

America the Feckless. Lies and Hypocrisy Are at the Heart of the Biden Foreign Policy

Devastating report released by Seymour Hersh

By [Philip Giraldi](#)

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One would think that the United States military staging an unprovoked "plausibly deniable" covert attack on a nation with which it is not at war would be at least considered newsworthy. That the attack did grave damage to a country with which the US is closely allied would seem to make the aggression even more unthinkable. And, perhaps worst of all, that the attack was set up by the nation's chief executive using a political bypass that avoided congressional oversight and adherence to the war powers act which might be most reprehensible of all as it cuts to the heart of the nation's constitutional balance of powers. It is clearly an impeachable offense. And "Yes," for those who are still wondering, Joe Biden and his team of terrorist emulators have done all that and more, and have capped their performance with a series of flat out lies and evasions to make it appear that they had done nothing wrong.

And the mainstream America media, in its worst performance since the invasion of Iraq, has served as an echo chamber for everything the White House chooses to leak to it. Given all of that, it was perhaps completely predictable that the government-subservient press and TV news would almost completely ignore the devastating report released by top investigative journalist Seymour Hersh on February 8th. [Hersh's article](#) was entitled "How America Took Out the Nord Stream Pipeline" with a secondary headline reading "The New York Times called it a 'mystery,' but the United States executed a covert sea operation that was kept secret—until now."

The article, which Hersh self-published on the internet, describes in considerable detail the preparations and execution by the US Navy Diving and Salvage Center and Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) Maritime Branch, coordinated and directed by the White House, to sabotage and destroy Russia's four Baltic Sea Nord Stream gas pipelines, a war crime and terroristic action that moves the United States much closer to direct armed conflict with

Russia.

Given its potential political blowback, the Hersh story might very well be the most important expose to appear since fighting began in Ukraine over a year ago, but it is being ignored by the White House, which is denying the report, with a spokesman only commenting that “This is false and complete fiction.”

The CIA’s spokesman Tammy Thorp likewise replied to Hersh that “This claim is completely and utterly false.”

The US Navy was also asked for comments but did not respond. The media, clearly evident by its inaction, has religiously adhered to that government line, possibly due to some mistaken notion that our national security forces have to be supported when they are going “toe to toe with the Russkies” over Ukraine. On the contrary, it is precisely when the government is behaving recklessly not to mention criminally to bring about an unnecessary war that the press should be in hot pursuit of the story and what it means. That is particularly so as the Ukraine conflict is now escalating and threatening to go nuclear as both sides dig in to incompatible positions.

I have known Sy Hersh for a number of years and spent time together with him and other former CIA colleagues helping to confirm details of some of his earlier exposes on US government abuses and outright lies in its somewhat not completely credible role as “guardian” of national security. Hersh is a meticulous investigator who never, in my experience, accepted uncorroborated claims in support of his narratives.

I have some understanding of who his sources in the intelligence agencies and Department of Defense might be in this case and it should be accepted that what he has written is completely verifiable and derived from individuals who were actual participants in the activities described. That is not to say that there will not be failures to recall accurately certainly details including aspects of the possible Norwegian involvement, something critics are [already pointing to](#), but the main thrust of “whodunit” and “how” is pretty definitively demonstrated.

The report is long and includes a great deal of information on both the planning and the political decision-making that went into the willingness to destroy the pipeline, which I will briefly describe.

Sy claims the following: It has not exactly been a secret that many in the United States government have long regarded the Nord Stream pipelines to be a security threat as the supply of relatively cheap natural gas to Germany as a gateway into Europe by Russia would enable Moscow to create a dependency on it for energy which could be manipulated to produce political and strategic advantage.

As the crisis over Ukraine deepened in 2021, the Biden White House set up a secret task force that worked on possible scenarios that focused on using military and intelligence resources to physically destroy the pipelines with some measure of plausible denial of the US hand in the process in order to avoid political blowback from America’s European allies or escalation of the conflict. The secrecy was needed to protect Biden from charges of hypocrisy since he had repeatedly pledged that the US would not be directly involved in any armed conflict with Russia over Ukraine.

National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan headed the interagency task force, which convened throughout late 2021 and included key players from the Agency's Maritime Branch and the Navy's Diving and Salvage Center, both located in Panama City Florida, as well as the State Department, Treasury and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The operation was originally treated as a covert action that would have required congressional oversight, but that fig leaf was abandoned and it became a "highly classified intelligence operation" when Biden and others in the administration stated publicly and clearly their intentions to stop the pipeline, making what eventually took place an openly declared policy, perhaps intended to send a warning to the Russians. A number of options to destroy the pipelines were discussed. According to Hersh, the participants in the meeting, many of whom were hawks who had cut their teeth under the Obama Administration, clearly understood that they were proposing an "act of war" that was being considered in spite of potential blowback because the president had ordered it.

There was plenty of warning of what might be coming.

In early February 2022, shortly before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, President Biden [publicly pledged](#) during a joint news conference accompanied by a silent and frowning German chancellor Olaf Scholz that "If Russia invades ... there will no longer be a Nord Stream 2" and, when pressed on how he would carry that out, he responded, "We will — I promise you — we will be able to do it."

Later, after the destruction of the pipeline, Secretary of State Blinken [stated that](#) the sabotage offered a "tremendous opportunity to once and for all remove the dependence on Russian energy... That's very significant and that offers tremendous strategic opportunity for the years to come."

Not that any more confirmation was needed, but on January 22nd 2023 Under Secretary of State Victoria Nuland gloated while testifying to a US Senate committee that "the administration is very gratified to know that Nord Stream 2 is now ... a hunk of metal at the bottom of the sea."

The Biden Administration, in its arrogance has more-or-less been admitting that it was behind the sabotage, which it certainly had the motive and means to carry out, though it was carefully avoiding leaving any actual evidence behind that it had carried out the destruction. As observed above, it has also been deliberately avoiding any congressional involvement, presumably to avoid any discussion of war powers or even due to concerns over possible media leaks.

The mechanics of the placing explosives followed by the actual destruction of the pipelines was reportedly as follows:

Under cover of a NATO [Baltic Sea exercise](#) called BALTOPS-22 in June 2022 US Navy and possibly also CIA Special Activities and Norwegian deep sea divers descended 260 feet to a spot off the Danish Island of Bornholm, which was considered to be a location where the pipelines converged in relatively shallow tide-free water and were particularly vulnerable. They attached C-4 explosives both to Nord Stream 1, which was operational, and Nord Stream 2, which was completed but was waiting for German safety and security regulators' approval to become active. The explosives were designed to be remotely detonatable.

The explosives were on a timer that created an escape window for those initiating the detonation and were reported to be activated by a secure signal sent by a sonar buoy that was dropped onto the prepared site by a Norwegian navy helicopter. The Norwegians were essential in that role due to their own military presence close to the targeted part of the Baltic as well as their considerable experience in deep-sea cold-water operations. A Norwegian Navy helicopter in the area would presumably arouse no particular concern, even from the ever-watchful Russians.

Under orders to “Go!” from Washington, on September 26, 2022 the Norwegians dropped the sonar buoy and a few hours later the C-4 explosives were detonated, immediately knocking out three of the four pipelines. In the immediate aftermath of the bombing, the US and its allies in the media made every effort to blame the Russians who were [repeatedly cited as a likely culprit](#). Leaks from the White House and from the British government never established a clear explanation of why Moscow would be into self-sabotage of a lucrative business arrangement.

A few months later, when it was revealed that Russian authorities had been quietly getting estimates for the cost to repair the Nord Streams, in the neighborhood of \$10 billion, the [New York Times seemingly cluelessly described](#) the development as “complicating theories about who was behind” the sabotage.

Indeed, it was never clear why Russia would seek to destroy its own valuable pipeline which was intended to be a major income source for many years to come, a proposition that former British diplomat Craig Murray [describes as](#) “deranged.” But a more telling rationale for the President’s action came from Secretary of State Blinken. Asked at a press conference in September about the consequences of the worsening global energy crisis, most felt in Western Europe, a delusional [Blinken described](#) the development in positive terms, enthusing how the destruction would “take away from Vladimir Putin the weaponization of energy as a means of advancing his imperial designs.”

The tale told by Sy Hersh is yet another great betrayal by the country’s so-called leadership, an egregious example of the United States government aided by its [lap-dog media](#) again lying to its own citizens and the world to cover-up a criminal act that in no way made Americans safer or more prosperous. In the US, the gadfly Tucker Carlson, among prominent journalists, has up to this point dared to present the investigative account developed by Hersh in a five-minute segment of [his program](#). *Newsweek* has also [run a piece](#) examining the issues raised featuring Constitutional lawyer John Yoo. More interesting perhaps, a [half hour interview](#) of Hersh by Amy Goodman on PBS television’s *Democracy Now!* aired last week but then was partially blocked because YouTube considered it to be “inappropriate or offensive.”

The full availability of the Seymour Hersh interview video has since that time [been restored](#) with the *Democracy Now!* channel providing the following explanatory message:

“UPDATE: We have blurred some imagery about 30 seconds into the video in response to a content warning from YouTube that severely limited the reach of this interview. What you see now is an edited version. For the uncensored version of this interview that aired on our show, visit [democracynow.org](#).”

Beyond that exposure, there remain, nevertheless, a lot of questions about the destruction

of Nord Stream, which was unambiguously an act of war or even terrorism, that continue to be unanswered.

Consider, for example, how NATO countries, the US and Norway, *de facto* attacked fellow NATO country Germany, which was both the intended recipient and an economic partner in the pipelines. Though some British involvement in the operation, also detected by Russian intelligence, was quickly revealed publicly by then-British Prime Minister Elizabeth Truss's "It's done" text to Secretary of State Antony Blinken sixty seconds after the [detonation](#).

Berlin apparently was not trusted enough to have a voice in the planning and execution of the bombing even though it was gravely damaged by it. Also, Article 5 of the NATO charter says an attack on one nation requires all other alliance members to aid the country that was targeted and it is intriguing to consider whether the rest of NATO ought to go to war with the United States and Norway. Alternatively, can "friends" in the defensive alliance attack each other without consequences or ought the US and Norway now be considered rogue nations? Will the alliance itself be able to stay together if several member states take steps unilaterally that can severely damage the economy of another member? And how are the Germans actually responding to their sinking economy and standards of living, with closing factories and cold houses as a consequence of the US/Norwegian action?

Americans, for their part, should also be thinking deeply about the government we have and the lack of restraint with which it behaves. The framers of the Constitution gave only to Congress the power to declare war, perhaps imagining that at some future date the president might stoop to using the military and naval forces of the United States globally to punish and coerce other nations, seize their territory, and kill their people. And it is all justified by something called "exceptionalism" empowering a massive sustained deception that waging continuous war is actually keeping the peace in a "rules based international order."

But the final, and biggest, question remains: How will Russia retaliate to Nord Stream? Will it be one step closer to possible nuclear war initiated by Joe Biden's reckless move or will the Kremlin persist with its request to have the United Nations Security Council [investigate the incident](#)? Moscow will certainly be careful to pick the right time and place, but the last act in this play surely remains to be written.

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Philip M. Giraldi, Ph.D., is Executive Director of the Council for the National Interest, a 501(c)3 tax deductible educational foundation (Federal ID Number #52-1739023) that seeks a more interests-based U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Website is councilforthenationalinterest.org, address is P.O. Box 2157, Purcellville VA 20134 and its email is inform@cnionline.org.

He is a regular contributor to Global Research.

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