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## The Strategy in Syria Has Failed

By Sean Fenley  
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While Senator Kirsten Gillibrand was questioning the former Nebraska senator Chuck Hagel, during his secretary of defense nomination hearing, she mentioned chemical weapons and Syria. I think that the good Senator Gillibrand should be aware that the so-called Free Syrian Army is a real threat with their chemical weapons too. They have been backed by disreputable American allies such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar that are Wahhabi states that repress women, have terrible civil liberties, and no democratic rights whatsoever for their people.

They are antediluvian states that are ripe for Arab Springs, and having genuine democracy sprout up in them. Saudi Arabia has invaded neighboring Bahrain, and has continually worked to repress a grassroots democratic movement/revolution there as well.

Syria is undeniably authoritarian, but it is a complex society with many sects, that are protected much better under the Arab nationalist Bashar al-Assad government than they would be under a Salafi/Muslim Brotherhood Islamic fascist potential successor state - a state like that of Mohamed Morsi's Egypt (where virtually all of the Coptic Christians have resigned from his ranks).

I have great fear for the Alawites, the Druze and the Christians of Syria: the Melkites, Syriacs, Maronites, Chaldeans and other groups, should these Salafi and Wahhabi killers, backed by retrograde American-allied governments, gain power. Laurent Fabus, the French Foreign Minister, has said, "We cannot let [Syria] degenerate into a conflict of militias." Gerard Araud,

the French Permanent Representative to the UN, has stated that "We are creating a Somalia in the heart of the Middle East."

The best answer is to urge Saudi Arabia and Qatar to stop their destabilization. A non-violent political solution that can assure that Sunni Islamic fundamentalists do not come to power is the only path. The Syriacs/Arameans - who speak Aramaic the language that Jesus Christ spoke - want a dialogue among all of the groups with no preconditions; they want a ceasefire; they want the stopping of the importation of all foreign weapons; they want an abeyance of the economic sanctions; and they want an ending to the recruitment of foreign fighters into their land.

Moaz al-Khatib, who leads the Syrian National Coalition, the group of exiles who support armed intervention against the Syrian government, and who are backed by the Western and Gulf Arab countries, now advocates talks with Bashar al-Assad's people. Several civic groups that have rejected the armed struggle and opposed foreign military intervention also favor a ceasefire and a negotiated solution straightaway/forthwith.

The US and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) need to call off their running dogs (Turkey too has been in this sordid mix as well), let clearer heads prevail, and not simply rush to expel a regime that is independent of them, but that they may not like fully 100%. They may not like that their corporations do not have free rein there, and they may not like that they do not string pull/puppetmaster the Syrian political leadership - and albeit that is just tough!

Syria, being allied with Hezbollah and Iran, is not amenable to them, but it is imperative nevertheless that Sunni fundamentalists do not take over power in this state. Instead of shortsighted geopolitical goals, and the national interest of Israel, the US and NATO have to work for a broad-minded political solution/plan now! They must not settle solely for the current philosophy of the barrel of the gun. That is a depraved and ignoble strategy, and moreover one that is being orchestrated via folks who have been classified as being coarse, savage death squads, and even wholly terrorist by a number of credible reports.