

The Ending of the CIA's Covert Operation in Syria Will Not Bring the Syrian Tragedy to an End

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Reports by major Western news outlets such as the [Washington Post](#) regarding US President Donald Trump's undertaking to end the covert CIA operation to arm rebels in Syria are essentially misleading. It assumes that there is truth to the official sanitized narrative of a bona fide faction of insurgents who could be classified as 'moderate rebels'. This was of course publicly discredited by the revelation that a 500 million-dollar investment aimed at creating a viable rebel force yielded a grand total of five guerrillas.

The whole point about the anti-Assad insurgency was to introduce fanatical Islamic warriors to destabilise and then balkanise Syria.

General Wesley Clark, the retired former supreme commander of Nato, once said during a CNN interview words to the effect that you don't put up recruitment posters in the Middle East exhorting the masses to volunteer for a militia in order to make the world a better place. In other words a conventional idealist is not the sort of person who in Clark's words "will fight to the death against Hezbollah."

The so-called Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra, the former a renegade group metastasized from al-Qaeda and the latter, an al-Qaeda affiliate, are precisely the sort of militias that have benefitted from a covert operation which has been overseen by the state and military intelligence agencies of the United States.

The unvarnished truth is that the United States, alongside its regional allies Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, has overseen the recruitment, training and financing of Syrian and foreign jihadis. The state of Israel has also provided jihadis operating near the Golan Heights with medical, financial and logistical support.

There have been episodes where the United States-led West has provided overt support for jihadis. For instance, the United States clearly sought to help al Nusra during the siege of Aleppo through a combination of disinformation and military intervention. The former relates to the role of the Western media in propagating the narrative of a Russian-induced humanitarian calamity, while the latter consisted of at least one significant military act of intervention: the supposedly 'accidental' killing of dozens of Syrian Army personnel in Deir al-Zour.

With the defeat of the Islamic State nearing, Trump's undertaking to President Vladimir Putin amounts to a piecemeal concession. The defeat of Islamic State and others by a coalition of the Syrian military, Russia, Hezbollah and Iran -effectively a defeat for the United

States- will not put out the fires in Syria.

This is because the United States will continue striving to ensure that Syria is balkanised. The instrument through which it will work towards achieving this end is through its support for Kurdish militias. The attack using Tomahawk missiles on a Syrian airbase which was ordered by Trump himself despite the lack of evidence that the Syrian military used chemical weapons, was designed to aid Kurdish rebels.

Israel, which for all of its existence has been committed to the balkanization of the Arab world, also supports the creation of a Kurdish state. While the secular government of President Bashar al-Assad has not been overthrown, it will take comfort from weakening of a neighbouring nationalist Arab state. The dismantling of Syria would, the Israelis hope, nullify or at least make more difficult any future claims by a successor state to the Golan Heights which Israel illegally annexed in 1981.

Trump's undertaking does not mean that after being displaced from the territories of which they took control, the Islamic State and al-Nusra will not continue to receive funding in order to operate underground as saboteurs and assassins much as the Muslim Brotherhood once functioned with Western support against the governments of Egypt and Syria. Turkey will oppose any efforts to create a Kurdish state and Israel will continue in its efforts to weaken the Assad government.

Thus with the future involvement of the United States, Turkey and Israel in Syrian affairs a guaranteed matter, Donald Trump's apparent concession is unlikely to bring an end to the tragedy of Syria.

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