

War on Syria and Imperial Hubris: Clinton Demands Russia And China to “Pay The Price”

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At the third meeting of the so-called Friends of Syria in Paris on July 6, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton proved once again that diplomacy is to the United States what refined dining etiquette is to a jackal.

The third such meeting, earlier versions were held in “post-revolution” Tunisia and in Turkey, a NATO member with military forces massed on Syria’s border, was opened by French President Francois Hollande (who already is making his predecessor Nicolas Sarkozy appear less anomalously egregious), who declaimed, “Bashir al Assad must go...a transitional government must be set up.”

The head of state of Syria’s former colonial master also engaged in comic opera theatrics by observing a moment of silence for – some – of the victims in Syria and insisted that the Syrian government’s “fall is inevitable.” Just as Sarkozy had done last year with the governments of Ivory Coast and Libya. Just as Clinton had done with both as well and now with Syria.

But Hollande was only the compère who warmed up the audience for the true personification of 21st century imperial hubris – Clinton.

She, who in February referred to Russia and China as being despicable for blocking a resolution in the United Nations Security Council aimed at the regime change in Syria mentioned above, abandoned any remaining element of restraint – a quality she has never been noted for, any more than for subtlety, judgment, humility, fairness and other seemingly outdated virtues – and exploited the Syrian crisis to crudely excoriate Russia and China once again.

Her shrill diatribe included an attempt to incite attendees from over 100 countries and organizations against the two alleged villains: “I ask you to reach out to Russia and China and to not only urge, but demand that they get off the sidelines and begin to support the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people.”

The operative word is demand. As in démarche. As in diktat.

However, if the above suggests that she accused Russia and China of what is the international equivalent of criminal negligence, the following demonstrates that she intended something far more severe:

“I don’t think Russia and China believe they are paying any price at all, nothing at all, for standing up on behalf of the Assad regime. The only way that will change is if every nation

represented here directly and urgently makes it clear that Russia and China will pay a price, because they are holding up progress.”

Clinton was born in a hospital on the North Side of Chicago and clearly knows cardinal rule number one of Machine politics there: Reward your friends and punish your enemies. Especially the second. Smite them ruthlessly and remorselessly. Crush them if possible. Teach them a lesson they – and others tempted to pursue a less than completely obedient path – will never forget. Make them “pay a price.”

Her commander-in-chief President Barack Obama, his Cardinal Richelieu, David Axelrod, and his first two White House chiefs of staff, Rahm Emanuel and William Daley (son of one long-term mayor and brother of another), all matriculated in the school of Chicago power politics where compromise is a foreign concept and negotiation isn’t a word in the dictionary.

For the past 81 years Chicago’s chief executive, the mayor, has belonged to the same political party, Clinton’s, and currently all fifty members of the legislative body, the City Council, do as well.

Bills and city budgets are regularly passed unanimously, often with little discussion, less debate and no public input.

To be recalled the next time Clinton launches into a tirade against the government of or elections in other nations, as she did in relation to parliamentary elections in Russia last December, which she denounced as “neither free nor fair.”

Following the all too brief reprieve provided by the mayoralty of Harold Washington (1983-1987), the city reverted to top-down, autocratic rule, with near-absolute power wielded from the mayor’s office on the 5th Floor of City Hall.

Although Chicagoans vote for members of the City Council, aldermen, the real power in the city has traditionally resided in the hands of Democratic Party ward committeemen and their precinct captains, known as ward heelers.

Politics in Chicago allow a citizen of the city only two options: He can capitulate in prostrate servility to the monolithic power structure or, in a trademark understatement by the late Chicago journalist Mike Royko, he will feel bad in the morning. If he wakes up at all.

It is the above style of strong-armed, zero-sum, take-no-prisoners, absolutist “statecraft” that has been applied first to the nation and now the world. The sort that Hillary Clinton is practicing on the international stage.

On the day before she threatened the two permanent members of the UN Security Council in the manner described, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen issued a threat of his own – to Syria – stating:

“It goes without saying that Turkey can count on NATO. NATO is of course prepared to defend Turkey if it is so necessary.”

Alliance solidarity.

Clinton’s latest provocation follows closely on the heels of another, her [accusing Russia last](#)

[month of supplying attack helicopters to the Syrian government to “escalate the conflict quite dramatically.”](#) (1)

Her style of abrasive, brazen, dogmatic, Manichean “diplomacy” is best indicated by a statement she made in 2001, after leaving the White House where as First Lady she was fond of employing the imperial we (as in “we are the president”) and reviving the once-discredited practice of carpetbagging in becoming a U.S. senator from New York.

Two days after the attacks of September 11, she told Dan Rather of CBS News:

“Every nation has to either be with us, or against us. Those who harbor terrorists, or who finance them, are going to pay a price.”

She has not veered from the practice of separating the world’s nations and people into those with or against her – there are no degrees in between – although her position regarding terrorists has evidently shifted with Libya last year and Syria currently.

The State Department has granted Clinton a forum from which to castigate, disparage, accuse and threaten others to her heart’s content. It has in particular emboldened her to issue orders for heads of state outside the Western world to vacate their offices and cede power to successors approved by Clinton and her nation’s allies.

Last February, within mere days of the beginning of anti-government actions in Libya, she pronounced before the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva: “It is time for Gaddafi to go – now, without further violence or delay.”

In April she ordered President Laurent Gbagbo of Ivory Coast, who retained his office after an election whose outcome was disputed by the nation’s Election Commission and the Constitutional Court – not unlike what occurred in the 2000 presidential election in the U.S. – to leave, stating:

“The United States calls on former President Laurent Gbagbo to step down immediately. Gbagbo is pushing Cote d’Ivoire into lawlessness.

“The path forward is clear. He must leave now so the conflict may end.”

In the same month she ordered Yemen’s head of state, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to leave office:

“President Saleh was given a very good offer that we strongly backed. And, you know, we cannot expect this conflict to end unless President Saleh and his government move out of the way to permit the opposition and civil society to begin a transition to political and economic reform.”

The “very good offer” was one initiated by the U.S.’s main allies in the Arab world, the monarchies of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which whom the U.S. and its NATO allies have also conspired to overthrow the governments of Libya and Syria.

In January of this year, while visiting Ivory Coast – where Gbagbo was deposed last April by French and compliant United Nations military forces and replaced by former Washington, D.C.-based International Monetary Fund official Alassane Ouattara – she renewed her demand that the Yemeni president must abdicate:

“There have been agreements with respect to the way forward that have not been fulfilled. We regret that the president has thus far failed to comply with his own commitments to leave the country, to permit elections to go forward that give the people a chance to be heard and be represented.”

In October Clinton was shown an image of the battered corpse of former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi shortly after he was murdered in his hometown of Sirte and after uttering an adolescent (or preteen) “wow,” stated while laughing and puffing herself up, almost squealing with self-satisfied abandon: “We came, we saw, he died.”

The paraphrase of the statement attributed to Julius Caesar is not fortuitous. What Clinton at the moment embodies to the highest degree is imperial arrogance in its foulest manifestation.

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