

False Flags and the Trump Administration: Expect an Erratic Flip-Flop Foreign Policy, a Return to Gunboat Diplomacy and More Illegal Wars of Aggression

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"Fool me once, shame on you; but fool me twice, shame on me." **Ancient proverb**, (sometimes attributed to an Italian, Russian or Chinese proverb)

"Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius, and a lot of courage to move in the opposite direction." **Ernst F. Schumacher** (1911-1977) (in 'Small is Beautiful', an essay, in The Radical Humanist, Aug. 1973, p. 22)

"The powers-that-be understand that to create the appropriate atmosphere for war, it's necessary to create within the general populace a hatred, fear or mistrust of others regardless of whether those others belong to a certain group of people or to a religion or a nation." **James Morcan** (1978-) (in 'The Orphan Conspiracies: 29 Conspiracy Theories from The Orphan Trilogy', 2014).

"Almost all wars begin with false flag operations." **Larry Chin**, (in 'False Flagging the World towards War. The CIA Weaponizes Hollywood', Global Research, Dec. 27, 2014)

Another terrible war crime against Syrian civilians has taken place in Syria, on top of multiple war crimes committed in that country torn apart by six years of a civil war marked by foreign interventions. On Tuesday, April 4, 2017, a chemical attack killed more than 70 people, including women and children. No neutral official investigation has yet taken place, but two versions of events have surfaced.

The first version, advanced by the American **Trump** administration and other Western governments, and seemingly the only version retained by most Western media, points to a bombing by the Syrian government at Khan Cheikhoun, in the Idlib province, as the culprit. The fact that a Syrian plane was seemingly involved would support this version. However, what benefit would the **Assad** regime gain from such a crime is less than obvious.



The second version, advanced by the Russian **Putin** government and by other [analysts](#) is that a bomb launched by a Syrian plane would have accidentally hit a depot of chemical weapons in the rebel-held territory and caused the carnage. Islamist rebels would have exploited the accident to stage a very effective mediated coup against the Assad regime. In the absence of conclusive physical evidence, the '*Cui Bono*' argument ('who benefits') could be used to support that version.

It is good to recall that a similar war crime, among many others, took place at Ghouta, in the Damascus suburb, on August 31, 2013. In that case, it was strongly suspected that the horrific chemical attacks, which killed hundreds of people, including many children, was likely a [criminal](#) 'false flag operation', staged by Al Qaeda rebels anxious to provoke U.S. President **Barack Obama** to intervene militarily on their side in the Syrian conflict. A '*false flag operation*' is defined as "a horrific, staged event, — blamed on a political enemy — and used as pretext to start a war or to enact draconian laws in the name of national security."

International law is being more and more discarded in favor of international anarchy

It is a sad fact that in totalitarian states, but also in our so-called democracies, it seems that wars of aggression are now based and sold with official lies and fraudulent fabrications in order to fool the people. Warmongers in government know that people do not like wars, especially illegal wars of aggression, against countries that have not attacked them. That is why their first choice is to attempt to drag the people along with lies and [false pretexts](#) for war, and by dehumanizing any potential enemy through crude propaganda.

Historically, there have been numerous instances when a 'false flag operation' was used to justify a "humanitarian" military intervention against a country or a regime. (Let us also remember that under the [United Nations Charter](#), which is the foundation of international law, no country has a right to attack another one, no matter the pretext used, except in self-defense.)

Suffice here to recall two famous cases.

✘ Case No. 1

Indeed, there are many historical precedents. Of course, the most recent one is **George W. Bush** administration's use of a pretext to launch a so-called "pre-emptive" war of aggression against Iraq, pretending that there were chemical "weapons of mass destruction" in that country. It asserted that such WMDs posed a threat to neighboring

countries and to the U.S. — It turned out that not only this act of international military aggression was [illegal](#), but also that it was a lie, a pure fabrication, since no such weapons were discovered after the U.S.-led military invasion of Iraq.

Case No. 2

On February 15, 1898, the battleship USS Maine, on a friendly visit to Cuba, caught fire and sank in the Havana Harbor, seemingly because of an internal explosion of one of its torpedoes aboard. A purely American-run investigation concluded, however, that the explosion was not a terrible internal [accident](#), but was caused externally by a naval mine in the harbor.



Republican President **William McKinley** (1843-1901), pushed by influential New York newspapers, (the Hearst and Pulitzer newspapers), accused the colonial government of Spain, in Cuba, of being responsible for the explosion and used that pretext to issue an ultimatum to Spain. The U.S Congress declared war against Spain on April 20, 1898. — That was the beginning of the [Spanish-American War](#), which ended up with the U.S. occupying Cuba, Porto Rico, the Island of Guam and the Philippines.

Donald Trump's new conversion to war

Politicians in disfavor can also find in foreign wars a way to improve their domestic political status. Indeed, if circumstances permit, what does an ambitious politician do, when facing a falling popularity at home? Chances are that he may be tempted to find a pretext to start a war, any war, and without any regard to international law.

It might seem bizarre that President Donald Trump has completely reversed his position regarding U.S. involvement in the Syrian conflict. But he is languishing in the [polls](#), and even the Republican-controlled Congress is [distancing itself](#) from the White House. What better way, especially in the United States where wars abroad are a rallying point, to move the attention from domestic affairs to foreign affairs?

Whatever the motive behind the move, President Trump's hasty decision to resort to an act of war in bombing the country of Syria, on Friday morning, April 7, has been [met with hurrahs](#) by many members of Congress. The American people may be more divided on the issue, but it can reasonably be expected that in the coming weeks Trump's popularity, presently around 35 percent, will rise under the general approval that he will surely receive from the [concentrated](#) American media. He also is likely to receive a more positive collaboration from Congress for his more controversial domestic agenda.

It may be sad to say, but in the United States, the quickest road to popularity for a politician in difficulty, at least initially, is to launch a war abroad. For example, President George W. [Bush's popularity](#) went from around 50 percent to more than 90 percent when he initiated his war against Iraq in 2002-2003. At the end of his second term, however, his approval rating had fallen below 30 percent. [For a description of the period, see my book [The New American Empire](#), 2004.]

Conclusion

The unfolding of events in the Middle East would seem to reinforce my personal assessment of last February that an unpredictable **President Donald Trump risks becoming “a**

[threat to American Democracy and an agent of chaos in the world](#)", and even more so now that Congressional Democrats seem ready to jump on his war bandwagon (as they did with President George W. Bush).

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