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**EMERGENCY PROGRAM
STOP THE DEPRESSION**

Fidel Castro Warns of Imminent Nuclear War; Admiral Mullen Threatens Iran; US-Israel Vs. Iran-Hezbollah Confrontation Builds On Multiple Fronts

[Translate]

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On July 21, the present writer **offered the evaluation** that an attack on Iran by the United States and Israel was now emphatically back on the agenda after a two-year hiatus.¹ More than two weeks after issuing that warning, it is possible to offer a second installment of evidence to buttress the original finding. The author considers that this evidence is now sufficient to confirm the July 21 analysis. The contours of the coming conflagration are becoming somewhat more distinct, and give us reason to fear not just a Middle East regional war, but possibly even a world war, with increasing danger that nuclear weapons will come into play.



Fidel Castro Convoles Parliament, Issues Dramatic War Warning

The most dramatic and outspoken confirmation of the views expressed here on July 21 comes from Fidel Castro, the first secretary of the Cuban Communist Party, and the de facto head of state of Cuba. During the spring and summer of 2010, Castro has referred several times to the growing war danger among the United States, Israel, and Iran. On August 8, Castro took the unusual step of convening a special session of the Cuban parliament to discuss the nuclear war danger threatening the peace of the world. Essentially, Castro called for the worldwide mobilization of peace-loving forces to avoid the worst, and included a special personal appeal to Obama.

Castro: Hundreds Of Millions Of Deaths

According to the Cuban News Agency, this war avoidance agenda 'was the purpose of the Cuban Revolution leader's address to the Cuban parliament summoned for an extraordinary session in Havana, due to the urgency of mobilizing the world, faced with the danger of a nuclear war that would be triggered by a US-Israeli led aggression on Iran.' Castro said that Obama, 'in the instant he gives the order, which is the only one he could give due to the power, speed and countless number of missiles accumulated in an absurd competition between powers, he would be ordering the instant death not only of hundreds of millions of people, including, an immeasurable number of inhabitants of his own country, but also the crews of all US ships in the seas near Iran.' "Simultaneously, the war would break out in the Near and Far East and across Eurasia," said Fidel. Otherwise, if the war breaks out, the current social order will abruptly vanish and the price will be much higher, Fidel warned.²

Whatever one may think of Castro personally and politically, he is unquestionably one of the longest-serving national leaders in today's world, and brings to the table his experience during the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962. Castro knows, in short, what a nuclear confrontation looks like from the inside. The American public would do well to put aside the arrogance and impudence of the US mass media and pay attention to why this sick old man is putting so much of his flagging energy into an attempt to alert the world to a danger which is being widely ignored.

US Media Blackout On War News Like Summer 1914

Not surprisingly, the controlled Wall Street news media in the United States did everything possible to trivialize, denigrate and ridicule this dramatic warning. Frivolity and inanity rule US news coverage this summer. The National Socialists had a word for this – *Nachrichtensperre*, the embargo of real news. To the extent they noticed Castro at all, the US networks focused on the state of Castro's health, and on the soap opera rivalry between Fidel and his brother

Raul, who had replaced him in the presidency several years ago. The account posted on CNN, in particular, avoided any direct reference to the questionable looming nuclear war until an oblique allusion in the final paragraph. The *Time* magazine article gave the war issue half a sentence, with no elaboration and no explanation. Many newspapers relied on the Associated Press wire account, which did everything possible to downplay the urgency of Castro's theme. This policy was typical of the attitude assumed by the US media starting several months earlier, which was to assiduously avoid the troubling hard news being generated in the Middle East in favor of an exclusive focus on domestic social wedge issues, including the New York City mosque, gay marriage, and the Arizona immigration law. The result is that the American people, somewhat like many Europeans of August 1914, are essentially living in a dream world, even as the momentum for global tragedy builds up in many corners of the globe. When the shooting started in August 1914, many in Europe were surprised, having thought that the Sarajevo incident of several weeks earlier was no longer a current concern. For those Europeans, the shock of reality came in the form of declarations of war and mobilization decrees. For today's world, the shock may be even more abrupt.

A Flurry Of Incidents Along The Main Fronts

The clash which is materializing pits a group of countries including most probably the United States, Israel, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and perhaps some others against a rival coalition including the government of Lebanon, the Hezbollah organization, Iran, and Syria, joined by guerrilla forces in Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere. During the past two to three weeks, unusual military incidents have occurred at the main flash-points where these rival coalitions are likely to collide

Israel-Lebanon Border Shootings: A Warning From Hezbollah?

The tense border between Israel and Lebanon is clearly one of these flashpoints. Here the Israeli forces confront a combination of the Lebanese national army along with independent units of heavily armed Hezbollah fighters. On August 3, this border was the scene of the most serious shooting incident since the Israel-Lebanon war of four years ago. A firefight started after the Israeli army began pruning a tree along the border. An Israeli lieutenant colonel was killed, an Israeli major severely wounded, and several Lebanese soldiers and a journalist killed. The casualties among Israeli officers suggest that this incident was a warning delivered by Hezbollah against the Israelis in the general context of rising tension. According to the Chinese news agency, 'Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak on Wednesday said the "unplanned" border clash on Tuesday between Lebanese Army Forces (LAF) and Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers would not widen into a real crisis. An Israel Defense Forces (IDF) officer and four Lebanese were killed on Tuesday during a border clash, the fiercest one since the fighting between Israel and the Lebanon-based Shiite group Hezbollah four years ago.'

According to **press accounts**, the United States quickly intervened to prevent the Israelis from making this clash the detonator for military operations against Lebanon and possibly Syria on a larger scale: 'The United States ... voiced "greatest concern" over the deadly military clashes along the Israel-Lebanon border, urging both the Israeli and Lebanese sides to exercise "maximum restraint." "We deeply regret the loss of life; we urge both sides to exercise maximum restraint to avoid an escalation and maintain the cease-fire that is now in place," State Department spokesman Philip Crowley told reporters at the daily press briefing.'³ The shooting may have been connected to the imminent delivery of a United Nations report on the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, which is expected to accuse Hezbollah. In a sign of continuing tension, Israel on August 8 fired warning shots at a Lebanese fishing boat in the eastern Mediterranean.

Japanese Tanker Attacked In Hormuz

A second front in the looming war is of course the Persian/Arabian Gulf and especially the critical choke-point of the straits of Hormuz, where Iran, if attacked, can be expected to retaliate against oil tanker traffic. The Straits of Hormuz also lend themselves to the creation of a war provocation by the US-led side, quite possibly in the form of a new Gulf of Tonkin incident. Political observers were therefore alarmed on July 28, when an explosion damaged the hull of a Japanese supertanker transiting Hormuz. **According to a wire dispatch**, 'a damaged Japanese oil tanker ... headed back to the United Arab Emirates where officials hope to determine what caused an onboard explosion. Japan's transport ministry said the *M. Star* was passing through the Strait of Hormuz ... with about two million barrels of crude oil when the crew reported a blast. Japan's Mitsui O.S.K. Lines said that despite the explosion, the ship's tanks did not rupture and that no oil is leaking.'⁴

Within a few days, the **UAE authorities were claiming** that this was indeed a suicide attack by al Qaeda-linked terrorists using a small boat loaded with homemade explosive: 'The United Arab Emirates said Friday that a Japanese oil tanker was hit by an explosives-laden dinghy in the Persian Gulf in what would be the first attack in the strategic waterway where millions of barrels of oil are transported each day. The report — which came days after an al-Qaida-linked group claimed responsibility for attacking the vessel — raised fears about the vulnerability of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital shipping lane for many petroleum exporting countries. ... But if the UAE report is confirmed, the July 28 incident would be the first militant attack in the strait, a narrow chokepoint between Oman and Iran.... A group known as the Abdullah Azzam Brigades said it had carried out a suicide attack against the tanker to avenge the plunder of Muslim wealth and to destabilize international markets. The statement was issued by al-Qaida's communications wing, the al-Fajr Media Center and posted on militant websites.'⁵ A collateral effect of the damage to the tanker was to begin pushing the world price of oil up above \$80 per barrel, anticipating on a small scale the massive price increase which the Wall Street financial interests would like to occur as part of their desperate strategy to save the US dollar *in*

extremis.

Hamas Rockets Fired From Egyptian Sinai

Another front where Israeli forces are facing a pro-Iranian guerrilla movement is the Gaza Strip, which is under the political control of the Hamas movement. An incident on August 2, the day before the shooting started on the Israel-Lebanon border, suggested that Hamas had acquired the ability to operate not just out of Gaza, but also in other parts of the Egyptian territory of the Sinai Peninsula. It was in August 2 that four or five Grad rockets were apparently fired from Egyptian territory against the Israeli city of Eilat and the Jordanian port of Aqaba. It should be recalled that the scene of the shooting is one of the most sensitive points in the entire Middle East, where Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia come together at the Gulf of Aqaba, the northeastern end of the Red Sea. One Jordanian was killed, and damage was otherwise slight, but Israel was alarmed enough to send the head of its Shin Beth intelligence agency to meet with his Egyptian counterpart.

Within a few days, **Egypt confirmed that Palestinians from Gaza, quite possibly Hamas, had launched the rockets:** 'Egypt, contradicting its initial denials, has acknowledged that Gaza militants operating in the country's Sinai Peninsula launched the deadly rocket attacks on Israel and Jordan earlier this week. At least five rockets hit the Red Sea border area Monday, killing one Jordanian and wounding at least three others. Egypt's state news agency ... blamed Palestinian factions from the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip, operating in the neighboring Sinai Peninsula, for the rocket volley. This is the second attack believed to originate from the Sinai in four months, highlighting Egypt's ongoing internal security problems in the largely lawless, desert frontier.'⁶ Any increase in the military potential of Hamas is a very ominous sign for the Israelis.

Mullen Admits US War Plan Is Ready — Thanks To Petraeus

On Sunday, August 1, US Admiral Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Pentagon's Joint Chiefs of Staff, shifted decidedly away from his personal brand of conciliatory rhetoric and towards the language of naked threats against Iran. Mullen stressed that the United States does indeed possess a war plan against Iran. **According to one summary,** 'Barack Obama's main military adviser said today the US does have a plan to attack Iran should it become needed as a means of stopping the Tehran regime from acquiring nuclear weapons....Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff and the country's highest ranking officer, was asked by Meet the Press on NBC whether the military had a plan to attack Iran. "We do," he replied.... He said it was unacceptable for Iran to obtain nuclear weapons, but he said that equally he would be "extremely concerned" about the prospect of a military engagement.... Striking Iran could have "unintended consequences that are difficult to predict in what is an incredibly unstable part of the world".... As Mullen put it: "I hope we don't get to that, but it's an important option and it's one that's well understood."⁷

The war plan in question would have been drawn up by the US Central Command, mainly during the time that it was run by General David Petraeus, the neocon leader who has now emerged as the virtual military czar of the hapless Obama regime. If war comes, Petraeus will gain immeasurably in power, with the obvious temptation to decree martial law.

Iranian Defense Minister: Mullen's Threats 'Fascistic'

Mullen's threats were quickly answered by **a chorus of bellicose replies from the Iranian side.** 'The official Iranian news agency IRNA quoted Revolutionary Guard deputy chief Yadollah Javani as saying ...that security in the Persian Gulf would be jeopardized "if Americans commit the slightest mistake."⁸ Speaking from Moscow, Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki also rejected Mullen's threats in vehement terms: "In case of an attack against Iran, their destiny will be worse than their pitiable destiny in Iraq and Afghanistan,"...Mottaki hoped that better sense would prevail in Washington, saying "they said they would go to some places and they went." "But we have seen what happened to them. We think there are still rational people in America... who will not put the American dignity on sale." ... Foreign ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast also dismissed Mullen's remarks. "We witness such inappropriate remarks by these American military officials," he told reporters at his weekly news conference in Tehran. "We think the reason behind it stems from the consecutive (US) defeats in the region and its military adventurism which has resulted in deaths of innocent citizens and of their own forces."⁹

Iran's Defence Minister Ahmad Vahidi 'described Mullen's comments as "fascistic." "Such remarks are in contradiction to their claims of change that they are after dialogue and peace," Vahidi was quoted as saying by state news agency IRNA. "They show that they are unable to stand against the will of Iran. Having plans to attack an independent nation... in the third millennium is a clear violation of the UN charter."⁹ These were eminently newsworthy exchanges, but so far as is known none of the Iranian replies made it onto the Wall Street-controlled US television evening news.

Obama The War Options Monster

In the meantime, Obama is revealing himself more and more as the most extreme warmonger among major US politicians, a niche which he seized in 2007 during the presidential campaign, although many pathetic left liberals still cannot grasp the aggressive designs of which Obama is the bearer. Back during the regime of Bush the younger, the standard White House jargon for issuing a threat against Iran was the mantra that "all options are on the table." Over

the past two years, Obama has been increasingly speaking this language more and more. **Obama told Newsweek on May 17, 2009**, in advance of a visit by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: "I've been very clear that I don't take any options off the table with respect to Iran. I don't take options off the table when it comes to US security, period."¹⁰

About a year later, on May 4, 2010, in the wake of reports that Iran and Syria were furnishing Hezbollah with new and more effective ballistic missiles, **an antiwar blogger noted**: "The continued presence of all options on the table" — this is the disappointing message which a Nobel Peace Prize laureate dispatches internationally, in his latest interview with CBS news....¹¹ Most recently, **Obama told Israeli television** on July 7: 'we are going to continue to keep the door open for a diplomatic resolution of this challenge. But I assure you that I have not taken options off the table.'¹² In response to this, **Netanyahu expressed cautious optimism** that he had the current tenant of the White House in his pocket in the same way that he was able to dominate Bush: "But I am saying that the president's position that all options are on the table might actually have the only real effect on Iran, if they think it's true," commented Netanyahu.¹³

Achmadinejad: US Will Strike Two Countries In The Next Three Months

Even before the volley of threats from Admiral Mullen, **Iranian President Achmadinejad had issued his forecast** of a US attack, probably involving his country. Achmadinejad said that the United States and Israel had 'decided to attack at least two countries in the region in the next three months...' Ahmadinejad said Iran had "very precise information that the Americans have hatched a plot, according to which they are to wage a psychological war against Iran". He also criticized the US-led drive for global sanctions to pressure Tehran over the nuclear issue. "The logic that they can persuade us to negotiate through sanctions is just a failure," Ahmadinejad said.¹⁴

Iranian Defense Minister Vahidi Warns Israel

One day earlier, Iranian Defense Minister Vahidi had issued a separate warning of his own addressed to Israel. **Vahidi stated** that "any injudicious action" will lead to the annihilation of the Israeli regime. "Any injudicious action of Israel will trigger the countdown of its destruction....Israel is facing many setbacks in resolving its domestic, regional and international problems. Therefore, it is trying to get rid of this heavy burden through putting the blame on others," he added. The Iranian defense minister reiterated that public pressure on Israeli officials has prompted them to have some "false illusions" in their minds,' a Syrian news service reported.¹⁵

The Devine Plan

As noted in the essay of July 21, the current deployment of US forces in Afghanistan and Iraq may well represent a grave weakness in the US military position in the region, since these fragmented forces are liable to be cut off and encircled by regular and a regular Iranian and pro-Iranian forces in case of general war. An awareness of this threat in US ruling circles is giving rise to more frequent calls to ratchet the Afghanistan adventure down to a more manageable level, so as not to give the Iranians such an opportunity. One of the clearest calls of this type **has come from Jack Devine**, the former deputy director of the CIA and head of the clandestine service. In an op-ed, Devine advocated getting US Army and Marine land forces largely out of Afghanistan, while perpetuating chaos there through a policy of predator drones for assassinations combined with special forces in small numbers and especially CIA negotiations with the principal warlords and druglords. This kind of the strategy has worked before, and it would work again, Devine argued: 'In the '80s we essentially ended the Cold War with a well-funded and broadly supported covert action program. In 2001, under similar political circumstances, a small band of CIA operators restored old ties to Afghan tribal leaders, teamed up with U.S. Special Forces and, backed with U.S. air power, toppled the Taliban in a matter of weeks.' ... A smart covert action program should rest on worst-case scenarios. Afghanistan will likely enter a period of heightened instability leading up to and following our planned 2012 departure, so we should figure out now which tribal leaders—and, under specially negotiated arrangements, which Taliban factions—we could establish productive relationships with. We must also consider the possibility that our departure could precipitate the eventual collapse of the Karzai government. Thus we should cultivate relationships with leaders inside and outside the current regime who are most likely to fill the power vacuum.¹⁶ Not mentioned was the tremendous advantage that would accrue to the CIA by controlling the totality of the Afghanistan opium, heroin, and morphine production, which would put the agency in a position to vastly increase its influence over American government and society for decades to come.

Wikileaks And Assange: Part Of The War Buildup

Against the backdrop of these confused alarms of war, a group of intelligence community provocateurs calling themselves Wikileaks saw fit to publish a document dump of more than 90,000 low level specimens of US cable traffic from Afghanistan, primarily of the secret and sub-secret classifications. No scandals against Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice, Powell, Obama, Biden, Gates, or any other top officials were contained among these dispatches. Instead, the documents tend to support the CIA's thesis that 'Osama bin Laden' is an actual living person and a powerful enemy of the United States— a manifest absurdity. Assange is also on record as saying that **he finds challenges to the US official story of September 11, 2001 an annoyance**.¹⁷ Assange's actions are evidently inspired by some combination of George Soros, Cass Sunstein, and Samantha Power of the Obama National Security Council. A separate essay on this important theme will be forthcoming shortly.

For the moment it is enough to note that the mental strategic map which emerges from the Wikileaks document dump faithfully mirrors the intentions of some of the most dangerous factions in the US intelligence community. The

interpretations of the document dump which were conveniently trumpeted by such ruling class news organs as the *New York Times*, the *London Guardian*, and *Der Spiegel* of Germany conveniently stress that the Afghanistan war is futile, while the real enemies of the United States and the Western world in general are the treacherous backstabbers of Pakistan who support the Taliban and kill American soldiers, and of course the Iranians, who do everything possible to defeat the US presence in the areas of western Afghanistan closest to their borders. In short, anyone creating an imperialist policy on the basis of the lessons of the Wikileaks document dump would tend to converge on something like the Devine plan, along with vigorous measures against both Pakistan and Iran. The much-touted document dump, which has been abundantly publicized by the controlled media of the world, is thus revealed as a CIA mind control operation in the tradition of Daniel Ellsberg and the 1971 Pentagon papers, which was a similar limited hang out of self-serving disinformation by the spook community, designed to manipulate public opinion.

British Prime Minister Cameron: Nuclear Klutz

British Prime Minister David Cameron appears to have a mind like a rag bag: lacking in mental discipline and astuteness, he appears to blurt out either total nonsense or fragments of the secret briefings he has been given. This means that important state secrets can sometimes be gleaned from what otherwise seemed to be his idiotic malapropisms. An example is **Cameron's early August charge** that Iran already possesses nuclear weapons. Had Cameron's Downing Street handlers jumped the gun, prepping him in advance for the war speech he might have to give a few weeks down the line? The BBC commented: 'Labour has accused David Cameron of committing a gaffe by mistakenly claiming Iran has a nuclear weapon. Asked why he was backing Turkey to join the EU, he said it could help solve the world's problems, "like the Middle East peace process, like the fact that Iran has got a nuclear weapon". A No 10 source said the PM "misspoke", later adding he had been talking about Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons. But Labour said he was becoming a "foreign policy klutz."'18 In reality, Cameron had tipped his hand too much.

Hariri Probe Targets Hezbollah

There is every indication that the United Nations commission investigating the February 2005 murder of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri will attempt to frame Hezbollah for this crime, while ignoring strong circumstantial evidence implicating the United States, the United Kingdom, and Israel, to name just a few. Hezbollah leaders have gotten out in front of the commission's findings with a preventive condemnation of the likely fixed verdict. As a new mania news source reports, 'Lebanon's Hezbollah Resistance Movement warns against falsely accusing its members of involvement in the assassination of Lebanon's former premier Rafik Hariri. A top Hezbollah official, Sheikh Nabil Qaouq, ... warned about the dire consequences of trying to link the resistance movement to the assassination and called such accusations "dangerous." Qaouq said the indictment of Hezbollah members was part of a US and Israeli conspiracy and called for the trial of the individuals, who testified in the case of Hariri's assassination and whom Hezbollah regards as false witnesses, **a Press TV correspondent reported....** "We will continue confronting this conspiracy ... and we will consider any indictment against the resistance an Israeli-American fabrication executed through local or international means," he added.'19 Part of the US-led strategy appears to be the attempt to drive a wedge between Syria and Iran over these Lebanese events. Whether this crude stratagem can succeed or not is uncertain.

Shapiro: New 9/11 Or New Oklahoma City Needed To Save Obama

A blunt and cynical appraisal of the crisis of the Obama regime and of Obama's need for a wag the dog crisis to shore up his cratering poll numbers comes from Rob Shapiro, co-founder of the Progressive Policy Institute, a think tank close to the right wing Democrats of the Democratic Leadership Council. A Bilderberger activist, Shapiro served as a top official during the Clinton administration. An article in the London *Financial Times* about Obama's alarming weakness **contains this revealing assessment** by Shapiro of how Obama might restore his authority: "The bottom line here is that Americans don't believe in President Obama's leadership," says Rob Shapiro, another former Clinton official and a supporter of Mr Obama. "He has to find some way between now and November of demonstrating that he is a leader who can command confidence and, short of a 9/11 event or an Oklahoma City bombing, I can't think of how he could do that.'"20

Barak And Barack

The last week in July saw the Washington visit of Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak, who came close on the heels of Prime Minister Netanyahu. According to *Time* magazine, Barak's party line was that the economic sanctions imposed on Iran by the United Nations Security Council in early June are only a temporary expedient, and must be quickly followed by war. **As the magazine reported**, 'Barak arrived in Washington this week with the message that not even the far-reaching sanctions adopted by the U.S. and its allies against Iran are likely to change Iran's behavior. "It's still time for sanctions," he told the *Washington Post* in an interview. But "probably, at a certain point, we should realize that sanctions cannot work." In an interview with the *Washington Post*, Barak stressed joint US-Israeli efforts in the area of anti-ballistic missile defense, noting that Israel is 'now developing, together with the United States, the Super Arrow, a kind of a space-age kind of interceptor that protects us against incoming missiles from places like deep into Syria or from Iran.'"21

Time identified Obama advisor Dennis Ross as a leading member of the US war party, suggesting that Ross is one of the handlers feeding Obama his belligerent "options" rhetoric and keeping the war option on the front burner. **The**

magazine wrote: ‘Obama has ... insisted that a military option remains “on the table.” That insistence could be consistent with the perspective of his key adviser on Iran, Dennis Ross, who wrote two years ago, “When we say we are not taking force off the table, that must be more than a slogan. It is essential that the Iranians continue to believe that they may well be playing with fire if they persist in their pursuit of nuclear weapons.” Regardless of whether force is ever used, Ross was arguing, the only way Tehran will back down is if it’s convinced it will face U.S. military action if it doesn’t.’²²

H. R. 1355: House Republicans Demand Aggressive War

The reactionary Republicans of the US House of Representatives claimed their part of the looming tragedy with a jingoistic draft resolution of genocidal intent, directed against Iran. As one commentator noted, ‘Republicans in the House or Representatives have unveiled House Resolution 1553, a resolution providing explicit support for an Israeli bombing campaign against Iran. The measure, introduced by Texas Republican Louie Gohmert and forty-six of his colleagues, endorses Israel’s use of “all means necessary” against Iran “including the use of military force.” “We have got to act,” Gohmert has said in regard to the measure. “We’ve got to get this done. We need to show our support for Israel. We need to quit playing games with this critical ally in such a difficult area.”’

As **this commentator pointed out**, ‘Gohmert’s resolution may be an unprecedented development — Congress has never endorsed pre-emptive military strikes by a foreign country. In fact, this measure is no small part of a neoconservative agenda to go to war with Iran. The green light resolution is precisely what John Bolton called for two weeks ago in a Wall Street Journal piece that reads as a playbook for dragging the US into military conflict with Iran.’²³ Such statements violate the Nonproliferation Treaty, since they represent direct military threats by a nuclear state against Iran, a non-nuclear state under that treaty.

Venezuela Threatened By The US Via Colombia

The notion that coming hostilities involving Iran could also be extended to the Latin American continent is **plausibly argued by Russian analyst Nil Nikandrov** of the Moscow Strategic Culture Foundation, the think tank associated with General Leonid Ivashov. Nikandrov points to the increasingly close relations between Iran and Venezuela to suggest that the conflagration may well be extended to this latter country as well. Here a likely scenario involves the US playing off Columbia against Venezuela in a classic exercise of the imperialist buck-passing favored by the Brzezinski faction. As Nikandrov argues, ‘Under B. Obama, the US started to actively reinforce the existing and set up new military bases along the borders of Venezuela. The US maintains 10 military bases in Columbia alone, though on top of that the Pentagon enjoys unrestricted access to the de facto occupied country’s own military infrastructures. US army and navy bases have also been promptly built in Costa Rica and Panama. Experts believe the list of potential targets of the forces deployed at the bases includes both Venezuela and its regional allies – Cuba, Nicaragua, and Ecuador. US military advisers are dispatched in increasing numbers to Guatemala, Honduras, and Salvador. Chavez speaks frequently about the threat posed by the US. This July, he mentioned several times the warnings about the higher than ever threat of the US aggression he received from a well-informed “secret friend” in Washington. Washington is waging a permanent smear campaign against Venezuela. Reports are circulated that Chavez hosts ETA terrorists or guerrillas from Iran, Palestine, and Lebanon and helps them to penetrate the US. The disinformation, easily disproved by Venezuela, will certainly reemerge when the US and Israeli forces hit Iran’s “nuclear infrastructures”, airports, and army bases. Ignoring Washington’s ire, Chavez openly sides with Iran. He visited Tehran on a number of occasions and keeps inviting the Iranian leaders to Caracas. Chavez pledges not to abandon Iran in trouble. The US is keenly aware what the signals sent by Chavez mean: against the backdrop of the war in Afghanistan and the coming war in Iran, Venezuela’s taking its barrels offline would send the oil prices skyrocketing up to \$200 per barrel and thus reanimate the global economic crisis.’²⁴ Unfortunately, increasing the price of oil is currently an enticement, rather than a deterrent, to the Anglo-American financiers.

A World War?

If things actually play out in this way, the resulting conflict, stretching from the Middle East to Latin America would indeed qualify as a new world war. One of the few bright spots in the present world intelligence picture is represented by the peace overtures to Chavez launched by the new Colombian President Manuel Santos in his inaugural address on August 6. Santos signaled a possible break with the reckless policies of his predecessor, Alvaro Uribe, who had acted as a provocateur under the direction of the United States. **As the Voice of America was forced to concede**, ‘The presidents of Colombia and Venezuela are set to meet ... in an effort to repair a diplomatic break due to Venezuela’s alleged support of leftist rebels in Colombia. The security and trade partnership between the two countries has suffered during the past two years. The meeting in Santa Marta, Colombia, comes only three days after Juan Manuel Santos took the oath of office as Colombia’s president. The former defense minister used his inauguration speech on Saturday to try to set a new tone with Venezuela. He said that as president, he will seek peace with Colombia’s neighbors. He offered a frank and direct dialogue with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez as soon as possible. In Caracas, Mr. Chavez welcomed the offer and said he would go to the meeting with an open heart and an extended hand.’²⁵

US Gambits To Antagonize China

At the same time that the exhausted and overstretched US military is preparing actions across a fast arc of countries

stretching from Lebanon and Syria in the west to Pakistan in the east, the Obama regime is also assuming a decidedly bellicose demeanor in regard to China. Obama and company are evidently encouraged by their success in browbeating and blackmailing China into giving at least verbal assent to the latest round of UN Security Council economic sanctions against Iran. They are intent on creating diversions on the Chinese flanks to keep the Middle Kingdom tied down as much as possible in the moment that war might break out in the Middle East. Needless to say, this approach only underlines the inherent adventurism of the line currently dominant in Washington.

Hillary Meddles In The South China Sea

On the one hand, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has announced her intention to begin meddling on a grand scale in the already difficult disputes about islands and oil in the South China Sea, parts of which are claimed by China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, and so forth. **As the *New York Times* sums up** Mrs. Clinton's demarche: 'Opening a new source of potential friction with China, the Obama administration is stepping into a tangled dispute between China and its smaller Asian neighbors over a string of strategically significant islands in the South China Sea. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, speaking at an Asian regional security meeting in Vietnam, stressed that the United States remained neutral on which regional countries had stronger territorial claims to the islands. But she said that the United States had an interest in preserving free shipping in the area and that it would be willing to facilitate multilateral talks on the issue. Though presented as an offer to help ease tensions, the stance amounts to a sharp rebuke to China. Beijing has insisted for years that all the islands belong to China and that any disputes should be resolved by China. In March, senior Chinese officials pointedly warned their American counterparts that they would brook no interference in the South China Sea, which they called part of the "core interest" of sovereignty.'²⁶

US Nuclear Deal With Vietnam Directed Against China

Another prong of this attempt to keep the Chinese tied down in conflicts with hostile neighbors close to home is represented by the fast-moving negotiations between Washington and Hanoi for a nuclear technology sharing deal. This ploy obviously intends to scare the Chinese with the prospect of a nuclear-armed Vietnam, acting as a cat's paw for the United States in the same way that the US is trying to use India. **As the *Wall Street Journal* reported**, 'the Obama administration is in advanced negotiations to share nuclear fuel and technology with Vietnam in a deal that would allow Hanoi to enrich its own uranium—terms that critics on Capitol Hill say would undercut the more stringent demands the U.S. has been making of its partners in the Middle East. The State Department-led negotiations could unsettle China, which shares hundreds of miles of border with Vietnam. It is the latest example of the U.S.'s renewed assertiveness in South and Southeast Asia, as Washington strengthens ties with nations that have grown increasingly wary of Beijing's growing regional might. U.S. officials familiar with the matter say negotiators have given a full nuclear-cooperation proposal to the communist country and former Cold War foe, and have started briefing House and Senate foreign-relations committees. A top U.S. official briefed on the negotiation said China hadn't been consulted on the talks. "It doesn't involve China," the official said.'²⁷ In the first three months of this year, we experienced a phase of growing US-Chinese hostility centering on the refusal of Google to obey relevant Chinese law regarding the Internet. After that, we had a short interval of relative calm, with the Chinese allowing their renminbi currency to float upwards to a limited and symbolic extent, and also voting for the UN sanctions against Iran demanded by the US. Now, tensions have abruptly begun to rise rapidly again in the Far East.

China's Dong Feng 21 D, The Carrier Killer

But the Chinese are growing tired of being threatened and bullied by the United States. One part of their response is the development of a new and powerful anti-ship missile, explicitly designed to sink US attack carriers. As the Associated Press reported, 'U.S. naval planners are scrambling to deal with what analysts say is a game-changing weapon being developed by China — an unprecedented carrier-killing missile called the Dong Feng 21D that could be launched from land with enough accuracy to penetrate the defenses of even the most advanced moving aircraft carrier at a distance of more than 1,500 kilometers (900 miles).'²⁸ The last US aircraft carrier to be sunk by enemy action was the USS Princeton, which was lost to Japanese attacks during the Battle of Leyte Gulf off the Philippines in 1944.

CIA Veterans Urge Obama To Desist From Aggression

On August 3, the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS), an association of retired intelligence officials, appealed to Obama to turn away from war while there was still time. This appeal was signed by Phil Giraldi, Larry Johnson, Ray McGovern, W. Patrick Lang, Coleen Rowley, and Ann Wright. **This appeal states**: 'We write to alert you to the likelihood that Israel will attack Iran as early as this month [August 2010]. This would likely lead to a wider war. This can be stopped, but only if you move quickly to pre-empt an Israeli attack by publicly condemning such a move before it happens. ... as we hope your advisers have told you, regime change, not Iranian nuclear weapons, is Israel's primary concern.'²⁹

A New National Intelligence Estimate On Iran Is Pending

The VIPS cite, among the motivations for Israel to launch a quick preemptive attack and drag the United States into war, the possibility that the new National Intelligence Estimate on the Iranian nuclear weapons situation will reinforce the conclusion of the earlier NIE of December 2007 that there is no Iranian and nuclear weapons program. But this

diagnosis appears to be overly optimistic, and does not take into account the growing power of the neocon faction at the expense of the Brzezinskyites which is reflected in the ascendancy of the neocon warlord Petraeus, as well as in Obama's own increasingly desperate and bellicose rhetoric. There is no doubt that the entire neocon faction is now fully mobilized with the overriding goal of concocting a new NIE which brands Iran as a de facto nuclear weapons state, thus making a direct US attack mandatory.

Among the reflections of this neocon agitation in the press, we can cite the article by Edward Jay Epstein in which the author, just as predicted in the present writer's essay of July 21, attempts to use the recent Amiri affair to concoct a plausible explanation for why the December 2007 NIE was so adamant that there was no Iranian nuclear weapons program. This is the same Edward Jay Epstein who is otherwise notorious for his attacks on New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison and on filmmaker Oliver Stone, attacks carried out in defense of the discredited Warren Commission report on the 1963 Kennedy assassination.

Epstein had this to say about the connection between the Amiri affair and the December 2007 NIE: 'One Iranian agent who supplied information to the CIA is Shahram Amiri, who defected to the U.S. last year and re-defected back to Iran this month. He reportedly provided details about the termination of Project 111 [the alleged nuclear weapons program] that presumably dovetailed with other information we got from the CIA's compromised network. Iran now claims Mr. Amiri was a double agent all along. Whether Iran controlled his secret reports to the CIA will be hotly debated for years to come. But willful blindness on our part should not be ignored. There were high-level people in the newly reorganized U.S. intelligence community who wanted to believe Iran was ending its quest for the bomb, and messages to the CIA from agents inside the country that diplomatic pressure was accomplishing this task fell on receptive ears. Whether the erroneous conclusions in the 2007 NIE proceeded from Iranian deception or American self-deception, they undercut the case for taking more drastic action against Tehran. To the degree that other countries believed Iran had ended its nuclear program, they had little incentive to join us in imposing further sanctions.'³⁰ The neocons intend to roll back all that as soon as possible.

Krauthammer: Relentlessly Visit Ruin Upon Iran

Most American newspapers never reported Achmadinejad's statement about the US getting ready to attack two countries within the next three months. Ironically, the only way this news crept into the *Washington Post* was by way of a belligerent opinion screed by neocon Charles Krauthammer. For Krauthammer, the alliance of Iran and Hezbollah assumed almost apocalyptic significance. Krauthammer comments that 'for all his clownishness, Ahmadinejad is nonetheless calculating and dangerous. What "two countries" was he talking about? They seem logically to be Lebanon and Syria. Hezbollah in Lebanon has armed itself with 50,000 rockets and made clear that it is in a position to start a war at any time. Fighting on this scale would immediately bring in Syria, which would in turn invite Iranian intervention in defense of its major Arab clients — and of the first Persian beachhead on the Mediterranean in 1,400 years.'

True to the neocon party line, **Krauthammer demands that Obama stay the course** towards Middle East conflagration: 'after 18 months of failed engagement, the administration is hardening its line. The hardening is already having its effect. The Iranian regime is beginning to realize that even President Obama's patience is limited — and that Iran may actually face a reckoning for its nuclear defiance. All this pressure would be enough to rattle a regime already unsteady and shorn of domestic legitimacy. Hence Achmadinejad's otherwise inscrutable warning about an Israeli attack on two countries. (Said Defense Minister Ehud Barak to Fox News: "Who is the second one?") It is a pointed reminder to the world of Iran's capacity to trigger, through Hezbollah and Syria, a regional conflagration. This is the kind of brinkmanship you get when leaders of a rogue regime are under growing pressure. The only hope to get them to reverse course is to relentlessly increase their feeling that, if they don't, the Arab states, Israel, the Europeans and America will, one way or another, ensure that ruin is visited upon them.'³¹ William Kristol, another of the neocon dogs of war, offered Obama a column full of friendly political advice, concluding inevitably with a call for 'military action military action against the Iranian nuclear program—and you'll have a real shot at a successful presidency.'³²

Still No Iraq Government

Before starting the Iran war, the Obama regime would like to finally set up a puppet regime in Iraq which would be anti-Iranian as can be managed under the current situation. The chosen agent of influence to head such a government would be Ayad Allawi. But the Iraqi politicians have been bickering about a new government since the March 7 parliamentary elections, so far with no success. Vice President Biden has made four trips to Iraq in the hope of installing Allawi, but so far he has failed. The most recent meetings between Allawi and the pro-Iranian Maliki have also brought no results. **As UPI reported**, 'A meeting between Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and his rival Ayad Allawi produced no political breakthroughs, secular leaders said. Allawi met in Baghdad with Maliki following talks in Damascus with anti-American cleric Moqtada Sadr. Hayder al-Mullah, a representative from Allawi's Iraqiya slate, told the Voices of Iraq new agency Wednesday that Allawi expressed his determination to form a new government.'³³ If the US strikes Iran, it is inevitable that the civil war inside Iraq will resume on a scale even more serious than what was observed in 2006-2007.

Obama Wants Iran To Release Three US Hikers

Obama has also been calling for Iran to release three alleged US hikers who supposedly went for a walk in Iraqi Kurdistan and suddenly found themselves on the Iranian side of the border, where they were arrested. The case is suspicious because of CIA covert operations among Kurds, Arabs, Azeris, Turkmen, Baluchis, and other minority

nationalities of the Islamic Republic. **As Politico reported**, 'President Barack Obama called on Iran Friday to free three American hikers it detained one year ago. He also said that Sarah Shourd, Shane Bauer and Josh Fattal never worked for the U.S. government and were people who have demonstrated open-mindedness and a desire for social justice. Iran recently charged the three young University of California Berkeley graduates with having improperly crossed the border, while it continues to carry out an investigation. But it did not charge them with espionage, as it had previously threatened. Obama also called on Iran to provide information in the case of former FBI agent Robert Levinson, who went missing after a 2007 meeting on Kish Island.'³⁴

¹ Webster G. Tarpley, "Obama is Preparing to Bomb Iran," July 21, 2010, <http://tarpley.net/2010/07/22/obama-preparing-to-bomb-iran/>

² <http://www.cubanews.ain.cu/2010/0807fidel-calls-on-the-world-to-persuade-obama-not-to-unleash-war.htm> In the original: "Mas, en ese mismo instante en que diera la orden, que es además la única que podría dar debido al poder, la velocidad y el incontable número de proyectiles nucleares acumulados en una absurda competencia entre las potencias, estaría ordenando la muerte instantánea no sólo de cientos de millones de personas, entre ellas, un incalculable número de habitantes de su propia Patria, sino también de los tripulantes de todos los navíos de la flota de Estados Unidos en los mares en torno a Irán. Simultáneamente, la conflagración estallaría en el Cercano y el Lejano Oriente, y en toda Eurasia." (Granma)

³ http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-08/04/c_13430358.htm

⁴ <http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/Blast-Damages-Japanese-Tanker-Near-Iran-Oman-99458299.html?refresh=1>

⁵ Michael Casey, 'UAE: Japanese tanker attacked in Persian Gulf,' AP, August 6, 2010, at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5ijprLX5wJOPvJeITBt9isdD-MI6wD9HE6LDG1>

⁶ There was speculation about the possible role of Bedouin tribesmen as enablers of Hamas: 'Restive Bedouin communities populating the mountainous desert area have long been at odds with the Egyptian government. Bedouins complain of state discrimination, lack of access to government resources, and racism. Now there are growing Israeli concerns that Hamas, an offshoot of Egypt's banned Muslim Brotherhood, has tapped into Bedouin discontent. Bedouins are believed to have at least provided space for militants to operate, if not directly assisted them, in both the latest rocket attack, and a similar one in April.' <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0805/Egypt-Gaza-militants-actually-did-launch-Monday-s-rocket-attacks-from-Sinai>

⁷ Ed Pilkington, "US has plan to attack Iran if needed, military chief admits," Guardian, August 1, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/aug/01/us-iran-attack-plan-mullen>

⁸ http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100801/ap_on_go_ca_st_pe/us_us_iran

⁹ http://www.france24.com/en/20100803-iran-officals-slam-us-admirals-attack-plan-remarks?quicktabs_1=1

¹⁰ Yitzhak Benhorin, "Obama on Iran: All options on table," Ynet News, May 17, 2009, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3716807,00.html>

¹¹ Kouros Ziabari, 'Obama Threatens Iran With "All Options" Again,' OpEd News, May 7, 2010, OpEdnews.com/articles/Obama-Threatens-Iran-With-by-Kouros-Ziabari-100504-671.html

¹² Obama's interview with Yonit Levi, Israeli TV, Conducted July 7, 2010, http://www.politico.com/blogs/laurarozen/0710/Obamas_interview_with_Israeli_TV.html

¹³ Fox News Sunday interview with Israeli PM Netanyahu, 11 Jul 2010, http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Speeches+by+Israeli+leaders/2010/Fox_News_interview_PM_Netanyahu_11-Jul-2010.htm

¹⁴ 'Ahmadinejad sure US will strike Middle East in 3 months,' Reuters, Jul 28, 2010, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/Ahmadinejad-sure-US-will-strike-Middle-East-in-3-months/articleshow/6225072.cms>

¹⁵ 'Vahidi: any Israeli injudicious action will trigger the countdown of its destruction,' Joughina News, July 27, 2010, at <http://www.jpnews-sy.com/en/news.php?id=1552>

¹⁶ Jack Devine, 'The CIA Solution for Afghanistan: There's no 'victory' to be had there. But we can prevent it from becoming a haven for al Qaeda with a covert strategy based on Predator drones and alliances with local leaders,' *Wall Street Journal*, July 29, 2010, at http://online.wsj.com/article/NA_WSJ_PUB:SB10001424052748704201604575373253893718806.html

¹⁷ "Wikileaks founder Julian Assange is 'annoyed' by 9/11 truth," Infowars, <http://www.infowars.com/wikileaks->

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¹⁸ David Cameron accused by Labour of Iran nuclear 'gaffe', BBC, 5 August 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-10886435>

¹⁹ Hezbollah warns against 'false charges.' PRESSTV, Wed, 28 Jul 2010, <http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=136570§ionid=351020203>

²⁰ Edward Luce, "Obama faces growing credibility crisis," *Financial Times*, July 13, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/aug/01/us-iran-attack-plan-mullen>

²¹ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/26/AR2010072602020.html>

²² Tony Karon, 'Iran War Rhetoric: A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy?', *Time*, July 29, 2010, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2007246,00.html>

²³ http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/07/29/the_republican_backdoor_to_war_with_iran

²⁴ Nil Nikandrov, 'The US is Synchronously Preparing to Launch Aggressions Against Iran and Venezuela,' RIA Novosti, July 29, 2010, http://www.en.rian.ru/international_affairs/20100729/159994768.html

²⁵ 'Colombia's Santos to Host Meeting with Venezuela's Chavez,' VOA, August 9, 2010, <http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/americas/Colombias-Santos-to-Host-Meeting-with-Venezuelas-Chavez-100307519.html>

²⁶ Mark Landler, 'Offering to Aid Talks, U.S. Challenges China on Disputed Islands,' *New York Times*, July 23, 2010, at http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/24/world/asia/24diplo.html?_r=1&pagewanted=print

²⁷ Jay Solomon, 'U.S., Hanoi in Nuclear Talks; Vietnam Plan to Enrich Uranium May Undercut Nonproliferation Efforts, Rile China,' *Wall Street Journal*, August 3, 2010, at http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704741904575409261840078780.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

²⁸ "Chinese missile could shift Pacific power balance," Eric Talmadge, *Associated Press*, Aug. 5, 2010

²⁹ Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, "Obama Warned Israel May Bomb Iran," August 3, 2010, <http://www.consortiumnews.com/2010/080310c.html>

³⁰ Edward Jay Epstein, 'How the CIA Got It Wrong on Iran's Nukes: In 2007, U.S. intelligence said Iran had stopped its nuclear weapons program. Analyst policy bias and disinformation from Iranian double agents may explain the mistake,' *Wall Street Journal*, July 29, 2010.

³¹ Charles Krauthammer, 'Iran starts feeling heat,' *Washington Post*, July 30, 2010, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/29/AR2010072904901.html>

³² *Washington Examiner*, August 2, 2010, p. 9.

³³ Maliki, Allawi talks go nowhere, UPI, July 21, 2010, at http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2010/07/21/Maliki-Allawi-talks-go-nowhere/UPI-55031279725288/

³⁴ 'Obama to Iran: Free the hikers,' *Politico*, July 30, 2010, at http://www.politico.com/blogs/laurarozen/0710/Obama_to_Iran_Free_the_hikers.html

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