Oil Supplies from the Persian Gulf May Soon be Cut Off Completely

As it’s been reported by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation with special reference to an unnamed source in the Australian government, the United States may soon launch strikes against nuclear facilities in Iran. At the same time, both the Australian and British military may be summoned by the Pentagon to support the aggression by providing assistance in the destruction of specific targets. However, it’s believed that they won’t be required to deploy any ground forces for a direct military invasion. However, it’s noteworthy that the Australian prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull announced that this information was no reason to believe that the US might be preparing for a military confrontation with Iran.

Just recently, Iran’s president Hassan Rouhani has warned Washington that it shouldn’t play with fire, or it may regret its decisions. In response, US president Donald Trump snapped that if Tehran carries on with threats, it will face unprecedented consequences.

By this point in time it’s clear that the United States is fully aware of its failure to approach the task of pushing Iranian forces along with Hezbollah out of Syria, even though it tried to get Russia on board with this plan. Continuous Israeli air strikes against the positions of Iranian proxy forces and Syria’s armed forces near the Golan
Heights proved to be equally futile. Therefore, Washington decided to change tactics by attempting to intimidate Tehran with threats. However, there’s only a handful of analysts who actually believe these threats, since most of them are aware that if Washington acts on its threats it will result in a total catastrophe for the whole region.

Further still, as part of America's other regional interference, Saudi Arabia carries on with its military aggression against Yemen. The Saudi-led coalition found itself unable to take the port city of Hodeida by force. In this situation, Tehran’s allies on the ground, namely the Houthis, decided it was time to cast a blow against the invading forces in a bid to make a point. The group leading the Houthis movement, Ansar Allah, has recently released a report that it launched strikes against the international airport of Abu Dhabi in the UAE through the use of drones. Earlier, the Houthis attacked a Saudi tanker in the Red Sea, thus disrupting oil traffic along this sea route. From Ansar Allah’s point of view, we are talking about permissible acts of warfare committed against the invading forces, namely Saudi Arabia, that has been trying to bomb Yemen back to the stone age, with the UAE spearheading ground operations in Yemen through the deployment of its own forces and mercenary formations from Sudan. These were in turn supported by local tribal militias from southern Yemen. However, most of the above-mentioned acts of war are increasingly reminiscent of state terrorism, as both the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthis are subjecting civilians to indiscriminate strikes.

That is why the conflict in Yemen is rapidly turning into a major regional challenge, especially against the backdrop of the fact that Ansar Allah is favoring the creation of a Shia clerical state – the Yemeni Imamate. At the same time, the level of legitimacy of the Houthis movement on the international stage steadily gravitates towards zero. If earlier in the conflict, an alliance that the Houthis struck with Yemen’s ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh created preconditions for the legitimization of the Houthis and provided grounds for the creation of a quasi-state in northern Yemen, then the fact that Ansar Allah assassinated this ally over certain disagreements left it with no figure capable of representing them within the international arena. Upon securing a number of tactical victories, the Houthis movement suffered a major strategical defeat. Now the destruction of Ansar Allah is only a matter of time, since has no legitimacy behind its actions.

Those facts are highly disturbing, as there were legitimate preconditions for the creation of Ansar Allah and its struggle has been just. The secular model in Yemen proved to be untenable, as the state was lost to a handful of internal contradictions, as an extremely poor country with no natural resources to speak of had been dominated by tribal agendas up until the arrival of Saleh upon the political stage. While he was in power he managed to address many challenges and find a balance between the interests of various tribes rather successfully, but never managed to modernize the tribal nature of Yemen. Therefore, it is not surprising that, like all the other states that were swept away by the so-called Arab Spring, a purely religious agenda was quickly pushed to the forefront of the day-to-day life, which led to the religious struggle among competing groups and the disintegrating of the Yemeni secular state. This was the case with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, with the Islamists in Tunisia, with terrorists in Libya, and it almost resulted in the destruction of Syria due to the rise of ISIS.

The problem in Yemen is that Iran lent support to Shia radical project known as Ansar Allah, which elevated the struggle in Yemen to a regional level. Unlike radical forces coming out of nowhere in Syria, Libya, and Egypt, the Ansar Allah movement has been fighting the secular regime for decades, since the Houthis started their struggle against the Saleh government long before the so-called Arab Spring began.

Most people are unaware that before becoming an all-consuming monster that was struck down by a broad coalition of states, ISIS had existed for some time as well, evolving through a series of defeats and revivals. But if ISIS managed to cut its ties with external players, preferring to fight alone, Ansar Allah never had the resources of the Islamic State, which forced it into surrendering itself to Iran. And now it is rather difficult to understand where the independent actions of the movement end, and where the regional policies of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps begins. The project that Tehran has been pursuing, the creation of the so-called Shia Crescent across the Middle East, will inevitably result in the downfall of Iran, since the capabilities of its opponents in the face of Saudi Arabia, Israel and the United States are far superior to anything that Iran can bring to the table. Although so far the alignment of regional forces along with the time factor are on the side of Iran, things may and will change. The notorious IRGC has nothing to offer to Iran itself. The idea of the construction of a clerical state in Iran has exhausted itself, as the number of internal contradictions in Iran is rapidly accumulating. Military expansion of the IRGC in the region is just an attempt to shift these contradictions some place far away, in vain hopes that they will not corrode Iranian society from the inside. Therefore, the Ansar Allah movement is doomed. At best, it will be able to negotiate partial political autonomy with the future government of Yemen. However, its reliance on Tehran will eventually be the end of the Houthis movement. Arabian monarchies will never allow their adversary to enjoy a foothold in the immediate vicinity of their most important sea trade route, no matter how much time and resources
they waste.

However, these days the Houthis have made the entire international community worried, as they managed to bring the supply of Saudi and Kuwaiti oil through the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait to a screeching halt, which resulted in Riyadh and Kuwait City announcing a temporary suspension of all oil shipment across the Red Sea. This situation represents a major energy threat to Europe, although it hasn’t reached a critical point yet. But time’s being wasted, as against the backdrop of Tehran’s recent threats to block the Strait of Hormuz, if the US decides to launch strikes against it, the EU might find itself in a tight corner soon. The only thing Brussels can do in this situation is to begin negotiations with Moscow, and play a role in the settlement of the Yemeni conflict for the Red Sea to become secure again. It was amid this realization that Russia’s foreign minister Sergey Lavrov made a trip go Germany together with Russia’s current Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov. Apperently, Washington’s threat to bring the North Stream-2 to a close together with Pentagon’s possible assault of Iran, resulted in German chancellor Angela Merkel panicking, as options narrow for protecting European energy security without demanding assistance.

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