

Terror hidden in plain sight, – target: American children

Target: Innocent Children

Events surrounding the July 2016 coup in Turkey befuddle onlookers.[1] In its wake, thousands of political enemies to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan were arrested or purged, and public sector employees were prevented from exiting the country. Erdogan opportunistically declared a state of emergency, thereby facilitating heavy-handed authoritarian rule.[2]

Straightaway Erdogan fingered Fethullah Gülen[3] as the coup's mastermind. At the time, Gülen's followers held important positions within judicial, military, and political spheres.[4] Called the "Parallel State" by President Erdogan, the Gülen (Hiznet) Movement[5] has spurred controversy for years. Some even credit Gülen with "running Turkey" from the Poconos.

An Internet web cam preacher, this self-proclaimed "living prophet" is said by many to be a moderate-progressive advocate for tolerance and interfaith dialogue, yet Erdogan alleges Gülen orchestrated the coup from self-imposed exile within the guarded, gated compound of a small Pennsylvania town in the Poconos Mountains.

Fetullah Gülen: Recluse Humanitarian and Scapegoat, or Radical Revolutionary?

Ostensibly to fight "poverty, disunity, and ignorance" under leadership of their esteemed imam, several hundreds of followers live with Gülen at the Golden Generation Worship and Retreat Center in the Poconos. While advocates laud Gülen as a charismatic cleric, scholar, and humanitarian, others label the imam and his five million devotees a "sect" or "cult."

United by faith, Gülen and Erdogan were one-time allies—this,

during the rise of Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP). After assuming power (2002), Erdogan protected Gülen's opaque businesses, but no longer. Today the two luminaries purportedly disdain one another. Since 2013, when Erdogan closed Gülen's tutoring centers, the Turkish government has scapegoated the movement for almost every tragedy, failure, and/or conflict in Turkey.

In the mean time, Foreign Policy magazine distinguished Gülen as the world's Top Public Intellectual (2008); thereafter, he received the New York-based EastWest Institute's Peace Award (2011). In 2013, Gülen made it onto the TIME 100 List of the most influential people in the world. He was awarded the Gandhi-KingIkeda Award for peace (2015), has held court with the Pope, is praised by Bill Clinton, heartily endorsed by the CIA, and unquestioned by state and local school boards.[6] What's not to like?

Here's the rub. Countless observers, including the FBI, allege that Gülen's "peace movement" needs to be taken seriously as a "radical threat." Among America's top experts on Turkey and the Middle East former CIA agent Graham Fuller takes exception. With Fuller's endorsement, Fethullah Gülen gained access to our country, purportedly for needed healthcare. When asked by Erodgen to return Gülen to Turkey, Fuller responded, "no," and President Obama agreed. Despite controversy associated with his namesake movement, Gülen had been awarded extended visa status.

Revolution Hidden in Plain Sight

The FBI determined Fethullah Gülen to be a "radical Islamist." The network is outlawed in Russia and Uzbekistan, and it's under investigation in the Netherlands. Yet friends of Gülen in Obama's White House, the CIA, and Clinton's State Department prevented the FBI from indicting and deporting Gülen.

This Turkey-indicted, exiled imam is credited with establishing a lucrative network of charter schools—by definition, deregulated, unaccountable, privately managed public schools that are partially funded by American taxpayers. Incredibly, Texans eschew Common Core, but nonetheless welcome fifty-two of Gülen's madrasas. Ohio welcomes seventeen.

Critics contend that H-1B visas were designed for companies to employ highly skilled, temporary foreign workers in biotechnology, chemistry, engineering, and other specialized fields. In reality, no one applies for more H-1B visas than Fethullah Gülen, who's bringing in large (and growing) numbers of Turkish teachers, K-12. The object, many contend, is to "force feed" American children "radical Islamic" educational programs and incentives.

Despite alleged immigration fraud—not to mention FBI raids, possible scandal involving a national Internet program, bribes, and kickbacks—some 155 Gülen charter schools in twenty-five states (and counting) cost American taxpayers about \$150 million each year; plus, no deportations, nor arrests, have ensued. Sadly, this anomaly is in tenor with Brennan's CIA, which openly supports public school Islamic indoctrination, as fundamentally developed by the George Soros-supported Center for American Progress and by Fethullah Gülen himself.[7]

Follow the Money Beyond Education

Gülen aims to reach all power centers. In Turkey, Gülen's reach extended to his own newspapers, television stations, and banks. Worldwide, Gülen runs thousands of secular educational institutions, hospitals, dialogue centers, and relief programs. Impressively, one thousand Gülen schools in 180 countries educate over sixty thousand students (with thirty thousand on waiting lists). In Turkey, Gülen called his network of private schools/ tutoring and dormitories "houses

of light.” The movement is known for violence abroad, yet Gülen Charter Schools in the United States are effectively disguised by similarly nondescript names—e.g., Concept, Horizon Science Academy, Paragon, Sonoran, LISA Academy, and Magnolia.

Gülen believes it’s sinful not to seek ways to acquire wealth.[8] Problem is, the source of his immense wealth is unclear. Partially supported by moneyed foundations (i.e., Gates, Dell, Walmart), Gülen Charter Schools naturally invite corruption and crony capitalism. American taxpayers likewise support salaries of Turkish teachers to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars. Disturbingly, their inflated incomes are skimmed twenty to forty percent. Kickbacks—i.e., mandated “tithes”—serve non-educational agendas abroad. Ostensibly, revolutionary interests have benefitted handsomely from the Gülen windfall.

Hijacking the Charter School Movement

Some contend that the charter school network is key to cherry picking underprivileged, and therefore easily molded, children for the express purpose of radicalization. So why would an exiled revolutionary imam be allowed to educate American school children at taxpayers’ expense? Why do overly compensated teachers from Turkey work without teaching licenses in public charter schools? And why, in some cases, are Turks imported into the States to teach (of all things) English?

One reason is that Newsweek voted two Harmony Schools among America’s Top Ten. American educators today tend to eliminate classroom competition in the name of egalitarianism. Deserving or not, all students get awards. In contrast, Gülen’s schools foster healthy competition for boys and girls alike. This policy appeals to ambitious parents who, to their credit, value healthy competition and measurable academic achievement.

Add to that Gülen's emphasis on STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math). Impressive Gülen initiated Science Fairs stair-step the profile of the Hizmet movement; however, it's claimed, students merely showcase projects that adults craft.

Thirdly, practice of hands-on, guided discovery methodology inspires students, whose summer studies take them to the exotic shores of Turkey to experience Turkish nationalism and identity. Presently, a Congressional Investigation is underway on the ethics of public servants courted by the movement who enjoy similarly choice trips.

Empowered through Intimidation

Against recommendations of legal counsel, a specially convened internal committee, and district residents, the Islamic Cultural Association in Michigan benefitted from a quietly negotiated, no-bid, below-market sale of valuable Farmington Public Schools property. Why? Intimidation prompted the sale (Ann Arbor, MI, 10 August 2012).

Worthy of a Closer Look [9]

When even a hint of malfeasance, as demonstrated above, shadows the education of American school children, a closer look is warranted.[10] Risk-taking documentary filmmaker, award-winning producer/director, and attorney Mark S. Hall apparently agrees. His recently released, feature-length documentary film, Killing Ed (2016), takes an in-depth, first-hand look at the Gülen Movement.[11] Too much is at stake to yawn in the face of anomalies associated with Fethullah Gülen and his furtive enterprises. Our kids deserve better.

© 2016 Debra Rae – All Rights Reserved

Footnotes:

1. Meira Svirsky and William Reed. "Did Erdogan Stage the

Coup?" The Clarion Project: Challenging Extremism; Promoting Dialogue Wednesday, July 20, 2016. (Accessed 20 July 2016)

2. According to a May poll of the Gezici Research Company, close to 1 in 5 Turks support the Islamic State, and over 23 percent are sympathizers. Furthermore, 60 percent of Turkey's Syrian asylum seekers, fleeing Syrian head of state Bashar al-Assad, view ISIS as a sort of savior.

3. Related:

- * Fethullah Gülen comments on rumors about the coup attempt in Turkey

- * Mr. Gülen calls for an international investigation of coup attempt in Turkey

- * Fethullah Gülen: No return from democracy (Remarks in 1994 & 2016)

- * Fethullah Gulen issued the following statement on recent developments in Turkey

- * Who is Fethullah Gulen, the man blamed for coup attempt in Turkey?

- * Fethullah Gülen: Turkey coup may have been 'staged' by Erdogan regime

- * Turkey Coup Attempt: Who is Fethullah Gülen, The Cleric Being Accused Of Orchestrating The Turmoil?

- * Dialogue Platform's Statement on Developments in Turkey

- * Turkey Coup: Who Is Fethullah Gulen and Is He To Blame?

4. When the Turkish president demanded extradition of Gülen, President Erdogan was accused of using the failed coup attempt to launch a far-reaching purge of his opponent, whom Secretary of State John Kerry characterized as a "peaceful" Muslim. (Turkish Minute, Tuesday, 19 July 2016).

5. In research paper entitled Fethullah Gülen and His Liberal Turkish Islam Movement (2000) (MERIA Journal. V4, No:4), Aras and Caha conclude that, Gülen's ideas are primarily drawn from Islamic sources to inspire a powerful civic/social movement, called Hizmet (popularly known as the Gülen movement). A Turkish word, Hizmet is derived from the Arabic-Persian word, Kihdmat, meaning "service."

6. <http://hizmetmovement.blogspot.com> (Accessed 20 July 2016)

7. <https://www.americanprogress.org> (Accessed 20 July 2016)
8. Turkey Pulse
9. Diane Kepus. "Danger: Gülen Charter Schools and the Fethullah Gülen Movement," Parts 1 & 2, NewsWithViews, May 21 & June 4, 2016.
10. Debra Rae. "Talking Turkey: Gülen Charter Schools in America," TRUTHTalk Beyond the Sound Bite with Shahram Hadian, 2 August 2016. <http://tobtr.com/8949099> [Access 2 August 2016, 3 PM (PT)/ 6PM (ET) & thereafter in the Archives]
11. <http://killinged.com> (Accessed 20 July 2016).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2d8piSWX3kg> (Accessed 20 July 2016). Further information on the Gülen Movement and its Schools:
 - Fethullah Gülen Historical Timeline by Prof. Joshua Hendrick
 - Fethullah Gülen Movement (AFPC World Almanac of Islamism)
 - Gülen Charter Schools Website (Anti-Gülen)
 - Fethullah Gülen's Official Website
 - Harmony Public Schools (Texas)
 - Concept Schools (Ohio)
 - Magnolia Schools (California)