

Syria's War Was Only The Beginning of A Broader Middle East War

By [Tony Cartalucci](#)

Global Research, January 02, 2017

[New Eastern Outlook](#) 2 January 2016

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

With the liberation of the city of Aleppo in northern Syria, it appears that the Syrian government in Damascus is on its way to ending the highly destructive conflict now ongoing for nearly 6 years.

But to assume the Syrian conflict is on the verge of resolution is to assume the Syrian conflict was fought in a geopolitical vacuum, disconnected from regional, even global agendas.

In fact, the proxy war the West waged on Syria was considered for the years before it began, during its planning and preparation stages, as only a prerequisite for war with Iran and a greater global conflict to prevent the reemergence of Russia and the rise of China.

US Hegemony Seeks to Eliminate Rising Superpowers

At the close of the Cold War, the US sought to establish and maintain itself as the world's sole superpower.

US Army General Wesley Clark, in a 2007 Flora TV talk titled, "[A Time to Lead](#)," would reveal this post-Cold War agenda by relating a conversation he had as early as 1991 with then US Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Paul Wolfowitz, by stating (emphasis added):

I said Mr. Secretary you must be pretty happy with the performance of the troops in Desert Storm. And he said, well yeah, he said but but not really, he said because the truth is we should have gotten rid of Saddam Hussein and we didn't. And this was just after the Shia uprising in March of 91' which we had provoked and then we kept our troops on the side lines and didn't intervene. And he said, but one thing we did learn, he said, **we learned that we can use our military in the region in the Middle East and the Soviets wont stop us. He said, and we have got about five or ten years to clean up those all Soviet client regimes; Syria, Iran, Iraq, - before the next great super power comes on to challenge us.**

Revealed in General Clark's statement is a clear, singular agenda, beginning after the Cold War, and evident with Desert Storm, the conflict in the Balkans, the US invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, and the US invasion and occupation of Iraq as well as the overall expansion of US military power projection predicated upon the "War on Terror" following the attacks on New York City and Washington DC on September 11, 2001.

America's "regime change" spree included not only the above mentioned wars, but also a

series of so-called “color revolutions” across Eastern Europe. This includes Otpor!’s activities between 1998-2004 in Serbia, the 2003 “Rose Revolution” in Georgia, and the 2004-2005 “Orange Revolution” in Ukraine.

Those involved in these US-backed regime change operations, both within the US State Department and American private industry (the corporate media and IT giants like Facebook and Google), as well as “activists” from each respective nation, would begin in 2008 to train opposition leaders from across the Arab World ahead of the 2011 US-engineered “Arab Spring.”

The US State Department itself, [in a 2008 press release](#), would admit to organizing a “Alliance of Youth Movements Summit,” admitting:

This Alliance of Youth Movements had organic beginnings in the sense that already, youth movements from around the world that were utilizing online, mobile and digital media were interacting to discuss best practices. The State Department acted as a facilitator to help provide some structure to this trend by partnering with entities like Facebook, Howcast, Google, MTV, and Columbia Law School.

Discussed throughout the dialogue featured in the press release were the very tactics used to serve as cover for inevitably violent regime change operations from Egypt and Libya to Syria and Yemen. A look at attendance of the US State Department’s “Alliance of Youth Movement Summits” reveals many of the groups that spearheaded protests upon returning home to the Middle East including the April 6 Youth Movement in Egypt.

Eventually, the New York Times in an article titled, “[U.S. Groups Helped Nurture Arab Uprisings](#),” would admit:

A number of the groups and individuals directly involved in the revolts and reforms sweeping the region, including the April 6 Youth Movement in Egypt, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights and grass-roots activists like Entsar Qadhi, a youth leader in Yemen, received training and financing from groups like the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and Freedom House, a nonprofit human rights organization based in Washington, according to interviews in recent weeks and American diplomatic cables obtained by WikiLeaks.

The goal of both direct military intervention and US-engineered “color revolutions” was to fulfill precisely what General Clark claimed US policymakers sought since the end of the Cold War – the elimination of states operating independently that might eventually rival American global hegemony.

Syria Just Another Stop Along the Way

The destruction of Iraq, the 2006 Israeli war on Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, and continuous efforts to isolate and topple the government in Tehran, were all part of this singular agenda. Throughout US policy papers stretching back for years, it was admitted that the key to ultimately toppling Iran was the destruction of Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the elimination of Syria as an Iranian ally.

In 2007, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh in his article "[The Redirection: Is the Administration's new policy benefitting our enemies in the war on terrorism?](#)," would reveal (emphasis added):

To undermine Iran, which is predominantly Shiite, the Bush Administration has decided, in effect, to reconfigure its priorities in the Middle East. In Lebanon, the Administration has cooperated with Saudi Arabia's government, which is Sunni, in clandestine operations that are intended to weaken Hezbollah, the Shiite organization that is backed by Iran. **The U.S. has also taken part in clandestine operations aimed at Iran and its ally Syria. A by-product of these activities has been the bolstering of Sunni extremist groups that espouse a militant vision of Islam and are hostile to America and sympathetic to Al Qaeda.**

In 2009, US corporate-financier sponsored geopolitical policy think tank, the Brookings Institution, would publish a 170 page report titled, "[Which Path to Persia?: Options for a New American Strategy Toward Iran](#)" (PDF), in which it proposes several options, including having Israel attack Iran on Washington's behalf. The report states (emphasis added):

...the Israelis may want U.S. help with a variety of things. Israel may be more willing to bear the risks of Iranian retaliation and international opprobrium than the United States is, but it is not invulnerable and may request certain commitments from the United States before it is ready to strike. **For instance, the Israelis may want to hold off until they have a peace deal with Syria in hand (assuming that Jerusalem believes that one is within reach), which would help them mitigate blowback from Hizballah and potentially Hamas. Consequently, they might want Washington to push hard in mediating between Jerusalem and Damascus.**

It is clear that no "peace deal" would be struck, and instead, the wholesale destruction of Syria would be orchestrated. Many of the proposals presented in the Brookings report in regards to triggering conflict and regime change in Iran were instead used on Syria.

With the US-led destruction of Libya in 2011 through the use of Al Qaeda-linked militants, and the transformation of the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi into a logistical springboard to Turkey's border with Syria, the proxy invasion of Syria began amid already ongoing clashes in the nation's urban centers.

By 2012, militants flooded over the Turkish-Syrian border, and invaded the city of Aleppo. The destructive war that followed has ravaged the nation, drawn in Syria's allies - Hezbollah and Iran, as well as Russia, and may have sufficiently weakened the coalition ahead of the conflict's expansion eastward into Iran and even southern Russia.

Look Who's in Office, Just in Time for War with Iran...

President-elect Donald Trump has surrounded himself with not only pro-Israeli hardliners like David Friedman, but also a circle who have - for years - advocated war with Iran including Breitbart News' Stephen Bannon and retired US Marine Corps General James Mattis.

A similar circle of policymakers would undoubtedly have accompanied 2016 US presidential candidate and former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton into office as well had she won

the election – her time as US Secretary of State being consumed with the destruction of Libya and Syria, prerequisites for this very conflict.

In essence, Washington is positioning itself for a wider confrontation with Iran just as its proxy war in Syria appears to have run its full course – and it would have begun positioning itself for this coming war regardless of who won the 2016 US presidential election.

In all likelihood, US policymakers envisioned Syria falling much faster and for a lesser cost. With Russia basing a significant military presence in the nation, and with Syria's military distilled down to a highly effective, experienced fighting force, and with Iranian and Hezbollah forces having gained experience fighting a regional conflict, moving the conflict into Iran will be no easy task.

It is perhaps because of this, that President-elect Trump has been presented as a potential “ally” of Russia, and accusations of Russia “hacking” American elections are being used to chill the alternative media under the guise of combating “fake news.” With the alternative media muzzled, would it be difficult for US policymakers to once again engineer a large provocation – as Brookings’ “Which Path to Persia?” report recommended – to justify expanding Syria's conflict and America's involvement in it, into Iranian territory?

It should also be noted that systematically – throughout the Syrian conflict – Israel has attacked Hezbollah infrastructure throughout Lebanon and Syria. Israeli policymakers are likely attempting to maintain a buffer zone between themselves and those who would retaliate in the wake of US-backed Israeli attack on Iran – just as Brookings proposed in 2009.

Elections Won't Beat US Hegemony, Only a Multipolar Balance of Power

US special interests, since the end of the Cold War, have been consumed with confronting and eliminating any threat to their perceived global hegemony. As retired US Army General Wesley Clark warned for years, the US is pursuing a singular agenda since the 1990's, one indifferent to who is in the White House and what rhetoric is being used to sell the myriad of wars and “color revolutions” required to incrementally achieve and maintain global hegemony.

As Russia and China reintroduce a global balance of power, checking US aggression and rolling back US hegemony to a more proportional, multipolar role upon the world stage, the US has increasingly reacted with direct confrontations with both Moscow and Beijing as well as an increasingly violent campaign of proxy wars and regime change operations worldwide.

The illusion that a presidential election could derail this singular, decades-long agenda is a dangerous one. In reality, the only obstacle between US special interests and achieving global hegemony are competing centers of power. These include nation-states like Russia and China, or grassroots movements like the alternative media, alternative and disruptive economic models, and political movements built on the power and influence such movements achieve. Such alternatives can undermine the unwarranted power and influence currently enjoyed by the US and the corporate-financier monopolies that dominate its political landscape.

Tony Cartalucci, Bangkok-based geopolitical researcher and writer, especially for the online magazine [“New Eastern Outlook.”](#)

The original source of this article is [New Eastern Outlook](#)
Copyright © [Tony Cartalucci](#), [New Eastern Outlook](#), 2017

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Tony Cartalucci](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca