



And must have whiskey
Oh, you know why

« North Korea Announces Something Important But Does Not Say What It Is | Main

October 18, 2019

Media And Pundits Misread The 'Everyone Wins' Plan For Syria

The U.S. media get yesterday's talks between U.S. Vice President Mike Pence and the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan all wrong. Those talks were just a show to soothe the criticism against President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw U.S. troops from northeast Syria.

The fake negotiations did not change the larger [win-win-win-win plan](#) or the facts on the ground. The Syrian Arab Army is replacing the Kurdish PKK/YPG troops at the border with Turkey. The armed PKK/YPG forces, which had [deceptively renamed themselves](#) (vid) "Syrian Democratic Forces" to win U.S. support, will be disbanded and integrated into the Syrian army. Those moves are sufficient to give Turkey the security guarantees it needs. They will prevent any further Turkish invasion.



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The *Washington Post* [reports](#):

Turkey agreed Thursday to a cease-fire that would suspend its march into Syria and temporarily halt a week of vicious fighting with Kurdish forces, while allowing President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government to carve

out a long-coveted buffer zone far beyond its borders.

The agreement, announced by Vice President Pence after hours of negotiations, appeared to hand Turkey's leader most of what he sought when his military launched an assault on northeastern Syria just over a week ago: the expulsion of Syrian Kurdish militias from the border and the removal of a U.S. threat to impose sanctions on Turkey's vulnerable economy.

Pence said Turkey had agreed to pause its offensive for five days while the United States helped facilitate the withdrawal of Kurdish-led forces, called the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), from a large swath of territory stretching from Turkey's border nearly 20 miles south into Syria. After the completion of the Kurdish withdrawal, Turkey's military operation, which began Oct. 9, would be "halted entirely," Pence said.

The *New York Times* falsely headlines: [In 'Cave-In,' Trump Cease-Fire Cements Turkey's Gains in Syria](#)

The cease-fire agreement reached with Turkey by Vice President Mike Pence amounts to a near-total victory for Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who gains territory, pays little in penalties and appears to have outmaneuvered President Trump.

The best that can be said for the agreement is that it may stop the killing in the Kurdish enclave in northern Syria. But the cost for Kurds, longtime American allies in the fight against the Islamic State, is severe: Even Pentagon officials were mystified about where tens of thousands of displaced Kurds would go, as they moved south from the Turkey-Syria border as required by the deal — if they agree to go at all.

...

Military officials said they were stunned that the agreement essentially allowed Turkey to annex a portion of Syria, displace tens of thousands of Kurdish residents and wipe away years of counterterrorism gains against the Islamic State.

The U.S. can not "allow Turkey to annex a portion of Syria". The U.S. does not own Syria. It is completely bollocks to think that it has the power to allow Turkey to annex parts of it.

Turkey will not "gain territory". There will be no Turkish "security corridor". The Kurdish civilians in Kobani, Ras al Ain and Qamishli areas will not go anywhere. The Turks will not touch those Kurdish majority areas because they are, or soon will be, under control of the Syrian government and its army.



For the first time in 5 years, the Syrian flag has been raised at the Syrian-Turkish border crossing in Kobani.

Turkey can be spotted behind the SAA soldiers.



4:28 PM · Oct 17, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

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[The picture](#), taken yesterday, shows the Syrian-Turkish border crossing north of Kobani. The Syrian army took control of it and raised the Syrian flag. There are no longer any Kurdish forces there that could threaten Turkey.

The Turkish Foreign Minister Cavusoglu [confirmed](#) that Turkey agrees with the Syrian government moves:

Russia "promised that the PKK or YPG will not be on the other side of the border," Cavusoglu said in an interview with the BBC. **"If Russia, accompanied by the Syrian army, removes YPG elements from the region, we will not oppose this."**

Even partisan Syrians opposed to its government recognize the ploy:

Rami Jarrah @RamiJarrah - [12:53 UTC · Oct 17, 2019](#)
Turkey's foreign minister once again reiterates that if Russia and the Syrian regime take over border areas they will not object, as long as the PYD are expelled. This has to be the easiest land grab opportunity Assad has had since the war started.

These moves [have been planned](#) all along. The Turkish invasion in northeast Syria [was designed](#) to give Trump a reason to withdraw U.S. troops. It was designed to push the Kurdish forces to finally submit to the Syrian government. Behind the scene Russia had already organized the replacement of the Kurdish forces with Syrian government troops. It has [coordinated](#) the Syrian army moves with the U.S. military. Turkey had agreed that Syrian government control would be sufficient to alleviate its concern about a Kurdish guerilla and a Kurdish proto-state at its border. Any further Turkish invasion of Syria is thereby unnecessary.

The plan has everyone winning. Turkey will be free of a Kurdish threat. Syria regains its territory. The U.S. can leave without further trouble. Russia and Iran gain standing. The Kurds get taken care of.

The 'ceasefire' and the retreat of the armed Kurdish groups from the border, which is claimed to have been [negotiated yesterday](#) between Pence and Erdogan, had already been decided on before the U.S. announced its withdrawal from Syria.

As veteran reporter Elijah Magnier [wrote yesterday](#), before the Turkish-U.S. negotiations happened:

Assad trusts that Russia will succeed in halting the Turkish advance and reduce its consequences, perhaps by asking the Kurds to pull back to a 30 km distance from the Turkish borders to satisfy President Erdogan's anxiety. That could also fit the Turkish-Syrian 1998 Adana agreement (5 km buffer zone rather than 30 km) and offer tranquillity to all parties involved. Turkey wants to make sure the Kurdish YPG, the PKK Syrian branch, is disarmed and contained. Nothing seems difficult for Russia to manage, particularly when the most difficult objective has already been graciously offered: the US forces' withdrawal.

What Magnier describes is exactly what Pence and Erdogan agreed upon after he wrote it because it was - all along - part of the larger common plan.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump - [20:13 UTC · Oct 17, 2019](#)

This is a great day for civilization. I am proud of the United States for sticking by me in following a necessary, but somewhat unconventional, path. People have been trying to make this "Deal" for many years. Millions of lives will be saved. Congratulations to ALL!

The question is now if the U.S. will stick to the deal or if the pressure on President Trump will get so heavy that he needs to retreat from the common deal. The U.S. must move ALL its troops out of northeast Syria for the plot to succeed. Any residual U.S. force, even an unsustainable small one, will make the situation much more complicate.

That the U.S. media and pundits completely misread the situation is a symptom of a wider failure. As Anatol Lieven [describes](#) the mess of U.S. Middle Eastern strategy:

This pattern has its roots in the decay of the US political system and political establishment at home, including the power of lobbies and their money over US policy in key areas; the retreat of area studies in academia and think tanks, leading to sheer ignorance of some of the key countries with which the USA has to deal; the self-obsession, self-satisfaction and ideological megalomania that in every dispute leads so much of the US

establishment and media to cast the USA as a force of absolute good, and its opponents as absolutely evil; and the failure – linked to these three syndromes – to identify vital and secondary interests and choose between them ..

Only a few pundits in the U.S. recognize reality. [Stephen Walt](#):

The bottom line: **The solution to the situation in Syria is to acknowledge Assad's victory and work with the other interested parties to stabilize the situation there.** Unfortunately, that sensible if unsavory approach is anathema to the foreign-policy "Blob" – Democrats and Republicans alike—and its members are marshaling the usual tired arguments to explain why it's all Trump's fault and the United States should never have withdrawn a single soldier.

I am confident for now that the blob will be held off by Trump and that the Win⁴ plan will succeed. Erdogan will soon travel to Russia to discuss the next steps towards peace in Syria. The talks will be about a common plan to liberate the Jihadi controlled governorate of Idleb. That step may require a summit between the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and Erdogan which Russia and Iran will help to facilitate.

With the U.S. removed from the Syria scenario such steps towards peace will now be much easier.

Posted by b on October 18, 2019 at 6:43 UTC | [Permalink](#)

Comments

I don't often comment b; however I read MoA every day, because your analysis is generally spot on. A rarity in todays world of fake media purporting to report the "news"; which almost never happens. Keep it coming please...

Posted by: V | Oct 18 2019 6:55 utc | [1](#)

The cease fire ends the day(5 days from start of cease fire)
Erdogan meets Putin in Sochi.

Posted by: Tom | Oct 18 2019 7:09 utc | [2](#)

What about the second part of the Turkish operation? The original intend was to clear a safe zone and relocate Syrian refuges from Turkey. Is this plan over or it is still happening? And if those people relocate, they will live under who's protection? Will the Turkish state move in, will they outsource that to the FSA or allow SAA/Russians to move in?

I guess is not the later simply because that those refugees had always the option to move into Assad controlled territories but chose not to. I may be wrong though.

Posted by: Erlindur | Oct 18 2019 7:24 utc | [3](#)

We could very well see the end of the Syrian War by the end of this year God willing. Also heard news of an imminent Idlib assault in 72 hours as there has been a buildup of troops and armor around Idlib.

Posted by: Kizaru | Oct 18 2019 7:32 utc | [4](#)

Many congratulations b on your first class parsing and analysis of this 'Turkish invasion' situation as it unfolded. The UK MSM is totally up the wrong tree on this one, and if I want an accurate appraisal on this, and many other things I come here first and avail myself of your views and also the erudite comment of your cohort of barflies, who seem to possess very accurate knowledge of certain strategic situations. Your pointing out of true journalists like Magnier and Beeley is an extra bonus. One of the few places on the web where I can read anything that looks and sounds like the truth..Take a bow, b and barflies.....you are doing thinking mankind a great service in these turbulent times.

Posted by: Emmanuel Goldstein | Oct 18 2019 7:34 utc | [5](#)

I would think the meeting in Sochi with Putin and Erdogan will sort that out. Your analysis b is spot on.

Posted by: Tom | Oct 18 2019 7:35 utc | [6](#)

Trump has defied some some powerful lobbies with this move. How long before he is removed through legal means or otherwise

Posted by: Down South | Oct 18 2019 7:42 utc | [7](#)

Le Drian, who has been involved in the Fr/NATO clusterf... since day 1 and has probably been kept by Macron just for this reason (he knows where the corpses are in the closets, French "cadavres dans les placards"), has been told by the Iraqis yesterday, when he begged them to put the Fr djihadists on trial themselves, that "Iraq is not a trash-bin for international djihadists" as reported by the French gov radios. A very good week indeed!

Posted by: Mina | Oct 18 2019 8:10 utc | [8](#)

There is an official statement that the US would hold on to At Tanf for a while while they evacuate it is not clear to me yet to what extent US is leaving Syria and what the timeframe is. When are they going to let go of the oil/gas areas they control. I do expect the US is really leaving but I don't understand how everyone is so sure of it.

Posted by: Tuyzentfloat | Oct 18 2019 8:21 utc | [9](#)

I really hope this analysis is correct. It means there is a future. Thousands of soldiers and contractors survive. Killing of civilians stops. Refugees return home.

The agitprop of western media and democrats is astonishingly scary. Solely for the benefit of war profitters. Based on fear, it is detached from history. In truth, peace is only possible if the Syrian government regains control of its territory within borders agreed to with its neighbors. The Kurds and Jihadists become non-issues if reintegrated into Syria. The only way for the House of Saud to keep its wealth is to end the Yemen war.

Forever wars are pointless. Nations must coordinate, keep their agreements and regulate corporations. Cooperation is the only way humans can overcome climate change and avoid a nuclear war. Then future generations will continue live on the tiny blue globe in the Milky Way.

Posted by: VietnamVet | Oct 18 2019 8:21 utc | [10](#)

Syria has gained much ground to date with the arrangements. A win already for Syria. A deal between Trump and Erdogan will comprise of the PKK and border areas.

Erdogan will not dump his cards in the bin just to be a nice bloke. He will play the cards he has as an independent player. It will still be some time before US leaves east Syria. Trump will try to hold onto the oil.

Trump has pulled out of a number of agreements. As Putin has said, US is not agreement capable.

The only difference between Obama and Trump in that respect is that hopefully Trump will not shit on the chessboard and kick off nuclear war. In the meantime, Russia will have to make their moves to counter whatever moves Trump and Erdo have cooked up.

Posted by: Peter AU 1 | Oct 18 2019 8:24 utc | [11](#)

That the U.S. media and pundits completely misread the situation

But do they really misread the situation? The NYT piece is 100% fakery deception, which has nothing to do with how the authors actually perceive the situation on the ground. If the BBC collaporate with the White Helmets in fake filming of an attack on a school, do the perpetrators believe in their own story? Of course not. What the NYT fiction writers believe will surely be perverted by their corrupted value systems, but I think they have to have at least some understanding of the reality on the ground to construct their deception.

The Washington Post citation I would read slightly differently - if you qualify certain terms used, it becomes almost a truthful description, albeit incomplete and only covering the superficial part of the Syria-Russia-Turkey-Iran coordinated plan; thus:

while allowing President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government to carve out a long-coveted buffer zone far beyond its borders.

is in the literal sense totally false, to the extent that it implies Turkey is doing the carving and controlling the buffer zone; but if you remove the word "carve" and realise that the Syrian Government are providing an SAA-controlled buffer zone, the rest is not especially dishonest. This is par for the course with MSM which distorts everything anyway, while the NYT is cloud cookoo land fabrication in a class of its own (but will as always be quoted uncritically by other fakers).

Posted by: BM | Oct 18 2019 8:29 utc | [12](#)

I think B has done it again.. what a report. even before the big time media has distorted the truth into false faked news. Still it looks like Assad must deal with a stable full of ISIS horses, Russia must monitor Mr. Erdogan's behavior and the Iraq Syria, Iran borders are about to become transparent.. to trade..

The unsettled question is Iranians in Syria ? If Iran helps Assad develop the technical know peace may come to Syria and Iraq, and both Iraq and Syria may become the beneficiaries of Iranian defensive technology. If Trump turns his back on Saudi Arabia leaves the Israeli bankers and their corporate power in the lurch and forces and leaves the Houthi in power in Yemen things could get smooth in a hurry, but yesterday Saudi and UAE Oman came to terms on the occupation of southern Yemen. So it looks as if Yemen will be split.

but one website suggested the Houthi are planning to take out the occupied port cities.. in Yemen..

better than Great journalism. better than the NYT as good .. the best

Posted by: snake | Oct 18 2019 8:43 utc | [13](#)

... There's the hand-off to Stoltenberg. ...

Posted by: Laurence | Oct 18 2019 8:49 utc | [14](#)

Thank you b for this reassuring post but I find the two divergent 'understandings' mighty disturbing. I trust your description of Win4 is the real plan and the USA media spin is fake. Time will tell as the USA ALWAYS breaks a deal before the door is closed.

And then if not the USA then the Apartheid occupier of Palestinian land will break it for them.

The resettlement question will be hugely complex and fraught with infiltrators from the Daesh headchoppers and their friends.

I can't see Trump getting any mileage from a partial withdrawal of 20 kilometers. He would have the military laughing at him every time he pats himself on the back and then there is Tulsi Gabbard who could do real damage to his golden persona in no time flat.

Posted by: uncle tungsten | Oct 18 2019 8:52 utc | [15](#)

The question is now if the U.S. will stick to the deal or if the pressure on President Trump will get so heavy that he needs to retreat from the common deal.

If so, will the US order the SAA and Russia back out of the areas they have already taken control of, and order the SDF to cease cooperation with the SAA? That is impossible, it cannot be done. If the US try to back out now they are automatically militarily defeated and out-gunned by the militarily far superior Russians and SAA who now almost completely surrounded them - completely, if the Iraqi PMU's cover the Iraqi border. If Trump really wanted to pull the US soldiers out of northeastern Syria permanently, as soon they allowed the Russians and SAA to flood in, Trump got *fait accompli*.

The US military are risk-averse, and trying to hold on to the oil would be military suicide. The Russians might step back a couple of steps and let the SAA do most of the action, but expecting the SAA to back off would be unrealistic. They have international law on their side, they have morality on their side, they have the guns on their side, and they have the boots on the ground on their side. Just as Iran forced the British warship to hold back while the Iranian navy boarded and took control of the British tanker, so to the US in that situation would back off from the oil fields. Since they are so risk-averse, they would try to avoid even being put in that situation They might yet try to bluff their control of the oil fields, but will readily back down as soon as the Syrians call their bluff). The Russians can impose a no-fly zone at any time. The US will not push their luck that far at so much risk.

The absolute most the US could do is to try to delay, but they won't get away with much delay either, I think. Russia/SAA can always subtly increase the pressure, making the US soldiers ever hotter and hotter under the collar.

Posted by: BM | Oct 18 2019 8:54 utc | [16](#)

The resettlement question will be hugely complex and fraught with infiltrators from the Daesh headchoppers and their friends.

Posted by: uncle tungsten | Oct 18 2019 8:52 utc | 15

The alleged resettlement of refugees in the areas currently occupied by Kurds was pure subterfuge, to scare the shit out of the YPG and force them to seek help from the SAA. It worked! Parking 3 million refugees in that tiny area - even if all the Kurds were removed - would never work anyway, it was never a serious proposal. Subterfuge, nothing else. Since the operation worked, it does not even come into question.

Posted by: BM | Oct 18 2019 9:02 utc | [17](#)

Lots of sour grapes against Vladimir Putin in an article by Patrick J Buchanan titled “ Is Putin the new King of the

Middle East? “ In todays episode of lewRockwell.com. To quote Lance Corporal Jones from the seventies BBC comedy, Dad’s Army : They don’t like it up ‘em!

Posted by: Beibdnn. | Oct 18 2019 9:08 utc | [18](#)

b

The Kurds get taken care of.

I hope you didn't intend to apply the euphemistic meaning of this phrase? As in "In the motion picture The Godfather, gangster Virgil Sollozzo took care of Luca Brasi by having him strangled".

Posted by: Ghost Ship | Oct 18 2019 9:42 utc | [19](#)

As for al Tanf, once the US has quit the formerly SDF controlled parts of Syria which will happen, any idea of regime change is completely off the table so al Tanf becomes pointless. Why leave any Americans in harms way for anything that's utterly and totally pointless except kissing Tel Aviv's arse. Let the Israelis defend that bit of the border. When Trump does pull out of al Tanf expect it to be met with the usual objections from the usual suspects which will rise to a crescendo when they understand how that "idiot" Trump has played them. Generally I don't like Trump but if this little project is actually what it seems to be then I'll really enjoy watching the agony and hatred of the corporate Democrats. Fuck them.

Posted by: Ghost Ship | Oct 18 2019 9:50 utc | [20](#)

cellophane @ 19

Erdogan has over three million refugees who he needs to move out. Most of them actually fled the takfiris and once the takfiris are gone should be happy to return home. Syria will ask that Erdogan withdraw from Syrian territory so that can happen.

Posted by: Ghost Ship | Oct 18 2019 9:56 utc | [21](#)

All well, but the big question, as Magnier also wrote: Will the Turks just end their occupation?

I seriously doubt it.

Like expected for a long time, Erdogan and Putin will "swap" liberating Idlib with Erdogan having his north Syria colony. Erdogan has executed a pre planed agenda in the occupied areas of "Turkeyzation", meaning enforcing and teaching Turkish language in schools and administration, and replacing anything Syrian with Turkish.

He went also through great lenghts, to brainwash the Syrian refugees in Turkey into being loyal followers.

The "safe zone" will be seen as a Turkish colony, even if the doublespeak says otherwise.

Erdogan wont give this up without being forced to. No

"peace" process will change that, like with Cyprus.

Fun fact from Elijahs report: When the SAA+Russian troops went into the area of the turkish observation post in Idlib, they automatically received a text message, saying: "Welcome to Turkey".

Erdogan sees the occupied territories as part of his Turkish empire. He may swap (like Idlib with N. Syria), but he will NEVER just give it up. Only when being forced.

So we better get used to the idea, that the promised respect of Syrias integrity ends for Erdogan where his empire begins, and that Assad can write off the safe zone as Syrian territory. Not officially, and next to no country will recognize Erdogans occupation, but like with Cyprus, this is of no concern to Erdogan.

Despite all the PR statements he signed at Astana.

Posted by: DontBelieveEitherPr. | Oct 18 2019 10:02 utc | [22](#)

Excellent analysis b. You have nailed this story to a tee. Also today [Pepe Escobar](#) has a great historical analysis on the significance of these developments on consolidating Syria as unified nation. Pepe's piece complements bs perfectly.

Posted by: ToivoS | Oct 18 2019 10:03 utc | [23](#)

Posted by: DontBelieveEitherPr. | Oct 18 2019 10:02 utc | 25

I'm also afraid that this is the case. And to further your analysis, Erdogan will continue to "support" Syrian territorial integrity with his protectorate as an integral part of Syria. So either Assad gives control of part of his government to Turkish puppets, or Turkey will interfere in every aspect of Syrian life, just like it does in Cyprus.

Posted by: Erlindur | Oct 18 2019 10:27 utc | [24](#)

maybe erdo will find some interest in keeping the MB refugees on his side of border
they will help reduce the ratio kurds vs arabs and turks
this whole area up to iskandarun in the west and mardin in the east has arabic speaking populations since.. very long,
they did learn turkish through time but are not considered as such

Posted by: Mina | Oct 18 2019 10:35 utc | [25](#)

The following letter from the American Jewish Congress could be a clue why the mainly Jewish owned US MSM chooses to misreport the situation in Syria. What happens in Syria is not in Israels interest.

The American Jewish Congress opposes the U.S. decision to withdraw troops from Syria and strongly condemns Turkey's actions in Syria against the Kurds. In addition to endangering a U.S. ally, the Kurds, it also poses a great threat to Israel and to the region's stability overall. Israel shares a border with Syria and is affected by what happens

within Syria.

Syria has become a hotbed of Hezbollah and Iranian activity, which poses a direct threat to Israel; as a result of this decision, Turkey, Iran and Hezbollah win while Israel loses. Ultimately, the impact of this decision may come to outweigh President Trump's historic actions in support of Israel. Regional stability and the security of our allies must be paramount for U.S. policy in the Middle East.

*Jack Rosen
President
American Jewish Congress*

*American Jewish Congress
745 5th Ave., 30th Floor
New York NY 10151 United States*

Posted by: D. | Oct 18 2019 10:47 utc | [26](#)

I am looking forward to the successful completion of these events. We'll know it when we receive confirmed reports of Syrian Arab Army taking their rightful positions at the Syrian/Iraqi border in the northeast reach of Syrian territory.

Posted by: [Josh](#) | Oct 18 2019 11:08 utc | [27](#)

ToivoS @26: Thanks for the Pepe.

D @29: Yes, the Israelis don't know what to make of it, and I imagine the "Israel Lobby" don't either.

Posted by: Bemildred | Oct 18 2019 11:15 utc | [28](#)

Great stuff, b. Your whole coverage of Syria has been fantastic for years.

The [Pepe Escobar piece](#) is essential co-reading.

There are more Wins. Trump wins, and is owed a favour by Syria and Russia. The US troops win by not being there. I am no Trump fan, but will always support decisions that reduce war. The only losers are the Israelis and the US MIC weapons manufacturers.

As for Al Tanf, that will stay. I am sure that this has been discussed, and is included in the deal. Al Tanf gives US/Israel a point from which to influence the region. Similarly, whatever happens in Afghanistan, Bagram stays.

Thanks to the barflies, your comments are worth the read.

Posted by: Cautious Volcano | Oct 18 2019 11:30 utc | [29](#)

Agree with V, above; currently essential daily reading. How else would one make any sense of the last few weeks? Also for the other ME commentators who would be a difficult find. I

post on the Twits with the occasional MoA retweet. People can be resistive to having open minds on this as the misinformation has been deep and relentless; white helmets being just the most obvious. And not to forget your many wonderful 'Commenters', of course.

Posted by: PH | Oct 18 2019 11:33 utc | [30](#)

U.S. making a last stand in Syria

Are we defending the Alamo against Santa Anna? No, we are rallying around Syria's oil fields <https://www.zerohedge.com/geopolitical/us-military-unlikely-withdraw-syrias-key-oil-fields-report>

We are scum, bandits, self-righteous d-bags. I cannot stand the way we operate.

Posted by: Christian J Chuba | Oct 18 2019 12:22 utc | [31](#)

Kurds not being massacred; Israel ominously quiet; Borg fuming; US stance regarding oil fields not entirely clear. So some smoke and confusion, but apparently much to be sanguine about.

Posted by: Paul Damascene | Oct 18 2019 12:32 utc | [32](#)

Erdogan with what can be seen as a confirmation of my take:

Ragıp Soylu:

Turkey wouldn't be bothered by Assad regime control in towns like Manbij, Kobane and Qamishli if YPG is completely cleared out, Erdogan says

Erdogan announces that he will try to work a compromise between Russia and Turkey over Qamishli, Manbij and Kobane in his visit to Russia next Tuesday

Posted by: [b](#) | Oct 18 2019 12:38 utc | [33](#)

As for al-Tanf:

The U.S. will for now stay there. But that is likely just for the moment. The Syrian-Iraqi border is open elsewhere and keeping it close at al-Tanf has zero strategic value.

Trump will wait until the current noise dies down and then quietly remove those troops.

Posted by: [b](#) | Oct 18 2019 12:43 utc | [34](#)

This is Spengler on Strategic Culture. He is a Trumpist and generally not my cup of tea, but every once in a while he

comes up with something interesting:

China has had its issues with Turkey's volatile and ambitious leader, to be sure. Turkey in the past styled itself the protector of China's Uyghur minority, some 15 million Muslims who speak a dialect of Turkish and live mainly in China's Xinjiang Province. China reportedly has incarcerated between 1 and 2 million Uyghurs in "re-education camps" where they are forced to learn Chinese culture to the detriment of their Islamic identity. Erdogan in the past had accused China of "genocide" against the Uyghurs. After the Chinese bailout, however, Erdogan declared that the Uyghurs are "living happily" in China.

Turkey has changed from Ataturk to Rent-A-Turk. China likes to keep its friends close and its enemies closer. China built the Great Wall to repel Turkic invasions, among others, and warred with nomadic peoples on its borders for centuries. Now Beijing believes that its \$2 trillion Belt and Road Initiative will assimilate the Turkic peoples of Central Asia into its sphere of economic influence. The Turkic countries seem eager to sign up.

[China's \\$3.6 bn Bailout Insulates Turkey From US](#)

Posted by: Bemildred | Oct 18 2019 12:44 utc | [35](#)

I think Mr Lieven's analysis is a little too rational - "Anatol Lieven describes the mess of U.S. Middle Eastern strategy: ..."

Basically, ultimately, a bureaucracy has something of a mind apart from the individuals (otherwise described as "mob rule" with a touch of hysteria), wherein certain boiler plate methods become tools of choice and there is a detachment from the impact on humanity. As we say in engineering: "It looked good on paper."

For me being of child-like mentality, I believe simple things in life often bear great opportunities for learning and I often find myself remembering the animated feature "Iron Giant" (an under appreciated masterpiece of wit and story telling) when the (stupid, self-serving and narcissistic) FBI agent says: "we don't know what it is or who sent it so therefore we've got to blow it to smithereens..". He then goes on to try to destroy the thing by launching a missile directed at themselves. OK, that's all I know, I am tired now.

Posted by: jared | Oct 18 2019 12:47 utc | [36](#)

b@34

In the short-term yes, but there were reports several months ago that the US was setting up another base on the same road but on the Iraqi side. I don't know how close to the border or the main Bagdad-Jordan road. However, there will almost certainly still be US control of Syrian or Iranian movements along the route to Damascus.

Deir Ezzor or Latakia -the Russians have set up some pontoon bridges, but the main "action" to come now seems to be Latakia. Heavy build up there by the SAA and Russians flying in troops(?) to Hymimin, and up to 500 "reinforcements" from Al-Shughour for the other side. Plus Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham are planning to redeploy 3500 there.

Main target seems to Kobani,

Posted by: stonebird | Oct 18 2019 13:05 utc | [37](#)

The video on RT or Brother Erdo in confab/photo-op with That Good Man VP (The Grise) Pence, suggests by VP's body language that one ought to bear in mind that Betrayal and Victory are a pair-twin gods of conflict. Trump has made with considerable help from Fate and Putin a "victory" inasmuch as retreat from Imperial War constitutes a victory in fact for ordinary US people, and people in the area, of course...

Pence wants power...and status. If we consider what he shows of himself, which is a costume of course, he's saying his basic assumption about himself.

"I am fraudulent and worthless."

Lean and hungry men >

Caesar:

Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men and such as sleep a-nights.
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look,
He thinks too much; such men are dangerous.

Julius Caesar Act 1, Scene 2

Trumpie the clown better "stay outta Dallas" ...remember Lyndon fellas...

see photo > search images for "Johnson Kennedy good one at morganreynolds.files.wordpress

[dot com]/2013/06/lbj-jfk[dot] png

I do hope I have not post wrongly, puter skill in me does not exist.

Posted by: Walter | Oct 18 2019 13:13 utc | [38](#)

My post 37. was not clear

The 500 + 3500 are the Terrorists.

Meanwhile the Russian and the SAA have been building up steadily - probably to try to take Kobani.

The question I have is - how many troops are now available for the SSA to take further action as there are supposed to be 10'000 on the "Turkish front"?

Posted by: stonebird | Oct 18 2019 13:15 utc | [39](#)

"The agitprop of western media and democrats is astonishingly scary. Solely for the benefit of war profiteers."

@10

Not just them. The Democrats, and most Republicans, fellow members of the duopoly, are intent on using every opportunity to whip up the apathetic public into believing that the most urgent business is to impeach Trump.

Why? Because if Trump is not eliminated by impeachment he will have to be campaigned against in an election.

And the US ruling class doesn't like elections when there is a possibility of politics arising.

There is no doubt that in 2020 the Democrats will either lose to Trump, by running a candidate who can't win (the First Gay candidate with a husband; the first female of colour; the first Obama from Newark NJ: the first member of the Biden family to go to University; the first First Lady to run and be defeated and run again...and so on ad nauseam) or beat Trump by running a candidate opposed not to the Arms industries but to Big Pharma, the Healthcare industry, the insurance companies, the Union racketeers who want to continue acting as middlemen for all of the above, and the entire universe of privatised public services, from prisons to charter schools.

The threat of Medicare for All is not just that it challenges the profit centres of those who make a killing out of dying, the fear of death and ill health, but that a public healthcare system would logically be bound to address the causes of ill health. Such as, for example, agriculture's reliance on pesticides and chemicals to cut labour costs and increase profit margins. Such as the malpractices at the heart of the food processing industries.

Recently Bernie Sanders talked of the enormous cost, to ordinary people, of fighting cancer. In doing so he highlighted the reality that "cancer" is one of the country's leading industries, a major source of profit for investors and far too important to be left to the tender mercies of american families prejudiced against it.

For the likes of Pelosi, Schumer and 90% of Congress elections are just a reminder that they haven't shaken down their capitalist sponsors for a year or two and the Fund Raising season has come again. The last thing they want to do is get involved in debates over things that matter, like living standards, public services, jobs, the cost of education and other sordid matters.

If Trump is impeached there will be no reason for the Democrats to run a candidate who can beat him. Instead they will run another one who will be-in almost all respects-indistinguishable politically from him, someone like Bill Clinton or Barack Obama or their female equivalents, who can be relied upon to keep things going the way they have been since 1944.

Of course, the problem, that nobody in Congress wants to think about is that that particular game-NATO, Bretton Woods, US triumphalism- is rapidly coming to an end.

Posted by: bevin | Oct 18 2019 13:17 utc | [40](#)

This hilarious thread made my day

<https://mobile.twitter.com/KarlreMarks/status/1184591070514089984>

Posted by: Mina | Oct 18 2019 13:25 utc | [41](#)

I recommend listening to Trump's victory speech in Dallas. It's extraordinary and his domestic audience loved it. Lots of talk about a great deal with Turkey and how everybody benefits, especially the US, and how he has saved civilization. But it's as if the Syrian government doesn't exist. Also no mention of Iran and Israel. One thing at a time I guess.

Posted by: dh | Oct 18 2019 13:33 utc | [42](#)

Win #5: Israel officially annexes the golan heights for good

Posted by: radiator | Oct 18 2019 13:42 utc | [43](#)

Big day at ZH today (many days there's nothing).

And related only in that it would be another big win for Russia and good news.

Such as this:

<https://www.zerohedge.com/energy/russia-ready-seize-control-worlds-largest-oil-reserves>

Pretty cool if it's true. Seems OilPrice.com is not very reliable.

Would be excellent move for Venezuela. Take away the the candy.
Check. Your move.

Posted by: jared | Oct 18 2019 13:57 utc | [44](#)

“The plan has everyone winning. Turkey will be free of a Kurdish threat. Syria regains its territory.”

The only thing is, that was the status quo ante bellum, and Erdogan nevertheless thought fit to ravage Syria.

So has he learned his lesson, or can the leopard not change his spots?

Posted by: David G | Oct 18 2019 14:03 utc | [45](#)

Has anyone noticed the MSM reaction to the election of a pro-Palestinian president in Tunisia?
no more victory shouts at the greatness of Arab democracy!
So when it s not the MB who wins it s not freedom anymore?

Posted by: Mina | Oct 18 2019 14:05 utc | [46](#)

Actually reporting done by John Helmer on the subject shows a COMPLETELY different picture:

<http://johnhelmer.net/in-the-war-for-syrias-highway-m4->

[the-kremlin-turks-have-been-beaten-to-the-punch-by-the-russian-general-staff-foreign-ministry-for-the-moment/](#)

He quotes Russian analysts close to the general staff, explains what the Turkey+US deal REALLY means, the for years ongoing struggle of the general staff against Putins concessions to Erdogan..

Erdogan PLAYED Putin this time. He and his occupation zone now is protected by the NATO treaty, and can present Putin at their meeting with the fait accompli.

Talking about 4D-Chess.

I understand it is important to fight against the anti Putin propaganda, but the opposite is equally crazy.

The general staff has pushed back against Putins Turkey policy, and now they are proven right.

And the conspiracy theorists, that wanted to believe Erdogan is doing Putins loyal bidding, instead of being the sociopath that does not give a shit, are equally proven wrong.

Erdogan is now NATOs occupation army in Syria. Officially. And backed by the US and NATO defense treaty.

Check-mate.

Posted by: DontBelieveEitherPr. | Oct 18 2019 14:08 utc | [47](#)

Regarding how long the U.S. may hold onto al-Tanf, even absent any strategic value and with the U.S.'s regime-change ambitions in tatters: just remember it's been a long time since the U.S. has needed Guantánamo Bay as a coaling station.

A fairly rapid U.S. departure from al-Tanf would shift me from seeing all this as something being done to Trump, to acknowledging he had some active role in doing it.

Posted by: David G | Oct 18 2019 14:23 utc | [48](#)

b said - As for al-Tanf:

The U.S. will for now stay there. But that is likely just for the moment. The Syrian-Iraqi border is open elsewhere and keeping it close at al-Tanf has zero strategic value.

Trump will wait until the current noise dies down and then quietly remove those troops.

Are you suggesting a kind of insurance policy? Meaning, if the win-win-win plan goes according to plan then US troops leave al-Tanf after Syrian troops/support have regained control over all towns in the region and along the border while U.S. troops remain at al-Tanf as a security force insuring an end to the bootlegging so to speak.

Obviously, Syria needs al-Tanf operating at full capacity. They need that revenue to rebuild.

Do I have this right?

Anybody have good information on al-Tanf's current

pumping capacity? Are the refineries even operational?

Posted by: [h](#) | Oct 18 2019 14:48 utc | [49](#)

Given BM's last post at the North Korea thread I'll be bold and say this is a 5W situation - but it is extremely important to understand the fourth win, and that is Trump's. If it has occurred now it says much for what may be underway in the US of A, and that is a very positive development for this country. We saw when Trump was first elected, the barrage of misinformation and negative press being hurled at him during that campaign. By and large it was ineffective and simpletons like myself thought the battle for the presidency had been won.

It hadn't.

But I think now it has. That's a momentous thing, and all the press is doing now (and it is the entirety of what people read in newspapers like the New York Times, and see on tv, every news channel, and hear on radio news in its entirety. I don't even except Amy Goodman - she has made a deal with the devil to be broadcast; it is what you have to do to be 'in the game'. But it comes at a great cost to do that and I'm sorry she did, as her reputation was stellar before she accepted the terms of the broadcast experience here today. I am guessing we might hear from Amy how this happened and how she felt about it though. I really hope she does a piece on it.

Now these outlets have to do an about turn, and they know it. They know they have been lying to the American public, many of whom have ignored them at least since the election. That's hard to do if you've been weaned on Walter Cronkite, but those were the days, my friends. We thought they'd never end...

Now just watch, they'll turn over quite seamlessly without ever giving Trump the credit he deserves. Just as they have done on the global warming issue, without ever acknowledging their duplicity in keeping the stark reality of human culpability centered on corporate greed and the war machine. Just look at how unwarlike the re-occupation of territory, and the return soon of syrian refugees shall be! It isn't because of threat or intimidation but a natural and joyful thing.

Oh, I did say 5W. That's because Korea will benefit from this also. China has waited, before making a generous offer (I posit) to the Koreans that is going to transform their country with respect to help with infrastructure and connections, energy and the like. Someone on the last Syrian thread asked where was China? Watching and waiting, is the answer.

And no doubt there will be more W's - many more! I am glad to have lived to see this!

Posted by: [juliania](#) | Oct 18 2019 14:52 utc | [50](#)

Erdogan will soon travel to Russia to discuss the next steps towards peace in Syria. The talks will be about a common plan to liberate the Jihadi controlled governorate of Idleb. That step may require a **summit between the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and Erdogan** which Russia and Iran will help to facilitate.

I already once commented on the Elijah Magnier's website that the best option for the entire "Syrian situation" is if Erdogan [again] recognizes Assad's legitimacy. The Syrian government (as well as, undoubtedly, the Russian side) needs to work in this direction. If Turkey - the strongest country in the region - recognizes the legitimacy of Syria under Assad's rule, then other countries in the region will be forced to follow.

I hope this happens in the foreseeable future.

Posted by: [alaff](#) | Oct 18 2019 15:00 utc | [51](#)

Should have said "...their duplicity in keeping silent on the stark reality..." sorry.

Posted by: [juliania](#) | Oct 18 2019 15:01 utc | [52](#)

@ DontBelieveEitherPr. | Oct 18 2019 14:08 utc | 47

Apparently, you are a Rules-Based policy theorist.

The U.S. and or Europe (ha-ha) could launch an assault on Russia in Syria at will.

As the Syrian experience clearly shows, there are not actually any rules in war (sorry to burst your bubble).

Are you thinking that the Turks will wave the treaty at the Ruskies to stop the shooting?

Paper and words are not worth much when there is lead flying.

Posted by: [jared](#) | Oct 18 2019 15:03 utc | [53](#)

The US will be on the road back to a functioning democracy only when and if the FCC resumes having public hearings on the activities of the mainstream media for the past I don't know how many years. Probably ever since the huge corporations moved to own them and dictate terms. That would take actually going back to pre-monopoly days, when capitalism wasn't a dirty word because there was government regulation that had teeth.

I'm a crazy optimist, but I don't have much time left, so pessimism is out the window. The American citizenry needs one of those W's...

Well, Syria's recovery comes first. I'll settle for the dawn for now. Win win win win.

Posted by: [juliania](#) | Oct 18 2019 15:17 utc | [54](#)

Between Elijah J. Magnier and our host, Bernard, we are privileged to read and ponder the real news and truths hiding under plain view day after day. Real journalism and professionalism.

Merci beau-coup.

Posted by: Taffyboy | Oct 18 2019 15:17 utc | [55](#)

b, you have left 1 vital parameter out of the win-win-win-win equation: the oil and wheat producing region in the East. According to Almasdar News it is unlikely U.S. forces will pull out of the region <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/us-military-unlikely-to-withdraw-from-eastern-syria-and-its-oil-fields/>

Posted by: Ernesto Che | Oct 18 2019 15:18 utc | [56](#)

Looks like Erdogan totally took no notice of Pence's Photo Op bs ceasefire. What a joke.

That's what you get when you live in a world completely detached from reality like US politics. One step closer to total irrelevance.

<https://southfront.org/northeastern-syria-ceasefire-is-collapsing/>

Posted by: Et Tu Brute | Oct 18 2019 15:25 utc | [57](#)

@DontBelieveEitherPr. #47

Helmer doesn't differentiate between "US" interests, especially those of the neocon foreign policy establishment and Trump's. The agreement was evidently drafted by the former. The latter will wipe his ass with it - or better still wait until Turkey try and invoke Art. 5 in northern Syria and then conspicuously not come to their aid, thus damaging NATO. Two birds with one stone.

Posted by: Barbara Ann | Oct 18 2019 15:30 utc | [58](#)

V

Posted by: Circe | Oct 18 2019 15:32 utc | [59](#)

with the Lebanese, you can get everything on TV

<https://mobile.twitter.com/allushiii/status/1185216072041058304>

these are the protests which the BBC has tried to reduce to some millennial demos against a whatsapp tax

coz the UK needs a bit of ME cash lately?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-50095448>

Posted by: Mina | Oct 18 2019 15:33 utc | [60](#)

with the Lebanese, you can get everything on TV

<https://mobile.twitter.com/allushiii/status/1185216072041058304>

these are the protests which the BBC has tried to reduce to some millennial demos against a whatsapp tax

coz the UK needs a bit of ME cash lately?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-50095448>

Posted by: Mina | Oct 18 2019 15:33 utc | [61](#)

Here's why I find your interpretation of what's going on untrustworthy and maybe delusional.:

You didn't address the 3+ million anti-Assad refugees Erdogan plans to resettle in that area.

ISTANBUL (Reuters) - Turkey aims to establish 12 observation posts in a planned so-called safe zone in northern Syria, President Tayyip Erdogan said on Friday, adding Ankara would respond if the Syrian government "makes a mistake" in the region.

Ankara agreed with Washington on Thursday to pause its operation in northern Syria against the Kurdish YPG militia while it withdraws from the border region. **Turkey wants to settle refugees in the area vacated by the YPG.**

Speaking to foreign press, Erdogan said 2 million refugees can be settled in the "safe zone" if it includes the cities of Deir Al Zor and Raqqa. Turkey hosts 3.6 million refugees that have fled the eight-year war in Syria.

[Turkey to establish 12 posts IN SYRIA SAFE ZONE for refugee resettlement](#)

You didn't address the fact that the U.S. doesn't want Syria's oil fields controlled by the Syrian government.

There are U.S. troops still in Syria ensuring just that, therefore, U.S. is still there.

According to the source, the U.S. Armed Forces won't withdraw from these areas because of Iran's presence in eastern Syria and the reality that Damascus would again have access to Deir Ezzor's vital oil fields.

He would add the U.S.' two largest military bases in Syria are in eastern Syria near some of the country's largest oil fields like Al-'Umar.

Damascus has wanted the Al-'Umar and Conoco oil fields to be returned to their government; however, with the U.S.' large military presence in the eastern countryside of Deir Ezzor, they have found themselves blocked from these critical petrol supplies.

us unlikely to withdraw from eastern Syria oil fields

And guess what? The Turks are already breaching the ceasefire and SDF are not merged with SAA!

ceasefire violations

Start giving us the straight story and not your SANITIZED VERSION. I'm sick of the ongoing bullshet on this. WIN-WIN, my ass! Zionist/Trump/Turkey win-win as per facts on the ground!

Posted by: Circe | Oct 18 2019 15:33 utc | [62](#)

@47 @53 Turkey isn't covered by NATO Article 5 if they're attacked within Syria, because it only applies to North America and Europe. The question of whether Turkey is part of Europe doesn't even arise.

Posted by: Fly | Oct 18 2019 15:36 utc | [63](#)

@ jared | Oct 18 2019 15:03 utc | 53

Rules. One basic rule of conflict is that actions have consequences, and everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth, which is why deterrence works.

So as far as anyone launching an "assault on Russia in Syria at will", it must be done knowing they can also retaliate at will, which in the case of both Russia and the US, can escalate to MAD very quickly.

So perhaps yes, paper and words don't count for much to you, but they sure do to generals responsible for men's lives when they are used to signal strategic deterrence, which does work indeed, and is why we haven't seen and will not see any clashes between Russian and Nato forces.

Posted by: Et Tu Brute | Oct 18 2019 15:43 utc | [64](#)

@Stonebird - the city you talk about near Latakia is Jisr Ash Shogur. Kobani is in the north-east and under Syrian government control.

@DontBelieveEitherPr - Helmer is talking bullshit. Especially with NATO Article 5 which certainly does not fit the current situation of common defense when Turkey attacks a non-NATO country.

@Ernesto Che - Almasdarnews is wrong. The U.S. is unlikely to hold onto the oilfields.

Posted by: b | Oct 18 2019 15:44 utc | [65](#)

The big news here, which few mentioned, is Europe's embrace of the Empire. The europeans were very angry about Trump's withdrawal from Syria.

There are deep reasons for this european behavior, including psychological, and various types of european degeneration causing this. In short, anyone who does not have very deep knowledge about Europe will not be able to understand why europeans can not live without the US Empire.

Posted by: Passer by | Oct 18 2019 15:45 utc | [66](#)

Actually reporting done by John Helmer on the subject shows a COMPLETELY different picture:

Posted by: DontBelieveEitherPr. | Oct 18 2019 14:08 utc | 47

John Helmer has a vivid imagination, but very often he seems to have great difficulty understanding the difference between fantasy and reality. He is UNRELIABLE!

Posted by: BM | Oct 18 2019 15:51 utc | [67](#)

@ Et Tu Brute | Oct 18 2019 15:43 utc | 64

Yes, and for that reason (and others) Russia would be hesitant to launch and assault on France.

And they would avoid conflict with Turkey in Syria for various reasons.

But if it became necessary, it would happen and they would deal with the consequences - which would likely not include war with NATO nor nuclear conflict.

I think.

Posted by: jared | Oct 18 2019 16:00 utc | [68](#)

Oh gee, I had yet to read your various disclaimers that don't change an iota of the facts.

Give us concrete proof the U.S. will move out of Eastern Syria oil region! Your whole article is projection and hypothesis not based in reality. Why does Trump say he's removing all U.S. immediately troops and fails to remove those??? Because this is a gigantic Zionist CON.

Syria is being squeezed on two fronts and in your opinion it's a win-win! Northern front by Nato Turkey and Eastern front by ZIONIST PROXY U.S.A.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Ghost Ship, your Trump fantasy is laughable. And Israel could replace U.S. troops in Eastern Syria??? Trump gave the Golan to Israel, BTW ANOTTHER OCCUPIED FRONT! And the U.S. is occupying Eastern Syria for Zionism.

3 Fronts in Syria are close to being OCCUPIED and that's a WIN-WIN???? It's a win for Zionists and their Trump stooge!

I know Trump wants to give Zionists the West Bank BUT 3 strategic corner regions of Syria too????

Now try again and pretend my lying eyes deceive me! I dare

ya.

Posted by: Circe | Oct 18 2019 16:09 utc | [69](#)

Wow! Someone was up early or stayed up late. Today, *Strategic Culture* published three excellent articles related to the recent events in Syria and their impact on the D-Party debates. First up is [this excellent editorial](#) that's straightforward in its honesty and assessment:

"For most of the decades since the Second World War, it was the US that dominated the oil-rich region. And it is no coincidence during much of that period the so-called Pax Americana was anything but peaceful. That's because Washington's foreign policy is essentially driven by imperialist objectives of control and domination, which requires a zero-sum modus operandi."

Second is [Cunningham's](https://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2019/10/18/tulsi-nails-national-tv-us-regime-change-wars/) <https://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2019/10/18/tulsi-nails-national-tv-us-regime-change-wars/> recap of Gabbard's debate performance and assessment of how her success's treated by BigLie Media:

"Following the TV debate this week, it seems that Gabbard won the popular vote with her truth-telling. A major online poll by the Drudge Report found that she stole a march on all the other candidates, winning approval from nearly 40 per cent of voters. Top ticket candidates Elizabeth Warren, Bernie Sanders and Joe Biden were trailing behind with 7 per cent or less....

"Despite her shattering exposé and seeming appreciation by the public, most mainstream media tried to bury her after the TV debate. Outlets like Vox and CNN declared that Warren was the winner of the debate, whose talking points were mainly about domestic policy issues. Like the other candidates, Warren plies the propaganda narrative of US forces "fighting terrorism". Vox even slated Gabbard as "a loser" in the debate and claimed she had made "blatantly false" statements about the US' role in Syria."

And third, [Lazare asks: "Are Democrats Vicious or Merely Sad?"](#). Pathetic might be another choice, aside from Gabbard and Sanders:

"With maybe one exception, the twelve Democrats who took part in Tuesday night's debate were all in favor of turning back the clock to the glory days of the US empire. They're livid that Trump has messed things up by betraying the Kurds. But they promise that as soon as they take back the White House, the United States will begin throwing its weight around the way it did in the good old days of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton.

"Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard was the sole exception. She started things off by slamming not only Trump but members of her own party 'who have supported this ongoing regime change war in Syria that started in 2011, along with many in the mainstream media, who have been championing and

cheerleading this regime change war."

What we're witnessing in Syria and beyond is one of the most brilliant works of diplomacy ever! Putin most certainly lobbied Saudi and UAE to join Iran's HOPE initiative to pave the way toward a peaceful and prosperous future as China's BRI expands into Southwest Asia. The Outlaw US Empire is effectively done and can be totally cancelled out by HOPE becoming reality. Let us all beat the drum for such a triumph!

Posted by: karlof1 | Oct 18 2019 16:11 utc | [70](#)

b: *Those moves are sufficient to give Turkey the security guarantees it needs.*

Turkey already had the security guarantees that it needed. USA was restricting weapons provided to SDF and created a North Syria Buffer Zone with joint US-Turk patrols.

The only reason for Erdogan to attack northern Syria was to reverse the ethnic cleansing that the Kurds had done years before. As part of that mission, Erdogan planned to forcibly resettle refugees.

But that Erdogan's planned ethnic re-cleansing and resettlement was never really workable. It was just an excuse.

With that in mind, we may well ask: what was US and Turkey up to?

It appears that John Helmer may have the answer (see DontBelieveEitherPr. @47).

<> <> <> <> <> <>

Those of us who are confused and suspicious are not against a peaceful outcome. It's just that the history of the conflict informs a guarded outlook.

Posted by: [Jackrabbit](#) | Oct 18 2019 16:12 utc | [71](#)

Sorry, second link @70 ought to be [this](#).

Posted by: karlof1 | Oct 18 2019 16:14 utc | [72](#)

Regarding John Helmer's argument that others here have mentioned, I hope that he is incorrect in his assessment, but you have to remember that Erdogan simply cannot be trusted.

He is just as treacherous as the Americans and wouldn't have a problem playing the role of the USA's Trojan Horse in Syria to advance his own interests--all the while pretending to be tilting towards the Axis of Resistance and Russia.

The Pence-Erdogan meeting may demonstrate America-Turkey's Machiavellian intentions, as Helmer asserts, or it may not.

It's just wise not to let triumphalism cloud one's

understanding of what is actually going on in Syria and the agreements that are being concluded.

In the War for Syria's Highway M4, the Kremlin Turks Have Been Beaten to the Punch by the Russian General Staff
<https://www.checkpointasia.net/in-the-war-for-syrias-highway-m4-the-kremlin-turks-have-been-beaten-to-the-punch-by-the-russian-general-staff/>

Posted by: AK74 | Oct 18 2019 16:19 utc | [73](#)

@b @65: you stated:

Almasdarnews is wrong. The U.S. is unlikely to hold onto the oilfields.

What makes you say that Almasdar News is wrong? It does make a lot of sense that the U.S. would not want to abandon the oil fields.

Posted by: Ernesto Che | Oct 18 2019 16:20 utc | [74](#)

@Circe @62 you said:

I'm sick of the ongoing bullshet on this.

So why do you read his articles?

Posted by: Ernesto Che | Oct 18 2019 16:25 utc | [75](#)

@ jared | Oct 18 2019 16:00 utc | 68

Necessary?

When the rewards of aggression far outweigh the risks, or when miscalculations are made by misinformed or deluded men, that is when conflicts become possible, but never necessary. When attacked however, a decision is indeed necessary. Whomever chooses to defend themselves, believes surrender will be worse than defeat, the attacker on the other hand, already acted because he believes he can win.

At least one of them is always proven wrong. Often, it is both.

Posted by: Et Tu Brute | Oct 18 2019 16:27 utc | [76](#)

Posted by: DontBelieveEitherPr. | Oct 18 2019 14:08 utc | 47

where in the otan treaty does it say that article 5 is valid in a occupied third country? How can article 5 be implemented when Turkey is illegally occupying Syria? Your logic and gatekeeping is pure cia bs, your attempts to be a gatekeeping narrative pusher is weak, i have noticed that for quite a while in my lurking.

Posted by: Per/Norway | Oct 18 2019 16:28 utc | [77](#)

@35 Bemildred, @50 juliania, @70 karlofi

Thanks Bemildred for the link to the report on China's investments into Turkey. I take your caution against Spengler to heart, the piece is heavily weighted to pessimism and more thinking that Erdogan wants to enlarge his sphere of influence, this time within China.

China has essentially made Turkey bullet-proof against US sanctions. juliania, this is the waiting for China that all of us have had to do, and the good news is that the waiting is already behind us, we just didn't notice the activity. Or rather, we had noticed the activity and surmised that One Road would be a huge geopolitical game-changer for Turkey, but we didn't factor the China play into the Syria equation. It's there I think as weightily as any of the other forces in play.

And when we see that Erdogan has abandoned his Syria play and embraced the Eurasian future, we can also see China quietly and steadfastly in the background. China has been burned often in the past with investments that had to be written off because imperialist forces changed a regime or the equation, but that was the past. I think the money coming into Turkey recently has been an increasingly safe bet.

karlofi you were whimsically wishing for an action from China to join in with all the allies in this axis play in Syria, and I guess this is the closest we get to one, but it's a strong one. If you are Turkey, or anyone, then no matter your imperial ambitions, how can you resist the kind of profit that China can offer to any theater? A strong economy with a population that feels it has an economic future is a gigantic security and political asset for any nation.

Spengler is gloomy and mistaken about much of his subject I think, but he coins a wonderful phrase when he says that *"Turkey has changed from Ataturk to Rent-A-Turk."* That's funny and I laughed, but Ataturk felt the winds that could benefit Turkey and acted in accordance with them, and despite all the residual gloom and suspicion regarding Erdogan among some commentators and commenters, this event will hopefully show them that Erdogan too has become a more reliable partner with its increasingly irresistible future in Eurasia.

Posted by: Grieved | Oct 18 2019 16:42 utc | [78](#)

In comment 65 I found it unlikely that the U.S. will hold onto the oil.

It seems I was wrong:

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
.....this thinking years ago. Instead, it was always held together with very weak bandaids, & in an artificial manner. There is good will on both sides & a really good chance for success. The U.S. has secured the Oil, & the ISIS Fighters are double secured by Kurds & Turkey....

[17:42 UTC · Oct 18, 2019](#)

Posted by: [b](#) | Oct 18 2019 16:42 utc | [79](#)

b@65

Half an apology - and I will use your spelling for Ash Shogur. I was using a map from Peto Lucem. However, the town I referred to is Kabanah (as in Petos spelling) which is **the** key point on a line of mountains in Latakia Province on the left of the Ghab plain. Has three mountains on one side (Hama province on the right). It is still in "rebel" hands. It might even be only a village.

The SAA successes some years ago managed most of their advances along the line of the **crests** of the mountains. (Not up and down all the hillsides and valleys from Latakia towards Ash Shogur/Al Shoghour etc.)

HD map, can take a bit of time to load. Can be enlarged.

<https://imgur.com/du2QSm8>

PS. Sorry about any confusion/IP addresses. I am trying to use a new computer which has a mind of it's own.

Posted by: stonebird | Oct 18 2019 16:45 utc | [80](#)

"I said take care of them, not take care of them!"

Posted by: Peter Fenton | Oct 18 2019 16:47 utc | [81](#)

The armed PKK/YPG forces, which had deceptively renamed themselves (vid) "Syrian Democratic Forces" to win U.S. support, will be disbanded and integrated into the Syrian army.

AFAICT, Kurds have only shown a willingness to fight for Kurd interests. So I'm not sure how many will actually join SAA or willingly fight in other parts of Syria.

Even with some Kurds joining SAA, thousands of SAA troops will be required in northeast Syria make Turkey happy and protect the Kurds.

Doesn't that negatively affect the Idlib operation?

Posted by: [Jackrabbit](#) | Oct 18 2019 16:54 utc | [82](#)

Stop defending your point with projection and wishful thinking and start giving us concrete facts.

Fact. Israel is permanently occupying Southeast Syria, a resource-rich corner already being exploited by Zionists.

Fact. U.S. is occupying geopolitically-strategic Northeast where coincidentally Syria's oil fields are located.

Fact. Turkey is invading northern Syria to resettle millions of anti-Assad refugees.

Do you have any facts to refute this reality? I have yet to read

them.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

@70 Karlofi. Yes-yes we all know the deceptive politics of the duopoly, but that doesn't explain away the reality in Syria as a *win-win* for Syria.

Regarding HOPE. Last I checked Trump just sent 3000 troops to SA at their request to counter Iran! HOPE is contingent on withdrawal of U.S. troops from the region. Saudi Arabia's recent request is a slap in the face to advancing HOPE. HOPE dashed. Again, though, what fact does this bring to the Syria win-win conjecture?

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Syria will be controlled on three fronts, it's economy will be squeezed through occupation of its resources. And a mass of hostile, seething refugees will be installed in the North.

Conclusion: ZIONIST SWINDLE AND CHECKMATE c/o DONALD JU TRUMP.

Posted by: Circe | Oct 18 2019 17:08 utc | [83](#)

Posted by: Grieved | Oct 18 2019 16:42 utc | 78:

Spengler: Thanks, I find his interest in demographics illuminating at times too, but generally don't find his analyses useful, his biases creep in. But sometimes he knows things. Kind of like Helmer, who is also useless as an analyst for the same reason, but sometimes knows things too. I find the idea that the Russian state is deeply divided at this point a bit wishful. We can only dream of being so "divided".

Erdogan has always been a train wreck, but he owns Turkey politically, and I think Putin has won him over:

[Putin Erdogan Rouhani Ankara](#)

I think the point is Russia and China do not want to control everything, they just want to do business, to do business you have to get along, they have better things to do than war. Washington DC does not grok that at all,

Posted by: Bemildred | Oct 18 2019 17:13 utc | [84](#)

@79 b

Finally! The truth.

Now, we can move beyond hype and deal in reality, I hope.

Posted by: Circe | Oct 18 2019 17:20 utc | [85](#)

Let's wait for the outcomes of the Sochi summit. Until then, the Adana treaty is still not implemented, Turkey - a NATO member - occupies swathes of Syria. Erdogan still has the

upper hand.

Posted by: Buenaventuradurruti | Oct 18 2019 17:23 utc | [86](#)

I'm hearing 2 disturbing things:

- 1) US will not leave most of Syrian oil fields
- 2) US has agreed to designate the Turkish incursion into NE Syria as a defense action covered by the NATO mutual defense pact thus putting Russia and Syria on their back feet. If they interfere with Turks then NATO allies will have to back up Turkey.

???????

Posted by: Cpm | Oct 18 2019 17:23 utc | [87](#)

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