

Is Mad Dog America Planning to Invade East Syria?

by Mike Whitney via jaxie - Counterpunch *Monday, Apr 24 2017, 11:22pm*

international / prose / post

The Pentagon's plan for seizing and occupying territory in east Syria is beginning to take shape. According to a Fox News exclusive:

"The Islamic State has essentially moved its so-called capital in Syria... ISIS is now centered in Deir ez-Zur, roughly 90 miles southeast of Raqqa, the officials said." ("ISIS moves its capital in Syria", FOX News)

The move by ISIS corresponds to the secretive massing of US troops and military equipment on the Syria-Jordan border. It creates the perfect pretext for a ground invasion followed by a long-term military occupation in an area that Washington has sought to control for the last 18 months. Here's more on the topic from South Front:

"The US military is reportedly concentrating troops and military equipment at the Syrian-Jordanian border. Local sources said that about 20 US Army armoured vehicles (including battle tanks and artillery pieces) carried on trucks were spotted in Al-Mafraq. US troops were allegedly accompanied with the Jordanian Army's 3rd Division.

The US Special Operation Forces, the UK Special Operation Forces and units from some other countries -have been conducting operations across the Syrian-Jordanian border for a long time. They even had a secret military facility inside Syria where members the so-called New Syrian Army militant group were deployed. However, it was the first time when a notable number of US armoured vehicles was reported there. The US Ro-Ro ship Liberty Passion, loaded with vehicles, had arrived to the Jordanian port of Al-Aqapa few days ago. These moves followed a meeting between the Jordanian King and the US president.

Thus, the US-led coalition could prepare a large-scale military operation in southern Syria. The goal of the operation will likely be to get control over the Syrian-Iraqi border and to reach Deir Ezzor. It will involve militants trained in camps in Jordan and the US-led coalition's forces." ("US Military Deployment at Syrian-Jordanian Border, Military Escalation", Global Research)

Deir Ezzor is a strategically-located city along the Euphrates that the Pentagon needs in order to tighten its grip on the eastern quadrant of the country. Once Deir Ezzor is taken, the US can launch its CIA-backed jihadist militias back into Syria at will putting more pressure on Damascus and eventually forcing regime change. That is the plan at least, whether it works or not is anyone's guess. The deployment of troops on the Jordanian border suggests that Washington's proxy-army, the mainly-Kurdish militia or SDF, is either unwilling to conduct operations as far south as Deir Ezzor or doesn't have the military strength to beat ISIS on its own. In any event, the Pentagon needs fresh troops and equipment to succeed. Here's more from South Front:

"US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis presented a preliminary version of the new plan to defeat ISIS in Syria and Iraq, a Pentagon spokesman, Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, said on February 28th.The plan submitted by Mattis also includes a proposal to increase the size of the US military contingent to ISIS in Syria... (Note-There are already 400 Special Forces operating alongside the SDF) Without

significant US presence on the ground, the SDF will hardly be able to retake Raqqa from ISIS without incurring unacceptable losses....

As to Deir Ezzor, the US can try to use militants trained in Jordan to launch an attack on Deir Ezzor from the southern direction. However, the total failure of this US-backed group in 2016 leaves little chance that it's able to combat ISIS successfully in 2017. So, the US and its allies will be pushed to deploy special forces units or even ground troops to support the advance there.

The Polish Special Forces have already deployed to Jordan where they will operate alongside their French and British counterparts. According to reports, the US-led block created a joint command center to coordinate efforts of all sides, which will support the advance against ISIS in the area." ("New US Strategy Against ISIS And War In Syria. What To Expect?", South Front)

Here's more from Fox News:

"U.S. military drones have watched hundreds of ISIS "bureaucrats," or administrators, leaving Raqqa in the past two months for the city of al-Mayadin located further down the Euphrates River from Deir el-Zour."

Let me get this straight: US military drones located hundreds of ISIS terrorists traveling across the open dessert, but did nothing to stop them. Why?

Is it because the Pentagon needs ISIS in Deir Ezzor to justify a ground invasion? That's certainly the most plausible explanation.

More from Fox: "Questions remain about the hold force necessary to keep the peace after ISIS is uprooted from Raqqa."

In other words, readers are supposed to believe that the Pentagon doesn't already have a plan in place for occupying the cities when the siege ends. That's baloney. Check out this excerpt from an article by Whitney Webb:

"The Syrian city of Raqqa - the "stronghold" of terror group ISIS - will be governed by a "civilian council" with the support of U.S. troops following its "liberation" from terrorists....

On Tuesday, the U.S.-allied militias ...announced that they had formed a "civilian council" to govern Raqqa after its capture from Daesh militants. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)... claim to have spent six months setting up the council, with a preparatory committee having met "with the people and important tribal figures of Raqqa city to find out their opinions on how to govern it," Middle East Eye reported.

SDF spokesman Talal Selo stated that some towns near Raqqa had already been turned over to the council following a successful operation to drive out Daesh forces.

The U.S. military had previously hinted that power would be given to rebel groups following Raqqa's "liberation"...("After 'Liberation,' U.S. To Give Control Of Raqqa To Rebels, Not Syrian Government", Information Clearinghouse)

Washington has already chosen a group of puppets who will follow their directives when the fighting finally ends. The leaders will be selected from rebel groups and tribal elders that pledge their allegiance to Washington. The new arrangement will prevent the Syrian government from reclaiming

a sizable portion of its sovereign territory or reestablishing control over its borders. A splintered Syria will strengthen US-Israeli regional hegemony and provide the land needed for future US military bases.

But why would Washington opt to occupy another country when previous occupations (like Iraq) have gone so badly?

There's a two word answer to that question: Nadia Schadlow. President Trump's National Security Advisor H R McMaster recently hired Schadlow to join his staff as a deputy assistant to the president for national security strategy. Schadlow recently published a book that "examined 15 cases in which the United States Army intervened abroad, and the service's role in political and economic reconstruction." According to the Wall Street Journal:

(Schadlow's) "War and the Art of Governance" consists of a collection of case studies, beginning with the Mexican-American War and ending in Iraq. Each examines how the U.S. attempted...to translate battlefield victory into a lasting and beneficial political outcome.

Ms. Schadlow's case studies tell an often doleful story of America allowing victories to fall apart, leaving behind a suffering populace that should have been rewarded with a better peace. She asserts convincingly that postconflict governance can only be done well by soldiers....

The Army's Civil Affairs units are the only government entities capable of administering conquered territories, yet Civil Affairs units remain the Army's neglected stepchildren. ... the nation must never go to war again until it can definitively answer Gen. Petraeus's question about "how this ends." It ends only when the U.S. Army assumes the mantle of leadership and commits itself to remaining on the field until the lives of the population can be protected, the damage repaired and a political future guaranteed." ("What Happens After Victory", Wall Street Journal)

Get it? The woman is an expert on military occupation!

Now answer this one question for me: Why would McMaster hire an expert on military occupation unless he was planning to militarily occupy another country?

The facts speak for themselves.

Notes.

1. <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/04/21/isis-moves-its-capital-in-syria.html>
2. <http://www.globalresearch.ca/breaking-video-us-military-deployment-at-syrian-jordanian-border-military-escalation/5584435>
3. <https://southfront.org/new-us-strategy-against-isis-and-war-in-syria-what-to-expect/>
4. <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/46907.htm>
5. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/what-happens-after-victory-1491520385>

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<http://www.counterpunch.org/2017/04/24/is-mad-dog-planning-to-invade-east-syria/>

Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-2627.html>