

Will U.S. Forces Aid Al-Qaeda in Syria on the Anniversary of 9/11?

This is an edited transcript of an interview with Virginia State Senator Richard Black, conducted by William Wertz on September 11, 2018.

William Wertz: My name is Will Wertz. I am with the LaRouche Political Action Committee. We're here today with State Senator Richard Black from Virginia, an individual who has been quite in the forefront of the fight for justice in the case of Syria and many other countries throughout the world. He has just returned from a six-day trip to Syria.

It is quite important that we're having this interview right now, because we are really on the edge, once again, of another major international crisis. As the Russians and the Syrians have indicated, another false-flag chemical attack is being prepared, this time in Idlib province, in order to encourage the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, in particular, to launch an attack upon the government of President Assad of Syria. This could happen, ironically, in this immediate period on the 17th anniversary of 9/11. The Russian Defense Ministry has indicated today that there was a preparatory meeting in Idlib province, and preparations have now been made for a chemical attack which could come as early as this evening.

So, what we have here is a situ-



Sen. Richard Black
Sen. Richard Black (right) meeting with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus, Syria, September 2018.

Bashar al-Assad, the legitimate, duly-elected President of Syria, recognized by the United Nations as the leader of Syria. This is the second time that I have met with him; I met with him two years ago. This time there was a sort of a buoyancy, a spring in his step, as he sees the final demise of the terrorists who we have funneled into

Syria. They're trapped in a pocket, in an area called Idlib province. It's a substantial area, but small in terms of the entire nation of Syria. We have trapped the greatest terror army on Earth, in Idlib province. I say "we"—it's the Syrian army, the Russians, and their allies; but I say "we" in the sense that the civilized world has trapped them. These are the worst of the worst.

The overall commander is a

ation which is extraordinarily dangerous. Senator Black is in a unique position to give us his insights on the situation in Syria. Please tell us about your trip.

Sen. Richard Black: Thank you very much. As you know, I had a military career. I was a colonel in the Pentagon and served in very fierce combat in Vietnam. So I have lived with military foreign policy really throughout my life.

Fake Gas Attack to Trigger Huge 'Reprisal'

My visit to Syria was tremendous. I met for several hours with President



man named al-Julani. Al-Julani was one of the principal lieutenants of al-Baghdadi, the founder of ISIS. So, al-Julani worked as the head of ISIS in Nineveh province in Iraq. This man is the senior field commander for al-Qaeda in the entire world. And he is trapped along with these other terrorists in Idlib province. The United States, ironically, has a \$10 million bounty on his head. All of the rebels have placed themselves under his general command; he is the commander-in-chief of all terrorists in Idlib province. I estimate—no one knows precise figures—but I’m estimating that about 40,000 terrorists are trapped there. They have nowhere to go at this point, because no one wants them.

They’re dangerous everywhere that they go. Wherever they go, they are sworn to murder all infidels: all people who are Christians, Jews, Alawites—it doesn’t matter what they are, even Sunnis; they are sworn to execute them if they do not adhere to the 18th century doctrines of Wahhabism.

The Syrian army has accumulated troops and surrounded this group; there’s a great battle being planned.

The dead-enders of the Western world, the ones who have tried to topple Syria for the last seven years, are determined to the final moment not to give up. We have excellent intelligence out of Idlib province that British MI6 agents, working through a group called Olive, which is sort of a Blackwater spin-off, are planning a gas attack. There is some uncertainty whether it will be an actual gas attack, or whether it will simply be a faked attack like they did in Douma recently, where there was no poison gas used, but was simply a pretence. The idea is to have the White Helmets, a propaganda arm of al-Qaeda, rushing around, “treating” people and photographing. Of course, that’s their principal job—to get video. They’ll put it out, and they’ll say, “Look at this! The Syrians have used poison gas.”

Those who have studied intensively, know that there has not been a Syrian government gas attack carried out anytime during the war. You’d never know that from reading the mainstream media, but not one alleged attack has panned out as valid. But the mainstream media will report it immediately. They will not say who did it; they will immediately blame it on the Syrian government, as they have done every time.

It is striking that in all of the years—seven years—not one journalist has ever said, “Can you answer this question? Why, with this vast war underway, would President Assad order the killing of a handful of civilians and never employ poison weapons against the enemy?” There’s never been a time that, faced with

thousands of enemy troops, that poison gas has been used. I’ll give you an example. In the southern part of Syria, there is a hold-out group of ISIS; it’s approximately 1,000 individuals. They have a tremendous defensive position; it’s very hard to eliminate them from it. It’s in the desert, but very hard, and the Syrian army is working, little by little, to try to eliminate this pocket.

If they wanted to use poison gas, the President could say, “Just put it to an end. Let’s drop a half a dozen sarin gas bombs. We’ll wipe out those 1,000 people and move on.” He doesn’t; Assad has never authorized the release of poison gas. In fact, there is very little evidence to support the idea that Syria has any poison gas, because under the agreement with the Russians and the United States, they eliminated all of their gas supplies. If we ever suspected that they had it in a building, the United Nations could have immediately had access to it and find it.

Liberate Idlib Province!

So, we know that they are planning a fake gas attack. The irony is that if the U.S. coalition responds by attacking Syria, we will be fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with al-Qaeda—the same group that attacked the Pentagon and collapsed the Twin Towers in New York City, killing 3,000 Americans, causing them to die in a blazing inferno. Will we become their allies? As you mentioned, we are on the eve of the anniversary of 9/11. How ironic it will be if, after these years, we are allied and are fighting on behalf of the very people who carried out the greatest attack on American soil in the history of the United States.

Wertz: I think that’s really the most powerful irony in this whole situation. One would hope that the United States would pull back from participation in any kind of military attack on the Damascus government and the people of Syria. To your point, I just read that the monthly newsletter of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) confirmed once again, that all of the chemical weapons in Syria were destroyed or removed. Secondly, as the Russians pointed out, if the United States has intelligence as to chemical preparations being made by the Syrian government to be used in Idlib province, why not give that information to the OPCW, so they can go and inspect? Those are two very direct things that come to mind in this situation.

Black: Yes. Sure. One other thing. In addition to trying to defend the terrorists by the use of this false gas



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Sen. Richard Black meets with Syrian Christian clergy.

claim, another angle is to say, “It’s just terrible there will be all this bloodshed of civilians, so we shouldn’t attack al-Qaeda because we want to spare the civilians.” It is the obligation of the Syrian government to liberate Idlib province, and to liberate the civilians. People don’t realize the utter cruelty and barbaric nature of these terrorists.

One of the things that the Syrian Parliament is wrestling with right now, is that there are tens of thousands of Syrian women who have been captured and impregnated by these filthy, unwashed barbarians that we have recruited from around the world to topple their government. These are not marriages, these are not families like you think of in America; these are women who are slaves, who have been purchased. They have been kidnapped in many cases.

Many times, particularly with the Christian villages, they will make up lists of the women in the town, and before the battle, they tell each of the soldiers, “If we capture this area, you will own these women. We’ll behead the husband, we’ll behead the sons of the husband. Then you will possess these women.” So, the people calling on us to simply leave them alone, are saying, leave those women to be perpetually raped by these fiends who control this area. I think that would be sinful, it would be deeply immoral in every respect, and contrary to American values.

Role of MI6, Olive, the White Helmets

Wertz: You mentioned earlier the role of MI6 and this company—Olive—which is basically a private mercenary company. It has about 5,000 employees currently and is expanding. They have reportedly been in-

volved in the Idlib operation. And then you also mentioned the White Helmets, who are also set up by the British. So, you have the British directly involved in this provocation in Idlib province, as they have been elsewhere. We did an interview back in April over the Douma chemical attack. The OPCW did not confirm the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian government.

Black: No, they didn’t. It was claimed to be a sarin gas attack. One of the unique things about sarin gas is that it’s extraordinarily persistent. A sarin gas release site can be detected 30 years later; it doesn’t break down like some chemicals do. So, the OPCW went in, and they said, no sarin gas. They did find a group of about 35

people who were dead, but their bodies were staged. I don’t think they ever figured out what killed them. But they said it could not have been chlorine gas either, because chlorine doesn’t kill you instantly like sarin gas does. Typically, people flee an area infused with chlorine gas, and they might die later on, but they would certainly not be found where the chlorine was.

Interestingly, when the inspectors viewed the bodies and then went back and saw these 35 bodies again, they discovered that some of them had been rearranged, and placed differently during the time that they [the OPCW inspectors] were not there; and that also their gold jewelry had been removed. So, they were murdered, perhaps poisoned, but it was neither by sarin gas, nor by chlorine gas, and I think that was the determination of the OPCW.

Wertz: So here you have the most recent incident which resulted in air attacks, “in retaliation,” and the OPCW concluded that chemical weapons were not used.

There is the other irony, which is that British intelligence is directly involved in promoting this thing—the same British intelligence that has been trying to carry out a coup d’état against the President of the United States, which has so far limited his freedom of action to conduct foreign policy. What do you think are the prospects for President Trump being able to pull back from such an attack, if this new provocation goes forward?

Black: I’m a supporter of President Trump. I know some people are, some people aren’t—I happen to be. I think domestically he’s accomplished a tremendous amount. But when he started off, he put Gen. Michael Flynn in as his National Security Advisor, which really

is the closest person to the President. The deep state focussed on Michael Flynn; they knew that they had to get rid of him, because he wanted to diminish tensions with Russia; he wanted to work with Syria and end the war; and they knew that they had a great deal at stake. And so, he was the first that they eliminated.

Michael Flynn and I had exchanged texts back and forth. I don't want to overstate it; I wasn't a confidant of his. But in his final transmission, he was convinced that I had a place working with the White House. He said, "You and I have to meet within the next week." It was during that week that he was swept out of office, and now we have John Bolton.

I will tell you, if someone were to put together one hundred names of foreign policy experts and were to say, "choose the top one," I would say, "Well, I'm not sure that I can do that, but I will pick the bottom one." The absolute worst possible person to control foreign policy, that would be John Bolton. John Bolton is a man of war, of bloodshed, of conflict. And I wish that President Trump would bring back "The Apprentice" [reality TV show] and call in John Bolton and say, "You're fired!"

Trump might do something similar with Nikki Haley, who's our Ambassador to the United Nations. An ambassador is someone who is supposed to find common ground, find ways that nations can work together. Every time she speaks out, she's threatening somebody with bomb strikes, and sanctions, and punishments of different sorts. I think she is a terrible example.

The problem is, the President is not a foreign policy expert. And so, when he sits down with the National Security Council, he's surrounded by these deep state actors, and he may argue against them, he may say, "I want to get out of Syria. I want to do it very quickly." And then, all of a sudden, he has six or eight or ten people saying, "Oh, that would be a huge mistake and here's the reason why." At a certain point, he probably thinks, "I don't want to do something that is going to be disastrous, so I better listen to my advisors."

Trump tried to get us out of Afghanistan, and they were just adamant, saying we can't leave Afghanistan. We continue bleeding lives and bleeding the Treasury of the United States in Afghanistan, with nothing to show for it after 17 years of war. The Taliban are on the march; it's only a question of time before Afghanistan falls.

President Trump unfortunately lacks voices that are close to him, who will raise the other side of the issue, to say, "Mr. President, I disagree. I see things this way." So that if his inclination is towards peace, he can say, "I

think I'm going to go with this advisor." That would be a healthier environment.

And so, it's very difficult. I don't know whether Trump can stop an attack based on White Helmets propaganda and a false gas attack—I just don't know.

Wertz: Well, hopefully the preemptive moves by Russia and Syria, in bringing this to the UN and the OPCW—and also, we have been very active in getting the word out, at the UN, in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere around the country—will be sufficient to avoid a disaster.

I would like to ask more about your visit, to Syria. Essentially, you said there was a spring in the step of President Assad, and you probably had an opportunity to get a sense of the way the people of Syria view him. You also mentioned the process of reconciliation that is going on in Syria. So, the question is, how has that contributed toward, hopefully, a resolution of this conflict?

My Two Visits to Syria Compared

Black: You know, I travelled all around the country. When I last visited Syria two years ago, we were in a 12-vehicle convoy with three technical vehicles that mounted automatic cannon; we had attack helicopters, we had a MiG jet flying air support—all of that security to move me from Palmyra to Homs.

This time, however, my security was light. Behind me was a vehicle with four photographers. I don't think they had a weapon among them in their group! I did have a little bit of security, but very light. I wasn't even in a bullet-proof vehicle this time, as we drove across Syria for five hours. We had to use rest stops, and we'd just pick a little—like a shepherd's hut—and we'd go in and ask if we could use their restroom. It was amazing! The spirit of the people is so uplifted, now that they see the terrorists have been driven out of the country: They're hopeful.

It was remarkable. We didn't talk politics with them, we were just friendly. But they would almost invariably speak up and they would say, "We are so grateful for our President and for our army for liberating us and for freeing us from the terrorists." These were common people, these were shepherds, these were people who tend olive groves with little olive trees in the desert. They were in very remote places, almost out of control of the government; and there's this great feeling of optimism.

You mentioned reconciliation. I will tell you, early in



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Sen. Black with Soviet-era BMP-1 amphibious tracked fighting vehicle destroyed by Syrian troops, September 2018.

the war, the government set up a Bureau of Reconciliation, where they would allow a rebel group to come over, to return to the government side, and their men had to join the Syrian Army, because Syria has a draft—just like we had, so you can't have draft dodgers; we didn't allow draft dodgers during the Vietnam War. I was very skeptical. I felt, you know, the terrorists, the rebels, they're going to simply say, "Oh yeah, we'll do this," and as soon as Syria's back was turned, they'd stab them in the back and betray them. It just shows that foreigners can never completely understand the culture of another nation, but President Assad believed that this policy would work.

I've spoken to many people, at many levels, and they all agree, it's been a magnificent success. In fact, the soldiers who were recruited from these towns and villages, that reconciled with the government, have joined the Army, and they have fought quite credibly; they've been excellent fighters, fighting against the terrorists. And in exchange, Syria restores their complete civil rights, gives them amnesty—with the exception of a few horrific war criminals—the typical person who got out there and fought the Syrian army, they're given amnesty and restored. And it has worked everywhere, and it has brought unity to the country and peace to the country everywhere.

There is so much hope and optimism—people are rebuilding! Even though we have essentially a blockade—we call them "sanctions"—but international law says, in wartime you can cut off everything except food and medicine. If you do that, that's a serious war crime. We have circumvented that, and we have cut off food

and medicine by making it impossible to exchange currency. There's a rule in law that's very fundamental, that you cannot do indirectly what you're forbidden to do directly: In other words, a woman is forbidden to murder her husband; but she might say, OK, I'll hire somebody and have him kill my husband. She can't do indirectly—she is still guilty of murder if she does that.

The same principle applies in international law. So, we have violated international law with impunity, and it's very cruel. All of the refugees want to pour back into Syria, they want to return to their homes, they want to rebuild; they still require some help. And one of the things that's very insidious, is that the United States and the other funders of the United

Nations have prevented the United Nations from giving financial and medical support to refugees who return to Syria. As long as they stay outside, in Lebanon and Turkey and Jordan, then we'll give them benefits; but as soon as they return home, we cut it off. We do this in order to perpetuate this refugee crisis.

In spite of this policy, 300,000 people have already returned to the city of Homs; 200,000 have returned to Aleppo; there are thousands returning to Damascus. President Assad made clear to me: "Look, we have to rebuild this country." Syrians, they're very intelligent, industrious people; very honest people. People will say, "We in Syria, we rebuild with our minds and with our muscles." And you can see it everywhere. There was one place where 5,000 university students had taken a week off, and they were there shoveling rubble from the damage done by the terrorists, taking it off in wheelbarrows and just cleaning things out, and getting it ready for the reconstruction, repainting things. So, there is life all over Syria. Syria has come back to life.

Compare that to what the terrorists did. We used to say, the Free Syrian Army, these are moderate terrorists; I went to Maaloula, to a convent where the Free Syrian Army captured twelve nuns and kept them as human shields. The nuns were eventually recovered by the Syrian army and returned; they now have an orphanage there where they take care of children, many of whom are the children of rape, and many others; their families were simply—because they were Christians or something—they had their heads chopped off and the child had nowhere to go. But the nuns now care for them.



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Sen. Black visits an orphanage in Maaloula, September 2018.

They took me through the convent; it's an ancient convent, a beautiful place. The Free Syrian Army came in and stole what they could, and then ancient icons that have been there for 500 and 1,000 years, they burned them, they torched them. Everywhere that they went, they killed Christians. The Christians heroically took to the hills that surround Maaloula and they fought. The Free Syrian Army could never overwhelm the Christians, and finally, President Assad sent the Syrian army in to rescue the Christians. Two hundred soldiers died saving the Christians, and most of them were Muslim; most of them were Sunni Muslims, but they died because there is this bond among Muslim, Christian, Alawi, Druze, Ismaili—all of these people. People don't realize the cohesion of the Syrian nation!

You think of it: Here's a nation of 23 million people, relatively small country. For seven years, they have fought the combined industrial and military might of two-thirds of the world's nations. I went to the Army War College; we studied wars. If anyone had said: "Here's a situation, you've got this small nation and you have all of the great powers of the world arrayed against them, all of the media, all of the financial system, everything, how will they fight?" And I think all of the officers in the class would have said: "It's not worth it, just submit to whatever horrors they're going to impose on you."

But they didn't submit. They fought, and they have won. And unless the United States and the U.K. and France, come in on the side of the al-Qaeda, on the side of terror—unless we align ourselves with terror in this final battle, then this small nation will win. I will tell

you, there are two things: One is the superior leadership that they have had. It has been magnificent, it has been brilliant. The other thing is, honestly—you know, I'm very deeply religious—I don't know any conceivable way that they could have survived unless it was the will of God.

So, things over there are looking up. And I really hope, if I go again in two years, I hope that the war is ended, the refugees have returned, and I see building going on everywhere.

Going back to that convent: The nuns gathered together the orphans who crowded around me. I had two sitting on my lap. I have 16 grandchildren, so I love small children. If we can bring peace, these little girls will not be sex slaves for ISIS and al-Qaeda. They will have happy lives; they will live normal lives. If, on the other hand, if we had succeeded in toppling the government, all of the Christian men would have been slaughtered and all the women would have all been slaves—many are slaves today, but *all* would be slaves. The Syrian army and their allies have blocked this from happening, and they have avoided one of the great immoral horrors of humanity. And I think that the civilized world should be very grateful to Syria for what they have accomplished.



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Part of the Old Souk (market) in Homs has been restored and is now open for business.

Wertz: Absolutely so. What you're describing as the Syrian policy of reconciliation reminds me of the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War in Europe. The basic conception there was—and I think it's common to all great religions, it's certainly expressed in Christianity, but it's also expressed in other religions—is the concept of acting to the honor, to the benefit, and to the advantage of the other, which is a principle of love. I think that's the power they are expressing, and it has to be unleashed throughout the world at this point.

And Syria—not from their choosing, was part of an overall offensive, including in Iraq, Libya, Syria, and other nations—to bring the world into a very bad state.

'Topple Seven Mideast Countries in Five Years'

Black: People need to realize that our war in Syria didn't begin as us declaring war on Syria. Gen. Wesley Clark, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe—he's on video, you can see the excellent quality [video](#) on YouTube—and he talks about two visits that he made to the Pentagon right after 9/11. The first visit, he asked, "What's going on?" and the general said, "We're going to attack Iraq." He said, "Why? Did we discover weapons of mass destruction?" The general said, "No." He said, "We've got a powerful military, I guess we're going to use it."

He went back on his second visit; he asked, "Well, are we still attacking Iraq?" The general said, "No, it's worse than that." He took a paper, a top-secret document, he waved it, and says, "I've just gotten orders from the Secretary of Defense that we're going to topple seven Middle Eastern countries in the next five years." And they included Libya, Syria, Yemen, Sudan, but ultimately ending up with Iran. None of these countries had done anything to us! They had never done any action that was hostile to the United States.

That was one thing. And then, in 2006, Ambassador William Roebuck was the Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Damascus, and he published a document—it runs, 8, 10, 12 pages—very widely disseminated throughout the hierarchy of the U.S. government. In this document, which is available thanks to WikiLeaks, he laid out the principles of how we were going to destabilize and topple the government of Syria.

At the time, Syria had enjoyed 40 years of peace with Israel, it was not at war with any nation; it had no debt, it had a very fine economy, not wealthy, but a good economy. It had the greatest religious freedom and the

greatest women's rights of any Arab nation: At that time 51% of Syria's college graduates were women. Women dressed as they wanted, they married whom they wanted, they lived in freedom—they could travel around the world, they didn't need the permission of their caretaker, like they do in Saudi Arabia. And they really were the model for all of the Arab world to emulate, because they were the most modernized, the most advanced in terms of their philosophy and their outlook.

We invaded Libya in order to capture weapons that we could send across the [Turkish] border into Syria, to overthrow the country. And of course, the disaster that we caused in Libya is a thing of history: They have no government after seven years. They are simply in a state of anarchy, where people roam the streets and murder and kill and steal, and there's no one you can go to and say, "I want to report a crime." You can't report a crime! Because there's no government—and we did that to them. We slaughtered people, massively, in Libya.

And we did it to capture their very large arsenal, and send it to Syria, so that there we could continue killing people, and we could install a puppet government, run by al-Qaeda. We were trying to have al-Qaeda take over Syria, despite the fact that they had attacked the United States on 9/11!

Just fantastic—the history needs to be written, because it's almost beyond belief. This is not my country—I was a United States Marine. I was enlisted to begin with; I ended up being a colonel. We used to stand at attention in our underwear at night, every night, and we would be ordered to shout at the top of our voices and sing the Marine Corps Hymn; and there's a phrase that says, "I will fight for right and freedom. And to keep our honor clean, we're proud to claim the title of United States Marine."

Our honor is not clean. The deep state that holds its clutches on America; it has smeared filth on the honor of the United States. I respect the flag of the United States, the State of Virginia, and the Marine Corps flag that are behind me in my office, and I want our honor restored. I demand this back: As a United States Marine, I demand that our honor be cleansed, and I will fight to my dying day to see this happen.

Wertz: Well, I think that that sums up your intention and what needs to be done. And so, I thank you very much.

Black: Thank you very much, Will.