

Subject: IRAN: 3RD SPECIAL OMNI NEWSLETTER

From: Dick Bennett <jbennet@uark.edu>

Date: Tue, 3 Apr 2007 07:57:03 -0500

To: OMNINEWS@LISTSERV.UARK.EDU

OMNI NEWSLETTER, 3RD SPECIAL NO. ON **IRAN**
TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 2007, BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE
BY WORKING TO PREVENT WARS
Ed. Dick Bennett

HEREIN ARE USEFUL MATERIALS ON THE PRESENT IRAN /US
CONFLICT

Contents:

Offside novel

Ritter's new book

Diplomacy for British Sailors

Monty Python Terry Jones on Iranian Arrest of British Sailors.

Video on US Warmongering Leaders

Mark Haim on Stopping the Invasion

Dick on Embassy Takeover 1979

Video on US/Iran in Recent Times

Hirsh in *Newsweek* on Brinkmanship

Herman and Peterson on US Aggression with UN Support

NEW BOOKS

--*Offside* by Jafar Panahi tells about six young women who disguise themselves as men in order to watch a soccer game in Tehran's stadium. Rev. *The Nation* (April 9, 2007). That is, human beings live in Iran.

--Scott Ritter's *Target Iran: The Truth About the White House's Plans for Regime Change*.

BRITISH SAILORS

The Crisis Over 15 British Prisoners in Iran Leads to Anywhere But Peace (from Mike T)

<http://www.alternet.org/story/50022>

As both the UK and Iran increase the stakes in an effort to gain the upper hand in the negotiations over the 15 captured British soldiers, both sides risk ruling out the option of diplomacy.

MONTY PYTHON TERRY JONES ON THE SAILORS

Call that humiliation?

No hoods. No electric shocks. No beatings. These Iranians clearly are a very uncivilised bunch

Terry Jones in *The Guardian*

Saturday March 31, 2007

I share the outrage expressed in the British press over the treatment

of our naval personnel accused by Iran of illegally entering their waters. It is a disgrace. We would never dream of treating captives like this - allowing them to smoke cigarettes, for example, even though it has been proven that smoking kills. And as for compelling poor servicewoman Faye Turney to wear a black headscarf, and then allowing the picture to be posted around the world - have the Iranians no concept of civilised behaviour? For God's sake, what's wrong with putting a bag over her head? That's what we do with the Muslims we capture: we put bags over their heads, so it's hard to breathe.

Then it's perfectly acceptable to take photographs of them and circulate them to the press because the captives can't be recognised and humiliated in the way these unfortunate British service people are.

It is also unacceptable that these British captives should be made to talk on television and say things that they may regret later. If the Iranians put duct tape over their mouths, like we do to our captives, they wouldn't be able to talk at all. Of course they'd probably find it even harder to breathe - especially with a bag over their head - but at least they wouldn't be humiliated.

And what's all this about allowing the captives to write letters home saying they are all right? It's time the Iranians fell into line with the rest of the civilised world: they should allow their captives the privacy of solitary confinement. That's one of the many privileges the US grants to its captives in Guantánamo Bay.

The true mark of a civilised country is that it doesn't rush into charging people whom it has arbitrarily arrested in places it's just invaded. The inmates of Guantánamo, for example, have been enjoying all the privacy they want for almost five years, and the first inmate has only just been charged.

What a contrast to the disgraceful Iranian rush to parade their captives before the cameras!

What's more, it is clear that the Iranians are not giving their British prisoners any decent physical exercise. The US military make sure that their Iraqi captives enjoy PT. This takes the form of exciting "stress positions", which the captives are expected to hold for hours on end so as to improve their stomach and calf muscles. A common exercise is where they are made to stand on the balls of their feet and then squat so that their thighs are parallel to the ground. This creates intense pain and, finally, muscle failure. It's all good healthy fun and has the bonus that the captives will confess to anything to get out of it.

And this brings me to my final point. It is clear from her TV appearance that servicewoman Turney has been put under pressure. The newspapers have persuaded behavioural psychologists to examine the footage and they all conclude that she is "unhappy and stressed".

What is so appalling is the underhand way in which the Iranians have

got her "unhappy and stressed". She shows no signs of electrocution or burn marks and there are no signs of beating on her face. This is unacceptable. If captives are to be put under duress, such as by forcing them into compromising sexual positions, or having electric shocks to their genitals, they should be photographed, as they were in Abu Ghraib. The photographs should then be circulated around the civilised world so that everyone can see exactly what has been going on.

As Stephen Glover pointed out in the Daily Mail, perhaps it would not be right to bomb Iran in retaliation for the humiliation of our servicemen, but clearly the Iranian people must be made to suffer - whether by beefing up sanctions, as the Mail suggests, or simply by getting President Bush to hurry up and invade, as he intends to anyway, and bring democracy and western values to the country, as he has in Iraq.

· Terry Jones is a film director, actor and Python
www.terry-jones.net <<http://www.terry-jones.net/>>

VIDEO ON WARMONGERING

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I've put together a new short video entitled "**Resisting the Drums of War**" that some of you might find interesting. It describes how the Bush administration promoted the misguided and destructive war in Iraq by targeting our core concerns about vulnerability, injustice, distrust, superiority, and helplessness. Looking ahead, the continued occupation of Iraq—or an attack on Iran—will likely be sold to us in much the same way. The video examines these warmongering appeals, and how to counter them. It's available here on youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81UKnb5zJbM>. If you have a chance to watch it, I'd welcome your reactions, and please forward it to others who you think might find it worthwhile. Thanks.

Best,

Roy J. Eidelson, Ph.D.

Executive Director

Solomon Asch Center for Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict

University of Pennsylvania

3819-33 Chestnut Street, Suite 305

Philadelphia, PA 19104-3106

215-573-0650 or 215-898-3510 (phone)

215-573-0653 (fax)

<http://psych.upenn.edu/sacsec>

<http://psych.upenn.edu/sacsec/eidelson>

FROM MARK HAIM OF MID-MISSOURI

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD NOW TO STOP A WAR WITH IRAN:

BACKGROUND: For more than a year our government has been quietly moving toward an attack on Iran. Voices in the know have sounded a warning, but this has gone largely unattended to. We're talking about credible people, including award-winning journalist Seymour Hersh, who first exposed the My Lai massacre and also broke the news on torture at Abu Ghraib. Just like they did nearly five years ago, when they attempted to justify launching a war of aggression on Iraq, the U.S government is focusing on the supposed threat of weapons of mass destruction.

The hypocrisy here is rank. Of course, Iran has no nuclear weapons, while the U.S. and several of our major allies, including regional powerhouse Israel, do. Moreover, our nation is the only country to ever use nuclear weapons in war, killing hundreds of thousands of innocent Japanese civilians at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Further, the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that the U.S. signed and ratified close to forty years ago, commits the U.S. and all nuclear weapons states to eliminate our arsenals, while it provides assurances that non-nuclear weapons states have the right to develop and utilize fuel cycle technology, including uranium enrichment, provided they agree to inspections. So, the U.S., which has absolutely no intention of ever living up to its NPT obligation by eliminating its vast arsenal of n-weapons, is vilifying Iran for doing something it is actually permitted to do under the NPT.

Our government has been alleged by several credible sources, to be funding, arming and training armed groups--Kurds and other ethnic minorities--to destabilize Iran. These sources also maintain that U.S. covert ops forces are already on the ground in Iran. Meanwhile, the Bushies are making allegations regarding Iran's role in Iraq, which, even if they were all true, which is highly dubious, pale in comparison to the scope and scale of the U.S.'s illegal invasion/occupation/virtual economic annexation of Iraq. Talk about the pot calling the kettle black.

It really appears that they are looking for some provocation to justify launching an attack. And the Pentagon has moved at least two naval carrier groups into the Persian Gulf, so they are ready to devastate Iran from the skies, if the order comes.

While many of us hoped that a new Congress would put the brakes on Bush's push for a wider war, this, unfortunately, has not been the case. As the Democratic-majority House debated the war funding resolution, Speaker Nancy Pelosi removed a provision that would have required Bush to come to Congress for approval before attacking Iran. The Dems have, it appears, in addition to fully funding the ongoing Iraq War, have given the administration a blank check to go to war with Iran.

The consequences of this course of action would be disastrous. If the U.S. bombs Iran's nuclear facilities, there will be massive "collateral damage." Moreover, the Iranians are unlikely to let the U.S. bomb their nation without responding. The resulting war could lead to a far greater bloodbath in Iraq, where Iran has influential allies. to the blocking of oil shipments out of the Persian Gulf, and possibly to a regional war that would bring in other powers. The Bushies have miscalculated before, but this is a mistake waiting to happen that would make their attack on Iraq look like a stroke of brilliance.

WE MUST STOP THIS: While many of us are dead-set against an attack on Iran, our government either doesn't seem to recognize this, or doesn't seem to care. And after the massive groundswell of public opposition to an attack on Iraq four years ago failed to stop Bush and Co., many are dispirited and think nothing we do will make an difference anyway, so why bother.

This is exactly what they want us to feel. And we can't afford to let our past frustrations stop

us from taking action now. While there is no guarantee that our actions will succeed, if those in power think they can launch another war of aggression and pay no political price, they almost surely will.

SPECIFIC STEPS:

**** Make your voice heard** through writing letters to the editor and calling your Congressional delegation. You can find links to letters columns of Missouri daily papers at www.mosafeenergy.org/papers and find contact info for elected officials at www.mosafeenergy.org/officials

**** Join in visible demonstrations.**

**** Urge others to join in speaking out.** Talk this up at your house of worship, at your workplace or school, with your family and/or neighbors, etc. Urge all to be as outspoken as possible on this matter. This is no time to be shy or to hesitate.

**** Become better informed.** There are lots of excellent resources on the Iran situation. On the web check out:

-United for Peace & Justice Iran resources:

<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=3263>

-Council for a Livable World Iran resources: <http://www.clw.org/policy/iran/>

-Hands off Iran: www.handsoffiran.org

- Seymour Hersh's most recent article on Iran:

http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/03/05/070305fa_fact_hersh?printable=true

-Important Hersh article from April 2006:

http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/060417fa_fact

-Also, check out Scott Ritter's new book: "Target Iran: The Truth About the White House's Plans for Regime Change"

SOME ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON THE ISSUE:

Nuclear Power: The technology for nuclear power is inexorably linked to nuclear weapons. If the U.S. and its allies continue to promote and proliferate nuclear power for civilian purposes, we will continue to spread the know-how and wherewithal for developing nuclear weapons. The Bush regime has implicitly acknowledged this by refusing to allow Iran to develop enrichment technology for civilian purposes as is allowed under the NPT.

The **Non-Proliferation Treaty** should be amended so that it no longer encourages the development of civilian n-power. Only by giving up nuclear power ourselves, and stopping the marketing of nuclear technology, can we make any attempt to develop nuclear weapons capacity unambiguous. Moreover, as n-power it more expensive than getting needed energy by investing in efficiency and renewables, we will be better off all around if we eschew this dangerous, dirty and weapons-connected technology.

Ahmadinejad: Iran's president is in many ways a horrible reactionary, and arguably an anti-Semite and holocaust denier. This is unfortunate, but it is no reason to start a war. It is important to understand that under Iran's system the president is more of a figurehead than an actual ruler. Much of the real power is in the hands of the mullahs. Moreover, there are many countries around the world whose rulers are bigots or people with strange and unfortunate ideas. This, again, is not a legitimate ground for making war on a nation and taking the lives of tens of thousands of innocent people.

IN SUMMARY:

The time for action to prevent a war with Iran is now. Unlike the 1991 Gulf War or the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, what is contemplated for Iran is not a ground invasion, but an aerial assault. There is not the need, therefore, to build up a large force on the ground. The forces

needed for an air attack are already in place. It could come at any time, so please don't put off making your voice heard.

Mid-Missouri Peaceworks
804-C E. Broadway
Columbia, MO 65201
573-875-0539

E-mail: mail@midmopeaceworks.org
Web site: www.midmopeaceworks.org

Check out our News Blog <http://www.midmopeaceworks.org/articles.php>

"Acquiescence in Bush's monstrous war in Iraq has amply demonstrated the political elite's limited capacity for introspection, independent thought and civic courage." Stephen F. Cohen, *The Nation*, July 10, 2006

FROM DICK BENNETT on the Iranian takeover of the US Embassy 1979

To the Editor, *The Morning News*
From Dick Bennett

Possible title: Know Your Enemy (676 words)

The present crisis between the United States and Iran reminds me of an earlier crisis exciting these nations. I could be referring to the CIA-arranged overthrow of the democratically elected Premier of Iran, Mohammed Mossadegh in 1953. But I will recount a later crisis, in which Iranian students captured the U.S. Embassy in Teheran in 1979 and held embassy employees for several months.

The response in the U.S. was sensationally jingoistic, fostering hysteria and endangering the hostages. Senator Long (D-La.) declared the takeover an "act of war." Governor Reagan of Calif. called the Iranians "rabble who need punishment and retaliation." President Carter described Khomeini and his followers as "frenzied" and "fanatics." Brzezinski denounced Ayatollah Khomeini as a "schlerotic madman," and various newspapers called him an "ecclesiastical con artist," a megalomaniac, who wants a holy war," and worse. An Iranian business was burned and a sign left by the arsonist read: "Go Home Sand Nigger."

Intransigent bellicosity typified both the government and the increasingly yellow press as the days of occupation mounted. Cartoons were particularly virulent; one showed Khomeini standing atop a grotesque heap of dead bodies shouting "You Satanic Americans."

The same was true in Iran. Khomeini did designate the U.S. a "satanic" nation. The exuberantly youthful Iranian students demanded "total surrender" by the U.S. And countless other sensationalisms inciting hatred.

What's the history beneath this mutual rhetoric of indignation? Were the Ayatollah, the students, Iran consumed by madness, as US leaders and mainstream media asserted? Well, not according to the Iranians. The anger seemed rational to the Iranians. The U.S. overthrew Iran's government, installed the Shah, and helped the Shah organize a cruel, violent police state. The Iranians overthrew the Shah and welcomed Khomeini from exile, who sought the Shah's return and arrest. President Carter welcomed the ailing Shah to the U.S. The students captured the U.S. Embassy. Tit for tat.

On both sides, some officials, scholars, and general citizens advised moderation to allow time for diplomacy and thought to operate. But few of the mainstream media tried to explain why it was that the majority of Iranians hated the Shah and the CIA and therefore President Carter so intensely that they would risk so much in violating international custom and law in taking our Embassy employees hostage. Few newspapers or broadcasting companies

offered significant in-depth study of Iran, Iranians, Khomeini, the Shah, the Muslim religion, U. S. imperialism, the CIA in Iran, or anything else which might shed light rather than intensity on Iranian antagonism toward the U.S. ABC's *Nightly News* showed a blindfolded hostage night after night.

So why did they hate the U.S. government? Here are some of the reasons: the CIA overthrow of Mossadegh; the Shah's oppression of Iran, the Shah one of the world's worst violators of human rights; torture and murder of citizens by the thousands by his secret police, the Savak; cooperation with Savak by the FBI and CIA; student dislike of the Embassy as a CIA "spy house"; the hypocrisy of Carter, who advocated human rights but supported the Shah unequivocally two days after a government massacre of at least 500 protesting civilians; the monarch's embezzlement from the nation of \$20 billion; the refusal of the U.S. to allow the Iranians to prosecute the Shah; the economic benefits of Iran's oil transferred under the Shah to seven British and U.S. oil corporations; Israel's oppression of the Palestinians; countless libels by the U.S. government and mainstream media of Iran and Iranians as religious fanatics or leftist troublemakers. Iranians saw the November 4, 1979 Embassy takeover as a compelled response to the last straw of our harboring their Enemy No. 1.

In contrast, Americans at first generally perceived the takeover as an outrageous violation of U. S. national pride by a fanatical mob. But by the end of December 1979 a Harris Poll reported that a majority of Americans knew how atrocious had been the Shah as torturer and thief, though not until later learned how inaccurate had been U.S. official and mainstream media representations of Iran and the Iranians.



Iran's perilous path in pictures

[A click-through history of modern Iran and its love-hate relationship with the United States](#) • [SEE THE SLIDE SHOW](#)

Henri Bureau / © Henri Bureau/Sygma/Corbis

- [Scars from Iraq](#)

Three U.S. troops share how the visible and invisible wounds of war changed their lives and impacted their loved ones.

- Day by day, a four-week war

From the first blasts in Baghdad to the U.S. military's declaration that major combat was over, see images from every day of the conflict.

LETTER FROM MIKE TRAMILL to Senator Lincoln with more information about US intention to attack Senator Lincoln,
Please advise your staff to be certain you have read the links below.

My only comment, other than "Are you aware of this?", is to agree with the sole American poster on the Atlantic Free Press site:

'I am an American and very worried about our President and our general war strategies but given the situation it seems to me that Bush would have to be certifiably insane to order such an attack. I don't see what it would accomplish and unlike the Iraqi's the Iranian's are not totally defenseless. They could easily destabilize Iraq (create a state of open warfare) and even effectively occupy the Basra region cutting our supply lines. Further the Russians and Chinese would not sit still for actions like this. I hope this report is in error. If it happens it would mean that the United States is no longer to be trusted in any capacity as we would then be guilty of electing a madman to high office with no effective bounds on his power. A complete failure of the entire system.'

Operation Bite: April 6 sneak attack by US Forces against Iran planned

<http://www.atlanticfreepress.com/content/view/1251/32/>

April 6 Sneak Attack By US Forces On Iran Planned

http://bellaciao.org/en/article.php3?id_article=14601

Operation Bite - April 6 Sneak Attack - Russian Military Sources Warn

<http://www.iraq-war.ru/article/122371>

Reading this put cold chills up and down my back. The Brits started withdrawing there troops from southeast Iraq. Virtually everything noted we have watched transpire in recent months, i.e., the maneuvers, the placement of carrier strike groups, etc. And we know we have been being "sheep dipped" by the media. No one 'on the street' in Northwest Arkansas thinks the US not going to attack Iran.
Sincerely, Mike Tramill 479-587-2615 mtramill@yahoo.com

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/17862888/site/newsweek/>

Brinksmanship Doesn't Always End in Battle

America and Iran are barreling toward a collision. It doesn't have to be this way.

By Michael Hirsh, *Newsweek*

Updated: 7:30 p.m. CT March 29, 2007

March 29, 2007 - Is war between the United States, its allies and Iran inevitable? It certainly feels that way right now. This is a tit-for-tat escalation right out of the textbook. Since Iran's Revolutionary Guard Navy seized 15 British sailors in the Persian Gulf last week, Tehran has paraded the captives before TV cameras and elicited apologies from them in a way that probably violates the Geneva Conventions (which bar humiliating treatment of prisoners). Iran's armed forces have fired off new test missiles, while George W. Bush has put on the biggest show of U.S. naval power in the Gulf in years. British sailors have been detained before, most recently in a similar Gulf incident in 2004. But this time, Tehran shows no sign of releasing its prisoners soon. The standoff is expected to continue while the United States holds Iranian personnel inside Iraq under mysterious circumstances and British Prime Minister Tony Blair petitions the United Nations to secure his sailors' freedom, rather than talking directly with Tehran.

Blair's approach to the U.N. will only aggravate the dispute, says one international diplomat who is familiar with Tehran's thinking, who requested anonymity when speaking of such sensitive matters. After last week's second resolution against its nuclear program, Iran takes a particularly dim view of the Security Council. Not surprisingly, Iran abruptly dropped a conciliatory offer to release the lone female prisoner, and Tehran's chief nuclear negotiator, Ali Larijani, warned that the prisoners now "may face a legal path"—a clear threat to prosecute them, possibly as spies. "The British have got to come down from their high horse. They've got to work at solving this bilaterally," says the international diplomat. "They shouldn't take the higher moral ground."

A British diplomat told NEWSWEEK that those claims were "outrageous" and said London's ambassador to Iran had been meeting regularly with officials at Tehran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to gain the captives' release. (Britain declares it has global positioning satellite data that proves its patrol ships were not in Iranian waters, while Iran says the British incursions into its territory had happened no fewer than six times before.) Yet Blair declared Thursday he would not negotiate. And now the British leader, who reportedly told Bush months ago that he opposed war with Iran, may have little choice but to back one.

The savage rhetoric between the two sides evokes the kind of irreconcilable differences that have paved the path to war in the past. Revolutionary fervor still prevails in both capitals—inside Iran, to spread jihadism; inside the Bush administration, to sow the sort of regime change that will end this jihadism. As Henry Kissinger wrote recently in an essay: "So long as Iran views itself as a crusade rather than a nation, a common interest will not emerge from negotiations."

Are Western and Iranian interests really so irreconcilable? No. Believe it or not, there is still time to rediscover that. Even though the U.S. Navy has worried for years that Iranian Revolutionary Guards zooming around in Gulf boats—they were first deployed there during the 1980s Iraq-Iran war—could "swarm our ships," as a former senior U.S. official put it, the sailors who were seized were British, after all, not American. Some Iran observers say this was quite calculated. "Historically, the Iranians are very, very cautious about not going after Americans directly," says Washington-based scholar Trita Parsi. During tense confrontations in the past—the U.S. shoot-down of an Iranian airliner in 1988, for example—Tehran has sometimes proved notably restrained in its reaction.

So this is still brinkmanship, not war. And there is still considerable evidence that neither side wants to leap into the abyss. Let's remember the many ways in which Iran—at least before the 2005 election of the radical populist president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad—was remarkably agreeable, even helpful to Washington after 9/11. And this cooperative attitude—which belied a generation's worth of enmity since the 1979 Islamic revolution—was in evidence under the same Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who last week issued a veiled threat to retaliate against the West (the British boats were seized days later). There is solid evidence that, from 2001-2004, Iran helped to set up the Afghan government, restrained unhelpful warlords in that country, proposed broad-based talks on everything

from nukes to Mideast peace and even agreed to discuss the return of downed U.S. fliers in the event of an Iraq war. Bush's former top negotiator with Iran, Jim Dobbins, recalls an encounter in March 2002 with an Iranian Revolutionary Guard general at one of the many U.S.-Iran meetings over Afghanistan. "He said they were prepared to join us in training the Afghan national army. I said, 'That's fine if you're talking about building barracks, and so forth. But when it comes to training and equipping, we might have conflicting doctrines.' He laughed and said, 'We're still using the manual you left behind in 1979.'" But on both sides right now, nobody seems to remember those gestures, and nobody seems interested in probing that crucial middle ground. "The noble art of losing face will one day save the human race," Hans Blix, the former chief U.N. inspector, once quipped about diplomacy. That's not happening here: neither side is willing to be seen to make the first move, to "lose face" in the delicate diplomatic dance. The problem is that the United States and Britain, along with their partners France and Germany, have successfully created a huge, powerful machine of coercion against Iran—economic, political, diplomatic. And now they don't quite know what to do with it. Similarly, the Iranians are divided about how to react, with Ahmadinejad and now apparently Khamenei himself counseling defiance while Tehran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs tries to find a way back to the table. Yes, pressure works. But exerting too much of it for too long, without offering the carrot of conciliation that can encourage moderates, usually gives the edge back to the hardliners. It is moments like these that call for special envoys. Karim Sadjadpour of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a major Washington think tank, says that the West's pressure—without-concession approach has grown so intense that even moderate forces inside Tehran figure if they relent now, it will only send a message to the U.S. hardliners that coercion alone works. "They think that if they compromise right now in response to pressure, it's not going to strengthen [Under Secretary of State] Nick Burns' policy for more diplomacy, it's going to strengthen [hardline Vice President] Dick Cheney's message policy for more pressure," Sadjadpour says.

If Tony Blair refuses to negotiate over this incident, and the Americans don't step in, then the tenuous signs of diplomatic life that were beginning to appear before last week's hostage incident will likely wither and die. Earlier in March, Tehran made a big concession by appearing at an Iraq regional conference without asking for up-front concessions—such as the release of Iranian operatives that it claims are mere diplomats. But if the newest Gulf crisis drags on much longer, the expected follow-up conference on Iraq probably won't go forward. Brinkmanship can sometimes set the table. But people have to be willing to sit down. With the West and the mullahs glaring at each other across a widening gulf of mutual mistrust, that seems unlikely to happen now.

URL: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/17862888/site/newsweek/>

UN DISARMS IRAN AS US THREATENS INVASION



Beyond Munich: The UN Security Council Helps Disarm a Prospective Further Victim of U.S. Aggression [*]

*by Edward S. Herman
and David Peterson*

March 31, 2007

Imagine that when Hitler was threatening to invade Poland, after having swallowed Czechoslovakia—with the help of the Western European powers' appeasement of Hitler at Munich in September 1938—the League of Nations imposed an arms embargo on Poland, making it more difficult for the imminent victim to defend itself, and at the same time suggested that Poland was the villainous party. That didn't happen back in 1939, but in a regression from that notorious era of appeasement something quite analogous is happening now.

Here is the United States, still fighting a brutal war of conquest in Iraq, which it is now doing with UN Security Council approval, with open plans and threats to attack Iran and engage in "regime change," gathering aircraft carriers off the coast of Iran, already engaging in subversive and probing attacks on the prospective target, and the UN Security Council, instead of warning and threatening the aggressor warns, threatens and imposes sanctions on the prospective victim!

The way it works is that the United States stirs up a big fuss, proclaiming a serious threat to its own national security, and expressing its deep concern over another state's flaunting of Security Council resolutions or dragging its feet on some point of order such as weapons inspections—we know how devoted the United States and its Israeli client are to the rule of law!

In the Iraq case, this noise was echoed and amplified in the media, often splashed across headlines and drummed up in editorial commentary. In turn, elite opinion in the United States and Britain coalesced around the beliefs (a) that a WMD-related crisis really existed in Baghdad and (b) that it required the Security Council's special attention. Straight through March 19-20 2003, Iraq, the prospective target of a full-scale attack, decried the absurdity of this U.S.-U.K. noise, and filed regular communiqués with the Security Council and Secretary-General documenting the U.S.-U.K. aerial strikes on its territory,[1] including the "spikes of activity" period from September 2002 onward.[2] The vast majority of the world's states and peoples also rejected the war propaganda—including the largely voiceless U.S. public, where in the weeks before the war, two-thirds of non-elite opinion stood firmly behind multilateral approaches to defuse the crisis, foremost of which was permitting the UN weapons inspections to take their course.[3] But then, as now, pretty much the entire world recognized the U.S.-U.K. hijacking of the Security Council, and its strategic misdirection away from a defense of the actual target of the threats (Iraq) onto the execution of the policy of the states making those threats while playing the role of Iraq's potential victims (the U.S. and U.K.).

So the aggression planning proceeded then and does now with the cooperation of the UN and international community. In the Iraq case, the Security Council allowed itself to be bamboozled into restarting the weapons-inspection process, accepting this as the urgent matter, rather than the war-mobilization and threat of aggression by the United States and its British ally. Although the Security Council did not vote approval of the U.S.-British attack, it helped set it up by inflating the Iraq threat and failing to confront the real threat posed by the United States and Britain. Then, within two months after "shock and awe," the Security Council voted to give the aggressor the right to stay in Iraq and manage its affairs, thereby approving a gross violation of the UN Charter after the fact.

Now, four years later, the Security Council has outdone itself. Not only has it failed to condemn the U.S. and Israeli threat to attack Iran—the threat itself a violation of the UN Charter,[4] and one made ever-more real by the U.S. invasions of neighboring Afghanistan and Iraq during this decade alone, now followed by a huge U.S. naval buildup near Iran's coast to levels not seen since the U.S. launched its war on Iraq four years ago in what the *New York Times* just called a "calculated show of force." [5] But even worse, the Council has aided and abetted these potential aggressors by adopting three resolutions in the past eight months under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, each of which affirms that Iran's nuclear program is a threat to international peace and security, and reserves for the Council the right to take "further appropriate measures" should Iran fail to comply—that is, should Iran not cave-in to U.S. demands on exactly the terms demanded.[6]

Since July 31, the Council has demanded that Iran "suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development"[7]—despite the fact that Iran's right to engage in these activities is guaranteed under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.[8] Since December 23, it has identified the existence of Iran's nuclear program with so-called "proliferation sensitive nuclear activities"[9]—despite the fact that the International Atomic Energy Agency has never shown Iran's program to be

engaged in any kind of activities other than peaceful ones. Indeed, in the December 23 resolution, the Council used the phrase "proliferation sensitive nuclear activities" no fewer than eight different times to describe Iran's nuclear program, the clear—and perfectly *false*—allegation being that for Iran to do research on and develop its indigenous nuclear fuel capabilities places Iran in violation of its NPT commitments.

But perhaps most egregious of all, the March 24 resolution prohibits Iran from selling "any arms or related material" to other states or individuals (par. 5), and calls upon all states "to exercise vigilance and restraint" in the sale or transfer of a whole list of weapons systems to Iran, "in order to prevent a destabilizing accumulation of arms..." (par. 6).[10] As the editorial voice of *The Hindu* immediately recognized, the first term is critical "not so much because the Islamic Republic is a major vendor of weapons even to Hamas or Hizbollah but because it gives the U.S. an excuse to intimidate or interdict all Iranian merchant shipping under the guise of 'enforcement'." [11] Likewise with the second term, which, if history is any guide, Washington will interpret as a strict prohibition on weapons sales to Iran, thus depriving the potential victim, faced with attack by one or more nuclear powers, of the right to obtain even non-nuclear means of self defense. This of course has been a standard U.S. tactic over many years, even against puny victims—Guatemala in 1954 and Nicaragua in the 1980s, among other cases. But now the United States has succeeded in getting the Security Council to help it impede the self-defense of yet another target of aggression. In this truly Kafkaesque case, the state targeted for attack (Iran) has been declared a threat to the peace by the Security Council, at the behest of a serial aggressor openly mobilizing its forces to attack the "threat." [12]

It should be recognized that the treatment of Iran's nuclear program, and the Security Council's cooperation in this treatment, is the ultimate application of a global double standard, enforced by an aggressive superpower now able to get away with both hypocrisy and murder. Only the United States and its allies may possess nuclear weapons. They alone may threaten to use nukes. They alone may improve their nukes and delivery systems. Only client states such as Israel may remain outside the NPT indefinitely and without penalty. The United States may ignore its NPT obligation to work toward nuclear disarmament. It may even renege on its promise never to use nukes against nuke-free states that joined the NPT. But no matter. By sheer fiat-power, no other state may acquire nukes without U.S. consent. Nor as the case of Iran shows may a state engage in its "inalienable right" to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes unless and until the United States approves.

We are in the midst of a crisis within the post-war international system, as a serial aggressor is now able to mobilize the Security Council, tasked with the maintenance of international peace and security, to declare the state that it threatens with war a menace to the peace and to help the aggressor disarm its target. This carries us beyond Munich.

---- Endnotes ----

* A shorter, standard op-ed length version of this commentary was drafted and submitted very widely across the major U.S. print media—and found to be *100 percent unpublishable*.

1. For an extensive list of documents filed at the United Nations by the Iraqi Government over the period August 29, 2001, through March 26, 2003, see David Peterson, "[No Memo Required](#)," ZNet, July 1, 2005.

2. See David Peterson, "[Spikes of Activity](#)," ZNet, July 5, 2005; and David Peterson, "[British Records on the Prewar Bombing of Iraq](#)," ZNet, July 6, 2005.

3. See Steven Kull *et al.*, [Americans on Iraq and the UN Inspections](#), Program on International Policy Attitudes, January 21-26, 2003.

4. See, e.g., [Chapter I, Article 2](#): "All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations" (par. 4).

5. "[USS John C. Stennis Now Operating in Persian Gulf](#)," *Navy Newsstand*, March 27, 2007; "[Russian intelligence sees U.S. military buildup on Iran border](#)," RIA Novosti, March 27, 2007; and Michael R. Gordon, "[U.S. Opens Naval Exercise in Persian Gulf](#)," *New York Times*, March 28, 2007.

6. See [Chapter VII](#). —We believe it essential to understand that for the Security Council to adopt a resolution under Chapter VII of the UN Charter means above all that either a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace, or an act of outright aggression has occurred. Otherwise, there is no point to the Council's resort to its Chapter VII functions and powers. Regardless of what the Council's other members may believe about the import of the Iran resolutions, their assent to these resolutions grants an enormously powerful and dangerous tool of coercion to the United States.

7. [Resolution 1696](#), July 31, 2006, par. 2.

8. See the [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons](#), the Preamble, and Articles I, II, and IV.
9. [Resolution 1737](#), December 23, 2006, par. 2.
10. [Resolution 1747](#), March 24, 2007, par. 5, par. 6.
11. "[Stepping towards the precipice](#)," Editorial, *The Hindu*, March 27, 2007.
12. See Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, "[Hegemony and Appeasement: Setting Up the Next U.S.-Israeli Target \(Iran\) For Another 'Supreme International Crime'](#)," ZNet, January 27, 2007.

[Edward S. Herman is an economist and media analyst, co-author with Noam Chomsky of *Manufacturing Consent*; David Peterson is a Chicago-based researcher and journalist.]

Dick Bennett
jbennet@uark.edu
(479) 442-4600
2582 Jimmie Ave.
Fayetteville, AR 72703