

Media Coverage of the Orlando Mass Shootings. The FBI, G4S, CIA, ISIS Nexus, “No Hard Questions Asked”

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As with most mass shooting cases in the United States, initial news reports are sensational and uninformative, focusing mainly on the number of dead and wounded. There is also an emphasis on the criminal's use of unattractive firearms, usually AR-15 semi-automatic rifles, generally obtained legally.

After a time, embarrassing facts start to trickle out, usually tied to prior official knowledge of the shooter's dubious background along with statements from long-time friends, relatives, and acquaintances, noting that the person was always known to be mentally unbalanced.

The Orlando, Florida killings follow this pattern—but with a great difference. The actor's father, Seddique Mateen, according to the *Washington Post*, praised the Taliban, saying “Our brothers in Waziristan, our warrior brothers in [the] Taliban movement and the national Afghan Taliban are rising up.” The elder Mateen was also a candidate for president of Afghanistan.

Omar Mateen, the shooter, had earlier been under investigation by the FBI for ties to Moner Abusalha, an American suicide bomber in Syria.

Omar was an armed security guard at a firm, G4S, founded in Denmark at the beginning of the last century. A major company supplying, inter alia, guard services, risk consulting, and investigations worldwide, it bought Wackenhut Corp., a similar purveyor of investigations and security services, in 2010. G4S unsurprisingly, has offices in Crystal City in Arlington, Va., a Washington, D.C. suburb known for its ties to the U.S. armed forces and intelligence services.

Wackenhut, begun by George R. Wackenhut, a former FBI official, in 1954, has long had ties to the American armed forces and intelligence services. Some of these include one-time FBI Director Clarence Kelley, past Defense Secretary and CIA Deputy Director Frank Carlucci, previous Defense Intelligence Agency Director Gen. Joseph Carroll, and Adm. Bobby Ray Inman, former Director of the National Security Agency and Deputy Director of the CIA. William J. Casey, before becoming Director of Central Intelligence, was outside legal counsel to Wackenhut Corp.

Terrorism expert and CIA analyst William Corbett noted that Wackenhut had been closely connected to the CIA and other intelligence organizations. According to Corbett, the company would allow the CIA to place “non-official cover” officers (i.e., intelligence officials posing as legitimate businessmen) in the firm to conduct clandestine activity.

Wackenhut was involved in Iran-Contra in Central America in the 1980s, producing and supplying explosives to the Contras in Nicaragua (through the Cabazon Indian Reservation in California).

Still other odd facts are emerging. NBC noted that Omar Mateen (whose wife had divorced him for physical abuse and mental health issues) had traveled several times to Saudi Arabia for *umrah*, essentially the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca outside Dhu al-Hijja (the last month of the Islamic year). CNN claimed that a U.S. official stated Mateen had also traveled to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) about the same time as the Saudi trips.

Saudi Arabia, known for its exceedingly conservative brand of Islam, Wahhabism, is the paymaster for much of the ISIL/ISIS/IS activity in the Arab world. Whether the Kingdom is somehow involved with the Orlando events is yet unclear. The UAE, which helped finance the Yugoslavia war in the 1990s, has long served as a safe haven for elements practicing and supporting terrorism in Iraq. Again, as with Saudi Arabia, whether the Emirates were connected to the murders in Florida is unknown. As yet, there is still a dearth of hard, provable facts, not unusual in the increasing series of mass shootings in the United States.

The press, in North America and elsewhere, should start asking hard questions as to what is really happening and why. Repeated media hand-wringing and blaming firearms makers do not help our understanding of current events, alleged terrorism, or government obfuscation.

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