

# Imperial Playground: The Story of Iran in Recent History

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Global Research, October 04, 2007

4 October 2007

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [Oil and Energy](#), [US NATO War](#)

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## PART 1

In recent months and even years, the United States and its close allies have been stepping up efforts to display Iran in a very negative light, labeling it as a terrorist nation bent on developing nuclear weapons to use against Israel and other allies of the United States in the Middle East, and possibly further outside of the region, or to deliver those nuclear weapons to the hands of terrorists hoping to use them against the United States and its allies.

If a war takes place with Iran, orchestrated by Israel, the United States and other allies, then there will be a massive transformation of not only the Middle East as a whole, but the entire geo-political structure of the world. Simply stated, if a war on Iran occurs, *everything* changes. So, it is extremely important and necessary to analyze the process of building the case for a war with Iran, as well as the current stance of the Iranian government, the historical relationship between Iran and the West, namely the United States and Britain and how far along these war preparations have already come to the point where there is currently a “secret war” taking place within Iran’s borders being directed by the West, namely, the United States.

As the United States is the sole superpower and empire in the world today, most commentators focus primarily just on relations between America and Iran to explain the current situation developing between the two countries, usually not going further back than just a few years, and as far back as the mainstream media will tell the story is to 1979, when Iran had a revolution, in which they threw out the Shah of Iran, who was backed by the Americans and British, and replaced that form of secular government with a religious one. However, as important as this event was between Iranian and American relations, it is important to go further back to truly understand the dynamic relations that the United Kingdom, and later, the United States (the Anglo-American alliance) have had with Iran. It is important to understand history so that we don’t repeat it. So, it is important to note that the United States only became a global superpower after World War 2, which left it the only major country in the world not devastated by the war. As the European and Asian countries lay in ruins, America built up its power and saw fit to expand its influence across the globe, for the first many decades in the guise of deterring the spread of Communism by the Soviet Union, the other great power in the world. However, in decades to come, the United States asserted itself an imperial status, and in 1989, at the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States was left as the sole superpower in the world, and saw fit to maintain that status. But before the Second World War, it was

the United Kingdom, or Great Britain that was the predominant world power, having exerted its influence throughout the entire globe.

It is during this period to which I will return to help identify the origins and causes of the current conflict between the Anglo-Americans (Britain and the United States), and Iran, as well as other great powers. Iran has often played the part of an imperial and hegemonic battleground between great nations and empires, and clearly, not much has changed.

### **Imperial Rumbblings and the Road to World War**

As the old British colonial system began to collapse in the late 18th Century, notably with the American Revolutionary War against the British colonialists from 1775-1783, the necessity for a new system of empire was drastically needed. This opportunity arose in the early 19th Century, as William Engdahl put it in his book, *A Century of War*, in the year 1820, "Acting on the urgings of a powerful group of London shipping and banking interests centered around the Bank of England, and Alexander Baring of Baring Brothers merchant bankers, parliament passes a statement of principle in support of the concept advocated several decades earlier by Scottish economist Adam Smith: so-called 'absolute free trade'."<sup>1</sup> He continued by explaining this concept; "If they [the British] dominated world trade, 'free trade' could only ensure that their dominance would grow at the expense of other less-developed trading nations." Citing the commentary of American economist Henry C. Carey, considered to be very influential in shaping President Lincoln's domestic economic policies Engdahl further noted that, "The class separations of British society were aggravated by a growing separation of a tiny number of very wealthy from the growing masses of very poor, as a lawful consequence of 'free trade'."<sup>2</sup> Engdahl further commented, "Britain's genius has been a chameleon-like ability to adapt that policy to a shifting international economic reality. But the core policy has remained - Adam Smith's 'absolute free trade,' as a weapon against sovereign national economic policy of rival powers", and that "at the end of the 19th Century, another debate arose regarding how exactly to maintain Britain's empire which led to the formation of what was termed 'Informal Empire', allowing the dispersal of British funds around the world in an aim of creating financial dependence, on which Engdahl mused, "The notion of special economic relationships with 'client states,' the concept of 'spheres of influence' as well as that of 'balance-of-power diplomacy,' all came out of this complex weave of British 'informal empire' towards the end of the last century."<sup>3</sup>

However, in world politics at the time, the British Empire was not the sole imperial force in the world, as there were several other Empires across Europe and Asia, notably, the Russian and Ottoman Empires. Iran, in this era, was referred to as Persia, and in fact, there had been a few wars between Russia and Persia in the early part of the 19th Century. However, in the later half of the Century, the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire was in its decline. In 1875, an anti-Ottoman revolt began in its controlled territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of which has been said, "Indeed, the immediate cause for the 1875 revolt was the crop failure of the previous year and the unrelenting pressure of the tax farmers."<sup>4</sup> This area of Eurasia has been especially pertinent throughout the history of empires, as Zbigniew Brzezinski, the National Security Advisor in the Jimmy Carter administration has noted, as he was the man behind the US strategy of supporting the Mujahideen in Afghanistan in 1979, which drew in the Soviet Union, delivering to them "their Vietnam", and ultimately leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and thusly, the multi-polar world.<sup>5</sup> Brzezinski, in his 1997 book, *The Grand Chessboard*, which outlines a blueprint for the global strategy that should be taken by the United States as the world's sole superpower, in which he states, "Ever since the continents started interacting politically, some five hundred years ago,

Eurasia has been the center of world power.”<sup>6</sup> So, “[t]he spreading of the war in the Balkans increased the complexity of the problem facing the great powers. No longer was it merely a question of arranging a satisfactory settlement in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Now Serbia and Montenegro were belligerents, while in Bulgaria the large-scale atrocities had so aroused European public opinion that the restoration of Turkish rule no longer was feasible. The English were particularly sensitive to the “Bulgarian Horrors” because they had fought the Crimean War to preserve the Ottoman Empire.”<sup>7</sup> Further, “The remainder of the year 1876 was characterized by intense diplomatic activity. The most important consequences were the Reichstadt Agreement reached by Russia and Austria on July 8, the Russian ultimatum to Turkey which resulted in an armistice on October 31, and the international conference held in Constantinople in December, 1876, and January, 1877,” and then “Finally, on April 24, 1877, after nearly two years of futile negotiations, Russia declared war upon Turkey.” One year later, in 1878, the Ottoman Empire lost the war against Russia.

It was at this time, as Engdahl points out, “British banking and political elites had begun to express first signs of alarm over two specific aspects of the impressive industrial development in Germany”, and that, “The first was the emergence of an independent, modern German merchant and military naval fleet,” and “The second strategic alarm was sounded over an ambitious German project to construct a railway linking Berlin with, ultimately, Baghdad, then part of the Ottoman Empire.”<sup>8</sup> Engdahl further pointed out that, “In both areas, the naval challenge and the construction of a rail infrastructure linking Berlin to the Persian Gulf, oil figured as a decisive, if still hidden, motive for both the British and German sides.” On top of this, “Russia’s oil fields, including those in Baku, were challenging Standard Oil’s supremacy in Europe. Russia’s ascendancy in natural resources disrupted the strategic balance of power in Europe and troubled Britain.”<sup>9</sup> Standard Oil was of course the American oil monopoly controlled by the Rockefeller family, which was later broken up into successive companies which have changed names over the years and merged with other large multinational oil companies, so that today the spawn of Standard Oil’s empire now is with ExxonMobil, the largest oil corporation in the world, Esso, which merged with Exxon, Chevron, Amoco, which merged with British Petroleum, Marathon Oil and ConocoPhillips.

So, there were significant Anglo-American and European interests in Persian and Middle Eastern oil, which were being threatened by Russia, not to mention each other, and further, “The first to try to establish a Middle East oil industry was Baron Julius de Reuter, founder of Reuters News Service. He approached the shah of Iran in 1872. Reuter secured a notorious ‘exclusive concession’ to develop a railroad, plus all riparian mining and mineral rights in the country, including oil, for the next 70 years.” However, this deal broke down due to frustrations with the shah, “and the London investment market quickly dismissed Persia as a completely unreliable kingdom for investment.” But with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, “Some capitals wanted to dominate the soon-to-be dismantled territories as their own spheres of interest. Some merely wanted to prevent others from doing so. A few wanted to see new, friendly nations emerge in the aftermath of Turkey’s disintegration.” As it was further pointed out in Edwin Black’s book, *Banking on Baghdad*, “as the nineteenth century drew to a close, Turkish Mesopotamia and indeed the entire extended Middle East suddenly catapulted in importance – especially to England,” and he further explained, “as the twentieth century opened for business, the world needed much more oil. Petroleum was no longer just to illuminate lanterns, boil stew, and lubricate moving parts. Modern armies and navies demanded vast new supplies of fuel and petroleum by-producers.”<sup>10</sup>

Edwin Black noted in his book that, “As England’s fleet needed oil, the prospects for

finding it were troubling. Baku's [Russia's] petroleum industry was certainly expanding and by century's end represented more than half the world's supply. It had already surpassed even Standard Oil, which was suffering under legal restraints and now controlled only 43 percent of the world market. Russian oil was dominant in Europe. Royal Dutch Shell - still majority Dutch-owned- was also emerging. Germany had secured control over the vast fields of Romania. But Britain's new source of supply could not be controlled by any potential adversaries, such as Russia, expanding into eastern Europe, Germany, threatening to sever the British Empire, or Holland, which even then was fighting the bloody Boer War with England in South Africa," and Black continues, "The most logical candidate for new supply was, of course, the Persian Gulf. Britain could have chosen the United States or Mexico or Poland as a trusted new supplier. But Persia had been within the sphere of British influence since the days of the East India Company. Persia was halfway to India. Persia it was."<sup>11</sup> So, the British had their eyes set on Persia, and "In 1900, Australian mining entrepreneur William D'Arcy heard of the opportunity and stepped forward to take the risk. D'Arcy's own representative had suggested to the Persians that 'an industry may be developed that will compete with that of Baku.' After paying several thousand pounds to all the right go-betweens, D'Arcy secured a powerful and seemingly safe concession." In 1908, at the discovery of vast oil reserves in Persia, "a new corporation named the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was created. Excitement on London's financial markets could barely be contained. All available shares were purchased within 30 minutes. Britain was now assured of an abundant supply of Mideast Petroleum."<sup>12</sup>

Shortly before this took place, "In 1889, a group of German industrialists and bankers, led by Deutsche Bank, secured a concession from the Ottoman government to build a railway through Anatolia from the capitol, Constantinople. This accord was expanded ten years later, in 1899, when the Ottoman government gave the German group approval for the next stage of what became known as the Berlin-Baghdad railway project,"<sup>13</sup> and this was not taken lightly by other powers as, "This railroad line was not seen by the European powers as a mere industrial improvement battering transportation in the region, but also as a profound German military threat and oil asset - a land check to England's naval supremacy."<sup>14</sup> At this time, a senior British military adviser to the Serbian army, R.G.D. Laffan, stated, "A glance at the map of the world will show how the chain of States stretched from Berlin to Baghdad. The German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bulgaria, Turkey. One little strip of territory alone blocked the way and prevented the two ends of the chain from being linked together. That little strip was Serbia [. . .] Serbia was really the first line of defense of our eastern possessions. If she were crushed or enticed into the 'Berlin-Baghdad' system, then our vast but slightly defended empire would soon have felt the shock of Germany's eastward thrust."<sup>15</sup> Of this, Engdahl commented, "Thus it is not surprising to find enormous unrest and wars throughout the Balkans in the decade before 1914," and that "Conveniently enough, the conflict and wars helped weaken the Berlin-Constantinople alliance, and especially the completion of the Berlin-Baghdad rail link."<sup>16</sup>

During this time, especially in the beginning of the 20th Century, Britain saw Germany as its greatest imperial threat. "By 1914, Germany's fleet had risen to second place, just behind Britain's and gaining rapidly."<sup>17</sup> Further, "Britain sought with every device known, to delay and obstruct progress of the railway, while always holding out the hope of ultimate agreement to keep the German side off balance. This game lasted until the outbreak of war in August 1914."<sup>18</sup> With this rising German threat to British hegemony in the Gulf region, "Many in the British establishment had determined well before 1914 that war was the only course suitable to bring the European situation under control. British interests dictated,

according to her balance-of-power logic, a shift from the traditional 'pro-Ottoman and anti-Russian' alliance strategy of the nineteenth century, to a 'pro-Russian and anti-German' alliance strategy."<sup>19</sup> Following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28, 1914, in Bosnia, Austria declared war on Serbia, with the backing of Germany, and Russia mobilized to support Serbia. A few days later, Britain declared war on Germany, and the First World War broke out.

In the lead up to this period, much more developments were taking place with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC). Anglo-Persian, still a new company in the petroleum business, was not as well organized and did not yet have the global reach that its main competitors, Standard Oil and Royal Dutch Shell, had. As the British were eyeing far-off foreign oil fields, they began to lean towards favoring the Shell Company, as it was already by this time far-reaching. So a project was undertaken with the aim of remaking Shell in a British fashion, which at that time, was still under the control of the Dutch. As Anglo-Persian noticed the British governments move towards Shell, they saw their presence in Persia soon being phased out, so they attempted to reform themselves, "So Anglo-Persian purchased an existing network. The Europäische Petroleum Union (EPU) was an amalgam of continental oil distribution arms, mainly controlled by German concerns. EPU owned an operating subsidiary in Britain. The subsidiary controlled both an international oil shipping division, the Petroleum Steamship Company, and a domestic consumer sales agency, the Homelight Oil Company. [ . . . ] The EPU subsidiary's name was British Petroleum Company, with its first name descriptive only of its operating territory, not its true ownership, which was mainly German."<sup>20</sup> After World War 1 began, British Petroleum was seized by the British government for being 'enemy property,' and in 1917 Anglo-Persian bought the seized property from the British government, thus making British Petroleum distinctly British.

An agreement was signed in 1916, named the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which was "a secret tripartite collection of letters, complete with colored maps, agreeing to carve up the Mideast after the war. Baghdad and Basra [Middle and Lower Iraq] were decreed British spheres of influence, while oil-rich Mosul and Syria would be French, with Russia exercising a privilege over its frontiers with Persia."<sup>21</sup> As Black noted in his book, "The India Office in London expressed the thinking succinctly in a telegram to Charles Hardinge, the British viceroy of India: 'What we want is not a United Arabia: but a weak and disunited Arabia, split up into little principalities so far as possible under our suzerainty [authority] - but incapable of coordinated action against us, forming a buffer against the Powers in the West.'<sup>22</sup> The British were the most adamant about maintaining control in the region, as "After 1918, Britain continued to maintain almost a million soldiers stationed throughout the Middle East. The Persian Gulf had become a 'British Lake' by 1919."<sup>23</sup>

## **A British Vision for World Order and the Road to *Another* World War**

After World War 1, and with the signing of the Versailles Treaty in 1919, Britain saw to maintain its grasp of the vast oil reserves of the Middle East, "The ink on the Versailles treaty had barely dried when the powerful American oil interests of the Rockefeller Standard Oil companies realized they had been skillfully cut out of the spoils of war by their British alliance partners. The newly carved Middle East boundaries, as well as the markets of postwar Europe, were dominated by British government interests through Britain's covert ownership of Royal Dutch Shell and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company [British Petroleum]."<sup>24</sup> In fact, the make-up of Royal Dutch Shell was comprised between two parent companies, "Royal Dutch in the Netherlands, controlling 60 percent, and Shell Transport in the United Kingdom, controlling 40 percent."<sup>25</sup>



å In 1920, the San Remo agreement was signed in which “the French and British had divided up the Middle East for its oil.”<sup>26</sup> In March of 1921, a large meeting took place with many top British experts in Near East affairs, which convened in Cairo, Egypt. The meeting’s purpose was to outline the political divisions in Britain’s newly obtained territories, and it was headed by Britain’s secretary of state for colonial affairs, Winston Churchill, and included the participation of T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia). It was at this meeting that it was decided that “Mesopotamia was renamed Iraq and given to the son of Hashemite Hussain ibn Ali of Mecca [Saudi Arabia], Feisal bin Hussain. British Royal Air Force aircraft were permanently based in Iraq and its administration was placed under the effective control of Anglo-Persian Oil Company officials,” and by this time, the British citizen in control of Royal Dutch Shell, Henry Deterding, through the company, “had an iron grip on the vast oil concessions of the Dutch East Indies, on Persia, Mesopotamia (Iraq) and most of the postwar Middle East.”<sup>27</sup>

Spending the next years under the auspices of British control, the rest of the world, namely Europe, went through drastic changes. As the Soviet Union grew in power, so too did another European country, Germany. In 1933, Hitler and the Nazi party came to power and in 1939, invaded Poland, igniting World War 2. In 1940, Hitler had to make a choice about strategy against the British, and as William Shirer stated in book *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, “There was of course another alternative open to the Germans. They might bring Britain down by striking across the Mediterranean with their Italian ally, taking Gibraltar at its western opening and in the east driving on from Italy’s bases in North Africa through Egypt and over the canal to Iran, severing one of the Empire’s main life lines.”<sup>28</sup> This strategy was corroborated by Black, who stated, “All attention now focused on where Hitler could find the extra fuel he needed: on the gargantuan oil fields of Iraq and Iran. A 1941 War Cabinet strategy report concluded, ‘Oil is, of course, Germany’s main economic objective both in Iraq and Iran (Persia).’”<sup>29</sup>

Hitler pursued a strategy of supporting the self-determination and nationalism of the Arab and Middle Eastern countries in order to gain their favour, and he did so by supporting the Palestinians, which set the pace for all other conflicts in the region. (What else is new?) Members of the Reich began holding meetings with senior Iraqi leaders. The Nazi strategy in the region reflected the strategy by the British years earlier, with Lawrence of Arabia, who led Arab nations in fighting against the Ottomans in the name of their autonomy. Now, Hitler was supporting this same idea, to gain access to Mideast oil for its war effort, “Nonetheless, der Fuhrer still viewed Arab nationalism as a mere means to an end, that is, as a stepping-stone to the Nazi conquest and domination of the entire Middle East.”<sup>30</sup> On April 3, 1941, a coup d’état occurred in Iraq, in which pro-Hitler forces took power, and “almost simultaneously, neighboring Syria, the anticipated gateway for the Nazi invasion, exploded with Reich propaganda, supported by Gestapo agents and specially trained Arab Nazis.”<sup>31</sup> It was further pointed out that, “The coup in Baghdad threatened British interests for at least three reasons: it severed the vital air link, and a supplemental land route, between India and Egypt. It endangered the vital oil supply from the northern Iraq oilfields upon which British defense of the Mediterranean depended. Finally, an Arab nationalist success in Iraq could prove contagious and subvert Britain’s tenuous political position in Egypt and Palestine.”<sup>32</sup> The new Iraqi government attempted to attack British forces at an airfield in Habbaniya, but engaged in a battle they were unable to win, “By mid-May 1941, the British had occupied Basra [Southern Iraq] thereby asserting their rights under the 1930 treaty, lifted the siege of Habbaniya and at least temporarily forestalled Axis intervention.” As the British neared Iraq, the leader of the Iraqi pro-Arab nationalist government fled to Persia, and Britain retook

Iraq.

T.E. Lawrence in 1941, wrote a letter to the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, which stated, "The people of England have been led in Iraq into a trap from which it will be hard to escape with dignity and honour. They have been tricked into it by a steady withholding of information. The Baghdad communiqués are belated, insincere, incomplete. Things have been far worse than we have been told, our administration more bloody and inefficient than the public knows. It is a disgrace to our record, and may soon be too inflamed for any ordinary cure. We are today not far from disaster." The response from Prime Minister Winston Churchill was, "You do not need to bother too much about the long term future in Iraq. Your immediate task is to get a friendly Government set up in Baghdad."<sup>33</sup>

In August of 1941, Germany invaded Russia, and the pre-World War 1 British strategy of being 'pro-Russia' and 'anti-German' again ensued. Through the Lend-Lease program, America was sending in supplies through Persia (Iran), into Russia to help with the war effort against Nazi Germany. However, "While officially neutral, Persia had friendly ties with Germany and was home to many German nationals. [The Iranian King] Reza Shah Pahlavi's refusal to expel the German nationals, coupled with their more strategic concerns, prompted an Anglo-Soviet invasion in August 1941."<sup>34</sup> The British invaded Persia from their bases in Iraq, invading the South of Iran, and the Russians invaded from the North. The Shah who was in power at the time was, after a speedy overthrow of Iran by British and Russian tanks and infantry, exiled to South Africa, and "The British and Soviet troops met in Tehran [the Iranian capital] on 17 September and effectively divided the country between them for the rest of the war. A Tri-Partite Treaty of Alliance between Britain, Russia and Persia, signed in January 1942, committed the Allies to leaving Persia at the end of the war."

The British and Russians made the former Shah's son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the new Shah of Iran, with a pro-Western view. After the end of World War 2, the West's (namely the Anglo-American) enemy was now the Soviet Union, their former Ally against Hitler. At the end of World War 2, the United States had the upper-hand of all the great powers of the world, as it suffered little damage compared to the European and Asian countries, so it was necessary for Britain to maintain a strong alliance with America if it wanted to maintain its global reach. It was no longer the era after WW1, where Britain was able to push aside US interest in the Middle East and elsewhere, now, they had to be allied interests, in an Anglo-American alliance. Iran had never decreased in strategic importance, both for its oil, and for its position in relation to the Soviet Union, being directly below it. According to the agreement signed between Britain, the Soviet Union and Iran during the war, the Anglo-Russian forces were to leave in a period of 6 months after the end of the war. America was closely watching the relations between the Soviet Union and Iran post-war, "Another indication of Soviet intentions was Moscow's support of independence and autonomy movements in northern Iran."<sup>35</sup> Soviet leader Josef Stalin began grandstanding, speaking for autonomy for certain nations, which was taken by the West as an inclination toward Soviet expansion. Clearly, the USSR and Stalin were pursuing similar strategies in Persia that England was pursuing at the end of the First World War in the area east of Persia, of creating a 'weak and disunited' region, making it easier to be dominated by great powers. Further, "Moscow radio broadcasts criticized Anglo-Iranian Oil Company concessions in Khuzestan [Western Iranian province] and accused British authorities of obstructing the Tudeh-dominated trade union." Soviet supported autonomy in Azerbaijan [North of Persia] was backfiring, and eventually Iranians moved toward a more pro-American stance.

### **The Anglo-American Alliance vs. Democracy**

In the early 1950s, Mohammed Mossadeq was elected to the Iranian Parliament, and as leader of the Nationalists, and was subsequently appointed by the Shah as Prime Minister of Iran in 1951. In 1953, “the CIA and the British SIS orchestrated a coup d’etat that toppled the democratically elected government of Mohammad Mossadegh. The prime minister and his nationalist supporters in parliament roused Britain’s ire when they nationalised the oil industry in 1951, which had previously been exclusively controlled by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company [British Petroleum]. Mossadegh argued that Iran should begin profiting from its vast oil reserves.”<sup>36</sup> The Anglo-Persian Oil Company had changed its name to Anglo-Iranian Oil in 1935, but was still an arm of British imperialism, so when Mossadeq made the suggestion of nationalizing Iranian oil for the Iranians, he committed the ultimate sin in the eyes of the international imperialist powers, and threatened their control over the supplies of Iranian oil, so in their eyes, he had to go. Thus, “Britain accused him [Mossadeq] of violating the company’s legal rights and orchestrated a worldwide boycott of Iran’s oil that plunged the country into financial crisis. The British government tried to enlist the Americans in planning a coup, an idea originally rebuffed by President Truman. But when Dwight Eisenhower took over the White House, cold war ideologues – determined to prevent the possibility of a Soviet takeover – ordered the CIA to embark on its first covert operation against a foreign government.” The *Guardian* newspaper went on to report that, “A new book about the coup, *All the Shah’s Men*, which is based on recently released CIA documents, describes how the CIA – with British assistance – undermined Mossadegh’s government by bribing influential figures, planting false reports in newspapers and provoking street violence. Led by an agent named Kermit Roosevelt, the grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt, the CIA leaned on a young, insecure Shah to issue a decree dismissing Mossadegh as prime minister. By the end of Operation Ajax, some 300 people had died in firefights in the streets of Tehran.” After the violent overthrow of a democratic government, who did the Brits and Americans rely on to take back the government for their strategic interests? Well, the answer is simple, the same person they relied upon to hold it for them when they invaded in 1941, the Shah of Iran, whose father was deposed and exiled in the 1941 invasion, and as the *Guardian* noted, “The crushing of Iran’s first democratic government ushered in more than two decades of dictatorship under the Shah, who relied heavily on US aid and arms.”

As the *National Security Archives* note, “On the morning of August 19, 1953, a crowd of demonstrators operating at the direction of pro-Shah organizers with ties to the CIA made its way from the bazaars of southern Tehran to the center of the city. Joined by military and police forces equipped with tanks, they sacked offices and newspapers aligned with Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddeq and his advisers, as well as the communist Tudeh Party and others opposed to the monarch. By early afternoon, clashes with Mosaddeq supporters were taking place, the fiercest occurring in front of the prime minister’s home. Reportedly 200 people were killed in that battle before Mosaddeq escaped over his own roof, only to surrender the following day.”<sup>37</sup> Further, it was reported that, “The CIA, with help from British intelligence, planned, funded and implemented the operation. When the plot threatened to fall apart entirely at an early point, U.S. agents on the ground took the initiative to jump-start the operation, adapted the plans to fit the new circumstances, and pressed their Iranian collaborators to keep going. Moreover, a British-led oil boycott, supported by the United States, plus a wide range of ongoing political pressures by both governments against Mosaddeq, culminating in a massive covert propaganda campaign in the months leading up to the coup helped create the environment necessary for success.” This is very reminiscent of what was done during the 1941 coup in Iraq, where a pro-German group came to power, simultaneously with a massive Nazi propaganda campaign being



unleashed in neighboring Syria. It continued, "However, Iranians also contributed in many ways. Among the Iranians involved were the Shah, Zahedi and several non-official figures who worked closely with the American and British intelligence services. Their roles in the coup were clearly vital, but so also were the activities of various political groups - in particular members of the National Front who split with Mosaddeq by early 1953, and the Tudeh party - in critically undermining Mosaddeq's base of support."

The *New York Times* ran a special story examining the recently released documents pertaining to the CIA/MI6 (SIS) coup in 1953, in which they state, "Britain, fearful of Iran's plans to nationalize its oil industry, came up with the idea for the coup in 1952 and pressed the United States to mount a joint operation to remove the prime minister," and that, "The C.I.A. and S.I.S., the British intelligence service, handpicked Gen. Fazlollah Zahedi to succeed Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh and covertly funneled \$5 million to General Zahedi's regime two days after the coup prevailed."<sup>38</sup> It further revealed that, "Iranians working for the C.I.A. and posing as Communists harassed religious leaders and staged the bombing of one cleric's home in a campaign to turn the country's Islamic religious community against Mossadegh's government." Here, we see a clear example of the Anglo-Americans using covert intelligence agents to incite violence and even commit acts of terrorism.

In an interview with Amy Goodman, of the *Democracy Now!* radio program, Stephen Kinzer, author of the book, *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup And The Roots of Middle East Terror*, was discussing the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, of which he said, "So the Iranian oil is actually what maintained Britain at its level of prosperity and its level of military preparedness all throughout the '30s, the '40s, and the '50s. Meanwhile, Iranians were getting a pittance, they were getting almost nothing from the oil that came out of their own soil. Naturally, as nationalist ideas began to spread through the world in the post-World War II era, this injustice came to grate more and more intensely on the Iranian people. So they carried Mossadegh to power very enthusiastically. On the day he was elected prime minister, Parliament also agreed unanimously to proceed with the nationalization of the oil company. And the British responded as you would imagine. Their first response was disbelief. They just couldn't believe that someone in some weird faraway country-which was the way they perceived Iran-would stand up and challenge such an important monopoly. This was actually the largest company in the entire British Empire."<sup>39</sup> And as it was pointed out, Anglo-Iranian Oil later changed its name to the corporation we know today as British Petroleum, or BP, one of the three largest oil corporations in the world, after ExxonMobil and Royal Dutch Shell. Further, "The crushing of Iran's first democratic government ushered in more than two decades of dictatorship under the Shah, who relied heavily on US aid and arms."

Clearly, Royal Dutch Shell also had interests related to Iran, as William Engdahl explained in his book, in the lead up to the conflict between the Anglo-Americans and Iran, in which Mossadegh began the process of nationalization of oil, "Mossadegh went to Washington in a vain effort to enlist American help for his country's position. The major political blunder made by Mossadegh was his lack of appreciation of the iron-clad cartel relationship of Anglo-American interests around the vital issue of strategic petroleum control. U.S. 'mediator' W. Averill Harriman had gone to Iran, accompanied by a delegation packed with people tied to Big Oil interests, including State Department economist Walter Levy. Harriman recommended that Iran accept the British 'offer.' When Mossadegh went to Washington, the only suggestion he heard from the State Department was to appoint Royal

Dutch Shell as Iran's management company."[40](#) Engdahl continues, "Britain's Secret Intelligence Services [MI6] had convinced the CIA's Allen Dulles and his brother, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who then convinced Eisenhower, that the overthrow of Mossadegh was indispensable."[41](#)

Under the imposed dictatorship of the Shah, a new agency named the SAVAK was created, "Formed under the guidance of United States and Israeli intelligence officers in 1957, SAVAK developed into an effective secret agency,"[42](#) which was responsible for torturing political dissidents, assassinations and jailing thousands of political prisoners. The SAVAK's brutality and actions became synonymous with the Shah's reign, itself, as they were *his* secret police.

### **Bilderberg and the OPEC War**

On October 6, 1973, the Yom Kippur War broke out in the Middle East, in which Egypt and Syria invaded Israel. However, there is much about this war that is not commonly known. The supposed "hero" that came out of this war was Henry Kissinger, but in reality, he was anything but. William Engdahl's account of the Yom Kippur War and the subsequent 'oil shock', was described by the former Oil Minister of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Zaki Yamani, as being "the only accurate account I have seen of what really happened with the price of oil in 1973," as written on the back of his book, *A Century of War*. As Engdahl states, "The entire constellation of events surrounding the outbreak of the October War was secretly orchestrated by Washington and London, using the powerful secret diplomatic channels developed by Nixon's national security adviser, Henry Kissinger."[43](#) It continues, "Kissinger effectively controlled the Israeli policy response through his intimate relation with Israel's Washington ambassador, Simcha Dinitz. In addition, Kissinger cultivated channels to the Egyptian and Syrian side. His method was simply to misrepresent to each party the critical elements of the other, ensuring the war and its subsequent Arab oil embargo."

As John Loftus, former prosecutor with the U.S Justice Department's Nazi-hunting unit, who had received unprecedented access to top-secret CIA and NATO archives, pointed out in his book, *The Secret War Against the Jews: How Western Espionage Betrayed the Jewish People*, that, "As one source admitted, Nixon's staff had at least two days' advance warning that an attack was coming on October 6," and that no one warned Israel until the morning of the attack.[44](#) It continued, "Whatever the motive, during September and October 1973 the Nixon White House turned a blind eye toward [Egyptian President Anwar] Sadat's plans for a consolidated sneak attack against the Jews. Not one word of the NSA's [National Security Agency's] information leaked out until the morning of the attack." Further, it was revealed that, "A few hours before the invasion, the White House belatedly alerted Tel Aviv [Israel] that the nation was in deep trouble. An attack was coming on both fronts, but the White House insisted that the Israelis do nothing: no preemptive strikes, no firing the first shot. If Israel wanted American support, Kissinger warned, it could not even begin to mobilize until the Arabs invaded."[45](#) Engdahl further pointed out, "The war and its aftermath, Kissinger's infamous 'shuttle diplomacy,' were scripted in Washington along the precise lines of the Bilderberg [secretive international economic think tank] deliberations in Saltsjobaden the previous May, some six months before the outbreak of the war. Arab oil-producing nations were to be the scapegoats for the coming rage of the world, while the Anglo-American interests responsible stood quietly in the background."[46](#) John Loftus further explained, "A number of intelligence sources we interviewed about the Yom Kippur War, including several Israelis, insist that Kissinger had set up the Jews. He sat on the NSA's information, disappeared on the day of the invasion, and waited three days before convening the

Security Council at the UN.”[47](#) Recent revelations have revealed that “Newly released documents show that former United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger delayed telling President Richard Nixon about the start of the Yom Kippur War in 1973 to keep him from interfering,” and that “after Egypt and Syria attacked Israel on October 6, 1973, the Israelis informed Kissinger at 6 a.m., about 3 and a half hours passed before he spoke to Nixon.”[48](#)

As Engdahl pointed out, Germany attempted to maintain neutrality in the conflict, and refused the United States to ship weapons to Israel through Germany, so that Germany itself, could avoid the repercussions of the oil embargo placed by the Arab oil-producing countries on those who supported Israel in the war, in which the OPEC countries [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries] raised the price of oil by 400%. However, the US refused to allow Germany to be neutral in the Middle East conflict, “But significantly, Britain was allowed to clearly state its neutrality, thus avoiding the impact of the Arab oil embargo. Once again, London had skillfully maneuvered itself around an international crisis that it had been instrumental in precipitating.” Then, Engdahl mentions how, “One enormous consequence of the ensuing 400 percent rise in OPEC oil prices was that investments of hundreds of millions of dollars by British Petroleum [formerly Anglo-Iranian Oil], Royal Dutch Shell and other Anglo-American petroleum concerns in the risky North Sea could produce oil at a profit. It is a curious fact that the profitability of these new North Sea oilfields was not at all secure until after the OPEC price rises. Of course, this might have only been a fortuitous coincidence.”[49](#)

It is also highly ‘coincidental’ to notice that at the 1973 Bilderberg meeting, at which Engdahl describes this plan as being formulated, American participants included, other than Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, the author of *The Grand Chessboard*, Jimmy Carter’s National Security Adviser and architect of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan through funding the Afghan Mujahideen (later to be known as Al-Qaeda), E.G. Collado, the Vice President of Exxon Corp. at the time, as well as Walter Levy, an oil consultant who was also among the American delegation that visited Iran in the lead-up to the 1953 coup, George Ball, ex-deputy secretary of state, from the Netherlands there was Gerrit A. Wagner, the President of Royal Dutch Shell, the Chairman of the Bilderberg meeting was Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, who was married to Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, the principal shareholder of Royal Dutch Shell (isn’t called ‘Royal Dutch’ for nothin’), and from Great Britain, Sir Eric Drake, the Chairman of British Petroleum and Sir Denis Greenhill, a director of British Petroleum.[50](#) Although, again, I’m sure it was all *just* a coincidence, because these particular oil companies and the vast and powerful interests behind them would *never* be involved in any nefarious activities, unless of course you include coups, imperialism and war.

As Engdahl further elaborates, the White House attempted to send an official to the U.S Treasury with the aim of getting OPEC to lower the price of oil, however, “he was bluntly turned away. In a memo, the official stated, ‘It was the banking leaders who swept aside this advice and pressed for a “recycling” program to accommodate higher oil prices,” and so the Treasury established a secret deal with the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA), which was put in place and finalized by Henry Kissinger, and “Under the terms of agreement, a sizeable part of the huge new Saudi oil revenue windfall was to be invested in financing the U.S government deficits. A young Wall Street investment banker with the leading London-based Eurobond firm of White Weld & Co., David Mulford, was sent to Saudi Arabia to become the principal ‘investment adviser’ to SAMA; he was to guide the Saudi petrodollar

investments to the correct banks, naturally in London and New York. The Bilderberg scheme was operating just as planned.”[51](#)

Engdahl further points out that, “Following a meeting in Teheran [Iran] on January 1, 1974, a second price increase of more than 100 percent brought OPEC benchmark oil prices to \$11.65. This was done on the surprising demand of the Shah of Iran, who had been secretly put up to it by Henry Kissinger. Only months earlier, the Shah had opposed the OPEC increase to \$3.01 for fear that this would force Western exporters to charge more for the industrial equipment the Shah sought to import for Iran’s ambitious industrialization.”[52](#)

### **Enter The Peanut Farmer, the Trilateralists and Brzezinski’s Arc of Crisis**

After the Nixon and Ford administrations, both in which Henry Kissinger played a part of great influence, came the Jimmy Carter administration. However, what most people do not know is that this administration was largely dominated by a group of people who were all members of the Trilateral Commission, another secretive international think tank institution, often considered to be the sister group of Bilderberg. In fact, it was founded in 1973 by Zbigniew Brzezinski, who was present at the 1973 Bilderberg meeting, and influential banker David Rockefeller, who was also a founding member of the Bilderberg Group, and “The Commission’s purpose is to engineer an enduring partnership among the ruling classes of North America, Western Europe and Japan.”[53](#) It was also said that, “Trilateralists cautioned that ‘in many cases, the support for human rights will have to be balanced against other important goals of world order’.”[54](#) Much of the membership of the Trilateral Commission overlaps with that of Bilderberg, besides individuals such as Zbigniew Brzezinski and David Rockefeller, were George Ball and Henry Kissinger, and other Trilateral Commission members included George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton.[55](#) As the Trilateral Commission was being formed in 1973, Brzezinski and a few others chose to invite a man by the name of Jimmy Carter to join, who accepted and became an active member of the Commission, attending all their meetings,[56](#) and when Jimmy Carter became President in 1977, he appointed 25 other members of the Trilateral Commission into his administration, including his National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski.[57](#)

In the 70s, the Shah of Iran, which was at the time a secular [non-religious] nation, was stepping up the process of industrializing the country of Iran. At this time, Europe, especially at the behest of Germany and France, was pursuing greater cooperation and integration, and in doing so, created the European Monetary System (EMS), under which the nine European Community member states made the decision to have their central banks work together to align their currencies to one another. This would allow for greater competition between the Anglo-American dominated ‘petrodollar monetary system’ and the rising European Community, which was still feeling the effects of the OPEC oil shock. Part of the agreement between Germany and France was to develop an agreement with OPEC countries in the Middle East to exchange high-technology and equipment for a stable-priced oil supply. The Anglo-Americans saw this as a threat to their hegemony over the oil market, and so, “Carter had unsuccessfully sought to persuade the Schmidt [German] government, under the Carter administration’s new Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act, to abandon export of virtually all nuclear technology to the developing sector, [underdeveloped countries, i.e. Iran] on the false argument that peaceful nuclear plant technology threatened to proliferate nuclear weapons, an argument which uniquely stood to enhance the strategic position of the Anglo-American petroleum-based financial establishment.”[58](#) This effort to persuade Germany was to no avail, so the Anglo-Americans had to pursue a more drastic policy change.

This policy formed when, “In November 1978, President Carter named the Bilderberg group’s George Ball, another member of the Trilateral Commission, to head a special White House Iran task force under the National Security Council’s Brzezinski. Ball recommended that Washington drop support for the Shah of Iran and support the fundamentalist Islamic opposition of Ayatollah Khomeini. Robert Bowie from the CIA was one of the lead ‘case officers’ in the new CIA-led coup against the man their covert actions had placed into power 25 years earlier.”<sup>59</sup> This is further corroborated by author and journalist, Webster Tarpley in his book, *George Bush: The Unauthorized Biography*, in which he stated, “Carter and Brzezinski had deliberately toppled the Shah of Iran, and deliberately installed [Ayatollah] Khomeini in power. This was an integral part of Brzezinski’s ‘arc of crisis’ geopolitical lunacy, another made-in-London artifact which called for the US to support the rise of Khomeini, and his personal brand of fanaticism, a militant heresy within Islam. U.S. arms deliveries were made to Iran during the time of the Shah; during the short-lived Shahpour Bakhtiar government at the end of the Shah’s reign; and continuously after the advent of Khomeini.”<sup>60</sup> The *Defense and Foreign Affairs Daily* reported in their March 2004 edition that, “In 1978 while the West was deciding to remove His Majesty Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi from the throne, [Ayatollah] Shariatmadari was telling anyone who would listen not to allow ‘Ayatollah’ Ruhollah Khomeini and his velayat faghih (Islamic jurist) version of Islam to be allowed to govern Iran. Ayatollah Shariatmadari noted: ‘We mullahs will behave like bickering whores in a brothel if we come to power ... and we have no experience on how to run a modern nation so we will destroy Iran and lose all that has been achieved at such great cost and effort.’”<sup>61</sup> This was exactly the point of putting them in power, as it would destabilize an industrializing country, and as William Engdahl further pointed out, “Their scheme was based on a detailed study of the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism, as presented by British Islamic expert, Dr. Bernard Lewis, then on assignment at Princeton University in the United States. Lewis’ scheme, which was unveiled at the May 1979 Bilderberg meeting in Austria, endorsed the radical Muslim Brotherhood movement behind Khomeini, in order to promote balkanization of the entire Muslim Near East along tribal and religious lines. Lewis argued that the West should encourage autonomous groups such as the Kurds, Armenians, Lebanese Maronites, Ethiopian Copts, Azerbaijani Turks, and so forth. The chaos would spread in what he termed an ‘Arc of Crisis,’ which would spill over into the Muslim regions of the Soviet Union.”<sup>62</sup>

Bernard Lewis’ concept was also discussed in a 1979 article in *Foreign Affairs*, the highly influential seasonal journal of international relations put forward by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the pre-eminent policy think tank in the United States, whose leadership and many members also share membership with the Trilateral Commission and Bilderberg Group. The article stated, “The ‘arc of crisis’ has been defined as an area stretching from the Indian subcontinent in the east to the Horn of Africa in the west. The Middle East constitutes its central core. Its strategic position is unequalled: it is the last major region of the Free World directly adjacent to the Soviet Union, it holds in its subsoil about three-fourths of the proven and estimated world oil reserves, and it is the locus [central point] of one of the most intractable conflicts of the twentieth century: that of Zionism versus Arab nationalism. Moreover, national, economic and territorial conflicts are aggravated by the intrusion of religious passions in an area which was the birthplace of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and by the exposure, in the twentieth century, to two competing appeals of secular modernization: Western and communist,” and further stated, “Against the background of these basic facts, postwar American policy in the Middle East has focused on three major challenges: security of the area as against Soviet threats to its integrity and independence, fair and peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and safe access to its



oil.”[63](#)

In May of 2006, US Vice President Dick Cheney was making some remarks at the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia Luncheon in honor of Bernard Lewis, the conceptualist behind the ‘arc of crisis’ strategy, at which he stated, “I’m delighted, as always, to see Henry [Kissinger]. He’s a frequent visitor to the White House. He was among those who joined us a couple of weeks ago in hosting a lunch for President Hu Jintao of China. And as Henry mentioned, he and I go back a long ways to the Ford Administration, when he was Secretary of State and I was White House Chief of Staff — the old days, when I had real power. (Laughter.) But Henry and I remain close friends,” and he continued, “Henry and I share an appreciation for history, and I know he would agree, as I do, with a very astute observer who once said that history ‘is the collective memory, the guiding experience of human society, and we still badly need that guidance.’ Those are the words of Dr. Bernard Lewis, a man who first studied the Middle East some 70 years ago.” Then, Cheney went on to say, “I had the pleasure of first meeting Bernard more than 15 years ago, during my time as [George HW Bush’s] Secretary of Defense [...] Since then we have met often, particularly during the last four-and-a-half years, and Bernard has always had some very good meetings with President Bush.”[64](#)

William Engdahl continued in his examination of the 1979 revolution/coup in Iran, of which he said, “The coup against the Shah, like that against Mossadeq in 1953, was run by British and American intelligence, with the bombastic American, Brzezinski, taking public ‘credit’ for getting rid of the ‘corrupt’ Shah, while the British characteristically remained in the background. During 1978, negotiations were under way between the Shah’s government and British Petroleum for renewal of the 25-year oil extraction agreement. By October 1978, the talks had collapsed over a British ‘offer’ which demanded exclusive rights to Iran’s future oil output, while refusing to guarantee purchase of the oil. With their dependence on British-controlled export apparently at an end, Iran appeared on the verge of independence in its oil sales policy for the first time since 1953, with eager prospective buyers in Germany, France, Japan and elsewhere.”[65](#) The strategy was to have “religious discontent against the Shah [which] could be fanned by trained agitators deployed by British and US intelligence,” and so “As Iran’s domestic economic troubles grew [as a result of the British refusing to buy Iranian oil in a strategy of economic pressure], American ‘security’ advisers to the Shah’s Savak secret police implemented a policy of ever more brutal repression, in a manner calculated to maximize popular antipathy to the Shah. At the same time, the Carter administration cynically began protesting abuses of ‘human rights’ under the Shah,” and the strategy even entailed using the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), which “gave the Ayatollah Khomeini a full propaganda platform inside Iran during this time. The British government-owned broadcasting organization refused to give the Shah’s government an equal chance to reply.”[66](#) Further, “during the Christmas season of 1979, one Captain Sivash Setoudeh, an Iranian naval officer and the former Iranian military attaché before the breaking of diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran [in 1979], was arranging arms deliveries to [Ayatollah] Khomeini out of a premises of the US Office of Naval Research in Arlington, Virginia.”[67](#)

With the successful revolution/coup in Iran in 1979, the Shah was exiled to Egypt, and back in the United States, Bilderberg and Trilateral Commission co-founder and international banker David Rockefeller was approached by Princess Ashraf, the sister of the deposed Shah, who was suffering from cancer, and “she was turning for help to the man who ran one of the leading U.S. banks [Chase Manhattan - now, JP Morgan Chase], one which had made a

fortune serving as the Shah's banker for a quarter century and handling billions of dollars in Iran's assets. Ashraf's message was straightforward. She wanted Rockefeller to intercede with Jimmy Carter and ask the President to relent on his decision against granting the Shah refuge in the United States," and further, "The new Iranian government also wanted Chase Manhattan to return Iranian assets, which Rockefeller put at more than \$1 billion in 1978, although some estimates ran much higher."<sup>68</sup> And so, "a public campaign by Rockefeller – along with [Henry] Kissinger and former Chase Manhattan Bank Chairman John McCloy – to find a suitable home in exile for the Shah" was undertaken, and "Rockefeller also pressed the Shah's case personally with Carter when the opportunity presented itself. On April 9, 1979, at the end of an Oval Office meeting on another topic, Rockefeller handed Carter a one-page memo describing the views of many foreign leaders disturbed by recent U.S. foreign policy actions, including Carter's treatment of the Shah." According to a *Time Magazine* article in 1979, "Kissinger concedes that he then made telephone calls to 'three senior officials' and paid two personal visits to [Secretary of State] Vance to argue that a U.S. visa should be granted the Shah. He expressed that view volubly in private conversations with many people, including journalists. He said that the last of his direct pleas was made in July. He and Rockefeller then sought to find asylum elsewhere for the Shah. Rockefeller found a temporary residence in the Bahamas, and Kissinger persuaded the government of Mexico to admit the Shah on a tourist visa."<sup>69</sup> Eventually their efforts were successful, as it was further revealed, "The late Shah had friends at Chase Manhattan Bank and in the highest echelons of trilateral power. David Rockefeller and Henry Kissinger played instrumental roles in arranging the Shah's exile and shaping US policy toward Iran."<sup>70</sup>

The Shah later recounted his experience of the 1979 Revolution, saying "I did not know it then – perhaps I did not want to know – but it is clear to me now that the Americans wanted me out. Clearly this is what the human rights advocates in the State Department wanted ... What was I to make of the Administration's sudden decision to call former Under Secretary of State [and Bilderberg member] George Ball to the White House as an adviser on Iran? ... Ball was among those Americans who wanted to abandon me and ultimately my country," and as Engdahl notes, "the new Khomeini regime had singled out the country's nuclear power development plans and announced cancellation of the entire program for French and German nuclear reactor construction."<sup>71</sup> Following this, Iran cut off its oil exports to the world, coinciding with Saudi Arabia cutting its oil production drastically and British Petroleum cancelled major oil contracts, which resulted in soaring oil prices.

For those who find this strategy of the British and Americans engineering the Iranian Revolution in 1979 far-fetched and implausible, in as much as on the face of it, it seemed to work against the interests of the United States and Britain, all that is needed is a quick glance at another precedent of this activity, and you need not look further than east of Iran's border, to Afghanistan, in the very same year, 1979. Under Brzezinski's "Arc of Crisis" strategy, developed by Bernard Lewis and presented at the 1979 Bilderberg meeting, Afghanistan was a key target in the crosshairs of the Trilateral Administration of Jimmy Carter. In an interview with *Le Nouvel Observateur* in 1998, Zbigniew Brzezinski was asked a poignant question, "The former director of the CIA [and current Secretary of Defense], Robert Gates, stated in his memoirs ["From the Shadows"], that American intelligence services began to aid the Mujahadeen in Afghanistan 6 months before the Soviet intervention. In this period you were the national security adviser to President Carter. You therefore played a role in this affair. Is that correct?" to which Brzezinski replied, "Yes. According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahadeen began during 1980,

that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan, 24 Dec 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise. Indeed, it was July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very day, I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention." The interviewer then posed the question, "Despite this risk, you were an advocate of this covert action. But perhaps you yourself desired this Soviet entry into war and looked to provoke it?" to which Brzezinski very diplomatically responded, "It isn't quite that. We didn't push the Russians to intervene, but we knowingly increased the probability that they would."<sup>72</sup>

The interviewer, on a continual role of asking very pertinent and important questions, stated, "When the Soviets justified their intervention by asserting that they intended to fight against a secret involvement of the United States in Afghanistan, people didn't believe them. However, there was a basis of truth. You don't regret anything today?" which provoked Brzezinski's response, saying, "Regret what? That secret operation was an excellent idea. It had the effect of drawing the Russians into the Afghan trap and you want me to regret it? The day that the Soviets officially crossed the border, I wrote to President Carter. We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam war. Indeed, for almost 10 years, Moscow had to carry on a war unsupportable by the government, a conflict that brought about the demoralization and finally the breakup of the Soviet empire." When asked whether or not he regretted supporting Islamic fundamentalism, which fostered the rise of terrorism (including the creation of Al-Qaeda), Brzezinski revealingly responded, "What is most important to the history of the world? The Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire? Some stirred-up Moslems or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the cold war?" Clearly, this was a veiled description of the strategy of "Arc of Crisis" that was imposed during that time, in fact, that very year; where Anglo-American interests (strategic or economic) were threatened, the "Arc of Crisis" was to be introduced, in an organized effort to destabilize the region. In the case of Afghanistan, it was imposed under strategic interests, being Afghanistan's relevance to and relationship with the Soviet Union; in the case of Iran, it was largely economic interests, such as the end of the British Petroleum contract, and move towards using Iranian oil for the benefit of the Iranians in industrializing the country, that motivated the implementation of the "Arc of Crisis" in that country.

### **Saddam and Iraq's New Role in the Anglo-American Alliance**

In 1980, a war broke out between Iraq and Iran, which lasted until 1988. However, there is a lot more to this war, as there is to most conflicts, than is widely understood. Saddam Hussein was in power in Iraq when this war broke out, however, it is first necessary to go back several years, when Saddam Hussein came to power in Iraq in order to better understand the story of the Iran-Iraq War. In 2003, Reuters News Agency reported that, "If the United States succeeds in shepherding the creation of a post-war Iraqi government, a former National Security Council official says, it won't be the first time that Washington has played a primary role in changing that country's rulers," as "Roger Morris, a former State Department foreign service officer who was on the NSC [National Security Council] staff during the Johnson and Nixon administrations, says the CIA had a hand in two coups in Iraq during the darkest days of the Cold War, including a 1968 putsch that set Saddam Hussein firmly on the path to power," and that, "in 1963, two years after the ill-fated U.S. attempt at overthrow in Cuba known as the Bay of Pigs, the CIA helped organize a bloody coup in Iraq that deposed the Soviet-leaning government of Gen. Abdel-Karim Kassem."<sup>73</sup> Further,

“Kassem, who had allowed communists to hold positions of responsibility in his government, was machine-gunned to death. And the country wound up in the hands of the Baath party. At the time, Morris continues, Saddam was a Baath operative studying law in Cairo, one of the venues the CIA chose to plan the coup,” and “In fact, he claims the former Iraqi president castigated by President George W. Bush as one of history’s most ‘brutal dictators’ was actually on the CIA payroll in those days.”

The article continued, “In 1968, Morris says, the CIA encouraged a palace revolt among Baath party elements led by long-time Saddam mentor Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, who would turn over the reins of power to his ambitious protégé in 1979,” and that, “Morris, who resigned from the NSC staff over the 1970 U.S. invasion of Cambodia, says he learned the details of American covert involvement in Iraq from ranking CIA officials of the day, including Teddy Roosevelt’s grandson, Archibald Roosevelt.” It’s also interesting to note that it was Teddy Roosevelt’s other grandson, Kermit Roosevelt, who was pivotal in organizing and orchestrating the 1953 coup in Iran, so it is likely that Morris’ assertions are correct, as Archibald Roosevelt would have a very keen understanding of the highly covert elements of CIA operations.

However, this is not the only source on this important story, as the *Indo-Asian News Service* reported in 2003, that “American intelligence operatives used him [Saddam] as their instrument for more than 40 years, according to former US intelligence officials and diplomats,” and that, “While many have thought that Saddam Hussein became involved with US intelligence agencies from the 1980 Iran-Iraq war, his first contacts date back to 1959 when he was part of a CIA-authorized six-man squad tasked with assassinating then Iraqi prime minister General Abd al-Karim Qasim.”<sup>74</sup> The article continued, “In July 1958, Qasim had overthrown the Iraqi monarchy [which was put into power by the British]. According to US officials, Iraq was then regarded as a key buffer and strategic asset in the Cold War with the Soviet Union. For example, in the mid-1950s, Iraq was quick to join the anti-Soviet Baghdad Pact which was to defend the region and whose members included Turkey, Britain, Iran and Pakistan. Little attention was paid to Qasim’s bloody and conspiratorial regime until his sudden decision to withdraw from the pact in 1959,” and so, “The assassination was set for October 7, 1959, but it was completely botched. One former CIA official said the 22-year-old Saddam lost his nerve and fired too soon, killing Qasim’s driver and only wounding Qasim in the shoulder and arm. Qasim, hiding on the floor of his car, escaped death, and Saddam Hussein, whose calf had been grazed by a fellow would-be assassin, escaped to Tikrit, thanks to CIA and Egyptian intelligence agents. He then crossed into Syria and was transferred by Egyptian intelligence agents to Beirut.” From there, “the CIA paid for Saddam Hussein’s apartment and put him through a brief training course. The agency then helped him get to Cairo. During this time Saddam made frequent visits to the American Embassy where CIA specialists such as Miles Copeland and CIA station chief Jim Eichelberger were in residence and knew him. In February 1963, Qasim was killed in a Baath Party coup. Morris claimed that the CIA was behind the coup.”

*Newsmax* also reported this story, stating that directly after the coup, “the agency quickly moved into action. Noting that the Baath Party was hunting down Iraq’s communists, the CIA provided the submachine gun-toting Iraqi National Guardsmen with lists of suspected communists who were then jailed, interrogated, and summarily gunned down, according to former U.S. intelligence officials with intimate knowledge of the executions,” and that, “A former senior CIA official said: ‘It was a bit like the mysterious killings of Iran’s communists just after Ayatollah Khomeini came to power in 1979. All 4,000 of his



communists suddenly got killed’.”<sup>75</sup> Another report of this came out through *Consortium News*, which wrote a story about the confessions of a retired CIA official, James Critchfield, who explained that, “In 1959, a young Saddam Hussein, allegedly in cahoots with the CIA, botched an assassination attempt on Iraq’s leader, Gen. Abdel Karim Qassim. Hussein fled Iraq and reportedly hid out under the CIA’s protection and sponsorship,” and “By early 1963, Qassim’s policies were raising new alarms in Washington. He had withdrawn Iraq from the pro-Western Baghdad Pact, made friendly overtures to Moscow, and revoked oil exploration rights granted by a predecessor to a consortium of companies that included American oil interests.”<sup>76</sup> It further reported that, “It fell to Critchfield, who was then in an extended tenure in charge of the CIA’s Near East and South Asia division, to remove Qassim. Critchfield supported a coup d’etat in February 1963 that was spearheaded by Iraq’s Baathist party. The troublesome Qassim was killed, as were scores of suspected communists who had been identified by the CIA,” and that “The 1963 coup also paved the way for another momentous political development. Five years later, Saddam Hussein emerged as a leader in another Baathist coup. Over the next decade, he bullied his way to power, eventually consolidating a ruthless dictatorship that would lead to three wars in less than a quarter century.”

So, jump ahead to 1980, when Saddam Hussein was still a US puppet, and when the Iran-Iraq War began. The Iran-Iraq War “followed months of rising tension between the Iranian Islamic republic and secular nationalist Iraq. In mid-September 1980 Iraq attacked, in the mistaken belief that Iranian political disarray would guarantee a quick victory.”<sup>77</sup> However, Dr. Francis Boyle, an international law professor who also has a PhD in political science from Harvard, and former board member of Amnesty International, wrote an article for *Counterpunch* in which he stated that, “There were several indications from the public record that the Carter Administration tacitly condoned, if not actively encouraged, the Iraqi invasion of Iran in September of 1980,” and that, “Presumably the Iraqi army could render Iranian oil fields inoperable and, unlike American marines, do so without provoking the Soviet Union to exercise its alleged right of counter-intervention.”<sup>78</sup> Boyle continued, “The report by columnist Jack Anderson that the Carter Administration was seriously considering an invasion of Iran to seize its oil fields in the Fall of 1980 as a last minute fillip to bolster his prospects for reelection was credible.” In 1981, Carter lost his re-election to Ronald Reagan, and “At the outset of the Reagan Administration, Secretary of State Alexander Haig and his mentor, Henry Kissinger, devoted a good deal of time to publicly lamenting the dire need for a ‘geopolitical’ approach to American foreign policy decision-making, one premised on a ‘grand theory’ or ‘strategic design’ of international relations,” and Boyle continued, “Consequently, Haig quite myopically viewed the myriad of problems in the Persian Gulf, Middle East, and Southwest Asia primarily within the context of a supposed struggle for control over the entire world between the United States and the Soviet Union. Haig erroneously concluded that this global confrontation required the United States to forge a ‘strategic consensus’ with Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf Sheikhdoms and Pakistan in order to resist anticipated Soviet aggression in the region.”

As the *National Security Archive* reported, “Initially, Iraq advanced far into Iranian territory, but was driven back within months. By mid-1982, Iraq was on the defensive against Iranian human-wave attacks. The U.S., having decided that an Iranian victory would not serve its interests, began supporting Iraq; measures already underway to upgrade U.S.-Iraq relations were accelerated, high-level officials exchanged visits, and in February 1982 the State Department removed Iraq from its list of states supporting international terrorism,” and that “Prolonging the war was phenomenally expensive. Iraq received



massive external financial support from the Gulf states, and assistance through loan programs from the U.S. The White House and State Department pressured the Export-Import Bank to provide Iraq with financing, to enhance its credit standing and enable it to obtain loans from other international financial institutions. The U.S. Agriculture Department provided taxpayer-guaranteed loans for purchases of American commodities, to the satisfaction of U.S. grain exporters.”<sup>79</sup> The *Archive*, which draws all their information from declassified government documents which they have available for all to see on their site, further stated, “The U.S. restored formal relations with Iraq in November 1984, but the U.S. had begun, several years earlier, to provide it with intelligence and military support (in secret and contrary to this country’s [America’s] official neutrality) in accordance with policy directives from President Ronald Reagan,” and it continued, “By the summer of 1983 Iran had been reporting Iraqi use of using chemical weapons for some time. The Geneva protocol requires that the international community respond to chemical warfare, but a diplomatically isolated Iran received only a muted response to its complaints.”

The Archive further explained that, “The U.S., which followed developments in the Iran-Iraq war with extraordinary intensity, had intelligence confirming Iran’s accusations, and describing Iraq’s “almost daily” use of chemical weapons, concurrent with its policy review and decision to support Iraq in the war,” and that “The intelligence indicated that Iraq used chemical weapons against Iranian forces, and, according to a November 1983 memo, against ‘Kurdish insurgents’ as well”. The *Archives* further reveal that, “Donald Rumsfeld (who had served in various positions in the Nixon and Ford administrations, including as President Ford’s defense secretary, and at this time headed the multinational pharmaceutical company G.D. Searle & Co.) was dispatched to the Middle East as a presidential envoy. His December 1983 tour of regional capitals included Baghdad, where he was to establish ‘direct contact between an envoy of President Reagan and President Saddam Hussein,’ while emphasizing ‘his close relationship’ with the president. Rumsfeld met with Saddam, and the two discussed regional issues of mutual interest, shared enmity toward Iran and Syria, and the U.S.’s efforts to find alternative routes to transport Iraq’s oil; its facilities in the Persian Gulf had been shut down by Iran, and Iran’s ally, Syria, had cut off a pipeline that transported Iraqi oil through its territory. Rumsfeld made no reference to chemical weapons, according to detailed notes on the meeting.” This was the incident in which the now-infamous photo of Donald Rumsfeld (who was George W. Bush’s Secretary of Defense until 2007) shaking hands with Saddam Hussein was taken.

It was further reported that, “The CIA/Defense Intelligence Agency [DIA] relation with Saddam intensified after the start of the Iran-Iraq war in September of 1980. During the war, the CIA regularly sent a team to Saddam to deliver battlefield intelligence obtained from Saudi AWACS surveillance aircraft to aid the effectiveness of Iraq’s armed forces, according to a former DIA official, part of a U.S. interagency intelligence group,” and that “This former official said that he personally had signed off on a document that shared U.S. satellite intelligence with both Iraq and Iran in an attempt to produce a military stalemate. ‘When I signed it, I thought I was losing my mind,’ the former official told UPI.”<sup>80</sup> The article continued, “A former CIA official said that Saddam had assigned a top team of three senior officers from the Estikhbarat, Iraq’s military intelligence, to meet with the Americans,” and that “the CIA and DIA provided military assistance to Saddam’s ferocious February 1988 assault on Iranian positions in the al-Fao peninsula by blinding Iranian radars for three days.”

On top of all this, the *London Independent* reported in 2002 that, “Iraq’s 11,000-page

report to the UN Security Council lists 150 foreign companies, including some from America, Britain, Germany and France, that supported Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction program," and it continued, "British officials said the list of companies appeared to be accurate. Eighty German firms and 24 US companies are reported to have supplied Iraq with equipment and know-how for its weapons programs from 1975 onwards."<sup>81</sup> The article further stated that, "From about 1975 onwards, these companies are shown to have supplied entire complexes, building elements, basic materials and technical know-how for Saddam Hussein's program to develop nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction," which would have included the weapons used against the Iranians and Kurds in the north of Iraq, which constituted war crimes.

### **Iran Contra: The Double Standard Status Quo**

Also during the Iran-Iraq War, "On November 25, 1986, the biggest political and constitutional scandal since Watergate exploded in Washington when President Ronald Reagan told a packed White House news conference that funds derived from covert arms deals with the Islamic Republic of Iran had been diverted to buy weapons for the U.S.-backed Contra rebels in Nicaragua," and that "In the weeks leading up to this shocking admission, news reports had exposed the U.S. role in both the Iran deals and the secret support for the Contras, but Reagan's announcement, in which he named two subordinates — National Security Advisor John M. Poindexter and NSC [National Security Council] staffer Oliver L. North — as the responsible parties, was the first to link the two operations."<sup>82</sup> As the *National Security Archive* reported, "Of all the revelations that emerged, the most galling for the American public was the president's abandonment of the long-standing policy against dealing with terrorists, which Reagan repeatedly denied doing in spite of overwhelming evidence that made it appear he was simply lying to cover up the story," and further, "Iran-Contra was a battle over presidential power dating back directly to the Richard Nixon era of Watergate, Vietnam and CIA dirty tricks. That clash continues under the presidency of George W. Bush, which has come under frequent fire for the controversial efforts of the president, as well as Vice President Richard Cheney, to expand Executive Branch authority over numerous areas of public life."

As Webster Tarpley wrote in his book, *George Bush: The Unauthorized Biography*, of which the chapter covering the Iran-Contra Affair relies primarily upon exposing George Bush's intimate relationship with and involvement in the Affair, that Iran-Contra involved, "the secret arming of the Khomeini regime in Iran by the U.S. government, during an official U.S.-decreed arms embargo against Iran, while the U.S. publicly denounced the recipients of its secret deliveries as terrorists and kidnappers – a policy initiated under the Jimmy Carter presidency and accelerated by the Reagan-Bush administration," in which George H.W. Bush was Vice President.<sup>83</sup> As Tarpley put it, "many once-classified documents have come to light, which suggest that Bush organized and supervised many, or most, of the criminal aspects of the Iran-Contra adventures,"<sup>84</sup> and that, "With the encouragement of Bush, and the absence of opponents to the scheme, President Reagan signed the authorization to arm the Khomeini regime with missiles, and keep the facts of this scheme from congressional oversight committees," and further, an official report on the situation stated, "The proposal to shift to direct U.S. arms sales to Iran . . . was considered by the president at a meeting on January 17 which only the Vice President [Bush], Mr. Regan, Mr. Fortier, and VADM Poindexter attend. Thereafter, the only senior-level review the Iran initiative received was during one or another of the President's daily national security briefings. These were routinely attended only by the President, the Vice President, Mr. Regan, and VADM

Poindexter.”[85](#)

Now, I will again briefly recount the information I provided regarding the Carter administration having a hand in the coup / Revolution in Iran in 1979, which installed the Islamic government of Ayatollah Khomeini, as I feel it is a very important point to address, largely because it is a very uncommon understanding of that event in history, as it is predominantly seen in historical context as being against the interests of the United States, and as being a disastrous situation for the US; seen as a radical Islamic revolt against America and all it ‘stands’ for. However, taking into consideration of all the other information provided thus far, it does not appear to be a very ‘radical’ or implausible understanding of that event, as similar support for and creation of radical Islamist movements is well documented, such as that which took place the same year as the revolution/coup in Afghanistan, under the same strategy of “Arc of Crisis”, and now, also taking into consideration the facts of the Iran-Contra Affair, which was one of the largest constitutional scandals in United States history and received great public attention.

This scandal, however, was largely covered up in the official investigation done by Congress, and the facts of George Bush’s involvement, was not widely known by any means, which is no surprise considering the fact that one prominent Congressman who was investigating the Iran-Contra Affair was a man by the name of Dick Cheney, the current Vice President, who, while sitting on the investigative committee, did not apply blame to the Executive branch [President’s administration] of government for its violation of the Constitution, but instead saw fit to blame Congress for “unjustly” investigating and questioning Presidential authority.[86](#) Most of the evidence of this important event was revealed over the years since it occurred, however, the blame was all placed on two individuals, the “fall guys”, John Poindexter and Oliver North.

Oliver North now has his own show on Fox News,[87](#) and Poindexter briefly worked in the George W. Bush administration, as Director of the Information Awareness Office, a large surveillance and tracking and “Big Brother” program, of which the *New Yorker* described as, “weird”, saying, “The Information Awareness Office’s official seal features an occult pyramid topped with mystic all-seeing eye, like the one on the dollar bill. Its official motto is ‘Scientia Est Potentia,’ which doesn’t mean ‘science has a lot of potential.’ It means ‘knowledge is power.’ And its official mission is to ‘imagine, develop, apply, integrate, demonstrate and transition information technologies, components and prototype, closed-loop, information systems that will counter asymmetric threats by achieving total information awareness’,” and further, “the Office’s main assignment is, basically, to turn everything in cyberspace about everybody—tax records, driver’s-license applications, travel records, bank records, raw F.B.I. files, telephone records, credit-card records, shopping-mall security-camera videotapes, medical records, every e-mail anybody ever sent—into a single, humongous, multi-googolplexibyte database that electronic robots will mine for patterns of information suggestive of terrorist activity”[88](#)... my God.

The Iran-Contra Affair entailed illegally sending arms to the Khomeini government in Iran, America’s “supposed” enemy, and using that money to fund Contras, also known as terrorist organizations, in Nicaragua, which were responsible for killing many innocent civilians and orchestrating terror attacks. Incidentally, the arms were being sold to Iran at the same time that the same organization, the CIA, was providing intelligence and directions (not to mention weapons) to Iraq in its war against Iran. So, in effect, the United States, through its covert military/intelligence operations, was arming both sides of the Iran-Iraq War. Again, sounds a lot like the “Arc of Crisis” strategy. And just the very fact that they were arming

the Khomeni regime warrants a closer look at the events surrounding Khomeni's rise to power.

As an aside, it is also very interesting to note some other individuals who were implicated in Iran-Contra (although not publicly), but since the event documentation has come about which suggests larger roles for a variety of people, including Robert Gates, who is currently the new Secretary of Defense (after Rumsfeld left), a former director of the CIA in the George H.W. Bush administration and the person who, in his memoirs, discussed the fact that the CIA helped instigate the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Other prominent names to note are Elliott Abrams, who was President Reagan's senior State Department official for Latin America in the mid-1980s, at the height of Iran-Contra, and was later indicted for providing false testimony, and accepted his guilt, however, when Bush Sr. was President, Abrams was pardoned, and today, serves as Deputy National Security Advisor for Global Democracy Strategy in the Bush Jr. administration. David Addington worked close with Cheney on the Congressional investigation as a staffer, and currently is Chief of Staff to Dick Cheney. Others, with some affiliation to Iran-Contra were Michael Ledeen, who is currently a prominent neoconservative with close ties to the Bush administration and a strong advocate of regime change in Iran, John Bolton, who was more recently George W. Bush's Ambassador to the United Nations, also a strong advocate of war with Iran, Manuchehr Ghorbanifar, who more recently was used as an important source for the Pentagon on Iranian affairs, John Negroponte, who was in past years Bush's Ambassador to Iraq, and was Director of National Intelligence, the head intelligence position in the United States, and is currently Deputy Secretary of State under Condoleezza Rice, and Otto Reich, who briefly served as Bush Jr's assistant secretary of state for Latin America.[89](#)

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