

# Escalating Threats of U.S. Attacks Against Iran

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⊕ The Bush administration is significantly ratcheting up its threats against Iran, in the context of arguing about a battle between “moderates” and “extremists” in the region.

⊕ U.S. efforts to control or undermine Iran are long-standing, and are rooted in Iran’s historic role as one of only two indigenous regional powers in the Middle East (with water, wealth and size) who can contend with U.S. domination there.

⊕ A U.S. (or U.S.-Israeli) strike on Iran, especially with the nuclear “bunker-buster” bombs being talked about, would be deadly for tens or hundreds of thousands of Iranians, and would be a preventive attack – in violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the UN Charter, and other parts of international law, as well as the U.S. Constitution.

⊕ Overheated U.S. rhetorical accusations against Iran are expanding earlier allegations about Iran’s alleged nuclear ambitions to claims (including show-and-tell but absent real evidence) that Iran is directly responsible for “killing American troops” in Iran. Current U.S. policy in Iraq calls for “dual escalations” – not only an escalation in troop numbers, but a geographic escalation, expanding from Iraq to Iran.

⊕ Beyond rhetoric, U.S. provocations include sending a second aircraft carrier group to the Persian Gulf, sending minesweepers to the Strait of Hormuz, arresting Iranian officials legally working in Iraq, openly backing the anti-Iranian Mujahideen el-Khalq (MEQ) guerrillas, appointing a naval flier as head of Central Command, continuing pressure in the United Nations to expand sanctions against Iran.

⊕ Iran is not a threat to the United States. It does not have a nuclear weapon and is not threatening to attack the U.S.; it is a signatory to the NPT and the UN’s nuclear watchdog agency has found no evidence of a nuclear weapons program; Iran’s nuclear power program, including enriching uranium, is legal under the NPT. As early as 2003 Iran had proposed a comprehensive “grand bargain” with the U.S., which the Bush administration has ignored. The February 2007 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) asserts that Iran’s involvement in Iraq “is not likely to be a major driver of violence” there.

⊕ The consequences of a U.S. attack on Iran will be dire. The evidence looks like a repeat of pre-Iraq

invasion lies, but “even if” Iran was closer to a nuclear weapon or had sent weapons into Iraq, there is no legal or moral justification for a preventive attack.

⊕ Israeli rhetoric against Iran is largely paralleling U.S. claims; unlike the run-up to the Iraq War, Israel and the pro-Israeli lobbies in the U.S. are pressing hard for an attack on Iran, and any Israeli involvement would significantly undercut Congressional opposition.

⊕ The U.S. efforts to force American-dependent Arab regimes to back a U.S. (or U.S.-Israeli) attack on Iran include imposing a “rising Shi’a threat” framework over regional events and renewing the appearance of Palestinian-Israeli peace talks.

⊕ The U.S. is more isolated now than at any time since the beginning of the 2003 Iraq War; no U.S. allies except Israel are supporting calls for a U.S. attack on Iran.

⊕ So what are the demands of the peace movement?

- No military attack on Iran
- A Congressional “Boland Amendment” for Iran to preempt any funding for any attack on Iran
- Diplomatic, not military engagement with Iran
- Maintain pressure against BOTH escalations of the Iraq War – the escalation of troops and the geographic escalation into Iran as central to our work against the Iraq War
- Build people-to-people ties between Americans and Iranians, including work with the Iranian community in the United States
- Support for a WMD-free or Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone throughout the Middle East

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These talking points are an excerpt of a larger article developed for **United for Peace and Justice**, by Phyllis Bennis, a fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies and the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam.

The full article can be found at [www.unitedforpeace.org](http://www.unitedforpeace.org)

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To find out how you can help stop the attack on Iran contact the **Canadian Peace Alliance** for petitions, sample letters to MP’s, protest plans, and further background info.

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