

Beat: Local

# SYRIA DECISION WILL BE THE LATEST BLOW TO BARACK OBAMA MIDDLE EAST LEGACY

## PROMISES TO NOT PUT BOOTS ON THE GROUND

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**USPA NEWS** - The White House announced on Friday that a small number of special forces will be put on the ground in the fight against the Islamic State in Syria , a new strategy that clearly contradicts past Barack Obama and his Administration statements that United States forces...

The White House announced on Friday that a small number of special forces will be put on the ground in the fight against the Islamic State in Syria , a new strategy that clearly contradicts past Barack Obama and his Administration statements that United States forces would not be put on the ground there. The White House repeatedly emphasized this point, a move to assure the Nation that they wouldn't be drawn into a new war like Iraq or Afghanistan.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest claimed there was still a difference of "night and day" compared with the Bush administration's invasions, but in the space of a few short weeks a central promise of Obama's presidential campaign has been undermined: first by conceding that he will not meet his pledge of removing troops from Afghanistan before he leaves office and now by acknowledging a long-term ground presence is necessary not just in Iraq, but Syria too. (The Guardian)

Asked Friday about the incongruence of Obama's past comments and putting these boots on the ground, White House press secretary Josh Earnest repeatedly emphasized that these are not combat troops -- a distinction that many disagree with, we would note -- and suggested promises to not put boots on the ground were being taken 'out of context.' (Washington Post)

This past week, Obama has made another promise that he may not be able to keep. "I want the American people to understand how this effort will be different from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan," the president said last week when he announced the new strategy to degrade the Islamic State. "It will not involve American combat troops fighting on foreign soil." While those two sentences may assuage the public, they are disingenuous. We don't know how these military engagements will unfold. If we've learned anything from Iraq and Afghanistan, it is that the Middle East is unpredictable and we must be prepared for everything. (New Republic Sept 2014)

'It's a little strange. All of things that they are announcing today, they are already doing in an ad hoc fashion, apart from the fact that the troops in Syria are going to be long term,' says Emma Ashford of the Cato Institute.

Instead, the deployment looks more like an act of symbolism by the US on the eve of crucial peace talks in Vienna, which are led by secretary of state of John Kerry and joined for the first time by the foreign minister of Iran.

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