

# The March to War: Détente in the Middle East or “Calm before the Storm?”

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“Never think that war, no matter how necessary, nor how justified, is not a crime.” (Ernest Hemingway)

Despite the discussions of détente in the Middle East, the peril of war is still a real menace that threatens to proliferate globally. The dialogue taking place between the U.S., the E.U., Russia, Syria, and Iran seems to be merely a transient point in the timeline of the Middle East and Central Asia. The ongoing international discussions focused on the Middle East are part of an instant in time and history that will come to pass. Attached to these discussions are the fate of the Middle East, or so it may seem. With certainty, only time will tell what will unfold in the Middle East and become recorded in the annals of history.

A deeper look must be taken at the evolving domestic conditions within the “American Homeland” and at the wave of events that are unfolding in the Palestinian Territories, Israel, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, the Persian Gulf, the former Soviet Union, and Iran.

There have been reports and chatter about war between Israel and Syria and a “Summer War” that could breakout in the Levant with the initiation of Israeli strikes in the Palestinian Territories and Lebanon. The summer-months of 2007 may see international tensions rise, but witness no regional war that could potentially spread in the Middle East and beyond.

## America Genuinely Engaging Iran and Syria?

*“Succeeding in Iraq also requires defending its territorial integrity and stabilizing the region [meaning the Middle East] in the face of extremist challenges. This begins with addressing Iran and Syria.”*

-George W. Bush Jr., 43rd President of the United States (January 10, 2007 Speech on “New Iraq Policy”)

It can be argued that the U.S. and Britain, the Anglo-American alliance, have had their hands tied up in the quagmires of Iraq and Afghanistan. France and Germany, the Franco-German entente, have also become further involved, as active partners, in Anglo-American foreign policy objectives. The White House has now reversed its policy of trying to isolate Iran and Syria and is trying to publicly engage both. Or so it seems at first glance. Is there substance behind these international developments or are these events merely part of the diplomatic waltz before a potential hail storm starts?

Javier Solana, the Foreign Policy and Security Chief of the E.U., has called on the U.S. to open a direct “channel of communication” with Tehran for negotiations after discussions with Dr. Ali Larijani, the Secretary-General of the Supreme Security Council of Iran. It was after the late-April 2007 discussions held in Ankara between the two individuals that Javier Solana publicly called on the White House to engage Tehran. [1] White House National Security Spokesman Gordon Johndroe responded directly to Javier Solana’s call by indicating that the U.S. government was ready to hold talks with Iran. [2] The White House also made it clear that U.S. officials were willing to engage in high-level talks with Iran and Syria during the international conference on Iraq in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. Condoleezza Rice, the Syrian Foreign Minister, and the Iranian Foreign Minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, all attended the international summit discussing Iraq. [3]

Iranian officials also highlighted that without the attendance of Iran at the International Compact for Iraq or Sharm el-Sheikh Summit that the U.S. government would not be able to rescue itself from the quagmire and bloodbath it has created in Iraq. [4] Syrian officials have likewise highlighted the significance of Syria in regards to Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine.

Prior and subsequent to the meetings in Egypt a whole set of notable and closed door discussions have taken place across the Middle East and beyond involving energy, security, geo-political, and defensive precautions. The winds of war are blowing and the thought of war is constantly reeking in the air. Alliances are being broken, made, and formed as the whole Middle East is shifting and waiting to see if some form of a conflict or another will erupt. Lines are being drawn and redrawn in the sand across the Middle East.

### **Damascus has started consultations with Ankara and Baku**

Syria has been the object of American and E.U. diplomatic pressure and visits. [5] Aside from the visits of E.U. and U.S. officials to Syria, the most notable visits to Damascus have come from Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan in the first half of 2007.

The Turkish Prime Minister visited Damascus in April of 2007 where he discussed bilateral relations on trade, security, economics, and energy with Syria. Prior to the Turkish Prime Minister’s visit, military cooperation was also discussed between the Syrian Defence Minister and the Commander of the Turkish Air Force. [6]

The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Elmar Mammadyarov, also met with Syrian officials, including the Syrian President in April of 2007. Baku and Damascus have been discussing economic cooperation and joint projects. [7] Energy has been part of the discussions between Damascus and Baku. The Republic of Azerbaijan also announced during the visit of Elmar Mammadyarov to Syria in April of 2007 that Baku subsequently intended to establish an embassy in the Syrian capital. [8] The Republic of Azerbaijan is establishing an embassy in Syria as a direct result of the economic cooperation and joint projects that have been discussed between Damascus and Baku.

Prior to the meeting of Condoleezza Rice and the Syrian Foreign Minister in Egypt, U.S. officials and military commanders, including General David Petraeus, stated that there were “indications that Syria may be acting to restrict the ability of foreign fighters to cross [the

Syrian] border into Iraq.” [9] It should be noted that such statements by General Petraeus and U.S. officials were made after the initiation of negotiations between Damascus, Ankara, and Baku. On one level, it could have been these negotiations that opened the door for further discussions between the U.S. and Syrian governments and the easing of U.S. accusations against Syria.

### **The Consultations between Damascus and Baku have included Lebanon**

The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan was also in Lebanon for meetings with all the representatives of the Lebanese political establishment. Baku also signed economic agreements with Lebanon, in addition to the economic agreements signed with Syria. [10] The agreements with Lebanon are supplementary to those with Syria.

The Republic of Azerbaijan’s Special Envoy to Syria and Lebanon and Foreign Minister Mammadyarov both held talks with Lebanese leaders from both the governing and opposing camps of the Lebanese political environment. The Lebanese President, the Lebanese Prime Minister, and the Lebanese Speaker of Parliament were all consulted by Baku. Directly or indirectly Amal, Hezbollah, the Hariri-led Future Movement, the Free Patriotic Movement, and other Lebanese political parties were all consulted by Baku. In most cases, no major decisions can be made and fully implemented in Lebanon without the approval of both the governing and opposing political parties in Lebanon.

What these agreements between Baku, Damascus, Ankara, and Beirut could mean is that Syria and Lebanon are conceivably allowing the establishment of an energy corridor on their borders. This energy corridor could link and operate between Israel, Turkey and the entire Eastern Mediterranean in some form of an energy grid and arc.

### **The Syrian Factor: Establishment of a “Levantine Energy Corridor?”**

*Turkey and Syria are both involved in a project that is supposed to bring Egyptian natural gas to Turkey, which could potentially involve cooperation with Israel and the establishment of an energy corridor on the coastline of the Eastern Mediterranean. [11] According to the public layout of the official plan, the gas pipeline is to bypass Israel through Jordan. There seems to be a premeditated argument between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Egypt over the gas project that has resulted in an examination of having several pipelines and routes.*

*Israel is heavily involved in Egyptian natural gas projects. On June 30, 2005, Egypt and Israel signed a preliminary joint agreement in Cairo that was valued at \$2.5 billion (U.S.). The gas deal was signed and called for a 15-year allocation of gas to be sent to Israel from Egypt. The Israeli-Egyptian gas deal went unnoticed and was barely reported in the state-controlled Egyptian media. [12] The Israeli-Egyptian natural gas deal was initially set to ensure the delivery of Egyptian natural gas to the Israeli port of Ashkelon via undersea pipelines. [13]*

It is apparent that infrastructure is being developed to connect the whole Eastern Mediterranean within a single energy arc or some form of energy corridor. Israel could easily integrate itself in this network and even seems like it could be the focal point of the energy projects in the Levant and the Eastern Mediterranean. A parallel branch of the Egyptian gas pipeline will also go through Lebanon vis-à-vis Syria and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

[14] Turkey could easily directly enter the project, should Ankara wish to enter the energy project and move away from its dependency on Iranian gas reserves or any energy dependency on Russia.

### **Is Syria the Linchpin of an Energy Arc in the Eastern Mediterranean involving Israel?**

*Many diversions are at play in the Levant and the entire Middle East. In tandem, it also seems that Israeli-Syrian negotiations were throbbing to be restarted during the same timeline as energy discussions with Ankara, Baku, and Cairo. [15] Clearly, the E.U. and U.S. representatives that visited Damascus also represented Israeli interests and energy interests. [16] Israel is taking a two-pronged approach in regards to Syria; the Israeli government is talking about both war and peace in chorus.*

Iran has also been playing an elusive role through backdoor negotiations in the ongoing developments in the Eastern Mediterranean. During the same timeline as the talks between Damascus, Ankara, and Baku, the Iranian Foreign Minister made an unannounced visit to Syria and another to Turkey. [17] Turkey is dependent on Iran for a great deal of its economic and energy needs.

Russia is also involved in the geo-strategically important projects and developments in the Eastern Mediterranean. In Syria alone the Russians are involved in three energy projects. Syria and Russia have also signed a gas deal worth 160 million euros. [18] One of these projects is the construction of the Syrian segment of the Egypt-Jordan-Syria gas pipeline. [19] The Syria Gas Company (SGC) and Stroytransgaz (a subsidiary of Russia's Gazprom) will also jointly work on developing Syrian gas reserves discovered in the fields of the governorate of Homs. [20]

Syria is a vital piece towards creating an energy arc or corridor in the Eastern Mediterranean. Whereas the integration of Lebanon is optional in the creation of an Eastern Mediterranean energy corridor, Syria is a required segment of the energy arc or corridor. Without Syria the Eastern Mediterranean cannot be linked together. It also seems that the area around Tripoli, Lebanon has been considered as the location of a future American or NATO military base to guard an Eastern Mediterranean energy arc. The integration of Jordan into the corridor also seems optional, unless Jordan is meant to be part of a route connecting Iraqi and Persian Gulf oil to Israel and the Eastern Mediterranean.

Without Syria there can be no north-south link between Turkey in the northern Eastern Mediterranean and Israel and Egypt in the southern Eastern Mediterranean. Caucasian and Caspian oil can be delivered to Israel and the southern areas in question from Turkey if the north-south link is made. Egyptian gas can also be delivered to Turkey and Europe from the southern area in question if the north-south link is made. In this scheme Israel seems to be positioned as the vanguard of this energy arc, but Syria seems to be the remaining piece necessary to making the north-south link.

### **The Call for Negotiations between Syria and Israel**

Abraham Suleiman (Solomon) an American citizen of Syrian background has spoken visibly to the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) maintaining that he at one time represented Damascus in "secret negotiations" with Israel. In Tel Aviv he has declared that Syria is ready for peace with Israel. Syria immediately distanced itself from him. Syrians have stated that Israel and

the U.S. are merely trying to dissociate Syria from Iran and Russia by portraying Syria as having negotiations without the knowledge of its allies. The Syrian Information Minister, in a televised address to the Syrian people and the Arab public, said that Abraham Suleiman expresses “his personal point of view, and Syria has nothing to do with this visit [to Israel] or statements [to Israeli officials].” [21]

Syria has been calling for open discussions with Israel, with the knowledge of Tehran. Several overtures have been made by official channels from Damascus to Israel for several years, even with the involvement of the Clinton Administration and the U.N. in the past.

“Syria’s call for a renewal of the peace process is genuine,” Ilan Mizrahi, the Chairman of the Israel National Security Council, has also told Israeli parliamentarians and officials. [22] In reality, Syria has been reaching out for peace talks and demanding the return of the Golan Heights (called the “Syrian Heights” by Israel in the past) since the late 1990s. *La Repubblica*, one of Italy’s major newspapers, in February of 2005 asked the Syrian President in an interview what he had to say about Ariel Sharon’s statements that Syria was insincere about peace with Israel. The response the Syrian President gave to the Italian paper was that Ariel Sharon and Israel should evaluate Syria’s sincerity through talks that would cost Israel nothing. [23]

### **The International Compact for Iraq: Bargaining over the fate of the Iraqi People?**

It is ridiculous to believe that anyone can decide the fate of the Iraqi people other than the Iraqi people themselves. The nature of the talks unfolding between the U.S., the E.U., Russia, Iran, and Syria are tied to Iraq, but are not based merely on the unadulterated interests of the Iraqi people. Many facets are involved in these discussions, including the strategic global balance of international relations.

The Sharm el-Sheikh Summit, formally called the International Compact for Iraq, was held from May 3 to May 4, 2007 and involved the U.S., Britain, Russia, Japan, China, France, the Arab League, Iran, Syria, the E.U., Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Germany, Canada, the U.N., and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (O.I.C.).

At the end of the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit in Egypt, Iran and the U.S. did not “visibly meet,” but low-key talks took place between the two countries. The American Ambassador to Iraq held talks with the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister, Dr. Abbas Araghchi. [24] The U.S State Department’s Iraq coordinator, David Satterfield, was also present at the talks that were played down and described by the American Ambassador to Iraq as only being “three minutes long.” [25] It was possibility through these contacts that talks in Baghdad were arranged between the Iranian and American embassies in Iraq.

At the Sharm el-Shiekh Summit it was publicly made known that the Syrian Foreign Minister and Dr. Rice, the U.S. Secretary of State, had a half-hour meeting. *The Times* (U.K.) called the talks a “diplomatic shift” that was prepared for by U.S. officials who were offering “rare praise for Syria,” before the meeting in Egypt. [26] In reality the talks in Sharm el-Sheikh were mostly cosmetic. Genuine talks and negotiations were mostly undisclosed in nature and through different backdoor channels.

The opening day of the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit in Egypt, saw the Iraqi government get pledges of \$30 billion (U.S.) in debt relief. [27] Amongst the countries that nullified part of the Iraqi debt was Saudi Arabia which refused to do so during the period of humanitarian

catastrophe in Iraq caused by U.N. sanctions. Debt relief to Iraq should be scrutinized. The debt relief amounts to less than a substitute to the billions of dollars (U.S.) that are being appropriated from Iraq because of the privatization of Iraqi oil and other national assets by the U.S. and British governments. Whatever is left of the Iraqi debt will also prove to be profitable to the creditor nations. Iraqi national assets may also be handed over to creditor nations in place of Iraqi debts.

### **Unintended Consequences: Secret U.S. Offers to Iran and Syria Declined?**

During the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit it was reported by the *Agence France-Presse* (AFP) that the Iranian Foreign Minister called U.S. troops “terrorists,” while denouncing the Anglo-American occupation of Iraq. After the international event in Egypt was over Iranian officials started declaring that the U.S. had lost its international influence and that this was the beginning of an endgame for the United States. Iranian officials also declared that war was no longer a viable option for the U.S. and the age of international wars was coming to an end. These statements caused great alarm in Washington D.C. and London.

It seems that U.S. clients in the Middle East were watching closely and expecting Iran, followed by Syria, to accept some sort of secret compromise that has been refused or partially refused by Tehran. There are genuine fears in London and Washington D.C. that their Arab allies may slowly leave their sides if they perceive any signs of Anglo-American weakness. The capture of British servicemen in the Persian Gulf by Iran has also helped render the Anglo-American alliance as declining in strength.

These British and American fears may be used to partially explain the chaos that the Anglo-American alliance is fomenting in the Middle East and Arab World. It has been repeatedly charged that the U.S. and Britain are arming Kurdish fighters against Turkey and even planning a coup in Saudi Arabia. The aspirations of the spewing of such chaos and instability can be said to force Middle Eastern and Arab regimes and governments to depend on the support of the U.S. and Britain.

The British and American fears may also be used to partially explain Iranian claims that the U.S. Navy did not launch any war games in March of 2007. Based on the naval surveillance and observation posts of the Revolutionary Guard in the Persian Gulf the U.S. Navy did not launch any war games showing an “unprecedented use of force” or exhibit any remarkable activities that were out of the ordinary. [28] The Iranians claim that the U.S. claims were made only to project an image of American supremacy by the illusion that the U.S. was able to go to war whenever it willed. The Persian Gulf war games were meant to keep the allies of America and Britain in line. These psychological tactics can be used to keep both foes and allies in line.

Backdoor talks with Damascus and Tehran seem to also have both the characteristics of overtures of peace and threats of war. It should be noted that while talks were being initiated by the U.S. and E.U. with Iran and Syria that Russia made significant geo-strategic gains in Central Asia. Moscow’s global influence continues to grow. There is a direct bearing between the rising tensions between Russia and the so-called “West” and the dialogue being initiated with Syria and Iran.

### **Acknowledging the Past: Lebanon and Syria were Targets since 2001**

Syria has continually stated publicly that it wants peace with Israel. It is apparent that the



Israeli leadership is not interested in genuine peace with Syria, but is merely flirting and passing away the time until the moment for military action arrives. It is now known that the Bush Jr. Administration and Tony Blair intended to invade and occupy Iraq since 2001. In this respect, control over Syria and Lebanon is no different and was envisioned in 2001.

Syria has been in the sights of the Pentagon since the advent of the “Global War on Terror.” In fact, attacks on both Lebanon and Syria have long been expected as a phase in the American-led war march unfolding in the wake of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. The White House itself has clarified that it was considering invading Syria after the fall of Baghdad in 2003. [29]

After the fall of Baghdad, Iranian, Syrian, and Lebanese leaders warned that the White House and 10 Downing Street would attempt to create a “New Crisis” in Lebanon and Syria either directly through invasion or through Israel or through creating internal instability. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported in May of 2003 that Mohammed Khatami, the former president of Iran, while in Beirut warned that both Lebanon and Syria were jointly in the sights of the Anglo-American alliance as part of the next phase of the military roadmap in the Middle East. [30]

What was predicted in 2003 in Lebanon, Syria, and Iran has slowly unfolded; Syrian troops have been forced to leave Lebanon, Lebanon is internally divided, Israel has attacked Lebanon, and Syria is under threat from Israeli attacks. [31]

### **Israeli Ruling Establishment rejects Peace with the Syrians: Why?**

Peace has become war and war has become peace. In a state of disturbing irony, the Chief of Mossad has made statements that reject peace talks with Syria for the sake of peace. Meir Dagan, the head of Mossad, has stated that peace negotiations with Syria will equate to war. The Chief of Mossad has stated “if negotiations between Israel and Syria fell through, this could lead to war, and therefore Israel should seek to maintain the status quo.” [32]

Israel has said that Syria must stop supporting Palestinian and Lebanese groups opposed to Israeli occupation of their lands, amongst several other preconditions for peace talks. Syria has also given notice that no relationship will be established between Israel and Syria until Israeli troops end their occupation of Syrian territory, meaning the Golan Heights. The Golan Heights have been occupied by Israel since 1967.

During the visit of Nancy Pelosi, the U.S. House Speaker, to Syria the issue of peace between Israel and Syria was brought up in Damascus between the American side and the Syrians. There was an almost immediate rebuttal from the office of the Israeli Prime Minister against the initiative. A press statement on behalf of the Israeli Prime Minister stated that “although Israel is interested in peace with Syria, that country [meaning Syria] continues to be part of the Axis of Evil and a force that encourages terror in the entire Middle East.” [33]

### **Syria Arming for the Possibility of War and Israeli Invasion**

Syria is being steadily armed defensively by Iran and Russia. *Russia has renewing its weapons deliveries to Syria after the interruption caused by the Israeli 2006 war on Lebanon. It has been reported by Russian sources, but denied by Kremlin officials, that Russia has initiated the delivery of five MiG-31E fighter-interceptors to Syria. This could only be the tip of the iceberg.*

*Kommersant, a major Russian newspaper, has reported in regards to the transfer of Russian jets to Syria that “Iran may be the big winner from the [Russian-Syrian] deal” because of the Syrian-Iranian mutual defence pact. [34] True enough, Tehran has been reportedly financing Syrian weapon upgrades and military purchases from Russia, Ukraine, and China. In the event of confrontation between Iran and the U.S. it is apparent that Israel will play a direct role. The strengthening of Syria will keep Israel at bay in the event of a possible conflict between the United States and Iran.*

*Additionally, according to an Italian source a U.N. official in Lebanon has revealed that the Iranian military has been moving Iranian missiles and equipment to Syrian territory and has sent Iranian military engineers to train the Syrians with use of Iranian hardware and technology. [35] Israeli sources have made similar statements in the past. If accurate, this is undoubtedly part of the defensive arrangements being made by Syria and Iran to protect Syria from an Israeli invasion or air strikes.*

### **Israel Preparing for War: Special “Israeli War Cabinet” formed**

According to Israeli sources, at the start of June of 2007 Israel held mock invasion exercises that simulated an Israeli invasion of Syria. [36] The Israeli exercise was offensive by definition and nature. Invasions are not defensive. Syrian model villages were also used for the simulated Israeli invasion of Syria. [37] Israel also held large-scale military operations and exercises on the Syrian border and in the Golan Heights. [38]

Israeli sources have been repeatedly talking about the Middle East through a war-like perspective. [39] They speak of Gaza, Lebanon, the West Bank, and Syria as fronts in an ongoing Israeli war and portray Israel under a continuous state of siege that is masterminded by Tehran and its associates. Israeli media operatives have also been training for public relations operations and media exercises that would aim to gain the sympathy of the global public upon the commencement of hostilities with Lebanon, Syria, and Iran.

Although it is rarely mentioned in public, Israel has also admitted that the only reason that a large-scale Israeli operation has not occurred in Gaza is because of Israeli war preparations against Syria. [40] Other developments have also taken place in Israel that point to an Israeli role in an attack against the Iranians. Ephraim Sneh, the Deputy Defence Minister of Israel, who has stepped down from his cabinet post, has protested that Israel is not prepared to manage military operations against Iran alone. This implies that an attack against Iran will be a joint Israeli-U.S. venture.

In Tel Aviv, as of June 6, 2007 a special “war cabinet” has been formed. [41] According to Israeli sources this inner circle within the Israeli government has been notified by Israeli intelligence sources that Syria is not planning any attack on Israel, but is preparing for an Israeli invasion. [42] In some ways the Israeli war cabinet is the Israeli alternative to the active war theatre posts being created by the White House for an expanded Middle Eastern war, which includes the American “war czar” post. [43] Israel and the U.S. have also created



the “Joint Political Military Group” which is a working and planning group that encompasses joint war and planning preparations against Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Territories.

The Israeli war cabinet compromises the notion that Israel is in a state of war preparations for an offensive war. Amongst the special war cabinets tasks are studies of the Iranian reaction to an Israeli attack and invasion of Syria. [44]

Ehud Barak has also said that “[Israel] must once again restore the Israeli army’s deterrence, because there is no other way [for Israel],” which means that Israel must demonstrate its military might. [45] Aside from the Palestinian people, such a show of force can only be demonstrated against Lebanon and/or Syria.

### **Petro-Politics: Geo-Strategic Defeat for the U.S. and E.U. in Central Asia**

Turkmenistan has tried to stay neutral in the tensions between Russia, Iran, and China on one side and the Anglo-American alliance and its NATO partners on the other side. In the last few months it has also turned out that Turkmenistan is beginning to shift from its neutral position. With the death of President Niyazov (Turkmenbashi), the dictator of Turkmenistan, the Central Asian republic has started to slowly align itself with Tehran, Moscow, and Beijing. The new leader of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhammedow, has made visits to Moscow and Tehran which have resulted in closer cooperation between Turkmenistan, the Russians, and the Iranians. Turkmenistan is also moving towards joining or working with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

The U.S. and E.U. have been trying to make sure that the Russian Federation, like Iran, would be bypassed by oil and gas pipelines, thus eliminating the control Russia would have on international energy supplies. [46] On 12 May, 2007 the Russian President and his Turkmen and Kazakh counterparts signed an agreement that confirmed a geo-strategic defeat for the U.S. and its partners. According to the agreement the energy exports of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan would go through Russian territory and not alternative routes that would avoid Russia. [47]

Since the end of 2006, the Turkmen President and the Iranian President have intensified cooperation and have reciprocally hosted one another in Tehran and Ashgabat (Ashkhabad). Most of the gas collected from the western fields of Turkmenistan is also being exported through Iran. [48] Days apart from the developments in Central Asia, Iran and China also finalized energy negotiations and concluded an agreement on the development of the North Pars gas field in the Persian Gulf on May 18, 2007. [49]

Russia is also involved in the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline and energy projects in Syria and the Eastern Mediterranean. The Russians are also establishing a naval base in Syria to protect their interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Greece, Bulgaria, and Russia have also signed a long-delayed energy deal for the construction of the Burgas-Alexandroupoli(s) pipeline that would carry oil from the Black Sea terminals of Russia through Bulgarian and Greek territory. [50]

### **A Web of Secret Meetings: Drawing the Lines in Iraq**

It is apparent and undeniable that nothing is developing or unfolding in Iraq as any party or side has planned. Prior to the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit, Dr. Ali Larijani, the Secretary-

General of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran, was in Baghdad and Najaf for discussions with the Iraqi Prime Minister, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, and other Iraqi figures. [51]

The talks in Baghdad were partially in essence discussions between the U.S. government and Iran and the talks in Najaf with Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani must have had British influence because of the private guarantees the British secretly gave the Grand Ayatollah in regards to Iraq during 2004 negotiations in London. These secret negotiations took place in 2004 when the Grand Ayatollah abruptly flew from Iraq to London, where he stayed for several days to receive treatment for his heart. [52]

Sadoun Al-Dulaimi, the former Iraqi Defence Minister, was also in Iran and held high-level talks that included Secretary-General Larijani. Ibrahim (Abraham) Al-Jaafari, who is notable for having served as the prime minister of Iraq in 2005, was also in Iran to attend an international conference. [53] While in Iran he had high-level meetings that included both Chairman Rafsanjani, a former Iranian president, and Dr. Larijani. [54] Al-Jaafari was distinctly broken down in his appearance throughout his stay in Tehran. It is worth mentioning, that prior to his visit to Tehran, that Al-Jaafari was reported as having had high-level talks in his home on April 4, 2007 with General David Petraeus, the Commander of Coalition and U.S. forces in Iraq. Seventy other Iraqi government officials, parliamentarians, and military men were also present for the talks with General Petraeus. [55] The Prime Minister of the Kurdish Regional Government of Northern Iraq, Nechervan Idris Barzani also visited Iran in the same timeframe as other politicians and figures from Iraq. Messages have undoubtedly been passed between the American and Iranian sides through these individuals.

Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim, the leader of the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC) which was formerly named the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), also visited both the U.S. and Tehran in May of 2007. These visits to the U.S. and Iran were reportedly on the basis of medical incentives. [56] Jalal Talabani, the Iraqi President, was also in the U.S. for “vacation” during the same time that Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim was in Iran. Jalal Talabani was also in Jordan and the U.S. for medical reasons prior and during his vacation. [57] Talabani later also visited Iran and held talks with Iranian leaders. [58] Undoubtedly, both individuals are also negotiating and relaying messages between the U.S. and Iranian governments. Both individuals also have their own distinct agendas within Iraq and are suspected of being involved in a plan to partition Iraq.

Young Iraqi cleric, Moqtada Al-Sadr, whose group has also pledged to fight alongside Syria and Iran in a united front against Israel, the U.S., and Britain in the event of a war, has criticised any talks with the U.S. government. [59] Moqtada Al-Sadr and his followers are also at odds with Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, Jalal Talabani, and Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim.

### **Ahmed Chalabi and Espionage Reports in Tehran**

Ahmed Chalabi, the leader of the Iraqi National Congress and an informal spokesman for Washington D.C. and London also visited Tehran for talks before the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit in Egypt. While in Tehran Ahmed Chalabi had talks with Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the Chairman of the Iranian Expediency Council. The Chairman of the Iranian Expediency Council is one of the posts of power in Iran. Chairman Rafsanjani, as the former president of Iran, is known to have been involved in secret negotiations with the U.S. and Israel, which came into the limelight during the Iran-Contra affair. Rafsanjani is also a strong

representative of market forces in Iran that has advocated for business ties with the U.S. and for economic liberalism. [60]

Most intriguing of all a former top Iranian negotiator under the Khatami Administration, Hossein Mousavian, with close links to Chairman Rafsanjani has also been arrested on charges of suspected espionage; this could be linked to talks between Chairman Rafsanjani and his allies with officials from Iraq, Afghanistan, and the E.U. representing U.S. interests. [61]

### **Domestic Politics in Iran: Pragmatists, Ideologues, Liberals, Revolutionaries, Reformers, and Conservatives**

Iran is divided amongst several poles. The political leadership of Iran is not monolithic, but it is presently unified against the Anglo-American threat and war march.

In the complex political matrix of Iranian domestic politics and the many diverse circles of power there seems to be several internal debates well underway. [62] One debate is about Iran's strategic direction in regards to the United States. This is a subject of internal contention between the revolutionary ideologues and visionaries on one side and the pragmatists and neo-liberals led by Chairman Rafsanjani on the other side, with several other circles stuck midway or shifting between these two poles.

There is contention in Iranian circles between those who prefer independence and self-reliance and see a vision of the Middle East without a U.S. presence against Chairman Rafsanjani and his political allies. Chairman Rafsanjani supports whatever is good for business interests and reticently advocates collaboration with the U.S. globally and in the Middle East for mutual benefits.

Inversely, in the U.S. there are circles of power that want to avert a war and seek collaboration between the U.S. and Iran for mutual benefits. It is these fractions in the U.S. and Iran that are pushing for negotiations, but primarily for self-serving reasons.

### **An Iranian Defensive Presence in Tajikistan?**

A series of diplomatic and bilateral meetings that are linked to alliance building or defensive configuration have been taking place. Syria and Iran maintain a constant flow of officials between Tehran and Damascus and continue to deepen their military ties. Before the talks at the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit, the Iranian Defence Minister went to Tajikistan to examine key military facilities, adjacent NATO-garrisoned Afghanistan, and to expand military cooperation between the forces of Tajikistan and Iran. [63]

Tajikistan, like the other republics of Central Asia, was once a part of Iran and the Persian language, like in Iran, is the official language of Tajikistan. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union talks of some form of union between the two republics have taken place. Like the rest of the Caucasus and Central Asia, a war against Iran would not be very welcomed in Tajikistan. The Tajik President and Iran have also started high-level negotiations that may involve the deployment of Iranian military personnel in Tajikistan.

If an Iranian defensive presence in Tajikistan were to materialize it would give Iran a considerable advantage in Afghanistan should a war break out. If a war were to start between Iran and the U.S., along with NATO, the Northern Alliance and the overwhelming

majority of the population of Afghanistan would side with the Iranians for numerous reasons. With every passing day the Afghan population perceives U.S. and NATO troops as an occupation force. An Iranian position in Tajikistan would allow Iran to protect the strongholds of the Northern Alliance in Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan, Nooristan (Nuristan), Panjshir, and Samangan. An Iranian presence in Tajikistan would also keep open a potential northern supply line that could include Chinese and Russian contributions to Iranian allies in Afghanistan.

### **Fire being lit between the Iraqi Kurds and Turkey by Unseen Forces**

The Prime Minister of the Kurdish Regional Government of Northern Iraq, Nechervan Idris Barzani was in Iran for high-level talks with Iranian leaders during May of 2007. The Iranian Interior Minister and Chairman Rafsanjani were just some of the leaders that the Iraqi Kurd leader held talks with. In Tehran he made pledges that Iraqi Kurdistan would not be used for any operations against Iran.

Nechervan Idris Barzani is also the nephew of Mullah Barzani who has been involved in a verbal row with the Turkish government. The talks between the Kurdish Regional Government of Northern Iraq and Iranian officials could have been motivated through the fears of Iraqi Kurds that the U.S. will use Turkish troops to secure Iraq if it attacks Iran and Syria.

### **Baku: The Caucasian Sphinx**

In the same timeframe that the Iranian Defence Minister was in Tajikistan for military consultations and exchanges, in Baku a U.S. delegation, led by Congressman Peter Hoekstra had arrived. It was immediately announced that the visit would be complemented by a reciprocal visit to the White House by President Aliyev and other officials from Baku for "security talks." [64]

Simultaneously it was also announced that the Iranian President intended to visit Baku during the same timeframe as President Aliyev's White House visit.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is an independent player in the frictions between the U.S., Russia, and Iran. Baku's foreign policy is pragmatic and flexible. Nor has Baku entrenched itself in any camp, yet. Baku is waiting to see how the conditions in the international environment will develop before it solidifies itself.

### **Awaken Lady America from your Slumber: The Legislative & Organizational Frameworks for War are here!**

*"Those who voluntarily put power into the hands of a tyrant or an enemy must not wonder if it be at last turned against themselves."*

-Aesop of Ancient Greece

The judicial and organization fabrics of America have been perverted and warped by a succession of presidential administrations. American law no longer applies to the White House or its officials. The White House has been openly contravening and ignoring U.S. and international law. Lewis Libby, a member of the Bush Jr. Administration, has been spared a jail term for deliberately violating American laws. [65] These extrajudicial activities on the part of the White House are only the tip of the iceberg.

Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the White House has centralized U.S. intelligence and pushed for laws that are unconstitutional in nature. Under orders from the White House, the Pentagon has also gone forward to set up a special military planning group to synchronize the initiation of a war against Iran, but this is not all that is being anticipated and projected by the Bush Jr. Administration. [66]

Senator Joseph Lieberman, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, has stated that widely used surveillance cameras will be stationed across the United States. [67] Military enrolment regulations have been changed and the White House has even granted itself immunity from war crimes.

### **The Covert Draft and the Recruitment of Non-Americans into the U.S. Military**

The draft has subtly been prepared. Inadvertently and advertently many American governors have complained about the haemorrhaging of their National Guard manpower. Oklahoma Governor Brad Henry has said that “the Pentagon has reinstated the draft on the backs of the National Guard” as 13, 000 National Guardsmen were projected to be sent to war zones. [68] The Pentagon has been stealthily siphoning troops and military force to the Middle East and NATO-garrisoned Afghanistan. Tours of duty have also been extended for U.S. servicemen.

According to the Pentagon there are currently about 25,000 non-Americans enlisted in the U.S. military and 8,000 non-Americans have been enlisting on an annual basis. [69] 37,000 non-Americans were involved in the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq as U.S. servicemen. [70] These figures do not include foreigners who are recruited into working for U.S. and foreign security firms contracted to the U.S. military or U.S. State Department in Iraq and Afghanistan. Helping relatives gain legal status in the U.S. has also been a tool to draw immigrants into enrolling in the U.S. military. In fact, U.S. immigration officials have been swearing in non-American servicemen as American citizens in Baghdad. In 2004 the U.S. government allowed non-Americans in the U.S. military to be sworn in as American citizens in Iraq and the Persian Gulf.

The White House has also signed an order waiving the three-year waiting period for active-duty servicemen to apply for American citizenships if they had joined before September 11, 2001. In 2004 the White House also pushed forward legislation that eliminated application fees for active-duty servicemen. [71]

### **The White House Exempts itself and U.S. Troops from charges of War Crimes: Why?**

In 2003 the U.S. started negotiations to exempt U.S. forces from war crime charges internationally. [72] In 2003, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina stated that they and other Eastern European countries were being forced into signing agreements with the Bush Jr. Administration that would grant immunity to U.S. soldiers from war crimes. [73] The U.S.

President has also gone forward to pass laws that give him and his administration immunity from being charged with war crimes themselves. This is a flagrant omission in itself that the U.S. President and his officials has been party to war crimes.

One should ask: why are the legislative steps and precautions being taken to grant war crime immunity? The simplest answer would be because war crimes and internationally illegally wars have been unfolding.

The War Crimes Act gives immunity to U.S. officials from legal prosecution and war crime charges. [74] It is interesting to note that the motif of the War Crimes Act is the continuity of the U.S. federal government in the case of any major disaster that could include a global conflict. What would worry a pessimist is that the U.S. President has had this legislation passed by the U.S. Congress not because of past war crimes, but because of future war crimes that will be beyond any imaginable levels. Such war crimes could include the use of nuclear weapons, the total destruction of Iran, and a global strike against Russia, China, Belarus, Venezuela, and other U.S. opponents. Before 2001 these suggestions would have been viewed as ludicrous, but global perception of U.S. actions has started to radically change.

### **E.U. Homeland Security: European Union to follow American steps?**

The E.U. is set to become a greater U.S. partner in the “Global War on Terror.” The E.U. is also discussing another treaty between all its member states in the realms of justice, freedom, and security. [75] The governments of Britain, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands (Holland), Spain, and Denmark are all discussing tighter security measures.

The populations of the E.U. have also become galvanized with fears of terrorism and views against foreign migration. In the U.S., one of the cornerstones of homeland security conceptualization has been an end to a liberal North American immigration regime. The E.U. has been starting to follow suit. Further European Union-wide security procedures are now being drafted in Brussels. The homeland security concept is now intensifying in the E.U. and one may suspect it has a direct link to war preparations in the Middle East and growing tensions with Russia and China.

### **Top U.S. Brass being Primed for War**

The highest ranks of the U.S. military are also being filled with allies of the Bush Jr. Administration. Amongst them are the commanding officer of United States Central Command (CENTCOM) and soon the position of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the United States Armed Forces. [76]

The White House has claimed that it is wary of an awkward reconfirmation hearing for General Peter Pace, but this is merely a boldface lie. In reality General Pace ruled out any nuclear attacks against Iran and his statements are viewed as a liability in the event that a nuclear attack against Iran occurs.

### **Iran-Syria Planning Group dismantled after the creation of the “War Czar” Post**

The Iran-Syria Planning Group has been dissolved. [77] Additionally, the White House is planning on appointing a flag officer or general to oversee both the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as one singular theatre and with the authority to issue directions to the Pentagon, the U.S. State Department, and other U.S. government bodies that could include



the CIA. [78]

Iran lies in between Iraq and Afghanistan. The creation of a position to oversee both war theatres in Iraq and Afghanistan could be the precursor to overseeing a much larger war theatre that would include Iran. The creation of the so-called “war czar” post in Washington D.C. may perhaps be part of the groundwork for a war against Iran and Syria, which would almost immediately assimilate the war theatres in Afghanistan and Iraq into one war zone.

The Iran-Syria planning Group was just what its name implies, a planning group, whereas the new “war czar” post is a supervisory position that will put all war planning into practice.

### **Japanese Minister legitimizes the use of Nuclear Weapons on civilians: Why?**

In Japan there have been massive cries of anger and outrage because a Japanese politician and cabinet minister had stated at Reitaku University that the use of nuclear weapons on Japanese civilians by the U.S. during the Second World War was legitimate. [79] Defence Minister Fumio Kyuma’s comments created tremendous backlash in Japan which forced the Japanese Prime Minister to publicly contest and reject his own minister’s comments. Subsequently Yuriko Koike, replacing Fumio Kyuma, was appointed as the first female Defence Minister of Japan. [80]

The Japanese Defence Minister’s statements are part of a calculated campaign to legitimize and prepare the public for the use of nuclear weapons on civilian populations.

It should also be noted that prior to the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japanese civilians that Japan was trying to surrender and already in the process of giving up— this is something that has now been acknowledged through documented sources in the U.S. and Japan. In actuality the Cold War started during the Second World War; President Harry S. Truman did not accept the Japanese surrender because the U.S. government wanted to demonstrate the powers of U.S. military might through the nuclear bomb to the Soviet Union.

### **Thinking the Unthinkable: Nuclear Strikes on the Iranian People**

While speaking during a CNN debate, Rudy Giuliani has said that if he was elected into the presidential office he would unleash a nuclear strike against Iran. *The Jerusalem Post* has written that in a state of irony “[s]everal Republican presidential candidates, among them front-runner Rudy Giuliani, said Tuesday [June 5, 2007] night [that] they would consider using tactical nuclear weapons to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons.” [81]

The unthinkable is no longer a taboo: the use of nuclear weapons once again by the U.S. military. In essence this will be the use of nuclear weapons against civilian populations. Any nuclear attack on Iranian nuclear facilities and structures will contaminate far-reaching areas that will go far beyond Iran.

An international consensus has been well underway to legitimize and normalize any nuclear strikes against Iran. This is why Fumio Kyuma tried to legitimize the dropping of nuclear weapons on Japanese civilians by the U.S. during his visit to Reitaku University.

It is evident from the Israeli military build-up, the public relations project to normalize the Israeli nuclear arsenal, and the American deployment of nuclear weapons into the Middle East that there is a calculated intent to use nuclear weapons against Iran.

The so-called slip of the tongue that Israel has nuclear weapons by Israeli Prime Minister Olmert has conveniently occurred after the December 2006 statements of Secretary Robert Gates that Israel has a nuclear arsenal. [82] What is significant about these statements is that they indicate that Israel will be involved in, or may start, a war against Iran that will involve the use of nuclear weapons. Israel has been putting together a public relations campaign to declare that it needs nuclear weapons to be used on a pre-emptive basis in response to Iran and its allies.

### **The Voice of the IAEA is being drowned out by U.S. and British officials**

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Chief has said that going to war with Iran would be utter madness. “You do not want to give additional argument to new crazies who say ‘let’s go and bomb Iran’” the IAEA Chief has said in regards to the political manipulation and distortion of IAEA reports by the U.S. and Britain. [83]

The IAEA and international officials have already complained that U.S. officials were outright lying about various IAEA findings and reports about the Iranians. [84] This is a case of déjà vu. What is reoccurring is a repeat of the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) propaganda as a pretext for waging war and invading a bleeding Iraq that had been suffering from years of economic sanctions and aerial raids by British and U.S. jets.

### **The Palestinian Civil War and “The Three Nation Solution”**

Days before the climax of fighting in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli Chief of Staff stated on Israeli television, while observing a simulated Israeli invasion exercise of a model Syrian village, that Israel was “ready for any deterioration on the Gaza Strip front and the Syrian front.” [85]

*The Times* (U.K.) had headlines titled *Iran’s long game sets stage for war* after the Gaza Strip was secured by Hamas and affiliated Palestinian groups allied to Iran. [86] In reality the U.S., Israel, and their allies have deliberately allowed Hamas to take total control of the Gaza Strip. This has allowed strands of Fatah and other collaborationist Palestinians working with the U.S. and Israel to form an unelected, parallel, proxy government in the West Bank. Iran and Syria are also being blamed for the hostilities in the Gaza Strip even though it is documented that the U.S. and Israel encouraged the creation of Palestinian groups that were ordered to attack and deliberately undermine the elected Hamas government.

Now in Israel there is talk of a “three nation solution,” meaning the creation of two Palestines— one in Gaza and one in the West Bank. This would also effectively weaken the Palestinian demand for making East Jerusalem the Palestinian capital.

The creation of two parallel Palestinian governments, the elected Hamas government in Gaza and the unelected Fatah-controlled government in the West Bank will allow Israel to partition the West Bank further with the collaboration of Mahmoud Abbas and his henchmen. The Gaza Strip is inconsequential to Israel, but the West Bank is coveted. A Hamas government would have refused to play along with the Israeli dismantlement of the West

Bank, but now through the establishment of a proxy government, Hamas is effectively cut off from most the West Bank. Israel may proceed to divide the West Bank as it pleases.

The situation in Gaza has also been internationalized like in Lebanon and NATO may now informally move into Gaza under a “peacekeeping mandate.”

### **The Arab Sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf: Sitting on the Fence**

The leaders of the U.A.E., Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, and the GCC as a whole have publicly stated that they will not allow their territories to be used in any hostilities against Iran. The Iraqi government has also uttered similar statements, not that they can be valued highly. Kyrgyzstan, in Central Asia, has also stated that no American or foreign aircraft on its territory will be allowed to attack Iran. The Secretary-General of the Arab League has also declared that the Arab World is unanimously against any American-led military adventure against Iran. [87]

Many of the rulers of the GCC are sitting on the fence and will side with who they believe will come out on top in the Middle East. If not neutral, they are expected to betray and distance themselves from whomever they perceive will be the loser of a showdown between the U.S. and Iran.

After Kuwaiti leaders declared that their territory would not be used against Iran they also sent envoys to Iran and later Syria. The Syrian President received the Crown Prince of Kuwait with a private message from the rulers of Kuwait. [88] The message may be part of the continuous effort to de-link Syria from Iran or may have deeper implications. Kuwait, Bahrain, and the GCC as a whole, have already taken publicly known measures to prepare themselves for war between the U.S. and Iran.

The leaders of the Arab Sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf have been known to say one thing, but to act differently. For example the princes of Saudi Arabia force their rigid views on their local population and hide behind religion, but themselves are known to engage in all sorts of legal breaches towards their own edicts. Saudi princes are involved in all types of fractions from bribery to the sex trade and the personal use of cocaine. [89] They stand as some of the greatest hypocrites amongst the Desert Arabs.

### **The U.S. is threatening both its Enemies and its own Allies alike in the Middle East**

The GCC’s statements of non-aggression towards Iran may only be made to calm the Arab public and hide any role these respective sheikdoms would play in any wars against Iran and Syria. The rulers of the GCC are conceivably keeping their options open and will throw their lots with the U.S. or Iran depending on what they believe will be the outcome of a showdown between Washington D.C. and Tehran. Whatever their selection they are not fully trusted by either the Americans or the Iranians.

When the presence of the U.S. Navy was enlarged in the Persian Gulf before the Iranian President’s visit to the U.A.E., Vice-President Cheney was quoted as saying “With two carrier strike groups in the [Persian] Gulf, we’re sending clear messages to friends and adversaries alike.” [90] It should be pointed out that U.S. officials such as the American Vice-President and Robert Gates have threatened both their enemy Iran and their own so-called allies in the Persian Gulf, the rulers of the Arab Sheikdoms, due to the volatility of the strategic balance of power. They have stated that the presence of U.S. military power in the region is

a reminder to both American foes and friends alike that the U.S. is not leaving the waters of the Persian Gulf.

The capture of British servicemen in the Persian Gulf by Iran helped portray Britain and America as declining powers. The U.S. and Britain know that their allies in the Middle East will abandon them if they are seen as weak. This is why they have started threatening their own allies.

The Arab allies of Washington D.C. and 10 Downing Street are being clearly courted by Tehran. [91] Iran has also called for the creation of a mutual defence pact amongst all the nations of the Persian Gulf littoral and for the exclusion of all foreign or alien forces from the Persian Gulf. [92]

The U.S. has become nervous because of the talks being held behind closed doors between Iran and members of the GCC. In an uncharacteristic move by Iran and Saudi Arabia, both Dr. Ali Larijani and the Iranian President have successively visited Saudi Arabia and held talks with the Saudi King. [93] Roger Hardy, an analyst on the Middle East working for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), has also suggested that there is some form of a political divide within the House of Saud in regards to a confrontation between the U.S. and Iran. [94] The Iranian President has also visited both the U.A.E. and the Sultanate of Oman to draw them closer into the Iranian orbit. [95] While in the U.A.E. the Iranian President also declared that Iran was also willing to restart full diplomatic relations with Egypt. [96]

According to an Al Jazeera interview with Naser Kandil of the Center for Modern Oriental Studies and Media in Lebanon the U.S. government with the collaboration of Prince Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud is planning a coup or military takeover of Saudi Arabia before it pulls out its troops from Iraq. [97] Regardless of the accuracy of Naser Kandril's assertion, it seems that the White House has contingency plans in regards to Saudi Arabia and the GCC should they split from America.

### **Enemy at the Gates in the East**

In Tehran and Damascus there has been a feeling that the enemy, meaning the U.S., Britain, and NATO is at the gate. The entities that have animated and supported Israel, radical and violent cells, the Taliban, and other enemies of Tehran and Damascus are now themselves directly settled on the borders of both Iran and Syria. The gates of Baghdad and Kabul have been entered and a political struggle is taking place within Beirut to decide Lebanon's fate.

Similarly Moscow and Beijing are also aware that the enemy has gathered at their gates. The sentiments on the part of these nation-states are similar to that of Austria when the Ottoman Turk armies marched towards the Habsburg capital, Vienna. In this posterior period it is the U.S. and NATO forces that are amassing on the borders of Iran, Syria, Russia, China, and the republics of the former Soviet Union. [98] To these countries the enemy is now at the gate. These nations continue to be demonized and demeaned as the anti-theses of peace. *The Washington Times* has even called Russia, China, and Iran the "new Axis of Evil." [99]

### **The U.S. and Britain intended to stay in Iraq for the long-term since 2003**

*"It is the [British] soldiers who have been telling me from the frontline [Iraq] that the war they have been fighting is a hopeless war, that they cannot possibly win it and the sooner we start talking politics and not military solutions, the sooner they will come home and their lives will be preserved."*

-General Sir Michael Rose, British Army

The threat of war is very much alive and breathing and will continue to do so until U.S. and British forces leave the Middle East, specifically Iraq and the Persian Gulf. General David Petraeus, the military commander in charge of operations in Iraq, has told the Fox News Channel, owned by media mogul Rupert Murdoch, that it will take approximately ten years to defeat the Iraqi Resistance.

Military bases in Iraq could also help enforce potential NATO bases in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Fourteen gargantuan, mammoth-sized, super-bases have been constructed in Iraq. These Anglo-American bases are spread throughout Iraq and located near geographically important positions, Iraqi oil fields, and oil terminals.

On May 30, 2007 the White House declared that the American President and his officials have planned a lengthy U.S. military presence in Iraq like the one in South Korea. [100] American forces have been in South Korea for well over half a century since the end of the Korean War in 1953.

The White House's statements were later echoed by the Pentagon in what has been termed as a "post-occupation" presence. [101] The term "post-occupation" signified the fact that U.S. officials know very well that they are an occupational force in Iraq and can also mean a continuation of the occupation of Iraq. The White House and Pentagon have only confirmed what has been observed since 2005 and that is that the U.S. and British governments wanted a permanent presence in Iraq. Permanent military bases were already being built in Iraq and hefty contracts were already awarded to build these mammoth bases to Anglo-American corporations at a cost of over a billion dollars (U.S.) per year. [102]

Secretary Robert Gates has also stated that the U.S. government desired a "long and enduring presence" in Iraq with the consent of the Iraqi government. [103] This is another instance where the double-standards of American foreign policy are exposed. In the past the U.S. government under the helms of the Bush Jr. Administration said that it did not accept Syria's claims that its troops were stationed in parts of Lebanon at the invitation of the Lebanese government. The reason for this was that the U.S. claimed that the Lebanese government was co-opted into Syria's clutches. What would make the current Iraqi puppet government any different from the pre-2005 Lebanese government?

### **U.S. Controlling, Directing, and Arming Death Squads in Iraq**

The U.S., Britain, and Saudi Arabia have been deliberately inseminating unsuccessful stories of a civil war in Iraq between Shiite Muslims and Sunni Muslims in an attempt to blame the Iraqis for the ongoing violence in their occupied land and to justify the continued presence of Anglo-American troops.

U.S. forces have allowed militias to form under their eyes and given them the power of arbitrary arrest and ordered the Iraqi Army to supply them with ammunition. [104] Coalition

forces claim that this is an act of desperation. *The Washington Post* has quoted an unnamed U.S. intelligence officer as saying “we have made a deal with the devil.” [105]

Ironically the U.S. is arming Iraqi groups under the very noses of the so-called international community while laying total blame on Syria, Iran, and even Hezbollah of Lebanon. [106] Many Iraqi eyewitnesses have reported that it was Coalition troops that also allowed and watched the raids of many low-profile military barracks during 2003 so that weapons could be dispersed throughout Iraq. The U.S. has also jointly imported terrorist groups into Iraq vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia and with the help of Saudi Intelligence.

### **Who controls the Death Squads from the Iraqi Interior Ministry?**

During the tenor of Ayad (Iyad) Allawi as the Anglo-American selected interim prime minister of Iraq in 2004, the Interior Ministry of Iraq was packed with former CIA collaborators. Under the directive of the Coalition Authorities in Baghdad and the supervision of the CIA a force of 5, 000 special police commandos was created within the Interior Ministry. A former Baathist (or someone who is at least described as a former Baathist), Major-General Adnan Thabit Al-Samarrai or simply Adnan Thabit, was given command of the force. [107] Major-General Adnan Thabit was given autonomy from the Interior Ministry and was supervised by the CIA. *The Washington Post* published an article by David Ignatius that has claimed that the force consists of approximately 10, 000 men. [108]

In 1996 Major-General Adnan Thabit participated in an unsuccessful coup organized by Ayad Allawi and the CIA that attempted to overthrow Saddam Hussein. As a result Major-General Thabit was jailed and only released in 2003. It is also not coincidental that the U.S. and Britain appointed Falah Al-Naqib, the son of a prominent former Baathist official and the nephew of Major-General Thabit, as the Interior Minister of Iraq.

John Negroponte, who was the U.S. ambassador to Iraq at the time of the creation of the special police commandos, also supervised the training of the Interior Ministry. [109] James Steele, a retired U.S. colonel who was the commander of a U.S. military advisor group in El Salvador from 1984 till 1986 became Major-General Adnan Thabit’s American handler. [110] It is believed that James Steele was assigned to the Interior Ministry because John Negroponte was the U.S. ambassador in Honduras while James Steele was in El Salvador and both men have experience in crushing and repressing Latin American democratic movements and revolutions. There should be little surprise when reports are made of torture marks and techniques in Iraq that are similar to those of Honduras and El Salvador.

### **The U.S. Government is a Sponsor of Terrorism in the Middle East**

On May 26, 2007 ABC News reported that the White House has admitted to giving presidential approval for covert operations against Iran, including acts of terrorism. [111] Although it is not fully admitted similar tactics have been used in Iraq.

Terrorist campaigns have been launched not just in Iraq, but across the Middle East to destabilize resistance and opposition to the Anglo-American alliance. The CIA has also admitted that it has been targeting Hezbollah and any opponents to U.S. foreign policy in Lebanon. This is the key force behind the destabilization of Lebanon. This is a subject that is reported, but causally shrugged aside by both American and British mainstream media.



[112] The White House has causally disclosed information that admits that the U.S. is a state sponsor of terrorism directed against its opponents.

### **Instability and Civil War in Iraq is an Anglo-American Objective**

Day-by-day it is becoming more and more evident that the Anglo-American alliance, with the assistance of Saudi Arabia and Israel, has been orchestrating ethnic, sectarian, and religious conflict in Iraq. It has universally been proclaimed as such by Kurd, Arab, Assyrian, and Turcoman alike in Iraq. Christians, Shiite Muslims, Sunni Muslims, Yazdis, and Mandaeans in Iraq are all under attack by secretive units, including the Coalition-controlled forces of the Interior Ministry of Iraq.

It is evident that stability is unwanted in Iraq. This has been the objective all along in Iraq. Only the stability of oil infrastructure matters to the Anglo-American alliance. Instability allows the U.S. and Britain to craft their excuses for their long-term deployments in Iraq and to plunder Iraqi energy resources.

For the most part, the truth of the matter is that the U.S. and Britain are deliberately fashioning a state of chaos in Iraq and turning brother and sister against brother and sister. Part of the Anglo-American objective is to divide Iraq and to arm Shiite Muslims and Sunni Muslims against one another and to disrupt all social order. [113] The U.S. and Britain have also desperately tried to portray Sunni Muslim groups as being behind the murder of leaders within the Sadrist Movement in Iraq. [114] This is rejected by the Sadrists, who are Shiite Muslims. They know the strategy the U.S. and Britain are playing by trying to blame Shiite Muslims for the murders of Sunni Muslim and by blaming Sunni Muslims for the death of Shiite Muslims.

### **Iran and Iraqis blame the U.S. and Britain for the Golden Mosque Bombings**

Iran has blamed the U.S. and Britain for the attacks on religious places of worship in Iraq. Although many are suspicious of Iran, both independent Iraqi Shiite Muslim and Sunni Muslim leaders who oppose the Iraqi government have also pointed the finger at the U.S. and Britain. The Iranians have blamed Coalition forces for the bombings of the Al-Askari Mosque in Samarra, Iraq.

Unsurprisingly the press in North America and Western Europe has distorted the Iranian statements that absolve Sunni Muslims. The press services in North America and Western Europe have instead attempted to incorporate Sunni Muslims as the perpetrators behind the bombings of the mosques revered by Shiite Muslims.

It is being claimed that the bombings of Iraqi mosques and places of worship are being performed by radical Shiite Muslim and Sunni Muslim groups, but this is unfeasible. [115] This claim seems almost undoubtedly false because mosques are not divided like churches by sectarian denominations. Although a mosque maybe used predominantly by either Shiite or Sunni Muslims, mosques are unitary places of worship for all Muslims. It is certain that the bombings are being overseen covertly by the U.S. and Britain.

To validate this statement it should be noted that British soldiers belonging to the SAS were caught red-handed in one of these covert operations in Basra. The SAS soldiers were dressed in local dress and hiding explosives that they planned to denominate amongst a religious congregation in Basra. [116] Their pictures, while in custody, the costumes they

wore, and the explosives they carried have been widely circulated in the Middle East, but unfortunately not in Britain or North America.

### **The Campaign to Exterminate Iraqi Christians**

*“Frankly, I try to avoid meeting them [meaning U.S. and British officials] as much as possible. They [the Americans and the British] are the occupiers. The occupied don’t want to be occupied.*

-The Archbishop of Baghdad and Patriarch of Babylon, Emmanuel III (Emmanuel-Karem) Delly, Chaldean Catholic Church

Suffering and pain recognize no religion. Iraqi Christians have been hard hit since the 2003 Anglo-American invasion of their country. Their churches were targeted and badly damaged by the so-called precision weaponry of the U.S. and Britain and now their churches are being deliberately attacked by unknown gunmen and explosives similar to those blowing mosques up throughout Iraq. To many of the Iraqi Christians it is obvious that the U.S. is trying to push them out of their own country. The attacks on Iraqi Christians are part of a greater agenda to erase the identity and history of Iraq.

Adding insult to injury, U.S. troops have forcefully appropriated one of Baghdad’s largest monasteries and places of Christian worship, where the Chaldean Catholic Church has had a seminary and theology college. The Christian monastery has been turned into an army barrack to the anger of Iraqi Christians. [117] Iraqi Christians see this as impertinent to their religious beliefs. One of their places of worship has been turned into a barrack. This is not an isolated incident, but part of a continued pattern effecting Christians and Muslims alike in Iraq.

### **Saudi Intelligence: The Secret Partner in Iraq**

With the initiation of the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in 2003 many Arabs reported that in many cases the cheering locales in Baghdad and Iraq did not have Iraqi accents when they spoke Arabic. This means that they were individuals who were brought in by the U.S. and the British. Amongst those who assert that non-Iraqi Arabs were brought into Iraq for public relations operations and propaganda purposes is Samir Khader of Al Jazeera in Qatar. [118] Samir Khader, an Iraqi and a Senior Producer for Al Jazeera, like many other fellow Arabs realized that non-Iraqis were brought into Iraq to play the role of cheering Iraqis during the Anglo-American invasion. The natural vicinity that these individuals originated from is deductively Saudi Arabia and the Arab Sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf.

The intelligence apparatus of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Israel have both played key roles in creating internal tension within Iraq in a deliberate effort to dismantle the occupied republic. Many of the groups creating disorder and attacking Iraqis have been facilitated into Iraq by Saudi Intelligence with the knowledge of the U.S. and British governments. The majority of foreign radical groups entering Iraq are originating from Saudi Arabia and the Arab Sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf. [119]

The Association of Muslims Scholars in Iraq (ASMI), a political coalition of Sunni Muslim clerics and scholars, has stated that the bombings of places of worship, the random attacks on crowded public areas, and the routine assassination of Iraqis by death squads are

intended to divide Iraq. The Association of Muslims Scholars in Iraq (ASMI) has also stated that Saudi Arabia is a perpetrator in the violence in Iraq and has helped create and train death squads and intelligence agents that are plaguing Iraq with violence. [120]

### **Remnants of the South Lebanon Army have been relocated to Iraq by Israel**

Many Iraqi torture victims who have survived have also testified that their captors worked with U.S. and British forces and possessed Khaliiji (Gulf) or Lebanese accents when they spoke Arabic. It is apparent that the remnants of the collaborationist South Lebanon Army (SLA) which was under the command of Israel are now operating for Anglo-American and mercenary forces in Iraq. Many members of the South Lebanon Army (SLA), including its leader General Antoine Lahad, had fled into Israel when Israeli forces retreated and Israel ended its occupation of South Lebanon on May 25, 2000.

The South Lebanese Army (SLA) was infamous for its employment of Israeli torture techniques on fellow Lebanese civilians. Al-Khiam, in South Lebanon, had a notorious detention facility that was used for torture by Israel and its proxy force in Lebanon, the South Lebanon Army (SLA). These torture techniques that have the signature markings of Israel have also been appearing in Iraq. Although it must be stated that torture techniques are being exchanged and transferred between Anglo-American, Saudi, and Israeli forces. It is a well known fact that Israeli instructors are training certain U.S. units specializing in prisoner detention, interrogation, and/or assassination missions. [121]

### **SLA Remnants behind the Systematic Targeting of Palestinians in Iraq?**

One can deduce that Israel and the United States have facilitated the arrival of former members of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) into Iraq. Many are now working as mercenaries for foreign security contractors in Iraq. It can even be questioned if it is these remnants of the South Lebanon Army (SLA), that are fiercely anti-Palestinian, that are behind the systematic targeting and murder of the Palestinians refugees of Iraq.

### **British reports that Iranian Forces have crossed into Iraq**

Reports of continued Iranian arms shipments to Iraq and to the Taliban in NATO-garrisoned Afghanistan continue to develop.

*The Sun*, a British tabloid, has been the source behind a report that Iranian Revolutionary Guard units have been spotted crossing into Iraq from the Iranian border near Basra. [122] *The Sun* has also reported that senior British officers have confirmed that Iranian helicopters have crossed into Iraq and has also quoted an unidentified British intelligence source saying that Britain is at war with Iran. *The Sun* quotes the unidentified intelligence source as saying "It is an extremely alarming development and raises the stakes considerably," and "In effect, it means we are in a full on war with Iran— but nobody has officially declared it." [123]

Almost instantly the reports were dismissed as blatant lies by the Iranian Armed Forces and the Iranian government. Such claims that Iranian forces were crossing into Iraq were being made as far back as March of 2006, over a year ago, by Donald Rumsfeld. [124]

### **Russian Brigades mobilizing near Iranian Borders**

Alarming developments have taken place in the Caucasus, the land bridge between Iran and Russia. Although Russia and Iran have no direct borders any longer, both nations share the Caspian Sea and have borders in close proximity to one another. Russia has commenced with the deployment of two Russian mountain brigades into the North Caucasus. The two Russian brigades would be based in the republics of Daghestan and Karachayevo-Circassia. [125]

Daghestan borders both Georgia and the Republic of Azerbaijan and is Russia's closet point to Iran. Karachayevo-Circassia is on the border with Georgia. Georgia is presently controlled by a government that is openly collaborating with NATO against Russia, Iran, and Armenia. Unreported in Western Europe or North America, the Georgian government has also been curbing back democratic liberties in Georgia with the tacit approval of the White House and 10 Downing Street. The case of Georgia, like Pakistan, exposes the fact that democracy is not a genuine concern of either the U.S. or British governments. Karachayevo-Circassia is also located above Abkhazia. Abkhazia is a well armed breakaway republic that has seceded from Georgia and is a Russian ally.

The Russian mountain brigades will be completely positioned by December of 2007 according to the Russian military. Russia also plans to deploy a motorized infantry battalion and reconnaissance contingents in the area during the summer of 2007 (from July to August, 2007). The two mountain brigades are scheduled to be completely equipped and armed by October of 2007. [126] This means that Russian forces will be in position just before 2008—the year that Israeli sources have cited as the possible year of an attack on Iran. [127]

### **Will Russian Forces enter the Middle East to support Iran?**

The deployment of these two Russian brigades is no mere coincidence. Brigades are large military organizations that are composed of several regiments or battalions and themselves are the units that compile military divisions. Divisions have tens of thousands of servicemen. The deployment of these two Russian brigades, without the consideration of existing units and other units being mobilized, are in essence the deployment of an incomplete division near the border of not just Georgia, but also in close proximity to Northern Iran. The added strength and military force to Russia's Caucasian flank is an alarming signal that Russia is fortifying its southern flank from a real threat from NATO or possibly preparing for the extension of a war in the Middle East. The fresh brigades would be added to the Russian units that have already been positioned in Russia's Caucasian flank.

Both Russian and Iranian troops could neutralize any American-led military initiative in Georgia or the Republic of Azerbaijan. Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Armenia, and Nagorno-Karabakh would also fight alongside Russia and Iran. It has already been reported that Iran has contingency plans in regards to opening a Caucasian front in a potential American war involving Tbilisi and Baku. Russian troops could also alternatively enter the Middle East from the Caucasus to assist Iran against U.S. and British forces. The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and Russia have already both termed an attack on Iran as "unacceptable."

### **Venezuela: Preparing for "War of Resistance" against America**

*"[Venezuela] must think and prepare for the Resistance War everyday..."*

-Hugo Chavez, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

The Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has urged Venezuelans and other Latin Americans to prepare for a “guerrilla-style war” and “resistance” against an American invasion. The Venezuelan President has also added that the U.S. is using psychological and economic warfare as part of an unconventional campaign aimed at overthrowing the democratically elected Venezuelan government. [128]

It is also not by chance that the Venezuelan President and other Venezuelan officials have visited Russia, Belarus, and Iran during the summer junction of 2007— a period when rumours of war have been elevated. [129] A global alliance of political, economic, security, social, and military characteristics is being sculpted against the Anglo-American alliance and NATO.

The Venezuelan President has also warned repeatedly that those in power in Washington D.C. will eventually launch an invasion of Venezuela and other nations as part of a global campaign, but are currently trying to overrun Venezuela, like Iran, without resorting to physical combat. The U.S. government has engineered regime change attempts against Venezuela in the past and is currently orchestrating a media campaign, economic warfare, and has been involved in attempts to nurture insurgency in Venezuela.

### **Why would there be a U.S. Invasion of Venezuela?**

The Second World War was lost by Germany and its allies in Stalingrad, when they failed to secure the oil resources of the Soviet Union and were depleted gravely in a life or death attempt to do so.

If a major global conflict was launched, the U.S. and several of its allies would be unable to access energy supplies from the Middle East, Central Asia, Russia, parts of Europe, and parts of Africa. Saudi, Iraqi, and Persian Gulf oil exports would be halted. Oil access would either be directly obstructed or inadvertently stopped because of military operations.

Canada, which is one of the top exporters of oil to the U.S., exports its oil to the U.S. while Canadians import Saudi Arabian and Middle Eastern oil. In the scenario of a Middle Eastern war, Canada would be forced to reduce its exports to the U.S. to meet its own domestic energy needs with Canadian oil.

Venezuela is a significant source of U.S. oil imports. If Venezuelan oil were to stop reaching the U.S. it would also be a major blow. There could be a major energy crisis in the U.S. should there be a global war and Venezuela were to end its oil exports to the U.S. at the same time as an obstruction of oil from the Middle East and other areas. The scenario would even worsen if Ecuador, a Venezuelan ally, were also to cut back or stop oil exports to the U.S. under the orders of President Rafael Correa.

Add the prices that oil would reach to all this and we may see U.S. officials do what Venezuela is claiming. Under such a scenario the U.S. may be strained to invade Venezuela for U.S. oil needs and to continue its war effort.

### **“Cry ‘Havoc’ and let slip the Dogs of War!”**

The Iranian Speaker of Parliament has stated during a press conference that it is highly unlikely that the U.S. would attack or attempt to invade Iran, but he has added that there are certain officials within the White House who have already caused many problems in the Middle East and who might embark on repeating the same “unwise decisions.” [130] In essence the Iranian Speaker of Parliament has not ruled out a war between the U.S. and Iran. Iranian officials and military commanders have repeatedly been saying that the U.S. would not dare attack Iran, but yet they always say that they are ready for the possibility of war. Logically it is evident that they have not ruled out a military attack against Iran.

U.S. officials have been trying to sow enmity amongst the American people and the people of distant lands. War cries and fictional tales are being nurtured to the American public. The media propaganda against Iran, Syria, Russia, China, and any nations outside the Anglo-American or Franco-German orbits has been increasing.

Senator Joseph Lieberman, who was ejected from the Democratic Party by his local party constituents, said that “I think we’ve got to be prepared to take aggressive military action against the Iranians to stop them from killing Americans in Iraq,” during an appearance on Face the Nation, a show on the CBS Television Network. He was lectured about his threatening statements, by various American politicians. The critical political statements against Senator Lieberman are misleading and actually authenticate Joseph Lieberman’s comments. All criticism of Senator Lieberman by his critics essentially says that Lieberman is correct that the Iranians are killing American troops indirectly, but half-heartedly says the U.S. should still work on a diplomatic track. This is merely part of the brinkmanship towards mobilizing hostile feelings in the U.S. against Iran.

Meanwhile, in late-June of 2007, the main military spokesman for the Coalition in Anglo-American occupied Iraq, Brigadier-General Kevin Bergner, alleged that Iran is behind the mayhem in Iraq. “There absolutely is evidence of Iranian operatives holding weapons, training fighters, providing resources, helping plan operations, resourcing [*sic*] secret cells that is destabilizing Iraq,” claimed Brigadier-General Bergner without providing one piece of irrefutable evidence. [131] This has been the unremitting *modus operandi* of U.S. and British officials. The conviction is if you claim it frequently enough and say it frequently enough then the general public will start believing what you said as if it were a fact and that it can be used as one of the multiple pretexts for war with Iran.

### **Deepening Crises in the Levant: Palestine and Lebanon**

The defeat of the renegade Fatah gangs in Gaza by Hamas seems to have been the last resort of the Hamas government of reigning in the renegade elements of Fatah that have been deliberately trying to overthrow the Palestinian government through a coup. The fighting in Gaza was orchestrated by the U.S. and Israel, and U.N. documents confirm this, but Iran is being blamed as the instigator of the fighting in Gaza.

Rockets have also been fired into Israel, by an unknown group, under suspicious circumstances that looks like an intelligence operation that is meant to open the door for Israeli military operations into Lebanon, which could eventually spread into Syria. Syria and Iran are also being blamed for the rocket fire from Lebanon and the instability and internal divisions being created throughout Lebanon. According to *Reuters*, Javier Solana has also blamed Iran for the fighting in Gaza and the tensions in Lebanon in a show of unity with the U.S. and Israel. [132] Days later Cristina Gallach, the spokesperson for Javier Solana, denied the statements attributed to him by *Reuters*. [133]



In paradox to the accusations being charged against Iran and Syria in the Levant, the U.S. and E.U. are accusing Russia and China of arming and destabilizing Sudan in East Africa. [134] It is ironic that the Sudanese government itself is accusing the U.S. and E.U. of arming and training insurgents in Darfour and of attempting to destabilize Sudan in an endeavour to control Sudanese oil resources.

### **Lebanon: Shiite Muslims versus Sunni Muslims, Christians, and Druze?**

Israeli analysts have also warned that Lebanon could explode with civil war between the American-backed governing political parties and the opposition parties that are backed by Syria and Iran. [135] Israeli and U.S. analysts have also painted an utterly erroneous image that a Lebanese civil war would line up the Shiite Muslims against the Sunni Muslims, Christians, and Druze of Lebanon. This is an extension of the “Shiite Crescent” concept popularly mentioned by Arab dictators which stipulates that the Shiite Muslims are preparing to overrun the Middle East.

In reality the largest Christian political party in Lebanon, the Free Patriotic Movement, with the largest representation in the Lebanese Parliament has sided with Hezbollah since the Israeli attacks on Lebanon in 2006. Other Christian parties in Lebanon that have sided with Hezbollah include El Marada, the Skaff Bloc, and the Murr Bloc.

The Lebanese Islamic Front, a Sunni Muslim party, and several prominent Sunni Muslim figures have also sided with Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement. Substantial amounts of the Sunni Muslim population of Lebanon have sided with Hezbollah since the 2006 Israeli attacks. There is a realization on their part that there is a deliberate American-led effort to drive a wedge between the Lebanese.

The Lebanese Democratic Party, a Druze party, and Wiam Wahhab have also sided with Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement. Minor fighting has also broken out in Druze areas between Druze individuals who have sided with the American-backed political parties and the Lebanese opposition parties. [136]

The Lebanese Communist Party and several other political parties that include both Muslims and Christians have also sided with Hezbollah and the opposition parties. Amal, a Shiite Muslim political party, is also a strong Hezbollah ally. Together these groups compose the Lebanese National Opposition.

The Western-backed political parties that currently govern Lebanon are the Hariri-led Future Movement, which is Sunni Muslim, Samir Geagea’s Lebanese Forces, which is Christian, and Walid Jumblatt’s Progressive Socialist Party, which is Druze. They also have allies amongst the Shiite Muslims and several Christian groups, including the Kataeb Party. The Kataeb Party is better known as the Phalange, which with Israel was involved in the massacre of Palestinian refugees, including women and children, during the Lebanese Civil War.

### **Press Hearsay: Smoke in the Horizon of the Middle East War Theatre?**

All sorts of articles are sprouting on a daily basis reiterating the constant message and motif that Iran and Syria are the forces behind the ensuing chaos in the Middle East and Afghanistan. These articles are also laying out the case for war with Iran and Syria.

*Yedioth Ahronoth*, an Israeli news source, has maintain that an unnamed Syrian official has

threatened that if Israel does not end its occupation of Syrian territory in the time between August to September of 2007 that Syria will wage a massive war against Israel. [137]

*The Wall Street Journal*, a mouth piece for the thoughts and interests of the upper echelons of power in the U.S., has published several editorials about an upcoming war against Iran and Syria. Amongst them is Norman Podhoretz's piece, *The case for bombing Iran*, which seeks to further justify a war against the Iranians and their allies.

Joshua Muravchik has written that "Several conflicts of various intensities are raging in the Middle East. But a bigger war, involving more states— Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, the Palestinian Authority and perhaps the United States and others— is growing more likely every day, beckoned by the sense that America and Israel are in retreat and that radical Islam is ascending." [138] In reality what Joshua Muravchik terms as "radical Islam" is any form of opposition of the U.S. agenda in the Middle East, regardless of religious affinity. The rhetoric in the U.S. press fails to recognize that Syria is a secular nation that does not embrace any religious dogma. Contrarily it is the U.S. government that has always harnessed and cultivated deviant movements and radical religious groups for its foreign policy objectives— Christian, Muslim, and other. The Taliban, Osama bin Laden, and Fatah Al-Islam are just three cases.

### **The Winds of War are blowing from Tel Aviv: The Israeli-U.S. Joint Political Military Group**

A case for war against Iran and Syria has gradually been built much like Iraq, but through longer instalments of time and with the help of Israel. Israel may be the agent that sparks the next global conflict. Israel is a vessel of Anglo-American policy in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Israeli officials have been steadily intensifying their war calls against Syria and Iran.

The Iranian Ambassador to the U.N., in New York City, has made several official complaints for the record on the basis of international law in regards to Israeli threats to clandestinely attack Iran. Syrian officials have also complained about the continuous threats directed against Syria from Israeli officials. The Lebanese have also likewise made complaints to the U.N. about Israel and the continual Israeli violations of international law and Lebanese sovereignty.

Tel Aviv will have a central role in any future American-led military campaign in the Middle East. Iran has already warned that it will be from Israel that the next war in the Middle East will be launched and that it may start as an Israeli attack on the Palestinian Territories or Lebanon that could spread like fire throughout the region. [139]

*The Jerusalem Post* in an interview with Israeli Transportation Minister Shaul Mofaz, who is an Iranian Jew born in Shiraz, has acknowledged that it is being said in Israeli circles of power that 2008 will be the year that Iran will be attacked. [140] True enough, while the Transportation Minister was holding strategic talks in Washington D.C. a lightly worded ultimatum was made by him on behalf of the Israeli government and ruling establishment that U.N. sanctions have until the end of 2007 to work against Iran. [141]

This Israeli ultimatum also reflects the position of the White House. Condoleezza Rice and Nicholas Burns were present as part of the Israeli-U.S. Joint Political Military Group that has

been created to tackle the issues of Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinians.

### **The Hunting words of NATO's Supreme Commander: Does a Timeline really exist for War?**

All the timelines mentioned including the Israeli assertions that 2008 is the year for action against Iran should be taken into consideration. Israeli sources have also claimed Syria may attack Israel within August to September of 2007. The Israeli military has also claimed that if Iran wishes it will be able to produce nuclear weapons in 2009. Additionally, the date that the Busher Nuclear Power Plant is set to run should be taken into consideration. Iranian officials believe that Busher will be running by the end of 2007 or early-2008, while Russian officials have given several dates falling in 2008. It should also be noted that Russia's closest point with Iran will be militarily strengthened by 2008.

Also the timeline for Lebanese elections should also be kept in the back of ones mind as well. Lebanese presidential elections are supposed to occur in September, 2007 before Émile Lahoud's term ends in November of 2007. As a benchmark it should also be noted that the second presidential term of George W. Bush Jr. ends in January of 2009.

One important factor to add to this equation is the statements of General Wesley Clark, the former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO in Europe. In an interview General Clark frankly stated that the U.S. had planned on attacking Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Sudan, Libya, Somalia, and Iran in 2001 as part of a multi-phased military roadmap that would start in Afghanistan and Iraq and end with Iran. [142] All the listed nations have either been invaded or are the subject of covert intelligence operations or have surrendered. Iraq is under occupation; Libya has surrendered and has given major oil concessions to Anglo-American firms; Sudan is the subject of internal fighting; Lebanon has been attacked and is internally divided; Somalia has been invaded by both Ethiopian and American forces; war threats loom over Syria; and Iran is being threatened.

The five-year period that General Clark has talked about began with the invasion of Iraq in mid-2003 and, if he is correct, it should enter its closing stages in approximately mid-2008 or the last war could be initiated by this point in time ranging from approximately mid-2008 to 2009.

### **A Wrinkle in Time: Resistance Whisking in the East**

Only time will tell if there will be war or not. The passing of a war is not etched in stone and may not come to occur. The potentials for another global war, but only this time nuclear, are high. A war involving Iran has the high potential of spreading from the Middle East to other areas. By extension any war or Israeli attack against Syria will involve Iran because of the military pact between the two Middle Eastern republics.

What has been unfolding in East Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans, and Central Asia since the end of the Cold War is the positioning of the board for a global monopoly on resources and energy routes. NATO expansion, the encirclement of Russia and China, and the wars in the Middle East are linked and are part of a global project.

A showdown with Iran will decide the fate of the Middle East and its energy resources. Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Palestine, and of course both the Iranian nuclear energy program and the "Global War on Terror" will all be in the backdrop of a showdown between the U.S. and

Iran.

The leaders of Russia, China, and Central Asia have made it clear that an attack against Iran would jeopardize their security and is unacceptable. It is not accidental that officials from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) have gathered several times to discuss U.S. behaviour and that military officials of the SCO assembled in Kyrgyzstan during late-June of 2007, before an upcoming leaders summit that will include Iran, to entrench and strengthen the Eurasian bloc's military ties. [143]

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The US is turning up the heat on the countries of the Balkans and [E]astern Europe to secure war crimes immunity deals for Americans and exemptions from the year-old international criminal court.

(...)

The Bosnians signed reluctantly, feeling they had no choice. Former Yugoslavia is particularly central to the US campaign to exempt Americans from the scope of the ICC because there are US troops in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Washington is vehemently opposed to the permanent international criminal court, arguing that US soldiers, officials and citizens will be targeted for political reasons, an argument dismissed by the court's supporters, who point out that safeguards have been built into the rules governing the court's operations.

(...)

"While the United States rightly insists that the former Yugoslav republics must fully cooperate with the [Hague tribunal], it is turning the screws on the very same states not to cooperate with the ICC," said Human Rights Watch.

Croatia is sitting on the fence, refusing to accept what the prime minister [of Croatia], Ivica Racan, dubbed "an ultimatum," but still hoping to reach a compromise with the US. The American ambassador in Zagreb published a letter in the Zagreb press last week warning that Croatia would lose \$19m in US military aid if it did not capitulate by July 1.

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