

# Building a Pretext to Wage War on Syria, Replicating the Iraq WMD 2003 Scenario

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

*What's ongoing now bears eerie resemblance to events preceding Bush's Iraq war. Obama's replicating a familiar scenario.*

Waging war requires a pretext to do so. When none exists, it's invented. It's easy. Lies substitute for truth. Claims about Syria using chemical weapons don't wash. Repetition gets people to believe them. We've seen it all before.

Colin Power's infamous February 5, 2003 [Security Council speech](#) led to war. It was shameless deception. Later he admitted WMD claims were false. It was too late to matter.

Plans were set. The die was cast. Weeks later, America bombed, invaded and occupied Iraq. The cradle of civilization was destroyed. No WMDs existed. It was well-known but ignored. More on that below.

Powell lied claiming them. US media scoundrels repeated what demanded renunciation. A [New York Times](#) editorial headlined "The Case Against Iraq," saying:

"Secretary of State Colin Powell presented the United Nations and a global television audience yesterday with the most powerful case to date that Saddam Hussein stands in defiance of Security Council resolutions and has no intention of revealing or surrendering whatever unconventional weapons he may have."

A (no longer available online) Washington Post editorial headlined "Irrefutable," saying:

"...it is hard to imagine how anyone could doubt that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction."

Months later, a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace report titled "[WMD in Iraq: Evidence and Implications](#)" said the Bush administration "systematically misrepresented the threat from Iraq's WMD and ballistic missile programs."

Asked about the report, Powell stood by his Security Council testimony, saying:

"I am confident of what I presented last year. The intelligence community is confident of the material they gave me. I was representing them."

"It was information they presented to the Congress. It was information they had presented publicly and they stand behind it, and this game is still unfolding."

Powell's speech was bald-faced deception. He willfully lied, saying:

"The material I will present to you comes from a variety of sources. Some are US sources. And some are those of other countries."

"Some of the sources are technical, such as intercepted telephone conversations and photos taken by satellites. Other sources are people who have risked their lives to let the world know what Saddam Hussein is really up to."

"...Iraq's behavior show(s) that Saddam Hussein and his regime are concealing their efforts to produce more weapons of mass destruction."

"We also have satellite photos that indicate that banned materials have recently been moved from a number of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction facilities."

"The Iraqis have never accounted for all of the biological weapons they admitted they had and we know they had. They have never accounted for all the organic material used to make them."

"And they have not accounted for many of the weapons filled with these agents such as there are 400 bombs. This is evidence, not conjecture. This is true. This is all well-documented."

He claimed Saddam stockpiled "between 100 and 500 tons of chemical weapons agents." He added that "(t)here can be no doubt that (he) has biological weapons and the capability to rapidly produce more, many more."

In August 1995, Saddam's son-in-law, Hussein Kamel, defected to the West. He headed Iraq's weapons programs. US intelligence officials debriefed him. He said "All weapons - biological, chemical, missile and nuclear were destroyed....Nothing remained."

The New York Times and other US media sources reported his comments.

[CNN's Brent Sadler](#) asked him: "Can you state here and now - does Iraq still to this day hold weapons of mass destruction?"

He responded: "No. Iraq does not possess any weapons of mass destruction. I am being completely honest about this."

In the run-up to March 2003, media misinformation replaced earlier headlines. It's standard practice. It repeating again now. Obama appears heading for full-scale war on Syria.

Big lies launch wars. In "[The Art of War](#)," Sun Tzu said "All war is based on deception." Fear, misinformation and duplicity enlist public support. Naked aggression is called humanitarian intervention.

Libya 2.0 looms. Fabricating chemical weapons use looks like pretext for full-scale war. Secretary of State John Kerry claims Syria launched two chemical weapons attacks.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said using them "violates every convention of warfare."

On April 25, the [Los Angeles Times](#) headlined "US lawmakers call for action on Syria's

chemical weapons,” saying:

They want quick action.

Senator Dianne Feinstein (D. CA) warned that without decisive action, “President Assad may calculate he has nothing more to lose.” He might “further escalate this conflict.”

“It is clear that ‘red lines’ have been crossed and action must be taken to prevent larger scale use,” she added. “Syria has the ability to kill tens of thousands with its chemical weapons.”

Senator John McCain (R. AZ) said “(i)t’s pretty obvious the red line has been crossed.”

Rep. Adam Schiff (D. CA) believes Assad’s testing the international community. “The administration has said (chemical weapons use is) a game changer, but it’s not clear what that new game will look like.”

“I think it is incumbent on the international community to take strong action.”

A same day [LA Times editorial](#) headlined “A ‘red line’ on Syria,” saying:

“If the Assad regime has indeed used chemical weapons, the US must honor its commitment to act.”

“(U)se of chemical weapons would represent a reckless escalation of Assad’s war on his own people.”

“Yes, the president must be sure before he acts; but if it is proved that Assad has crossed the ‘red line,’ Obama must respond.”

[Chicago Tribune editors](#) headlined “The pink line,” asking: “If Assad used chemical weapons, what will Obama do?”

He “drew a clear red line last August....(He) ‘put together a range of contingency plans,’ but he didn’t spell them out.”

“Now there’s mounting, though not yet conclusive, evidence that if Assad hasn’t stormed across that red line, he may be tiptoeing on it.”

Tribune editors want more decisive action. “We’ve long argued that the US should directly arm the rebels.”

Operating covertly from southern Turkey, CIA operatives have been doing it all along. It’s handled through a network of intermediaries. Weapons are also entering from Lebanon, Jordan and Israel.

Tribune editors urge more. Impose a no-fly zone “to ground Assad’s air force.” Doing so is an act of war.

“(B)omb access roads where chemical weapons are transported, to make moving (them) difficult if not impossible.”

Bombing anywhere assures doing it everywhere considered strategically important. Tribune

editors urge war. They're not alone.

On April 25, [Wall Street Journal editors](#) headlined "Chemical Weapons and Consequences: Syria calls President Obama's bluff on WMD," saying:

"As President of the United States, I don't bluff," said Obama.

He "famously said (it) in March 2012, warning Iranian leaders that he would not allow them to acquire nuclear weapons."

Last month he said:

"I've made it clear to Bashar al-Assad and all who follow his orders: We will not tolerate the use of chemical weapons against the Syrian people, or the transfer of those weapons to terrorists."

"The world is watching; we will hold you accountable."

"Or not," said Journal editors. "Israel will have to consider its own military options to secure the stockpiles if the US won't act...."

"Presidents who are exposed as bluffers tend to have their bluff called again and again, with ever more dangerous consequences."

Official accusations are familiar. So is heated rhetoric that follows. Obama heads closer to full-scale intervention. Reports say around 20,000 US troops will be deployed in Jordan.

On April 26, Obama hosted Jordan's King Abdullah II in Washington. Perhaps they discussed invasion plans.

A Final Comment

While meeting with King Abdullah, Obama stopped short of saying Assad crossed a "red line." Earlier he warned doing so would unleash "unspecified consequences." Likely he meant direct US intervention.

"Horrific as it is when mortars are being fired on civilians and people are being indiscriminately killed, to use potential weapons of mass destruction on civilian populations crosses another line with respect to international norms and international law," he told reporters.

"That is going to be a game changer. We have to act prudently."

"We have to make these assessments deliberately. But I think all of us....recognize how we cannot stand by and permit the systematic use of weapons like chemical weapons on civilian populations."

Sorting things out requires "increased urgency," he stressed.

White House spokesman Jay Carney said "(h)e retains all options to respond." Further reports will explain more.

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