

## Syria: Syrians, Iraqis, Palestinians: No Place to Hide

Pentagon's plan to "take out 7 countries in 5 years...."

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"A person can only be born in one place. However, he may die several times elsewhere: in the exiles and prisons, and in a homeland transformed by the occupation and oppression in to a nightmare."

(2004 Acceptance speech for the Prince Klaus Fund Award, Mahmoud Darwish, 1941-2008.)

Syria's citizens are now another nation reduced to tragic turmoil resultant from being targeted in the post 11th September 2001 Pentagon plan to: *"take out seven countries in five years: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and finishing off with Iran"*, as described by General Wesley Clark. (i)

US planned carnage in sovereign Syria was a bit behind schedule, but now back on track, if out of predicted sequence, with another wannabe Crusader in the White House, this one with a Nobel Peace Prize. Fact mirrors fiction's wildest darkneses, and from the "Nile to the Euphrates" the regions's residents increasingly have only the most uncertain and tenuous places to hide.

Syria, with population of under twenty three million, is also host to nearly half a million Palestinian refugees and the largest influx of Iraqi refugees in the world, a minimum of 1.2 million, who fled the US-UK's liberating bombs, bullets, kidnappings, rapes, murders, ethnic cleansing, looting and mayhem.

The UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) record: "Syria has been a generous host to Iraqi refugees."

Now the horrors they fled after the invasion are again stalking those who thought they were now safe:

"Iraqis with old vendettas have taken advantage of the chaos and instability in Syria to pursue Iraqi refugees there, with a string of kidnappings in recent months", records UNHCR.(ii)

One young woman who had survived the unimaginable, said she feared being hunted down in Syria by the same people who killed nine members of her family at the height of sectarian warfare in Iraq in 2006-7.

Another family who had already lost one member in Iraq before fleeing to Syria recently had their son: "kidnapped, tortured and killed, despite paying a ransom."

A short time ago seven members of an Iraqi family were found dead in their Damascus apartment according to the U.N., recording three other refugees killed by gunfire. Two Iraqi journalists were killed in Damascus this month in circumstances that remain unclear. (Los Angeles Times, 20th July 2012.)

Three hundred Palestinians are already thought to have been killed, again mirroring their plight in Iraq when the 2003 onslaught and the ignorance or willfulness of those who planned it from far away, destroyed the entire societal fabric of the nation. "As for Arab media, they should know well that their insistence on representing Palestinians as a relevant party in the bloodshed in Syria equals to setting them up for a major disaster, to say the least", writes Palestine Chronicle Editor Ramzy Baroud. (iii)

"It is a gruesome turn for the distinguished Middle Eastern city of Damascus, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world ..." comments the Jordan Times (23rd July 2012.) "The people of Damascus are not used to wars, there were real fears in Damascus last week", a resident told them.

Meanwhile an Iraqi friend with impeccable knowledge states: "Iraqi refugees in Syria are facing a real dilemma."

Last week Prime Minister Nuri al Maliki called for Iraqi refugees to return to their country and formed a team headed by the Transportation Minister to facilitate travel and re-entry at land borders, to date having also sent ten aircraft to transport them.

Finally a hand of reconciliation from America's murderously sectarian puppet Prime Minister? Not quite states my Iraq-wise sage. It is as ever, more murderously complex than that:

"Tens if not hundreds of Iraqi refugees in Damascus got killed and injured during the clash between the (Syrian Free Army) and the Government Army in Kudsyah, Yermuk, and Sayedah Zainab areas. Some of them were mugged during their escape from one area to another, trying to save their children's lives.

"While the Iraqi government announced their concerns about Iraqi refugees, they actually meant their (own) followers and militias in Sayeda Zainab in Damascus.

"They are asking Iraqi refugees in Syria to go back to Iraq. At the same time they increased their security personnel and are fully prepared at the Al Waleed check point between Syria and Iraq to triple check the passports in a serious search for previous Iraqi Army generals and other prominent anti-occupation figures and to arrest them on the spot when they enter Iraq. (Emphasis mine.)

"That is if they survive the (Syrian Free Army) check points. After shutting Syria's neighbouring countries borders off in the face of Iraqi refugees from Syria, most of the refugees are heading to Iraqi Kurdistan through Yaaroubia Check point instead of going back to Baghdad.

"Whilst not knowing what are they facing in that region, this choice seems better than Maliki's secret prisons or receiving a bullet in head before

settling down in their homes in Baghdad.

“It looks like UN refugees organizations left the American Occupation victims to face their terrible destiny again: Running away to the unknown, with their children suffering a new episode of fear ...”

Fear indeed for what my kidnapped and murdered friend, Margaret Hassan, who worked so fearlessly and tirelessly to alleviate their suffering, rightly predicted would be: “another lost generation of Iraqi children.”

“Iraq ... is still one of the most dangerous places in the world”, stated IRIN, the news service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in April this year.

Another UN Report states: “UNHCR does not consider the security situation in Iraq adequate to facilitate or promote returns.”

Between Sunday and Monday, 22nd and 23rd July, one hundred and forty six Iraqis were killed and hundreds injured in bomb attacks across the country.

Suicide bombings were unknown in Iraq until 2003, with car bombings nearly so, with the exception of a few of the latter in the late 1990's, widely agreed by various intelligence sources to be linked to the Iraqi National Accord (INA) which received backing from countries including the UK, Saudia Arabia, and the United States.(iv)

In 2004, INC founder Iyad Allawi - reportedly under pressure from the US and with objections by the UN Special Envoy to Iraq Lakhdar Brahimi - became Iraq's interim Prime Minister. Undisputed is that Brahimi resigned two weeks later.

Short of a miracle, Syria is set to follow another bloody US guided path: “Gangs and thieves (are) attacking cars and commercial centers the way we have seen in Baghdad during the invasion of . It seems like another beautiful country is going to be wasted (God forbid). Christian's and Armenians are terrified”, adds my friend, who has family there, saying desperately:

“I don't know how can I help them. They won't to leave because their children are in schools and universities and they can't see them going through the agony of leaving another country which felt like home after seven or eight years.”

Meanwhile, for those returning to Iraqi Kurdistan, it is widely reported that British Commandos have been given permission by the Iranian born warlord for all seasons and current President of Kurdistan, Massoud Barzani, to train insurgents there to infiltrate and fight in Syria. (eg vi)

Further, the US has declared that President Bashar al Assad's sovereign government must be toppled. (vii)

Ramzy Baroud, who has nothing to learn on either regional complexities, or displacement(viii) writes:

“There is nothing worse than being a refugee on the run, except being a

refugee on the run again and again, with a legal status of perpetual statelessness, and with no country in which to seek shelter.”

That is surely not the: “Change we can believe in”, promised by the Presidential Nobel Peace Laureate currently running for re-election.

#### Notes

- i. <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=5166>
- ii. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/95856/SYRIA-Iraqis-use-Syrian-conflict-to-settle-old-scores>
- iii. [http://www.palestinechronicle.com/view\\_article\\_details.php?id=19433](http://www.palestinechronicle.com/view_article_details.php?id=19433)
- iv. [http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Ayad\\_Allawi](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Ayad_Allawi)
- v. <http://www.unhcr.org/4caf376c6.html>
- vi. <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/07/24/252536/british-army-trains-syria-militants/>
- vii. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/in-syria-conflict-us-struggles-to-fill-intelligence-gaps/2012/07/23/gJQAW8DG5W\\_story.html?wprss=rss\\_world](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/in-syria-conflict-us-struggles-to-fill-intelligence-gaps/2012/07/23/gJQAW8DG5W_story.html?wprss=rss_world)
- viii. <http://www.amazon.com/My-Father-Was-Freedom-Fighter/dp/0745328814>

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