

Tougher Response to Islamic Terrorism Is Needed

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The Arab Spring continues. After the overthrow of former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and his henchmen and following the anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attack, the Egyptian people — 91 percent of whom approved of the 9/11 attack according to a 2003 survey by the Free Egyptians organization — turned their attention once again last week to fighting the devil incarnate. A mob of Egyptian radicals broke into the U.S. Embassy in Cairo and hoisted up the black flag of jihad. Similar crowds seized the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya, and killed the U.S. ambassador. Angry mobs also protested in front of U.S. embassies in a dozen or so other countries in North Africa and the Middle East.

The weak response to that unrest was shocking. For example, the United Nations did not even react for three days, and when it did, it posted a statement on its website in small letters, sandwiched between much larger banners announcing "daily struggles for Palestinians" and "Bangkok climate talks." The statement began: "The United Nations rejects defamation of religion in all forms."

Why the tepid response? Perhaps because the Islamist radicals claimed they killed the ambassador in revenge for a video that insulted the Prophet Muhammad.

But wait just a minute. For starters, why do the UN authorities believe the terrorists' statements? Following 9/11, senior al-Qaida leader Anwar al-Awlaki said that the United States itself had waged the attack to tarnish the good name of peace-loving Islam. It is a standard tactic of Islamic extremism to justify murder by claiming to be the victim of insult or injury.

Let's take a look at exactly how the Benghazi consulate attack occurred. The protests began after Islamist websites posted knowingly deceitful announcements that U.S. television would commemorate the Sept. 11 attack by showing a derogatory film about Muhammad on prime time television.

The attack in Benghazi was carefully planned. Libyan consulate guards evacuated the U.S. staff to a shelter that turned out to be a trap, suggesting that some of the guards cooperated with radical Islamists as part of an inside job. What's more, the crowd of attackers swarming through the burned-out consulate had differing opinions as to why they had staged the attack. Some said it was revenge for the video, while others claimed it was revenge for the U.S. drone killing in June of Abu Yahya al-Libi, deputy to the al-Qaida leader in Pakistan.

Contrary to conventional opinion, the Benghazi attack was not a spontaneous reaction to the video. These were planned operations carried out under the cover of angry mobs as part of an organized provocation. It represents a new form of terrorism — that is, terrorism in the guise of an enraged, fanatical crowd. ☒

So what if a fundamentalist, Quran-burning Christian pastor from Florida and an equally fundamentalist Egyptian Copt living in California made an idiotic film about Muhammad? If someone had made a pornographic film mocking Christianity, would it have differed substantially from the antics of Pussy Riot? Would it have differed in terms of artistic merit?

No, they would have been equally vulgar. The difference is that President Vladimir Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church responded to Pussy Riot's political and religious affronts with a two-year prison sentence. Although the punishment was clearly too severe for the crime, the prison sentence looks humanitarian compared to the way the radical Islamists' responded to the blasphemous film. They avenged the affront to Muhammad with blood.

The Islamic protests highlight two very unfortunate developments. First, we see the systemic capitulation of leftist ideology, the global bureaucracy and even of democratic politicians in the face of militant Islamism. Why are they silent about the dangers of Islamic radicalism? Instead, they whine about how Muslim women should have the right to wear veils in public and why a defensive jihad is justified.

We also see the complete failure of the leftist ideology that claims that the popular voice of the people is always the voice of freedom. When the Arab Spring began, the Western media rushed to welcome the dawn of freedom and proclaim that the Muslim Brotherhood is a pro-democracy movement.

Question: What is the difference between the Egyptian mob that stormed the U.S. Embassy in Cairo and the mob that overthrew Mubarak?

Now that Mubarak has been swept from power, Islamists have taken his place in Egypt. Expect

the same in Syria once President Bashar Assad is removed or killed.

Bureaucrats in global organizations and liberal ideologues are now in a tight fix. Either they admit that they were wrong, or they reach for the rickety lifeboat the Islamists are offering and follow the example of UN General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, who, with a doleful face, condemned "in the strongest terms any acts of defamation of religions and religious symbols."

I wonder what they will say next time the radical Islamists turn violent and innocent blood is spilled. We probably don't have to wait long to find out.

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