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Obama Official Says No Evidence Gitmo Detainee Behind Benghazi Attack

By [Adam Serwer \(/authors/adam-serwer\)](#) | Thu Sep. 20, 2012 5:02 PM EDT

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Christopher Stevens, the US Ambassador to Libya, was killed in Benghazi earlier this month.

was transferred into Libyan custody in 2007. His [detention file \(http://wikileaks.org/gitmo/prisoner/557.html#\)](#) describes him as a former member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and a "probable member of al Qaeda."

But a [US national security official tells *Mother Jones* that "that report is wrong, there's no intelligence suggesting that he was leading the attack on the consulate that evening."](#) The official insisted there was no evidence that Qumu "directed, coordinated, or planned" the attack.

The administration has come under fire, [particularly from Republicans](#)

([http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/19/usa-libya-consulate-](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/19/usa-libya-consulate-idUSL1E8KJ6PT20120919?type=marketsNews)

[idUSL1E8KJ6PT20120919?type=marketsNews](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/19/usa-libya-consulate-idUSL1E8KJ6PT20120919?type=marketsNews)), for saying it does not yet have evidence the attack on the US consulate, which occurred on the eleventh anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, was preplanned. Testifying before the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee yesterday, Matthew G. Olsen, the head of the National Counterterrorism Center, said that "a number of different elements are thought to be involved in this attack, including individuals involved in militant groups that are prominent in the Benghazi area," but that "there was no specific intelligence regarding an imminent attack prior to September 11th on our post in Benghazi."

Whether or not there was intelligence warning of an imminent attack, Republicans have balked at the administration's statements saying the attack [may not have been planned in advance \(http://www.wtma.com/rssItem.asp?feedid=112&itemid=29909337\)](#), in part because Libyan officials have said local security forces [may have been involved \(http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57512847/official-libyan-insiders-may-have-aided-assault/\)](#).

During the hearing, Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) expressed skepticism at the

idea the attack was not premeditated. "I just don't think people come to protests with [rocket-propelled grenades] and other heavy weapons," Collins said.

Former Bush-era Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld [tweeted](https://twitter.com/RumsfeldOffice/status/248764921574195201) (https://twitter.com/RumsfeldOffice/status/248764921574195201) the Fox News article Thursday, calling it "A sad reminder of why Guantanamo was - and remains - necessary to keep terrorists from killing Americans."

The extent to which intelligence or security failures lead to the ambush at the embassy is still unclear, but Foreign Policy's Josh Rogin [reports](http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/09/19/state_department_setting_up_independent_panel_to_investigate_benghazi_attack) (http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/09/19/state_department_setting_up_independent_panel_to_investigate_benghazi_attack) that the State Department will convene a bipartisan panel to investigate both the Libya attack and attacks on US embassies in Egypt and Yemen.

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Pummell · 2 years ago

Sufyan Bin Qumu - was released to Libyan authorities in 2007. Just an FYI. Seems like there is still a lot we don't know.

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JNagarya · 2 years ago

There is obviously much we don't know about the attack.

But there is one thing we do know: the FOX sewer is not in the news business.

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Clinton50 → JNagarya · 2 years ago

You are very right on that

FOX news is the new Republican headquarters.

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jjvwv → Clinton50 · 2 years ago

And MSNBC and Mother Jones are the new DNC. Try to be well rounded enough in your news facts to at least realize that they are both one sided at times.

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2007, now who was President in 2007? Maybe they should get the facts before they run with a story. Oh sorry, it's fox news where facts never get in the way of propaganda.

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Hasn't Fox news been renamed: Now know as Bulls#!t Mountain:-)

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george w bush was president then

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