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US Intervention In Syria

By Stephen Lendman

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Despite genuine popular Middle East/North Africa uprisings, Washington's dirty hands orchestrated regime change plans in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Jordan, and Syria as part of its "New Middle East" project.

On November 18, 2006, Middle East analyst Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya's Global Research article headlined, "Plans for Redrawing the Middle East: The Project for a 'New Middle East,' " saying:

In June 2006 in Tel Aviv, "US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice (first) coin(ed) the term" in place of the former "Greater Middle East" project, a shift in rhetoric only for Washington's longstanding imperial aims.

The new terminology "coincided with the inauguration of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) Oil Terminal in the Eastern Mediterranean." During Israel's summer 2006 Lebanon war, "Prime Minister Olmert and (Rice) informed the international media that a project for a 'New Middle East' was being launched in Lebanon," a plan in the works for years to "creat(e) an arc of instability, chaos, and violence extending from Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria to Iraq, the Persian Gulf, Iran, and the borders of NATO-garrisoned Afghanistan."

In other words, "constructive chaos" would be used to redraw the region according to US-Israeli "geo-strategic needs and objectives." The strategy is currently playing out violently in Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Libya and Syria, and may erupt anywhere in the region to solidify Washington's aim for unchallengeable dominance from Morocco to Oman to Syria.

Partnered with Israel, it's to assure only leaders fully "with the program" are in place. Mostly isn't good enough, so ones like Mubarak, Gaddafi, Sudan's Omar al-Bashir, likely Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh (now damaged goods), and Syria's Bashar al-Assad are targeted for removal by methods ranging

from uprisings to coups, assassinations, or war, perhaps in that order.

Nazemroaya now says Syrian "protesters are being armed and funded by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states via Jordan and Saad Hariri in Lebanon," besides US and Israeli involvement.

Pack Journalism Goes to War with Washington

America's pack journalism never met an America imperial initiative it didn't support and promote, no matter how lawless, mindless, destructive or counterproductive. For example, an April 28 New York Times editorial headlined, "President Assad's Crackdown," saying:

He "appears determined to join his father in the ranks of history's blood-stained dictators, sending his troops and thugs to murder anyone who has the courage to demand political freedom."

Whether about Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Palestine, Syria, Haiti's Aristide, former Honduran President Manuel Zelaya, Venezuela's Chavez or others for many decades, Times "journalists" and opinion writers have a sordid history of supporting America's imperial ruthlessness, including perpetual wars killing millions for power, profit, and unchallengeable dominance.

Now Times writers laud Obama for intervening in Libya and trying "to engage Syria....in hopes that Mr. Assad would make the right choice," meaning get "with the program" by surrendering Syrian sovereignty.

Despite clear evidence of US intervention, Obama "issued a statement condemning the violence and accusing Mr. Assad of seeking Iranian assistance in brutalizing his people. That is a start, but it is not nearly enough."

War is always a last choice so The Times endorses "international condemnation and tough sanctions, (as well as) asset freezes and travel bans for Mr. Assad and his top supporters and a complete arms embargo."

However, "Russia and China, as ever, are determined to protect autocrats. That cannot be the last word."

Times opinions are shamelessly belligerent, one-sided, wrong-headed, and mindless on rule of law issues, including about prohibitions against meddling in the internal affairs of other countries except in self-defense until the Security Council acts.

Instead, the "newspaper of record" remains America's leading managed news source, backing the worst of Washington's imperial arrogance and ruthlessness. As a result, it omits inconvenient facts to make its case, including America's notorious ties to numerous global despots on every continent.

WikiLeaks Released Cables Expose America's Regime Change Plan

Though widely reported since mid-April, The Times hasn't acknowledged information (though sketchy) from Washington Post writer Craig Whitlock's April 17 report headlined, "US secretly backed Syrian opposition groups, cables released by WikiLeaks show," saying:

Through its Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), "The State Department has secretly financed Syrian political opposition groups and related projects, including a satellite TV channel (London-based Barada TV) that beams anti-government programming into the country, according to previously undisclosed diplomatic cables."

"Barada TV is closely affiliated with the Movement for Justice and Development, a London-based network of (pro-Western) Syrian exiles."

Funding began at least after the Bush administration cut ties with Damascus in 2005. In April 2009, a diplomatic cable from Damascus said:

"A reassessment of current US-sponsored programming that supports anti-(government) factions, both inside and outside Syria, may prove productive."

In February 2006, Bush officials announced funding to "accelerate the work of reformers in Syria." Nonetheless, Barada TV denied receiving money, its news director Malik al-Abdeh saying:

"I'm not aware of anything like that. If your purpose is to smear Barada TV, I don't want to continue this conversation. That's all I'm going to give you."

America's National Endowment for Democracy: A Global Regime Change Initiative

Besides covert CIA activities, US-government funded organizations like the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and International Republican Institute (IRI) operate as US foreign policy destabilizing instruments. They do it by supporting opposition group regime change efforts in countries like Syria, despite claiming "dedicat(ion) to the growth and strengthening of democratic institutions around the world....in more than 90 countries."

In MENA nations (Middle East/North Africa) alone, NED's web site lists activities in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iran, Jordan, Yemen, Kuwait, Morocco, Lebanon, Bahrain, Libya, Sudan, and Syria.

The IRI's web site includes (destabilizing anti-democratic) initiatives in Afghanistan, Egypt, GCC states, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, and Palestine.

Other US imperial organizations are also regionally active, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the

National Democratic Institute (NDI), operating contrary to their stated missions.

In January 1996, based on firsthand knowledge, former CIA agent (from 1952 - 1977) Ralph McGehee discussed covert NED efforts in Cuba, China, Russia and Vietnam, saying:

The government-funded organization "assumed many of the political action responsibilities of the CIA," including:

- "efforts to influence foreign journalists;"
- money laundering;

- isolating "democratic-minded intellectuals and journalist in the third world;"

- distributing propaganda articles "to regional editors on each continent;"

- "disseminating an attack on people in Jamaica;"

- funding anti-Castro groups in South Florida as well as Radio and TV Marti, airing regime change propaganda;

- anti-communist grants; and

- much more while claiming its mission is "guided by the belief that freedom is a universal human aspiration that can be realized through the development of democratic institutions, procedures and values."

In a 2005 interview, another former CIA agent (1957 - 1968), Philip Agee, author of "Inside the Company," explained NED's origins and covert efforts to destabilize and oust Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, calling efforts "similar to what (went on) in Nicaragua in the 1980s minus the Contra terrorist operations (that) wreaked so much destruction on the Nicaraguan economy."

Founded in 1982, NED distributes government funds to four other organizations, including the IRI, NDI, Chamber of Commerce's Center for Private Enterprise (CIPE), and the AFL-CIO's American Center for International Labor Solidarity.

In fact, a 2010 Kim Scipes book titled, "AFL-CIO's Secret War against Developing Country Workers: Solidarity or Sabotage?" discusses its covert anti-worker "labor imperialism," including regime change initiatives.

Manipulated Popular Uprising in Syria

Since late January, popular uprisings began, suspiciously orchestrated by outside forces to destabilize and oust Assad. In fact, Richard Perle's 1996 "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," prepared for Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu during his first term, stated:

"Israel can shape its strategic environment, in cooperation with Turkey and Jordan, by weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria. This effort can focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq - an important Israeli objective in its own right."

It added:

"Syria challenges Israel on Lebanese soil. An affective approach, and one with which America can sympathize, would be if Israel seized the strategic initiative along its northern borders by engaging Hizbollah, Syria, and Iran, as the principal agents of aggression in Lebanon...."

"Given the nature of the regime in Damascus (much the same today), it is both natural and moral that Israel abandon the slogan comprehensive peace and move to contain Syria, drawing attention to its weapons of mass destruction programs, and rejecting land for peace deals on the Golan Heights," Syrian territory colonized by Israel since 1967.

Perle's report was a destabilization and regime change manifesto, implemented in Iraq, Libya, elsewhere in the region, and now Syria. The strategy includes managed news, funding internal and external dissident groups, and other initiatives to oust leaders like Assad.

On March 30, 2011, Haaretz writer Zvi Bar'el headlined "Why did website linked to Syria regime publish US-Saudi plan to oust Assad?" saying:

"According to the report....the plan was formulated in 2008 by the Saudi national security advisor, Prince Bandar bin Sultan and Jeffrey Feltman, a veteran US diplomat in the Middle East who was formerly ambassador to Lebanon and is currently the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs."

Dividing Syria into large cities, towns and villages, the plan involved "establishing five recruitment networks," using unemployed youths, criminals, other young people, and media efforts "funded by European countries but not" America, as well as a "capital network of businesspeople from the large cities."

Training included "sniper fire, arson, and murdering in cold blood," journalists reporting it by hard to monitor satellite phones depicting "human rights activists....demanding not the regime's fall," but need for social networks training "as a means for recruitment."

"After the recruitment and training phases, which would be funded by Saudi Arabia for about \$2 billion," thousands of "activists" would be given communications equipment to begin public actions. "The plan also suggest(ed) igniting ethnic tensions between groups around the country to stir unrest," including in Damascus "to convince the military leadership to disassociate itself from Assad and establish a new regime."

"The hoped-for outcome is the establishment of a supreme national council that will run the country and terminate Syria's relations with Iran and Hezbollah."

The Jordan-based Dot and Com company was named as the behind the scenes recruiter, a company run by Saudi intelligence under Bandar to destabilize Syria and oust Assad.

Whether or not the plan was implemented, some of its features are now playing out violently across the country. Orchestrated in Washington, it's to install a totally "with the program" regime, the same war strategy ongoing in Libya.

A Final Comment

On April 28, Russia and China blocked a US-backed UK, French, German and Portugal proposed Security Council resolution condemning Syrian violence. Damascus' UN ambassador, Bashar Ja'arari, said it failed because several members were fair-minded enough to reject it, knowing Libya's fate after Resolution 1973, calling only for no-fly zone protection.

UN Undersecretary General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe reported about 400 deaths so far. Other estimates are higher. Russian, Chinese and Syrian representatives say government security forces killed by armed extremists are among them. According to RT.com:

"Russia's Foreign Affairs Ministry had clearly outlined its position: it condemned all those responsible for the deaths of protesters during the clashes with the police. But, it urged (no intervention) in Syria's internal affairs," that could easily escalate to Western regime change plans.

Federation Council to the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, Rudik Iskuzhin, believes Syrian intervention may mean Iran is next, saying:

"We very well understand that the hidden motive of all of the recent revolutionary processes is Iran, to which the destabilization in Syria will eventually ricochet. Libya, just like Syria, was an important ally of" Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Western powers and Israel want the alliance subverted.

On April 29, China ruled out force against Syria, Foreign Affairs Ministry Vice-Minister He Yafei saying it "cannot bring a solution to the problem and will only cause a greater humanitarian crisis." Insisting proposed solutions comply with the UN Charter and international law, he added:

"Any help from the international community has to be constructive in nature, which is conducive to the restoration of stability and public order and ensuring the maintenance of economic and social life."

American intervention assures "constructive chaos," the agenda Washington pursues globally, focusing mainly on controlling Eurasia's enormous wealth and resources. Either one or multiple countries at a time, it includes turning Russia and China into vassal states, a goal neither Beijing or Moscow will tolerate.

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