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Counterpunch

Why the US & Israel May Agree to Bombing Iran

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The arguments for attacking Iran are crazy, like those for attacking Iraq in response to 9-11. But that does not mean such an attack by the American and/or the Israelis will not occur.

Indeed, I think the political pressure for such an attack is increasing. My reasons for saying this are as follows:

On 11 October, Patrick Seale wrote a very important essay, [Will Israel Bomb Iran](#). Seale described secret internal deliberations in the Israeli government over the twin questions of (1) how short a time window existed for Israel to launch a sneak attack on Iran and (2) how to suck in the United States into supporting such an attack, even if an Israeli attack was launched without US approval or if the US was kept in ignorance beforehand? Seale, who is extremely well connected and very knowledgeable on the Middle Eastern affairs, also reported the Americans knew of the Israeli discussions, and the idea of Israeli decision makers thinking their window of opportunity was closing was causing alarm in Washington.

Seale did not address the speculative question of whether or not Israel, motivated by the opportunities implicit in the US election cycle, was running a 'perception shaping' operation on the Obama Administration and/or Obama's opponents in the Republican party.

Also on 11 October, the US Attorney General Eric Holder held a spectacular press conference announcing the FBI had uncovered an Iranian plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States on US soil and to attack embassies of unnamed third countries. But the story was full of holes, and as I argued [here](#), it smacked of a botched sting operation or, even worse, a false

flag operation, perhaps by the Israelis or the Saudis. The story quickly lost its traction and vanished, but the impression was planted in a sound-byte-addicted popular psyche.

In November, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) released what Paul Pillar, a retired high-ranking CIA officer, characterized as a [yawner](#) of a report. The report vaguely described Iran's efforts to build a nuclear bomb, and it included an explosive claim that a former Soviet nuclear weapons scientist helped Iran construct a detonation trigger that could be used for a nuclear weapon. But, as the independent and enterprising investigative journalist Gareth Porter [reported](#) in CounterPunch, it turned out that this so-called foreign expert, who was not named in the [IAEA report](#), had *never* worked on nuclear weapons. He was identified as Vyacheslav Danilenko, a Ukrainian, who is one of the top specialists in the world in the production of nanodiamonds by explosives. This finding lead Porter to question whether the Israelis had provided the IAEA with false information. Nevertheless, despite Porter's industriousness, the IAEA's yawner had planted another subtle impression in the popular psyche, which like the aforementioned plot to kill the Saudi ambassador can be regurgitated repeatedly, when needed for stoking passion with the faux news cycle.

Now, in another important essay, [Feeble Pushback From the Prowar Crowd](#), Paul Pillar describes how, in early December, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta tried to inject a dose of reality into the irrational 'let's bomb Iran' debate at the pro-Israel Saban Center for Middle Eastern Policy [1]. Pillar describes in detail how Panetta thoroughly demolished the arguments for launching a preemptive attack on Iran with the aim of destroying Iran's nuclear weapons program, whatever that is. Of course, Panetta's dissection of this foolishness does not make for snappy soundbytes and is likely to disappear in the electronic ether.

Not surprisingly, Pillar ended his argument on a pessimistic note by saying the power of Panetta's analysis may not make a difference.

While Pillar did not say so explicitly, he implied the reason why Panetta's logic may not prevail is one Joseph Goebbels would have recognized instantly: The name of the game is to condition the public mind: By repeating an outrageous narrative loud enough and often enough, the pro-war faction may succeed in getting their war. That is because people will begin to absorb the false and misleading narrative into their subconscious Orientation (i.e., the filter through which they interpret their Observations of unfolding and often ambiguous and sometimes threatening circumstances), and when this subliminal shaping operation is successful, the desired Decisions and Actions will follow naturally and spontaneously, without coercion.

That is how you use what Hitler called 'good wholesome fear' to hijack popular OODA loops in the irrational electronic echo chamber of Amerika's irrational post-information culture [2].

Notes.

[1] The Saban Center was founded by the Haim Saban who has retained very close ties to Israel even though he has lived in the United States for the past thirty years. According to a 10 May

2010 [profile](#) in the *New Yorker*, Saban says his greatest concern is protect Israel by strengthening the US-Israeli relationship, and his strategy for achieving this is threefold: making large donations to political parties, establishing thinktanks, and controlling media outlets.

[2] The process, power, and effectiveness of ‘hijacking’ OODA loops is explained [here](#).