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The Looming War Against Iran

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In-depth Report: IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?

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President Donald Trump and his neocon advisors have been trying to provoke a war with Iran and Syria for many months.

The neocons are echoing Cato the Elder's cry, 'delenda est Carthago!'. Iran must be destroyed.

So far, Tehran and its ally Damascus have refused to respond to US naval and air incursions or Israel's growing air attacks in Syria. But the war of words between the US and Iran has now reached a critical phase.

Last week, Trump, who evaded military service during the Vietnam War, made his loudest threats yet against Iran, bringing the danger of war to the boiling point. On 21 May, the hard-line US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo delivered a thunderous ultimatum to Iran during an address to the US Heritage Foundation, a rich, influential arm of America's Israel lobby.

Pompeo made 12 totally unacceptable demands on Iran that were clearly designed to be rejected by Tehran. Not since Austria-Hungary's ultimatum against Serbia in 1914 have we seen such a clear effort to bring about war. Tehran quickly dismissed Pompeo as 'a gangster.'

We are by now used to blood and thunder rhetoric between Washington and Tehran. But this time White House policy is clearly being directed by pro-Israel American neocons who want the US military to crush Iran as it did Iraq.

Crushing Iran will leave Israel with unfettered control of the Mideast and its oil – unless Russia or Turkey intervene against Israel, which is most unlikely. Some think Russia and Israel – and the US – have already made a deal to divvy up the central Mideast.

'Let the Americans come,' one Iranian militant told me, 'they will break their teeth on Iran.' Very colorful but hardly accurate. The US and Israel will surely avoid a massive, costly land campaign again Iran, a vast, mountainous nation that was willing to suffer a million battle casualties in its eight-year war with Iraq that started in 1980 . This gruesome war was instigated by the US, Britain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to overthrow Iran's new popular Islamic government.

The Pentagon has planned a high-intensity air war against Iran that Israel and the Saudis

might very well join. The plan calls for over 2,300 air strikes against Iranian strategic targets: airfields and naval bases, arms and petroleum, oil and lubricant depots, telecommunication nodes, radar, factories, military headquarters, ports, water works, airports, missile bases and units of the Revolutionary Guards.

Iran's air defenses range from feeble to non-existent. Decades of US-led military and commercial embargos against Iran have left it as decrepit and enfeebled as was Iraq when the US invaded in 2003. The gun barrels of Iran's 70's vintage tanks are warped and can't shoot straight, its old British and Soviet AA missiles are mostly unusable, and its ancient MiG and Chinese fighters ready for the museum, notably its antique US-built F-14 Tomcats, Chinese copies of obsolete MiG-21's, and a handful of barely working F-4 Phantoms of Vietnam War vintage.

Air combat command is no better. Everything electronic that Iran has will be fried or blown up in the first hours of a US attack. Iran's little navy will be sunk in the opening attacks. Its oil industry may be destroyed or partially preserved depending on US post-war plans for Iran.

The only way Tehran can riposte is by staging isolated commando attacks on US installations in the Mideast of no decisive value, and, of course, blocking the narrow Strait of Hormuz that carries two thirds of Mideast oil exports. The US Navy, based nearby in Bahrain, has been practicing for decades to combat this threat.

China vows to keep buying Iranian oil in spite of the US blockade to be imposed this fall. This could put the US and China on a collision course.

While Iran may be able to interdict some oil exports from the Arab states, and cause maritime insurance rates to skyrocket, it's unlikely to be able to block the bulk of oil exports unless it attacks the main oil terminals in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf with ground troops. During the Iran-Iraq war, neither side was able to fully interdict the other's oil exports.

Direct western intervention in a major ground campaign seems unlikely. But the US and Israeli war plan would aim to totally destroy Iran's infrastructure, communications and transport (including oil) crippling this important nation of 80 million and taking it back to the pre-revolutionary era. That was the plan for Iraq, the Arab world's most industrialized nation. Today Iraq still lies in ruins.

One recalls the words of the great Roman historian, Tacitus: 'they make a desert and call it peace.'

The Globalization of War: America's "Long War" against Humanity

Michel Chossudovsky

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

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