turkey. And up until recently, Turkey has abetted the Islamic State in a rat-line of foreign fighters, weapons, and money running from southern Turkey into northern Iraq.

Erdogan Targets Assad

This past week, the situation along the Turkey-Syria border got further complicated when the Turkish parliament passed a government-sponsored resolution to provide support to the U.S.-led coalition fighting against the Islamic State in both Syria and Iraq. While the Syrian government has publicly stated its tacit support for American bombing missions against IS targets in the north of the country, and has advertised that the United States has been unofficially coordinating those attacks with Damascus, the Syrians responded harshly to the idea of Turkish involvement on the side of the U.S.

For one thing, the Turkish government continues to place higher priority on the overthrow of Assad. It has mooted the idea of creating a no-fly zone in the north of Iraq and a safe zone. Given that the Islamic State does not have an air force, the idea of a Turkish no-fly zone in northern Iraq can only mean one thing: It is actually targeted at the Syrian regime.

Furthermore, Turkey has been blocking the passage of Iraqi Kurdish fighters into northern Syria, to assist Syrian Kurds battling the IS near the critical border town of Kobani. Turkish authorities have used water cannons and have sealed the border to the Iraqi Kurds, thus in effect abetting the IS offensive. The Assad government warned that any involvement of Turkey in the fighting in northern Syria would be viewed as a foreign invasion in violation of Syrian sovereignty, and a violation as well of the recent UN Security Council resolution, which obliges all UN member-states to block the flow of foreign fighters and weapons into Syria and Iraq.

While the United States continues a non-stop bombing campaign against IS in Iraq and Syria, the jihadists continue to take more territory. According to an Egyptian source, in recent weeks of fighting, IS has taken over 70 more Syrian and Iraqi towns and villages, and expanded the overall territory under its control. Gen. Anthony Zinni (ret.), former head of the U.S. Central Command, told a Washington audience last week that the Obama plan for defeating IS is so fatally flawed that it is guaranteed “one hundred percent” to fail.

Recent indications are that the IS forces are closing in around Baghdad itself, which has been the constant target of suicide bombings, and would be a prize objective for the jihadists.

The 28 Pages Are Key

In an interview with [RIA Novosti](#) on Oct. 3, this author traced the flaw in Obama’s war plan all the way back to the President’s refusal to declassify the 28-page chapter from the 2002 Joint Congressional Inquiry into 9/11, which reportedly details the role of the Saudis in the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. By covering for the Saudis, President Obama has made it impossible to conduct a genuine campaign to defeat the Islamic State.

From before 9/11 right up to the present, the Saudis and other Gulf states have been funneling arms, money, and foreign fighters into the terrorist groups. Until that relationship is fully exposed and shut down—starting with the declassification of the crucial 28 pages—no effective war against IS can be waged.

There is legislation in Congress—HConRes 428, sponsored by Rep. Walter Jones (R-N.C.)—demanding that Obama declassify the pages, originally classified by President G.W. Bush.

Furthermore, President Obama’s refusal to go to Congress for authorization for the war against the Is-

lamic State—despite unanimous demands from his Cabinet that he must get Congressional approval—has added to the problem. The war, as now being fought, is unconstitutional, and is grounds for Obama’s impeachment for violating Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

Obama has rejected the idea of formal collaboration with Syria and Iran in the campaign against IS—to assure the Saudis and other Gulf states that the U.S. continues to support regime change in Syria, as well as the defeat of IS. He has left China and Russia on the sidelines, although both countries face similar threats from Uighur and Chechen jihadists, many of whom are now fighting in Syria and Iraq with the Islamic State, the al-Nusra Front, and the Islamic Front. To conceal the fact that he has rejected the best advice of his Joint Chiefs of Staff and instead adopted a losing strategy, White House spokesmen have asked for patience, claiming that the war to defeat IS will take years, perhaps generations.

Obama Lies

To make matters worse, the President has attacked the U.S. intelligence community for alleged failure to foresee the IS threat.

In an interview with CBS TV “60 Minutes” on Sept. 28, Obama said that Director of National Intelligence Gen. James Clapper had failed to warn him about the IS threat, and failed to see how poorly trained the Iraqi Armed Forces were. In reality, President Obama was repeatedly warned about the threat from the IS—from no later than November 2013, when then-Iraq Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki came to Washington and begged Obama to launch a bombing campaign against the jihadists. This was two months before IS launched its first major offensive in western Iraq, taking Fallujah and Ramadi.

Top U.S. intelligence officials, including notably the head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Gen. Michael Flynn, repeatedly told the White House and Congress about the danger of IS, and warned that the group would launch a major offensive to take territory in both Iraq and Syria during 2014.

Not only did U.S. intelligence professionals revolt against the President’s accusations. Breitbart News reported that the President had only attended 42% of his Presidential Daily Briefings since coming into office. They are the daily in-person briefings from the Office of the Director of National Security and the CIA given to the President every morning.