

## **Putin Forces US to Whistle Another Tune on Syria**

by Mike Whitney via sal - Counterpunch *Wednesday, Oct 21 2015, 9:46am*

international / prose / post

The Russian-led military coalition is badly beating Washington's proxies in Syria which is why John Kerry is calling for a "Time Out".

On Monday, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry called for an emergency summit later in the week so that leaders from Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Jordan could discuss ways to avoid the "total destruction" of Syria. According to Kerry, "Everybody, including the Russians and the Iranians, have said there is no military solution, so we need to make an effort to find a political solution. This is a human catastrophe that now threatens the integrity of a whole group of countries around the region," Kerry added.

Of course, it was never a "catastrophe" when the terrorists were destroying cities and villages across the country, uprooting half the population and transforming the once-unified and secure nation into an anarchic failed state. It only became a catastrophe when Vladimir Putin synchronized the Russian bombing campaign with allied forces on the ground who started wiping out hundreds of US-backed militants and recapturing critical cities across Western corridor. Now that the Russian airforce is pounding the living daylights out of jihadi ammo dumps, weapons depots and rebel strongholds, and the Syrian Arab Army (SAA) is tightening their grip on Aleppo, and Hezbollah is inflicting heavy casualties on Jabhat al Nusra militants and other Al Qaida-linked vermin; Kerry's decided it's a catastrophe. Now that the momentum of the war has shifted in favor of Syrian president Bashar al Assad, Kerry wants a "Time out".

Keep in mind, that Putin worked tirelessly throughout the summer months to try to bring the warring parties together (including Assad's political opposition) to see if deal could be worked out to stabilize Syria and fight ISIS. But Washington wanted no part of any Russian-led coalition. Having exhausted all the possibilities for resolving the conflict through a broader consensus, Putin decided to get directly involved by committing the Russian airforce to lead the fight against the Sunni extremists and other anti-government forces that have been tearing the country apart and paving the way for Al Qaida-linked forces to take control of the Capital. Putin's intervention stopped the emergence of a terrorist Caliphate in Damascus. He turned the tide in the four year-long war, and delivered a body-blow to Washington's malign strategy Now he's going to finish the job.

Putin is not gullible enough to fall for Kerry's stalling tactic. He's going to kill or capture as many of the terrorists as possible and he's not going to let Uncle Sam get in the way.

These terrorists—over 2,000 of who are from Chechnya—pose an existential threat to Russia, as does the US plan to use Islamic extremists to advance their foreign policy objectives. Putin takes the threat seriously. He knows that if Washington's strategy succeeds in Syria, it will be used in Iran and then again in Russia. That's why he's decided to dump tons of money and resources into the project. That's why his Generals have worked out all the details and come up with a rock-solid strategy for annihilating this clatter of juvenile delinquents and for restoring Syria's sovereign borders. And that's why he's not going to be waved-away by the likes of mealy-mouth John Kerry. Putin is going to see this thing through to the bitter end. He's not going to stop for anyone or anything. Winning in Syria is a matter of national security, Russia's national security.

Here's Kerry again: "If Russia is there to help Assad find a way to a political solution as well as to fight Daesh (ISIS) and extremism, then there is the possibility of a very different path."

Putin has offered solutions from the very onset, it was Washington that rejected those remedies. Putin supported the so called Geneva communique dating back to 2012. In fact, it was then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton who threw a wrench in the proceedings by demanding that Assad not be part of any transitional governing body. (Note: Now Obama has caved on this demand.) Russia saw her demand as tantamount to regime change, which it was since Assad is the internationally-recognized head of state and fully entitled to be a part of any transitional government. US rejectionism sabotaged efforts for internationally-monitored "free and fair multi-party elections" and ended any chance for a speedy end to the war. Washington was more determined to get its own way ("Assad must go") than to save the lives of tens of thousands of civilians who have died since Clinton walked away from Geneva.

And now Kerry is extending the olive branch? Now Washington pretends to care about the "total destruction" of Syria?

I'm not buying it. What Kerry cares about is his hoodlum "head-chopper" buddies that are being turned into shredded wheat by Russian Daisy Cutters. That's what he cares about. Take a look at this from RT:

"Syrian President Bashar Assad "does not have to leave tomorrow or the next day," the US State Department (spokesman Mark Toner) has stated. Washington allows that Assad may take part in transitional process, but can't be part of Syria's next government...

"... this isn't the US dictating this. This is the feeling of many governments around the world, and frankly, the majority of the Syrian people," Toner said.

When asked to clarify "how long" the State Department thinks the transition process could take, Toner failed to give an exact time period.

"I can't put a timeframe on it. I can't say two weeks, two months, six months," he said, adding that the US is looking for "a political resolution to the conflict."...

Toner then admitted that the US is still in the "process to start the process," stressing that this was "an urgent issue" that "has gone on too long." ('Assad doesn't have to leave tomorrow, can be part of transitional process' - US State Department", RT)

"A process to start the process"?? Hello?

Toner is backpeddling so fast he's not even sure what he's saying. Clearly, the administration is so flustered by developments on the ground in Syria, and so eager to stop the killing of US-backed jihadis, that they sent poor Toner out to talk to the media before he'd even gotten his talking points figured out. What a joke. The administration has gone from refusing to meet with a high-level Russian delegation just last week (to talk about coordinating airstrikes in Syria), to completely capitulating on their ridiculous "Assad must go" position today. That's quite a reversal, don't you think? I'm surprised they didn't just run a big white flag up over 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. while the Marine Band played Taps.

But don't think that this latest humiliation will derail Washington's plan for destroying Syria as a functioning, sovereign state and carving it into a million powerless statelets that pose no threat to

Big Oil's pipeline corridors, or US military bases, or Israel's sprawling Zionist Valhalla. Because it won't. That plan is still right on track despite Putin's efforts to crush the militants and defend the borders. The latest iteration of the Syria dissolution strategy was articulated by Council on Foreign Relations president Richard Haass who said:

"...the United States and others should pursue a two-track policy. One track would channel steps to improve the balance of power on the ground in Syria. This means doing more to help the Kurds and select Sunni tribes, as well as continuing to attack the Islamic State from the air.

Relatively safe enclaves should emerge from this effort. A Syria of enclaves or cantons may be the best possible outcome for now and the foreseeable future. Neither the US nor anyone else has a vital national interest in restoring a Syrian government that controls all of the country's territory; what is essential is to roll back the Islamic State and similar groups.

The second track is a political process in which the US and other governments remain open to Russian (and even Iranian) participation. The goal would be to ease Assad out of power and establish a successor government that, at a minimum, enjoyed the support of his Alawite base and, ideally, some Sunnis." (Testing Putin in Syria, Richard Haass, Project Syndicate)

Topple Assad and partition the country. Destroy Syria once and for all. That is Washington's operating strategy. It's a plan that was first proposed by Brookings' analyst Michael O'Hanlon who recently said:

"...a future Syria could be a confederation of several sectors: one largely Alawite (Assad's own sect), spread along the Mediterranean coast; another Kurdish, along the north and northeast corridors near the Turkish border; a third primarily Druse, in the southwest; a fourth largely made up of Sunni Muslims; and then a central zone of intermixed groups in the country's main population belt from Damascus to Aleppo...

Under such an arrangement, Assad would ultimately have to step down from power in Damascus... A weak central government would replace him. But most of the power, as well as most of the armed forces, would reside within the individual autonomous sectors — and belong to the various regional governments...

American and other foreign trainers would need to deploy inside Syria, where the would-be recruits actually live — and must stay, if they are to protect their families. (Syria's one hope may be as dim as Bosnia's once was, Michael O' Hanlon, Reuters)

Once again, the same theme repeated: Topple Assad and partition the country. Of course, the US will have to train "would-be recruits" to police the natives and prevent the buildup of any coalition or militia that might threaten US imperial ambitions in the region. But that goes without saying. (By the way, Hillary Clinton has already thrown her support behind the O'Hanlon plan emphasizing the importance of "safe zones" that could be used to harbor Sunni militants and other enemies of the state.)

John "Wacko" McCain has been the most strident proponent of the plan to break up Syria. Here's part of what he said on the topic:

"We must act now to defend civilian populations and our opposition partners in

Syria....we must establish enclaves in Syria where civilians and the moderate opposition to Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad and ISIS can find greater security. These enclaves must be protected with greater American and coalition airpower and likely foreign troops on the ground. We should not rule out that U.S. forces could play a limited role in this ground contingent...

“We must back up our policy in ways that check Putin’s ambitions and shape his behavior. If Russia attacks our opposition partners, we must impose greater costs on Russia’s interests — for example, by striking significant Syrian leadership or military targets. But we should not confine our response to Syria. We must increase pressure on Russia elsewhere. We should provide defensive weapons and related assistance to Ukrainian forces so they can take a greater toll on Russian forces.” (The Reckless Guns of October, Daniel Lazare, Consortium News)

Sure, let’s Kick-off World War 3. Why not?

The man should be in a straitjacket not fulminating on the floor of the Congress.

The entire US political establishment supports the removal of Assad and the breaking up of Syria. Kerry’s sudden appeal for dialogue does not represent a fundamental change in the strategy. It’s merely an attempt to buy some time for US-backed mercenaries who are feeling the full-brunt of the Russia’s bombing campaign. Putin would be well-advised to ignore Kerry’s braying and continue to prosecute his war on terror until the job is done.

(Note: As this article was going to press, the Turkish Daily Zaman reported that:

“...the US and several European and Gulf states...have agreed to a plan under which Syria’s embattled President Bashar al-Assad will remain in power for the next six months during a transition period....Turkey has abandoned its determination [to get rid of Assad] and has agreed on an interim period with Assad in place,” former Foreign Minister Yaşar Yakış told Today’s Zaman on Tuesday....If the Syrian people decide to continue with Assad, then there is not much Turkey can object to.” (Report: Turkey agrees to Syria political transition involving Assad, Today’s Zaman)

This story has not yet appeared in any western media. Obama’s Syrian policy has completely collapsed.

Copyright applies.

<http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/10/21/putin-forces-obama-to-capitulate-on-syria/>

---

Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-1937.html>