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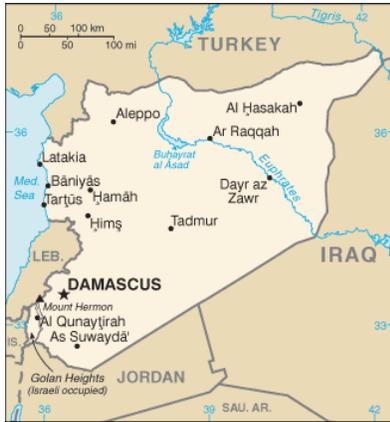
Attacking Syria, US Bolsters al-Qaeda-Dominated Rebels

By Jason Ditz

August 27, 2013

When the US attacks a nation with an ongoing civil war, the underlying assumption has always been that they are backing the rebels, and whatever collection of warlords and military defectors happens to make up that rebellion suddenly becomes the avatar of international democracy. In Afghanistan it was the Northern Alliance, in Libya it was the LNC. In Syria, it's al-Qaeda.

And that's a bridge too far. Not that it's going to stop the US from launching a war that directly benefits al-Qaeda, but they're not going to publicize that fact, and rather seem to be going to great lengths to avoid the implications of the war they're about to start.



The reality is that the US war on Syria is bringing the al-Qaeda dominated rebels closer to power, and that even though the US isn't going to be directly coordinating its attacks with al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), at least one assumes not, they will be the de facto air force for them.

The administration is trying to present the idea that this new war is completely distinct from the ongoing Syrian war, even though they're both in the exact same place and against the same government, but it doesn't make a lot of sense.

Indeed, this idea that the US doesn't expect their attacks to do anything, and is just a military operation with no military goals and an agenda of just really sticking it to Assad, is an excuse that they've been forced into simply to avoid admitting that the war risks turning Syria into a foreign-dominated Islamist caliphate with al-Qaeda at the helm.