

# Unknown Snipers and Western backed “Regime Change”

A Historical Review and Analysis

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Article originally published in November 2011, of particular relevance to what is happening in Ukraine

*Unknown snipers played a pivotal role throughout the so-called « Arab Spring Revolutions » yet, in spite of reports of their presence in the mainstream media, surprisingly little attention has been paid to their purpose and role.*

The Russian investigative journalist Nikolay Starikov has written a book which discusses the role of unknown snipers in the destabilization of countries targeted for regime change by the United States and its allies. The following article attempts to elucidate some historical examples of this technique with a view to providing a background within which to understand the current cover war on the people of Syria by death squads in the service of Western intelligence.[1]

Romania 1989.

In Susanne Brandstätter's documentary 'Checkmate: Strategy of a Revolution' aired on Arte television station some years ago, Western intelligence officials revealed how death squads were used to destabilize Romania and turn its people against the head of state Nicolai Ceaucescu.

Brandstätter's film is a must see for anyone interested in how Western intelligence agencies, human rights groups and the corporate press collude in the systematic destruction of countries whose leadership conflicts with the interests of big capital and empire.

Former secret agent with the French secret service, the DGSE (La *Direction générale de la sécurité extérieure*) Dominique Fonvielle, spoke candidly about the role of Western intelligence operatives in destabilizing the Romanian population.

“how do you organize a revolution? I believe the first step is to locate oppositional forces in a given country. It is sufficient to have a highly developed intelligence service in order to determine which people are credible enough to have influence at their hands to destabilize the people to the

disadvantage of the ruling regime”[2]

This open and rare admission of Western sponsorship of terrorism was justified on the grounds of the “greater good” brought to Romania by free-market capitalism. It was necessary, according to the strategists of Romania’s “revolution”, for some people to die.

Today, Romania remains one of the poorest countries in Europe. A report on Euractiv reads:

“Most Romanians associate the last two decades with a continuous process of impoverishment and deteriorating living standards, according to Romania’s Life Quality Research Institute, quoted by the Financiarul daily.” [3]

The western intelligence officials interviewed in the documentary also revealed how the Western press played a central role in disinformation. For example, the victims of Western-backed snipers were photographed by presented to the world as evidence of a crazed dictator who was “killing his own people”.

To this day, there is a Museum in the back streets of Timisoara Romania which promotes the myth of the “Romanian Revolution”. The Arte documentary was one of the rare occasions when the mainstream press revealed some of the dark secrets of Western liberal democracy. The documentary caused a scandal when it was aired in France, with the prestigious Le Monde Diplomatique discussing the moral dilemma of the West’s support of terror in its desire to spread ‘democracy’.

Since the destruction of Libya and the ongoing cover war on Syria, Le Monde Diplomatique has stood safely on the side of political correction, condemning Bachar Al Assad for the crimes of the DGSE and the CIA. In its current edition, the front page article reads *Ou est la gauche? Where is the left ?* Certainly not in the pages of Le Monde Diplomatique !

#### Russia 1993

During Boris Yeltsin’s counter-revolution in Russia in 1993, when the Russian parliament was bombed resulting in the deaths of thousands of people, Yeltsin’s counter-revolutionaries made extensive use of snipers. According to many eye witness reports, snipers were seen shooting civilians from the building opposite the US embassy in Moscow. The snipers were attributed to the Soviet government by the international media.[4]

#### Venezuela 2002

In 2002, the CIA attempted to overthrow Hugo Chavez, president of Venezuela, in a military coup. On the 11th of April 2002, an opposition March towards the presidential palace was organized by the US backed Venezuelan opposition. Snipers hidden in buildings near the palace opened fire on protestors killing 18. The Venezuelan and international media claimed that Chavez was “killing his own people” thereby justifying the military coup presented as a humanitarian intervention. It was subsequently proved that the coup had been organized by the CIA but the identity of the snipers was never established.

#### Thailand April 2010

On April 12th 2010, Christian Science Monitor published a detailed report of the riots in Thailand between “red-shirt” activists and the Thai government. The article headline read: ‘Thailand’s red shirt protests darken with unknown snipers, parade of coffins’.

Like their counterparts in Tunisia, Thailand's red shirts were calling for the resignation of the Thai prime minister. While a heavy-handed response by the Thai security forces to the protestors was indicated in the report, the government's version of events was also reported:

"Mr. Abhisit has used solemn televised addresses to tell his story. He has blamed rogue gunmen, or "terrorists," for the intense violence (at least 21 people died and 800 were injured) and emphasized the need for a full investigation into the killings of both soldiers and protesters. State television has broadcast repeated images of soldiers coming under fire from bullets and explosives."

The CSM report went on to quote Thai military officials and unnamed Western diplomats:

"military observers say Thai troops stumbled into a trap set by agents provocateurs with military expertise. By pinning down soldiers after dark and sparking chaotic battles with unarmed protesters, the unknown gunmen ensured heavy casualties on both sides.

Some were caught on camera and seen by reporters, including this one. Snipers targeted military ground commanders, indicating a degree of advance planning and knowledge of Army movements, say Western diplomats briefed by Thai officials. While leaders of the demonstrations have disowned the use of firearms and say their struggle is nonviolent, it is unclear whether radicals in the movement knew of the trap.

"You can't claim to be a peaceful political movement and have an arsenal of weapons out the back if needed. You can't have it both ways," says a Western diplomat in regular contact with protest leaders [5]

The CSM article also explores the possibility that the snipers could be rogue elements in the Thai military, agents provocateurs used to justify a crack down on democratic opposition. Thailand's ruling elite is currently coming under pressure from a group called the Red Shirts.[6]

#### Kyrgyzstan June 2010

Ethnic violence broke out in the Central Asian republic of Kyrgyzstan in June 2010. It was widely reported that unknown snipers opened fire on members of the Uzbek minority in Kyrgyzstan. Eurasia.net reports:

"In many Uzbek mahallas, inhabitants offer convincing testimony of gunmen targeting their neighborhoods from vantage points. Men barricaded into the Arygali Niyazov neighborhood, for example, testified to seeing gunmen on the upper floors of a nearby medical institute hostel with a view over the district's narrow streets. They said that during the height of the violence these gunmen were covering attackers and looters, assaulting their area with sniper fire. Men in other Uzbek neighborhoods tell similar stories

. « Among the rumours and unconfirmed reports circulating in Kyrgyzstan after the 2010 violence were claims that water supplies to Uzbek areas were about to be poisoned. Such rumours had also been spread against the Ceausescu regime in Romania during the CIA-backed coup in 1989. Eurasia.net goes on to claim that:

“Many people are convinced that they’ve seen foreign mercenaries acting as snipers. These alleged foreign combatants are distinguished by their appearance – inhabitants report seeing black snipers and tall, blonde, female snipers from the Baltic states. The idea that English snipers have been roaming the streets of Osh shooting at Uzbeks is also popular. There’ve been no independent corroborations of such sightings by foreign journalists or representatives of international organizations.” [7]

None of these reports have been independently investigated or corroborated. It is therefore impossible to draw any hard conclusions from these stories.

Ethnic violence against Uzbek citizens in Kyrgyzstan occurred *pari pasu* with a popular revolt against the US-backed regime, which many analysts have attributed to the machinations of Moscow.

The Bakiyev régime came to power in a CIA-backed people-power coup known to the world as the Tulip Revolution in 2005.

Located to the West of China and bordering Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan hosts one of America’s biggest and most important military bases in Central Asia, the Manas Air Base, which is vital for the NATO occupation of neighbouring Afghanistan.

Despite initial worries, US/Kyrgyz relations have remained good under the regime of President Roza Otunbayeva. This is not surprising as Otunbayeva had previously participated in the US-created Tulip Revolution in 2004, taking power as foreign minister.

To date no proper investigation has been conducted into the origins of the ethnic violence that spread throughout the south of Kyrgyzstan in 2010, nor have the marauding gangs of unknown snipers been identified and apprehended.

Given the geostrategic and geopolitical importance of Kyrgyzstan to both the United States and Russia, and the former’s track-record of using death squads to divide and weaken countries so as to maintain US domination, US involvement in the dissemination of terrorism in Kyrgyzstan cannot be ruled out. One effective way of maintaining a grip on Central Asian countries would be to exacerbate ethnic tensions.

In August 6th 2008, the Russian newspaper Kommersant reported that a US arms cache had been found in a house in the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek, which was being rented by two American citizens. The US embassy claimed the arms were being used for “anti-terrorism” exercises. However, this was not confirmed by Kyrgyz authorities. [8]

Covert US military support to terrorist groups in the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia proved to be an effective strategy in creating the conditions for “humanitarian” bombing in 1999. An effective means of keeping the government in Bishkek firmly on America’s side would be to insist on a US and European presence in the country to help “protect” the Uzbek minority.

Military intervention similar to that in the former Yugoslavia by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe has already been advocated by the New York Times, whose misleading article on the riots on June 24th 2010 has the headline “Kyrgyzstan asks European Security Body for Police Teams”. The article is misleading as the headline

contradicts the actual report which cites a Kyrgyz official stating:

“A government spokesman said officials had discussed an outside police presence with the O.S.C.E., but said he could not confirm that a request for a deployment had been made.”

There is no evidence in the article of any request by the Kyrgyz government for military intervention. In fact, the article presents much evidence to the contrary. However, before the reader has a chance to read the explanation of the Kyrgyz government, the New York Times' writer presents the now all too horribly familiar narrative of oppressed peoples begging the West to come and bomb or occupy their country:

“Ethnic Uzbeks in the south have clamored for international intervention. Many Uzbeks said they were attacked in their neighborhoods not only by civilian mobs, but also by the Kyrgyz military and police officers”[9]

Only towards the end of the article do we find out that the Kyrgyz authorities blamed the US-backed dictator for fomenting ethnic violence in the country, through the use of Islamic jihadists in Uzbekistan. This policy of using ethnic tension to create an environment of fear in order to prop up an extremely unpopular dictatorship, the policy of using Islamic Jihadism as a political tool to create what former US National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski called “ an arc of crisis”, ties in well with the history of US involvement in Central Asia from the creation of Al Qaida in Afghanistan in 1978 to the present day.

Again, the question persists, who were the “unknown snipers” terrorizing the Uzbek population, where did their weapons come from and who would benefit from ethnic conflict in Central Asia's geopolitical hotspot?

Tunisia January 2011

On January 16th 2011, CNN reported that “armed gangs” were fighting Tunisian security forces. [10] Many of the murders committed throughout the Tunisian uprising were by “unknown snipers”. There were also videos posted on the internet showing Swedish nationals detained by Tunisian security forces. The men were clearly armed with sniper rifles. Russia Today aired the dramatic pictures.[11]

In spite of articles by professor Michel Chossudovsky, William Engdahl and others showing how the uprisings in North Africa were following the patterns of US backed people-power coups rather than genuinely popular revolutions, left wing parties and organizations continued to believe the version of events presented to them by Al Jazeera and the mainstream press. Had the left taken a leaf from old Lenin's book they would have transposed his comments on the February/March revolution in Russia thus:

“The whole course of events in the January/February Revolution clearly shows that the British, French and American embassies, with their agents and “connections”,... directly organized a plot.. in conjunction with a section of the generals and army and Tunisian garrison officers, with the express object of deposing Ben Ali”

What the left did not understand is that sometimes it is necessary for imperialism to

overthrow some of its clients. A suitable successor to Ben Ali could always be found among the feudalists of the Muslim Brotherhood who now look likely to take power.

In their revolutionary sloganeering and arrogant insistence that the events in Tunisia and Egypt were “spontaneous and popular uprisings” they committed what Lenin identified as the most dangerous sins in a revolution, namely, the substitution of the abstract for the concrete. In other words, left wing groups were simply fooled by the sophistication of the Western backed “Arab Spring” events.

That is why the violence of the demonstrators and in particular the widespread use of snipers possibly linked to Western intelligence was the great unthought of the Tunisian uprising. The same techniques would be used in Libya a few weeks later, forcing the left to back track and modify its initial enthusiasm for the CIA’s “Arab Spring”.

When we are talking about the “left” here, we are referring to genuine left wing parties, that is to say, parties who supported the Great People’s Socialist Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in their long and brave fight against Western imperialism, not the infantile petty bourgeois dupes who supported NATO’s Benghazi terrorists. The blatant idiocy of such a stance should be crystal clear to anyone who understands global politics and class struggle.

#### Egypt 2011

On October 20th 2011, the Telegraph newspaper published an article entitled, “Our brother died for a better Egypt”. According to the Telegraph, Mina Daniel, an anti-government activist in Cairo, had been ‘shot from an unknown sniper, wounding him fatally in the chest’

Inexplicably, the article is no longer available on the Telegraph’s website for online perusal. But a google search for ‘Egypt, unknown sniper, Telegraph’ clearly shows the above quoted explanation for Mina Daniel’s death. So, who could these “unknown snipers” be?

On February 6th Al Jazeera reported that Egyptian journalist Ahmad Mahmoud was shot by snipers as he attempted to cover clashes between Egyptian security forces and protestors. Referring to statements made by Mahmoud’s wife Enas Abdel-Alim, the Al Jazeera article insinuates that Mahmoud may have been killed by Egyptian security forces:

“Abdel-Alim said several eyewitnesses told her a uniformed police captain with Egypt’s notorious Central Security forces yelled at her husband to stop filming.

Before Mahmoud even had a chance to react, she said, a sniper shot him.” [12]

While the Al Jazeera article advances the theory that the snipers were agents of the Mubarak regime, their role in the uprising still remains a mystery. Al Jazeera, the Qatar-based television stations owned by the Emir Hamid Bin Khalifa Al Thani, played a key role in provoking protests in Tunisia and Egypt before launching a campaign of unmitigated pro-NATO war propaganda and lies during the destruction of Libya.

The Qatari channel been a central participant in the current covert war waged by NATO agencies and their clients against the Republic of Syria. Al Jazeera’s incessant disinformation against Libya and Syria resulted in the resignation of several prominent journalists such as Beirut station chief Ghassan Bin Jeddo[13] and senior Al Jazeera executive Wadah Khanfar who was forced to resign after a wikileaks cable revealed he was co-operating with the Central Intelligence Agency.[14]



Many people were killed during the US-backed colour revolution in Egypt. Although, the killings have been attributed to former US semi-client Hosni Mubarak, the involvement of Western intelligence cannot be ruled out. However, it should be pointed out that the role of unknown snipers in mass demonstrations remains complex and multi-faceted and therefore one should not jump to conclusions. For example, after the Bloody Sunday massacre (*Domhnach na Fola*) in Derry, Ireland 1972, where peaceful demonstrators were shot dead by the British army, British officials claimed that they had come under fire from snipers. But the 30 year long Bloody Sunday inquiry subsequently proved this to be false. But the question persists once more, who were the snipers in Egypt and whose purposes did they serve?

#### Libya 2011

During the destabilization of Libya, a video was aired by Al Jazeera purporting to show peaceful “pro-democracy” demonstrators being fired upon by “Gaddafi’s forces”. The video was edited to convince the viewer that anti-Gaddafi demonstrators were being murdered by the security forces. However, the unedited version of the video is available on utube. It clearly shows pro-Gaddafi demonstrators with Green flags being fired upon by unknown snipers. The attribution of NATO-linked crimes to the security forces of the Libyan Jamahiriya was a constant feature of the brutal media war waged against the Libyan people. [15]

#### Syria 2011

The people of Syria have been beset by death squads and snipers since the outbreak of violence there in March. Hundreds of Syrian soldiers and security personnel have been murdered, tortured and mutilated by Salafist and Muslim Brotherhood militants. Yet the international media corporations continue to spread the pathetic lie that the deaths are the result of Bachar Al Assad’s dictatorship.

When I visited Syria in April of this year, I personally encountered merchants and citizens in Hama who told me they had seen armed terrorists roaming the streets of that once peaceful city, terrorizing the neighbourhood. I recall speaking to a fruit seller in the city of Hama who spoke about the horror he had witnessed that day. As he described the scenes of violence to me, my attention was arrested by a newspaper headline in English from the Washington Post shown on Syrian television: “CIA backs Syrian opposition”. The Central Intelligence Agency provides training and funding for groups who do the bidding of US imperialist interests. The history of the CIA shows that backing opposition forces means providing them with arms and finance, actions illegal under international law.

A few days later, while at a hostel in the ancient, cultured city of Aleppo, I spoke to a Syrian business man and his family. The business man ran many hotels in the city and was pro-Assad. He told me that he used to watch Al Jazeera television but now had doubts about their honesty. As we conversed, the Al Jazeera television in the background showed scenes of Syrian soldiers beating and torturing protestors. “ Now if that is true, it is simply unacceptable” he said. It is sometimes impossible to verify whether the images shown on television are true or not. Many of the crimes attributed to the Syrian army have been committed by the armed gangs, such as the dumping of mutilated bodies into the river in Hama, presented to the world as more proof of the crimes of the Assad regime.

There is a minority of innocent opponents of the Assad regime who believe everything they see and hear on Al Jazeera and the other pro-Western satellite stations. These people simply do not understand the intricacies of international politics.

But the facts on the ground show that most people in Syria support the government. Syrians have access to all internet websites and international TV channels. They can watch BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera, read the New York Times online or Le Monde before tuning into their own state media. In this respect, many Syrians are more informed about international politics than the average European or American. Most Europeans and American believe their own media. Few are capable of reading the Syrian press in original Arabic or watching Syrian television. The Western powers are the masters of discourse, who own the means of communication. The Arab Spring has been the most horrifying example of the wanton abuse of this power.

Disinformation is effective in sowing the seeds of doubt among those who are seduced by Western propaganda. Syrian state media has disproved hundreds of Al Jazeera lies since the beginning of this conflict. Yet the western media has refused to even report the Syrian government's position lest fair coverage of the other side of this story encourage a modicum of critical thought in the public mind.

Conclusion.

The use of mercenaries, death squads and snipers by Western intelligence agencies is well documented. No rational government attempting to stay in power would resort to unknown snipers to intimidate its opponents. Shooting at innocent protestors would be counterproductive in the face of unmitigated pressure from Western governments determined to install a client regime in Damascus. Shooting of unarmed protestors is only acceptable in dictatorships that enjoy the unconditional support of Western governments such as Bahrain, Honduras or Colombia.

A government which is so massively supported by the population of Syria would not sabotage its own survival by setting snipers against the protests of a small minority.

The opposition to the Syrian regime is, in fact, miniscule. Tear gas, mass arrests and other non lethal methods would be perfectly sufficient for a government wishing to control unarmed demonstrators.

Snipers are used to create terror, fear and anti-regime propaganda. They are an integral feature of Western sponsored regime change.

If one were to make a serious criticism of the Syrian government over the past few months, it is that they have failed to implement effective anti-terrorism measures in the country.

The Syrian people want troops on the streets and the roofs of public buildings. In the weeks and months ahead, the Syrian armed forces will probably rely more and more on their Russian military specialists to strengthen the country's defenses as the Western crusade begun in Libya in March spreads to the Levant.

There is no conclusive proof that the snipers murdering men, women and children in Syria are the agents of Western imperialism. But there is overwhelming proof that Western imperialism is attempting to destroy the Syrian state. As in Libya, they have never once mentioned the possibility of negotiations between the so-called opposition and the Syrian government. The West wants regime change and is determined to repeat the slaughter in Libya to achieve this geopolitical objective.

It now looks likely that the cradle of civilization and science will be overrun by semi-literate



barbarians as the terminal decline of the West plays itself out in the deserts of the East.

## Notes

- [1] <http://nstarikov.ru/en/>
- [2] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1l8qjX4SzBY&feature=related>
- [3] <http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/romania-says-poverty-reduction-impossible-target-news-468172>
- [4] <http://www.truthinmedia.org/Bulletins/tim98-3-10.html>
- [5] <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2010/0412/Thailand-s-red-shirt-protests-darken-wit-h-unknown-snipers-parade-of-coffins>
- [6] <http://www.activistpost.com/2010/12/thailand-stage-set-for-another-color.html>
- [7] <http://www.eurasianet.org/taxonomy/term/2813?page=6>
- [8] [http://kommersant.com/p1008364/r\\_500/U.S.-Kyrgyzstan\\_relations/](http://kommersant.com/p1008364/r_500/U.S.-Kyrgyzstan_relations/)
- [9] <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/25/world/asia/25kyrgyz.html>
- [10] [http://articles.cnn.com/2011-01-16/world/tunisia.protests\\_1\\_troops-battle-unity-government-tunisia?s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2011-01-16/world/tunisia.protests_1_troops-battle-unity-government-tunisia?s=PM:WORLD)
- [11] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIFxqXPQEU&feature=related>
- [12] <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/anger-in-egypt/2011/02/201126201341479784.html>
- [13] <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4060180,00.html>
- [14] <http://intelligencenews.wordpress.com/2011/09/21/01-828/>
- [15] [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQtM-59jDAo&feature=player\\_embedded#!](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQtM-59jDAo&feature=player_embedded#!)

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