

# **BUILDING A POLITICAL CONSENSUS FOR WAR: Former US Policymakers Promote War on Iran**

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

In 2007, former Senators Howard Baker, Tom Daschle, Bob Dole, and George Mitchell established their Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) imperial project front group.

Among other issues addressed, warmaking's prioritized. Its board of directors include:

Norman Augustine, former Lockheed Martin chairman and CEO;

General Charles Wald, USAF (ret.);

John Rowe, Exelon chairman and CEO, the nation's largest proliferator of dangerous nuclear power plants;

Frances Fragos Townsend, Baker Botts partner; James Baker's a senior partner;  
former FAA head Jane Garvey, BPC chairperson;

former National Commission on Energy Policy (NCEP) head Jason Grumet, BPC president;

Walter Isaacson, president and CEO of the right leaning, pro-corporate Aspen Institute; formerly he was CNN chairman/CEO and Time managing editor; and

former Senators Charles Robb and John Danforth, as well as five former senators and General James L. Jones (ret.), former Supreme Allied Commander Europe and National Security Advisor, serving as senior fellows.

BPC's new report, released February 1, is titled "Meeting the Challenge: Stopping the Clock on Iran's Nuclear Development."

Previous Iran reports included:

"Meeting the Challenge: US Policy Toward Iranian Nuclear Development" (September 19, 2008);

"Meeting the Challenge: Time is Running Out" (September 15, 2009);

"Meeting the Challenge: When Times Runs Out" (June 23, 2010); and

"Iran's Nuclear Program: Status and Breakout Timing" (September 12, 2011).

They all urged a robust US response “to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capability” even though BPC and Obama officials know Tehran’s development is entirely peaceful, commercial, and legal according to Nuclear Non-Proliferating Treaty provisions.

Signed on July 1, 1968, NPT became effective March 5, 1970. Notably, Iran was one of its first signatories in 1968. It permits uranium enrichment for peaceful, commercial purposes.

Iran’s program is entirely non-military. Nonetheless, it’s maliciously targeted unfairly and illegally even though it fully cooperates with IAEA inspectors. Monitoring is constant, directly or through installed surveillance cameras operating round-the-clock.

In contrast, India, Pakistan, Israel and America are nuclear outlaws. Their policies endanger humanity. BPC’s unconcerned.

On January 24, its press release headlined, “Stopping the Clock on Iran’s Nuclear Development: Bipartisan Policy Center’s New Report Recommends More Credible Threat of Military Action Against Iran,” saying:

Iran’s program “fast approach(es) a volatile threshold.”

“Preventing Iran from achieving nuclear weapons capability is one of the most urgent national security challenges facing the US.”

BPC’s new report “argues that to prevent a nuclear Iran, the US must demonstrate its resolve to do whatever is necessary, including taking military action.”

Despite no Iranian threat whatever, BPC promotes war. At issue is replacing its independent leaders with servile pro-Western ones. As a result, anything ahead’s possible, including intervention against Syria.

America’s business is war. Permanent war’s its longstanding agenda. When enemies don’t exist, they’re invented. Washington pushes the envelope aggressively. Pretexts serve as justification. Imperial madness for unchallenged global dominance follows. As a result, humanity’s threatened, today more than ever.

On February 1, Reuters headlined, “Group urges credible US military threat to Iran,” saying:

BPC urged harsher war threatening rhetoric, covert operations, and stronger US regional military presence to stop Iran’s alleged nuclear weapons development.

Obama affirms “all options are on the table.”

BPC’s “central thesis is that to persuade Iran to address questions about its nuclear program via negotiations (and) economic sanctions, (they) must be accompanied by a credible threat of military attack against Iran’s nuclear facilities.”

It bluntly stated:

“The United States needs to make clear that Iran faces a choice: it can either abandon its nuclear program through a negotiated arrangement or have its

program destroyed militarily by the United States or Israel.”

## Relevant Background

In the 1950s, Eisenhower’s “Atoms for Peace” program encouraged and financed Iran’s nuclear power program. Despite substantial oil revenues, the Shah wanted a modern energy infrastructure, built around nuclear power.

As a result, by 1978, Iran had the world’s fourth largest program, the largest among developing nations, and plans were for 20 new reactors by 1995.

Washington’s support continued until November 1978. Carter’s task force recommended replacing the Shah with Ayatollah Khomeini, then living in France.

At the time, his BP oil negotiations broke down. BP demanded exclusive future output rights but refused to guarantee oil purchases. As a result, the Shah sought other deals. Eager German, French, Japanese and other buyers showed interest.

Washington and Britain were alarmed. Destabilization followed, including reduced Iranian oil purchases and other economic pressures. US/UK agitators fanned religious discontent and turmoil. Oil strikes occurred. Production was crippled.

Regime change was planned. In January 1979, things came to a head. The Shah fled the country. Khomeini returned and proclaimed an Islamic republic. In May, he cancelled further nuclear development. It was peaceful then and now.

In the 1980s, America encouraged Saddam’s war against him. Around a million on both sides died. Iran was too strong to defeat. Other measures short of war followed, including vicious anti-Iranian propaganda.

It portrays the Islamic Republic as uncultured, uncivilized, and dangerous. Forged documents and other materials suggest an Iranian nuclear weapons program. Western media scoundrels regurgitate the lie. They’ve been doing it for years, despite no corroborating evidence whatever.

Nonetheless, Washington, Israel and rogue Western allies spuriously accuse Iran of covertly developing a nuclear weapons capability.

BPC urges combating it aggressively, including:

- strengthening America’s “declaratory policy” to use force;

- escalating disruptive covert operations and intelligence;

- bolstering Washington’s Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman presence by deploying another carrier battle group, conducting regional military exercises with allies, and pre-positioning supplies for possible aggression;

- building the military capabilities of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman and UAE;

- “quarantin(ing)” Iran if other measures fail; it’s diplomatic language for blockading, constituting an act of war under international law; and

as a last resort, launching “an effective surgical strike against Iran’s nuclear program.”

BPC recommends several weeks of air attacks against key military and nuclear targets combined with Special Forces on the ground, saying:

“A military strike would delay Iran’s acquisition of nuclear capability but not eliminate it.”

“Still policymakers need to consider whether delaying Iran’s program in the short term would allow Washington to take advantage of that space to stop Iran’s nuclear program altogether.”

“It is also possible that the delays and increased costs that a devastating strike would impose on Iran’s nuclear program might be followed by a different set of dynamics that would cause or compel the Iranian leadership to change course.”

More likely, it would encourage an Iranian nuclear weapons program to deter future attacks. America strikes soft targets. Nuclear armed ones can retaliate.

Former Senator Charles Robb said BPC tried to prepare a “reasoned, thoughtful approach,” not a “bombs away” one. The above recommendations suggest otherwise.

#### A Final Comment

Previous articles discussed America’s media war on Iran, notably by The New York Times in print. On January 31, Mondoweiss headlined, “ ‘NYT’ gives Israelis its magazine to make an attack on Iran normal,” saying:

Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth analyst Ronen Bergman headlined, “Will Israel Attack Iran?” saying:

The New York Times Magazine “published a landmark in warmongering journalism, a huge article predicting and justifying an Israeli attack on Iran....”

Have all measures to contain Iran’s “nuclear threat been exhausted, bringing Israel to the point of last resort,” Bergman asked?

Some of Israel’s “most powerful leaders” believe it and want more decisive action before “it will no longer be possible to act.”

Moshe Ya’alon, Israel’s Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Strategic Affairs stressed Israel’s resolve, saying:

“Our policy is that in one way or another, Iran’s nuclear program must be stopped. It is a matter of months before the Iranians will be able to attain military nuclear capability. Israel should not have to lead the struggle against Iran.”

“It is up to the international community to confront the regime, but nevertheless Israel has to be ready to defend itself. And we are prepared to defend ourselves in any way and anywhere that we see fit.”

Other influential Israeli policymakers share his view. Bergman's complicit by promoting them. So is The New York Times for providing feature space instead of taking a principled anti-war stand.

Mondoweiss contributor Matthew Taylor called his article "Megalomania on high," saying The Times piece "cheerleads an Israeli attack on Iran."

Former Carter/Ford administrations National Security Council member/Middle East analyst Gary Sick condemned the article as "sensationalist" hype adding more "hysteria" to current US/Israeli Iranian relations.

He also caled Bergman's conclusion "at odds with virtually everything he produce(d) as evidence, but there are some omissions in his analysis that regrettably have become predictably routine in talking about" Iran's nuclear program.

Like other anti-Iranian writer/analysts, Bergman ignores facts to hype fear. Israel benefits by "keeping the pot near the boiling point" to portray possible planned aggression as justified.

Bergman ended his article saying, "I have come to believe that Israel will indeed strike Iran in 2012." Obama (so far) hasn't gone beyond saying "no options (are) off the table."

The National Interest's Leon Hadar believes Israel and Republican candidates, not Obama, lead the war offensive and won't tolerate "a deal with Iran that would be acceptable to the regime there."

Other feature Times articles and editorials unfairly demonize Iran. They barely stop short of endorsing war, but smooth the way if planned by repeated baseless accusations.

If Israel and/or Washington use nuclear bunker-buster munitions against underground Iranian nuclear facilities, millions of lives will be risked. Retaliation will follow. The entire region will be inflamed. General war may follow, or as this writer explained several times in on air interviews:

At issue is possible WW III, the first nuclear war, potentially endangering humanity's survival.

Hawkish policymakers, Bergman, others like him, and NYT editors mindlessly ignore the threat.

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