

“CIA Fabricated Evidence to Lure US into War with Syria”: Ray McGovern

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The intelligence gathered against Syria's Assad was manufactured by elements within the spy community in order to mislead the US President to take punitive action, Ray McGovern, a veteran CIA analyst, told RT.

McGovern was among the signatories to the letter from veteran intelligence professionals to Obama, warning the US president that Assad is not responsible for the chemical attack, and that *“CIA Director John Brennan is perpetrating a pre-Iraq-War-type fraud on members of Congress, the media, [and] the public.”*

RT: *You were one of the signatories to that letter to the US President. Do you think it will influence Obama?*

Ray McGovern: Well, the problem of course is getting into what they call the mainstream media. The media is drumbeating for the war just as before Iraq. And they don't want to hear that the evidence is very very flimsy. They don't want to hear that people within the CIA – senior people, with great access to this information – assure us, the veterans, that there's no conclusive evidence that Assad ordered those chemical incidents on August 21. They don't want to hear that. They want to process beyond that and just deal with what we must do. Now, you don't assume those things – you need proof of them.

RT: *In the letter, you cite evidence that the Syrian opposition and its allies carried out a chemical weapons provocation. Why do you think this has been ignored completely by Obama and Kerry?*

RM: The reason that they don't adduce the evidence is because it wouldn't stand up not only in the court of law, it wouldn't bear close scrutiny. We've been down this road before. It happened before in Iraq. What the president needs to do is to release the intercepted message, on which most of this depends. And once he's done that, we could see what he's got. There's precedent for this – Ronald Reagan in 1986, when the Libyans bombed a discotheque in Berlin, killing two US servicemen and wounding hundreds. He hit [Muammar] Gaddafi's palace, killing his little daughter, 15 months old, and almost killing his son three years old. Now, the world said: *'You can't do that! What's your evidence that the Libyans did that?'* And Reagan came to us and said: *'We have to release that intercepted message. And we said; 'No! No! No! You can't do that because you'll blow our source.'* And he said: *'Do it anyway.'* That was released and the world calmed down. I don't defend killing little children, but at least Reagan gained some credibility from the fact that he saw that the interests of the state, of the US, superseded protecting sources and methods. That's what Obama has to do now. We're very suspicious that if he's unwilling to do that, since he sends his Chief of

Staff before the camera and says: *'Well, it wouldn't stand up in a court of law, but, hey, intelligence is intelligence – you got to trust this. But we're not going to trust him this time, especially when the head of the intelligence establishment is a self-admitted perjurer'.*

RT: *Why has it been so hard for Washington to sell to the world its case for intervention? Very few of their key allies explicitly support a military strike right now.*

RM: I have to say that if you look at the *'Cui Bono'* – the classic question: *'who does this profit?'* The only state, the only country that it profits is Israel. As long as, there's an unending... looks like it's going to be a 30-year war in Syria, a Shia against Sunni contest, not only in Syria, but in the whole Middle East area, now that Israel feels that the Sunni and the Shia aren't going to be turning their swords and their guns on Israel. It's that simple. Now, [US Secretary of State] John Kerry has amply demonstrated that he's under the influence of [Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin] Netanyahu. He made believe he was talking about Palestine in the last couple of months, but what he was really talking about was Syria and that shows in his behavior and even his demeanor. So, what we have here is a situation where Israel and the tough guys – and tough gals now – in the White House, advising Obama, say, *'you've got to do something'*, and the only country that would profit from this is the state of Israel.

RT: *We heard John Kerry backtrack a little yesterday, by saying that Obama hasn't made a decision yet on Syria. The US President was much more certain about an attack on Syria a week ago. Why the softening of their stance?*

RM: You know what happened a week ago. Last Friday, Kerry went before the cameras and said: *'We got to do this. And here's not the intelligence assessment, mind you – but the government's assessment.'* Meaning the White House had a chance to massage it, edit it. It didn't hold up to scrutiny. Now, what happened? Apparently the military got to the president, and I see some evidence of this. Next thing we know the president changes his mind on Saturday afternoon, and the only thing that really intervened was that the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey, telling the president: *"Look. It's going to be really hard to explain why we have to do it now. We could do it tomorrow, or next week, or next month. We don't really have to do it now."* And the president said that in justifying this delay. What's more evidence? Lindsey Graham and John McCain the next day just took off after the Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman in a very personal and vindictive way. Because they know the military leaders went to the president saying, *"Look, we know you're being told this is going to be easy and limited and all that – but these guys and gals don't know a thing about war. We do. And we know that it's not going to be so easy, so if you're going to do this, you'd better gain wide support, because, otherwise, your presidency is over."*

RT: *And who do you think the Congressional vote is going to play out?*

RM: You know... I'm not a domestic political analyst. So, my opinion isn't much better than anyone else's. In Washington, within the beltway and in all the TV shows, it's always *"we've got to do something! We must protect the President!"* The odd thing is that this time the Democrats have drunk the Kool Aid [an American expression in business and politics, meaning to follow blindly]. This time we have to protect the President, he's gone out on a limb here. He's drunk the Kool Aid, and I talked to a Congressman last night for five minutes... and it was every clear that he pledged the House leader that he would vote according to what the President says, because *"we have to protect the President"*. Are you

going to say the President is lying? We don't have to say [that]. What you do need to say, according to our information, is that the President is being given cooked-up intelligence because John Brennan, the head of the CIA, and James Clapper, the confessed perjurer, have thought it in their best interests to cater to the wishes of the White House, which have been very clear: *'this time, we want to strike Syria.'* It's a terrible situation, it's a political sort of thing now, and we'll have to see how it plays out. I have more hope than this time last week that it will be turned down. And then I don't think the President would violate the constitution and the UN Charter both by starting a war.

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