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Tiptoeing Toward War on Syria

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Events in Syria resemble the run-up to Obama's Libya war. Victims are called aggressors. Pretexts are created for intervention.

Washington appears headed for more war. Lack of public support doesn't matter. A New York Times/CBS poll showed 62% of respondents don't believe America has a "responsibility" to intervene.

A new Pew survey at best found lukewarm support. Asked how Washington should respond if Assad used chemical weapons, 45% supported intervention while 31% opposed. Another 25% had no opinion.

Americans remain largely indifferent. Only 18% of Pew respondents said they follow Syrian events closely. The Times/CBS poll registered 10%. Apathy gives Obama more leverage. Expect him to take full advantage.

Perhaps Israeli involvement is planned. Thousands of IDF reservists were called up. On April 30, special drill exercises began along the Syrian/Lebanese borders.

They'll continue through Sunday, May 5. Ground, air and naval branches are involved. A senior IDF official said the drill simulates a sudden security threat escalation. It tests the IDF's ability to respond quickly.

Mossad-connected DEBKAfile said they're "ready for a role in a potential American operation against Syria." Perhaps they'll be co-aggressors. NATO countries may join them. It's usually planned that way.

On April 30, the Washington Post headlined "Obama moving toward sending lethal arms to Syrian rebels, officials say."

The New York Times reported the same thing. It said "(s)uch a decision would be a policy shift for the Obama administration, which has stepped up its nonlethal aid but stopped short of lethal weaponry and expressed reluctance about greater military" involvement.

The Times ignored its June 21, 2012 report. It headlined "CIA Said to Aid Steering Arms to Syrian Opposition." They're based in southern Turkey. They're funneling arms cross-border.

They include "automatic rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, ammunition and some antitank weapons….They're using "a shadowy network of intermediaries…."

The operation "is the most detailed known instance" of direct US support. "CIA officers are (in Turkey) trying to make new sources and recruit people said one Arab intelligence source

who is briefed regularly by American counterparts."

The Times hinted but stopped short of saying CIA agents operate covertly inside Syria. Washington's been involved in supplying weapons and munitions all along. They flow through Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and perhaps Israel.

On April 30, The Times should have headlined Obama Considers Expanding Lethal Aid.

The Washington Post went further. It cited an unnamed US official saying Obama's ready to move on "the left side" of options. They range from "arming the opposition to boots on the ground. We're clearly on an upward trajectory. We've" upped the ante. We've put "more skin in the game."

On May 1, Haaretz headlined "Former IDF Chief: Syria chemical weapons must be met with response," saying:

CNN interviewed former IDF Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi. He said after "confidently" determining that Assad used chemical weapons, not responding would send "the wrong message."

"Doing nothing (is) not an option." He suggested helping opposition forces "in a more concrete way, like providing them….weapons (and) maybe impos(ing) a no-fly zone, at least on part of Syria."

He omitted explaining that imposing one is an act of war. It requires taking out Syrian air defenses, as well as command and control capability. It means bombing Syria to do it. It replicates Washington's-led NATO war on Libya.

Ashkenazi called Syrian regime change a major blow to Iran and Hezbollah. He said achieving it represents a "mixed picture" for Israel.

"Syria was and still is the logistical hub of Hezbollah, and most of (its weapons come) from Syrian depots," he claimed.

"Iran really (may) lose" its major regional ally "so that's good news for Israel." He added that Israel can deal effectively with "cross-border terror."

On May 1, Press TV headlined "Militants carry out new chemical attack near Idlib: Syrian UN envoy," saying:

Bashar al-Jaafari said militants spread plastic bag contents containing chemical material during an attack. Many Syrians were harmed by the "heinous and irresponsible act."

The Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) explained more. Al-Jaafari stressed that his government won't ever use chemical weapons against its people.

He demanded that countries claiming Syrian chemical weapons use "provide credible information on the alleged incidents so as to study and assess them."

He denounced baseless accusations. "We expect the UN General Secretariat not to be part of this campaign targeting Syria."

“What happened in Iraq has been alive in our mind until this moment, and our region in general and Iraq in particular are living the repercussions of such false claims.”

He said his government is “ready to welcome an investigation team in less than 24 hours according to the agreement reached with Head of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, Angela Kane, on April 4th.”

He stressed the importance of adhering to the UN Charter and other international law, as well as respecting Syrian sovereignty.

“This requires that the Syrian government, being the party concerned, be acquainted with the details of incidents which foreign countries claim they have happened on the Syrian land.”

Despite repeated requests, no information’s been provided. Failure to do so suggests Ban Ki-moon’s attempt “to politicize the issue.” He does it repeatedly in league with Washington, other Western countries and anti-Syrian regional ones.

What’s ongoing is “similar to what happened in Iraq before it was invaded,” said al-Jafaari.

He added that terrorists spread “unknown powder in the faces of Syrians gathered in Shabour neighborhood in Idleb. Many showed symptoms of chemical weapons exposure.

Those affected were taken to Turkish hospitals. Al-Jafaari expects “today or tomorrow you will hear again that the Turkish government has new tools indicating that the Syrian government used chemical weapons against its own people.”

On April 28, Robert Fisk headlined “Syria and sarin gas: US claims have a very familiar ring,” saying:

Reports that Assad used chemical weapons “are part of a retold drama riddled with plot-holes.”

“It all comes back to that most infantile cliche of all: that the US and Israel fear Assad’s chemical weapons falling into the wrong hands.”

“They are frightened, in other words, that these chemicals might end up in the armoury of the very same rebels, especially the Islamists, that Washington, London, Paris, Qatar and Saudi Arabia are supporting.”

“And if these are the ‘wrong hands,’ then presumably the weapons in Assad’s armoury are in the ‘right hands.’ That was the case with Saddam Hussein’s chemical weapons – until he used them against the Kurds.”

The “headlines are all the same: Syria uses chemical weapons. That’s how the theatre works.” Truth isn’t stranger than fiction. It’s entirely absent. A mantra of lies replaced it.

On May 1, Lebanon’s Daily Star headlined “Nasrallah hints Assad’s allies could intervene,” saying:

He said Assad has “true friends in the region who will not allow Syria to fall into the hands of the United States, Israel, and ‘takfiri’ groups.”

"How will this happen? Details will come later. I say this based on information (not) wishful thinking."

"If the situation gets more dangerous, states, resistance movements and other forces will be obliged to intervene effectively in the confrontation on the ground."

He suggested that Russia and Iran might get involved. The atmosphere is highly charged. Anything ahead is possible.

On April 30, Wall Street Journal editors hyped an alleged Al Qaeda threat. "In recent months," they said, it "revived or started terrorist franchises in Iraq and Syria, across northern Africa and in Nigeria."

It "set up bases in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia." It's "more active in more places."

Al Qaeda is a CIA creation. Washington uses it strategically as both enemy and ally. Sometimes it's done simultaneously. Al Nusra is an Al Qaeda affiliate.

It's a key part of Washington's war on Syria. Death squad diplomacy describes it. The State Department declared Al Nusra a foreign terrorist organization. It doesn't matter when used against enemies. It's getting Western supplied lethal aid.

Al Qaeda "resurgence" and "Middle East instability" reflect official US policy. Journal editors revealed their position. Fear-mongering was intentional.

They want US forces kept "on offense overseas." They urge more war, not peace. Obama may likely oblige them. His comments and body language suggest it.

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