

The Inconvenient Truth: Bashar al Assad's Popularity Confounds NATO Propagandists

By [Barbara McKenzie](#)

Global Research, June 26, 2016

[21st Century Wire](#) 25 June 2016

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Face it, NATO and its allies would have labelled Jesus Christ the Butcher of Damascus if this had suited their agenda of forced regime change in Syria.

Anyone who saw the vilification of Alex Salmond during the run-up to the referendum on Scottish Independence, or of Corbyn during the British Labour leadership campaign, by 'responsible organs of the Press', must have come to full realisation of how totally unbridled, how totally unprincipled, the Establishment and its mouthpieces can be once they declare war.

The Establishment has been demonising popular leaders who threaten its hegemony for centuries. If you believe Bashar al Assad evil, purely on the claims of the Establishment and its press, then you probably accept that Joan of Arc was a witch, Bonny Dundee was depraved, Napoleon ate babies, Ares Velouchiotis was a sick sadist, Arthur Scargill was corrupt, Alex Salmond is the new Ghengis Khan, and Jeremy Corbyn everything thrown at him last year. (I'm guessing the traditional view of Richard III is suspect as well...)



In the case of Bashar al Assad, the accusations range from gassing his own people (long disproved), to the frankly batty one of being responsible for 90% of the deaths in Syria (even though almost half of all deaths have been soldiers from the Syrian Arab Army – presumably Assad has been killing his own soldiers ...). The hollowness of the accusations has been [well documented](#).

The attack on al Assad is reinforced by creating an equivalence between all secular leaders in the Middle East – they are, or were, defined without exception as evil dictators. George Galloway jubilantly declared his support for the Arab Spring in a strongly worded critique of Gaddafi in a radio broadcast in February 2011. ‘I have been waiting for these Arab dictatorships to fall, and it appears that one after the other they are falling, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya’ – Galloway clearly does not see Iraq as part of the pattern.

Galloway repeated this sentiment again at the [Oxford Union](#) in October 2012, in relation to Syria, though admittedly he had turned against the idea of military intervention. While the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt may indeed have had considerable popular support, Galloway in 2012 appears to have been still unaware of the [huge demonstrations](#) in support of Gaddafi in Libya the previous year. In Syria too, big demonstrations in support of the al Assad government took place from a very early stage, notably in [Damascus](#) and [Aleppo](#).

The Arab Spring has been well exposed as a propaganda tool to enable Western powers, with the help of oppressive regimes such as Saudi Arabia, to destabilise secular, progressive, independent countries like Libya and Syria and put in place a pliant leadership. In this interview recorded in Damascus 2013, a Syrian soldier gives his own take on the Arab Spring:

An integral part of the campaign against al Assad is the smearing of those who are sceptical about the negative claims regarding al Assad, don't like bloody proxy wars dressed up as revolutions and moreover support Syria's right to control its own destiny.

They are termed Assadistas, fascists, truthers, monsterphiliacs even (yes I've got links, no I'm not promoting the authors here). The argument goes something like, 'the evil dictator Bashar al Assad gassed his own people, you are trying to prove he's not an evil dictator and didn't gas his own people, therefore you are a fascist supporting an evil dictator'.

Inevitably the campaign to undermine those investigating the truth about Syria extends to preventing them from discussing their findings publicly. British journalists Owen Jones and Jeremy Scahill, both dedicated supporters of forced regime change in Syria, were [instrumental in preventing Mother Agnes Mariam](#), a nun based in Homs, from speaking at the Stop the War Coalition. That STW buckled to such pressure is a shameful moment in their history.

The concerted efforts to stop Tim Anderson, author of [The Dirty War on Syria](#), from speaking at the Crossing the Border conference on the refugee crisis to be held on Lesbos, Greece in July, is another example of the determination of regime change advocates to stifle open discussion, though this time without success.

The attack was orchestrated by [Syrian Solidarity UK](#) (usually referred to by the unfortunate acronym SSUK), notable for its strong support for the [White Helmets](#) who are embedded with al Qaeda in Syria (Jabhat al Nusra). At the same time the group published a [hit piece](#) against the Syrian Solidarity Movement, which is led by a group of pro-Syrian activists and journalists, including Dr Anderson.

If Bashar al Assad were a war criminal he would not have the support of his people, and Syria would not have been able to hold off against externally funded forces as it has done for five years. Before the Syrian war Bashar al Assad was the most popular leader in the Arab world. Polls [show](#) that Bashar al Assad still has the support of the majority of Syrians.



Al Assad's position within Syria is now stronger than ever. Syrians view with horror the thought that extremist takfiris who have collaborated with the West might have a permanent role in Syria's future, and are more than ever determined to resist sectarianism. The al Assads are seen as representing the tolerant, multi-confessional country they are so proud of.

Bashar is an Alawite, his wife Asma is Sunni, and they make a point of showing solidarity with Syria's Christian community, exemplified by the couple's surprise attendance at choir practice at the Church of Our Lady of Damascus [last Christmas](#), a few days after the church suffered a mortar attack. If Bashar al Assad is deposed, it will not be by the will of the Syrian people.

The original source of this article is [21st Century Wire](#)

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Barbara McKenzie](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca