



Private Group Sought to Arm Syrian Rebels

A group led by a former Pentagon official devised a plan to supply moderate Syrian rebels with weapons sourced in Eastern Europe and financed by a wealthy Saudi, and it ran into flak from the CIA

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Former Department of Defense official Joseph Schmitz
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For one group of Americans, that wasn't enough. On their own, the Americans offered to provide 70,000 Russian-made assault rifles and 21 million rounds of ammunition to the Free Syrian Army, a major infusion they said could be a game changer. With a tentative nod from the rebels, the group set about arranging a weapons shipment from Eastern Europe, to be paid for by a Saudi prince.

The weapons never made it to Syria. As the private group worked to complete its deal, a surprise showdown in Jordan forced it to put its plan on hold.