

Promoting War on Iran

By Stephen Lendman

January 06, 2012 "[Information Clearing House](#)" - In June 2009, a [Brookings Institution](#) report titled, "Which Path to Persia? Options for a New American Strategy Toward Iran" was a regime change policy paper. Pro-Israeli right-wing ideologues prepared it, including:

(1) Martin Indyk: former US ambassador to Israel, currently Brookings foreign policy director.

(2) Kenneth Pollack: Former CIA analyst and National Security Council staff member; current Council on Foreign Relations member and Brookings Saban Center for Middle East Policy research director.

(3) Michael O'Hanlon: Former Congressional Budget Office national security analyst, currently Brookings senior fellow for defense and military policy.

(4) Bruce Riedel: Former CIA counterterrorism specialist and assistant to the President and senior director for Near East Affairs on the National Security Council; current Brookings foreign policy senior fellow.

(5) Suzanne Maloney: Former State Department policy advisor, currently Brookings foreign policy senior fellow.

(6) Daniel Byman: Former 9/11 Commission staff member; currently Brookings Saban Center for Middle East Policy research director and Georgetown University security studies professor.

Report topics include:

military options for disarming Iran; invasion; air strikes; allowing or encouraging an Israeli attack; regime change; and containment.

Its introduction stressed "the trouble with Iran," asking what should America do about it? It falsely claimed Iran's well along toward developing nuclear weapons. It also sited "Iranian mischief," including "support for terrorist groups," and its "wider efforts to overturn the regional status quo."

It claimed alleged "incontrovertible" evidence that "Iran has aided groups seeking to overthrow the governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain (and arguably Lebanon and Israel as well) at various times," but didn't reveal it.

In addition, it claimed alleged evidence shows "Iran may have encouraged (perhaps even ordered) various groups to mount attacks that have derailed (Israeli - Palestinian) peacemaking efforts."

It asked if Washington "should (be) willing to accept the Islamic Republic at all."

Iran hasn't attacked another country in over 200 years and threatens none now. However, Brookings called Tehran a threat to America, when, in fact, Washington very much threatens Iran, the region and other independent states worldwide.

Brookings ignored America downing Iran Air 655 in July 1988 in Iranian air space, killing 290 passengers and crew on board. Instead, it falsely accused Tehran of attacking US Persian Gulf naval forces in 1987 and 1988.

In fact, an Iraqi missile struck the USS Stark in March 1987, and the USS Samuel B. Roberts struck an Iranian mine in April 1988 in waters it had no business being in.

Brookings stressed "ticking clock" urgency to act...(I)gnoring Iran is no long a realistic alternative (because) Iran('s) the bane of the United States in the Middle East."

Claiming its position doesn't "argue for one approach over another" dismisses its hawkish stance.

America's Media War on Iran

For months, media scoundrels promoted it. They headlined bogus accusations about Iran plotting to kill Saudi Arabia's US ambassador. They feature stories about Iran's alleged nuclear threat despite no corroborating evidence proving it.

On December 29, New York Times writer John Vinocur headlined, "Clock Ticking for West to Act on Iranian Nuclear Program," saying:

"The Iranian nuclear clock ticks faster and louder in 2012." Israel's defense minister Ehud Barak said they'll have nuclear weapons in nine months and move into a "zone of immunity" safe from attack.

London-based International Institute for Studies anti-proliferation director Mark Fitzpatrick agreed, calling it "a real possibility."

US defense secretary Panetta believes it in a year, saying (i)f we have to do it, we will deal with it." Perhaps he means an election year October surprise after another self-inflicted homeland terrorist attack blamed on Iran.

Instead of responsible reporting, Vanocur encouraged war. So do other MSM contributors in print and on air.

On December 29, a Times editorial headlined, "Iran and the Strait," saying:

Doing it will be countered. "A Fifth Fleet spokesman usefully reminded Iran this week that the Navy always stands 'ready to counter malevolent actions to ensure freedom of navigation.' "

According to IAEA "inspectors, Iran has created computer models of nuclear explosions, conducted experiments on nuclear triggers and completed advanced research on a warhead that could be delivered by a medium-range missile."

Fact check

In November, outdated, forged, long ago discredited, and perhaps nonexistent documents were used to claim Iran's developing nuclear weapons.

During his tenure as IAEA director general (December 1, 1997 - November 30, 2009), Mohamed ElBaradei avoided anti-Iranian rhetoric and baseless charges. In fact, numerous times he denied a potential threat.

So do independent nuclear experts and America's Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community as recently as March 2011.

"Tehran's latest threat to block global oil shipping should leave no doubt about its recklessness and its contempt for international law. This is not a government any country should want to see acquire nuclear weapons."

Fact check

Truth isn't The Times' long suit. Baseless charges make headlines. Fingers are pointed the wrong way. America's appalling contempt for democracy, human and civil rights,

international law and its own is ignored.

Times contributors dismiss issues of equity, justice, rule of law standards, and peace. Instead, they cheerlead US wars and promote new ones.

Presidential aspirant Ron Paul said sanctions aren't "an effective means to encourage a change of behavior in another country without war. However, sanctions and blockades are not only acts of war....they are most often the first step toward" it.

"Iran has every right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes." No evidence suggests "Iran has diverted enriched uranium for the peaceful and lawful generation of power toward building a nuclear weapon."

"We should be clear about this: sanctions against Iran are definite steps toward a US attack" as they were against Iraq and Libya. Moreover, disrupting Iranian oil shipments will harm "global trade and undermine the US economy, which in turn harms our national security."

"This race to war against Iran and Syria is both foolhardy and dangerous."

Paul added that threatening to block the Strait of Hormuz is a plausible response without "weapons of mass destruction" to deter menaces.

In fact, Paul's record on war is mixed. He supported attacking Afghanistan, but called war on Libya "unconstitutional (and) a loss for our American Republic."

He opposed attacking Iraq because Congress illegally ceded authority to Bush. In addition, he claimed it gave UN members say over US foreign interventions.

He also said GHW Bush sought and received UN authority to attack Iraq in 1991 because UN Resolution 678 permitted "all necessary means," implying military force if others failed.

In fact, US ambassador April Glaspie OK'd invading Kuwait to settle a border dispute over cross-drilling into Iraqi territory. A recent WikiLeaks release confirmed it: the Glaspie Memo known as 90BAGHDAD423.

Saddam was deceived. Iraqis paid dearly and still do. The combination of war, sanctions, more war and occupation destroyed the "cradle of civilization." Millions also died from war, post-war violence, disease, deep poverty, deprivation, a repressive pro-Western regime, and belligerent occupation.

Claiming Iran seeks nuclear weapons is a ruse. At issue is regime change to turn an independent state into a client one. Times writers, op-ed contributors, and editors know it but feature managed news and opinion, not truth and full disclosure.

So do other major media scoundrels.

On November 22, a Washington Post editorial headlined, "More half-measures from Obama administration on Iran," saying:

"By now it should be obvious that only regime change will stop the Iranian nuclear program. That means, at a minimum, the departure of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei...."

In other words, whatever it takes is OK, including war against another nonbelligerent state posing no threat.

On December 30, a Wall Street Journal op-ed headlined, "Iran's Hormuz Threat," saying:

"The US and Europe are at last mustering the gumption to target Iran's multibillion-dollar oil industry, and almost immediately Tehran is threatening to bring Persian Gulf tankers to a halt."

Around 40% of sea-borne oil passes through the strait or about 15.5 million barrels daily. Disrupting it, of course, affects all regional producers, including Iran. Catastrophic economic consequences would result, including skyrocketing oil prices. So would war by bringing America and Iran into direct confrontation.

"Iran's leaders are trying to see if they can intimidate (Washington) into backing down. The Western response should be to tighten sanctions further to show such tactics won't work."

"The episode is also a reminder (of Iran's) character and intentions....wholly in character for the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism." Disrupting Hormuz shipments should "be considered an act of war that would be met with a military response (against) Iran's military and nuclear assets, perhaps even its regime."

A Final Comment

Iran poses no belligerent or terrorist threat. In contrast, America, key NATO partners

and Israel are global menaces.

Initiating war on Iran and/or Syria could be catastrophic, especially if nuclear weapons are used. Yet major media scoundrels promote it, mindless of the potential consequences.

Nonetheless, more war in 2012 is likely because Washington, Britain, France, and Israel want it, no matter the risks.

Perhaps a September or October surprise will become pretext to launch it. It wouldn't be the first time.

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Also visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com and listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network Thursdays at 10AM US Central time and Saturdays and Sundays at noon. All programs are archived for easy listening. <http://www.progressiveradionetwork.com/the-progressive-news-hour/>.