

How to Avoid World War III. Repeal the Lies

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The US strike against Syria, launched on Friday with the complicity of the UK and France, was a war crime executed in service to foreign policy objectives that run counter to US interests. As the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the UN chemical weapons watchdog, begins its fact-finding mission in Douma, [journalists on the ground](#) have been unable to confirm a chemical attack happened at all. This shouldn't surprise anyone. We've been here before.

The US has a history of lying about chemical weapons in Syria. Attacks are invariably blamed on Assad, though this blame is never supported by conclusive proof. “Mad Dog” Mattis was forced to admit there is no evidence that Assad used chemical weapons in Douma, but he is “confident” it happened because of “social media” shared by the White Helmets, an [anti-Assad group](#) that has repeatedly been caught [waving severed heads around](#) while cavorting with [terrorist leadership](#). The White Helmets' reports have not been [verified](#), and a doctor who treated the victims reported no injuries associated with chemical weapons, stating that the deaths were actually caused by [suffocation](#).

Previous gas attacks pinned on Assad don't add up either.

Last year's Khan Sheikhoun attack, which followed Trump's proclamation that the US military was no longer intent on regime change in Syria, was never conclusively linked to Assad. [Patients turned up at hospitals](#) with symptoms of gas exposure before the Syrian airplane believed responsible for the attack could have dropped its payload. A number of [other inconsistencies](#) were smoothed over with photographs of dead children, and a retaliatory strike preempted impartial investigation, just as would happen a year later in Douma. The White Helmets were on the scene here, too, and their dubious heroics provide [further evidence](#) against the official story.

The Ghouta incident in 2013, which famously followed Obama's declaration of a “red line” – noticing a pattern here? – also fell apart on [closer scrutiny](#). Weapons experts including MIT's **Theodore Postol** analyzed the missile that delivered the sarin in the attack and concluded that its short range meant it had to have been fired from rebel territory. US intelligence identified more than one rebel group with the capacity to produce sarin, poking holes in the administration's supposedly iron-clad case against Assad, which relied on the false assumption that only the regime possessed the munition.

After Obama stepped back from the brink of war in 2013, Russia came forward as peace-maker, offering to help Syria destroy its chemical weapons stockpiles and make everyone happy. Even [Wikipedia](#), hardly an anti-establishment voice, states Syria disposed of its

chemical weapons offshore by August 2014, with blame for the two subsequent chemical attacks tacked on without explanation as to where these new weapons came from. The OPCW certified Syria's chemical weapons destroyed. If they lied, why are they still relied upon?

It should be obvious, then, that Assad has not been using chemical weapons. Aside from the fact that the US has been trying to remove Assad for [over a decade](#) and trying to control Syria [for far longer](#), the timing of the "attack" was a dead giveaway. Trump's surprise announcement that the US would pull out of Syria set off a flurry of activity among Trump's handlers, including Israeli president Netanyahu, who personally called Trump to remind him he doesn't actually have the authority to make foreign policy decisions for the country he was elected to run. Israel was also the first to respond to the Douma incident, launching its own missiles at the T4 airbase in Homs hours after the attack was reported. Good thing they had those missiles ready!

Trump's timing in launching the "retaliatory" joint strike is also telling. The OPCW was due to arrive in Damascus the day after the strike. If Trump's cabinet was so certain Assad had used chemical weapons, surely they could have waited for proof. This strike was an attempt to prevent clearer heads from prevailing and goad Syria or Russia into hitting back, escalating into a larger conflict. It may also have been designed to destroy evidence (or lack thereof).



The timing of the strike looks even more suspicious in light of former OPCW **Director General José Bustani's** (image on the right) revelation that **John Bolton**, then Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense, pushed him out of his position in 2002 when Bustani had the gall to invite Saddam Hussein into the OPCW, which would have allowed UN weapons inspectors to visit Iraq and actually look for the WMDs Bolton and friends claimed were lurking around every corner. Since this was a fantasy, the presence of actual OPCW inspectors would have jeopardized the case for war, and Bolton finally gave Bustani 24 hours to resign, telling him "[we know where your kids live.](#)" Bolton is now national security advisor to Trump. If the US didn't even believe the new, improved OPCW would give them the "proof" required for war in Syria, they truly have gotten lazy with their false flags, suggesting even the most cursory inspection of the attack site could absolve Assad.

It should be obvious, in any case, that the US does not really care about chemical weapons, since Saudi Arabia, one of its closest allies in the Middle East, has used [white phosphorus](#) in Yemen. Yet we don't bomb Saudi Arabia - we sell them billions of dollars in weapons to facilitate their war crimes. Israel, too, has used white phosphorus in Gaza - yet Israel is the largest recipient of US military aid in the world. If Assad was using chemical weapons, he'd

just be emulating the US's best friends in the region. Hell, the US used chemical weapons in Iraq and Afghanistan – are we bombing ourselves? I hadn't noticed.

The anti-Assad rebels have been caught using chemical weapons [numerous times](#). Where do they get such things? When the US military overthrew Gaddafi's government in Libya, it snatched up his chemical weapons and gave them to the ["moderate" Syrian rebels](#) – groups like al-Nusra and the [Saudi-funded Jaysh al-Islam](#). The CIA in 2015 was [spending \\$100,000 a head](#) training these terrorists to overthrow Assad.

The US and its allies have not shied away from spreading propaganda to support their paper-thin rationale for overthrowing Assad. Despite the high level of support he enjoys among Syrian citizens, Assad is portrayed as an oppressive dictator, though every congressperson who actually visits Syria (only **Tulsi Gabbard** and **Dick Black**, so far) discovers that Syrians like their leader a lot more than we like ours.

So Assad is a beloved leader who hasn't committed any war crimes. Why are we trying to overthrow him again? **Nikki Haley** gave away the game when she enumerated the three conditions that would have to be met for the US to withdraw from Syria. "We cannot have chemical weapons anywhere," [she said](#) – an empty declaration for reasons stated above. ISIS is all but defeated, especially after having its US funding cut. Finally, she "wants to make sure that the influence of Iran doesn't take over the area." Overthrowing Assad has never been about Assad. The US's goal of [overthrowing seven countries](#) – Iraq and Libya have already been crossed off the "to-do" list – is rooted in Israel's [Oded Yinon plan](#), which calls for the balkanization of the Middle East along ethnic and religious lines and the expansion of Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates. Saudi Arabia, once an enemy of Israel, has allied with its former nemesis against Iran, Syria, and Lebanon, the "Shia Crescent" the Sunni regime sees as its primary obstacle to regional dominance.

Saudi Arabia is the world's leading sponsor of terrorism, and Israel has openly admitted [it prefers ISIS](#) to the stable regimes of Assad and [Iran's Rouhani](#). The US has allowed itself to be led by its allies in choosing sides in this conflict to its detriment. We gain nothing from the overthrow of one of the few stable nations left in the Middle East. Taking out Assad would ignite a conflict sure to last decades and cost trillions of dollars. At a minimum, hundreds of thousands will die, many of them civilians, and many more will be displaced, turning up on European or American shores as refugees. The involvement of Russia and now China mean a local conflict could quickly spiral into World War 3, placing the future of human civilization at risk. The goals of our allies in Syria are not our goals. The US must choose its friends more carefully.

If you are unwilling to consider the possibility that the American government might be lying, put yourself in Assad's place. You are the ruler of one of the last stable secular nations in a region destroyed by conflict, much of which was instigated by the US, Israel, and/or Saudi Arabia. You have been fighting a bloody war against foreign-funded terrorists for the better part of a decade, trying not to go the way of Gaddafi and Hussein. You have finally regained most of the territory held by the rebels seeking to overthrow your government – victory is in sight. Do you A) drive the rebels out of the last of their strongholds, declare victory, and throw a big parade or B) commit a sadistic war crime that serves no strategic goal but brings down the wrath of the same US military apparatus that so recently destroyed two of your neighbors?

Even the most inexperienced, politically-inept ruler would pick A. Assad is neither

inexperienced nor politically inept. Few heads of state last as long as he has when the US military wants them gone. There is literally no reason why he would snatch defeat from the jaws of victory in this way.

If you are willing to continue in this thought experiment, place yourself in the head of a military strategist seeking regime change in Syria. Your target, the legitimate ruler of that nation, has nearly defeated the terrorists [your country](#) has [been funding](#) and [supplying](#) with [weapons](#) for the better part of a decade. Your ability to indiscriminately fund terrorist groups has been somewhat curtailed by an uppity president who disapproves of your preferred militants' appetite for beheadings and other barbaric displays of power. You're screwed unless you can convince that president and his cabinet to reverse their course on how they handle this country. You know he has a weakness for gas attacks and photos of dead kids, and your colleagues were careful to lay the groundwork for such a move last time this president threatened to thwart your careful plan. Do you A) honorably admit defeat, realizing the legitimate ruler of the nation in question has beaten you fair and square despite the dirty tricks you've employed over the preceding years B) frame him for the one war crime that would bring down the wrath of the US military apparatus even though it contradicts his best interests? Even the greenest intelligence operative would pick B.

Even if you don't believe any of the above - in which case, I would ask what part of the establishment narrative is so compelling - it remains the case that the **US and its allies acted outside international law in striking Syria**. None of these nations obtained consent from Congress or Parliament; Syria as a UN member state is protected under UN law from attack without provocation, and since no member state was attacked, no provocation occurred. Striking Syria was a war crime. If one class of countries can flout international law while another can be accused of breaking it without evidence, the entire concept is meaningless.

The US has gone to war on false pretenses before; in fact, it's standard operating procedure. The establishment media were certain that Saddam Hussein was hoarding Weapons of Mass Destruction with which he was intent on laying waste to the US. The Gulf of Tonkin incident falsified Vietnamese aggression to justify US involvement in the Vietnam War. "Remember the Maine!" was the rallying cry pitching the then-isolationist US into the Spanish-American War. Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me; we can no longer count the number of times we've been fooled into feed the military-industrial beast. The ruling class thinks we're stupid. Don't prove them right.

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