

A political bombshell from Zbigniew Brzezinski: Ex-national security adviser warns that Bush is seeking a pretext to attack Iran

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Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday, Zbigniew Brzezinski, the national security adviser in the Carter administration, delivered a scathing critique of the war in Iraq and warned that the Bush administration's policy was leading inevitably to a war with Iran, with incalculable consequences for US imperialism in the Middle East and internationally.

Brzezinski, who opposed the March 2003 invasion and has publicly denounced the war as a colossal foreign policy blunder, began his remarks on what he called the "war of choice" in Iraq by characterizing it as "a historic, strategic and moral calamity."

"Undertaken under false assumptions," he continued, "it is undermining America's global legitimacy. Its collateral civilian casualties as well as some abuses are tarnishing America's moral credentials. Driven by Manichean principles and imperial hubris, it is intensifying regional instability."

Brzezinski derided Bush's talk of a "decisive ideological struggle" against radical Islam as "simplistic and demagogic," and called it a "mythical historical narrative" employed to justify a "protracted and potentially expanding war."

"To argue that America is already at war in the region with a wider Islamic threat, of which Iran is the epicenter, is to promote a self-fulfilling prophecy," he said.

Most stunning and disturbing was his description of a "plausible scenario for a military collision with Iran." It would, he suggested, involve "Iraqi failure to meet the benchmarks, followed by accusations of Iranian responsibility for the failure, then by some *provocation in Iraq or a terrorist act in the US blamed on Iran*, culminating in a 'defensive' US military action against Iran that plunges a lonely America into a spreading and deepening quagmire eventually ranging across Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan." [Emphasis added].

This was an unmistakable warning to the US Congress, replete with quotation marks to discount the "defensive" nature of such military action, that the Bush administration is seeking a pretext for an attack on Iran. Although he did not explicitly say so, Brzezinski came close to suggesting that the White House was capable of manufacturing a provocation—including a possible terrorist attack within the US—to provide the *casus belli* for war.

That a man such as Brzezinski, with decades of experience in the top echelons of the US foreign policy establishment, a man who has the closest links to the military and to intelligence agencies, should issue such a warning at an open hearing of the US Senate has immense and grave significance.

Brzezinski knows whereof he speaks, having authored provocations of his own while serving as Jimmy Carter's national security adviser. In that capacity, as he has since acknowledged in published writings, he drew up the covert plan at the end of the 1970s to mobilize Islamic fundamentalist mujaheddin to topple the pro-Soviet regime in Afghanistan and draw the Soviet Union into a ruinous war in that country.

Following his opening remarks, in response to questions from the senators, Brzezinski reiterated his warning of a provocation.

He called the senators' attention to a March 27, 2006 report in the *New York Times* on "a private meeting between the president and Prime Minister Blair, two months before the war, based on a memorandum prepared by the British official present at this meeting." In the article, Brzezinski said, "the president is cited as saying he is concerned that there may not be weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq, and that there must be some consideration given to finding a different basis for undertaking the action."

He continued: "I'll just read you what this memo allegedly says, according to the *New York Times*: 'The memo states that the president and the prime minister acknowledged that no unconventional weapons had been found inside Iraq. Faced with the possibility of not finding any before the planned invasion, Mr. Bush talked about several ways to provoke a confrontation.'

"He described the several ways in which this could be done. I won't go into that... the ways were quite sensational, at least one of them.

"If one is of the view that one is dealing with an implacable enemy that has to be removed, that course of action may under certain circumstances be appealing. I'm afraid that if this situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate, and if Iran is perceived as in some fashion involved or responsible, or a potential beneficiary, that temptation could arise."

At another point Brzezinski remarked on the conspiratorial methods of the Bush administration and all but described it as a cabal. "I am perplexed," he said, "by the fact that major strategic decisions seem to be made within a very narrow circle of individuals—just a few, probably a handful, perhaps not more than the fingers on my hand. And these are the individuals, all of whom but one, who made the original decision to go to war, and used the original justifications to go to war."

None of the senators in attendance addressed themselves to the stark warning from Brzezinski. The Democrats in particular, flaccid, complacent and complicit in the war conspiracies of the Bush administration, said nothing about the danger of a provocation spelled out by the witness.

Following the hearing, this reporter asked Brzezinski directly if he was suggesting that the source of a possible provocation might be the US government itself. The former national security adviser was evasive.

The following exchange took place:

Q: Dr. Brzezinski, who do you think would be carrying out this possible provocation?

A: I have no idea. As I said, these things can never be predicted. It can be spontaneous.

Q: Are you suggesting there is a possibility it could originate within the US government itself?

A: I'm saying the whole situation can get out of hand and all sorts of calculations can produce a circumstance that would be very difficult to trace.

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