

# Has the Administration Failed to Recognize the Threat of Global Jihad?



As a Former Army Intelligence officer, we were trained to evaluate the credibility of sources and then delve into the intel they were providing. We were also trained that if you didn't identify the threat doctrine of your enemies then you couldn't formulate a winning strategy, let alone protect your forces. The Obama Administration has been evading the capabilities of military intelligence echelons to assist it in fashioning a winning strategy in the war against Global Jihad. One would have thought that when the members of Seal Team Six killed the late Osama Bin Laden and scooped up disk drives and documents that the West Wing would have considered it a treasure trove. The vital raw intelligence would have determined the aims and global strategy of so-called "core Al Qaeda" and its burgeoning affiliates across the Muslim Ummah and the West. (Groups like AQAP, AQIM, al Nusrah, Al Shabaab and Boko Haram.) Unfortunately, as this *Weekly Standard* article by *Fox News* 'Special Report' panelist, Stephen F. Hayes illustrates, President Obama may have evaded his oath of office as Commander in Chief, [Former Defense Intel Chief Blasts Obama.](#)



**Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn (ret.) former DIA Head**

**Former DIA head Gen. Flynn's cautionary tale.**

Hayes uses a speech by former Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) chief, Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn to fellow intelligence professionals to illustrate why the Administration cannot be trusted. Flynn retired after being brushed off by the National Security team in the West Wing and the politicized CIA. He was seeking to deploy his resources at the DIA to evaluate and derive meaningful intelligence on Al Qaeda its aims and strategies from the treasure trove of Obama bin laden computer files captured during the Seal Team Six assault. This would have enabled the Commander in Chief and his national security team to articulate the threat of global radical Islam and fashion a strategy that would protect our forces engaged in a war against Islamic Jihad. Instead the Administration myopically evaded its responsibilities opting to promote the meaningless and opaque threat as "violent extremism." Instead Flynn and his team of military intelligence analysts were brushed off after having unearthed the goals of "core Al Qaeda" and its network of empowered affiliates

Here are excerpts from the Hayes *Weekly Standard* article that illustrates these points:

Lt. General Michael Flynn, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, [said], "The dangers to the U.S. do not arise from the arrogance of American power, but from unpreparedness or an excessive unwillingness to fight when fighting is necessary." The Obama Administration doesn't understand the threat, Flynn said, noting that the Administration refuses to use "Islamic militants" to describe the enemy.

"You cannot defeat an enemy you do not admit exists," he said.

The administration, he continued, wants "us to think that our challenge is dealing with an undefined set of violent extremists or merely lone-wolf actors with no ideology or network. But that's just not the straight truth."

[...]

The failure to exploit the captured Bin Laden file.

The CIA was responsible for the first scrub of the collection of more than 1 million documents and retained “executive authority” over the cache when it was completed. But the CIA stopped analyzing or “exploiting” the documents after that first quick and incomplete assessment and the Agency made no attempt to systematically examine and codify all of the intelligence included in the intelligence haul.

Flynn assembled a team at the DIA to do exactly that, but the CIA initially refused to share the documents. After a lengthy bureaucratic battle, DIA analysts were given limited access to the bin Laden documents and undertook an exhaustive exploitation. The documents provided the U.S. government with its best look at al Qaeda and its operations and challenges—from the inside. There were letters between Osama bin Laden and other terrorist leaders, plans for future attacks, details about fundraising successes and failures, descriptions of relationships between al Qaeda and governments in the region. The documents remain unexploited to this day.

Derek Harvey, a senior DIA official and former director of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Center of Excellence at CENTCOM, led the DIA team that exploited the documents. [He recently told TWS](#) that the U.S. government hasn’t “done anything close to a full exploitation.”

And what was Flynn’s overall assessment?

In classified analyses based heavily on the documents, the DIA directly challenged the Obama administration’s claims that the threat from al Qaeda was diminished or fading. [Flynn hinted at this](#) in an interview he gave to James Kitfield of *Breaking Defense* shortly after he left

government. "When asked if the terrorists were on the run, we couldn't respond with any answer but 'no.' When asked if the terrorists were defeated, we had to say 'no.' Anyone who answers 'yes' to either of those questions either doesn't know what they are talking about, they are misinformed, or they are flat-out lying," Flynn said.



**Gen. Anthony Zinni, former CENTCOMM commander**

**Source: Pensacola News Journal**

**Enter former CENTCOM Commander Marine General Zinni on the lack of a Strategy.**

Recently, we heard former CENTCOMM Commander, Four Star Marine Gen. (ret.) Anthony Zinni talk about the lack of a meaningful Obama Strategy in the war against the Islamic state. See; *Pensacola News Journal* article, "[General discusses 'Situation in the Middle East.'](#)"

Among those gathered to hear him were former colleagues at CENTCOMM. He was introduced by Marine Lt. Gen. Duane Thiesen, president and CEO of the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation. Zinni shared his insights gained from long experience serving in the Middle East and his engagement in strategic defense studies about terrorism and stability or the lack thereof in the Arab World. He opened up his speech with an anecdote about a conversation with two Arab leaders in the UAE on the day when the US-led coalition invaded Iraq in 2003. His two interlocutors said this was a disaster, because" it would unleash the Persian threat and ignite a religious war between Sunni and Shia." Zinni had disagreed with the Bush strategy that without overwhelming force to seal the borders of Iraq, that sectarian fissures and conflicts would arise and that victory would not be achieved. In his remarks referring to the

current situation he said, "Obviously, it's the rise of the extremists – their ability to recruit now and reach out globally having bases from which they can operate." He was dismissive of regional and bi-lateral initiatives saying that "the nation's leaders need to take a strategic look at the world. "This globalization is connected by a network" A network according to Zinni including space, cyberspace, sea, air, land communications and trade resulting in global impact.

Before his talk I chatted with him briefly and gave him my question for the Q+A:

We are now several months into Operation Inherent Resolve – a US led coalition "to degrade and destroy", the Islamic State, formerly ISIS. What is your current assessment of the conduct of this Operation and what in your view could be done to achieve the ultimate objective?

He smiled and said, "The short answer is we should not be afraid to put boots on the ground."

When the question was posed to him by the Tiger Bay moderator, Zinni differentiated between, a strategy for Iraq versus one for Syria. He suggested that perhaps two US brigades, coupled with Kurdish Peshmerga and both Iraqi Special Forces and Sunni militias with meaningful air support would enable the recovery of Mosul and Anbar province. He cautioned that the US now finds itself in the odd situation where Iran's Quds Force is on the same side in Iraq. He noted this is part of a strategy by the Islamic Regime in Tehran to surround the Arabian Peninsula. That is illustrated by the US failure in Yemen, with the Houthi Shia rebels toppling the central government, the Shia majority in Bahrain, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Assad clinging to control in Syria. A Shia crescent cutting across the Gulf stretching as far as the Mediterranean coast. It is a hegemonic strategy that includes state sponsored terrorism and achievement of nuclear breakout, further destabilizing the region and threatening the Saudi Kingdom. As regards the

Houthi uprising in Yemen, despite the death of King Abdullah and succession of King Salman, Zinni contended that the Saudis might move troops into Yemen. He suggested that US drone campaign against Al Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula would not aid in saving the failed state. He was dismissive of direct involvement in Syria as there are too many disparate sectarian forces both within the Sunni majority and among the minority Alawites, Christians, Druze and Kurds. As illustrated by the US coalition strategy in the four months struggle that succeeded in [freeing](#) the embattled city of Kobani on the Turkish border, the Kurdish YPG and Peshmerga Forces were the "boots on the ground." His assessment is reflected in a recent *Wall Street Journal* [article depicting](#) the failure of CIA training of opposition Sunni militias in Syria. He believes that the map of the modern Middle East, created in the wake of the fall of the Ottoman Empire and by the WWI Sykes Picot Agreement, may not survive.

Both Gens. Flynn and Zinni decry the failure of strategic thinking by the Administration frozen in the headlights of an oncoming Global Jihad that it refuses to acknowledge as a threat to the West.