

What Was the “Success Rate” of the US-UK-France April 14th Missiles Against Syria?

By [Eric Zuesse](#)
Global Research, April 26, 2018

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
Theme: [Militarization and WMD, US NATO War Agenda](#)
In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

The U.S. and Russia provide diametrically opposite accounts of the percentages of U.S.-and-allied missiles that hit their targets in Syria on the night of April 13th-14th.

On the 14th, Russia’s military said that [71 of the 103 U.S.-and-allied missiles were shot down by Syria](#). But on this very same day, [the U.S. announced that 105 missiles had been launched and “none intercepted.”](#) So: Was the U.S. side’s success-rate 100%, as America claimed; or, instead, 31%, as Russia claimed? This difference is, obviously, huge.

During the subsequent days, U.S.-and-allied media celebrated their side’s alleged victory; for example, on April 22nd, *USA Today* bannered [“105 to 0: Why Syria’s air defenses failed to intercept a single incoming missile”](#), and reported that:

U.S., French and British forces launched 105 missiles from aircraft and ships at three chemical weapons facilities in Syria last weekend in response to a suspected chemical weapons attack launched by the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Russia claimed that Syrian defenses knocked down many incoming missiles, but the Pentagon said every weapon hit its intended target, dismissing the Russian comments as a disinformation campaign.

As of yet, the Russian side has not accused the U.S. side of a “disinformation campaign” about this. However, it has stuck to its guns and not backed down about its own, directly opposite, assertions; for example, Russia on April 16th gave a detailed breakdown of the results of the U.S.-and-allied bombing, and reported [here](#) (at 1:32:30), “a total of 103 cruise missiles were targeting the Syrian targets, and 71 [missiles] were taken out.” That claim would be a 69% Syrian-and-allied (defensive) success-rate, and a 31% U.S.-and-allied (aggressive) success-rate, on this event, which was the biggest direct military confrontation between Russian and American (and French and UK) forces, ever. This was also, therefore, arguably, the actual start of World War III.

The issue in the wake of the U.S. side’s invasion here — the crucial issue — is the relative functionality of the two sides’ conventional weaponries, and perhaps even more broadly of their militaries: the functionality of, and preparedness for, the conventional stage, preceding the strategic nuclear stage, in WW III. Presumably, after the conventional phase will have its ultimate winner and loser, the loser will suddenly unleash its nuclear forces against the other, so as to avoid defeat. The first side to attack will have the advantage to achieve a

nuclear victory. The nuclear phase of the war will be over within around 30 minutes. In military matters, to 'win' means simply suffering less damage than does the opponent; and the first to attack will destroy some of the opponent's retaliatory strategic weapons. Only conventional weaponry is involved at the present stage, the conventional-war phase; but, if things do reach the nuclear stage between these two sides, then even the side that 'wins' the war will be far more totally destroyed than even the loser has been in any prior war in history.

On April 25th, a Russian news-site headlined (as autotranslated) [“The Russian military showed the remains of downed Coalition missiles in Syria”](#) and reported that:

The Russian Defense Ministry showed the wreckage of the American Tomahawk missiles and European TOOL, the Storm Shadow. At the disposal of the military were large fragments of the engines and control systems, parts of the fuselage. And many of them show visible marks from shrapnel. This proves the fact that the missiles were intercepted by air defense systems.

Although the truth about this matter might not be of much interest to voters in any country, it will matter a great deal to the ruling aristocracies in any countries, such as Turkey, which are now making decisions between buying weapons made by the U.S. side, or else buying weapons made by the Russian side. And those decisions, in turn, will factor heavily into the choosing-up-of-sides in WW III, if neither the U.S nor Russia backs down so that a full-fledged hot war between U.S. and Russia results.

Consequently, the question as to which of these two sides is lying, is geostrategically very important. If Russia is telling the truth, then the sway will be favorable to Russia; if America is telling the truth, America will benefit.

Also: ever since the U.S. misrepresented the evidence regarding “Saddam’s WMD” in the lead-up to America’s 2003 invasion-and-occupation of Iraq, the question as to whether or not the assertions by the U.S. Government are lies is at least as severe as is the question as to whether the Russian Government lies. Presumably, both sides do (though one side might be lying far more than does the other); but, the question here concerns, in particular, military matters, and even the fate of the world. Lying in order to ‘justify’ an invasion is as serious a matter as exists, anywhere, anytime; and, if the Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons will determine that the U.S.-and-allied invasion of Syria on April 14th was likewise based upon lies, then the consequences of what happened in that invasion will be even larger than merely the military competencies of the two respective sides.

On April 25th, Russia’s Sputnik News bannered [“OPCW Finds No Chemical Weapons at Syrian Facilities Bombed by US – Russian MoD”](#), and so it’s not only the U.S. side’s military competency that is yet to be determined, but — again, as had happened in 2003 Iraq — whether or not the U.S. now routinely lies in order to ‘justify’ its invasions. That might turn out to be an issue of interest not only to the ruling aristocracies, but to their respective subjects.

Perhaps neither of the two sides will back down as between there having been an American missiles-success-rate of 100%, or of 31%, but the OPCW represents a higher authority than does any nation; it represents, in fact, 192 nations. If the finding by the OPCW turns out to confirm the U.S. Government’s accusation (that Syria’s government had used chemicals on

April 7th against its own people) which was used to justify the April 14th invasion, then the invasion will retroactively thereby receive at least some degree of moral, if not legal, confirmation. But if the finding turns out to disconfirm that accusation, then the April 14th invasion will be seen instead as a smaller version of George W. Bush's and Tony Blair's clearly illegal and unjustified 20 March 2003 invasion of Iraq. Repeating that type of invasion, now, even though far smaller than happened in 2003, would indicate to the entire world that the United States is an enduring and systematic threat to world peace. The stakes are high for both sides, regardless of what the finding by the OPCW turns out to be.

*

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#). He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Eric Zuesse](#), Global Research, 2018

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Eric Zuesse](#)

About the author:

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long as the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca