

Thirty Years War Spreading Across Africa, Middle East

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Jan. 20—The just-concluded mass hostage incident in Algeria is the latest indication that the British-Saudi plan for a new Thirty Years War of religious, tribal, and sectarian permanent conflict is spreading throughout the African continent, the eastern Mediterranean, and the Persian Gulf. The British objective, as frequently spelled out by Royal Consort Prince Philip, is the rapid wiping out of 80% of the human race—either through permanent war/permanent revolution or a thermonuclear war from which mankind might not survive at all.

Last week, the French government mounted a military intervention into Mali at the point that al-Qaeda-linked rebels threatened to take over the country. The French military operations were backed by Britain and the United States, and came after a United Nations Security Council resolution authorized an African military force to intervene to secure the existing Mali government, facing an all-out assault by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and a separatist apparatus that already has seized a portion of northern Mali the size of Texas.

There are unconfirmed reports that Russia is also sending in cargo planes to assist in the effort to crush the rebellion.

Regardless of the merits or liabilities of the French intervention, the Mali conflict, and AQIM's long-planned assault on a British Petroleum-led consortium's natural gas field in Algeria have made clear that all of North Africa is facing a brutal war that will either be decisively stopped, or will lead to a decade or more

of perpetual warfare and mass population reduction.

Two years too late, even the *New York Times* admitted today that "Qaddafi was right," noting, "As the uprising was closing in around him, the Libyan dictator Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi warned that if he fell, chaos and holy war would overtake North Africa. 'Bin Laden's people would come to impose ransoms by land and sea, he told reporters. We will go back to the time of Redbeard, of pirates, of Ottomans imposing ransoms on boats.'"

Permanent Sectarian War in Islam

This week's developments in Africa are solidly in line with British operations to foment a permanent Sunni-versus-Shi'a bloody confrontation within the extended Islamic world. The conflict in Syria, now going into its third year, has been transformed into a vicious sectarian conflict between Sunni jihadists from various countries on the one side, and Shi'ite, Alawite, and Christian minorities in Syria on the other. Saudi Arabia remains the number one source of weapons and funding to the jihadists in their campaign to overthrow the Bashar Assad government in Damascus.

Last week, the Lebanese daily *al-Manar*, closely tied to Hezbollah, reported that Saudi Arabia's chief of intelligence, Prince Bandar bin-Sultan, was pouring cash and weapons into the al-Nusra Front, an offshoot of al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), to both overthrow Assad and wipe out rival oppositionists from the Free Syrian Army. Al-Nusra is comprised of Syrian, Jordanian, and



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Recent developments in Africa are part and parcel of the British empire's project to foment a bloody Sunni-versus-Shi'a conflict within the extended Islamic world. Here, Islamist fighters in northern Mali, July 2012.

Iraqi neo-Salafists who fought against the American occupation in Iraq, and who crossed into Syria in early 2011, when the revolt against the Assad government began. Even though the U.S. State Department placed al-Nusra on its list of international terrorist organizations, the vast majority of Syrian rebel groups remain loyal to al-Nusra—for the simple reason that they are the best-armed, best-funded, and most effective fighting force deployed against the Syrian Army.

The fact that the Syrian crisis has reached a military stalemate has forced American and European analysts to finally admit that the NATO-Saudi-Qatari drive to oust Assad has created the conditions for an each-against-all conflict that will soon engulf neighboring Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iraq. For London, the issue is not about choosing between winners and losers. For the British Crown, the basic issue comes down to the body count: How many people will be killed or permanently dislocated as the result of the spreading sectarian conflict?

As bad as the prospect of a new Thirty Years War may be, the even greater danger is that the regional conflict now spreading throughout Southwest Asia and Africa will devolve into a superpower confrontation between the United States and Russia/China. This past week, Russia conducted the largest naval maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean since the end of the Cold

War. Tom Donilon, President Obama's National Security Advisor, is heading to Moscow in the next hours, with a letter from President Obama to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Whatever the content of Obama's message, it is not likely to satisfy Mr. Putin, who is well aware that the U.S. and NATO ballistic-missile defense shield being installed along the eastern borders of Russia and the southern tier of Russia and China, is not about containing Iran or Syria. It is aimed at the two thermonuclear weapons rivals of Washington—Russia and China.

A former top American diplomat, who recently traveled to Moscow to deliver a series of lectures, remarked with alarm that,

while Russian relations with China, Turkey, and Germany are at an all-time high, relations with the U.S. are in the pits. Hypocritical personal gestures by President Obama will not alter the fundamental reality that the superpowers are headed toward a direct confrontation, and the events in Southwest Asia and Africa are merely the cockpits from which world war can be triggered.

Top Russian officials are painfully aware of just how fragile peace is. In addition to reportedly giving their support to the French move to crush al-Qaeda in Mali, Moscow is working with special UN and Arab League envoy Lakhtar Brahimi, and with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State William Burns, to come up with a framework for a diplomatic solution to the Syria conflict. Yet, important elements in the Saudi monarchy are determined to undermine any positive outcome for Syria and allied Iran.

In anticipation of a new round of talks between the Iranian government and the P5+1 nations, David Albright, the head of the private nuclear watchdog group Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), published a fraudulent, but provocative study last week, claiming that Iran is close to being able to build a deployable nuclear weapon. The evidence is based on UN and IAEA data, but stretches the documentation far beyond the limits of truth. The Anglo-American faction behind Albright is out to ensure that the talks with Iran break

down, and that regime-change war will begin this year.

An IAEA delegation was in Tehran last week, resuming negotiations with the Iranian government over a proposed memorandum of understanding, permitting more intrusive IAEA inspections of Iran's nuclear enrichment program, access to Iranian scientists, and data on earlier efforts to develop weaponization capabilities at Parchin.

As the situation in North Africa and Southwest Asia moves closer and closer to full-scale regional war, drawing in the United States, Russia, and China, the situation in South Asia is also heating up. In addition to a renewal of Pakistani-Indian conflict along the border in Kashmir, Pakistan has been the scene of a brutal sectarian offensive by fundamentalist Sunnis versus Shi'ites. One incident in Quetta, Baluchistan, in Pakistan, took nearly 100 lives, all Shi'ite worshippers.

In response, President Asif Ali Zardari disbanded the Baluchistan government, dismissing both the regional president and his cabinet, and taking charge of the province, which borders on both Afghanistan and Iran. A Baluchi group, Jundallah, has been engaged for the past two years in a low-intensity insurgency into the bordering region of Iran, carrying out sabotage and as-

sassinations directed against the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Following Afghan President Hamid Karzai's recent visit to Washington, where he met with President Obama, plans are being finalized to resume bilateral talks between the U.S. and the Taliban, for a power-sharing deal following the U.S. pullout from Afghanistan by the end of 2014. After the meeting, Obama announced an accelerated timetable for turning security responsibilities over to Afghan military and police. He also announced that President Karzai had signed off on the resumed U.S.-Taliban talks. Any serious plan for stabilizing the region after a U.S./NATO withdrawal would necessarily involve convening a regional conference with China, Russia, Pakistan, India, Iran, and the Central Asian Republics, along with the United States, to develop common regional objectives and economic cooperation and development.

So far, although outgoing Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has publicly endorsed this approach, there is no indication whatsoever that President Obama has any interest in such a collective economic-security framework. South Asia, like Southwest Asia and Africa, is in the bull's-eye zone for permanent war.

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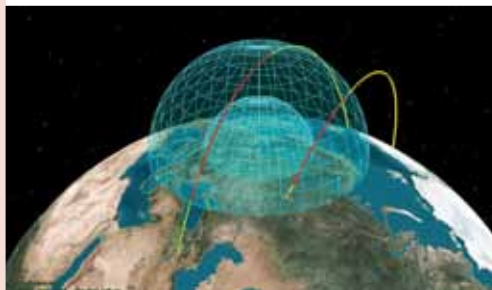
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