

Kiev Sniper Shootings: Lies v. Truth

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Ukraine putschist authorities are illegitimate. Arsen Avakov is interim interior minister. On Thursday he lied. He pointed fingers the wrong way.

He outrageously accused Ukraine's legitimate President Viktor Yanukovich, his interior minister Vitali Zakharchenko, and Russian security elements of direct involvement in Kiev sniper shootings.

"The former government of the country gave criminal orders and a huge number of people suffered in the 'mincer'," he said.

He cited no evidence whatever proving it. None exists. He said a dozen Ukrainian so-called Black Unit Berkut police officers were detained on suspicion of what happened.

In late February, putschist authorities disbanded the Berkut. Its force numbered around 4,000. At the time, Avakov said "Berkut no longer exists."

Its officers complained about neo-Nazi provocations. They and their families were threatened.

One former Berkut officer said threats painted on houses they used said "You're dead" or "We'll hang you and kill all your family one by one."

Donetsk and Sevastopol residents called Berkut elements heroes. Sevastopol Mayor Aleksey Chaly said they "d(id) their duty with dignity. (They) show(ed) themselves to be true men."

They're "now being thrown to the gang of nationalists..." They deserve better than they got.

They had no involvement in sniper shootings. Their own ranks were targeted. Putschist snipers shot them from occupied buildings.

They killed them. At the time, they were doing their job with restraint. They're heroes, not villains.

Clear evidence shows Kiev putschists recruited Euromaidan snipers. They bear full responsibility for what happened. Claims otherwise are lies. More on this below.

Illegitimate Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) Valentyn Nalivaichenko head lied. He claimed Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) elements collaborated with Yanukovich's security service SBU authorities in December and January.

Russian citizens were present at SBU headquarters, he alleged. Moscow delivered

explosives and weapons to Kiev, he claimed.

(Phantom) planes loaded with over 5,000 kilograms of Russian explosives and other materials delivered them, he said.

"They brought the means of organizing the shooting and destruction of our protesters on Maidan," he added.

No corroborating evidence was cited. None exists. Outrageous charges have no legitimacy. Avakov turned truth on its head. Lies substituted.

An FSB press service statement added: "Let these statements remain on the conscience of (Yanukovych's) SBU."

On Thursday, illegitimate putschist prime minister Arseny Yatsenyuk outrageously accused Yanukovych of direct involvement in planning Kiev sniper shootings.

He issued a statement saying "as a politician, I can state that the former president is personally responsible and we would like to bring (him) to justice."

"It is unacceptable when the Russian Federation covers for a man who is under investigation for the charges of mass murder and crimes against humanity."

Russia categorically denied sniper shootings involvement. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was clear and unequivocal.

He cited hard evidence showing putschist Right Sector responsibility for what happened. "(A) good deal of facts...point to" this conclusion. Moscow informed Western authorities, he said.

"I cannot say I'm 100 percent sure, but there are a slew of facts that indicate just as much," he added. "Of course, they should be double-checked."

"(S)weep(ing) (truth) under the rug" is unacceptable. Substituting lies is worse.

Kiev authorities ignored hard evidence, said Lavrov. Legitimate investigation into what happened was whitewashed.

Independent analysis was ignored. Kiev authorities turned a blind eye to Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet's comments.

On February 25, he and EU foreign policy Catherine Ashton spoke.

They were monitored. They didn't know it at the time. Their discussion was leaked. Paet commented on what he heard in Kiev.

He confirmed putschist involvement in sniper shootings. He said "there is now stronger and stronger understanding that behind the snipers, it was not Yanukovich, but it was somebody from the new coalition."

"All the evidence shows" they were shooting at people from both sides. They targeted police and protesters. Yanukovych was wrongfully blamed.

Paet spoke to Kiev doctor Olga Bogomolets. She's a Bogomolets National Medical University professor.

She said snipers shot protesters and police. Paet called Dr. Bogomolets' evidence "quite disturbing."

She showed him photos. They revealed "the same handwriting, the same type of bullets, and it's really disturbing that now the new coalition, that they don't want to investigate what exactly happened," said Paet.

Around 100 people were killed. Another 900 were injured. Paet blamed putschists for cover-up. They refuse to investigate, he said.

They want evidence suppressed. Snipers were neo-Nazi hitmen. Yanukovych and others in his government had no involvement.

On March 12, former Ukrainian Security Service head Aleksandr Yakimenko confirmed Paet's assessment. He blamed putschist official Andrey Parubiy. He's a neo-Nazi Svoboda party leader.

"Shots came from the Philharmonic Hall," he said. "Maidan Commandant Parubiy was responsible for this building."

"Snipers and people with automatic weapons were 'working' from this building on February 20. They supported the assault on the Interior Ministry forces on the ground who were already demoralized and had, in fact, fled," he added.

"When the first wave of shootings ended, many have witnessed 20 people leaving the building."

They were carrying military-style bags used for sniper and assault rifles with optical sights.

Many witnesses saw them. Foreign elements may have been involved. Perhaps CIA, US special forces, and secret service operatives.

What happened was well planned in advance. "These were the forces that carried out everything that they were told by their leadership – the United States," Yakimenko stressed.

Maidan leaders practically lived at Washington's embassy, he added. As security chief, he was ready to order Ukrainian troops to enter the building and remove the snipers, he said.

He needed approval from Parubiy to do it, he explained. Otherwise, so-called "self-defense" elements would have attacked him, he believes.

"Parubiy did not give such consent," he said. He controlled access to weapons used in Independence Square.

Moscow wants an independent investigation. It wants full disclosure of what happened. Deep East/West divisions remain.

Russia and independent analysts are on its own to investigate. Evidence revealed will be buried.

Ukraine's dark future is planned. It remains to be seen how ordinary Ukrainians react. Perhaps Euromaidan protests 2.0 will follow. The battle for Ukraine's soul continues.

A Final Comment

On Thursday, Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said 25 ultranationalist Ukrainians were detained. They're held on suspicions of planning terrorist attacks in seven Russian regions.

They include Rostov, Volgograd, Tver, Orel, Belgorod regions, as well as Kalmykia and Tatarstan republics.

An FSB statement said:

"As a result of measures taken on the basis of information about the preparation of terrorist acts on the territory of the Russian Federation by activists of the so-called Right Sector movement during the period from March 14 to March 16, some 25 Ukrainian citizens have been detained."

They admitted intentions to do so. They said Ukraine's SBU sent them to photo survey Russian military exercises. They were told to establish contacts with Russian radicals.

They were detained "before committing any illegal actions damaging Russian security," the statement added.

At least three Right Sector members were involved. Expect similar provocations ahead. Washington's dirty hands are likely involved.

Confronting Russia irresponsibly continues. A US navy warship was deployed to Black Sea waters. Pentagon authorities didn't confirm what vessel was sent.

Two US destroyers are nearby - the USS Donald Cook and USS Ramage. They're involved in eastern Mediterranean exercises with Greek and Israeli navies.

According to US European Command Capt. Gregory Hicks:

"We are making plans to meet the intent vocalized by (US and NATO officials) to lay out a sustainable maritime presence in the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea, but we do not have anything to announce at this time."

US naval forces operate provocatively in Black Sea waters and others nearby. Lavrov criticized Pentagon deployments responsibly.

They violate Montreux Convention provisions, he said. It's a 1936 international agreement.

It restricts naval warships' passage through the Bosphorus Straits and Dardanelles. It pertains to non-Black Sea area nations.

Lavrov issued a statement saying:

"There exists the Montreux Convention, which gives extremely clear criteria limiting the deployment of warships not belonging to the Black Sea governments in regard to tonnage and length of stay."

"We have noticed that US warships have extended their deployment beyond the set terms a couple of times lately, and at times they did not always comply with the regulations that are set within the Montreux Convention."

Washington ignores international laws, conventions and treaties. Its own rules alone apply. It does what it wants. It operates extrajudicially.

Escalating tensions threaten potential conflict with Russia. The worst of all possible outcomes could follow.

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