

“Reichstag Fire” Style Chemical Attack in Khan Sheikhoun: Set-Up to Revive Syria Regime Change Agenda

Virulent Argument at the United Nations Security Council, April 7

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***Theodor Postol**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Professor emeritus and former scientific adviser at the Department of Defense discredits White House allegation that the Syrian President perpetrated the attack at Khan Sheikhoun on April 4, 2017. He states “The White House document does not provide any evidence whatsoever that the US government has concrete knowledge that the government of Syria was the source of the chemical attack in Khan Sheikhoun on April 4.”*

Even The New York Times on April 7 acknowledged that the Syrian government of **Bashar al Assad** had no motive, whatsoever, for launching a chemical weapon attack against his own people. The Syrian government had recovered control over Aleppo, was winning the war against the opposition, and the United States had seemingly abandoned its goal of regime change. Iranian analyst **Mosib Na’imi** stated that such an act would be “a crazy move,” infuriating public opinion and inviting military retaliation, and neither Assad nor his Russian allies can be accused of being crazy.



Further, a chemical weapons attack by the Syrian government would sabotage United Nations peace talks in Geneva, and would sabotage the progress of the peace talks in Astana, Kazakhstan, conducted by Turkey and Russia, which had achieved the longest- ever

cease-fire. The late Ambassador **Vitali Churkin** had repeatedly denounced the fact that whenever there was a breakthrough in peace negotiations, raising the possibility of an end to the six year war in Syria, someone or something was done to disrupt and sabotage progress toward peace.

Without any credible, impartial investigation into the causes of the chemical attack, or the actual identity of the perpetrators, the UK, the US and France are flouting the legal requirement for the “presumption of innocence,” and have rushed to condemn the Syrian government, with no valid evidence, whatsoever, thereby raising serious questions.

At the UN Security Council Meeting on April 7, Bolivia’s Ambassador to the United Nations, **Mr. Llorentty Soliz** denounced this duplicitous maneuver, and stated:



“While we were discussing and demanding an independent, impartial, thorough and conclusive investigation of those previous attacks—the United States had taken it upon itself to be investigator, prosecutor, judge and jury. Where is the investigation that would enable us to establish objectively who was responsible for the attacks? This is an extremely serious violation of international law. This is not the first time that this has happened....On Wednesday, 5 February 2003, the then Secretary of State of the United States of America came to this Chamber in order to present to us what he said in his own words was convincing proof that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq (see S/PV.4701). I believe that it is essential that we remember those images and the fact that in this very Chamber we were told that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and that was the reason for the proposed invasion. That invasion resulted in 1 million deaths and set in motion a series of atrocities in the region....Would we be talking about the series of horrific attacks that have occurred in various parts of the world without that illegal invasion?...On that occasion the United States affirmed that it had all the proof necessary to show that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. They were never, ever found.”

The Ambassador of the United Kingdom, without valid, impartial evidence or investigation, reiterated the hackneyed condemnation of the Syrian government, and stated:

“I deeply regret that the previous speaker showed more outrage against the United States than against the Al-Assad regime, which on Tuesday deliberately dropped chemical weapons killing over 100 men, women and children in the most barbaric fashion.”

Without valid evidence, The UK Ambassador then described Assad as “the greatest war criminal of all.” The UK Ambassador’s hyperbolic characterization of Assad is refuted by the

Bolivian Ambassador's earlier statement:

"The series of coups d'état in Latin America was organized and financed by the CIA. This is historical truth. It is not a speech-making. Let us remember the coup d'état in 1973 against the constitutional Government of **Salvador Allende**, which was financed by the CIA. Let us remember the Escuela de las Americas at which soldiers were taught to torture people. There were training manuals for torture, which was taught to Latin American military personnel as part of the so-called national security doctrine."

The Ambassador of the UK, together with the US and France continued asserting that although 3 years ago Assad had declared and destroyed his chemical weapons (resolution 2119), the only possible explanation for the recent chemical weapons attack is that Assad had lied three years ago, and kept undeclared chemical weapons. Again, the speed of the irresponsible rush to judgment and condemnation, and the failure to respect the legal principle of the presumption of innocence raises further questions about the motives of the "troika," and the derailment of the Geneva and Astana peace negotiations. For the "troika" (the US, UK and France) ignore the logical and compelling alternative explanation for the reappearance of chemical weapons in Syria: they may well have been re-introduced into Syria to create a false-flag operation to facilitate regime change. Simply put, the Syrian President may, in good faith, have declared and destroyed his own chemical weapons, but new chemical weapons could easily have been brought into Syria by "third parties" arming the admittedly terrorist infested opposition.

In 2013 the UK Daily Mail published an article entitled: "U.S. backed plan to launch chemical weapon attack on Syria and blame it on Assad regime." The article was deleted within days. But the plan did not disappear. And there is undisputed historic precedent for Western support for the use of chemical weapons. During the Iran-Iraq war a CIA analyst observed, in 1982:

"You just had a series of catastrophic Iraqi defeats. They had been driven out of Iran, and the Iraqi army looked like it was falling apart."

An NSC official, **Howard Teicher** stated:

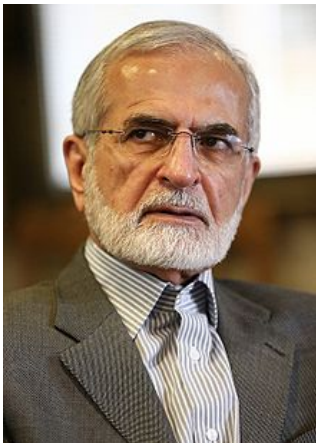
"The US could not afford to allow Iraq to lose the war to Iran."

In 1994, US Senator Riegle reported that:

"Pathogenic, toxigenic and other biological research materials were exported to Iraq, pursuant to application and licensing by the US Department of Commerce...." Senator Riegle stated that "UN inspectors had identified many United States manufactured items that had been exported from the United States to Iraq under licenses issued by the Department of Commerce and established that these items were used to further Iraq's chemical and nuclear weapons development...The Executive Branch of our government approved 771 different export licenses for sale of dual-use technology in Iraq. I think that is a devastating record."

In the International Herald Tribune, **Joost Hiltermann** reported:

“When the Iraqi military turned its chemical weapons on the Kurds during the war, killing approximately 5,000 people in Halabja, the Reagan administration actually sought to obscure Iraqi leadership culpability by suggesting, inaccurately, that the Iranians may have carried out the attack.”



In 1991, during the first Persian Gulf War, I was present at the UN Security Council when an American reporter asked the then Iranian Ambassador **Kemal Kharazi** whether he thought Iraq had chemical weapons. Ambassador Kharazi retorted:

“You should know the answer to that. Your own government gave chemical weapons to Iraq to use against my country during the Iran-Iraq war.”

The entire press corps gasped at his remark.

This pattern of obfuscation and Orwellian distortion of the facts has been repeated too often. This gives credibility to President Putin’s allegation that “provocations are being prepared in other parts of Syria, where they (US, UK, etc.) are planning to again plant some substance and accuse the Syrian authorities of using chemical weapons.”

As President Assad recovers control over wider areas of his country, there seem to be no limits to attempts to thwart his success. Protecting human rights and Syrian lives is of no concern in this deadly business. As Bolivian Ambassador Soliz stated:

“They speak to us in the language of human rights, which we are supposed to live up to, but when their interests make the human rights discourse inconvenient for them, they systematically violate human rights. When it suits their interests, they are defenders of democracy, but when it does not they finance coups d’etats.”

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