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US Will Focus on Ousting Assad ‘to Defeat ISIS’

By Jason Ditz

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The Obama Administration today realized what everyone else has known for quite some time, that their strategy in the new ISIS war is simply not working. Unfortunately, they seem to be shifting toward even deeper escalation of the war, particularly in Syria.

Officials are now describing the “Iraq first, then Syria” strategy for destroying ISIS as “untenable,” and while continuing to present the war goal as the destruction of ISIS, they seem to be heading down the road of less direct conflict with them.

Instead, the new Syria strategy appears to be the military removal of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, even though his forces are the major significant anti-ISIS force inside Syria, and officials

now seem to believe that ousting Assad first and cobbling together a new regime from the non-existent “moderate” factions that the Pentagon is supposed to be creating, is the key to the war.

Which is to say that the war is even less tenable than it was before, as between attacks on ISIS, Nusra, and Islamic Front fighters, and now the Assad government, the US is fighting materially all of the combat forces inside Syria at the same time, even the ones that are aligned with their publicly-stated goals.

Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R – GA) cheered the announcement, while pushing for further escalation, insisting the war needed more boots on the ground. Chambliss was similarly vague on how this new strategy would even conceivably work, saying only that the US would have to hope some moderate faction would emerge and benefit the US in some unforeseen way.

The policy, in that regard, isn't so much changed as simply escalated, as US policy has from the start been to do things that don't make any sense, and to keep fingers crossed that their war will be won in spite of themselves.