



WHO DARES WINS INFLUENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST - EAST OR WEST

Peter Adamis 22 June 2014

The stakes are high, resources, influence, access to a range of commodities that will have far reaching effects for many years to come.

Some say this a new carving of the Middle east that has yet to be complete. The major powers are laying the foundations for a new Middle East, each bringing along with them their own means of "carving knives" in the form of deceptive politics that would make eve Sun Tzu sit up in his grave and take notice.

The players are: *USA, SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN, SYRIA, JORDAN, TURKEY, RUSSIA AFGHANISTAN, ISRAEL*, and some are saying that QATAR should be involved. Why QATAR is beyond my understanding other than there has been a trend over the past few years to find anecdotal evidence that this small state being involved many Middle East and surrounding areas on more than just a passing interest.

The world is wondering why Obama is dithering and not being proactive in a region where so many US and coalition men and women lost their lives. Is he doing a Pontius Pilate and wiping his hands clean of the whole affair. Mind you an affair that was created by his predecessors. His failure and that of the Coalition to act can only lead to a power of influence vacuum being created and it will be no surprise for weaker nations to seek powerful allies in the face of rising terrorism and Islamic fundamentalists eager to see a return of the Caliphate and to an era that belongs to the past annals of history.

Australia is sending its elite troops presumably a group of highly trained SAS to safeguard its diplomatic mission and other assets in Iraq. Although it can be safely assumed that other like minded countries are doing the same to cater for their interests, one wonders whether all of these nations with their troops being sent are not also designed to lay down the foundations for an escalation of support in the event that need becomes a serious reality. After all it makes good sense to ascertain what support is need without the use of employing large troop contingents and a waste of coalition manpower and resources.

The political and resource strategy of limited troop support to bolster the current Iraqi forces will bolster the moral of the troops and be a wakeup call to the imams and those responsible for the welfare of the Iraqi people that they must take up arms in support of an alleged unpopular and out of touch Iraqi government.

The people themselves have had enough of the violence the past 10 or so years and do not wish to return to a lifestyle that prohibited them from being free to live a lifestyle free from oppression. With external support, it is hoped that the revolutionary, the rebels, the terrorists and other nefarious organisations are removed in order that a people can return to a life of peace and tranquillity. The Iraqi government has no choice at the moment but to consider all offers of support, no matter where that support emanates from, but as long as they do not become puppets in their own country as a result of that support.



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PUTIN OFFERS COMPLETE SUPPORT TO IRAQ

Tyler Durden 06/20/2014 ZEROHEDGE

Putin Offers Complete Support to Iraq Prime Minister but is scorned By Obama that Russia is reigniting a Proxy War.

Two days ago, before it was formalized that the US tacitly, if not explicitly, now supports the removal of the Iraqi Prime Minister whom it itself had helped elect, we summarized the geopolitical tensions and "national interests" in Iraq, which is shaping up to be a proxy war that makes last year's Syrian escapade pale by comparison, as follows:

A. The situation in Iraq, already a jumble of domestic sectarian violence, is now pitting virtually all major (and regional) international players against each other as well. There is:

1. **USA.** US which tacitly supports Iran intervention in the region, but may have suddenly cooled in its support of Maliki despite sending naval and troop forces in the country after partially evacuating its embassy.
2. **SAUDI ARABIA.** Saudi Arabia which wants to remain friendly with the US but is antagonistic to the Iraq regime, is potentially aiding the ISIS forces, and clearly refuses to allow Iran entrance in Iraq.

3. **IRAN.** **Iran**, which has suddenly become America's best friend in the region, which is willing to enter Iraq and protect its holy sites.
4. **SYRIA.** **Syria**, whose president is sitting back amused at last year's failed campaign by the US to remove him from power, and whose army is at a stalemate with the local US-armed and funded rebels.
5. **QATAR.** **Qatar**, which is supporting the Syrian rebels, but so far has not made its stance clear on Iraq. Like Saudi, it too may be indirectly backing ISIS.
6. **JORDAN.** **Jordan**, which is a close friend the US, and which may have hosted ISIS in a secret base on its territory with the US instructing the jihadist group according to an unconfirmed report.
7. **TURKEY.** **Turkey**, which is on constant alert to Kurdish escalation across the border, the same Kurds which now have far more leverage courtesy of ISIS crushing the Iraq army in the north and handing over Kurds access to oil fields in the north.
8. **RUSSIA.** And of course **Russia**: because while Putin clearly benefits from rising crude prices, it is his Lukoil that is developing (and investing vast amounts of money in) the vast Iraqi West Qurna-2 oil field. It is not clear how he would feel about it falling into ISIS hands.

B. It was the bolded text that was of biggest interest because as we noted the next day, when discussing the next steps for ISIS, we said that "One wonders how long until the mercenary force finds its latest major backer, because for all the western, US-led intervention, both Russia and China are oddly missing from the scene. We expect that to change soon." Because clearly one can't have a global proxy war without China, and certainly without Russia.

C. Well, we said we expected Russia's conspicuous absence to "change soon", and so it did: within just 24 hours. Because apparently all Putin was waiting for was for Obama to pick sides (i.e., not Maliki) before the Russian leader made it clear whom he sides with. US, helpfully obliged yesterday morning when we also reported that "US Slams Its Former Iraq Puppet: "The Maliki Government, Candidly, Has Got To Go"."

So what does Putin - who as a reminder is heavily invested in Iraq' massive West Qurna-2 oil field via Lukoil- do? Why announce his undying support for Maliki, of course, and as AP reported, the former KGB spy offered Iraqi premier Nuri al-Maliki Russia's total backing for the fight against fighters who have swept across the country, as well as his full support for the embattled prime minister.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has spoken by phone to Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, expressing Moscow's support for his action against the militant offensive. The Kremlin said in a statement that al-Maliki informed Putin on Friday about his government's steps to combat the "terrorist groups in the north of the country." It added that the insurgency threatens security of the entire region.

Putin confirmed Russia's "full support for the Iraqi government's action to quickly free the territory of the republic from terrorists," the Kremlin said, adding that Putin and al-Maliki also discussed bilateral cooperation. Putin's expression of support for the embattled Iraqi prime minister comes as al-Maliki's rivals have mounted a campaign to force him out of office, with some angling for support from Western backers and regional heavyweights.

And just like in Syria from 2012 to 2013, the chessboard is once again set, with a regional middle-east conflict, this time in Iraq, merely serving as the proxy staging ground in which the Iraqi PM, once an obedient US puppet but now an enemy of Saudi Arabia and thus the US, "simply has to go" in the words of Dianne Feinstein, has suddenly become the fulcrum issue behind yet another soon to escalate conflict between Russia and the US.

One thing is certain: the more the US (and Saudi Arabia, and Qatar) pushes for Maliki's ouster, the more involved Russia will become with its offers of support and bilateral cooperation. And if the Syrian fiasco (for John Kerry) is any indication, Russia is about to expand its "national interest" sphere of influence by one more country.

<http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2014-06-20/russia-reignites-proxy-war-putin-offers-complete-support-iraq-prime-minister-scorned>

PUTIN OFFERS IRAQ'S MALIKI COMPLETE SUPPORT AGAINST MILITANTS

MEE and Agencies Friday 20 June 2014

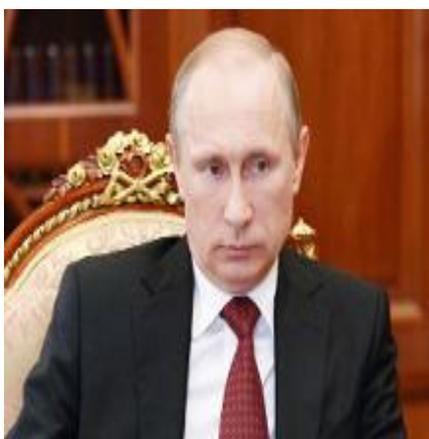
Iraq clashes in town of Muqdadiyah lead to the death of 30 Shiite militiamen as Russian president offers support to the Iraqi premier. Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday offered Iraqi premier Nuri al-Maliki Russia's total backing for the fight against fighters who have swept across the country. "Putin confirmed Russia's complete support for the efforts of the Iraqi government to speedily liberate the territory of the republic from terrorists," the Kremlin said in a statement following a phone conversation between the two leaders. Meanwhile, militants attacked the town of Muqdadiyah northeast of Baghdad on Friday, sparking clashes that killed 30 Shiite militiamen, a police colonel and a doctor said.

The fighting began on Friday morning and eased later in the day with security forces still in control of Muqdadiyah, a key approach to Diyala provincial capital Baquba, and militants deployed in adjoining areas. Shiite militiamen have joined Iraqi security forces in fighting against a major offensive by Sunni Arab militants that overran all of one province and chunks of three more in a matter of days.

Security forces performed poorly during the initial days of the assault, in some cases shedding uniforms and abandoning vehicles in their haste to flee. While they seem to have recovered somewhat from the shock of the onslaught, retaking ground in certain areas, the militants have made gains elsewhere.

UN aid agencies said Friday they were rushing supplies to conflict-torn Iraq to help over one million people driven from their homes by fighting. Donor nations were also holding a closed-door meeting at the UN's European offices in Geneva ahead of an expected fresh funding appeal next week, said Jens Laerke, spokesman for the world body's humanitarian division. An existing \$105-million appeal has garnered just 14 percent of what is needed, he told reporters. Around 500,000 people have been displaced by fighting in Iraq's western Anbar province, notably the flashpoint city of Fallujah, since the beginning of this year, according to UN figures. A similar number have fled in the wake of the fall of the northern city of Mosul last week.

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/putin-offers-iraqs-maliki-complete-support-against-militants/1379844635>



IRAN SAYS OBAMA LACKS WILL TO COMBAT TERRORISM

AFP Jun 20, 2014

The Kremlin said Vladimir Putin confirmed Russia's complete support for the efforts of the Iraqi government to speedily liberate the territory of the republic from terrorists.

MOSCOW/TEHRAN:

Russian President [Vladimir Putin](#) on Friday offered Iraqi premier Nouri al-Maliki Russia's total backing for the fight against jihadist fighters who have swept across the Middle East country. "Putin confirmed Russia's complete support for the efforts of the Iraqi government to speedily liberate the territory of the republic from terrorists," the Kremlin said in a statement following a phone conversation between the two leaders.



ISIS jihadists leading captured Iraqi soldiers in Tikrit before summarily executing them. **Iran says Obama lacks will to combat terrorism in Iraq.**

US President Barack Obama lacks "serious will" to combat terrorism, a top Iranian official said Friday after an Iraqi appeal for American airstrikes went unanswered.

Deputy foreign minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian's comments followed a statement from Obama on the Iraq crisis in which he pledged to send military advisors to Baghdad but stopped short of further action at this stage. Fighters from the Sunni extremist Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and their allies, have made swift territorial gains in Shia-majority Iraq in a push that began last week. ISIS considers Shias, also a majority in neighbouring Iran, to be apostates.

"Delaying the fight against terrorism and ISIS and putting conditions on it have fuelled suspicions and doubts about the United States' objectives in Iraq," Abdollahian said, according to the state broadcaster's website. "Obama's comments show the White House lacks serious will in fighting terrorism in Iraq and the region," he added. On Thursday, Obama had warned Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and Iran against promoting sectarianism after Tehran vowed to help Iraq against the fighters and defend Shia holy sites located in its western neighbour.



Kurdish security forces detain a man suspected of being an ISIS jihadist. "Our view is that Iran can play a constructive role if it is helping to send the same message to the Iraqi government that we're sending," Obama said. But Abdollahian accused Obama of fuelling sectarianism. "Instead of focusing on fighting terrorism and national unity and strengthening of government institutions, the US is spreading sectarianism," he said.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/Putin-offers-complete-support-to-iraq-iran-says-obama-lacks-will-to-combat-terrorism/articleshow/36904573.cms>