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Compiled by Freelance Researcher
www.AmarkFoundation.org

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I. Hillary Clinton as Secretary of State

Hillary Clinton, former First Lady, served as the 67th Secretary of State under President Barack Obama from Jan. 21, 2009, to Feb. 1, 2013. ¹

From CNN/Politics.com, Jan. 22, 2009: “Hillary Clinton was sworn in as the 67th U.S. secretary of state Wednesday afternoon after the Senate approved her nomination by a vote of 94-2.”

The oath of office Hillary Clinton took for Secretary of State on January 21, 2009, which was given by Vice President Joe Biden and shown on C-SPAN:

“I, Hillary Rodham Clinton, do solemnly swear, that I will support and defend, the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith, and allegiance to the same, that I take this oath freely, without any mental reservation, or purpose of evasion, that I will well and faithfully, discharge the duties of the office, on which I am about to enter, so help me God.”

Prior to being sworn in on Jan. 21, 2009, she read from a prepared statement at the hearing of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on January 13, 2009:

“I am deeply grateful for the trust--and keenly aware of the responsibility--that the President-elect has placed in me to serve our country and our people at a time of such grave

¹ History.state.gov, “Biographies of the Secretaries of State: Hillary Rodham Clinton (1947–),” Office of the Historian, Accessed 2/15/2017

dangers, and great possibilities. If confirmed, I will accept the duties of the office with gratitude, humility, and firm determination to represent the United States as energetically and faithfully as I can.”

Here is [a link](#) to the entire statement titled “Prepared statement of HON. Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Senator from New York, nominee for Secretary of State”

II. Secretary of State Job Description

“Duties of the Secretary of State” are listed on State.gov and are dated Jan. 20, 2017.

“Under the Constitution, the President of the United States determines U.S. foreign policy. The Secretary of State, appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, is the President’s chief foreign affairs adviser. The Secretary carries out the President’s foreign policies through the State Department and the Foreign Service of the United States.

Created in 1789 by the Congress as the successor to the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of State is the senior executive Department of the U.S. Government. The Secretary of State’s duties relating to foreign affairs have not changed significantly since then, but they have become far more complex as international commitments multiplied. These duties -- the activities and responsibilities of the State Department -- include the following:

- Serves as the President's principal adviser on U.S. foreign policy;
- Conducts negotiations relating to U.S. foreign affairs;
- Grants and issues passports to American citizens and exequaturs to foreign consuls in the United States;
- Advises the President on the appointment of U.S. ambassadors, ministers, consuls, and other diplomatic representatives;
- Advises the President regarding the acceptance, recall, and dismissal of the representatives of foreign governments;

- Personally participates in or directs U.S. representatives to international conferences, organizations, and agencies;
- Negotiates, interprets, and terminates treaties and agreements;
- Ensures the protection of the U.S. Government to American citizens, property, and interests in foreign countries;
- Supervises the administration of U.S. immigration laws abroad;
- Provides information to American citizens regarding the political, economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian conditions in foreign countries;
- Informs the Congress and American citizens on the conduct of U.S. foreign relations;
- Promotes beneficial economic intercourse between the United States and other countries;
- Administers the Department of State;
- Supervises the Foreign Service of the United States.

In addition, the Secretary of State retains domestic responsibilities that Congress entrusted to the State Department in 1789. These include the custody of the Great Seal of the United States, the preparation of certain presidential proclamations, the publication of treaties and international acts as well as the official record of the foreign relations of the United States, and the custody of certain original treaties and international agreements. The Secretary also serves as the channel of communication between the Federal Government and the States on the extradition of fugitives to or from foreign countries.”

III. Government Reports on Benghazi ²

September 11-12, 2012

“On September 11 and 12, 2012, the U.S. Special Mission Compound in Benghazi, Libya and a nearby annex were attacked, killing four Americans— Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens, Sean Smith, Glen Doherty, and Tyrone Woods. Several others were seriously wounded, while others were successfully evacuated to safety.” ³

In the aftermath, the Secretary of State convened an investigation, and there were seven separate congressional committees devoted to determining the events of that night.

According to Politifact.com:⁴ “It should be noted that each congressional committee that investigated the Benghazi attack looked into different aspects of the event. After the attack, Republican Speaker John Boehner directed the House Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, Judiciary, Foreign Affairs, Armed Services and Intelligence to investigate the issues within their jurisdictions. The House investigations were led by Republicans. Two bipartisan Senate Committees also investigated the attack.”

² Reports are defined as known most recent reports, whether or not they are classified as “final.”

³ Select Committee on Benghazi Minority Site, “Benghazi on the Record: Asked and Answered,” Accessed 2/18/2017

⁴ Politifact.com, “Clinton: 7 Benghazi probes so far,” Oct. 12, 2015, Accessed 2/15/2017

A. Report Convened by the Secretary of State
Hillary Rodham Clinton

1. “Accountability Review Board Report” of
the Accountability Review Board for
Benghazi convened by Secretary of State
Hillary Rodham Clinton

12/19/2012 – Non-partisan

- **Title of Report:** “Accountability Review Board Report”
- **Date of Report:** Dec. 19, 2012
- **Type of Committee:** Non-partisan
- **Pages:** 39
- **Chairman:** Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering
- **Members:** Four Board members were selected by the Secretary of State and one member from the intelligence community (IC) was selected by the Director for National Intelligence. Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering served as Chairman, with Admiral Michael Mullen as Vice Chairman. Additional members were Catherine Bertini, Richard Shinnick, and Hugh Turner, who represented the IC.

- **Findings From the Report:**

“In examining the circumstances of these attacks, the Accountability Review Board for Benghazi determined that:

1. The attacks were security related, involving arson, small arms and machine gun fire, and the use of RPGs, grenades, and mortars against U.S. personnel at two separate facilities – the SMC and the Annex – and en route between them. Responsibility for the tragic loss of life, injuries, and damage to U.S. facilities and property rests solely and completely with the terrorists who perpetrated the attacks. The Board concluded that there was no protest prior to the attacks, which were unanticipated in their scale and intensity.

2. Systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department (the “Department”) resulted in a Special Mission security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place.

Security in Benghazi was not recognized and implemented as a “shared responsibility” by the bureaus in Washington charged with supporting the post, resulting in stove-piped discussions and decisions on policy and security. That said, Embassy Tripoli did not demonstrate strong and sustained advocacy with Washington for increased security for Special Mission Benghazi.

The short-term, transitory nature of Special Mission Benghazi’s staffing, with talented and committed, but

relatively inexperienced, American personnel often on temporary assignments of 40 days or less, resulted in diminished institutional knowledge, continuity, and mission capacity.

Overall, the number of Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) security staff in Benghazi on the day of the attack and in the months and weeks leading up to it was inadequate, despite repeated requests from Special Mission Benghazi and Embassy Tripoli for additional staffing. Board members found a pervasive realization among personnel who served in Benghazi that the Special Mission was not a high priority for Washington when it came to security-related requests, especially those relating to staffing.

The insufficient Special Mission security platform was at variance with the appropriate Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB) standards with respect to perimeter and interior security. Benghazi was also severely under-resourced with regard to certain needed security equipment, although DS funded and installed in 2012 a number of physical security upgrades. These included heightening the outer perimeter wall, safety grills on safe area egress windows, concrete jersey barriers, manual drop-arm vehicle barriers, a steel gate for the Villa C safe area, some locally manufactured steel doors, sandbag fortifications, security cameras, some additional security lighting, guard booths, and an Internal Defense Notification System.

Special Mission Benghazi's uncertain future after 2012 and its "non-status" as a temporary, residential facility made allocation of resources for security and personnel more difficult, and left responsibility to

meet security standards to the working-level in the field, with very limited resources.

In the weeks and months leading up to the attacks, the response from post, Embassy Tripoli, and Washington to a deteriorating security situation was inadequate. At the same time, the SMC's dependence on the armed but poorly skilled Libyan February 17 Martyrs' Brigade (February 17) militia members and unarmed, locally contracted Blue Mountain Libya (BML) guards for security support was misplaced.

Although the February 17 militia had proven effective in responding to improvised explosive device (IED) attacks on the Special Mission in April and June 2012, there were some troubling indicators of its reliability in the months and weeks preceding the September attacks. At the time of Ambassador Stevens' visit, February 17 militia members had stopped accompanying Special Mission vehicle movements in protest over salary and working hours.

Post and the Department were well aware of the anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks but at no time were there ever any specific, credible threats against the mission in Benghazi related to the September 11 anniversary. Ambassador Stevens and Benghazi-based DS agents had taken the anniversary into account and decided to hold all meetings on-compound on September 11.

The Board found that Ambassador Stevens made the decision to travel to Benghazi independently of Washington, per standard practice. Timing for his trip was driven in part by commitments in Tripoli, as well as a staffing gap between principal officers in

Benghazi. Plans for the Ambassador's trip provided for minimal close protection security support and were not shared thoroughly with the Embassy's country team, who were not fully aware of planned movements off compound. The Ambassador did not see a direct threat of an attack of this nature and scale on the U.S. Mission in the overall negative trendline of security incidents from spring to summer 2012. His status as the leading U.S. government advocate on Libya policy, and his expertise on Benghazi in particular, caused Washington to give unusual deference to his judgments.

Communication, cooperation, and coordination among Washington, Tripoli, and Benghazi functioned collegially at the working-level but were constrained by a lack of transparency, responsiveness, and leadership at the senior levels. Among various Department bureaus and personnel in the field, there appeared to be very real confusion over who, ultimately, was responsible and empowered to make decisions based on both policy and security considerations.

3. Notwithstanding the proper implementation of security systems and procedures and remarkable heroism shown by American personnel, those systems and the Libyan response fell short in the face of a series of attacks that began with the sudden penetration of the Special Mission compound by dozens of armed attackers.

The Board found the responses by both the BML guards and February 17 to be inadequate. The Board's inquiry found little evidence that the armed February 17 guards offered any meaningful defense

of the SMC, or succeeded in summoning a February 17 militia presence to assist expeditiously.

The Board found the Libyan government's response to be profoundly lacking on the night of the attacks, reflecting both weak capacity and near absence of central government influence and control in Benghazi. The Libyan government did facilitate assistance from a quasi-governmental militia that supported the evacuation of U.S. government personnel to Benghazi airport. The Libyan government also provided a military C-130 aircraft which was used to evacuate remaining U.S. personnel and the bodies of the deceased from Benghazi to Tripoli on September 12.

The Board determined that U.S. personnel on the ground in Benghazi performed with courage and readiness to risk their lives to protect their colleagues, in a near impossible situation. The Board members believe every possible effort was made to rescue and recover Ambassador Stevens and Sean Smith.

The interagency response was timely and appropriate, but there simply was not enough time for armed U.S. military assets to have made a difference.

4. The Board found that intelligence provided no immediate, specific tactical warning of the September 11 attacks. Known gaps existed in the intelligence community's understanding of extremist militias in Libya and the potential threat they posed to U.S. interests, although some threats were known to exist.

5. The Board found that certain senior State Department officials within two bureaus demonstrated a lack of proactive leadership and management ability in their responses to security concerns posed by Special Mission Benghazi, given the deteriorating threat environment and the lack of reliable host government protection. However, the Board did not find reasonable cause to determine that any individual U.S. government employee breached his or her duty.”

B. House Committee Reports⁵

1. “Flashing Red: A Special Report On The Terrorist Attack At Benghazi” Report of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

12/30/2012 – Bipartisan committee

- **Report Title:** [“Flashing Red: A Special Report On The Terrorist Attack At Benghazi”](#)
- “In the report that follows we provide a brief factual overview of the attacks in Benghazi and then discuss our findings and recommendations.”
- **Date of Report:** Dec. 30, 2012
- **Type of Committee:** Bipartisan
- **Pages:** 29
- **Chairman:** Joseph I. Lieberman, [I]
- **Members:** Susan M. Collins, (R) Ranking Member
- **Conclusion From the Report:**

“The deaths of Ambassador Stevens and three other Americans at the hands of terrorists is a tragic reminder that the fight our country is engaged in with Islamist extremists and terrorists is not over. U.S. and Western

⁵ <http://democrats-benghazi.house.gov/previous-investigations>

diplomats, and other personnel operating in the Middle East and other countries where these terrorists use violence to further their extremist agenda and thwart democratic reforms are increasingly at risk.

We hope this report will help contribute to the ongoing discussion that our nation must have about how best to protect the brave men and women who serve our country abroad and how to win this war that will continue for years to come. We owe it to our public servants abroad to protect them as they work to protect us. The government of the U.S. failed tragically to fulfill that responsibility in Benghazi on September 11, 2012. We hope the findings and recommendations we have made in this Special Report will help ensure that such a failure never happens again.”

2. “Interim Progress Report for the Members of the House Republican Conference on the Events Surrounding the September 11, 2012 Terrorist Attacks in Benghazi, Libya” from the House Committee on the Judiciary

4/23/2013 – Heads of other Republican-led committees

- **Report Title:** “Interim Progress Report for the Members of the House Republican Conference on the Events Surrounding the September 11, 2012 Terrorist Attacks in Benghazi, Libya”
- “An ongoing Congressional investigation across five House Committees concerning the events surrounding the September 11, 2012, terrorist attacks on U.S. facilities in Benghazi, Libya has made several determinations to date, ... These preliminary findings illustrate the need for continued examination and oversight by the five House Committees.”
- **Date of Report:** April 23, 2013
- **Type of Committee:** Heads of other Republican-led committees
- **Pages:** 43
- **Chairmen:** Howard P. “Buck” McKeon, (R) Committee on Armed Services; Ed Royce, (R) Committee on Foreign Affairs; Bob Goodlatte, (R) Committee on the Judiciary; Darrell Issa, (R) Committee on Oversight & Government Reform; Mike Rogers, (R) Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

- **Findings From the Report:**

“This progress report reveals a fundamental lack of understanding at the highest levels of the State Department as to the dangers presented in Benghazi, Libya, as well as a concerted attempt to insulate the Department of State from blame following the terrorist attacks. The Committees’ majority staff summarizes findings to date as follows:

Before the Attacks:

- After the U.S.-backed Libyan revolution ended the Gadhafi regime, **the U.S. government did not deploy sufficient U.S. security elements to protect U.S. interests and personnel that remained on the ground.**
- **Senior State Department officials knew that the threat environment in Benghazi was high and that the Benghazi compound was vulnerable and unable to withstand an attack, yet the Department continued to systematically withdraw security personnel.**
- **Repeated requests for additional security were denied at the highest levels of the State Department.** For example, an April 2012 State Department cable bearing Secretary Hillary Clinton’s signature acknowledged then-Ambassador Cretz’s formal request for additional security assets but ordered the withdrawal of security elements to proceed as planned.

- **The attacks were not the result of a failure by the Intelligence Community (IC) to recognize or communicate the threat.** The IC collected considerable information about the threats in the region, and disseminated regular assessments to senior U.S. officials warning of the deteriorating security environment in Benghazi, which included threats to American interests, facilities, and personnel.
- **The President, as Commander-in-Chief, failed to proactively anticipate the significance of September 11 and provide the Department of Defense with the authority to launch offensive operations beyond self-defense.** Defense Department assets were correctly positioned for the general threat across the region, but the assets were not authorized at an alert posture to launch offensive operations beyond self-defense, and were provided no notice to defend diplomatic facilities.

During the Attacks:

- On the evening of September 11, 2012, **U.S. security teams on the ground in Benghazi exhibited extreme bravery** responding to the attacks by al-Qa'ida-affiliated groups against the U.S. mission.
- **Department of Defense officials and military personnel reacted quickly to the attacks in Benghazi.** The effectiveness of their response was hindered on account of U.S. military forces not being properly postured to address the growing threats in northern Africa or to respond to a brief,

high-intensity attack on U.S. personnel or interests across much of Africa.

After the Attacks:

- **The Administration willfully perpetuated a deliberately misleading and incomplete narrative that the attacks evolved from a political demonstration caused by a YouTube video.** U.S. officials on the ground reported – and video evidence confirms – that demonstrations outside the Benghazi Mission did not occur and that the incident began with an armed attack on the facility. Senior Administration officials knowingly minimized the role played by al-Qa’ida-affiliated entities and other associated groups in the attacks, and decided to exclude from the discussion the previous attempts by extremists to attack U.S. persons or facilities in Libya.
- **Administration officials crafted and continued to rely on incomplete and misleading talking points.** Specifically, after a White House Deputies Meeting on Saturday, September 15, 2012, the Administration altered the talking points to remove references to the likely participation of Islamic extremists in the attacks. The Administration also removed references to the threat of extremists linked to al-Qa’ida in Benghazi and eastern Libya, including information about at least five other attacks against foreign interests in Benghazi. Senior State Department officials requested – and the White House approved – that the details of the threats, specifics of the previous attacks, and previous warnings be removed to insulate the Department from criticism that it ignored the threat environment in Benghazi.

- **Evidence rebuts Administration claims that the talking points were modified to protect classified information or to protect an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).** Email exchanges during the interagency process do not reveal any concern with protecting classified information. Additionally, the Bureau itself approved a version of the talking points with significantly more information about the attacks and previous threats than the version that the State Department requested. Thus, the claim that the State Department's edits were made solely to protect that investigation is not credible.
- **The Administration deflected responsibility by blaming the IC for the information it communicated to the public in both the talking points and the subsequent narrative it perpetuated.** Had Administration spokesmen performed even limited due diligence inquiries into the intelligence behind the talking points or requested reports from personnel on the ground, they would have quickly understood that the situation was more complex than the narrative provided by Ambassador Susan Rice and others in the Administration.
- **The Administration's decision to respond to the Benghazi attacks with an FBI investigation, rather than military or other intelligence resources, contributed to the government's lack of candor about the nature of the attack.**

Responding to the attacks with an FBI investigation significantly delayed U.S. access to key witnesses and evidence and undermined the

government's ability to bring those responsible for the attacks to justice in a timely manner."

3. “Benghazi Attacks: Investigative Update Interim Report on the Accountability Review Board” of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

9/16/2013 – Republican-led committee

- **Report Title:** “Benghazi Attacks: Investigative Update Interim Report on the Accountability Review Board”
- “This interim report focuses exclusively on the ARB and its shortcomings. While the Committee presents current observations about the ARB gleaned through its investigation, it has also identified areas for further inquiry. Indeed, many serious questions surrounding Benghazi have gone unanswered. The Committee will continue its investigation wherever the facts lead.”
- **Date of Report:** Sept. 16, 2013
- **Type of Committee:** Republican-led
- **Pages:** 98
- **Chairman:** Darrell Issa, (R)
- **Members:** Department of State: Eric Boswell, Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security; Scott Bultrowicz, Director, Diplomatic Security Service; Elizabeth Dibble, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs; Jeffrey Feltman, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs; Gregory Hicks, Deputy Chief of Mission, Libya; Elizabeth Jones, Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs; Patrick F. Kennedy, Under Secretary of State for

Management; Charlene Lamb, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Programs; Lee Lohman, Executive Director, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs; Raymond Maxwell, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Maghreb Affairs; Brian Papanu, Desk Officer, Libya; William Roebuck, Director, Office of Maghreb Affairs. Accountability Review Board: Thomas R. Pickering, Chairman; Michael G. Mullen, Vice Chairman; Catherine A. Bertini; Richard J. Shinnick; Hugh J. Turner III

- **Conclusion From the Report:**

“The unclassified ARB report begins with a quote from George Santayana’s 1905 book, *Reason in Common Sense*: “Those that cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Notwithstanding this promising start, the gaps in the ARB review and final report identified by the Committee signal that the State Department may very well be doomed to repeat its past mistakes.

In response to a question about Benghazi at a May 13, 2013 press conference, the President pledged to the American people to “find out what happened.” To this day, more than one year after the attacks, not a single person at the State Department has actually been fired or formally held accountable for the attacks in Benghazi. More importantly, those most accountable for the attacks in Benghazi—the terrorists who attacked U.S. facilities and claimed the lives of four Americans—have not been brought to justice.

The gaps in the ARB’s work are particularly troubling because the Obama Administration has repeatedly touted the ARB report as the final word on failures by the State

Department that contributed to the inadequate security posture in Benghazi. The limitations inherent in the ARB's mandate and the weaknesses in the ARB's methodology show that a more thorough investigation is necessary. The Committee will continue to examine the events before, during and after the September 11, 2012 attacks on U.S. diplomatic facilities to properly assign accountability and to make findings that will inform legislative remedies.”

4. “Benghazi: Where is the State Department Accountability?” Report of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs

2/7/2014 – Bipartisan committee; report by Republican Majority Staff

- **Report Title:** “Benghazi: Where is the State Department Accountability?”
- “This report shows a State Department that is not focused on accountability.”
- **Date of Report:** Feb. 7, 2014
- **Type of Committee:** Bipartisan; report by Republican Majority Staff
- **Pages:** 25
- **Chairman:** Rep. Ed Royce, (R)
- **Members:** Majority Staff, House Foreign Affairs Committee
- **Conclusion From the Report:**

“Systemic failures at the State Department during Secretary Clinton’s tenure resulted in a grossly inadequate security posture in Benghazi. These vulnerabilities contributed to the deaths of four Americans, including the first U.S. ambassador killed in the line of duty since 1979. Americans mourned this loss of life. This tactical defeat at the hands of Islamist terrorists has been made worse by President Obama’s

failure to honor his vow to bring the perpetrators to justice.

In order to prevent such attacks in the future, the State Department and other agencies must adapt and improve. The deteriorating security situation in Benghazi was well known, yet nothing was done in response to the warnings from the intelligence community and U.S. personnel on the ground. It may never be known to what extent the President's repeated claims that al-Qaeda was on —the path to defeat|| affected the decision making of senior officials in Washington. Nevertheless, the U.S. government must learn from this abysmal bureaucratic failure.

The Administration has taken some positive steps towards improving embassy security, but much more remains to be done. To this end, the Committee has supported an active legislative agenda to reform and bolster embassy security. One reform that cannot be legislated, however, is an organization's culture. The Committee's oversight work has for good reason stressed the importance of personal accountability within the Department. Without it, no amount of legislation or added funding can make the State Department's men and women overseas safer. Unfortunately, the Department has not demonstrated a commitment to developing a culture of accountability.

The State Department's response stands in stark contrast with recent Defense Department disciplinary actions, which held military commanders accountable for what happened on their watch in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan and elsewhere, State Department personnel increasingly face the kind of threats that our men and women in uniform face. They deserve the high standards of

accountability that make their Defense Department brethren safer in this dangerous world.

As Chairman Royce noted when questioning Under Secretary Kennedy one year after the Benghazi tragedy, not a single State Department employee has missed a paycheck as a result of the Department's failure to adequately protect its people in Benghazi. While four employees were temporarily suspended with pay, they were ultimately reassigned to new positions within the Department. The result of this reshuffling is that no one has been held responsible in a meaningful way for the grossly inadequate security in Benghazi.

The Committee will continue pressing for improvements to U.S. diplomatic security overseas, including doing what it can to promote a culture of accountability. Reforming the Accountability Review Board process – by not only increasing its independence, but also allowing it to recommend dismissals – is central to moving in this important direction.

Accountability, of course, starts at the top. Unfortunately, leadership from the Administration has been sorely missing. While the Committee will continue to press for accountability, it is incumbent upon President Obama and Secretary Kerry to recognize the failures of senior officials and hold them accountable. Otherwise, another Benghazi scenario, in which U.S. personnel are left vulnerable by irresponsible security decision making in Washington, is inevitable.”

5. “Majority Interim Report: Benghazi Investigation Update” of the House Committee on Armed Services

2/10/2014 – Republican-led committee

- **Report Title:** “Majority Interim Report: Benghazi Investigation Update”
- “This report should be considered one component of continuing comprehensive Benghazi- related oversight underway in the U.S. House of Representatives.”
- **Date of Report:** Feb. 10, 2014
- **Type of Committee:** Republican-led
- **Pages:** 30
- **Chairman:** Howard P. “Buck” McKeon, (R)
- **Members:** Vice Chairman Mac Thornberry; Rep. Martha Roby (R) (who was the chairman of the Oversight and Investigations subcommittee until December 2013), and the five majority members of that subcommittee.
- **Findings From the Report:**

“I. In assessing military posture in anticipation of the September 11 anniversary, White House officials failed to comprehend or ignored the dramatically deteriorating security situation in Libya and the growing threat to U.S. interests in the region. Official public statements seem to have exaggerated the extent and rigor of the security assessment conducted at the time.

II. U.S. personnel in Benghazi were woefully vulnerable in September 2012 because a.) the administration did not direct a change in military force posture, b.) there was no intelligence of a specific “imminent” threat in Libya, and c.) the Department of State, which has primary responsibility for diplomatic security, favored a reduction of Department of Defense security personnel in Libya before the attack.

III. Defense Department officials believed nearly from the outset of violence in Benghazi that it was a terrorist attack rather than a protest gone awry, and the President subsequently permitted the military to respond with minimal direction.

IV. The U.S. military’s response to the Benghazi attack was severely degraded because of the location and readiness posture of U.S. forces, and because of lack of clarity about how the terrorist action was unfolding. However, given the uncertainty about the prospective length and scope of the attack, military commanders did not take all possible steps to prepare for a more extended operation.

V. There was no “stand down” order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi. However, because official reviews after the attack were not sufficiently comprehensive, there was confusion about the roles and responsibilities of these individuals.

VI. The Department of Defense is working to correct many weaknesses revealed by the Benghazi attack, but the global security situation is still deteriorating and military resources continue to decline.”

6. “Investigative Report on the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012” from the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

11/21/2014 – Republican-led committee

- **Title of Report:** “Investigative Report on the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012”
- “The nearly two-year investigation focused on the activities of the Intelligence Community (‘IC’) before, during, and after the attacks.”
- **Date of Report:** Nov. 21, 2014
- **Type of Committee:** Republican-led
- **Pages:** 36
- **Chairman:** Mike Rogers, (R)
- **Members:** Ranking Member C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, (D)
- **Conclusion From the Report:**

“This report is the result of nearly two years of intensive investigation. The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence reviewed thousands of pages of intelligence assessments, cables, notes, and emails; held 20 Committee events and hearings; and conducted detailed interviews with senior intelligence officials and eyewitnesses to the attacks, including eight security

personnel on the ground in Benghazi that night. Members and Staff spent thousands of hours intensively looking at every aspect of the tragedy. The report is therefore meant to serve as the definitive House statement on the Intelligence Community's activities before, during and after the tragic events that caused the deaths of four brave Americans. Despite the highly sensitive nature of these activities, the report has endeavored to make the facts and conclusions within this report widely and publicly available so that the American public can separate actual fact from rumor and unsupported innuendo. Only with a full accounting of the facts can we ensure that tragedies like this one never happen again.”

7. “Final Report of the Select Committee on the events surrounding the 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi: House of Representatives together with additional and Minority reviews” of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

12/7/2016 – Republican-led, bipartisan committee

- “On May 8, 2014, the House of Representatives adopted H. Res. 567, establishing the Select Committee on Benghazi.”⁶
- **Report Title:** “Final Report of the Select Committee on the events surrounding the 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi: House of Representatives together with additional and Minority reviews”
- **Date of Report:** Dec. 7, 2016
- **Type of Committee:** Republican-led, bipartisan; Committee formed pursuant to H. Res. 567
- **Pages:** 997
- **Chairman:** Trey Gowdy, (R)
- **Members:** Lynn Westmoreland, (R); Jim Jordan, (R); Peter Roskam, (R); Mike Pompeo, (R); Martha Roby, (R); Susan Brooks, (R); Elijah E. Cummings, (D) Ranking Member; Adam Smith, (D); Adam

⁶ Select Committee on Benghazi Minority Site, “Benghazi on the Record: Asked and Answered,” Accessed 2/18/2017

Schiff, (D); Linda Sanchez, (D); Tammy Duckworth, (D)

- **Conclusion From the Report:**

“In the end, the administration’s efforts to impede the investigation succeeded, but only in part. The minority members’ and their staff’s efforts to impede the investigation succeeded also, but again only in part. And although we answered many questions, we could not do so completely. What we did find was a tragic failure of leadership—in the run up to the attack and the night of—and an administration that, so blinded by politics and its desire to win an election, disregarded a basic duty of government: *Tell the people the truth*. And for those reasons Benghazi is, and always will be, an American tragedy.”

IV. No Conclusion

Given the emotions and finger pointing that Benghazi has brought out in so many people, we have decided that any attempt to interpret or categorize the reports, or even parts of them, might compromise our primary goal of nonpartisanship. Therefore, we offer no conclusion or even commentary on any parts of the reports, but we have endeavored to present them accurately.

We hope the information in this report helps you see the perspectives of how different political bodies reported on what happened in Benghazi on Sept. 11 and 12, 2012, and in the aftermath.

Hopefully the information herein will assist you in deciding whether Benghazi was a cover-up by the Left, the Right's red herring – or something else or in between.