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Obama's Lose-Lose: WikiLeaks Releases Put Obama in Untenable Position

By Jason Ditz

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President Obama is increasingly finding himself in a no-win situation with regards to the WikiLeaks releases, as his pretense of support for transparent and honest government goes up in smoke in the face of secretive and in some cases [downright criminal policies](#).

This has left the White House on the one hand sticking up for [Secretary of State Hillary Clinton by denying that she ordered crimes for which orders clearly exist signed in her own hand](#), and claims of weakness from would-be 2012 presidential candidates calling for mass executions.

Indeed, the actual damage done to America's foreign policy so far appears comparatively minimal, with most of its key allies (Turkey being a notable exception) shrugging off evidence of State Department dirty dealings as unsurprising or trying to spin them to suit their own agendas. But his attempts to carve out a niche in his response to WikiLeaks that involves hysterical condemnations but stops well short of a Soviet style massacre of dissidents seems to be satisfying no one.

Perhaps it was inevitable that the president, after taking office on a mantra of change and a policy of continuity, would be placed into such a position, but it appears to have come surprisingly fast and to have left him no easy political escape. He cannot accept responsibility for the content of the WikiLeaks releases without firing (and prosecuting) many of his State Department appointees, who in all likelihood really were following

policies he laid the groundwork for. Likewise though he has tried to make such claims of power under the guise of the global war on terror, it seems virtually impossible that he would be able to launch the sort of public wholesale slaughter that would render his rivals unable to accuse him of weakness.