

Hezbollah or Qods Force Saboteurs to the Gulf States

This from Debka yesterday.

In the past 48 hours, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey have alerted Washington to intelligence reports of Iranian Al Qods Brigades operatives heading their way for attacks on oil installations and American targets. The alert was accompanied by a query about how the US intended to respond to the approaching menace.

Reporting this, debkafile's intelligence and counterterrorism sources say the information relayed to Washington was more detailed and specific than the customary tip-off.

Tuesday, Jan. 17, a US spokesman accused Tehran of deepening its involvement in the Syrian conflict. For the second time in a week, Washington disclosed that Al Qods commander Gen. Qassem Soleimani had visited Damascus recently, confirming Iranian arms shipments for ensuring President Bashar Assad's victory over the uprising against him.

debkafile's intelligence sources report that another part of Soleimani's Damascus mission was to synchronize the Al Qods cells' strikes across the Middle East – in Turkey, Lebanon, Gaza and Sinai – with the tempo of Assad's crackdown on protest. He also dealt with setting up terrorist attacks against Israeli targets.

A US spokesman said: "We are confident that he was received at the highest levels of the Syrian government, including by President Assad."

Four months ago, in October 2011, the US accused Soleimani of a hatching a conspiracy to assassinate the Saudi ambassador in Washington.

Tuesday night, the Turkish Security General Directorate-EGM put all the country's 81 districts on guard for the expected arrival of Al Qods operatives to stir up mass unrest against the Erdogan government and attack the US embassy and provincial consulates-general.

Their arrival, said the EGM notice, would be coordinated with the infiltration of Hizballah terrorist teams to Turkey.

debkafile's sources in Ankara believe Tehran is kicking off its first round of Middle East terrorist operations in Turkey as punishment for consenting to the installation of a US radar station on its soil for the NATO shield against incoming Iranian missile attacks, in defiance of Iran's warnings. The Erdogan government is also being penalized for actively supporting Syrian resistance to the Assad regime, especially the Free Syrian Army-SFA.

When Iranian parliament speaker Ali Larijani visited Ankara Jan. 12, he delivered a last warning to the Turkish government to desist from both steps, although the visit was officially billed as focusing on the resumption of nuclear negotiations between Iran and the five powers plus Germany. Larijani's talks clearly ended in disagreement, judging by his parting shot: "We've got our ways of doing things."

A senior counterterrorism source told debkafile sources on Wednesday, Jan. 18 that the Iranians are setting Turkey up as an example to show the US and their Middle East antagonists what they can expect when Tehran lets the Al Qods Brigades loose against them.

According to the information relayed to Washington by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, Al Qods has been placed on the ready for action, such as blowing up oil fields, oil pipelines and oil export terminals. Some of its cells are already present among the two countries' Shiite populations in the guise of longtime Saudi and Kuwaiti nationals of Iranian descent; others to be dropped by sea on the Saudi and Kuwaiti coasts. (<http://www.debka.com/article/21659/>)

This is the entire article. I reprint it in its entirety because it no longer appears on the Debka page. You can access it by going to the link as of 20 Jan 12/2016Z.

Analysis. Information that Iran might be considering some kind of military action against Turkey appeared on the Debka crawl Tuesday night. The original crawl item about the possibility of Qods Force or Hezbollah teams going to Turkey to attack American targets was sourced to Zaman, a Turkish paper. This piece appeared Wednesday morning. Later that evening the Debka crawl announced that three rockets had been fired at the Turkish embassy in Baghdad. Those two items have also disappeared from the Debka crawl. There was also an item on the Debka crawl this morning that said that Iranian Foreign Minister Salehi was on his way to Ankara. It is now missing.

What reasons would there be for such important information to appear and vanish so quickly? It is possible that one of the countries involved, probably Turkey, asked that the information be removed. The Turks might not want their people to know that terrorists were on their way to attack American facilities in Turkey. Or, the Turks requested the information be removed pending Salehi's current visit to Ankara. I suspect that this visit has a lot to do with rockets being fired at the Turkish embassy in Baghdad. It would be very helpful to know what the results of this meeting are.

The Gulf states also have reasons for not wanting this information out. They are already aware of Qods Force sleeper cells among their Shiite populations. Bahrain was the first example of the use of Qods Force sleeper cells to create civil unrest. Both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia would rather that their security services quietly pick up the Qods Force folks and their allies.

I do not see the Israeli military censors having Debka pull the article down. This article actually buttresses the Netanyahu position of Israel retaining the option to strike Iran without American "permission". That position is reinforced by the current Debka article on the visit of General Dempsey to Israel (<http://www.debka.com/article/21661/>).

What is more likely is that a request was passed to Debka from the United States to take the article down. Enough Americans read Debka faithfully that this kind of information could be detrimental to the Obama Administration. It is perhaps bad enough that the countries in the Middle East are asking America what we plan to do about the possibility, more likely the probability, of terrorist attacks on their facilities. Now is not a good time for Americans to start asking the same questions.

Perhaps this is the reason that the articles have disappeared.

Turkey called on Thursday for the immediate resumption of talks between Iran and major world powers and said both sides have expressed willingness to try to end the standoff over Tehran's disputed nuclear program as the European Union envoys failed to agree details of a planned embargo on Iranian crude. But France questioned whether Iran is ready for such talks and said the next step appears to be tougher sanctions, including a European Union embargo on Iran's oil exports.

At a joint news conference with Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said his country is ready to host and "make any other kind of contribution" to talks between Iran and six countries leading such negotiations: the U.S., Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany. "What is important is for these negotiations to start immediately and for the tensions to be reduced," Davutoglu said, according to The Associated Press. "It is important that the hurdles in front of the talks are removed." "I would like to say that the sides have confirmed their willingness," he said. "Today is the day for negotiations and a solution."

Salehi, concluding his two-day visit to Turkey, said the six powers should enter talks without "excuses." He said: "If there are excuses, it is a sign that they oppose and do not approve of the negotiations." Iranian officials have said they favor Turkey as a venue for further talks with the six

powers. (<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/01/19/189321.html>) (edited for space.)

So apparently these articles were removed to give Turkey the freedom to receive Salehi and make various statements about hosting Iran-P5+1 talks if they happen. I doubt that removes the threat. It only postpones it.