

## PM: Syria: The Next Move on the Chess Board

By Polly Mann

Although it would seem unlikely that in international affairs the US government would operate with one set strategy, its behavior indicates it does. So while it might appear that the recent conflict in Libya was strictly an internal affair and the US/UN, for the best of humanitarian reasons, accomplished regime change and brought peace and security to that nation, Finian Cunningham, Middle East and East Africa correspondent for the Global Research Centre, Canada, is among those who would argue to the contrary. Using the Libyan conflict as a template, he recently dissected the situation in Syria.

While the US public was being fed the tale of a country led by a wicked dictator that for humanitarian reasons it was forced to protest, Wikileaks made public leaked correspondence from the Western private intelligence firm Stratfor, said to be a Pentagon agency, which reported the existence of an ongoing campaign, including guerilla tactics and assassinations, of destabilization against the Syrian government of Bashir Al Assad. The justification given for the campaign is the existence of "brutal state repression against a civilian population." But the current Syrian internal crackdown is in response to the violence perpetrated by outside forces, namely the Western powers and Western-backed Gulf Arab states led by Saudi Arabia and Qatar, hardly bastions of democracy.

Cunningham agrees that "the Syrian government has a case to answer, not only over recent human rights violations, but also for decades of resistance to political reforms. However, this is a far secondary issue to the immediate concern of criminal aggression by foreign powers. Over the past year the Assad government has consistently maintained that a large measure of the violence assailing the civilian population is emanating from external forces. That is, the situation in Syria is more akin to a sponsored armed insurrection against the state. In that context, the Syrian government has a sovereign right to suppress such violent sedition, which furthermore appears to have little popular support and which is threatening the stability and security of the entire country...Turkey, Israel and Saudi Arabia have emerged as key backers of the self-styled armed opposition, the so-called Syrian Free Army, and most of the weaponry supplied to the opposition is reportedly emanating from Israel."

The interpretation we get from Western governments and the mainstream media of this situation is that the Syrian state is acting unilaterally, barbarically, and criminally against its own people. Indeed, contrary to reality, the media continues to report that Western governments are opposed to military intervention or supplying arms to "Syrian rebels" (already armed to the teeth by Arab Sunni monarchs).

During the past years, Western governments have been calculating on subverting Syria from within.

Cunningham concludes with what this intervention is really all about: “Syria is a preordained piece on the chessboard that the Western powers want to take out in their grand scheme for bolstering dominance over the oil-rich Middle East—with Iran as the next piece.” You got it? Oil. Oil. Oil

“The so-called ‘Friends of Syria’ [the U.S. included]...begin openly funding the rebels to the tune of millions of dollars. This week we have been watching the inevitable, pre-scripted ‘break down’ in Annan’s UN-brokered ceasefire...it’s impossible to expect a cessation in fighting when you are openly arming, training and funding an insurgent proxy army that is hell-bent on toppling the government.”

—James Corbett, International Forecaster, April 14

### KIRKUK-BANIAS PIPELINE



#### Pipeline Dreams

Map: 2007 Strategic Forecasting Inc. (Stratfor) “...Syria’s history as a perennial spoiler and location as a potential energy path cannot have been missed...there are feasibility studies underway to add significant additional crude oil pipeline capacity from Iraq through Syria...”

—Ronnie Blewer, “The Oil Road Through Damascus” Speaking Freely, Asia Times Online February 15, 2012

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