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Why Hersh's Nord Stream bombshell may become legal nightmare for Team Biden & its Nordic allies

written by Ekaterina Blinova
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The White House has denounced Seymour Hersh’s Nord Stream bombshell as “fiction”. Oslo claimed that the Pulitzer-prize-winning journalist’s allegations are “nonsensical.” Still, the denials are unlikely to satisfy the public given that EU probes in the attack remain top secret, Sputnik’s interlocutors say.

“Many people - including myself - determined at the time that blowing up the pipeline was a U.S./NATO operation that was being falsely blamed on Russia,” Hans Mahncke, a U.S. investigative journalist and lawyer, told Sputnik.

“Many of the details of Seymour Hersh’s reporting were already known but not reported by Western media, including the fact that the Danish and American governments had agreed to station U.S. military personnel in Bornholm and the fact that [NATO’s BALTOPS military exercise in June 2022](#) took place in the area of the Nord Stream 2 bombing. Hersh has added some details about the exact modalities of

how the sabotage was carried out, which he attributes to a source. Hersh's track record is solid and there is no reason to believe that the source is not credible."

On February 8, Pulitzer-prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh published an article on the U.S. online platform Substack detailing the Biden administration's plot to destroy Russia's Nord Stream pipeline network. The blasts occurred on September 26 at three of the four strings of Nord Stream 1 and 2 underwater pipelines, which were built to carry a combined 110 billion cubic meters of Russian gas to Europe annually. According to Hersh, the plan was carried out by U.S. operatives in coordination and collaboration with the Norwegian Secret Service and Navy.

Why Norway?

"[NATO Secretary General] Stoltenberg is one reason. Another reason is the competence (excellence) of our Navy Special Forces," Norwegian investigative journalist and intelligence veteran Geir Furuseth told Sputnik.

Furuseth believes that only a very few Norwegian politicians and officers were in the know about Washington's alleged covert operation.

"Norway has highly experienced military personnel, especially in connection with underwater and naval operations," echoed Wall Street analyst and investigative journalist Charles Ortel while speaking to Sputnik.

"Norway's involvement is natural though it seems highly ill-advised. Another set of questions concerns why the governments of Sweden and Denmark [were] willing to play along, as they were informed at high levels concerning this scheme, according to Hersh."

Hersh revealed that *"The Norwegians joined the Americans in insisting that some senior officials in Denmark and Sweden had to be briefed in general terms about possible diving activity"* in their respective territorial waters. He specified, however,

citing his source, that what Swedish and Danish officials “*were told and what they knew were purposely different.*”

Remarkably, following the sabotage, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden kicked off separate inquiries into the attack. Sweden was reportedly the first to leave the planned joint investigation team; Denmark followed suit. Thus, Germany was left to investigate the matter on its own.

European states didn’t invite Russian investigators to participate: at that time, the Western media actively disseminated an ungrounded assumption that Moscow blasted the pipelines itself. What’s more, neither of the European countries made their findings public.

Why hasn’t Sweden or any other of the implicated governments made their investigations public? This secrecy undermines all Western credibility!

It appears suspicious that Sweden, Denmark, and Germany are continuing to keep their cards close to their chest. The only thing European investigators and officials have admitted so far is that [there is no evidence that Russia destroyed its own pipelines](#). Moscow had no motive to do this, while [several international actors were interested in destroying](#) Russia’s natural gas infrastructure in the Baltics, the U.S. mainstream media acknowledged, adding that the truth about the real culprit may never come out. Hersh’s bombshell appears to have proven the Western mainstream media wrong.

Cold War parallels

In some sense, the secrecy and controversies surrounding the blasts and subsequent investigations resemble Cold War-era cases. “I’m not an expert on the covert ops of the Cold War, but that said, I certainly see similarities,” said Furuseth.

During the Cold War era, Washington routinely attempted covert subversive

operations against the USSR, its major rival at that time. Some of those ops have remained a subject of heated debate up to this day.

In February 2004, the U.S. press reported an alleged CIA plan to destroy a Siberian natural gas pipeline which was supposedly approved by then-President Ronald Reagan in 1982. Thomas C. Reed, a former Air Force secretary who was serving in the National Security Council at the time, described this episode in his book *“At the Abyss: An Insider’s History of the Cold War.”* The USSR did not acknowledge that the explosion had ever taken place.

Still, the Nord Stream sabotage is especially scandalous because it brought the West even closer to a nuclear war, according to Furuseth.

The attack came at a time when the U.S. and its NATO allies have been providing Kiev with sophisticated weapons to counter Russia’s special operation to demilitarize and de-Nazify Ukraine. In April 2022, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin proclaimed the weakening of Russia as Washington’s top priority.

For their part, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Undersecretary Victoria Nuland openly expressed their satisfaction with the destruction of Nord Stream pipelines. Months before the attack, U.S. President Joe [Biden directly threatened to nix the pipelines](#) during a joint press conference with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on February 7, 2022. “I promise you, we will be able to do it,” Biden asserted to the press at the time. It seems that the U.S. is overtly provoking Russia while Moscow is showing wise restraint, according to observers.

Investigation could be damning for Team Biden

Apparently, Hersh’s source came forward because he/she was concerned about the escalation of NATO involvement in the Ukraine conflict, suggested Hans Mahncke.

“If Hersh’s source is right – and we have no reason to doubt the source – [the](#)

[executive branch under Biden](#) has unilaterally decided to wage war against Russia,” the lawyer said. “Aside from the obvious folly of such a decision, there are many legal problems, such as failure to inform Congress or even the congressional Gang of Eight. It is ironic that the military service chiefs – who for many years considered it their primary job to keep [then-U.S. President Donald] Trump under control, including having clandestine conversations with Chinese counterparts behind Trump’s back – did not raise any alarms when Biden decided to blow up Nord Stream 2.”

If responsible investigators go further, they would see that “the covert operation clearly increased energy prices substantially to the detriment of countless persons worldwide and likely to the benefit of energy companies, especially including Burisma,” assumed Ortel, referring, in particular, to the Biden family ties to the Ukrainian energy firm and the nation’s notorious oligarchy.

“During the 2020 campaign, we now know that credible allegations of corruption involving payments to the Biden family were suppressed in corporate-owned media and in social media while manifestly ludicrous allegations were intensely fanned against Trump and against Russia,” the Wall Street analyst said.

If Hersh’s allegations are proven true – as Ortel suspects, they shall be – then the world will see how U.S. political families are using the U.S., its military power, and sophisticated intelligence to undermine their competitors and pursue their own vested interests, according to the Wall Street analyst. “Peace through strength seems to have been turned on its head to become perpetual war using graft,” he stressed.

“In 2016, Hersh explained to me that inside many governments there are always pitched battles when it comes to making decisions,” continued Ortel. “In his career, Hersh has distinguished himself by bringing atrocities to light, while protecting his sources. Doing so using Substack, as he has, gave him the needed element of

surprise as Hersh did not need to involve editors and others in the mainstream press, he just clicked a button on his Substack control panel and off his bombshell reporting went.”

The Wall Street analyst highlighted that Hersh’s revelation came on the heels of a series of other exposes which had also been almost completely neglected by the Western mainstream media.

One of them, written by U.S. investigative journalist Jeff Gerth, told the story of how the mainstream press brazenly promoted allegations against Donald Trump and then refused to attempt to atone.

Earlier, Matt Taibbi and others shed light on inconvenient truths about former Twitter employees, their censorship of free speech and their collusion with the U.S. federal government.

“I suspect more revelations are coming that will connect dots concerning bipartisan corruption in service of the false god of unregulated globalism,” Ortel pointed out. “The Biden administration has crises over trust, over competence and over decency. No one can puzzle through a disagreement rejecting facts or logic (...) The known facts about Biden family corruption in Ukraine and elsewhere are damning.”

What’s next?

If Hersh is right, all relations between the U.S. and Europe and within the Old Continent will be weakened, according to Furuseth.

“Plausible deniability may be a useful tool at times, but it doesn’t work that well with credibility,” the Norwegian journalist remarked.

He doubts that Norwegian parliamentarians will exert pressure on Oslo to launch an investigation into what Hersh revealed. According to him, the Nordic state’s

lawmakers don't have the guts and the liberty to do it. "As long as our mainstream media buys into the official narrative, they do as they want," he added.

Furuseth quoted another Norwegian investigative reporter, Alf R. Jacobsen, who wrote a detailed analysis of the Nord Stream sabotage in October 2022, challenging an idea of Russia's involvement in the blasts. According to Jacobsen, Hersh's piece is credible, and along the lines, he indicated in his October article. Jacobsen hopes that the bombshell will increase the pressure on Sweden to release its findings.

"Several other nations ought to question their own governments' involvement, too. That includes my own, for sure," Furuseth added.

Meanwhile, Germany emerged as the big loser in this story, according to Mahncke.

"Germany should be extremely upset with the U.S. but won't say anything because Germany is effectively a vassal state which, like all western countries, is completely dependent on U.S. security guarantees," the U.S. investigative journalist said. "The reality is that the U.S. is running the show among western countries. U.S. contributions to Ukraine exceed those of other countries by a factor of 20 or more. So if the U.S. decides to blow up the pipeline, everyone else will toe the line, irrespective of what their own views are."

Not only Germany's industrial base was thrown under the bus, but the U.S. establishment also did everything to undermine Russo-German relations, according to Imelda Ibanez, a specialist in the history of Russian diplomacy and foreign policy at Saint Petersburg State University.

"In general terms, the [Nord Stream sabotage] was a terrorist attack against the alliance between Germany and Russia, which was formed many years ago, and which in geopolitical terms [the United States] wanted to prevent, because the potential that would be generated by both sides would have lessen the United

States,” Ibanez argued citing the dichotomy of “maritime” and “continental” powers described by British geostrategist Halford Mackinder in early 20th century.

The attempt to shatter the Russo-German partnership also involves dark symbolism pertaining to Berlin’s decision to send Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine 82 years after Nazi Germany’s Panthers and Tigers brought death and destruction to the U.S.S.R. Washington is believed to have twisted Berlin’s arm into sending the armored vehicles to Kiev.

Sputnik’s interlocutors doubt that the U.S. and European nations will launch an all-out investigation into the sabotage plot discovered by Hersh anytime soon.

However, it appears that the Pulitzer-prize-winning reporter won’t let the potential culprits off the hook.

“You are assuming I am done reporting ... not so,” Hersh told Sputnik.

Source: [Sputnik](#)

