



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on September 10, 2013

Amid Talk of Syria Deal, Obama May Defy Congress on War

After having already [falsely claimed](#) to have the authority to launch a war against Syria without congressional approval — let alone a declaration of war, as required by the Constitution — Obama is now brazenly threatening that he may attack whether Congress votes to support it or not. Amid solidifying opposition to the scheme in Congress and among the public, multiple news reports have suggested that lawmakers are set to [delay the vote](#) — or possibly even not hold it at all if Obama's war plans look certain to be crushed. Obama, however, [said he had not made up his mind](#) on whether to listen to Congress.



By Monday afternoon, numerous [media reports](#) and statements by officials from belligerent governments on both sides of the conflict — Russia, Syria, Iran, the United States, and France — suggested there may be a way to defuse tensions. Following a remark by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry about having the Syrian regime surrender its chemical weapons to “international authorities” to avoid a U.S. military strike on Syria, authorities from Russia, Iran, France, and Syria seized the potential opportunity.

The Assad regime promptly expressed its willingness to submit, as the Russian government announced a formal proposal. French authorities, meanwhile, said they would prepare a resolution for the United Nations Security Council putting the scheme into effect. The dictatorships ruling Iran and China, both of which have been supporting the Syrian dictator to varying degrees, also agreed to support the new measure. Despite having suggested the scheme in the first place, however, the Obama administration sounded hesitant about endorsing it while continuing to seek congressional support for war — not that it will mean anything, at least according to the president's assertions.

Speaking to NBC, Obama [argued](#) that having the international community monitor and eventually destroy Assad's chemical weapons “could potentially be a significant breakthrough.” “I think you have to take it with a grain of salt, initially,” he continued during one of his many TV interviews aimed at building some semblance of public support for war. “We're going to make sure that we see how serious these proposals are.”

Despite news about the potential for the supposed deal and Obama's stated willingness to consider the scheme, however, the U.S. administration continued to beat the war drums as late as Monday evening. During a sales pitch to the compliant establishment media and supposedly the American people, the president acknowledged he was not “confident” that lawmakers were ready to submit to his demands on approving “authorization of force.” The Senate has [already “delayed” its vote](#), which was originally scheduled for Wednesday, amid growing bipartisan opposition to more war. In the House, no date has yet been set.



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However, like his senior officials late last week, Obama made clear that he intends to do whatever he pleases — potentially setting up a historic showdown with Congress, which would almost certainly come under heavy pressure to impeach. More than a few critics, [including members of Congress](#), have already suggested that he could be [impeached](#) for starting another unconstitutional war. The pressure is expected to be especially significant following [similar calls for impeachment](#) after the administration's lawless decision to wage war on Libya by [providing weapons and air power to al-Qaeda-linked jihadist rebels](#) in Libya.

Of course, attempting to sell his latest dubious war directly to the public on September 9 was already a tough job, with polls showing that Americans across the political spectrum remain overwhelmingly opposed to the scheme. Well over two-thirds oppose further intervention, with some polls [suggesting](#) fewer than one in 10 support military strikes. The opposition is growing, too. So, the president took to the airwaves to make his case.

Considering Obama's televised remarks, though, it was not clear what purpose the convincing would serve, except, perhaps, to give the impression that Obama is taking the American people's opinion into consideration. During one of his many TV sales pitches, for example, Obama openly said he did not yet know whether he would defy Congress, the will of the people, and the Constitution by starting a war if lawmakers rejected his demands.

"It's fair to say I haven't decided," he [told](#) NBC News casually, as if congressional approval for war were a mere option or formality rather than a constitutional requirement he swore to uphold. "I've made my decision about what I think is best for America's national interests, but this is one where I think it's important for me to pay close attention to what Congress and the American people say."

Also, despite supposedly considering the deal on Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles while claiming he may defy lawmakers, multiple news reports said the administration was hard at work lobbying members of Congress to support military action. He also vowed during September 9 TV interviews to continue pushing his plan for military strikes in an address to the nation Tuesday afternoon.

"I'll explain this is not Iraq; this is not Afghanistan; this is not even Libya," Obama [told](#) PBS in one of the six carefully orchestrated televised sales pitches Monday about what he would be saying during his next war-marketing blitz. "We're talking about a very specific set of strikes to degrade his chemical weapons capabilities in terms of delivery."

Meanwhile, Obama also said he would put the military strikes on hold if the Assad regime cooperated with the chemical weapons scheme, but his administration is still urging lawmakers to approve the use of force. Among analysts, confusion is mounting about the plan, the purpose of strikes, the wisdom of overtly [joining a war on the side of al-Qaeda](#), why the administration lawlessly claims it can defy Congress, and what the establishment may really be seeking amid the Syrian ordeal.

As *The New American* [reported](#) last week, it is hardly the first time in recent days that the Obama administration has claimed it could ignore Congress. After over 150 lawmakers from both parties sent letters explaining the Constitution, Obama lashed out in an August 31 speech, announcing his intention to consult lawmakers prior to launching strikes while claiming their opinions were essentially irrelevant.

In a stunning display of either constitutional ignorance or brazen defiance of his oath to the U.S. Constitution, however, the president reemphasized his wildly mistaken belief that he can do virtually whatever he wants. "I believe I have the authority to carry out this military action without specific



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congressional authorization,” Obama [claimed](#), drawing a swift rebuke from critics while openly contradicting his campaign-trail statements correctly pointing out that the president cannot start a war without congressional approval.

Senior administration officials were even more belligerent. Whatever the motivations for seeking congressional approval, they again made clear that lawmakers were all but irrelevant if they stood in the way. “We don’t contemplate that the Congress is going to vote no,” Secretary of State Kerry [said](#) confidently after Obama’s speech, adding incorrectly that the president has the “right” to take action “no matter what Congress does.” “America intends to act,” Kerry also said, dangerously equating the [out-of-control administration](#) with the American people.

While numerous analysts say tensions have eased slightly with the proposed deal to have Assad surrender his weapons of mass destruction to the UN, the prospect of Obama launching an unconstitutional war on his own remains a serious threat. Indeed, for years, even before the full-blown conflict in Syria began, the U.S. government has been supporting the opposition with taxpayer dollars. More recently, the administration and various Arab dictators have been helping to [provide weapons, training, and more](#) to the [jihadist rebels](#).

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle have made clear to the president that he [does not have the authority to start a war](#) without congressional approval. That would be obvious to anyone who has read the Constitution, which Obama swore to uphold and claims to understand. However, it appears increasingly unlikely, barring some sort of real or staged attack, that Congress will eventually provide the authority. If it refuses and Obama goes to war anyway, lawmakers must act in order to safeguard constitutional governance in America.

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