

TAPPING THE OIL INDUSTRY

Remember when it was outrageous that the Iranians had ([allegedly](#)) hacked Aramco? In addition to wiping hard drives (though in ways that left the computers recoverable), they also took and threatened to release documents.

In news that I earlier predicted, NSA and GCHQ [have hacked](#) OPEC, including Saudi Arabia's OPEC Minister (though NSA managed to detask him when he came to the US).

Spiegel doesn't provide much detail of what they've gotten – just a tantalizing overview, particularly given the likelihood that the speculation claim pertains to the skyrocketing prices in 2008, which (among other things) the Saudis used to get us into a new security cooperation agreement.

None of this is surprising. But as we try to fearmonger new wars based on one party hacking another, it's probably safe to assume we got there first.

It stated that OPEC officials were trying to cast the blame for high oil prices on speculators. A look at files in the OPEC legal department revealed how the organization was preparing itself for an antitrust suit in the United States. And a review of the section reserved for the OPEC secretary general documented that the Saudis were using underhanded tactics, even within the organization. According to the NSA analysts, Riyadh had tried to keep an increase in oil production a secret for as long as possible.

Our TCA with Saudi Arabia (and the fact that we (Booz, in fact!) are now providing it with cybersecurity) may well be one reason it is no longer a top NSA target.

OPEC appears in the “National Intelligence Priorities Framework,” which the White House issues to the US intelligence community. Although the organization is still listed as an intelligence target in the April 2013 list, it is no longer a high-priority target.

Who needs to hack when you’re in charge of cybersecurity?

And guess which company has a lot of that business? Edward Snowden’s former employer, Booz.