

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نیاشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

<http://original.antiwar.com/brandon-huson/2013/09/29/demonizing-russia-and-hiding-us-duplicity/print/>

Demonizing Russia and Hiding US Duplicity

By Brandon Huson

September 29, 2013

The demonization of Russia is permitting the US to hide its own role in the conflict and may yet, provide the cover necessary for Washington to violate the wishes of the Syrian people, the American people and the international community to intervene into the Syrian conflict directly in an attempt to oust Assad. The media and Washington's collaboration to hide Washington's interested and deliberate behavior in the Middle East and Syria could contribute to the American public being pulled into another humanitarian mission, rife with the usual bloodshed and destruction of humanitarian interventions of the past (see Libya, Yugoslavia).

A CNN article from Sept. 22 denotes the immediate skepticism of the Western media of Russia's intentions in brokering the Chemical Weapons Convention. Three Russian experts are quoted for their belief in Russia's pursuit of a peace agreement as part of their pursuit of "wider ambitions" that, as Chatham House Russian expert James Sherr states, includes "changing the architecture in the region". Sherr later lays the blame for the conflict and potential success of the new agreement for chemical weapons monitoring at the feet of the Russians by stating that "before the opposition was militarized, before the influx of foreign fighters, before the dominance of jihadists, before 100,000 people were killed, before there were half a million refugees...the country that had the most convincing combination of nonmilitary means of pressure to apply against Assad to produce meaningful changes and compromises, was Russia. And those means were not used." He continues this line of reasoning by stating that "Russia does have a considerable responsibility for how this conflict has evolved. Whether they recognize that responsibility or not, anyone on the outside assessing the conflict today or in the future will have

to come to that conclusion. They are at least as responsible for everything which has gone awry here as the United States and some other significant actors."

John McCain, in an insincere letter to the Russian people, displayed his hatred for Russia and his desire to highlight Russian debauchery in front of the American people. McCain claims that Russian support of the Syrian regime has delegitimized Russia in the eyes of "nations that seek to build a safer, more peaceful and prosperous world". Russia's supposed falling reputation in the international community comes from its support of a Syrian regime "that is murdering tens of thousands of its own people". The duplicitousness of McCain and these so-called experts is amazing and yet ordinary in the daily deluge of propaganda emanating from the mouthpieces of Western hegemony. These statements reflect an inversion of meaning in language where the aggressors become those who must provide stability and where those attempting to maintain peace and normalcy are evildoers. Obama's UN speech demonstrated his belief in the West as the solution to war and violence in the Middle East when he asked "How should we respond to conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa – conflicts between countries, but also conflicts within them?"

These statements hide a basic and well-known reality throughout the world among government leaders and populations, that the US is an aggressive state and capable propagandist in providing justifications for its own material gain. In Syria, US aggression and duplicity could be understood with utter clarity were the media committed to honestly dissecting events there. The demonization of Russia by U.S. leaders and political experts in major media outlets allows the US government to maintain an aggressive posture in Syria even while a majority of Americans oppose armed conflict in Syria. The US government-media narratives about Russia are being used to legitimize imperial power in the Middle East while populations in the Middle East remain unheard. A 2011 Zogby poll of public opinion in the Middle East found that "the two greatest threats to the region's peace and stability" are "'the continuing occupation of Palestinian lands' and 'US interference in the Arab world'."

While Middle Easterners are forced to live with the destabilizing effects of Israeli and American power projections in their homes and streets, CNN's expert interviewees look to different sources of Middle Eastern instability, namely Russia. So while the above experts provide tautological criticisms of Russian policy (that they are acting in their own interests), they (either dishonestly or ignorantly) fail to note long-term US interests in the region. As has been reported extensively, the US had designs on Syria as early as 2001 when General Wesley Clark quoted a senior Pentagon official who told him of a plan to instigate conflicts in multiple countries over the course of the next five years. Clark quotes the official as saying that "[The] Five-year campaign plan [includes]... a total of seven countries, beginning with Iraq, then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Iran, Somalia and Sudan". In 2002, soon after Clark reports to have heard of the invasion plans, John Bolton, President Bush's former ambassador to the U.N., added Syria to the axis of evil.

Additionally, in 2007, Seymour Hersh reported that sources within the intelligence community had told him that the US had plans in the region and within Syria to foment conflict among Sunni and Shiite Muslims. This was to be done through the support of groups such as the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood and other Sunni extremist groups, in order to foment a viable resistance

force. Hersh was told by a C.I.A. officer that "The Americans have provided both political and financial support. The Saudis are taking the lead with financial support, but there is American involvement." These reports are entirely ignored by US media and their claims, valid as they seem given the present involvement of Saudi Arabia (especially Prince Bandar).

US policy in Syria, far from being passive as many commentators like to claim, has been quite active. The US and its allies, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey have actively paid for and orchestrated the importation into Syria of both fighters and weapons. This flow provides the rebels with hope and the necessary push to challenge Syrian state forces. Without aid from the US allies in the region, the rebels, unpopular and brutal as they are, would likely have been kicked out of Syria long ago. In fact, their tactical success has been limited even with Western support, which has been the reason for the push to deepen US involvement. Now that a path to peace has been officially established, Washington's commitment to peace is revealed by recent reports the CIA has begun direct armament of the rebels, no doubt intended to help Obama "welcome the influence of all nations that can help bring about a peaceful resolution of Syria's civil war".

What is also missed in the demonizations of Russia and Syria are the actions of the US and its loyal allies to undermine the current negotiations. In fact, amidst recent negotiations the American media has largely ignored the claims of the Russian foreign ministry that the US sought to extract from Russia a concession that will provide automatic UN authorization to intervene in Syria militarily if, in the future, it is discovered to be in violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention . It was also reported that Prince Bandar of Saudi Arabia, [noted to be President Bush's (Sr.) Arab "son" as a result of the Bush family and House of Saud's close ties and the "CIA's Man in Riyadh"] offered Russia concessions in the world oil market and protection for Russia interests in Syria if Russia would allow for Assad to be ousted from Syria. He also offered Russia protection from Chechen terrorists at the upcoming Olympics. He is reported to have offered (or threatened) "I can give you a guarantee to protect the Winter Olympics next year. The Chechen groups that threaten the security of the games are controlled by us". On Sept. 22, the Global Post reported that the Russian embassy in Damascus was hit by rocket fire from the rebels, indicating intimidation on the part of the Western backed forces and demonstrating the US fear that the Syrians would comply with the proposed agreements, harming the legitimacy of armed conflict in Syria. The National also reported (not noticing the irony) that "peace prospects could intensify fighting in Syria". Inside the story the author quotes a former Saudi embassy official who claims, "The Saudis will use all tools available to oust Assad...and intensify its efforts to arm the rebels and to use its media outlets and diplomatic clout to rally support for a military strike." These claims are corroborated in the story by high-ranking Saudi officials making the same argument.

Lastly, although the chemical weapons controversy in Syria has been covered extensively, it seems clear that the motive and opportunity for a false-flag attack was present. It was reported that the Syrian rebels did have access to chemical weapons, most prominently by UN inspector Carla del Ponte. Also, Turkey charged members of the Al-Nusra front with trafficking chemical weapons in late May. A group of independent technical analysts has discovered notable inconsistencies in both the UN Report and the evidence of regime responsibility for the chemical attacks presented by US government officials. Aside from this technical critique, however, the

Syrian government has not behaved like a guilty state, but rather has been very willing to permit UN investigators into their country. Many experts claimed that the Syrian air force's bombings in Ghouta after the chemical weapons attack prove the Syrian government's attempts to hide evidence. Yet, as the New York Times reported, chemical weapons attacks with chemicals such as those used in Ghouta leave traces behind for years and are nearly impossible to cover-up. The inability to hide the attack illustrates the fact that the Syrian government could not have expected to use chemical weapons and escape detection. The inability to escape detection means the Syrian government had no reason to think the use of chemical weapons would increase its chances for survival.

Many officials within the US are skeptical of the "proof" US officials claim to have of Syria's guilt in the use of chemical weapons. A call from the VIPS (Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity), a group of concerned former officials and experts within the Defense and Intelligence bureaucracy have stated their belief that the intelligence about chemical weapons is suspect and that Obama and the nation may once again be manipulated into a war under false pretenses. A few days after the alleged attack, the AP quoted US intelligence officials who, anonymously, stated the intelligence on Syrian guilt in the bombings was "no slam dunk". In a free, democratic and open society, these claims should be interrogated publicly to determine the social "truth". However, these claims are harder to interrogate in public forums when discussion in these forums are filled with chatter about ready-made scapegoats responsible for instability and war, Syria and Russia in this case.

Ultimately, contradictions and double-standards in U.S. foreign policy endure. The double-standards and obfuscation of US policies is nothing new and something officials within the security bureaucracy are aware of. For example, Chester Crocker, a member of the State Department's Advisory Committee on Democracy Promotion, and formerly Assistant Secretary of State, was quoted by William Blum for saying that "we have to be able to cope with the argument that the US is inconsistent and hypocritical in its promotion of democracy around the world. That may be true." In the same article, Blum also quotes Robert Kagan, a prominent neo-conservative who noted that the US "must support arms control, but not always for itself. It must live by a double standard." The US double standards, hypocrisy and avoidance of its own culpability in fomenting instability throughout the world has led to declining acceptance of America's global rule. William Blum, expert on US interventionism, has written that "The remarkable international goodwill and credibility enjoyed by the United States at the close of the Second World War was dissipated country by country, intervention by intervention". It looks like one more country could join that list any time now, doing away with the vestiges of good will the US hasn't already soured.