

Cooked Up Evidence. Trying to Fool the Public over Syria

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Image: Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel and Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin E. Dempsey

“Attempts to bypass the Security Council, once again to create artificial groundless excuses for a military intervention in the region are fraught with new suffering in Syria and catastrophic consequences for other countries of the Middle East and North Africa.” Russian foreign ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich.

Despite the stance expressed by Lukashevich, Russia has been depicted by various prominent Western politicians as an obstacle to ‘humanitarian’ military intervention in Syria. As hundreds of thousands of deaths and injuries continue to mount as a result of US-led wars in the world, such humanitarian concerns ring hollow.

What these politicians are doing is called trying to take the public for fools.

‘Their’ politicians

But this is what ‘their’ politicians do: the taxpayer-salaried ‘public servants’, who do the bidding of the powerful corporations, with the situation over Syria being a case in point (1).

In Britain, ‘public servants’, like PM Cameron and Foreign Secretary Hague, dutifully obey their corporate-financier masters and their political bosses in Washington and were keen to lead Britain into a war, at first seemingly with or without the backing of the UN Security Council, with or without evidence that the Syrian government used chemical weapons.

Cameron said the world should not stand idly by as the Syrian government attacks its own people with chemical weapons. ‘Their’ man in the Labour Party, leader Ed Miliband, seemed to be on board too. That was before MPs began to voice dissent and parliament then put a block on the plans for Britain’s involvement in any military intervention – for the time being at least.

Before any independently verified evidence was available, US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel was already convinced of the Syrian government’s guilt. US State Department spokesperson Marie Haff also parroted this line on the BBC by saying: “Let there be no question about who is responsible for this.”

She also spoke about the Assad ‘regime’ being intent on spreading chaos throughout the region.

Anyone who has been following this conflict (and the one in Libya, Afghanistan, Pakistan or Iraq) will note the rank hypocrisy of this Washington propagandist Haff. She should look very close to home if she wants to talk about spreading chaos (and death and destruction).

After interviewing Chuck Hagel on TV, the BBC presented a range of military options and asked what would be the objective. Then we were told of the official line coming out of Washington, that the objective is not about regime change and not about intervening in a civil war, when quite clearly it is about both (2,3). The US and its allies fueled conflict and intervened in Libya and then helped bomb a path into Tripoli for the rebels to bring about regime change. And the US and its client states have been helping to stoke conflict in Syria for many months (4).

What Hagel, Cameron and Hague say about this conflict and how the issue of chemical weapons is being presented by much of the media is all based the same type of lie that has taken Britain to war in the recent past. And it is all being cheered on in the British press by the totally discredited Tony Blair, who urges military intervention in Syria on the basis of his foregone conclusion about the Assad government having used chemical weapons.

We should expect no better from such a man, though. The more naive might ask did Blair learn nothing from leading the country into an illegal war with Iraq? But Blair is not in the habit of learning lessons from actions that ended up in the mass killing of Iraqis – because Blair, as with Cameron and Hague, is ‘their’ man too. And as ‘their’ man, after leaving office, Blair has done very well indeed.

In 2012, The Telegraph newspaper in the UK discussed Tony Blair’s jet set lifestyle and his UK property portfolio of seven homes worth £14 million (5). Blair is paid in the region of £3 million a year to advise both JP Morgan, the US investment bank, and also Zurich International, the global insurer based in Switzerland. On top of that he runs his own consultancy firm, which advises the oil and gas rich governments of Kuwait and Kazakhstan.

Criminality

If we take what happened in Libya as a starting point for the type of events that may now unfold in Syria, we should turn to University of Johannesburg professor Chris Landsberg. He stated that, regarding Libya, the UN was misused to militarise policy, legalise military action and effect regime change (6). He subsequently challenged the International Criminal Court to investigate NATO for “violating international law.” Little if any talk of such matters, or of the 200 prominent African figures who accused Western nations subverting international law, by the gung ho mainstream media at the time though, which merely peddled with the pious narrative that NATO was essentially a civilising force in a barbaric world. It’s the same narrative that we now witness over Syria.

And this moral tone underpins the rhetoric about ‘protecting civilians’ (by bombing them from afar – they then conveniently become ‘collateral damage’, not civilians; and that’s okay because ‘we’ are doing it, not ‘them’). It also underpins attempts to justify plans that have been in place for years to topple governments, including Assad’s. US Vice-President Joe Biden has said there is “no doubt” that the Syrian government has used chemical weapons and that it must be held accountable. The situation has been prejudged by the world’s self appointed policeman in order to pursue its well-documented wider geo-political agenda (7).

Washington hopes the public will be reeled in by its red-line-in-the-sand ‘look he used them’

ploy. Unfortunately for Washington, the public in the US or Britain has not been yelling for retribution. The public are tired of wars and don't trust governments or intelligence agencies that cried wolf over Iraq and were found to be liars.

It's not a case of who will save people from Assad, but who will save us from the lies that fuel the type of terror and instability we have seen in places such as Libya, Iraq or Syria? Who will save us from the depleted uranium or the drones? Who will save us from the aggression and militarism? Who will save us from the suffering brought about by the economic neo-liberalism of the corporate cartels and the financial institutions that dictate policy, whether military or non-military, and salt away profits in tax havens while expecting ordinary people to bear the brunt of their criminality, wars and deceptions?

The arrogance of people like US State Department spokesperson Marie Haff is breathtaking. People like Haff should think very hard before attempting to take the British public for gullible idiots. The public is not ready to accept at face value the deceit from her mouth, or some cooked up PR strategy designed to brow beat people into line. The ghost of Tony Blair's wrongdoings haunts many British MPs, who have as a result successfully reined in Cameron and Hague, and is a constant reminder to a public that is unwilling to be fooled again.

No public appetite for war

With polls indicating very little appetite from the British public for military intervention in Syria, politicians and their PR people have their work cut to try to convince people that this is a cause worth backing (8). But at least they have a compliant media.

The BBC's depiction of NATO's attack on Libya was woefully one-sided and anti-Gadaffi (9). And thus far its track record on Syria fares little better. Take BBC world news editor Jon Williams over last year's Houla massacre incident. As noted by Chris Marsden (10), Williams admitted that the coverage of the May 2012 massacre in Syria by the world's media and the BBC was dodgy to say the least. Early in June, on his personal blog, Williams explained that, despite the claims by the BBC, there was no evidence whatsoever to identify either the Syrian Army or Alawite militias as the perpetrators of the massacre of 100 people. Indeed, leading German newspaper the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) reported that the Houla massacre was in fact committed by anti-Assad Sunni militants, and the bulk of the victims were member of the Alawi and Shia minorities, which had been largely supportive of Assad.

Williams said that the facts turned out to be few and that it was not clear who ordered the killings or why.

But why let facts get in the way of a good story? Kerry, Hagel and Haff certainly don't. Why let the actual evidence (implicating the rebels) about a chemicals weapons incident (11) or the wider narrative (that disguises deceit and chicanery) about Syria (12) get in the way of a good fairytale? Push ahead regardless. The cooked up evidence will eventually be made to fit the preconceived policy... they hope.

Cheer-leading from the sidelines, Tony Blair knows about that (13).

Notes

1) <http://www.globalresearch.ca/latest-un-syria-report-compiled-by-washington-think-tanker/32386>

2

- 1) <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:http://www.syria-tribune.com/e/index.php/guest-features/50-stephen-warwithoutmercy>
- 3) <http://landdestroyer.blogspot.co.uk/2012/05/syrian-war-prequel.html>
- 4) <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=139779>
- 5) <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/tony-blair/8999847/Blair-Inc-How-Tony-Blair-makes-his-fortune.html>
- 6) <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=80782>
- 7) <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article1665.htm>
- 8) http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/08/28/syria-intervention_n_3827081.html
- 9) <http://www.globalresearch.ca/nato-and-the-mainstream-media/5304275>
- 10) <http://www.countercurrents.org/marsden150612.htm>
- 11) <http://www.mintpressnews.com/witnesses-of-gas-attack-say-saudis-supplied-rebels-with-chemical-weapons/168135/>
- 12) <http://www.globalresearch.ca/media-truth-and-sabotage-online-threats-directed-the-global-research-website/5347388>
- 13) <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/tony-blair-and-iraq-the-damning-evidence-8563133.html>

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