

Corrupt and Duplicitous Putin Sells Out Ally Once AGAIN

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Putin and Netanyahu Were on the Same Side All Along

The sooner Putin is eliminated, one way or the other, the better for Russia and the prospect of world Peace.

After Iran assisted Russia in liberating Syria by supporting the ground offensive, Putin, true to character, has back-stabbed Iran, read on.



Putin

As Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman meets his Russian counterpart [Thursday in Moscow](#) to discuss the arrangements for keeping Iran and its proxies away from Israel's border with [Syria](#), they will be merely formalizing an understanding between the two countries that has long been in the making. It should have been clear from the beginning of the Russian involvement in Syria nearly three years ago that, when forced to choose between Israel and Iran, Vladimir Putin would come out on Israel's side.

This has little if anything to do with Putin's own special brand of philo-semitism. The Russian president is not the sentimental type. He favors Israel because it is currently the only regional power capable of ruining his plans. Putin, who wanted to ensure that the Bashar Assad regime survived in Syria, had a shared interest with Iran, which sees Syria as part of its axis of influence in the region. Iran supplied the ground forces to prop up the Assad regime, which in mid-2015 was very close to collapse. Not so much its own troops, but its proxy Lebanese militia Hezbollah and tens of thousands of Afghan refugees, who were paid or press-ganged into joining the Fatemiyoun brigades, that Iran financed, armed and sent to Syria.

Putin, for political reasons, did not want to risk too many Russian soldiers in Syria. Coffins coming home would have eroded his popularity. Moscow supplied the air-power and the combination of Russian Sukhoi fighter jets bombing rebel enclaves from thousands of feet, and Iranian-paid Shi'ite fighters mopping up the survivors, saved Bashar Assad. Now that the war in Syria has been decided in Assad's favor, the Russians have less need for Tehran's boots on the ground.

Russia of course has no plans to leave Syria. It is its client state and thanks to the Assad regime, Russia has its coveted warm-water ports on the Mediterranean. Iran wants to remain as well, but Israel sees the Iranian long-term presence as a strategic threat and since Russia has little need for Iran either, the choice is clear.

Throughout Russia's presence in Syria, Israel didn't attack the Iranian-backed ground forces - just the convoys and depots of advanced missiles that could be used in the future by Hezbollah or Iranian officers to strike Israel. Jerusalem's circumspection in not targeting the elements that Russia needed to prop up Assad, along with Israel's assurances to Moscow that it has no intention in intervening in the battle for power in Damascus, ensured that the two countries were never on opposite sides of the war.

Now that Assad is back in control of most of Syria and rolling back the few remaining pockets of rebels, Putin is keenly aware that the only regional force that can seriously ruin his plans, should it choose to do so, is Israel. Iran can't and won't jeopardize Assad. In addition, Iran can't turn against Russia since it needs its commercial ties with Moscow more than ever, now that the Trump administration has pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal and re-imposed sanctions on Tehran.

The week after the first Russian aircraft landed at Syria's Khmeimim airbase in September 2015, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was in Moscow, agreeing on ground-rules with Putin. Ever since, Israel has continued carrying out its periodic airstrikes on Iranian and Hezbollah assets in Syria, with barely an occasional bland diplomatic protest from the Kremlin. Effectively Israel was allowed free rein to attack targets that were ostensibly under Russia's air-defense umbrella. The understanding was clear - Israel would not do anything that could hamper Russia's campaign to save Assad. Everything else was fair game.

Netanyahu was the first to understand that as soon as former U.S. President Barack Obama had broken his own commitment and decided not to respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons against Syrian citizens, the United States had ceased to become a serious player in the region. Putin inserted himself into the vacuum created by Obama and Netanyahu moved quickly to establish his own arrangement with the Russian leader. As the Sukhois landed in Syria, many Israeli security officials and experts fretted that Israel's freedom of operation over Syria was over. But one of their colleagues in Moscow said: "You'll see. Putin respects Israel's military force. And Putin and Netanyahu understand each other. They will find a way to get along."

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