The Long History of British and American Covert Provocation and Action in Iran

By Steve Watson
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The US and Britain are already at war with Iran, have been at war with Iran for a number of years now and are funding anti-Iranian terrorist groups inside Iran in preparation for the fallout that will occur after overt military action is commenced.

Not my words, the words of high ranking CIA officials, Defense department officials, former UN officials and retired US air force Colonels.

Iran's state news agency, IRNA today listed five previous violations of Iranian territory by British armed forces:

June 2004: An unmanned reconnaissance plane violated Iranian airspace in northeastern Abadan and was hit by Iranian anti-aircraft guns.

June 22, 2004: Eight navy personnel in three speed boats entered Iranian territorial waters and were arrested by Iranian coast guards; the arrested were released after three days.

November 1, 2006: Two helicopters, hovering at a height of 150 meters (492 feet), violated Iranian airspace for a total of 10 minutes.

January 27, 2007: A helicopter violated Iranian airspace over the mouth of the Arvand river and left the area after a warning from Iranian coast guards.

February 28, 2007: Three navy boats entered Iranian territorial waters in the mouth of Khor Mousa.

Can we believe Iranian state news? Is Britain and/or the US engaging in covert intelligence gathering in Iran? The answer is we don't have to believe Iranian state news because it is a well established fact that a covert intelligence war is already being waged with Iran and has been ongoing for many years now.

In an article entitled The US war with Iran has already begun [1], written back in June 2005, former UN weapons inspector in Iraq, Scott Ritter, addressed this very issue and described how intelligence gathering, direct action and the mobilizing of indigenous opposition is all being carried out already by CIA backed US special forces.

Ritter stated: "As with Iraq, the president has paved the way for the conditioning of the American public and an all-too-compliant media to accept at face value the merits of a regime change policy regarding Iran, linking the regime of the Mullah's to an "axis of evil" (together with the newly "liberated" Iraq and North Korea), and speaking of the absolute

requirement for the spread of "democracy" to the Iranian people.

But Americans, and indeed much of the rest of the world, continue to be lulled into a false sense of complacency by the fact that overt conventional military operations have not yet commenced between the United States and Iran.

As such, many hold out the false hope that an extension of the current insanity in Iraq can be postponed or prevented in the case of Iran. But this is a fool's dream.

The reality is that the US war with Iran has already begun. As we speak, American over flights of Iranian soil are taking place, using pilotless drones and other, more sophisticated, capabilities.

The violation of a sovereign nation's airspace is an act of war in and of itself. But the war with Iran has gone far beyond the intelligence-gathering phase. President Bush has taken advantage of the sweeping powers granted to him in the aftermath of 11 September 2001, to wage a global war against terror and to initiate several covert offensive operations inside Iran."

Ritter goes on to describe how Iranian opposition groups, including the well known right-wing terrorist organization known as Mujahedeen-e Khalq (MEK), once run by Saddam Hussein's dreaded intelligence services, but now working exclusively for the CIA's Directorate of Operations, are carrying out remote bombings in Iran of the sort that the Bush administration condemns on a daily basis inside Iraq.

He also describes how to the north, in neighbouring Azerbaijan, the US military is preparing a base of operations for a massive military presence that will foretell a major land-based campaign designed to capture Tehran.

Ritter is not alone in his assertions.

During an interview on CNN a year ago, retired U.S. Air Force Colonel Sam Gardiner claimed that U.S. military operations were already 'underway' inside Iran.

"I would say — and this may shock some — I think the decision has been made and military operations are under way," Col. Gardiner told CNN International anchor Jim Clancy.

"The secretary point is, the Iranians have been saying American military troops are in there, have been saying it for almost a year," Gardiner said. "I was in Berlin two weeks ago, sat next to the ambassador, the Iranian ambassador to the IAEA. And I said, 'Hey, I hear you're accusing Americans of being in there operating with some of the units that have shot up revolution guard units.' He said, quite frankly, 'Yes, we know they are. We've captured some of the units, and they've confessed to working with the Americans,'" said the retired Air Force colonel.

Around the same time that Gardiner revealed this, RAW story ran an exclusive [2] , which also revealed that, according to counterintelligence officials, covert operations were underway that included CIA co-option and use of right wing terror groups:

"We disarmed [the MEK] of major weapons but not small arms. [Secretary of Defense Donald] Rumsfeld was pushing to use them as a military special ops team, but policy infighting between their camp and Condi, but she was able to fight them off for a while,"

said the intelligence official. According to still another intelligence source, the policy infighting ended last year when Donald Rumsfeld, under pressure from Vice President Cheney, came up with a plan to "convert" the MEK by having them simply quit their organization.

"These guys are nuts," this intelligence source said. "Cambone and those guys made MEK members swear an oath to Democracy and resign from the MEK and then our guys incorporated them into their unit and trained them."

The MEK were notorious in Iraq, indeed, Saddam Hussein himself had used the MEK for acts of terror against non-Sunni Muslims and had assigned domestic security detail to the MEK as a way of policing dissent among his own people. It was under the guidance of MEK 'policing' that Iraqi citizens who were not Sunni were routinely tortured, attacked and arrested.

Just last month after a bombing inside Iran, the London Telegraph also reported [3]on how a high ranking CIA official has blown the whistle on the fact that America is secretly funding terrorist groups in Iran in an attempt to pile pressure on the Islamic regime to give up its nuclear programme.

The claims were backed by Fred Burton, a former US state department counter-terrorism agent, who said: "The latest attacks inside Iran fall in line with US efforts to supply and train Iran's ethnic minorities to destabilise the Iranian regime."

John Pike, the head of the influential Global Security think tank in Washington, said: "The activities of the ethnic groups have hotted up over the last two years and it would be a scandal if that was not at least in part the result of CIA activity."

If this all sounds a little familiar, it's because it is. The fact is that the US has a long history of provocation and covert action inside Iran.

In 1953 the CIA and MI6 carried out Operation Ajax (officially TP-AJAX), a covert operation by the United Kingdom and the United States to remove the democratically elected nationalist cabinet of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh from power, to support the Pahlavi dynasty and consolidate the power of Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in order to preserve the Western control of Iran's hugely lucrative oil infrastructure.

In planning the operation, the CIA organized a guerrilla force incase the communist Tudeh Party seized power as a result of the chaos created by Operation Ajax. According to formerly "Top Secret" documents released by the National Security Archive, Undersecretary of State Walter Bedell Smith reported that the CIA had reached an agreement with Qashqai tribal leaders in southern Iran to establish a clandestine safe haven from which U.S.-funded guerrillas and intelligence agents could operate.

The conspiracy centered around having the increasingly impotent Shah dismiss the powerful Prime Minister Mossadegh and replace him with General Fazlollah Zahedi, a choice agreed on by the British and Americans after careful examination for his likeliness to be pro-British.

Zahedi was installed to succeed Prime Minister Mossadegh. The deposed Mossadegh was arrested, given a show trial, and condemned to death. The Shah commuted this sentence to solitary confinement for three years in a military prison, followed by house arrest for life.

"If there had not been a military coup, there would not have been 25 years of the Shah's brutal regime, there would not have been a revolution in 1979 and a government of clerics," Ibrahim Yazdi, a former foreign minister and leading member of a political party that traces its origins to Mossadegh's National Front, told the Christian Science Monitor on the 50th anniversary of the coup and installation of the Shah. "Now it seems that the Americans are pushing towards the same direction again. That shows they have not learned anything from history."

"For many Iranians, the coup was a tragedy from which their country has never recovered. Perhaps because Mossadegh represents a future denied, his memory has approached myth," Dan De Luce writes for the Guardian. "Beyond Iran, America remains deeply resented for siding with authoritarian rule in the region."

Alex Jones's latest film Terrorstorm [5] covers the ousting of Mossadegh in depth.

After the Iranian revolution in 1979, the US again found itself sparring with Iran. Again we find a history of provocation and aggression. In particular, a fierce assault known as Operation Praying Mantis, is renowned. The operation began after a US warship had entered mined Iranian territorial waters in the Persian Gulf.

From Wikipedia [6] : "On April 14 1988, the guided missile frigate USS Samuel B. Roberts struck a mine while sailing in the Persian Gulf as part of Operation Earnest Will, the 1987-88 convoy missions in which U.S. warships escorted reflagged Kuwaiti oil tankers to protect them from Iranian attacks. The explosion put a 25-foot hole in the Roberts' hull and nearly sank it. But the crew saved their ship with no loss of life, and Roberts was towed to Dubai on April 16.

After the mining, U.S. Navy divers recovered other mines in the area. When the serial numbers were found to match those of mines seized along with the Iran Ajr the previous September, U.S. military officials planned a retaliatory operation against Iranian targets in the Gulf.

The battle, the largest for American surface forces since World War II,[1] sank two Iranian warships and as many as six armed speedboats. It also marked the first surface-to-surface missile engagement in U.S. Navy history."

The US also attacked and destroyed several Iranian oil platforms in a full out military assault. At the time the Chicago Sun Times [7] reported:

"U.S. naval forces on Monday attacked Iranian targets in the Persian Gulf to show the Iranians that "if they threaten us, they'll pay a price," President Reagan said.

In fighting conducted over nine hours, the U.S. forces knocked out two Iranian oil platforms, and then sank or disabled a fast-attack missile patrol boat, two frigates, and three speedboats when Iran attempted to fight back. [8]"

Note Reagan's comments. Hence the name 'Operation Praying Mantis' was a reference to the fanning of the wings used to make the mantis seem larger and to scare the opponent.

On November 6, 2003 the International Court of Justice dismissed Iran's claim for reparation against the United States for breach of the 1955 Treaty of Amity between the two countries. The court also dismissed a counter-claim by the United States, also for reparation for breach

of the same treaty. As part of its finding the court did note that "the actions of the United States of America against Iranian oil platforms on 19 October 1987 (Operation Nimble Archer) and 18 April 1988 (Operation Praying Mantis) cannot be justified as measures necessary to protect the essential security interests of the United States of America."

The fallout of Praying Mantis also resulted in the U.S. Navy guided missile cruiser USS Vincennes shooting down an Iranian civilian commercial airliner, Iran air flight 665 , between Bandar Abbas and Dubai, killing all 290 passengers and crew aboard, including 38 non-Iranians and 66 children. The Vincennes was inside Iranian territorial waters at the time of the shoot-down.

On the morning of July 3, the Vincennes crossed into Iranian territorial waters during clashes with Iranian gunboats. Earlier in the day, the Vincennes – along with Iranian gunboats – had similarly violated Omani waters until challenged by an Omani warship.

According to the U.S. government, the Iranian aircraft was mistakenly identified as an attacking military fighter. The Iranian government, however, maintains that the Vincennes knowingly shot down a civilian aircraft.

According to the Iranian government, the shooting down of IR 655 by the Vincennes was an intentionally performed and unlawful act. Even if there was a mistaken identification, which Iran has not accepted, it argues that this constituted gross negligence and recklessness amounting to an international crime, not an accident.

Newsweek reporters John Barry and Roger Charles wrote that Rogers acted recklessly and without due care. Their report accused the U.S. government of a cover-up. An analysis of the events by the International Strategic Studies Association described the deployment of an Aegis cruiser in the zone as irresponsible and felt that the expense of the ship had played a major part in the setting of a low threshold for opening fire.

George H.W. Bush, at the time Vice President said "I will never apologize for the United States of America — I don't care what the facts are" in reference to the incident.

The BBC later reported [9]: It took four years for the US administration to admit officially that the USS Vincennes was in Iranian waters when the skirmish took place with the Iranian gunboats. Subsequent investigations have accused the US military of waging a covert war against Iran in support of Iraq. In February 1996 the US agreed to pay Iran $61.8 million in compensation for the 248 Iranians killed, plus the cost of the aircraft and legal expenses.

So we see that Britain and the US have a long history of covert action against and provocation of Iran in their bid to aggressively control the region. Nothing has changed. These facts and past precedents are exactly the reason why we should be questioning our own governments on the authenticity of the current seizure of the British marines [10] by Iran.

Our governments have continually violated Iranian territory covertly for decades and then covered up the fact.

In January Republican Congressman and 2008 Presidential candidate Ron Paul stated [11] that he feared a staged Gulf of Tonkin [12] style incident may be used to provoke air strikes on Iran as numerous factors collide to heighten expectations that America may soon be embroiled in its third war in six years.

Just last month former National Security Advisor and founding member of the Trilateral Commission Zbigniew Brzezinski also tacitly warned [13] that an attack on Iran could be launched following a staged provocation.

During a BBC Newsnight feature story this week, it was demonstrated that the Iranian footage of the capture of the British sailors was in large part likely faked and the commentators all but suggested the entire incident was staged or at least constituted "gross negligence" on behalf of the British.

Former British Ambassador Craig Murray and others are highlighting the fact that the maritime border between Iraq and Iran is contested, and the British have essentially manufactured a border to make it appear as if HMS Cornwall was within Iraqi territorial waters. The mainstream media has uniformly failed to address this issue.

It seems that we are once again witnessing the unfolding of ongoing covert military action by our governments against (whether you agree with it or not) a democratically elected foreign government in Iran.

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var callCount = ((oBw.agt.match( /gecko/ ) == "gecko"))? 0 : 50;
function rmvScroll( msg )
{
if ( ++callCount 10 ) { msg.style.visibility = "visible"; }
if ( callCount msg.clientHeight ) {
msg.style.height = ( msg.scrollHeight + delta ) + "px";
}
delta = msg.offsetWidth – msg.clientWidth;
delta = ( isNaN( delta )? 1 : delta + 1 );
if ( msg.scrollWidth msg.clientWidth ) {
msg.style.width = ( msg.scrollWidth + delta ) + "px";
}
msg.style.overflow = "hidden";
msg.style.visibility = "visible";
}
function imgsDone( msg ) // for Firefox, we need to scan for images that haven't set their width yet
{
var imgList = msg.getElementsByTagName( "IMG" );
var len = ((imgList == null)? 0 : imgList.length);
for ( var i = 0; i
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