Australian Citizens Party

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Why isn't the media reporting the proof that 2018 Syria gas attack was a lie?

In April 2018, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Opposition Leader Bill Shorten rushed to back the US, British and French airstrikes on Syria for the alleged chemical weapons attack in Douma. For days, the media had been full of pictures of supposed victims of the attack, "proof" that Syrian President Assad was a monster. Among "Western" political leaders, only UK Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn questioned the evidence and demanded a proper investigation before any military retaliation, for which he was accused of being a Russian stooge. A belated investigation was conducted, by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which reported inconclusive findings in March of this year. Now, in a stunning development, a leaked report from the OPCW reveals that it suppressed evidence that proves the accusations against the Syrian forces were a lie. The proof is laid out in the following article by Richard Bardon, reprinted from the 22 May 2019 Australian Alert Service*, the weekly magazine of the Citizens Electoral Council. Why aren't the Australian media that reported the false accusations in 2018, which led to airstrikes on innocent Syrians, reporting now on this new evidence?*

OPCW suppressed evidence clearing Syrian army of 2018 'gas attack'

Whistleblowers from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) have revealed that the organisation suppressed an assessment by its own specialist engineers that the Syrian military did not drop chlorine gas on civilians in Douma, Damascus on 7 April 2018. As well as proving beyond doubt that the US, British and French governments lied about every aspect of their supposedly cut-and-dried intelligence to the contrary, to justify a missile attack on Syria one week later for which, by rights, they should all be tried for war crimes, the leaked report also demonstrates the disturbing extent to which the Anglo-Americans have bent the ostensibly independent OPCW to their own ends.

The OPCW's "Report of the Fact-Finding Mission regarding the incident of the alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Douma, Syria on 7 April 2018" was released in March this year. *AAS* reported at the time that for the proponents of regime change in Syria, it was a flop: the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) was unable to say for sure that a chlorine attack had happened at all, let alone who might have been responsible; but it *did* conclude definitively that neither Sarin nor any other organophosphorus nerve agent had been used—and therefore that the Anglo-American and French aggressors lied to justify bombing Syrian military and civilian facilities they claimed had produced it.

The FFM did, however, conclude that if chlorine *had* been used, its likely source was two large (1.4 x 0.4 m) gas cylinders modified to act as delivery systems, which were photographed at the scene; and it supported the "opposition" claim that they had been dropped by Syrian Arab Army (SAA) helicopters. But as *AAS* reported, "the computer modelling that purports to prove they were dropped from overhead (rather than, say, planted by 'opposition' jihadists) appears to suspend the laws of physics. One supposedly smashed through a steel-reinforced concrete roof, then inexplicably bounced sideways off a bare floor—without damaging it—and landed atop a bed 3-4 metres away. The other is supposed to have struck a similar roof end-on, punching a hole larger than its own diameter; but instead of falling through as gravity and momentum demand, it apparently reversed course and laid over sideways on the roof—with its nose over the hole, the better to leak gas into the room below. The 'experts' who produced the modelling are not named."

Thanks to OPCW whistleblowers and the Working Group on Syria, Propaganda and Media—a group of courageous academics and independent researchers based mainly in the UK—it is now known that the OPCW went to these "experts" *only after its own experts had exonerated the SAA* . "The Final Report provided no explanation for why the FFM had not sought engineering assessments in April 2018, when the experts could have inspected the sites with cylinders in position, rather than six months later when inspection of the sites with cylinders in position was no longer possible and the assessments had to rely on images and measurements obtained by others", wrote Professors Paul McKeigue, David Miller and Piers Robinson of the Working Group, in a 13 May blog post announcing the leaked engineering report. "OPCW staff members have communicated with the Working Group. We have

learned that an investigation was undertaken by an engineering sub-team of the FFM, beginning with on-site inspections in April-May 2018, followed by a detailed engineering analysis including collaboration on computer modelling studies with two European universities. *The report of this investigation was excluded from the published Final Report of the Fact-Finding Mission*, which referred only to assessments sought from unidentified 'engineering experts' commissioned in October 2018 and obtained in December 2018." (Emphasis in original.) The leaked report, titled "Engineering Assessment of two cylinders observed at the Douma incident", was signed off by one Ian Henderson, a top-level OPCW inspection team leader of over 20 years' experience, whom the Working Group has confirmed was assigned to lead the investigation of the cylinders and their alleged impact sites.

The real findings

On the basis of all available evidence, Henderson's team concluded that "The dimensions, characteristics and appearance of the cylinders, and the surrounding scene of the incidents, were inconsistent with what would have been expected in the case of either cylinder being delivered from an aircraft." Neither one showed any of the damage it should have sustained had it struck reinforced concrete from hundreds of metres above. Of the cylinder that supposedly bounced sideways onto a bed, the OPCW engineers reported that "obstacles on top of the building precluded the possibility of this being due to incoming flight trajectory … [and] it was not possible to establish a set of circumstances that were consistent with observations, which could have resulted in that movement." And the crater allegedly caused by the other cylinder "was more consistent with that expected as a result of blast/energetics (for example from a HE [high explosive] mortar or rocket artillery round) rather than a result of an impact from the falling object", a conclusion supported by the presence of more than one near-identical crater on surrounding rooftops; a blast-fragmentation pattern on the walls; and the fact that the reinforcing bars were bent past 90 degrees at the underside of the crater. [View pictures here]

"In each case", the engineers concluded, "the alternative hypothesis produced the only plausible explanation for observations at the scene … [which], together with subsequent analysis, suggest that there is a higher probability that both cylinders were manually placed at those two locations rather than being delivered by aircraft." Which is to say, the so-called "opposition" in Douma—terrorist groups Jaysh al-Islam, al-Qaeda and ISIS, and those "humanitarian" organ-traffickers and child-abductors, the White Helmets—manufactured the evidence to frame the Syrian army at their foreign backers' behest, exactly as the Syrian and Russian governments have said all along.

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