

Middle East on the Boil

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Call it the curse of oil and gas. Countries with large and smaller reserves are affected. So are some with few or perhaps none. Living in a targeted neighborhood is challenging. Independent governments are most vulnerable.

Reports suggest the worst ahead. Iran remains a longtime US/ Israeli target. Syria's very much on the boil. Washington's proxy war rages. It's been ongoing since early last year.

It was planned many years ago. Previous articles explained that America wants all independent governments replaced by pro-Western puppet ones. War is the bottom line option of choice when other methods fail.

Direct US/NATO intervention looms. Deploying attack Patriot missiles in Turkey near Syria's border comes perilously close to declaring war. Doing so may follow.

Germany agreed to participate. It approved sending 400 troops to the Turkish/Syrian border. Washington, Berlin, and the Netherlands will provide Patriot missiles.

On Tuesday, NATO formerly approved deploying them. Operationally, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) will control them.

Washington considers the Persian Gulf and Mediterranean Sea its private lakes. Powerful naval forces dominate their waters ominously.

The USS Eisenhower sits off Syria's coast. On board are eight fighter bomber squadrons and 8,000 troops. It joined the USS Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group. About 2,500 marines are on board.

Mossad-connected [DEBKAFfile](#) (DF) said "10,000 US fighting men, 70 fighter-bombers and at least 17 warships, including three Iwo Jima amphibious craft, a guided missile cruiser, and 10 destroyers and frigates" are positioned off Syria or nearby.

Four ships have Aegis missile interceptors. Some are nuclear armed. US firepower off Syria's coast can destroy the entire country. It remains to be seen what's next.

The combination of powerful warships, heavy armaments, thousands of combat troops, dozens of attack aircraft, offensive Patriot missiles, Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System readiness, and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) capability suggests direct US-led intervention could happen any time.

On Tuesday, the Senate overwhelmingly passed a 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) amendment. It requires Obama to inform Congress of intentions to impose a Syrian

no-fly zone or planned intervention in other ways.

Voting 92 - 6, it requires "a report on military activities to deny or significantly degrade the use of (Syrian) air power against civilian and opposition groups in Syria."

It suggests possible US intervention. Allies should be involved if it comes. US boots on the ground should be avoided. Hostilities could erupt any time. Opinion in Washington is divided. Influential hawks want something done now.

Amendment language said it's not a declaration of war or authorization of force. It didn't rule them out. It wants US military options evaluated. It suggests establishing a no-fly zone.

Attack Patriot missiles deployed on Syria's border impose one. The Senate amendment adds more teeth. It suggests possible intervention in one of three ways or a combination of two or more.

US aggression may involve offensive Patriot missiles, no-fly zones over population centers, and/or US-led NATO air strikes.

Backers called the amendment a "reasonable assessment" of how Pentagon forces can degrade and deter Assad's air capability. Some call it step one toward direct US involvement.

Senators want to be kept informed about plans. Most House members likely concur. They passed their NDAA measure earlier this year. Both versions will be reconciled once a final Senate bill passes. Obama will sign it into law.

He made baseless threats about Syria's chemical weapons. He called using them crossing a "red line." He's looking for ways to provoke full-scale intervention.

When America wants war, pretexts are claimed to justify it. When none exist, they're invented. Washington wants Assad removed. Expect full-scale war. It's coming.

Timing may follow Obama's January inauguration. It could be sooner. Reports suggest Israeli involvement in plans to remove Assad. A previous article discussed Israel approaching Jordanian officials about attacking Syrian chemical weapons sites.

Baseless US claims suggest Assad has sarin nerve gas bombs ready for use. They say he's positioning them at as yet unknown locations.

Syria categorically denies it. A Foreign Ministry statement said military forces "would not use chemical weapons, if (they) had them, against its own people under any circumstances."

On December 2, The [New York Times](#) hyped the baseless chemical weapons threat. Unnamed officials were cited as sources. A US one said "activity we are seeing suggests some potential chemical weapon preparation."

It goes beyond moving them from one location to another, he claimed. No evidence whatever of planned use was given.

Leaking the chemical weapons story was strategically timed. It came ahead of NATO foreign

ministers meeting in Brussels. They approved deploying Patriot missiles.

Doing so permits establishing no-fly zones over Syrian population centers without Security Council authorization. Incrementally, US-led NATO heads for war.

Following his one day Istanbul meeting with Turkey's Prime Minister Erdogan, Vladimir Putin issued a veiled warning. It was meant for Washington, saying:

"What we are concerned about is Syria's future. We don't want the same mistakes to be repeated in the near future. We shall remember how some regimes supported the militants in Libya and" how badly that turned out.

At the same time, Putin knows Washington's war on Syria looms. Russia and China have much to lose if America achieves unchallenged regional control. It remains to be seen how both countries will respond.

Egypt also remains very much on the boil. On November 23, protests erupted throughout the country. They came after President Mohamed Morsi's November 22 decree asserted dictatorial powers.

Despite strong opposition, Egypt's Constituent Assembly approved a draft constitution on November 30. In mid-December, a national referendum will be held on whether to adopt it. Elections in early 2013 will follow.

Morsi said once a new constitution is approved, he'll rescind his unlimited executive powers. Egyptians are justifiably skeptical. Similar earlier promises proved hollow.

Washington supports him and his Muslim Brotherhood led government. They're reliable imperial allies. They're too important to lose. So is Egypt's military. It retains enormous power. It has considerable say over whatever it chooses to control.

Morsi's government is Egypt's public face. Opponents and supporters squared off for days. Police attacked anti-government protesters.

On December 6, tanks and armored vehicles protected the presidential palace. Three Morsi advisors resigned. His planned Wednesday address was cancelled. Prime Minister Hisham Qandil called for calm and national dialogue.

Since protests erupted, six people died. Hundreds more were injured and/or arrested. Clashes show no signs of ending. On Tuesday, protesters broke through presidential palace barbed wire barriers.

Morsi fled for his own protection. Later he returned. Street clashes reflect pandemonium. Demonstrators call their efforts a "last warning."

They demand Morsi rescind his degree. They oppose the hastily written constitution. It's based on Sharia law. It establishes an Islamic dictatorship and military rule.

It hardens the worst of what most Egyptians oppose. It keeps Egypt on the boil. It assures vicious crackdowns against opponents. Public anger erupted on and off last year. Broken pledges continued them this year.

Ousting Mubarak reaped the whirlwind. America wanted him replaced. Morsi is Washington's man in Cairo. Obama wants Muslim Brotherhood officials and Egypt's military running things.

Western funding supports them. Considerable amounts are provided. Morsi is a US-educated technocrat. His public persona belies his collusion with Washington and other NATO countries.

He's hardline anti-Assad. He supports anti-Syrian death squads. He feigns Palestinian support. He's another tinpot regional despot. He's secure as long as he retains Western support. He's got it as long as he remembers who's boss.

Egyptians are no better off than before anti-Mubarak clashes erupted. Their legitimate grievances are ignored. It's the same throughout most of the region.

Despite uprisings in a dozen or more countries, substantive change didn't follow. Liberating struggles remain.

Throughout most of the region, people want jobs, decent pay, better services, ending corruption and repression, as well as liberating democratic change in a part of the world where poverty, unemployment and despotism reflect daily life for tens of millions.

Regional despots enforce the worst of conditions. Fed up people want change. They're on their own against repressive entrenched power.

Western support makes their liberating struggles harder. Expect no resolution easily or quickly. Dark forces will go all out to crush them. Real change remains a distant dream.

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