

WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF GHOLAM SHAKURI'S URGENCY?

I'm working on a big post that raises more questions about the government's interpretation of the Scary Iran Plot.

But for the moment I want to raise an issue that might provide a nugget of plausibility for the larger story. And that's Gholam Shakuri's urgency.

According to the complaint, Arbabsiar confessed that when he traveled back to Iran (I've taken this to be sometime after July 20, but as I explained here, it may have happened earlier) Shakuri told him the kidnap or kill operation had to happen quickly.

ARBABSIAR was asked to have [Narc] kidnap or kill the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the United States, and told that it would need to be done fast.

Because the government has sealed evidence explaining on what terms Arbabsiar is cooperating, I find his confession to be suspect. But Shakuri does repeat that urgency in the recorded call on October 5 (though note I also find the government's interpretation of the "code" here suspect, both because it derives from Arbabsiar's confession and the syntax suggests the FBI Agent is reading a multiplicity of codes to all refer to the assassination).

[After discussing "the Chevrolet"] SHAKURI urged ARBABSIAR "[j]ust do it quickly, it's late, just buy it for me and bring it already."

I find the urgency interesting because of several events that would implicate Quds Force power, like the push to sell Bahrain weapons, the negotiations on leaving troops in Iraq

and—most notably—the negotiation of a prisoner swap between Hamas and Israel on the very day the plot was announced. And remember, the US managed the timing of this, drawing out its denouement over two months after money got transferred and 12 days after Arbabsiar was arrested. I don't know what role Adel al-Jubeir had in this prisoner swap (Egypt is a key player), but the exchange certainly seems like it would serve Saudi goals of giving Palestine some relief while serving Israeli-dictated US goals of thwarting the PLO UN statehood bid, all while lessening Iranian influence with Hamas.

Frankly, that's all just based on the coincidence between the announcement of the plot and the prisoner swap.

But it seems that one key to understanding who really sponsored this plot—if there really was one—is understanding Shakuri's urgency.