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Let's Blame Bush's "Lies" for Obama's Syria Fiasco

Host Al Hunt: "Does the ghost of George W. Bush's Iraq War resolution hang over this Syria debate?"

Bloomberg columnist Margaret Carlson: "It surely does. You would hope that Bush's lies would keep him awake at 3:00 in the morning, but what they really do is haunt the country. . . . Part of the resistance to doing anything in Syria, punishing this awful behavior, is what happened in Iraq when we were lied to about mushroom clouds and aluminum tubes and mobile weapons labs that didn't exist. Here we have concrete evidence, and people just can't fathom getting mired in another Iraq."

— Exchange on Bloomberg's *Political Capital*, September 6.

"Diane, there are two things that you hear a lot in this part of the world [the Middle East]. First, you recognize the catastrophic calamity to American credibility that the claims about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction were. People don't believe this President or this administration when they talk about this attack on August 21, and they want to see and hear real evidence, not the claims of the Secretary of State or even the President."

— ABC News chief foreign correspondent Terry Moran during live coverage following Obama's speech, September 10.

"I don't want to re-litigate Iraq, but the blunt fact is that some of the questions that were asked — Congressman [Juan] Vargas [D-CA] asked both [Secretary of State John] Kerry and [Defense Secretary Chuck] Hagel yesterday, 'Are you lying? Because we were lied to about weapons of mass destruction.' There is such a credibility gap between the White House and Congress, the leftover, the hangover from the Iraq War."

— Anchor Andrea Mitchell on MSNBC's *Andrea Mitchell Reports*, September 5.

Demands Rumsfeld "Take Responsibility" for Obama's Woes

"Looming over this debate time and time again has been the specter of Iraq. Most recently, the U.K. Parliament, many members, cited the failure of intelligence leading up to Iraq as the reason that they won't take action now in Syria, because they don't trust U.S. intelligence. Do you personally take any responsibility for that? Or feel any responsibility for that?"

— Co-host Savannah Guthrie to former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld on NBC's *Today*, September 4.

Obama's Syria Debacle Actually an "Amazing" Success

"It is an amazing thing what's happened, and I do believe very strongly that it is because finally diplomacy was enacted with the threat, the credible threat, of force behind it. And having talked to many, many people today, they believe that President Obama during the G20 made it very clear to President Putin that this time he was serious and there were going to be military consequences as limited and targeted as he describes. But nonetheless, the threat of force worked."

— CNN's Christiane Amanpour on *AC360 Later*, September 10.

"I think it's fair to say that the people at the White House are feeling a lot better tonight about where they are, than where they were two days ago when they faced an almost certain humiliation of having Congress turn down the President's request to use force. They have managed to finesse that, and have even managed to get Bashar al-Assad to say that he does have chemical weapons. He said before he didn't even have them."

— *Face the Nation* host Bob Schieffer during live CBS News coverage in advance of President Obama's speech to the nation on Syria, September 10.



Relax: We'll Bomb from a "Cautious Anti-War Perspective"

"Barack Obama, as you know better than I do, was one of the leading Democratic politicians against the Iraq War. So if he says that this is different, that the evidence is there, that no one's disputing that chemicals were used, and that they have the evidence linking it to the Assad regime, does that persuade you since he has always come at this from a very cautious anti-war perspective?"

— Andrea Mitchell interviewing anti-war Democratic Rep. Barbara Lee on MSNBC's *Andrea Mitchell Reports*, August 30.



On Syria, Chuck Sees Many More "Rational and Principled" Democrats

"To me — and I'm as cynical as anybody when it comes to political motivation — and I think about half of the Republican opposition here is a political opposition, but I think a good 50 percent of it is not. I think about 75 percent of the opposition of the Democratic Party is rational and principled, and maybe about 25 percent of it is politics. I don't think it's as political as you think on this."

— NBC News Chief White House correspondent Chuck Todd on *Meet the Press*, September 8.

GOP Must "Hate" Obama More than They Love War

"How much of the Republican resistance to this action is rooted in their hatred for this President?...How much of the problem in the Republican caucus with this action is just distaste for the President?"

— Co-host Krystal Ball on MSNBC's *The Cycle*, September 4.



"Let me finish with this: I believe that this debate over Syria is offering a road map to the Republican nomination for President next time. The candidate who wishes to be the nominee will be the one who positions himself as directly as possible against President Obama. Why? You know. It's for the simple new definition of the Republican Party: it's the anti-Obama party. The more you hate Obama, the more you are deeply entrenched in the deepest bunker of the GOP."

— Chris Matthews wrapping up MSNBC's *Hardball*, September 4.

Tea Party = "Obstinate Brats" Who'll Doom GOP

"Here's a story about a little boy named Pierre, who stars in Maurice Sendak's classic children's tale. Pierre is an obstinate brat who sits backward in his chair, pours syrup on his hair, and screams, 'I don't care!' at every kindhearted word from his parents. When a lion shows up and asks him if he'd like to die, Pierre ignores the obvious danger and blurts, 'I don't care!'"

"The lion eats him."

"With midterm elections on the horizon, the Republican Party should be hyper-tuned to its weak standing among nonwhites, women, and young people. Instead, its Pierre wing — hard-right purists — insists that the GOP's problem is a shortage of obstinacy....The most visible case is the Tea Party-backed campaign — supported by 17 senators and 77 members of Congress — to shut down the government rather than vote for a budget that funds ObamaCare...."

— *Fortune*'s Nina Easton writing in the magazine's September 16 issue.



Ex-CNNer Slams "Oligarch" Bloomberg

"Let's face it, when it comes to economic matters, he [outgoing New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg] is the representative of the oligarchs, and I choose that word on purpose. He is somebody that will come up with all these different rationalizations for the unsavory conduct of the people in his little club, the 'one percenters' they have been called, or something like that....People who use the term 'class warfare' are the very people who have conducted a class warfare against everybody but the super rich class."

— Ex-CNN correspondent Bob Franken on MSNBC's *Melissa Harris-Perry*, September 8, complaining about Bloomberg's criticism of liberal mayoral candidate Bill De Blasio.



Post-9/11 Flag-Waving “Sometimes a Cousin to Intolerance”

“The CNN film [*The Flag*], based on a book by David Friend, focuses on the smudged American flag that three firefighters raised through the dust of the collapsed buildings at ground zero late in the afternoon of Sept. 11, 2001. A photograph of the flag raising taken by Thomas E. Franklin of the New Jersey newspaper *The Record* became a heartening, patriotic symbol for many on an otherwise awful day... [But] the photographer rebelled at efforts to make him a celebrity, and so did the three firefighters. A plan to turn the photograph into a sculpture became a source of controversy. Nationwide, flag-waving was sometimes a cousin to intolerance.”

— From *New York Times* critic Neil Genzlinger’s September 4 review of CNN’s *The Flag*.



Rush Limbaugh = “Racist Troll”

Clip of Rush Limbaugh: “You know, this operation of Bush had ‘shock and awe.’

We are looking at ‘shuck and jive’ here. That’s what I’m going to name this — the Obama operation in Syria, ‘Operation Shuck and Jive,’ because that’s what this is.”

Host Al Sharpton: “‘Operation Shuck and Jive.’ The inferences, the implication, the outright subtlety of what he’s saying which is not so subtle to me. The dog whistling around something as serious as a military engagement....”

Salon’s Joan Walsh: “You know, Rush Limbaugh is a racist troll, and he’s proud of it. His audience expects this. He’s always looking for a new low with this President, and he hit one today.”

— MSNBC’s *PoliticsNation*, September 9.

Sickened by “Degenerate Cowboy” Limbaugh’s Book for Kids

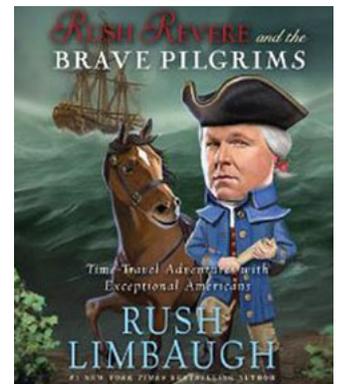
“Hey kids! Rush Limbaugh wrote a book that’s just for you... Um. Oh. Seriously?”

“I’m a little sick now.”

— Pair of tweets posted by CNN anchor Carol Costello, September 5, reacting to a Huffington Post story about Limbaugh’s new book, *Rush Revere and the Brave Pilgrims*.

“[Limbaugh] has never shown any signs of being a serious or thoughtful or earnest guy. He is a degenerate rodeo clown — a toxic provocateur who, while undeniably entertaining for like-minded adults, should be kept as far away from kids as possible. Am I concerned that he’s going to start raving about ‘sluts’ or ‘feminazis’ or slip the lyrics to ‘Barack the Magic Negro’ into his kiddie lit? Of course not. But the guy is a proudly offensive adult showman. Having him pen books for kids is a little bit like having Howard Stern come in to lead your preschooler’s circle time. It just shouldn’t happen.”

— *Newsweek/The Daily Beast*’s Michelle Cottle, September 10.



Piers Takes Aim at Conservative Hosts

“An idea @Dloesch @benfergusonshow > you guys stand at the end of a range and I’ll get 100 blind people to fire away at targets around you.”

— September 12 tweet from CNN’s Piers Morgan directed at conservative radio hosts Ben Ferguson and Dana Loesch.

Sleazy Maher Won’t Skip a Chance to Smear the Tea Party

“Kudos to Barry for restoring constitution re war powers. Tea People shld luv it but of course wont cuz President Blackenstein did it”

— August 31 tweet from HBO *Real Time* host Bill Maher, talking about Obama’s decision to seek congressional authorization for military action against Syria. [Grammar and spelling as in the original.]

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