

Who's Targeting Iran - and Why?

By [Gordon Prather](#)

Global Research, November 06, 2006

[Antiwar.com](#) 6 November 2006

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

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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

One of the more interesting revelations elicited by Seymour Hersh from Scott Ritter during their [public discussion](#) last month, sponsored by the New York Society for Ethical Culture, about the Bush-Cheney administration's not-so-secret plans to effect regime change in Iran, was the extent to which Ritter has been – and apparently still is – intimately associated with Israeli intelligence analysts.

According to Ritter, the involvement began during his service as a US Marine intelligence officer, assigned to the staff of General Norman Schwarzkopf, during our preparations for – and execution of – Operation Desert Storm.

The Iranians and the Iraqis had launched hundreds of Scud ballistic missiles against each other in the Iran-Iraq war, but Saddam Hussein was known to have some left. Ritter's job was to find out – using on-the-ground human intelligence and spy-satellite imagery – where those missiles were. Ritter soon concluded that the Israelis – who correctly feared Saddam might launch those missiles against them – had already done most of his job for him.

During his seven years of post-USMC service as Chief Weapons Inspector for the UN Special Commission on Iraq, Ritter says he continued to rely heavily on Israeli intelligence to do his job.

Furthermore, in response to prompting by Hersh, Ritter revealed that his latest book, [Target Iran: The Truth About the White House's Plans for Regime Change](#), was heavily informed by ongoing conversations with Israeli intelligence analysts.

So, when [Amy Goodman](#) – host and executive producer of Democracy Now! – was interviewing Ritter about “Target Iran,” she knew Ritter was the man to describe the similarities “between the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq [in 2003] and what's happening now with Iran,”

“The biggest similarity that we need to point out is that in both cases no evidence was put forward [by the White House] to sustain the allegations that are being made.

“Iraq was accused of having weapons of mass destruction programs, reconstituting chemical, biological, nuclear, long-range ballistic missile programs.

There was an [UN] inspection process in place that had access, full access to the facilities in question, and no data was derived from these inspections that backed up the Bush administration's allegations.

And yet, Iraq was told, it's not up to the inspectors to find the weapons. It's up to Iraq to prove they don't exist. Iraq had to prove a negative. And they couldn't.

We now know that in 1991, Saddam Hussein had destroyed the totality of his weapons programs. There weren't any left to find, discover. There was no threat."

(Ritter did not make in the Goodman interview the accusation he has made – and provided documentary evidence for – in the past. Namely, that from 1997 onwards, "we" – Clinton-Gore and Bush-Cheney – *did* know that Saddam had totally destroyed his "weapons of mass destruction" and his capability to produce such weapons, and had made no attempt to reconstruct that capability.)

"We now have Iran.

It's alleged [by the White House] to have a nuclear weapons program. And yet the International Atomic Energy Agency, the inspectors who have had full access to the sites in Iran, have come out and said, "Well, we can't say that there isn't a secret program that we don't know about. What we can say, as a direct result of our investigations, there is no data whatsoever to sustain the Bush administration's claims that there is a nuclear weapons program."

(Ritter revealed in the public discussion with Hersh that Israeli intelligence has *also* been unable – despite considerable use of on-the-ground human intelligence and analysis of spy-satellite images – to find any indication that Iran does have a secret nuclear program.)

"And yet, the Bush administration once again is putting the onus on Iran, saying, 'It's not up to the inspectors to find the nuclear weapons program. It's up to the Iranians to prove that one doesn't exist.'

Why do we go down this path?

Because you can't prove a negative!

There's nothing Iran can do that will satisfy the Bush administration, because the policy at the end of the day is not about nonproliferation, it's not about disarmament.

It's about regime change. And all the Bush administration wants to do is to create the conditions that support their ultimate objective of military intervention.

Read the 2006 version of the [National Security Strategy](#), where Iran is named sixteen times as the number one threat to the national security of the United States of America, because in the same document, it embraces the notion of pre-emptive wars of aggression as a legitimate means of dealing with such threats.

Look, Bush has already said that he doesn't want to leave Iran to the next president, that this is a problem he needs to solve now."

And why does Bush feel he needs to effect regime change in Iran? Because of pressure by the Likudniks, here and abroad.

"Israel has drawn a red line that says, not only will they not tolerate a nuclear weapons program in Iran, they will not tolerate anything dealing with nuclear energy, especially enrichment, that could be used in a nuclear program.

So, even if Iran is telling the truth - Iran says, 'We have no nuclear weapons program. We just want peaceful nuclear energy'- Israel says, 'So long as Iran has any enrichment capability, this constitutes a threat to Israel,' and they are pressuring the United States to take forceful action."

The *New York Times* has just published an exhaustive [pre-election poll](#) [.pdf]. Somewhat to the Grey Lady's surprise, the issue most on voters minds is not same-sex marriage; it's the ongoing war in Iraq, which most voters now believe was launched under false pretenses.

The voters are not much concerned about North Korea's nuclear weapons, indeed, do not consider North Korea a "threat."

But what do the voters think about Bush's upcoming preemptive attack against "the number one threat" to our national security?

The *New York Times* doesn't know. You see, there was no mention of Iran in their exhaustive pre-election poll.

The original source of this article is [Antiwar.com](#)
Copyright © [Gordon Prather](#), [Antiwar.com](#), 2006

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

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Gordon Prather](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca