

where the chemical attacks reportedly occurred—including Kafr Batna, Jawbar, Ayn Tarma, Darayya, and Mu'addamiyah. This includes the detection of rocket launches from regime controlled territory early in the morning, approximately 90 minutes before the first report of a chemical attack appeared in social media. The lack of flight activity or missile launches also leads us to conclude that the regime used rockets in the attack.

Local social media reports of a chemical attack in the Damascus suburbs began at 2:30 a.m. local time on August 21. Within the next four hours there were thousands of social media reports on this attack from at least 12 different locations in the Damascus area. Multiple accounts described chemical-filled rockets impacting opposition-controlled areas.

Three hospitals in the Damascus area received approximately 3,600 patients displaying symptoms consistent with nerve agent exposure in less than three hours on the morning of August 21, according to a highly credible international humanitarian organization. The reported symptoms, and the epidemiological pattern of events—characterized by the massive influx of patients in a short period of time, the origin of the patients, and the contamination of medical and first aid workers—were consistent with mass exposure to a nerve agent. We also received reports from international and Syrian medical personnel on the ground.

We have identified one hundred videos attributed to the attack, many of which show large numbers of bodies exhibiting physical signs consistent with, but not unique to, nerve agent exposure. The reported symptoms of victims included unconsciousness, foaming from the nose and mouth, constricted pupils, rapid heartbeat, and difficulty breathing. Several of the videos show what appear to be numerous fatalities with no visible injuries, which is consistent with death from chemical weapons, and inconsistent with death from small-arms, high-explosive munitions or blister agents. At least 12 locations are portrayed in the publicly available videos, and a sampling of those videos confirmed that some were shot at the general times and locations described in the footage.

We assess the Syrian opposition does not have the capability to fabricate all of the videos, physical symptoms verified by medical personnel and NGOs, and other information associated with this chemical attack.

We have a body of information, including past Syrian practice, that leads us to conclude that regime officials were witting of and directed the attack on August 21. We intercepted communications involving a senior official intimately familiar with the offensive who confirmed that chemical weapons were used by the regime on August 21 and was concerned with the U.N. inspectors obtaining evidence. On the afternoon of August 21, we have intelligence that Syrian chemical weapons personnel were directed to cease operations. At the same time, the regime intensified the artillery barrage targeting many of the neighborhoods where chemical attacks occurred. In the 24 hour period after the attack, we detected indications of artillery and rocket fire at a rate approximately four times higher than the ten preceding days. We continued to see indications of sustained shelling in the neighborhoods up until the morning of August 26.

To conclude, there is a substantial body of information that implicates the Syrian government's responsibility in the chemical weapons attack that took place on August 21. As indicated, there is additional intelligence that remains classified because of sources and methods concerns that is being

provided to Congress and international partners.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS USAGE SINCE WORLD WAR I

1,462 American soldiers were killed and 72,807 injured by chemical weapons in World War I, one-third of all U.S. casualties during the war. No Americans have died in battle from chemical weapons since World War I.

According to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, "Since World War I, chemical weapons have caused more than one million casualties globally."

1914–1918—During World War I, chemical weapons (primarily chlorine, phosgene, and mustard gas) were used by both sides and caused an estimated 100,000 fatalities and 1.3 million injuries.

During the war, Germany used 68,000 tons of gas, the French used 36,000 tons, and the British used 25,000.

April 1915—Germany used chlorine gas at the Battle of Ypres. This is the first significant use of chemical weapons in World War I.

September 1915—The British used chlorine gas against the Germans at the Battle of Loos.

February 1918—Germans used phosgene and chloropicrin artillery shells against American troops. This is the first major use of chemical weapons against U.S. forces.

June 1918—The United States employed a wide variety of chemical weapons against Axis forces using British and French artillery shells.

1918–1921—The Bolshevik army used chemical weapons to suppress at least three uprisings following the Bolshevik revolution.

1919—The British Air Force used Adamsite gas, a vomiting agent, against the Bolsheviks during the Russian Civil War.

1921–1927—Spanish forces used mustard gas against Berber rebels during the Third Rif War in Morocco.

1936—Italy used mustard gas during its invasion of Ethiopia. No precise estimate of chemical weapon-specific casualties, but contemporary Soviet estimates stated 15,000 Ethiopian casualties from chemical weapons.

1937–1945—Japan used chemical weapons (sulfur mustard, chlorine, chloropicrin, phosgene, and lewisite) during its invasion of China. The Japanese were the only country to use chemical weapons during World War II and did not use them against Western forces. Estimated 10,000 Chinese fatalities and 80,000 casualties as a result of chemical weapons.

1939–1945—Nazi Germany used carbon monoxide and pesticides, such as Zyklon B (hydrocyanic acid), in gas chambers during the Holocaust. Estimated 3 million killed.

1941—Mobile vans were used following the German invasion of the Soviet Union to murder an unknown number of Jews, Roma, and mental patients using exhaust from the vans to gas victims. Vans were also used at the Chelmno concentration camp in Poland.

1942—Nazi Germany began using diesel gas chambers at the Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka camps in Poland.

Zyklon B was used to kill up to 6,000 Jews per day at Auschwitz. Zyklon B was also used at Stutthoff, Mauthausen, Sachsenhausen, and Ravensbrueck concentration camps.

1963–1967—Egypt used phosgene and mustard gas against Yemeni royalist forces during the North Yemen Civil War between royalists and republicans. Egypt denied their use, but the Red Cross affirmed their use after forensic investigation.

1975–1982—Las and Vietnamese forces used chemical weapons against Hmong rebels. At least 6,504 killed.

1978–1982—Vietnamese forces used chemical weapons against Kampuchean troops and Khmer villages. At least 1,014 fatalities.

1979–1992—The United States alleged that the Soviet Union used mustard gas and other chemical weapons against mujahidin rebels in Afghanistan. At least 3,000 fatalities.

1980–1988—During the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq employed mustard gas and Tabun nerve agent. Iran retaliated with mustard, phosgene, and hydrogen cyanide gas. Estimated 1 million chemical weapons casualties.

1987—Libya allegedly used Iranian-supplied mustard gas against Chadian forces. However, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons did not find the allegations sufficiently persuasive to send investigators.

1988—Iraq used hydrogen cyanide and mustard gas against the Kurdish village of Halabja. Estimated 5,000 casualties.

1994—Aum Shinrikyo, a Japanese terrorist group, released sarin gas in Matsumoto, Japan. 8 fatalities and 200 injuries.

1995—Aum Shinrikyo released sarin gas in the Tokyo subway system. 12 fatalities and 5,000 estimated casualties.

Sources: Monterey Institute of International Studies, The Nonproliferation Review, declassified CIA report, Encyclopedia Britannica, The Washington Post, Reuters, New York Times, NPR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

BENGHAZI

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, 12 years ago Al Qaeda terrorists attacked our homeland, killing nearly 3,000 people. I will never forget the heroes of that day, many of whom laid down their lives for others.

Their courage is epitomized by the words spoken by a fire department captain at the World Trade Center. He radioed in to say, "We're still heading up." Indeed, these firefighters were still heading up while others were fleeing the flames and the acrid smoke. Where that kind of courage and determination comes from is hard to contemplate, but we are so grateful our first responders have that kind of dedication and courage.

Nor will I ever forget the many people who continue to live with the scars, whether they are civilians who lost a loved one that day, firefighters, police officers, or other first responders who rushed to the scene, or our brave military servicemembers who answered the call to defend our country in the years that followed. We must never lose sight of their sacrifice.

This week we have been considering the weighty issue of whether to grant the administration the authority to use military force against Syria. This day, the anniversary of those horrific attacks on our country 12 years ago, should not pass without our calling attention to another important matter of unfinished business critical to our national security and to our Nation's conscience.

A year ago today terrorists with links to Al Qaeda attacked our diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya. Despite a steadily escalating stream of threat reporting, and an obvious inability of Libyan security forces to protect

our diplomatic personnel and our facilities, the State Department had denied urgent requests for increased security measures. Officials kept the woefully vulnerable Benghazi compound open, setting the stage for attackers to essentially walk right into the compound and set it ablaze.

Tragically we lost four brave, dedicated diplomats and security personnel that terrible day and night: Glen Doherty, Tyrone Woods, Sean Smith, and Ambassador Chris Stevens. We laud their courage and we honor their memory, but we must also remedy the security failures and punish those responsible for their deaths.

Today I draw attention to the lessons that must be learned from the attacks in Benghazi and to the work that still must be done to bring the attackers to justice. First we must ensure that such wholesale failure to read the signs of escalating danger and to respond to urgent security needs never happens again.

Last year, as chairman and ranking member of the Senate Homeland Security Committee, former Senator Joe Lieberman and I conducted an investigation into the terrorist attacks at Benghazi. In our bipartisan report entitled “Flashing Red,” we found the State Department downplayed the terrorist threat in Benghazi despite numerous previous attacks on western targets, that they ignored repeated requests for additional security, and that they insufficiently fortified a shamefully ill-protected American compound. The Benghazi facility should either have been closed until security was strengthened or the threat abated.

We identified changes that must be made, including greater attention to security at high-risk posts around the world and better management to ensure that the recommendations of previous security reviews are fully implemented. It was discouraging to read previous accountability review board reports after the attacks in Africa, for example, back in the late 1990s and see similar patterns of requests for security being denied in Washington.

Second, Secretary of State John Kerry should hold personnel accountable for the problems identified in our committee report and by the Accountability Review Board. After our committee and the ARB identified systemic failures and leadership deficiencies that contributed to the grossly inadequate security in Benghazi, it is totally unacceptable for the State Department to hold no one responsible for the broader mismanagement that occurred prior to the attack.

Finally, a year after the attack, the terrorists who invaded the Benghazi compound still have not been brought to justice despite repeated promises and pledges by President Obama to do so.

After a long-delayed investigation, including a period of weeks when the FBI agents were not allowed to even access the Benghazi facility, Federal

authorities have recently filed criminal charges against several suspects. But serious questions remain about the pace, the extent, and the effectiveness of these investigations and charges.

A major problem is the willingness—or lack thereof—of the Libyan Government to fully cooperate. I am told that the whereabouts of one of the prime suspects is known and that he is walking about fully, openly, and freely. Yet he has not been picked up. He has not been arrested. He has not been taken into captivity. Why not?

The administration must follow through on its commitment by taking the steps necessary to bring the attackers to justice, as the President promised. And the State Department, in the meantime, must implement all of the actions needed to prevent a Benghazi-like attack from taking place again. Surely, on the anniversary of the attacks on our Nation 12 years ago and the attacks 1 year ago in Benghazi, we owe it to Chris Stevens and his colleagues and to the American people.

Madam President, seeing no one seeking recognition, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING 9/11

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, today, September 11, 2013, is a day in which we remember lives cut too short in the attacks on our Nation 12 years ago. We also remember acts of bravery, selflessness, and all that took place that morning and in the days and months and the years that followed. I wish to take a moment to thank all the others who have sought to protect us from harm in the intervening years.

FISCAL 2014 SPENDING

Mr. FLAKE. I also rise today to speak about the need for continued attention to our Nation’s fiscal health and to encourage my colleagues to seize the opportunity to take the necessary steps to rein in our out-of-control spending. As so often happens this time of year, talk has turned to the need for a continuing resolution for at least part of the next year, and I urge my colleagues to join me in pushing for a CR that respects the commitments we have already made.

As we all know, the President and the Congress approved the Budget Con-

trol Act in 2011, putting in place annual spending caps and establishing a deficit reduction commission to find additional savings and solutions to ensure the solvency of our entitlement programs. With the failure of that commission, a sequester that forced \$1.2 trillion in automatic spending reductions was put in place. In the absence of an agreement to replace them, the caps and sequester guarantee at least \$2 trillion in deficit reduction.

Seventy-four Members of the Senate believed these enforcement measures were needed to put us on the right fiscal track. The President signed the Budget Control Act into law, saying that, “It’s an important first step to ensuring that, as a Nation, we live within our means.” Yet there are continuing conversations about passing a short-term continuing resolution that would fund the government at a level above that established by the Budget Control Act for next year.

I should have to remind no one that under the Budget Control Act, passing a continuing resolution at anything higher than the \$967 billion limit would trigger another statutory, across-the-board sequester cut in January that would bring spending down to the \$967 billion level for the next fiscal year of 2014.

I can see why there are those who would like to take such action. Passing a CR at a higher-than-BCA-appropriate level would create yet another fiscal cliff, with hopes, I am sure, of causing enough pressure to finally do away with the sequester. That is what some would like. However, such a scenario does little to add pressure to address the sequester, provides the pretense that the BCA levels don’t mean anything if even for a short while, and it further complicates agencies implementing what are sure to be the required cuts.

Make no mistake, I understand the sequester process is a blunt instrument and not a preferred method of fiscal restraint. However, it was put in place because Congress failed to do what is needed to rein in reckless spending.

I also understand the difficult position it puts agencies in, particularly the Department of Defense. I am open to allowing reasonable flexibility and to replacing the sequester, albeit with changes to mandatory spending and entitlements, and not hikes in taxes. But that deal, much like the supercommittee’s success, has been elusive, and to seek to pass a CR that doesn’t reflect the reality of the post-BCA world raises itself a set of problems. However, such a scenario does little to add pressure to address the sequester, as I mentioned. It simply would make it more difficult for agencies to address their needs and to bring down their own spending.

Certainly, passing any budget bill for next year at levels in excess of those that are outlined in the Budget Control Act breaks any promise to “live within our means.”