

Did Israel Order the Assassination of Hezbollah Top Commander?

Hezbollah Blames Syrian Rebels for Top Commander's Assassination; But Don't You Believe It.

By [Richard Silverstein](#)

Global Research, May 14, 2016

[Tikun Olam](#) 14 May 2016

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

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

Here's why: though Hezbollah usually is quite prompt and forthright when it's commanders have been assassinated by Israelis in the past, this time is different. It's hard to know why. But I have a few theories:

I've been reading the [Twitter timeline of Elijah Magnier](#), who is one of the most astute observers of both Hezbollah and the Syrian conflict. He believes the [assignment of blame to Syrian rebels](#) is deliberate disinformation. I'm inclined to agree.

Israel has assassinated as much of the top Hezbollah leadership as it can over the years. It killed Abbas Musawi, the top leader who preceded Hassan Nasrallah. It assassinated Imad Mugniyeh and later, his son. It's also assassinated [Syrian generals](#) and [IRG commanders](#) in Syria. That's why you shouldn't believe the nonsense the world media offers about Israel's alleged neutrality in the Syria conflict.



When someone as senior as Mustafa Badreddine is assassinated, it doesn't happen by coincidence and *not* via an artillery shell. It's a deliberate, targeted assassination—well-planned and executed with sophisticated weaponry. There is only one power in the region capable of doing this, and with a history of doing it in the past: Israel.

By the way, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights noted that there had been [no artillery shelling](#) of the airport for days before the assassination there.

Magnier adds another tantalizing piece of information: that only 30 minutes before his murder, Badreddine [met with Iran's top IRG commander](#), Qassem Soleimani in the same location where he died. If so, whoever killed the Hezbollah commander likely knew Soleimani was there and chose not to kill him. If Israel did it, the reason would be clear: killing Iran's top military commander would necessitate a huge Iranian response. It would threaten to destroy the Iran nuclear deal at the heart of Barack Obama's legacy. If the U.S. knew about the plans for this attack (and given the NSA's penetration of foreign intelligence services, including Israel's, that's entirely possible), it would warn Israel not to kill Soleimani.

But it would not care about Badreddine, since he and Mugniyeh were instrumental in attacks against U.S. interests in Lebanon in 1982. In assassinating Osama bin Laden, Obama has shown not just willingness, but eagerness to murder Islamists who've killed Americans. In fact, it's the worst aspect of the outgoing president's legacy.

Ronen Bergman wrote in his [NY Times Magazine portrait](#) of Mugniyeh's assassination that the NSA played a key role in intercepting the victim's communications. That, in turn led to locating and targeting Mugniyeh, information fed to the Israelis which permitted them to kill him. I say, if it worked once before why wouldn't both the CIA-NSA and Israel try it again?

If the U.S. was involved in this attack as well, it would explain why Soleimani wasn't killed. Obama would move heaven and earth to prevent Israel from killing a figure as critical as him, given the disruptive consequences to Iran-western relations.

Why would Hezbollah release deliberately false information about the culprits? Because if they point the finger at Israel immediately, it will ratchet up pressure on them to respond. If they do not take revenge, their supporters and the world will think them weak and ineffectual. In the past, Hezbollah has been accused of mounting botched terror attacks in Asia, Africa and the Far East. It doesn't want to be rushed when/if it responds. This cover gives them the time they need to decide how to respond and when.

Sealing the deal of Israeli responsibility is the Cheshire grin on the faces of Israeli intelligence officials when asked if Israel did it. The canned response is: "I don't know, but whoever did it did the world a favor. And I won't shed a tear for his sorry ass." Or words to that effect. Ehud Barak used to do that when he was defense minister. Yaakov Amidror was the one who [said virtually the same words](#) as Barak in the current case. The other typical obfuscation you'll hear from intelligence folk in Israel is: "Who did it? Oh I don't know, but he sure had a lot of enemies. Any one of them could've done it." In effect, Hezbollah pre-empted them when it blamed precisely the culprit Israel would blame: the rebels. All this is almost guaranteed to point to Israel as the culprit. The pattern of response is so standard that it's getting boringly predictable.

The original source of this article is [Tikun Olam](#)
Copyright © [Richard Silverstein](#), [Tikun Olam](#), 2016

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Richard Silverstein](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca