

Retired US General Admits Military's Role in Creating ISIS

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In a [forthcoming interview with Al Jazeera English](#) set to air on July 31st, a former United States general—who helped craft some of the most [controversial tactics in America's foreign wars](#)—warned that drone strikes create terrorists. Retired Army General Mike Flynn also criticized American torture tactics and condemned the United States for the integral role its foreign policy has played in spurring the creation of the notorious Islamic State.

Flynn was a top intelligence official following 9/11. He worked for the Pentagon's internal intelligence agency—the Defense Intelligence Agency—before conflict with Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper [forced him to resign a year ahead of schedule](#). Following his resignation, Flynn became an [outspoken opponent](#) of Obama's foreign policy because, in spite of the president's [expansion of military operations](#), the general believed Obama had not been sufficiently aggressive in battling the Islamic State.

Now, however, the hawkish general is open about his concerns about the American military's role in the world. In his interview with Mehdi Hasan of Al Jazeera, he [addresses](#) the drone war, which [grew considerably under President Obama](#):

"When you drop a bomb from a drone ... you are going to cause more damage than you are going to cause good," he said.

When Hasan suggests [drone strikes create more terrorists than they kill](#), he responds, "I don't disagree with that," calling the drone program a "failed strategy."

He also indicts America's infamous—and widespread use—of torture. "You know I hope that as more and more information comes out that people are held accountable," he says. "History is not going to look kind on those actions ... and we will be held, we should be held accountable for many, many years to come."

His statements parallel sentiments he expressed previously. Earlier this year, he [condemned](#) the findings of the highly publicized CIA torture report, which revealed the use of inhumane and grotesque "enhanced interrogation techniques." Flynn said history "will look back on it, and it won't be a pretty picture."

As the director of Intelligence for the Joint Special Operations Command—a [secretive unit that reports directly to the White House](#)—Flynn oversaw the transformation of JSOC into an intelligence-based unit. As detailed by journalist Jeremy Scahill's documentary, "[Dirty Wars](#)," JSOC was responsible for thousands of raids—many deadly—on Afghani civilians, many of

whom had no ties to terrorism.

When he was asked (on a separate occasion from the Al Jazeera interview) how many people JSOC killed in Iraq, Flynn [reportedly](#) responded, “Thousands, I don’t even know how many.”

Now, however, Flynn acknowledges the [aggressive military approach](#) that encompassed his actions may not have been wise—an analysis not to be taken lightly considering his extensive role in military operations in the Iraq. In fact, he admitted U.S. military policy played a significant part in the rise of the Islamic State. As The Intercept [reported](#) of his interview with Al Jazeera,

“Flynn says that the invasion of Iraq was a strategic mistake that directly contributed to the rise of the extremist group the Islamic State. ‘We definitely put fuel on a fire,’ he told Hasan. ‘Absolutely ... there’s no doubt, I mean ... history will not be kind to the decisions that were made certainly in 2003.’”

His statements are further evidence that the military’s misadventures are not the brave, noble missions they are so often made out to be. A recent declassified report [suggested the military knowingly contributed](#) to the rise of ISIS. As far back as 2006, [intelligence agencies warned](#) that waging war in the Middle East would result in increased terrorist activity.

Whether increased terror activity is precipitated by drone strikes, full-on invasions, or both of Flynn’s admissions, what is clear is that the United States now reaps what it sows in the Middle East. It is becoming astoundingly clear that the U.S.’ wars in the Middle East—many times [justified by lies](#) for the sake of [securing resources](#)—cause more harm than good.

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