

Syrian and Iranian Axis Terrorize their opposition

Contributed by Walid Phares
Tuesday, 18 December 2007

By Walid Phares

While Petrodollars Propaganda showers networks in the Middle East, Europe and North America to weaken democracies' resolve to confront the Iranian and Syrian regimes and as "lobbies" in the West accelerate the campaign to break the isolation of Damascus and Tehran, these two regimes turned against their opposition in several attempts to crush them as long as the "window of opportunity is open" according to insiders. The Khamenei and Assad regimes, witnessing the Baker-Hamilton report causing confusion throughout the West and taking advantage of the findings of the NIE rushed to clump down on what they consider the real dangers emerging from the inside their countries. Interestingly, and while the Iranian propaganda machine uses efficiently the Oil generated revenues to place favorable stories in the international media and impact think tanks around the world, Syrian Mukhabarat and Pasdaran operated swiftly over the past few days to shut down dissident groups and youth activities deemed "dangerous" -read too close to provoke political changes.

Syrian Mukhabarat arrest dissidents

According to news agencies and the reformist site Aafaq "Syrian security forces, last Wednesday raided the home of Riad Seif and broke up a meeting of the Secretariat of the 'Damascus Declaration for National Democratic Change in Syria.' Those who were present at the time of the raid were threatened with arrest if they did not leave the house immediately. This was just two days after the government launched a campaign of arrests across Syria sweeping up leading members of the political opposition.

Among those present at the meeting, reports Aafaq and other dissident news agencies, were: Dr. Fada' Hourani, President of the National Council of the Damascus Declaration, Secretariat members Riad Seif and Riad Turk, Nawaf Al-Bashir, Suleiman Al-Shammar, Walid Bunni (a detainee of the Damascus Spring), Ali Al-Abdullah, Ismail Omar, and Abdul Ghani Ayyash, Amin Sheikh Abdi, Ghassan Al-Naggar, Gabra'il Koreah, Abdul Karim Al-Dahhak, and Muwaffaq Nirbeh.

Syrian security services carried out a campaign of mass arrests on Sunday evening and Monday that covered all Syrian "governorates", and arrested members of the National Council of the Damascus Declaration, who held their convention in Damascus last week. Most of the arrested have been released, but Akram Bunni, Ahmad Tomeh and Jabar Shoufeh remain in custody. The Syrian Human Rights Committee (SHRC) said today Sunday that the Amn al Dawla State Security in the city of Hama has summoned Dr. Fida' al-Horani, the president of Damascus Declaration for National change this morning (Sunday 16/12/2007), she was arrested the time she arrived at 11.00 a.m. and hurriedly moved to the headquarters in Damascus. The SHRC immediately condemned this arrest and requested the immediate release of Dr. Horani, and the release of her colleagues Akram al-Bunni, Ahmad To'ma and Jabr al-Shoofi. According to Syrian opposition sources the campaign aims at "breaking the backbone of the democratic opposition, taking advantage of the American so-called dialogue with the Assad regime. The latter," added the source "took advantage of the invitation to Annapolis by the US to claim that a US-Syrian dialogue is underway. Hence under the aegis of such perception, Bashar Assad instructed his Mukhabarat to hit the iron while it is hot." Every time Western media talks about "talking with Syria" the secret services comes to "talk" with us, said a dissident.

Pasdaran stikes at internet cafes

According to Reuters and other agencies, Iranian Police closed down 24 Internet cafes over the past 24 hours and arrested 23 youth. The Police commander Nader Sarkari said his troops burst in 435 cafes looking for anti revolutionary elements. Iranian opposition sources said 11 young women were arrested. In addition security forces searched 275 restaurants and closed down 17.

According to Iranian opposition sources the Pasdaran have been instructed by Ahmedinijad to sweep the capital and other cities from the "potential threat of growing pro democracy youth." In fact, the Internet cafes have become bases for the "revolutionary anti Khomeinist youth" in he country. Thousands of high school and college students meet in these locations and also communicate among each other across the country. Per Iranian dissidents appearing in chat rooms in cyberspace, a "real revolutionary force is mushrooming in Iran." They said "how sad it is to see Western media and academics siding with the fascist regime in Tehran as we are on the brink of a formidable uprising." Iranian young scholars said in the chat rooms that "because of Internet we can read what these journalists are writing in defense of the

regime. What they don't know, is that while they are covering up for the Ayatollah and their Petrodollars, we are becoming the majority among the youth."

Last week a main Iranian opposition group, based in Iraq and Europe, the "People Mujahidin" organized small demonstrations on several campuses in Tehran. The group, known as MEK is still designed as Terrorist in the United States while its status is now changing in Britain and other European countries. Tehran's regime, designated as Terrorist by Washington, considers the MEK as terrorist. This puzzling situation is due to the fact that pro Iranian pressure groups consider the Mujahidin Khalq as a real threat to the regime and thus put significant pressures internationally to keep the designation of the MEK as is.

"Axis" strikes at Lebanese Army

The Syro-Iranian move to crush their opposition using the "window of opportunity" created by the NIE and the "talk-to-Syria-and-Iran" campaign in Washington and Brussels, is not confined to these countries. This week, the "axis" war room delivered a deadly blow to the Lebanese Army, which is considered by Hezbollah as the only native force capable of engaging its militias at some point. The assassination of Brigadier General Francois Hajj is increasingly perceived as a preemptive strike by the Pasdaran controlled Hezbollah against a future commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces. Hajj was the chief operation officer who planned and led the campaign to defeat Fatah al Islam in Nahr al Bared. A growing opposition inside Lebanon is building against this Iranian funded organization. In today's issue of the Kuwait Al Siyassa, several Lebanese NGOs called on the UN to investigate with Hassan Nasrallah at the Hague. "The only military force capable of perpetrating these terror acts, other than the Lebanese Army and the UNIFIL is none than Hezbollah" said these groups in al Siyassa.

As events are unfolding the two terror regimes of Iran and Syria are sprinting to eliminate the democratic opposition rising inside their public and the Cedars Revolution in Lebanon. They feel they can strike fast while the beltway debate is still trying to figure out if the power elite in Tehran and Damascus can become good partners in Peace and stability. .

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