



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 19, 2015

Obama Anti-terrorism “Jobs for Jihadists” Concept Is a Marxist Idea

“I was going to behead you, but I have to be at work in five minutes.”

U.S. Department of State deputy spokesman Marie Harf certainly did a job on her reputation this Monday while offering an analysis that critics have mockingly dismissed as a jobs-for-jihadists solution to terrorism. While a guest on *Hardball* with Chris Matthews, Harf was defending the Obama administration’s reaction to the Islamic State jihadists and [said](#) that while the United States and her allies were destroying many of them, “We cannot win this war by killing them.... We need ... in the medium and longer-term to go after the root causes that lead people to join these groups, whether it’s lack of opportunity for jobs, whether...” At this point liberal host Matthews interrupted, saying, “We’re not going to be able to stop that in our lifetimes or 50 lifetimes; there’s always going to be poor people.”



Since then the mockery has come fast and furious. *Powerline*’s Scott Johnson [opined](#), “Jobs programs don’t quite cut it when you’re in the 72 virgins business.” *National Review*’s Ian Tuttle piled on, saying that Harf “apparently fell back on government work after losing out on *Saturday Night Live*’s ‘Weekend Update’ anchor job.” And *American Thinker*’s Thomas Lifson also weighed in, [writing](#):

Steven Hayward of [Powerline](#) suggests a new term be put into play, Harfing. Although he doesn’t define it precisely, I would suggest: “Ignoring the obvious in an effort to deflect attention away from an inconvenient truth.”

There’s a whole lotta Harfing going on in the era of Obama.

But the Mockery of the Week award has to go to the *Free Beacon*’s Sonny Bunch (hat tip: Thomas Lifson), who provides [examples](#) of how Harf’s counsel could have been invaluable before great historical conflicts. Here’s one offering:

Marc Antony, after discussing a forthcoming battle with Marie Harf: “Cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of equitable employment opportunities.”

Of course, rhetorically, an ounce of mockery is worth a gallon of analysis. And given that Obama is an acolyte of Saul “the Red” Alinsky — who recommended mockery, [writing](#), “‘Ridicule is man’s most potent weapon.’ ... It’s irrational. It’s infuriating” — turnabout is fair play. Yet there’s a deeper issue



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 19, 2015

here that should be addressed.

Harf [defended](#) the administration position yesterday on *The Situation Room* with Wolf Blitzer, criticizing her detractors as unable to grasp nuance and being guilty of a “gross oversimplification.” While military action may sometimes be necessary she said, “Longer term, we have to look at how we combat the conditions that can lead people to turn to extremism.” This actually makes sense. The question is: Does the administration — and moderns in general — have any idea what these root-cause conditions are?

Poverty has long been thought an explanation for evil behavior, and it certainly tells us why *Les Misérables’* Jean Valjean stole a loaf of bread. But does it explain belief-motivated aggression that brings no monetary or material gain?

It should be noted here that notorious terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden was worth \$125 million. Jihadist breeding ground Saudi Arabia is one of the world’s richest countries, ranking in the top 10 in GDP per capita according to the World Bank. And the *Charlie Hebdo* and 9/11 terrorists, like all jihadists living in Western nations (such as those traveling to join ISIS), could enjoy a Western lifestyle; mud huts were not their lot. In fact, while there may be exceptions, I don’t know of a “poor” modern terrorist. And jihad? Like all warfare it’s expensive; it’s not generally a path to enrichment.

Now, Harf and her fellow travelers have something to say, and it’s important to understand it better than they explain it. Put simply, they believe that people won’t feel desperate and look for meaning in destructive movements if they’re materially secure and comfortable. They won’t be so willing to die for something if they have something to live for. Give them jobs, reduce economic inequality, and terrorism’s fertile soil is salted.

This sounds familiar. Under Marxist doctrine, “communism” is the final stage of human development, where there is *no government* or law and people live harmoniously with one another. Karl Marx fancied this was achievable because he believed the root of all problems was *economic inequality*. Eliminate that, and man’s woes go the way of the dodo.

This itself is simplistic, though. It overlooks that we’re not merely economic beings; we also have moral and spiritual dimensions. As Pope Benedict XVI [wrote](#) critiquing Marx:

He forgot that man always remains man. He forgot man and he forgot man’s freedom. He forgot that freedom always remains also freedom for evil. He thought that once the economy had been put right, everything would automatically be put right. His real error is materialism: man, in fact, is not merely the product of economic conditions, and it is not possible to redeem him purely from the outside by creating a favourable economic environment.

The reason Harf prescribes the same medicine as Marx is not that she’s also a “Marxist” (per se), although many moderns are unknowingly influenced by the ideology. It’s that they’re both *materialists*. With nothing beyond the material world real to them, they place inordinate emphasis on the things of that world. They forget, as Jesus said, “Man shall not live by bread alone.” And he doesn’t.

So what these moderns are doing is mirroring, which is when you ascribe your motivations and priorities to others. Their materialistic “religion” satisfies them, so surely it would soothe the savage jihadist breast as well.

Also forgotten is that “an idle mind is the Devil’s playground.” The free time a prosperous lifestyle affords can be used, congruent with the ancient Greek concept of “leisure,” for higher pursuits. But it also can be filled with lower ones. If people have to toil sun-up to sunset just to eke out a subsistence



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 19, 2015

living, will they have time and energy to engage in, or even seriously contemplate, jihad?

In fact, it's much as with the man who wouldn't waste away countless hours watching porn if he didn't have free time and the money to buy a computer. Saudi and other Islamic sources can only fund propaganda-disgorging madrasahs (Muslim schools) and other jihadist endeavors because they have wealth. A thoroughly destitute terrorist movement isn't at all a movement, but a myth.

We live in the most prosperous times ever known to man. And if few jihadists suffer economic privation, poverty cannot be the root cause of terrorism. It's more likely the root cause is an "inconvenient truth," something few moderns dare mention or even contemplate.



Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative, non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



[Subscribe](#)

What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.