

UK Govt Sources Confirm War With Iran Is On

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Entered into the database on Monday, July 24th, 2006 @ 11:53:25 MST

In the last few days, I learned from a credible and informed source that a former senior Labour government Minister, who continues to be well-connected to British military and security officials, confirms that Britain and the United States "... will go to war with Iran before the end of the year."

As we now know from similar reporting prior to the invasion of Iraq, it's quite possible that the war planning may indeed change repeatedly, and the war may again be postponed. In any case, it's worth noting that the information from a former Labour Minister corroborates expert analyses suggesting that Israel, with US and British support, is deliberately escalating the cycle of retaliation to legitimize the imminent targeting of Iran before year's end. Let us remind ourselves, for instance, of US Vice President Cheney's assertions recorded on MSNBC over a year ago. He described Iran as being "right at the top of the list" of "rogue states". He continued: "One of the concerns people have is that Israel might do it without being asked... Given the fact that Iran has a stated policy that their objective is the destruction of Israel, the Israelis might well decide to act first, and let the rest of the world worry about cleaning up the diplomatic mess afterwards."

But the emphasis on Israel's pre-eminent role in a prospective assault on Iran is not accurate. Israel would rather play the role of a regional proxy force in a US-led campaign. "Despite the deteriorating security situation in Iraq, the Bush Administration has not reconsidered its basic long-range policy goal in the Middle East..." reports Seymour Hersh. He quotes a former high-level US intelligence official as follows:

"This is a war against terrorism, and Iraq is just one campaign. The Bush Administration is looking at this as a huge war zone. Next, we're going to have the Iranian campaign. We've declared war and the bad guys, wherever they are, are the enemy. This is the last hurrah-we've got four years, and want to come out of this saying we won the war on terrorism."

Are these just the fanatical pipedreams of the neoconservative faction currently occupying (literally) the White House?

Unfortunately, no. The Iraq War was one such fanatical pipedream in the late 1990s, one that Bush administration officials were eagerly ruminating over when they were actively and directly involved in the Project for a New American Century. But that particular pipedream is now a terrible, gruelling reality for the Iraqi people. Despite the glaring failures of US efforts in that country, there appears to be a serious inability to recognize the futility of attempting the same in Iran.

The Monterey Institute for International Studies already showed nearly two years ago in a detailed analysis that the likely consequences of a strike on Iran by the US, Israel, or both, would be a regional conflagration that could quickly turn nuclear, and spiral out of control. US and Israeli planners are no doubt aware of what could happen. Such a catastrophe would have irreversible ramifications for the global political economy. Energy security would be in tatters, precipitating the activation of long-standing contingency plans to invade and occupy all the major resource-rich areas of the Middle East and elsewhere (see my book published by Clairview, *Behind the War on Terror* for references and discussion). Such action could itself trigger responses from other major powers with fundamental interests in maintaining their own access to regional energy supplies, such as Russia and particularly China, which has huge interests in Iran. Simultaneously, the dollar-economy would be seriously undermined, most likely facing imminent collapse in the context of such crises.

Which raises pertinent questions about why Britain, the US and Israel are contemplating such a scenario as a viable way of securing their interests.

A glimpse of an answer lies in the fact that the post-9/11 military geostrategy of the "War on Terror" does not spring from a position of power, but rather from entirely the opposite. The global system has been crumbling under the weight of its own unsustainability for many years now, and we are fast approaching the convergence

of multiple crises that are already interacting fatally as I write. The peak of world oil production, of which the Bush administration is well aware, either has already just happened, or is very close to happening. It is a pivotal event that signals the end of the Oil Age, for all intents and purposes, with escalating demand placing increasing pressure on dwindling supplies. Half the world's oil reserves are, more or less, depleted, which means that it will be technologically, geophysically, increasingly difficult to extract conventional oil. I had a chat last week with some scientists from the Omega Institute in Brighton, directed by my colleague and friend Graham Ennis, who told me eloquently and powerfully what I already knew, that while a number of climate "tipping-points" may or may not have yet been passed, we have about 10-15 years before the "tipping-point" is breached certainly and irreversibly. Breaching that point means plunging head-first into full-scale "climate catastrophe". Amidst this looming Armageddon of Nature, the dollar-denominated economy itself has been teetering on the edge of spiralling collapse for the last seven years or more. This is not idle speculation. A financial analyst as senior as Paul Volcker, Alan Greenspan's immediate predecessor as chairman of the Federal Reserve, recently confessed "that he thought there was a 75% chance of a currency crisis in the United States within five years."

There appears to have been a cold calculation made at senior levels within the Anglo-American policymaking establishment: that the system is dying, but the last remaining viable means of sustaining it remains a fundamentally military solution designed to reconfigure and rehabilitate the system to continue to meet the requirements of the interlocking circuits of military-corporate power and profit.

The highly respected US whistleblower, former RAND strategic analyst Daniel Ellsberg, who was Special Assistant to Assistant Secretary of Defense during the Vietnam conflict and became famous after leaking the Pentagon Papers, has already warned of his fears that in the event of "another 9/11 or a major war in the Middle-East involving a U.S. attack on Iran, I have no doubt that there will be, the day after or within days an equivalent of a Reichstag fire decree that will involve massive detentions in this country, detention camps for middle-easterners and their quote 'sympathizers', critics of the President's policy and essentially the wiping-out of the Bill of Rights."

So is that what all the "emergency preparedness" legislation, here in the UK as well as in the USA and in Europe, is all about? The US plans are bad enough, as Ellsberg notes, but the plans UK scene is hardly better, prompting The Guardian to describe the Civil Contingencies Bill (passed as an Act in 2004) as "the greatest threat to civil liberty that any parliament is ever likely to consider."

As global crises converge over the next few years, we the people are faced with an unprecedented opportunity to use the growing awareness of the inherent inhumanity and comprehensive destructiveness of the global imperial system to establish new, viable, sustainable and humane ways of living.

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