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Former CIA chief says environmental concerns prevented bombing of Islamic State oil wells

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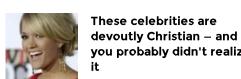


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By Dave Boyer (/staff/dave-boyer/) - The Washington Times - Wednesday, November 25, 2015 A former CIA director said the U.S.-led coalition fighting the Islamic State has been reluctant to attack oil wells controlled by the extremist group due in part to environmental concerns.

"We didn't go after oil wells — actually hitting oil wells that ISIS controls because we didn't want to do environmental damage, and we didn't want to destroy that infrastructure," said former spy chief Michael Morell, using an acronym for the Islamic State.



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Speaking Tuesday night on the "Charlie Rose" program, Mr. Morell cautioned that he doesn't "sit in the room anymore" where the topsecret decisions are made by President Obama's national security

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But he said prior to the terrorist attacks in Paris on Nov. 13, "there seemed to have been a judgment that ... we don't want to destroy these (http://pros.palmbeachgroup.com/1511PBLREAGANICTAPRELISBECause that's infrastructure that's going to be necessary to support the people when ISIS isn't there anymore, and it's going to

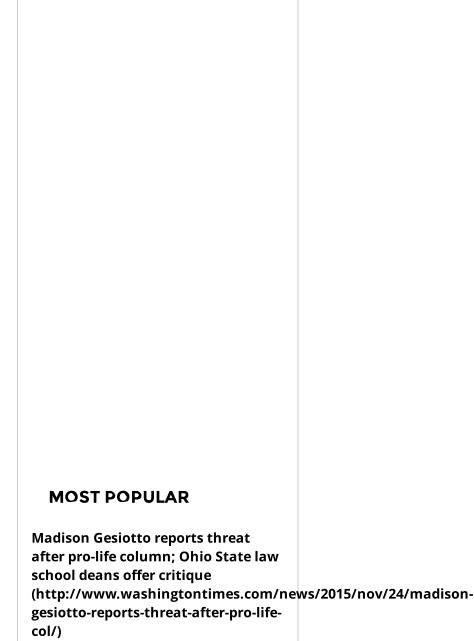
> Mr. Morell left the CIA in 2013, last serving as the agency's acting director.

The U.S. stepped up its attacks on Islamic State's industrial base after the Paris terrorist spree, bombing more than 100 tanker trucks on Nov. 16 that were used to transport oil that provides the extremist group with as much as half of its funding.





Mr. Obama has come under renewed criticism since the Paris attacks for lacking an effective strategy to defeat the Islamic State. He pledged Tuesday with French President Francois Hollande to step up airstrikes against the extremist group, and both leaders urged other coalition members to contribute more resources to the military campaign.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dave Boyer (/staff/dave-boyer/)

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Dave Boyer is a White House correspondent for The Washington Times. A native of Allentown, Pa., Boyer worked for the Philadelphia Inquirer from 2002 to 2011 and also has covered Congress for the Times. He is a graduate of Penn State University. Boyer can be reached at dboyer@washingtontimes.com (mailto:dboyer@washingtontimes.com).

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