



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on January 24, 2013

Clinton Testimony on Benghazi Leaves Real Questions Unanswered

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton came under fire during and after her Jan. 23 congressional testimony on the scandal that has become known as Benghaziagate, with Republican lawmakers asking some tough questions but getting little in the way of real answers. Indeed, the most serious concerns about the deadly attack on U.S. personnel in Libya remain as unaddressed today as they were before Clinton's testimony, which was supposed to come last month but was delayed due to illness that many pundits noted was suspiciously well timed.



Instead of telling Congress why the administration [lied about the terror attack for days](#), falsely claiming that it was a "protest" gone awry, for example, Clinton claimed it did not matter anymore, urging everyone to just move on. Analysts and officials have also suggested the administration was [running guns and heavy weapons to Islamic terrorists](#) in Syria out of Benghazi, too, but despite the opportunity to get answers during the House and Senate committee hearings, it remains unclear what was going on at the U.S. mission there.

While accepting responsibility for the deadly attacks that claimed the lives of U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans, Clinton was continually trying to deflect attention from the real scandals — the days of official lies after the assault, the allegations of Obama gun-running to Islamist "rebels" in Syria, support for al-Qaeda forces during the Libyan "revolution," and more. Even with the establishment press running cover for Clinton and the administration, however, criticism about her testimony and Benghaziagate more broadly continues to boil.

Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) was among the few who sought serious answers from Clinton, but he made little progress. "Is the U.S. involved in any procuring of weapons, transfer of weapons, buying, selling, any how transferring weapons to Turkey out of Libya?" the liberty-minded senator asked her, echoing well-founded suspicions that have been raised by [top American military officials](#), analysts, [journalists](#), [Middle Eastern security officials](#), and others.

Clinton acted surprised — almost as if she did not realize Sen. Paul was referring to the administration's well-known and well-documented scheme to arm Islamist "rebels" in Syria via the Islamist Turkish government, similar to Obama's lawless schemes in Libya. "To Turkey?" asked Clinton incredulously, face contorted. "I will have to take that question for the record; nobody's ever raised that with me." She later backtracked slightly, saying the question would have to be raised with "the agency" that ran the annex in Benghazi — presumably she was referring to the [Central Intelligence Agency \(CIA\)](#).

Sen. Paul then continued, slamming Clinton for allowing U.S. personnel to be placed virtually unprotected in such a dangerous city recently ravaged by Obama's war — an [unconstitutional war](#) that



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[unleashed and empowered al-Qaeda forces and other Islamic extremists to run wild](#). “Had I been president at the time and I found that you did not read the cables from Benghazi ... I would have relieved you of your post,” the senator said in one of his most widely quoted remarks. “It was a failure of leadership not to be involved. It was a failure of leadership not to know these things.”

Sen. Paul later appeared on Sean Hannity’s Fox News show, where he again raised questions about whether the Obama administration was unlawfully running guns to Islamic extremists in the region for nefarious purposes. Even the establishment press has [admitted](#) that U.S. government-funded arms are going to Islamic extremists in Syria, [similar to the situation in Libya](#), though how deeply involved the post in Benghazi was in the plot remains unclear. Credible evidence indicates the mission there was also involved in [recruiting jihadists](#) for the establishment-backed “revolution” in Syria supported by al-Qaeda.

Another Republican senator who tried to get some real answers also had an opportunity to do so, but as with Sen. Paul’s questions, serious answers were not forthcoming. “We were misled that there were supposedly protests and something sprang out of that, an assault sprang out of that and that was easily ascertained that that was not the fact,” said Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) during the hearing regarding the false claims parroted by top Obama officials for days after the tragedy, long after the White House knew the truth. “The American people could have known that within days.”

Clinton responded by flailing her arms and screaming with feigned disgust. “What difference, at this point, does it make?” she asked, suggesting that the official lies spewed by top administration officials throughout the increasingly discredited establishment press were somehow irrelevant because four Americans were killed. “I was pretty occupied about keeping our people safe, doing what needed to be done.... I wasn’t involved in the talking points process.” Establishment media outlets ran with the quote, suggesting that White House lies really do not matter and that the freshman GOP senator was out of line for asking real questions.

Interviewed later by CNN, however, Sen. Johnson clearly was not buying the bogus attempt to deflect attention from the issues. “The American people also have the right to be told the truth,” Sen. Johnson [explained](#). “They have an expectation that this administration, this president will be honest with them. And so it makes a big deal of difference. I’ll tell you what, I was surprised by Secretary Clinton’s reaction to that.” Sen. Johnson also [told](#) Buzzfeed after the hearing that he thought Clinton’s apparently phony display of emotion when discussing the dead Americans was a calculated “trump card to get out of the questions.”

Democrats, meanwhile, spent their time fawning over the secretary. “Hillary spent the day getting a love-fest from fellow Democrats in both Houses, instead of an accountability check,” law enforcement advocate Andy Ramirez, who has testified on security-related issues before Congress on numerous occasions and briefs congressional leaders, told *The New American*, adding that Clinton was not even sworn in before testifying. “So yesterday’s hearings were nothing more than media sound bites.”

There were, however, some interesting developments. Contradicting previous Obama talking points about al-Qaeda being on the run, Clinton admitted that was not the case, though she omitted the administration’s massive role in bringing about the current state of affairs. “The Arab Spring has ushered in a time when al-Qaeda is on the rise,” she admitted without pointing out the fact that the [U.S. government armed, trained, and supported al-Qaeda leaders in both Libya and Syria](#). “The world in many ways is even more dangerous because we lack a central command [in al-Qaeda] and have instead these nodes that are scattered throughout North Africa and other places.”



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Also suggested earlier by some lawmakers was that political gimmicks by Obama — [not wanting a lot of security at the U.S. mission because people would realize the war had turned Libya into a ticking time bomb ruled by warlords and terrorists](#) — were at least partly responsible for the attack. Clinton’s testimony, however, revealed little new information about [why there was no proper security in place at the post](#), which was inaccurately characterized as a “consulate” for months by the establishment press.

Unwittingly, perhaps, Clinton also offered some insight into the utter failure of American foreign policy and its disastrous “blowback,” or the unintended and unforeseen consequences that result from it. “Sitting here today, we probably have at least 20 other posts that are under a serious threat environment as I speak to you,” she told the Senate committee, offering further evidence that the U.S. foreign policy of lawlessly propping up dictators and terrorists before turning against them continues to create new and potentially deadly enemies worldwide. “We operate in places where we know that our facilities are being surveilled for potential attacks, where we have a steady intel stream of plotting.”

Still, Clinton claimed that more of the same was needed. “We’ve come a long way in the past four years, and we cannot afford to retreat now,” she told the Senate committee, echoing recent statements by Obama and other administration officials about the alleged need to continue spending or borrowing to police the world. “When America is absent, especially from unstable environments, there are consequences. Extremism takes root, our interests suffer, our security at home is threatened.”

In reality, even the former head of the CIA has [explained that the deadly attacks in Libya were probably caused by the Obama administration’s intervention there](#), which saw the U.S. government supporting known terrorist leaders in the fight against its former terror-war ally, dictator Moammar Gadhafi. The blowback from Obama’s unconstitutional war on Libya — not only did the administration not ask Congress, it [specifically told lawmakers that Obama would ignore them](#) — continues to claim lives throughout the region. The [conflict raging in Mali, for instance, is being fought with weapons from the Libyan war](#).

While the establishment press and Democrats were busy celebrating Clinton’s testimony as a vindication of the Obama administration, the fact remains that Americans are no closer to knowing the truth about what happened or what was happening in Benghazi than before the hearings. Instead, there are [numerous, serious questions that remain unanswered](#). The few lonely voices on Capitol Hill that actually asked the real questions, however, were celebrated by Americans interested in knowing what their government is doing in their name and with their money.

Photo of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Jan. 23: AP Images

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