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“U.S. hopes of winning more influence over Syria’s divided rebel movement faded Wednesday after 11 of the biggest armed factions repudiated the Western-backed political opposition coalition and announced the formation of an alliance dedicated to creating an Islamist state. The al-Qaeda-affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra, designated a terrorist organization by the United States, is the lead signatory of the new group.” ¹

Pity the poor American who wants to be a good citizen, wants to understand the world and his country’s role in it, wants to believe in the War on Terrorism, wants to believe that his government seeks to do good ... What is he to make of all this?

For about two years, his dear American government has been supporting the same anti-government side as the jihadists in the Syrian civil war; not total, all-out support, but enough military hardware, logistics support, intelligence information, international political, diplomatic and propaganda assistance (including the crucial alleged-chemical-weapons story), to keep the jihadists in the ball game. Washington and its main Mideast allies in the conflict – Turkey, Jordan, Qatar and Saudi Arabia – have not impeded the movement to Syria of jihadists coming to join the rebels, recruited from the ranks of Sunni extremist veterans of the wars in Chechnya, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya, while Qatar and the Saudis have supplied the rebels with weapons, most likely bought in large measure from the United States, as well as lots of what they have lots of – money.

This widespread international support has been provided despite the many atrocities carried out by the jihadists – truck and car suicide bombings (with numerous civilian casualties), planting roadside bombs à la Iraq, gruesome massacres of Christians and Kurds, grotesque beheadings and other dissections of victims’ bodies (most charming of all: a Youtube video of a rebel leader cutting out an organ from the chest of a victim and biting into it as it drips with blood). All this barbarity piled on top of a greater absurdity – these Western-backed, anti-government forces are often engaged in battle with other Western-backed, anti-government forces, non-jihadist. It has become increasingly difficult to sell this war to the American public as one of

pro-democracy “moderates” locked in a good-guy-versus-bad-guy struggle with an evil dictator, although in actuality the United States has fought on the same side as al Qaeda on repeated occasions before Syria. Here’s a brief survey:

Afghanistan, 1980-early 1990s: In support of the Islamic *Moujahedeen* (“holy warriors”), the CIA orchestrated a war against the Afghan government and their Soviet allies, pouring in several billions of dollars of arms and extensive military training; hitting up Middle-Eastern countries for donations, notably Saudi Arabia which gave hundreds of millions of dollars in aid each year; pressuring and bribing Pakistan to rent out its country as a military staging area and sanctuary.

It worked. And out of the victorious *Moujahedeen* came al Qaeda.

Bosnia, 1992-5: In 2001 the *Wall Street Journal* declared:

It is safe to say that the birth of al-Qaeda as a force on the world stage can be traced directly back to 1992, when the Bosnian Muslim government of Alija Izetbegovic issued a passport in their Vienna embassy to Osama bin Laden. ... for the past 10 years, the most senior leaders of al Qaeda have visited the Balkans, including bin Laden himself on three occasions between 1994 and 1996. The Egyptian surgeon turned terrorist leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri has operated terrorist training camps, weapons of mass destruction factories and money-laundering and drug-trading networks throughout Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Turkey and Bosnia. This has gone on for a decade. 2

A few months later, *The Guardian* reported on “the full story of the secret alliance between the Pentagon and radical Islamist groups from the Middle East designed to assist the Bosnian Muslims – some of the same groups that the Pentagon is now fighting in “the war against terrorism”. 3

In 1994 and 1995 US/NATO forces carried out bombing campaigns over Bosnia aimed at damaging the military capability of the Serbs and enhancing that of the Bosnian Muslims. In the decade-long civil wars in the Balkans, the Serbs, regarded by Washington as the “the last communist government in Europe”, were always the main enemy.

Kosovo, 1998-99: Kosovo, overwhelmingly Muslim, was a province of Serbia, the main republic of the former Yugoslavia. In 1998, Kosovo separatists – The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) – began an armed conflict with Belgrade to split Kosovo from Serbia. The KLA was considered a terrorist organization by the US, the UK and France for years, with numerous reports of the KLA having contact with al-Qaeda, getting arms from them, having its militants trained in al-Qaeda camps in Pakistan, and even having members of al-Qaeda in KLA ranks fighting against the Serbs. 4

However, when US-NATO forces began military action against the Serbs the KLA was taken off the US terrorist list, it “received official US-NATO arms and training support” 5 , and the 1999 US-NATO bombing campaign eventually focused on driving Serbian forces from Kosovo.

In 2008 Kosovo unilaterally declared independence from Serbia, an independence so illegitimate and artificial that the majority of the world’s nations still have not recognized it. But the United States was the first to do so, the very next day, thus affirming the unilateral declaration of independence of a part of another country’s territory.

The KLA have been known for their trafficking in women, heroin, and human body parts (sic). The United States has naturally been pushing for Kosovo’s membership in NATO and the European Union.

Nota bene: In 1992 the Bosnian Muslims, Croats, and Serbs reached agreement in Lisbon for a unified state. The continuation of a peaceful multi-ethnic Bosnia seemed assured. But the United States sabotaged the agreement. 6

Libya, 2011: The US and NATO to the rescue again. For more than six months, almost daily missile attacks against the government and forces of Muammar Gaddafi as assorted Middle East jihadists assembled in Libya and battled the government on the ground. The predictable outcome came to be – the jihadists now in control of parts of the country and fighting for the remaining parts. The wartime allies showed their gratitude to Washington by assassinating the US ambassador and three other Americans, presumably CIA, in the city of Benghazi.

Caucasus (Russia), mid-2000s to present: The National Endowment for Democracy and Freedom House have for many years been the leading American “non-government” institutions tasked with destabilizing, if not overthrowing, foreign governments which refuse to be subservient to the desires of US foreign policy. Both NGOs have backed militants in the Russian Caucasus area, one that has seen more than its share of terror stretching back to the Chechnyan actions of the 1990s. 7

Notes

1. *Washington Post*, September 26, 2013
2. *Wall Street Journal*, November 1, 2001
3. *The Guardian* (London), April 22, 2002
4. RT TV (Moscow), May 4, 2012
5. *Wall Street Journal*, November 1, 2001
6. *New York Times*, June 17, 1993, buried at the very end of the article on an inside page
7. Sibel Edmonds' *Boiling Frogs Post*, “[Barbarians at the Gate: Terrorism, the US, and the Subversion of Russia](#)”, August 30, 2012