

Headlines:

- **US Refuses to Discuss Withdrawing its Troops from ‘Sovereign’ Iraq**
- **Long-Serving British Agent Sultan Qaboos of Oman Dies**
- **Turkey and Russia Enjoying Best Relations Despite Apparent Conflict In Syria and Libya**

Details:

US Refuses to Discuss Withdrawing its Troops from ‘Sovereign’ Iraq

Contrary to the US official position that it is in Iraq at its government’s request, the US is refusing to even discuss the possibility of withdrawing troops with the Iraqi government, after its parliament voted to expel US forces. According to the *New York Times*:

The State Department on Friday rebuffed the Iraqi government’s request to begin discussions on pulling out troops, saying that any American officials going to Baghdad during a state of heightened tensions would not discuss a “troop withdrawal.” Instead, discussions would be about the “appropriate force posture in the Middle East.”

The statement from Washington was a direct rejoinder to Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi of Iraq, and was certain to add to the friction between the two nations.

The prime minister said earlier on Friday that he had asked Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to send a delegation from the United States to discuss steps for the withdrawal of the approximately 5,200 American troops from his country, in the aftermath of a deadly American military strike ordered by President Trump that many Iraqis say violated their country’s sovereignty.

“We are happy to continue the conversation with the Iraqis about what the right structure is,” Mr. Pompeo said at a news conference after the State Department had made its announcement. He stressed that the mission of the United States in Iraq was to train Iraqi forces to fight the Islamic State, and “we’re going to continue that mission.”

“But as times change and we get to a place where we can deliver up on what I believe and the president believes is our right structure, with fewer resources dedicated to that mission, we will do so,” he added.

Pressed on the issue, Mr. Trump on Friday sounded less like his secretary of state and more like he did during the presidential campaign in 2016, when he pledged to withdraw American troops from overseas conflicts.

In an interview on Fox News, the president was asked whether this was an opportunity to bring American troops home from Iraq. “I’m O.K. with it,” Mr. Trump said. But the president also said that while Iraqi officials may call for an American withdrawal in public, “They don’t say that privately.”

Iraqi lawmakers voted on Sunday to expel United States forces after the American drone strike that killed 10 people in a two-car convoy — Maj. Gen. Qassim Suleimani, a top Iranian commander, four of his Iranian aides and five Iraqis, including a senior militia leader, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis. The prime minister has not signed the bill yet, but had been criticizing the American troop presence in Iraq since a series of recent actions by the United States military.

Western Capitalist countries build their foreign policy on the method of imperialism, changing over the centuries only the styles that they employ to make this effective. The age of formal empires is over but Western imperialism only continues by other means. The legalisms employed by America, insisting that it is in Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi people, are not primarily to justify themselves before the Iraqi people, for whom the Americans have little care, but so that the Americans can justify themselves before their rival Western powers each of whom is struggling against the others to build its own foreign interests.

The American military presence in Iraq is a small component of its overall domination of Iraq and the Muslim world in general. The Iraqi government are firmly in the American grasp, and their parliament know and accept this, and are bending only momentarily to the public opinion at this time. Muslims will never be free of the Western disbelieving imperialist until they pledge their support to sincere, indigenous, ideological leadership that shall uproot Western-implanted systems of governance and return us to the comprehensive implementation of Islam.

Long-Serving British Agent Sultan Qaboos of Oman dies

After decades of long service to imperialist Britain, the Omani Sultan Qaboos has died at the age of 79. He worked tirelessly throughout his life for his English masters. According to a piece last year in the *Middle East Eye* by Mark Curtis, an expert in British imperial interests in the Middle East, Qaboos was brought to power after Britain failed to defend the regime of the previous sultan, Qaboos's father; Curtis goes on to explain Britain deep interests in the country:

When the British realised the sultan might not win the Dhofar war, their military advisers in Muscat overthrew him in a palace coup in 1970 and installed in power his son, Qaboos, who has remained there ever since. Oman became, in effect, a giant British military and intelligence base.

Files leaked by Edward Snowden show that Britain's GCHQ has a network of three spy bases in Oman – codenamed Timpani, Guitar and Clarinet – which tap in to various undersea cables passing through the Strait of Hormuz into the Arabian Gulf.

These bases intercept and process vast quantities of emails, telephone calls and web traffic. The information is then shared with the US National Security Agency.

Britain has just established a large, new military base at the Duqm port complex in central Oman, which will house the two 65,000-tonne aircraft carriers being built for the Royal Navy. This will provide “a strategically important and permanent maritime base east of Suez, but outside of the Gulf” and “serve as a staging post for UK Carrier Strike Group deployments across the Indian Ocean”.

A new Omani-British Joint Training Area is also being established in Oman this year to facilitate a permanent British army presence in the region. The relationship is solidified, as ever, by arms exports: Oman imported \$2.4bn worth of arms during 2014-18, of which the UK was the largest supplier.

British commercial interests in Oman are also growing, especially in oil and gas, which accounts for 30 percent of Oman's GDP. Shell has a 34 percent interest in the Petroleum Development Corporation, which manages the country's oil, while BP has a 60 percent interest in the massive Khazzan gas project, in which it has invested \$16bn...

Britain's active support for the sultan's regime was confirmed in 2017, when Middle East Eye revealed that the Police Service of Northern Ireland had run programmes training Oman's police, military and special forces in how to manage strikes and protests.

London remains silent on Oman's human rights abuses, while stressing their "exceptionally close relationship". Indeed, when the recently-sacked UK defence secretary, Gavin Williamson, was in Oman in February 2019, he praised the "statesmanship, the knowledge, the wisdom" of the sultan, even describing him as a "visionary".

Undoubtedly, the UK will continue to preserve its power in Oman beyond Qaboos. They will continue to employ agent rulers from amongst the corrupt and weak in our societies until we rise up and establish a state that is loyal to our Deen and our Ummah.

Turkey and Russia Enjoying Best Relations Despite Apparent Conflict in Syria and Libya

The conflicts in Syria and now Libya are portrayed as if Turkish President Erdogan and Russian President Putin are deadly opponents. But the reality is that they have a close working partnership, with Putin visiting Istanbul this week to inaugurate the TurkStream pipeline; according to *Reuters*:

The presidents of Turkey and Russia on Wednesday formally launched the TurkStream pipeline which will carry Russian natural gas to southern Europe through Turkey, part of Moscow's efforts to reduce shipments via Ukraine.

The pipeline project, stretching 930 km (580 miles) across the Black Sea, reinforces strong energy ties between Moscow and Ankara, which have also increased defense cooperation after Turkey bought advanced Russian missile defenses last year.

Russia and Turkey are also coordinating military deployments in northeast Syria, although they back opposing sides in the conflict in Syria's northwestern Idlib region and also in the battle for control of Libya.

Presidents Vladimir Putin and Tayyip Erdogan inaugurated the project at a ceremony in Istanbul also attended by the leaders of Serbia and Bulgaria.

The pipeline was a sign of "interaction and cooperation for the benefit of our people and the people of all Europe, the whole world", Putin said at the inauguration ceremony.

Russia has already started European gas deliveries through the pipeline, gas operator Bulgartransgaz said on Sunday. The pipeline terminal is near the Turkish village of Kiyikoy, some 20 km (12 miles) from the Bulgarian border.

In fact, for those who are able to see, the cooperation between Putin and Erdogan extends far beyond gas pipelines and even to Syria and Libya, where despite ostensibly supporting opposing sides Erdogan actually conspires to betray those he claims to support in favour of Assad in Syria and Haftar in Libya. Erdogan's actual loyalty is not to Putin but to America, and it is America that has involved Russia also in these two countries.

With Allah's permission, the world shall soon see the return of the righteous Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) State on the method of the Prophet (saw) that shall put an end to agent rulers supporting the foreign disbelievers' interference in Muslim lands and restore the Islamic Ummah to its rightful position as foremost nation in the world. Allah (swt) says: **﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾** **"You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. If only the People of the Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient."** [Aale Imran: 110]