Plans, rumors, and war

propaganda for attacking Syria and deposing

Assad have been around for

many months. This past week, however,

it was reported that the Pentagon

indeed was finalizing plans to do just

that.

In my opinion, all the evidence to

justify this attack is bogus. It is no

more credible than the pretext given

for the 2003 invasion of Iraq or for the

2011 attack on Libya.

The total waste of those wars should

cause us to pause before this all-out effort

at occupation and regime change

is initiated against Syria. There are no

national security concerns that require

such a foolish escalation of violence in

the Middle East. There should be no

doubt that our security interests are

best served by completely staying out

of the internal strife now raging in

Syria. We are already too much involved

in supporting the forces within

Syria anxious to overthrow their current

government. Without outside interference,

the strife, now characterized

as a civil war, would likely be nonexistent.

Whether or not we attack yet another

country, occupying it and setting

up another regime that we hope we can

control, poses a serious constitutional

question: From where does a President

get such authority?

Since World War II, the proper authority

to go to war has been ignored.

It has been replaced by international

entities like the United Nations and

NATO, or the President, himself, while

ignoring the Congress. And sadly, the

people don’t object.

Our recent Presidents explicitly

maintain that the authority to go to

war is not the U.S. Congress’. This has

been the case since the 1950s, when we

were first taken into war in Korea

under a UN resolution and without congressional

approval. Once again, we are

about to engage in military action

against Syria, and at the same time irresponsibly

reactivating the Cold War

with Russia. We’re now engaged in a

game of ‘‘chicken’’ with Russia, which

presents a much greater threat to our

security than does Syria.

Would we tolerate Russia in Mexico

demanding a humanitarian solution to

the violence on the U.S.-Mexican border?

We would consider that a legitimate

concern for us. But for us to be

engaged in Syria, where the Russians

have a legal naval base, is equivalent

to the Russians being in our backyard

in Mexico.

We are hypocritical when we condemn

Russia for protecting its neighborhood

interests, as we claim we are

doing the same ourselves thousands of

miles from our shore. There’s no benefit

for us to be picking sides, secretly

providing assistance and encouraging

civil strife in an effort to effect regime

change in Syria. Falsely charging the

Russians with supplying military helicopters

to Assad is an unnecessary

provocation. Falsely blaming the Assad

government for a so-called massacre

perpetrated by a violent warring rebel

faction is nothing more than war propaganda.

Most knowledgeable people now recognize

that to plan war against Syria

is merely the next step to take on the

Iranian Government, something the

neoconservatives openly admit. Controlling

Iranian oil, just as we have

done in Saudi Arabia and are attempting

to do in Iraq, is the real goal of the

neoconservatives who have been in

charge of our foreign policy for the

past couple of decades.

War is inevitable without a significant

change in our foreign policy—and

soon. Disagreements between our two

political parties are minor.

Both agree that sequestration of any

war funds must be canceled. Neither

side wants to abandon our aggressive

and growing presence in the Middle

East and South Asia.

This crisis building can easily get out

of control and become a much bigger

war than just another routine occupation

and regime change that the American

people have grown to accept or ignore.

It’s time the United States tried a

policy of diplomacy, seeking peace,

trade, and friendship. We must abandon

our military effort to promote and secure

an American empire.

Besides, we’re broke. We can’t afford

it. And worst of all, we’re fulfilling the

strategy laid out by Osama bin Laden,

whose goal had always been to bog us

down in the Middle East and bring on

our bankruptcy here at home.

It’s time to bring our troops home

and establish a noninterventionist foreign

policy, which is the only road to

peace and prosperity.

This week I’m introducing legislation

to prohibit the administration, absent

a declaration of war by Congress, from

supporting—directly or indirectly—any

military or paramilitary operations in

Syria. I hope my colleagues will join

me in this effort.