

DOJ THINKS RELEASING OMAR MATEEN'S ISIS ALLEGIANCE CLAIMS IT RELEASED LAST WEEK WILL REVICTIMIZE THE VICTIMS

Yesterday, NPR reported that people investigating the Orlando mass shootings increasingly believe his attack may have had nothing to do with ISIS.

In fact, intelligence officials and investigators say they're "becoming increasingly convinced that the motive for this attack had very little – or maybe nothing – to do with ISIS."

Speaking on Weekend Edition Saturday, Dina says that al-Qaida and ISIS-inspired attacks tend to follow a different pattern. She explains:

"We know that during the attack the gunman posted messages on Facebook saying he was doing this on behalf of ISIS. But officials have yet to find any of the precursors usually associated with radicalization. They've interviewed dozens of people who either knew him or had contact with Mateen.

"And they say that they've yet to find any indication that he became noticeably more religious, which is one of the indicators of radicalization. He still was going to the same mosque. The way he dressed didn't change. His relationship with his family didn't change in

any way. And these are all typically warning signs that parents and friends and educators are told to look for if they're worried that someone they're close to is radicalizing."

She adds "this isn't science," but so far the signs of radicalization aren't there, which has led investigators to wonder whether the 29-year-old invoked the name of ISIS to garner more publicity for his deadly attack.

I've been suggesting not only that Mateen was likely motivated for other reasons – but that FBI likely missed those cues because they were evaluating him for one and only one kind of threat, an Islamic terrorist rather than an angry violent man threat.

[I]t seems that when a Muslim guy invents a terrorist tie explicitly saying he wants the FBI to come after him in response so he can martyr himself protecting a particular image of his life – "He said he hoped that law enforcement would raid his apartment and assault his wife and child so that he could martyr himself" – the Bureau might think a little more critically about what is going on.

Instead, it appears, the FBI assessed Mateen for one and only one thing: whether his bogus claims of ties to terrorist organizations were real. There have been a slew of articles, such as [this one](#) or [this one](#), wondering why the FBI didn't "identify" Mateen as a "real" terrorist in its two investigations of him. But it appears the FBI was assessing *only* whether he was likely to commit violence because of—and with the support of—an Islamic terrorist group.

It appears they weren't assessing whether he was, like the overwhelming majority of men who commit mass shootings in this country, really screwed up, expressing it in violent ways, and seeking attention with such actions.

It is true that Islamic extremists want to attack this country. It is also true that far, far more Americans die when men carry out mass killings because they're fucked up and begging for attention. If you're Muslim, the easiest way to get attention right now is to say that word, "ISIS," because it's a guarantee law enforcement and politicians will give that killing more due than they might give the next disturbed mass shooter.

Of course, the apparent fact that investigators have now come to agree with me means that those who started screaming ISIS right away – and, importantly, leaking *and officially revealing* news that Mateen claimed affiliation with ISIS (and other conflicting terrorist groups) on his 911 call – means the people who rushed out the ISIS explanation in fact did ISIS' propaganda work for them, giving them credit for a mass killing that was really your garden variety mass killing conducted by an angry man.

Which is why this is so batshit. After blowing off Florida's open record laws for a week, DOJ will finally release his 911 transcripts. But, according to Loretta Lynch, they're going to edit out the references to ISIS so as to avoid "revictimizing" the victims.

A week after the worst mass shooting in U.S. history, Attorney General Loretta Lynch said a portion of Orlando shooter Omar Mateen's calls with hostage negotiators will be released Monday.

"We'll be releasing a partial transcript of the calls between the killer and the hostage negotiators so people can, in fact, see the type of interaction that was had there," Lynch told ABC News' Jonathan Karl on "This Week" Sunday.

The Attorney General says she'll travel to Orlando on Tuesday to get an on-the-ground perspective on the investigation.

"I say partial because we're not going to be, for example, broadcasting his pledges of allegiance. We are trying not to re-victimize those who went through that horror," she added. "We're trying to get as much information about this investigation out as possible, and we want people to provide information that they have to us."

If releasing these claims of affiliation would "revictimize" the victims, then releasing them in the first place served to victimize them. So the much better approach would be to release the full transcripts and admit the Department fucked up, both in its assessment of a potential mass killer, and in rushing to blame ISIS in the first place. Not to mention that this will just feed conspiracy theories.

If DOJ fucked up – and the claim this could revictimize people is tacit admission it seriously fucked up – then admit that and make it right. Pay the political consequences of admitting that our obsessive focus on terrorism has distracted us from the more general, and therefore more lethal, problem with mass killings. Don't try to pretend there's a good reason for suppressing the very same claims you made a big deal of a week ago.

If DOJ now believes the claims served to do nothing more than give Mateen's rampage more attention – and it was a key part of generating that attention – then it needs to come clean.

Update: One more point on this. Releasing the

full transcript would reveal how non-credible the ISIS claim was, appearing as it did with a claim of affiliation with al-Nusra, which would make it even clearer that FBI shouldn't have started telling everyone about the ISIS claim.

Update: Here's the transcript from Meet the Press.

LORETTA LYNCH:

Yes, I'll be going to Orlando on Tuesday to continue my briefings in the case. Actually though what we are announcing tomorrow is that the F.B.I. is releasing a partial transcript of the killer's calls with law enforcement from inside the club. These are the calls with the Orlando P.D. negotiating team who were trying to ascertain who he was, where he was, and why he was doing this, all the while the rescue operations were continuing. That'll be coming out tomorrow and I'll be headed to Orlando on Tuesday.

CHUCK TODD:

Including the hostage negotiation part of this?

LORETTA LYNCH:

Yes. It will be primarily a partial transcript of his calls with the hostage negotiators.

CHUCK TODD:

You say partial. What's being left out?

LORETTA LYNCH:

Well, what we're not going to do is further proclaim this individual's pledges of allegiance to terrorist groups and further his propaganda.

CHUCK TODD:

So we're not going to hear him talk

about those things?

LORETTA LYNCH:

We will hear him talk about some of those things, but we're not going to hear him make his ascertains of allegiance and that. This will not be audio. This will be a printed transcript. But it will begin to capture the back and forth between him and the negotiators. We're trying to get as much information about this investigation out as possible. As you know, because the killer is dead, we have a bit more leeway there. And so we will be producing that information tomorrow.