

What Is Happening in Syria?

Washington's interventionism and its disregard for its own highly promoted "rules based international order" is outrageous

By [Philip Giraldi](#)

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Which are the governments generally regarded as "rogue" by an overwhelming majority of the world's nations? If you answered either Russia or China you would be wrong, even though many countries have condemned Russia's attack on Ukraine on grounds that no government has an intrinsic right to invade another unless there is an imminent serious threat that would excuse such an intervention.

I would however expect that most readers of this review would have made the right choice, which is that the United States is probably number one based on its ability to destabilize whole regions with a military reach that spans the globe. And indeed, it is important to note that the Russian "special military operation" directed against Ukraine would not have happened at all if the Joe Biden Administration had simply indicated clearly and non-ambiguously to the Russian government that there was no intention of allowing Ukraine to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance. Ironically, the White House knew very well that inviting Kiev to enter into the alliance was a legitimate red-line, existential issue for the Kremlin, but opted to push hard on the issue instead. Instead of opting for a negotiated peaceful settlement, Biden and his clown show foreign and national security policy team opted to kill possibly hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians and Russians to somehow "weaken" Russia, an intention that has borne no fruit even after more than a year and a half of fighting.

So yes, by the world's reckoning the United States of American is both "exceptional" and "number one," which a series of White House inhabitants have aspired to, though perhaps not in the same way as buffoons like Senators Tom Cotton and Ted Cruz refer to it. Most non-Americans see the US as the greatest threat to world peace. And then there is America's "closest ally and best friend in the whole world" Israel in second place, a government which commits crimes against humanity and even war crimes on a nearly daily basis with absolute impunity as it is protected and defended by the very same United

States, where the Jewish state runs the foremost and most powerful foreign policy lobby. It is a lobby that has inserted itself in all levels of government and which has corrupted huge majorities of politicians and both major political parties while also controlling the “message” on the Middle East promoted by the media.

Even as I write this, 41 Democratic Party politicians are [spending their recess](#) on a Lobby sponsored trip to Israel. Their leaders include the inimitable traitor 80 year old Congressman Steny Hoyer of Maryland, who is on his twenty-third trip to the country that he loves and admires beyond all others, and House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries. Jeffries is on his second trip to Israel this year. He should be ashamed but, of course, isn't. It is the largest-ever delegation of Democratic lawmakers on a tour of Israel, sponsored in this case by the American Israel Education Foundation, an affiliate of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Not to be outdone House Speaker Kevin McCarthy is leading 31 Republican Congressmen on the same mission though the groups will not mingle and the speaker will be careful to render his own obeisance separately to the Israeli leadership.

The Democrats and Republicans, will as always be unable to enunciate any good reasons for American bondage to Israel beyond bromides like “Israel has a right to defend itself,” which will be repeated over and over before the Solons head back to Washington to send billions more of US taxpayer dollars to the Jewish state. While in Israel they will be fed a special diet of “all Arabs are terrorists” and good old Steny will be nodding his head in time with the song. That is before he and his colleagues engage in crawling on their bellies before Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as a sign of their total submission to his will.

If one is seeking a single example of the failure of the United States and its ally Israel to abide by the clearly mythical “rules based international order” one might well examine what is going on in Syria, where both the US and the Jewish state have been punishing the country through lethal sanctions and direct military intervention for many years with no sign that the interaction will be ending any time soon. The activity is rarely reported in the US and European media, which somehow has decided that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is some kind of tyrant who deserves whatever he gets, even if it is dished out by “apartheid” Israel and the clueless US, which has been illegally militarily occupying roughly [one third of Syria since 2015](#), including the areas that have producing oil facilities and good agricultural land, both of which are being exploited or stolen. Israel meanwhile has annexed the Syrian Golan Heights, which it occupied in 1967. Donald Trump gave his blessing to the illegal annexation and also gave his consent to whatever the Jewish state decides to do both with the Syrians and the Palestinians while also conniving at the nearly daily air attacks carried out by Israel against targets in both Palestine-Gaza and Syria, killing scores of local soldiers and civilians.

The US military occupation has been supplemented by an [increasingly harsh series of sanctions](#) that have effectively cut off food, medicines and other basic commodities to the Syrian people while also denying access to international banking services. Russia, which is assisting Syria at the invitation of the country's government, has made up for some of the shortages but there is considerable suffering among the ordinary people, not the country's leaders. The claim by Washington is that Syria has to be protected from its own “totalitarian” government and the US is there to fight terrorists, most particularly ISIS. Ironically perhaps, but Tel Aviv and Washington [actually support](#) some of the groups that many would consider to be themselves terrorists, including providing direct US aid to al-Qaeda clone Hayat Tahrir al Sham and Israeli support for ISIS to include treating wounded

terrorists in Israel's hospitals. The US air base at Al-Tanf, near the border with Iraq and Jordan, has, in fact, become a support hub for terrorist groups opposing the al-Assad government.

Sanctions on energy imports were temporarily lifted by the US and EU after the disastrous earthquakes that shook the region in February, but in June, [US lawmakers](#) introduced the Assad Regime Anti-Normalization Act of 2023 which would use secondary sanctions to penalize those countries that might be tempted to help restore services to the areas of Syria affected by both war and the impact of the quakes. [Israel reportedly](#) has exploited the opportunity provided by the natural disaster to increase its air attacks on Syrian infrastructure.

Indeed, recent history tells us that both Israel and the United States are particularly fond of occupying someone else's land and are capable of coming up with excuses for doing so at the drop of a hat. The reasons generally sound like saying "Hey! We are the good guys who support democracy!" Repeat as necessary until the audience either goes to sleep or wanders off. The western media reporting on what is taking place in Syria can be regarded as being in the "wanders off" category.

I certainly am not the only one who has noted that the United States tends to do everything ass-backwards in its conduct of foreign policy since the time of the Clintons. That has certainly been the case in dealing with nations like Syria and Russia, where ambassadors Robert Ford and Michael McFaul were openly hostile to the respective local governments and openly sought to empower declared opponents of the countries' leaders. Syria presumably was demonized to please Israel, beginning with the seeking to destabilize Syria through the passage of the [Syria Accountability Act](#) in 2003, even though Damascus posed no threat whatsoever to American interests. The current sanctions come at a time when Syria is continuing to struggle to rebuild after a still active twelve year civil war that destroyed much of the country's infrastructure. US sanctions are making more difficult ongoing reconstruction efforts and are *de facto* largely punishing the Syrian people, with only minor impact on its government.

And sanctioning to punish Syria is bipartisan, perhaps reflecting a desire to satisfy Israeli demands. Donald Trump, who ran for president pledging to end America's pointless wars overseas, on June 17th 2020 nevertheless [initiated](#) new sanctions against Syria and its government. US Ambassador to the United Nations Kelly Craft informed the Security Council that the Trump Administration would implement the measures to "prevent the Assad regime from securing a military victory. Our aim is to deprive the Assad regime of the revenue and the support it has used to commit the large-scale atrocities and human rights violations that prevent a political resolution and severely diminish the prospects for peace."

Subsequently, the most recent block of sanctions was imposed through the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act, signed by President Trump in December 2020 after he was due to leave office, with the objective of stopping "bad actors who continue to aid and finance the Assad regime's atrocities against the Syrian people while simply enriching themselves." At that time, the existing US sanctions on Syria had already frozen all government assets and had also targeted companies and even individuals. The new sanctions gave the White House and Treasury the power to apply so-called "secondary sanctions" to freeze the assets of any entity or even individual, regardless of nationality, for doing any business in Syria. The threat of secondary sanctions have in fact had a major negative impact on Damascus's

remaining trading partners, to include Lebanon and Iran. Russia might also be impacted as it is involved in Syrian reconstruction.

The United States and Israel clearly hope that punitive sanctions will eventually force the starving Syrian people to rise up against the government, as some sought to do during the so-called Arab Spring in 2011. That means that a sanctions routine, much favored by both the Trump and Biden Administrations, never succeeds in compelling rogue governments to behave better because the way it works it is always really about regime change no matter how it is packaged. In the case of Syria, and contrary to the claims made by Ambassador Craft at the United Nations, the Bashar al-Assad government has already won the war in spite of US and Turkish intervention on behalf of the largely terrorist group supported insurgency. And the evidence for Syria's having carried out "large scale atrocities and human rights violations" has mostly been manufactured by enemies of the government, to include the Hollywood and Washington think tank favorite, the White Helmets, a terrorist front group funded at least in part by western intelligence agencies, which was featured in a self-generated documentary that won a Hollywood Motion Pictures Academy Award in 2017. The film was effusively praised by the usual celebrity brain-deads including Hillary Clinton and George Clooney. It is indeed overall a very impressive piece of propaganda. The National Holocaust Museum even gave the coveted [2019 Elie Wiesel Award](#) to the group. The White Helmets are still active in Syria in areas that are still held by the so-called rebels and they featured in a film clip just last week. They are still being funded by western governments and Israel to destabilize the government of Bashar al-Assad.

One might well ask what the US objective in continuing to promote the carnage and suffering in a Syria that poses no threat to Americans or to any vital security interests. It is similar to a question that might well be raised regarding Ukraine, which is confronting an unneeded escalation of 3,000 US military reservists to reinforce the 20,000 American soldiers that have arrived in theater since February 2022. And then there is Iran, which responded to its oil tankers being hijacked in international waters under the unilaterally imposed authority granted by US sanctions. Iran has [sought to respond in kind](#) and now the US will dispatch Marines to the Persian Gulf to ride shotgun on foreign tankers and other commercial vessels traversing the Straits of Hormuz. If Iranian vessels come too close, they will shoot to kill. It is another escalation that is asking for trouble. Why can't the United States leave the rest of the world alone? That is perhaps the fundamental question for our times.

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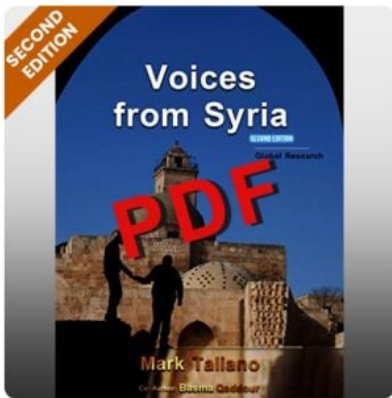
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Philip M. Giraldi, Ph.D., is Executive Director of the Council for the National Interest, a 501(c)3 tax deductible educational foundation (Federal ID Number #52-1739023) that seeks a more interests-based U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Website is councilforthenationalinterest.org, address is P.O. Box 2157, Purcellville VA 20134 and its email is [\[email protected\]](#).

He is a regular contributor to Global Research.

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