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The History of ISIS Beheadings: Part of the "Training Manual" of US Sponsored Syria "Pro-Democracy" Terrorists

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Global Research, September 19, 2014

Region: Middle East & North Africa
Theme: Media Disinformation, US NATO War Agenda
In-depth Report: SYRIA

The recent beheadings of three Westerners, Foley, Sotloff and Haines, at the hands of the Islamic State (ISIS) has sparked a wave of indignation and strong condemnation by Western heads of state.

For anyone aware of what has been truly going on in Syria from the outset of the war in March 2011, there is something unusual in these strong statements, which are now the object of a wave of "humanitarian bombings" under a counter-terrorism mandate directed against the Islamic State.

Lest we forget, from the outset of the war on Syria in March 2011, the US and its allies supported so-called "Freedom fighters" largely composed of the Al Nusrah and ISIS brigades. Trained in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, these pro-democracy terrorists were routinely involved in atrocities including beheadings directed against Syrian civilians.

Double standards? In the course of the last three years, no Western leader made any statements in regards to these atrocities committed by "Muslim extremists". They passed virtually unnoticed. No concern was expressed by the international community in this regard. With some exceptions, these beheadings were barely the object of media coverage.

Is it because the "freedom fighters" integrated by ISIS and Al Nusrah forces were beheading Syrian civilians rather than Westerners. Was it because the victims of these atrocities were opposed to the bloody "pro-democracy revolution" sponsored by US-NATO against the government of Bashar Al Assad?

Why are Western leaders only appalled now? Is it because now Westerners rather than Syrians are being decapitated?

These recent beheadings of American and British nationals, whether authentic or not, are obviously exploited to pave the way for a military intervention in Syria. This is a basic propaganda technique used time and time again to gather support for war and the mainstream media is there to convey this propaganda.

The mainstream media's role is not to inform people but to appeal to their emotions and manipulate them into approving what they would otherwise refuse.

Westerners don't want to go to war in the Middle East again? Show them one of their fellow

countrymen getting his head cut off by a “Muslim” and they will change their mind. And you don’t even need to show anything, just say that people in high office have seen the horrific act and have their media mouthpieces repeat what they have said. It works every time.

This tactic can either be considered as an appeal to fear and/or an appeal to emotions:

> An appeal to fear (also called argumentum ad metum or argumentum in terrorem) is a fallacy in which a person attempts to create support for an idea by using deception and propaganda in attempts to increase fear and prejudice toward a competitor. The appeal to fear is common in marketing and politics. (Wikipedia)
>
> The appeal to emotions, or argumentum ad passiones is a logical fallacy which uses the manipulation of the recipient’s emotions, rather than valid logic, to win an argument.” (Wikipedia)

If this technique is used rather than valid arguments, it’s in part because it always works like a charm and this is what the mainstream media is for, but also because the “valid arguments” which could be used to intervene could only be lies and easily refuted, as this article will attempt to demonstrate.

Several independent media have questioned the authenticity of the beheading videos and some experts have clearly qualified them as “fake”, at least in the cases involving journalists Foley and Sotloff. The true identity of both men has also been questioned, especially Sotloff’s, who has known ties to the Israeli secret service (Mossad), and has been allegedly photographed behind a machine gun belonging to the Syrian rebel fighters.

As “Operation Mocking Bird” has documented, journalism is the best cover for an intelligence operative. Several former CIA officers have confirmed that it is used to plant stories that are picked up by news outlets as facts when they actually are propaganda pieces (see CIA Manipulation: The Painful Truths Told by Phil Agee and John Stockwell about false reports generated by the CIA). The DC based “producer” of the terror videos, SITE, with its close links to the Pentagon and the FBI, is also suspicious and tends to point to a major propaganda stunt originating in the US.

For the purpose of this article we will however examine the situation and the reaction of Western leaders from the point of view that these beheadings actually took place and that the videos are authentic.

Beheadings from Western-backed rebels: “business as usual”

Atrocities committed in Syria were reported from the outset of the unrest in 2011 by independent media. It took some time for the mainstream media to mention those atrocities, but since 2012, many reports have been published by the mainstream press, in spite of which the prevailing discourse on Syria remained essentially the same: the “tyrannical Assad regime” was brutally repressing a “pro-democracy rebellion” and the West was still expressing its unyielding support for the “pro-democracy fighters”.

The only difference was that at some point the U.S. authorities had to admit the presence of terrorist groups among the “moderate rebels” even though these so-called moderate rebels were never clearly identified. Even former CIA operative Bob Baer said in a CNN interview following Sotloff’s alleged beheading that “there are no moderate rebels in Syria”.

Here are only a few excerpts of various mainstream and independent articles and videos mentioning beheadings by rebels in Syria in 2012 and 2013, including reports from the UN and Human Rights Watch, which are usually used to support "humanitarian interventions" abroad.

The video you can find here was published on July 3, 2013 and shows a Christian priest and another Christian being decapitated. The host of the web site explains:

> WARNING GRAPHIC: A priest and another Christian were beheaded before a cheering crowd by Syrian insurgents who say they aided and abetted the enemy, President Bashar Assad's military, foreign media reported. An undated video that made the Internet rounds on Wednesday showed two unnamed men with tied hands surrounded by a cheering crowd of dozens, just moments before their heads were cut off with a small knife, Syria Report said. The attackers in the video then lifted the head for show, and placed it back on the body. The incident took place in the countryside of Idlib, the media report said. (RAW: Syrian Rebels Behead Christians, Military.com, July 3, 2013)

This *Daily Mail* article from December 2012 describes how another Christian was beheaded and his body fed to dogs in a town close to the Turkish border, where most rebel fighters are said to transit into Syrian territory:

> Christian Andrei Arbashe, 38, was kidnapped and beheaded by rebel fighters in northern town of Ras Al-Ayn on the Turkish border.
>
> News came as pro-government forces celebrated their victory against rebels near Aleppo Airport.
>
> Syrian rebels beheaded a Christian man and fed his body to dogs, according to a nun who says the West is ignoring atrocities committed by Islamic extremists.
>
> The nun said taxi driver Andrei Arbashe, 38, was kidnapped after his brother was heard complaining that fighters against the ruling regime behaved like bandits.
>
> She said his headless corpse was found by the side of the road, surrounded by hungry dogs. He had recently married and was soon to be a father…
>
> Sister Agnes-Mariam de la Croix said: 'His only crime was his brother criticised the rebels, accused them of acting like bandits, which is what they are.'
>
> There have been a growing number of accounts of atrocities carried out by rogue elements of the Syrian Free Army, which opposes dictator Bashar al-Assad and is recognised by Britain and the West as the legitimate leadership.
>
> 'The free and democratic world is supporting extremists,' Sister Agnes-Miriam said from her sanctuary in Lebanon. 'They want to impose Sharia Law and create an Islamic state in Syria. (Nick Fagge, Syria rebels 'beheaded a Christian and fed him to the dogs' as fears grow over Islamist atrocities, Daily Mail, December 31, 2012)

The term "rogue elements" is used to create distance from and excuse the FSA, but the frequency of beheadings and other atrocities committed by rebel fighters prove the contrary.

The German magazine *Der Spiegel* published in March 2012 a story featuring an "executioner" part of a "burial brigade", some sort of death squad "responsible for the arbitrary execution of 350-400 people" who expressed "their opposition to the rule of terror of the Free Syrian Army (FSA)":

> This single "burial brigade", according to the executioner's testimony, was responsible for the arbitrary execution of 350-400 people including "prisoners" and "traitors". The "traitors" are Sunni civilians within the occupied urban and rural areas, who express their opposition to the rule of terror of the Free Syrian Army (FSA):
>
> "Since last summer, we have executed slightly fewer than 150 men, which represents about 20 percent of our prisoners," says Abu Rami. ... But the executioners of Homs have been busier with traitors within their own ranks than with prisoners of war. "If we catch a Sunni spying, or if a citizen betrays the revolution, we make it quick," says the fighter.According to Abu Rami, Hussein's burial brigade has put between 200 and 250 traitors to death since the beginning of the uprising." (Ulrike Putz, Syria: Atrocities Committed by US-NATO Sponsored "Opposition". Executioner for Syria's "Rebels" Tells His Story, Der Spiegel Online, March 30, 2012)

In this independent report from *Human rights investigations*, a child is shown using a machete to cut a man's head off and mentions the involvement of the Free Syrian Army (if you wish to see the video, click on the link to the original article):

> Extensive and horrifying footage of an incident in which two men are executed by beheading in which a child participates now comes from two different sources.
>
> Footage posted to YouTube by Voice of America Arabic (Radio Sawa) anchor and journalist Zaid Benjamin, shows a child hacking a prisoner's neck with a machete.

> ...
>
> In fact, different footage of the same incident was previously shown on 26 November on Sama TV (A Syrian channel) as part of a segment which

> demonstrated the difference between Turkish propaganda on the Syrian conflict and the actual reality.
>
> The footage shown by Sama was edited to remove the most graphic content, but shows more of the background to the incident. The Free Syrian Army (FSA) brigade involved is apparently the Khalid ibn al-Waleed brigade. (Syrian rebels use a child to behead a prisoner, Human rights investigations, December 10, 2012)

A United Nations report from June 2013 describes what appears to be the same scene:

> Syrian opposition forces recruited a 14-year-old boy from Homs as a fighter and had a child take part in beheading two government soldiers, according to a United Nations report…
>
> The report drew attention to video footage, submitted by the Russian mission to the UN in Geneva, showing the decapitation of two regime soldiers, with a child responsible for one beheading. "Following investigation, it is believed that the video is authentic and the men were soldiers, killed as depicted," the UN panel said. (Flavia Krause-Jackson and Sangwon Yoon, Beheadings by Syrian Rebels Add to Atrocities, UN Says, Bloomberg, June 4, 2013)

Even the very conservative *Economist* reported in October 2013 about an "assault by rebels, led by al-Qaeda affiliates" against Alawites considered to be "heretics" by the jihadists.

> This was day one of an assault by rebels, led by al-Qaeda affiliates, on Syria's northwestern coastal region. Early in the morning bands of opposition fighters overran a government checkpoint and pushed into an area of ten villages, carrying out killings that Human Rights Watch, a New York-based pressure group, says may amount to crimes against humanity. Local residents reported indiscriminate gunfire and murder.
>
> Home to Syrians of all creeds, the area is also the heartland of the Alawites, the esoteric Shia offshoot to which the ruling Assad family belongs and whose adherents the jihadists consider heretics. Over the course of the operation, Human Rights Watch says the fighters killed 190 civilians. Residents and hospital staff in Latakia, the nearest city, spoke of burned bodies, beheaded corpses and graves being dug in backyards. Two hundred people from the area remain hostage. (S.B., The war in Syria – Rebel atrocities, The Economist, October 13, 2013)

The BBC also commented on the same Human Rights Watch report:

> The report names 190 civilians killed by the rebels, including at least 57 women, 18 children and 14 elderly men. The total number of dead is likely higher because many residents remained missing and bodies were buried in mass graves, it adds…
>
> A doctor at a hospital in Latakia said several of the bodies had multiple gunshot wounds, stab wounds or had been decapitated. Some were burnt or had their feet bound, he added…
>
> HRW says Islamist rebel groups – which include foreign fighters – are financed

> by individuals in Kuwait and the Gulf. It calls on the UN to impose an arms embargo on all groups credibly accused of war crimes. (Syria rebels executed civilians, says Human Rights Watch, BBC, October 11, 2013)

Like every Western mainstream news outlet, the BBC has been biased on the Syrian issue and has defended the Western-backed Free Syrian Army right from the beginning. Confronted with this evidence of atrocities by the ones they kept promoting as being pro-democracy freedom fighters, the public broadcaster attempted to whitewash the Free Syrian Army with a somewhat absurd and contradictory statement:

> HRW says about 20 opposition groups took part in the offensive and that five were involved in the attacks on civilians – the al-Nusra Front, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS), Jaysh al-Muhajirin wa al-Ansar, Ahrar al-Sham and Suqour al-Izz
>
> None are affiliated to the Western-backed Supreme Military Council of the Free Syrian Army, though SMC chief Gen Salim Idris did say at the time that fighters under his command participated in the assault… (Ibid.)

The phrasing is very insidious since it leads the reader to believe that if the groups which committed the assault are not linked to the Western-backed FSA, the latter did not participate in the assault. But the FSA DID participate in the assault since "fighters under [the FSA General's] command participated in the assault."

The US was Supporting ISIS via the Free Syria Army

Salim Idriss, who was replaced in February 2014 by Col Abd al-Ilah al-Bashir, even declared in November 2013, one month after the publication of the HRW report, that his relationship with ISIL (ISIS) was "good":

> "My relationship with the brothers in ISIL is good… I communicate almost daily with brothers in ISIL to settle these disputes and issues. The issues are being overinflated by the media."(FSA General Declares Support for ISIS & Al-Nusra)

He also said in a previous interview in January 2013 that the terrorist group Jabhat al-Nusra constituted "about 10% of the FSA", a statement which also contradicts the BBC analysis. He said he didn't know why it is listed as a terrorist organization because all he saw was "good morals and brave and heroic fighting against the regime" and added: "They did not exhibit any abnormal behavior which is different from that of the FSA." (*Ibid*.)

Should we conclude that "normal behavior" for the Western-backed FSA and ISIS includes beheading people?

The Human Rights Watch report from October 2013 explicitly states that the murders committed in "Operation to Save the Coast" in the Syrian region of Latakia were committed by 20 groups including ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra AND the FSA. It also clearly indicates that individuals from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, know to be Western allies, funded and planned the "Operation to Save the Coast" and that the foreign fighters entering Latakia at the time almost did so entirely from Turkey, a NATO member.

One “Western diplomat raised the concern to Human Rights Watch that in general the number of nationals from European countries going into Syria to fight was ‘greater than the number of those who went from Europe to fight in Afghanistan or Iraq.’”

The testimony from a doctor working in the National Hospital in Latakia said “they had received 205 corpses of civilians killed during the August 4-August 18 operation” with “decapitation observed in most bodies.”

So if we summarize, over 200 civilians were killed in this single operation, most of them were decapitated, most probably by Western-backed foreign fighters transiting through a NATO member state.

Where was the disgust, the horror and the outrage from Western leaders back then?

It is quite obvious that the decapitations of hundreds of Syrian civilians by Western-backed forces would completely destroy the propaganda and prove that Assad was telling the truth when he said he was fighting a foreign terrorist invasion. That’s why this report was not much talked about and the narrative stayed the same in the Western media.

But all other subsequent attempts to justify a military invasion in Syria failed and now we are faced with the most absurd scenario: the West pretends it must intervene against its own deadly creation: ISIS

The recent ISIS beheadings are just another pretext to intervene militarily in Syria. The hundreds of decapitations of Syrian nationals which have been committed by the Western proxy soldiers for years prove that this is just another PSYOP to gather support for another war in the Middle East.

Below you will find longer excerpts of the Human Rights Watch report mentioned above.

ANNEX

“You Can Still See Their Blood” – Executions, Unlawful Killings, and Hostage Taking by Opposition Forces in Latakia Countryside Human Rights Watch, October 2013

Fourteen residents and first responders told Human Rights Watch that they witnessed executions or saw bodies that bore signs of execution… including in some cases corpses that were bound, and bodies that had been decapitated. A doctor working in the National Hospital in Latakia who was receiving the dead and wounded from Latakia countryside told Human Rights Watch that they had received 205 corpses of civilians killed during the August 4-August 18 operation. The doctor showed Human Rights Watch a medical report the hospital prepared on August 26 stating that the, “[c]ause of death in several of them [the bodies] was multiple gunshot wounds all over the bodies, in addition to stab wounds made with a sharp instrument, given the decapitation observed in most bodies…

IV. Opposition Groups Involved in August 4 Attacks

The operation launched by opposition fighters in Latakia countryside on August 4, termed the “Campaign of the Descendants of Aisha the Mother of Believers,”[138] the “Barouda Offensive,”[139] and the “Operation to Liberate the Coast,” or the “Operation to Save the Coast” (herein after Operation to Liberate the Coast) was a coordinated preplanned assault by armed

opposition groups on Syrian military positions and unguarded Alawite villages that lasted from August 4-August 18. On the first day of the operation, opposition fighters killed civilians on numerous occasions. In many cases evidence gathered by Human Rights Watch suggests they killed them knowing them to be civilian and that they were playing no part in combat…

Of the 20 or more groups that were involved in the "Operation to Liberate the Coast" … five groups were among the principle planners, fundraisers, and executors of the offensive… These groups are:

-Ahrar al-Sham

–Islamic State of Iraq and Sham

–Jabhat al-Nusra

-Jaish al-Muhajireen wal-Ansar

-Suquor al-Izz

….

The Islamic State of Iraq and Sham

In 2006, the name of al-Qaeda in Iraq was changed to the Islamic State of Iraq.[156] This group is now operating in Syria under the name the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS).[157] Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is the group's leader and he has sworn loyalty to the al-Qaeda leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri.[158] According to the opposition activist who spoke to Human Rights Watch, Abu Ayman commanded the group during the August Latakia offensive.[159]Abu Jaafar from ISIS has also been identified as the first deputy commander of the operation.[160]

Multiple opposition sources identify ISIS as one of the leading groups involved in the "Operation to Liberate the Coast."[161]Videos posted by opposition groups on YouTube also show ISIS's involvement in the offensive on August 4.[162]On August 6 the opposition activist that spoke to Human Rights Watch also said that the ISIS played a key role in abducting and holding civilian hostages from the villages.[163] According to an opposition military leader from Latakia working on the hostage exchange, as of early September ISIS was holding 110 to 120 hostages.[164]

V. Other Groups Involved in the "Operation to Liberate the Coast"

…

Free Syrian Army under Salim Idriss's Command

Notably, several statements from Salim Idriss, the Chief of Staff of the Supreme Military Council of the Free Syrian Army, reflect that fighters under his command participated in the operation. In a video posted on August 11 and apparently filmed in Latakia countryside, Idriss states:

I am here [in Latakia countryside] today to get a picture on the true achievements and the big successes that our fellow revolutionaries have achieved in the coastal campaign and to respond to the charges that claim incorrectly that we will end our operations here on the coastal frontlines. We are here today to assure everyone that our chief of staff is cooperating fully with the coastal military front command regarding their military activities. We are not going to withdraw as was falsely claimed but on the contrary, we are cooperating to a great extent in this operation.[211]

… [T]he participation of Idriss and fighters under his command in the “Operation to Liberate the Coast” appears clear ….

VI. Financial Support to Operation

Largely based on information posted by individuals in the groups who participated in the “Operation to Liberate the Coast” and their supporters on social media sites, Human Rights Watch has identified several individuals, principally from Gulf countries, who actively fundraised for the operation and for support to the groups involved. There is no evidence that the fundraisers and financiers knew at the time that they gave their support about the abuses that would or were taking place in Latakia countryside. However future support to the five groups principally involved in planning, fundraising, and executing the attack on the villages may make these individuals complicit in war crimes or crimes against humanity if these groups continue to commit abuses. …

On August 3 al-Suwan tweeted that he supports the Islamic brigades in Latakia countryside. [291] On August 5 and 7, al-Suwan tweeted a thank you to donors from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Qatar …

VII. Access of Foreign Fighters to Syria

According to Syrian security officials, media reports, western diplomats, and direct observations by journalists and humanitarian workers who visited the area in the past, many foreign fighters operating in northern Syria gain access to Syria via Turkey, from which they also smuggle their weapons, obtain money and other supplies, and sometimes retreat to for medical treatment. [314]

According to a humanitarian worker in Turkey, based on his observations, foreign fighters entering Latakia governorate do so almost entirely from Turkey, even flying into Hatay airport where they are picked up by other foreign fighters and facilitators.[315]

A western diplomat told Human Rights Watch that diplomats from several EU member state missions in Ankara are very concerned about the transiting of nationals from European and other countries through Turkey to Syria.[316]Another Western diplomat raised the concern to Human Rights Watch that in general the number of nationals from European countries going into Syria to fight was “greater than the number of those who went from Europe to fight in Afghanistan or Iraq.” (emphasis added)

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She was among the first independent journalists to visit Haiti in the wake of the January 2010 earthquake. In 2011, she was on board "The Spirit of Rachel Corrie", the only humanitarian vessel which penetrated Gaza territorial waters before being shot at by the Israeli Navy.

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