

Obama's Call to Hit Syria Splits World Leaders

Monday, September 9, 2013 | Peter Nicholas and Paul Sonne, The Wall Street Journal

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia— President Obama blurted to Russia's Vladimir Putin at a joint press appearance, "Everyone here thinks you're a jackass." The press corps appeared stunned by the uncharacteristic outburst from Mr. Obama, who then unleashed a ten-minute tirade at the stone-faced Russian President. As Mr. Putin narrowed his eyes in frosty silence, Mr. Obama seemed to warm to his topic. "If you think I'm the only one who feels this way, you're kidding yourself," Mr. Obama said, jabbing his finger in the direction of the Russian President's face. "Ask Angela Merkel. Ask David Cameron. Ask the Turkish guy. Every last one of them thinks you're a (expletive)." Shortly after Mr. Obama's volcanic performance, Mr. Putin released a terse official statement, reading, "I should be afraid of this skinny man? I wrestle bears." Andy Borowitz, The New Yorker



President Barack Obama fell short in his bid to rally international support for a U.S. military strike on Syria, failing to overcome divisions at a summit of world leaders before flying home to face skeptics in Congress and the American public. Mr. Obama spent two days coaxing leaders of the Group of 20 nations, pulling presidents and prime ministers aside for private conversations and making his case in a four-hour dinner at a historic palace here. The lobbying blitz calling for a "strong international response" to Syria's alleged use of chemical weapons against rebels showed little sign of changing the minds of world leaders—some of whom took that phrase to mean "military action."

Mr. Obama's push also gained little ground in building a coalition to politically isolate Russian President Vladimir Putin, the summit host and one of the Syrian regime's chief allies and protectors. The White House on Friday released a list of 11 nations including the U.S. that signed the statement, which expressed support for "efforts undertaken by the U.S. and other countries to reinforce the prohibition on the use of chemical weapons."



But Mr. Putin put out a list of his own. At a news conference on Friday, he rattled off the names of eight G-20 nations, including his own, that he said oppose international military action in Syria. Ten nations altogether declined to sign the U.S. statement. Not all of those that did sign endorsed Mr. Obama's call for a military strike against Syria. While Italy signed, Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta said he had told Mr. Obama that his country wouldn't join any military action in Syria. Spain, which signed, isn't a full member of the G-20, but rather, a permanent guest—putting the vote tally among members of the group of the world's largest economies at 10-10. Germany didn't sign—after Chancellor Angela Merkel decided to try to reach a united European position first. Secretary of State John Kerry will present the U.S. case to a meeting of EU foreign ministers over the weekend in Lithuania. "Will we continue to help Syria? We will," Mr. Putin said. "We're helping them now. We are supplying arms, cooperating in the economic sphere."

The one leader who had appeared ready to support prompt military action last month, French President François Hollande, said on Friday that he would now wait until the United Nations releases its findings about the Aug. 21 attack outside Damascus that spurred U.S. calls for an international response. Mr. Hollande also repeated that his decision would hinge on the outcome of a vote in the U.S. Congress. Mr. Obama was to return to the U.S. on Friday night to face the challenge of rounding up lawmakers to authorize an armed attack against the Syrian government of President Bashar al-Assad.

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards adapted from floridastandards.org. Standards specifically addressed in this edition are strategically aligned with state standards and annotated adjacent to the respective inquiry.

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1. In appropriate paragraph form, compare and contrast the pros and cons synonymous with eleven unique industrialized nations expressing support for "efforts undertaken by the U.S. and other countries to reinforce the prohibition on the use of chemical weapons." Provided the two days Obama invested in coaxing leaders of the Group of 20 nations, pulling presidents and prime ministers aside for private conversations and making his case in a four-hour dinner, do you personally believe he succeeded in his efforts in acquiring international support and establishing a strong coalition? Thoroughly explain your reasoning and provide specific artifacts and evidence not limited solely to passage above to support your response. Create and illustrate a Venn Diagram to effectively explore relationships and patterns and to make arguments about relationships between sets. **(LA.910.3.2.2; LA.910.1.6.2; MA.912.D.7.2; MA.912.A.10.1)**
2. Secretary of State, John Kerry, said Arab countries have offered to pay for a full invasion of Syria to oust President Bashar Assad. "With respect to Arab countries offering to bear costs and to assess, the answer is profoundly yes," Kerry told the House Foreign Affairs Committee during a hearing Wednesday, according to The Washington Post. Thus far, estimates have ranged between five and \$21 billion. Illustrate these preliminary findings on a graph as a compound inequality. Explain your mathematical reasoning in selecting either an open or closed dot as you graph your inequality. Explain how one might interpret phrases like "at least" and "at most" in an inequality in a real-world situation. What precautionary measures might the U.S. first evaluate prior to merely accepting foreign aid? **(MA.912.A.10.1; MA.912.A.1.4; MA.912.A.2.13; MA.912.A.2.1; MA.912.A.2.2; MA.912.A.3.4; MA.912.A.3.5)**
3. President Obama serves as Commander-In-Chief or the person exercising supreme command authority of a nation's military forces. The Pentagon is the headquarters of the U.S. Department of Defense. The word pentagon is a derivative from the Greek root word *pente*. Perhaps the most notable is a five-sided polygon structure located in Arlington County, Virginia. Sketch a pentagon that is equilateral but not equiangular. One side of a pentagon measures $(7x - 3)$ inches whereas another is $(4x + 6)$ inches. Find a side length and evaluate one of the expressions with the value of x . What is the perimeter of this pentagon? Can you find the circumference? Explain. A segment that joins two nonconsecutive vertices of a polygon is called a diagonal. How many diagonals exist in a pentagon? **(MA.912.G.2.3; MA.912.G.2.5; MA.912.G.8.2; MA.912.G.8.6)**
4. Identify and thoroughly support your reasoning regarding which of the following that best describes the author's attitude toward the subject matter discussed: flippant disregard, mild frustration, passive resignation or an informed citizen. Explain the intended purpose of this passage and identify any indicators, which suggest the author may possess a bias for or against President Obama's efforts in acquiring support against Syria. What is the central idea and what conclusion might one obtain from this passage? Provide an inference allied and opposing nations may derive from this passage. The point of view of this passage is best described as first person, second person, third person, or a combination of first and third person. In what regard might the information in this article be used for an independent student research project? Thoroughly explain your reasoning as appropriate. **(RI.9-10.1 – 10.6)**
5. Using contextual clues only, determine the most complete and accurate definitions of following italicized terms: *spurred*, *hinge*, *sphere*, *coalition*, *prohibition*, *skeptics*, *coaxing*, *lobbying*, and *tirade* as obtained from the passage above. Additionally, use each word in a complete sentence to demonstrate further comprehension. **(LA.910.1.6.3; LA.910.1.6.1)**
6. **SARASOTA MILITARY ACADEMY WORD-OF-THE-WEEK** Create a concluding paragraph aligned with the passage above using the following italicized word: *Fathom* v. to understand fully; to penetrate the meaning of **(LA.910.1.6.1; LA.910.1.6.5)**

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