

Why Obama's 'Red Line' in Syria has turned Pink

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Back in August 2012, things were a lot different in Washington DC and in the White House.

The Obama administration was brandishing a confident swagger back then, heading into the elections against a hobbling GOP opponent, and Benghazi had yet to unfold in all of its ugliness.

As Hillary Clinton was jetting around on the US State Department budget promoting her 'Friends of Syria' Middle East and European tours, and as the CIA were busy like bees working in the gray shadows of Benghazi, Washington and London were laying the groundwork for their new WMD case in Syria.

As last summer drew to a close, President Barack Obama confidently announced he was drawing a 'Red Line' in Syria regarding the use of chemical weapons, meaning that any evidence of their use on either side of that conflict would lead to consequences, the obvious inference being automatic US military intervention.

Fast forward to the present, and Washington appears to have been caught in the vortex of its own spin machine, with White House Press Secretary Jay Carney recently forced to 'clarify' the President's infamous 'Red Line' decree with what can only be described as desperate political cover. Here Carney attempted to explain away the previous ultimatum and re-explain the President's position:

"What the president made clear is that it was a red line, and that it was unacceptable, and that it would change his calculus... What he never did - and it is simplistic to do so is to say that 'if X happens, Y will happen'. He has never said what reaction he would take."

It's hard to run a global empire and still pander to sensitive liberal concerns at home. The White House seems to be at pains coming to terms with what the Neoconservative Bush government already knew a decade ago - that there really is no good, safe way to do a military intervention. In the end, the façade of political spin cannot provide ethical cover for invading and toppling another sovereign state. You can't finesse your way into it, you have to just go for it in full view - lie if you have to, fabricate evidence if need be, and be damned with the political fallout.

This approach sort of worked in the past for the US and Britain with Iraq. Granted, the WMD case was knocked down eventually, but the lie was good enough to achieve lift off for an attack, invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003, and to a lesser degree the same system netted a result - with the help of a NATO smokescreen in Libya in 2011. The Obama Administration believed it would merely follow the already existing template for

'humanitarian intervention'.

The case

Thus far we can point to three concerted attempts in 2013 by the US and its NATO allies to fabricate a case for chemical weapons in Syria. The first was a plan allegedly hatched by the British with the help of Qatar, through the use of a safe proxy to provide 'deniability' - in this case, a UK defense contractor named Britam. The plan was simple and would have gone unnoticed if not for the inconvenience of it being prematurely exposed in the "*Britam Leaks*" from an anonymous hack back in January. The plan was to take old Gadaffi era chemical weapons stocks from Libya, transfer them out via Benghazi, and then plant them in Syria in order to blame the Assad government and thus open the door for western military intervention. The leaked emails also indicated clearly that Qatar would be paying a substantive sum for the operation to be coordinated through Britam. The UK's Daily Mail had initially run the Britam Leaks story, but then suddenly pulled it down from their website within 24 hours of the story running.

The second attempt to make a chemical weapons charge stick in Syria came in March, following reports of a deadly chlorine attack in the northern region of Aleppo, with both sides claiming the other was responsible. With Washington openly touting its agenda of regime change and the Obama 'Red Line' promising intervention in Syria if either side was found to use chemical weapons, the obvious motive would fall on the rebel opposition camp. The Aleppo case that was quickly knocked down by a number of alternative media outlets including 21st Century Wire, who outlined a detailed and compelling case to illustrate how manufactured chlorine munitions were not used in Aleppo by the Syria government forces, but rather, makeshift chlorine '*dirty bombs*' were assembled and likely detonated by a Saudi-linked Islamic rebel confab originating out of Iraq, who coincidentally, had a track record of exploding the same devices before in Iraq.



The third attempt was led by British scientists who claimed they had found evidence of chemical weapons that were used in Syria in relation to two incidents in the Damascus area around March 19th. Critics rightly pointed out the inherent problems with their case, including the obvious chain of custody issue that meant the 'evidence' brought from Syria to a British lab could easily have been contaminated, or even fabricated in order to come to a conclusion which the British government wanted in order to get a green light for military intervention.

The UN's own investigation into chemical weapons claims, led by Carla Del Ponte, has concluded that that witness and victim testimonies clearly show that Western and Gulf-backed Syrian rebels used chemical weapons such as the nerve gas sarin. This is at odds with US Secretary of State John Kerry who claims to having seen himself "*strong evidence*" that the Assad regime has used chemical weapons. Turkey has also entered the fray this week, themselves claiming to have seen evidence of Assad's use of chemical weapons.

Seeking truth

So who is telling the truth? From a common sense point of view, there is no motive, not does it make any real sense for the Syrian army to deploy chemical weapons in there fight, especially since the 'Red Line' has been laid down already. The rebels on the other hand have a motive, as does Washington, London and its NATO allies like Turkey - who have all been actively facilitating and aiding the rebel factions in Syria since the conflict began two years ago. They have a vested interest in any outcome which involves Western military intervention.

Meanwhile, in Washington the confusion has already begun to set in with the true believers and war hawks insisting that the UN investigation has reached the wrong conclusions.

In an attempt to control the political damage, Jay Carney swiftly moved to derail any UN findings that Syria's rebels - and not President Bashar Assad's forces, used chemical weapons. The White House Press Secretary attempts to re-spin the argument, trying in vain to hold Obama's 'Red Line':

"We find it incredible, not credible, that the opposition has used chemical weapons," he said. "We think that any use of chemical weapons in Syria is almost certain to have been done by the Assad regime."

Already painted in a corner, President Obama is left to watch his 'Red Line' on chemical weapons - turn pink. It was a fatal mistake by President Obama to take such an illogical line so early on, but his statement was merely a reflection of Washington's own schizophrenic and irrational foreign policy which has chosen to openly side with known al Qaeda Islamist guerrilla fighters in both Libya and in Syria.



The *'Red Line'* was a historical first, in the sense that this ultimatum was woven to insure a case for intervention either way and would mean that the US would be free to attack the Assad government militarily even if the foreign terrorist confab were the guilty party. It was an attempt to essentially widen the definition of a case for intervention, essentially rewriting the language of international law and replacing it with language more suitable for a global police force who could act out under the guise of *'keeping the peace'*. An extraordinary first in global diplomacy for sure, and a very difficult line to enforce in view of an international community cannot see the sense in such an insane equation put forth by a US President.

Another reason for Obama's fading *'Pink Line'* in Syria is the Benghazi Hearings. Events of this week have finally begun to expose the inadequacy in US intelligence circles, as well as the institutional corruption that allows political gain to trump American lives in Washington. Rival factions within the US power structure, including those of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton have been implicated in both using and covering-up what happened in Benghazi.

Much more damaging than this however, is that Benghazi links the White House directly to the Syrian proxy war. The hearings have already begun to open the lid on how the US covert *'national-wrecking'* road show were facilitating both the transfer of both weapons and foreign al Qaeda fighters from Libya in order to help destabilize the sovereign nation of Syria. Ambassador Chris Stevens and the others who died when Washington was forced to pull the plug on their operation there, are now known to be mere expendable cannon fodder – a revelation that has disgusted many American voters who would have previously turned a blind eye to any similar covert and underhanded US operations overseas.

On Wednesday Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul(R) weighed in on the Benghazi debacle, in a direct challenge to the President and Hillary Clinton, inferring that the Sept. 11, 2012 attack unfolded as a result of a secret arms trade, and rubbishing the previous government line put

forward by Susan Rice and the US Intelligence community that the attack was a result of a YouTube film, "The Innocence of Muslims". During a recent CNN interview Paul explains:

"I've actually always suspected that, although I have no evidence, that maybe we were facilitating arms leaving Libya going through Turkey into Syria," he said.

"Were they trying to obscure that there was an arms operation going on at the CIA annex?"

Additional heat has been put on Washington with regards to Syria last week, as Israel's unprovoked bombing raids inside Syria have appeared to have thrown a spanner into the works of Washington's carefully woven public relations plan, with many critics believing that Israel's raid on Damascus was sanctioned by Washington - in effect, using Israel to help soften-up the Assad forces for a sharper blow later on.

Obama's fading '*pink line*' also means that both neo-conservatives and those in Washington who are guided by Israeli influence have been forced to declare their wider intentions in arguing that attacking Syria is important right now - because Iran would not take future US threats seriously unless Obama follows through with his '*red line*'. Such a political force majeure means that those once covert plans to take down both Syria and Iran have now been forced into the open.

Russian-led diplomacy efforts have proposed an international conference on Syria, but the major powers may not be ready until the end of June, which will put more stress on the Western agenda and their foreign guerrilla fighter factions who are currently engaged in a dead lock in Syria. In light of the UN's guilty chemical weapons findings against the rebel opposition, US desires to ship arms directly to those same rebel proxies - no matter how insistent Senator hawks like John McCain and Lindsey Graham might be - will no longer play so well in the public arena.

On top of all this, Washington and London have been accused of steering Syria's '*government in exile*' who, along with western-supported opposition groups inside Syria have refused to engage in any dialogue with the government of Syria, an outsider engineered move which has completely smashed any diplomatic or political solution from the onset.

The chemical weapons crowd in Washington and London are now on very shaky ground indeed.

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