

# The Iranian “Smoke and Mirrors Threat” and Washington’s “Human Rights Card”

By [Sam Muhho](#)

Global Research, May 15, 2018

Global Research 27 October 2013

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

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

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

Relevant article selected from the GR archive, first published on GR in October 2013.

*In a cycle of habit borne out repeatedly in the mainstream western media, demonization and fear mongering against Iran is picking up pace again in the face of attempts by the new Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to rebuild relations with the west and work toward international cooperation. The techniques and methodologies used by the west in perpetuating the geopolitically-motivated, neo-imperialist, agenda against Iran often come across in the media as clumsy and awkward in their reasoning. Before delving into the hard geopolitical reality, a much needed word on the disingenuous leveraging of human-rights against countries such as Iran is critical.*

## Iran and the Western “Human Rights Card”

In a recent [Fox News report](#), Iran’s human rights record is criticized by Benjamin Weinthal, a Berlin-based fellow of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD). His arguments are employed to argue against the feasibility of pragmatic negotiations with Iran as according to his logic, Iran is not a regime “worthy” of practical negotiation with. To use the reported human right violations against religious minorities and Christians and particular as geopolitical leverage to argue against diplomacy and negotiation with Iran wrecks of compromised, corporate-financier motivation, especially when juxtaposed with [the intimate collaboration of the United States](#) and its allies with one of the most repressive regimes in the Middle East (and the world), Saudi Arabia.

While Iran is often berated for its short-comings, these short-comings pale in comparison to the atrocities perpetuated by the Saudis. In Saudi Arabia, no Jewish or Christian worship is allowed and possession of a Bible could warrant you various brutal punishments. Saudi Arabia has been notorious for [rigid campaigns against Bible possession](#) and religious symbols, especially in airport customs searches including the shredding of any Bibles found and in one case, [harassing a nun](#) who was passing through Jeddah on a transit flight.

Saudi Arabia, in cooperation with the United States, is currently promoting a [sectarian-extremist-driven destabilization](#) campaign in Syria whose byproduct has resulted in nightmarish lives for people across religious lines which can be described as nothing less than [premeditated genocide](#) with former CIA official Robert Baer predicting campaigns against Christians in Syria and Lebanon during an interview with Seymour Hersh for his excellent 2007 article, [“The Redirection.”](#)

What is rather ironic in light of western focus on Iran is that Baer stated that joint US-Saudi-Israeli machinations in Lebanon, which were generating radical Islamist groups, would necessitate the protection of Christians which would be done by Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah of Hezbollah and the Shiites as opposed to the US and France. Iran is predominantly Shiite and while conservative Islam is the norm, this conservatism is distinct from the twisted [inventions and atrocities](#) of radical Wahabism in Saudi Arabia which serve as the hotbed of global Al Qaeda activity.

Let it not be forgotten that Saudi Arabia is the [primary underwriter](#) of Al Qaeda's proliferation throughout Eurasia, done admittedly and particularly in line with western imperialist designs of isolating Iran and serving as geopolitical pawns. It is noted that the Taliban and the Wahabi fundamentalists that constitute its ranks and the ranks of extremists from Nigeria to the Philippines would not exist without Saudi financing done purposefully to create a twisted brand of Islam and produce a "Swiss-Army knife" to be used against the targets of western foreign policy such as [Syria](#) today and previously against [Afghanistan](#) during the 1980s; it has since formed the cornerstone of the [fake "war on terror"](#) driven by [western neo-imperialist interests](#). The [largest arms sale in U.S. history](#) has been to Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia regularly conducts brutal executions through the means of hooded swordsmen including on religious charges of being accused of "[sorcery and witchcraft](#)" in the grimly-dubbed "[Chop-Chop Square](#)." Women are not allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia and foreign women cannot visit the country without being accompanied by a male guardian. In addition to toeing the line of western corporate-financier geopolitical agendas [in cooperation with Israel such as in Syria](#), the Saudi establishment interlocks with these interests as noted in points "6" and "7" in the article "[Introducing the Gulf State Despots](#)" by Tony Cartalucci.

Iran, which may have its shortcoming, has an unprecedented standard when compared to Saudi Arabia. Iranian Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians are guaranteed their own seats on the Iranian parliament in proportion to their population. Iranian Jews, roughly 30,000 in population, enjoy relatively peaceful lives in Iran with a Jewish hospital, two kosher restaurants in Tehran, 11 synagogues, many with Hebrew schools, and a Jewish library including 20,000 titles. Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini issued edicts in the 1980s stating that Iran's Jewish and Christian populations be "protected." Many of these points are noted by Benjamin Schett's article "[Debunking Anti-Iran Propaganda](#)" which conflict with the gravely austere picture painted by western media. This short [documentary by Journeyman Pictures](#) gives a candid picture of Jewish life in Iran.

It is often claimed that Iran promotes institutionalized anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial but [Benjamin Schett](#) explains why this is not true. Ahmadinejad has made accusations against the reliability of the Holocaust but this does NOT represent the position of the Iranian state or people whose state-media even broadcasted a popular, [Hollywood-quality film](#) commemorating the suffering of the Jews and featuring the story of Abdol Hossein Sardari, an Iranian diplomat who helped save Jews from the Holocaust by giving them false passports to flee Nazi-occupied France. Iran's former Jewish Member of Parliament, Moris Motamed, has [criticized Ahmadinejad](#) for his statements on the Holocaust and even held a press conference to denounce those statements. However, such sentiments must not be seen as reflecting the entirety of the Iranian society as clearly is not the case.

Criticism against Israel is mainstream and expected but not because of any religious animosity towards the Jews, as Ahmadinejad himself stated in a speech in Esfahan cited by

Schett, but rather because of the complicated political issues surrounding the [Palestinian plight](#).

Benjamin Schett notes that it is impossible to give 100% insight of life as a religious minority in a religiously conservative country without being in that position oneself but unlike in Saudi Arabia, at least such minorities openly exist. Of course, such minorities must not settle for the bare minimum and as a westerner, I'm in the tradition of the equality for all. If and where any cases of rights violations exist, such as those noted in the original Fox News article by Benjamin Weinthal, they must be openly addressed but done so in a manner unlike the western media's purpose which is to highlight certain facts, at the expense of others, and use any incident they can as propaganda fodder for the sake of [western geopolitical objectives](#) aimed at stifling peace and diplomacy, substituting it with war-mongering, and covering up the west and its assets' own serial crimes against humanity.

Foundation for the Defense of Democracies (FDD): Is it Really About Democracy?

Of particular interest in the Fox News article is that the author, Benjamin Weinthal, is listed as a fellow at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies (FDD), an organization with a vested interest in promoting western corporate- financier objectives around the world with human rights simply employed as an easily-leveraged cloak for naked imperialism. I will assume good faith on the part of Benjamin Wienthal as many people drawn into organizations and NGOs that served western subversion are drawn it by honest intentions which is something that imperialist systems exploit as [they have in history](#). Nevertheless, the overall bulk and existence of the FDD cannot be casually excused when one gets an insight into the interests and networks propping it up. Tony Cartalucci in his excellent article, "[The War on Terror is a Fraud](#)", explains the FDD:

The [Foundation for Defense of Democracies](#) (FDD) is [a corporate](#) and [US State Department](#)-funded policy institute that [claims to be dedicated to promoting](#) "pluralism, defending democratic values, and fighting the ideologies that threaten democracy." It is decidedly "Neo-Conservative" and focuses almost exclusively on starting and maintaining wars at America's expense.

FDD's "[executive team](#)" includes James Woolsey and Clifford May, while its "[leadership council](#)" includes Bill Kristol – all signatories of a recent Foreign Policy Initiative [letter addressed to House Republicans](#) asking them to discard the UN mandate for NATO's Libyan intervention and commit more support specifically for regime change. Acting [Senator Joseph Lieberman also can be found on FDD's "leadership council"](#) and has been a chief proponent of war with Libya, as well as Syria and Iran, [alongside John McCain](#). FDD has a myriad of publications expressing the elation of the "Neo-Conservative" establishment over current operations against Libya and the possible springboard the Libyan war serves toward US intervention in Syria and Iran. FDD's only criticism of Obama is that more should be done, faster, and at a greater expense to America. Michael Ledeen, a "freedom scholar," expresses this well in his article titled, "[Lessons of Libya \(and Syria, and, Some Day, Iran\)](#)," where he throws in his organization's collective desire to intervene in both Syria and Iran, for good measure.

The Atlantic article, "[Al-Qaeda Is Winning](#)," written by FDD "senior fellow" Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, expresses the true contempt these individuals have toward their audience. In this piece reflecting on the last 10 years of the "War on Terror," Gartenstein-

Ross claims that Al Qaeda's ability to use cheap means to provoke the United States into a multi-billion dollar defense is rendering an Al Qaeda victory through a "strategy of a thousand cuts." Of course, the x-ray machines and other security apparatuses being installed across the United States and the tremendous amount of money being used to sustain combat operations around the world "hunting terrorists," doesn't go into a black hole. Instead, it goes into the pockets of the very people funding the work of Mr. Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and his peers throughout his and other US and British think-tanks.

Those who have read [my recent article on Libya](#) will note the entirely illegitimate nature of the NATO campaign against Libya and the intellectually bankrupt mentality of those who shamefully perpetuate its talking-points. The FDD, at the top of the organization, is not merely concerned with human rights themselves but rather leveraging such concerns for their own sake, something the US government and the corporate-financier interests it represents have clearly done before [with regards to China](#). It should be noted that the FDD is just one element in the neo-imperialist racket. Other corporate-financier, "globalist" think-tanks, who are the true underwriters of western policy, includes the Council on Foreign Relations, Chatham House, the International Crisis Group, and the Brookings Institute. In "[Naming Names: Your Real Government](#)", Tony Cartalucci points out who truly controls the United States/NATO and lists the prominent individuals and corporations financing and directing them.

### Iran and the Western Geopolitical Struggle

The Brookings Institution is of particular concern among these think-tanks as it has been the primary facilitator in the drive for war against Iran founded on distortion and geopolitically-motivated propaganda. Contrary to media reports portraying Iran as an immediate, existential threat to US and Israeli security, the [Brookings Institute released a policy report](#) that was basically a handbook for overthrowing nations titled [Which Path to Persia? \(.PDF\)](#). It was written by six prominent analysts within establishment circles, including [Kenneth Pollack](#), admitting that Iran poses not a threat to the survival of the United States and Israel's security but their collective regional and geopolitical hegemony and interests across the region. It was noted that Iran was playing a strategy of firmness and even aggressiveness but not recklessness in combating western hegemony and imperialism as can be seen in its recent economic endeavors in the [pipeline and gas politics of the region](#). It was also noted that Iran was deliberately avoiding a conflagration with the west and that any possible nuclear weapons capability for Iran (which is noted as unconfirmed and nonexistent in other reports) would be used as a deterrence for attack and protecting regional ambitions Iran has for the region (pg. 24-25).

This is reconfirmed by the recent 2013 [RAND Corporation report Iran After the Bomb](#) which while noting that no evidence exists that Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons according to the US intelligence community, envisions a post-nuclear scenario of Iran. RAND is another "globalist" think-tank that hosts compromised interests but manages to give an honest synopsis of the Iranian reality. It is also noted that Iran's "supreme leader" Ayatollah Khamenei has issued religious decrees labeling nuclear weapons as "against Islamic principles." Contrary to recent reports circulation by MEMRI TV and mainstream media, [these fatwas are not fake and actually do exist](#). And contrary to some critics, they are [not an example of taqiyya \(deception\) as Juan Cole notes](#). One thing that is very revealing is the following statement by RAND which sums up their insightful report:

The Islamic Republic [of Iran] is a revisionist state that seeks to undermine what it perceives to be the American-dominated order in the Middle East. However, it does not have territorial ambitions and does not seek to invade, conquer, or occupy other nations. Its chief military aim is to deter a U.S. and/or Israeli military attack while it undermines American allies in the Middle East [which includes the economic interests of the totalitarian kingdoms of Saudi Arabia and Qatar whose atrocities in human rights dwarfs anything Iran is guilty of]... Iran's possession of nuclear weapons will lead to greater tension between the Shi'a theocracy and the conservative Sunni monarchies [Saudi Arabia, Qatar, etc.] However, Iran is unlikely to use nuclear weapons against other Muslim countries...The Islamic Republic views Israel in ideological terms. However, it is very unlikely that Iran would use nuclear weapons against Israel, given the latter's overwhelming conventional and nuclear military superiority. (pg. vii)

The Brookings Institution not only enumerates transparently the similar points that Iran is not an existential threat but goes further to enumerate a list of strategies for US provocations against Iran to initiate a war that, according to the report, Iran does not want. It is even noted that an Iranian retaliation in the case of American airstrikes would not be inevitable and that Iran may deliberately refrain from retaliation in order to strategically "play the victim" (pg. 84-85, 95) Let it not be forgotten how the US and Britain staged the [CIA "Operation Ajax"](#) in 1953 to oust the democratically-elected Iranian president Mohammad Mosaddegh, who nationalized the country's oil, in favor of the pro-American Shah who ruled as a brutal dictator. Similar plans for regime change are enumerated in the Brookings Institute report where it is admitted that the opposition "Green Movement" in 2009 was orchestrated by the US government through "civil society and NGOs" in order to provoke Iranian belligerence through regime change operations, capitalizing on internal dissent. This is not to deny any legitimate aspirations and calls for reform in Iran which are prevalent among student groups but merely to point out how such ambitions are co-opted and used by western interests for their own agenda (103-105, 109-110). See this excellent [summary](#) of all these critical points.

Other means proposed included playing upon sectarian and ethnic divisions inside Iran to destabilize the country and even funding radical Sunni militant groups, specifically the MEK, which has killed Americans in the past and is labeled by the U.S. state department as a "foreign terrorist organization". Its ideology is described by analysts as radical "left-wing" Islamic-Marxism which makes it interesting to consider the US plans to fully employ this group as political assets. MEK has also collaborated with Saddam Hussein's forces in guerilla warfare against Iran in the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s (113, 117-118). The group is against the dominant Iranian establishment and it is noted that the US has worked covertly with them in the past and that in order to work overtly with them, the group had to be removed from the terrorist list (118). Regarding the MEK on pages 117-118, Brookings states:

"Perhaps the most prominent (and certainly the most controversial) opposition group that has attracted attention as a potential U.S. proxy is the NCRI (National Council of Resistance of Iran), the political movement established by the MEK (Mujahedin-e Khalq). Critics believe the group to be undemocratic and unpopular, and indeed anti-American.

In contrast, the group's champions contend that the movement's long-standing opposition to the Iranian regime and record of successful attacks on and intelligence-gathering operations against the regime make it worthy of U.S. support. They also



argue that the group is no longer anti-American and question the merit of earlier accusations. Raymond Tanter, one of the group's supporters in the United States, contends that the MEK and the NCRI are allies for regime change in Tehran and also act as a useful proxy for gathering intelligence. The MEK's greatest intelligence coup was the provision of intelligence in 2002 that led to the discovery of a secret site in Iran for enriching uranium.

Despite its defenders' claims, the MEK remains on the U.S. government list of foreign terrorist organizations. In the 1970s, the group killed three U.S. officers and three civilian contractors in Iran. During the 1979-1980 hostage crisis, the group praised the decision to take America hostages and Elaine Sciolino reported that while group leaders publicly condemned the 9/11 attacks, within the group celebrations were widespread.

Undeniably, the group has conducted terrorist attacks—often excused by the MEK's advocates because they are directed against the Iranian government. For example, in 1981, the group bombed the headquarters of the Islamic Republic Party, which was then the clerical leadership's main political organization, killing an estimated 70 senior officials. More recently, the group has claimed credit for over a dozen mortar attacks, assassinations, and other assaults on Iranian civilian and military targets between 1998 and 2001. At the very least, to work more closely with the group (at least in an overt manner), Washington would need to remove it from the list of foreign terrorist organizations."

The compounded criminality of western and Israeli collaboration with MEK is emphasized [here](#). It should be noted that the MEK has recently been removed from the US list of terrorist organizations as part of the next phase of using them as a proxy. MEK claims to have killed 40,000 Iranians in the past and has been trained on U.S. soil in a secret base in Nevada, published on the Huffington Post and [cited here by Kurt Nimmo](#) in an excellent and well-sourced article emphasizing the coordinated western agenda against Iran.

In culminating these abhorrent proposals, Brookings further notes the option of a military invasion and conventional war against Iran if the above proposals failed to accomplish western interests. This is the most alarming option especially in context to the following admission:

If the United States were to decide that to garner greater international support, galvanize U.S. domestic support, and/or provide a legal justification for an invasion, it would be best to wait for an Iranian provocation, then the time frame for an invasion might stretch out indefinitely. ..However, since it would be up to Iran to make the provocative move, which Iran has been wary of doing most times in the past, the United States would never know for sure when it would get the requisite Iranian provocation. In fact, it might never come at all (65)... it would be far more preferable if the United States could cite an Iranian provocation as justification for the airstrikes [as a catalyst for an invasion] before launching them. Clearly, the more outrageous, the more deadly, and the more unprovoked the Iranian action, the better off the United States would be. Of course, it would be very difficult for the United States to goad Iran into such a provocation without the rest of the world recognizing this game, which would then undermine it (85).

In all this certified criminality, which has obviously been at play even as the report was being published in 2009, it must not be forgotten that the [Brookings Institution is of, for, and](#)

[by big business](#) and their collective agenda of integrating Iran into their international consensus and exploiting its 76 million population for their unipolar order. This is opposed to Iran's attempts to foster national self-sufficiency and develop ties with nations strategic to western interests including [India, Thailand](#), China, and Russia. Brookings Institution is funded by the likes of the Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation, The Carnegie Foundation, Goldman Sachs, and the Carlyle Group among others; their report even includes a special acknowledgement of financial support from the Smith Richardson Foundation upon which Zbigniew Brzezinski sits as an active governor as pointed out by Tony Cartalucci and easily verifiable in the report's preface.

Such international criminality is magnified when Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist [Seymour Hersh revealed](#) in his article "Preparing the Battlefield" that the U.S. is cooperating with their anti-Iranian terrorist asset, Saudi Arabia, in order to fund radical, [Al Qaeda-linked, Sunni-groups like the Jundallah](#) to destabilize and destroy Iran as a viable geopolitical opponent. Al Qaeda, directed by the Saudis in cooperation with western geopolitical objectives, has been leveraged as a "Swiss army knife of destabilization" across the Middle East in the fake "war on terror" as Seymour Hersh exposed in another report titled "[The Redirection](#)" published in 2007. In that report, Hersh reveals that the U.S. and Saudi Arabia have been working since 2007 to destabilize Syria and Lebanon with a wave of sectarian-extremists currently being marketed in the media as a "political uprising" and a "revolution". This is different from the legitimate internal political opposition in Syria that has collaborated with the Syrian government in a reform initiative and maintains distinctiveness from the extremist and terrorist elements that clearly constitute the bulk of the "Syrian rebels" supported by the west. In his report, Seymour Hersh states:

To undermine Iran, which is predominantly Shiite, the Bush Administration has decided, in effect, to reconfigure its priorities in the Middle East. In Lebanon, the Administration has coöperated with Saudi Arabia's government, which is Sunni, in clandestine operations that are intended to weaken Hezbollah, the Shiite organization that is backed by Iran. The U.S. has also taken part in clandestine operations aimed at Iran and its ally Syria. A by-product of these activities has been the bolstering of Sunni extremist groups that espouse a militant vision of Islam and are hostile to America and sympathetic to Al Qaeda...[Saudi Arabia's Prince] Bandar and other Saudis have assured the White House that "they will keep a very close eye on the religious fundamentalists. Their message to us was 'We've created this movement, and we can control it.' It's not that we don't want the Salafis [Al Qaeda] to throw bombs; it's who they throw them at—Hezbollah, Moqtada al-Sadr, Iran, and at the Syrians, if they continue to work with Hezbollah and Iran.

There is no doubt that there is an anti-Iranian proxy conflict being waged in Syria by a [joint US-Saudi-Israeli effort](#) to further the [Wall Street-London geopolitical consensus](#). Undermining and destabilizing Syria would further isolate Iran and perpetuate [the united geopolitical front](#) against Iran that has been the objective of western politicians and think-tanks. Iran would ultimately serve as a vital door into central Asia and a springboard against [Russia and China](#) who are the ultimate target for absorption within the western design of a unipolar world order. Former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, who is an active agent in the networks of these machinations, makes it no secret in his book [The Grand Chessboard](#) that U.S. "global pre-eminence" (a euphemism for Wall Street/London geopolitical domination and a unipolar world order) is the agenda along with American influence in central Asia to which Iran is a doorway. Russian President Vladimir Putin has also spoken of hegemonic

ambitions on the part of the west to establish a unipolar order at a [2007 Munich conference](#).

In addition to this evidence of open subversion, it must be noted that Clinton Bastin, former director of US nuclear weapons production programs, [has sent an open letter to President Obama](#) in December 2011 claiming that there is no nuclear weapons threat from Iran, stating the following on Iran's nuclear weapons program:

The ultimate product of Iran's gas centrifuge facilities would be highly enriched uranium hexafluoride, a gas that cannot be used to make a weapon. Converting the gas to metal, fabricating components and assembling them with high explosives using dangerous and difficult technology that has never been used in Iran would take many years after a diversion of three tons of low enriched uranium gas from fully safeguarded inventories. The resulting weapon, if intended for delivery by missile, would have a yield equivalent to that of a kiloton of conventional high explosives.

As warmongering against Iran is expected to drastically pick up pace as western designs for domination across the Middle East show increasing signs of faltering, it is absolutely critical to be educated on these matters in order to undermine and extinguish the effects of the media propaganda echo-chamber. This is not to deny any human rights accusations against Iran altogether but one must guard themselves from being misguided and swayed by disingenuous [corporate-financier, globalist interests](#) seeking to expand their empire. It is imperative for people around the world to recognize the corporations and institutions perpetuating systematic atrocities and genocide across the planet and realize that once they eliminate the sovereignty of other countries, they will then turn their attention fully to the people within their own borders in the west.

A [real revolution](#) will come by boycotting the degenerate corporations and financier interests seeking to enslave humanity and building up our own communities to create a world order [in our own image](#) and not in the image of Wall Street and London.

*Sam Muhho is a student of history and an advocate for anti-imperialism and anti-globalism. He can be reached at [smuhho1@gmail.com](mailto:smuhho1@gmail.com) and runs the Facebook page "[Globalist Watch](#)" at [facebook.com/gwatch1776](https://facebook.com/gwatch1776) in order to explain the reality at play in global affairs.*

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Sam Muhho](#), Global Research, 2018

---

**[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)**

**[Become a Member of Global Research](#)**

Articles by: [Sam Muhho](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are



acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)  
[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.  
For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)