

Dangerous Crossroads in World History: Obama's New Iran Sanctions: An Act of War

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When the UN refused to agree to the severe sanctions that the U.S. wanted, Obama responded with typical Bush flair and went solo. The new U.S. sanctions against Iran — signed into law by Obama on July 1st — are an unmistakable act of war.

If fully enforced, Iran's economy will be potentially destroyed. The New York Times outlines the central parts of the sanctions:

"The law signed by Mr. Obama imposes penalties on foreign entities that sell refined petroleum to Iran or assist Iran with its domestic refining capacity. It also requires that American and foreign businesses that seek contracts with the United States government certify that they do not engage in prohibited business with Iran." (July 1, 2010).

Iran must import a large part of its refined oil from foreign corporations and nations, since it does not have the technology needed to refine all the fuel that it pumps from its soil. By cutting this refined oil off, the U.S. will be causing massive, irreparable damage to the Iranian economy — equaling an act of war.

In fact, war against Japan in WWII was sparked by very similar circumstances. Franklin Delano Roosevelt spearheaded a series of sanctions against Japan, which included the Export Control Act, giving the President the power to prohibit the export of a variety of materials to Japan, including oil. This gave Roosevelt the legal stance he needed to implement an oil embargo, an obvious act of war. Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor simply brought the war out of the economic realm into the military sphere.

Iran is facing the exact same situation. Whereas the Obama Administration calmly portrays economic sanctions as "peaceful" solutions to political problems, they are anything but. The strategy here is to economically attack Iran until it responds militarily, giving the U.S. a fake moral high ground to "defend" itself, since the other side supposedly attacked first.

But the U.S. is provoking militarily too. According to the New York Times: "The Obama administration is accelerating the deployment of new defenses against possible Iranian missile attacks in the Persian Gulf, placing special ships [war ships] off the Iranian coast and antimissile systems in at least four [surrounding] Arab countries, according to administration and military officials." (January 30, 2010).

The same article mentions that U.S. General Petraeus admitted that, "... the United States was now keeping Aegis cruisers on patrol in the Persian Gulf [Iran's border] at all times. Those cruisers are equipped with advanced radar and antimissile systems designed to

intercept medium-range missiles.” Iran, as well as the whole world, knows full well that “antimissile systems” are perfectly capable of going on the offensive — their real purpose.

Iran is completely surrounded by countries occupied by the U.S. military, whether it be the mass occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan, or the U.S. puppet states that house U.S. military bases in Arab nations (not to mention Zionist Israel, a U.S. cohort in its war aims against Iran). Contrary to the statements of President Obama, Iran is already well contained militarily.

It remains to be seen how closely U.S. allies will follow the new oil sanctions; they will be under tremendous pressure to do so. The European Union has already signaled that it will follow Obama’s lead.

Ultimately, the march to war begun by Bush is picking up momentum under Obama. Congressional Democrats and Republicans gave the President their overwhelming support in passing these sanctions, proving that the two party system agrees to the necessity of more war.

Uniting the U.S. anti-war movement is crucial if current and future wars are to be stopped. A step in this direction will take place at the National Peace Conference, in Albany, New York, July 23-25.

(http://nationalpeaceconference.org/Home_Page.html).

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