

Julian Assange, "... our civilisation can only be as good as our knowledge of what our civilisation is. We can't possibly hope to reform that which we do not understand.", Democracy Now, 25/7/16

The reference list below supports points made in the complaint submitted to ABC's Audience and Consumer Affairs about RN's *The Minefield* program, 16 October 2019.

***The Minefield* program ignored the research findings of highly esteemed experts and, more importantly, the perspectives of millions of people in Syria.**

Despite some Australians being victims of terrorist acts at home and overseas, our ignorance about the war in Syria has made it difficult for us to truly empathise with Syrians who have faced unimaginable horrors.

A video on Youtube 'shows two men being beheaded by Syrian rebels, one of them by a child. He hacks with a machete at the neck of a middle-aged man who has been forced to lie in the street with his head on a concrete block'.

Ref: Syria: Descent into Holy War, by Patrick Cockburn, 16 Dec 2012

When speaking about the origin of the Syrian crisis, the guest and presenters of *The Minefield* gave no consideration to the perspective of Syrians who would

- (1) not want America, allied with insurgents (who at times work with ISIS), to wage an aggressive war against their country; and
- (2) not want to lose women's freedoms and equalities as well as religious freedoms that are guaranteed by a secular state with its separation of religion and politics.

The August 2013 brutal massacre of around 200 Alawites and the abduction of around the same number, mostly women and children, was a coordinated attack committed by 20 different anti-government armed groups, ranging from ISIS to the Free Syrian Army. The overwhelming majority of Syrians would condemn both the massacre and the bigoted, murderous hatred that spawned it. But *Minefield* presenters did not present their perspective.

The Minefield program presented a simplistic take on the war in Syria that basically echoed US and Australian foreign policy stands rather than the reasoned thinking one should expect from academics and philosophers.

The stories of two young Syrian men exemplify aspects of the war ignored in *The Minefield*.

In early 2012, a young army conscript on leave was abducted by 'rebels' and, because he was Sunni, he wasn't killed on the spot, but given four choices: 'fight with his captors against the government and kill as many police, soldiers, security agents, and non-Muslims (i.e. non-Sunnis) as possible; take ammunition supplied by them to destroy key infrastructure and wreak havoc; pay a substantial ransom; or be killed on the spot.' ('Syria's 'Arab Spring': failed or hijacked?', Dr Fiona Hill, ABC's The Drum, 14/02/2012)

A popular Palestinian Syrian actor, Mohamed Rafea, also with a Sunni background, spoke out against 'terrorists' in the 2012 documentary 'Manufacturing Dissent: The Truth about Syria'. In an interview with RT about Arab TV satellite channels boycotting popular Syrian soap operas, Rafea spoke about the 'love' Syrians have for each other. In late 2012, he was abducted, tortured and killed by 'rebels'. (BBC report.)

Over a million Iraqi refugees made their home in Syria after March 2003, so Syrians would be aware of the catastrophic consequences of a US-led war. Also, many would have some knowledge of attempts - beginning soon after Syria's independence - by the CIA and MI6 to effect 'regime change' through covert means in their country.

However, instead of giving the above due consideration and remembering the disinformation and distortions that led Australia into the war in Iraq, *The Minefield* program had a clear bias toward US military action against the Syrian secular state and an inferred bias toward Islamist insurgents with no reference to the chaos and violence they have inflicted across Syria.

Professor Ted Hayward, Edinburgh University,

The pursuit of justice requires great scrupulousness of method and honesty of intent; it entails respecting the presumption of innocence, ensuring procedures are impartial and consistent, with due transparency and openness.

'Caesar' evidence for atrocities in Syria: what does justice require?

REFERENCE LIST

A. Syrians whose perspectives were ignored in *The Minefield* program

Minorities, eg Christians, Alawites, and Druze

1. Youtube: Open Letter to president Obama from a Syrian Reverend from Aleppo, 7 September 2012
2. Youtube: Damascus mortar attack Children and bus driver buried, BBC 12 Nov 2013
3. Youtube: Mother Agnes Mariam on terrorists' shelling of school, killing and injuring many children, 15 April 2014
Mother Agnes and a BBC reporter discuss the targeting of a Christian area in Damascus
4. Rebel fire kills swimmer with 'big dreams' in Syria's Aleppo, AFP 6 Oct 2016
On the day she was killed, Syrian star swimmer Mireille Hindoyan had decided to skip her daily swim at an Aleppo pool to work a shift at her family's supermarket near the frontline. Not long after she arrived, a rocket fired by rebels just across the frontline in the war-ravaged city slammed into the shop, killing the 20-year-old and her 12-year-old brother Arman.
5. 'We're Too Frightened to Talk' - Christians Flee from Radical Rebels in Syria
"We're too frightened to talk," her daughter Rim explained, before mustering the courage to continue. "Last summer Salafists came to Qusayr, foreigners. They stirred the local rebels against us," she says. Soon, an outright campaign against the Christians in Qusayr took shape. "They sermonized on Fridays in the mosques that it was a sacred duty to drive us away," she says. "We were constantly accused of working for the regime. And Christians had to pay bribes to the jihadists repeatedly in order to avoid getting killed."
Grandmother Leila made the sign of the cross. "Anyone who believes in this cross suffers," she says.
6. Youtube: A day in Jaramana, CBC News, 23 Oct 2013
Radio-Canada's Marie-Eve Bedard reports from inside Syria, from the town of Jaramana. It's a place where some religious minorities are caught in the ongoing conflict.
7. Islamists force 50,000 Christians to flee from Syrian city of Homs, 16/04/2012
Damascus: April 16, 2012. (PCP) The Syrian Orthodox Church, which represents over half of Syrian Christians, issued a statement saying revolutionary fighters had expelled some 50,000 Christians from the embattled city of Homs. That figure is estimated to account for about 90 percent of the Christian community there
8. Mass held in Rome for kidnapped Syrian bishops, Catholic News Agency, 11 May 2013
"The Syrian war is not a crisis between Muslims and Christians or Muslims and other Muslims and it's not a Syrian civil war from and for Syrians," he told CNA.
"This is a war imported from outside and we have traitors who have sold themselves to outsiders for a bit of money."
9. Father Fadi Haddad Martyred near Damascus, 25 Oct 2012
Fadi Haddad was priest of the Greek Orthodox Church of Saint Elias in Qatana in the outskirts of Damascus.

One of the residents of the city told Agence France-Presse that the body was found in the town of Drousha, near Qatana and Damascus, indicating that he was murdered.

He stated that the priest was acting as an intermediary for a doctor from Qatana who was kidnapped over ten days ago. He was communicating with the kidnappers, who demanded from the family more than 50 million lira (\$700,000) to release him.

10. "You Can Still See Their Blood": Executions, Indiscriminate Shootings, and Hostage Taking by Opposition Forces in Latakia Countryside"
Human Rights Watch Report, 10 October 2013

This report documents serious abuses committed by opposition forces on August 4 during their attack on the villages. Eight survivors and witnesses described how opposition forces executed residents and opened fire on civilians, sometimes killing or attempting to kill entire families who were either in their homes unarmed or fleeing from the attack, and at other times killing adult male family members, and holding the female relatives and children hostage. At the time of writing, according to opposition sources, over 200 civilians, the vast majority of whom are women and children, continue to be held by the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS) and Jaish al-Muhajireen wal-Ansar, groups that led the opposition offensive.

11. Surprise Isis attacks leave more than 200 dead in south-west Syria, 26 July 2018

More than 200 people have been killed in a brutal surprise offensive by Islamic State in Syria that involved multiple suicide bombings and simultaneous raids in which militants stormed villages and slaughtered civilians.

The attacks on Wednesday targeted the city of Sweida and nearby towns and villages in south-western Syria – areas that before the war were populated mostly by members of the Druze minority sect, and that are nominally under government control but have largely stayed out of the fighting that devastated much of the country over the last seven years.

12. Robert Fisk: Another week in the violent, murderous and divided world of Syria - Christians and Armenians among latest to die, 1 September 2012

A week is a long time in violence. It seems only yesterday – five days ago, in fact – that armed men shot Sheikh Abu Haitham al-Bortawi outside the el-Noor mosque in the Rukenadin suburb of Damascus. Went to the scene. Middle class area. Tree shaded, clean street. Ten in the morning. Turns out he was the cleric who knelt right next to Bashar al-Assad for the Eid prayers at the end of Ramadan. A dagger to the heart of the body politick.

Then there's the two Christian guys outside town. One runs a DVD store, the other a pharmacy. Murdered. Next day, their funeral cortege is car-bombed. Twelve dead, at least 40 wounded. Turns out they had brothers in the Syrian army, apparently conscripts. Hardly a sin. But the opposition says the two men were "connected to the military".

Syrian Women

13. Al Qaeda in Syria kills woman accused of adultery

BEIRUT (Reuters) - Al Qaeda's Syria wing, Nusra Front, shot dead a woman in the northwest of the country after accusing her of adultery, a monitoring group said on Wednesday, saying it showed such execution-style killings were not confined to the militant Islamic State group.

A VIDEO of the woman's execution is online [here](#).

(See mention [here](#) of how al Qaeda fighters reportedly infiltrated ranks of 'rebels' in Syria. *The Hill*, 20/5/2012)

14. Rape and atrocities on a young Christian in Qusair, Agenzia Fidez, 2 July 2013

Qusair (Agenzia Fides) -

Mariam was a 15-year-old Christian from Qusair, a city of the governorate in Homs, 35 km south of the capital. The city, which had become a stronghold of the Syrian rebels, was reconquered by the troops of the regular army at the beginning of June. Mariam's story - sent to Fides thanks to the report of two Catholic priests - is a sign of the brutality of the conflict and

the extreme vulnerability of religious minorities. Mariam's family was in town when militants linked to the jihadist group "Jabhat al-Nusra" conquered and occupied it. While her family was able to escape, Mariam was taken and forced into an Islamic marriage. Fides sources point out that, through social networks, the fatwa was widespread in Syria produced by Yasir al-Ajlawni - A Salafi sheikh of Jordanian origin, resident in Damascus - who declared lawful, for opponents of the regime of Bashar al-Assad, rape committed against "any non-Sunni Syrian woman." According to the fatwa to capture and rape Alawi or Christian women is not contrary to the precepts of Islam.

15. Islamic cleric decrees it OK for Syrian rebels to rape women, By Cheryl K. Chumley - The Washington Times - Wednesday, April 3, 2013

An Islamic cleric has cleared the path for rebels in Syria, who are trying to oust President Bashar Assad, to rape women, so long as they're non-Sunni. Salafi Sheikh Yasir al-Ajlawni, who hails from Jordan but who lived in Damascus for 17 years, sent a message via YouTube: It's a "legitimate fatwa" for Muslims waging war against Mr. Assad and trying to put in place a Sharia government to "capture and have sex with" Alawites and other non-Sunni, non-Muslim women, Human Events reports.

16. Youtube: Syria's women refugees fear sham marriages and rape, Channel 4 News, 28 March 2013

17. Aleppo the Story of Unending Pain. Eyewitnesses Accounts from Sheik Maqsoud, Syria News, 2 April 2013

"They raped lots of Christian girls in Sheik Maqsoud, in front of their parents. They killed anyone who tried to stop the rape, saying the girls are war trophies. They took turns raping them, then they slaughtered them" Abu Omar continued crying
 "They killed AlHassan mosque Imam, where is the pride in that, where is the honor?!! We are Syrians, how can we watch that and do nothing. This is our pride and honor being paraded in front of us. None is doing anything
 What did Aleppo do to you... By God if we only had one day left in our lives, we'll kill you one by one you bastards, you AlNusra Front. You barbarians, you want Aleppo. You'll have to kill all Syrians not only the people of Aleppo"

18. Analysis on claims of rape against the Syrian government: WAR, SYRIAN STYLE? HAS ASSAD ORDERED MASS RAPES?, 24 July 2012, Russ Baker

One of the early and leading claimants for mass rape in Syria is Sen. Joseph Lieberman, a member of the Armed Services Committee and a strong supporter of US military interventions in Iraq and Libya. He, along with his friend John McCain, has been in the forefront of **pushing for US military participation** in support of the uprising against Assad.

Syrians of all faith backgrounds

19. Syria: As the bombs fall, the people of Damascus rally round Bashar al-Assad, by Peter Osborne, The Telegraph, 17 April 2014

There are no "good guys" in Syria's civil war. But we should not be blind to the fact that there is a project out there to destroy its rich, pluralist and unbelievably intricate culture and replace it with a monochrome version of Wahhabi Islam, of the kind favoured by Saudi mullahs. And for reasons that history may come to judge very severely, Britain, the United States, and the West have been aiding and abetting this project.

20. Syrian children find relief from trauma with magic of music - SBS report 2/2/2016

21. Youtube: Syrian Voices-3 Years On.(Red Crescent)

Syrian voices: As we mark the third year since the beginning of the Syria crisis, we listen to the voices of some of the people who've been through it -- mothers, children, volunteers -- how that has impacted their lives, which challenges they face on a daily basis, and which hope they have for the future.

22. Mortar strike kills 15 in Damascus University: state media, 28 March 2013

BEIRUT (Reuters) - Fifteen Syrian students were killed when rebel mortar bombs hit a Damascus University canteen on Thursday, state-run news agency SANA said, as attacks intensify in the center of the capital.

23. Youtube: Revolution Racketeers: Industrial terrorism in Syria, (Aleppo), RT, 26 April '12
24. Youtube: Kidnapped Syrian Journalists Rescued by the Army, August 2012
25. Pro-Assad Imam shot dead in Damascus, 16 Feb 2012
A leading religious figure has been assassinated in the conservative Midan area of the Syrian capital Damascus....
"He was killed because he was calling for reform and the end of clashes," said Sheikh Housaim Shouaib. "Those who did it – they only want chaos and more death."
26. Syria suicide bombing kills top pro-Assad Sunni Muslim preacher (and at least 41 of his students), AP 21 March '13
A small, frail man, al-Buti was well known in the Arab world as a religious scholar and longtime imam at the eighth-century Omayyad Mosque, a Damascus landmark. State TV said he has written 60 books and religious publications.
27. Syria blames al-Qaida for Damascus bomb blast, Ian Black in Damascus, 7 Jan 2012
Syria's government has blamed al-Qaida for a suicide bombing which reportedly killed at least 11 people in a Damascus suburb on another Friday of protests across the country...
The dead and more than 60 injured were said to be mostly civilians, according to the state news agency Sana. The interior ministry described the modus operandi and intention to cause mass casualties as having the "fingerprints of al-Qaida".
The attack triggered furious condemnation from the regime and loud demonstrations of support for President **Bashar al-Assad**, who is under mounting international pressure over the continuing crackdown on the 10-month uprising – the bloodiest episode of the Arab spring.

Security forces - Soldiers, Police

28. Syria: The hidden massacre, by Sharmine Narwani, 7 May 2014
By early 2012, the UN claimed there were over 5,000 casualties in Syria – without specifying whether these were civilians, rebel fighters or government security forces. According to government lists presented to and published by the UN's Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria, in the first year of conflict, the death toll for Syrian police forces was 478, and 2,091 for military and security force casualties.
Those numbers suggest a remarkable parity in deaths between both sides in the conflict, right from the start. It also suggests that at least part of the Syrian "opposition" was from the earliest days, armed, organized, and targeting security forces as a matter of strategy – in all likelihood, to elicit a response that would ensure continued escalation.
29. Yara Abbas – In her own words, by Sharmine Narwani, 31 May 2013
(Yara Abbas was a Syrian war correspondent killed in May 2013.) When I asked her if she was afraid, Yara was emphatic that she has never been afraid of moving in sniper-filled corridors. She told me that the soldiers – whom she had first met in Damascus and then followed into Aleppo – protected her with their lives and made her feel safe.

B. Covert war against Syria

CIA and MI6

30. CIA in Syria 1949 - Miles Copeland on the failed CIA instituted Syrian coup d'état;
31. CIA in Syria 'Arab Spring' - Operation Timber Sycamore - Professor Jeffrey Sachs
Prof Sachs, "The CIA and Saudi Arabia, together in covert operations, tried to overthrow Assad"
Susan Dirgham, Jan 2020

Re: ABC RN *Minfield* program, 16/10/19

32. ERETZ_ZEN: US ambassador's man in Syria, FSA, Al-Qaeda and ISIS/ISIL
 Before it was shut down, Youtube account of 'Eretz Zen' presented valuable primary resource material on the war in Syria. These screen shots were taken of a video posted on this account that shows links between Robert Ford, the last US ambassador to Syria; the former leader of the 'Free Syrian Army; the terrorist group Jabhat al-Nusra; and ISIS.
33. Macmillan backed Syria assassination plot: Documents show White House and No 10 conspired over oil-fuelled invasion plan, The Guardian, 27 Sept 2003
 Nearly 50 years before the war in Iraq, Britain and America sought a secretive "regime change" in another Arab country they accused of spreading terror and threatening the west's oil supplies, by planning the invasion of Syria and the assassination of leading figures. Newly discovered documents show how in 1957 Harold Macmillan and President Dwight Eisenhower approved a CIA-MI6 plan to stage fake border incidents as an excuse for an invasion by Syria's pro-western neighbours, and then to "eliminate" the most influential triumvirate in Damascus.
34. On French TV: Roland Dumas (former French foreign minister) - The British prepared for war in Syria 2 years before the eruption of the crisis, June 2013.
35. Moazzam Begg was in contact with MI5 about his Syria visits, papers show, 3 Oct '14
 The terrorism case against former Guantánamo inmate Moazzam Begg collapsed after MI5 belatedly gave police and prosecutors a series of documents that detailed the agency's extensive contacts with him before and after his trips to Syria, the Guardian has learned.
36. How Britain funds the 'propaganda war' against Isis in Syria, The Guardian, 3 May '16
 The British government is waging information warfare in Syria by funding media operations for some rebel fighting groups, in the foreign front of what David Cameron has called "the propaganda war" against Islamic State.
 The campaign aims to boost the reputation of what the government calls the "moderate armed opposition", a complex and shifting alliance of armed factions.
37. Fabrication in BBC Panorama 'Saving Syria's Children'
 Analysis of the 30 September 2013 BBC Panorama documentary 'Saving Syria's Children' and related BBC News reports, contending that sequences filmed by BBC personnel and others at Atarab Hospital, Aleppo on 26 August 2013 purporting to show the aftermath of an incendiary bomb attack on a nearby school are largely, if not entirely, staged.
38. The Syrian opposition: who's doing the talking?, by Charlie Skelton, The Guardian, 13 Feb '12
a number of key figures in the Syrian opposition movement are long-term exiles who were receiving US government funding to undermine the Assad government long before the Arab spring broke out.
 Though it is not yet stated US government policy to oust Assad by force, these spokespeople are vocal advocates of foreign military intervention in Syria and thus natural allies of well-known US neoconservatives who supported Bush's invasion of Iraq and are now pressuring the Obama administration to intervene. As we will see, several of these spokespeople have found support, and in some cases developed long and lucrative relationships with advocates of military intervention on both sides of the Atlantic.
39. Trump gives \$4.5 million to Syria's White Helmets, which partnered with jihadists and joined Turkey's ethnic cleansing, 28 Oct 2019, by Ben Norton

C. UN reports on Syria / The use of chemical weapons / Crossing Obama's 'red line'

The United Nations

40. What the Syrian death tolls really tell us, by Sharmine Narwani, *The Guardian*, 15/2/13

Unreliable data can incite and escalate a conflict – the latest UN-sponsored figure of 60,000 should not be reported as fact

The problem is that, increasingly, death tolls are used as political tools to scene-set for **western-backed "humanitarian interventions"** in the Middle East and north Africa and – more broadly – against the kinds of negotiated political settlements that could actually reduce or stop the killing.

41. Carla Del Ponte 'stupefied by Syrian opposition sarin use', BBC, 6 May 2013

A leading United Nations investigator says she is 'stupefied' by the testimony from victims of the Syrian conflict that rebels have used nerve agent sarin.

Carla Del Ponte told Swiss TV there were "strong, concrete suspicions but not yet incontrovertible proof".

She said her panel had not yet seen evidence of government forces using chemical weapons.

42. Critical Flaws in UN Report on Syria, 16 August 2013, Susan Dirgham

There are strong grounds for considering the report to be politically biased. Firstly,all the interviewees quoted make allegations against the 'government and pro-government armed forces'. No interviewee is quoted alleging that an 'anti-government armed group' committed a crime....

43. United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in Syrian Arab Republic, Final Report 16 Sept 2013; Report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, General Assembly, 12 Feb 2014

Paragraph 6 of Summary (12/2/14) states, 'Chemical weapons, specifically sarin, were found to have been used in multiple incidents during the conflict. **In no incident was the commission's evidentiary threshold met with respect to the perpetrator.**

44. 'Clear and convincing' evidence of chemical weapons use in Syria, UN team reports, UN News, Sept 16, 2013

Responding to questions, the Secretary-General (Ban Ki-moon) said Dr. Sellström's team had been able to determine objectively that Sarin was used on a relatively large scale. It was the team's job to determine whether and to what extent chemical weapons were used, **not who used them.**

"It is for others to decide whether to pursue this matter further to determine responsibility. We may all have our own thoughts on this, but I would simply say that this was a grave crime and those responsible must be brought to justice as soon as possible," he said.

45. Gas missiles 'were not sold to Syria', by Robert Fisk, 22 Sept 2013

....**grave doubts are being expressed by the UN and other international organisations in Damascus that the sarin gas missiles were fired by Assad's army.** While these international employees cannot be identified, some of them were in Damascus on 21 August and asked a series of questions to which no one has yet supplied an answer. Why, for example, would Syria wait until the UN inspectors were ensconced in Damascus on 18 August before using sarin gas little more than two days later – and only four miles from the hotel in which the UN had just checked in? As one Western NGO put it yesterday: "if Assad really wanted to use sarin gas, why for God's sake, did he wait for two years and then when the UN was actually on the ground to investigate?"

Scientists and Investigative Journalists

46. Robert Parry writing for Consortium News, 6 April 2017

NYT Retreats on 2013 Syria-Sarin Claims

The New York Times, which has never heard an allegation against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad that it hasn't immediately believed, has compiled **a list of his alleged atrocities** with a surprising omission: the Aug. 21, 2013 sarin gas attack outside Damascus.

47. Theodore Postol, Professor of Science, Technology and National Security Policy, and Richard Lloyd, Former UN Weapons Inspector
Possible Implication of Possible Faulty US Technical Intelligence in the Damascus Nerve Agent Attack of August 21, 2013

- The Syrian Improvised Chemical Munitions that Were Used in the August 21, Nerve Agent Attack in Damascus Have a Range of About 2 Kilometers
- The UN Independent Assessment of the Range of the Chemical Munition Is in Exact Agreement with Our Findings
- This Indicates That These Munitions Could Not Possibly Have Been Fired at East Ghouta from the "Heart", or from the Eastern Edge, of the Syrian Government Controlled Area Shown in the Intelligence Map Published by the White House on August 30, 2013.
- This mistaken intelligence could have led to an unjustified US military action based on false intelligence.
- A proper vetting of the fact that the munition was of such short range would have led to a completely different assessment of the situation from the gathered data
- Whatever the reasons for the egregious errors in the intelligence, the source of these errors needs to be explained.
- If the source of these errors is not identified, the procedures that led to this intelligence failure will go uncorrected, and the chances of a future policy disaster will grow with certainty.

48. Neocons Red-Faced Over 'Red Line, by Robert Parry, Consortium News, 10/3/16
 What I was told by intelligence sources at the time was that the evidence against Assad was anything but a slam dunk. It was not even "robust," as Goldberg insists. There were serious doubts among intelligence professionals about many of the "certainties" that Official Washington's neocon-dominated foreign policy establishment had quickly accepted as true about the sarin attack, blaming Assad.

In the face of that "group think," Clapper surely did not want to go too much against the grain – he's far too timid a bureaucrat for that – but his analysts were balking at once again being pushed into justifying another hasty war.

49. Seymour M. Hersh writing for The London Review of Books, 17 April 2014
The Red Line and the Rat Line on Obama, Erdoğan and the Syrian rebels

Dempsey's initial view after 21 August was that a US strike on Syria – under the assumption that the Assad government was responsible for the sarin attack – would be a military blunder, the former intelligence official said. The Porton Down report caused the joint chiefs to go to the president with a more serious worry: that the attack sought by the White House would be an unjustified act of aggression. It was the joint chiefs who led Obama to change course. The official White House explanation for the turnabout – the story the press corps told – was that the president, during a walk in the Rose Garden with Denis McDonough, his chief of staff, suddenly decided to seek approval for the strike from a bitterly divided Congress with which he'd been in conflict for years. The former Defense Department official told me that the White House provided a different explanation to members of the civilian leadership of the Pentagon: the bombing had been called off because there was intelligence 'that the Middle East would go up in smoke' if it was carried out.

50. Sarin gas materials sent to Isis from Turkey, claims MP, Belfast Telegraph, Dec 2015
 Erdem, from the Republican People's Party (CHP), made the claims in parliament, citing evidence from an abruptly-closed criminal case.

51. Murder in the SunMorgue

Uploaded by [Denis O'Brien](#), Jun 22, 2014

Description: A Critique of the Sarin Myth and a Cyber-Investigation of the Ghouta Massacre

According to the late US pharmacologist/lawyer Dr Denis O'Brien there had been no sarin poisoning, but rather a 'macabre massacre of children and adults by other means', their bodies becoming 'props in a staged set-up'. After a six-month study of the video evidence presented to the US Congress, he concluded that victims' symptoms indicated either carbon monoxide or cyanide was used to kill the alleged victims. Such deadly gases could not have been carried in rockets.

D. Prominent clerics who encourage 'jihad' and attacks on civilians

52. Wahhabi Yusuf Al Qaradawi "Its OK to kill Syrian Civilians And Religious Clerics" English Subs), posted on this Youtube account, August 2013

53. Leading Sunni Muslim cleric calls for "jihad" in Syria, 2 June 2013, Reuters
 ... Qaradawi had "called on all those able to undertake jihad and fighting to head to Syria to stand by the Syrian people who are being killed at the hands of the regime and are now being killed at the hands of what he called the party of Satan".

54. How One Jihadi In Syria Became A Twitter Sensation, by Miriam Berger, 1 April 2014
 Popular Saudi cleric and promoter of jihad in Syria Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Moheisini has over 295,000 followers on Twitter and until the afternoon of March 7 — hours after BuzzFeed first contacted Twitter regarding Moheisini's account — he had a verified blue check next to his name. Moheisini tweets in Arabic from Syria, where he relocated in September 2013 to advise, publicize, fundraise, and recruit for jihadi groups battling the Syrian regime and rebel factions. The move has not dampened the 49-year-old preacher's high profile. His Twitter feed is a stream of words, videos, and pictures that extol jihad in Syria and encourage his followers near and far to donate and join.

55. Bobb Carr condemns Alawite attacks in Australia, *The Australian*, 26 June 2012
 ... Alawites had been fearful since Syrian Sunni cleric Adnan Aroor declared a year ago, "we shall mince them in meat grinders and feed their flesh to the dogs".

56. SYRIAN SUNNI CLERIC ADNAN AL-'AR'OUR THREATENS THE ALAWITES WHO SUPPORTED THE SYRIAN REGIME: "WE SHALL MINCE THEM IN MEAT GRINDERS AND FEED THEIR FLESH TO THE DOGS", June 26, 2011

Adnan Al-'Ar'our: As you know, the [Sunni] Muslims constitute 85-86% of the Syrian population. Therefore, if we overcome [the regime], the punishment will be harsh and painful. I am referring especially to the Alawite sect. Those Alawites who remained neutral will not be harmed. Anyone who supported us will be on our side, and will be treated as a citizen just like us. As for those who violated all that is sacred, by Allah, we shall mince them in meat grinders and we shall feed their flesh to the dogs.

E. Imagining a Utopia - A united Muslim bloc

57. Julian Assange Interviews Moazzam Begg & Asim Qureshi on 'The World Tomorrow', 17/5/12

Julian Assange: What do you think of the desire to unite Muslims under one Caliphate?...Do you see that as a possibility?

Moazzam Begg:It would be a union of countries where they all speak Arabic.

Moazzam Begg: What would be new is that their unity wouldn't be based upon their personal nationalism. ...a united Muslim bloc is something that most people would want. ... This goes beyond Arab unity. This is Islamic unity, which includes Turks, it includes Iranians, it includes Pakistanis and Indonesians. It's huge. It's massive.

Julian Assange: But why have unity?

Moazzam Begg: Well, why would Europe want unity? The whole point ... The reason for unity would probably be economics, of course. Defence, of course. And harking back to a history where

you can travel from one point to the other unhindered because you're a citizen of this land. And this land isn't divided based upon colonial principles.

APPENDIX - An update

Since submitting my complaint to the ABC, the credibility of the OPCW has been called into question.

58. PETER HITCHENS reveals fresh evidence that UN watchdog suppressed report casting doubt on Assad gas attack, *Mail on Sunday*, 15 Dec 2019

The Mail on Sunday can reveal that a senior official at the Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) demanded the 'removal of all traces' of a document which undermined claims that gas cylinders had been dropped from the air – a key element of the 'evidence' that the Syrian regime was responsible.

59. Nader Hashemi on OPCW, Twitter

In May 2019, on Twitter, Nader Hashemi responded to a tweet of Susan Sarandon's when news of a whistleblower in the OPCW was first being discussed in alternative news sources.

@SusanSarandon · May 18, 2019

This is really important. Why aren't we talking about it?

"We may have just discovered a major piece of the puzzle explaining how seemingly independent international organizations help deceive us into consenting to wars and regime change interventionism around the world."

@naderalhashemi Replying to @SusanSarandon

Sorry Susan: to understand the topic, I don't read conspiracy theorists -- I read the reports from Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International & the UN Syria Commission. I suggest you do as well. You have a platform. In the era of fake news, please use it constructively.

In his tweet, Nader Hashemi refers to three bodies that have adopted partisan stands on Syria, all effectively supporting the militarised opposition.

- 60. Human Rights Watch has been criticised by Nobel Peace Laureates and scholars for its revolving door to the US government.
- 61. Amnesty International's links with a former State Department official, Suzanne Nossel, call into question its bias. (Nossel promotes what she calls 'Smart Power' to encourage 'progressives' to back ways to guarantee US hegemony.)
- 62. Finally, as the US is the chief funder of the UN, it cannot be assumed it is an impartial body and that the US doesn't influence its decisions.