

WAR: Marching Toward Syria: Eyes Cast on Iran

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While all the incessant warmongering directed toward Iran at the annual AIPAC policy conference in Washington was grabbing the headlines, the momentum for Western intervention into Syria continued to steadily build. All those neo-con “real men,” it appears, just might prefer to go to Tehran via Damascus.

Taking to the Senate floor on Monday, Arizona Senator John McCain, one of the first supporters of arming the Free Syrian Army, upped the ante by [calling](#) for a U.S.-led air campaign against Syrian military targets. McCain deemed such an escalation necessary to establish “humanitarian corridors.”

“The United States should lead an international effort to protect key population centers in Syria, especially in the north, through airstrikes on Assad’s forces,” the intervention-hungry McCain declared.

And as the *Washington Post* [reported](#) in late February, Obama administration officials have made it clear that “additional measures” might still be considered in order to oust Assad. That favored refrain of all options being on the table appears to be in effect in regards to Syria.

Indeed, for according to CNN, the Pentagon has already composed “detailed plans” for military action inside Syria. As the network [reported](#), the Pentagon has especially focused on securing Syrian chemical weapons sites, with one scenario in particular calling “for tens of thousands of troops to potentially be used for guarding the installations.”

Although, according to a December email recently published by *Wikileaks* from the U.S. global intelligence firm Stratfor (known as a [private C.I.A.](#)), special operations forces from the U.S., U.K., France, Jordan, and Turkey are already on the ground in Syria. And as the email [states](#), these forces are actively “training the Free Syrian Army.” Additional measures indeed!

Not wanting to be left behind in any march on Syria, the U.S. corporate media has largely begun to join the ranks of the recently ascendant intervention hawks.

In an editorial on Friday, the *New York Times*, although ruling out military force, called for providing greater tactical assistance to the Free Syrian Army. As the paper wrote: “The United States and its allies should consider providing the rebels with communications equipment, intelligence and nonlethal training.” Of course, a mission providing such tactical support would ultimately transform into more explicit military involvement.

Meanwhile, the [Washington Post](#) also editorialized on Friday for a more credible threat of force against Assad. As the paper wrote:

“The Obama administration’s public arguments against the use of force in Syria are simply encouraging a rogue regime to believe it can act with impunity. Until he is faced with a credible threat of force, from the opposition or outsider powers, Mr. Assad’s slaughter will go on.”

The [Christian Science Monitor](#) has likewise called for the U.S. to help “forcefully” end Assad’s rule.

Of course, the driving force behind such intense Western interest in Syria is Iran. Let there be no doubt, the ouster of Assad is not driven by some great humanitarian impulse, or “responsibility to protect.” Nor does the bloodletting and slaughter inside the country disturb U.S. elites. After all, the U.S. had no qualms with laying siege to Fallujah. Rather, all the contrived moralizing is being utilized in an attempt to garner support for imposing Syrian “regime change,” which would deal a strategic defeat to Tehran. It’s all nothing more than *realpolitik*. The Syrian people and their revolution are being cynically recruited as means to imperial ends, and thus would be wise to resist all foreign intervention.

For instance, when the *Atlantic*’s Jeffery Goldberg stated in a [recent interview with President Obama](#), “But it would seem to me that one way to weaken and further isolate Iran is to remove or help remove Iran’s only Arab ally,” the president responded, “Absolutely.”

Similarly, former Mossad chief Efraim Halevy has [argued](#), “The current standoff in Syria presents a rare chance to rid the world of the Iranian menace to international security and well-being.”

It’s target Iran, albeit on a Syrian battlefield. Therefore, that anti-Iran propaganda machine that is the U.S. media revs up.

Writing in the *Washington Post*, stenographers Joby Warrick and Liz Sly [reported](#) over the weekend that:

“U.S. officials say they see Iran’s hand in the increasingly brutal crackdown on opposition strongholds in Syria, including evidence of Iranian military and intelligence support for government troops accused of mass executions and other atrocities in the past week.”

The *Post*’s report was of course based solely on three anonymous U.S. officials. And as Warrick and Sly even admit in their piece, “such accounts are generally difficult to verify independently.” Thus they don’t.

On Monday, though, a similar piece of propaganda appeared at CNN. Penned by CNN Pentagon correspondent Barbara Starr, it also [reports](#) of Iranian infiltration into Syria, although Starr only relies on two anonymous U.S. officials. What hay a seasoned propagandist can make with such limited sources!

Yet amidst this mounting drive for Western intervention into Syria, President Obama spoke on Tuesday in an apparent attempt to tamp down all such notions, going so far as to call military intervention a “mistake.” As the president went on to [state](#), “the notion that the way to solve every one of these problems is to deploy our military, that hasn’t been true in the past and it won’t be true now.”

Such reassurances aside, actions do, as the president himself implored in his AIPAC speech over the weekend, speak louder than words. And so while the president publicly posits that military intervention would be a mistake, his military readies for intervention into Syria, while continuing its larger ongoing [build-up in the region](#).

The march towards Syria with eyes cast towards Iran continues on. For as Albeit Einstein once remarked, "You cannot simultaneously prevent and prepare for war."

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