

## Media Disinformation: “Saudis give nod to Israeli raid on Iran”

Contrary to Times accounts relations between Ahmedinejad and Saudi King Abdullah seem to be cordial

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*The world-renowned Times newspaper of London published a report in its July 5th edition titled, “Saudis give nod to Israeli raid on Iran.” The story, were it true, would imply a dramatic change in Saudi foreign and military policy whose consequences potentially could lead to a World War III. A more serious investigation reveals that there are nasty elements of what military psychologists and intelligence specialists term “disinformation” at work trying to foster discord across the Muslim oil-producing world. The question is Qui Bono? Who ultimately benefits from such disinformation?*

According to the London Times, the flagship paper of the giant media group owned by naturalized American citizen, Australian media mogul, Rupert Murdoch, “The head of Mossad, Israel’s overseas intelligence service, has assured Benjamin Netanyahu, its prime minister, that Saudi Arabia would turn a blind eye to Israeli jets flying over the kingdom during any future raid on Iran’s nuclear sites.”

The London paper went on to report to allege that Meir Dagan, the head of Israeli’s Mossad intelligence service, had held secret meetings early this year with leading Saudi officials and that as well former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had held such secret talks. Citing an unnamed “diplomatic source” from an unnamed country, the Times went on to quote, “The Saudis have tacitly agreed to the Israeli air force flying through their airspace on a mission which is supposed to be in the common interests of both Israel and Saudi Arabia.”

Were that report accurate, it would be, excuse the expression, a bombshell of a nuclear dimension. The story suggests that war preparations against Iran are very advanced in the wake of the tumultuous elections in Iran last month in which the conservative Mahmud Ahmedinejad was declared the victor against massive opposition protests, protests fanned actively from outside at a certain point by US Government-linked NGOs and by the US State Department.

A recent statement by Obama’s Vice President, Joe Biden with ABC’s George Stephanopoulos, where he said in answer to a question: “Look, Israel can determine for itself — it’s a sovereign nation — what’s in their interest and what they decide to do relative to Iran and anyone else.” Whether we agree or not? The interviewer asked. “Whether we agree or not,” said the vice president.” That suggested that the Obama Administration had changed its earlier reported “veto” over potential Israeli military strike in Iran. It was the first time a senior Obama administration official left Israeli the military option against Iran’s nuclear sites.

## **British intelligence disinfo?**

Because the Times story was so important and because the implications of a “Saudi nod” to Israeli military over-flight en route to bomb Teheran or Iranian targets could potentially unleash a Holy War within the one-billion strong Muslim world, I decided to probe more deeply. What emerged was quite different from the Times account.

I contacted very reliable sources with extensive involvement in Saudi Arabia and who have been reliable in the past, to ask whether the Times story of a secret agreement with Israel over bombing Iran was accurate. The answer I got back was revealing.

The Times itself cited a denial statement from the Saudi Government, but in a way to leave the impression it was not serious, merely covering up the truth of the Times story of collusion between Israeli intelligence and the Saudi Kingdom.

According to this Saudi inside confidential source, however, “not only have we denied it, it would be absolute political suicide to even contemplate letting the Israelis cross our airspace!”

That corresponded with my knowledge of years of quiet diplomatic dialogue between, yes, even Ahmedinejad and the Saudi Royal family. Indeed, it was reportedly largely due to agreement between Iran’s Ahmedinejad and the Saudi King Abdullah, during a personal meeting in Riyadh in March 2007, that agreement was reached to try to create lessening of tensions between Sunni and Shiite muslim groups in Iraq. Those talks had more to do, according to on-the-ground reports, with the dramatic falloff in killings in Iraq than General Petraeus’ infamous “surge” strategy.

## **Who is behind the Times?**

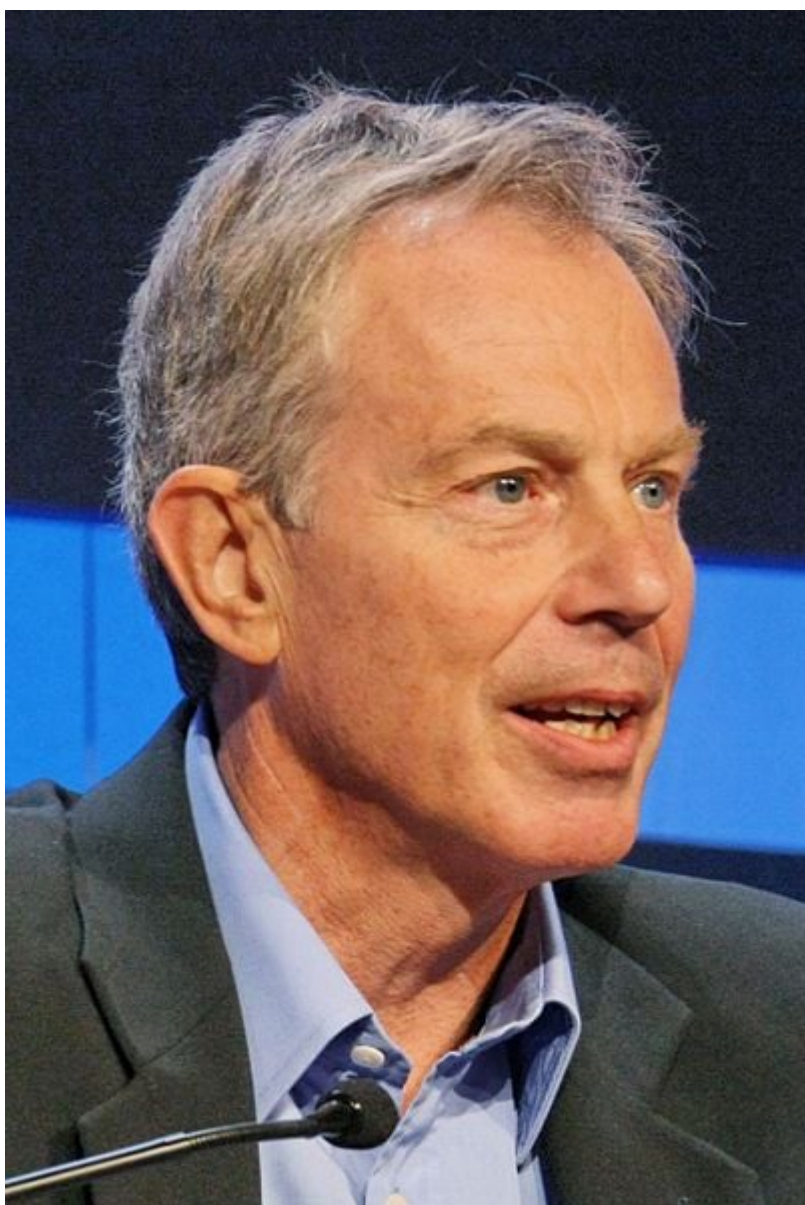
The Times of London is one of the world’s best known newspapers. In its better times, during the First and even Second World Wars, it was the newspaper of record of Britain, comparable to what the New York Times also once was in the United States. The Times in those days was one of the most influential propaganda instruments of a little-known and extremely influential elite group that called itself the Round Table, as in King Arthur’s legendary Knights of the Round Table. The Round Table group, initially created out of the will of British mining magnate and inciter of the 1899 Boer War, Sir Cecil Rhodes, played a key role in manipulating British public opinion into going to war in 1914 against the German “Hun,” in a fruitless attempt to save the “English way of life” as they saw it, to save the declining British Empire.

Since the newspaper came into financial difficulties in the early 1980’s, its then-owners, the Astor family, sold it and Australian media czar Rupert Murdoch bought it, placing it under his News Corporation International which also owns the New York Post, the San Antonio Star, the Hollywood 20th Century Fox studios, the right-wing neo-conservative Fox News TV network and until recently the flagship of US neo-conservative William Kristol, the Weekly Standard. In 2007 Murdoch added the prestigious Wall Street Journal to his stable.

The Board of Directors of Murdoch’s News Corp. holding company, owners of the Times of London, is also interesting. It includes, in addition to Murdoch as Chairman and CEO, also former Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, the very conservative and very controversial friend of Britain’s Tony Blair, who split EU opposition to the 2003 Iraq War by

backing Blair and Bush. Murdoch's board also includes Andrew Knight of J. Rothschild Capital Management, the financial holding of Jacob Lord Rothschild, the head of the British branch of the legendary financial family. It also includes Viet D. Dinh who served as an Assistant Attorney General of the United States from 2001 to 2003, under George W. Bush, and who was the chief architect of the USA PATRIOT Act.

To put it mildly, Murdoch's News Corp. has a distinct political or geopolitical profile. It is clearly in the neo-conservative war hawk camp. It clearly backed Tony Blair, who according to London sources, owed his job to the backing of Murdoch's Sun tabloid newspaper in the UK, a paper better known for sensational stories than for serious analysis. That puts the "impartiality" of Blair today as official "Envoy of the Quartet" on the Middle East, the Quartet being the motley combination of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States, and Russia.



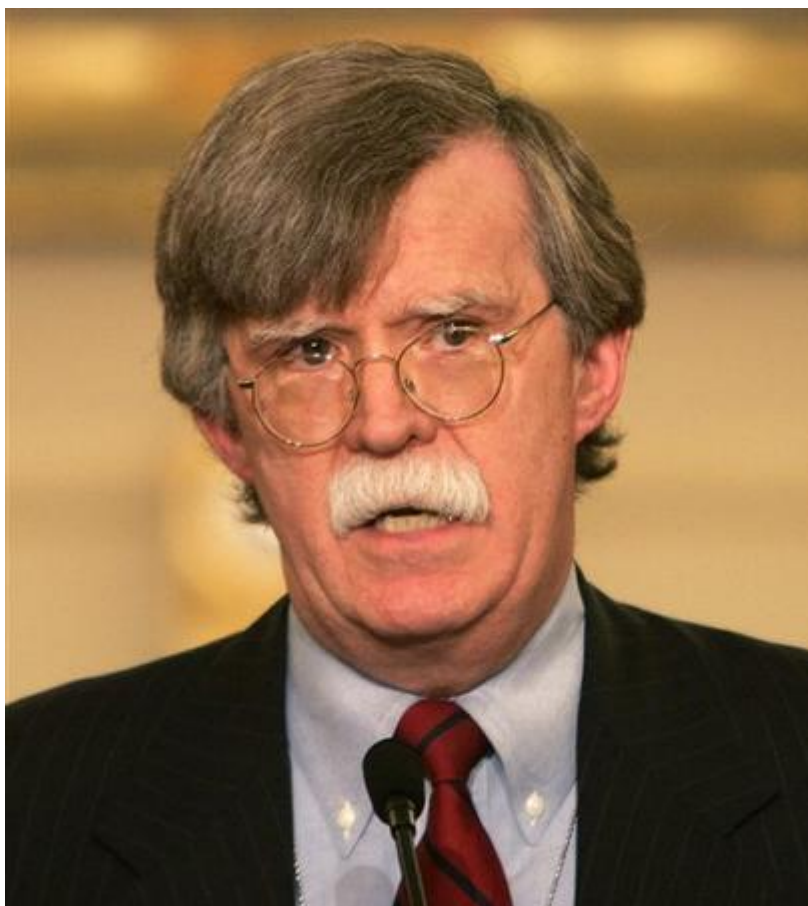
Tony Blair

### **The controversial John Bolton**

It is also notable that in its story of the "Saudi nod to Israel," Murdoch's Times chose to cite the infamous former Bush UN "acting" Ambassador, neo-conservative John Bolton, who told the Times that it was "entirely logical" for the Israelis to use Saudi airspace. The Times

wrote, “Bolton, who has talked to several Arab leaders, added: ‘None of them would say anything about it publicly but they would certainly acquiesce in an over-flight if the Israelis didn’t trumpet it as a big success.’ Arab states would condemn a raid when they spoke at the UN but would be privately relieved to see the threat of an Iranian bomb removed, he said.”

John Bolton was one of the founding members of the pro-war Project for the New American Century think-tank along with Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, Don Rumsfeld and most of the prominent neo-conservative hawks of the Bush Administration. As well, Bolton is alleged to be a member of the ultra-secretive Council for National Policy which brings the Rev. Moon cult, the Church of Scientology and the ultra-religious Christian Right under one neat political umbrella, the heart of the George W. Bush right-wing political machine. As Bush Administration State Department official, Bolton was accused by his associates of helping fake intelligence on Niger yellowcake uranium sales to Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, a faked intelligence report, aided by Tony Blair’s good offices, that was falsely cited by Secretary of State Colin Powell as justification for the March 2003 US invasion of Iraq.



John Bolton

This time it seems that the same Bolton and Rupert Murdoch’s Times of London are again in bed together, this time in an effort to drive a wedge of distrust across the Muslim oil-producing world by planting disinformation about an agreement between Saudi Arabia and Israeli military intelligence that never existed.

Cui Bono? By planting a false story that Saudi Arabia’s worst opponent, Israel, is now its closest friend, allied with the Netanyahu government against Iran, the false story spreads and sows distrust that functions along the classic lines of Roman military strategy: divide and conquer. Whatever internal disagreement in foreign policy between the regime of Iran’s

Shiite President, Ahmedinejad and the Sunni Saudi Kingdom, more likely the case is that the Saudis – no matter how much they disapproved of Iran—would always side with a fellow Muslim before they would side with Israel or the US. The Iranian leaders come to Saudi Arabia often; they don't hate each other according to well-informed reports from the region.

There appears to be a split within the Obama Administration over Iran policy. However if Biden represents the hawk faction that finds an Israeli military strike an “option” the US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen has just warned on national TV, notably on Murdoch's Fox News TV that any attack against Iran would be “very destabilizing.” Mullen was quoted by AFP as saying, “I've been one who has been concerned about a strike on Iran for some time, because it could be very destabilizing, and it is the unintended consequences of that which aren't predictable.”

*F. William Engdahl is author of Full Spectrum Dominance: Totalitarian Democracy in the New World Order.*

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