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Is Obama's Entire Foreign Policy Going Down in Flames? (I)

ERIC ZUESSE

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LIBYA

On May 19th, the *Washington Post* headlined «Agreement that could lead to US troops in Libya could be reached 'any day'», and reported that Joseph F Dunford, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that US troops will be sent to Libya to fight against ISIS, and that, «*there will be a long-term mission in Libya*», in order to deal with the mushrooming presence of ISIS fighters who have come to Libya after the secularist leader of Libya, Muammar Gaddafi, was overthrown there by US bombing backed up by other NATO forces, and some Libyans on the ground.

«*There is interest among some NATO nations in participating in the mission, Dunford said, but the specifics of who and what would be involved remain unclear. The operation will likely focus on training and equipping militias that pledge loyalty to Prime Minister Fayez Sarraj, the leader of the new Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA)*», which «*has not yet been accepted by either existing rival government in Libya*». In other words: the US and its allies had produced a failed state and a festering jihadist breeding-ground where US troops now will be sent in order to re-establish the peace and prosperity that it had destroyed there. They'll do this by participating in Libya's civil war – trying to dictate whom Libya's leader will be.

So, on the Libyan matter, America's Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton's, famous victory statement, «*We came, we saw, he died. Ha, ha!!*» turns out to have been more the start of a US defeat in an unprovoked invasion, than the start of a US victory against any authentic provocation by 'the enemy'. Obama's current plan to turn his defeat into victory there has no more reason to succeed than his predecessor, George W Bush's plan to do likewise in Iraq did after he had, on 1 May 2003, declared victory there, aboard the warship USS Abraham Lincoln. Then, his famous 2007 «*troop surge in Iraq*» utterly failed to produce peace and to end the sectarian war the US and its allies had generated by their thoroughly counter-productive and shameful invasion against a nation that (like Libya) hadn't invaded nor threatened to invade the United States – nor its allies. There, as in Syria, too, America's aggression produced only mass death and misery – and trillions of dollars in US federal debt, which hasn't yet resulted from America's invasions of Libya and Syria, but might. And, of course, millions of refugees.

SYRIA

Two days prior, on May 17th, US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov held a joint press conference, in which the Obama Administration's longstanding bottom-line demand, that «*Assad must go*» before any peace negotiations can start in Syria, was finally and totally abandoned by Kerry, when he said that «*all of the parties*» (including now the United States, which formerly had refused to join with Russia and Iran on this) «*have agreed on a basic framework, which is a united Syria, nonsectarian, that is able to choose its future through a transitional governing body which is, in effect, the implementation of the Geneva process*». Previously, the Obama regime had demanded that Assad step down before there can be any negotiations, and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon had repeatedly condemned that stand against democracy in Syria, by asserting that «*the future of Assad must be determined by the Syrian people,*» and «*it is up to the Syrian people who have to decide the future of President Assad*». As I previously reported, the reason why Obama had been standing firm on removal of Assad prior to any political process was that even Western polling firms have been finding that Assad's remaining as Syria's leader is supported by 55% of Syrians, and that the US is blamed by 82% of Syrians as being the source of Syria's civil war: «*82% agree 'IS [Islamic State] is US and foreign made group'*». In other words: Syrians, the most secular, the most anti-theocratic, people in the entire Middle East, blame people such as John Brennan as the source of their miseries. This same poll found that «*79% agree 'Foreign fighters made war worse'*». It also found «*70% agree 'Oppose division of country'*».

In other words, it was Obama who had been standing in the way of a democratic solution to the question of whom the leader of Syria would be – Obama knows that any democratic national election of Syria's leader will produce the same leader that now heads Syria's government: the only *non*-sectarian head-of-state still remaining anywhere in the Arab world. (Assad is a non-sectarian Shiite, and the few Syrians who want him overthrown are the most-fundamentalistic of Syria's Sunnis.) And, as Robert F Kennedy Jr and other honest historians also have noted, the US CIA has been trying ever since 1949 to overthrow Syria's non-sectarian governments in order to become allowed by a fundamentalist-Sunni regime to build through Syria «*the Trans-Arabian Pipeline, an American project intended to connect the oil fields of Saudi Arabia to the ports of Lebanon via Syria*».

The ultimate intended destination of that oil and gas has been Europe, the world's largest oil-and-gas market, so as to choke off Russia's main export market, and transfer that business from the USSR and now from just Russia, to the American aristocracy and its allied aristocracies in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and UAE. (Those Arabic oil royal families, especially the Sauds, are the main funders of jihadist groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIS, but now with the added help of their fellow fundamentalist Sunni Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, ISIS's main funding comes from selling the stolen oil from Syria and Iraq.) As RFK Jr described the proposed pipeline, it *«would have linked Qatar directly to European energy markets via distribution terminals in Turkey which would pocket rich transit fees. The Qatar/Turkey pipeline would have given the Sunni Kingdoms of the Persian Gulf decisive domination of world natural gas markets and strengthen Qatar, America's closest ally in the Arab world. Qatar hosts two massive American military bases and the US Central Command's Mid-East headquarters»*.

Furthermore, as Seymour Hersh and others have reported, the Obama regime has been strongly backing and arming al-Qaeda in Syria, which is called al-Nusra there, and Obama thus had long insisted that Russia not be allowed to include al-Nusra along with ISIS as targets to be bombed by Russia in Syria while the peace talks go on, but Russia refused to allow the US to protect al-Nusra, as if that group were anything other than jihadist, and so the only way that Obama could allow these talks to take place was by accepting Russia's condition, that al-Qaeda was beyond the pale, just like ISIS. Otherwise, Russia would not negotiate terms for a cessation of hostilities there.

So, when Kerry in that press conference on May 17th said, *«we call on all parties to the cessation of hostilities to disassociate themselves physically and politically from Daesh and al-Nusrah»*, this inclusion of al-Nusra along with Daesh constituted a major concession to Russia.

Finally, Kerry made another major concession to Russia there by saying that *«we pledged our support for transforming the cessation of hostilities into a comprehensive ceasefire»*. This is actually the last shoe to drop, because it means that the Obama regime is now fully committed to ending the invasion of Syria by means of a political process, instead of by means of a conquest. The US aristocracy now accept that the dream of transporting the oil and gas from the Saud family's Saudi Arabia, and from the Thani family's Qatar, through Syria, into the EU, cannot be achieved, at least in the short term.

Only one American reporter, from the *New York Times*, was given the opportunity to ask a question at the end of this joint press conference, and he seemed quite hostile toward Kerry. He said: *«It appears you have less leverage over President Assad now than you did when the Vienna agreement was reached at the end of October. If anything, thanks to the intervention of Mr Lavrov's government, Mr Assad seems to feel now more secure than he did eight months ago»*. Kerry gave a defensive, anti-Russian, answer, to satisfy the reporter. They just don't let up, but Obama now is no longer going along with the effort; he now accepts that the Syrian people, democracy, will decide Syria's leader.

SAUDI ARABIA

On Tuesday May 17th *The Hill* bannered «Senate passes bill allowing 9/11 victims to sue Saudi Arabia», and reported that, «The Senate on Tuesday approved legislation that would allow victims of the 9/11 terror attacks to sue Saudi Arabia, defying vocal opposition from the White House. The upper chamber approved the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act by unanimous consent».

As I had reported a month earlier: «Saudi Arabia, owned by the Saud family are telling the US Government, they'll wreck the US economy, if a bill in the Congress that would remove the unique and exclusive immunity the royal owners of that country enjoy in the United States, against their being prosecuted for their having financed the 9/11 attacks, passes in Congress, and becomes US law».

Obama demanded that the bill to lift the immunity of the Saud family not be passed and he said he'd veto it if it comes to his desk. But, as it turns out, the Sauds might not even have the capability any longer to retaliate in the way they're threatening to.

On May 18th, Mish Shedlock headlined «Saudi Arabia Delays Payment to Contractors, Considers IOUs: Liquidity Crunch at Best», and he reported that, «Saudi Arabia burnt through its reserves faster than anyone thought. In signs of a huge liquidity crunch, at best, the country has delayed paying contractors and now considers paying them in IOUs and tradable bonds. In retrospect, the Saudi threat to dump US assets looks more ridiculous than ever».

The US Congress is about to call the bluff of the Saud family and of President Obama. That would throw another huge monkey-wrench into the effort to overthrow Assad, whom the Sauds hate, and whose overthrow they've spent huge sums to finance. From yet another standpoint, the Sauds and Obama are losing.