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Hegemony and Appeasement: Setting Up the Next U.S.-Israeli Target (Iran) For Another "Supreme International Crime" 1

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Still digesting their recent and ongoing aggressions in the Middle East, the Bush and Israeli regimes now threaten to attack Iran. As these warrior states cast their long shadow across the region, they find themselves aided and abetted by the Security Council, the other major powers, parties of the opposition, and the media.

The ease with which a supposedly independent media in a supposedly democratic society like the United States can demonize enemies and convert third- and fourth-rate official targets into major threats is almost beyond belief. And the collective amnesia of the establishment media enables them to do the same thing over and over again; they never learn, and most important never have to learn, because the collective amnesia they help instill in the society protects them against correction—an unending series of victories over memory in the exercise of "reality-control" (Orwell). This enables the media to serve as *de facto* propaganda agents of their state while still claiming to be independent watchdogs. Less than three years ago, in 2004, the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* were hardly alone in offering partial *mea culpas* for having swallowed and regurgitated Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld-Powell-Rice lies about Saddam Hussein's menacing weapons of mass destruction (WMD),2 thereby making a major contribution to the criminal and costly quagmire they now bemoan (but, along with Bush, still declining to urge any quick exit or meaningful withdrawal.) And yet they had barely gotten out their apologies before they eagerly climbed aboard the Bush-Cheney-Rice-Olmert bandwagon on the Iran menace and urgent need to do something about that grave threat.

And what a threat it is! Admittedly, Iran doesn't possess a single nuclear weapon, and won't have one for some years even if it is trying to get one, which its religious leaders vigorously deny. If it got a nuclear weapon it couldn't use it except in desperate self-defense as both Israel and the United States have many nuclear bombs and superior delivery systems, so that any offensive use of its nuclear weapon(s) would entail Iranian national suicide. It may be recalled that Saddam used his WMD only against Iran and his Kurds, but not even in self-defense during the 1991 Persian Gulf war attack on Iraq by the United States and its "coalition"—the former use was with U.S. approval, the latter case of non-use was because Saddam would have suffered disproportionate retaliation by the United States and his restraint followed. This point is not made in the establishment media, possibly because it would seem to qualify the Iran nuclear menace.

The media also do not draw the further inference that an Iranian nuclear weapon would

therefore serve only as a means of self-defense and to give Iran a little more leverage in dealing with the nuclear power states—the United States and Israel—that openly threaten it. Instead, the media, following the official line, talk about an Iranian nuclear weapon as "destabilizing," when what they really mean is that the Israeli-U.S. continuous war-making, ethnic cleansing, and deliberate and effective *de*stabilization of the Middle East would be made more difficult.

Of course, in the demonization tradition, the media feature the special menace of the evil men who run the Iranian state. In the good old days the trick was to tie them to the Evil Empire (the Guatemalan leadership in 1954, the Sandinistas in the 1980s, and in fact any national liberation movement or uncooperative leader who might have sought arms from the Soviet Union), carefully avoiding any awkward earlier support the United States might have given the evil man when he was doing its bidding (Noriega, Saddam in the 1980s and earlier). The media play this game well and regularly perform in the manner that would fit comfortably into the world of Big Brother, where "any past or future agreement [with the demonized enemy] was impossible….The Party said that Oceania had never been in alliance with Eurasia. He, Winston Smith, knew that Oceania had been in alliance with Eurasia so short a time as four years ago. But where did that knowledge exist? Only in his own consciousness, which in any case must soon be annihilated." In the case of the Iraq war the technique has been simply to play dumb and never mention the earlier alliance between "Oceania" (the United States) and "Eurasia"(Iraq).

In the Iran case, its President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has done yeoman service in facilitating the demonization process, although the media have distorted his remarks, misrepresented his power, and generally provided a misleading context to meet the demands of demonization. Ahmadinejad allegedly proclaimed that "Israel must be wiped off the map of the world," a threat proving how dangerous Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon would be for Israel; the former Israeli Prime Minister and Likud Party Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu currently leads a campaign calling for Ahmadinejad's indictment on the charge of inciting genocide against the Jewish state.3 But it has been shown that Ahmadinejad did not threaten Israel with violence in his October 26, 2005 address before the World Without Zionism conference. Rather, to commemorate International Quds Day, he quoted a number of passages from Ayatollah Khomeini, and in one of these quotes, Khomeini had predicted the passing or ending or vanishing of the *Israeli occupation of Quds* (i.e., Jerusalem) *from the pages of time*.4 Furthermore, Ahmadinejad does not rule Iran and does not have the power to go to war against Israel—that power lies with the Mullahs, as the *New York Times* and others deign to mention when the Mullahs are criticizing Ahmadinejad and thus points can be scored against him.5

On the other hand, both Israel and the United States have leaderships greatly influenced by religious groups whose principles encourage and welcome violent expansionism and even apocalyptic, "end-time" scenarios. The media do not mention U.S. and Israeli religious fanaticism as posing any kind of regional or global existential threat. Nor do they discuss or express great concern over the fact that whereas a few nuclear weapons would only help Iran to deter other states from attacking it, the United States and Israel could use nuclear weapons against Iran without committing national suicide. And both of these nuclear states threaten and reportedly have very active plans for such an attack.6 In the Kafka Era, while such credible plans and threats disappear, the mythical threat to wipe Israel "off the map" is placed front and center, helping make the real threat politically more feasible.

These media failures are closely related to the power of the pro-Israel Lobby in the United

States, which has paralyzed the Democratic Party and made it into an ally of Bush administration hardliners pushing for an attack on Iran. Israeli leaders want a war with Iran, preferably with the United States doing the fighting, and this translates into Lobby pressures and hence Democratic leaders jumping on the war bandwagon, often trying to outdo the Republicans. U.S. Senator John Edwards told a recent conference on the "Balance of Israel's National Security" that the "rise of Islamic radicalism, use of terrorism, and the spread of nuclear technology and weapons of mass destruction represent an unprecedented threat to the world and Israel." He immediately added: "At the top of these threats is Iran. Iran threatens the security of Israel and the entire world. Let me be clear: Under no circumstances can Iran be allowed to have nuclear weapons."7

Edwards is far from alone. Prior to winning election to the Senate in 2004, Illinois' Barack Obama told the editorial board of the *Chicago Tribune* that "launching some missile strikes into Iran is not the optimal position for us to be in. On the other hand, having a radical Muslim theocracy in possession of nuclear weapons is worse." Last October, New York Senator Hillary Clinton told the Council on Foreign Relations that "U.S. policy must be unequivocal. Iran must not build or acquire nuclear weapons….We have to keep all options on the table…." More recently, Indiana's Democratic Senator and one-time presidential hopeful Evan Bayh called Iran "everything we thought Iraq was but wasn't. They are seeking nuclear weapons, they do support terrorists, they have threatened to destroy Israel, and they've threatened us, too."8

Coming from the "opposition" party, comments such as these and the assumptions and beliefs which they betray help to reinforce the establishment's party-line about the "existential" threat that a nuclear-armed Iran would pose to Israel and to the "stability" of the entire Middle East. Thus the rapidity with which Iran has assumed the role formerly occupied by Iraq within the reigning demonology helps to reinvigorate a war-supportive climate just when public disaffection with the Iraq war has sharpened. In the November 2006 elections, the American public voted against the continuation of the Iraq war, and most certainly would oppose their government's expansion of the war to Iran.9 But with the Democrats neutralized and in the absence of a truly mass opposition movement, the public remains irrelevant to this decision-making process: It can be ushered along belatedly, as the bombs begin falling and it is called upon to support "our troops." That worked for some years in the case of the Iraq invasion-occupation.

As With the Iraqi WMD Hoax, Iran's Alleged "Threat to the Peace" Serves To Cover Over the Real Threat Posed to Iran by the United States and Israel

In retrospect, it is crystal clear that the alleged threat of Iraq's WMD was a cover, long in the making, for a U.S.-British plan to conquer and occupy Iraq, with WMD selected as the sexiest, most saleable marketing device around which this planned violation of the UN Charter was "fixed." In that episode, the United States and Britain also clearly used the UN as a means of facilitating their attack. But this recent history, none of it more than five years old, had no effect in preventing a closely analogous rerun of that scenario in a run-up to a planned U.S.-Israeli attack and possible attempt at another "regime change" in violation of the UN Charter.

Consider some of the relevant facts:

1. Iran has never once moved beyond its borders in an act of aggression since the organization of the UN and widespread acceptance of the UN Charter as fundamental

international law. This, of course, has not prevented Henry Kissinger from describing the "Iranian combination of imperialism and fundamentalist ideology" as a threat to the "region on which the energy supplies of the industrial democracies depend," a threat for which the counterweight of "American forces are indispensable."10 Nor has Iran's non-aggressive history prevented a wide array of commentators from repeating the views expressed by the Director of National Intelligence in testimony before the Senate on January 11, when he warned of the "shadow" that Iran now casts across the Middle East; by Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who warned of an "emboldened and strengthened Iran;" or by George Bush, who, in his two major speeches in January, warned of an Iran "emboldened in its pursuit of nuclear weapons" (January 10), a new axis emerging "out of chaos in Iraq,…an emboldened enemy with new safe havens, new recruits, new resources, and an even greater determination to harm America" (January 23).11

On the other hand, while despite all this noisy rhetoric Iran has stayed at home, it has been attacked by Iraq in a war of aggression that was actively supported by the United States and Britain. The United States also organized a coup in Iran in 1953 that replaced a democratic with a dictatorial regime. The Security Council stood by and did nothing in the face of these U.S.-supported violations of the UN Charter.

2. The United States and Israel have both engaged in numerous cross-border invasions and occupations in violation of the UN Charter, most recently the United States (and Britain) attacking and occupying Iraq, and Israel bombing and invading Lebanon. The UN Security Council not only failed to do anything punitive in the face of these open violations of the UN Charter, it actually ratified the U.S. occupation—whereas it had quickly forced Iraq out of Kuwait in 1991 as a matter of course, given Iraq's violation of the UN Charter and the importance of adherence to the rule of law!12

3. Iran has not threatened to attack the United States—which it couldn't do anyway, any more than Iraq could have attacked this country in 2003—and it has not threatened to attack Israel, although Iran has promised to retaliate for an attack against its territory, and President Ahmadinejad has made hostile remarks about Israel and expressed the wish that Israel would disappear as an apartheid state. As noted, his statement was misrepresented by the Western media as part of the demonization process, the media also failing across the board to note the limits of Ahmadinejad's power in Iran, and the reasons why any offensive effort by Iran against Israel would be suicidal.

4. In contrast with Iran's bluster but non-threats, both the United States and Israel have made quite open threats to attack Iran, with U.S. officials speaking regularly of their objective as "regime change" in Tehran. This is normalized in the media, which transform Iran's bluster and non-threats into very worrisome concerns, while making the quite explicit and realistic U.S. and Israeli threats into reasonable reactions to the politically-constructed threat posed by Iran. In one of Condoleezza Rice's classic expressions, matching her claim that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon marked the "birth pangs of a new Middle East," Rice treats the open Israeli threat against Iran as a regrettable but understandable consequence of Iran's refusal to terminate nuclear activities–which have never been shown to be anything but peaceful and permitted under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT): "I think that even talk of such [military operations against Iran] just shows how very serious it would be to have Iran continue its program unabated."13 That Iran's nuclear program, on the unproven assumption that it has weapons in mind, might be an understandable response to the Israeli open threat to use nuclear weapons on Iran, is outside her—or the Western media's—orbit of thought.

Although these U.S.-Israeli threats are splashed across headlines and television screens around the globe, and violate the UN Charter's prohibition against states engaging in the "*threat* or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state," and although these threats are made by two states that have committed the "supreme international crime" in Iraq and Lebanon in 2003 and 2006, respectively, the UN and international community take no cognizance of these Charter violations and the threat its authors pose for a further major war. Instead the new Secretary-General speaks of the UN and United States having a "shared objective of promoting human rights, democracy and freedom and peace and security,"14 and the Security Council continues to cooperate actively with the threatening global rogue state as it and its client prepare for a further war of aggression.

5. Beyond mere threats, the United States has already been carrying out provocations and a low-level war of aggression against Iran, on at least two occasions abducting Iranian diplomatic personnel inside Iraq in violation of international law, conducting surveillance flights over Iran's territory, and infiltrating military personnel on the ground.15 It has been transferring deep-earth-penetrating munitions to Israel, and has spoken openly about their possible use against targets within Iran. It has transferred anti-missile systems to neighboring states such as Kuwait and Qatar, and openly made clear their Iran-oriented mission. And it has undertaken the highly provocative placement of two naval aircraft carrier groups off Iran's coastal waters in the Persian Gulf, naming Admiral William J. Fallon the new head of U.S. Central Command, whose theater of operations include Afghanistan and Iraq in a move the *New York Times* called "classic gunboat diplomacy."16 Or in the words of the U.S. Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns, "Iran needs to learn to respect us. And Iran certainly needs to respect American power in the Middle East."17 All the United States wants is a little respect!

6. Iran was among the original signatories to the NPT (1968); and though the Islamic Republic of Iran dates only from 1979, it has consistently denounced the nuclear-weapon option, instructing the IAEA that it "considers the acquiring, development and use of nuclear weapons inhuman, immoral, illegal and against its very basic principles."18 Iran has cooperated with the inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to an impressive extent. For some years prior to 2003, it did hide aspects of its nuclear program, most notably its early research in the field of uranium enrichment, possibly recognizing that its enemies (the United States and Israel) would give it trouble for any work it did in this area even if it was legal. In order to satisfy the IAEA's ever-changing doubts, however, Iran adopted numerous and sometimes unprecedented "confidence building" measures over the course of 2003-2005, including the voluntary suspension of a uranium enrichment program in which it has every right to engage under the NPT, and the voluntary observance of the stricter Additional Protocol measures, even though Iran never adopted them formally. More important, *no* IAEA report on Iran's implementation of its non-proliferation commitments has ever determined that Iran diverted its nuclear program away from civilian toward military uses. Nor has the CIA found any evidence of a secret program to develop nuclear weapons.19

7. On the other hand, the United States (along with every other nuclear-weapon state) has violated its commitment under the same NPT "to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control," in the words of the unanimous opinion of the International Court of Justice (July 8, 1996).20 The United States not only refuses to move toward nuclear

disarmament, it has recently declared nuclear weapons part of its regular war arsenal, has unilaterally abrogated its NPT promise never to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states, and it is busily modernizing its nuclear weapons to make them more practicable.21 Further, although the NPT requires nuclear states to help non-nuclear states develop civilian technology, the United States not only refuses to do this, it openly denies that right to Iran.

8. Israel remains outside the NPT, and has secretly built up a sizable arsenal of nuclear weapons, giving it unique status as the only Middle Eastern country with nuclear arms. This also has been normalized by the UN and international community, and Israel's nuclear arms are unchallenged despite its numerous violations of Security Council and International Court rulings, the Geneva Conventions that relate to the behavior of an occupying power, and its recent major aggression against Lebanon. While Israel remains outside the IAEA's jurisdiction, it threatens to attack Iran with its own nuclear arsenal, or those acquired from the Americans. Regardless, the Security Council has never adopted sanctions against Israel for building up a nuclear weapons arsenal that constitutes a grave threat to international peace and security. In September 2006, the United States, France, Germany and Britain (among others) blocked a vote at an IAEA meeting that would have declared Israel's nuclear capabilities a threat. So the double standard is institutionalized and official: Only a U.S. target poses a threat in acquiring nuclear weapons; the United States and its clients pose no such threat, even when they warn of their possible use of nuclear weapons in a further "supreme international crime" of aggression.

In an act of remarkable chutzpah, the Israeli Minister of Strategic Affairs, and noted racist, Avigdor Lieberman wrote to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to formally request that he "Revoke Iran's membership in the United Nations" for its failures in dealing with the charges against it under NPT rules, to which of course Israel has avoided subjecting itself.22 In the Kafka Era, Iran finds itself "surrounded by powers with nuclear weapons: Pakistan to their east, the Russians to the north, the Israelis to the west and us in the Persian Gulf," as Robert Gates recently remarked, but it has no right to even embark on nuclear activities to which it is entitled under the NPT, because the United States says so.

9. Close U.S. allies India and Pakistan also remain outside the NPT, despite having built-up and tested nuclear weapons, India at least twice (1974 and 1998), and Pakistan once (1998). In December 2006, just days before the Security Council imposed sanctions on Iran, Bush signed legislation that allows the U.S. to sell nuclear fuel and technology to India for the first time since it exploded a nuclear device in 1974. Bush, the *Washington Post* reported, "reversing three decades of nonproliferation policy,…persuaded Congress to make an exception for India despite its not having signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty." Within disarmament and non-proliferation circles, the India-exception is regarded as a nightmare scenario, as it permits India to designate "only 14 of its 22 nuclear reactors as civilian," and open to inspections; the other eight "are considered military and will remain shielded from international scrutiny." This "will allow India to import nuclear fuel for civilian use," while enabling it to "use its own facilities to produce enough fuel for 40 or 50 nuclear bombs per year." But as the *Financial Times* noted, "US officials hope the agreement will given US companies such as Westinghouse a 'leg up' in contracts for civilian nuclear plants in India…." One section of the law requires the White House to periodically certify that India is not transferring nuclear material or technology to Iran. Upon signing it, however, the White House issued a statement announcing that it will construe all such requirements as "advisory." As Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns explained, "We don't have any

doubts that India also wishes to deny Iran a nuclear weapons capability."23 In the Kafka Era, nuclear-weapons proliferation to India and beyond is acceptable, so long as India (and anybody else) serves U.S. political interests.

10. Instead of trying to curb the aggressions and NPT violations of the United States and Israel, or their allies like India and Pakistan, the Security Council and international community have zeroed-in on the U.S. and Israeli target already under attack and threatened with a more massive aggression. Under U.S. pressure the IAEA has devoted at least 20 different reports to the assessment of Iran's nuclear program since March 2003. Although Iran has NPT rights to peaceful nuclear activities, the United States has openly declared that it will refuse Iran those legal rights, and it has continuously pressed for a complete suspension of Iran's enrichment and processing activities as a pre-condition for any negotiations with Iran on any issue. After more than three years of arm-twisting, the UN Security Council has finally gone along with this, twice adopting resolutions in 2006 under Chapter VII's "threat to the peace" articles that demanded, first, that Iran suspend all enrichment and reprocessing activities (1696, July 31), and later that all states withhold assistance to specified aspects of Iran's program (1737, December 23).24 In short, a sanctions regime was imposed on the "defiant" state (i.e., U.S. target).

11. The Security Council adopted these resolutions despite reaffirming the right of *all* states "to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination" (here echoing Art. IV.1 of the NPT). Despite the fact that ever since the present round of harassment began in 2003, Iran has steadfastly renounced the nuclear-weapon option as anathema to Islamic principles. Despite the fact that *no* IAEA report on Iran's implementation of its non-proliferation commitments has ever found Iran guilty of diverting its nuclear program away from civilian toward military uses. Despite the fact that Iran advocates the establishment of a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East—as does every other state in the region, with one exception. Despite the fact that in order to satisfy the IAEA's ever-changing doubts, Iran adopted numerous and sometimes unprecedented "confidence building" measures over the course of 2003 – 2005. Despite the fact that there are as many as 442 nuclear power plants currently operating in more than 30 different countries around the world, with nearly one-quarter of the total located in the United States alone, and zero inside Iran. Despite the fact that Iran long ago declared its intention to develop its own nuclear energy sector to provide electricity to a rapidly growing population, and to free-up its oil sector for desperately needed export earnings—an argument supported by a recent paper in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.25 And despite the fact that the United States once supported Iran in this objective—though only at a time when a so-called "special relationship" still existed between the two states, Iran then ruled by the U.S.-installed client regime of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, under whose "great leadership" Iran was regarded as an "island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world" (Jimmy Carter, New Year's Eve 1977).

12. The range of "nuclear"-related material and activities that the U.S. seeks to deny Iran is far more extensive than just those that clearly have a *potential* weapons or even "dual-use" applications, such as Iran's Heavy Water Reactor Program at Arak. "Iran gets IAEA technical aid for more than 15 projects and dozens more that also involve other countries," Associated Press reports. "Diplomats familiar with the American strategy for the next IAEA board meeting March 5 say Washington wants at least half of the aid projects permanently eliminated." Although 1737 makes exceptions for aid that does not contribute to

“proliferation sensitive nuclear activities,” specifically if it serves “food, agricultural, medical or other humanitarian purposes” (par. 9), the projects currently under review include those designed “to bolster the peaceful use of nuclear energy in medicine, agriculture [and] power generation”—clearly not military related. Perhaps most strikingly, AP mentions “cancer therapy programs and requests for help in international nuclear licensing procedures.”26 Thus the U.S. seeks to exploit the IAEA review process to heighten tension with Iran and to penalize it in a flagrant fashion.27

It is ironic that while the U.S. struggles to prevent Iran from researching even medical projects that make use of nuclear technology, it is able to dispatch nuclear-powered warships to the same region, including two aircraft carrier strike groups and a nuclear-powered submarine that on January 8 rear-ended a Japanese supertanker in the Strait of Hormuz, which connects the Persian Gulf to the Indian Ocean. In the Kafka Era, for Iran to develop even a peaceful nuclear program constitutes a threat to the peace, while for seven decades running, the U.S. has researched, developed, and manufactured nuclear-powered weapons and warships, and sent them to any theater on the planet it chooses, as a guardian of the peace.

13. Both 1696 and 1737 state that the “IAEA is unable to conclude that there are no undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran.” Similarly, the IAEA’s November 14 report noted that “While the Agency is able to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran, the Agency will remain unable to make further progress in its efforts to verify the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran unless Iran addresses the long outstanding verification issues”—locutions repeated many times over the course of the IAEA’s reporting on Iran.28 In plainer English, the IAEA can verify that there are no serious NPT-violations in Iran. Therefore it has been necessary to seize upon any area of Iran’s nuclear program where there are ambiguities, and to use these “outstanding issues” that Iran can never fully satisfy to keep Iran under the gun. In analogous fashion, the regime of Saddam Hussein could never satisfy UNSCOM or UNMOVIC, even when it had no WMD. Although the IAEA and Security Council would never face a comparable “gap in knowledge” were they to examine the programs and stockpiles of the eight nuclear-weapons states (for the time being, we’d exclude North Korea from this category), it is the repetitive allegation that there are “outstanding issues” in Iran that has transformed Iran’s nuclear program into an apparent problem, independently of what Iran’s leadership does or does not do. In the Kafka Era, Iran is obliged to prove a negative. Its inability to do so is a threat to the peace

14. In another triumph of U.S. war-making “diplomacy”—recall the Rambouillet Conference on Kosovo in February 1999, which cleared the ground for NATO bombing29—1696 and 1737 are on the books now, reinforcing the presumption of Iran’s “threat to the peace.” Both Russia’s and China’s UN ambassadors explained that a reason their states had voted in favor of sanctions was that 1737 “clearly affirms that, if Iran suspends all activities relating to the enrichment and chemical reprocessing of uranium, the measures spelled out…will be suspended” (Russia’s Vitaly Churkin). “The sanctions measures adopted by the Security Council this time are limited and reversible,” China’s Wang Guangya added later. “There are also explicit provisions indicating that if Iran suspends its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, complies with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and meets with the requirements of the IAEA, the Security Council would suspend and even terminate the sanctions measures.”30 But these testimonies are false and disingenuous. In accepting the 1737 sanctions, surely Russia and China recognize that they have handed the

belligerent members of the Security Council a weapon that can be used to punish Iran economically and to facilitate another major war of aggression.

Recalling the history of the U.S. and British manipulation of the UN during the long march towards war with Iraq, common sense tells us that, once having secured the Council's approval of sanctions on Iran, Washington will never surrender them without achieving its ultimate goal. To lift the 1737 sanctions requires Security Council determination "that Iran has fully complied" with its demands. If Iran has not complied the Council will "adopt further appropriate measures…to persuade Iran to comply." Given the U.S. veto and other forms of leverage, this means that the sanctions will remain until U.S. objectives are met. One of those objectives is "regime change." And since Washington has declared that it will not accept Iran's right even to civilian uses of nuclear power, "full compliance" may never be recognized by the United States without a military attack. The Iraq "sanctions of mass destruction" were only lifted after the U.S. invasion and occupation. The Iran sanctions are similarly structured to provide the United States with a *casus belli*—an incident for war. They very well may be lifted only in the ruins of another victim of aggression.

Conclusion

In a statement delivered to the IAEA more than three-and-one-half years ago, Iran still held out hope "that not all international organizations have yet come [to] the state of total domination."31 That hope has not been realized and the performance of the UN and UN Security Council in the Middle East crises has been shameful. To have allowed two global rogue states that have evaded or violated the NPT and committed a stream of major UN Charter and Geneva Convention violations to drag Iran before the Security Council, and to obtain Chapter VII sanctions against it, constitutes a most grave moral and political collapse of any genuine international community worthy of the name. The Iran case is a true throwback to Munich-style appeasement and poses a serious threat to world peace. This is because it bends multilateral institutions to fit the super-rogue state's will, and provides it with a semi-legal basis for attacking its next target, an amazing innovation in the annals of power and lawlessness, given its performance in brushing aside any UN constraints when attacking Iraq just four years ago.

Notes

1. According to the *Final Judgment* at Nuremberg, a ruling that has provided all succeeding generations with the classic pronouncement on the illegality of aggressive war: "War is essentially an evil thing. Its consequences are not confined to the belligerent states alone, but affect the whole world. To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime; it is the *supreme international crime* differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole." See *Final Judgment of the International Military Tribunal for the Trial of German Major War Criminals* (September 30, 1946), specifically "The Common Plan or Conspiracy and Aggressive War," from which this passage derives.

2. "From the Editors: *The Times* and Iraq," Editorial, *New York Times*, May 26, 2004; Howard Kurtz, "The Post on WMDs: An Inside Story," *Washington Post*, August 12, 2004. Also see "Were We Wrong?" Editorial, *The New Republic*, June 28, 2004. In this last case,

the editors expressed "regret…but no shame," adding: "if our strategic rationale for war has collapsed, our moral one has not."

3. Gil Hoffman, "Netanyahu to address Britain on Iran," *Jerusalem Post*, January 11, 2007. Also see the Remarks by Benjamin Netanyahu at the 2007 Herzliya Conference, Lecture Summaries, January 21, 2007.

4. See Anneliese Fikentscher and Andreas Neumann, "Does Iran's President Want Israel Wiped Off the Map?" (Trans. Erik Appleby), *Information Clearinghouse*, April 20, 2006; Juan Cole, "Hitchens the Hacker," *Informed Comment*, May 3, 2006; Jonathan Steele, "Lost in Translation," *The Guardian*, June 14, 2006; and Arash Norouzi, "'Wiped Off the Map' — The Rumor of the Century," *DemocracyRising.US*, January 18, 2007.

5. Nazila Fathi and Michael Slackman, "Rebuke in Iran To Its President On Nuclear Role," *New York Times*, January 19, 2007; Dariush Zahedi and Omid Memarian, "The clock may be ticking on Iran's fiery president," *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 2007; and Marie Colvin and Leila Asgharzadeh, "Iran's strongman loses grip as ayatollah offers nuclear deal," London *Times*, January 21, 2007.

6. See Seymour M. Hersh, "The Coming Wars: What the Pentagon can now do in secret," *New Yorker*, January 25, 2005; Sarah Baxter and Michael Smith, "Bush plans strike on Iran's nuclear sites," *Sunday Times*, April 9, 2006; Peter Baker *et al*., "U.S. Is Studying Military Strike Options on Iran," *Washington Post*, April 9, 2006; Seymour M. Hersh, "The Iran Plans: Would President Bush go to war to stop Tehran from getting the bomb?" *New Yorker*, April 17, 2006; Seymour M. Hersh, "The Next Act: Is a damaged Administration less likely to attack Iran, or more?" *New Yorker*, November 27, 2006; and most recently Uzi Mahnaimi and Sarah Baxter, "Revealed: Israel Plans Nuclear Strike on Iran," *Sunday Times*, January 7, 2007 (as posted to *Truthout*).

7. Remarks by Senator John Edwards at the 2007 Herzliya Conference (via satellite), Lecture Summaries, January 22, 2007.

8. David Mendell, "Obama would consider missile strikes on Iran," *Chicago Tribune*, September 25, 2004; Hillary Clinton, "Challenges Facing the United States in the Global Security Environment," Council on Foreign Relations, October 31, 2006; Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Starting Gate," *The New Yorker*, January 15, 2007.

9. According to a major poll of more than 26,000 people in 25 different countries, 61 percent of all respondents living outside the United States said they disapprove of the U.S. Government's handling of Iran's nuclear program, as does 50 percent of U.S. respondents. The disapproval rating for the U.S. Government's handling of the war in Iraq is even higher: 74 percent of those living outside the United States, and 57 percent inside the U.S. Were the U.S. Government to extend its Afghanistan and Iraq wars to neighboring Iran, surely these disapproval ratings could only increase—perhaps dramatically. See "World View of U.S. Role Goes from Bad To Worse," Program on International Policy Attitudes, January 22, 2007. Also see the accompanying Questionnaire, pp. 2-3.

10. Henry A. Kissinger, "Withdrawal is not an option," *International Herald Tribune*, January 18, 2007.

11. John D. Negroponte, "Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National

Intelligence," Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, January 11, 2007; "Statement of Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates," Senate Armed Services Committee, January 12, 2007; "President's Address to the Nation," January 10, 2007; "President Bush Delivers State of the Union Address," January 23, 2007.

12. In another illustration of hypocrisy, the U.S. joined with seven Middle Eastern states (Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and the U.A.E.) in January to issue a statement which affirmed, among other things, that "disputes among states should be settled peacefully and in accordance with international norms, and that relations among all countries should be based on mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, and on the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of other nations." ("Gulf Cooperation Council – Plus Two's Ministerial Statement," U.S. Department of State, January 16, 2007). This accolade to the principles of sovereignty and noninterference was directed not against the March 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq or a possible U.S.-Israeli military attack on Iran, but rather against Iran and Syria, which have faced the U.S. charge that they are interfering in the internal affairs of the newly liberated Iraq.

13. Condoleezza Rice, "Interview With Chico Menashe of Israel's Channel 10," Jerusalem, U.S. Department of State, January 14, 2007.

14. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Remarks to the press following his meeting with President Bush at the White House, January 16, 2007.

15. See Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, "The Fourth 'Supreme International Crime' in Seven Years Is Already Underway," *ElectricPolitics.com*, May 16, 2006.

16. John Kifner, "Gunboat Diplomacy: The Watch on the Gulf," *New York Times*, January 14, 2007.

17. Jay Solomon, "Spillover Feared as U.S. Confronts Iran," *Wall Street Journal*, January 12, 2007.

18. Statement by Iran before the IAEA, June 6, 2003, p. 4. —This statement continued: "[Nuclear weapons] have no place in Iran's defence doctrine. They do not add to Iran's security nor do they help rid the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction, which is in Iran's supreme interests."

19. On the lack of evidence for the charge that Iran possesses a covert nuclear weapons program, including the CIA's assessment that *no* evidence of such a covert program exists, see Seymour M. Hersh, "The Next Act: Is a damaged Administration less likely to attack Iran, or more?" *New Yorker*, November 27, 2006; and Norman Dombey, "Iran and the Bomb," *London Review of Books*, January 25, 2007. Dombey notes that "until or unless Iran withdraws from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the facilities at Natanz and Arak are safeguarded by the IAEA. Cameras are installed at Natanz (they function continuously), and there are monthly inspections. Similar arrangements will be made for Arak. Any enriched uranium or plutonium made will be under IAEA seal and will not be available for casting into the core of a weapon. There is no pressing nuclear threat from Iran at the moment; nor does there appear to be a tipping point in sight, beyond which it would be impossible to prevent the country from acquiring weapons." —For a list of Iran's nuclear facilities under IAEA surveillance as of June 2003, including the uranium-enrichment project at Natanz and the heavy-water research reactor at Arak, see the Annex to the report by the

IAEA's General Secretary to the Board of Governors, *Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran* (GOV/2003/40), June 6, 2003, p. 9.

20. See *The Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*, International Court of Justice, July 8, 1996, pars. 98-103.

21. William J. Broad *et al*., "U.S. Selecting Hybrid Design For Warheads," *New York Times*, January 7, 2007.

22. "Israeli minister urges UN chief to revoke Iran membership," Agence France Presse, January 3, 2007.

23. Peter Baker, "Bush Signs India Nuclear Law," *Washington Post*, December 19, 2006; Caroline Daniel, "Bush signs India nuclear pact," *Financial Times*, December 19, 2006; and "President's Statement on H.R. 5682, the 'Henry J. Hyde United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act of 2006'," White House Office of the Press Secretary, December 18, 2006.

24. For the actual texts, see Resolution 1696 (S/RES/1696), July 31, 2006; and Resolution 1737 (S/RES/1737), December 23, 2006.

25. Roger Stern, "The Iranian petroleum crisis and United States national security," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Vol. 104, No. 1, January 2, 2007.

26. Mark Heinrich, "Atom watchdog reviews Iran aid amidst UN sanctions," Reuters, January 3, 2007; Mark Heinrich, "Iran's caution under sanctions eases heat at IAEA," Reuters, January 12, 2007; Jean-Michel Stoullig, "IAEA suspends some technical aid to Iran," Agence France Presse, January 18, 2007; George Jahn, "U.N. nuclear agency puts some technical aid projects to Iran on hold, pending review," January 18, 2007.

27. To monitor the evolving lists of Technical Cooperation programs that the IAEA shares with Iran, go to the IAEA Department of Technical Cooperation's "Query Asia and the Pacific Projects" search engine, and use it to search for those the IAEA maintains with Iran.

28. *Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran* (GOV/2006/64), November 14, 2006, par. 21.

29. The Rambouillet Conference was held at the Chateau Rambouillet in France from February 6 – 20, 1999. Its ostensible purpose was to negotiate an interim political settlement to the conflict over the Serbian province of Kosovo. But the conference was held under extreme duress, as at no point were the Serb negotiators free from the threat of military attack by NATO, which six days prior to the conference had issued an Activation Order "authoriz[ing] air strikes against targets on [Federal Republic of Yugoslavia] territory" (January 30, 1999). As the former State Department official George Kenney reported shortly after the war, a "senior State Department official had bragged that the United States 'deliberately set the bar higher that the Serbs could accept'. The Serbs needed, according to the official, a little bombing to see reason." See Marc Weller (Ed.), *The Crisis in Kosovo 1989 – 1999* (Documents and Analysis Publishing Ltd., 1999), Ch. 15, "The Rambouillet Conference," pp. 392-474, which includes a copy of NATO's Activation Order (p. 416); and George Kenney, "Rolling Thunder: the Rerun," *The Nation*, June 14, 1999.

30. UN Security Council, "Non-proliferation—Iran" (S/PV.5612), December 23, 2006.

31. Statement by Iran before the IAEA, June 6, 2003, p. 2.

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