

The Bloody Road to Damascus: The Triple Alliance's War on a Sovereign State

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Introduction

There is clear and overwhelming evidence that the uprising to overthrow President Assad of Syria is a violent, power grab led by foreign-supported fighters who have killed and wounded thousands of Syrian soldiers, police and civilians, partisans of the government and its peaceful opposition.

The outrage expressed by politicians in the West and Gulf State and in the mass media, about the 'killing of peaceful Syrian citizens protesting in justice' is cynically designed to cover up the documented reports of violent seizure of neighborhoods, villages and towns by armed bands, brandishing machine guns and planting road-side bombs.

The assault on Syria is backed by foreign funds, arms and training. Due to a lack of domestic support, however, to be successful, direct foreign military intervention will be necessary. For this reason a huge propaganda and diplomatic campaign has been mounted to demonize the legitimate Syrian government. The goal is to impose a puppet regime and strengthen Western imperial control in the Middle East. In the short run, this will further isolate Iran in preparation for a military attack by Israel and the US and, in the long run, it eliminates another independent secular regime friendly to China and Russia.

In order to mobilize world support behind this Western, Israeli and Gulf State-funded power grab, several propaganda ploys have been used to justify another blatant violation of a country's sovereignty after their successful destruction of the secular governments of Iraq and Libya.

The Larger Context: Serial Aggression

The current Western campaign against the independent Assad regime in Syria is part of a series of attacks against pro-democracy movements and independent regimes from North Africa to the Persian Gulf. The imperial-militarist response to the Egyptian democracy movement that overthrew the Mubarak dictatorship was to back the military junta's seizure of power and murderous campaign to jail, torture and assassinate over 10,000 pro-democracy protesters.

Faced with similar mass democratic movements in the Arab world, the Western-backed Gulf autocratic dictators crushed their respective uprisings in Bahrain, Yemen and Saudi Arabia. The assaults extended to the secular government in Libya where NATO powers launched a massive air and sea bombardment in support of armed bands of mercenaries thereby destroying Libya's economy and civil society. The unleashing of armed gangster-

mercenaries led to the savaging of urban life in Libya and devastation in the countryside. The NATO powers eliminated the secular regime of Colonel Gadhafi and along with having him murdered and mutilated by its mercenaries. Nato oversaw the wounding, imprisonment, torture and elimination of tens of thousands of civilian Gadhafi supporters and government workers. NATO backed the puppet regime as it embarked on a bloody pogrom against Libyan citizens of sub-Saharan African ancestry as well as sub-Saharan African immigrant workers – groups who had benefited from Gadhafi’s generous social programs. The imperial policy of ruin and rule in Libya serves as “the model” for Syria : Creating the conditions for a mass uprising led by Muslim fundamentalists, funded and trained by Western and Gulf State mercenaries.

The Bloody Road From Damascus to Teheran

According to the State Department ‘The road to Teheran passes through Damascus’: The strategic goal of NATO is to destroy Iran’s principal ally in the Middle East; for the Gulf absolutist monarchies the purpose is to replace a secular republic with a vassal theocratic dictatorship; for the Turkish government the purpose is to foster a regime amenable to the dictates of Ankara’s version of Islamic capitalism; for Al Qaeda and allied Salafi and Wahabi fundamentalists a theocratic Sunni regime, cleansed of secular Syrians, Alevis and Christians, will serve as a trampoline for projecting power in the Islamic world; and for Israel a blood-drenched divided Syria will further ensure its regional hegemony. It was not without prophetic foresight that the uber-Zionist US Senator Joseph Lieberman demanded days after the ‘Al Queda’ attack of September 11, 2001: “First we must go after Iran, Iraq and Syria” before considering the actual authors of the deed.

The armed anti-Syrian forces reflect a variety of conflicting political perspectives united only by their common hatred of the independent secular, nationalist regime which has governed the complex, multi-ethnic Syrian society for decades. The war against Syria is the principle launching pad for a further resurgence of Western militarism extending from North Africa to the Persian Gulf , buttressed by a systematic propaganda campaign proclaiming NATO’s democratic, humanitarian and ‘civilizing’ mission on behalf of the Syrian people.

The Road to Damascus is Paved with Lies

An objective analysis of the political and social composition of the principle armed combatants in Syria refutes any claim that the uprising is in pursuit of democracy for the people of that country. Authoritarian fundamentalist fighters form the backbone of the uprising. The Gulf States financing these brutal thugs are themselves absolutist monarchies. The West, after having foisted a brutal gangster regime on the people of Libya , can make no claim of ‘humanitarian intervention’.

The armed groups infiltrate towns and use population centers as shields from which they launch their attacks on government forces. In the process they force thousands of citizens from their homes, stores and offices which they use as military outposts. The destruction of the neighborhood of Baba Amr in Homs is a classic case of armed gangs using civilians as shields and as propaganda fodder in demonizing the government.

These armed mercenaries have no national credibility with the mass of Syrian people. One of their main propaganda mills is located in the heart of London , the so-called “Syrian Human Rights Observatory” where it coordinates closely with British intelligence turning out

lurid atrocity stories to whip up sentiment in favor of a NATO intervention. The kings and emirs of the Gulf States bankroll these fighters. Turkey provides military bases and controls the cross-border flow of arms and the movement of the leaders of the so-called “Free Syrian Army”. The US, France and England provide the arms, training and diplomatic cover. Foreign jihadist-fundamentalists, including Al Qaeda fighters from Libya , Iraq and Afghanistan , have entered the conflict. This is no “civil war”. This is an international conflict pitting an unholy triple alliance of NATO imperialists, Gulf State despots and Muslim fundamentalists against an independent secular nationalist regime. The foreign origin of the weapons, propaganda machinery and mercenary fighters reveals the sinister imperial, ‘multi-national’ character of the conflict. Ultimately the violent uprising against the Syrian state represents a systematic imperialist campaign to overthrow an ally of Iran, Russia and China, even at the cost of destroying Syria’s economy and civil society, fragmenting the country and unleashing enduring sectarian wars of extermination against the Alevi and Christian minorities, as well as secular government supporters.

The killings and mass flight of refugees is not the result of gratuitous violence committed by a blood thirsty Syrian state. The Western backed militias have seized neighborhoods by force of arms, destroyed oil pipelines, sabotaged transportation and bombed government buildings. In the course of their attacks they have disrupted basic services critical to the Syrian people including education, access to medical care, security, water, electricity and transportation. As such, they bear most of the responsibility for this “humanitarian disaster”, (which their imperial allies and UN officials blame on Syrian security and armed forces). The Syrian security forces are fighting to preserve the national independence of a secular state, while the armed opposition commits violence on behalf of their foreign pay-masters - in Washington , Riyadh , Tel Aviv, Ankara and London .

Conclusions

The Assad regime’s referendum last month drew millions of Syrian voters in defiance of Western imperialist threats and terrorist calls for a boycott. This clearly indicated that a majority of Syrians prefer a peaceful, negotiated settlement and reject mercenary violence. The Western-backed Syrian National Council and the Turkish and Gulf States-armed “Free Syrian Army” flatly rejected Russian and Chinese calls for an open dialogue and negotiations which the Assad regime has accepted. NATO and Gulf State dictatorships are pushing their proxies to pursue violent “regime change”, a policy which already has caused the death of thousands of Syrians. US and European economic sanctions are designed to wreck the Syrian economy, in the expectation that acute deprivation will drive an impoverished population into the arms of their violent proxies. In a repeat of the Libya scenario, NATO proposes to “liberate” the Syrian people by destroying their economy, civil society and secular state.

A Western military victory in Syria will merely feed the rising frenzy of militarism. It will encourage the West, Riyadh and Israel to provoke a new civil war in Lebanon . After demolishing Syria , the Washington-EU-Riyadh-Tel Aviv axes will move on to a far bloodier confrontation with Iran .

The horrific destruction of Iraq , followed by Libya ’s post-war collapse provides a terrifying template of what is in store for the people of Syria : A precipitous collapse of their living standards, the fragmentation of their country, ethnic cleansing, rule by sectarian and fundamentalist gangs, and total insecurity of life and property.

Just as the “left” and “progressives” declared the brutal savaging of Libya to be the “revolutionary struggle of insurgent democrats” and then walked away, washing their hands of the bloody aftermath of ethnic violence against black Libyans, they repeat the same calls for military intervention against Syria. The same liberals, progressives, socialists and Marxists who are calling on the West to intervene in Syria’s “humanitarian crises” from their cafes and offices in Manhattan and Paris, will lose all interest in the bloody orgy of their victorious mercenaries after Damascus, Aleppo and other Syrian cities have been bombed by NATO into submission.

James Petras latest book ,*The Arab Revolt and the Imperialist Counterattack*

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