

# Setting the Propaganda Stage for an Attack on Iran: American Hegemony Is Not Guaranteed

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Exactly as the British press predicted, last week's congressional testimony by Gen. David Petraeus and Green Zone administrator Ryan Crocker set the propaganda stage for a Bush regime attack on Iran. On April 10 Robert H. Reid of AP News reported: "The top US commander has shifted the focus from al-Qaida to Iranian-backed 'special groups' as the main threat . . . The shift was articulated by Gen. Petraeus who told Congress that 'unchecked, the special groups pose the greatest long-term threat to the viability of a democratic Iraq.'"

According to the neocon propaganda, the "special groups" (have you ever heard of them before?) are breakaway elements of al Sadr's militia.

Nonsensical on its face, the Petraeus/Crocker testimony is just another mask in the macabre theatre of lies that the Bush regime has told in order to justify its wars of naked aggression against Muslims.

Fact #1: Al Sadr is not allied with Iran. He speaks with an Iraqi voice and has his militia under orders to stand down from conflict. The Badr militia is the Shi'ite militia that is allied with Iran. Why did the US and its Iraqi puppet Maliki attack al Sadr's militia and not the Badr militia or the breakaway elements of Sadr's militia that allegedly now operate as gangs?

Fact #2: The Shi'ite militias and the Sunni insurgents are armed with weapons available from the unsecured weapon stockpiles of Saddam Hussein's army. If Iran were arming Iraqis, the Iraqi insurgents and militias would have armor-piercing rocket-propelled grenades and surface-to-air missiles. These two weapons would neutralize the US advantage by enabling Iraqis to destroy US helicopter gunships, aircraft and tanks. The Iraqis cannot mass their forces as they have no weapons against US air power. To destroy US tanks, Iraqis have to guess the roads US vehicles will travel and bury bombs constructed from artillery shells. The inability to directly attack armor and to defend against air attack denies offensive capability to Iraqis.

If the Iranians desired to arm Iraqis, they obviously would provide these two weapons that would change the course of the war.

Just as the Bush regime lied to Americans and the UN about why Iraq was attacked, hiding the real agenda behind false claims that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and connections to al Qaeda, the Bush regime is now lying about why it needs to attack Iran. Could anyone possibly believe that Iran is so desirous of having its beautiful country bombed and its nuclear energy program destroyed that Iran would invite an attack by fighting a "proxy war" against the US in Iraq?

That the Bush regime would tell such a blatant lie shows that the regime has no respect for the intelligence of the American public and no respect for the integrity of the US media.

And why should it? The public and media have fallen for every lie the Bush regime has told.

The moral hypocrisy of US politicians is unrivaled. McCain says that if he were president he would not attend the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics because China has killed and injured 100 Tibetans who protested Tibet's occupation by China. Meanwhile the Iraqi toll of the American occupation is one million dead and four million displaced. That comes to 20% of the Iraqi population. At what point does the US occupation of Iraq graduate from a war crime to genocide?

Not to be outdone by McCain's hypocrisy, Bush declared: "The message to the Iranians is: we will bring you to justice if you continue to try to infiltrate, send your agents or send surrogates to bring harm to our troops and/or the Iraqi citizens."

Consider our "Christian" president's position: It is perfectly appropriate for the US to bomb and to invade countries and to send its agents and surrogates to harm Iraqis, Afghans, Somalians, Serbians and whomever, but resistance to American aggression is the mark of terrorism, and any country that aids America's victims is at war with America.

The three-week "cakewalk" war that would be paid for by Iraqi oil revenues is now into its sixth year. According to Nobel economist Joseph Stiglitz, the cost of the war to Americans is between three and five trillion dollars. Five trillion dollars equals the entire US personal and corporate income tax revenues for two years.

Of what benefit is this enormous expenditure to America? The price of oil and gasoline in US dollars has tripled, the price of gold has quadrupled, and the dollar has declined sharply against other currencies. The national debt has rapidly mounted. America's reputation is in tatters.

The Bush regime's coming attack on Iran will widen the war dramatically and escalate the costs.

Not content with war with Iran, Republican presidential candidate John McCain in a speech written for him by neocon warmonger Robert Kagan promises to confront both Russia and China.

Three questions present themselves:

1. Will our foreign creditors – principally China, Japan and Saudi Arabia – finance a third monstrous Bush regime war crime?
2. Will Iran sit on its hands and wait on the American bombs to fall?
3. Will Russia and China passively wait to be confronted by the warmonger McCain?

Should a country that is over-extended in Iraq and Afghanistan be preparing to attack yet a third country, while threatening to interfere in the affairs of two large nuclear powers? What sort of political leadership seeks to initiate conflict in so many unpromising directions?

With Iran, Russia, China, and North Korea threatened by American hegemonic belligerence, it is not difficult to imagine a scenario that would terminate all pretense of American power: For example, instead of waiting to be attacked, Iran uses its Chinese and Russian anti-ship missiles, against which the US reportedly has poor means of defense, and sinks every ship in the American carrier strike forces that have been foolishly massed in the Persian Gulf, simultaneously taking out the Saudi oil fields and the Green Zone in Baghdad, the headquarters of the US occupation. Shi'ite militias break the US supply lines from Kuwait, and Iranian troops destroy the dispersed US forces in Iraq before they can be concentrated to battle strength.

Simultaneously, North Korea crosses the demilitarized zone and takes South Korea, China seizes Taiwan and dumps a trillion dollars of US Treasury bonds on the market. Russia goes on full nuclear alert and cuts off all natural gas to Europe.

What would the Bush regime do? Wet its pants? Push the button and end the world?

If America really had dangerous enemies, surely the enemies would collude to take advantage of a dramatically over-extended delusional regime that, blinded by its own arrogance and hubris, issues gratuitous threats and lives by Mao's doctrine that power comes out of the barrel of a gun.

There are other less dramatic scenarios. Why does the US assume that only it can initiate aggression, boycotts, freezes on financial assets of other countries and bans on foreign banks from participation in the international banking system? If the rest of the world were to tire of American aggression or to develop a moral conscience, it would be easy to organize a boycott of America and to ban US banks from participating in the international banking system. Such a boycott would be especially effective at the present time with the balance sheets of US banks impaired by subprime derivatives and the US government dependent on foreign loans in order to finance its day-to-day activities.

Sooner or later it will occur to other countries that putting up with America is a habit that they don't need to continue.

Does America really need more political leadership that leads in such unpromising directions?

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