

US prepares military onslaught against Syria

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The Obama administration is in the final stages of its longstanding preparations for a massive military onslaught against Syria. President Obama is signing off on one of the various scenarios that have been developed over the past two years by the Pentagon. In all likelihood, the initial stages of the attack will involve the use of cruise missiles fired from US navy vessels and “standoff” attacks launched by US war planes from beyond Syria’s borders.

According to an NBC News report Tuesday evening, the US could hit Syria with an initial three days of missile strikes, beginning as early as Thursday. Subsequent waves of strikes could then be launched, unnamed senior officials told NBC, “to target what was missed in further rounds.”

“We are ready to go,” Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel told the BBC on Tuesday.

“This is as much a warning to Iran, as I see it, as it is action against Syria,” Representative Peter King of New York told CNN.

In order to provide political camouflage for the military operations and deceive the public, the administration and the media are claiming that the attack will be of a limited nature. This is a lie. Aside from the fact that the use of bombs and missiles against a heavily populated capital must lead to massive casualties, the political and military aims of the undeclared war are far-reaching.

The US and its imperialist co-conspirators in Britain, France and Germany intend to destroy the Assad regime’s military capabilities, eliminate its ability to resist the proxy “rebel” forces that are serving US interests, and bring about regime-change. This outcome will set the stage for a war against Iran within the next year or two, if not earlier.

The four US destroyers stationed off the coast of Syria are capable of delivering 160 cruise missiles to targets inside the country. Once the assault begins, the US onslaught will likely continue until Syria’s defenses have been decimated and the situation on the ground has shifted in favor of the US-backed militias, consisting for

the most part of right-wing Islamists with connections to Al Qaeda forces. As in Iraq and Libya, the infrastructure of Syria will be devastated and countless thousands of Syrians will lose their lives.

Proposals for military intervention laid out by the top US military officer further expose the claims that a US assault will be limited in nature. In a letter written to Congress in June, Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, proposed a scenario involving “stand-off strikes” which would target “high-value air defense, air, ground, missile and naval forces, as well as the supporting military facilities and command nodes... Stand-off air and missile systems could be used to strike hundreds of targets at a tempo of our choosing.”

A primary objective of the US intervention will be to kill Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, in a grisly repetition of what was done to Libya’s Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. In a bloodthirsty and fascistic column published Tuesday, entitled “Target Assad,” Bret Stephens of the *Wall Street Journal* declared:

“Should President Obama decide to order a military strike against Syria, his main order of business must be to kill Bashar Assad. Also, Bashar’s brother and principal henchman, Maher. Also, everyone else in the Assad family with a claim on political power. Also, all of the political symbols of the Assad family’s power, including all of their official or unofficial residences.”

The US-NATO war on Libya was a dress rehearsal for the coming war against Syria, which in turn is merely the prologue to future confrontations with not only Iran, but also Russia and China.

It is hardly a coincidence that top Israeli defense and intelligence personnel are in Washington, DC to discuss “Iran’s nuclear program” and “Hezbollah and Iran’s role in the Syria crisis,” according to *Haaretz*.

The public is being subjected to an unrelenting propaganda campaign designed to chloroform opposition to war by a media that ignores the howling contradictions and obvious lies in the Obama administration’s account of events. In a Tuesday editorial, the *New York Times*

characterized Secretary of State John Kerry's hypocrisy-drenched and fact-free moralistic condemnations of Assad as "forcefully making the case for action."

Far from demanding that the administration back up its claims with scientifically verified evidence, the media is utterly indifferent to the factual foundations of the government's allegations. Without evincing the slightest concern, PBS News reported Tuesday night that the Obama administration will not wait until the United Nations investigators complete their report on the alleged chemical attack before ordering military action. What better proof could there be that the allegations against the Assad regime have been manufactured only to serve as a pretext for war?

If a chemical attack took place, there are good reasons to believe that it was carried out by Syrian "rebels" with the assistance of the United States. Evidence of US-directed rebel operations in the areas where the chemical weapons were allegedly used continues to emerge.

Over the past two weeks, US Special Forces have reportedly been leading teams of opposition fighters in operations against regime targets near Damascus, in the very same area where the government claims the chemical attack took place. (See: "US prepares military assault on Syria".) *Le Figaro* reported last week that guerrillas who were being trained in Jordan by CIA agents began massing near the Syrian capital beginning in mid-August. Hundreds of freshly trained fighters reportedly began crossing the border into Deraa on August 17.

The *Jerusalem Post* reported, "The rebels were trained for several months in a training camp on the Jordanian-Syrian border by CIA operatives, as well as Jordanian and Israeli commandos."

Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem corroborated these claims in a statement Tuesday, saying "rebel" fighters trained outside Syria were flooding into the Damascus suburbs and preparing an assault on "four different fronts."

America's regional allies and the European imperialist powers are lining up in support of the assault on Syria. Meeting in Cairo, the Arab League condemned the alleged chemical weapons attack and signaled support for a US-NATO assault by declaring that Assad was responsible. Arab League governments such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Jordan have been crucial backers of the anti-Assad forces fighting in Syria.

Turkey, which has also played a central role in stoking up a sectarian civil war in order to topple Assad, declared its full support for a US-NATO intervention.

Germany, Britain and France have joined in calls for action against Syria. Conversations between Obama and British Prime Minister David Cameron over the weekend yielded agreement on the need for "a serious response." Additional Syria-related discussions between the US, British and French governments are set for this week. British Prime Minister David Cameron announced Tuesday that Parliament will cut short its summer holiday and reconvene on Thursday to authorize military action against Syria.

Top military officials gathered on Monday in Amman Jordan, including General Martin Dempsey and military chiefs from Britain, Italy, Germany, France, Canada, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Jordan, and an emergency meeting at NATO headquarters in Brussels is scheduled for Wednesday.

The US Congress is not planning to hold public hearings that might delay the outbreak of war, or submit the Obama administration's claims to any critical examination. There are virtually no demands from Congress for even the legal fig leaf of congressional authorization for the war. While, according to a recent poll, only 9 percent of the public support a war against Syria, the pro-war mood in the Congress is overwhelming.

Obama, who won election in 2008 on a wave of anger against the Bush administration's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, is now, just five years later, about to drag the country into a war against Syria, once again on the basis of lies about weapons of mass destruction.



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