

Israel Baits the Hook. Will Syria Bite?

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Israel has repeatedly struck Syria with missiles and rockets - the most recent exchange taking place after Israel claims "Iranian rockets" struck positions the Israeli military is illegally occupying in Syria's Golan Heights.

Headlines like the UK's Independent's, "[Israel and Iran on brink of war after unprecedented Syria bombardment in response to alleged Golan Heights attack](#)," attempt to portray the Israeli aggression as self-defense. The Independent, however, failed to produce any evidence confirming Israeli claims.

At face value, for Iran to inexplicably launch missiles at Israel, unprovoked and achieving no conceivable tactical, strategic, or political gain strains the credibility of Israel's narrative even further.

But it is perhaps published US policy **designating Israel as a hostile provocateur tasked with expanding Washington's proxy war against Damascus** that fully reveals the deadly and deceptive game Israel and the Western media are now playing.

For years, US policymakers admitted in their papers that the US desired regime change in Iran and sought to provoke a war to achieve it.

Israel Baits the Hook

The corporate-funded Brookings Institution - whose sponsors include weapon manufacturers, oil corporations, banks, and defense contractors - published a 2009 paper titled, "[Which Path to Persia? Options for a New American Strategy Toward Iran](#)," and would not only spell out the US desire for regime change in Iran but devise a number of options to achieve it.

These included sponsoring street protests in tandem with known terrorist organizations to wage a proxy war against Iran as was done to Libya and Syria. It also included provoking Iran to war - a war Brookings policymakers repeatedly admitted Iran seeks to avoid.

In regards to provoking a war with Iran based on a number of contrived cases, the paper would admit (emphasis added):

The truth is that these all would be challenging cases to make. For that reason, **it would be far more preferable if the United States could cite an Iranian provocation as justification for the airstrikes before launching them.** Clearly, the more outrageous, the more deadly, and the more unprovoked the Iranian action, the better off the United States would be.

Of course, **it would be very difficult for the United States to goad Iran into such a provocation without the rest of the world recognizing this game, which would then undermine it.** (One method that would have some possibility of success would be to ratchet up covert regime change efforts in the hope that Tehran would retaliate overtly, or even semi-overtly, **which could then be portrayed as an unprovoked act of Iranian aggression.**)

The Brookings paper even admits that Iran may not retaliate even to the most overt provocations, including US or Israeli air raids and missiles attacks. The papers notes:

...because many Iranian leaders would likely be looking to emerge from the fighting in as advantageous a strategic position as possible, and because they would likely calculate that playing the victim would be their best route to that goal, they might well refrain from such retaliatory missiles attacks.

Brookings also admits that even massive airstrikes on Iran would not achieve US objectives, including regime change and that airstrikes would have to be part of a wider strategy including either a proxy war or a full-scale war led by the US.

More recent Brookings papers, like the 2012 "[Assessing Options for Regime Change, Brookings Institution](#)," would admit that Israel's role – particularly from its occupation of the Golan Heights – is to provide constant pressure on Syria to aid in regime change there.

The paper notes (emphasis added):

Israel's intelligence services have a strong knowledge of Syria, as well as assets within the Syrian regime that could be used to subvert the regime's power base and press for Asad's removal. **Israel could posture forces on or near the Golan Heights and, in so doing, might divert regime forces from suppressing the opposition. This posture may conjure fears in the Asad regime of a multi-front war,** particularly if Turkey is willing to do the same on its border and if the Syrian opposition is being fed a steady diet of arms and training. **Such a mobilization could perhaps persuade Syria's military leadership to oust Asad in order to preserve itself.** Advocates argue this additional pressure could tip the balance against Asad inside Syria, if other forces were aligned properly.

We can assume that the 2012 objective of taking pressure off "the opposition" has failed – since US-NATO-Gulf sponsored terrorists have been all but defeated everywhere inside Syria, save for border regions and territory occupied by US forces to the east.

Instead, Israel's role now has switched – both from pressuring Syria, and from attempting to provoke Iran with attacks on Iranian territory – to provoking a wider war with Syria and its allies – including Iran – by launching provocations against Syria as described in the 2009 Brookings paper, "*Which Path to Persia?*"

Despite Israel's serial provocations going unanswered for years by Syria, each attack is depicted by the Western media as defensive in nature. At the beginning of May when Syrian forces finally did retaliate, the Western media attempted to depict it as an unprovoked attack, citing Israeli military officials who claimed "Iranian missiles" were fired at the Golan

Heights – rather than on-the-ground sources – both Israeli and Syrian who said otherwise.

Syria Isn't Biting

Retaliation by Syria, however, has been proportional and reluctant.

A cynical reality remains as to why. Israel's war on Lebanon in 2006, conducted with extensive airpower – failed to achieve any of Israel's objectives. An abortive ground invasion into southern Lebanon resulted in a humiliating defeat for Israeli forces. While extensive damage was delivered to Lebanon's infrastructure, the nation and in particular, Hezbollah, has rebounded stronger than ever.

Likewise in Syria, Israeli airstrikes and missile attacks will do nothing on their own to defeat Syria or change the West's failing fortunes toward achieving regime change. They serve only as a means of provoking a retaliation sufficient enough for the the West to cite as *casus belli* for a much wider operation that *might* effect regime change.

Attempts to place wedges among the Syrian-Russian-Iranian alliance have been ongoing. Claims that Russia's refusal to retaliate after US-Israeli attacks or its refusal to provide Syria with more modern air defenses attempt to depict Russia as weak and disinterested in Syria's well-being.

The fact remains that a Russian retaliation would open the door to a possibly catastrophic conflict Russia may not be able to win. The delivery of more modern air defense systems to Syria will not change the fact that US-Israeli attacks will fail to achieve any tangible objectives with or without such defenses. Their delivery will – however – help further increase tensions in the region, not manage or eliminate them.

Because Syria Already Won

Syria and its allies have eliminated the extensive proxy forces the US and its allies armed and funded to overthrow the Syrian government beginning in 2011. The remnants of this proxy force cling to Syria's borders and in regions the US and its allies are tentatively occupying.

Should the conflict's status quo be maintained and Russia's presence maintained in the region, these proxy forces will be unable to regroup or regain the territory they have lost. In essence, Syria has won the conflict.

Indeed, sections of Syria are now under the control of occupying foreign armies. Turkey controls sections in northern Syria and the United States is occupying territory east of the Euphrates River. While Syria's territorial integrity is essential – Syria will be better positioned to retake this territory years from now, than it is at the moment. Maintaining the status quo and preventing the conflict from escalating is the primary concern.

Over the next several years – within this status quo – the global balance of power will only further shift further away from America's favor. As that happens, Syria will have a much better opportunity to reclaim its occupied territory.

While it is only human for people to become infuriated by unprovoked attacks – these attacks by the US and Israel are designed specifically to provoke a response. Long-term patience is just as important to winning a war as immediate fury.

Sun Tzu stated in the timeless strategic treatise, "The Art of War," that:

A government should not mobilize an army out of anger, military leaders should not provoke war out of wrath. Act when it is beneficial, desist if it is not. Anger can revert to joy, wrath can revert to delight, but a nation destroyed cannot be restored to existence, and the dead cannot be restored to life.

The US and its allies seek to provoke Syria and its allies into a war now while the US believes it still hold military primacy. Avoiding this until a time when US military primacy no longer exists is the true key to finally and completely winning the Syrian war.

The most perfect of all "retaliations" will be winning the Syrian war - confounding and defeating the US, NATO, the Persian Gulf states, and Israel finally and completely - not launching symbolic missile attacks the US eagerly seeks to use to provoke a wider war they may be able to win while the current global balance of power still favors them.

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