

Oh What a Lovely New War! False Flagging in the Middle East?

By [Philip Giraldi](#)

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*There has been virtually no American media coverage of last week’s arrival of a senior Israeli delegation in Washington [to discuss Iran](#). The delegation included the head of the Israeli external intelligence service Mossad **Yossi Cohen** and Israel’s National Security Advisor **Meir Ben-Shabbat**. Their itinerary included briefings at the Pentagon and also with national security and State Department officials at the White House. Lest there be any confusion about the “mission” of the delegation, Israeli **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** announced unambiguously that his team would be explaining why Iran should not be trusted and that any agreement with it is [“fundamentally flawed”](#) in that it opens the door to a nuclear weapon for the Iranians when the deal enters its “sunset” phase after ten years.*

Consequently, the Israelis pushed hard for maintaining U.S. non-participation in the multilateral Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) nuclear inspection program that was established in 2015 and which **President Donald Trump** chose to withdraw from.

The secondary message from Jerusalem was that U.S. “extreme pressure” sanctions should remain in place and should, if anything, be made even more punitive. The Israeli team produced “intelligence” to help make their case, but those of us experienced in the information provided by America’s “best friend” and “closest ally” Israel would probably agree that it tends to be highly politicized and often lacking any credible sourcing. In short, it is frequently little more than fabricated material that is only intended to influence gullible U.S. government officials.

The Israeli media has, unlike the U.S. media, closely followed the pushback against President Joe Biden’s apparent willingness to do what it takes to bring about re-entry into the non-proliferation arrangement, which is in the interest of the United States, Iran, and even Israel. Biden is reportedly [now willing to cancel sanctions against the petroleum and banking sectors](#), which Iran has cited as a precondition for moving talks currently taking place in Austria forward. Nevertheless, there are certainly a number of high officials in Washington that favor retaining a hardline versus Iran along the lines the Israel is demanding in the belief that the pressure will make Iran concede on all points. They include the three most senior relevant officials at the State Department, all of whom are Jewish and

Zionists, as well as many other appointees at the Pentagon and National Security Council.

To return to JCPOA, some in both Washington and Jerusalem [are demanding](#) that **Iran also make additional concessions that go beyond the nuclear program**, to include abandoning its ballistic missile program and ceasing its “interference” and alleged “terrorist support” outside its borders in the Middle East. Those demands are deal breakers for Iran and the intent is clearly maintain a high level of aggression directed against the Islamic Republic while also labeling the country as a “pariah.”

Former senior Israeli diplomat **Dore Gold** also has come out with [another Israeli argument](#) that is being replayed by its supporters in the U.S.: “...there is a real dilemma, because if you remove sanctions there is a huge windfall of funds that becomes available for terrorist activities in the Middle East and around the world.” Of course, the money belongs to Iran, having been frozen by the U.S., and how one defines terrorist is dependent on whom one is seeking to defame. Gold clearly has no problem with Israeli support of ISIS and al-Qaeda linked groups, and he is referring, of course, to Hezbollah, which successfully resisted the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon and which much of the world currently regards as a legitimate party of government.

There is also something of a secret, [undeclared war](#) going on between Iran and Israel on the high seas, where drone and limpet mining attacks on tankers and merchant vessels have been increasing. Israel also has been bombing alleged Iranian targets in Syria on a regular basis. Some high-level attacks, including a possible bombing at the Iranian nuclear research center at Natanz and the assassination of scientist **Mohsen Fakhrizadeh**, both accomplished possibly with the assistance of the U.S., are designed to make it more difficult to resurrect the JCPOA. Last week also saw a claim by pundits hostile to Iran and apparently also to former **Secretary of State John Kerry**, that Kerry had [provided top secret information](#) to Iranian **Foreign Minister Javad Zarif**. Kerry allegedly revealed to the Iranian that Israel had attacked targets in Syria over two hundred times. As it turned out, the Israeli Defense Ministry had already publicly revealed that fact while boasting about all it is doing against the enemy Iran.

The danger is, of course, that Israel is working hard to suck the United States into a war of its own choosing against Iran and it has a fifth column of allies in the United States that are willing to do its bidding by fair means or foul. Its leadership may be thinking that it is now or never to take the steps to initiate an armed conflict and that just might mean staging a false flag attack on a U.S. merchant or war ship, a diplomatic mission, or a vulnerable military base.

The Middle East region is certainly a target-rich environment for those seeking to identify American facilities and vessels, so it wouldn't be that hard to set up something that could appear to be an Iranian act of aggression that Joe Biden would have to respond to. And he would find plenty of support both in Congress and in the media to do so. Even if the American counter-attack were strictly limited, the prime beneficiary would of course be Israel, which would have made the possibility of any U.S.-Iranian agreement go away forever.

As is frequently the case when Washington gets entangled with Israel's perceived interests, this would not be good for the United States and would keep the American forces locked into the Middle East region for many years to come. The question becomes, if Netanyahu pulls a

trick and everyone knows or at least suspects that it is fraudulent, will Biden under pressure from the powerful Israel Lobby in the U.S. take the bait? It will be a true test of whether any president will be able to stand up to the Israelis and tell that country "hell no!" It hasn't happened yet, but hope springs eternal.

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Philip M. Girdali, Ph.D., is Executive Director of the Council for the National Interest, a 501(c)3 tax deductible educational foundation (Federal ID Number #52-1739023) that seeks a more interests-based U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Website is <https://councilforthenationalinterest.org> address is P.O. Box 2157, Purcellville VA 20134 and its email is inform@cnionline.org

He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

Featured image: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu delivers a speech on Iran's nuclear programme at the defence ministry in Tel Aviv on 30 April 2018 (Source: Middle East Eye)

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