

Biden Targets Iran. Cyber, Military and Legal Provocations. Economic Warfare

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Global Research, July 19, 2021

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

Theme: [Intelligence, US NATO War Agenda](#)

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On June 18, 2021, the Iranian people elected [Ebrahim Raeisi](#) as the next president of the Islamic Republic of Iran. [Raeisi](#) is a conservative jurist who ran for office pledging to fight “poverty, corruption, humiliation and discrimination.” He is viewed in Washington as a tool of Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.

At a [press conference](#) held on Monday, June 21, 2021, Raeisi called for an end to U.S. sanctions that were imposed on Iran by Donald Trump in violation of international law. He also announced that “all parties must return to the nuclear agreement.” However, he noted that Iran would not accept restrictions on its ballistic missile program or support for regional militias. Nor would he meet with President Biden if given the opportunity.

The U.S. response was swift in coming. A disturbing pattern of harassment emerged that included cyber, military and legal provocations perpetrated within the context of economic war being waged against Iran.

On Tuesday, June 22, 2021, the Biden administration shut down the web domain of [Presstv](#), an English language Iranian news outlet, violating the principle of free speech. The censorship of Presstv.com prevents Westerners, particularly Americans, who visit the website from obtaining information about the Middle East that contradicts the official U.S. narrative.

On Sunday, June 27, 2021 the United States [launched airstrikes](#) on the border of Syria and Iraq targeting “operational and weapons storage facilities of Iran-backed militias.” Commander-in-Chief Biden promised he would act to “protect U.S. personnel” in the region. This is the second time [Biden ordered airstrikes](#) in Syria, the first being launched on February 26th of this year.

On July 14, 2021, the U.S. Justice Department sought indictments of four Iranians who were accused of plotting to kidnap [Masih Alinejad](#), an exiled Iranian journalist currently living in Brooklyn, New York. An Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson called the allegations “baseless and ridiculous.” Washington shows grave concern for the well-being of journalists

who criticize its enemies but hostility to those, like Julian Assange, who excoriate the American empire.

The most dangerous provocations are air assaults in a region where one spark can ignite a conflagration. By ordering airstrikes, Biden picked up where [Trump](#) left off. Both presidents portrayed military actions as “defensive.” They were not. They were offensive. U.S. troop deployments in Syria and Iraq are illegal.

The U.S. militarily occupies Syrian oil fields in violation of the country’s sovereignty. Those troops are not there to protect the Syrian people from the “dictator” Assad or to fight ISIS. They are deployed to [destabilize the Syrian government](#) and steal Syrian oil.

After the United States assassinated Iranian General Soleimani in Baghdad’s airport, the [Iraqi Parliament](#) passed a resolution to expel all foreign troops from the country. U.S. leaders ignored the decree and maintain 2,500 troops in Iraq.

The legality of U.S. military operations in other countries are never questioned by the political elite and their media presstitutes who think America has a right to rule the world. The doctrine is known as “exceptionalism” and is shared by both wings of the property party.

The [“Iranian-backed militias”](#) bombed by American warplanes belong to the Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces who helped to fight ISIS. Kata’b Hezbollah and Kata’b Sayyid al-Shuhada are Shia para-military organizations that fought alongside the Iraqi army against the ISIS insurgency.

U.S. media claims American troops remain in Iraq to “train and support” the Iraqi military. The reporting is convoluted and disingenuous. Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces are an extension of the Iraqi military. By bombing those forces, the United States reveals its genuine intention to dominate the region. The ‘war on terror’ against ISIS is only a pretext for military aggression. The American military will not defeat the remnants of ISIS by bombing forces that are fighting ISIS.

To make geopolitical sense of U.S. foreign policy towards Iran, three factors need to be considered. Empire, oil and Israel.

First, empire. No country can be allowed to defy rulers of U.S. global empire. Economic nationalism and political independence cannot be allowed by the hegemon. If one country can defy the dictates of Washington, other countries will follow its lead. National sovereignty is a threat to empire. The goal of U.S. foreign policy is to make the world safe for capital accumulation. U.S. banks and corporations must control the world’s land, labor, resources, markets, currencies and governments. No economic or military challenge to U.S. power is acceptable in the empire. This is true in the Middle East because of its key energy resources.

Second, oil. Since the collapse of the British empire, the United States exercises hegemony in Southwest Asia. At the end of World War II, U.S. policy in the Middle East was guided by insuring the cheap flow of oil from the region. The U.S. relationship with Saudi Arabia is predicated on oil. Franklin Roosevelt met with Saudi King Ibn Saud on February 14, 1945. Roosevelt scheduled the meeting aboard a U.S. cruise ship in the Suez Canal on the way home from the Yalta Conference where he unceremoniously informed Churchill that Britain

was out of the empire business. At the meeting with King Saud, Roosevelt created an arrangement whereby the United States would protect the Saudi monarchy for an endless flow of cheap oil.

It is also important to note that Ibn Saud opposed the partition of Palestine during the meeting, a harbinger of things to come as Saudi Arabia led the OPEC oil embargo against the United States in 1973 because of American support for Israel's war with Egypt and Syria. The House of Saud has long since abandoned the Palestinian cause.

The United States and Saudi Arabia also created the [petro-dollar system](#) in 1973 when the monarchy agreed to sell crude oil for U.S. dollars. In 1975, OPEC nations followed suit.

Third, Israel. Not only did the United States dislodge the British and French empires in the Middle East after World War II, it supplanted Britain as Israel's main benefactor. It was Britain's Balfour Declaration of 1917 that established a "Jewish Homeland" in Palestine. And it was the United States that pushed through the UN partition of Palestine in 1947. The United States was the first country to extend diplomatic recognition of the Zionist state in 1948. Just to show who was boss in the Middle East, the United States thwarted the British, French and Israeli invasion of Egypt in 1956. Rulers of the American empire have called the shots in the region ever since.

Iran challenges America on all three counts. It established economic sovereignty in 1951, possesses large reserves of oil that are nationalized and opposes Israel's colonization of Palestine.

In March 1951, the Iranian Parliament enacted legislation that nationalized the Iranian oil industry. Shortly thereafter, Mohammad Mossadegh was elected Prime Minister of Iran, a position he occupied until being overthrown by a [CIA coup](#) in 1953. His crime? Advancing economic sovereignty and exerting control over Iran's oil resources.

In the coup's aftermath, Shah Reza Pahlavi was restored to power by the United States until his tyrannical monarchy was overthrown by the Islamic revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini in February 1979.

Iran possesses the fourth largest oil reserves in the world. After the overthrow of Mossadegh, the Shah returned oil profits to British and American companies. He used the SAVAK, Iran's secret police, to torture and kill opponents of his autocratic rule. The establishment of the Islamic Republic returned control of Iranian oil to the Iranian government.

The National Iranian Oil Company controls oil and natural gas operations and is owned by the state. China is a major consumer of Iranian oil, followed by the EU. The oil and natural gas sectors have been severely crippled by U.S. sanctions that were imposed after Trump's exit from the [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action](#) nuclear deal negotiated by Obama.

For the United States and Israel, Iran is the heart of an "axis of resistance" that includes Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Occupied Palestine. They are joined by Saudi Arabia in their effort to smash the axis. The dirty war in Syria was waged to topple the Assad government and isolate Iran. The Saudis consider Iran to be part of a "Shai arc" stretching from Tehran to Baghdad to Damascus to Beirut. As early as 2007, [neoconservatives](#) in the Bush administration actively supported Sunni forces led by Saudi

Arabia against Shia forces led by Iran.

The Syrian proxy war was [organized by the CIA](#). The operation code named “[Timber Sycamore](#)” was approved by the Obama regime in 2012. Washington armed and trained the jihadists who terrorized Syria. Saudi Arabia and Qatar provided funding. Israel consistently used its air force to support jihadist fighters by [bombing](#) Syria. Turkey joined the war to suppress the [Kurds](#) in northern Syria.

Vladimir Putin’s [Russian military intervention](#) in September 2015 thwarted the plan by saving the Assad government and preserving Syrian independence. Fighters from Iran’s Revolutionary Guard, Hezbollah and the Popular Mobilization Forces of Iraq supported the Syrian Arab Army in the proxy war against so-called Free Syrian Army, ISIS and the fundamentalist insurgency.

Most significantly, Israel fears the development of an Iranian nuclear bomb that would break the Zionist state’s nuclear monopoly and constrain its aggressive behavior. During a recent visit by Israeli [President Reuven Rivlin](#), Joe Biden assured his guest that U.S. support for Israel is “iron-clad” and Iran will never be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon during his administration. Rivlin admonished Biden not to re-enter the JCPOA nuclear agreement with Iran because of its purported desire, never proven, to develop a nuclear weapon. In fact, JCPOA ensures Iran can only develop nuclear power for energy and medical purposes. Nothing is ever mentioned about Israel’s secret stockpile of over [400 nuclear weapons](#).

Despite efforts of the United States and its allies, the insurgency was defeated, Assad remains in power and Israel had its wings clipped when Russia provided Syria with an [S-300 missile defense system](#).

Yet, neoconservative domination of the American foreign policy establishment remains intact. Israel and the neocons want war with Iran. They believe the path to destruction of Palestinian resistance lies through Tehran. Researchers at the notorious [Rand Corporation](#), assert that Iran controls a network of para-military organizations that present a threat to U.S. forces in the Middle East that needs to be neutralized.

American political leaders evince a pathological hatred of Iran. Hillary Clinton threatened to “[obliterate](#)” Iran should it attack Israel in 2008. The late warmonger John McCain, pledged to “[bomb bomb bomb, bomb bomb Iran](#)” to the tune of a Beach Boys song as a presidential candidate in 2007. Donald Trump threatened to “[obliterate parts of Iran](#)” if it attacked “anything American” in 2019.

The June election of a [hardline government](#) bodes ill for rulers of American empire who seek to bring Iran to its knees by continuing crippling economic sanctions. At present, Iran promises to re-join the JCPOA nuclear agreement if the United States lifts sanctions. However, the Americans will not lift sanctions unless Iran stops missile development and support for “terrorist” organizations, meaning Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Occupied Palestine, Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq and Houthi rebels in Yemen.

President Ebrahim Raeisi will take power in August. He provides little room for compromise. The result is stalemate, continuation of economic warfare and persistent low intensity conflict.

A key question needs to be pondered in the increasingly ominous future. How long can Iran

endure the sanctions regime and avoid war with an imperialist power that will never rest until it inspires regime change in the homeland of the Persian people?

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[The Globalization of War: America's "Long War" against Humanity](#)

Michel Chossudovsky

The "globalization of war" is a hegemonic project. Major military and covert intelligence operations are being undertaken simultaneously in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and the Far East. The U.S. military agenda combines both major theater operations as well as covert actions geared towards destabilizing sovereign states.

ISBN Number: 978-0-9737147-6-0

Year: 2015

Pages: 240 Pages

List Price: \$22.95

Special Price: \$15.00

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