

Iraq WMD Redux: takfiri terrorists seize chemicals at Muthanna and uranium at Mosul

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“There are no weapons of mass destruction and time will bear me out.”

— Dr. Amir Al Sa’adi, Iraq’s liaison with UNMOVIC inspectors¹

On June 11, 2014, members of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) seized a former chemical weapons facility near Samarra, Iraq called Muthanna,² 56 kilometers northwest of the capital Baghdad,³ taking possession of chemical remnants left over from the 1991 Persian Gulf War. Iraq’s permanent ambassador to the United Nations, Muhammad Ali Al Hakim, reported the incident to Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in a letter, which was made public on July 7.⁴

As if seizure of a Saddam-era chemical weapons depot were not enough, the takfiri terrorists also have taken some 40 kilograms of uranium compounds used for research at Mosul University. “These nuclear materials, despite the limited amounts mentioned, can enable terrorist groups, with the availability of the required expertise, to use it separate or in combination with other materials in its terrorist acts,” warned Iraq’s ambassador in his letter, in which he emphasized that the uranium material “can be used in manufacturing weapons of mass destruction.”⁵

Downplaying the incident, an IAEA spokesperson stated the stolen material, which was not confirmed as uranium, was “low grade and would not present a significant safety, security or nuclear proliferation risk,” and apparently not even suitable for a terrorist to make a dirty bomb.⁶ In agreement over the dangers posed by the militants’ possession was U.S. Defense Department spokesman Rear Admiral John Kirby. “We aren’t viewing this particular site and their holding it as a major issue at this point,” he said, adding, “Should they even be able to access the materials, frankly, it would likely be more of a threat to them than anyone else.”⁷ If the material is 3.5 percent enriched uranium, refining would yield less than 2 kg of highly enriched uranium (HEU), far short of the 15 kg minimum necessary to form a critical mass for a bomb.⁸

Once again ignoring the facts, the right-wing media is abuzz with claims that the capture of chemical agents at Muthanna and low-grade uranium at Mosul by the ISIL represents a vindication of former U.S. president George Bush and his accomplices in Iraq war crimes. “This is truly startling news that could destroy years of unrelenting criticism of the Bush administration,” wrote journalist Norvell Rose.⁹ Another right-winger, apparently ecstatic over the news of a WMD stash now under the control of takfiri extremists, wrote that Muthanna “must be a nonexistent WMD factory since George Bush was demonized for saying there were WMDs in Iraq.”¹⁰ The Tea Party news network triumphantly trumpeted, “Like it or not, George W. Bush has now officially and forever been completely vindicated.”¹¹

It is probably no coincidence that the news of the ISIL “discovery” came shortly after former vice president Dick Cheney, one of the masterminds behind the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, was taken to task over the missing WMD by Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly. After Cheney tried to justify the unilateral U.S. attack, Kelly fired back, “But time and time again, history has proven that you got it wrong as well in Iraq, sir. You said there were no doubts Saddam Hussein had

weapons of mass destruction.”¹² And that is exactly what Cheney told the audience at the Veterans of Foreign Wars 103rd National Convention in August of 2002.¹³

Cheney’s interview with Kelly on Fox News followed a June 17 Wall Street Journal op-ed, coauthored with his daughter Liz, in which Cheney charged, “The fall of the Iraqi cities of Fallujah, Tikrit, Mosul and Tel Afar, and the establishment of terrorist safe havens across a large swath of the Arab world, present a strategic threat to the security of the United States.”¹⁴ This is the same pathological liar who, in 2002, insisted, “Our goal would be an Iraq that has territorial integrity, a government that is democratic and pluralistic, a nation where the human rights of every ethnic and religious group are recognized and protected.”¹⁵ Of course it was specifically the U.S. invasion of Iraq contrived by Cheney followed by support to “rebels” for overthrowing the sovereign government in Syria that caused the current tragedy in Iraq.

Not mentioned during the Fox News interview was the matter of the forged papers introduced as evidence by the Bush administration that Saddam was seeking to purchase yellowcake from Niger.¹⁶ Assessed as forgeries by then head of the IAEA Mohammad ElBaradei, the documents were traceable back to then vice president Dick Cheney, according to former CIA analyst Ray McGovern.¹⁷ At that time, Cheney had been willing to lie about an alleged security threat to gain support for his agenda for the first U.S. invasion of Iraq. When confronted about the issue in September 2003, he lied again and said, “I don’t know what the truth is on the ground with respect to that.”¹⁸ Now, he is lying to manipulate the media into amplify the threat posed by ISIL extremists seizure of chemical agents at Muthanna and uranium from Mosul University.

Let us be clear that the chemical agents in Bunkers 13 and 41 at Muthanna do not represent Bush and Blair’s long-sought WMD bonanza to justify their criminal acts in Iraq. When it submitted its initial declaration to the Organization to Prevent Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in 2009 upon signing on to the Chemical Weapons Convention, Iraq had reported that some chemical agents from Saddam’s ramp-up to the Kuwait invasion in 1990 remained.¹⁹ Prior to that in 2007, the CIA had reported, “The majority of the Al Muthanna complex was bombed during Desert Storm, completely incapacitating Iraq’s chemical weapon production capabilities, however, large stockpiles of chemical weapons and bulk agent survived.”²⁰ However, the bombings also created a cleanup nightmare in Bunker 13, posing explosive, chemical and physical hazards to any personnel attempting to enter it.²¹

The fact of the matter is that substantial portions of Iraq’s stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, along with the facilities to make them, were destroyed in the summer of 1991. This was later verified by the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and its successor, the United Nations Monitoring, Inspections, and Verification Commission (UNMOVIC).²² Nevertheless, Bush and his Anglo cohort Blair insisted on invading Iraq on the pretext that the former dictator, Saddam, was concealing weapons of mass destruction from UN inspectors, based on faulty intelligence reports that Iraq had reconstituted its nuclear weapons program and was capable of quickly weaponizing a variety of chemical and biological warfare agents.²³

“Strangely, no one seemed inclined to test the thesis that the missing chemical and biological weapons had in fact been destroyed in 1991,” wrote Hans Blix, former IAEA director general and head of UNMOVIC.²⁴ Additional confirmation concerning a lack of any threat from Iraq

came from General Tommy Franks, who briefed Bush on September 6, 2002. “Mr. President, we’ve been looking for Scud missiles and other weapons of mass destruction for ten years and haven’t found any yet,” Franks conceded.²⁵ So now, to the glee of the Bush-Cheney apologists, the ISIL has overrun a former chemical weapons plant and stolen some uranium compounds, which, from their distorted reactionary perspectives, constitutes a “vindication” of these neocon humanoid pathogens.

As Deputy Head of Hezbollah Sheikh Naim Qassem correctly pointed out, “America and its allies are responsible for the bringing in and financing of Takfiri terrorism in our region through the Syrian gate.”²⁶ Indeed, the recent ISIL activity bears the trademark²⁷ of a Zionist-initiated, American-backed false flag operation designed to maintain chaos in Iraq and the region, thus diverting attention as the Zionists carry out their genocide on Palestinians in Gaza.

Endnotes

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⁹ Norvell Rose, “WAS BUSH RIGHT? Reports from Iraq Say Jihadi Terrorists Have Seized a Stockpile of Saddam’s Chemical Weapons!” *Liberty News*, June 19, 2014, accessed July 9, 2014, <http://www.libertynews.com/2014/06/was-bush-right-reports-from-iraq-say-jihadi-terrorists-have-seized-a-stockpile-of-saddams-chemical-weapons/#sthash.9Np0GLfj.dpuf>.

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