



*And must have whiskey
Oh, you know why*

« **The MoA Week In Review - OT 2019-59 | Main**

October 14, 2019

Syrian Government Regains Control Over Country's Northeastern Parts

Eight days ago U.S. President Donald Trump gave [a green light for another Turkish invasion](#) of Syria. We explained why that move made it inevitable for the Kurds to submit to Damascus and to let the Syrian Arab Army back into northeast Syria:

While the YPG might want to fight off a Turkish invasion they have little chance to succeed. The land is flat and the YPG forces only have light arms.

There is only one solution for them. They will have to call up the Syrian government and ask it to come back into the north east. That would remove the Turkish concerns and would likely prevent further Turkish moves.

After Trump had spoken with the Turkish president Erdogan, the U.S. military removed a few of its forces from some areas near the Turkish border. The Pentagon was still under the false impression that Turkey would limit its invasion to some 5 kilometer in depth. It was obvious, as we [wrote](#), that Turkey wanted far more:

A major goal is to interrupt the M4 highway that runs parallel to the border and allows for troop movements between the east and the west of the Kurdish majority areas. The highway is about 20-30 kilometers from the border.

The M4 road is also one of the major logistical routes for the U.S. troops stationed in the western part.

The Kurds could do little to resist the Turkish onslaught. On Saturday Turkish supported "Syrian rebels" reached the M4 highway and captured and killed several Kurdish troops and

civilians who were passing by. The Pentagon finally **took notice** of the imminent danger:

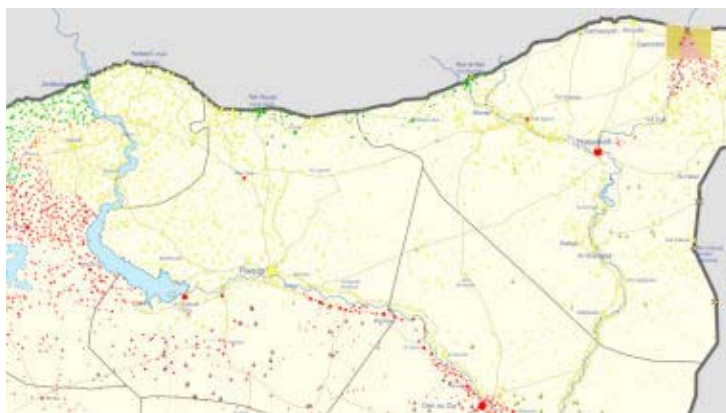
“This is total chaos,” a senior administration official said at midday, speaking on the condition of anonymity about the confusing situation in Syria.

Although “the Turks gave guarantees to us” that U.S. forces would not be harmed, the official said, Syrian militias allied with them “are running up and down roads, ambushing and attacking vehicles,” putting American forces — as well as civilians — in danger even as they withdraw. **The militias, known as the Free Syrian Army, “are crazy and not reliable.”**

Ahhhh. The "Free Syrian Army", which the U.S. built and supplied with an immense amount of weapons to fight the Syrian government, is "crazy and not reliable". How come that all the think tankers and 'journalists' who for years lauded that 'army' never noticed that?

The Pentagon finally recognized that it was not possible to hold onto the area without starting a war with its NATO partner Turkey. On Saturday evening Trump gave the order that all U.S. troops shall leave northeast Syria within 30 days. The Secretary of Defense did not resign as his predecessor did over a similar decision but **defended the move**.

The decision was the kick in the ass the Kurds needed to agree to the return of Syrian government troops to the area they had held on to while under U.S. command. Currently Syrian troops and their heavy weapons are **streaming in**. Their primary task is to prevent any further encroachment by Turkish forces. They will also move to retake the oil fields east of Deir Ezzor and they will take control of the prison camps where ISIS fighters are held.



bigger

As of this writing Syrian troops (red) have entered Manbij, Ain al Issa, Tabqa airbase near Raqqa and Tel Tamr. Turkish supported groups (green) hold Tell Abyad and Ras al-Ayn and the villages

between those two cities. That area has an Arab majority population.

The Kurds **wish to keep** their 'autonomous administration' of northeast Syria. While **talks are still ongoing** I do not expect that the mostly Arab inhabitants of the whole area, nor the Syrian government will agree to that. There can not be a special status for any of Syria's many ethnic or religious groups.

The Kurdish led Syrian Democratic Forces will be disbanded. Its soldiers will be integrated into the Syrian army. The Syrian government will also disband the 'autonomous' Kurdish administration. It will confiscate the weapons the U.S. has given to the Kurds. All this will take some time but it will, in the end, remove the Turkish concerns that the organized Syrian Kurdish groups could enter Turkey to fight on the side of their PKK separatist brethren.

The U.S. had more than 1,000 troops in northeast Syria. There were also several hundred French and British special forces and some 2,000 U.S. contractors. They, and a huge amount of equipment, are now moving out. They have nothing to fear from the Syrian forces. Syria is happy to see them leave. (Reports that the U.S.yesterday bombed Syrian troops are false.)

The strategic plan behind last weeks development must have come from Moscow. Russia has tried for some time to get Turkey into its camp. Russia, Iran and Syria allowed Turkey a limited invasion of Syria to scare the U.S. out. Russia largely **supported the Turkish move** but it will also set its limits.

Since last year Trump looked for a chance to move the U.S. troops out of Syria. The borg made that politically unfeasible. The Turkish (Russian) move gave him the excuse he needed.

It is possible that the whole arrangement was made for exactly that purpose.

Posted by b on October 14, 2019 at 12:28 UTC | [Permalink](#)

Comments

yep
looks like trump was praying for this and it all looks too good to have just happened by chance

Posted by: nick | Oct 14 2019 12:35 utc | [1](#)

Great day for Syria to recover so much of it without actually fighting for it. This would all have ended years ago is not for the crazies in the US clamoring for another war. Seems they just can not live without killing massive amounts of people

near and far. That's what Americans are exceptional for.. killing.. because nothing speaks about your exceptionalism than shooting others in the back.

Posted by: Igor Bundy | Oct 14 2019 12:53 utc | [2](#)

And Borgists, Lindsay Graham first of them, are agitating for massive sanctions against Turkey. If the Congress follow through, then NATO will have definitively lost Turkey and pushed it into the arms of their fellow sanctioned countries, Iran and Russia, with China watching this closely and smiling accordingly.

We'll see if US politicians are that foolish or if they'll let things slip to avoid creating a massive block right in the middle of Eurasia, controlling pretty much every land route between Europe and Asia.

Posted by: Clueless Joe | Oct 14 2019 12:57 utc | [3](#)

Turkey still aims to occupy the areas the Syrian Arab Army is entering. There is a possibility of a direct clash between Turkish and Syrian forces. Such a clash would create headaches for both Russia and Iran. Putin has said Russia would not take action against the Turks. What will Iran and Hezbollah do?

Posted by: bob sykes | Oct 14 2019 12:58 utc | [4](#)

If there is a deal between Putin and Erdogan, we can expect that the SAA will hold the line but not push Turkish militias out of northern Syria. When Erdogan has moved in his refugees and the place is calm, the green light will be given to the SAA for the Idlib offensive. I wouldn't expect it to take long.

Posted by: aniteleya | Oct 14 2019 13:18 utc | [5](#)

I commented on the previous (open) thread that this was a jaw-dropping win-win masterpiece for Russia, the Turks (if they don't get greedy), Syria, and even Trump, but that the deep state won't give up easily...they were just caught a bit off guard. I had mentioned that Trump could "trumpet" that one "win" he received from this was the potential ability to begin mending relations with Turkey. But as Clueless Joe just pointed out, part of the deep state flailing around here may actually also play into a win for Trump, in that far from wanting to save NATO, he would really love to see it collapse, as well as re-patriate all those F-35 jobs subbed out to Turkey. So what would be a bigger win for him than letting his political enemies do the dirty work for him? I suspect he slept well last night.

We're far from out of the woods on this, but it is the happiest

news in ages, and might even work. As for conflict between the Turks and SAA, there could be minor clashes, and the Turks may over-stay their welcome in certain areas, but at least Russia is an active mediator between the two, so the differences will ultimately be hammered out--through diplomacy, as they ought to be, rather than war, which is the only trick the US seems to know these days.

Posted by: J Swift | Oct 14 2019 13:27 utc | [6](#)

I do not agree at all that the idea of a Turkish invasion came from Moscow. It is a NATO scheme and nothing else!

Posted by: Magnar Husby | Oct 14 2019 13:34 utc | [7](#)

If this was all agreed beforehand, where are the Izzies in all this? Surely, this is not what Bibi had planned. Graham is their errand boy, certainly, but did Bibi also agree on this? If not, that implies there is some light showing between Trump and Bibi that wasn't there before.

Also, the Izzies fire two torpedoes into an Iranian tanker in the Gulf. Seems a rather significant event that received next to no coverage. Or did the US do that? Certainly, the IRGC must be carefully reviewing target options.

Posted by: casey | Oct 14 2019 13:37 utc | [8](#)

So is the U.S. presence now reduced to just Al-Tanf and environs? No one will "trip the wire" by attacking Al-Tanf, and it can be resupplied over land via client Jordan, but I don't see how the U.S. can control, or even remain in, any larger area now. From the jihadis' perspective, I suppose Al-Tanf's continued usefulness as a refuge will depend on how things go farther north.

Assuming the U.S. will be in Al-Tanf indefinitely, maybe Syria and Iraq can bite the bullet and build a new highway around it to restore the Damascus-Baghdad link. That would be a huge waste of resources, of course, but if the alternative is to wait for sanity to reign in Washington, maybe it's worth it.

Syria can just consider Al-Tanf a nature reserve for particularly savage and dangerous beasts: monitor it to keep the inhabitants from slipping out, but otherwise leave it alone.

Posted by: David G | Oct 14 2019 13:39 utc | [9](#)

It seems the removal of Bolton is having positive repercussions.

Still, U.S. looking kind-of messed-up here.

Are we winding-down in Iraq ans Afganistan as well?

Posted by: jared | Oct 14 2019 13:44 utc | [10](#)

@J Swift: Afaik, all F-35s come with DRM, and the US can shut them off at will.* So there's no reason not to sell them to "allies", or to collapse NATO, because that would probably harm sales.

* See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0jgZKV4N_A for details.

Posted by: Foppe | Oct 14 2019 13:46 utc | [11](#)

I do not expect that the mostly Arab inhabitants of the whole area, nor the Syrian government will agree to that.

I'm not sure whether the "mostly Arab inhabitants of the whole area" bit is quite right. Most of the Kurds are on the border, or near it. The southern parts of the SDF area are Arab. But if the Kurds were not more or less majority in the north, they would never have had any claim to autonomy at all.

Asad would do best to grant them autonomy. It's a standard solution round there. The Druze in Jebal Druze are supposed to be autonomous. In Iraq, the Sunni are supposed to have a devolved administration, not to speak of KRG. The degree of autonomy will depend on what pressure they can bring to bear. I don't think Asad will want to be difficult - as it's nearly bringing him the end of the war, and having a Rojava in revolt behind his back would prevent that overarching aim.

Posted by: Laguerre | Oct 14 2019 13:54 utc | [12](#)

@ Foppe: I understand what you are saying, but I'm just pointing out that Trump has long railed against NATO. Essentially his argument is that it entails commitments and costs to the US, and he is philosophically against that. I think he feels that NATO has served its purpose, which was to gut the militarys and foreign policy independence of Europe, but that they are now sufficiently subservient and will buy US arms when told, without the need for the US to be obligated to do anything in return. I'm making no judgment whether he's right or not, but that's the way I think he sees it. F-35 sales to Turkey are blocked by the deep state right now anyway, so what's the harm?

Posted by: J Swift | Oct 14 2019 13:55 utc | [13](#)

Posted by: David G | Oct 14 2019 13:39 utc | [9](#)

I saw a report yesterday that the US was going to pull out of al-Tanf in a month's time, but I don't know whether it's

confirmed.

Posted by: Laguerre | Oct 14 2019 13:56 utc | [14](#)

Laguerre @14:

That would be very out of character, but great news if true.

Posted by: David G | Oct 14 2019 14:02 utc | [15](#)

Off topic but found the Moon of Alabama song on Youtube here:

<https://youtu.be/x-5ata4jDyk>

Posted by: Morongobill | Oct 14 2019 14:05 utc | [16](#)

Kurdish spokesperson quoted as saying agreement with SAA only to deploy to border. Political talks later about status. I don't believe the Kurdish block in Syria is completely unified, at any rate the situation is too fluid at the moment to be clear about what the eventual status will be.

Posted by: the pessimist | Oct 14 2019 14:08 utc | [17](#)

Fascinating - and exhilarating - developments! This is a truly historic turning point, following on from several others including the Russian unveiling of new weapons systems, Chinese strength against the US trade war, the Iranian demonstration of real ability to stand up to the US, and Houthi demonstrations against Aramco/3 Saudi brigades. The world is changing.

As Bhadrakumar points out, the currency and banking agreements between Russia and Turkey just as the offensive was starting underline the tacit behind the scenes coordination between Russia and Turkey. Likewise the lightning fast advance of the SAA through the middle of the previously US-controlled area underline the tacit behind the scenes coordination between Presidents Trump and President Putin. This is a true coup of US President Trump against the US treasonists - though I think the US (pro-pullout faction) has been taken aback by the speed of developments and the loss of their control of developments.

The operation has been meticulously planned for numerous months by Russia, Syria, Turkey, Iran and Hezbollah. See for example the massing of SAA troops near Aleppo under the guise of preparations against Idleb, and the lightning fast Russian building of a bridge over the Euphrates in Deir Izzor! Some US trolls in the previous thread were claiming the US is fully in control - ha ha! it is the Russians who are in total control. Trump was certainly party to limited parts of the

plot, but in my opinion only parts of it.

Complex multidimensional kabuki theatre for a truly multipolar world! Indeed, precisely in fact as I presaged in the last 7 days here!

[Syria - Trump Gives A Green Light For Another Turkish Invasion #11](#)

[Syria - Trump Gives A Green Light For Another Turkish Invasion #172](#)

[Syria - Trump Gives A Green Light For Another Turkish Invasion #240](#)

[Syria - Trump Gives A Green Light For Another Turkish Invasion #242](#)

[Syria - Turkey Again Invades #22](#)

[Syria - Turkey Again Invades #225](#)

[Syria - Turkey Again Invades #226](#)

Posted by: BM | Oct 14 2019 14:16 utc | [18](#)

I think this may have been in fact coordinated between Putin, Erdogan AND Trump.

Big clue...Russia AND the US both vetoed the UN Security Council resolution brought forward by the Europeans and condemning Turkey.

This does indeed look like the 'help' Trump needed to get the US out of Syria, which has been knee-capped by the Deep State since day one.

Posted by: [flankerbandit](#) | Oct 14 2019 14:19 utc | [19](#)

Oops, meant to put the Trump Gives A Green Light #172 & #240 and Turkey again invades #225 links first, those were the main ones.

Posted by: BM | Oct 14 2019 14:24 utc | [20](#)

Big clue...Russia AND the US both vetoed the UN Security Council resolution brought forward by the Europeans and condemning Turkey.

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Posted by: flankerbandit / Oct 14 2019 14:19 utc / 19

Precisely, flankerbandit!

Posted by: BM | Oct 14 2019 14:27 utc | [21](#)

Helpful Thanks b for demystifying the fog of chaos.

@7 Mr. Husby is disagreeing: Moscow does not have a card in

this outcome. Really?

Erdogan had better have an agreement with Mr. Putin. Just in case a bi-partisan pro-war, pro-Bibi Congress keeps the pressure on. Sunday's talk shows:

[here](#)

Trump Threatens to Shut Down All US Dollar Transaction in Turkey

No kidding. Be careful. pardon my pun - Putting a smile on Mr. Putin's face as he sips a fine bottle of wine with his caviar:

Excepts from LINK to a pro-Turkey article [LINK](#)

[.]The United States has zero historic interest in the region. US troops in Syria appear to have come from the US garrison in Iraq, which, as VP Dick Cheney hoped, would become a central US military base for the entire Mideast. The Washington war party is moaning that Trump has 'betrayed' the Kurds. Their unofficial head, Sen. Lindsey Graham, is demanding more war in Syria – the same warrior senator who dodged the Vietnam War by joining the National Guard as a lawyer.

The Kurds have been used and betrayed since 1918. They always seem to get the short end of the stick. The old Kurdish saying, 'no friends but the mountains,' is painfully true. Washington does not want to get involved in a new Kurdish state carved out of Syria or Iraq even though Israel is pushing it hard to further splinter the Mideast. Iraq's and Syria's oil deposits are still a powerful lure for imperial-minded powers.[.]

In the middle is the scattered debris of the short-lived ISIS caliphate. Russia, which is selling Turkey its very capable S-400 anti-aircraft system, is watching with delight as old allies Turkey and the US split.

Even Trump knows how important Turkey is to the NATO alliance. A rupture between Washington and Ankara could see the vital US bases at Incirlik and Adana thrown out of Turkey. That's why Trump needs to tread carefully.

May I add, not just the two bases, throw in the Bosphorous Strait. Ankara, firmly in the arms of Putin? well, there is that vast Black Sea. Americans are known to overlook geography

Posted by: Likklemore | Oct 14 2019 14:28 utc | [22](#)

@8 '....where are the Izzies in all this?'

Where indeed. They seem strangely quiet. Lindsey Graham is doing his best to get sanctions against Turkey but he sounds like a lone voice.

Israel invested a lot in the Rojava project and it looks like they have to kiss it goodbye. Has Bibi lost his mojo?

Posted by: dh | Oct 14 2019 14:34 utc | [23](#)

Lyndsey Graham (why I hate him)

If you look at the evolution of Graham's twitter posts, he starts out with crocodile tears over the plight of the valiant Kurds. But now that the SAA is coming to their rescue all he can worry about is the perceived benefit to Iran and threat to Israel. At least he hasn't proposed new sanctions on Syria (yet).

BTW this is the **ONE** reason why Bolton remains my favorite, or rather least despised Neocon. He never disguised his raw lust for power behind self-righteous morality, he was and is a scorpion and served it neat. Pompeo, Graham, Rubio, and Pence disgust me to the core of my being.

Posted by: Christian J Chuba | Oct 14 2019 14:38 utc | [24](#)

Aaaaah, MoA. Your commentary is quick and incisive.

How will the US MSM "we're abandoning our allies!" respond to SAA "protecting them". A shit show of wonderful.

The MSM have long ago swallowed their tail and cant see (propagandize) left from down.

Yet another "regime change" defeat for the hegemon. It'll piss off the CIA types, but the more sober generals may actually be happy about it. Disfunction joy!

Posted by: Fizzle | Oct 14 2019 14:44 utc | [25](#)

23 & 8: Where are the Israelis on this:

[ISRAEL PUSHES TO INCREASE MILITARY BUDGET AMID GROWING ANTI-IRANIAN HYSTERIA](#)

Notice what Bibi is interested in there.

Jpost has a couple analyses up that more or less agree with our speculations here, along with some teeth-gnashing. I would imagine they are calling Putin. I see the beginnings of Trump-hate too, betrayal and like that.

Posted by: Bemildred | Oct 14 2019 14:51 utc | [26](#)

@9 Daved G The Al Qaim border crossing opened last month. They don't necessarily need Al-Tanf. The US protested loudly about it to Iraq. I believe they even threatened them. Some indications the protests in Iraq may be US sponsored.

Posted by: goldhoarder | Oct 14 2019 14:57 utc | [27](#)

Never mind our own little 'we told you so's' at all - the ubersage is b, who has kept us informed and focused on the

actual happenings day to day.

We who are hopeful of a unified Syria and world peace salute you, b! Thank you very much for this good news. And as the Syrians take the chastened but now positive leaning Syrian Kurds into their fold, so may it be for all nations. Let the Kurdish resolution there be a shining example to even the US of A, that it too can come back home like the prodigal son and be welcomed in.

The road ahead has potholes a-many. But at least now it is in sight!

Posted by: juliania | Oct 14 2019 15:06 utc | [28](#)

We will see how the Syrian and Turkish armies will react as soon as they come into contact on Syrian soil.

Posted by: Pnyx | Oct 14 2019 15:09 utc | [29](#)

Yes definitely a deal made among Trump, Erdogan and Putin as I've stated with Erdo driving the bus and the others waiting to grab the steering wheel if need be.

The question becomes will they grab the steering wheel if need be?

Great news from this too in that Trump will be severely damaged by this move among his dwindling constituency, who are not isolationist so much as Amerikkka Firsters.

And Amerikkka First doesn't square very well with Amerikkka in abject retreat in the face of Turkish and Syrian troop movements. Not too mention leaving its allies to twist in the wind and join sides with the "enemy."

Trump may be doing the right thing here but it will come at a political cost he can barely afford with the impeachment inquiry gathering steam.

So this is a win-win from the domestic US political perspective too

Posted by: donkeytale | Oct 14 2019 15:15 utc | [30](#)

Turkey still aims to occupy the areas the Syrian Arab Army is entering. There is a possibility of a direct clash between Turkish and Syrian forces.

Posted by: bob sykes | Oct 14 2019 12:58 utc | 4

There will be no Turkish occupation, they will hand over to SAA. Turkey certainly wants to strike a blow to Kurdish terrorists and make sure the PKK and YPG are seriously weakened politically (already guaranteed), but the rest is all kabuki theatre to force the Kurds to give up their stolen

territory, and to assist Trump in pulling the US definitively out of the US (a little faster than the US expected, though, it seems). Russia, Turkey, Syria and Iran are in perfect agreement over the whole operation, all four sides get a massive win.

Are we winding-down in Iraq ans Afganistan as well?
Posted by: jared | Oct 14 2019 13:44 utc | 10

It would seem a logical next step, wouldn't it, after the promised pull-out from Al-Tanf?

I predict that Trump now has the momentum to turn the tables on the Russiagate/Muellergate/Ukrainegate treason. Barr will in the near future bring indictments against some of the treasonists (I suspect including eventually Brennan, but later); before the end of the year Trump will initiate moves to pull out of Iraq and/or Afghanistan, and before the election will make somewhat believable promises to pull out of both. Trump will win a landslide in 2020, with the presidency, and a majority in both houses. The neocon movement will be finished forever.

Trump is a monster, a mobster, a disgusting crepe, and a war criminal - so what's new, he's the US President! He has also done a lot of really bad things as president. But beyond question he is also doing a few good and fundamentally important things. A lousy US president, but the best of a bad job. The transition to a truly multipolar world is well underway.

Posted by: BM | Oct 14 2019 15:21 utc | [31](#)

Posted by: Laguerre | Oct 14 2019 13:54 utc

I don't think it's wise to do so. SAA have liberated region without anyone gaining special status. Giving autonomy to just Kurds would raise eyebrows from many of their own ranks not to mention Erdogan own woe about it. Anyway Assad have reiterated time and time again that Kurds did not deserve anything more or less than the rest. Both him and his officials have labeled the Kurds as traitors multiple times. While reconciliation and merge between pro government forces and US backed forces is in order with little in their way as of now i predict bad blood would still be shed between them in which the process can be capitalized by USA once again (if the Kurds hadn't enough).

Posted by: HW | Oct 14 2019 15:23 utc | [32](#)

Pynx

I'm getting the impression that from Manbij for eg, the TSk is poised on one side, the north, the SAA to the south of the

town. But the TSK is more the TFSA, ie the expendables, and they are nervous to attack, expecting a full reaction from the SAA.

Each side is testing the other and probing their resolve. Apparently the TFSA does not have air support, unlike the SAA.

Posted by: Musasa | Oct 14 2019 15:24 utc | [33](#)

Where are the Israelis on this:

It's none of their fucking business. I can see no reason why any of the conspirators would want the Israelis to know what was about to happen. Israel's capacity to fuck this up by whining to their neo-con/lib pals in Washington and perhaps London provides all the justification the conspirators needed to keep Tel Aviv out of the loop. Fortunately the political Zionists in London are deeply involved in the Brexit crap so weren't paying attention. Yet again Mossad demonstrate they are fucking useless in gathering intelligence so residents and visitors here should stop being in awe of Mossad, a shitty, ineffective and entirely useless "intelligence operation". As for American Zionists, it's useful that Sheldon Adelson's other half has apparently fallen out AFAIK with Netanyahu's other half, so a simple phone call is all that is required of Trump.

As for Trump's involvement, for his own safety, he'd want to have little to no involvement in the planning and execution of this conspiracy beyond passing on a warning of what he was about to do which is all he really needed to do. The other possibilities are either that someone in the White House told the conspirators what was about to happen because they wanted the best possible outcome for the Kurds or perhaps the GRU has someone in place in the White House who is doing it for the money or whatever.

Posted by: Ghost Ship | Oct 14 2019 15:26 utc | [34](#)

Most recent report from Canthama posted at SyrPers:

"Early reports, no photos to confirm, that the SAA has positioned inside Ras Ayn city, this is literally the battlefield.

"It seems Tall Abyad was fully taken by turkish backed terrorists between Saturday night and Sunday, the[y] can[t] advance further though.

"SAA inside Ayn Al Arab (Kobane) since last night.

"Frontline seems calm, though skirmishes are reported in few places.

"It is hard to tell how many SAA soldiers moved yesterday, some guesses are close to 10,000 SAA soldiers from HASaka,

Qamishli, Aleppo and down center Syria to Tabqa.

"The SAA is entering Raqqa city at this very moment, it will be on TV soon.

"The following bases which saw many brave Syrians be martyred are now under the control of the SAA:

Brigade 93 in Ayn Issa

Tabqa Airbase

Division 17 – inside Raqqa, yet to be occupied."

By the time Congress organizes itself to pass sanctions on Turkey the entire affair will be over and the sanctions meaningless except as telling us which Congresscritters play for the Deep State borg.

Putin is in Saudi for his Summit. We should know more about how that went later today. And Imran Khan is visiting Iran. Hopefully more news about that happening too.

Once SAA's in place, I expect Turkish forces to withdraw. Then the anvil's going to drop unto Idlib.

Posted by: karlof1 | Oct 14 2019 15:28 utc | [35](#)

The kurds are not united, especially those in N Syria. There are a range of ideological and religious loyalties, the SDF/PYG being a smaller group. But with US funding they got a following. Now that plug is pulled, other loyalties will come to the surface.

I still think the Xi-Putin partnership did the phase one agriculture trade deal as a sop to the US. After all, betrayers usually get something

Posted by: les7 | Oct 14 2019 15:43 utc | [36](#)

A few open questions remain regarding Israel and Trump. Was the earlier extreme support of Israel just a setup for this about-turn? Does Trump feel betrayed and vindictive about being manipulated by his son-in-law? Only time will tell. Hopefully Nutty-Yahoo will eventually be pushed out and indicted.

Posted by: BM | Oct 14 2019 15:44 utc | [37](#)

Kudos to BM for a number of excellent posts on this situation. This whole operation carried out by Syria, Russia and Turkey does look like a carefully choreographed operation.

Big question seems to be is how much of this Trump knew before it happened? The classic questions: what did he know and when did he know it? If he knew beforehand what was coming down, and if the Dems could prove such then they would likely add treason to the articles of his impeachment.

This could result in enough neocon Republican senators voting to convict.

Posted by: ToivoS | Oct 14 2019 15:49 utc | [38](#)

thanks b and the many fine commentators.... ultimately this looks and appears super positive... my one concern is no serious clash with turkey and syria here.... hopefully this can be worked out amicably and turkey goes back to turkey... where do their proxies go though?? that is one of the x factors as i see it...

Posted by: james | Oct 14 2019 15:50 utc | [39](#)

New twist on wag the dog. To counter the internal opposition by stopping a war rather than starting one.

Posted by: browning | Oct 14 2019 15:55 utc | [40](#)

b: On Saturday evening Trump gave the order that all U.S. troops shall leave northeast Syria within 30 days.

Link?

When officials like SecDef Esper talk of "withdrawal" from "North Syria" I read their statements as meaning a PULL BACK from the border area.

But many in the media have taken that talk to mean a "pull out" of all troops in the northeast instead of a "pull back".

So any link to an official statement that contains the intention to "pull out" instead of "pull back" would be really helpful.

Posted by: [Jackrabbit](#) | Oct 14 2019 15:56 utc | [41](#)

It is hilarious to hear the "Empire Can Never Lose" crowd making excuses! "It's just a flesh wound"! "It's not over till Miss Lindsey sings"! "Langley take the Wheel"! Whatever...

At this point all American power has left is to write some more ham-fisted propaganda in the NYT!

Posted by: nemo | Oct 14 2019 16:02 utc | [42](#)

@41 jr.. in one of the links up top
"THE NATION. We are following two very big stories this Sunday. The impeachment investigation and the president's decision to pull U.S. troops out of Syria."

"MARGARET BRENNAN: A deliberate withdrawal from the entire country?"

SEC. ESPER: From northern Syria.

MARGARET BRENNAN: From northern Syria.

SEC. ESPER: Right, which is where most of our forces are."

etc. [this link..](#)

Posted by: james | Oct 14 2019 16:02 utc | [43](#)

*Once SAA's in place, I expect Turkish forces to withdraw.
Then the anvil's going to drop unto Idlib.*

Posted by: karlofl | Oct 14 2019 15:28 utc | 35

I agree, but Turkey cannot withdraw until Syria has convincing control of the whole of the formerly SDF occupied territories. Until then there will have to be plausible fighting or imminent threat of fighting. Otherwise the YPG will see how they have been conned and will try to wrest back power from the SAA. Therefore there will continue to be realistic kabuki theatre fighting alongside real skirmishes, as the SAA close the trap on the YPG. As soon as the trap is completely closed, political pressure will be on to topple the YPG from control over the Syrian Kurds. With the SAA boots on the ground on the front between Turkey and SDF - and apparently even in the centre of Ras Ayn city - I think the majority of the Kurds will strongly and vociferously reject the YPG/SDF and their pathetic and lethal stupidity.

Posted by: BM | Oct 14 2019 16:04 utc | [44](#)

ttg post at sst's [here](#) which goes into my concerns @39..

Posted by: james | Oct 14 2019 16:06 utc | [45](#)

Also Turkey will not withdraw (nore the kabuki fighting end) until the US withdrawal is definitively irreversible.

Posted by: BM | Oct 14 2019 16:06 utc | [46](#)

correction to @45.. that is pl talking..

"A successful Syrian/SDF alliance will inevitably mean an end to the US policy of regime change in Syria. pl"

Posted by: james | Oct 14 2019 16:09 utc | [47](#)

NYT today: "Embittered at their abandonment by their American allies, Kurdish leaders moved to secure a new partner: the government of Bashar al-Assad, an avowed foe of the United States."

The list of "regimes" suddenly got shorter?

Another passage is strangely formulated, but informative:

"... a Turkish incursion gave Mr. Assad an opening, and his forces began to fill it on Monday.

In some towns, they were welcomed by locals who chanted nationalistic slogans and carried Mr. Assad's photograph. In other areas, trucks drove large numbers of Syrian soldiers into the area to take up positions."

Posted by: Piotr Berman | Oct 14 2019 16:11 utc | [48](#)

Posted by: HW | Oct 14 2019 15:23 utc | 32

You failed to read my comment. The Druze already have autonomous status; it would be nothing new for the Kurds.

Posted by: Laguerre | Oct 14 2019 16:17 utc | [49](#)

we

I love it when those pseudo analyst from the Think Tanks sitting in their comfortable office saying "we"

<https://twitter.com/JennyCafarella/status/1183778880844419072>

She is full of camel doodoo

Posted by: Yul | Oct 14 2019 16:23 utc | [50](#)

@fizzle 25 *The MSM have long ago swallowed their tail and cant see (propagandize) left from down. The MSM is the propaganda arm of the CIA. Hell... look at how many "ex" employees are on staff. That is the telling mark of a third world country. Those countries whose intelligence agencies run the media.*

Posted by: goldhoarder | Oct 14 2019 16:25 utc | [51](#)

@31 *Trump is a monster, a mobster, a disgusting crepe, and a war criminal - so what's new, he's the US President! He has also done a lot of really bad things as president. But beyond question he is also doing a few good and fundamentally important things. A lousy US president, but the best of a bad job. The transition to a truly multipolar world is well underway. An optimist! I love it! Honestly if all this comes true we should build a monument to Trump's "greatness" in DC. Leave it there as a stick in the eye to all the neocons and their close partners the war mongering democrats.*

Posted by: goldhoarder | Oct 14 2019 16:32 utc | [52](#)

Turkey is on its own here...

“It was an coordinated arrangement between us and the Turks. And despite our protestations, despite the fact that we urged the Turks not to do this, they decided to do it and we told them that we would not support them militarily in this action.”

More from Esper -

“The Kurds have been very good partners in the D-ISIS campaign. They were very good fighters on the battlefield. We obviously enabled that as well. **But at the same time, we didn't sign up to fight the Turks on their behalf. And we've been very clear with them about that.** That's why since I came into office over two months ago I worked week after week with my defense minister counterpart from Turkey and urged them not to do this.”

<https://southfront.org/us-secretary-of-defense-we-didnt-sign-up-to-fight-the-turks-on-behalf-of-sdf/>

Posted by: [h](#) | Oct 14 2019 16:34 utc | [53](#)

@47 Given the degree of distrust on both sides (which is more or less a given in ME affairs) I think 'a successful Syrian/SDF alliance' is wishful thinking (sorry Colonel). It will be more like a tentative temporary agreement.

Posted by: [dh](#) | Oct 14 2019 16:36 utc | [54](#)

Moon, this article is simply marvellous and I hate to nit-pick but there is a minor inconsistency I hope I can smooth out. Early in the article you say that Trump “gave a green light for another Turkish invasion of Syria.” This way of putting it suggests that this sequence of events began when Trump announced a troop withdrawal from north eastern Syria. However, later in the article you – referring to Trump – you write “The Turkish (Russian) move gave him the excuse he needed.” This suggests that the sequence of events began with the Turkish move.

I have kept fairly detailed notes on this matter and these notes tell me that on 5 October Erdogan stated that the Turks would be moving into north eastern Syria, that on 6 October social media were reporting evidence that the move had begun and that on 7 October Trump made his announcement to the effect that US troops would be withdrawn from the area. In short, as you say at the end, it was the Turkish move that prompted Trump's withdrawal announcement, not the other way around. I think this is important. It is the Russians (in this case with Turkish cooperation) who know what they are doing and have a plan. Trump is merely reacting.

Posted by: Roger Milbrandt | Oct 14 2019 16:44 utc | [55](#)

@dh They don't have the power to remain independent without US troops acting as a backup or trip wire. You make it sound like they have a choice. It is either Assad or Turkey.


Posted by: goldhoarder | Oct 14 2019 16:45 utc | [56](#)

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