



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on April 12, 2017

Trump's Decision to Bomb Syria Was "Emotional"

"Passion governs, and she never governs wisely," noted Ben Franklin — and she also influenced President Trump's decision to bomb Syria.

This inescapable conclusion was drawn by Trump supporter Pat Buchanan, who used the term "emotional" a few times to describe the attack while speaking to radio host Michael Savage yesterday. Trump supporter Katie Hopkins, a prominent British journalist, expressed the same sentiment on the Monday edition of Savage's show. And pundit Ann Coulter, yet another Trump supporter, said it all in an April 6 tweet: "Trump campaigned on not getting involved in Mideast. Said it always helps our enemies & creates more refugees. Then he saw a picture on TV."



The president wasn't the only one. His son Eric said that Trump's decision was influenced by daughter Ivanka, who was "heartbroken and outraged" at the chemical-weapons attack that killed dozens of civilians last week. Yes, well, some people watch too many movies — and some just shouldn't look at pictures.

This isn't to trivialize the gas attack, a most monstrous act. Yet as Buchanan, Savage, and others have wondered, do we really know who launched it? Buchanan opined that Syrian leader Bashar Assad would have to be stupid to have ordered the action; he is, after all, winning his war against the rebels and would have known that crossing the chemical-weapons line would draw the United State's ire. Under this theory, the attack would have been a perfect false-flag move by the rebels, who could frame Assad and manipulate the West into doing their dirty work.

Of course, Trump is privy to intelligence (which we can only hope is *intelligent*) that pundits don't have. Regardless, however, what is upside to ousting Assad?

To be clear, the Syrian leader is a bad guy. But he's surrounded by other bad guys — there are no good guys in this story.

One great mistake influencing the West's support for the so-called "Arab Spring" — of which the Syrian civil war is a part — is the very human tendency to project our own expectations onto alien cultures. But not every revolution is the American Revolution (in fact, no other revolution has been). There is no Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, or George Washington waiting in the wings for a chance to establish a constitutional republic in Afghanistan, Iraq, Egypt, or Syria.

Instead, waiting to pounce are Islamic jihadists. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said yesterday, "It is clear to all of us that the reign of the Assad family is coming to an end," but, as New York's *Daily News* [put it](#), he also "offered little insight on what's next for the embattled country." Do we want to do for



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Syria what Jimmy Carter helped do for Iran in 1979 and what Barack Obama did for a wider swath of the Mideast, as he threw gasoline on the fire?

So now Iraq's Saddam Hussein (far worse than Assad) and Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi are gone — and the Islamic State has filled the vacuum. The result? The genocide of Christians and other minorities, unspeakable brutality, and Libya used as a conduit for a Muslim-migrant influx into Europe. How's that "spreading of democracy" and nation-building workin' for ya'?

Trump said it well himself in a June 2013 tweet: "We should stay the hell out of Syria, the 'rebels' are just as bad as the current regime. WHAT WILL WE GET FOR OUR LIVES AND \$ BILLIONS?ZERO"

But now he has seen a picture and his "attitude toward Syria and Assad has changed very much," said the president. "Beautiful babies were cruelly murdered in this very barbaric attack. No child of God should ever suffer such horror," he emoted sometime later. But as Buchanan [wrote](#) Monday, adding perspective:

400,000 people have died in Syria's civil war, among them thousands of children and infants.

Have they been killed by Assad's forces? Surely, but also by U.S., Russian, Israeli and Turkish planes and drones — and by Kurds, Iranians, Hezbollah, al-Qaida, ISIS, U.S.-backed rebels and Shiite militia.

Assad is battling insurgents and jihadists who would slaughter his Alawite brethren and the Christians in Syria just as those Copts were massacred in Egypt on Palm Sunday. Why is Assad more responsible for all the deaths in Syria than those fighting to overthrow and kill him?

He isn't. The difference is that the Trump team hasn't recently seen emotion-stoking pictures of the thousand other atrocities. But let's paint a clear picture: Only a serious knock-down, drag-out fight would ensure that Assad's regime was "coming to an end." Remember that Russia is intent on not letting that happen and has far more skin in this game than we do. As Buchanan also pointed out:

For Assad, this war is about his survival and that of his regime. For Putin, it is about Russia remaining a great power and not losing its last naval base in the Med. For Iran, this is about preserving a land bridge to its Shiite ally Hezbollah. For Hezbollah it is about not being cut off from the Shiite world and isolated in Lebanon.

Because all have vital interests in Syria, all have invested more blood in this conflict than have we. And they are not going to give up their gains or goals in Syria and yield to the Americans without a fight.

There are things worth fighting for. But do we really want to risk a major conflict with Russia — perhaps even WWII — with no foreseeable upside to ousting Assad and no national interest at stake? Part of Just War Doctrine is that a proposed action must do more good than harm. This Syrian adventure doesn't qualify.

"A picture is worth a thousand words" — and sometimes a few hundred deceitful ones. On Savage's Monday show, Katie Hopkins analogized the current situation to that inspired by the 2015 death of three-year-old Alan Kurdi. Back then, the heartrending picture of his body washed up on a Turkish beach went viral and was used as Exhibit A for why Muslim migrants should be resettled in the West.

Yet here's what the picture couldn't relate: Kurdi's family wasn't fleeing violence in Syria. Rather, they were living safely in Turkey, but wanted to get to Europe and, ultimately, to relatives in Canada. So they boarded a small and, tragically, unseaworthy boat. The rest is history.



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But is the lesson that the West needs to roll out a red carpet for millions of unassimilable migrants? Or is it that it needs to stop doing so, so migrants won't roll the dice trying to win the Western welfare-state jackpot?

The lesson is also that we need to stop destabilizing Mideast regimes with not nation-building, but nation-rending, schemes. It is, in addition, that leading with the heart and not the head can leave you broke, bloody, and dead.

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