

Eyewitness Syria, the Last 12 Days

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My friend lives in Damascus. I will call him Qusay to protect his identity. Qusay was born and grew up in Aleppo and still has family there. He is a high-level translator and university professor. From his family he learned what unfolded in Aleppo following the invasion beginning November 27. He personally witnessed events in Damascus where he still is. The following is what Qusay told me about events in Syria over the past 12 days.

Overthrow of Aleppo

The march and overthrow of Aleppo was done by Syrian and many foreign fighters supplied and backed by Turkish intelligence and military. Syrian military communications were jammed using electronic warfare. The invaders used drones for surveilling and attacking Syria forces. The jihadists were trained in the use of drones by NATO-funded Ukrainians. Turkey and other NATO forces supplied the drones and all sorts of other advanced weaponry. They had tanks in addition to machine gun mounted trucks and other vehicles.

The jihadists were carefully prepared by Turkish / US forces. They sent individuals to talk with influential people in the Aleppo community, promising payments of hundreds of dollars and other rewards in exchange for complicity or no opposition. Doctors, engineers and public officials were contacted personally. It is highly likely that military officials were also contacted. When the invasion supported by the Turkish military happened starting November 27, the Syrian defense of Aleppo collapsed.

Qusay thinks the Syrian army was exhausted from 13 years of war plus constant attacks from Israeli jets they have been helpless to stop. They, like all Syrian society, have been impoverished by intense sanctions from the West coupled with the theft of essential national resources. The primary wheat growing and oil and gas producing regions have been occupied by US forces and their Kurdish proxies since 2016. As a result, most Syrians only have electricity a few hours per day and have trouble putting food on the table. Before the “dirty war” began in 2011, Syria was self sufficient in food and energy. Syria had no national debt and Syrians enjoyed free health care and education.

The invaders in Aleppo tried to assuage the public that they are not like the “rebels” of old who persecuted and killed Christians and Alawi and enforced sharia law. In Aleppo, they provided free bread for families and quickly set up electronic communications hubs so that everyone might have internet and also so they could broadcast their messages.

Collapse in Damascus

While the northern invading army went on to central Syria, a different attacking group worked from the south. First they attacked and took over Deraa on the Jordan border, then Suweida. Then they advanced to Damascus. It seems there were agreements in advance because there was little military defense of the capital of Syria. President Assad relinquished power and departed for Moscow.

On Day One (Sunday) after the collapse of Bashar's government, looting and chaos erupted immediately. People were terrified and afraid to go out of their homes. Government other buildings were looted and ransacked. Universities were broken into and computers and lab equipment stolen. The Central Bank of Syria and other institutions was vandalized.

Many people have replaced the flag of Syria with the "revolution" flag out of fear.

Now, on Day Two, the situation is better. There is more security. Many stores are still closed but they are opening one by one. The former PM and cabinet have urged people to go back to work.

The titular head of the new government is **Abu Mohammed al Jolani**. He has publicly stated women are free to wear what they want and there will be no retaliation or revenge attacks. The Syrian Prime Minister has been replaced with Mohamad al Bashir. The Jolani government seems to be in control throughout most of the country, including Latakia.

A huge concern now is the ongoing Israeli attacks and bombings. Israel has destroyed nearly all military buildings in Damascus area while Israeli drones are constantly overhead. Queneitra in the far south has been occupied by the Zionist army. Netanyahu and Biden have both taken "credit" for the long dirty war in Syria.

Qusay says,

"Suddenly everything is lost.... Syrians are used to relying on the army to defend our country. But there is no more defense. Israel is taking over every Syrian land. Turkey is taking over another part of Syria. We don't know where Syria is going."

Some Syrians think they will have a better life. Others believe this is an illusion and there are dark days ahead. Last weekend Qusay's family had their bags packed and were ready to leave. But there is no place to go. Both Jordan and Lebanon have closed their borders.

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