

Clinton Flogs Alleged Iranian Role in Iraq - Even More Than Bush

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In Thursday night's debate, defending her vote for the Kyl-Lieberman amendment — which critics have charged was intended to escalate towards military confrontation with Iran — Senator Clinton said, "The Iranian Revolutionary Guard has assisted the militias... in killing...Americans."

This unsubstantiated allegation echoes unsubstantiated claims by Senator Lieberman and the Bush administration that both Lieberman and the administration have claimed would justify U.S. military attacks on Iran. But, as Senator Clinton surely knows, the Bush administration has not produced evidence to substantiate these allegations. Why is she repeating them, now, when even the Bush administration has moved away from them?

On February 12, the Washington Post reported on a much-awaited U.S. military briefing in Iraq that was supposed to substantiate these claims. "The officials offered no evidence to substantiate allegations that the 'highest levels' of the Iranian government had sanctioned support for attacks against U.S. troops.," noted the Post, adding that "the U.S. government has never publicly offered evidence proving the allegations."

Iraq's deputy foreign minister said the Iraqi government remains in the dark about the U.S. investigation into Iranian activities in Iraq. "It is difficult for us here in the diplomatic circles just to accept whatever the American forces say is evidence," he said. "If they have anything really conclusive, then they should come out and say it openly."

The components of the one device shown at the briefing "require precision machining that Iraq has shown no evidence of being able to perform," U.S. officials said.

But as NBC reported on February 23, U.S. military officials subsequently admitted that these devices were indeed being manufactured in Iraq. That doesn't prove that some were not also coming from Iran, but it does undermine the previous U.S. claim that they had to be coming from Iran since they couldn't be manufactured in Iraq.

Regardless of what was true in the past, U.S. military officials are now saying that Iran has halted the smuggling of bombs into Iraq. "We have not seen any recent evidence that weapons continue to come across the border into Iraq." Army Maj. Gen. James Simmons said, the Los Angeles Times reported Thursday. "We believe that the initiatives and the commitments that the Iranians have made appear to be holding up."

It's very unfortunate, to say the least, that Senator Clinton is still pushing the claim that Iran is responsible for the deaths of U.S. soldiers in Iraq when even the Bush administration is moving away from it. "Aktar maliki min il malik," as they say in Arabic — more royalist than

the King.

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