

# **Trump Regime Heightens Middle East Tensions**

By <u>Stephen Lendman</u> Global Research, May 25, 2019 Region: Middle East & North Africa
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Since WW II, the US waged wars of aggression against nations threatening no one, the highest of high crimes gone unpunished.

From North Korea in the early 1950s to what's ongoing endlessly post-9/11, the US attacked nations unwilling to subordinate their sovereign rights affirmed under international law to its interests.

Longstanding US plans call for regime change in Iran and Syria for this reason, in a part of the world with around two-thirds known oil reserves — why it's strategically important.

US war on the Syrian Arab Republic rages in its ninth year with no prospect for near-term resolution. US hostility toward the Islamic Republic makes anything possible ahead, including unthinkable war against a nation able to hit back hard if attacked.

In a Friday op-ed published by the Washington Post, <u>Ira</u>n's UN envoy <u>Majid Takht-Ravanchi</u> said Trump regime hardliners (meaning Pompeo, Bolton, and their subordinates) are pushing DJT for belligerence against the Islamic Republic based on "fake intelligence," adding:

"The recent dispatching of a US naval armada (and nuclear-capable B-52 bombers) to the Persian Gulf (region) is a response to the same fake intelligence, supported not by members of Congress or US allies."

"While Iran does not desire war in the region, neither with the United States nor with any other country, we will stand firmly against any act of aggression against our country."

On Friday, the Trump regime heightened regional tensions further. Acting war secretary **Patrick Shanahan** issued a statement, saying his department "approved the deployment of about 1,500 service members and additional capabilities to the Middle East to deter (nonexistent) Iranian efforts to destabilize the region (sic)."

Sending more US troops and military hardware to a tinder box part of the world further destabilizes the region, heightening the risk of greater conflict.

Trump regime assistant war secretary for international security affairs **Katie Wheelbarger** turned truth on its head, claiming the troop deployment is in response to "credible intelligence we have received that Iran continues to plan for attacks by itself and its proxies against the United States, its forces and its allies in the region" — a bald-faced Big Lie.

No such intelligence exists! Throughout its history over the past 40 years, Iran never

attacked another nation. No evidence suggests it intends to now.

There's nothing "defensive" about US military deployments and actions. Its record speaks for itself, waging multiple wars of aggression against invented enemies. Real ones don't exist — not now or any other time post-WW II.

## US Navy Vice Admiral Mike Gilday lied, saying

"Iranian leaders have initiated actions that pose a danger to the United States, its allies in the region and the globe (sic)."

The US war department lied, falsely accusing Iran of "at least three recent attacks in the region, including the attacks on oil tankers in Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates, drone attacks on oil pipelines in Saudi Arabia, and rocket attacks on the Green Zone in Baghdad last weekend (sic)."

Not a shred of evidence connects Iran to these incidents, most likely false flags, a longstanding US tradition, 9/11 the mother of them all.

Bypassing Congress on Friday, the Trump regime upped the stakes further, Pompeo saying pursuant to the Arms Export Control Act, he directed the State Department "to complete immediately the formal notification of 22 pending arms transfers to Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia totaling approximately \$8.1 billion to deter Iranian aggression (sic) and build partner self-defense capacity (sic)."

There's no "Iranian aggression" to deter. Weapons sales to the Saudis and UAE are all about offense, not "self-defense."

US weapons sales to aggressor nations — notably Israel, the Gulf states, Egypt, and other despotic regimes — violate the US Foreign Assistance Act (FAA).

It prohibits aiding regimes engaged "in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, including torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges, causing the disappearance of persons by the abduction and clandestine detention of those persons, or other flagrant denial of the right to life, liberty, and the security of person, unless such assistance will directly benefit the needy people in such country."

The Leahy Law provision of the 2001 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act (FOAA) (Sec. 8092 of PL 106-259) states the following:

"None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to support any training program involving a unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of Defense has received credible information from the Department of State that a member of such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights, unless all necessary corrective steps have been taken."

Washington consistently breaches international, constitutional, and US statute laws, operating by its own rules exclusively.

Throwing more weapons at Middle East rogue states increases the chance of greater belligerence than already.

While US war on Iran is unlikely in my judgment, its hostile actions make the unthinkable possible — despite strong world community opposition against it.

On May 24, 76 retired US generals, admirals, and envoys signed an open letter to Trump, urging him against attacking Iran — "express(ing) deep concern with the current escalation with Iran," adding:

"(W)ar with Iran, either by choice or miscalculation, would produce dramatic repercussions in an already destabilized Middle East and drag the United States into another armed conflict at immense financial, human, and geopolitical cost."

The signatories urged "thoughtful statesmanship and...diplomacy (to avoid) unnecessary armed conflict."

Hostile US actions against Russia, China, Iran, and other nations heighten the risk of global war, what's vital to go all out to avoid.

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