

US Airstrikes Killing Hundreds of Civilians in Syria's Raqqa

Strikes Meant to 'Support' Kurdish Invasion of ISIS City

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Heavy US airstrikes in densely populated residential areas have, throughout the ISIS war, proven a recipe for massive civilian casualties. This is increasingly the prevailing theme in the ISIS capital of Raqqa, [where US strikes are killing many hundreds of civilians](#).

Earlier this week, [at least 100 civilians were killed in a span on 48 hours](#) in Raqqa. Observers put the figure at 168 in the past 10 days, and 458 in US airstrikes against the city since June, including 134 children.

These strikes are meant to support the Kurdish invasion of Raqqa, but the fact that they are pounding residential districts in a war-torn city means that a lot of what they're hitting are buildings packed with civilian bystanders.

The Pentagon has continued to defend the practice, insisting they are the most careful military in history about civilian casualties, and pointing to their own official bodycounts, which are usually less than 10% of the number documented by NGOs.

Perhaps even more importantly, these strikes really aren't doing much to support the Kurdish invasion, as the Kurdish forces have been described as holding about 45% of the city for the last several weeks, and despite a marked increase in US strikes and civilian deaths, don't seem to be making any progress.

The [UN is even pushing the US to halt](#) its airstrikes against the city indefinitely, saying another 20,000 civilians should be allowed to flee without fearing being a target of US airstrikes. There is, as yet, no indication that is being seriously considered.

Jason Ditz is news editor of [Antiwar.com](#).

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