

US Navy attacked Nord Stream pipeline, says Pulitzer-winning journalist Seymour Hersh

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The destruction of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline between Russia and Germany was a terror attack carried out by the US Navy, in a mission planned before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, according to a report by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh published Wednesday.

On September 26, a series of explosions destroyed the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines, which shipped natural gas from Russia to Germany. While no one has publicly admitted responsibility, US officials have expressed satisfaction at the pipeline's destruction.

Seymour Hersh is one of the world's leading investigative journalists, who exposed the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War. He also contributed to revealing the Watergate scandal and prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib. While Hersh, as usual, does not report his sources, and his accusations cannot be independently verified, his reporting has been confirmed again and again in the past.

Hersh alleges that:

Last June, the Navy divers, operating under the cover of a widely publicized mid-summer NATO exercise known as BALTOPS 22, planted the remotely triggered explosives that, three months later, destroyed three of the four Nord Stream pipelines, according to a source with direct knowledge of the operational planning.

The terrorist attack on the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines destroyed civilian infrastructure valued at over \$20 billion. It resulted in the single largest spill of methane gas in human history, releasing the equivalent of 14.6 million tons of CO₂, with a major climate impact. The attack contributed to a spike in energy prices through

Europe and the entire world.

In congressional testimony in January, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland said, "I think the administration is very gratified to know that Nord Stream 2 is now, as you like to say, a hunk of metal at the bottom of the sea."

These statements strongly suggested that the US and its allies viewed the attack favorably. They also made it appear likely that the attack had been directed by Washington through an intermediary, such as the Ukrainian special forces.

According to Hersh, however, the attack was not only planned by the United States, but actively conducted by the US Navy. If true, what occurred was a staggeringly reckless attack on Germany, a NATO ally of the US. The United States fought against Germany in two world wars, in which hundreds of thousands of American soldiers were killed. In 1917, the United States nominally entered World War I in response to the German policy of indiscriminately sinking American civilian ships using submarines.

In his report, Hersh explained the economic significance of the Nord Stream pipelines:

From its earliest days, Nord Stream 1 was seen by Washington and its anti-Russian NATO partners as a threat to western dominance...

The direct route, which bypassed any need to transit Ukraine, had been a boon for the German economy, which enjoyed an abundance of cheap Russian natural gas—enough to run its factories and heat its homes while enabling German distributors to sell excess gas, at a profit, throughout Western Europe...

America's political fears were real: [Russian President] Putin would now have an additional and

much-needed major source of income, and Germany and the rest of Western Europe would become addicted to low-cost natural gas supplied by Russia—while diminishing European reliance on America...

As long as Europe remained dependent on the pipelines for cheap natural gas, Washington was afraid that countries like Germany would be reluctant to supply Ukraine with the money and weapons it needed to defeat Russia.

Hersh does not note that following the shutoff of European natural gas imports from Russia, the US massively increased its natural gas exports to Europe, leading to record profits for US energy companies.

As one European official told *Politico*, “The fact is, if you look at it soberly, the country that is most profiting from this war is the US because they are selling more gas and at higher prices, and because they are selling more weapons.”

Hersh reports that plans for the American attack on Nord Stream 2 were already in the making ahead of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. He writes:

In December of 2021, two months before the first Russian tanks rolled into Ukraine, [National Security Advisor] Jake Sullivan convened a meeting of a newly formed task force—men and women from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the CIA, and the State and Treasury Departments—and asked for recommendations about how to respond to Putin’s impending invasion.

Hersh claims that Sullivan proposed a “plan for the destruction” and that he was “delivering on the desires of the President.”

Describing the reasoning among the war planners, Hersh writes, “This is not kiddie stuff,” the source said. If the attack were traceable to the United States, “It’s an act of war.”

On February 7, ahead of the invasion, US President Joe Biden declared publicly, “If Russia invades ... there will be no longer a Nord Stream 2. We will bring an end to it.”

According to Hersh, Biden’s statements shocked the planners of the operation.

Several of those involved in planning the pipeline mission were dismayed by what they viewed as indirect references to the attack...

“It was like putting an atomic bomb on the ground in Tokyo and telling the Japanese that we are going to detonate it,” the source said. “The plan was for the options to be executed post invasion and not advertised publicly. Biden simply didn’t get it or ignored it.”

The US Navy would, according to Hersh, plant the explosives during the BALTOPS 22 military exercise, which involved dozens of warships and thousands of personnel. The US Navy published a press release regarding deep-sea diving operations during the exercise, including a picture of a deep-sea diver.

While the explosives were planted during the exercise, according to Hersh, the White House ultimately decided not to trigger the explosions immediately, and instead allowed them to be remotely detonated in September.

Hersh’s report included rebuttals from the White House, which declared in response to his story, “This is false and complete fiction,” and from the Central Intelligence Agency, which declared “This claim is completely and utterly false.”

Whistleblower Edward Snowden, who shared the article on Twitter, responded to the denials from the White House, “Can you think of any examples from history of a secret operation that the White House was responsible for, but strongly denied? Besides, you know, that little ‘mass surveillance’ kerfuffle.” Snowden was referring to the illegal NSA mass surveillance program created after the 9/11 terror attacks, which he publicly exposed in 2013.

Meanwhile, the entire US media has treated the attack as if it were an unsolved mystery, despite statements by US and NATO officials openly welcoming the bombings. Continuing a wall of silence, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Wall Street Journal* have not reported Hersh’s article, or even the denial by the White House.



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