



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on November 5, 2015

Obama Was Against Putting Troops in Syria Before Being for It

After the White House announced last week that nearly 50 Special Operations advisers are being deployed to Syria, White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest went into full spin in a vain effort to explain how this does not repudiate President Obama's repeated promises that he would not send troops into the region. Unfortunately for Obama and Earnest, the easily located record of Obama's previous statements says otherwise



Sadly, it is not shocking when politicians — from either major party — lie to their constituents. President Obama has certainly done his fair share of it. This time, though, the plethora of documented statements make the lie so blatantly obvious that it is somewhat shocking that the administration would tell it. After all, doesn't everyone know the administration is lying?

Rather than simply admit what everyone knows — that President Obama said he would never do what he is now doing — Josh Earnest tried to play it off as a mere extension of previous policy. "This is an intensification of a strategy that the president announced more than a year ago," he said in a White House press conference. There is certainly more josh than earnest in that statement.

Even liberal publications normally friendly to Obama are taking him to task over this shifty non-shift in foreign policy. [Salon](#) pointed out that Obama not only changed direction while claiming not to, but that he did so without even addressing the issue himself. The website reported, "In an effort to downplay the move for more ground troops, President Obama will not be making the announcement himself but will have White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest brief the press Friday afternoon." The article goes on to point to a clear example of a time when Obama said he would not put troops in Syria:

For years, Obama has pledged not to send ground forces into Syria. Announcing air strikes against ISIS in September 2014, the president said, "After a decade of massive ground deployments, it is more effective to use our unique capabilities in support of partners on the ground so they can secure their own countries' futures. And that's the only solution that will succeed over the long term."

Even if that were the one and only time the president said he would not do what he is now doing, it would be sufficient to prove this new move is a reversal of his policy and a promise broken. That example, however, is just one of many in the public record. The following is a list of 18 times that President Obama or one of his staff said that he would not put American troops in Syria. The list was compiled from several sources including [The Examiner](#), the [Washington Post](#), Twitter, and [whitehouse.gov](#).

- Aug. 30, 2013: "So again, I repeat, we're not considering any open-ended commitment. We're not considering any boots-on-the-ground approach."



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- Aug. 31, 2013: "Now, after careful deliberation, I have decided that the United States should take military action against Syrian regime targets. This would not be an open-ended intervention. We would not put boots on the ground. Instead, our action would be designed to be limited in duration and scope."
- Sept. 3, 2013: "So the key point that I want to emphasize to the American people: The military plan that has been developed by our Joint Chiefs — and that I believe is appropriate — is proportional. It is limited. It does not involve boots on the ground. This is not Iraq, and this is not Afghanistan."
- Sept. 4, 2013: "I think America recognizes that, as difficult as it is to take any military action — even one as limited as we're talking about, even one without boots on the ground — that's a sober decision."
- Sept. 6, 2013: "The question for the American people is, is that responsibility that we'll be willing to bear? And I believe that when you have a limited, proportional strike like this — not Iraq, not putting boots on the ground; not some long, drawn-out affair; not without any risks, but with manageable risks — that we should be willing to bear that responsibility."
- Sept. 7, 2013: "What we're not talking about is an open-ended intervention. This would not be another Iraq or Afghanistan. There would be no American boots on the ground."
- Sept. 9, 2013: "Tomorrow I'll speak to the American people. I'll explain this is not Iraq; this is not Afghanistan; this is not even Libya. We're not talking about — not boots on the ground. We're not talking about sustained airstrikes."
- Sept. 9, 2013: "'This will not be Iraq or Afghanistan. There will be no American boots on the ground—period.' — @AmbassadorRice on the need to act in #Syria" — The White House (@WhiteHouse)
- Sept. 10, 2013: "Many of you have asked, won't this put us on a slippery slope to another war? One man wrote to me that we are 'still recovering from our involvement in Iraq.' A veteran put it more bluntly: 'This nation is sick and tired of war.' My answer is simple: I will not put American boots on the ground in Syria."
- Sept. 11, 2013: President Obama: "I will not put American boots on the ground in #Syria. I will not pursue an open-ended action like Iraq or Afghanistan." — The White House (@WhiteHouse)
- Feb. 27, 2014: "We are doing everything we can to see how we can do that and how we can resource it. But I've looked at a whole lot of game plans, a whole lot of war plans, a whole bunch of scenarios, and nobody has been able to persuade me that us taking large-scale military action even absent boots on the ground, would actually solve the problem."
- Sept. 5, 2014: "With respect to the situation on the ground in Syria, we will not be placing U.S. ground troops to try to control the areas that are part of the conflict inside of Syria."
- Sept. 7, 2014: "The notion that the United States should be putting boots on the ground, I think would be a profound mistake. And I want to be very clear and very explicit about that."
- Sept. 10, 2014: "I want the American people to understand how this effort will be different from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It will not involve American combat troops fighting on foreign soil."
- Sept. 19, 2014: "The President has ruled out the option of deploying American boots on the ground in Iraq and in Syria in a combat role. The President, the Commander-in-Chief has ruled that out." (Josh Earnest made this statement. After saying it, he was asked if this meant never, and he replied, "That's correct.")



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- Sept. 20, 2014: "I won't commit our troops to fighting another ground war in Iraq, or in Syria. It's more effective to use our capabilities to help partners on the ground secure their own country's futures."
- Nov. 16, 2014: "Right now we're moving forward in conjunction with outstanding allies like Australia in training Iraqi security forces to do their job on the ground."
- Feb. 11, 2015: "The resolution we've submitted today does not call for the deployment of U.S. ground combat forces to Iraq or Syria. It is not the authorization of another ground war, like Afghanistan or Iraq.... As I've said before, I'm convinced that the United States should not get dragged back into another prolonged ground war in the Middle East."

President George Washington — who it is said could not tell a lie — advocated an American foreign policy of "no entangling alliances" with foreign nations. He lived that policy out in his two terms. Obama said "no boots on the ground" in Syria and then committed troops to fight in Syria, without being honest enough to even acknowledge the policy reversal.

It is time for the American voters to reject the policy of foreign interventionism that has been pursued by modern-day presidents whether Republican or Democrat. It is time to return to the common sense and honesty of minding our own business and expecting our politicians to keep their promises.

Photo of President Obama: AP Images



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