

Who Are the Arsonists of the Petrol Tankers in the Gulf?

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Global Research, June 19, 2019

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

Theme: [Media Disinformation, Oil and Energy, US NATO War Agenda](#)

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*While the United States prepares a new escalation of tension in the Middle East by accusing Iran of attacking petrol tankers in the Gulf of Oman, Italian vice-Prime Minister **Matteo Salvini** met with one of the artisans of this strategy in Washington, **Secretary of State Mike Pompeo**, assuring him that “Italy wants to regain its place as the major partner on the European continent of the greatest Western democracy”. Thereby he has allied Italy with the operation launched by Washington.*

The “Gulf of Oman affair”, a *casus belli* against Iran, is a carbon copy of the “Gulf of Tonkin affair” of 4 August 1964, itself used as a *casus belli* to bomb North Vietnam, which was accused of having attacked a US torpedo boat (an accusation which was later proved to be false).

Today, a video released by Washington shows the crew of an alleged Iranian patrol boat removing an unexploded mine from the hull of a petrol tanker in order to conceal its origin (because the mine would allegedly have borne the inscription “Made in Iran”).

With this “proof” – a veritable insult to our intelligence – Washington is attempting to camouflage the goal of the operation. It is part of the strategy aimed at controlling the world’s reserves of oil and natural gas and their energy corridors [1].

It is no coincidence if Iran and Iraq are in US crosshairs. Their total oil reserves are greater than those of Saudi Arabia, and five times greater than those of the United States. Iranian reserves of natural gas are approximately 2.5 times those of the USA. Venezuela finds itself targeted by the USA for the same reason, since it is the country which owns the greatest oil reserves in the world.

The control of the energy corridors is of strategic importance. By accusing Iran of attempting to “interrupt the flow of oil through the Straights of Hormuz”, Mike Pompeo announced that “the United States will defend freedom of navigation”.

In other words, he has announced that the United States wants to gain military control of this key area for energy supplies, including those for Europe, by preventing above all the transit of Iranian oil (to which Italy and other European countries cannot in any case enjoy free access because of the US embargo).

- Low-cost Iranian natural gas might also have reached Europe by way of a pipeline crossing Iraq and Syria. But the project, launched in 2011, was

destroyed by the USA/NATO operation to demolish the Syrian state.

- Natural gas might also have arrived directly in Italy from Russia, and from there to be distributed to other European countries with notable economical advantages, via the *South Stream* route through the Black Sea. But the pipeline, already in an advanced stage of construction, was blocked in 2014 by the pressure of the United States and European Union itself, with heavy prejudice for Italy.

In fact it was the reproduction of *North Stream* which continued, making Germany the centre of triage for Russian gas. Then, on the basis of the “USA/UE strategic cooperation in the energy field” agreement stipulated in July 2018, US exports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to the UE tripled. **The triage centre is in Poland**, from which the “Freedom Gas” will be distributed to Ukraine.

Washington’s objective is strategic - to hurt Russia by replacing Russian gas in Europe with US gas.

But we have no guarantees, neither on the price, nor on the time-scale for US gas extracted from the bituminous shale by the technique known as *fracking* (hydraulic fracturation), which is disastrous for the environment.

So what does Matteo Salvini have to say about all that?

When he arrived in the “greatest democracy in the Western world”, he proudly declared - “I am part of a government which in Europe is no longer satisfied with breadcrumbs”.

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*This article was originally published on Il Manifesto. Translated from Italian by **Pete Kimberley**.*

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