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## US Fears Russian Syria Peace Plan Not Russian Intervention

**US isn't worried about Russian military action in Syria. It's worried about a Russian initiative that would see power sharing in Syria and a joint front against ISIS and Al Qaeda in the region**

By Pepe ESCOBAR

The Russians are coming! The Russians are coming! Well, the Russians are always coming. The Russians never stopped coming since those heady Cold War days. The Russians are “invading” Ukraine. Every day. For over a year now. Now the Russians are “invading” Syria.

That’s just a prelude. Soon the Russians will be invading the whole Middle East, the whole of Eastern and Western Europe, the whole Arctic. And then, one day, surreptitiously, they will be back in Cuba, ready to invade Florida and then the whole homeland.

History now repeats itself under the eternal recurrence of farce. About the best illustration of the propaganda modus operandi underlying the current exceptionalist hysteria over Russia’s alleged “military incursion” in Syria was penned way back in 2011 on Counterpunch by the late, great Alex Cockburn. Enjoy:

“Suppose the CIA leaks a national security review concluding that the moon is actually made of cheese, and the Chinese are planning to send up a pair of gigantic bio-engineered rats to breed in numbers sufficient to eat the cheese and thus sabotage US plans for Missile Defense radar deployment on the moon’s dark side.

The headlines will initially proclaim, “Doubts on Chinese Rat Threat Widespread. Many scoff.” The lead paragraph in news stories in the New York Times, Washington Post and Wall Street Journal will quote the scoffers, but then ‘balance’ will mandate respectful quotation from ‘intelligence sources’, faculty professors, think tank ‘experts’ and the like, all eager to dance to the government’s tune: Many say rat scenario ‘plausible’, etc.

Lo and behold, by the end of a couple of days of such news stories, the Chinese rat plot is firmly ensconced as a credible proposition. News reports then turn to respectful discussion of the US government’s options in confronting and routing the Chinese rat threat: Vice President says ‘all options are on the table,’ etc.”

There you go. China – as well as Russia – are of course major threats, according to the Pentagon’s military doctrine; as bad if not worse than ISIS/ISIL/Daesh. So Russia must have a rat threat of its own. Which brings us to the “The Russians are Coming” Syria plot, which has submerged think tanks such as the CIA front [Stratfor](#) in profoundly thoughtful speculation, everything of course based on prime, second-hand, ideologically-corrupted, lousy – and fake - intel.

## **That power-sharing dilemma**

Virtually all key aspects of the nonsense of a Russian military intervention in Syria have been thoroughly debunked by The Saker in [this](#) piece.

Moscow simply won't involve itself in a new Afghanistan. Besides, 66 percent of Russians are even against a military intervention in nearby Donbass; oh yes, that “invasion” NATO and Western corporate media alarmingly announce with utmost certainty virtually every week.

The problem for what we may describe as the NATO-GCC Warmonger Party is that Moscow is actually trying to coordinate a real, anti-regime change, peace plan that simultaneously tackles the two key problems of the Syrian tragedy: power-sharing in Damascus and the ascension of ISIS/ISIL/Daesh.

As President Putin confirmed on the record, Bashar al-Assad has already agreed to new elections and power-sharing with the non-Salafi-jihadi opposition. This was already discussed in detail with Washington, Ankara, Riyadh and Cairo. Even a paranoid Riyadh – which, by the way, continues to conduct the illegal bombing and now invasion of Yemen - had been at least open to discussion.

The first step of the plan would be to form a real coalition to fight the fake “Caliphate” – including Russia, Iran, the Syrian government in Damascus, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, as well as Washington.

There's the rub. The Obama administration's plan A remains regime change. A plan B with co-Russian leadership and with Assad on board remains anathema. After all Obama himself has never abandoned his “Assad must go” mantra.

## **Watch the M5**

The M5 highway is the absolutely strategic artery connecting Damascus with the north and west of Syria. Those were the days – during Hafez Assad and then Bashar, up to 2011 - when everyone could be back and forth on the M5 like it was a safe autobahn.

A month ago, though, ISIS/ISIL/Daesh captured the strategic, mostly Christian town of al-Qaryatain, northeast of Damascus. The overstretched Syrian Arab Army, so far, has been hopeless in trying to recapture it.

This is particularly worrying because the fake “Caliphate” is now a mere 30km away from the M5 highway. OK, the highway had been under threat in the past, on and off, by a few snipers holed up in the wasteland of north Damascus. But if ISIS/ISIL/Daesh ever manages to cut it in half, then this would signify nightmare territory for Damascus.

The chances arguably are minimal, because a possible fall of the M5 would be prevented in the first place by a hardcore line of defense – comprised of Hezbollah and Iran military advisers and Special Forces. These would take care of the trouble – without involvement of Russian military experts/advisers which the Russian Foreign Ministry confirmed are indeed in Syria.

They'd have to be; after all they are implementing existing military contracts between

Moscow and Damascus, and must teach Syrians how to operate Russian hardware.

So Damascus, even in a critical situation, does not need Russian boots on the ground. What they may rely on is sound advice by GRU and SVR special adviser teams. “The Russians are coming” meme parroted by lousy Western/Israeli intel may in fact refer to these teams coupled with some Russian marines deployed to beef up security at Tartus and the airbase close to Latakia.

## **R2P is back**

Meanwhile, ISIS/ISIL/Daesh continues to annex territory like clockwork. It’s one of the wonders of the geopolitical heavens that Pentagon/NATO drones can pinpoint and surgically obliterate the odd fake “Caliphate” operative while un-surgically ignoring those gleaming, stealth white Toyota convoys parading havoc across ‘Syraq’ concealed by desert storms.

ISIS/ISIL/Daesh can now operate over a huge territory. And every territory lost by Damascus’ forces is now instantly occupied not only by ISIS/ISIL/Daesh but also by Jabhat al-Nusra, a.k.a Al-Qaeda in Syria, or Ahrar al-Sham. All of them hardcore Salafi-jihadis. Not a single US-trained/weaponized “moderate rebel” in sight.

What this implies, politically, is zero possibility of a power-sharing agreement in Damascus. It’s either total victory against the fake “Caliphate”, all across ‘Syraq’ – or death. The precedents are grim. When the Syrian Arab Army was winning against the Caliphate goons, they retreated into Iraqi territory.

This also implies that the current US-led-from-behind bombing campaign is a worthless videogame – with futility reaching Walhalla dimensions with Britain and France now merrily joining the bombing. The only realistic way this beheading-demented motley crew of Salafi-jihadi takfiris may be soundly defeated, on the ground, is by an alliance of Syrian, Hezbollah, Iran and Iraq forces coordinating with precision bombing guided by first-hand intel gathered in the theatre of operations.

It’s not going to happen. Because the White House, the Pentagon, the House of Saud and Sultan Erdogan – beyond any uplifting rhetoric - simply don’t want it. For them, it’s the regime change way, or the highway (as in allowing the fake “Caliphate” to take the M5 highway.)

The bottom line: “The Russians Are Coming” Syria intervention plot is nonsense. It would be simply pointless militarily, apart from politically unsustainable in Moscow. Advising Damascus, yes – that will go on.

Meanwhile, the number of “regime change refugees”, as analyst Vijay Prashad coined them, will keep on swelling. Vast swathes of European-wide public opinion – which has just ‘discovered’ there’s a real, nasty civil war raging in Syria - are already demanding that “something” should be done. As in even more bombing of Syria (thus the French and the British “joining” the action.)

What may be on the cards though is something even more sinister: Libya remixed. Remember the responsibility to protect the would-be victims of a would-be Gaddafi-conducted, massacre of civilians? In this post-Orwellian world, a new R2P war is slouching towards Damascus to be born masking, once again, an obsession with regime change.

That's what Russia is trying to prevent. For the NATO-GCC Warmonger Party, Make Love, not War will never protect regime change refugees. Their code is crystal clear: Make Bombs, Not Refugees.