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US Too Afraid to Bomb Syria After Russia Cuts Communication Channels

US bombing missions over Syria are way down since the missile attack on April 6



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US just made much of its strike force useless

By striking the Syrian military on April 6 with cruise missiles the US demonstrated 'resolve'. So much 'resolve' that it is now afraid to fly over Syria lest the Russians shoot them down.

US officials told The New York Times:

The American-led task force that is battling the Islamic State **has sharply reduced airstrikes** against the militants in Syria **as commanders assess whether Syrian government forces or their Russian allies plan to respond to the United States' cruise missile strike** on a Syrian airfield this past week, American officials said.

Quite apart from showing what a tough guy Trump is, the US strike has robbed its Syrian proxies of the support they enjoyed before, and at a time when the Battle for Raqqa intensifies.

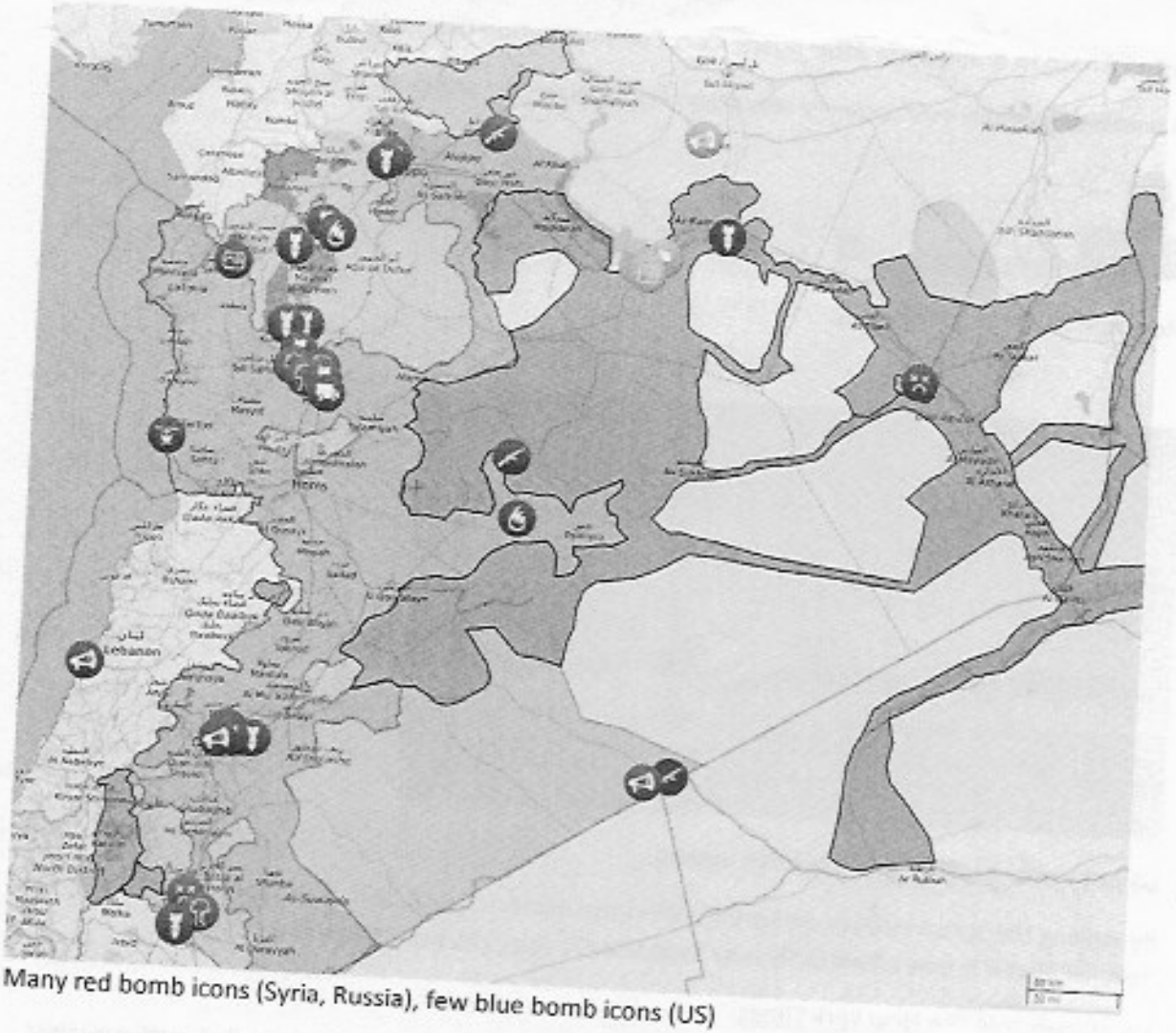
The US is now limiting itself to just the most essential strikes and accompanying these with expensive F-22 fighter jets. (Belgium meanwhile suspended all strikes.)

US insecurity is not only due to their cruise missile strike, but more specifically due to the Russian reaction to it. Immediately after it the Russians suspended the "deconfliction" hotline with the Americans, who now have to guess at the Russians' intentions.

There has not been a comparable drop in Syrian and Russian air strikes. Indeed numerous strikes on rebel positions were reported over the weekend.

It is both in US and Russian interests that the deconfliction hotline is restored but Americans need it more urgently — giving the Russians some leverage.

Far from boosting US prestige, the April 6th strike and its aftermath will have reduced it in the eyes of attentive observers.



Many red bomb icons (Syria, Russia), few blue bomb icons (US)