

War or No War on Iran?

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

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

In Shakespearean terms, indeed that's the question. Longstanding regime change plans are known. Means to achieve them have been ongoing for years.

A previous article put it this way:

Red lines, timelines, deadlines, sanctions, sabotage, subversion, cyber attacks, assassinations, saber rattling, falsified IAEA hype, ad nauseam warmongering, Netanyahu/Barak bluster, spurious accusations, manipulated to fail P5+1 talks, and inflammatory headlines up the stakes for war.

Washington also uses color revolutions. Some work. Others don't. Iran's so-called "green" one was made in America.

After Iran's June 12, 2009 election, days of street protests and clashes with security forces followed. Washington stirred the pot and caused them. They replicated previous efforts elsewhere. Regime change is the common thread.

Spurious Western media reports claimed electoral fraud. A new vote was demanded. Events replicated Georgia's "rose revolution" and Ukraine's "orange" one. Both worked.

The Iranian scheme failed. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won fair and square. He became the Islamic Republic of Iran's sixth and current president. What Iranian voters chose, Washington wasn't able to put asunder. It hasn't stopped trying.

One scheme follows others. Iran's so-called nuclear/existential threat makes headlines. They repeat ad nauseam. The power of repetition gets most people to believe them.

Lincoln said, "You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time...." Too many people are always fooled on issues mattering most.

What's more important than war and peace. Public ignorance lets America get away with murder. It happens repeatedly against one targeted country after another.

Will Washington attack Iran? Will it be done jointly with Israel? More on that below. The Islamic Republic poses no threat. It hasn't attacked another country in two or three centuries. It threatens none now. It's nuclear program is peaceful.

Netanyahu is menacing. He's toxic, belligerent and dangerous. He's a world class thug. He's Israel's worst ever leader. He threatens Jews as well as Muslims.

Most Israelis are fooled. They may, in fact, reelect him. On October 9, he announced early

elections. He said coalition partners can't agree on budget priorities. Scheduled fall 2013 elections now shift to early next year.

Iran will be issue one. On October 10, [Haaretz](#) headlined "Nuclear Iran will star in Netanyahu's bid for re-election, not Israel's economy," saying:

Fear trumps human need. "Netanyahu will highlight the approaching nuclear danger and portray himself as the only Israeli leader realistic enough - and tough enough - to deal with it."

He repeats the Big Lie ad nauseam. He promises action against a bogus "Iranian threat."

"Netanyahu prefers to focus on Iran rather than the economy, since Israeli elections are usually decided on the people's anxiety about their security. And the economic horizon beyond the election looks grim indeed."

From now through election, expect scurrilous anti-Iranian propaganda. It'll probably get him reelected. Fear works that way. What's coming post-election bears close watching.

David Rothkopf serves as Foreign Policy (FP) magazine's CEO and Editor-at-Large. Formerly, he and former Clinton National Security Advisor Anthony Lake co-founded Intellibridge Corporation.

[Sourcewatch](#) said in launching Intellibridge, Rothkopf had help from "several former government officials and spooks, including Anthony Lake and former CIA director John Deutch...." Former Clinton administration officials hold top posts.

Intellibridge provides "open-source intelligence, customized content, and analysis to the military and corporations."

Earlier, Rothkopf was Kissinger Associates managing director and US Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Policy.

He and FP support Washington's imperial agenda. On October 8, he [headlined](#) "A Truly Credible Military Threat to Iran," saying:

America and Israeli may surgically strike Iran. Washington will do most heavy lifting. Israel will ride shotgun. Netanyahu won't go it alone. He needs US approval and support.

Romney's been baiting Obama on Iran. In an October 8 Virginia Military Institute speech, he [claimed](#):

"Iran today has never been closer to a nuclear weapons capability. It has never posed a greater danger to our friends, our allies, and to us."

"The President has failed to lead in Syria....Our ally Turkey has been attacked. And the conflict threatens stability in the region."

"It is time to change course in the Middle East....I will put the leaders of Iran on notice that the United States and our friends and allies will prevent them from acquiring nuclear weapons capability."

“(W)e must make clear to Iran through actions – not just words – that their nuclear pursuit will not be tolerated.” He barely stopped short of urging war.

He’s in campaign mode. Whether he’ll follow through if elected isn’t known. The possibility very much is real.

He claimed Obama hasn’t slowed Iran’s “pursuit” of nuclear weapons. Rothkopf called the issue a “centerpiece of the Romney campaign’s argument that Obama has not been tough enough on Iran....”

He hasn’t “offered a credible military threat” to deter what, in fact, doesn’t exist.

Rothkopf said unnamed Obama advisors told him privately that “they wonder about his commitment and that of the US military to taking action against Iran.”

Up to now, he’s been “dragging his feet,” but no longer. White House and Israeli officials are “closer together in their views in recent days.”

While no precise red line exists, Netanyahu’s preferred military option “is considerably more limited and lower risk” than full-scale war.

Saying so greatly understates the threat and potential catastrophic consequences. Attacking Iran is madness. Tehran’s response will be swift and strong. It’ll be far more robust than anything Israel previously experienced.

Bombing nuclear facilities in both countries assures widespread irradiation. Immediate casualties will be huge in both countries. Longer-term ones will be catastrophically high.

War on Iran assures all sides lose. Regional countries will be affected. US facilities and ships will be attacked.

Economic consequences will be severe. Sharply higher oil prices will follow. Global recession will deepen. Israel and America will be more hated than ever. War may happen anyway.

Understating what’s at stake is irresponsible. Is Rothkopf urging war? Claiming low risk consequences suggests it. According to his unnamed source, “(t)he strike might take only ‘a couple of hours’ in the best case and only would involve a ‘day or two’ overall.”

It “would be conducted by air, using primarily bombers and drone support.” It’s “politically palatable.” It’ll set back Iran’s nuclear program “many years....without civilian casualties – it would have regional benefits.”

Yellow journalism is bad enough. Practically endorsing catastrophic war is unconscionable and madness.

He quoted an unnamed warmonger claiming a “transformative outcome: saving Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, reanimating the peace process, securing the Gulf, sending an unequivocal message to Russia and China, and assuring American ascendancy in the region for a decade to come.”

Transformative indeed in all the wrong ways.

It’s well known, or should be, that Israel can’t go it alone. Its capability isn’t up to destroying

Iran's Fordo facility. It's built deep underground within a mountain for protection.

Powerful bunker busters (possibly mini-nukes) are needed. Using them won't assure success. At the same time, Israeli aircraft on their own may be unable to deliver a potential knockout punch.

The [Wilson Center's Iran Project](#) assessed benefits and costs. Its conclusions didn't please warmongers. Iran can retaliate with "conventionally armed ballistic missiles capable of striking most of the region, including Israel," it said.

War could last years. Military and economic costs will be high. A [New American Foundation](#) study said attacking Iran's nuclear facilities assures disaster.

Another by Harvard's [Olin Institute for Strategic Studies](#) said Iranian mines and missiles can block the Strait of Hormuz, halt or greatly curtail oil shipments, and "it could take many weeks, even months, to restore the full flow of commerce, and more time still for the oil markets to be convinced that stability has returned."

A 2008 Washington Institute for the Near East Policy ([WINEP](#)) study said two decades after the Iran/Iraq war, the Islamic Republic's naval capabilities now excel. They're able to wage effective asymmetric warfare against larger naval forces.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Navy (IRGCN) is highly motivated, well-equipped, and well-financed. It's a formidable force. It controls the Strait of Hormuz choke point.

WINEP added that if Washington and/or Israel attacks Iran, its response will be proportional to damage it sustains.

It bears repeating. Attacking Iran is madness for good reason. Claiming otherwise is unconscionable. It also avoids explaining serious international law violations.

Preemptive aggressive wars are illegal. Hot or cold warriors don't seem to care.

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