



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on October 20, 2015

Ahmed the “Clock Boy” Meets with Obama and War Criminal

The media has dubbed him “Clock Boy,” but critics have pointed out that he’s really just Crock Boy. This hasn’t prevented Ahmed Mohamed (shown), the 14-year-old Texas student arrested for bringing to school a device that could be taken for a bomb, from making the rounds as a celebrity and meeting world leaders. This included an encounter Barack Obama at the White House’s Astronomy Night last evening, even though the meeting was left in doubt after Mohamed met last Wednesday with an African president wanted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court.



The boy’s dubious meeting with Sudan’s president Omar al-Bashir — accused of orchestrating genocide and crimes against humanity in Darfur — put the White House in an uncomfortable position. Obama had already committed to the now-discredited narrative that Mohamed was a fertile-minded inventor victimized by “Islamophobia,” and revoking his Astronomy Night invitation would have been a blow against that victim narrative. Ultimately, the administration decided to walk a fine line. Press Secretary Josh Earnest played down Mohamed’s visit at a press briefing yesterday, [saying](#) he didn’t believe Obama would “have an opportunity to meet one-on-one with Ahmed” as “several hundred people” would participate in the event. And so it transpired: Obama met with the high-school student while mingling with the attendees, but didn’t showcase his visit.

Unfortunately, Mohamed’s tale is an example of how, as Jonathan Swift wrote in 1710, “Falsehood flies, and the Truth comes limping after it; so that when Men come to be undeceiv’d, it is too late; the Jest is over, and the Tale has had its Effect...” And a tall tale Mohamed’s is. After bringing his “clock” to school on September 14, it was confiscated by his English teacher who thought it looked like a bomb. Mohamed was subsequently arrested and questioned by police on suspicion of bringing to school a “hoax bomb,” which is against Texas law. No charges were filed and Mohamed was later released, but that didn’t stop [headlines from reading](#) “Why teen inventor Ahmed Mohamed got arrested.”

Of course, “inventor” Mohamed hadn’t invented anything. And while he apparently didn’t claim to — his statement that he wanted to display his technical skill by taking apart a clock and rebuilding it — also appears false. As Artvoice.com webmaster and tech expert Anthony DiPasquale [told](#) the *Daily Beast*, “Anyone with even a basic hobby-level understanding could see it was a commercially available mass-produced product that was just taken out of its enclosure, and placed in a pencil box.”

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Now, it should be noted that Mohamed does have a school history of misbehavior, including the playing of pranks. For example, a former teacher from junior-high school, Ralph Kubiak, [said](#) that the boy was a “weird little kid” who “could either be CEO of a company or head of a gang.” And the teen apparently



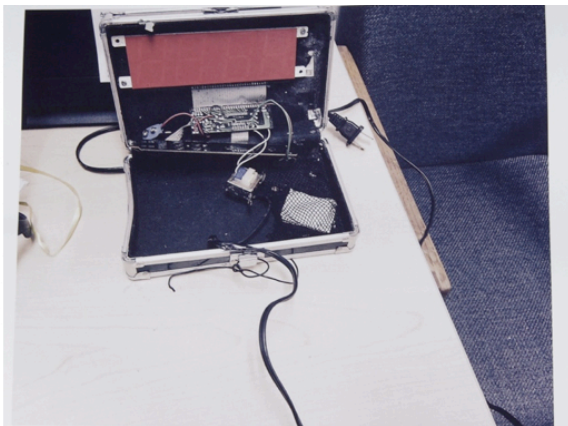
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was suspended for several weeks in junior-high school and spent time the next year in a “reassignment center.” Of course, it wouldn’t be surprising if a 14-year-old lad, especially one given to pranks, tried to impress others via sleight-of-hand. It also wouldn’t be surprising if a young adolescent boy considered it funny to bring something with the appearance of a bomb to school. Unfortunately, what also isn’t surprising is the media’s politically correct reaction to the story.

The bigotry card was played right away. No doubt a victim of “Islamophobia,” as the narrative went, the boy’s father, Mohamed Elhassan Mohamed, said his son was mistreated “because his name is Mohamed and because of Sept. 11.” Ahmed chimed in, “If I was a Caucasian male, I’m pretty sure I wouldn’t have gotten arrested.” Yet this notion is quite fanciful.

As *Reason’s* Robbie Soave [points out](#), “White kids are disciplined — and yes, arrested — for mild misbehavior in schools *all the time*. It literally happens every day.” Soave cites Alex Stone, a 16-year-old suspended and arrested for writing a fictional story in which he kills a dinosaur with a gun. The writer also mentions white children punished for pointing fingers like a laser gun, chewing a Pop-Tart and cutting a piece of paper into a firearm shape, and other incidents ridiculous enough to make you wonder if you’re reading the *Onion*.

In contrast, Mohamed’s “creation” could realistically be mistaken for a threat (image below). And while a sane observer could take issue with the paranoia-driven, zero-tolerance rules in today’s schools, the fact remains that there’s no way a student could bring such a device to class in 2015 and not evoke suspicion.



This is why many are suspicious that there’s more to the story. While Mohamed qualified his race-card comment by [saying](#) “I’m really not into politics. I’m into science,” he certainly has played politics better than he has pursued science. Kubiak said that he called Mohamed after the Sept. 14 incident, and the boy bragged, “I told you one day I’m going to be — and you told me yourself — I’m going to be really big on the Internet one day.”

And if Machiavellian aims were operative, the clock crock certainly fit the bill. As research scientist Thomas Talbot said of Mohamed’s device, [reports](#) the *Daily Beast*, “This is simply taking a clock out of its case, and I think probably for provocative reasons, intentionally” — “to look like a device that would be suspicious.” This sentiment was echoed by figures ranging from famed atheist [Richard Dawkins](#) to Texas Municipal Patrolman’s Association president Heath Wester, who considers the clock crock a publicity stunt. As he [said](#) of Mohamed to *Raw Story*, “I think his intent was to see how far he could get with the device and to see what kind of alarmant he could get. And as you can see now, he’s got what he asked for. ...He’s gotten that excitement or whatever he was trying to get.”



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This may seem overly cynical when speaking of a 14-year-old. Yet who may be pulling the strings? Note that Mohamed's father is a [Muslim activist](#) who *twice ran for the presidency of his native Sudan*. Also note that billionaire Mark Cuban, who spoke to the boy on the phone, [said](#) that when he asked Mohamed to explain "what happened," his sister was coaching him, "giving him the answer."

Yet perhaps the most underappreciated aspect of the story is the retreating "clock." Obama had originally tweeted, "Cool clock, Ahmed. Want to bring it to the White House?" And had it been more clock than crock, it would have made an appearance there. The media would have treated us to expositions on the nature, construction, and brilliance of Mohamed's "invention." It would have been Exhibit A in the persecution of a budding Muslim scientist and would be rubbed in the faces of those stupid enough to mistake tomorrow's technology for today's terrorism. Instead, what figures in the news is not Exhibit A — that supposedly misunderstood thing that started this whole mess — but Mohamed himself. The fraudulent clock has already served its purpose, you see, so now it can be shunted to the background, the public's eyes diverted from it like a magician using misdirection to hide his sleight-of-hand. "Look over here, at the persecution, the prejudice, the Islamophobia." And while that's a fraud, too, it's not one easily verifiable via simple technical analysis.

Yet falsehood has flown and the tale has had its effect. Mohamed has not only met world leaders and been invited to the United Nations; he has received offers of opportunities from Google, Twitter, and Facebook; has appeared on talk shows; a GoFundMe campaign has sought to raise money so the boy can attend MIT; and Microsoft sent him a few thousand dollars' worth of products.

And with such results, his creativity may not be in question — only whether it lies in science or fiction. Because he may not be Rolex, but he certainly rolled the media.

Photos: AP Images



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