

A Frenzy of War Talk—Israel’s Outrageous Threats to Attack Iran

By [Larry Everest](#)

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)
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“Decision by Netanyahu, Barak to strike Iran is almost final-Israel TV”

([Times of Israel, August 11](#))

“Israeli speculation over Iran strike reaches fever pitch”

([Guardian, August 14](#))

Over the past several weeks there has been an eruption of alarming reports, high-level meetings, and public debate over whether Israel is close to deciding—or has already decided—to launch a military assault on Iran before the November U.S. presidential election.

On August 10, [Channel 2 News](#), Israel’s leading news program, stated that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defense Minister Barak were on the verge of making a decision to go to war. “Insofar as it depends on [Prime Minister] Benjamin Netanyahu and [Defense Minister] Ehud Barak,” the [Guardian UK](#), citing Israel’s largest daily *Yedioth Ahronoth*, reported, “an Israeli military strike on the nuclear facilities in Iran will take place in these coming autumn months, before the U.S. elections in November.”

The week before, [The New York Times](#) reported, “In Israel, there remains feverish speculation that Mr. Netanyahu will act in September or early October.” A former head of Israeli intelligence commented, “If I was an Iranian, I would be very fearful of the next 12 weeks.”

In the midst of these threats, the [BBC](#) reported that a document purporting to be an Israeli plan was leaked describing a “shock and awe, Israel-style” assault including a massive cyber-attack, barrages of ballistic and cruise missiles, and follow-on attacks by Israeli war planes.

The Outrage of War—and Threatening War

There is widespread debate and speculation over what’s really going on here. Is Israel actually preparing to attack in the coming weeks, calculating that on the eve of the Presidential elections it would be difficult if not impossible for the Obama administration to refuse to support or join such an assault? Are the threats by Israel’s leaders part of a high-stakes ploy aimed at forcing the U.S. imperialists to take an even more aggressive stance toward Iran, with an even more clear cut and near-term commitment to take military action against Iran in order to head off a unilateral Israeli attack as [The New York Times](#) and others are suggesting? Is it some combination of both, or another scenario entirely? In any case,

there is doubtless more going on behind closed doors than is being aired in public, and in all likelihood no one outside the highest levels of the Israeli and/or U.S. governments can answer these questions with certainty at this moment (and there may be uncertainty at these levels as well).

But three things can be said.

First, whether bluff, actual attack preparations, or some other machination, this flurry of threats represents a further escalation of a very dangerous overall trajectory toward confrontation and possible war against Iran by the world's main capitalist-imperialist powers and their creation and Middle East garrison state—Israel.

This dynamic has ratcheted up sharply in the past year and in certain ways the U.S., Israel and the European powers are already waging forms of war on Iran (sanctions, covert cyber-attacks, assassinations and the like). The stated and public focus of this clash has been Iran's nuclear enrichment program, but this is part of a bigger battle by the U.S. and Israel to maintain their domination and control over the entire Middle East-Central Asian region, including their military hegemony.

At present, this battle for dominance is concentrated in their clash with the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is posing an obstacle and challenge to the U.S. on many fronts. This is a clash between two reactionary, outmoded forces, with the U.S. and Israel posing the far greater danger to the planet. Stepped-up U.S. intervention in Syria, including possible military intervention, is linked to these efforts to weaken, isolate, and ultimately topple Iran's Islamist theocracy. (See my analyses of the recent [P5+1 negotiations with Iran](#), the [accelerating U.S.-EU-Israeli campaign against Iran](#), and the [role of Israel](#).)

Second, whatever Israel's motives, the moves against Iran are still outrageous and must be condemned. Threatening preemptive war is itself a form of aggression. Let's call it what it is: terrorism, aimed at terrorizing the people of Iran and the region. And it must be noted here that whatever differences do or don't exist between Israel and the U.S.—the Obama administration has neither condemned these threats, nor stated categorically that it opposes an Israeli strike and would not support such an action. Instead, Obama officials have talked of Israel's sovereign "right" to make its own decisions concerning its "defense."

And coming from Israel, the region's only nuclear power, a country whose main backer, the U.S., is the only country in the world to have ever actually used nuclear weapons, there's an implied nuclear threat here. This makes it all the more clear that Israeli and U.S. aggression is not aimed at lessening the nuclear danger, much less ridding the world of these horrific weapons of mass destruction. Israeli and U.S. threats—"all options are on the table"—are a form of using nuclear weapons—their nuclear weapons—against non-nuclear Iran. Their demand: that only they be allowed to possess and wield these doomsday devices, while Iran must not be allowed to enrich uranium or ever develop nuclear weapons know-how.

Third, what should our stand be towards all this? First, recognizing that any U.S. and/or Israeli attack would be a towering crime against the people, with the potential to escalate in unpredictable ways. Second, the need to act with urgency to mobilize mass opposition, in many forms and on many fronts, to the U.S.-European-Israeli aggression against Iran that's taking place right now, and to any kind of military attack—right now. Third, the solution to

this madness is not siding with either of the reactionary outmoded forces now at each other's throats, but fighting to bring forward a whole other, liberating way—including here in the U.S. by actively opposing the threats and crimes of this government—election or no election, no matter who's in office.

Larry Everest is a correspondent for Revolution newspaper (revcom.us), where this article first appeared and author of Oil, Power & Empire: Iraq and the U.S. Global Agenda (Common Courage 2004). He can be reached via www.larryeverest.org

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