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Man is the only animal of which I am thoroughly and cravenly afraid...There is no harm in a well-fed lion. It has no ideals, no sect, no party...
– George Bernard Shaw

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March 6, 2006

Another War for Israel

The amen corner howls for war with Iran

A prominent public official **finally said** what we've **been** saying all **along** in these **pages**:

"The U.S. presence in Iraq is hurting the worldwide war on terrorism and benefits only Iran and al-Qaeda, U.S. Rep. John Murtha said on Sunday. 'The only people who want us in Iraq are Iran and al-Qaeda,' Murtha said on CBS's Face the Nation political talk show. 'And I talked to a top-level commander the other day and he said China wants us there also. Why? Because we're depleting our resources ... our troop resources and our fiscal resources.'"

Not to worry: Iran, it seems, is next on our hit list, and this is largely at the behest of the one beneficiary of the Iraq war Murtha fails to mention: **Israel**. The Israelis have been **loudly howling** for **months** about the prospect of a nuclear Iran: **their amen corner** in the U.S. has gone into overdrive, **pushing for sanctions** and drawing a **dire picture** of nuke-wielding "mad mullahs." The world was **shocked** when Iranian President **Mahmoud Ahmadinejad threatened** to wipe Israel off the map, yet it has to be said that even the maddest mullahs don't imagine nuking Washington, D.C. Iran's nukes, if it ever acquires any – **in 10 years' time**, like **the experts** say – will more than likely target **Tel Aviv, not Toledo**.

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A white t-shirt with blue sleeves and a blue collar. The front of the t-shirt features the Antiwar.com logo, which includes the text "ANTIWAR.COM" in a bold, sans-serif font, with "Your best source for antiwar news, viewpoints, and activities" written in smaller text below it.

Yet in one important sense, at least, the former is just as American as the latter – at least it is in the eyes of American decision-makers, who **conduct** U.S. foreign policy as if Israel were the 51st state. An outstanding example of this unique symbiosis is **the news** that the Israelis have penetrated Iran via U.S.-occupied Iraq, with the full complicity and assistance of the Americans:

"Israel's special forces are said to be operating inside Iran in an urgent attempt to locate the country's secret uranium enrichment sites. 'We found several suspected sites last year but there must be more,' an Israeli intelligence source said. They are operating from a base in northern Iraq, guarded by Israeli soldiers with the approval of the Americans, according to Israeli sources."

This sort of **scuttlebutt** has been **knocking around** ever since Seymour Hersh **first broke the story** of Israel's penetration of Kurdistan. The point is that the extension of American power in the Middle East has allowed Tel Aviv's tentacles to slither **all the way to the Euphrates** and beyond – to Tehran.

The *Times* of London also reveals that **NATO is keen to get in on the act**: "multilateralism," i.e., gang-banging, is back in style. This ought to **delight** the Democrats, who are in some ways **ahead of the Republicans** (and certainly ahead of the Bush administration) on the Iran issue. Hillary Clinton has done **everything but** call for declaring war on the mullahs, and House Democratic **mis-Leader** Nancy Pelosi **supported the movement** to impose **draconian economic sanctions** on Iran. The supposedly "antiwar" Democrats are getting way out ahead of the Bush administration when it comes to Part II of the Great Middle Eastern War. With **Hillary's** finger on the trigger, the first shots of **World War IV** are almost certain to be sounded.

The dramatic narrative of the Iranian nuke crisis is going according to **a familiar script**, one we became well-acquainted with in the run-up to war with Iraq. All the same ingredients of the Iraqi potboiler are being thrown into the mix: a Middle Eastern country ruled by an **unattractive tyrant**, Israel's partisans **furiously beating** the drums for war, and "weapons of mass destruction" described by **dubious exile groups**. Playing the part of **Chalabi**, we have the **Marxoid-feminist cult** of **Maryam Rajavi** and her army of **Amazonian fighters**. Ostensibly corralled within the walls of **Camp Ashraf** in Iraq, these Iranian "freedom fighters" –

half of them women – are on the **State Department's list** of terrorist organizations. Yet I have it on good authority that American visas are being handed out to these burly gals at a fast clip: all they have to do is show up at a U.S. embassy somewhere in the Middle East – say, Istanbul – and they are granted "asylum" in the U.S. They constitute a reserve army ready to spring into action when the time comes to put an Iranian face on an American invasion.

The UN Security Council is **slated** to discuss the Iranian nuke issue shortly, and the sequence of events – Western demands that Iran cease and desist, followed by **angry Iranian refusals** – is perfectly suited to war propaganda. As the pace of the narrative picks up and the tension builds, the war drama unfolds according to a by-now-timeworn pattern. It's not the kind of screenplay that usually wins an Academy Award: this is strictly **formulaic** stuff, designed to give consumers of **war propaganda** what they need in order to rationalize mass murder. It may be crude – as in **the case** of Saddam Hussein's alleged ties to al-Qaeda, or **tales** of WMD hidden beneath Saddam's Babylonian palaces – but it does the job.

Remember how important the nuclear issue was for getting us into the Iraqi quagmire: this time around, the **same crew** is pushing the same button. A **recent poll** shows that a clear majority of Americans are willing to risk war in order to stop the Iranians from going nuclear. **Invoking the specter of nuclear annihilation** is the best way to scare the living daylights out of otherwise thinking people. If the War Party can convince the Americans that the "mad mullahs" are on the brink of having the ability to nuke New York, they will have accomplished their mission.

Some, like Gore Vidal, believe we live in "**the United States of Amnesia**," and that Americans can't remember what happens from week to week, never mind the lies they told **last year** and the **year before**. I respectfully disagree: the people **clearly** realize they were lied into war, and they aren't happy about it. As to whether they'll let the War Party get away with pulling another fast one, that remains to be seen. The Republicans, if they are smart, will bet on "no" and back away from the abyss, while the Democrats blithely step off the ledge and invite the rest of the country to come with them. The Bushies are already **under fire** for going soft on those Ay-rabs with the Dubai port-management **brouhaha**, and the Democrats

show every sign of taking up with alacrity **Marshall Wittmann's** advice and outflanking the GOP on "national security" issues, i.e., out-warmongering the Republicans.

As the next presidential campaign season looms, the prospect of **John McCain** and **Hillary Clinton** going at it *mano a mano*, in a contest to see who can bluster with a more convincing bellicosity – well, all I can say is that the presidential debates will redefine gender roles for the next hundred years, and it isn't going to be pretty.

Justin Raimondo is the editorial director of Antiwar.com. He is the author of *An Enemy of the State: The Life of Murray N. Rothbard* (Prometheus Books, 2000). He is also the author of *Reclaiming the American Right: The Lost Legacy of the Conservative Movement* (with an Introduction by Patrick J. Buchanan), (Center for Libertarian Studies, 1993), and *Into the Bosnian Quagmire: The Case Against U.S. Intervention in the Balkans* (1996).

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