

‘Caesar Sanctions’ Are Killing Syrians: They Must Be Overturned

by Harley Schlanger

April 16—Helga Zepp-LaRouche stated emphatically, “This must stop, and the Caesar Sanctions must be lifted. And all the members of the U.S. Congress who do not lift these sanctions make themselves complicit in every death that occurs in the region.”

The real intent of the “Caesar Sanctions” was stated by James Jeffrey, who served as the Special Representative for Syrian Engagement in the Trump administration. Jeffrey described his job as making “Syria a quagmire for Russia.” A former Ambassador to Iraq, appointed by Obama, he stated that the purpose of the Caesar Sanctions is to “make it clear to anyone who wants to rebuild Assad’s Syria that that cannot happen without Caesar Sanctions,” as they will become a “target” of sanctions. He admitted in a recent PBS interview that the Al Qaeda-linked terrorist group Jabhat al-Nusra, which controls much of Idlib Province, serves as a “U.S. asset.”

As sanctions have become a weapon of choice by regime changers, as part of a broad strategy of hybrid warfare, it is essential that the intent behind them be exposed. It is the height of evil hypocrisy to proclaim, as Secretary of State Blinken did, that the sanctions against Syria represent a “humanitarian effort” to protect the Syrian people. A policy of deliberate genocide was defined at the Nuremberg Tribunals at the end of World War II as a crime against humanity. If the cry “Never Again” is to retain any meaning, the Caesar Sanctions against Syria must be immediately lifted.

The Criminal Fraud

Having failed in efforts at regime change in Syria, which were launched by the Obama-Biden administration through their support of “moderate rebels,” who conducted a bloody civil war in the country,

Trump’s Secretary of State Pompeo mobilized international support for regime change through economic strangulation. To do this, a bill was passed in the Congress, as part of the National Defense Authorization Act, which imposed sanctions on Syria. It passed in June 2020.

It was called the “Caesar Act,” named after a mysterious figure who claimed to have been a photographer employed by the Syrian Ministry of Defense to take photographs of victims killed in the civil war. Described



James Jeffrey, Obama’s U.S. Ambassador to Iraq and Trump’s Special Representative for Syrian Engagement, said the Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists are a U.S. asset, and any government helping to rebuild Assad’s Syria will be a target of the Caesar Sanctions.

as a “defector,” he delivered more than 58,000 photographs to the Syrian National Movement (SNM), which is funded in part by Qatar, to oppose the Assad government. The SNM then turned the photos over to Human Rights Watch (HRW), which produced an 86-page report in 2015. The report titled, “If the Dead Could Speak: Mass Deaths and Torture in Syria’s Detention Facilities,” was used to push the sanctions through the Congress.

In a detailed exposure of the fraud behind this report, “How a U.S and Qatari Regime Change Deception Produced ‘Caesar’ Sanctions Driving Syria Towards Famine,” investigative journalist Max Blumenthal, writing for *The Grayzone*, outlines how the usual cast of characters from the human rights mafia were involved in using this falsified report for the purpose of regime change. “Caesar” was brought before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in a private session in April 2014, and again in a public session in August of that year, to present the “evi-



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A “special relationship”: Stephen J. Rapp (left), Obama’s Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues, is now promoting Biden’s Caesar Sanctions policy to isolate and punish the Syrian people for false flag attacks actually organized by the Anglo-American powers, whose narrative is circulated by Britain’s Sir Geoffrey Nice (right).

“evidence” of Syrian government murders. According to HRW, their investigators “meticulously verified dozens of stories” of civilians they claimed to have been tortured and murdered by Syrian government officials.

Yet, out of the 28,000 photos of more than 6,000 individuals, fewer than 30 were identified as civilians who were arrested by authorities. Nearly half of those pictured were Syrian soldiers killed by terrorists during the civil war; many others were civilians who were victims of terrorist attacks, including car bombs and assassinations; and others were foreign jihadis killed in battle by government forces—hardly proof of “mass genocide” of civilians conducted by the government!

The Criminal Fraudsters

Blumenthal identifies former U.S. government officials, including David Crane, a former DIA operative with a military-intelligence background, as one of the people who worked with “Caesar” to push through the sanctions bill. Crane leads the Syrian Accountability Project. Another was Mouaz Moustafa, Director of the Syrian Emergency Task Force, which is funded by the U.S. State Department. Moustafa, who sat next to Caesar during his Congressional testimony, escorted Sen. John McCain on his “fact-finding” trip to Syria, during which he was photographed next to gun-toting jihadis and members of the CIA-backed Free Syrian

Army. Another official who testified was Frederic Hof, of the pro-regime change Atlantic Council’s Rafik Hariri Center. Hof called for more funds to go to anti-Assad groups in Syria.

A former Obama official, Stephen Rapp, who served as ambassador-at-large for global criminal justice, presented the Caesar file as an exhibit at the U.S. Holocaust Museum. Now serving as a visiting fellow at the Museum’s Center for the Prevention of Genocide, Rapp oversees a project which claims to be pursuing “justice and accountability in Syria.”

Two British attorneys were identified by Blumenthal as having been involved in authenticating the photos. One is Sir Geoffrey Nice, the former lead prosecutor in the case against former Yugoslav President Milosevic; Sir Geoffrey is identified as an “adviser” to Qatar. The other, also on the Qatari payroll, is Desmond De Silva. British so-called experts frequently serve on the boards of many of the “human rights” groups, some funded directly by the UK’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in promoting false-flag events. One such group is the White Helmets, which fraudulently claimed that the Syrian government had used chemical weapons against the Syrian people. Such charges were used to defend support for “moderate rebels” during the civil war, and to justify these murderous sanctions as a “humanitarian” response to the Assad government.