

The Obama Two-Step on Syria

By [Ajamu Baraka](#)

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Global Research, September 24, 2015

[Black Agenda Report](#) 23 September 2015

President Obama is disavowing his failed strategy to train “moderate” rebels to fight ISIS, claiming the Republicans made him do it. Under Washington’s plan for regime change in Syria, radical jihadists would be used as the ‘boots on the ground’ for the U.S. in Syria,” as they were in Afghanistan. The West’s plans for ISIS and al Qaeda have gone awry, as have U.S. schemes to deploy “moderates” proxies of imperialism.

http://blackagendareport.com/the_obama_two-step_on_syria

It was a pathetic spectacle, another black face in a high place in the person of General Lloyd J. Austin III, head of the United States Central Command, came before the Senate’s Armed Services Committee [to report](#) to incredulous members that the 500 million dollar program to train 5000 so-called moderate rebels in Syria had only resulted in the training of a few dozen.

He went on to report that of that number, half had already been either captured, or some say “integrated,” into the al-Qaeda’s official Syrian affiliate, the al-Nusra Front, leaving just four or five individuals in what must be a record for the most expensive training process in human history.

With howls of criticism coming from right-wing Democrats and Republicans, the impression developing in Congress and the general public is that similar to the debacle that Iraq and Afghanistan became for George Bush, Syria is Obama’s foreign policy disaster.

Strangely however, while General Austin was falling on his sword in front of the Senate committee, spokespersons for Barack Obama were busy telling anyone who would listen that President Obama could not be blamed for the calamity unfolding in Syria.

The White House claimed that [it is not to blame](#) for the training issue. In what some are calling his “[the devil made me do it](#)” defense, Josh Earnest, the White House press secretary argued that the finger should be pointed at those who convinced President Obama to get directly involved in training Syrian rebels, including by implication the former Secretary of State [Hillary Rodham Clinton](#).

And on the general Syrian issue, the Administration appears to be trying to put distance between itself and its own policies.

But facts can be stubborn things, even when the interpretative framework for assessing facts is different. For many of us, the historical record is clear – this war was/is Mr. Obama’s. And what we are witnessing in Syria today is the human and political consequences of his administration’s decision to embrace a policy of regime change in Syria.

Plan A- Regime Change, Plan B – The Destruction and Dismembering of the Syria State and Society:

This notion that Obama was a reluctant warrior who only got involved in Syria recently is a fiction.

From the very beginning of the phony Arab Spring actions in Syria, it was not even necessary for former general Wesley Clark [to reveal](#) that Syria was on a hit-list of governments slated for subversion to see the reactionary presence of U.S. intelligence agencies in the “rebellion” in Syria.

Former French Foreign Minister, Roland Dumas [blew the whistle](#) on Western war plans against Syria, long before the first “spontaneous” protests erupted in 2011. While Dumas told a story of British and French intrigue, it was always clear that those two sub-imperialist nations would not have been engaged in anything of that magnitude and sensitivity without a green light from the U.S. hegemon.

WikiLeaks conformed those plans when it released over 7000 secret diplomatic cables that documented that from 2006 to 2010, the US spent 12 million dollars in order to support and instigate demonstrations and propaganda [against the Syrian government](#).

Millions were spent to support dissident groups and for disinformation campaigns targeting the corporate media in the U.S. and Western Europe.

Once the destabilization plan was launched reports in the alternative press immediately emerged of CIA involvement with illicit arms being funneled to Syria opposition fighters, including tons of equipment from Libya that had been destroyed by NATO forces.

“From 2006 to 2010, the US spent 12 million dollars in order to support and instigate demonstrations and propaganda against the Syrian government.”

Seymour Hersh, the Pulitzer Prize winning investigative reporter, [revealed](#) that President Obama and the Turkish PM, Erdogan concluded a secret deal in the beginning of 2012 in which the CIA and the British M16 would move heavy weapons out of Libya to supply the Free Syrian Army. This was the activity that Chris Stevens, the U.S. Ambassador to Libya, was providing political cover for in Benghazi when the CIA annex and diplomatic compound was attacked by one of the disaffected armed groups that the U.S. was dealing with.

Those reports became so wide-spread in media outlets globally that finally even the *New York Times* could no longer avoid the reports and ran [a story](#) that essentially corroborated reports of CIA involvement in support of Syrian opposition forces.

But clearly the most damaging information that revealed the extent of the Obama’s administration moral complicity with the carnage that it unleashed in Syria was the [report](#) from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) written in 2012 that clearly documented that *“the Salafist, the Muslim Brotherhood, and AQI [Al- Qaeda in Iraq] are the major forces driving the insurgency in Syria,”* being supported by *“the West, Gulf countries and Turkey.”* *And like the report that exposed that white terrorist organizations represented a major threat to domestic security in the U.S., this report was also ignored by the administration.*

When retired Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, former head of the Defense Intelligence

Agency (DIA), [was asked](#) why the Obama administration didn't act on his agency's concerns, his response was that the administration apparently decided to ignore the findings, "I think it was a *willful decision*."

The DIA report was ignored because the Obama Administration had already decided on its course of action. The strategy that the administration was implementing was detailed in another piece of [reporting by Seymour Hersh](#). Hersh revealed that the strategy first formulated in the latter years of the Bush administration and carried over into the Obama Administration, was that radical jihadists would be used in a manner similar to how they were used in Afghanistan in the 80s, as the "boots on the ground" for the U.S. in Syria.

"Obama is now taking a familiar position that European imperialists have taken for years after committing unspeakable crimes against humanity - they feign innocence."

Embracing this strategy was not a very difficult one for the Administration, especially since Obama and many others in his administration believed that the creation of a "moderate" force of what Obama divisively referred to as former doctors, farmers and pharmacists capable of dislodging [Assad was a fantasy](#).

The geo-strategic objective for the Obama Administration was regime change, therefore, the plan implemented for that objective had nothing to do with wanting to liberate Syrians. In their cynical calculations, eliminating al-Assad outweighed any considerations for the longer term interests of the Syrian people. For the cold-hearted strategists of the Obama Administration, the talk of a people's revolution was only a ploy to obscure their real intentions and confuse liberals and even some leftists.

The Administration peddled the outrageous fiction that there was a viable force of so-called moderates in Syria that they were supporting at the same time that they knew that the al-Nusra Front, and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) had emerged as the central forces in the anti-Assad insurgency.

And by early 2013 when it became clear that the al-Assad government would not surrender, the destruction and [dismemberment of the Syria State](#) became the goal of U.S. policy. The impact that this decision would have on the people of Syria was of no concern for U.S. planners.

It would not be an exaggeration to argue that despite whatever contradictions existed in Syria, and there were many, without the subversion by the U.S./EU/NATO axis of domination and its allies, it is highly unlikely that any social upheaval that might have developed in the country as part of a pro-democracy movement would have reached the scale of suffering experience by the people of Syria today.

No, the devil did not make Obama engage in the incredible cynicism that sacrificed an ancient culture and the lives of so many. It was the imperatives of empire and the ethical position that Westerners have the right to determine the leadership of states and what lives have value.

Being the self-centered narcissist and operating from a colonialist, Eurocentric mindset, Obama is now taking a familiar position that European imperialists have taken for years after committing unspeakable crimes against humanity - they feign innocence.

But this is Obama's war and while he may escape prosecution as the war criminal that he is,

the consequences and moral condemnation that it has generated is inescapable. It is his legacy, a legacy written in blood that no amount of slick public relations will be able to erase from the pages of history.

Ajamu Baraka is a human rights activist, organizer and geo-political analyst. Baraka is an Associate Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) in Washington, D.C. and editor and contributing columnist for the Black Agenda Report. He is a contributor to "Killing Trayvons: An Anthology of American Violence" (Counterpunch Books, 2014). He can be reached at www.AjamuBaraka.com

The original source of this article is [Black Agenda Report](#)
Copyright © [Ajamu Baraka](#), [Black Agenda Report](#), 2015

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Ajamu Baraka](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca