

US media continues coverup of State Department admission of biological weapons labs in Ukraine

Kevin Reed
11 March 2022

The Biden administration and the corporate media are continuing to cover up the acknowledgment by Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland that biological weapons laboratories have been operating in Ukraine under US direction.

During her testimony before a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Tuesday, when asked by Senator Marco Rubio (Republican of Florida), “Does Ukraine have chemical or biological weapons?,” Nuland responded that there are “biological research facilities” in the country.

While she did not discuss prior US government involvement in these facilities—and Senator Rubio also did not ask her about this—Nuland said that the State Department is “working with the Ukrainians on how we can prevent any of those research materials from falling into the hands of Russian forces should they approach.”

As the scripted exchange continued, Senator Rubio said reports that Russia had, “uncovered a plot by the Ukrainians to unleash biological weapons in the country, and with NATO’s coordination,” were propaganda. Then Nuland went on to say that “it is a classic Russian technique to blame the other guy for what they are planning to do themselves.”

As numerous international news outlets began reporting Nuland’s comments as confirmation that US-backed biological weapons labs did in fact exist in Ukraine as the Russians have maintained, the State Department was forced to issue a denial on Wednesday in an official statement by department spokesperson Ned Price.

Price did not confirm or deny or even refer to the statements by Nuland. Instead, he wrote that the Kremlin is, “intentionally spreading outright lies that the United States and Ukraine are conducting chemical and biological weapons activities in Ukraine.” He called the

Russian reports “disinformation,” and “total nonsense,” that had been “debunked conclusively and repeatedly over many years.”

Price then repeated the claims made in a lengthy tweet on Wednesday by White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki, stating that the US, “does not own or operate any chemical or biological laboratories in Ukraine” and is in full compliance with both the Biological and Chemicals Weapons Conventions of the UN. Price also said that Russia has a “track record of accusing the West of the very crimes that Russia itself is perpetrating.” None of these assertions were backed up with substantiating facts or evidence.

At a press conference on Wednesday, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby was asked by a reporter—once again without mentioning Victoria Nuland’s comments—to explain, “to us what the relationship if any, there was between the Pentagon and the Ukrainian side on any biological labs,” and, “When was the last cooperation and what do you say about these Russian accusations?”

Kirby refused to answer the question and replied by saying the Russian accusations were “absurd” and “laughable,” and added, “There’s nothing to it. It’s classic Russian propaganda. And, and I wouldn’t, if I were you, I wouldn’t give it a drop of ink worth paying attention to.”

As of Thursday evening, no national daily newspaper in the US—including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today*—had reported on the statements of Nuland before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Tuesday. CNN buried Nuland’s comments in an article on Thursday that accused China of promoting “Russian disinformation.”

In its summary of the events on day thirteen of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the *Times* mentioned

Victoria Nuland's Senate testimony, but only concerning the proposal from Poland to deploy Soviet-era MiG-29 aircraft to the US airbase in Germany.

Fox News aired a 16-minute segment by Tucker Carlson on Wednesday evening that included a clip of Nuland's testimony and accused the Biden administration and Pentagon of lying about Ukrainian bio labs for reasons connected with the network's promotion of the Wuhan lab conspiracy theory about the origins of the coronavirus pandemic.

The State Department replied to an inquiry by Fox News stating, "The US Department of Defense does not own or operate biological weapons labs in Ukraine. Under Secretary Nuland was referring to Ukrainian diagnostic and biodefense laboratories during her testimony which are not biological weapons facilities. These institutions counter biological threats throughout the country."

Late Wednesday, *Newsweek* published a report saying an unnamed State Department official had "clarified" the nature of the "biological research facilities" mentioned by Nuland that were "at the center of dueling accusations between US and Russian officials."

It is very clear that the exposure of US-sponsored biological warfare operations in Ukraine explodes the entire narrative concocted by the Biden administration and faithfully propagandized by the corporate media that Russia is solely responsible for the present war crisis.

The anonymous State Department spokesperson admitted this fact to *Newsweek*, saying that the US has maintained all along that, "Russia is continuing to invent false pretexts to justify their horrific actions in Ukraine. Neither the United States nor NATO has any desire or intention for conflict with Russia."

Recognizing expressions of culpability in the hysterical denials emanating from the US, UK and Ukrainian officials, the head of the Russian delegation at the Vienna Negotiations on Military Security and Arms Control, Konstantin Gavrillov, described the reactions to allegations about the bio labs as "amazing." In an interview with the Russian language Rossiya-24 outlet, Gavrillov added that he had seen nothing like it in his 30-year diplomatic career.

Referring to representatives of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), of which all four countries are a part, Gavrillov said "they have done everything to evade the issue in their speeches, emphasizing that Russia is conducting a war, aggression, twisting the facts and everything like that. Both in the media and here."

"Nothing new. But they are avoiding this topic in every possible way," Gavrillov added. "We raised it proactively and generated a flurry of reactions."

Documents have been published by the *National Pulse* that show the Obama administration signed an agreement with Ukraine for the construction of biolabs handling "especially dangerous pathogens." The documents, which have since been removed, include a post from June 18, 2010, entitled, "Biolab Opens in Ukraine" explains how Barack Obama while serving as an Illinois Senator helped negotiate an agreement to build a Level 3 bio-safety lab in the Ukrainian city of Odessa.

The *National Pulse* also quotes a 2011 report from the US National Academy of Sciences which said, "This laboratory was reconstructed and technically updated up to the BSL-3 level through a cooperative agreement between the United States Department of Defense and the Ministry of Health of Ukraine that started in 2005. The collaboration focuses on preventing the spread of technologies, pathogens, and knowledge that can be used in the development of biological weapons."

The report went on, "The updated laboratory serves as Interim Central Reference Laboratory with a depository (pathogen collection). According to Ukrainian regulations, it has a permit to work with both bacteria and viruses of the first and second pathogenic groups." The lab provided "special training for specialists on biosafety and biosecurity issues during handling of dangerous biological pathogenic agents."

As with all Pentagon-directed technologies, operations and facilities, the use of the terms "defense," "security" and "safety" are euphemisms for US imperialist strategic military superiority and war preparations. For example, in March 2017, when hackers breached the CIA's cybersecurity servers, nearly 9,000 documents were stolen from what was called "Vault 7." These documents were essentially a massive arsenal of offensive malware, viruses and weaponized "zero day" exploits that had been part of the CIA's international hacking and cyberwarfare operations.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact