

Obama's Never-Ending Lecture Tour - The American Interest

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11/16/2016

President Obama, who has done less for Europe than any American President since Calvin Coolidge, cannot stop telling Europeans what to do. As Obama sets out on his final European tour as President, with his political party back home in a state of near collapse, and with Putin inflicting yet another painful humiliation on the least successful American President in the history of the modern Middle East, nothing seems able to shake his serene confidence that he knows more than other people, sees farther than they do, and that other people are eager to gather up his pearls of insight.

Here is the [Wall Street Journal](#) on Obama's trip to Greece:

President Barack Obama urged Europe to resolve lingering issues from its debt crisis, saying on Tuesday that leaders should favor growth over austerity, as part of their response to the rising populism in Western countries exemplified by the election of Donald Trump.

Mr. Obama made the appeal after meeting with Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, who said it is time for Greece to receive significant debt relief from Europe.

Mr. Obama said European leaders should follow economic policies that ease some of the voter backlash against globalization, as they grapple with political trends similar to those behind Mr. Trump's victory in the U.S. presidential election.

Not everything Obama is recommending to Europe is bad, but his words no longer have a significant impact from a continent battered first by his failures in foreign policy and now by the collapse of his legacy at home. Obama will be remembered by historians as the man who turned over the White House to Donald Trump, the man who let Putin unleash the forces of Hell in Syria and Ukraine, and the man who honored European values but made the world steadily [less safe](#) for them.

That Putin took the occasion of Obama's final tour to open a wide [new air offensive](#) in Syria and [withdraw from the ICC](#) even as [his allies celebrated victories](#) in Estonia, Moldova and Bulgaria only underlines what a foreign policy disaster the 44th President has been. Many world leaders like Obama; some pity him; few respect him as a leader (rather than as a man); none fear him. Most are too busy coping with the consequences of his failures to spend a lot of time thinking about him at this point in his presidency. Even Germany, whose cheering crowds once greeted Obama as an enlightened internationalist in the mold of John F. Kennedy, has [gradually lost faith](#) in the President.

The early signs of struggle and factionalism in the [Donald Trump transition](#), meanwhile, are leading many foreigners to suppose that the next American President will be another inconsequential bumbler. We must hope that they are wrong; not even the power of the United States can survive a long string of failed Presidents unscathed.