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After Trump's Syria Attack, What Comes Next?

Thursday's US missile attack on Syria must represent the quickest foreign policy U-turn in history. Less than a week after the White House gave Assad permission to stay on as president of his own country, President Trump decided that the US had to attack Syria and demand Assad's ouster after a chemical attack earlier in the week. Trump blamed Assad for the attack, stated that "something's going to happen" in retaliation, and less than two days later he launched a volley of 59 Tomahawk missiles (at a cost of \$1.5 million each) onto a military airfield near where the chemical attack took place.



President Trump said it is in the "vital national security interest of the United States" to attack Syria over the use of poison gas. That is nonsense. Even if what Trump claims about the gas attack is true — and we've seen no evidence that it is — there is nothing about an isolated incident of inhuman cruelty thousands of miles from our borders that is in our "vital national security interest." Even if Assad gassed his own people last week it hardly means he will launch chemical attacks on the United States even if he had the ability, which he does not.

From the moment the chemical attack was blamed on Assad, however, I expressed my doubts about the claims. It simply makes no sense for Assad to attack civilians with a chemical weapon just as he is winning his war against ISIS and al-Qaeda and has been told by the US that it no longer seeks regime change. On the verge of victory, he commits a suicidal act to no strategic or tactical military advantage? More likely the gas attack was a false flag by the rebels — or perhaps even by our CIA — as a last ditch effort to forestall a rebel defeat in the six-year war.

Would the neocons and the mainstream media lie to us about what happened last week in Syria? Of course they would. They lied us into attacking Iraq, they lied us into attacking Gaddafi, they lied us into seeking regime change in Syria in the first place. We should always assume they are lying.

Who benefits from the US attack on Syria? ISIS, which immediately after the attack began a ground offensive. Does President Trump really want the US to act as ISIS's air force?

The gas attack, which took some 70 civilian lives, was horrible and must be condemned. But we must also remember that US bombs in Syria have killed hundreds of civilians. Just recently, US bombs killed 300 Iraqi civilians in one strike! Does it really make a difference if you are killed by poison gas or by a US missile?

What's next for President Trump in Syria? Russia has not backed down from its claim that the poison gas leaked as a result of a conventional Syrian bomb on an ISIS chemical weapons factory. Moscow claims it is determined to defend its ally, Syria. Will Trump unilaterally declare a no fly zone in parts of Syria and attempt to prevent Russian air traffic? Some suggest this is his next move. It is one that carries a great danger of igniting World War Three.



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Donald Trump's attack on Syria was clearly illegal. However, Congress shows no interest in reining in this out-of-control president. We should fear any US escalation and must demand that our Representatives prohibit it. If there ever was a time to flood the Capitol Hill switchboard demanding an end to US military action in Syria, it is now!

Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.



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