

“More Lies for War”: Barack Obama, President and “Liar-in-Chief”

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Barack Obama’s September 10 speech on Syria was packaged, and is being “debated,” as a defense of his policies and his latest diplomatic moves.

But framing and underneath all that, the basis on which everyone is supposed to think and act is as big a collection of incredible lies as has ever been assembled in a speech, starting with Obama’s assertion that “the world’s a better place” because for “nearly seven decades the United States has been the anchor of global security.”

As is Obama’s claim that the U.S. mission in Syria is driven by opposition to “the terrible nature of chemical weapons.”

As is his assertion that the motive of the U.S. is to “stop children from being gassed to death and thereby make our own children safer over the long run.”

Libraries full of books, decades of documentaries, and the testimony of hundreds of millions of victims of what the U.S. has brought to the world would hardly begin to reveal the extent to which these are all LIES

“Nearly Seven Decades” of Mass Murder – Including of Children

Obama: “The world’s a better place” because for “nearly seven decades the United States has been the anchor of global security.”

Let us fast-forward through U.S. history to those “nearly seven decades.” Past the genocide of Native Americans and the theft of their land, including the “Trail of Tears” where tens of thousands were driven off their lands in the southeastern U.S. and forced to march to Oklahoma—of 15,000 relocated Cherokees, 4,000 died on the march; yes, including many children. And let us fast-forward past *slavery*, where hundreds of thousands of people, kidnapped from Africa, were worked from “can’t see” in the morning to “can’t see” at night. And the legacy of children ripped from their parents, sold to other slave masters. All to build the foundation for much of what made America into the global empire it is today.

Let’s pause at just a few events in the “nearly seven decades” Obama claims that the U.S. was making the world “a better place.”

Those decades were launched with, and in important ways defined—militarily, politically, and morally—by the most concentrated mass murder of civilians in human history. The U.S. atomic bomb attacks on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the firebombing of Tokyo in 1945 killed 200,000 civilians, some burned to death on the spot, others dying

torturous deaths from radiation poisoning, with survivors and humanity as a whole traumatized. (See from *A World to Win News Service*, "[From Hiroshima and Nagasaki to Today: Reporting American Crimes Against Humanity](#)")

Eight years later, the U.S. was "making the world a better place" through the Korean War. Of the U.S. invasion of Korea in 1950, U.S. Air Force General Curtis LeMay boasted that U.S. planes "burned down every town in North Korea." The U.S. used more bombs and artillery shells in Korea than in all of World War 2, and used *napalm*—a chemical weapon more terrifying and "effective" against military and civilian targets than the older sarin gas the U.S. accuses Syria's Bashar al-Assad of using. An estimated five million people were killed in that war, three million of them civilians.

In the U.S. war of aggression against Vietnam, from 1965-1975, the U.S. continued to make the world "a better place" and along the way demonstrated how much it cares about children by dropping more than seven million tons of bombs on Vietnam and the neighboring countries of Cambodia and Laos before being driven out in 1975, killing an estimated three million Vietnamese—again, many of them children. Typical of the logic and morality of the U.S. military was the infamous statement by one U.S. military commander who directed the burning down of a whole peasant village and then said, "We had to destroy the village in order to save it." In massacres as at the village of My Lai, and in the "cluster bombs" they dropped, the U.S. specifically aimed to kill civilians—including children—at random.

And in response to the arguments of defenders of U.S. imperialism, including liberal "critics" who insist "that was then, this is now," the U.S. *still* provides cluster bombs for use against civilians. In 2006, the U.S. Senate voted, 70-30, to defeat an amendment to a Pentagon budget bill which would have banned the use of cluster bombs near populated civilian areas. That enabled the U.S. to continue to supply cluster bombs to Israel to use in an invasion of Lebanon. (See "[Victims of Israel's Cluster Bombs](#)," Revolution #61, September 17, 2006, at revcom.us)

Obama rails against Assad as a "tyrant." But over "nearly seven decades" the United States *installed* many of the most brutal tyrants who carried out some of the most massive crimes against their own people in history. In 1965, the U.S. orchestrated a reactionary coup in Indonesia and the slaughter of one million communists and others. The massacres were so wanton that in parts of the country, the rivers were choked with bodies and blood. The fascist gangs and Islamic fundamentalists enlisted along with regular military and police to carry out these massacres used and reveled in the most depraved and sadistic means of torturing and killing people to spread widespread terror, including among children. The deaths of communists were then reported to officials at the U.S. embassy who crossed off the names of the dead from lists they had provided to the Indonesian butchers.

The fact that this history is not taught in schools, or acknowledged in acceptable discourse, does not mean these things didn't really happen. Readers are challenged to look these up for themselves, and send the results of what they find to revolution.reports@yahoo.com.

Dealing with the Legacy of Iraq

Here's one bit of actual truth that nearly everyone does know: The Iraq war was based on LIES.

Obama claimed in his speech that he was determined not to repeat what happened in Iraq and Afghanistan. As if simply avoiding U.S. “boots on the ground” should be the measuring stick for whether or not the U.S. is *again* carrying out the same kinds of crimes it carried out in Iraq and Afghanistan. Justified with THE SAME BASIC SET OF LIES!

Set aside, for a moment, the fact that the U.S. invasion of Iraq was justified by TOTAL LIES about Saddam Hussein’s supposed “weapons of mass destruction.” Set aside, for a moment, the fact that the media, including the liberal *New York Times*, channeled these lies and gave them credibility.

Consider instead the self-righteous claims by the likes of Dick Cheney and George W. Bush that the U.S. was motivated by and driven to attack Iraq because “Saddam Hussein is a man who is willing to gas his own people, willing to use weapons of mass destruction against Iraq citizens.” (President Bush, March 22, 2002)

Saddam Hussein did gas Kurdish people in Iraq in 1988—something the U.S. *facilitated*, by the way, including through encouraging the Kurds to rebel and then stabbing them in the back, and through making it possible—including through allies—for Hussein to obtain poison gas. And Saddam Hussein did torture his opponents in Abu Ghraib prison (remember the name of that prison, we’ll come back to it).

But the U.S. invasion of Iraq, and, importantly, *the “diplomatic” moves the U.S. carried out against Hussein*—namely sanctions, made things exponentially, horribly worse for the people of Iraq.

Operation Desert Storm, 1991, the first U.S. invasion of Iraq, killed or injured hundreds of thousands—over 25,000 civilians and fleeing soldiers were killed in 48 hours on the “Highway of Death.” Then, after the war, the U.S. continued “making the world a better place” and demonstrating care for children through sanctions that killed some 500,000 children in Iraq—*killed because of those U.S. sanctions* that prevented them from getting needed medicine, clean water, and nutrition. And this crime was justified by a future U.S. Secretary of State as “a very hard choice, but the price—we think the price is worth it.” (*60 Minutes*, May 12, 1996)

In 2003, the U.S. and its allies again invaded Iraq—once again making the world “a better place.” During and after the war, between 600,000 and one million Iraqis were killed, and over *four million* were driven from their homes. (See “[Mortality after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: a cross-sectional cluster survey](#)” *The Lancet*, October 12, 2006). One can debate whether the invasion of Iraq was a good move from the perspective of “the national interests of the United States.” But *these* deaths are almost never mentioned in the mainstream media.

And the U.S. turned Abu Ghraib prison into *their* hellish torture chamber, with U.S. military personnel bragging on social media and in emails of sadistic torture, murder, sexual abuse, water boarding, beatings, sleep deprivation, humiliation, and dog attacks.

Today Iraq is wracked with terrible sectarian violence (different religious and ethnic factions killing each other). During the U.S. occupation much of that was directly orchestrated by the U.S. in the tradition of colonial “divide and conquer” strategies, but all of it greatly exacerbated in one way or another by the U.S. invasion and the legacy and present-day reality of imperialist domination.

The same can be said about Afghanistan. And one can literally spin a globe of the planet, point to a country, and find crimes carried out by the U.S.

All this misery is a product of how their imperialist *system* works. It is a *system* that, by its nature, is driven to exploit the people and resources of the world, to contend and compete with rivals big and small, global and regional, over their ability to do that, which is *driven by its nature* to enforce all this with the most brutal violence.

Think about what kind of a SYSTEM is represented by a liar-in-chief who can look back on a record like this, look earnestly into the cameras, and talk about nearly seven decades of “enforcing” what he calls “international agreements” that he claims made the world “a better place.”

“The United States military doesn’t do pinpricks”... and Diplomacy

Far, far too many of those who Obama would refer to as “on the Left” are breathing a sigh of relief that Obama is turning to “diplomacy” instead of launching a military strike—at this moment. But thuggish threats and violent crimes on the one hand and diplomacy on the other are two sides of the same coin.

Speaking to a world population that is much more aware than are people in the U.S. of the legacy of U.S. violent crimes around the world, and speaking to (and embracing) the “hawks” in the ruling class and good ole boys watching on TV, Obama put on his stern face, looked into the cameras, and made this ominous declaration and threat:

“Let me make something clear: The United States military doesn’t do pinpricks.”

U.S. diplomacy *rests on violence and threats of violence*, and is aimed at the same ends as violence of enforcing exploitation and oppression, fending off rivals, and keeping people enslaved. If Tony Soprano establishes the freedom to set up and run drug dealing, prostitution, and extortion in a district by *threatening* to strangle someone (a threat that only means something because everyone knows he actually strangles people), how is that something to celebrate?

And, again, look at Iraq, where U.S. sanctions (“diplomacy”) killed hundreds of thousands of children, and softened up Iraq for the 2003 invasion and all the horrors that came with that.

Stop Thinking Like Americans

On the basis of a world of lies, Obama proclaimed: “Our ideals and principles, as well as our national security, are at stake in Syria, along with our leadership of a world where we seek to ensure that the worst weapons will never be used.”

First of all, given that Obama is speaking for a ruling class of imperialists who have carried out the greatest crimes against humanity in history, WHO THE FUCK WOULD WANT TO IDENTIFY WITH THE “IDEALS AND PRINCIPLES” behind what Obama calls “our” national security!?! Those are NOT “OUR” ideals and principles. They are the “ideals and principles” of a murderous, sadistic, depraved imperialist ruling class driven to subjugate, dominate, and terrorize the planet.

So why would anyone want to “debate” what the United States should do in Syria based on THOSE interests? Unless they identify with ensuring that the U.S. imperialist ruling class can

continue to dominate the planet, violently enforcing a system of sweatshops and slums, environmental devastation, and a system whose culture and “traditions” have produced an epidemic of rape.

Get Out of the Terms of THEIR Debate, and Get INTO Revolution

- Does Obama deserve credit for the negotiations now because he took a “strong stand? Or does America look weak for backing down on the threat of an attack on Syria?
- Can the Russians be partners for U.S. objectives in Syria, or should they be put in their place in the imperialist pecking order more decisively now?”
- Is a limited military strike possible? Or will it draw “us” into a wider conflict?
- Etc., etc., etc.

The answer(s): NONE OF THE ABOVE!

The American public is being trained to think in these terms through Obama’s speech, and through endless spinning and “debate” among media pundits who are allowed access to mainstream media. But people who have the ability to think critically and have the moral sense to look at things from the standpoint of the interests of HUMANITY have to loudly and clearly REJECT THESE TERMS in all kinds of ways, including connecting that outlook with, and encouraging political protests against, any U.S. moves against Syria.

It is an unfortunate fact that among the forces “in the field” in Syria, none of them represent the interests of the people—including the regime and its allies and the motley collection of jihadists and more pro-U.S. forces. Beyond that, two reactionary forces are setting overall terms in the Middle East—“the West” (capitalism-imperialism, led by the U.S.) and—on a much lesser scale but equally reactionary—Islamic Jihad. And other reactionary powers (like Russia) are maneuvering for their own interests in the devastating civil war in Syria that has killed over 100,000 and made refugees of *a million people*.

But none of this should be an excuse for inaction and disorientation by people who oppose a U.S. attack. Just the opposite. An important editorial at revcom.us, “[Syria: No War for Imperialist Interests!](#)” bears ongoing study as a reference point for everyone who finds intolerable the “choices” of different ways of bringing oppression and suffering to the people of Syria. That editorial discusses the problems the imperialist system is facing right now, including that because of real difficulties, obstacles, and dangers to the U.S. empire involved in various scenarios they are debating, it may actually not be a settled question whether the U.S. attacks Syria. In short, there is both a moral and political basis to oppose *any* U.S. attack on Syria in any form, *and* openings to wage political protest *on that basis*.

And as the [editorial](#) we referenced earlier notes, this is a “teachable moment”—part of transforming people *for revolution* that will bring to an end this system that has perpetrated such terrible crimes against humanity.

As part of that, this is a critical moment to bring boldly into every sphere of public life the message of *BAsics* 3:8. In the words of Bob Avakian:

The interests, objectives, and grand designs of the imperialists are not our interests—they are not the interests of the great majority of people in the U.S. nor of the overwhelming majority of people in the world as a whole. And the difficulties the imperialists have gotten themselves into in pursuit of these

interests must be seen, and responded to, not from the point of view of the imperialists and their interests, but from the point of view of the great majority of humanity and the basic and urgent need of humanity for a different and better world, for another way.

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