

## Israel-Saudi Arabia: An Unholy Alliance

By <u>Stephen Lendman</u> Global Research, October 10, 2013 Region: <u>Middle East & North Africa</u> Theme: <u>US NATO War Agenda</u> In-depth Report: <u>SYRIA</u>

Israel and Saudi Arabia are rogue states writ large. They're two of the world's worst. They deplore democratic values. They spurn rule of law principles.

They commit horrendous human and civil rights abuses. They're responsible for daily crimes against humanity.

They partner with Washington's imperial wars. They're an odd couple. They're strange bedfellows. Perhaps they're joining forces. Formal relations aren't maintained. Back channel secret ones substitute.

On October 2, Israel's Channel 2 TV news said senior Israeli security officials met with a high-level Gulf state counterpart. They did so in Jerusalem.

The Arab official's name wasn't mentioned. It's believed to be Saudi Prince Bandar bin Sultan. Representing his government, he's very much involved in Washington's war on Syria. So is Israel.

Bandar's visit broke a decades long taboo. It marks the first known time a Saudi official visited Israel. It's believed no others did so earlier.

Bandar did it covertly, not openly. He came to discuss interests both countries share. They include toppling Assad and confronting Iran.

Doing so involves forming a dark alliance. Including America, it's hard imagining a darker one. It's an axis of evil writ large.

Saudi money allied with US/Israeli warmaking reflect sinister/lethal trouble. On October 8, <u>UPI headlined</u> "Saudis bankroll new rebel force to fight own war on Assad."

They're recruiting, funding and arming Salafist extremists. A "pro-Saudi warlord" is involved.

Riyadh wants "to foment an Iraq-style 'Sunni Awakening." It wants to do so by toppling Assad. According to Middle East analyst Michael Weiss:

Saudi officials have "taken substantive measures to circumvent Washington altogether on Syria by activating a cadre of new clients in the form of hard-line Salafist rebels who are now united under the umbrella of the army of Islam."

They "enlisted '50 brigades' and some thousands of fighters under a new structure (led) by Zahran Alloush." He "heads Liwa al-Islam, the new group's most powerful Salafist brigade."

A previous article discussed him. His father, Abdullah Mohammed Alloush, is a Salafist cleric. Aharan conducts joint operations with Jabhat al-Nusra. He rejects peaceful conflict resolution. He won't negotiate with Assad.

In July 2012, Liva al-Islam was responsible for killing Syrian Defense Minister Dawoud Rajiha, his deputy Asef Shawkat and Assistant Vice President Hassan Turkmani.

UPI quoted pro-regime Saudi analyst Jamal Khashoggi saying:

"For us in Saudi Arabia, the worst scenario is to let (Assad) survive. He has to go."

Prince Bandar heads Riyadh's General Intelligence Directorate. Earlier he was Saudi's US ambassador. He served for 22 years. He's a master of regional intrigue.

In July, he tried bribing Vladimir Putin. In return for billions of dollars in Russian arms purchases and other economic incentives, he wanted him to stop supporting Assad.

He chose the wrong leader. Putin isn't for sale. He won't abandon Syria for blood money. He diplomatically told Bandar no deal.

Apparently what he's selling Israel is buying. Together with America they comprise an alliance from hell. Other Gulf states and Jordan are believed to be involved.

Israel and Saudi Arabia are strange bedfellows. Israel is a predominantly secular Jewish state. The House of Saud is an fundamentalist Sunni Islam Wahhabi one. Fanaticism defines it.

It's extremely hostile to Shia Islam and secular Arab states. Assad's Alawite rule makes him especially unacceptable. Wahhabis want him toppled.

They want their version of Islam replacing Iran's predominantly Shia government. Israel wants regional rivals removed.

Rogue states operate that way. They employ extreme measures to achieve goals. War is common strategy to do so.

Israel and Saudi Arabia both oppose responsible governance. They deplore treating everyone equitably and fairly. They want Arab spring eruptions contained. They want them kept from blooming.

They fear them spreading and affecting their rule. They backed Egypt's military coup against Muslim Brotherhood President Mohamed Morsi.

They want Sunni/Shia divisions exploited advantageously. They believe confrontations and instability work best. They think conflict resolutions, peace, and stability defeat them strategically.

They perhaps believe allying creates greater mutually beneficial opportunities.

In 1996, Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, David Wurmser and other neocon extremists wrote "<u>A</u> <u>Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the realm</u>." Incoming Likud Prime Minister Netanyahu requested "a new set of ideas" ahead of his first term. Neocon hardliners recommended jettisoning notions of peace.

They advocated replacing "land for peace" with "peace for peace." They proposed challenging Syria confrontationally. They wanted Iraq "redefine(d)."

They urged "wean(ing) the south Lebanese Shia from Hezbollah, Iran and Syria." They wrote:

"Israel can shape its strategic environment, in cooperation with Turkey and Jordan, by weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria."

"This effort can focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq – an important Israeli objective in its own right."

"Given the nature of the regime in Damascus (much the same today), it is both natural and moral that Israel abandon the slogan comprehensive peace and move to contain Syria, drawing attention to its weapons of mass destruction programs, and rejecting land for peace deals on the Golan Heights."

Perle et al's report was a destabilization/regime change manifesto. It was implemented in Iraq and Libya. Neither effort turned out as planned.

Shia Iraq replaced Saddam's Sunni governance. Local militia gangs control most parts of Libya. Both countries are out-of-control cauldrons of violence.

Bordering countries are affected. Contagion spreads easily. Doing so cross border continues. The phrase be careful what you wish for applies. Best laid plans this time went awry.

Clean break strategy targets Syria, Iran, Lebanon's Hezbollah and Palestine's Hamas. Tactics includes managed news misinformation, backing internal and external dissident groups, and other belligerent/destabilizing initiatives.

At issue is replacing independent governments/Israeli-Saudi rivals with controllable vassals. It aims to benefit Sunni Islam at the expense of Shias.

It bears repeating. Pursuing this agenda risks embroiling the entire region in conflict. It risks global war.

It risks what no responsible leaders would chance. Stopping what's potentially catastrophic is top priority. Doing it in time matters most.

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