

Syria's White Helmets: "Soft War" by Way of Deception. The Non-Profit Propaganda Industry

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"The Ivy League bourgeoisie who sit at the helm of the non-profit industrial complex will one day be known simply as charismatic architects of death. Funded by the ruling class oligarchy, the role they serve for their funders is not unlike that of corporate media. Yet, it appears that global society is paralyzed in a collective hypnosis – rejecting universal social interests, thus rejecting reason, to instead fall in line with the position of the powerful minority that has seized control, a minority that systematically favours corporate interests."
~ [Cory Morningstar](#)

In his [recent speech](#) Hezbollah leader, Sayyed Nasrallah, alluded to a multi-phase "soft war" which relies upon the mass media complex to disseminate propaganda and bias, propelling the Middle East into, primarily, a sectarian crisis before descending even further into regionalism and finally a devastating individualism.

[Cory Morningstar's body of work](#) does more than any other to expose the bare bones of the non-profit propaganda industry that governs both our reactions – and inactions, through a network of multi-layered and multi-faceted media manipulation campaigns, of which the end result is mass thought control. She explains:

"The 21st century NGO is becoming, more and more, a key tool serving the imperialist quest of absolute global dominance and exploitation. Global society has been, and continues to be, manipulated to believe that NGOs are representative of "civil society" (a concept promoted by corporations in the first place). This misplaced trust has allowed the "humanitarian industrial complex" to ascend to the highest position: the missionaries of deity – the deity of the empire."

In a paper entitled, [Foreign Aid and Regime Change: A Role for Donor Intent](#), written just prior to NATO intervention in Libya, [Prof. Sarah Blodgett Borneo](#) describes the "democratization" process for target nations. Unwittingly or wittingly, Borneo perfectly outlines the role played by NGOs in this process. Borneo even goes so far as to pinpoint the lack of impartiality rife among NGOs large and small, the majority of whom, receive their funding directly from western government and major corporation sources – all of whom have a vested interest in the outcome of their NGO's activities and 'intervention' in a particular location. Borneo emphasises the importance of "picking winners" in this scenario, as opposed to respecting and supporting the will of the people in any sovereign nation.

"Thus, it is possible that aid donors, in an effort to avoid further entrenching an

“authoritarian” [my edit: this status is decided by donor] regime and perhaps increase the likelihood of democratization, channel funds through NGOs and civil society organizations in authoritarian states.”

In this short video below, we are introduced to the US military’s symbiotic relationship with NGOs in countries [in this instance, Iraq] where the policy is to Induce Pacification & Advance Western Ideologies. NGOs are cynically used to “soften” cultures and render entire communities dependent upon foreign aid in order to facilitate “Democratization”.

In this role, and dependent upon their donor support, NGOs cease to be the neutral, unbiased ‘humanitarian’ organisations they publically purport to be, and instead become actual covert tools for foreign intervention and *regime change*. By default, they are assimilated into the Western *modus vivendi* of “waging war by way of deception” and their purpose is to alter public perception of a conflict via a multitude of media and “marketing” channels.

Following this formula, let’s examine, once more, the role of the [Syria Civil Defence](#) aka, ‘The White Helmets’ currently operating in Syria and take a closer look at their financial sources and mainstream media partners in order to better determine if they are indeed “neutral” as media moguls proclaim these “humanitarians” to be.

White Helmets: Follow the Money

The White Helmets were established in March 2013, in Istanbul, Turkey, and is headed by James Le Mesurier, a British “security” specialist and ‘ex’ British military intelligence officer with an impressive track record in some of the most dubious NATO intervention theatres including Bosnia and Kosovo, as well as Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine. Le Mesurier is a product of Britain’s elite Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, and has also been placed in a series of high-profile posts at the United Nations, European Union, and U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The origins of The White Helmet’s initial \$300k seed funding is a little hazy, reports are contradictory but subsequent information leads us to conclude that the UK, US and the ‘Syrian Opposition’ [or Syrian National Council, parallel government backed and funded by the US, UK and allies] are connected. Logistical support has been provided and given by Turkish elite natural disaster response team, AKUT.

A further \$13 million was poured into the White Helmet coffers during 2013 and this is where it gets interesting. Early reports suggest that these “donations” came from the US, UK and SNC with the previously explored [connections to George Soros in the US](#).

However, subsequent investigations reveal that USAID has been a major shareholder in the White Helmet organisation.

The website for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) claims that “our work supports long-term and equitable economic growth and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives by supporting: economic growth, agriculture and trade; global health; and, democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance.”

In a [USAID report update in July 2015](#) it is clearly stated that they have supplied over \$ 16m in assistance to the White Helmets.

The USAID track record as a primary US Government/CIA regime change facilitator is extensively documented. From South America to the Ukraine and in the Middle East, USAID serve a malevolent and ultimately destructive role in the dismantling of sovereign nations and their reduction to Western hegemony vassal states, as always, all in the name of *freedom and democracy*.

“The United States does not lack institutions that continue to conspire, and that’s why I am using this gathering to announce that we have decided to expel USAID from Bolivia” ~ Bolivian President Evo Morales

“USAID and NED are in the business of “Democracy Promotion” which uses public money (from U.S. taxpayers) for secretive operations with the intention to support pro-U.S. governments with the help of political and social movements abroad. The goal is regime change.” ~ [Timothy Alexander Guzman](#)

With recent developments in Syria and as a consequence of the Syrian Government requested Russian intervention, we have seen a scramble to justify the shambolic US foreign policy and its clandestine terror operations in Syria. We have previously established the White Helmet connections to this US regime change operation and their undisputed exclusive integration into the Al Nusra and Free Syrian Army [Muslim Brotherhood] and even ISIS networks and strongholds.

After [RT](#) and [Sott.net](#) among others, exposed the gaping holes in White Helmet propaganda whereby the group [recycled older photographs on Twitter in an effort to blame Russia](#) for ‘civilian deaths’ – even before the alleged Russian bombing had occurred. Since then, the propaganda “war” has only ramped up. The Russian involvement in Syria, did not only betray the US military deception, it also brought some heavyweight media giants of its own into the fray who set about de-constructing the Western media and NGO indoctrination that had, for so long, been largely unchallenged.

At this point the [London Telegraph](#) went into damage limitation mode. It published an article expounding the White Helmet humanitarian role in Syria but with admissions of UK Government “majority” funding and that the White Helmets are embedded with ISIS (“in at least one ISIL held area”), claims previously vehemently denied but rendered indisputable after discovery of the photo showing an ISIS mercenary posing directly in front of a White Helmets depot located deep in ISIS held territory south of Yarmouk.

“The Foreign Office is currently [the largest single source of funding](#). It is an irony that if Britain does effectively become an ally of Assad, and starts raids against Isil in Syria, it will be bombing from the air and paying for the bodies to be dug out on the ground. The White Helmets are also operating in at least one Isil-held area.”

Interestingly, the *Telegraph* stated clearly that the UK Foreign Office is the “largest single source of funding” for the White Helmets which may be perceived as an attempt to draw fire away from the USAID funding which still outstrips official figures released by the British Gov’t who “gifted” £ 3.5 million in equipment to “civil defence teams” in Syria [[Report March 2015](#)]. However, the British Government also committed to an additional £ 10m to “increase coordination between the Syrian Interim Government and civil defence teams” to be funded by: UK Government’s Conflict, Security and Stability Fund (CSSF).

If an organisation is funded by foreign governments who are directly involved in trying overthrow Syria's government, how can they be rightly called an 'independent relief organisation'?

It should be noted here also that although cries of 'regime change!' from both Washington and London have been muted since Russia entered the Syria conflict, both Washington and London have been supporting their own parallel, hand-picked 'interim government' for Syria since at least 2012.

So, with millions in hard cash and equipment being invested into the White Helmets by US & UK donors who have a very clear regime change objective in Syria, it becomes increasingly difficult to perceive their role as anything other than donor-biased propaganda merchants and a 'humanitarian' extension of a clandestine terror operation allied to the NATO proxy armies in the region.

White Helmet Leadership

[James Le Mesurier](#) has been portrayed as a Humanitarian maverick hero, miraculously in the right place (Istanbul) at the right time, just as the need arose for the formation of a Syria Civil Defence team, perhaps coincidentally, only a few months prior to the now infamous and universally (except for a few diehard propagandists) discredited Ghouta 'chemical weapon' attack in August 2013, an event which has [already been proven beyond a doubt to be a false flag attack](#), as well as subsequent accusations levied at the Syrian Government which narrowly failed to precipitate the NATO desired 'No Fly Zone'.

However, when we delve deeper into the life and times of Le Mesurier we see that it was no happy accident that he was in Istanbul at this juncture. As Sandhurst Military Academy's top student and recipient of the Queen's Medal, his chequered career took him from OHR [Office of High Representative] in Bosnia to intelligence co-ordinator in NATO's newly won prize, Kosovo.

We're told that Le Mesurier left the British Army in 2000 and joined the UN serving as deputy head of the Advisory Unit on 'Security and Justice', and Special Representative of the Secretary General's security policy body within the UN mission in Kosovo. His career then took him to Jerusalem where he worked on implementing the Ramallah Agreement, then to Baghdad as a special advisor to Iraqi Minister of Interior, and to the UAE to train their gas field protection force, and later to Lebanon during the 2006 war. In 2005 he was made Vice President for Special Projects at private mercenary firm [Olive Group](#), and in January 2008 he was appointed as Principal for [Good Harbour International](#), both based in Dubai.

Le Mesurier is also the founder of [Mayday Rescue](#), a "non profit" organisation providing SAR [search & rescue] training to civilians enduring conflict. According to Mesurier's own biography on the website, Mayday Rescue was founded in 2014, after he had established Syria Civil Defence/White Helmets.

Mosab Obeidat, previous Assistant Chief of Mission with the Qatar Red Crescent, one of whose officials, Khaled Diab was accused of supplying \$ 2.2 m to secure arms for the terrorist groups in Syria. Details of this transaction and its exposure can be found in this Al Akhbar article from June 2013. <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/16160>

At least [three other members of the team](#) were a part of the Syrian "revolution" including

[Farouq al Habib](#), one of the 3 most prominent White Helmet leaders who was also a leader of the Homs uprising against the Syrian government and according to his testimony, was tortured by the Syrian “regime” security forces in 2012 for smuggling a journalist into Syria to “cover” the “peaceful protests”. Habib was a founder member of the “Homs Revolutionary Council” (note that the [CIA have been linked](#) to nearly all ‘Revolutionary Councils’ in Syria) before fleeing to Turkey in 2013 (A more in-depth analysis of his anti-Syrian government testimony will be presented in Part II of this article).

Le Mesurier is heavily involved in several organisations not mentioned in this article, but for the purposes of demonstrating that the White Helmets *should not* be considered impartial or neutral as they claim, we will focus on those that best substantiate that argument.

Both Olive Group and Good Harbour International are experts in private “security”. Taken from [Sourcewatch](#) on Olive Group:

“Olive Security was founded in 2001 by Harry Legge Burke. Olive lends their quick success to strong relations in the government and military industry. Harry Legge-Burke is an ex-Welsh Guard, and a former aid to chief of defence staff Sir [Charles Guthrie]. He can claim Prince William as a skiing partner and his sister was a nanny to the royal children.

Iraq: Olive were on the ground since the invasion began in 2003, and were able to deploy 38 former SAS employees within two days of the invasion’s completion in 2004

[Jonathan Allum](#), Olive’s former director and co-owner, is also the son of [Tony Allum](#), who is the chairman of the engineering company [Halcrow](#) and also the head of the UK government’s Iraq Industry Working Group. It was in the latter position that Tony Allum went to Washington to meet with Bechtel leaders, where he suggested, among other UK companies, Halcrow and Olive as companies worth considering for subcontracted work, all stemming from Bechtel’s \$680 million contract with USAID. They were considered and contracts followed, though both Legge-Burke and Allum deny one had anything to do with the other.”

In May 2015, Olive Group merged with Constellis Holdings, in whose portfolio we can also find Academi, previously the notorious [Blackwater Group](#) ([Nisour Square massacre, Iraq 2007](#)). Taken from [The Atlantic July 2012](#): Post 9/11, Bush enabled the CIA to subcontract assassinations allegedly targeting Al Qaeda operatives. Blackwater was awarded this contract.

“Running operations through Blackwater gave the CIA the power to have people abducted, or killed, with no one in the government being exactly responsible.”

The CIA can no longer hide its Blackwater/Academi connections, especially after this week’s Wikileaks data dump of [CIA director John Brennan’s emails](#), whose contact list included now spy chief [Robert Richer](#) at his Blackwater contact address.

The outsourcing of intelligence operations was in full-swing. What Bush initiated, Obama ran with, awarding Blackwater/Academi a \$ 250m contract in 2010 to offer “unspecified” services to the CIA, thus maintaining the apparatus for “unaccountable” covert

assassinations.

It is true that James Le Mesurier only joined Olive Group in 2005 and left them in 2008, but his involvement with them and their subsequent merger with Constellis and by default, Blackwater/Academi, gives a degree of valuable insight into the elite intelligence and Pentagon circles that Le Mesurier moved in prior to working for Good Harbour International and creating Syria Civil Defence (not forgetting the USAID funding & influence that underpins both Olive and SCD/White Helmets).

In 2008, Le Mesurier joined Good Harbour International, another private “security” expert organisation, whose CEO is none other than former terror advisor to the Bush administration, the Terror Czar himself, Richard A. Clarke.

The jury is still out on whether Clarke was indeed the “whistleblower” he fashioned himself as, post 9/11, or a merely a high-level gatekeeper who aided in preventing a full and detailed investigation into Bush and Rumsfeld’s roles in 9/11.

Patrick Henningsen, a political analyst and writer for [21st Century Wire](#) believes the latter is more likely:

“On first glance, one might buy into the mainstream media’s characterization of him, but it’s more likely that Richard Clarke is not a whistleblower at all. While appearing to oppose the Bush administration from a safe enough distance, I believe his role was inserted into the mix in the period of 2004-2005 in order to VALIDATE the bin Laden mythology and help to portray al Qaeda as an organic, independently run terror organization. He also claimed that Bush and Rumsfeld committed war crimes, but this means nothing because everyone knows that no US official will ever face ‘war crimes’ charges in any court of law anywhere on the planet. It’s effectively a straw man narrative that distracts from the real scandal in the US which is that the entire premise of the war on terror is completely contrived. Clarke’s ‘whistleblower’ status gives him brilliant cover from too much public scrutiny. I remain skeptical of his whole public narrative. He was, is, and always will be an insider.”

What is perhaps even more telling, is Clarke’s reported close ties with Israeli-US operative Rita Katz of the [SITE Intelligence Group](#), another supposedly independent, albeit ‘private’ intelligence firm located in Bethesda, Maryland, a stone’s throw away from CIA headquarters. SITE are said to be responsible for the media release of the harrowing ISIS execution videos, al Qaeda videos, and [their credibility](#) has been extensively questioned.

[Katz’s long term working relationship](#) with Clarke began before 9/11 when she and her research associate Steve Emerson were commissioned by Clarke to identify ‘Islamic radicals’ inside the United States. Over time, Katz’s relationship with Clarke blossomed into a much more extensive one that included regular briefings at both the Clinton and Bush White Houses.

“One of SITE’s founders, Rita Katz, is a government insider with close connections to former terrorism czar Richard Clarke and his staff in the White House, as well as investigators in the Department of Justice, Department of the Treasury, and the Department of Homeland Security, according to SourceWatch. Her father was executed in Iraq as an Israel spy, a fact that

suggests a connection to Israeli intelligence.”

~ [Mark Taliano](#)

Wheels Within Wheels

This background on Le Mesurier should at least make us question the media portrayal of an affable, debonair and philanthropic leader of a civilian humanitarian mission. His military & intelligence roots, the fact that despite working for OHR in Bosnia, no visible record of his employment can be found there, his private security-centric career path, his appearance in Istanbul at just the right moment to partner USAID, the UK government & Syrian opposition in creating just the sort of “democratization” enabling NGO as described in our introduction, MUST at least cause us to doubt the transparency and neutrality of the White Helmets in Syria.

In addition, the White Helmet leadership consisting of known Syrian opposition protagonists such as Raed Saleh and Farouq al Habib must make us more cynical about the claims of impartiality and lack of bias and for those who will defend the “peaceful” revolution narrative upheld by Habib and Saleh, please take the time to read Professor Tim Anderson’s [in depth analysis of events in Syria pre NATO intervention](#).

“I have seen from the beginning armed protesters in those demonstrations ... they were the first to fire on the police. Very often the violence of the security forces comes in response to the brutal violence of the armed insurgents”
– Jesuit priest Father Frans Van der Lugt, January 2012, Homs Syria

“The claim that armed opposition to the government has begun only recently is a complete lie. The killings of soldiers, police and civilians, often in the most brutal circumstances, have been going on virtually since the beginning.” – Professor Jeremy Salt, October 2011, Ankara Turkey

Our presentation of the White Helmets as regime change propagandists & terrorist allies in this article will be further explored and verified in Part II.

“Existing soft power initiatives and agencies, particularly those engaged in development and strategic communications, must be reinvigorated through increased funding, human resources and prioritization. Concurrently, the U.S. government must establish goals, objectives and metrics for soft power initiatives. Furthermore, the U.S. government can better maximize the effectiveness of soft power instruments and efforts through increased partnerships with NGOs. By providing humanitarian and development assistance in areas typically inaccessible to government agencies, NGOs are often able to access potential extremist areas before the government can establish or strengthen diplomatic, developmental or military presence, including intelligence.” — Joseph S. Nye, former US assistant secretary of defence, June 2004

Author Vanessa Beeley is a contributor to 21WIRE, and since 2011, she has spent most of her time in the Middle East reporting on events there – as a independent researcher, writer, photographer and peace activist. She is also a member of the Steering Committee of the Syria Solidarity Movement, and a volunteer with the Global Campaign to Return to Palestine. See more of her work at her blog [The Wall Will Fall](#).

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