

Washington's New Middle East Plan in the Losing Gambit

Eastern Asia Persian Gulf Arab States Resistance Axis Roots of Crises War Zones

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We are in the 'losing gambit' phase of Washington's failing plan for a 'New Middle East'. Let me explain. The 'New Middle East' plan, announced by former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Israel in 2006, aimed to destroy all independent political will in the region. It did not matter what type of independent state or people, nor that they were divided (though that is an obstacle for the resistance), **what mattered to Washington was that they were not integrated, that they were 'disconnected' from its orbit.**

Pentagon doctrine since the start of this century has spoken of 'full spectrum dominance' and 'destroying disconnectedness'. The bigger plan was to exclude potential competitors (Russia, China, any independent European players) from the region, or dictate the terms of their engagement. **An underlying aim is also to block the westward expansion of Chinese networks, not least its 'Belt and Road' infrastructure initiative, and to prevent strong links from forming between Europe and Asia.** Eurasian union remains the big fear of Washington. If Europe and Asia have good and close relations, what role would be left for the USA in either continent?

Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote of this current 'great game' (especially in his book *The Grand Chessboard*) and Lawrence Wilkerson has recently updated those ideas – noting that the US occupation of Afghanistan serves to obstruct and destabilize China.

With that background, the US invaded both Afghanistan and Iraq, in quick succession, substantially damaging both states but without managing to subdue the resistance. **However soon after those terrible crimes, resistance in the Levant imposed two defeats on the principal agent of the US in the region: the Israeli colony in Palestine.** Zionist forces were expelled from Gaza in 2005 and the following year the Lebanese resistance led by Hezbollah once again expelled Israeli invaders from south Lebanon.

Large scale terrorism was introduced into Iraq, after the destruction of the Saddam Hussein regime, to prevent the new, fragile government in Baghdad getting too close to Tehran. **DAESH was born (as ISI) in Iraq in 2006, to inflame sectarian divisions, and in 2012 the terror group was renewed in both Syria and Iraq.**

Taking advantage of the so called 'Arab Spring', catalysed by the 2010-2011 revolts in Egypt and Tunisia, Washington made use of sectarian proxy armies (initially funded and armed by Qatar and the Saudis) to attack Libya and Syria. **These sectarian militia (LIFG, al Nusra, DAESH, HTS, etc) were commissioned to help drive Washington's 'New Middle East' plan.**

After NATO's direct intervention Libya (with the highest living standards in Africa) was destroyed but Syria resisted. Despite the uprising in Bahrain, which was crushed by Saudi intervention, the Persian Gulf monarchies (the least democratic of all Arab regimes) were untouched by this 'Arab Spring'.

Although there were some changes in style between the Bush, Obama, Trump and Biden regimes, the New Middle East plan remained on track, but faced serious difficulties. Washington did not expect that Syria could resist for so long, with only direct support from Hezbollah, especially after Erdogan's Turkey came strongly into the war in 2012. Syria had managed to drive terrorist proxies out of most of its western territories by early 2015; but then Turkey sent new proxy armies in from the north, while Washington nurtured a DAESH invasion from the east.

It was at this stage that stronger bonds between the resistance began to turn the imperial offensive into a retreat. In September 2015 a combined Iran-Russia force backed the Syrian Arab Army, and turned back the al Nusra and DAESH advances. The formation of Hash al Shaabi, a genuine indigenous militia in Iraq, was also very important.

Over 2016-2017 Aleppo, Palmyra and Deir Ezzor were liberated; DAESH was crushed in Iraq and, at the end of 2017, resistance commander Qassem Soleimani reported that DAESH had been effectively broken in the region. **The following year, in 2018, Ansarallah-led Yemeni forces were beginning to inflict defeats on the mercenary armies sent in by the Saudis, under orders from Washington.**

That is why I suggest that the period from 2015 onwards marks the beginning of a 'losing gambit' for Washington's New Middle East plan. The imperialists and their proxies are now 'on the back foot' and have had to resort to direct interventions in Syria and Iraq, to provide safe haven to their terrorist proxies and delay a crushing defeat.

Syria is now occupied by Turkey, the USA and the Israelis, but these occupation positions are fragile. Iraq is gradually recovering some political will and has made it clear (especially after the US murder of Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al

Muhandis) that US forces (invited back into Iraq in 2014, in a moment of weakness) must leave. Meantime the imperial coalition is losing in Yemen and Afghanistan.

The Israeli colony has pretended some advances but is rapidly losing international legitimacy, as its apartheid character is more fully exposed and the 'two state' myth disappears. **In many respects Palestinian disunity and the Palestinian Authority's links to the two state myth remain as key obstacles.** An open and united 'one democratic state', anti-apartheid campaign would crush Israeli legitimacy.

The Trump regime extended the economic war against Syria to include Iraq, Lebanon and Iran, and the European Union obediently followed. But besieging the entire region is a sign of strategic weakness and has encouraged new agreements with Russia and China, something the New Middle East project always aimed to prevent.

So we come to the current conjuncture. There is a tussle over the remnants of the moribund 2015 JCPOA (nuclear deal) with Iran (created only to limit the role of Iran in the region), while the US looks for a way out of Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, the Saudis are begging for a truce with Yemen and many Zionists still cannot foresee the looming collapse of Apartheid Israel.

But the losing gambit phase remains dangerous and a cool-minded Resistance leadership must carefully play out the remaining moves.