

Syria and Obama's Humiliating Defeat

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When presidents fail, it is a public spectacle. In his rush into unprovoked war against Syria, President Obama overplayed his hand. Shortly before he appeared on television on Wednesday, "Obama's handlers advised him that his political position was, for the time being, untenable." But he'll soon be back on the warpath, meaner and more aggressive than ever.

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It was a strange speech, in which the real news was left for last, popping out like a Jack-in-the-Box after 11 minutes of growls and snarls and Obama's bizarre whining about how unfair it is to be restrained from making war on people who have done you no harm. The president abruptly switched from absurd, lie-based justifications for war to his surprise announcement that, no, Syria's turn to endure Shock and Awe had been postponed. The reader suddenly realizes that the diplomatic developments had been hastily cut and pasted into the speech, probably only hours before. Obama had intended to build the case for smashing Assad to an imperial peroration – a laying down of the law from on high. But his handlers threw in the towel, for reasons both foreign and domestic. Temporarily defeated, Obama will be back on the Syria warpath as soon as the proper false flag operations can be arranged.



The president's roiling emotions, visible through his eyes, got in the way of his oratorical skills. But then, he didn't have much material to work with, just an endless string of prevarications and half-truths strung almost randomly together. Obama, who was reluctantly asking permission from Congress to violate the most fundamental tenets of international law – permission that Congress is not empowered to give – framed Syria as a rogue nation because it has not signed a treaty on chemical weapons like "98 percent of humanity." This makes Syria ripe for bombing. The president does not explain that Syria's neighbors, Israel and Egypt – both U.S. allies – have also not signed the treaty. He does not suggest bombing Tel Aviv or Cairo.

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Obama claims that the U.S. has proof that "Assad's chemical weapons personnel prepared for an attack near an area where they mix sarin gas. They distributed gas masks to their troops. Then they fired rockets from a regime-controlled area into 11 neighborhoods that

the regime has been trying to wipe clear of opposition forces.” Not a shred of evidence has been presented to back up this narrative – which, under the circumstances, tends to prove it is fiction. On the other hand, there are credible reports (everybody’s reports are more credible than the Americans), that rebels under [U.S. allied control](#) were told to prepare to go on the offensive following an American retaliation to a chemical attack that would be blamed on Assad’s forces – a story whose logic conforms to what actually occurred and answers the common sense question, Who profits?

Obama will not for long accept diplomatic delays in his war schedule. On Tuesday night, he was already priming the public to accept Assad’s guilt the next time chemical weapons explode in Syria. “If we fail to act,” said the president, “the Assad regime will see no reason to stop using chemical weapons.” American and allied secret services will gladly arrange a replay.

Early in the speech, Obama raised the specter that, because of Assad’s mad chemical predilections, “our troops would again face the prospect of chemical warfare on the battlefield.” Moreover, “If fighting spills beyond Syria’s borders, these weapons could threaten allies like Turkey, Jordan and Israel.” At this point, the president was arguing for a punitive strike, and had taken on the persona of warlike Obama.

Near the end of the speech, Obama responds to those who want Assad “taken out” right away and permanently, rather than merely “degrading” his forces with calibrated strikes. Now speaking as the “moderate” Obama, the president makes the case that Assad has no “interest in escalation that would lead to his demise, and our ally, Israel, can defend itself with overwhelming force.”

“Assad would not launch a chemical attack just a few miles away from United Nations inspectors that had just arrived in the country at his government’s request.”

The two Obamas are matched with two corresponding Assads. One Assad is a menace to the whole neighborhood and to himself, while the other Assad knows who to mess with and takes no risks with his own survival.

It would seem logical that the latter Assad, who is not prone to suicidal actions, would not launch a chemical attack just a few miles away from United Nations inspectors that had just arrived in the country at his government’s request.

The point here is not to argue with Obama’s logic, but to show how inconsistent, opportunistic and, at times, incoherent his reasoning is. He has not the slightest interest in truth or simple logic, only in what sounds right in the immediate context. Obama mixes his personas, and those of his nemesis, at the drop of a hat, because he is shameless and absolutely cynical – as befits a mass murderer.

Barack Obama pretends to believe – at least I *hope* he’s only pretending – that it was his idea to wait for a congressional debate before blasting Syria to smithereens. “So even though I possess the authority to order military strikes, I believed it was right in the absence of a direct or imminent threat to our security to take this debate to Congress.” He didn’t take the debate to Congress; the congressional detour was forced on the White House [on August 31](#) when it became clear that Obama lacked both domestic and foreign support for a speedy strike. That was Obama’s first big defeat. The second was a knockout, after Russia and Syria seized on Secretary of State John Kerry’s “joke” about Assad giving up his

chemical weapons, at which point Obama's handlers advised him that his political position was, for the time being, untenable. He arrived in front of the cameras shaken, angry, and humiliated – with a patched together script and a mouth full of crow.

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The president who claimed that he could bomb the sovereign nation of Libya for seven months, overthrow its government and kill its president, without triggering the War Powers Act – and, further, that no state of war exists unless Americans are killed – told his Tuesday night audience that he opposes excessive presidential power. "This is especially true," said Obama, with a straight face, "after a decade that put more and more war-making power in the hands of the president and more and more burdens on the shoulders of our troops, while sidelining the people's representatives from the critical decisions about when we use force."

In truth, it was the likelihood of rejection by American "people's representatives" – just as British Prime Minister Cameron's war plans were rejected by Parliament – that derailed Obama.

It took more than 1,500 words before Obama acknowledged the existence of the real world, in which he was compelled to "postpone" a congressional vote on the use of force while the U.S., Russia, China, France and Britain work on a UN resolution "requiring Assad to give up his chemical weapons and to ultimately destroy them under international control." Syria has already agreed to the arrangement, in principle. Obama must bear, not only the bitter burden of defeat, but the humiliation of having to pretend that the UN route was his idea, all along.

Expect him back on the war track in no time flat. What else is an imperialist to do?

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