

Latest Bush administration war propaganda: Iran's president-elect as hostage taker

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As part of the propaganda pretext towards a full-scale [US military attack on Iran](#) (covert operations and military preparations have [have been ongoing](#) for months) the Bush administration, the Associated Press, and a handful of former US hostages (all former CIA and US military officers) have accused Iranian President-elect [Mahmoud Ahmadinejad](#) of being one of the 1979 hostage-takers.

The former hostages, Chuck Scott, William Daugherty, Don Sharer and David Roeder declared to the AP that they have “no doubt” that Ahmadinejad was a hostage-taker after seeing the Iranian president-elect on TV. Scott, a former US Army Colonel, declared: “This is the guy. There’s no question about it. You could make him a blond and shave his whiskers, put him in a zoot suit and I’d still spot him.” Daugherty was a CIA officer, Sharer was a US Navy attaché, and Roeder was a deputy Air Force attaché. Two other ex-hostages, William Gallegos and Kevin Hermening, reached the same conclusion after looking at photos.

It is telling that the accusations were first brought to light by the Associated Press (which itself is connected to the White House, functioning as [part of the Bush administration machine](#)). It is even more telling that the uncorroborated, unconfirmed, and unproven speculations and suspicions of former US military and CIA personnel (whose own roles in Iran in the 1970s deserve to be investigated) have immediately been made world news headlines without factual corroboration, and without cross-examination of the accusers.

Hot off of [Bush's speech at Fort Bragg](#) , the Bush/Rove machine is running with it. The hostage crisis myth—“America held hostage”—is being reignited and milked for yet another generation—Iran as fundamentalist “terrorist” hotbed, led by a “terrorist hostage taker,” Ahmadinejad. Expect old blindfolded hostage footage, and reels of “fanatical Iranian street demons” to be dusted off and looped endlessly, shown alongside photos of Ahmadinejad, the new enemy of the hour.

In an interview with foreign reporters, Bush uttered what sounded like an idiot’s gibberish, but was actually a surgical and calculated line, directly out of the Karl Rove playbook. Bush said: “I have *no information*, but obviously *his involvement* raises many questions.” While denying having “information,” Bush made sure that the accusation of Ahmadinejad “involvement” stuck, and spreads like wildfire all over the world. (Condoleeza Rice pulled an identical stunt last week, claiming to have no “information” on Syrian involvement in the recent political assassinations in Lebanon, while still accusing Syria of “*involvement*.”)

[Mark Bowden](#) , author of the notorious *Blackhawk Down* (the whitewash of US operations in Somalia), is one in a growing legion of hawkish voices pushing the insinuation that the Iranian president-elect was indeed a hostage taker. Bowden said: “Ahmadinejad is just the most recent of the central players in the takeover of the American Embassy to arise to positions of power in the Iranian government.” In a marvelous display of mind reading, Bowden has also concluded that Ahmadinejad is lying: “[Ahmadinejad] very assiduously denies he was involved. Probably smartly, because it doesn’t help him now that he’s a national figure, and it doesn’t do him any favors in dealing with the rest of the world.” Bowden’s version of the hostage crisis, *Guests of the Ayatollah*, is scheduled for publication next year (perhaps timed to coincide with the US attack or concluded conquest of Iran).

While coverage within the United States has already turned the former hostages’ claims into a targeted Swift Boat-type propaganda weapon, more balanced reporting from the rest of the world casts serious doubts on the accusations.

In [“Bush Takes Iran Allegations Seriously”](#) from the *Guardian* (UK), the actual leaders of the hostage takers deny that Ahmadinejad was part of the operation:

“Abbas Abdi, the leader of the hostage-takers, said Ahmadinejad definitely did not take part in the seizure. Abdi has since become a leading supporter of reform and sharply opposed Ahmadinejad. ‘He was not part of us,’ Abdi said.

“Another of the hostage-takers, Bijan Adibi, said Ahmadinejad ‘was not involved. There was no one by that name among the students who took part in the U.S. Embassy seizure.’

“Adibi said it’s clear from photos, which show a blindfolded American hostage next to a bearded man of about the same height, that the man could not be Ahmadinejad, who stands at 5 feet 2 inches.

“‘Look at every picture of Ahmadinejad today and he is at least a head shorter. In this picture this man is the height of the American,’ Adibi said.”

The *Guardian* account also reported that not all former hostages are going along with the story. One, Air Force Colonel Thomas Schaefer said he does not believe that the man in the photos is Ahmadinejad. Other former hostages also aren’t sure.

In an ideal world, Ahmadinejad’s past would be a matter of simple, sober, and quick clarification. And regardless of the findings, Ahmadinejad is still the president-elect of Iran—like it or not, and in spite of the Bush administration’s bellicose (and humorous) accusations of election-rigging.

In an ideal world, one would also look upon this controversy as an opportunity to revisit the deep political facts and Eurasian geostrategy surrounding the 1970s-1980s hostage crisis itself. An objective examination would expose and condemn US foreign policy and covert operations in the Middle East since World War II, including: 1) creation of “Islamic fundamentalism” and jihadist “terrorist” fronts, which remain key components of a US military-intelligence operations and foreign policy; 2) the US-British overthrow of Mossadegh, and the reign of the Shah; 3) CIA operations in the Middle East; 4) oil; 5) US manipulation of both sides in the Iran-Iraq war; 6) all aspects of Iran-Contra and the “October Surprise;” and 7) CIA narcotrafficking, arms trafficking and other criminal activities . It would also delve into the exact roles played by US intelligence personnel in Iran in the

1970s who became hostages—including the current accusers.

But in this post-9/11 world, facts mean nothing, and fabrications, lies, twisted half-truths, fiction, disinformation, and brute force are everything. The Bush war machine manufactures what it wishes.

More importantly, time has run out. Or, more accurately, the Bush administration has blown up the clock, not even allowing it to tick. The attack on Iran is already underway (see [Planned US-Israeli attack on Iran](#) , [Iran: Next Target of US Military Aggression](#) , and [Target: Iran](#)).

As [Scott Ritter](#) noted in [US War With Iran Has Already Begun](#) : “Most Americans, together with the mainstream American media, are blind to the tell-tale signs of war, waiting, instead, for some formal declaration of hostility, a made-for-TV moment such as was witnessed on 19 March 2003 [the official start of the Iraq war]. Likewise, history will show that the US-led war with Iran will not have begun once a similar formal statement is offered by the Bush administration, but, rather, had already been under way since June 2005, when the CIA began its programme of MEK-executed terror bombings in Iran.”

The “he was a hostage taker” propoganda is one of hundreds of tell-tale signs of mushrooming crisis. We are not blind.

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