

COMMENT

Lies About Nukes

Why do Bush, Cheney and their associates lie—openly, unashamedly, and repeatedly? It is not because they were born habitual liars or they're simply 'lying politicians'. They do so because they represent a system that is compelled by its very workings to commit horrendous atrocities—and by its need to enlist the people in supporting (or accepting) those atrocities, even though they are against the most fundamental interests of the vast majority.

The drumbeat of lies, distortions, and half-truths was being used to push for harsher economic and political sanctions against Iran. Sanctions are not only an assault on ordinary Iranians, they can also be part of preparing for war by politically isolating and vilifying an opponent and building a coalition around US objectives. These charges had been continually repeated in order to prepare public opinion for a possible military attack against Iran that could put millions of lives at risk.

The US government's own intelligence agencies are now saying with "high confidence" that Iran suspended its nuclear weapons programme in 2003. The "finding" that the Iran had a nuclear weapons programme at all can hardly be taken at face value, given that it comes from the same "intelligence community" that produced the Iraqi "weapons of mass destruction" hoax. But, according to this latest National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), they have suspended the weapons programme and do not have their own capabilities to produce weapons grade nuclear fuel. This report also describes their capacity to produce civilian grade fuel (which is a much lower grade and a far simpler process) as still facing significant technical problems. This new assessment sharply contradicts a 2005 NIE report that claimed "with high confidence that Iran is currently determined to develop nuclear weapons" although Iran would be unable to do so until "early-to mid next decade," a timeframe that despite this pretty radical reassessment was reiterated in the new NIE report.

Ever since the infamous "Axis of Evil" speech, and with increased urgency since the invasion and occupation of Iraq—and the quagmire that led to—the Bush regime has been moving to isolate, squeeze, and prepare for possible war on Iran. US warships hover off the coast of Iran, a floating trip wire and provocation. The Bush administration has made a barrage of accusations that the Iranians are supplying weapons to forces attacking the US forces in Iraq. And the "nuclear weapons" lie has been put out as a justification of all this. Even when Iran has signaled at various points that it was willing to come to an accommodation with the US on the nuclear issue, the US has either dismissed Iran's offers or insisted on agreements it knew Iran could not accept.

The NIE report reveals that Bush has been lying about Iran's nuclear weapons programme in order to justify aggression, and even war under false pretenses. The fact that this report saw the light of day indicates a sense among some in the ruling class that there are grave dangers for them in Bush's push for regime change in Iran. The whole situation remains fraught with peril for the peoples of the region and the world. □□□

