The Shocking Truth
Behind the
Army of
Terror
The “US” in “ISIS IS US” has multiple possible meanings. 1). USA. 2). USA and allies. 3). The book or its cover is a portrait of ISIS. 4). We have met the enemy and it is us. We are responsible for what the US is doing (Ken O’Keefe). 5). We are all one human race, all in the same boat, we can’t just make war over there and have peace at home.
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The ISIS-Contra Affair

Did the “Islamic State” spring full-blown into spontaneous being as the fanatical scourge of the Middle East, or was it helped along by state sponsors?

There are uncanny parallels with Iran-Contra. In the 1980’s, the Reagan team wanted to topple the government of Nicaragua, using right-wing mercenaries, or death squads, based in Honduras. But Congress passed a law against it. So they went around, by financing the Contras via Iran.

Thirty years later, the hawks in Washington wanted to topple the elected governments of Libya and Syria, crush the popular resistance in Iraq, and split up those countries on ethnic lines. Once again, they wanted to do this using death squads. So they got around Congress by having Qatar and the Saudis finance it.

To set up the “Sunni” (Al-Qaida) and “Shiite” (regime) death squads to cut up Iraq, they sent John Negroponte as Ambassador to Baghdad in 2004. The same guy they sent to Honduras as Ambassador from 1981 to 1985. In 2011 they sent some of those killers from Iraq to Libya to overthrow Qaddafi, with NATO air cover. From Libya, they were sent to Syria to start the killing there — the dirty war directed by Negroponte’s right-hand man, US Ambassador Ford.

The US embedded media perversely pinned these killings on Assad, following the script for another NATO invasion. Only Russia’s UN veto spared Syria. So the sheikhs kept financing the “rebels” — and the US pretended to fight them — until they grew into the ISIS terror army. They and their backers have still not quit.

Even Fox News is saying the US coalition against ISIS is a myth.¹ In a recent US poll, just 18% think we have the upper hand in the “war on terror.”² In a poll by an international firm in Syria, 82% said the US and its allies created ISIS.³

The wave of refugees, attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, and early reception to this book, tell me people want an end to the “war on terror,” and they want to know what’s really going on. So I’m putting the spoiler right here on the first page.

European efforts to subjugate the Middle East go back to the British, Napoleon, the Crusades, the Romans, and Alexander the Great. The British knew the best way to permanently hold a territory was to settle it; this is how they beat the French in North America. The Old World was already well settled, though. So to capture the Near East prize, England joined forces with Herzl’s Zionists. In 1917, their Balfour Declaration announced the plan for Jewish settlement in Palestine.

Another way to hold vast domains is divide and chaos, to smash them up into quarreling fiefdoms. And the cheapest way to get people to fight each other is with religion. British, French, Israeli and US strategists have all written up plans to rule the Muslim world, by breaking up the Arab states along sectarian lines. That goal is what “ethnic cleansing,” Al Qaida, ISIS death squads, “Islamic jihad” terrorism, the Bushes’ wars on Iraq and even 9/11 are really all about.

I still hope you’ll read the whole book, though. There’s a lot more good stuff!

And if you like it, it would be so nice if you’d give it a little online review too. :-)

¹ http://video.foxbusiness.com/v/4661253273001/obamas-coalition-against-isis-a-myth/
³ www.washingtonsblog.com/2015/09/polls-show-syrians-overwhelmingly-blame-u-s-for-isis.html
Ambassadors of Terror

by John-Paul Leonard

The world has never seen anything quite like ISIS\(^4\) before. Where in the world did it come from? Many pundits say this unique terrorist army would not exist if we had not crushed Saddam Hussein’s regime in Bush’s war on Iraq. Politicians like Donald Trump or Rand Paul are saying that Iraq, Libya and Syria were better off under Saddam, Qaddafi and Assad than they are now.

Americans had supported the war on Iraq “to make the world safe for democracy” – to stop a dangerous dictator from oppressing his people and using weapons of mass destruction – not to plunge the Middle East into the hands of savage extremists who seem set on demolishing modern civilization.

The world was shocked by the ISIS blitz of June 2014 that captured huge areas of Iraq, oil fields and the second largest city, Mosul, nearly bringing the government in Baghdad to collapse. NBC News headlined, “Huge Majority Regret Iraq War.”\(^5\) A poll showed that only 22% of Americans still thought the Iraq war had been a good idea. This was a new low, down from 32% in 2013 and 62% in March 2003, when Secretary of State Colin Powell told the big lie at the UN about Saddam Hussein’s “threat” to our security.

Apparently, many Americans make the link between the war on Iraq, and the rise of terrorism in the region.

Few critics, however, have gone so far as to accuse the US or its allies of the unthinkable madness of intentionally creating ISIS.\(^6\) For us in the US this would be difficult to accept. We cherish the faith that our nation is a force for good in the world, or at least tries to be; we want to share the good things about America with the rest of the world when we can.

Yet we have also heard of a dark side, that sometimes bubbles to the surface – for example, the Iran-Contra scandal. And therein lies a tale, a biography of deeds you won’t read on Wikipedia for a very long time, at the end of this preface.

A Lot of Blackwater Under the Bridge

It’s a basic historical fact that the US has shored up many Latin American dictatorships, but few details are generally known about how they do it. One practitioner who knows is Ambassador John Dimitri Negroponte, a veteran counter-insurgency expert going back to Operation Phoenix in the Vietnam War.

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\(^4\) “Islamic State in Iraq and Shams (Syria)” or “the Levant” (ISIL), or “Islamic Emirate,” or Daesh (Arabic initials). “Shams” means “sun” and is the old name for Syria, corresponding to “Levant,” meaning “Rising” or “sunrise.” (Viz. German Morgenland und Abendland.) An “L” could also be there for Libya. As for something new under the sun, the 18th and 19th century Wahhabi-Saudi conquest of Arabia is a precedent with parallels to the ISIS campaign of today; see the entry “A Word on Wahhabism” in the section on “Who Needs a Clash of Civilizations?”).


\(^6\) Vladimir Putin is the best-known such critic. He let diplomatic niceties drop in a speech at the Valdai Club in Sochi, Oct. 15, 2015. See “Statements by Statesmen.”
He has held many high posts. Including Ambassador to Honduras 1981-1985, and US Ambassador to Iraq, 2004-2005...

Prof. Michel Chossudovsky of Global Research reveals how Negroponte fulfilled his assignment to defeat the Iraqi insurgency – and nearly managed to destroy Iraq as a nation as well.

The recruitment of death squads is part of a well-established US military-intelligence agenda. There is a long and gruesome US history of covert funding and support of terror brigades and targeted assassinations going back to the Vietnam war...

The recruitment and training of terror Briggs in both Iraq and Syria was modeled on the “Salvador Option”, a “terrorist model” of mass killings by US-sponsored death squads in Central America. It was first applied in El Salvador, in the heyday of resistance against the military dictatorship, resulting in an estimated 75,000 deaths.7

As Ambassador to Honduras in the 1980’s, Negroponte was the lynch pin between Washington and the US-sponsored death squads in Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

In April 2004, G.W. Bush hired him as “the man for the job” to bring the “Salvador Option” to Iraq and Syria. In the same month, Al-Qaida in Iraq, the precursor to ISIS, was formed.8

Chossudovsky cites a report in The Times Online, in Jan. 2005, that the Pentagon was looking at forming hit squads of Kurdish and Shia fighters to target leaders of the Iraqi insurgency [Resistance] in a strategic shift borrowed from the American struggle against left-wing guerrillas in Central America 20 years ago.

Under the so-called “El Salvador option”, Iraqi and American forces would be sent to kill or kidnap insurgency leaders, even in Syria, where some are thought to shelter.

Hit squads would be controversial and would probably be kept secret...

The Reagan Administration funded and trained teams of nationalist forces to neutralise Salvadorean rebel leaders and sympathisers. … John Negroponte, the US Ambassador in Baghdad, had a front-row seat at the time as Ambassador to Honduras from 1981-85.

In the early 1980s, President Reagan’s Administration funded and helped to train Nicaraguan contras based in Honduras, with the aim of ousting Nicaragua’s Sandinista regime. The Contras were equipped using money from illegal American arms sales to Iran, a scandal that could have toppled Mr Reagan.

The thrust of the Pentagon proposal in Iraq … is to follow that model …9

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8 Private security contractors” are paid approximately five times as much as ordinary soldiers.
9 The National Counterterrorism Center’s AQI page, http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/aqi.html

The Globalization of War, p. 152
But it gets worse. A lot worse. Chossudovsky notes:

While the stated objective of the “Iraq Salvador Option” was to “take out the insurgency,” in practice the US-sponsored terror brigades were involved in routine killings of civilians, with a view to fomenting sectarian violence. In turn, the CIA and MI6 were overseeing “Al Qaeda in Iraq” units involved in targeted assassinations directed against the Shiite population... advised by undercover US Special Forces.

Robert Stephen Ford – subsequently appointed US Ambassador to Syria – was part of Negroponte’s team in Baghdad in 2004-2005. In January 2004, he was dispatched as U.S. representative to the Shiite city of Najaf, which was the stronghold of the Mahdi army [an important volunteer force loyal to the charismatic Shiite imam Muqtada al-Sadr], with which he made preliminary contacts.10

So they were stoking violence from both sides of the street. The Salvador Option is El Salvador squared, El Salvador on steroids. The primary objective is not just quelling the insurgency to seal a US victory; it is to take that violence and ramp it up into internecine warfare that will rip the country into three parts. This is divide and conquer with a vengeance, following a plan to subjugate Iraq that the Israeli strategist Oded Yinon laid out in the 1980’s, of which more later.

Supposedly the war on Iraq was part of the US “war on terror.” Bush even made a lame attempt to link Saddam and Al Qaida to justify his war on Iraq (of course, Saddam’s regime was naturally trying to eradicate fundamentalist terrorism). Yet now the US was going to put Al Qaida into mass production.

The policy design was devastatingly simple. The Sunnis were to be punished because Saddam and much of his administration had been Sunni. This decapitated the country and gutted its military. A Shiite-leaning government was set up. The Sunni insurgency would direct its ire against this weak center. “Sunni” terrorists of Al Qaida in Iraq (AQI) were unleashed against Shiite civilians, and regime gangs against Sunni civilians. Ethnic cleansing would result, beginning the dissolution into three separate territories, Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish.

John Negroponte and Robert Stephen Ford were put in charge of recruiting the Iraqi death squads. While Negroponte coordinated the operation from his office at the US Embassy, Robert S. Ford, who was fluent in both Arabic and Turkish, was entrusted with the task of establishing strategic contacts with Shiite and Kurdish militia groups outside the “Green Zone”.11

Chossudovsky quotes Dahr Jamail, the courageous, award-winning American journalist cited by Wikipedia as “one of the few unembedded journalists to report extensively from Iraq during the 2003 Iraq invasion:”

Negroponte had assistance from his colleague from his days in Central America during the 1980’s, Ret. Col James Steele. Steele, whose title in Baghdad was Counselor for Iraqi Security Forces, supervised the selection and training of members of the Badr Organization [Badr Brigade] and Mehdi Army, the two largest Shi’ite militias in Iraq, in order to target the leadership and support

10 Ibid., p. 153
11 Ibid.
networks of a primarily Sunni resistance. Planned or not, these death squads promptly spiraled out of control to become the leading cause of death in Iraq. Intentional or not, the scores of tortured, mutilated bodies which turn up on the streets of Baghdad each day are generated by the death squads whose impetus was John Negroponte. And it is this U.S.-backed sectarian violence which largely led to the hell-disaster that Iraq is today.12

Demographic warfare. This was the era when Shiite and Sunni mosques and neighborhoods were rocked by terror bombings, until the residents were forced to flee to areas where their sect was in the majority. This was when the famous incident occurred with the two British SAS special forces mercenaries, dressed in mufti and driving around Basra with detonators in their car, apparently planning to bomb a mosque or a market.13 They were arrested by the Iraqi police. The British liberated them by driving an assault group of tanks through the walls of the jail. Interesting parallel: during “the troubles” in Northern Ireland, the SAS was caught carrying out terror bombing provocations to stoke the sectarian civil war there.

“On May 4, 2006, Congressman Dennis Kucinich gave a speech on the floor of the House which linked the Bush administration to the death squads in Iraq.” Kucinich had written to Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, citing copious references to newspaper articles. “News reports over the past 10 months,” Kucinich told Congress, “strongly suggest that the U.S. has trained and supported highly organized Iraqi commando brigades, and that some of those brigades have operated as death squads, abducting and assassinating thousands of Iraqis.”14

Here are a few of the congressman’s news highlights:

July 28, 2005 – Los Angeles Times reports that members of a California Army National Guard company, the Alpha Company, who were implicated in a detainee abuse scandal, trained and conducted joint operations with the Wolf Brigade, a commando unit criticized for human rights abuses. In an online Alpha Company newsletter, Captain Haviland wrote, “We have assigned 2nd Platoon to help them transition, and install some of our ‘Killer Company’ aggressive tactical spirit in them.” The article further states that despite the Wolf Brigade’s controversial reputation for human rights violations, it is regarded as the gold standard for Iraqi security forces by U.S. military officials.

August 31, 2005 – BBC reports that on the night of August 24, a large force of the Volcano Brigade raided homes in Al-Hurriyah city in the Baghdad, kidnapping and then executing 76 citizens. The victims were all shot in the head after their hands and feet had been tied up. They suffered the harshest forms of torture, deformation and burning.

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13 “Were British Special Forces Soldiers Planting Bombs in Basra?” www.globalresearch.ca/were-british-special-forces-soldiers-planting-bombs-in-basra/994 . The photo of their car is at http://www.globalresearch.ca/british-uncover-operation-in-basra-agents-provocateurs/990 . Some reports are that the car was already booby-trapped as a car bomb when they were arrested.
November 17, 2005 – *Newsday* reports that in the past year, the U.S. military has helped build up Iraqi commandos under guidance from James Steele, a former Army Special Forces officer who led U.S. counterinsurgency efforts in El Salvador in the 1980s. The brigades built up over the past year include the Lion Brigade, Scorpion Brigade and Volcano Brigade [the killers cited in the previous article].

February 26, 2006 – *The Independent* reports that outgoing United Nations’ human rights chief in Iraq, John Pace, revealed that hundreds of Iraqis are being tortured to death or summarily executed every month in Baghdad alone by the death squads working from the Ministry of Interior. He said that up to three-quarters of the corpses stacked in the Baghdad mortuary show evidence of gunshot wounds to the head or injuries caused by drill-bits or burning cigarettes.

March 9, 2006 – *Los Angeles Times* reports that ... U.S. trainers have also given extensive support to 27 brigades of heavily armed commandos accused of a series of abuses, including the death of 14 Sunni Arabs who were locked in an airtight van last summer.

March 10, 2006 – *Sydney Morning Herald* reports that men wearing the uniforms of U.S.-trained security forces, which are controlled by the Interior Ministry, abducted 50 people in a daylight raid on a security agency. Masked men who are driving what appear to be new government-owned vehicles are carrying out many of the raids.

March 27, 2006 – *The Independent* reports that while U.S. authorities have begun criticizing the Iraqi government over the “death squads,” many of the paramilitary groups accused of the abuse, such as the Wolf Brigade, the Scorpion Brigade and the Special Police Commandos were set up with the help of the American military. Furthermore, the militiamen were provided with U.S. advisers some of whom were veterans of Latin American counter-insurgency which also had led to allegations of death squads at the time.15

Author Mike Whitney notes that “the appearance of Colonel James Steele, as counselor for the Iraqi Security Forces, should remove any doubt about the real nature of America’s involvement... Steele’s ‘stock in trade’ is ‘spreading terror through the application of extreme violence’ – Max Fuller’s apt description of US counterinsurgency campaigns in Latin America.”

About 160,000 US troops occupied Iraq, and the cost to Iraq so far, has been about 160,000 civilian lives. The troops were gradually replaced with mercenaries from Blackwater and other “private security firms.” By the end of 2011, the US Army withdrew. It lost 4,400 men, cost $1 trillion,16 and released thousands of veterans disabled by trauma into US society. They leave behind them a fractured, instable and radioactive Iraq. By 2013, civilian casualties were already on the rise again.17

Negroponte understudy Robert S. Ford, the No. 2 “genius of genocide” who helped set up the Iraqi death squads, stayed in Baghdad until 2006. He was then assigned as ambassador to Algeria (another target for regime change) until 2008,

15 Ibid.
17 https://www.iraqbodycount.org/
when he returned to the Baghdad embassy as Deputy Head of Mission.\(^\text{18}\) Ford was by then well prepared for his appointment as US Ambassador to Syria in January 2011, coinciding with the “Arab Spring” disturbances by the Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo. In a scarce two months thereafter, the armed insurgency started in Syria. The “military-industrial-media complex” was all geared up to present it as a spree of insane violence by President Assad against his own people.

From the very start, fighters, weapons and supplies were funneled over the border from Iraq and Turkey into Syria – including the vicious and extremist death squads of the LIFG, or Libyan Islamic Fighting group: fresh veterans of the Libya campaign, US mercenaries going back to Afghanistan.\(^\text{19}\) The US-trained veteran terrorist brigades began to commit atrocities against civilians, then post footage of the carnage on YouTube, and fix the blame on imaginary pro-government gangs – as if Assad himself had learned the tactics of counter-insurgency terror at the School of the Americas. Each time, the mass media would then join in a chorus of hysteria about the US “responsibility to protect” civilians (so-called R2P) – the trick that had just worked to mobilize the extreme violence of NATO firepower to bring down Qaddafi and smash Libya. Russia and China learned their lesson,\(^\text{20}\) and vetoed NATO intervention in Syria at the UN.

Our lying, embedded media are acting as the purveyors of fakery, and the enablers of genocide. They are just as guilty as those who do the actual killing, because these war crimes could never happen without their protection.

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Damascus holds a place of honor as the world’s oldest continuously inhabited city, and the third holiest city in Islam. Religious tolerance has deep roots in Syria. When the city surrendered peacefully to the Muslim siege in 634, the Orthodox Christians were treated benevolently by the new masters. The Koran considers Islam to be a continuation of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and ordains respect towards Christians and Jews as peoples with a holy scripture.\(^\text{21}\)

When the Allies parceled out the Turkish empire after World War I, and the French got their mandate over Syria, they tried to divide and conquer the land by splitting it up into six ethno-religious enclaves. The Syrians, who are three-quarters Sunni, would have none of it. They have an ingrained suspicion of foreign conspiracies attempting to divide them along religious lines.\(^\text{22}\) Some critics believe the imperialist aim is not regime change or balkanization, but “merely” the destruction of a non-compliant nation. However, the Kurds, who are Sunni but not Arab, do have aspirations for more autonomy. It was easy enough to get them to cooperate with ISIS, at least to seize Syria’s oil fields and smuggle out the oil. So as we will see, the “French option” is not off the table.

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\(^\text{19}\) See my YouTube video, “The Big Lie & Dirty War on Syria: the Foreign Subversive Army Massacres its Human Shields in Daraya” for a profile of the Libyan death squads, and an account of a false flag attack on civilians near Damascus.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6YAOJ35yMk


\(^\text{21}\) Islam and the West, ZDF-Smithsonian TV miniseries, www.archive.org

\(^\text{22}\) http://progressivepress.com/blog/dirty-war-syria
Terror attacks have been concentrated against Syria’s minorities, especially the Christians and the Alawites, Assad’s sect. The effect is to force them to flee as refugees, leaving a Sunni state that will be more susceptible to takeover by extremists, and to join the Sunni bloc of Gulf states allied with the US. In Iraq, the Christian population has now decreased by 80% or 90% from a figure of about 1.5 million in 2003. As to who benefits, well, “three’s a crowd.” Friendship between Muslims and Christians is the nemesis of Zionism (just as the world alliance between Christendom and Zionism is so fatal to the Muslim peoples.)

According to Chossudovsky in *The Globalization of War*, the thesis of a “Sunni belt” or bloc was spawned by Condoleeza Rice in 2006, ostensibly as a strategy to contain Iran. It was implemented by Prince Bandar “Bush,” the Saudi spymaster, who went right to work creating the Jabhat al Nusra and ISIL / ISIS terror brigades. Saudi Arabia bankrolled the early years of the death squad campaign against Syria, providing financing and plausible deniability for the US effort.

Within days after Bandar organized a terror bombing against the high command of the Syrian military, in July 2012, he too was nearly killed by a bomb; many believe this was a revenge blow by Syrian military intelligence. That is one reason PM Erdogan of Turkey took the lead role in supporting the insurgency, but there is also the important logistical advantage: Turkey’s long border with Syria and Iraq. The bandits financed themselves and made Erdogan’s family rich by stealing Syria’s oil, which the Turks then sold to Israel. It is widely believed ISIS was able to loot $400 million from the central bank of Mosul, but Iraq has denied it. The UK *Daily Mail* reported on Iraq’s claim that ISIS is selling organs harvested from its victims to supplement its $2 million-a-day income from oil, ransom payments, and smuggled antiques.

**Takeaways**

- Terrorist death squads in Iraq were created using the “El Salvador Option” under cover of US Army counter-insurgency operations in the Iraq War. Ambassador Negroponte and Col. Steele, veterans of the Central American “Contras” project, set up secret police death squads and freelance terror brigades on both sides of the Sunni-Shiite divide. The aim was to instigate a civil war along sectarian lines, as a divide-and-conquer strategy. The Al Qaida or “Sunni” terror brigades were later renamed ISIS (the “Islamic State in Iraq and Syria”). In 2014, ISIS captured huge areas of Iraq, thanks to a stand-down by Iraqi army officers.
- In the “Arab Spring” of March 2011, US “human rights” NGO’s organized protests against the Syrian government, which worked as a screen for the death squad operations organized by Ambassador Ford. Terror brigades brought in

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from Iraq and Libya committed atrocities which were blamed on the government. Western nations supported them, claiming they were “moderate” pro-democracy rebels. To fight the Syrian Army, a huge army of mercenaries and extremists was recruited, paid for by the Saudis and the theft of Syrian oil. While the US and its allies pretended to fight their own terrorists, ISIS and its ilk grew stronger in Syria. On Sept. 30, 2015, Vladimir Putin changed the game by calling their bluff and carrying out massive airstrikes on ISIS, in coordination with the Syrian Army.

Eric King: Russia is dominating in Syria... and there’s really nothing Washington can do.

Paul Craig Roberts: No, except make a fool of itself by supporting ISIS. We brought ISIS in there — everybody knows that. Just the other day the former head of the Pentagon’s Defense Intelligence Agency said on television that ‘Yes, we created ISIS and we used them as henchmen to overthrow governments.’ (Laughter).26

***

It’s no fun for anyone to have to admit, “My country: wrong and wrong!” However, the flip side of the freedoms we enjoy, is that burden of responsibility.

This short preface can’t tell very much of the story. It can only hope to help the sincere reader set aside natural skepticism, long enough to consider the unfamiliar evidence in the book. It is a strange tale indeed, and unfortunately, there is no way to expose monstrous deceptions without risking being thought a liar oneself.

I have tried here to open one fairly clear window, one reasonably straight thread of the narrative, leading from known points in our history (“our” Central American death squad “rebels” or “Contras”), to the unfamiliar and frightening territory of today’s terror bloodbath in the Middle East, in Paris, and beyond.

In this book are contributions from an array of authors, each with a unique perspective, yet arriving at similar conclusions: that ISIS was created intentionally, not by accidental “blowback”27 from misguided policies. Whether or not we convince you, I hope you will find our selections in some measure thought-provoking, stimulating and enlightening.

It’s a minority viewpoint, but we should remember – One good reason we have freedom of speech, is that truth always starts from a minority viewpoint.

– John-Paul Leonard,
San Diego, Calif.,
December 2015

27 “Blowback” or “law of unintended consequences” is one of the favorite “limited hangouts” or ploys used by intelligence agencies to cover their tracks. Like other “accidental” or “spontaneous” explanations, it is a natural reflex – as when a child says, “the dish broke,” rather than “I broke it.”
John Negroponte & The Death-Squad Connection:

*Bush Nominates Terrorist for National Intelligence Director.*

by Frank Morales, Spring 2005 (excerpts)28

John Negroponte has a long and bloody criminal history, dating back to the early 1960s, of overseeing the training and arming of death squads, schooled in the techniques of torture, “forced interrogation,” assassination and, as we shall see, even genocide. He has been described as an “old-fashioned imperialist,” active for nearly four decades in Vietnam, Central America, the Philippines, Mexico and most recently Iraq. He got his start back in the days of the CIA’s Phoenix program, which assassinated some 40,000 Vietnamese “subversives.”

On Sept. 18, 2001, as the embers were still smoking at Lower Manhattan’s Ground Zero, Negroponte was appointed U.S. Representative to the United Nations. His mission was to work the floor and backrooms in preparation for Colin Powell’s infamous February 2003 presentation to the UN making the case for war on Iraq—which even Powell now admits was based on falsehoods. Then in April 2004, with a counter-insurgency war in Iraq rapidly spreading, Bush nominated Negroponte to be U.S. Ambassador to that occupied nation following the June 2004 hand-over of “sovereignty” to as-yet “undetermined Iraqi authorities.”

As ambassador to Honduras from 1981 to 1985, Negroponte played a key role in establishing that country as a base of operations for the CIA’s “Contra” guerrilla army then attempting to destabilize Nicaragua, with a 450-square-kilometer stretch along the border virtually turned over to the US-backed Nicaraguan rebels. He was also instrumental in the reign of terror then being overseen in Honduras by security chief Gen. Gustavo Alvarez Martinez, his good friend. Between 1980 and 1984, US military aid to Honduras jumped from $3.9 million to $77.4 million. Much of this went to facilitate the crushing of popular movements through a covert “low intensity” war.

Negroponte was in charge of the US Embassy when—according to a 1995 four-part series in the Baltimore Sun—hundreds of Hondurans deemed “subversives” were kidnapped, raped, tortured and killed by Battalion 316, a secret Honduran army intelligence unit (death squad) trained and supported by the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency.29

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Intelligence Battalion 3–16 was the name of a Honduran army unit responsible for carrying out political assassinations and torture of suspected political opponents of the government during the 1980s. Battalion members received training and support from the United States Central Intelligence Agency both in Honduras and at US military bases. At least 19 Battalion 3–16 members were graduates of the School of the Americas. Battalion 3–16 was also trained by Pinochet’s Chile. [Its leader] General Gustavo Álvarez Martínez studied at the Argentine Military College, graduating in 1961.

By the end of 1981, i.e. during the Dirty War in Argentina during which up to 30,000 people were disappeared by Argentine security forces and death squads, more than 150 Argentine officers were in Honduras.
Battalion 316 also participated in the CIA’s covert war against Nicaragua... Negroponte worked closely with Gen. Alvarez in overseeing the training of Honduran soldiers in psychological warfare, sabotage, torture and kidnapping. Honduras was the second largest recipient of U.S. military aid in the hemisphere at this time after neighboring El Salvador. Increasing numbers of both Honduran and Salvadoran soldiers were sent to the U.S. Army’s School of the Americas to receive training. In El Salvador, the death squads were headed up by Major Roberto D’Aubuisson, a 1972 graduate of the School of the Americas.

Covert operations in Central America were paid for in part through the sale of cocaine... Ambassador Negroponte acquiesced in shutting down the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) office in Tegucigalpa, just as Honduras was emerging as an important base for CIA-facilitated cocaine trans-shipments to the United States, with profits going to the Contras. According to a 1989 Senate Foreign Relations Committee investigative report, “elements of the Honduran military were involved in the protection of the drug traffickers.”

In 1982, the US negotiated access to airfields in Honduras and established a regional military training center there for Central American forces, principally directed at improving the lethal effectiveness of the Salvadoran military – at a time when the Salvadoran army was carrying out massacres...

Negroponte supervised the construction of El Aguacate Air Base where Nicaraguan Contras were trained by the US, said to be a secret detention and torture center.

Jack Binns, who served under president Jimmy Carter as the ambassador to Honduras prior to Negroponte, made numerous complaints about human rights abuses by the Honduran military. Recently, he stated regarding Negroponte, “I think he was complicit in abuses, I think he tried to put a lid on reporting abuses and I think he was untruthful to Congress about those activities.” (NYT, March 29, 2005) In one early ’80s cable, Binns reported that Gen. Alvarez was modeling his campaign against suspected subversives, on Argentina’s “dirty war” of the 1970s.

When Bush announced Negroponte’s nomination as ambassador to the UN shortly after coming to office, the move was met with widespread protest... the Bush administration did not back down – and even went so far as to silence potential witnesses who might have shed some light on Negroponte’s criminal history... One of the deported Hondurans was none other than Gen. Luis Alonso Discua, the former commander of Battalion 3-16, then serving as Honduras’ deputy ambassador to the UN!

Negroponte was sworn in as U.S. Representative to the United Nations on Sept. 18, 2001. By November 2002, he was strong-arming a resolution through the UN Security Council which called for the “disarming” of Iraq.

In March 2003, Negroponte walked out of the General Assembly after Iraq’s UN envoy, Mohammed Al-Douri, accused the U.S. of preparing a war of

The CIA had a strong role in establishing, training, equipping and financing Battalion 3–16. The US Ambassador to Honduras at the time, John Negroponte, met frequently with General Gustavo Alvarez Martínez.

See also: Death squad, The Torture Manuals, Torture, Honduras, John Negroponte
aggression. “Britain and the United States are about to start a real war of extermination” he said, “that will kill everything and destroy everything.”

On April 20, 2004, Bush nominated Negroponte as ambassador to Iraq.

Negroponte’s US Embassy in Baghdad, housed in a palace that once belonged to Saddam Hussein, was and remains the largest embassy in the world, with a “diplomatic staff” of over 3,000. Opting for the kind of diplomacy he’s most familiar with, he immediately “shifted more than $1 billion to build up the Iraqi Army,” diverting the funds “from reconstruction projects” to military and intelligence projects.

By the first weeks of January 2005, Negroponte was said to be overseeing the formation of death squads in Iraq, prompting media reports about a “Salvador option.” MSNBC reported on Jan. 8, 2005 that the Pentagon was intensively debating an option that dates back to a still-secret strategy in the Reagan administration’s battle against the leftist guerrilla insurgency in El Salvador in the early 1980s. Then, faced with a losing war against Salvadoran rebels, the US government funded or supported ‘nationalist’ forces that allegedly included so-called death squads directed to hunt down and kill rebel leaders and sympathizers. Eventually, the insurgency was quelled, and many U.S. conservatives consider the policy to have been a success, despite the deaths of innocent civilians...

At least one pro-occupation death squad is already in operation. On Jan. 11, 2004, just days after the Pentagon plans regarding possible “new offensive operations” were revealed, a new militant group, “Saraya Iraqna,” began offering big wads of American cash for insurgent scalps – up to $50,000.30

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Question: what sort of man is Negroponte? Civil servant taking orders, patriot, mass murderer - or all of the above? There is yet another possibility – he suffers from the delusion that he is doing the right thing. At least, this may be the state of mind of the man who sent him to Iraq, GW Bush.

The eminent Malaysian Islamic scholar Imran Hosein has a fascinating anecdote in the description of his book *Gog and Magog.*31

In 2003, G. Bush, on the eve of his invasion of Iraq, was trying to change the stance of France, which had refused to take part in this opening offensive of the Clash of Civilizations. He called [French President] Jacques Chirac, and told him about Gog and Magog, hoping this would make him realize the importance of joining this great battle of the End Times. Puzzled, the advisers at the Élysée Palace contacted a Protestant professor of theology. The answer: Bush is an

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30 Sheikh Imran Hosein tells anecdotes from his own circle of acquaintances, of a Syrian family whose son was given $1 million, and a Tunisian woman whose brother was given half a million, to join the “jihad” against Assad. “The Zionist Attack On Syria” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CISHTtNywyk, at 32-33 min. “They are not buying mujahideen, they are buying mercenaries... Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey are all in the Zionist camp. These are the countries who are financing, who are supplying the weapons. Is this a legitimate jihad, or is this a Zionist attack on Syria?”

evangelical Christian, who believes that “God will be on the side of Israel in the final conflict of the End Times, and its enemies will belong to the camp of the Antichrist.” If the French ministers would read this book, they would ... lead France on its own way, the way of peace.

So Bush meant well, he’s off the hook, and the Iraq war was for Israel after all. What else could Jesus say. “Forgive them, they have no idea what they’re doing.”

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John Negroponte is connected to Britain’s royal family and British intelligence through his wife, Diana Villiers. Diana’s father was Sir Charles Villiers, a merchant banker who would rise to become chairman of British Steel. His father was a Greek shipping magnate. He graduated from Yale, then joined the Foreign Service. He has held five ambassadorial posts, and was Deputy Sec’y of State under Reagan and Bush 43. He was succeeded as Ambassador to Iraq by the Afghan-American, card-carrying neocon Zalmay Khalilzad.

Khalilzad was Ambassador to Afghanistan, 2003-05, to Iraq 2005-07, and to the UN 2007-09. “His decisions, most especially his selection of puppet overseers to administer the conquered lands, were uniformly disastrous, contributing in large degree to the catastrophes of today.” His role was to appoint underqualified prime ministers, Unocal consultant Karzai in Afghanistan, and small shopkeeper Maliki in Iraq, ensuring both nations a future as failed states and US colonies. The Afghans wanted to bring back their old king. Instead, Khalilzad parceled out fiefs to warlords and drug lords, to play them off against each other. Local tribes were so fed up they turned to the Taliban. In Iraq, Maliki and the US alienated Sunnis and plunged the country into abysmal corruption. Every office, including military commands, was for sale; no wonder the Iraq army melted away.

Sheikh Hatem al-Suleiman is the chief of the powerful Dulaim tribe in Ramadi, capital of Anbar province, Western Iraq. He was an early leader of the insurgency who changed sides and got “hundreds of millions” to join the US “Surge.” But Sunni tribes are so bitter against Maliki that they have allied with ISIS to oppose him. Hatem blames the rise of ISIS on Maliki’s sectarianism, but says “ISIS doesn’t even represent 7 or 10 percent of the fighters.” In 2014, his tribal council hired a retired CIA officer to lobby Washington for Sunni autonomy: Jonathan Greenhill. Current duties on his fascinating resumé include: “strategy for an Iraqi Sunni movement ... to halt Iranian influence in Iraq and to create ... an independent Sunni state” and “Promotion of foreign energy resources to U.S. Companies.” Recent experience: “executed one of the Agency’s most successful counterterrorism covert action operations while leading a CIA Base in a ... high stress war zone.” Sound familiar? Just like Iraq, but it says Afghanistan.

32 http://www.apfn.org/apfn/negroponte.htm
34 Andrew Cockburn, http://harpers.org/blog/2014/06/the-long-shadow-of-a-neocon/
36 “Maliki Is ‘More Dangerous’ than ISIS” http://rudaw.net/english/interview/06072014
How the CIA Created ISIS –
The Libyan Connection\textsuperscript{39}

The fact that the CIA was actively working to help the Libyan rebels topple Gaddafi was no secret,\textsuperscript{40} nor were the airstrikes that Obama ordered against the Libyan government.\textsuperscript{41}

However, little was said about the identity or the ideological leanings of these Libyan rebels. Not surprising, considering the fact that the leader of the Libyan rebels later admitted that his fighters included Al-Qaeda linked jihadists who fought against allied troops in Iraq.\textsuperscript{42}

These jihadist militants from Iraq were part of what national security analysts commonly referred to as Al-Qaeda in Iraq. Remember Al-Qaeda in Iraq was ISIS before it was rebranded.

With the assistance of U.S. and NATO intelligence and air support, the Libyan rebels captured Gaddafi and summarily executed him in the street, all the while enthusiastically chanting “Allah Akbar”. For many of those who had bought the official line about how these rebels were freedom fighters aiming to establish a liberal democracy in Libya, this was the beginning of the end of their illusions.

Prior to the U.S. and NATO backed intervention, Libya had the highest standard of living of any country in Africa. This according to the U.N.’s Human Development Index rankings for 2010.\textsuperscript{43} In the years following the coup, the country descended into chaos, with extremism and violence running rampant. Libya is now widely regarded as a failed state (of course those who were naive enough to buy into the propaganda leading up to the war get defensive when this is said).

Now after Gaddafi was overthrown, the Libyan armories were looted, and massive quantities of weapons were sent by the Libyan rebels to Syria. The weapons, which included anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles, were smuggled into Syria through Turkey, a NATO ally. The Times of London reported on the arrival of the shipment on September 14th, 2012.

This was just three days after Ambassador Chris Stevens was killed by the attack on the U.S. embassy in Benghazi. Chris Stevens had served as the U.S. government’s liaison to the Libyan rebels since April of 2011. While a great deal media attention has focused on the fact that the State Department did not provide adequate security at the consulate, and was slow to send assistance when the attack started, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Seymour Hersh released an

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\textsuperscript{39} Adapted from “Here is the Proof the CIA Created ISIS,” May 18, 2015, http://www.conspiracyclub.co/2015/05/18/heres-the-proof-cia-created-isis/
\textsuperscript{40} https://sg.news.yahoo.com/cia-sends-teams-libya-us-considers-rebel-aid-20110331-065759-284.html
\textsuperscript{41} http://articles.latimes.com/2011/mar/29/world/la-fg-obama-libya-20110329
\textsuperscript{42} http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8407047/Libyan-rebel-commander-admits-his-fighters-have-al-Qaeda-links.html
article in April of 2014\textsuperscript{44} which exposed a classified agreement between the CIA, Turkey and the Syrian rebels to create what was referred to as a “rat line”.

The “rat line” was a covert network used to channel weapons and ammunition from Libya, through southern Turkey and across the Syrian border. Funding was provided by Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

With Stevens dead any direct U.S. involvement in that arms shipment was buried,\textsuperscript{45} and Washington would continue to claim that they had not sent heavy weaponry into Syria. It was at this time that jihadist fighters from Libya began flooding into Syria as well.\textsuperscript{46} And not just low level militants. Many were experienced commanders who had fought in multiple theaters.\textsuperscript{47}

The U.S. and its allies were now fully focused on taking down Assad’s government in Syria. As in Libya this regime change was to be framed in terms of human rights, and now overt support began to supplement the backdoor channels.\textsuperscript{48} The growing jihadist presence was swept under the rug and covered up. As the rebels gained strength, however, the reports of war crimes and atrocities that they were committing began to create a bit of a public relations problem for Washington. It then became standard policy to insist that U.S. support was only being given to what they referred to as “moderate” rebel forces.\textsuperscript{49}

This distinction obviously has zero relation to the reality of the situation. In an interview given in April of 2014, FSA commander Jamal Maarouf admitted that his fighters regularly conduct joint operations with Al-Nusra.\textsuperscript{50} Al-Nusra is the official Al-Qa’ida branch in Syria. This statement is further validated by an interview in June of 2013 by Colonel Abdel Basset Al-Tawil, commander of the FSA’s Northern Front. In this interview he openly discusses his ties with Al-Nusra, and expresses his desire to see Syria ruled by sharia law. (You can verify the identities of these two commanders here in this document from The Institute for the Study of War)\textsuperscript{51}

Moderate rebels? Well it’s complicated. Not that this should really come as any surprise. Reuters had reported in 2012 that the FSA’s command was dominated by Islamic extremists,\textsuperscript{52} and the \textit{New York Times} had reported that same year\textsuperscript{53}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{44}http://www.lrb.co.uk/v36/n08/seymour-m-hersh/the-red-line-and-the-rat-line
\item \textsuperscript{45}http://www.businessinsider.com/us-syria-heavy-weapons-jihadists-2012-10
\item \textsuperscript{46}http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/9606691/Syria-despatch-rebel-fighters-fear-the-growing-influence-of-their-Bin-Laden-faction.html
\item \textsuperscript{47}http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/11/isis_praised_slain_c.php
\item \textsuperscript{48}http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/25/world/middleeast/arms-airlift-to-syrian-rebels-expands-with-cia-aid.html
\item \textsuperscript{49}http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/syria-civil-war-us-will-arm-moderate-rebels-says-barack-obama-confirming-use-of-chemical-weapons-by-president-bashar-alassads-regime-8658368.html
\item \textsuperscript{50}http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/i-am-not-fighting-againstalqaida-itsnotour-problem-says-wests-last-hope-in-syria-9233424.html
\item \textsuperscript{51}http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Selected-Supreme-Military-Command-Members.pdf
\item \textsuperscript{52}http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/07/us-syria-crisis-rebels-idUSBRE8B60QX20121207
\item \textsuperscript{53}http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/15/world/middleeast/jihadists-receiving-most-arms-sent-to-syrian-rebels.html
\end{itemize}
that the majority of the weapons that Washington was sending into Syria were ending up in the hands of Jihadists. FOR TWO YEARS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT KNEW THIS WAS HAPPENING BUT DID NOTHING AND CONTINUED DOING IT.

And the FSA’s ties to Al-Nusra are just the beginning. In June of 2014 Al-Nusra merged with ISIS at the border between Iraq and Syria. In that context, the sarin gas attacks of 2013 turned out to have been committed by the Syrian rebels, which makes a lot more sense doesn’t it? If it wasn’t enough that U.N. investigators, Russian investigators, and Pulitzer prize winning journalist Seymour Hersh all pinned that crime on Washington’s proxies, the rebels themselves threatened the West that they would expose what really happened if they were not given more advanced weaponry within one month. This threat was made on June 10th, 2013. In what can only be described as an amazing coincidence, just nine days later, the rebels received their first official shipment of heavy weapons in Aleppo.

After the second sarin gas fiasco, which was also exposed and therefore failed to garner public support for airstrikes, the U.S. continued to increase its the training and support for the rebels.

In February of 2014, Haaretz reported that the U.S. and its allies in the region, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Israel, were in the process of helping the Syrian rebels plan and prepare for a massive attack in the south. According to Haaretz, Israel had also provided direct assistance in military operations against Assad four months prior. Then in May of 2014 PBS ran a report in which they interviewed rebels who were trained by the U.S. in Qatar. According to those rebels they were being trained to finish off soldiers who survived attacks.

“They trained us to ambush regime or enemy vehicles and cut off the road,” said the fighter, who is identified only as “Hussein.” “They also trained us on how to attack a vehicle, raid it, retrieve information or weapons and munitions, and how to finish off soldiers still alive after an ambush.”

This is a blatant violation of the Geneva conventions. It also runs contrary to conventional military strategy. In conventional doctrine soldiers are better off left wounded, because this ends up costing the enemy more resources. Executing captured enemy soldiers is the kind of tactic used when you want to strike terror in the hearts of the enemy. It also just happens to be standard operating

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55 http://scgnews.com/the-syrian-war-what-youre-not-being-told
56 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-22424188
58 http://www.lrb.co.uk/v35/n24/seymour-m-hersh/whose-sarin
procedure for ISIS. One month after this report, in June of 2014, ISIS made its dramatic entry, crossing over the Syrian border into Iraq, capturing Mosul, Baiji and almost reaching Baghdad. The internet was suddenly flooded with footage of drive-by shootings, large scale death marches, and mass graves. And of course any Iraqi soldier that was captured was executed.

Massive quantities of American military equipment were seized during that operation. ISIS took entire truckloads of humvees, they took helicopters, tanks, and artillery. They photographed and video taped themselves and advertised what they were doing on social media, and yet for some reason Washington didn’t even TRY to stop them. U.S. military doctrine clearly calls for the destruction of military equipment and supplies when friendly forces cannot prevent them from falling into enemy hands, but that didn’t happen here. ISIS was allowed to carry this equipment out of Iraq and into Syria unimpeded. The U.S. military had the means to strike these convoys, but they didn’t lift a finger, even though they had been launching drone strikes in Pakistan that same week.

Those who know their history will remember that Zbigniew Brzezinski was directly involved in funding and arming the Islamic extremists in Pakistan and Afghanistan in order to weaken the Soviets. Officially the U.S. government’s arming and funding of the Mujahideen was a response to the Soviet invasion in December of 1979. However, in his memoir entitled “From the Shadows,” Robert Gates – director of the CIA under Ronald Reagan and George Bush Sr., and Secretary of Defense under both George W. Bush and Barack Obama – revealed that the U.S. actually began the covert operation six months prior, with the express intention of luring the Soviets into a quagmire. The strategy worked. The Soviets invaded, and the ten years of war that followed are considered by many historians as being one of the primary causes of the fall of the USSR.

This example doesn’t just establish precedent, what we’re seeing happen in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria right now is actually a continuation of an old story. Al-Nusra and ISIS are ideological and organizational descendants of these extremist elements that the U.S. government made use of thirty years ago. The U.S. then went on to create a breeding ground for them by invading Iraq in 2003. Had it not been for the vacuum of power left by the removal and execution of Saddam, Al-Qaeda in Iraq, aka ISIS, would not exist. And had it not been for Washington’s attempt at toppling Assad by arming, funding and training shadowy militant groups in Syria, there is no way that ISIS would have been capable of storming into Iraq in June of 2014.

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64 http://books.google.com/books?id=M51sslgLmI8C&pg=PA131&lpg=PA131&dq=arnold+horelick+afghanistan
Syria’s Fake Color Revolution65

By Joe Quinn

Hundreds of thousands of people have been repeatedly taking to the streets of Damascus to show their support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and demonstrate against the threat of a Libya-style foreign intervention.

This goes unreported by the mainstream media, who go to great lengths to mold world opinion to believe that events in Syria are yet another ‘people’s revolution,’ while the facts point clearly to yet another US government-sponsored bloody ‘regime change.’

This should be no surprise. History records that the CIA has orchestrated innumerable armed insurgencies in dozens of countries around the world, arming bands of mercenaries and death squads in an effort to overthrow national governments and expand American domination over every corner of the globe.

In 1988, former CIA station chief John Stockwell, who ran the CIA secret war in Angola, estimated the CIA had mounted approximately 3,000 major operations and 10,000 minor operations of this nature, which killed over six million people. As quoted in the book Addicted to War,66 he wrote,

Now we have massive documentation of what they call the secret wars of the CIA. We don’t have to guess or speculate. We had the Church committee investigate them in 1975, which gave us our first really in-depth powerful look inside this structure.

Senator Church said in the 14 years before he did his investigation that he found that they had run 900 major operations and 3000 minor operations. And if you extrapolate that over the whole period of the 40 odd years that we’ve had a CIA,

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you come up with 3000 major operations and over 10,000 minor operations. Every one of them illegal. Every one of them disruptive of the lives and societies of other peoples and many of them bloody and gory beyond comprehension, almost.

Each covert war is a violation of the US Constitution, which requires war to be declared by Congress, and not launched by an unelected, secret body.

To finance their business on such a scale they have control of the global drug trade, which is presumably the true reason for the American-Afghan war.

Stockwell’s estimate did not include the NATO/Gladio operations in Europe, plus with 15 more years since with the CIA at work, probably at an increased tempo and with a widening global scope, it will by now have passed the mind-boggling figure of 20,000 such covert operations.

It should come as no great surprise to the reader, then, if evidence points to the current crisis in Syria as another CIA operation.

In an interview with Amy Goodman on March 2, 2007, U.S. General Wesley Clark (Ret.), explained that the Bush Administration planned to “take out” seven countries in five years: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Iran.

Syria has always been on the Israelis’ ‘to-do’ list, especially as it is (now) the last independent, secular, multi-ethnic Arab country in the Middle East, a staunch supporter of Iran and, as such, an obstacle to Israeli hegemony over the entire Middle East.

But isn’t Syria a dictatorship? This too is part of the grand game of NIGYSOB (‘Now I’ve Got You you Son Of a Bitch’), whereby some Arab governments that refuse to submit to Western and Israeli dominance are continually harassed and destabilized to the point that they are forced, in order to survive, to develop a security infrastructure that is, to one extent or another, totalitarian. Western powers and the Israelis can then, when it suits them best, decry the lack of ‘freedom’ within the targeted nation and begin overthrowing the government. See Hugo Chavez’s terms as Venezuelan president as an example of how this ‘game’ is played by Western powers.

So far, the Syrian ‘revolution’ has been a carbon copy of most other CIA-sponsored ‘regime changes’ over the past 60 years: mercenaries and death squads are imported into the country to ‘stir things up’ in advance of a bombing campaign when the time is right. In Libya, that’s exactly what happened, with the British, Americans and Israelis pooling their resources and sharing the contents of their little black books of ‘Al-Qaeda’ fighters they have been recruiting over the years. Several leaders in the rebellion against Libya are now active in Syria, as witnessed by Spanish journalist Daniel Iriarte. These former Muslim terrorists turned NATO freedom fighters are nothing more than unscrupulous hired guns, who will fight for any cause as long as someone is willing to pay them hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In April 2011, Syrian state television aired the testimonies of three men arrested on suspicion of attacks on civilians and Syrian security forces. Anas al-Kanj, who presented himself as the head of an “armed terrorist group,” is heard saying in a taped broadcast that he received “arms and money” from a member of Syria’s banned Muslim Brotherhood.

Kanj said he was instructed “to incite people to protest, particularly outside the Ummayad Mosque in Damascus” and in the flashpoint protest towns of Daraa,
Latakia and Banias, to “incite protests to topple the regime and to carry out acts of sabotage”. Agence France-Presse, citing Syria’s Ath-Thawra newspaper, said that Kanj was instructed “to open fire on protesters in order to sow disarray and lead people to believe that the security forces were shooting on the demonstrators.”

The idea is to get the people and the authorities up in arms against each other, while trumpeting in the world media that the regime is brutally repressing protests. This is a very interesting testimony because it captures several crucial steps in the Pentagon’s Unconventional Warfare doctrine [See the chapter “Sociological Warfare”]. Here is an overview of the game plan as it applies to Syria:

- Fund NGO’s to create a climate of protest in the target country
- Provocateurs organize demonstrations, then fire on protesters and security forces alike to stoke violence
- Staged and falsely attributed video footage creates the illusion of repression by the regime
- Mass media endlessly repeat the Big Lie that the nation’s leader is a brutal dictator— “Give the dog a bad name and hang him.”
- Invade border towns with special forces death squads, the CIA Foreign Legion of Al Qaeda psychopaths, fanatics and guns for hire
- Foment a civil war on ethnic divides, and fabricate pretexts for military intervention by the UN, or NATO
- Bomb the country into the stone age, to be conquered and ruled by NATO’s Islamic terrorist puppets
- Eradicate Arab socialism and government for the people, replacing it with a corrupt clique beholden to Wall Street and London bankers
- US corporations write multi-billion-dollar contracts for “reconstruction” and “security,” yielding an astronomical profit on the spoils of war
- Isolate Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and Iran, giving free rein for Greater Israel to dominate the Middle East

In a December 2011 post on her web site, Turkish-American former FBI translator and whistleblower Sibel Edmonds stated that

foreign military groups, estimated at hundreds of individuals, began to spread near the villages of the north-Jordan city of Al-Mafraq, which is adjacent to the Jordanian and Syrian border.

According to one Jordanian military officer who asked to remain anonymous, hundreds of soldiers who speak languages other than Arabic were seen during the past two days in those areas moving back and forth in military vehicles between the King Hussein Air Base of al-Mafraq (10 km from the Syrian border), and the vicinity of Jordanian villages adjacent to the Syrian border.

In January 2012, the UK website ‘Elite UK Forces’ reported that “There has been growing chatter indicating that British Special Forces are in some way assisting forces aligned against the Syrian regime.”

The US ambassador to Syria since 2010 until the closing of the US Embassy in Damascus has been Robert Stephen Ford (“Mr. Death Squad, Jr.”) Before Syria, Ford was Political Counselor to the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad under John...
Negroponte, who has been so infamously linked to death squads in Iraq. According to Wikipedia, “Former CIA intelligence officer Michael Scheuer has asserted that prior to Ford’s removal he was traveling across the country [Syria] inciting groups to overthrow the government.”

The Syrian ‘revolution’ proper began in March 2011 when fighting broke out in the relatively small town of Daraa on the Jordanian border, rather than in large cities like Damascus or Homs. Since then, the mainstream media has systematically misrepresented the size of the anti-government demonstrations and relied on biased reports for casualty counts.

For example, almost all of the first reports from fighting in Daraa in March made reference to police attacks on ‘anti-government’ protestors. Yet other reports point to more police being killed than demonstrators. So who, exactly, in this supposedly ‘peaceful demonstration’ was able to shoot and kill seven policemen? And what exactly did anyone expect the Syrian government to do in response? After seeing what US police do to actual peaceful protestors, like the OWS movement, we can only imagine what the US government would do if US cops came under fire from protestors.

In June 2011, Syrian state media reported that at least 120 members of the country’s security forces were killed in a battle with what it called “armed organizations.” According to NPR’s Deborah Amos:

*Syrian state television described a heated battle in the northern town of Jisr al-Shughour, near the Turkish border. Gangs armed with machine guns attacked security forces and set fire to government buildings, according to Syrian state TV. In the broadcast, a frantic resident called the evening news program to ask the government to save the town.*

Notice that the reports of the most serious fighting come from border towns, which is indicative of incursions by armed groups from Turkey to the north, Jordan to the south and, of course, US-controlled Iraq to the east. Indeed, the main ‘centers of unrest’, as they’re being called, are Daraa near Jordan, Talkalakh, Homs, Talbiseh and Al-Rastan near Lebanon, and Jisr ash-Shugur near Turkey, all located along Syria’s borders. In November 2011, Albawaba reported that 600 fighters had already gone from Libya to Syria in order to support the newly established ‘Free Syrian Army’.

Within a few weeks of the beginning of the CIA-sponsored uprising in Syria, the Syrian government expelled most foreign journalists from the country and tightly controlled the activities of those that remained. Given the nature of the Western media—the propaganda arm of the empire builders—this was an understandable reaction. Unfortunately, the Syrian government seems to have underestimated the extent to which the CIA had infiltrated Syria.

With little or no direct access to events in Syria, most Western media reports rely on the claims of unnamed ‘opposition activists’ who, frankly, could be anyone, and an organisation calling itself the ‘Local Coordination Committees of Syria’ (LCC), which claims to be a “collection of local committees in towns and cities across Syria that meet, plan and organize events on the ground.” Strangely enough, however, the web sites associated with this LCC are based in Germany and owned by a person named Andreas Bertsch. It was the Local Coordination Committees of Syria that first broke the fake story that the hoax figure “Amina the Gay Girl from Damascus” had been arrested by Syrian police.
A video report from RT.com gave an example of the way in which reports of a Syrian government ‘crack down’ can be entirely fabricated:

Armed men came warning that the army and navy would attack Latakia - 2000 people fled, but came back in a couple days angry they had been lied to - no such attack came. The scare came the day after a big pro-Assad rally.

The attack never came, but the media omitted that. Over and over again, the media and Ms. “Heil” Hillary Clinton have jumped to vilify a “massacre by the Syrian government,” before the dust settles and the facts emerge that the massacre was committed by the NATO-Salafist-mercenary death squads, or else it was a pitched battle between opposing armies.

In either case, it always turns out the Syrian Army was there doing its job protecting its people. But of course, the correction is never, ever heard in the media. Syria has realized the mistake of banning western journalists and has overturned the decision, but with the cards stacked for war fever, this still won’t help them much in the media war.

What we are dealing with here is known in military circles as psychological warfare or ‘psywar’, which aims to influence a target audience’s emotions, reasoning, behavior—usually by inventing lies and presenting them as truth.

High on the CIA’s to-do list for ‘regime change’ in Syria—as was the case with the genocidal invasions of Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya—is the creation of an embryonic Syrian government-in-exile made up of right-wing hardliners and/or convicted conmen. Early last year, the Syrian National Council was created with its headquarters in Turkey. To get an idea of the political leaning of this clique, we need only look to the comments of its Chairman, Burhan Ghalioun, a French professor of political sociology and potential future President of Syria. On December 2, 2011 Ghalioun said that if his regime takes over Syria it would “end the military relationship to Iran and cut off arms supplies to Hezbollah and Hamas, and establish ties with Israel.”

This fact alone points to strong Israeli backing and motivation in the effort to oust Assad. With a pro-US/Israel government in Syria, crucial Iranian support to Hizb’allah and the Palestinians would be cut off, leaving Israel free to enact its final solution for its ‘Arab problem’.

George Galloway has pointed out that among the “opposition leaders” supported by the US and Saudi Arabia are personages responsible for crimes against humanity and the embezzlement of billions while they held high office in Syria under Hafez al-Assad: the expatriates Rifaat al-Assad and Abdul Halim Khaddam. Here again, note the parallel to “Iraqi Freedom” and that corrupt creature of the CIA, Ahmed Chalabi. Iraq and Libya are prime examples of the viciousness of this U.S. imperialism which mumbles on about “nation-building”—while smashing and plundering already highly-developed nations into ruins.

To quote cartoonist Walt Kelly from his famous Pogo comic strip, “We have met the enemy and he is us.”
Unmasking ISIS
by George Washington’s Blog

Introduction
Where did ISIS come from? How was it able to gain land, arms and money so quickly?

This book will answer those questions ... and unmask ISIS.

Part 1 shows that the U.S. – through bad policies and stupid choices – is largely responsible for the rise of ISIS.

Part 2 reveals the strange history of the leaders of ISIS ... Including one who never really existed, and another who – if you read mainstream media drivel – was killed ... then arrested ... and then killed again.

Part 3 delves into the little-known, secret history of Iraq and Syria ... and discusses the real motivations behind our current policies towards those countries.

And Part 4 reveals the shocking truth about who is really supporting ISIS.

So grab a cup of coffee, and prepare to learn the real story.

Part 1: Oops … We Created a Monster

President Barack Obama noted in an interview in March 2015:

ISIL [also known as ISIS] is a direct outgrowth of Al-Qaeda in Iraq that grew out of our invasion. Which is an example of unintended consequences. Which is why we should generally aim before we shoot.

He's correct. After all:

ISIS leaders themselves credit the Iraq war for their success

- The New Yorker reports: “ISIS is run by a council of former Iraqi generals .... Many are members of Saddam Hussein’s secular Baath Party who converted to radical Islam in American prisons.”
- Torture of Iraqis by Americans led to the rise of ISIS ... and America’s Guantanamo prison inspired ISIS atrocities
- Al Qaeda wasn’t even in Iraq until the U.S. invaded that country, as admitted by President George W. Bush to ABC News in 2008:

Bush: One of the major theaters against al Qaeda turns out to have been Iraq. This is where al Qaeda said they were going to take their stand. This is where al Qaeda was hoping to take ...

ABC News Interviewer: But not until after the U.S. invaded.

Bush: Yeah, that’s right. So what?

- ISIS took over large swaths of Iraq using captured American weapons left over from the Iraq war

In addition, the entire American policy of arming “moderate” Syrian rebels has backfired.

Lebanon’s Daily Star reports that so-called “moderate” Syrian rebels support ISIS terrorists:
“We are collaborating with the Islamic State and the Nusra Front [another extremist and hard-line Islamic terrorist group] by attacking the Syrian Army’s gatherings in ... Qalamoun,” said Bassel Idriss, the commander of an FSA-aligned rebel brigade...

“A very large number of FSA members have joined ISIS and Nusra,” Abu Fidaa [a retired Colonel in the Syrian army who is now the head of the Revolutionary Council in Qalamoun] said. The so-called “moderate” Free Syrian Army has also signed a non-aggression pact with ISIS.

The New York Times writes:

President Obama’s determination to train Syrian rebels to serve as ground troops against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria leaves the United States dependent on a diverse group riven by infighting, with no shared leadership and with hard-line Islamists as its most effective fighters.

After more than three years of civil war, there are hundreds of militias fighting President Bashar al-Assad — and one another. Among them, even the more secular forces have turned to Islamists for support and weapons over the years, and the remaining moderate rebels often fight alongside extremists like the Nusra Front, Al Qaeda’s affiliate in Syria...

Analysts who track the rebel movement say that the concept of the Free Syrian Army as a unified force with an effective command structure is a myth...

The Syrian rebels are a scattered archipelago of mostly local forces with ideologies that range from nationalist to jihadist. Their rank-and-file fighters are largely from the rural underclass, with few having clear political visions beyond a general interest in greater rights or the dream of an Islamic state...

Some European allies remain skeptical about the efficacy of arming the Syrian rebels. Germany, for instance, has been arming and training Kurdish pesh merga forces in Iraq, but has resisted doing the same for any groups in Syria — partly out of fear that the weapons could end up in the hands of ISIS or other radical groups.

“We can’t really control the final destination of these arms,” said Peter Wittig, the German ambassador to the United States...

The fluidity of battlefield alliances in Syria means that even mainline rebels often end up fighting alongside the Nusra Front, whose suicide bombers are relied on by other groups to soften up government targets.

“Even the groups that the U.S. has trained tend to show up in the same trenches as the Nusra Front eventually, because they need them and they are fighting the same battles,” Mr. Lund said...

Current and former American officials acknowledge the government’s lack of deep knowledge about the rebels. “We need to do everything we can to figure out who the non-ISIS opposition is,” said Ryan C. Crocker, a former United States ambassador to Iraq and Syria. “Frankly, we don’t have a clue.”

And yet, as the Wall Street Journal, PBS, CNN, New York Times, Medium, Pulitzer prize-winning reporter Seymour Hersh and others note, the U.S. and its allies have poured huge amounts of weapons and support to the Syrian Islamic “rebels”. This is in spite of the CIA warning President Obama that arming rebels rarely works.
Washington wants regime change in Syria, so it’s making up a myth of the “moderate Syrian rebel” who hates Assad and ISIS. But they “don’t have a clue” as to whether such a mythical unicorn actually exists (spoiler alert: it doesn’t).

The New York Times reported in 2013 that virtually all of the rebel fighters in Syria are hardline Islamic terrorists. Things have gotten much worse since then ... as the few remaining moderates have been lured away by ISIS’ arms, cash and influence.

Michael Shank – Adjunct Faculty and Board Member at George Mason University’s School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, and director of foreign policy at the Friends Committee on National Legislation – warned a year ago:

The Senate and House Intelligence committees’ about-face decision last week to arm the rebels in Syria is dangerous and disconcerting. The weapons will assuredly end up in the wrong hands and will only escalate the slaughter in Syria. Regardless of the vetting procedures in place, the sheer factionalized nature of the opposition guarantees that the arms will end up in some unsavory hands. The same militant fighters who have committed gross atrocities are among the best-positioned of the rebel groups to seize the weapons that the United States sends to Syria...

Arming one side of Syria’s multi-sided and bloody civil war will come back to haunt us. Past decisions by the U.S. to arm insurgencies in Libya, Angola, Central America and Afghanistan helped sustain brutal conflicts in those regions for decades. In the case of Afghanistan, arming the mujahideen in the 1980s created the instability that emboldened extreme militant groups and gave rise to the Taliban, which ultimately created an environment for al Qaeda to thrive...

Arming the enemies of our enemies hasn’t made the U.S. more friends; it has made the U.S. more enemies...

Some armed opposition factions, including powerful Islamist coalitions, reject negotiation altogether. Yet these are the same groups that will likely seize control of U.S.-supplied weapons, just as they’ve already seized control of the bulk of the rebels’ weaponry...

When you lift the curtain on the armed groups with the most formidable military presence on the ground in Syria, you find the Al Nusra Front and Al Farough Brigades. Both groups are closely aligned with Al Qaeda and have directly perpetrated barbaric atrocities. The Al Nusra Front has been charged with beheadings of civilians, while a commander from the Al Farough Brigades reportedly ate the heart of a pro-Assad soldier.

Shank's warning was ignored, and his worst fears came to pass. And since the Obama administration is doubling-down on the same moronic policy, it will happen again ...

And it’s not as if we only started supporting the rebels after the Syrian civil war started. Rather, the U.S. started funding the Syrian opposition 5 years before the civil war started ... and started arming them 4 years beforehand.

And a leaked 2006 U.S. State Department Cable from the U.S. Ambassador to Syria discussed plans to overthrow the Syrian government.

So it’s not as if our intervention in Syria is for humanitarian reasons.

We summarized the state of affairs in 2014:
The Syrian rebels are mainly Al Qaeda, and the U.S. has been supporting these terrorists for years. Indeed, as reported in the Wall Street Journal, the National and other sources, Al Qaeda’s power within the Syrian rebel forces is only growing stronger.

Rank-and-file Syrian rebels have:

- Burned American flags
- Threatened to attack America
- Said: “When we finish with Assad, we will fight the U.S.!”
- Said: “We started our holy war here and won’t finish until this [Al Qaeda] banner will be raised on top of the White House. Keep funding them, you always do that, remember? Al Qaeda for instance.”
- A former Syrian Jihadi says the rebels have a “9/11 ideology”
- Indeed, they’re literally singing Bin Laden’s praises and celebrating the 9/11 attack

In fact, one of the heads of the Syrian rebels is also the global boss of Al Qaeda ... and he is calling for fresh terrorist attacks on America. CBS News reports:

Al Qaeda chief Ayman al-Zawahiri called has called on Muslims to continue attacking Americans on their own soil in order to “bleed” the U.S. economy... “To keep up the hemorrhage in America’s security and military spending, we need to keep the Unites States on a constant state of alert about where and when the next strike will blow,” Zawahiri said.

Let’s recap ... Most of the Syrian “rebels” are Al Qaeda. The U.S. government has designated these guys as terrorists.

Things are getting worse, not better: Al Qaeda is gaining more and more power among the rebels....

Indeed, we’ve long known that most of the weapons we’re shipping to Syria are ending up in the hands of Al Qaeda. And they apparently have chemical weapons.

Summary: We’re arming the same guys who are threatening to blow us up.

Indeed, ISIS has tripled the size of its territory in Syria and greatly expanded its territory in Iraq even after the U.S. started its bombing campaign against ISIS. (Update: ISIS now has captured even more of Syria.)

Is something deeper going on behind the scene?

Part 2: ISIS’ Strange Leadership

There is a question about whether the heads of ISIS are who we’ve been told. For example, the New York Times reported in 2007:

For more than a year, the leader of one the most notorious insurgent groups in Iraq was said to be a mysterious Iraqi named Abdullah Rashid al-Baghdadi.

As the titular head of the Islamic State in Iraq, an organization publicly backed by Al Qaeda, Baghdadi issued a steady stream of incendiary pronouncements. Despite claims by Iraqi officials that he had been killed in May, Baghdadi appeared to havepersevered unscathed.
On Wednesday, a senior American military spokesman provided a new explanation for Baghdadi’s ability to escape attack: He never existed.

**Brigadier General Kevin Bergner, the chief American military spokesman, said the elusive Baghdadi was actually a fictional character** whose audio-taped declarations were provided by an elderly actor named Abu Abdullah al-Naima.

The ruse, Bergner said, was devised by Abu Ayub al-Masri, the Egyptian-born leader of Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, who was trying to mask the dominant role that foreigners play in that insurgent organization.

The ploy was to invent Baghdadi, a figure whose very name establishes his Iraqi pedigree, install him as the head of a front organization called the Islamic State of Iraq and then arrange for Masri to swear allegiance to him. Ayman al-Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden’s deputy, sought to reinforce the deception by referring to Baghdadi in his video and Internet statements...

Bruce Riedel, a former CIA official and a Middle East expert, said that experts had long wondered whether Baghdadi actually existed. “There has been a question mark about this,” he said...

American military spokesmen insist they have gotten to the truth on Baghdadi. Mashadani, they say, provided his account because he resented the role of foreign leaders in Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia.

The unmasking of the terror leader as being an actor’s fictitious persona came after al-Baghdadi was – according to mainstream media reports – arrested in 2007, killed in 2007, arrested again in 2009, and then killed again in 2010.

The story of ISIS’ previous leader – Abu Musab al-Zarqawi – was odd as well. He was declared dead in 2004. Then he was said to be arrested ... several different times. Then he was supposedly killed again in 2006.

The Independent – in an article on “black propaganda” (i.e. intentional disinformation) by the U.S. government – cites the forging by the U.S. government of a letter which it pretended was written by al Zarqawi, which was then unquestioningly parroted by the media as an authentic by Zarqawi letter. The Washington Post reported:

One internal briefing, produced by the U.S. military headquarters in Iraq, said that Kimmitt [Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt, the U.S. military’s chief spokesman in 2004, and subsequently the senior planner on the staff of the Central Command that directs operations in Iraq and the rest of the Middle East] had concluded that, “The Zarqawi PSYOP program is the most successful information campaign to date.”

And CNN reported that ISIS’ current leader – Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi – was “respected” very much by the U.S. Army and allowed to communicate freely with other prisoners in the prison in which ISIS was hatched (see Part 1) and to travel without restriction at that prison.
Part 3: Deeper Background

To understand the deeper story behind ISIS, we have to go back more than half a century to look at U.S. history in the Middle East (and drill deep down for the black gold).

Target: Iraq

Between 1932 and 1948, the roots for the current wars in Iraq were planted. As Wikipedia explains:

The Mosul–Haifa oil pipeline (also known as Mediterranean pipeline) was a crude oil pipeline from the oil fields in Kirkuk, located in north Iraq, through Jordan to Haifa (now on the territory of Israel). The pipeline was operational in 1935–1948. Its length was about 942 kilometres (585 mi), with a diameter of 12 inches (300 mm) (reducing to 10 and 8 inches (250 and 200 mm) in parts), and it took about 10 days for crude oil to travel the full length of the line. The oil arriving in Haifa was distilled in the Haifa refineries, stored in tanks, and then put in tankers for shipment to Europe.

The pipeline was built by the Iraq Petroleum Company between 1932 and 1935, during which period most of the area through which the pipeline passed was under a British mandate approved by the League of Nations. The pipeline was one of two
pipelines carrying oil from the Kirkuk oilfield to the Mediterranean coast. The main pipeline split at Haditha with a second line carrying oil to Tripoli, Lebanon, which was then under a French mandate. This line was built primarily to satisfy the demands of the French partner in IPC, Compagnie Française des Pétroles, for a separate line to be built across French mandated territory.

The pipeline and the Haifa refineries were considered **strategically important by the British Government, and indeed provided much of the fuel needs of the British and American forces in the Mediterranean during the Second World War.**

The pipeline was a target of attacks by Arab gangs during the Great Arab Revolt, and as a result one of the main objectives of a joint British-Jewish Special Night Squad commanded by Captain Orde Wingate was to protect the pipeline against such attacks. Later on, the pipeline was the target of attacks by the Irgun.

[Background62.]

In 1948, with the outbreak of the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, the official operation of the pipeline ended when the Iraqi Government refused to pump any more oil through it.

Why is this relevant today? Haaretz reported63 soon after the Iraq war started in 2003:

The United States has asked Israel to check the possibility of pumping oil from Iraq to the oil refineries in Haifa. The request came in a telegram last week from a senior Pentagon official to a top Foreign Ministry official in Jerusalem.

The Prime Minister’s Office, which views the pipeline to Haifa as a “bonus” the U.S. could give to Israel in return for its unequivocal support for the American-led campaign in Iraq, had asked the Americans for the official telegram.

The new pipeline would take oil from the Kirkuk area, where some 40 percent of Iraqi oil is produced, and transport it via Mosul, and then across Jordan to Israel. The U.S. telegram included a request for a cost estimate for repairing the Mosul-Haifa pipeline that was in use prior to 1948. During the War of Independence [what Jews call64 the 1948 war to form the state of Israel], the Iraqis stopped the flow of oil to Haifa and the pipeline fell into disrepair over the years...

National Infrastructure Minister Yosef Paritzky said yesterday that the port of Haifa is an attractive destination for Iraqi oil and that he plans to discuss this matter with the U.S. secretary of energy during his planned visit to Washington next month...

In response to rumors about the possible Kirkuk-Mosul-Haifa pipeline, Turkey has warned Israel that it would regard this development as a serious blow to Turkish-Israeli relations.

So the fighting over Iraq can be traced back to events occurring in 1948 and before.

But let’s fast-forward to subsequent little-known events in Iraq. The CIA plotted to poison the Iraqi leader65 in 1960.

In 1963, the U.S. backed the coup which succeeded66 in killing the head of Iraq. And everyone knows that the U.S. also toppled Saddam Hussein during the Iraq war. But most don’t know that neoconservatives planned regime change in Iraq once again in 199167.
4-Star General Wesley Clark – former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO – said:

It came back to me … a 1991 meeting I had with Paul Wolfowitz...

In 1991, he was the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy – the number 3 position at the Pentagon. And I had gone to see him when I was a 1-Star General commanding the National Training Center...

And I said, “Mr. Secretary, you must be pretty happy with the performance of the troops in Desert Storm.” And he said: “Yeah, but not really, because the truth is we should have gotten rid of Saddam Hussein, and we didn’t … But one thing we did learn [from the Persian Gulf War] is that we can use our military in the region – in the Middle East – and the Soviets won’t stop us. And we’ve got about 5 or 10 years to clean up those old Soviet client regimes – Syria, Iran, IRAQ – before the next great superpower comes on to challenge us.”

And many people don’t know that the architects of the Iraq War themselves admitted the war was about oil. For example, former U.S. Secretary of Defense – and former 12-year Republican Senator – Chuck Hagel said of the Iraq war in 2007:

People say we’re not fighting for oil. Of course we are. They talk about America’s national interest. What the hell do you think they’re talking about? We’re not there for figs.

4 Star General John Abizaid – the former commander of CENTCOM with responsibility for Iraq – said: “Of course it’s about oil, it’s very much about oil, and we can’t really deny that.”

Former Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan said in 2007: “I am saddened that it is politically inconvenient to acknowledge what everyone knows: the Iraq war is largely about oil.”

President George W. Bush said in 2005 that keeping Iraqi oil away from the bad guys was a key motive for the Iraq war:

If Zarqawi and [Osama] bin Laden gain control of Iraq, they would create a new training ground for future terrorist attacks. They’d seize oil fields to fund their ambitions.

John McCain said in 2008:

My friends, I will have an energy policy that we will be talking about, which will eliminate our dependence on oil from the Middle East that will — that will then prevent us — that will prevent us from having ever to send our young men and women into conflict again in the Middle East.

Sarah Palin said in 2008:

Better to start that drilling [for oil within the U.S.] today than wait and continue relying on foreign sources of energy. We are a nation at war and in many ways the reasons for war are fights over energy sources, which is nonsensical when you consider that domestically we have the supplies ready to go.

Former Bush speechwriter David Frum – author of the infamous “Axis of Evil” claim in Bush’s 2002 State of the Union address – writes in Newsweek:

In 2002, Chalabi [the Iraqi politician and oil minister who the Bush Administration favored to lead Iraq after the war] joined the annual summer retreat of the American Enterprise Institute near Vail, Colorado. He and Cheney spent
3. Deeper Background

long hours together, contemplating the possibilities of a Western-oriented Iraq: an additional source of oil, an alternative to U.S. dependency on an unstable-looking Saudi Arabia.

Key war architect – and Under Secretary of State – John Bolton said\textsuperscript{77}:
The critical oil and natural gas producing region that we fought so many wars to try and protect our economy from the adverse impact of losing that supply or having it available only at very high prices.

General Wesley Clark said\textsuperscript{78} that the Iraq war – like all modern U.S. wars – were about oil.

A high-level National Security Council officer strongly implied that Cheney and the U.S. oil chiefs planned the Iraq war before 9/11 in order to get control of its oil\textsuperscript{79}.

The Sunday Herald reported\textsuperscript{80}:
It is a document that fundamentally questions the motives behind the Bush administration’s desire to take out Saddam Hussein and go to war with Iraq. Strategic Energy Policy Challenges For The 21st Century describes how America is facing the biggest energy crisis in its history. It targets Saddam as a threat to American interests because of his control of Iraqi oilfields and recommends the use of ‘military intervention’ as a means to fix the US energy crisis.

The report is linked to a veritable who’s who of US hawks, oilmen and corporate bigwigs. It was commissioned by James Baker, the former US Secretary of State under George Bush Sr, and submitted to Vice-President Dick Cheney in April 2001 — a full five months before September 11. Yet it advocates a policy of using military force against an enemy such as Iraq to secure US access to, and control of, Middle Eastern oil fields.

One of the most telling passages in the document reads: ‘Iraq remains a destabilising influence to … the flow of oil to international markets from the Middle East. Saddam Hussein has also demonstrated a willingness to threaten to use the oil weapon and to use his own export programme to manipulate oil markets.

‘This would display his personal power, enhance his image as a pan-Arab leader … and pressure others for a lifting of economic sanctions against his regime. The United States should conduct an immediate policy review toward Iraq including military, energy, economic and political/diplomatic assessments…

‘Military intervention’ is supported …..

The document also points out that ‘the United States remains a prisoner of its energy dilemma’, and that one of the ‘consequences’ of this is a ‘need for military intervention’.

At the heart of the decision to target Iraq over oil lies dire mismanagement of the US energy policy over decades by consecutive administrations. The report refers to the huge power cuts that have affected California in recent years and warns of ‘more Californias’ ahead.

It says the ‘central dilemma’ for the US administration is that ‘the American people continue to demand plentiful and cheap energy without sacrifice or inconvenience’. With the ‘energy sector in critical condition, a crisis could erupt at any time
[which] could have potentially enormous impact on the US … and would affect US national security and foreign policy in dramatic ways.”..

The response is to put oil at the heart of the administration — ‘a reassessment of the role of energy in American foreign policy’...

Iraq is described as the world’s ‘key swing producer … turning its taps on and off when it has felt such action was in its strategic interest’’. The report also says there is a ‘possibility that Saddam may remove Iraqi oil from the market for an extended period of time’, creating a volatile market...

Halliburton is one of the firms thought by analysts to be in line to make a killing in any clean-up operation after another US-led war on Iraq.

All five permanent members of the UN Security Council — the UK, France, China, Russia and the US — have international oil companies that would benefit from huge windfalls in the event of regime change in Baghdad. The best chance for US firms to make billions would come if Bush installed a pro-US Iraqi opposition member as the head of a new government.

Representatives of foreign oil firms have already met with leaders of the Iraqi opposition. Ahmed Chalabi, the London-based leader of the Iraqi National Congress, said: ‘American companies will have a big shot at Iraqi oil.’

The Independent reported in 2011:

Plans to exploit Iraq’s oil reserves were discussed by government ministers and the world’s largest oil companies the year before Britain took a leading role in invading Iraq, government documents show...

The minutes of a series of meetings between ministers and senior oil executives are at odds with the public denials of self-interest from oil companies and Western governments at the time...

Minutes of a meeting with BP, Shell and BG (formerly British Gas) on 31 October 2002 read: “Baroness Symons agreed that it would be difficult to justify British companies losing out in Iraq in that way if the UK had itself been a conspicuous supporter of the US government throughout the crisis.”

The minister then promised to “report back to the companies before Christmas” on her lobbying efforts.

The Foreign Office invited BP in on 6 November 2002 to talk about opportunities in Iraq “post regime change”. Its minutes state: “Iraq is the big oil prospect. BP is desperate to get in there and anxious that political deals should not deny them the opportunity.”

After another meeting, this one in October 2002, the Foreign Office’s Middle East director at the time, Edward Chaplin, noted: “Shell and BP could not afford not to have a stake in [Iraq] for the sake of their long-term future… We were determined to get a fair slice of the action for UK companies in a post-Saddam Iraq.”

Whereas BP was insisting in public that it had “no strategic interest” in Iraq, in private it told the Foreign Office that Iraq was “more important than anything we’ve seen for a long time”.

BP was concerned that if Washington allowed TotalFinaElf’s existing contact with Saddam Hussein to stand after the invasion it would make the French conglomerate the world’s leading oil company. BP told the Government it was willing to take “big risks” to get a share of the Iraqi reserves, the second largest in the world.
Over 1,000 documents were obtained under Freedom of Information over five years by the oil campaigner Greg Muttitt. They reveal that at least five meetings were held between civil servants, ministers and BP and Shell in late 2002. The 20-year contracts signed in the wake of the invasion were the largest in the history of the oil industry. They covered half of Iraq’s reserves – 60 billion barrels of oil …

[Note: The 1990 Gulf war – while not a regime change – was also about oil. Specifically, Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait caused oil prices to skyrocket. The U.S. invaded Iraq in order to calm oil markets. In its August 20, 1990 issue, Time Magazine quoted an anonymous U.S. Official as saying:

Even a dolt understands the principle. We need the oil. It’s nice to talk about standing up for freedom, but Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are not exactly democracies, and if their principal export were oranges, a mid-level State Department official would have issued a statement and we would have closed Washington down for August.]

Target: Syria

The history of western intervention in Syria is similar to our meddling in Iraq. The CIA backed a right-wing coup in Syria in 1949. Douglas Little, Professor, Department of Clark University History professor Douglas Little notes:

As early as 1949, this newly independent Arab republic was an important staging ground for the CIA’s earliest experiments in covert action. The CIA secretly encouraged a right-wing military coup in 1949.

The reason the U.S. initiated the coup? Little explains:

In late 1945, the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) announced plans to construct the Trans-Arabian Pipe Line (TAPLINE) from Saudi Arabia to the Mediterranean. With U.S. help, ARAMCO secured rights-of-way from Lebanon, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The Syrian right-of-way was stalled in parliament.

In other words, Syria was the sole holdout for the lucrative oil pipeline. The BBC reports that in 1957 – the British and American leaders seriously considered attacking the Syrian government using Muslim extremists in Syria as a form of “false flag” attack:

In 1957 Harold Macmillan [then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom] and President Dwight Eisenhower approved a CIA-MI6 plan to stage fake border incidents as an excuse for an invasion by Syria’s pro-western neighbours, and then to “eliminate” the most influential triumvirate in Damascus…. More importantly, Syria also had control of one of the main oil arteries of the Middle East, the pipeline which connected pro-western Iraq’s oilfields to Turkey...

The report said that once the necessary degree of fear had been created, frontier incidents and border clashes would be staged to provide a pretext for Iraqi and Jordanian military intervention. Syria had to be “made to appear as the sponsor of plots, sabotage and violence directed against neighbouring governments,” the report says. “CIA and SIS should use their capabilities in both the psychological and action fields to augment tension.” That meant operations in Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon, taking the form of “sabotage, national conspiracies and various strong-arm activities” to be blamed on Damascus. The plan called for funding of a “Free Syria Committee” [hmmm … sounds vaguely familiar], and the arming of
“political factions with paramilitary or other actionist capabilities” within Syria. The CIA and MI6 would instigate internal uprisings, for instance by the Druze [a Shia Muslim sect] in the south, help to free political prisoners held in the Mezze prison, and stir up the Muslim Brotherhood in Damascus.

Neoconservatives planned regime change in Syria once again in 1991 (as noted above in the quote from 4-Star General Wesley Clark).

And as the Guardian reported in 2013:

According to former French foreign minister Roland Dumas, Britain had planned covert action in Syria as early as 2009:

“I was in England two years before the violence in Syria on other business,” he told French television: “I met with top British officials, who confessed to me that they were preparing something in Syria. This was in Britain not in America. Britain was preparing gunmen to invade Syria.”

Leaked emails from the private intelligence firm Stratfor, including notes from a meeting with Pentagon officials, confirmed that as of 2011, US and UK special forces training of Syrian opposition forces was well underway. The goal was to elicit the “collapse” of Assad’s regime “from within.”

In 2009 – the same year former French foreign minister Dumas alleges the British began planning operations in Syria – Assad refused to sign a proposed agreement with Qatar that would run a pipeline from the latter’s North field, contiguous with Iran’s South Pars field, through Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria and on to Turkey, with a view to supply European markets – albeit crucially bypassing Russia. Assad’s rationale was “to protect the interests of [his] Russian ally, which is Europe’s top supplier of natural gas.”

Instead, the following year, Assad pursued negotiations for an alternative $10 billion pipeline plan with Iran, across Iraq to Syria, that would also potentially allow Iran to supply gas to Europe from its South Pars field shared with Qatar. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the project was signed in July 2012 – just as Syria’s civil war was spreading to Damascus and Aleppo – and earlier this year Iraq signed a framework agreement for construction of the gas pipelines.

The Iran-Iraq-Syria pipeline plan was a “direct slap in the face” to Qatar’s plans. No wonder Saudi Prince Bandar bin Sultan, in a failed attempt to bribe Russia to switch sides, told President Vladimir Putin that “whatever regime comes after” Assad, it will be “completely” in Saudi Arabia’s hands and will “not sign any agreement allowing any Gulf country to transport its gas across Syria to Europe and compete with Russian gas exports”, according to diplomatic sources. When Putin refused, the Prince vowed military action.

It would seem that contradictory self-serving Saudi and Qatari oil interests are pulling the strings of an equally self-serving oil-focused US policy in Syria, if not the wider region. It is this – the problem of establishing a pliable opposition which the US and its oil allies feel confident will play ball, pipeline-style, in a post-Assad Syria – that will determine the nature of any prospective intervention: not concern for Syrian life.

[Footnote: The U.S. and its allies have toppled many other governments, as well.]

The war in Syria – like Iraq – is largely about oil and gas. International Business Times noted in 2013:
3. Deeper Background

[Syria] controls one of the largest conventional hydrocarbon resources in the eastern Mediterranean.

Syria possessed 2.5 billion barrels of crude oil as of January 2013, which makes it the largest proved reserve of crude oil in the eastern Mediterranean according to the Oil & Gas Journal estimate...

Syria also has oil shale resources with estimated reserves that range as high as 50 billion tons, according to a Syrian government source in 2010.

Moreover, Syria is a key chess piece in the pipeline wars. Syria is an integral part of the proposed 1,200km Arab Gas Pipeline:

Here are some additional graphics courtesy of Adam Curry:

http://blog.curry.com/images/2012/02/07/arabGasPipeline.jpg

http://blog.curry.com/images/2012/02/07/syria-turkey.jpg and
Syria’s central role in the Arab gas pipeline is also a key to why it is now being targeted.

Just as the Taliban was scheduled for removal after they demanded too much in return for the Unocal pipeline, Syria’s Assad is being targeted because he is not a reliable “player”.

Specifically, **Turkey, Israel and their ally the U.S. want an assured flow of gas through Syria**, and don’t want a Syrian regime which is not unquestionably loyal to those 3 countries to stand in the way of the pipeline ... or which demands too big a cut of the profits.

A deal has also been inked to run a natural gas pipeline from Iran’s giant South Pars field through Iraq and Syria (with a possible extension to Lebanon). And a deal to run petroleum from Iraq’s Kirkuk oil field to the Syrian port of Banias has also been approved:

Turkey and Israel would be cut out of these competing pipelines.

Gail Tverberg- an expert on financial aspects of the oil industry – writes:

![Image of Arab Gas Pipeline Project](http://blog.curry.com/images/2012/02/07/levantprovince2.jpg)
One of the limits in ramping up Iraqi oil extraction is the limited amount of infrastructure available for exporting oil from Iraq. If pipelines through Syria could be added, this might alleviate part of the problem in getting oil to international markets.

**The Plan to Break Up Iraq and Syria?**

In September 2015, Pentagon intelligence chief Lt. Gen. Vincent Stewart said that he has “a tough time” seeing either Iraq or Syria really coming back together as sovereign nations. This may sound like a reaction to ISIS and the civil war raging in Syria. But – in reality – the hawks in the U.S. and Israel decided long ago to break up Iraq and Syria into small fragments.

The Guardian noted in 2003:

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt predicted devastating consequences for the Middle East if Iraq is attacked. “We fear a state of disorder and chaos may prevail in the region,” he said...

They are probably still splitting their sides with laughter in the Pentagon. But Mr Mubarak and the [Pentagon] hawks do agree on one thing: war with Iraq could spell disaster for several regimes in the Middle East. Mr Mubarak believes that would be bad. **The hawks, though, believe it would be good.**

For the hawks, disorder and chaos sweeping through the region would not be an unfortunate side-effect of war with Iraq, but a sign that **everything is going according to plan...**

The “skittles theory” of the Middle East – that one ball aimed at Iraq can knock down several regimes – has been around for some time on the wilder fringes of politics but has come to the fore in the United States on the back of the “war against terrorism”.

Its roots can be traced, at least in part, to a paper published in 1996 by an Israeli think tank, the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies. Entitled “A
clean break: a new strategy for securing the realm”, it was intended as a political blueprint for the incoming government of Binyamin Netanyahu. As the title indicates, it advised the right-wing Mr Netanyahu to make a complete break with the past by adopting a strategy “based on an entirely new intellectual foundation, one that restores strategic initiative and provides the nation the room to engage every possible energy on rebuilding Zionism …”.

The paper set out a plan by which Israel would “shape its strategic environment”, beginning with the removal of Saddam Hussein and the installation of a Hashemite monarchy in Baghdad.

With Saddam out of the way and Iraq thus brought under Jordanian Hashemite influence, Jordan and Turkey would form an axis along with Israel to weaken and “roll back” Syria. Jordan, it suggested, could also sort out Lebanon by “weaning” the Shia Muslim population away from Syria and Iran, and re-establishing their former ties with the Shia in the new Hashemite kingdom of Iraq. “Israel will not only contain its foes; it will transcend them”, the paper concluded...

The leader of the “prominent opinion makers” who wrote it was Richard Perle – now chairman of the Defense Policy Board at the Pentagon.

Also among the eight-person team was Douglas Feith, a neo-conservative lawyer, who now holds one of the top four posts at the Pentagon as under-secretary of policy...

Two other opinion-makers in the team were David Wurmser and his wife, Meyrav (see US thinktanks give lessons in foreign policy, August 19). Mrs Wurmser was co-founder of Memri, a Washington-based charity that distributes articles translated from Arabic newspapers portraying Arabs in a bad light. After working with Mr Perle at the American Enterprise Institute, David Wurmser is now at the State Department, as a special assistant to John Bolton, the under-secretary for arms control and international security.

A fifth member of the team was James Colbert, of the Washington-based Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (Jinsa) – a bastion of neo-conservative hawker whose advisory board was previously graced by Dick Cheney (now US vice-president), John Bolton and Douglas Feith...

With several of the “Clean Break” paper’s authors now holding key positions in Washington, the plan for Israel to “transcend” its foes by reshaping the Middle East looks a good deal more achievable today than it did in 1996. Americans may even be persuaded to give up their lives to achieve it.

(Before assuming prominent roles in the Bush administration, many of the same people – including Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, Dick Cheney, John Bolton and others – advocated their imperial views during the Clinton administration via their American think tank, the “Project for a New American Century”.)

Thomas Harrington – professor of Iberian Studies at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut – writes:

[While there are some good articles on the chaos in Iraq, none of them] consider whether the chaos now enveloping the region might, in fact, be the desired aim of policy planners in Washington and Tel Aviv...
3. Deeper Background

One of the prime goals of every empire is to foment ongoing internecine conflict in the territories whose resources and/or strategic outposts they covet...

The most efficient way of sparking such open-ended internecine conflict is to brutally smash the target country’s social matrix and physical infrastructure...

Ongoing unrest has the additional perk of justifying the maintenance and expansion of the military machine that feeds the financial and political fortunes of the metropolitan elite.

In short … divide and rule is about as close as it gets to a universal recourse the imperial game and that it is, therefore, as important to bear it in mind today as it was in the times of Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, the Spanish Conquistadors and the British Raj.

To those—and I suspect there are still many out there—for whom all this seems too neat or too conspiratorial, I would suggest a careful side-by-side reading of:

a) the “Clean Break” manifesto generated by the Jerusalem-based Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies (IASPS) in 1996

and

b) the “Rebuilding America’s Defenses” paper generated by The Project for a New American Century (PNAC) in 2000, a US group with deep personal and institutional links to the aforementioned Israeli think tank, and with the ascension of George Bush Junior to the White House, to the most exclusive sanctums of the US foreign policy apparatus.

To read the cold-blooded imperial reasoning in both of these documents—which speak, in the first case, quite openly of the need to destabilize the region so as to reshape Israel’s “strategic environment” and, in the second of the need to dramatically increase the number of US “forward bases” in the region ….

To do so now, after the US’s systematic destruction of Iraq and Libya—two notably oil-rich countries whose delicate ethnic and religious balances were well known to anyone in or out of government with more than passing interest in history,— and after them its carefully calibrated efforts to generate and maintain murderous and civilization-destroying stalemates in Syria and Egypt (something that is easily substantiated despite our media’s deafening silence on the subject), is downright blood-curdling.

And yet, it seems that for even very well-informed analysts, it is beyond the pale to raise the possibility that foreign policy elites in the US and Israel, like all virtually all the ambitious hegemons before them on the world stage, might have quite coldly and consciously fomented open-ended chaos in order to achieve their overlapping strategic objectives in this part of the world.

Antiwar’s Justin Raimondo notes:

Iraq’s fate was sealed from the moment we invaded: it has no future as a unitary state. As I pointed out again and again in the early days of the conflict, Iraq is fated to split apart into at least three separate states: the Shi’ite areas around Baghdad and to the south, the Sunni regions to the northwest, and the Kurdish enclave which was itching for independence since well before the US invasion.

This was the War Party’s real if unexpressed goal from the very beginning: the atomization of Iraq, and indeed the entire Middle East. Their goal, in short, was chaos—and that is precisely what we are seeing today...
As I put it years ago:118

"[T]he actual purpose was to blow the country to smithereens: to atomize it, and crush it, so that it would never rise again.

“When we invaded and occupied Iraq, we didn’t just militarily defeat Iraq’s armed forces – we dismantled their army, and their police force, along with all the other institutions that held the country together. The educational system was destroyed, and not reconstituted. The infrastructure was pulverized, and never restored. Even the physical hallmarks of a civilized society – roads, bridges, electrical plants, water facilities, museums, schools – were bombed out of existence or else left to fall into disrepair. Along with that, the spiritual and psychological infrastructure that enables a society to function – the bonds of trust, allegiance, and custom – was dissolved, leaving Iraqis to fend for themselves in a war of all against all.

“… What we are witnessing in post-Saddam Iraq is the erasure of an entire country. We can say, with confidence: We came, we saw, we atomized.”

Why? This is the question that inevitably arises in the wake of such an analysis: why deliberately destroy an entire country whose people were civilized while our European ancestors were living in trees?

The people who planned, agitated for, and executed this war are the very same people who have advanced Israeli interests – at America’s expense – at every opportunity. In “A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm,” a 1996 document prepared by a gaggle of neocons – Perle, Douglas Feith, James Colbert, Charles Fairbanks, Jr., Robert Loewenberg, David Wurmser, and Meyrav Wurmser – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was urged to “break out” - of Israel’s alleged stagnation and undertake a campaign of “regime change” across the Middle East, targeting Lebanon, Libya, Syria, Iraq, and eventually Iran. With the exception of Iran – and that one’s still cooking on the back burner – this is precisely what has occurred. In 2003, in the immediate wake of our Pyrrhic “victory” in Iraq, then Prime Minister Ariel Sharon declared to a visiting delegation of American members of Congress that these “rogue states” – Iran, Libya, and Syria – would have to be next on the War Party’s target list.

(Indeed.)

And Michel Chossudovsky points out:

The division of Iraq along sectarian-ethnic lines has been on the drawing board of the Pentagon for more than 10 years.

What is envisaged by Washington is the outright suppression of the Baghdad regime and the institutions of the central government, leading to a process of political fracturing and the elimination of Iraq as a country.

This process of political fracturing in Iraq along sectarian lines will inevitably have an impact on Syria, where the US-NATO sponsored terrorists have in large part been defeated.

Destabilization and political fragmentation in Syria is also contemplated: Washington’s intent is no longer to pursue the narrow objective of “regime change” in Damascus. What is contemplated is the break up of both Iraq and Syria along sectarian-ethnic lines.
3. Deeper Background

The formation of the caliphate may be the first step towards a broader conflict in the Middle East, bearing in mind that Iran is supportive of the al-Maliki government and the US ploy may indeed be to encourage the intervention of Iran. The proposed re-division of both Iraq and Syria is broadly modeled on that of the Federation of Yugoslavia (leader of the non-aligned bloc) which was split up by internecine warfare into seven “independent states” (Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia (FYRM), Slovenia, Montenegro, Kosovo). According to Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, the division of Iraq into three separate states is part of a broader process of redrawing the Map of the Middle East.

The above map was prepared by Lieutenant-Colonel Ralph Peters. It was published in the Armed Forces Journal in June 2006, Peters is a retired colonel of the U.S. National War Academy. (Map Copyright Lieutenant-Colonel Ralph Peters 2006).

Although the map does not officially reflect Pentagon doctrine, it has been used in a training program at NATO’s Defense College for senior military officers”. (See Plans for Redrawing the Middle East: The Project for a “New Middle East” By Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, Global Research, November 2006)

Similarly, Neoconservatives in the U.S. and Israel have long advocated for the balkanization of Syria into smaller regions based on ethnicity and religion. The goal was to break up the country, and to do away with the sovereignty of Syria as a separate nation.

In 1982, a prominent Israeli journalist formerly attached to the Israeli Foreign Ministry wrote a book expressly calling for the break-up of Syria:

All the Arab states should be broken down, by Israel, into small units .... Dissolution of Syria and Iraq later on into ethnically or religiously unique areas such as in Lebanon, is Israel’s primary target on the Eastern front in the long run.

In any event, it is well-documented that – in 1996 – U.S. and Israeli Neocons advocated “Weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria...”

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As Michel Chossudovsky points out: