

Obama's Self-Deceit

by Joe Lauria via shirl - Consortium News *Wednesday, Sep 30 2015, 8:55am*
international / prose / post

President Obama, who has boasted of ordering military strikes on seven countries, chastised Russia and China for not abiding by the rules of international behavior, a breathtaking example of hypocrisy or self-deceit.



Obama, arrogant, disconnected and deluded

There was stunned silence in the General Assembly Hall on Monday as U.S. President Barack Obama warned leaders against falling back to pre-United Nations days, in which strong nations imposed their will by force against the weak. There was apparent disbelief as he said it was Russia and China that wanted a “return to the rules that applied for most of human history and that pre-date this institution.”

These ancient rules included the “belief that power is a zero-sum game; that might makes right; that strong states must impose their will on weaker ones; that the rights of individuals don’t matter; and that in a time of rapid change, order must be imposed by force.”

The silence in the chamber came because everything Obama ascribed to others perfectly describes U.S. behavior from the end of the Second World War until today.

Since 1945, the U.S. has participated in dozens of documented invasions and overthrows of sovereign governments that resisted U.S. hegemony — the strongest nation imposing its will militarily on the weak. Among the best known are the 1953 and 1954 coups in Iran and Guatemala, and the invasions of Vietnam and Iraq. There were other democracies overthrown to install monarchies or dictatorships, such as Mobutu in Congo in 1961, Suharto in Indonesia in 1965 and Pinochet in Chile in 1973.

There was a setback to the American militarists with the loss in Vietnam, but a decade later Ronald Reagan was back at it, starting with a small invasion of Grenada. George H.W. Bush pounded Panama in 1989 and then devastated Iraqi forces in 1991 with an air and ground campaign, leading to his declaration that “we’ve kicked the Vietnam Syndrome once and for all.” Thirty years after the defeat in Vietnam, his son, George W. Bush, staged a full-scale 2003 invasion of Iraq, unleashing

utter chaos that's led to the most fearsome terrorist power in history.

Yet Obama on Monday was blaming Russia and China for the mess Washington has created, saying, "We see some major powers assert themselves in ways that contravene international law." Obama cited Russia's "annexation" of Crimea and "further aggression" in Eastern Ukraine.

He didn't mention the documented U.S. orchestrated coup against a democratically-elected president in Kiev, which eastern Ukrainians have resisted. Russia has helped them but the U.S. with all its fancy surveillance that can find out almost any detail of your private life has yet to come up with a scrap of evidence of a Russian "invasion" of Ukraine.

At heart is either Obama's willful ignorance of Ukraine, a clumsy attempt at disinformation, or as Vladimir Putin suggested in his U.N. speech a half hour later, a big measure of self-deception.

Obama said Ukrainians favor the West. That may be true of most western Ukrainians but not the whole country. Then, he said the U.S. has "few economic interests" in Ukraine. That's woefully ignorant or a blatant lie. Monsanto has a big interest. Then there's Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, and a John Kerry family friend joining the board of Burisma Holdings, Ukraine's largest private gas producer, just after the coup.

And the country's finance minister is an American, Natalie Jaresko, who was given Ukrainian citizenship on the day she began the job. Why put an American government official in charge of the treasury of a foreign country?

Despite Russia's "aggression," Obama said he did not want a new Cold War — just U.S. bases encircling Russia, and China. In the South China Sea, the "U.S. makes no territorial claims," Obama said, and only has an altruistic interest in protecting freedom of navigation and resolving disputes peacefully and not by "the law of force." Yet, when the International Court of Justice ruled the U.S. mining of Nicaraguan harbors in the 1980s was illegal, the U.S. just ignored it.

On Syria, Obama (and his junior partners in Europe) insist that President Bashar al-Assad must leave office, as though that would make ISIS lay down its arms. "Realism ... requires a managed transition away from Assad and to a new leader, and an inclusive government that recognizes there must be an end to this chaos so that the Syrian people can begin to rebuild," the President said.

Obama's position presupposes that the war would end as soon as a new Syrian leader calls off the fight. Instead ISIS is fighting not only to topple Assad, but to take Damascus from whoever may take Assad's place. They want the capital. It doesn't matter who is in charge.

Putin argues that Assad's military is the most effective ground force (along with the Kurds) against the monstrous group and that all nations who want ISIS defeated should work with Assad. "Similar to the anti-Hitler coalition, it could unite a broad range of parties willing to stand firm against those who, just like the Nazis, sow evil and hatred of humankind," Putin said.

While this is the most practical approach, it would be politically difficult for Western leaders, after three years of calling for Assad's ouster, to reverse course. Instead the West blames Russian "ambition" in its military build-up in Syria rather than seeing it as a move to help Syria defeat this scourge that came about partly by the West playing around with terrorists who turned into a Frankenstein monster.

"The Islamic State itself did not come out of nowhere," Putin told the Assembly. "It was initially

developed as a weapon against undesirable secular regimes.” He added that it was irresponsible “to manipulate extremist groups and use them to achieve your political goals, hoping that later you’ll find a way to get rid of them or somehow eliminate them.”

Russia warned from three years ago that this could happen. “I’m urged to ask those who created this situation: do you at least realize now what you’ve done?” Putin asked. “But I’m afraid that this question will remain unanswered, because they have never abandoned their policy, which is based on arrogance, exceptionalism and impunity.”

Though Obama told the U.N. that he could essentially blow up the whole world if he wanted to, he’s decided to be a nice guy and seek diplomacy over confrontation with Russia and China. “I lead the strongest military that the world has ever known,” he boasted to the quiet hall, “and I will never hesitate to protect my country or our allies, unilaterally and by force where necessary.”

“I stand before you today believing in my core that we, the nations of the world, cannot return to the old ways of conflict and coercion,” Obama said. “We cannot look backwards.” Obama might try looking into a mirror instead.

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