

But – with this administration – rationality has not exactly been a strong suit. Bush has placed himself in a neoconservative bubble that operates with its own false sense of reality. As psychiatrist Justin Frank noted in a July 27 memorandum updating his book, *Bush on the Couch*:

“We are left with a president who cannot actually govern, because he is incapable of reasoned thought in coping with events outside his control, like those in the Middle East.

“This makes it a monumental challenge—as urgent as it is difficult—not only to get him to stop the carnage in the Middle East, but also to prevent him from undertaking a new, perhaps even more disastrous adventure—like going to war with Iran, in order to embellish the image he so proudly created for himself after 9/11 as the commander in chief of ‘the first war of the 21st century.’”

*Ray McGovern is a 27-year veteran analyst of the CIA and co-founder of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS). He works with Tell the Word, the publishing arm of the ecumenical Church of the Saviour in Washington, DC. His e-mail is [RRMcGovern@aol.com](mailto:RRMcGovern@aol.com).*

**ACTION:** Tell President Bush and your Senators/Representative: “Don’t Attack Iran” <http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml>

Local contact:

**8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice**  
205 W. Monroe St.  
Chicago IL 60606-5062  
312-641-5151 [8thday@claret.org](mailto:8thday@claret.org)  
[www.8thdaycenter.org](http://www.8thdaycenter.org)



## Bush's New War Drums for Iran

Ray McGovern, 8/27/07

<http://www.consortiumnews.com/Print/2007/082107a.html>

It is as though I’m back as an analyst at the CIA, trying to estimate the chances of an attack on Iran. The putative attacker, though, happens to be our own president.

It is precisely the work we analysts used to do. And, while it is still a bit jarring to be turning our analytical tools on the U.S. leadership, it is by no means entirely new. For, of necessity, we Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS) have been doing that for almost six years now—ever since 9/11, when “everything changed.”

Of necessity? Yes, because, with very few exceptions, American journalists lose their jobs if they expose things like fraudulent wars.

The craft of CIA analysis was designed to be an all-source operation, meaning that we analysts were responsible—and held a c c c o u n t a b l e — f o r assimilating information from all sources and coming to judgments on what it all meant. We used information of all kinds, from the most sophisticated technical collection platforms to spies to open media.



Here I have to reveal a trade secret, which punctures the mystique of intelligence analysis. Generally speaking, **80 percent of the information one needs to form judgments on key intelligence targets or issues is available in open media.**

It helps to have training from past masters of media analysis, which began in a structured way in targeting Japanese and German media in the 1940s. But, truth be told, everyone with a high school education can do it. It is not rocket science.

This is not to denigrate the contribution of CIA operations officers, case officers running sensitive agents, for though small in percentage of the whole nine yards available to be analyzed, information from such sources can often make a crucial contribution.

Consider, for example, the daring recruitment in mid-2002 of Saddam Hussein’s foreign minister, Naji Sabri, who was “turned” into working for the CIA and quickly established his credibility. **Sabri told us there were no**

## **weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.**

My former colleagues, perhaps a bit naively, were quite sure this would come as a vast relief to President George W. Bush and his advisers. Instead, they were told that the White House had no further interest in reporting from Sabri; rather, that the issue was not really WMD, it was “regime change.”

*(Don't feel embarrassed if you did not know this; our corporate-owned, war-profiteering media has largely suppressed all this.)*

So our former colleague, operations officer par excellence Robert Baer, reports (in this week's Time) that, according to his sources, the Bush/Cheney administration is winding up for a strike on Iran, that Bush's plan to put Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on the terrorism list points in the direction of such a strike, and that delusional “neo-conservative” thinking that still guides White House policy concludes that such an attack would lead to the fall of the clerics and rise of a more friendly Iran.

Hold on, it gets even worse: Baer's sources tell him that administration officials are thinking that “as long as we have bombers and missiles in the air, we will hit Iran's nuclear facilities.”

VIPS member Phil Galdi, writing in The American Conservative, earlier noted that Karl Rove has served as a counterweight to Vice President Dick Cheney, determined as Cheney seems to be to expand the Middle East quagmire to Iran.

And former Pentagon analyst, retired Lt. Col. Karen Kwiatkowski, who worked shoulder-to-shoulder with the most rabid Pentagon neo-cons just before the attack on Iraq, has put into words (on LewRockwell.com) speculation several of us have been indulging in with respect to Rove's departure.

**In short, it seems a good bet that Rove, who is no one's dummy and would not want to have to “spin” an unnecessary war on Iran, lost the battle with Cheney over the merits of a military strike on Iran, and only then decided to spend more time with his family.**

Whatever else Rove has been, he has served as a counterweight to Dick Cheney's clear desire to expand the Middle East quagmire into Iran.

As for White House spokesperson **Tony Snow**, it seems equally possible that, before deciding he has to make more money, he **concluded that his stomach could not withstand the task explaining why Bush/Cheney needed to attack Iran.**

With the propaganda buildup we have seen so far, what seems most likely, at least initially, is an attack on Revolutionary Guard training facilities inside Iran, and that can be done with cruise missiles.

With some 20 targets already identified by anti-Iranian groups, there are enough assets already in place to do that job. But the while-we're-at-it neo-con logic referred to above may well be applied after, or even during, that kind of attack from the air.

## **Cheerleading in the MSM**

Yes, it is happening again.

The lead editorial in today's Washington Post regurgitates the unproven allegations that Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps is “supplying the weapons that are killing a growing number of American soldiers in Iraq;” that it is “waging war against the United States and trying to kill as many American soldiers as possible.”

Designating Iran a “specially designated global terrorist” organization, says the Post, “seems to be the least the United States should be doing, giving the soaring number of Iranian-sponsored bomb attacks in Iraq.”

It's as though Dick Cheney is again writing the Post editorials. And not only that, arch neo-con James Woolsey has just told Lou Dobbs that the U.S. may have no choice but to bomb Iran in order to halt its nuclear weapons program.

As Woolsey puts it, “I'm afraid within, well, at worst, a few months; at best, a few years; they could have the bomb.”

Woolsey, self-described “anchor of the Presbyterian wing of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs,” has long been way out in front plumbing for wars, like Iraq, that he and other neo-cons myopically see as being in Israel's, as well as America's, interest.

Within days of 9/11, Woolsey was arguing for war with Iraq even while conceding, at the time, that there was no evidence tying Iraq to 9/11.

**The latest is also rubbish. And Woolsey knows it. And so do the reporters for the Washington Post, who are aware of, but have been forbidden to tell, a highly interesting story.**

## **The NIE That Didn't Bark**

The National Intelligence Estimate on if and when Iran is likely to have the bomb has been ready since February. It has been sent back four times—no doubt because **its conclusions do not support what folks like Cheney and Woolsey are telling the president.**

The conclusions of the most recent NIE on the issue (early 2005) was that Iran could probably not have a nuclear weapon until “early to mid-next decade,” a formula memorized and restated by Director of National Intelligence Michael McConnell at his confirmation hearing in February.

One can safely assume that McConnell had been fully briefed on the first “final draft” of the new estimate, which has now been in limbo for half a year. It is a safe bet that the conclusions of the new draft resemble those of the 2005 estimate all too closely to suit Cheney.

It is a scandal that the congressional oversight committees have not been able to get hold of the new estimate, even in draft. For it is a safe bet it would give the lie to the claims of Cheney, Woolsey and other cheerleaders for war with Iran and provide powerful ammunition to those arguing for a more sensible approach to Iran.

**Despite the administration's war-like record, many Americans may still cling to the belief that attacking Iran won't happen because it would be crazy; that Bush is a lame-duck president who wouldn't dare undertake a new reckless adventure when the last one went so badly.**