

The media has not considered how Russophobia is benefitting big business

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THE attack on Sergei and Yulia Skripal in Salisbury seems to take a new twist daily as empty speculation and disinformation saturate the major media outlets without even so much as a WMD “dodgy dossier” to go on.

... the British media has, for the most part, wallowed in guesswork, served up a steady stream of suspiciously contradictory non-attributable “leaks” and displayed a stubborn refusal to consider possible third-party beneficiaries of this growing tension between Britain and Russia.

Russian policies in Ukraine and Crimea, as well as its stance in defence of Syria, have not made it many friends in the West, nor in Riyadh, Ankara, Tel Aviv or Kiev.

...

Lately another group has emerged, Doctors Under Fire. Coincidentally, as with the White Helmets, it was co-founded by a **former British army officer, Colonel (rtd) Hamish de Bretton-Gordon.**

Quoted daily by multiple media outlets on the Skripal case, de Bretton-Gordon has become a very public expert, relied upon for unbiased comment and analysis by the British and foreign media on chemical weapon threats from Salisbury to Syria.

He is a former assistant director of Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Land Forces with the Ministry of Defence. Before that de Bretton-Gordon was commanding officer of Britain’s Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Regiment and Nato’s Rapid Reaction CBRN Battalion.

While his CBRN background is often mentioned, his military intelligence links are rarely referred to publicly.

Long before the Salisbury event, de Bretton-Gordon was urging greater government expenditure on chemical protection counter-measures and equipment. He has used his columns in The Guardian, Daily Telegraph, as well as TV appearances to repeat this message.

He was quoted in the Morning Star on March 15 in the news story [Tories to fork out £48m for new defence centre.](#)

While his Guardian online biography selectively mentions his military record and work on Syria, it overlooks his day job — de Bretton-Gordon is managing director CBRN of Avon Protection Systems, based in Melksham, Wiltshire.

The company website states: “We have been supplying respirators to the UK Ministry of Defence and other Nato allies since the 1920s and we are the primary supplier of CBRN respiratory equipment to all United States Department of Defence Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Special Operations Forces.”

So **Colonel de Bretton-Gordon, among other things, sells gas masks.** In fact, it’s likely you’ve

seen his company's products on TV worn by military or police personnel at high-profile incidents such as the one in Salisbury.

Last month, Avon Rubber, Avon Protection's parent company, announced a five-year £16m contract to supply the Ministry of Defence with general service respirators.

In November, Avon Rubber announced it was a recognised bidder in a 10-year \$8bn US Defence Department programme on CBRN equipment.

In January, it announced the completion of a multimillion-dollar order from the US Department of Defence after revealing last May that it had won a contract to supply 37,000 of its FM50 masks to "an unnamed customer."

In 2017, the company made £50m from its US military contracts and a further £63.3m from other "protection and defence" revenue.

Commenting on the results, Fiona Cincotta, senior market analyst at City Index, noted: "Fatal acts of terrorism in the US and Europe have buoyed demand for gas masks that shows little signs of waning any time soon" ([Terror acts 'drive up' orders at Avon Rubber, RubberNews.com](#) — November 20 2017).

You don't need to be a market analyst to predict that 2018 is likely to be a stellar year for the company.

Of course, de Bretton-Gordon is under no legal or ethical obligation to reveal his business affiliations during his media appearances, but shouldn't the corporate media alert its readers and viewers to this obvious commercial interest?

After his military intelligence service ended and before he joined Avon, de Bretton-Gordon was a director of SecureBio Ltd, a company officially registered in the Northwest of England.

However, de Bretton-Gordon's social media accounts place SecureBio's location during this time as Porton Down in Wiltshire, home to the Ministry of Defence's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl).

According to the website of Military Speakers, "a specialist agency for keynote, motivation and after dinner speakers for corporate, industry and public sector events ... Hamish advises UK government at the very highest level on CBRN and frequently appears on the BBC, Sky News, AJE and CBS News as their expert commentator on Syria chemical weapons and all things CBRN."

A veteran of war-torn Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, he conducted, we are told, "highly secret operations some of which are now declassified."

We are also told that he has travelled often to Syria and "has reported with the BBC on some of the very high profile chemical attacks. He has also worked with US networks and British newspapers to smuggle chemical samples out of Syria for verification in UK and France."

The British newspaper was the Daily Telegraph. On April 29 2014, the paper reported that it "obtained soil samples collected from sites of chemical attacks inside Syria by Dr Ahmad — a medic whose real identity cannot be revealed for his own protection — who had previously received training

in sample collection by western chemical weapons experts.

"Mr de Bretton-Gordon, a British chemical weapons expert and director of Secure Bio, a private company, was one of the trainers."

And who carried out the tests? None other than de Bretton-Gordon himself.

In a previous piece for the paper, [Syrian activists and doctors being trained to combat chemical attacks](#) October 12 2013, de Bretton-Gordon wrote about his training programmes in Turkey, which were attended by senior leaders and activists of the Syrian National Council, the political wing of the Free Syrian Army.

This came at critical juncture in the war when every attempt was being made to use allegations of chemical weapon attacks, vehemently denied by the Syrian government, to promote overt Western military intervention.

Colonel de Bretton-Gordon was active on both sides of the Atlantic to further this aim. According to Homeland Security Today (May 22 2015), "In mid-April, he collected and analysed samples from the chlorine attack in Sarmin, Syria, which was presented to the UN Security Council by US Ambassador Samantha Powell (sic) [Power]."

In his many opinion pieces, this military intelligence veteran repeatedly called for the removal of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and the imposition of no-fly zones by the RAF and the US air force, the key foreign policy demands of the Nato hawks.

The current anti-Russia hysteria is not simply directed against Russian President Vladimir Putin but also against the current Labour leader, whose refusal to meekly line up behind the Tories has appalled Establishment diehards, including right-wing Labour MPs.

It's a concern de Bretton-Gordon shares, as he outlined in yet another Telegraph opinion piece on May 31 2017, just a week before the general election, entitled [Jeremy Corbyn in Downing Street would be a gift to Britain's enemies](#).

Whatever truth eventually emerges from the Skripal attacks, there is no need for complex conspiracy theories to see how the incident is manipulated in the media to promote the interests, both commercial and political, of Britain's very own military-industrial complex.

The mask has slipped.