PUTIN COMES TO RESCUE OF EL-ASSAD, MINORITIES

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Hamo Moskofian, Beirut, 8 October 2015

For almost four years the world watched the Syrian conflict get worse and for four years it looked forward to an early and just resolution. But after four years, rather than ending in negotiated peace, the war became more brutal. About 250,000 (mostly civilians) were killed and millions of Syrians became refugees in their own country, in neighboring countries and in far away Western states. The war also gave an opportunity to Islamic fanatics to commit genocide of minorities, especially Christian and to destroy priceless international heritage sites such as Palmyra in Syria and Assyrian monuments in Iraq.

After watching the interminable civil war and the provocative acts of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and certain Western powers which were intent at bringing down the duly elected president of Syria, Russia finally moved in, in late September, to stop the carnage. President Vladimir Putin had had enough of Western lip service and hypocrisy. He could no longer tolerate Turkey and its allies, which for years financed, trained and directed the Islamic terrorists, portray themselves as peace makers. US Senator John McCain's several maladroit meetings with ISIS "Caliph" Al-Baghdadi was *prima face* evidence which way the wind was blowing. French President Hollande and his Foreign Minister Fabius betrayed French civilization by abandoning the persecuted Christians and other minorities. Instead of holding high the principles France preaches, Paris allowed Islamic extremist-terrorists to raise funds and send fighters to Syria and Iraq via autocrat Erdogan's Turkey.

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Minister Fabius betrayed French civilization by abandoning the persecuted Christians and other minorities. Instead of holding high the principles France preaches, Paris allowed Islamic extremist-terrorists to raise funds and send fighters to Syria and Iraq via autocrat Erdogan's Turkey.

Yet another example of Western hypocrisy. According to Russian military sources, Iraq had to pay $68,000-an-hour to hire one American F-22 or F-18 fighter-bomber to hit ISIS which practically occupied most of the oil-rich territories of Iraq & Syria. And yet Washington proclaimed itself to be fighting ISIS. For more than a year NATO bombers, cruise missiles, helicopters bombarded the so-called terrorist targets in Syria and Iraq, but somehow their far-superior firepower didn't make a dent in the terrorists' shield. In fact, the terrorists expanded the territories they held and continued to commit unmentionable brutalities. At the same time the "caravans"of mercenaries continued to invade the Middle East through Turkey.

Seeing the situation was worsening and no hope for peace in sight, about a million refugees from Syria and Iraq invaded Greece, Serbia, and Hungary on foot and by sea, hoping to find sanctuary in Germany. Angela Merkel's government put them in concentration camps, giving them food, clothing and 30 euros a week. Meanwhile, the rulers of Saudi Arabia, one of the main culprits of the Middle East turmoil, refused to accept the same Muslim Arab refugees or to help them financially while Riyad waged a war against Yemen.

In this turmoil, hope and salvation finally appeared on the horizon...from Russia and its dynamic President Putin. In less than two weeks Russian SU-24M, SU-30 and 34, and MiG 29 fighters and bombers proved to be more effective than the Western billions of worth aircraft and firepower. Russia quickly began to destroy the command centres, ammunition depots, military bases and communication networks of the terrorists. And for further effect, it fired cruise missiles from its warships in the Caspian Sea. Under Russian air cover, Syrian government ground forces went on the attack and began to liberate territories within hours. As collateral benefit, the Russian air force also ensured the safety of the Lebanese/Syrian border which was threatened by ISIS.
The Western powers now openly proclaim their "solidarity" with the fictional Syrian "moderate opposition" represented in reality by ISIS. Whereas Russia, through its military intervention, along with its ally China, brought hope to millions of people, including Christians. The rules of the game have changed.

Lebanon on Edge...Again

Hamo Moskofian, Beirut, 23 September 2015

For weeks the public has been throwing garbage on the streets of Beirut and of other major cities, including tourist sites while the corrupt government, the members of parliament--many former war lords, crooks, narcotics dealers, agents to regional and major powers--have negotiated millions of dollars of commissions they expect to receive.

As a result of the public's "garbage strike", epidemics, non-curable diseases have spread to all layers of society and demographics. Billions of dollars of foreign aid to help Syrian refugees living in Lebanon have "evaporated" in the bank accounts of the ruling classes. The desperate situation of the more than 2 million refugees is destroying the fabric of social life, job opportunities, and the hope of a better life for the Lebanon's new generation.

A billion-dollar project to provide regular electricity has also "disappeared", while ministers responsible for the fiasco have acquired private jets, villas, ultra-modern automobiles, and gangs of mercenaries to protect them from the public's outrage.

Citizens pay twice to receive electricity. First to the state and then to profiteering private operators who own electricity generating motors. The situation is the same for the muddy water supplied by the government. Telephone fees are among the highest in the world. Food, clothing, college and university fees are beyond the reach of the middle class. The latter is melting away as poverty spreads from the economically disadvantaged classes.

For weeks, nearly every day, mass demonstrations have been held in the center of Beirut by a new generation of revolutionary youth. They say they have nothing to lose and are demanding equality, and punishment for the people who are robbing the country and do not heed the plight of the populace.

Presidential and parliamentary elections, jobs, electricity, water, clashes with security forces, mass arrests, violence ... are leading the country to a precarious situation. The ruling classes, which have no intention to improve the life of the rest of the population, have joined forces to squash the popular revolt. The atmosphere is reminiscent of 1975: everybody is on edge... waiting for an explosion and perhaps a new civil war.