

# Brzezinski: On The Path To War With Iran

By Michael Collins

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## The Rationale for War

*"...a terrorist act in the U.S. blamed on Iran..." Zbigniew Brzezinski. 01 Feb 2007*

The National Security Advisor to former President Carter testified before the [US Senate Committee](#) on Foreign Relations on 1 Feb 2007. Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski delivered a scathing assessment of the core mistakes made by the Bush administration in the Middle East. Just before describing what he termed the *mythical historical narrative* of the policy, he offered a scenario that the Bush administration might use as a convenient invitation to attack Iran.

War may result from Iraqi failures at governance attributed to Iranian interference followed "...by some provocation in Iraq or a terrorist act in the U.S. blamed on Iran; culminating in a 'defensive' U.S. military action against Iran..." The "act" would lead to a "lonely America" into a conundrum of conflict across Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Further isolation and estrangement from the world would be the end game for the United States.

## 18 Fateful Words

***a terrorist act in the U.S. blamed on Iran; culminating in a "defensive" U.S. military action against Iran***

Brzezinski doesn't waste any time setting off his own fire works. This phrase appears in the third paragraph (see full text below). He posits a possible justification for attacking Iran; clearly outside the bounds of rationality and built upon a foundation of myths.

Look at the use of "terrorist act in the U.S." in the context of his prepared statement:

*If the United States continues to be bogged down in a protracted bloody involvement in Iraq, the final destination on this downhill track is likely to be a head-on conflict with Iran and with much of the world of Islam at large. A plausible scenario for a military collision with Iran involves Iraqi failure to meet the benchmarks; followed by accusations of Iranian responsibility for the failure; then by some provocation in Iraq or a terrorist act in the U.S. blamed on Iran; culminating in a "defensive" U.S. military action against Iran that plunges a lonely America into a spreading and deepening quagmire eventually ranging across Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.. ([pdf of Brzezinski's testimony](#))*

***Note: The emphasis by underlining and the use of quotation marks around defensive is found in the original copy and presumed to be that of Dr. Brzezinski.***

The remarkable wording is that Iran is "blamed."

**"...blamed on Iran..." Does that mean that they did it?**

Brzezinski refers to "a 'defensive' U.S. military action" adding emphasis and meaning by the use of quotation marks highlighting *defensive*. This answers the question about Iran's *blame* in the scenario. The quotation marks around *defensive* indicate something other than that. This defines the meaning of "blamed" as somewhat akin to saying Iran would be the *patsy*, *fall guy*, or *stooge* for whoever actually committed the act.

Brzezinski's prepared testimony is a chilling and highly evocative analysis offered by a major player in the U.S. foreign policy establishment. Before serving in the Carter administration, he was the first director of the Trilateral Commission. This isn't speculation by an outsider supporting human rights or a peace activist, its insider information from the highest level of the United States foreign policy establishment.

Shortly after testifying Brzezinski was approached by [Barry Grey](#), reporter for the World Socialist Web. Grey recounts the exchange:

*Q: Dr. Brzezinski, who do you think would be carrying out this possible provocation?*

*A: I have no idea. As I said, these things can never be predicted. It can be spontaneous.*

*Q: Are you suggesting there is a possibility it could originate within the US government itself?*

*A: I'm saying the whole situation can get out of hand and all sorts of calculations can produce a circumstance that would be very difficult to trace.*

"I have no idea" in response to the "provocation" is certainly not comforting since it implies the blaming of Iran would be arbitrary. Brzezinski's answers above indicate that the terrorist act "can be spontaneous" or "the whole situation can get out of hand and all sorts of calculations" can lead to the act. At one end of the spectrum of anti U.S. terrorist acts, we have something totally random which the administration grabs and runs with as an excuse for war. At the other end, we have out of control "calculations" which at the extreme might be taken to include something like [Operation Northwoods](#) given the absence of a denial to Grey's assertion in the second question above.

## The plan swings into action...blaming Iran

**[Gates Says Bombs Tie Iran to Iraq Extremists](#)  
*Lolita Baldor Associated Press 9 Feb 2007***

*MUNICH, Germany (Feb. 9) - Serial numbers and other markings on bombs suggest that Iranians are linked*

*to deadly explosives used by Iraqi militants, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Friday in some of the administration's first public assertions on evidence the military has collected.*

Just a week after Brzezinski outlined the *modus operandi* for the Bush crew, the supposed voice of reason at the Pentagon is selling a story of Iranian subversion. Trying it out on the road in Munich, Germany before the homeland premier, Gates indicated that weapons were found with Iranian serial numbers.



**U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates on his European tour.**

*"I think there's some serial numbers, there may be some markings on some of the projectile fragments that we found" that point to Iran, he said.*

*Gates' remarks left unclear how the U.S. knows the serial numbers are traceable to Iran and whether such weapons would have been sent to Iraq by the Iranian government or by private arms dealers.*

Compare Gates' tentative assertion to this whopper used to justify Gulf War I: "They took the babies out of the incubators, took the incubators, and left the babies on the cold floor to die" said the Kuwaiti Ambassador's [daughter](#), who, by the way, had never seen anything of the sort. Gates' tentative serial number claim is no way to whip up war fever. Even the AP reporter bluntly questioned his ability to know just what it is about those serial numbers that gives them that tell-tale Iranian look.

So it begins - the rationale for war. The political basis for this scenario explains why the tactics must, of necessity, be so completely inept.

**"...9/11 as the equivalent of the Pearl Harbor..."**

After defining the specific dangers from the ill begotten Bush tactics, Brzezinski unveils the mythology that justifies the rush to war.

*A mythical historical narrative to justify the case for such a protracted and potentially expanding war is already being articulated. Initially justified by false claims about WMD's in Iraq, the war is now being redefined as the "decisive ideological struggle" of our time, reminiscent of the earlier collisions with Nazism and Stalinism. In that context, Islamist extremism and al Qaeda are presented as the equivalents of the threat posed by Nazi Germany and then Soviet Russia, and 9/11 as the equivalent of the Pearl Harbor attack which precipitated America's involvement in World War II. (Author's emphasis)*

This short paragraph is the epitaph for the widely rejected neoconservative policies adopted by the White House. One can only wonder if the last line of the paragraph is a reference to the often quoted line from the [Project for a New American Century](#) anticipating the arrival of the brave new world of United States dominance. That PNAC goal will evolve slowly "...absent some catastrophic and crystallizing event – like a new Pearl Harbor" (p. 51).

### **Corporate Media Response**

Reporter Grey [complained](#) vigorously about the lack of corporate media coverage for this testimony. This is one of the minor ironies of this event – a Socialist writer advocating for wide spread coverage of one of the most ardent anti-Communists of our time.

The silence was quickly broken when Barry Schweid of the [Associated Press](#) covered the story on the same day of the hearing, 01 Feb:

*Brzezinski set out as a plausible scenario for military collision: Iraq fails to meet benchmarks set by the U.S., followed by accusations that Iran is responsible for the failure and then a terrorist act or some provocation blamed on Iran. This scenario, he said, would play out with a defensive U.S. military action against Iran.*

They included "blamed" on Iran. The only less than representative element is the absence of quotation marks around defensive to imply something other than real defense. Banner headlines would have helped also.

The AP article appeared on MSNBC's web page, in the Guardian, and other media outlets.

The [St. Petersburg Times](#) (Times Wires) story on 2 Feb completes the process AP began and clearly represents the testimony:

*While other former U.S. officials and ex-generals have criticized administration policy in committee*

*hearings, none savaged it to the degree Brzezinski did. He set out as a plausible scenario for military collision: Iraq fails to meet benchmarks set by the administration, followed by accusations Iran is responsible for the failure, then a terrorist act or some provocation blamed on Iran, and culminating in so-called defensive U.S. military action against Iran. (Author's emphasis)*

This clearly represents the most provocative statement in the testimony. It places the former national security advisor at the head of a pack of distinguished critics. This isn't headline news yet but in just 72 hours we have an honest reading of the implication that a "so-called defensive...action" will arise from a terrorist act of questionable origin.

Now it's time for the White House Press Corp to move in and fully expose the story:

*Mr. President, what do you think of a former National Security Advisor Brzezinski's claim that you're cooking up a war with Iran based on a questionable terrorist act?*

*The author acknowledges the [contributions](#) of these early analysts of Dr. Brzezinski's remarks.*

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