

# House Select Committee Needed for Truth About Benghazi Attack

by William Wertz

Jan. 16—The Democratic-controlled Senate Select Intelligence Committee, chaired by Dianne Feinstein (Calif.), yesterday released its report on the attack on the American mission and CIA annex in Benghazi, Libya, of Sept. 11, 2012. The Democratic majority, in its views appended the end report, not surprisingly exonerates President Barack Obama of any responsibility for the attack and for his attempted cover-up of the fact that it was carried out by the al-Qaeda-affiliated Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), his allies in the overthrow of Libyan leader Qaddafi. The additional views of Committee Vice Chairman Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), on the other hand, document the Obama Administration's continuing obstruction of the investigation.

In response to the release of the report, Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.) issued a statement pointing out that "the report ... fails to even broach the subject of just what the CIA was doing in Benghazi," and renewed his call for the creation of a House Select Committee: "We are never going to get all the answers to what happened that night until there is a House Select Committee that can reach across jurisdictional boundaries, compel testimony and documents that the administration continues to withhold from the Congress, and protect those who may want to testify about the events of that evening."

On Jan. 14, two additional Congressmen signed on as co-sponsors to Wolf's H. Res. 36, which calls for a House Select Committee. There are now 180 co-sponsors, and yet the House Republican leadership under Speaker John Boehner (Ohio) has refused to allow the measure to come to the floor for a vote, thus protecting Obama.

## The Senate Report

Although the Senate report includes some useful new intelligence, it fails to address the most important issues:

1. The policy of Obama in allying with the al-Qaeda-affiliated LIFG, in the Administration's illegal war to overthrow Qaddafi;

2. The purpose of the CIA annex in Benghazi;

3. The issue of illegal gunrunning both to Libya during the war, and from Libya to Syria after the war, with the complicity of the Obama Administration, both in violation of the UN arms embargo;

4. The fact that the head of al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, issued a video on Sept. 10, 2012, calling for revenge for the death of Abu Yahya al-Libi, who was killed in Pakistan by a U.S. drone. (Did anyone ask the NSA or the CIA if they were aware of this video?)

5. The report in a hacked e-mail from journalist Sidney Blumenthal to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Feb. 16, 2013, that French, Algerian, and Libyan intelligence had information indicating that the attack was funded by wealthy Sunni Islamists from Saudi Arabia.

While failing to address any of these substantive issues, among the important intelligence nevertheless revealed in the report is the following:

1. A July 6, 2012 CIA report stated: "This year, Muhammad Jaymal's Egypt-based network, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) have conducted training, built communication networks, and facilitated extremist travel across North Africa from their safe haven in parts of Eastern Libya."

2. An Aug. 15, 2012 cable reported that a CIA officer "briefed the EAC [Emergency Action Committee] on the location of approximately ten Islamist militias and AQ training camps within Benghazi."

3. "Individuals affiliated with terrorist groups, including AQIM and the Mohammad Jamal Network, participated in the Sept. 11, 2012 attacks."

4. "Although it did not reach the U.S. Intelligence Community until after the attacks, it is important to note that a former Transitional National Council (TNC) security official in Benghazi had received information of a possible imminent attack against the Mission facility in advance. The official said that approximately four hours prior to the attack, he attempted to notify the Libyan Intelligence Service (LIS) that an attack was expected, but he was unable to reach two contacts he had in the LIS as they were out of the country."

5. “According to U.S. AFRICOM, neither the command nor its Commander were aware of an annex in Benghazi, Libya. However, it is the Committee’s understanding that other DOD personnel were aware of the Benghazi Annex.”

### ‘Additional Views’

The report is accompanied by three “Additional Views,” those of the Democratic Majority; those of Vice Chairman Chambliss and Republican Senators Richard Burr (N.C.), James Risch (Idaho), Dan Coats (Ind.), Marco Rubio (Fla.), and Tom Coburn (Okla.); and, finally, those of Sen. Susan Collins (R-Me.).

The “Additional Views” of Chambliss et al. are the most significant, because they underscore the need for a Select Committee, without making that argument explicitly.

They stress that “important questions remain unanswered as a direct result of the Obama Administration’s failure to provide the Committee with access to necessary documents and witnesses.” They argue that the “Administration’s lack of cooperation is directly contrary to its statutory obligation,” and point out that the committee under Feinstein never held a vote to exercise

its subpoena power to end this “obstruction.” They also point to the fact that the Administration has “made repeated and spurious claims of the ‘executive’ and ‘deliberative process’ privileges, serving to deny information to the Committee.”

While Feinstein et al. argue that the reference to al-Qaeda in the talking points given to Administration spokesmen immediately after the Benghazi attack was “included in early drafts of the talking points [but] was removed by CIA staff, not by the White House,” Chambliss et al. correctly point out an e-mail from then-CIA Director David Petraeus on Sept. 15, 2012, in which he stated that the final content of the talking points was the National Security staff’s “call, to be sure.”

Chambliss et al. state in this respect that “we believe the role of the White House must be fully explored. As we write these Additional Views, we are still without a full understanding of the substance of the Deputies Committee meeting that resulted in the final changes to the talking points, and we have yet to receive a clear explanation of the specific interactions among the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of State on the night of the attacks.”

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