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Obama Announces Intention to Shoot Self in the Foot...

By [Philip I. Levy](#)

September 15, 2009, 1:42 pm

President Obama today announced his intention to shoot himself in the foot. He will do so under a law passed back in the Mondale administration which authorizes, but does not require, the president to take such action.

The president said that by blasting himself, he will demonstrate his resolve and his commitment to enforcement. "I just want to make sure if we actually have rules written down, they mean something," Obama told CNBC television. "If we don't enforce the rules, then it's very hard to have credibility, and it's hard to get the American people to support us as we make new rules," Obama said.

The president's predecessors in office had all declined to shoot themselves in the foot, arguing that it would not do anyone much good and would likely hurt. Supporters today praised the president for his willingness to take decisive action. "He's making good on his promise that he would enforce our laws more effectively and we appreciate that," said Thea Lee, policy director for the AFL-CIO labor federation. In particular, she said, it is "a welcome change" from Bush, who fell far short on the enforcement front.

The preceding is fictional, of course. Except the quotes are only slightly modified from a [Reuters story](#) today about the president's [protectionist decision](#) to apply a tariff to Chinese tires.

As Dan Ikenson of Cato [details](#), the tires decision will not do anyone much good and will likely hurt. This was why President Bush declined to apply similar tariffs in four previous opportunities. President Obama, in contrast, is committed to enforcement.

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