

# The Saudi Oil Attack: Geo-Political Theatrics

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [History](#)

## *The Opening Scene*

*The 14<sup>th</sup> September 2019 attack which had caused significant damage to Saudi based Aramco Oil plants in Abqaiq and Khurais, was the trigger for much of the recent rise in regional tension at least when it comes to Saudi- Iran relations.*

However, given the way that recent events have unfolded, it seems that a commitment to a comprehensive and fair investigation is not exactly on the agenda.

If anything, there seems to be a more concerted effort in doubling down on a narrative that Iran is responsible for the attack despite the mind-boggling irrationality of why Iran would commit such an aggressive action where it stands to gain almost nothing from it.

Iran doesn't need to worry about competing with Saudi Arabia over oil markets given the ridiculously draconian economic sanctions placed upon it by the U.S. To attack Saudi Arabia in such an open fashion would only result in loss of global political standing while risking retaliation and antagonism which opens up more avenues for potential conflict which Iran, given its historical experience dealing with the global hegemonic warmongering engine that is the U.S, does not want to risk entering.

In short from a geo-political strategic standpoint, Iran doesn't benefit at all, from such a move.

So why would it commit such a bold and brazen attack?

## *Mystery and Misdirection*

Nonetheless, various officials from the United States of America, almost without hesitation have jumped into a murky pool of unsubstantiated conjectures while hyping up the sensationalized fictional bogeyman of Iran. Their primary motivation is nothing more than their own antagonistic foreign policy stance and agenda against the Iranian state.

Even when Yemen's Houthi rebels' armed forces, claimed responsibility for the attack, as payback for Saudi Arabia's continuous aggression towards the Yemeni people (which is completely backed and supported by the US government) their claim was dismissed with the argument that the 10 unmanned drone operation of 14<sup>th</sup> September was something far beyond the capabilities of the Yemeni people. The attack, US officials and others alleged, was far more effective and too "neat" compared to previous attempts by the rebels and "likely originated from Iraq".[1]

It should also be mentioned that this attack is also a significant embarrassment for the

Saudis and the U.S. as the Saudi government had spent a significant amount to purchase the U.S. air defence system which had failed to defend their oil installations

Analysis of the drone parts however, revealed some interesting factors, namely that the drone parts developed was beyond the technological capability of both Yemen and Iran. Historically speaking, Iran's missile arsenal, while formidable in its own right, has long been plagued by poor reliability and guidance problems. This fact alone would debunk the Saudi narrative. The logistical and technological assets are just not in the capabilities of the Iranians at this time.

The missiles on the other hand which were shown through pictures supplied by the Saudi Defence Ministry itself had indicated through the number MC 79050 a Joint Electronics Type Designation System (JETDS). This particular missile type is one of many developed by the Counter Electronics High Power Microwave Advanced Missile Project (CHAMP), all of which were confirmed by the Saudis to have been fired from the Iraq-Kuwait border. The missiles themselves were speculated to have been supplied from Ukraine. Some have even gone on to suggest that it may have been the work of rogue U.S. elements [2]

However with the Saudis bullishly pushing through this narrative, it becomes clearer, that the agenda here is to implicate Iran as the instigator, wilfully ignoring the lack of evidence and the lack of plausible motive while simultaneously not giving credence to the plight faced by the Yemeni people.

Even when China's own Xi Jinping, expressing concern over the issue as the attack had caused quite a stir within the International energy market, called for a comprehensive and just investigation into the incident[3] — a fairly standard and sensible approach to calming the tensions between the Saudis and the Iranian state for the sake of international energy security — China was rewarded with new rounds of American sanctions against it for dealing with Iran on oil.

Considering all these factors, one begins to wonder about a few things.

Firstly why is there such an insistence that Iran be painted as the criminal in this story despite the poor foundation of the accusations?

Second, as we have shown, Iran does not stand to benefit from this event, which is why the question has to be asked: who benefits the most from this whole debacle?

The answers are found among the role-players themselves who are now in a situation that can only be called grand geo-political theatrics with the protagonists being the U.S. and its allies, Saudi Arabia the hapless victim, and Iran, the proverbial bad guy.

### *Heroes, Villains and Victims*

Saudi Arabia has called for retaliation against the Iranian state and has played its role as a victim of aggression. Saudi Arabia play-acting is what is perhaps best described as bad comedy and to many who have followed the issue, the irony is not lost. Since 2015, the Saudis have been massacring the civilian population of Yemen. According to data collected by the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, 67 percent of all reported civilian casualties in Yemen have been caused by Saudi-led coalition air strikes making them the "most responsible for civilian deaths" in Yemen since 2015. The current death toll now exceeds over 90,000 with many more suffering from treatable diseases in the midst of

crumbling social infrastructure due to the on-going hostilities by the Saudis.[4]

The leading role of the hero will most likely be the U.S. and its allies who not only perpetuate the narrative against Iran but also, as we have noted, militarily support the brutal war against the Yemeni people, one of the poorest people on earth. Apart from supplying arms to the unpopular Yemeni government, the US is also helping to enforce a naval blockade. A recent article by Amnesty International observes that a laser guided bomb manufactured by US company *Raytheon*, was used in a Saudi-led attack which killed six Yemeni civilians, three of whom were children.[5] In addition to this mess, the United Kingdom government has come out saying that it “unreservedly” apologised for authorising arms deals to Saudi Arabia in breach of a court ruling against the sale of weapons that could be used in the war in Yemen.[6]

With the U.S. and the Saudi state fanning the flames, one should also ask: what would be their motive for perpetuating and escalating conflict in the region?

Some have laid the blame directly at the U.S. administration and President Donald Trump, accusing the president of going back on his election promise to end US involvement in military conflicts in West Asia.

But is that true?

Trump, despite many other failings, has shown considerable restraint by rejecting demands to launch major attacks on Iran. If his previous actions are any indication of what his stance on conflict escalation is, notably on wanting to draw down forces from Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria (his decision to pull out of Syria resulted in the resignation of his then Secretary of Defense James “Mad Dog” Mattis), Trump is more inclined to avoid getting caught in another costly war. He would rather strike a deal with his foe.

One simply has to recall during the previous Presidential Election Campaign when Trump adamantly labelled the entire Middle East Wars as “stupid” and given that he is aiming to contest for the U.S. Presidential election next year, it makes little to no sense to commit American lives to another senseless war. It also goes without saying that should the US involve itself in a military operation against Iran, it will only expose its forces in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan Somalia and other places in the region to hostilities and possible Iranian guerrilla attacks[7].

So while it may be an admittedly contestable conjecture at this point, if we entertain the idea that this whole scenario was a false flag operation (something the U.S. has been historically known to do to attack sovereign foreign governments), it stands to reason it is not Trump’s administration that is directly coordinating these events in recent weeks and in fact there may be those within the U.S. government that seek to oppose the President on his own foreign policy stance.

The murky swamp that is the deep state of the U.S. largely controlled by the neocons, has always been the lever of power within the U.S. administration and many in it have served to advance the Zionist project of the Israeli State. Exemplifying this is perhaps people like prolific warmonger John Bolton, who unlike Trump, seeks very much to enter into military conflict with Iran. He was quoted in 2017 by the Mujahedeen Khalq, MEK, which is represented by members of the Iranian exile group, as saying that the Trump Administration should embrace their goal of “regime change” in Iran and that before 2019, they will

“celebrate in Tehran”.

Lest we forget, it was John Bolton, who vigorously campaigned against Tehran, and he was the one who ultimately demolished the hard and long struggle for the Iran Nuclear deal, tearing it to pieces and causing further rifts between Iran and the U.S. and essentially damaging U.S. foreign policy for the Trump Administration.

Bolton succeeded to some extent but in early September 2019, he was asked by President Donald Trump to resign as the National Security Advisor, noting that he “strongly disagrees” with many of Bolton’s suggestions “as did others in the administration”[8].

Perhaps it is coincidental, but one cannot help but draw a connection between Bolton’s resignation, and the Saudi oil plant attack as it had occurred soon afterwards.

With all that was mentioned previously, it would seem that the U.S. and Donald Trump’s Administration would benefit very little from this event and may face more backlash from it. Why then does the U.S. insist on pushing this poorly structured narrative of Iran’s involvement in the September 14 attack?

Does Bolton and his neo-con friends in the deep state have anything to do with this attack, and if so why and what would they have to gain?

Perhaps at this stage we must look beyond the theatrical show being presented to us and have a peek behind the proverbial red curtain and follow the puppet strings that are being pulled.

### *Hidden Hands Behind the Curtain*

President Donald Trump’s call for John Bolton’s resignation via twitter had sent some shockwaves within the bureaucracy of the U.S. Administration, especially with Trump now having gone through a total of three National Security Advisers, H.R. McMaster, Michael Flynn and now Bolton.

Bolton’s dismissal brings us back to the question of who stands to gain?

To encapsulate, there is no credible evidence to suggest Iranian involvement. The Trump Administration gains almost nothing from the attack. So who stands to benefit from it?

One suspect is the Saudi elite with its prolonged proxy war against the state of Iran, more commonly known as the Iran-Saudi proxy conflict. The Saudi elite sees itself as a regional power. It views Iran as a direct challenge to that ambition. This conflict is primarily political and economic in practice, but there have been attempts to exacerbate religious tensions especially between the Sunni and Shia sects within the Muslim Ummah. This has repercussions beyond West Asia. Its impact upon Malaysia is an example. Influential Saudi trained preachers continue to demonize and vilify Shia groups and religious practices. Though there is hardly an indigenous Shia community in Malaysia, this vilification obviously serves the larger Saudi agenda of marginalising Shias and Iran.

However if we do not wish to entertain the idea that Saudi Arabia is willing blow up its own oil infrastructure to begin a false flag operation to justify military action against Iran, then we have to abandon “the Saudis did it theory”. Besides, the attack as we have acknowledged was a sophisticated technological exercise beyond Saudi capabilities. Even a

false flag operation would play into the hands of the local Shia population that inhabits that particular geographical area in Saudi Arabia and for that reason would undermine the interests of the Sunni helmed Saudi state.

This leaves us with one other country that fits the proverbial bill and perhaps stands to gain the most from the deliberate targeting of Iran. It is the Zionist state of Israel.

Israel's link to the lobbyist movement in America, its relationship with the neo-cons and its close historical ties with the deep state are all embodied in its intimate tie with John Bolton.

The Israeli government, in particular Benjamin Netanyahu, had hoped that by working through Bolton, there would be a more vigorous US policy against Iran, especially as mentioned before, Bolton clearly had been campaigning for maximum pressure against Iran, with him calling for more sanctions and the cancellation of the Iran Nuclear Deal as soon as he became National Security Adviser in April 2018.

All for the state of Israel.

Upon John Bolton's dismissal from the Trump government, there were definitely segments in the Israeli Administration that were left uneasy by his departure. As a case in point, Amos Yadlin, the head of the Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv stated that "There's no doubt that there's sadness in Jerusalem" as John Bolton had "greatly amplified the Prime Minister's position [on the issue]. But even with Bolton, Washington's Iran Policy wasn't heading in a direction that Netanyahu wanted." [\[9\]](#)

Much like how the attacks at the Saudi Oil Plant happened a few days after Bolton's dismissal, it is also coincidental that the attack had occurred around the same time as Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to annex more Palestinian land, especially Palestine's Jordan Valley.

The biggest fear for Israel, is that if the Trump Administration, suddenly favours détente with Iran, Israel may have to stand alone against Iran, something it has never had to do being backed by US Administrations all along.

So perhaps this whole incident may have been a response to that. Escalation of military tensions, justifying military aggression towards Iran, will not benefit Saudi Arabia and the U.S. but it will benefit Israel's agenda centring around its perpetual quest for continuous land annexation, expansion of power and enhanced control over the region. The one country that seeks to counter this parasitic drive for power and control is Iran. Iran's presence in the region balances Israel's and the U.S's hegemonic expansionism and quest for total dominance. Because the Iranian people have suffered so much from decades old US sanctions and Israeli manipulations, they are determined to protect their sovereignty, independence and dignity at all costs.

Seen from this perspective, the Saudi oil attack may have been an Israeli ploy to draw the US and the Saudi government into a more serious conflict with Iran. It is a misstep because the ploy has not worked. Both the US and the Saudis are very much aware of the dangers of a military conflict with Iran.

In fact, the whole 14<sup>th</sup> September episode reveals how complex the geopolitical game in West Asia is. We don't know how the game will end. We only hope that the theatrics that we

have witnessed so far will not culminate in a huge tragedy for the people of West Asia and indeed for the entire human family

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#### Notes

[1] <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/09/14/middleeast/yemen-houthi-rebels-drone-attacks-saudi-aramco-intl/index.html>

[2] Eric Margolis Eric Margolis (2019), *Who launched that Mystery Attack*, 24 September 2019

[3] Xinhua (2019) *Xi Condemns Saudi Oil Strike*

[4] Matthias Sulz (2019) *Political Violence &Protes Events, Yemen, January 2015-June 2019*, <https://www.acleddata.com/2019/06/18/yemen-snapshots-2015-2019/>

[5] Amnesty International (2019) <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190926-amnesty-us-arms-used-to-kill-civilians-in-yemen/>

[6] Middle East Eye (2019) *UK apologises for Saudi arms sales in breach of court ruling*, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/uk-government-apologizes-inadvertent-arms-sales-saudi-arabia-br-each-court-ruling>

[7] Eric Margolis (2019), *Who launched that Mystery Attack*, 24 September 2019

[8] Zachary Cohen, Kaitlan Collins and Kevin Piptak (2019) *Trump Fires John Bolton*, <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/09/10/politics/trump-john-bolton-out/index.html>

[9] Neri Zelber (2019), *What Bolton's Departure Means for Israel*, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/09/12/what-john-bolton-departure-means-for-israel-netanyahu-iran-trump/>

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