



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on July 14, 2012

After U.S. Uproar, Another Syrian “Civilian Massacre” Story Falls Apart

Yet [another alleged](#) “massacre” of “civilians”  by the Syrian regime was in the establishment-press headlines this week, supposedly a brutal killing spree by dictator Bashar al-Assad’s forces in the village of Tremseh that left up to 250 people dead. As has become typical, Western governments and mainstream media outlets — the *New York Times*, the BBC, and others included — parroted anonymous “opposition activists” for the claims. But within days, after foreign powers seeking regime change had their chance to beat the war drums even louder, the carefully constructed tale was already falling apart.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, one of the top defenders of the dangerous “rebel” coalition operating in Syria at American taxpayer expense, immediately claimed there was “indisputable evidence that the regime deliberately murdered innocent civilians” — “over 200 men, women and children,” in fact. She did not present or cite any of the alleged evidence, but vowed to punish those responsible amid more calls for immediate regime change. Other Western leaders and financiers of the violence in Syria issued similar condemnations and more threats.

Despite hysterical reporting and wild statements by political leaders, however, even “opposition activists” were conceding early on that most of the dead were actually armed combatants who had staged attacks on the regime’s military forces. More recent reports, even those based on anonymous “opposition activists,” also suggest that closer to 100 people had died. Almost all of the dead were military-aged men, too — a far cry from Clinton’s “over 200 men, women and children.”

“At this stage, though we do not yet have the final count, the number of civilians killed by shelling is not more than seven,” an anti-Assad “activist” known as “Jaafar” with the Sham News Network (SNN) [told](#) the AFP press agency. “The rest were members of the [Western-backed] Free Syrian Army.” How could Clinton and the establishment press have messed up the story so badly, [again](#)?

One problem, according to analysts, is that the Free Syrian Army (FSA) is consistently discussed using deceptive terminology. “From the U.S. State Department and outward through its tentacles across the corporate media, the so-called ‘Free Syrian Army’ is continuously referred to interchangeably as ‘civilians’ and ‘activists,’” [noted](#) analyst Tony Cartalucci, who has followed the conflict closely. “In reality they are heavily armed, foreign-backed, and include amongst their ranks a sizable proportion of foreign fighters — betraying the very name Free ‘Syrian’ Army.”

Cartalucci called the deceptive mainstream-media reporting and the dangerous Western war-mongering against Syria an example of “Goebbelsesque propaganda.” Numerous other analysts [criticized](#) the lies and propaganda as well. And it is [hardly the first allegation of a “massacre” conducted by the Syrian](#)



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[regime to crumble](#) upon closer scrutiny.

Of course, there was indeed killing going on in the area, and many young men — possibly up to 100 — did indeed die. Both sides acknowledged that. And Assad's tyrannical regime did deploy heavy weapons including tanks and helicopters as both sides continued to violate the international cease-fire agreement. What exactly happened, however, remains unclear. Members of the UN mission in Syria are supposed to be investigating and reporting their findings as soon as possible.

"The BBC's Jim Muir in Beirut says it remains far from clear what took place at Tremseh," [acknowledged](#) the state-run British news service, days after touting opposition claims along with most of the establishment press and not long after it was caught using an old photo from Iraq to illustrate a previous "civilian massacre" in Syria. After parroting anonymous claims about the latest alleged "civilian massacre" in Tremseh conducted by the regime, other news outlets and "opposition activists" reluctantly followed suit and admitted that the facts did not fit the original allegations.

Clinton and other Western advocates of "regime change," however, have not yet corrected themselves. And as the war-mongers continue to demand international military intervention to oust the Syrian despot, it is unlikely that they will.

The Assad dictatorship claims it was battling "armed terrorist" groups backed by foreign powers at the request of innocent local villagers in the area who were being terrorized and slaughtered by the establishment-backed "opposition" fighters. It also alleged in press reports that the "terrorists" had been summarily executing people including women and children. No independent confirmation has been made of the claims.

"Syria has been exposed to more than 16 months of terrorist attacks and booby-trapped suicide attacks by foreign-backed armed terrorist groups, which in part coordinate their attacks with some media outlets, especially once a UN session about Syria is to be or convened," reported the dictatorship-run Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), echoing concerns of analysts around the world after top mainstream news outlets like CNN and Al Jazeera were [caught broadcasting staged propaganda by the rebels](#). The report also acknowledged that the regime's forces had indeed killed and captured "scores" of "terrorists."

"Had the Army or security personnel existed in the village, the terrorists wouldn't have been able to overrun the village and perpetrate their massacres," claimed villager Abo Arif al-Khalid, a supposed "witness" to the alleged rebel atrocities, in an interview with the state-run media. The man, apparently crying in the interview, also claimed that the Western-backed opposition fighters had killed women and children including his cousin.

At least three Syrian soldiers died in the conflict, according to the regime.

On the other hand, anonymous "democracy activists" cited in early establishment-press reports originally claimed, like Clinton, that the Syrian military had indiscriminately slaughtered innocent villagers with tanks and helicopters. However, when no evidence was offered to substantiate those claims — let alone images of dead women and children — the narrative slowly changed. The few videos that did emerge showed at most 17 dead or bloody military-aged men alleged to have been victims of the fighting.

In a July 12 report, the *New York Times* implicitly — and deceptively — [suggested](#) that there was actual evidence. "Activists in Hama posted a video on YouTube accusing the government of 'ethnic cleansing in Hama,' and said the killings in Tremseh were 'unlike any massacre that has previously occurred in



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Syria,” the paper reported. Instead of a video showing any “ethnic cleansing” or “massacre,” however, the clip cited by the Times actually just shows a man with a bandage on his head talking in Arabic making assorted accusations. You can watch it [here](#).

Online commentators were not buying it, though. “This revolution of the Syrian free army is nothing but a paid thugs running around to create terrorism,” noted the top comment on the YouTube video as of July 14. “When they get killed or injured your stupid media starts to cry ‘oh my god Bashar is evil.’”

The *Times* also cited a statement by the anti-Assad Muslim Brotherhood. “The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria do not consider Bashar the Beast the only one responsible for this horrific massacre,” the radical Islamic socialist group claimed. “Responsibility for this and for previous massacres also lies with Annan, with the Russians and the Iranians, and all those states who claim they are protecting peace and stability yet stay silent and skulk away from taking any responsibility.” Apparently the extremist group wants the world to intervene militarily on its side.

Some analysts have tried to [claim](#) that the Assad dictatorship has not been responsible for any massacres at all, arguing that it would be counterproductive to his campaign to retain power. That is almost certainly not the case, as thousands have already died on both sides, with Assad’s forces likely involved in many of the deaths. But the timing of the latest alleged massacre was indeed suspicious — like most reports of Assad atrocities, it coincided perfectly with high-level international negotiations on Syria.

When asked about why the alleged mass abuses perpetrated by Assad against his opponents often seem to be timed just ahead of major UN Security Council meetings, a spokesman for the [Bilderberg-linked](#) “Syrian National Council” — which includes the radical Muslim Brotherhood and is considered by the establishment to be the main “representative” of Syria’s opposition — dodged the question. “Assad doesn’t really care about the international community,” the SNC spokesman [finally said](#) in what was probably the only relevant comment to the query.

Both sides — the barbaric Assad regime and the anti-Assad foreign powers backing the rebels — are undoubtedly using propaganda to advance their narratives. However, a disturbing pattern has emerged over the last year: [numerous massacres blamed on the dictatorship’s forces were actually conducted by the Western-backed rebels](#). Christians in particular, who have found one of the last Middle Eastern refuges in Syria under Assad and therefore largely support the regime, are being [exterminated by the foreign-financed Islamist opposition](#) in what observers have called a real example of “ethnic cleansing.”

Of course, none of the information presented here is meant to defend the barbarian tyrant ruling over Syria. The point is that there is much more going on than Western governments and the mainstream press would like citizens to realize — and people are dying based on gross deceptions perpetrated by the highest levels of the establishment. More will undoubtedly die in the coming months.

Instead of presenting the truth, powerful establishment forces are using [lies and deception](#), as well as taxpayer money, in an effort to impose a new regime on the Syrian people by force of arms if necessary. And unfortunately for the populations of Syria and maybe Iran next, more than a few analysts worry that the new rulers — if and when the bloodshed ever stops — might be even worse than the current situation. Only time will tell.

Photo of members of the Free Syrian Army: AP Images

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