

Skripal Case: What Happened at the United Nations Security Council. U.K. Rhetoric: “Highly Likely...”

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I don't often comment on foreign relations between other countries - that is other than what the U.S. is doing concerning other countries, but having just listened to the UN Security Council discussion about the Skripal case, these thoughts stood out.

The Russian UN representative made his presentation first, outlining their doubts about the case as expressed by the UK and the manner in which it is being handled. This was followed by the British UN representative and her attempt at a rebuttal to the Russian comments.

I have to admit that the Brits are very clever and careful with they manner in which they manipulate their mother tongue. Along with the usual rebuttals the UK rep presented an argument about the use of the phrase “highly likely” in regards to the reasoning why Russia was guilty of the Skripal attack.

The UK representative said it was a reflection of the British judicial system in that “only a court can finally determine culpability.”

However she then goes on to argue that the lack of a court finding (because it hasn't gone there) “should not be construed as casting doubt whatsoever on the likelihood of Russia being responsible.” In other words, we haven't sent it to court yet, but Russia is obviously guilty anyway, without a doubt.

The UK rep the continues arguing about Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and his contradictory statements re: Porton Down's statement using the “highly likely” phrase. According to her,

Boris Johnson “was making clear that Porton Down was sure the nerve agent was Novichok, a point they have subsequently reaffirmed.”

From anything else I have read in the media this is simply not true as they stated it was “like” a Novichok “class” of nerve agents, neither precise nor definitive.

She then argued that because there was a “lack of alternate explanations” that is why “we have reached the conclusion we have.” She then goes on to deride two alternate theories - outliers both - without considering the many questions that contradict the ‘official’ UK theory. Nor did she acknowledge the many other alternate explanations that could be arrived at from the information presented so far in public.

In short, regardless that the case has not gone through the judicial system, the UK knows that Russia tried to kill the Skripals (yet failed even though the chemical was supposed to be

more toxic than any other highly toxic nerve agent). The UK rep's argument rests on the phrase "highly likely" which is simply pushed aside as a legal dodge because, really, who could doubt that Russia really did it.

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