

Moderate Islamic Jihadists: What's Wrong With That Phrase?

As the administration contemplates launching an itty-bitty, teeny-weeny cruise missile strike, a “change the momentum of the ground” blitz or grabbing the Russian lifeline, it’s worth reading this little window into its analysis. Here’s a key sentence from an *NBC News* report on the extremist elements amongst the rebels:

“Most of the groups battling against Assad are composed of Islamist fighters, but only a small minority could accurately be characterized as extremist,” a U.S. official told *NBC News*, speaking on background.

Ah yes, the mythical moderate Islamist jihadist. Paging Andrew McCarthy. His piece three days ago was spot-on:

“Even worse, the Obama Left and the GOP’s McCain wing are applying Washington’s lunatic definition of ‘moderate.’ By this thinking, the Islamic *ummah* is divided into two camps: an al-Qaeda fringe in one, and in the other the teeming millions of ‘moderate,’ tolerant, peace-loving ‘democracy’ activists. In this fantasy, the Muslim Brotherhood—whose name the Beltway strains to avoid uttering in discussions of Syria—is moderate; and never you mind the bloody catastrophe the Brothers have wrought in nearby Egypt over the last few weeks and months.

“In truth, the Brotherhood is an implacably Islamic-supremacist organization that is ‘moderate’ only by comparison with al-Qaeda, and, even then, only if we are talking about al-Qaeda’s methodology of full-time savagery—the Brothers are part-timers who, unlike al-Qaeda, think violent jihad is just one item on the sharia-installation menu. As far as ideology

goes—i.e., the imperative that sharia be installed—the two are on exactly the same page. If anything, the Brotherhood's influence over the 'oppositionists' is even greater than al-Qaeda's. The Brothers are the antithesis of moderate. They are anti-American (though they'll happily take our help before using it against us), anti-democratic (though they'll happily hold popular elections in Muslim-majority countries), and rabidly anti-Semitic."

Exactly right. And now the administration is admitting it is counting Islamist fighters amongst the allegedly friendly majority of so-called moderate rebels. This fact should be broadcast far and wide. A "moderate" majority fighting force exists only in the administration's fondest ideological dreams.