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I Wish Nobody Was Bombing Syria

The US regime change policy for Syria has been a catastrophe. More than 200,000 killed and an entire country reduced to rubble at least partly because President Obama decided that “Assad has lost his legitimacy.” How is it that the president of a country 6,000 miles away has the authority to decide whether another leader belongs in office or not? What if Rouhani in Iran decided that Obama had lost his legitimacy for killing a number of American citizens by drone without charge or trial? Would we accept that?



At least three years of US efforts to train rebels to overthrow the Syrian government has produced, as General Lloyd Austin, Commander of US Central Command, testified last month, “four or five” trained and vetted “moderates” in Syria. The \$500 million appropriated for this purpose has disappeared.

The neocon solution to this failure to overthrow Assad and “degrade and destroy” ISIS is to increase the bombing and lead a ground invasion of Syria. The confusing policy of fighting Assad and also fighting his enemies does not seem to bother the neocons. They want us to forget all about their recent failures in Libya and Iraq and to try the same failed strategy one more time.

But something dramatic happened last week. Russian president Vladimir Putin delivered a speech at the United Nations criticizing the US policy of partnering with one set of extremists – al-Qaeda and its allies – to attack both ISIS and Assad. “Do you realize now what you have done?” asked Putin.

Shortly after Putin’s UN speech, he requested and was granted authority from the Russian parliament to use force in Syria in response to the Syrian government’s request for assistance against the rebels. Russian fighters and bombers began flying sorties over Syria almost immediately. In less than a week of Russian bombing, considerable damage appears to have been done to both ISIS and to al-Qaeda affiliates — some of which are considered allies by the US and were actually trained by the CIA.

It may be tempting to cheer Russian military action in Syria, as it seems ISIS is finally suffering some considerable losses. Press reports suggest large numbers of desertions in their ranks after the Russian attacks. All of a sudden what looked to be an inevitable ISIS takeover of Syria once Assad was overthrown, seems far less likely with the Russians on the scene.

But I cannot cheer the bombs, whether they are Russian bombs or US bombs or French or British bombs. I do not believe a terrorist group created by foreign intervention in the region will be solved by more foreign intervention in the region. Bombs represent a total failure of policy. They destroy a country’s economy and infrastructure.

I wish the American people would finally demand that their government end its destructive policy of trying to change any regime that does not bow to Washington’s demands. I wish Congress respected our Constitution enough to demand that the president seek a declaration of war before attacking a foreign country. I wish President Bush and his neocon advisors had never decided to overthrow the



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Syrian government. I wish President Obama had fired the neocons who led him from one foolish intervention to another. I wish the CIA had not trained rebels to fight alongside al-Qaeda in Syria. I wish we would reject the shrill cries of the warmongers. I wish the US media was more than just a propaganda arm of the US government.

I am not thrilled that Russia is bombing Syria. I wish nobody was bombing Syria.

Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.



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