

Wahhabis Go Nuclear — Literally. Saudi Arabia's Bomb?

By [Pepe Escobar](#)

Global Research, May 24, 2015
[Asia Times](#)

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?,
Nuclear War](#)

The serious possibility of a nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1 is only a few weeks away - on June 30.

So guess what the terminally paranoid House of Saud is up to: Lay their hands on a nuclear bomb to counteract the non-existent "Iranian bomb", which Tehran, via Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, has consistently abhorred as un-Islamic, and wouldn't have it anyway because of stringent inspections bound to be part of the final nuclear deal.

The proverbial "former Pentagon official" has leaked to a Rupert Murdoch paper that the House of Saud is bound to buy a ready-made nuclear bomb from Pakistan. The choice of media already offers a clue; Prince Alwaleed bin Talal is one of News Corporation's leading shareholders.

The "why now?" concerning the leak is pretty obvious. Yet the whodunit is hazier territory.

Meanwhile, adding fuel to the jihadi fire, as the Wahhabis in Riyadh dream of going — literally — nuclear their faith brothers across "Syraq" are going figuratively nuclear, adding victory after victory on the ground; from the assault on [Palmyra](#), the Silk Road-era jewel of the desert in Syria, to the fall of Ramadi in the former "triangle of death" in Iraq.

The "Iranian bomb" was never really an issue for successive U.S. administrations; only a convenient pretext to box in, harass, sanction and "isolate" the Islamic Republic, the former "gendarme" of the Gulf in the Shah era. The U.S. government always knew nuclear bombs can be bought on the black market; so whether Tehran could develop a nuclear weapon was irrelevant.

The House of Saud, for its part, may — and the operative concept is "may" — already have a bomb, for a long time now, to offset Israel. And they "may" have paid Islamabad for it. There is no conclusive proof.

What's certain is that the — non-existent — "Iranian bomb" is where the House of Saud, other GCC minions and, crucially, Bibi Netanyahu's extremist, fundamentalist Israeli government converge; they all consider it an "existential threat" to their survival.

The problem is we can't just dismiss outbursts of the type as mere instances of geopolitical surrealism. A running myth — very popular in the Beltway — goes that Riyadh's got some credit with Islamabad as the House of Saud invested billions of dollars in the 1970s to develop the Pakistani nuclear program, which was a counterpunch against the Indian nuclear program.

Already on December 2011, the House of Saud announced publicly that it was pursuing a nuclear bomb. But only as the possibility of an Iranian nuclear deal advanced they started to embark in a wag the dog attempt to control U.S. foreign policy.

Israel got into the game as early as November 2013, when the BBC [reported](#) on an alleged nuclear deal between Riyadh and Islamabad. A key quote was from a former head of Israeli military intel, Amos Yadlin; if Iran had a bomb, “the Saudis will not wait one month. They already paid for the bomb, they will go to Pakistan and bring what they need to bring.”

Compare this with wily Prince Turki, former Saudi intelligence chief and close pal of one Osama bin Laden, who has always waved the possibility of a nuclear House of Saud. The last time was in fact in April, at the South Korean Asan Plenum; “Whatever the Iranians have, we will have, too.”

The new Godfather of the Riyadh mob, King Salman, wanted Islamabad to provide troops for his ongoing war on Yemen. Islamabad said thanks but no, thanks. Instead, a nuclear deal might – and the operative word, once again, is “might” — have been struck. Naturally no high-ranking official in Riyadh or Islamabad will confirm any of this.

Watch the Pakistani angle

King Salman is pretty much aware that in the event of ISIS/ISIL/Daesh achieving regime change in Syria – still a pretty remote possibility – the next in line would be the House of Saud.

And then there’s the fact of Washington keeping those infamous 28 redacted pages of the 9/11 secret under wraps after all these years. So possessing a nuclear bomb might be as much an insurance policy against Washington as against the non-existent “Iranian bomb.”

Beyond propaganda, the fact remains that several Masters of the Universe VIPs are positively fed up with the House of Saud on a number of key issues, most of all the Saudi oil price war decimating the U.S. shale oil industry.

Still, the House of Saud would never be allowed to go — literally — nuclear — without a green light from Washington.

The view from Pakistan helps to clear the haze. Pakistani nuclear project chief A.Q. Khan — with some support or at least acquiescence by Islamabad — did sell nuclear weapons technology to North Korea, Iran and Libya. Yet the whole Pakistani nuclear program cost less than \$450 million. Scores of Pakistani analysts stress it was that cheap because Islamabad received help from China, not the House of Saud.

Both Iran and Saudi Arabia are key Chinese energy suppliers. Both Iran and Pakistan will be key players in the emerging, Chinese-led New Silk Road(s) project. Islamabad would be extremely foolish to jeopardize its relationship with Beijing by providing a nuclear weapon which would be used to threaten a non-nuclear neighbor — Iran — that not only is a Chinese strategic ally but will play a key role into easing Pakistan’s energy problems, via the Iran-Pakistan (IP) pipeline, partly financed by — who else — Beijing.

Watch the Battle of Ramadi – remixed

Wahhabism as practiced in beheading-friendly Saudi Arabia is and will continue to be the ideological matrix of all forms of Salafi-jihadism let loose in the Middle East and beyond. That especially applies to its latest social media-friendly spectacular, ISIS/ISIL/Daesh.

ISIS/ISIL/Daesh - to the "civilized world" consternation - has seized Ancient Silk Road pearl Palmyra. UNESCO is "concerned." The White House is "worried." Palmyra is a strategic crossroads in the center of Syria which will allow the fake Caliphate to launch attacks in all directions and harass the Syrian government's vital axis, from Damascus to Aleppo. They have already taken over the crucial Syria-Iraq border control point of al-Walid, in Syrian territory.

Moreover, over a third of Palmyra's 200,000 residents have already been turned into refugees. Hundreds have been made hostages. The macabre beheading show is on. Is the Empire of Chaos - which, in thesis, is at war with the fake Caliphate - doing anything to save Palmyra's priceless Roman ruins from possible, imminent destruction by Wahhabi-drenched barbarians? Of course not.

And the same applies to Ramadi, capital of Anbar province, roughly 110 km west of Baghdad, which the U.S. [did not "lose"](#) because it never had. While ISIS/ISIL/Daesh gloated about their victory with megaphones at all the major mosques, the Pentagon was spinning this "is a fluid and contested battlefield", and insisted on "supporting (the Iraqis) with air power."

Cue to gleaming Toyota convoys of Caliphate goons laughing their Kalashnikovs off while they make their mark on the "fluid and contested battlefield." The Pentagon may "support" anything they want with "air power," but bombing won't disrupt the fluidity. The Pentagon has run out of targets. ISIS/ISIL/Daesh are not sitting ducks; they are an asymmetrical guerrilla very apt at redeploying in a flash.

ISIS/ISIL/Daesh invested in a lot of strategic planning to take Ramadi. The symbolism is far-reaching; a major defeat not only for Baghdad but also for the "leading from behind" Empire of Chaos, even though a clueless Barack Obama insists "we are not losing" the fight against the Caliphate.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haydar al-Abadi is finally starting to get the picture. He met with leaders of key Shi'ite militias - who will have to do the heavy lifting crossing the Euphrates and trying to retake Ramadi before the Caliphate goons decide to advance towards holy Karbala, which holds the tomb of Imam Hussein, the martyred grandson of Prophet Muhammad. It's a race against time because ISIS/ISIL/Daesh may also try to control nearby Iraqi military bases and weapons depots.

As for Sunni tribal sheikhs around Ramadi willing to fight the Caliphate, they were - and remain - fuming because they never received promised weaponry from Baghdad. Besides, no one knows why the Iraqi Army on site did not get air support; helicopter gunships would have turned scores of Caliphate goons into minced meat.

Al-Abadi finally acted by removing his early ban for the Shi'ite militias to operate in hardcore Sunni Anbar province; they did that in the first place obeying a command by revered Ayatollah Sistani.

Meanwhile, the head of the Badr Corps and overall commander of the Shi'ite militias, Hadi al-

Ameri, is sure that taking back Ramadi is easier than campaigning north of Baghdad in Salahuddin province — where the militias, alongside the Iraqi Army, recaptured Tikrit and Beiji from ISIS/ISIL/Daesh. In both cases, Empire of Chaos bombing played a minimal role.

Al-Abadi also met with Iranian defense minister, Brig. Gen. Husain Dehqan, in Baghdad; he stressed both Iran and Iraq are fighting (Sunni) terrorist extremism; and crucially, he said, “we do not support the war on Yemen,” which puts Baghdad in direct conflict with Riyadh.

It gets even better; al-Abadi has gone to Moscow, where he hopes to get plenty of support — and weapons. After all, ISIS/ISIL/Daesh is crammed with Chechens. Moscow wants the Caliphate smashed; as it thrives, there is a direct threat of a jihadi renewal in Chechnya.

So now the stage is set for the Battle of Ramadi — remixed; Shi’ite militias plus Sunni tribals, the odd American adviser, and discreet help from Iran and Russia, against Caliphate goons, many of them mercenaries, lavishly supported by assorted wealthy Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia and across the Gulf. As far as the Empire of Chaos goes, Divide and Rule remains the sweetest game in town.

(Copyright 2015 Asia Times Holdings Limited, a duly registered Hong Kong company. All rights reserved. Please contact us about sales, syndication and republishing.)

The original source of this article is [Asia Times](#)
Copyright © [Pepe Escobar](#), [Asia Times](#), 2015

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

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Pepe Escobar](#)

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