

## Obama Signals Start of US War in Syria

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The Obama Administration's sudden announcement last night that it has discovered the Syrian government used chemical weapons and thus crossed the "red line" is pretty unconvincing. The Administration provided no evidence, no new information, and no explanation of why the intelligence community's assessment of just three months ago that chemical weapons had not been used by the Syrian government has changed so dramatically.

What changed? They won't tell us. The Administration spokesman who made the announcement would only say that they have a "high confidence in that assessment given multiple, independent streams of information." What are those streams of information? They won't tell us.

It reminds me of a decade ago, when another presidential spokesman came forward to tell us:

"But make no mistake — as I said earlier — we have high confidence that they have weapons of mass destruction. That is what this war was about and it is about. And we have high confidence it will be found."

That was President Bush's spokesman Ari Fleischer speaking about Iraq in early 2003.

Those who have been shown this evidence are not too impressed. An aide to Russian President Putin said today that the US side "tried to present us with information on the use of chemical weapons by the regime, but frankly we thought that it was not convincing."

The Administration has announced that based on this new information, it would begin providing weapons to the Syrian opposition. This is of course another stretch of the truth, as it is well known that the Administration has been facilitating the transfer of weapons to the Syrian rebels for quite some time. The CIA is training the rebels in Jordan. The New York Times and other major media have reported on this numerous times.

But it is true that President Obama is taking us further toward war in Syria. And it is true that again Congress is taking no role in the matter, beyond the usual cheerleading by warhawks like McCain and Lindsey Graham.

Perhaps the Obama administration, seeing the multitude of scandals that have broken over the past several weeks, has decided to take a page from Bill Clinton, who famously bombed a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan on August 20, 1998, just three days after he was forced to appear at a grand jury hearing investigating the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

I will have more on this developing news on Sunday in my weekly column. You can subscribe

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