

US-UK Preparing Another Chemical False Flag in Syria

by Peter Korzun via jillian - Strategic Culture Foundation *Monday, Aug 27 2018, 9:23am*
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US Poised to Hit Syria Harder

The US warned Russia it would attack Syria again if chemical weapons (CW) were used by the government forces. According to [Bloomberg](#), National Security Adviser John Bolton told his Russian counterpart, Nikolai Patrushev, at a meeting in Geneva on Aug. 23 that the US “is prepared to respond with greater military force than it has used against Assad’s regime in the past.” US officials supposedly “have information” that the Syrian military is preparing a chemical attack in Syria’s northwestern province of Idlib. Mr. Bolton had also [stressed publicly](#) the US readiness to use force on a larger scale before the meeting with his Russian counterpart.



White Helmets

On Aug. 21, the US, the UK, and France [issued](#) a joint statement likewise threatening military action against Syria if a chemical attack occurred. The US has delivered [strikes](#) against Syria twice before, in 2017 and 2018. No evidence to confirm the allegations that the Syrian government was behind the chemical attacks has [never been presented](#).

Russia believes a potential attack is nothing more than a provocation to justify military action. The Russian Defense Ministry issued a [statement](#) on Aug. 25 stating that the Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham militants had brought eight containers of chlorine to Idlib in order to stage a false-flag attack with the help of UK intelligence agencies. A group of Tahrir al-Sham fighters trained to handle chemical warfare agents by the UK private military company Olive arrived in the suburbs of the city of Jisr ash-Shugur, Idlib, 20 km. from the Turkish border.

This prompts some questions. The Syrian government forces are winning the war. They control most of the country and continue to make advances. Why would they use CW now if they did not use them in 2014 or 2015 when they were retreating? The political and military gains the rebels could win by staging provocations are obvious, while the Syria military has no reason to use CW even if it had them. After all, the Syrian army has no trouble winning with conventional weapons wherever it goes.

As the previous military actions in Syria demonstrated, the attacks boost presidential approval ratings. President Trump needs to distract the public’s attention from the hush payments made to Stormy Daniels and Karen McDougal after his alleged affairs. These dalliance scandals are the last thing he needs during the midterm election campaigns. Syria and alleged CW attacks could come in

handy.

He and his party badly need to do something in Syria before the November vote to support the image of the US as the defender of the “poor” Syrians suffering from the “atrocities” of Assad’s regime. The US global standing has suffered as a result of unimpressive operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. It needs to be burnished. Heading an international coalition against Syria, an Iranian ally, is the way to restore the US image as an indispensable nation in the Middle East.

If Syria establishes full control over Idlib province, the hope, no matter how slim, of overthrowing Syrian President Assad will be dead. Any pretext would do to justify an intervention to prevent such a turn of events. The rebels in Idlib are viewed as allies in the fight against Iran. Besides, the alleged CW in the hands of Assad fuels the narrative of Russian cheating in 2013 during the elimination of the Syrian CW stockpile. “Losing” Syria would lead to diminishing US influence in Iraq, which is also viewed as a battlefield against Iran.

The US administration has [frozen](#) some \$200 million in funds earmarked for Syria’s recovery but it is ready to spend money on military actions against that country. Congress has failed to include a Senate-backed provision in the 2019 FY budget law to give the Defense Department \$25 million per year and increased authority to support stabilization efforts in Syria. But the use of force in Syria is by and large warmly supported by lawmakers.

A staged “chemical attack” is the way to invent a pretext for using force against Syria and pressing for a rollback of Russia and Iran. With Idlib liberated and an agreement reached between Damascus and the Kurds, Syria will have fundamentally regained its territorial integrity, making it “lost” to the West and its Persian Gulf allies. Russia, Iran, and Turkey will act as mediators promoting a peaceful settlement. The “chemical attack” provocation will be staged as an attempt to scuttle such a development.

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