

THE BIG FAIL

AN EXAMINATION OF THE FAILED OBAMA RECORD



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Benghazi One Year Later

As The One-Year Anniversary Of Benghazi Approaches, Questions Linger About The Attack And The Administration's Response

WHY HAVE OFFICIALS AT BOTH STATE DEPARTMENT AND CIA DESCRIBED INTIMIDATION EFFORTS CONCERNING BENGHAZI?

A 22-Year Foreign Service Officer Has Felt "Punished" And "Shunted Aside" For Questioning The Administration's Benghazi Response

Gregory Hicks, Former Deputy Chief Of Mission In Libya: "I Feel That I Have Been Punished" By The State Department For Speaking Out About Benghazi. STEPHANOPOULOS: "You've had, you know, quite a journey yourself in this last year: decided to speak to Congress just back in May. Since then, it appears it had been in something of career limbo inside the State Department." HICKS: "That's correct. That's true." STEPHANOPOULOS: "The State Department says this was an assignment you requested. You're getting the same pay as before. But do you feel you're being punished for speaking out?" MR. HICKS: "Yes, I feel that I have been punished. I don't know why I was punished. I don't know why I was punished. (ABC's ["This Week"](#) 9/8/13)

- **Hicks: "I Don't Know Why I Was Shunted Aside, Put In A Closet, If You Will."** HICKS: "I don't know why I was shunted aside, put in a closet, if you will." STEPHANOPOULOS: "Does the State Department know you're speaking out now?" HICKS: "No, they don't know I'm here with you." (ABC's ["This Week"](#) 9/8/13)

Hicks, A 22-Year Foreign Service Officer, Testified That His Benghazi Questions Produced A Chill From State Department Superiors: "The Sense I Got Was That I Needed To Stop The Line Of Questioning." "But within days, Mr. Hicks said, after raising questions about the account of what had happened in Benghazi offered in television interviews by Susan E. Rice, the United Nations ambassador, he felt a distinct chill from State Department superiors. 'The sense I got was that I needed to stop the line of questioning,' said Mr. Hicks, who has been a Foreign Service officer for 22 years." (Scott Shane, Jeremy W. Peters and Eric Schmitt, "Diplomat Says Questions Over Benghazi Led To Demotion," [The New York Times](#), 5/8/13)

Hicks Has Claimed The State Department "Effectively Demoted" Him For Questioning The Administration's Benghazi Response. "He was soon given a scathing review of his management style, he said, and was later 'effectively demoted' to desk officer at headquarters, in what he believes was

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retaliation for speaking up.” (Scott Shane, Jeremy W. Peters and Eric Schmitt, “Diplomat Says Questions Over Benghazi Led To Demotion,” [The New York Times](#), 5/8/13)

CIA Sources Have Also Described Intimidation Efforts Over Benghazi

CNN Has Reported That CIA Sources Have Described “An Unprecedented Attempt To Keep The Spy Agency’s Benghazi Secrets From Ever Leaking Out.” “CNN has learned the CIA is involved in what one source calls an unprecedented attempt to keep the spy agency’s Benghazi secrets from ever leaking out. Since January, some CIA operatives involved in the agency’s missions in Libya, have been subjected to frequent, even monthly polygraph examinations, according to a source with deep inside knowledge of the agency’s workings. The goal of the questioning, according to sources, is to find out if anyone is talking to the media or Congress.” (“Exclusive: Dozens Of CIA Operatives On The Ground During Benghazi Attack,” [CNN](#), 8/1/13)

“It Is Being Described As Pure Intimidation, With The Threat That Any Unauthorized CIA Employee Who Leaks Information Could Face The End Of His Or Her Career.” (“Exclusive: Dozens Of CIA Operatives On The Ground During Benghazi Attack,” [CNN](#), 8/1/13)

WHY ARE SOME KEY PLAYERS STILL RELUCTANT TO FACE QUESTIONS ABOUT BENGHAZI?

On The Advice Of His Attorney, Benghazi Accountability Review Board Chairman Ambassador Thomas Pickering Refused To Speak With CNN About Benghazi. CNN’S JOHN KING: “The ARB was led by veteran diplomat Thomas Pickering. He twice canceled scheduled interviews with CNN and now says his attorney advised him not to speak with us.” (CNN’s [“The Truth About Benghazi,”](#) 8/6/13)

Jake Sullivan, Former State Dept. Deputy Chief Of Staff And Part Of Hillary Clinton’s “Inner Circle,” Was Named As The Member Of State’s Leadership Who Wanted Benghazi Talking Points Changed. KING: “We now know the National Security Council staff was behind several edits, and the State Department vigorously pushed others. The first draft referenced Islamic extremists with ties to al Qaeda. The second noted repeated CIA warnings about al Qaeda’s presence in Benghazi. But administration e-mails show State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland objected to naming terror groups. She also pushed to delete reference to those threat warnings. Even after changes, Nuland wrote one draft failed ‘to resolve all of my issues or those of my building leadership.’ For months, Nuland refused to explain who she meant by building relationship.” HAYDEN: “Not being transparent feeds people’s worst fears and worst suspicions.” KING: “In July, she finally told the Senate she was referring to Jake Sullivan, the department’s deputy chief of staff and key member of Secretary Clinton’s inner circle.” (CNN’s [“The Truth About Benghazi,”](#) 8/6/12)

- **“Sullivan Is Among More Than Half Dozen Top Clinton Aides Issa’s Committee Wants To Question.”** KING: “Sullivan is among more than half dozen top Clinton aides Issa’s committee wants to question.” (CNN’s [“The Truth About Benghazi,”](#) 8/6/12)

WHY DID HILLARY CLINTON PLACE BLAME ON FOUR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE NOW BEEN REINSTATED AT STATE?

The Four State Department Officials Placed On Administrative Leave By Hillary Clinton Have Been Asked Back To Work By Secretary John Kerry. “Secretary of State John Kerry has determined that the four State Department officials placed on administrative leave by Hillary Clinton after the terrorist attack on the U.S. mission in Benghazi do not deserve any formal disciplinary action and has asked them to come

back to work at the State Department starting Tuesday.” (Josh Rogin, “Kerry Reinstates Benghazi Officials Clinton Punished,” [The Daily Beast](#), 8/19/13)

- **The State Department Confirmed That All Four Officials Placed On Leave Have Returned To Regular Duty And Would Not Face Any Formal Disciplinary Action.** “A senior State Department official confirmed to The Daily Beast Monday that all four officials placed on administrative leave were now returned to regular duty and would not face any formal disciplinary action. The administrative leave designation was not a formal punishment, but did prevent the officials from working while the Kerry team, which inherited the Benghazi issue from the Clinton team in February, reviewed their cases.” (Josh Rogin, “Kerry Reinstates Benghazi Officials Clinton Punished,” [The Daily Beast](#), 8/19/13)

CNN’s Jake Tapper: “The Obama Administration Is Holding No One Responsible For What Happened During The Deadly Attacks On The U.S. Compound In Benghazi, Libya.” “As of Tuesday, it became official – the Obama administration is holding no one responsible for what happened during the deadly attacks on the U.S. compound in Benghazi, Libya. Last fall it was only a matter of days after four Americans were killed in Benghazi before evidence appeared indicating that State Department officials paid insufficient attention to requests from diplomats and security personnel in Libya, desperately asking for additional security. ... A State Department official told CNN that there was no breach of duty for these officials, and that they are not returning to their previous posts.” (Jake Tapper, “Analysis: No One Is Being Held Responsible For Benghazi,” [CNN](#), 8/20/13)

Clinton’s Idea Of Benghazi Accountability Was Disciplining Four Mid-Level Officials – Including One Who Had No Role In Security Decisions

Following The Release Of The ARB Report, Four Mid-Level State Officials Were Placed On Leave And Continued Collecting Government Paychecks. “Following the ARB investigation into the incident, then-Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton placed Diplomatic Security Chief Eric Boswell, security officials Charlene Lamb and Scott Bultrowicz and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Maghreb Region Raymond Maxwell on administrative leave. They continued collecting their government paychecks during their leave, but have remained in employment limbo until this week.” (“Kerry Clears 4 State Staffers Put On Leave Over Benghazi Attack To Return To Work,” [CBS News](#), 8/20/13)

- **Foreign Policy Headline: “Mid-Level Officials Take The Fall For Benghazi”** (Josh Rogin, “Mid-Level Officials Take The Fall For Benghazi,” [Foreign Policy](#), 12/20/12)
- **“But Lawmakers And Experts Are Asking Why The Disciplinary Action Stops There.”** “One State Department mid-level official has resigned over the security failures related to the Sept. 11 attack on the U.S. mission in Benghazi and three others have been placed on ‘administrative leave.’ But lawmakers and experts are asking why the disciplinary action stops there.” (Josh Rogin, “Mid-Level Officials Take The Fall For Benghazi,” [Foreign Policy](#), 12/20/12)

One Of The Officials Put On Leave By Clinton’s Aides Was Raymond Maxwell, “A Mid-Level Official Who Had No Role In Security Decisions And Has Never Been Told The Charges Against Him.”

“Following the attack in Benghazi, senior State Department officials close to Hillary Clinton ordered the removal of a mid-level official who had no role in security decisions and has never been told the charges against him. He is now accusing Clinton’s team of scapegoating him for the failures that led to the death of four Americans last year.” (Josh Rogin, “Exclusive: Hillary’s Benghazi ‘Scapegoat’ Speaks Out,” [The Daily Beast](#), 5/20/13)

- **Hillary Clinton’s Chief Of Staff Cheryl Mills Instructed Acting Assistant Secretary For Near Eastern Affairs Beth Jones To Remove Raymond Maxwell From His Position As Deputy**

Assistant Secretary For Near Eastern Affairs (NEA). “The decision to place Maxwell on administrative leave was made by Clinton’s chief of staff Cheryl Mills, according to three State Department officials with direct knowledge of the events. On the day after the unclassified version of the ARB’s report was released in December, Mills called Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Beth Jones and directed her to have Maxwell leave his job immediately. ‘Cheryl Mills directed me to remove you immediately from the [deputy assistant secretary] position,’ Jones told Maxwell, according to Maxwell.” (Josh Rogin, “Exclusive: Hillary’s Benghazi ‘Scapegoat’ Speaks Out,” [The Daily Beast](#), 5/20/13)

Maxwell’s Removal “Seems To Conflict” With The ARB’s Finding That Responsibility For The Benghazi Attacks Would Be Fixed “At The Assistant Secretary Level.” “The decision to remove Maxwell and not Jones seems to conflict with the finding of the ARB that responsibility for the security failures leading up to the Sept. 11, 2012 attack on the U.S. mission in Benghazi should fall on more senior officials. ‘We fixed [the responsibility] at the assistant secretary level, which is in our view the appropriate place to look, where the decision-making in fact takes place, where, if you like, the rubber hits the road,’ Pickering said when releasing the ARB report.” (Josh Rogin, “Exclusive: Hillary’s Benghazi ‘Scapegoat’ Speaks Out,” [The Daily Beast](#), 5/20/13)

- **The ARB Found “Systemic Failures And Leadership And Management Deficiencies At Senior Levels Within Two Bureaus Of The State Department,” Including The Assistant Secretaries And Possibly “7th Floor” Leadership.** “The report found ‘systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department,’ namely the Diplomatic Security (DS) and Near East bureaus. Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns testified in December that requests for more security in Libya, denied by the State Department, did reach the assistant secretaries and ‘it may be that some of my colleagues on the 7th floor saw them as well.’” (Josh Rogin, “Exclusive: Hillary’s Benghazi ‘Scapegoat’ Speaks Out,” [The Daily Beast](#), 5/20/13)

Maxwell’s Superiors, The Assistant Secretary Of State For Near Eastern Affairs Beth Jones And Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary For Near Eastern Affairs Liz Dibble, Were Not Disciplined. “But Jones was not disciplined in any way following the release of the report, nor was the principal deputy assistant secretary of State at NEA, Liz Dibble, who is slated to receive a plush post as the deputy chief of mission at the U.S. embassy in London this summer.” (Josh Rogin, “Exclusive: Hillary’s Benghazi ‘Scapegoat’ Speaks Out,” [The Daily Beast](#), 5/20/13)

- **Jones And Dibble Handled “All Security Related Decisions” For Libya.** “Jones and Dibble were responsible for security in Libya, Maxwell and three State Department officials said. What’s more, when Maxwell was promoted to his DAS position in August 2011, most responsibility for Libya was carved out of his portfolio, which also included Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. Although Maxwell did some work on Libya, all security related decisions were handled by Dibble and Jones, according to the three officials.” (Josh Rogin, “Exclusive: Hillary’s Benghazi ‘Scapegoat’ Speaks Out,” [The Daily Beast](#), 5/20/13)

ONE YEAR LATER, WHY IS A BENGHAZI SUSPECT STILL AT LARGE FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT BUT NOT MEDIA OUTLETS?

This Weekend, White House Chief Of Staff Denis McDonough Did Not Answer Questions On Why A Benghazi Suspect Spoke To CNN, AP, And The New York Times But Has Not Been Arrested. FOX NEWS’ CHRIS WALLACE: “Finally, Wednesday marks one year since the terror attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi. The day after, in the Rose Garden, the President promised to bring the killers to justice. But while our government has charged Ahmed Khattalah as one of the people involved in this,

there's been no arrest while at the same time Khattalah has given interviews to CNN, to AP and to the New York Times. Why is it that reporters seem to be able to find this guy who the government is charging for involvement in Benghazi but our law enforcement can't find him?" MCDONOUGH: "Look, we've been very clear that we will hold those people who carried out this dastardly, heinous attack against our people to account." WALLACE: "It's been a year, sir." MCDONOUGH: "It has been a year. And you know what the United States does, Chris, is we track every lead until we find and can accomplish what we say we will do." (Fox's "Fox News Sunday," 9/8/13)

In July, CNN Reported That A Reporter Sat Down For Two Hours With A Benghazi Suspect, Who Has "Never Been Contacted By The Libyan Government, Never Been Contacted By The FBI." CNN'S JOHN KING: "And Arwa Damon, our great correspondent, went back to Benghazi. She sat down with one of the people the FBI says is a lead suspect for two hours. He says he's never been contacted by the Libyan government, never been contacted by the FBI. So that is why you have this exasperation among some leading Republicans in the Congress." (CNN's "[New Day](#)," 7/31/13)