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Does the U.S. army intend to leave Syria?

Last December, the U.S. President Donald Trump announced that the Pentagon started the process of withdrawing its troops from Syria. Even then, many people were quite skeptical about the words of the American president while a number of political analysts and experts noted that the Americans are unlikely to pull out their troops from Syria, taking into account the interests of Washington in the Middle East.

It is also worth noting that in April, 2018, before the aforementioned statement by the American president, Nikki Haley, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, speaking on Fox News said that the United States would not withdraw its troops from Syria until its goals were accomplished. Haley listed three aims for the United States: ensuring that chemical weapons are not used in any way that pose a risk to U.S. interests, that Islamic State is defeated and that there is a good vantage point to watch what Iran is doing. Apparently the goals have not been achieved, that's why Defense secretary nominee Mark Esper recently confirmed the true intentions of the Pentagon, stating that the U.S. Armed Forces will remain in Syria and continue the military campaign against ISIS. In addition, in February, the American newspaper The Wall Street Journal conveyed the words of a senior U.S. defense official who revealed the plans of Washington. US forces will stay in the northern Syrian city of Manbij, where they will continue to conduct joint patrols with their Turkish counterparts. A second group will be based east of the Euphrates River Valley as part of a safe zone between Turkey and Syria. Those U.S. forces also will help train and advise local fighters.

A third contingent will remain in the southern city of al-Tanf, as part of a counter-ISIS campaign and a buffer against Iranian expansion in that region, the defense official said.

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Thus, it becomes obvious that the words of Donald Trump about his readiness to let Syria alone are just empty promises that do not reflect the true intentions of the White House. The above statement by Mark Esper also looks quite timely, especially given the increased tensions between Iran and the United States.

Moreover, we do not ignore the fact that the possible withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria could cause a serious split inside the U.S. establishment. Back in December, 2018, Trump's alleged intentions towards Syria caused a flurry of criticism. For example, the Republican senator and Trump supporter Lindsay Graham blasted the American president's decision describing it as "a huge Obama-like mistake". So even if Trump really wanted to finally withdraw the American troops from Syria, he simply wouldn't be allowed to do this without hindrance.

As a result, there is no doubt that the United States will continue its illegal presence in Syria. The Pentagon does not intend to abandon its plans, which primarily lie in constraining Iran and its nuclear program. At the same time, the veil is no longer important. The Americans will continue to violate the sovereignty of an independent state justifying their crimes either by a military operation against ISIS or by a response to the alleged use of chemical weapons by Syrian government forces.

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