

“Progressive” Mainstream Media Supports the Destabilization and Balkanization of Syria

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Since the onset of the Syrian crisis, Martin Chulov of the Guardian has continuously been one of the most prominent “journalists” whose coverage, to put kindly, has been skewed beyond any recognition of objective journalism. His narratives have systematically relied on sectarian overtones and cherry picked “activist” quotes from such bastions of objectivity as the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Chulov has gone to great lengths to portray the conflict in simplistic and sectarian terms: “Assad the Alawite, versus the Sunni majority.”

The large part of Syrian society that ardently support their president has gone largely unmentioned in his coverage. The larger still part of Syrian society that simply want the war to end, and the militants to leave their towns and villages so they can attempt to rebuild their lives have been callously brushed aside by war-profiteers such as Chulov; who willingly ignore the much larger sections of Syrian society that don’t abide his bias narrative. Chulov perniciously attempts to lead the reader to believe the whole Syrian public is fighting against a regime and its security infrastructure. The simple fact that the majority of men fighting the Salafi/Jihadi dominated rebels within the Syrian Army itself are Sunni Syrians belies his whole false sectarian narrative.

[Chulov’s latest article is no exception](#). The sectarian melodrama is set in the title: “Sunnis fear Assad wants to ethnically cleanse Alawite heartland”, in usual fashion, Chulov plays on manufactured sectarian fear and a growing western narrative that Assad is planning on building an “Alawite enclave” in the western provinces of Syria reaching to the Mediterranean coast, the heartland of Assad’s Alawite sect.

The sub-title, illuminates Chulovs simplistic rendering and the basis for his “Alawite enclave” theory:

“Homs land registry fire and handing out of arms to villagers fuel concerns that an Alawite-Shia enclave is being formed in Syria.”

Chulov lays the foundations of his theory with these basic facts, Assad is arming “farmers and villagers”, ie: Syrian men of military age, that are willing to fight the extremist dominated insurgency Chulov has propagated and promoted for the best part of two years. Yet Chulov is eager to portray these farmers and villagers (Syrians) as “evil Shabiha” intent on sectarian cleansing.

And, lo and behold, the land registry in Homs has burnt down! It seems Chulov has forgotten Homs has been a conflict zone for quite some time, constantly under bombardment from either rebels, or the SAA attempting to remove them. This includes a massive air and artillery campaign on the SAA's part. Again, it is beyond Chulov's wildest imaginations that this particular building may well be under government auspices, therefore a prime target for his beloved rebels. Indeed, since the very first week of the crisis in Daraa, militants attacked Government buildings and offices - often setting them ablaze. In Chulov's investigative mind, there is only one explanation: "the "Shabiha" set the land registry ablaze to remove proof of land-ownership, his anonymous source, in an almost Sherlock-Watson moment of journalistic drama confirms Chulov's suspicions: (my emphasis)

"What else could be going on?" asked one resident who refused to be identified. "This is the most secure area of the city and it is the only building that has been burned. **A conspiracy is underway.**"

Once more Chulov relies on anonymous sources and vague rhetoric to underline that the fire was undoubtedly set by "regime forces". Chulov tells us "eyewitnesses" (no names of course) and "employees" (employees of who exactly he is not clear) recall seeing flames in the upper floors of the ministry and regime forces in the floors below. The regime forces couldn't possibly have been stationed there, inside a government building, or maybe even attempting to put the flames out. No, the only plausible explanation is that regime forces set the blaze then dutifully stood around in the floors below waiting for the ceiling to collapse, in public view of everyone, even "employees"!

Chulov takes us on his sectarian fantasy of Homs, he leads us to believe that regime controlled areas are no longer multi-ethnic towns under the auspice of government, (as they have been for decades) these towns have morphed into "Alawite only" areas. Chulov fails to even mention that since the onset of the crisis it has been predominantly the "rebels" he that have ethnically cleansed virtually every town or village they have entered, the examples are long and numerous. On the odd occasion rebel "liberated" towns and villages haven't been completely emptied of civilian residents, the rebels have quickly laid sectarian demands upon Christian and Shi'a communities; engaged in summary executions, torture, imprisonment, and forced displacement, all on the basis of sect.

The oft-referenced town of Qusair is possibly the prime example of the duplicity inherent in reports from western "journalists" such as Chulov. He failed to show an ounce of "concern" back in 2012 when rebels entered Qusair and immediately forcibly removed all Christians living there (the vast majority of residents left at the same time, as has been the case in most rebel "liberated" areas). Indeed, he failed to even report on the rebel cleansing of Qusair. Chulov would find it extremely difficult to find a single town or village "liberated" by the extremist dominated rebels that hasn't seen some form of ethnic cleansing, but these uncomfortable truths do not fit with his skewed narrative.

In fairness Chulov does attempt to offer some "balance" in his article, one whole sentence alludes to the mass exodus of Alawite's from rebel held areas in the north of Syria (he doesn't mention the thousands of Christians that have also been ethnically cleansed, nor the thousands of Sunnis that have left rebel-held areas due to the fundamentalist doctrine of the Salafi/Jihadi rebels forced upon them). Chulov explains this minimal episode of ethnic cleansing as a result of northern Syria being dominated by jihadists, giving the reader the false impression that rebels in other regions are not the jihadi type.

Literally every piece of information Chulov uses to bolster his “Alawite enclave” narrative is a secondary source from a rebel leader/militant, an activist, or an anonymous source. He again tells us that the whole of the North of Homs has been “emptied of Sunni’s” and replaced with Alawites, the empirical evidence he provides? “Local leaders claim”. Leaders of what and whom Chulov fails to reveal. The sectarian narrative Chulov has relied upon bears fruit once more, and again in the form of an “activist” account: (my emphasis)

“There have been obvious examples of denominational cleansing in different areas in Homs,” **said local activist**, Abu Rami. “It is denominational cleansing; part of a major Iranian Shia plan, which is obvious through the involvement of Hezbollah and Iranian militias. And it’s also part of Assad’s personal Alawite state project.”

One must seriously take this man for his word, obviously an “activist” (a common euphemism for armed opposition rebel in western media) is in a prime position to understand the workings of “Iranian Shia plans” and Assads “personal projects”. Maybe the Syrian Observatory told him, just after Assad and Ayatollah Khamenei relayed their plans to the man in Coventry. Chulov once again offers zero empirical evidence to back these claims and is quite literally engaging in opposition stenography. (a favourite pastime of Chulov’s going by his work on Syria for the past two years.)

Chulov spends the remainder of the article theorising and speculating on the regimes alleged sectarian motives, all on the basis of his vague and anonymous “sources”. He tells us, quite incredibly and with no shame in the lack of journalistic integrity that “diplomatic sources in the region” – presumably the same “diplomatic sources” that have erroneously declared such falsehood as “Assads days are numbered”, which Chulov has dutifully repeated in his articles ad nauseam – have relayed that Assad is not only planning an “Alawite rump state” in the west of Syria, but the first countries Assad is making overtures toward to secure this “rump state” are his biggest enemies: (my emphasis)

Over the past six months, **diplomats in the region** have claimed that contingency planning for a rump state to protect Syrian Alawites has involved diplomatic contact being made by senior Syrian officials with enemy states. A mediator – a well-known diplomatic figure – is understood to have been asked by **Assad to approach the former Israeli foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman**, late last year with a request that Israel not stand in the way of attempts to form an Alawite state, which could have meant moving some displaced communities into the Golan Heights area.

It seems Chulov is unwilling to acknowledge, or realise, that Israel is the only regional state that has overtly and opportunistically attacked Syria since the crisis erupted. It makes absolutely no sense for Assad to make overtures and relay plans to one of his biggest threats, and a state that actively conspires with the jihadi dominated opposition. Chulov also conveniently omits the fact that the “plan” he so eagerly propagates Assad is intent upon is the exact [“optimal scenario” Israeli military leaders have put forward for their ideal outcome of the Syrian crisis.](#)

How very convenient that the “optimal scenario” for Israel (and its allies in their attack on the Syrian state) just happens to be the precise narrative Chulov and others are going to great lengths to propagate. Let me be clear, Western/Israeli media is propagating the idea

that Assad is attempting to build an “Alawite enclave”, because that is the exact scenario the west and its allies who are attacking Syria are intent upon. If Assad cannot be removed – which is becoming more and more unlikely without overt western intervention – then the US, Israel and their Gulf allies will attempt to “Balkanise” the Syrian state.the Syrian state.

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