

Timeline of Military-Intelligence Operation: U.S. Had Planned Syrian Civilian Catastrophe Since 2007

By [Tony Cartalucci](#)

Global Research, September 04, 2013

[Land Destroyer](#)

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

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

NBC News' report, "[‘The great tragedy of this century’: More than 2 million refugees forced out of Syria,](#)" stated:

More than 2 million Syrians have poured into neighboring countries as refugees, the United Nations revealed on Tuesday.

Around 5,000 people per day are fleeing the three-year conflict, which the U.N. says has already claimed over 100,000 lives.

"Syria has become the great tragedy of this century — a disgraceful humanitarian calamity with suffering and displacement unparalleled in recent history," said António Guterres, the U.N.'s high commissioner responsible for refugees.

But, while the UN and nations across the West feign shock over the growing humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in and around Syria, the goal of a violent sectarian conflict and its predictable, catastrophic results along with calls to literally "bleed" Syria have been the underlying strategy of special interests in the United States, Israel, Saudi Arabia and their regional partners since at least 2007.

A Timeline: How the Syrian Conflict Really Unfolded

Western media networks have ensured that a singular narrative of "pro-democracy" uprisings turning violent in the face of brutal oppression by the Syrian government after the so-called "Arab Spring" is disseminated across the public. In reality, "pro-democracy" protesters served as a tenuous smokescreen behind which armed foreign-backed extremists took to the streets and countrysides of Syria to execute a sectarian bloodbath years in the making. Here is a timeline that illuminates the true cause of Syria's current conflict and the foreign interests, not the Syrian government, responsible for the tens of thousands dead and millions displaced during the conflict.

1991: Paul Wolfowitz, then Undersecretary of Defense, tells US Army General Wesley Clark that the US has 5-10 years to "clean up those old Soviet client regimes, Syria, Iran, Iraq, before the next great superpower comes on to challenge us." [Fora.TV: Wesley Clark at the Commonwealth Club of California, October 3, 2007.](#)

2001: A classified plot is revealed to US Army General Wesley Clark that the US plans to attack and destroy the governments of 7 nations: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya Somalia, Sudan, and Iran. [Fora.TV: Wesley Clark at the Commonwealth Club of California, October 3, 2007.](#)

2002: US Under Secretary of State John Bolton declares Syria a member of the “Axis of Evil” and warned that “the US would take action.” [BBC: “US Expands ‘Axis of Evil’” May 6, 2002.](#)

2005: US State Department’s National Endowment for Democracy organizes and implements the “Cedar Revolution” in Lebanon directly aimed at undermining Syrian-Iranian influence in Lebanon in favor of Western-backed proxies, most notably Saad Hariri’s political faction. [Counterpunch: “Faking the Case Against Syria,” by Trish Schuh November 19-20, 2005.](#)



Image: Via [Color Revolutions and Geopolitics](#): “As illustrated by the images above, Lebanon’s so-called [2005] Cedar Revolution was an expensive, highly-professional production.” (click image to enlarge)

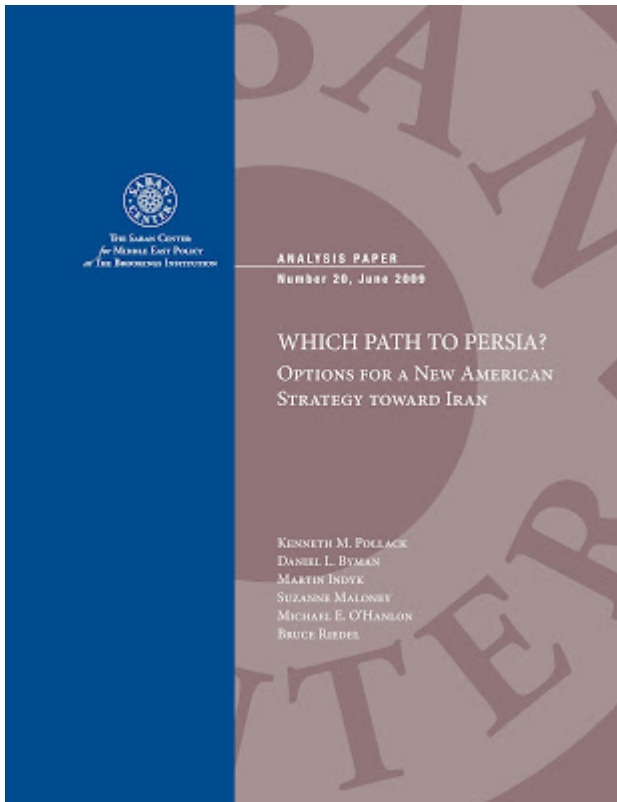
....

2005: Ziad Abdel Nour, [an associate of Bush Administration advisers, policy makers, and media](#) including Neo-Conservatives Paula Dobriansky, James Woolsey, Frank Gaffney, Daniel Pipes, Joseph Farah (World Net Daily), Clifford May, and Daniel Nassif of US State Department-funded Al Hurra and Radio Sawa, [admits](#): “Both the Syrian and Lebanese regimes will be changed- whether they like it or not- whether it’s going to be a military coup or something else... and we are working on it. We know already exactly who’s going to be the replacements. We’re working on it with the Bush administration.” [Counterpunch: “Faking the Case Against Syria,” by Trish Schuh November 19-20, 2005.](#)

2006: Israel [attempts, and fails](#), to destroy Hezbollah in Lebanon after a prolonged aerial bombard that resulted in thousands of civilian deaths. [CNN: “UN: Hezbollah and Israel agree on Monday cease-fire,” August 13, 2006.](#)

2007: Seymour Hersh in the New Yorker reveals that US, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Hariri in Lebanon as well as the Syrian arm of the Muslim Brotherhood were assembling, arming, training, and heavily funding a sectarian extremists front, many of whom had direct ties to Al Qaeda, to unleash in both Lebanon and Syria. The goal was to create and exploit a sectarian divide between Sunni and Shi’ia Muslims. Hersh interviewed intelligence officers who expressed concerns over the “cataclysmic conflict” that would result, and the need to protect ethnic minorities from sectarian atrocities. The report indicated that extremists would be logistically staged in northern Lebanon where they would be able to cross back

and forth into Syria. [New Yorker: "The Redirection," by Seymour Hersh, March 5, 2007.](#)2008: The US State Department begins training, funding, networking, and equipping "activists" through its "Alliance for Youth Movements" where the future protest leaders of the "Arab Spring," [including Egypt's "April 6 Movement"](#) were brought to New York, London, and Mexico, [before being trained by US-funded CANVAS in Serbia](#), and then returning home to begin preparations for 2011. [Land Destroyer: "2011 - Year of the Dupe," December 24, 2011.](#)



[Which Path to Persia? .pdf](#)

....

2009: The Brookings Institution published a report titled, "[Which Path to Persia?](#)" (.pdf), which admits that the Bush Administration "evicted" Syria from Lebanon without building up a strong Lebanese government to replace it (p. 34), that Israel struck a "nascent" Syrian nuclear program, and states the importance of neutralizing Syrian influence before any attack on Iran can be carried out (p. 109). The report then goes on to describe in detail the use of listed terrorist organizations against the government of Iran, [in particular the Mujahedin-e Khalq \(MEK\)](#) (p. 126) and [Baluch insurgents in Pakistan](#) (p.132). [Brookings Institution: "Which Path to Persia? Options for a New American Strategy Toward Iran," June 2009.](#)

2009-2010: [In an April 2011 AFP report](#), Michael Posner, the assistant US Secretary of State for Human Rights and Labor, admitted that the "US government has budgeted \$50 million in the last two years to develop new technologies to help activists protect themselves from arrest and prosecution by authoritarian governments." The report went on to admit that the US (emphasis added) "organized training sessions for 5,000 activists in different parts of the world. A session held in the Middle East about six weeks ago gathered activists from Tunisia, Egypt, [Syria](#) and Lebanon who returned to their countries with the aim of training their colleagues there." Posner would add, "They went back and there's a ripple effect." [AFP: "US](#)

[Trains Activists to Evade Security Forces," April 8, 2011.](#)

2011: Posner's US trained, funded, and equipped activists return to their respective countries across the Arab World to begin their "ripple effect." [Protests, vandalism , and arson sweep across Syria](#) and "[rooftop snipers](#)" begin attacking both protesters and Syrian security forces, [just as Western-backed movements were documented doing in Bangkok, Thailand one year earlier](#). With a similar gambit already unfolding in Libya, [US senators begin threatening Syria](#) with long planned and sought after military intervention. [Land Destroyer: "Syria: Intervention Inevitable," April 29, 2011.](#)



Image: *Real genocidal atrocities during the "Arab Spring" occurred at the hands of NATO and its proxy sectarian terrorists. Pictured is Sirte, Libya, after NATO-armed rebels [surrounded it, cut off power, water, food, and emergency aid, and allowed NATO to bombard it](#) with daily airstrikes before a final orgy of death and destruction left its streets and facades crumbling. This is the "civilian protection" the UN and its enforcement arm NATO plan on bringing to Syria.*

....

2012: With NATO's Libyan intervention resulting in a weak [US-backed Tripoli client-regime](#), perpetual infighting, nationwide genocide, and [the succession of Benghazi](#) in the east, the [NATO-backed Libyan Islamic Fighting Group \(LIFG\)](#), listed by the [US State Department as a Foreign Terrorist Organization \(listed #27\)](#) begins mobilizing weapons, cash, and fighters to begin destabilizing Syria. [Headed by LIFG's Abdul Hakim Belhaj](#), this would be the first confirmed presence of Al Qaeda in Syria, flush with NATO weapons and cash. [The Washington Post would confirm](#), just as stated by Hersh in 2007, that the US and Saudi Arabia were arming the sectarian extremists, now labeled the "Free Syrian Army." The Post also admits that the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, as stated in Hersh's 2007 report, was also involved in arming and backing extremist fighters. [Land Destroyer: "US Officially Arming Extremists in Syria," May 16, 2012.](#)

Saving Syria: Assessing Options for Regime Change

David Byman, Michael Dezer, Kenneth Pollack, and Salman Sharif

SYRIA IS TRAPPED ON A CRUMBLING PRECIPICE, and however it might fall will entail significant risks for the United States and for the Syrian people.

The brutal regime of Bashar al-Assad is employing its loyal military forces and sectarian thugs to crush the opposition and reassert its tyranny. Even if Bashar falls, Syria may not be out of the woods: an increasingly likely alternative to the current regime is a bloody civil war similar to what we saw in Lebanon, Bosnia, Congo, and most recently in Iraq. The horrors of such a war might even exceed the brutal repressions of Assad's current, and would cause spillover into Syria's neighbors—Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Israel—that could be disastrous for them and for American interests in the Middle East.¹

But the unrest in Syria, which is now entering its second year, also offers some important opportunities, ones that would come from the fall of the regime of Bashar al-Assad, whose family has ruled the country with an iron grip for over fifty years. Syria is Iraq's oldest and most important ally in the Arab world, and the Iranian regime has doubled down on Assad, providing him with financial aid and military support to shore up his regime. Assad's departure would deal a significant blow to Tehran, further isolating it at a time when it has few friends in the region or the world. In addition, Damascus is restless in its hostility toward Israel, and Assad's regime is also a longtime supporter of extremist groups like Hezbollah and Hamas, and has at times aided al-Qaeda terrorists and former regime

defectors in Iraq. The regime's collapse, therefore, could have significant benefits for the United States and its allies in the region.

Actually saving Assad, however, will not be easy. Although the Obama administration has for months called for Assad to go, every policy option to remove him is flawed, and some could even make the situation worse—seemingly a recipe for inaction. Doing nothing, however, means standing by while Assad murders his own people, and Syria plunges into civil war and risks becoming a failed state. Already the violence is staggering: as of March 2012, at least 8,000 Syrians have died and thousands more have been arrested and tortured in trying to topple the regime. At the same time, Syria is fragmenting. The Syrian opposition remains divided, and the Free Syrian Army is more a brand than a meaningful, unified force. Al-Qaeda is urging fighters to join the fray in Syria, and sectarian killings and atrocities are growing. Should the violence continue to intensify, Syria's neighbors may increase their meddling, and instability could spread, further weakening already-fragile neighbors like Iraq and Lebanon.

So to protect U.S. interests, Assad cannot triumph. But a failed Syria, one attacked by civil war, would be just as bad. Thus, U.S. policy must walk this tight-rope, trying to remove Assad, but doing so in a way that keeps Syria as intact as possible, jettisoning its backers and standing orders at home. At the end of the day, however, removing Assad may not be desirable.

Image: Brookings Institution's Middle East Memo #21 "[Assessing Options for Regime Change \(.pdf\)](#)," makes no secret that the humanitarian "responsibility to protect" is but a pretext for long-planned regime change.

....
 2012: The US policy think-tank Brookings Institution in its Middle East Memo #21 "[Assessing Options for Regime Change \(.pdf\)](#)," admits that it does not seek any negotiated ceasefire under the UN's "Kofi Annan peace plan" that leaves Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in power and would rather arm militants, even with the knowledge they will never succeed, to "bleed" the government, "keeping a regional adversary weak, while avoiding the costs of direct intervention." This reveals that US policy does not view US interference in Syria as a moral imperative predicated on defending human rights, but rather using this false predication to couch aspirations of regional hegemony. [Land Destroyer: "US Brookings Wants to "Bleed" Syria to Death," May 28, 2012.](#)

And, just this year, it was revealed that despite the West's feigned military and political paralysis regarding the Syrian conflict, the US and Great Britain have been covertly funding and arming sectarian extremists to the tune of billions of dollars [and arming them with literally thousands of tons of weaponry](#). Despite claims of "carefully vetting" "moderate" militant factions, the prominence of Al Qaeda-linked extremist groups indicates that the majority of Western support, laundered through Qatar and Saudi Arabia, is being purposefully put into the hands of the very sectarian extremists identified in Seymour Hersh's 2007 article, "The Redirection."

US Created and is Now Using Syrian Catastrophe to Justify Intervention

The non-debate taking place now to justify US military intervention in a conflict they themselves started and have intentionally perpetuated, is whether chemical weapons were used in Damascus on August 21, 2013 – not even "who" deployed them. The weakness of the US' argument has seen an unprecedented backlash across both the world's populations and the global diplomatic community. And [despite only 9% of the American public](#)

[supporting a military intervention in Syria](#), Congress appears poised to not only green-light “limited strikes,” but may approve of a wider military escalation.

In Seymour Hersh’s 2007 New Yorker article, “[The Redirection](#),” Robert Baer, a former CIA agent in Lebanon, warned of the sectarian bloodbath the US, Israel, and Saudi Arabia were planning to unleash. He stated:

“we’ve got Sunni Arabs preparing for cataclysmic conflict, and we will need somebody to protect the Christians in Lebanon. It used to be the French and the United States who would do it, and now it’s going to be Nasrallah and the Shiites”

Hezbollah’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah, also featured in Hersh’s report, would in turn also warn of an imminent and spreading sectarian war purposefully stoked by the West:

Nasrallah said he believed that President Bush’s goal was “the drawing of a new map for the region. They want the partition of Iraq. Iraq is not on the edge of a civil war—there is a civil war. There is ethnic and sectarian cleansing. The daily killing and displacement which is taking place in Iraq aims at achieving three Iraqi parts, which will be sectarian and ethnically pure as a prelude to the partition of Iraq. Within one or two years at the most, there will be total Sunni areas, total Shiite areas, and total Kurdish areas. Even in Baghdad, there is a fear that it might be divided into two areas, one Sunni and one Shiite.”

He went on, “I can say that President Bush is lying when he says he does not want Iraq to be partitioned. All the facts occurring now on the ground make you swear he is dragging Iraq to partition. And a day will come when he will say, ‘I cannot do anything, since the Iraqis want the partition of their country and I honor the wishes of the people of Iraq.’ ”

Nasrallah said he believed that America also wanted to bring about the partition of Lebanon and of Syria. In Syria, he said, the result would be to push the country “into chaos and internal battles like in Iraq.” In Lebanon, “There will be a Sunni state, an Alawi state, a Christian state, and a Druze state.” But, he said, “I do not know if there will be a Shiite state.”

It would be difficult for anyone to look across the scarred landscape of today’s Syria and not see that this horrific conspiracy was realized in full. The Western media [is now acquainting the public](#) with the possibility of a partitioned Syria, echoing the warnings of Nasrallah years ago. The goals of a US military strike would be to “degrade” the capabilities of the Syrian government, while bolstering the terrorist legions still operating within and along Syria’s borders.

What we are witnessing in Syria today is the direct result of a documented conspiracy, not by a “brutal Syrian regime” “oppressing” its own people, but of a US, Israel, and Saudi Arabia radicalizing, arming, and unleashing a sectarian tidal wave they knew well ahead of time would cause atrocities, genocide, mass displacements and even the geopolitical partitioning of Syria and beyond. The intentional destabilization of the region is meant to weaken Lebanon, Syria, Iran, and Iraq – and even Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, and others – to accomplish what the depleted, impotent US and Israeli forces could not achieve. Military intervention now seeks to tip the balance of an already teetering region.

The attacks on Syria are not humanitarian by any measure. They are simply the latest stage of a long-running plan to divide and destroy the region, leaving the West the sole regional hegemonic power.

The original source of this article is [Land Destroyer](#)
Copyright © [Tony Cartalucci](#), [Land Destroyer](#), 2013

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

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Tony Cartalucci](#)

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