

Obama Pushes Syria Intervention With Same Argument He Ignores On Iran

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President Obama has turned to Congress to save him from staggering political isolation on the global stage. It is an isolation that is the inverse of the promise of a passionate and reciprocal multilateral embrace that carried him into office.

Asking Republicans to rescue him from a foreign policy catastrophe entirely of his own making is not a neat political trick. It dramatically cheapens the office of commander-in-chief. Contrary to the President's devious portrayal, therefore, the coming vote is so much more than a response to "this attack" or "the massacre" in Syria.

The President had the audacity to ask Congress about the message "we" will send if he does not go forward with his highly circumscribed attack on the Syrian regime. The real question is, what is the message he has already sent by his deed and his words, his paralysis and his verbal scam?

First and foremost, the President cast the rationale for an attack on Syria as a "danger to our national security." And yet, what is the single greatest threat to the national security of the United States – not tomorrow, but today? There is only one incontrovertible answer, and it is Iran. Not once in his rare appeal to Congress and the American people to use force, however, did President Obama use the word "Iran."

He twisted and turned and alluded – in the plural – to "governments who would choose to build nuclear arms." He simply would not come clean with his fellow citizens.

The acquisition of the world's most dangerous weapon of mass destruction, by a country which is the leading state sponsor of terrorism, dwarfs President Assad's use of chemical weapons. Syrians, too, would find their lives very different if Iranian support were eliminated from the equation.

If this President were truly serious about protecting America and civilization from WMDs he would set his sights firmly on Iran and take the only action still left to prevent an Iranian nuclear weapon.

There will be those who argue that this President can walk and chew gum at the same time, that taking action on Syria does not preclude acting on Iran. Such wishful thinking misunderstands the message of the Syrian debacle and the lesson of the President's inability to gather an international coalition and his derivative appeal to Congress.

The damage has been done. This is not some kind of reluctant warrior or hero. If approved, this painful circuitous path just to Damascus will have sapped the iota of fortitude in a man who is not a commander or hero at all.

Virtually every argument the President made Saturday about why Syria threatens our national security can be applied to Iran many times over. "Risks making a mockery of the global prohibition" on nuclear proliferation. "Endangers our friends." "Could lead to escalating use" of nuclear weapons. Has the "United Nations Security Council completely paralyzed." "Flouts fundamental international rules."

Congress would understand Iran. But the President of the United States refuses to make the case.

On the contrary, on September 26, 2013 the United Nations will hold a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament. Iran's new "moderate" president, Hassan Rouhani, is expected to attend. It was President Obama himself, who in 2009 at the UN Security Council, inexcusably married progress on Iranian nuclear non-proliferation to American nuclear disarmament.

The Obama administration intends to use the occasion as another exercise in self-flagellation. The plan is to open one more pathetic chapter in the ongoing saga of never-ending dialogue with Iran while the country's nuclear weapons program gallops towards the finish line.

So here is what Americans and the rest of the world can look forward to if Congress feels compelled to salvage the President's self-esteem. With a tut-tut on Syria under his belt, an exhausted President Obama will give another speech – and another and another. His history has been written. We can only

hope world history will take a different turn.