OMNI SYRIA NEWSLETTER #3, November 11, 2012

(Armistice Day).  Compiled by Dick Bennett for Culture of Peace (#1: 5-22-11; #2: June 26, 2011)

My blog:  War Department/Peace Department  
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Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters: [http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/](http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/) For a knowledge-based peace, justice, and ecology movement and an informed citizenry as the foundation for change.
FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS: Arkansans will gather to “Stand for the Children of Syria” as part of a global event called “Walk for the Children of Syria” happening in 21 cities across the U.S., and in eight other countries, on Saturday, November 17, 2012. Our event aims to raise awareness about the humanitarian catastrophe in Syria and to generate funds for children impacted by the crisis, by encouraging donations to UNICEF.

Our local version of the global event is a “stand” rather than a “walk,” and will occur at the Town Center plaza on the Square in downtown Fayetteville at 2-3pm.

Ø Singer/songwriter/guitarist Susan Shore will perform. Singer/songwriter Talina Madonna will open for her. Poet Moshe Newmark will MC.

Ø Petra Café, owned by congenial local restaurateur Saleh Faur, will sell food.

Ø Arsaga’s Café, owned by local community supporters Cary & Cindy Arsaga, will sell hot beverages.

Ø Participants will sing, “For the children, hand in hand, Stop the killing in the land,” and other rally chants supporting children of Syria, nonviolence, & human rights.

Ø Donations go to UNICEF’s services for Syrian children.

The international humanitarian event, Walk for Children of Syria, is an initiative of the Syrian American Alliance, with approval from UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund), Amnesty International, & UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees).
Arkansas’ Stand for the Children of Syria brings our community together in the best tradition of “think globally, act locally.” The following folks are local sponsors:

- Omni Center for Peace, Justice, & Ecology. Contact: Gladys Tiffany
- Omni UA: Students for Peace, Justice, & Ecology. Contact: Andrea Love
- Nature’s Water, local water filtration business. Contact: Hamsa & Moshe Newmark, filters@newmarketnaturals.com
- UA chapter of the Golden Key International Honor Society. Contact: Julian Thomas
- Fiddlehead Fern Therapeutics, local business. Contact: fiddleheadferntherapeutics@gmail.com
- Arsaga’s Espresso Café, local business. Contact: Cary or Cindy Arsaga, via contact form at: http://arsagas.com/contact/
- St. Paul’s Episcopal Church of Fayetteville, Arkansas. Contact: Rev. Llowell Grisham, Rev. Suzanne Stoner
- St. Joseph’s Catholic Church of Fayetteville, Arkansas. Contact: Father John K. Antony via Sara Bishop
- Free Syrian Americans of Arkansas, an ad hoc group formed on Facebook. Contact: Dr. Eyad Abochale.
- Fayetteville Quakers. Contact Maya Porter.

SITUATION

Ongoing brutality in Syria has claimed the lives of 2,995 children (documented by human rights experts at http://vdc-sy.org), and forced 348,000 Syrians to flee to neighboring countries. Over two million Syrians are internally displaced from shelled areas inside Syria; families in other areas are double- and triple-hosting displaced families. This humanitarian crisis is at catastrophic levels. Thousands of traumatized children have each lost a parent, sibling, or limb--and a home. Syrian activists are overwhelmed in relief work. UNICEF provides health services and remedial schooling.

Syrian American Alliance (SAA) is a secular, non-partisan organization recently formed in the U.S., for furthering human & civil rights in Syria. Holding the local event does not bind its local organizers or participants to views of the SAA, or to the views of organizations supporting this event. Contact: SAA chair Dr. Mahmoud Khattab (m.khattab@syrianaa.org).

For updates on the walks globally, check Twitter tag, #Walk4Syria.

National Walk Website: www.walk4childrenofsyria.org

FACEBOOK PAGE OF OUR LOCAL EVENT (where you can read full text of our crowd-chants, updates about local sponsors, news about Syrian children, and more): https://www.facebook.com/events/209650579166969/ - “Arkansas’ Stand for the Children of Syria in Fayetteville.”
*No cash donations accepted, following UNICEF’s guidelines. Please bring checks and credit cards.

To request an interview, please contact: Mohja Kahf, Ph.D., email damascenequeen@gmail.com.

Dr. Kahf, associate professor of comparative literature on the English & Middle East Studies faculties at UA-Fayetteville for 17 years, is a member of the Syrian Nonviolence Movement. She has been tweeting about Syria since March, 2011@profkahf, focusing on nonviolent civil resistance to the dictatorship in Syria, Syrian women’s issues, Syrian revolution arts, Syrian prisoners of conscience, and tolerance work among the diverse populations of Syria. She has lectured about the Syrian revolution at Princeton University, Georgia State University, & University of California- Berkeley, as well as at the Quakers Meeting, Fayetteville, Arkansas

ALSO SEE ARTICLE BY GINNY MASULLO IN FREE WEEKLY 11-8-2012.

Ms. Masullo stresses that all funds go for relief work and none to armed rebels, and she quotes Dr. Kahf regarding the “massive humanitarian crisis.” She quotes from Kahf’s poem “Holding Fatima to the Light.” And she mentions the sponsors UNICEF and Amnesty International. We should be thankful too for the UN’s refugee agency: UNHCR - The UN Refugee Agency

www.unhcr.org/Cached - Similar
You +1’d this publicly. Undo
The UN's refugee agency, the site contains feature stories and information about the UN's work for refugees around the world as well as searchable databases ...
Career Opportunities - Contact Us - Statistics - About Us
UN Refugee Agency - USA for UNHCR

www.unrefugees.org/Cached - Similar
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The UN Refugee Agency protects and assists women and children fleeing violence, war, and persecution USA for UNHCR supports the UN Refugee Agency’s ...
Invitation to Support Syrian Freedom Waves

Syrian Freedom Waves’ mission is to establish a free radio station that amplifies the voices of Syrians for broadcast in Syria, to emphasize:

The grassroots movement for a democratic civil society in Syria

Vision for a strong, unified, democratic and free Syria

Respect for the rule of law, due process, human rights and human dignity

Freedom of expression, opinion and assembly

Pluralism and non-sectarianism

Available here:

http://syrianfreedomwaves.org/mission/

Donation link is available online here: http://syrianfreedomwaves.org/donate/
Special Section: Are Liberals Supporting Assad or Rebels or Neutral?
Instigated by this claim by al Jzeera:

http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/10/201210975353819725.html

"Far from decrying the government in Damascus, the left has either remained silent or alternatively chosen to dodge, evade and obfuscate what is really happening in Syria."

Dick: Since the left (Communist, Socialist parties) has been suppressed in the US, I assume al Jazeera means liberal.

I searched through my 2012 numbers of The Progressive, The Nation, Mother Jones. (Only MJ was complete.)
The five numbers of MJ contained no articles on Syria.
I found one article on Syria in The Progressive (a venerable anti-war, Bill of Rights magazine pub. in Madison, WI): the June no. contained a highly sympathetic article on Syrian rebels, by David Enders,
"Syrian Refugees Sound Off." He interviewed Syrians who had taken refuge in a camp in Jordan, all of whom were mainstream Syrians--a female defender of women's rights, a screenwriter, a music engineer, an actor, several of whom had been tortured before reaching safety.
The Nation, a weekly, offered two editorials, a short article, and one book review on the Middle East. (Remember I did not examine every no. of The Nation Jan. -Oct 2012).
"The Syrian Dilemma" (March 5/12) tries to encompass the rapidly changing complexities in short space: rebel transition from nonviolent protest to armed rebellion, Russian and Chinese veto of UNSC resolution calling for elections. MCCain called for Obama to arm and support the Free Syrian Army, but Obama felt that would create a full-blown civil war, and marginalize the nonviolent democratic opposition. And so many more complications that The Nation editorialist urges caution and continued efforts for a cease-fire and negotiations.

In its Sept. 10 no., the editors lament the collapse into increasingly violent civil war and its inflaming a regional Sunni-Shia conflict. The UN Special Envoy, Kofi Annan, resigned, and was replaced by Lakhdar Brahimi, facing a mission impossible, while Obama authorized the CIA and other agencies to assist the rebels. The editorialist would put a brake on the enlarging which he or she compares to Afghanistan or Lebanon in the 1980s. Assad has only hardened to the US-Saudi-Turkish support of the rebels and extremist Sunni determination to wipe out the regime, which stirs Assad’s Alawites to fight to the finish. The editoralist urges US to support Brahimi and UN diplomacy, to include all interested nations in negotiations, to curb extremist sectarian divisions, to work toward a cease-fire and power-sharing that guarantees rights.

The same no. includes an article describing individual Syrian army defectors and other local Syrians now members of the Free Syrian Army, They have gained success through money from Saudi Arabia and other Sunni sources (the rebels are mainly Sunni) and with weapons smuggled in via Turkey with help from CIA. Article from point of view of rebels. No solution seems in sight.

And in The Nation of Nov. 5 a review by Patrick Cockburn of The Arab Uprising by Marc Lynch says, “The ever more violent struggle continues with little sign of a clear winner emerging,” and Cockburn observes that it could signal a reprise of the ‘60s and 70s when “in the battle between revolution and counter-revolution….military and monarchical dictatorships were triumphing everywhere.”
Finally, I found this pro-rebel program from Amy Goodman’s *DEMOCRACY NOW* Thursday, April 19, 2012.

**Full Show**

**Back from Syria, Journalist Anand Gopal Warns Protesters "Face Slaughter" by Assad Regime.  Donate**

Journalist Anand Gopal has just returned from Syria, where he interviewed survivors of last week’s bloody battle for the town of Taftanaz in northern Syria. Reports say government forces continue to attack rebel strongholds in Homs, Hama and other cities in violation of a U.N.-backed ceasefire that took effect last week. "In every town and village, essentially the entire population was mobilized in support of the revolution," Gopal says. "You had from little children to old people. Really, I’ve never seen anything like that before. And it showed to me the extent to which the revolution has a mass, democratic popular base, and Assad doesn’t."

[http://www.democracynow.org/2012/4/19/back_from_syria_journalist_anand_gopal](http://www.democracynow.org/2012/4/19/back_from_syria_journalist_anand_gopal)

**Anand Gopal**, journalist who covers Afghanistan, Egypt, and other countries in the region for various newspapers and magazines. He’s currently working on a book about the history of the decade-long Afghan war. On Tuesday, Gopal returned from Syria, where he interviewed survivors of last week’s bloody battle for the town of Taftanaz in northern Syria.

My minuscule sample suggests that liberals of the kinds found in these publications and t v support the rebels.

I hoped to present the views of liberals like McGovern, Moore, and Bacevich in the following report, but I was unable to gain access to it.

**Real Blame for Deaths in Libya**


Cannot the legal profession give us some clarity on this key point (Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution) before legally trained leaders with a penchant for abiding by the Constitution only when it suits them take our country to war in Syria without the authorization of our elected representatives?  Bacevich: **Intervention in Syria Constitutional?**
US Prepares For Direct Intervention in Syria  Tue Jul 24, 2012 9:05 am (PDT)  Posted by: "ssinsley" ssinsley US Prepares For Direct Intervention in Syria.  As FSA proxies fail and psychological operations falter, US prepares more direct approach for long-sought regime change, by Tony Cartalucci  As it becomes increasingly clear that last week's "surge" by NATO-backed so-called "Free Syrian Army" terrorists was a failed psychological operation, coordinated with meticulously timed assassinations the day of the UN Security Council vote designed to stampede the Syrian government out of power, the FSA's foreign sponsors are preparing the public for a more direct intervention while desperately attempting to maintain the illusion of chaos and the imminent collapse of Syria's government.

Video: Thierry Meyssan in Damascus, Syria. Please choose from "choose language" to see English subtitles.

http://dotsub.com/view/6fdcfc58-cb9d-4b12-b008-5a29a1d1f225?utm_source=p\layer&utm_medium=embed

Contradicting NATO's narrative, was Thierry Meyssan in Damascus, Syria who reported that Syria's continuity of government seamlessly moved
forward after the assassinations last week, and that state institutions are still standing and very much functional. He describes Syria's latest unrest as the result of a coordinated NATO-backed terrorist operation aimed at creating confusion and panic, coupled with Western propaganda - and warns that more operations are likely on the way.

The Telegraph's, "Bashar al-Assad's Syria is now in a death spiral," and the Guardian's "Syria endgame: who and what will emerge from the ruins?" both desperately attempt to write off the Syrian government as already finished, an unsubstantiated reoccurring narrative being repeated daily by the West. Both articles however, categorically fail in qualifying their premises with subsequent facts - instead they depend on rehashing the initial violence that accompanied last week's assassinations - violence that has already been adequately dealt with by Syrian security forces.

In New York Times' article, "US to Focus on Forcibly Toppling Syrian Government," is all but an admission that indeed NATO's FSA terrorists have failed, and that what is in reality imminent, is the restoration of order by the Syrian army after over a year of foreign subversion and armed infiltration. Essential to the West's plan, is now fabricating a
justification the US, Israel, and the Gulf despots currently do not have
- to more directly intervene before the limitations of NATO's proxy forces are irrevocably exposed.

To achieve this, the Western media has decided to continue depicting Syria as "collapsing" even as security has been fully restored in Damascus, border crossings retaken after NATO-harbored terrorists struck from across Syria's borders, overrunning small platoon-sized garrisons, and now it is confirmed that bolstered Syrian border defenses near Daraa on the Jordanian-Syrian border, entirely balked FSA terrorists.

Despite this, the Western media is still reporting "battles" in Damascus, that have "spread" to Aleppo. Aleppo being another relatively unscathed city, is being purposefully attacked in order to enhance NATO's campaign to terrorize, panic, and divide the Syrian people. Already, however, Syrian troops have begun security operations to surround and neutralize terrorist elements, just as they have done already in Damascus.

But before the violence ebbs, at least, before the Western media finds
it no longer tenable to report battles that have subsided days ago, the
West has stampeded through several declarations. New York Times'
article, in addition to admitting more direct military intervention is
being prepared, admits that the US and France are putting their proxy
"Syrian National Council" in place to lead a "transitional government."

The West's problem is that not a square-inch of Syrian territory is held
by NATO's terrorist proxies - unlike in Libya where NATO proxies were
operating out of Benghazi - raising the specter that some larger
military intervention emanating from Syria's borders will take place.
The most likely location of such an operation would be via Turkey to
establish a seat of power for the Western client regime.

To justify more overt Western intervention, an incredible amount of time
and energy has been invested in preparing the general public for the
prospect of a "chemical attack." Syria has never deployed its chemical
weapons, nor does it stand to gain from any such deployment, tactically,
politically, or geopolitically. The only beneficiaries of such an attack
would be NATO, Israel, and the Gulf despots, who could then use it to
justify the "forcible toppling" of the Syrian government they now openly
seek. If chemical weapons are deployed in Syria, it will most certainly
be the work of NATO and its FSA proxies, using Libya's admittedly pilfered and proliferated arsenal.

The announcement that indeed the US and France are maneuvering their client regime into place, while they plan on openly intervening on behalf of the so-called "Free Syrian Army," is the final nail in the "opposition's" legitimacy, exposing them as place holders of Western geopolitical aspirations in Syria, and in the Arab World. Earlier it was reported that the Syrian opposition was literally being coached and tutored by the US State Department, via the US government-funded US Institute of Peace (USIP) who is literally writing Syria's "new" constitution, as well as engineering the entire "transitional" process on their behalf.

Syria and its allies, should they remain resolved and react only to the actual conditions on the ground can continue to balk Western ambitions by standing united, as they have throughout their history. For now, it appears the West will be happy to divide Syria along sectarian lines, forcing the government's supporters to flee to ethnic enclaves. This means that NATO death squads will be focusing primarily on attacking
minorities - a campaign that seems to have already begun.

Above all, skepticism and vigilance is needed to objectively analyze further developments, with further NATO machinations all but assured to follow.

Tony Cartalucci is a frequent contributor to Global Research. Global

[D: I was unable to track down the ideology of Global Research, there being several organizations by that title, e.g. GE”s. I give the article to represent strong opposition to Western intervention. Comments welcome.]

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Syrian Protesters Killed

Syria’s Secret Prisons

Medea Benjamin to Obama: Nonviolence

Amnesty’s Response to Killings of Human Rights Activists

END SYRIA NEWSLETTER #3

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