

# Exposed: The British BAE Hand Behind The Drive for World War III This Year

by Jeffrey Steinberg and Michele Steinberg

In a move ripe with historic irony, Iranian Foreign Minister Manoucher Mottaki has commemorated American Independence Day celebrations, with a July 4 attack on Great Britain. Mottaki slammed the British House of Lords, for recently removing the Mujahideen e-Khalq Organization (MKO) from its official list of terrorist organizations.

“Any country moving officially in line with removal of the MKO from the terrorists’ list will from the viewpoint of Iran and Iranians be an accomplice in the terrorist acts taken by the grouplet,” he warned (according to the translation provided by the government of Iran), during a visit to the United Nations in New York City. “Surely, such a move is condemned, and we reserve the right to follow necessary procedures, and lodge complaint against the country supporting terrorism. The cowardly move of clearing the MKO’s name from the terrorists’ list started from Britain, and definitely such a cowardly effort will have no impact on our people’s attitude, and the nature and position of the terrorist group.”

Mottaki concluded: “The MKO will continue to be regarded as a terrorist group by survivors of the victims of its terrorist measures, and the Iranian nation. Terrorism can not be classified into good and bad today. Terrorism is terrorism, and is so condemned. Equal and indiscriminate approach should be shown against all of them.”

The British move to back the MKO came just days before the organization, which is also on the U.S. State Department list of international terrorist organizations, held a mass rally outside Paris, attended by 15 members of the British House of Commons and House of Lords, led by former Home Secretary David Waddington, Lord Corbett, and Baroness Gould. The British delegation also included Struan Stevenson, a Scottish member of the European Parliament, who co-chairs the Friends of a Free Iran Intergroup, and who is leading a drive to remove the MKO from the European Union’s list of terrorist groups. In his speech, Stevenson echoed the words of Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Likud Party chairman, Dick Cheney intimate, and leading proponent of preventive war against Iran; Netanyahu famously told an AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) event in Washington, “Today is 1938, and Ahmadinejad is Hitler.”

Stevenson told the Paris rally: “Ahmadinejad has repeatedly said that he wants to wipe Israel off the map. Now he is building the nuclear weapons which will enable him to do so.



*Iranian Foreign Minister Manoucher Mottaki blasted London’s role in fostering terrorism against his country.*

Ahmadinejad is the new Hitler. . . . I say to Europe’s Leaders: Forget appeasement. Back the Iranian people. Back the main opposition force, which embodies the only people capable of replacing the mullahs’ evil regime.”

A similar MKO rally near Paris in July 2007 was addressed by Daniel Pipes, one of the most lunatic of the American neoconservatives, demanding the military overthrow of the Iranian regime, through the backing of groups like the MKO. At that rally, a representative of Saudi Arabia’s national security chief and former Saudi ambassador in Washington, Prince Bandar bin-Sultan, delivered a check for nearly \$1 million to the MKO. The amount was symbolic, but the implications are profound.

## **Bandar and BAE**

Prince Bandar was the broker of the infamous “Al-Yamah” barter deal between London and Riyadh, under which the British defense conglomerate BAE Systems has provided an estimated \$80 billion in arms and defense services to the Saudi Kingdom since 1985, and which has provided the cover for creation of an offshore Anglo-Saudi covert operations

fund, estimated in the hundreds of billions of dollars. By Prince Bandar's own admission, the offshore fund has financed wars and covert insurgencies around the globe, including the 1980s Afghanistan War, out of which emerged al-Qaeda and a score of other "Afghansi" terrorist organizations, which have been the main source of asymmetric warfare from Africa, to South Asia, to the Far East.

Under the Al-Yamamah deal, BAE Systems provided Saudi Arabia with fighter jets, ground support, and training, and in return, received as much as 600,000 barrels of oil per day, for the last 23 years. Through arrangements with British Petroleum, Royal Dutch Shell, and the British Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO), the Saudi oil was sold on the international spot market, and BAE amassed a net profit of at least \$80-100 billion. According to U.S. Treasury Department officials, those funds were, in turn, invested in offshore funds in locations like the Cayman Islands and the Dutch Antilles, and have generated additional hundreds of billions of dollars in profit, over the last two decades.

The entire Al-Yamamah project is now under investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice, which is probing a reported \$2 billion in bribes, paid to Prince Bandar, while he was ambassador in Washington. Those funds passed through American banks, including the former Riggs National Bank, and are thus subject to investigation under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

According to senior U.S. intelligence officials, the case has been given high priority at the DOJ, because of persistent questions about whether some of the Al-Yamamah funds wound up in the hands of Saudi terrorists, who carried out the attacks on New York City and Washington, on Sept. 11, 2001.

### **Another Preventive War?**

Both the MKO and Al-Yamamah issues take on profound strategic significance today, because the war party factions in London, Washington, and Tel Aviv are driving for a preventive strike against Iran, before the Bush Administration leaves office next January.

Since the recent AIPAC convention in Washington this Spring, the propaganda offensive for preventive military strikes against Iran's nuclear facilities at Natanz, and an estimated 50 other locations inside the Islamic Republic, has reached a fever pitch.

In recent weeks, a parade of top U.S. military and intelligence officials, including Adm. Michael Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Adm. Michael McConnell, Director of National Intelligence, have traveled to Tel Aviv, to receive briefings from their Israeli counterparts, who claim to have proof that Iran is less than 18 months away from possessing a nuclear bomb.

Although such Israeli claims fly in the face of the most recent U.S. National Intelligence Estimate, which found that Iran halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003, pressure on

the United States is mounting to either attack Iran, or provide vital support to an Israeli attack on the Iranian sites.

In early June, Israel conducted maneuvers over the eastern Mediterranean, simulating an attack on Natanz. While the large-scale military exercise was formally aided by the Greek military, U.S. and European intelligence sources confirm that the British played a supporting role, through their large air base on Cyprus. Israel could not carry out any kind of attack on Iran, without the active support of neighboring countries, including from British and American military forces inside Iraq. Therefore, any attack on Iranian nuclear sites would likely trigger asymmetric retaliation, targeted at NATO, as well as Israel, and that would mean World War III.

### **LaRouche Issues a Warning**

The drums of war against Iran come at the same time that negotiations between the Islamic Republic and the so-called "P5-plus-1," over the status of Iran's nuclear enrichment program, are also reaching a critical moment. In May, Iran and the P5-plus-1 (the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council—the U.S., Britain, France, Russia, and China—plus Germany) exchanged proposals for comprehensive negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. Beginning on June 30, a series of statements were issued by senior Iranian officials, including Foreign Minister Mottaki, chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili, and the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Agency, Gholam Reza Aghazadeh, all indicating that Iran is prepared to make concessions and enter into serious negotiations.

Despite these positive signs, and wary that the British oligarchy is driving for preventive war, due to the onrushing collapse of the global financial system, Lyndon LaRouche issued a pointed warning, in a statement released by the LaRouche Political Action Committee on July 4, 2008. "Negotiations with sundry factions in Iran should be encouraged," LaRouche stated, "but it must never be assumed that one faction proffering an arrangement will be supported by other factions. Those who insist on 'now or never' agreements with the government of Iran are not only being foolish, but are playing into the hands of those who wish a doomsday confrontation with Iran prior to the November 2008 U.S. Presidential elections; and there are certain factions which are lunatic enough to desire such a confrontation."

While LaRouche certainly had in mind the "war party" faction inside the Bush White House, led by Vice President Dick Cheney, his main warning target is the present majority faction in Britain, which is driven to desperation by the onrushing global financial crash—and the danger that an "FDR policy" impulse will take charge in the United States, and follow LaRouche's call for a Four Powers alliance with Russia, China, and India, to not only avert an attack on Iran, but also to put the British oligarchy out of business, once and for all. And that means shutting down BAE's Al-Yamamah spigot, as a first step.