

Did Iran “Mistreat” US Navy Personnel Briefly Held Captive? US Media in High Gear

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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On Tuesday, Iranian forces seized two small US naval vessels, provocatively operating three nautical miles within Iran’s territorial waters.

Pentagon and State Department claims about mechanical problems responsible for their location were dubious at best.

Washington spies intensively on Iran, both vessels likely involved in illegal surveillance. The State Department extended an official apology.

Briefly detained US crew members were treated humanely. No evidence suggests otherwise.

Major media reports claim otherwise, saying videos showing several Americans kneeling with their hands clasped behind their heads were used for propaganda purposes and suggest mistreatment – contradicting Obama administration officials saying its military personnel were well treated with respect.

CNN hosts and guests blasted Iran. Pentagon reporter Barbara Starr called Tuesday’s incident “one of the most aggressive elements of the military and national security apparatus in that country.”

White House correspondent Jim Acosta accused Tehran of staging “an October(-like) surprise” ahead of Obama’s State of the Union address, meant to embarrass him.

State Department spokesman Mark Toner said:

“(w)e’ve seen no indications (of) mistreat(ment) during their (brief) period of detention.”

“As we look at this, we’ll continue to assess and, as appropriate, comment further on how we view their treatment.”

The incident was swiftly resolved diplomatically in less than 24 hours, despite what appears to have been a willful US provocation, continuing longstanding hostility toward the Islamic Republic.

On Wednesday, a Pentagon official said a rescue plan was being prepared, cancelled

following diplomatic resolution.

Washington violated international law by illegally entering Iranian waters without permission. Tehran scrupulously observed Geneva principles while detaining US naval personnel. No evidence suggests otherwise.

Hawkish US lawmakers unjustifiably claimed otherwise. Senate Armed Services Committee chairman John McCain accused the “administration (of) pretending as if nothing out of the ordinary has occurred.”

He lied, accusing Iran of violating “basic principles of international law...plac(ing) (US military personnel) at increased risk in the future.”

Iranian news media published photos and videos of US naval personnel in captivity. One sailor said the incident “was our fault, and we apologize for our mistake.”

“The Iranian behavior was fantastic while we were here, and we thank you very much for your hospitality and your assistance. We had no problems here.”

John Kerry said US naval personnel were “well taken care of. All indications suggest” it.

They were “provided with blankets and food, and assisted with their return to the fleet...” Diplomacy triumphed over confrontation.

Neocon Republican presidential aspirant Senator Marco Rubio called detaining US naval personnel another reason “why on my first day in office (if elected), I am going to cancel this ridiculous (nuclear) deal...”

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