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Who will Israel attack this year?

This year, Purim will be celebrated from sunset, March 7 until nightfall, March 8.

**Here's an analysis of the Syrian situation
in the light of what happened in Libya with a perspective on Iran**

After UN veto, US proposes Syria coalition

Hillary calls for "friends of democratic Syria" to support the armed uprising

Lee Keath and Matthew Lee, February 6, 2012 - 7:14AM

The United States has proposed an international coalition to support Syria's opposition after Russia and China blocked a UN attempt to end nearly 11 months of bloodshed, raising fears that violence will escalate.

Rebel soldiers say force is now the only way to oust President Bashar al-Assad, while the regime is vowing to press its military crackdown on dissent.

The threat of both sides turning to greater force after Russia and China vetoed a UN Security Council resolution raises the potential for Syria's turmoil to move into an even more dangerous new phase that could degenerate into outright civil war.

The uprising inspired by other Arab Spring revolts began in March with peaceful protests against Assad's regime, sparking a fierce crackdown by government forces.

Soldiers who defected to join the uprising later began to protect protesters from attacks. In recent months the rebel soldiers, known as the Free Syrian Army have grown bolder, attacking regime troops and trying establish control in pro-opposition areas. That has brought a heavier government response.

Well over 5400 people have been killed since March, according to the UN, and now regime opponents fear Assad will be emboldened by the feeling he is protected by his top ally Moscow and unleash even greater violence to crush protesters.

If the opposition turns overtly to armed resistance, the result could be a dramatic increase in bloodshed.

At least 19 people were killed in new violence on Sunday, including five children and a woman who was hit by a bullet while standing on her balcony as troops fired on protesters in a Damascus suburb, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an activist group.

Government forces firing mortars and heavy machine guns also battered the mountain town of Zabadani, north of Damascus, a significant opposition stronghold that fell under rebels' control late last month.

Bombardment in the past two days has wounded dozens and forced scores of families to flee, an activist in the town said.

The commander of the Free Syrian Army told AP that, after the vetoes at the UN, "there is no other road" except military action to topple Assad.

"We consider that Syria is occupied by a criminal gang and we must liberate the country from this gang," Colonel Riad al-Asaad said, speaking from Turkey.

"This regime does not understand the language of politics, it only understands the language of force."

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton warned that chances for "a brutal civil war" would increase as Syrians under attack from their government move to defend themselves, unless international steps provide another way.

Speaking to reporters in the Bulgarian capital, Sofia, she called the double veto at the UN Security Council on Saturday "a travesty".

"Faced with a neutered Security Council, we have to redouble our efforts outside of the United Nations," she said, calling for "friends of democratic Syria" to unite "support the Syrian people's right to have a better future".

The call points to the formation of a formal group of like-minded nations to co-ordinate assistance to the Syrian opposition, similar but not identical to the Contact Group on Libya, which oversaw international help for opponents of the late deposed Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.

In the case of Libya, the group also co-ordinated NATO military operations to protect Libyan civilians, something that is not envisioned in Syria.

A deeply sensitive question is whether such a coalition would back the Free Syrian Army. There appears to be deep hesitation among Western countries, fearing further militarisation of the conflict.

Over the weekend, regime forces bombarded the restive central city of Homs, apparently in response to Free Syrian Army attacks.

Activists said the bombardment was the deadliest incident of the uprising, killing more than 200 people in a single day.

The regime denied any bombardment and there was no way to independently confirm the toll.

On Sunday, gunfire continued to ring out in several neighbourhoods of Homs, killing at least seven people, including two children, the Observatory said. Grisly video posted by activists on line showed a young boy said to have been wounded in the shooting, his entire jaw torn away.

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/after-un-veto-us-proposes-syria-coalition-20120206-1r06r.html>

Exposed: The Arab Agenda in Syria

Arab League/GCC report on Syria says "peaceful protesters" are in fact armed gangs conducting bombings

By Pepe Escobar, Asia Times, February 4, 2012

Here's a crash course on the "democratic" machinations of the Arab League - rather the GCC League, as real power in this pan-Arab organization is wielded by two of the six Persian Gulf monarchies composing the Gulf Cooperation Council, also known as Gulf Counter-revolution Club; Qatar and the House of Saud.

Essentially, the GCC created an Arab League group to monitor what's going on in Syria. The Syrian National Council - based in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member countries Turkey and France - enthusiastically supported it. It's telling that Syria's neighbor Lebanon did not.

When the over 160 monitors, after one month of enquiries, issued their report ... surprise! The report did not follow the official GCC line - which is that the "evil" Bashar al-Assad government is discriminately, and unilaterally, killing its own people, and so regime change is in order.

The Arab League's Ministerial Committee had approved the report, with four votes in favor (Algeria, Egypt, Sudan and GCC member Oman) and only one against; guess who, Qatar - which is now presiding the Arab League because the emirate bought their (rotating) turn from the Palestinian Authority.

So the report was either ignored (by Western corporate media) or mercilessly destroyed - by Arab media, virtually all of it financed by either the House of Saud or Qatar. It was not even discussed - because it was prevented by the GCC from being translated from Arabic into English and published in the Arab League's website. Until it was leaked.

http://www.columbia.edu/~hauben/Report_of_Arab_League_Observer_Mission.pdf

Here it is, in full.

The report is adamant. There was no organized, lethal repression by the Syrian government against peaceful protesters. Instead, the report points to shady armed gangs as responsible for hundreds of deaths among Syrian civilians, and over one thousand among the Syrian army, using lethal tactics such as bombing of civilian buses, bombing of trains carrying diesel oil, bombing of police buses and bombing of bridges and pipelines.

Once again, the official NATOGCC version of Syria is of a popular uprising smashed by bullets and tanks. Instead, BRICS members Russia and China, and large swathes of the developing world see it as the Syrian government fighting heavily armed foreign

mercenaries. The report largely confirms these suspicions.

The Syrian National Council is essentially a Muslim Brotherhood outfit affiliated with both the House of Saud and Qatar - with an uneasy Israel quietly supporting it in the background. Legitimacy is not exactly its cup of green tea. As for the Free Syrian Army, it does have its defectors, and well-meaning opponents of the Assad regime, but most of all is infested with these foreign mercenaries weaponized by the GCC, especially Salafist gangs.

Still NATOGCC, blocked from applying in Syria its one-size-fits-all model of promoting "democracy" by bombing a country and getting rid of the proverbial evil dictator, won't be deterred. GCC leaders House of Saud and Qatar bluntly dismissed their own report and went straight to the meat of the matter; impose a NATOGCC regime change via the UN Security Council.

So the current "Arab-led drive to secure a peaceful end to the 10-month crackdown" in Syria at the UN is no less than a crude regime change drive. Usual suspects Washington, London and Paris have been forced to fall over themselves to assure the real international community this is not another mandate for NATO bombing - a la Libya. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton described it as "a path for a political transition that would preserve Syria's unity and institutions".

But BRICS members Russia and China see it for what it is. Another BRICS member - India - alongside Pakistan and South Africa, have all raised serious objections to the NATOGCC-peddled draft UN resolution.

There won't be another Libya-style no fly zone; after all the Assad regime is not exactly deploying Migs against civilians. A UN regime change resolution will be blocked - again - by Russia and China. Even NATOGCC is in disarray, as each block of players - Washington, Ankara, and the House of Saud-Doha duo - has a different long-term geopolitical agenda. Not to mention crucial Syrian neighbor and trading partner Iraq; Baghdad is on the record against any regime change scheme.

So here's a suggestion to the House of Saud and Qatar; since you're so seduced by the prospect of "democracy" in Syria, why don't you use all your American weaponry and invade in the dead of night - like you did to Bahrain - and execute regime change by yourselves?

<http://www.commondreams.org/view/2012/02/04-4>

Assad's popularity, Arab League observers, US military involvement: all distorted in the west's propaganda war

Jonathan Steele, guardian.co.uk, Tuesday 17 January 2012 18.40 GMT

Suppose a respectable opinion poll found that most Syrians are in favour of Bashar al-Assad remaining as president, would that not be major news?

Especially as the finding would go against the dominant narrative about the Syrian crisis, and the media considers the unexpected more newsworthy than the

obvious. Suppose a respectable opinion poll found that most Syrians are in favour of Bashar al-Assad remaining as president, would that not be major news? Especially as the finding would go against the dominant narrative about the Syrian crisis, and the media considers the unexpected more newsworthy than the obvious.

Alas, not in every case. When coverage of an unfolding drama ceases to be fair and turns into a propaganda weapon, inconvenient facts get suppressed. So it is with the results of a recent YouGov Siraj poll on Syria commissioned by The Doha Debates, funded by the Qatar Foundation.

Qatar's royal family has taken one of the most hawkish lines against Assad – the emir has just called for Arab troops to intervene – so it was good that The Doha Debates published the poll on its website. The pity is that it was ignored by almost all media outlets in every western country whose government has called for Assad to go.

The key finding was that while most Arabs outside Syria feel the president should resign, attitudes in the country are different. Some 55% of Syrians want Assad to stay, motivated by fear of civil war – a spectre that is not theoretical as it is for those who live outside Syria's borders. What is less good news for the Assad regime is that the poll also found that half the Syrians who accept him staying in power believe he must usher in free elections in the near future. Assad claims he is about to do that, a point he has repeated in his latest speeches.

But it is vital that he publishes the election law as soon as possible, permits political parties and makes a commitment to allow independent monitors to watch the poll.

Biased media coverage also continues to distort the Arab League's observer mission in Syria. When the league endorsed a no-fly zone in Libya last spring, there was high praise in the west for its action. Its decision to mediate in Syria was less welcome to western governments, and to high-profile Syrian opposition groups, who increasingly support a military rather than a political solution. So the league's move was promptly called into doubt by western leaders, and most western media echoed the line. Attacks were launched on the credentials of the mission's Sudanese chairman. Criticisms of the mission's performance by one of its 165 members were headlined. Demands were made that the mission pull out in favour of UN intervention.

The critics presumably feared that the Arab observers would report that armed violence is no longer confined to the regime's forces, and the image of peaceful protests brutally suppressed by army and police is false. Homs and a few other Syrian cities are becoming like Beirut in the 1980s or Sarajevo in the 1990s, with

battles between militias raging across sectarian and ethnic fault lines.

As for foreign military intervention, it has already started. It is not following the Libyan pattern since Russia and China are furious at the west's deception in the security council last year. They will not accept a new United Nations resolution that allows any use of force. The model is an older one, going back to the era of the cold war, before "humanitarian intervention" and the "responsibility to protect" were developed and often misused. Remember Ronald Reagan's support for the Contras, whom he armed and trained to try to topple Nicaragua's Sandinistas from bases in Honduras? For Honduras read Turkey, the safe haven where the so-called Free Syrian Army has set up.

Here too western media silence is dramatic. No reporters have followed up on a significant recent article by Philip Giraldi, a former CIA officer who now writes for the American Conservative – a magazine that criticises the American military-industrial complex from a non-neocon position on the lines of Ron Paul, who came second in last week's New Hampshire Republican primary. Giraldi states that Turkey, a Nato member, has become Washington's proxy and that unmarked Nato warplanes have been arriving at Iskenderum, near the Syrian border, delivering Libyan volunteers and weapons seized from the late Muammar Gaddafi's arsenal.

"French and British special forces trainers are on the ground," he writes, "assisting the Syrian rebels, while the CIA and US Spec Ops are providing communications equipment and intelligence to assist the rebel cause, enabling the fighters to avoid concentrations of Syrian soldiers ..."

As the danger of full-scale war increases, Arab League foreign ministers are preparing to meet in Cairo this weekend to discuss the future of their Syrian mission. No doubt there will be western media reports highlighting remarks by those ministers who feel the mission has "lost credibility", "been duped by the regime" or "failed to stop the violence". Counter-arguments will be played down or suppressed.

In spite of the provocations from all sides the league should stand its ground. Its mission in Syria has seen peaceful demonstrations both for and against the regime. It has witnessed, and in some cases suffered from, violence by opposing forces. But it has not yet had enough time or a large enough team to talk to a comprehensive range of Syrian actors and then come up with a clear set of recommendations. Above all, it has not even started to fulfil that part of its mandate requiring it to help produce a dialogue between the regime and its critics. The mission needs to stay in Syria and not be bullied out.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/jan/17/syrians-support-assad-western-propaganda>

NATO is clandestinely engaged in Syria conflict, with Turkey the U.S. proxy NATO vs. Syria

By Philip Giraldi | December 19, 2011

Americans should be concerned about what is happening in Syria, if only because it threatens to become another undeclared war like Libya but much, much worse. Calls for regime change have come from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who several weeks ago predicted a civil war. That is indeed likely if the

largely secular and nationalist regime of Bashar al-Assad falls, pitting Sunni against Shia against Alawite. Indigenous Christians will be caught in the meat grinder. Ironically, many of the Christians in Damascus are Iraqis who experienced the last round of liberation in their own country and had to flee for their lives.

NATO is already clandestinely engaged in the Syrian conflict, with Turkey taking the lead as U.S. proxy. Ankara's foreign minister, Ahmet Davitoglu, has openly admitted that his country is prepared to invade as soon as there is agreement among the Western allies to do so. The intervention would be based on humanitarian principles, to defend the civilian population based on the "responsibility to protect" doctrine that was invoked to justify Libya. Turkish sources suggest that intervention would start with creation of a buffer zone along the Turkish-Syrian border and then be expanded. Aleppo, Syria's largest and most cosmopolitan city, would be the crown jewel targeted by liberation forces. Unmarked NATO warplanes are arriving at Turkish military bases close to Iskenderum on the Syrian border, delivering weapons from the late Muammar Gaddafi's arsenals as well as volunteers from the Libyan Transitional National Council who are experienced in pitting local volunteers against trained soldiers, a skill they acquired confronting Gaddafi's army. Iskenderum is also the seat of the Free Syrian Army, the armed wing of the Syrian National Council. French and British special forces trainers are on the ground, assisting the Syrian rebels while the CIA and U.S. Spec Ops are providing communications equipment and intelligence to assist the rebel cause,

enabling the fighters to avoid concentrations of Syrian soldiers.

CIA analysts are skeptical regarding the march to war. The frequently cited United Nations report that more than 3,500 civilians have been killed by Assad's soldiers is based largely on rebel sources and is uncorroborated. The Agency has refused to sign off on the claims.

Likewise, accounts of mass defections from the Syrian Army and pitched battles between deserters and loyal soldiers appear to be a fabrication, with few defections being confirmed independently. Syrian government claims that it is being assaulted by rebels who are armed, trained, and financed by foreign governments are more true than false.

In the United States, many friends of Israel are on the Assad regime-change bandwagon, believing that a weakened Syria, divided by civil war, will present no threat to Tel Aviv. But they should think again, as these developments have a way of turning on their head. The best organized and funded opposition political movement in Syria is the Muslim Brotherhood.

Philip Giraldi, a former CIA officer, is executive director of the Council for the National Interest.

<http://www.theamericanconservative.com/blog/nato-vs-syria/>

British soldiers helped topple Gaddafi: special forces blended in with rebel fighters **Inside story of the UK's secret mission to beat Gaddafi**

**By Mark Urban, Diplomatic and defence editor, Newsnight,
19 January 2012 Last updated at 12:38 GMT**

British efforts to help topple Colonel Gaddafi were not limited to air strikes. On the ground - and on the quiet - special forces soldiers were blending in with rebel fighters. This is the previously untold account of the crucial part they played.

The British campaign to overthrow Muammar Gaddafi's regime had its public face - with aircraft dropping bombs, or Royal Navy ships appearing in Libyan waters, but it also had a secret aspect.

My investigations into that covert effort reveal a story of practically minded people trying to get on with the job, while all the time facing political and legal constraints imposed from London.

In the end, though, British special forces were deployed on the ground in order to help the UK's allies - the Libyan revolutionaries often called the National Transitional Council or NTC. Those with a knowledge of the programme insist "they did a tremendous job" and contributed to the final collapse of the Gaddafi regime.

The UK's policy for intervention evolved in a series of fits and starts, being changed at key points by events on the ground. The arguments about how far the UK should go were thrashed out in a series of meetings of the National Security Council at Downing Street. Under the chairmanship of Prime Minister David Cameron, its key members were:

Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir David Richards
Defence Secretary Liam Fox
Foreign Secretary William Hague

Mr Cameron's chief of staff, Ed Llewellyn, was a key voice in urging action following start of the Libyan revolution last February, say Whitehall insiders.

The first significant involvement of British forces inside Libya was a rescue mission mounted just a couple of weeks after the rising against Gaddafi broke out. On 3

March, Royal Air Force C130 aircraft were sent to a desert airstrip at Zilla in the south of the country to rescue expatriate oil workers. Many had been threatened by gunmen and bandits.

This airlift of 150 foreigners, including about 20 Britons, to Valletta airport in Malta went smoothly, despite one of the aircraft being hit by ground fire soon after taking off.

Accompanying the flights were about two dozen men from C Squadron of the Special Boat Service (SBS), who helped secure the landing zone. It was a short-term and discreet intervention that saved the workers from risk of abduction or murder, and caused little debate in Whitehall.

Events, though, were moving chaotically and violently onwards, with the Libyan armed forces breaking up and Benghazi emerging as the centre of opposition. The government sought to open contacts with the National Transitional Council both overtly and covertly.

It was the undercover aspect of this relationship that almost brought Britain's wider attempt to help the revolution to grief. The Secret Intelligence Service, or MI6, sought to step up communications with some of its contacts in the opposition. It was decided to send a pair of the service's people to a town not far from Benghazi to meet one of these Libyans.

MI6, say people familiar with what happened, decided to avoid the Royal Navy frigate in Benghazi at the time, or any other obvious symbol of national power as the base for this meeting. Instead, they opted to be flown from Malta into Libya at night by Chinook helicopter in order to meet local "fixers" who would help them get to the meeting.

In planning this operation, SIS chose to use a highly sensitive arm of the special forces, E Squadron, in

order to look after its people. Six members of E Squadron, which is recruited from all three Tier 1 units (SAS, SBS and Special Reconnaissance Regiment) duly boarded the Chinook to "mind" the intelligence people. They were equipped with a variety of weapons and secure communications gear. In keeping with E Squadron's sensitive role, they were in plain clothes or black jumpsuits (accounts vary), and carried a variety of passports.

SAS 'captured near Benghazi'

The plan unravelled almost immediately. The landing of their helicopter aroused local curiosity.

The Libyan revolution, like many others, was accompanied by a good deal of paranoia about foreign mercenaries and spies, and the British party could not have appeared more suspicious. They were detained and taken to Benghazi, the men on the ground having decided that to open fire would destroy the very bridge-building mission they were engaged in.

This debacle in Benghazi rapidly became even more embarrassing, as the Gaddafi government released an intercepted phone call in which a British diplomat pleaded with the NTC for the team's release.

As a result of what happened with E Squadron, those who would advocate using special forces to help topple the regime were sidelined for months. It also caused great difficulties for MI6, which had plans to turn some key figures in Gaddafi's inner circle.

When, on 19 March, Colonel Gaddafi's tanks were bombed as they entered Benghazi, the conflict entered a dramatically different phase.

High-profile military action was under way, and the leaders of the UK, US, and France were increasingly committed to the overthrow of the Libyan leader.

But the means that could be used would be tightly limited as a result both of the unhappy experience of Iraq, and the terms of the UN resolution that had authorised the air action.

Under UN Security Council Resolution 1973, countries were authorised to use force "to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack". The text noted that the measures used to achieve this aim excluded "a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory".

The resolution authorised force but its limitations, both in avoiding any mention of support to forces fighting Col Gaddafi's army and apparently in ruling out "boots on the ground", defined much of British government thinking.

Yet key figures in the Downing Street discussions were convinced that air strikes alone would not achieve the result they wanted. At sessions of the National Security Council, Gen Richards and Mr Fox made the case for planning to provide training and equipment for the revolutionary forces of the NTC.

At a meeting near the end of March, we have been told, authorisation was given to take certain steps to develop the NTC's embryonic ground forces. This involved the immediate dispatch of a small advisory team, and the longer-term development of a "train and equip" project. Ministers were advised, say those familiar with the discussion, that this second part of the plan would take at least three months to implement.

When half a dozen British officers arrived at a seaside hotel in Benghazi at the beginning of April, they were unarmed and their role was strictly limited. They had been told to help the NTC set up a nascent defence

ministry, located in a commandeered factory on the outskirts of the city.

The first and most basic task of the advisory team was to get the various bands of Libyan fighters roaring around in armed pick-up trucks under some sort of central co-ordination. As reporters had discovered, most of these men had little idea of what they were doing, and soon panicked if they thought Col Gaddafi's forces were attacking or outflanking them.

There were a number of legal issues preventing them giving more help.

Some Whitehall lawyers argued that any type of presence on the ground was problematic. Legal doubts were raised about arming the NTC or targeting Col Gaddafi.

Once the air operation was put on a proper Nato footing, these issues became even more vexed, insiders say, with the alliance saying it would not accept men on the ground "directing air strikes" in a way that some newspapers, even in late spring, were speculating was already happening.

The British government's desire to achieve the overthrow of Gaddafi while accommodating the legal sensitivities registered by various Whitehall departments led to some frustration among those who were meant to make the policy work.

"It just seemed to me an unnecessarily muddled way of going about a business that we all knew the underlying aims of," said one. "It was almost as if we have lost the ability to define a clear objective and go for it."

However, the accidental bombing of NTC columns by Nato aircraft in early April provided those who wanted more direct assistance with a powerful argument. British and French officers on the ground were permitted to co-ordinate more closely with the NTC for the purposes of "deconfliction" or preventing such accidental clashes from happening again.

Under the deconfliction rubric, British advisers made their way to places like Misrata, then under siege, where the RAF was focusing its air strikes. The stage was set then for months of bombing which, as it progressed, both exhausted the stocks of precision weapons available to some Nato allies and the patience of many politicians for what was going on. Insiders say that, discreetly, they were soon doing more than deconfliction, actually co-ordinating certain Nato air attacks.

Taking as his cue the March approval in principal for a training programme, Gen Richards had started a series of low profile visits to Doha, the capital of Qatar.

This Gulf emirate had taken a leading role in backing the NTC, and its defence chief was by June brokering an agreement with the UK and France to provide material back-up as well as training for the NTC.

France was to prove more forward-leaning than the UK in this, and by August was providing weapons to NTC units in the Nefusa mountains of western Libya. The UK, meanwhile, had agreed to focus its efforts in the east of the country. It was as part of this new effort that British special forces returned to Libya.

Although plenty of people in Whitehall still remembered the March debacle, it was agreed to allow a limited number of British advisers to take a direct part in training and mentoring NTC units in Libya. Sources say the number of men sent from D Squadron of 22 SAS Regiment was capped at 24. They were performing their mission by late August.

While France and Qatar were ready to provide weapons directly, the UK was not. However, this made little practical difference since the SAS was operating closely with Qatar special forces who had reportedly delivered items such as Milan anti-tank missiles.

There were some suggestions from Whitehall that the training itself should be conducted outside Libya in order to remain within the narrow interpretation of the UN resolution, but the SAS was apparently soon present at a base in southern Libya.

Decoding the special forces

British Army's Special Air Service (SAS), formed in 1941 to drop troops by parachute behind enemy lines. Main role of its 400 members is to gather intelligence on the ground, but also has history of tackling perilous engagements - most famously storming the Iranian embassy in London in 1980.

Special Boat Service (SBS), formed in 1940, is Royal Navy's equivalent, and the two services have strong links. SBS specialises in operations at sea and on river networks, but sometimes operates inland.

Special Reconnaissance Regiment (SRR), formed in 2005. Few details of its function or personnel have been made public, but its main purpose is to carry out covert surveillance operations, freeing SAS and SBS for combat.

During the months that this project had taken to come to fruition, the slow grinding down of Gaddafi's forces by air attack had continued. Soon after the foreign trainers arrived, NTC units swept into Tripoli. Some people close to the Libyan revolution say that the Qatari chief of defence staff claimed credit for coming up with the strategy of pushing simultaneously towards the Libyan capital from different directions.

Certainly, the foreign special forces on the ground played a role in co-ordinating the different columns.

The SAS had meanwhile strayed beyond its training facility, with single men or pairs accompanying the NTC commanders that they had been training back to their units. They dressed as Libyans and blended in with the units they mentored, says someone familiar with the operation.

There had been concerns that they would be spotted by the press, but this did not happen. "We have become a lot better at blending in," says someone familiar with the D Squadron operation. "Our people were able to stay close to the NTC commanders without being compromised."

Instead, as the revolutionaries fought their way into Gaddafi's home town of Sirte, they were assisted by a handful of British and other special forces. Members of the Jordanian and United Arab Emirates armies had fallen in behind the Qataris too.

When, on 20 October, Gaddafi was finally captured and then killed by NTC men, it followed Nato air strikes on a convoy of vehicles carrying leading members of the former regime as they tried to escape from Sirte early in the morning. Had British soldiers on the ground had a hand in this? Nobody will say yet.

In keeping with its long standing policies on special forces and MI6 operations, Whitehall has refrained from public statements about the nature of assistance on the ground. The Ministry of Defence reiterated that policy when asked to comment on this story.

Speaking at a public event late last year, though, Gen Richards commented that the NTC forces "were the land element, an 'army' was still vital". He also noted

that "integrating the Qataris, Emiratis and Jordanians into the operation was key". He did not, however, allude to the presence of more than 20 British operators on the ground.

Last October the Chief of the Qatar Defence Staff revealed that "hundreds" of his troops has been on the ground in Libya. British sources agree Qatar played a leading role - and accept it put more soldiers in than the UK - but question whether the number was this large. Around the more secret parts of Whitehall, the suggestion is that the number committed on the ground by all nations probably did not exceed a couple of hundred.

As for Britain's decision finally to deploy an SAS squadron, "they made a fantastic difference", argues one insider. It is part of the essence of troops of this kind that they often operate in secrecy, providing their political masters with policy options that they might not wish to own up to publicly.

But given that the UK's earlier relationship with Col Gaddafi and his intelligence services caused great embarrassment, it could be that attention will one day focus more closely on British assistance to the NTC, particularly if the Libyan revolution comes unstuck.

{inset} Secret unit within the special forces

The existence of E Squadron is well known within the special forces community but has not hitherto been discussed publicly. It was formed five years ago to work closely with the intelligence service MI6, and is mainly involved in missions where maximum discretion is required, say Whitehall insiders.

Its role as a small, handpicked force operating with MI6 makes it the modern-day successor to the shadowy cell sometimes referred to as the Increment.

While the existence of teams of this kind is a gift for thriller writers looking to insert a hit team of hardened SAS men into their plotline, the reality of E Squadron's operations has been a little more prosaic.

Last March's debacle, in which six members of the squadron were caught in Libya, was highly embarrassing. The reason for their presence, escorting two people from MI6, gives a clue to the facilitating role they often play in foreign intelligence operations in risky places.

After 9/11, with major military commitments in Afghanistan and then Iraq, MI6 stepped up its intelligence-gathering in many places that had hitherto been off the radar or considered too dangerous.

It was often backed up by UK special forces, but the competing demands on them to support special operations in Afghanistan and Iraq eventually led to the creation of E Squadron.

According to special forces people, E Squadron is a composite organisation formed from selected SAS, SBS and Special Reconnaissance Regiment operators. It is not technically part of the SAS or SBS, but at the disposal of the Director of Special Forces and MI6.

The squadron often operates in plain clothes and with the full range of national support, such as false identities, at its disposal.

Whitehall sources suggest E Squadron was prepared to launch a rescue of a British citizen kidnapped in the Sahara in 2009, but could not obtain political clearance to do so before he was murdered by the hostage-takers. {end inset}

Libya: Is a breakdown in order forcing NGOs out? Medecins Sans Frontieres reports torture by militias, as tribes feud in "liberated" Libya Mark Urban, 27 January 2012 Last updated at 17:02 GMT

The decision by the French group Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) to withdraw its fieldworkers from prisons in the Libyan city of Misrata is an important and disturbing indicator of the situation in that country.

While some NGOs are guilty of trying to apply western 'best practice' in unrealistic ways, or to put the safety of their own teams ahead of project work, MSF's reputation, built over decades of operations in the most inhospitable parts of the world, suggests they should be listened to carefully both by the interim government in Libya and the western countries that assisted it to overthrow Muammar al Gaddafi's regime.

According to the NGO, in a few months its field workers have treated 115 people in the city's jail for wounds arising from torture.

"Patients were brought to us in the middle of interrogation for medical care, in order to make them fit for further interrogation", says MSF director Christopher Stokes, "this is unacceptable".

When one considers that this is just one city, it is not unreasonable to suppose that hundreds or even thousands of detainees have been abused in this way.

'Score-settling'

Apparently those subjected to this treatment have been removed from Misrata's prisons, taken to 'interrogation centres' run by various militias or state agencies before being returned with bad bruises, broken bones, and other signs of beating. Some are suspected of loyalty to the Gaddafi regime, others of criminality, and with some it is completely unclear.

Has Libya overthrown an oppressive, centralised, regime that relied upon torture, with one that also uses brutal methods but is so diffuse and divided along regional or tribal lines that it cannot run the country?

It is too early to write off the interim government, the revolution still has huge support, and it is natural that it should take time to establish a new democracy after 42 years of dictatorship.

However, the torture in Misrata and other places suggests that a great deal of score-settling is going on - much of it along tribal or local lines - and that it is not petering out in a way that many might have hoped.

Arbitrary detention and abuse now seem to be fuelling a new insurgency among former regime supporters in places like Sirte, Abu Salim (a neighbourhood of Tripoli), and Bani Walid, as well as feuds between tribes.

There have already been warnings to the Libyan government from the Foreign Office and State Department about the mistreatment of people in prison.

It does not appear that these have produced any effective action from the authorities.

Rather the arbitrary nature of the arrests, who is being beaten by whom, and the signs of new violence from former regime members and tribal enemies all suggest a situation in which authority is fragmenting.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-16761200>

C.I.A. drone strikes on suspected militants in Pakistan repeatedly targeted rescuers.

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U.S. Said to Target Rescuers at Drone Strike Sites By SCOTT SHANE

Published: February 5, 2012

WASHINGTON — British and Pakistani journalists said Sunday that the C.I.A.'s drone strikes on suspected militants in Pakistan have repeatedly targeted rescuers who responded to the scene of a strike, as well as mourners at subsequent funerals.

The report, by the London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism, found that at least 50 civilians had been killed in follow-up strikes after they rushed to help those hit by a drone-fired missile. The bureau counted more than 20 other civilians killed in strikes on funerals. The findings were published on the bureau's Web site and in The Sunday Times of London.

The bureau's findings are based on interviews with witnesses to strikes in Pakistan's rugged tribal area, where reporting is often dangerous and difficult. American officials have questioned the accuracy of such claims, asserting that accounts might be concocted by militants or falsely confirmed by residents who fear retaliation.

But most other studies of drone strikes have relied on sketchy and often contradictory news reports from Pakistan. The bureau's investigation, which began last year with a detailed study of civilian casualties, involved interviews with villagers who said they saw strikes, wounded people and family members of those killed.

The bureau counted 260 strikes by Predator and Reaper drones since President Obama took office, and it said that 282 to 535 civilians had been "credibly reported" killed in those attacks, including more than 60 children. American officials said that the number was much too high, though they acknowledged that at least several dozen civilians had been killed inadvertently in strikes aimed at militant suspects.

A senior American counterterrorism official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, questioned the report's findings, saying "targeting decisions are the product of intensive intelligence collection and observation." The official added: "One must wonder why an effort that has so carefully gone after terrorists who plot to kill civilians has been subjected to so much misinformation. Let's be under no illusions — there are a number of elements who would like nothing more than to malign these efforts and help Al Qaeda succeed."

Getting a full picture of the drone campaign is difficult. It is classified as top secret, and Obama administration officials have refused to make public even the much-disputed legal opinions underpinning it.

But Mr. Obama spoke about the program in an online appearance last week.

"I want to make sure that people understand: actually, drones have not caused a huge number of civilian casualties," he said in the forum on YouTube. "For the

most part they have been very precise precision strikes against Al Qaeda and their affiliates." He called the strikes "a targeted, focused effort at people who are on a list of active terrorists."
However, American officials familiar with the rules governing the strikes and who spoke on the condition of anonymity said that many missiles had been fired at

groups of suspected militants who are not on any list. These so-called signature strikes are based on assessments that men carrying weapons or in a militant compound are legitimate targets.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/06/world/asia/us-drone-strikes-are-said-to-target-rescuers.html>

**Afghan Army killed US 'allies' over 30 times since 2007.
"Mutual hatred is growing rapidly," said an Afghan Army colonel
Afghanistan's Soldiers Step Up Killings of Allied Forces
A report cites growing fiction between the ostensible allies.
By MATTHEW ROSENBERG, January 20, 2012**

KABUL, Afghanistan — American and other coalition forces here are being killed in increasing numbers by the very Afghan soldiers they fight alongside and train, in attacks motivated by deep-seated animosity between the supposedly allied forces, according to American and Afghan officers and a classified coalition report obtained by The New York Times.

A decade into the war in Afghanistan, the report makes clear that these killings have become the most visible symptom of a far deeper ailment plaguing the war effort: the contempt each side holds for the other, never mind the Taliban. The ill will and mistrust run deep among civilians and militaries on both sides, raising questions about what future role the United States and its allies can expect to play in Afghanistan.

The violence, and the failure by coalition commanders to address it, casts a harsh spotlight on the shortcomings of American efforts to build a functional Afghan Army, a pillar of the Obama administration's strategy for extricating the United States from the war in Afghanistan, said the officers and experts who helped shape the strategy.

The problems risk leaving the United States and its allies dependent on an Afghan force that is permeated by anti-Western sentiment and incapable of combating the Taliban and other militants when NATO's combat mission ends in 2014, they said.

One instance of the general level of antipathy in the war exploded into uncomfortable view last week when video emerged of American Marines urinating on dead Taliban fighters. Although American commanders quickly took action and condemned the act, chat-room and Facebook posts by Marines and their supporters were full of praise for the desecration.

But the most troubling fallout has been the mounting number of Westerners killed by their Afghan allies, events that have been routinely dismissed by American and NATO officials as isolated episodes that are the work of disturbed individual soldiers or Taliban infiltrators, and not indicative of a larger pattern. The unusually blunt report, which was prepared for a subordinate American command in eastern Afghanistan, takes a decidedly different view.

"Lethal altercations are clearly not rare or isolated; they reflect a rapidly growing systemic homicide threat

(a magnitude of which may be unprecedented between 'allies' in modern military history)," it said.

Official NATO pronouncements to the contrary "seem disingenuous, if not profoundly intellectually dishonest," said the report, and it played down the role of Taliban infiltrators in the killings.

The coalition refused to comment on the classified report. But "incidents in the recent past where Afghan soldiers have wounded or killed I.S.A.F. members are isolated cases and are not occurring on a routine basis," said Lt. Col. Jimmie E. Cummings Jr. of the Army, a spokesman for the American-led International Security Assistance Force.

"We train and are partnered with Afghan personnel every day and we are not seeing any issues or concerns with our relationships."

The numbers appear to tell a different story. Although NATO does not release a complete tally of its forces' deaths at the hands of Afghan soldiers and the police, the classified report and coalition news releases indicate that Afghan forces have attacked American and allied service members nearly three dozen times since 2007.

Two members of the French Foreign Legion and one American soldier were killed in separate episodes in the past month, according to statements by NATO. The classified report found that between May 2007 and May 2011, when it was completed, at least 58 Western service members were killed in 26 separate attacks by Afghan soldiers and the police nationwide.

Most of those attacks have occurred since October 2009. This toll represented 6 percent of all hostile coalition deaths during that period, the report said.

"The sense of hatred is growing rapidly," said an Afghan Army colonel.

He described his troops as "thieves, liars and drug addicts," but also said that the Americans were "rude, arrogant bullies who use foul language."

Senior commanders largely manage to keep their feelings in check, said the officer, who asked not to be named so he could speak openly. But the officer said, "I am afraid it will turn into a major problem in the near future in the lower ranks of both armies."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/20/world/asia/afghan-soldiers-step-up-killings-of-allied-forces.html>

**Israel sets up elite command unit to strike behind 'enemy' lines
Covert operations on rise amid concern that sanctions may not halt Iran nuclear programme
Wednesday 01 February 2012**

Israel has set up a specialist commando unit designed to carry out missions deep inside enemy territory amid

growing consensus in government circles that military strikes must be contemplated if economic sanctions do not halt Iran's nuclear programme.

The "Depth Corps" has been organised with the aim of co-ordinating deep penetration operations in other countries at a time when the defence ministry acknowledges that the number of covert Israeli operations abroad has increased significantly in the last year.

The unit, headed by Major General Shai Avital, a former head of an elite reconnaissance squad, was ordered by the head of Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) to focus on undercover work. Defence ministry officials in Tel Aviv insisted that it was not "Iran specific" and is needed to co-ordinate a range of duties.

The Tehran regime has repeatedly claimed that Israeli, US and British agents are responsible for the assassination of six scientists involved in the country's nuclear programme – a charge refuted by London and Washington. Officials in Tel Aviv in general refuse to comment on covert action.

"Of course I see about the killings in the media. I see it happens", said Dan Meridor, the Minister for Intelligence and Nuclear Affairs. "Are they natural, are they unnatural? There are many stories coming from there."

"About these deaths of scientists, I don't know what to tell you. I do not know the effects of that. The fact that they continue to work on this programme despite sanctions means they want to get nuclear and are prepared to pay a heavy price," he said.

Mr Meridor stated that Israel will monitor the effects of the sanctions, including an oil embargo, imposed on Iran by the European Union as well as punitive measures taken by the US.

"Pressure is important here, to leave them in a state where they are on the threshold of getting nuclear weapons would be a mistake," he said.

While Israeli officials publicly say they are prepared to wait and see the effectiveness of the sanctions, many hold privately that they lack the bite to force Tehran to abandon its nuclear ambitions. The decision by India and China to continue importing Iranian oil, around 35 per cent of the country's total sales, will seriously hinder the attempt to choke off the revenue stream of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's regime.

"It's definitely a blow," said David Hartwell, senior Middle East analyst at IHS Jane's, adding that Iran may have discounted prices to keep the Chinese and Indians on their side.

Israeli officials say that any military action must take place by the end of summer to prevent Iran moving more of its nuclear capabilities underground. They also point out that the Western powers which have imposed them are now fully aware of the dangers posed by the regime. Yesterday in Washington, James Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence, told a Congressional panel that Iran may launch terrorist attacks in response to a perceived threat.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israel-sets-up-elite-command-unit-to-strike-behind-enemy-lines-6297652.html>

Incoming IAF chief: Iran is our top concern

Maj.-Gen. Amir Eshel said in rare speech last month that nuclear Iran would trigger arms race in Middle East, and should be addressed strategically before all other conflicts

Yoav Zitun, Israel News, 6 February 2012

The escalating public discourse over the possibility of a strike on [Iran's](#) nuclear facilities has put a magnifying glass on incoming IAF Chief Major-General [Amir Eshel's](#) stance on the issue.

Eshel, whose IAF appointment was announced Monday, seldom expresses his opinion publically all the more so since becoming the head of the [IDF's](#) Plans and Policy Directorate in 2008.

But in a rare speech made last month at the Jerusalem Center for Public affairs, Eshel stressed that while the decision to launch an airstrike on the Islamic Republic is left up to the political echelon, Iran is [Israel's](#) primary concern.

"Iran is above everything, and it must be taken into account, strategically, before the others," he said. "A nuclear Iran would cause a mighty change in the region. It would trigger an arms race in the Middle East. I'm sure that other nations in the region will attempt to obtain such weapons as well.

"It could create a situation that leads to a global nuclear jungle," he added. "This is not an official

assessment, but the first lesson that leaders in the Middle East learned from the Arab Spring is that they should obtain nuclear weapons ... Who would have dared to question (Gaddafi) or Saddam Hussein if they had atom weapons?"

Eshel raised the concern that a nuclear Iran could embolden terror groups that operate with the Islamic Republic's backing, including [Hamas](#) and [Hezbollah](#) a development that would restrict the IDF in Gaza and [Lebanon](#).



Eshel: Iran's above all else-Photo: Roni Aviv, Bamahane

Iran precedes Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

He argued that the Iranian issue even trumps Israel's conflict with the Palestinians, saying that an agreement with the PA won't bring peace to the region.

"Even if Israel and the Palestinians sign a peace accord tomorrow, it won't solve the other problems or the Iranian issue," he said. "An agreement with them won't create a paradise in the Middle East. I don't belittle the issue, but if (the agreement) isn't based on solid security arrangements, it won't last."

Eshel noted that as per the government's order, the IDF supports the Palestinian apparatuses in the West Bank.

"We take many risks in order to help the Palestinians build better lives with a better economy," he said. "But if we make a mistake here, there won't be a second chance. This is why we are so determined (to reach an accord), because we already tried in 1993 and in 2000."

In his speech, Eshel accused the regime in Tehran of running a terrorist state.

"Everyday Iran is fighting everyone, not only through terror but also through economic means," he said.

Eshel voiced pessimism regarding the outcomes of the turmoil in the surrounding countries, noting that "our estimation that the revolutions would be taken over by other movements have come true."

"If the economic issues aren't addressed, a downturn is inevitable," he said. "The Muslim Brotherhood's influence in [Egypt](#) could spread to the region, including [Jordan](#), [Syria](#) and the Palestinian Authority."

He warned that Syria's chemical and biological weapons could fall into the hands of terror groups, noting that the country's air force armament poses a challenge to the IAF.

"Syria has invested over \$2 billion in its air force over the past two years," he said. "We haven't seen anything like it in the past two decades. They invested great funds in order to undermine our aerial superiority."

Related articles:

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[Amir Eshel named next IAF chief](#)

[Syrian 'chemical, biological' weapons concern Israel](#)

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<http://www.vnetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4185997,00.html>

Chabadniks in India deny espionage charge

By GIL SHEFLER 02/07/2012 13:53

Members of the Chabad community in the southern Indian city of Kochi on Tuesday vehemently denied a report accusing them of being part of an Israeli covert operation.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman and Yaffa Shenoi told *The Jerusalem Post* that they had been stunned by a story in *The Times of India* in which unnamed Indian security

officials said they were Israeli secret agents who would soon be deported from the country.



By Wikimedia Commons

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I was invited here by the Jewish community of Kochi with the full knowledge of local authorities, said Zalman, a 27-year-old rabbi from Jerusalem. I have no idea how they got the impression I was part of a Mossad operation.

He said he and Shenoi ran an outreach center catering to Jewish travelers in the popular tourist destination, as well as to the city's 50 remaining Jews. Kochi once had a much larger community whose origins dated back to the 16th century.

He insisted that this was their sole motivation.

Shenoi speculated that the report might have been related to an upcoming hearing on their visa status, but said she had been unaware of claims that they were Israeli agents before the story appeared.

Earlier in the day, *The Times of India* quoted anonymous security sources as saying the two had been under close surveillance by Indian intelligence officers for a year, and had taken part in suspicious activities, including hosting large groups of people at their house late at night. The officials added that the pair also drew attention to themselves for paying more than the average rent.

A monthly rent of Rs 50,000 is disproportionately high, even in Fort Kochi. This is one of the main factors that made us suspicious, the intelligence source was quoted as saying.

They have been in the country from March 3, 2010. When their visas expired on March 3 last year, they went out and returned on April 1, 2011, on a new visa.

The newspaper also published private information about the two Israelis, including their passport numbers.

By just after 4 p.m. local time, the story had received 613 comments on *The Times of India's* website, many of which were anti-Semitic. One reader tied the report to the case of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, a Jewish couple executed by the US in the 1950s for spying on behalf of the Soviet Union, as proof of the existence of an international Jewish conspiracy.

Followers of the Chabad movement run outreach centers in dozens of countries around the world, including several in India. In 2008 Rabbi Gavriel Herzberg, his wife, Rivka, and four Jewish guests at the center they ran in Mumbai were killed by Islamic terrorists.

<http://www.jpost.com/International/Article.aspx?id=256835>

Adrian Salbuchi

Showdown in Syria: All roads lead to Tehran

Published: 7 February, 2012, 15:05

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While Israel believes that the road to Tehran is a straight pre-emptive military attack super-highway, the US and UK seem to believe that the road to Tehran runs through Damascus.

This might explain the growing turmoil in Syria that's being used to try to promote a Libya-like UN Security Council resolution which, if passed, would certainly have Libya-like results

In recent days, there has been horrific violence in the Syrian city of Homs, as more than 200 people have died in gunfights and bombings. For the Western mainstream media, all the blame lies with Bashar al-Assad's government, with President Obama spelling out the official line: *Assad must halt his campaign of killing and crimes against his own people now. He must step aside and allow a democratic transition to proceed immediately.* The Western Allies strategy of encroachment on Syria and Iran seems to run in parallel and sequentially. Its logic is: if Syria falls, Iran will follow.

As with Iraq and Libya, the US, UK and France tried to impose a UN Security Council resolution laying all the

blame on the government, and calling for its immediate resignation. Only this time they've been vetoed by Russia and China, who are standing up to the West's global bullying tactics.

No small matter indeed! For it hinges on how the Western allies on one side, and the Russians and Chinese on the other understand the root causes of violence and turmoil in Syria and, by extension, throughout the region. On Syria, the official US/UK/French/Israeli line is that the Arab Spring has finally reached Syria. In their usual Hollywoodesque boxing match-like Good Guys versus Bad Guys worldview, they seem to tell global public opinion, in this corner we have heroic freedom-fighters trying to bring democracy (US brand, of course!) to Syria; in that corner, we have the mean, fundamentalist antidemocratic Assad regime repressing the people. It might sound like a great script for some teary-eyed Stephen Spielberg thriller, but the real world isn't like that

Rather than saying it's simply the Assad government turning against its people, Russia and China take a

more balanced stance on the internal affairs of Syria, where several factions are in conflict. There are the legal authorities of Syria, and there are armed terrorist throngs taking advantage of genuine social grievances and unleashing violence throughout the country, which in turn triggers police repression. With lesser intensity, similar scenes can also be seen on the streets of London, Manchester, New York, Oakland, Athens and other western cities.

In Syria, such groups are in all likelihood profusely armed, trained, financed and abetted by foreign players, pointing straight at US, UK, French and Israeli intelligence entities: public, private, official, unofficial, overt and covert.

Clearly, this is a much more complex view than Washingtons and Londons easier-to-grasp Walt Disney version of reality with its bad cat fighting good Tweety Bird rhetoric.

The UN resolution the western allies are trying to get imposed on Syria is based on a report and proposal emanating from the Arab League under its present Secretary General Nabyl El Araby, which has regressed into a pro-western political and diplomatic tool. Something similar happened to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under its present Director General Yukiya Amano, as it recently produced a damning report on Irans nuclear program based on intelligence from member states, implicitly, the US, UK, France and Israel.

Whats happening in Syria today is very bad news for the Syrians, who are becoming the victims of western-style state-sponsored terrorism. Alas! It is, however good news for the rest of the world. And it has made Russia and China stand up to the US, UK, France and Israel: Russia and China are not ready to tolerate a re-run of Iraq and Libya.

It seems todays foremost geopolitical problem is that the forces running the United States, United Kingdom, France and Israel are increasingly out of control. They have no qualms in risking global nuclear war if thats what it takes to achieve their political, financial even Messianic! objectives. They clearly must be stopped.

A year ago, the western allies launched clandestine operations triggering the so-called Arab Spring, which has brought hundreds of thousands of deaths, injuries, and the destruction and demise of Libya. Would the western allies dare to include Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine in their list of Arab Spring countries, recommending that they too rise up in arms against their invaders?

Syria is yet another example of western double standards. The west complains about Bashar al-Assad fighting the very terrorists they finance, but says nothing when Israel launches cluster and phosphorus bombs over Gazas civilians. They overran Libya to

protect civilians, but discretely looked the other way when their Egyptian military semi-allies repressed the people, kicking young women senseless on the streets of Cairo.

As US President Franklyn D Roosevelt once replied when an aide pointed out to him that Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza was a complete SOB: Yes! He is a SOB, but hes our SOB!

Right now, Syria is being dragged towards civil war. Can we believe everything the western media report and western governments parrot? Remember the take-out-Saddam-if-you-dont-want-to-see-a-mushroom-cloud-over-one-of-our-cities rhetoric?

Today, Syrian news agency SANA gives a very different story on the Homs episode, reporting that **armed terrorist groups on Monday attacked citizens and law-enforcement members at several areas in Homs the authorities were pursuing and clashing with them. Armed terrorist groups exploded two explosive devices behind the building of the Technical Services at al-Dablan Neighborhood in Homs. Terrorists also shelled with mortars several quarters in Homs, while others broke into houses in Idleb Governorates. A number of citizens escaped from an armed terrorist group to a mosque in Rastan City, where the armed terrorist group burnt the mosque, killing and injuring some of the citizens.**

Why doesn't the western media report this?

Think of it: if Mossad, the CIA and MI6 are suspected of assassinating Iranian nuclear scientists on the streets of Tehran in veritable exercises of blatant state-sponsored terrorism, couldn't they be doing this on a much vaster scale inside Syria?

Every time we see horrendous, yet unclear, violence whether in Egypt, Syria, Iran, Libya, 9/11 in New York or 7 July in London, two key factors must be unraveled: **1. Who benefits? 2. Follow the money - who's paying for the bombs, logistics, bullets, satellite and drone support?**

Conclusion:

Perhaps the US, UK and France want to attack Iran, going first through Syria.

Perhaps Israel wants to attack Iran, going directly at it. Probably, these are two sides of the same coin

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<http://rt.com/news/syria-tehran-us-uk-677/>