

# British Hand Is Pushing Bush Into Iran War Trap

by Michele Steinberg and Jeffrey Steinberg

On Aug. 28, after George W. Bush delivered a speech to the American Legion where he raved about a “nuclear holocaust” coming from Iran, and vowed to continue—and even escalate—the war in Iraq, Lyndon LaRouche warned that British interests were goading the President into a suicidal flight-forward that would lead to a cataclysmic Hundred Years War. LaRouche said that the President is clearly in very bad psychological shape, and any British effort to encourage him to order strikes on Iran, based on deluded claims of American military capabilities that do not exist, is dangerous and perfidious. And, in the week since *EIR* published its story on Iran, “Is It Just Drumbeats We Hear, or Is It Actual War?” there has been a massive escalation in the propaganda push to justify war against Iran, and it is no accident that the leading voices are British.

LaRouche, on Aug. 29, denounced a British think-tank study which claimed that the United States can obliterate Iran’s nuclear program, defense infrastructure, and government, in a matter of hours, calling it “a filthy pack of lies,” aimed at inducing President George “My name is Legion” Bush into a flight-forward attack.

The 80-page paper, “Considering a war with Iran: A discussion paper on WMD in the Middle East,” was written by Daniel Plesch, director of the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy of the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London; and Martin Butcher, former director of the British American Security Information Council (BASIC).

The report has already come under harsh criticism from some U.S. military and intelligence specialists, who charge that it makes utopian assumptions about the effectiveness of air power, when the U.S. “shock and awe” bombing campaign did far less damage in Iraq than initially claimed. The critics, including former CIA and U.S. Army counter-terrorism spe-

cialist Larry Johnson, also charged that the report vastly underestimates Iran’s asymmetric retaliatory capabilities. Other U.S. military experts contacted by *EIR* agree with Johnson, and warn that the United States does not have the kind of capacity-in-depth claimed by the British authors, without diverting vital equipment from other theaters of operation, including Afghanistan.

The British report was first revealed on Aug. 28 on [www.rawstory.com](http://www.rawstory.com), which summarized the document: “The US has made military preparations to destroy Iran’s WMD, nuclear energy, regime, armed forces, state apparatus and economic infrastructure within days if not hours of President George W. Bush giving the order.” The Plesch-Butcher study claims that the U.S. has bombers and long-range missiles capable of destroying 10,000 targets in “a few hours.” They say that the United States, perhaps with the assistance of Great Britain and Israel, could turn Iran into a “failed state” without using nuclear weapons; however, the report warned that if some of Iran’s nuclear sites prove too hardened to knock out with conventional weapons, the “military logic and doctrine” may prompt “the use of nukes if all other means fail.” The authors focused special attention on Global Strike, the STRATCOM (Strategic Command) scheme for launching instantaneous missile and bomber attacks on targets all over the world. That capability, according to the authors, was in place as of December 2005.

This is not the only British hype. On Aug. 29, Jim Lobe, the Washington bureau chief for Inter Press Service, reported that, to justify war against Iran, the White House is “outsourcing” its intelligence. Lobe exposed a 32-page report, sponsored by the Institute for the Study of War and the *Weekly Standard* (owned by British imperial agent Sir Rupert Murdoch), released under the title, “Iran’s Proxy War Against the United States and the Government of Iraq.” The Murdoch-funded report says that the “surge” in Iraq is a success, and

“Iranian intervention is the next major problem” that the U.S. must “tackle” in Iraq.

The Institute for the Study of War is a mysterious outfit, writes Lobe, which reveals little about its founding, or financing. But, the author, Kimberly Kagan, is a known quantity—she is the wife of Fred Kagan, the American Enterprise Institute neo-con who came up with the “surge” plan for the White House to begin with. Mrs. Kagan, following in the footsteps of the AEI stable of liars who hoked up pre-war intelligence on Iraq, writes that, “The government of Iran has also exported rockets, sniper rifles and mortars to enemy groups in Iraq,” and she belittles the tripartite talks on security in Iraq, saying that this diplomacy has “coincided with a significant increase in Iranian support for violence in Iraq.”

But, it appears that the U.S. military is not buying the British propaganda designed to goad the United States into another war. An Aug. 31 report by McClatchy reporter Nancy A. Youssef makes clear that the top U.S. generals and Defense Secretary Robert Gates are distancing themselves from Bush’s policy to “stay the course” in Iraq. Rather than present him with one recommendation on Iraq, Gates, the Joint Chiefs, and other generals will each give him individual recommendations. “If there are differences, the President will hear them,” said Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell. Morrell also confessed that there *is no Petraeus report*, per se. Petraeus will give his “assessment” to the White House and Congress. But then, others, including, Gates, Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey, and Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Gen. Peter Pace (who both reportedly want to draw down troop levels in Iraq), will give their assessments to the White House.

Defense Intelligence Agency veteran Jeffrey White told McClatchy that this non-consensus is unprecedented, and it suggests that the military commanders want to be able to make clear that whatever course is followed is the decision of the President, and *not* the commanders.

### ‘My Name Is Legion’

LaRouche’s reference to Bush as “My name is Legion” is from the *New Testament* Gospel of Mark 5:1-10, which recounts Jesus’s encounter with a tormented man, who was beset by demons. LaRouche warned that, given Bush’s state of mind, one cannot rule out a wild assault on Iran. On Aug. 17, *EIR* published a psychiatric assessment of the President’s state of mind by Dr. Justin Frank, a noted George Washington University Medical Center professor, who authored the 2004 book *Bush on the Couch*. Dr. Frank warned of the President’s deteriorating mental state, and wrote of his concerns about a flight-forward order to bomb Iran.

LaRouche drew the parallel between the intensifying war hype against Iran, and Hitler’s behavior on the eve of the Nazi invasion of Poland. Such historical comparisons, LaRouche said, are harsh, but appropriate, and cannot be avoided, if war is to be prevented.

But the danger of war doesn’t stem only from the psycho-

drama in the White House. Rather, as LaRouche has explained, like a Classical tragedy, it is the entire global strategic situation that is rotten. One highly placed intelligence source in Southwest Asia told *EIR* that every serious thinker in the region believes that the U.S.A. will attack Iran—without justification. He sees the U.S. policy in Iraq coming unglued, and given the dangers, the main question he asks himself is, “Is this 1912, or 1914?” adding, “Nobody knows where the ‘Sarajevo’ will occur. It could be Jordan, or Lebanon, or Iraq.”

Meanwhile, one of the major concerns is that Congress, which must act now to stop the White House adventure, lacks the courage to do so.

On Aug. 26, on hearing of the proposals by some well-meaning members of Congress like Sen. John Warner (R-Va.), to ask Bush to consider a token reduction in troops immediately, LaRouche countered by insisting that the *only* successful course is the immediate withdrawal of all American military forces from Iraq.

LaRouche warned, “We now have a combination of a banking and housing crisis, which is only the front end of the biggest financial collapse in modern history. For anyone to talk about extending the war in Iraq, under these already unfolding conditions, is insane.” LaRouche elaborated, “We need an immediate withdrawal of all American forces from Iraq. It can and must be done, by effective diplomacy. We can create the kind of coalition of Iraq’s neighbors and other nations, by diplomacy, that would make the immediate withdrawal of American troops a stabilizing factor. Let us face the real problem, standing in the way of this only viable solution: The President of the United States is becoming more infantile by the day, and the Vice President of the United States is a criminal. Dick Cheney’s removal from office is therefore an immediate, urgent priority for the U.S. Congress and others.

“We must change the agenda of the U.S. government to address the biggest financial crisis in history. We must address the immediate housing crisis.... We must, therefore, disengage from the Iraq War. Start the process of getting the troops safely disengaged now.... By announcing the immediate withdrawal of American troops from Iraq, we can begin, today, to redeploy our forces, out of Baghdad and other combat zones, in preparation for their orderly withdrawal—as we work, diplomatically, with Russia, China, Europe, the neighboring countries, including Iran, Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan, the nations of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), and others. This can be done, immediately. Clearly, the complete withdrawal of American forces will take some time, but the policy must be set now....”

LaRouche noted that well-meaning baby steps by Congress are insufficient. “Some people are beginning to think that the Iraq War is part of our national heritage. That is the real tragedy; to keep the troops there—except for some perverse desire to please those among the British who wish to see the United States destroyed before Bush and Cheney leave office.”