

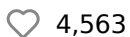
Why Attack Iran?

Our Authoritarianism and Our Corruption



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How do understand the war with Iran? We must get away from the propaganda and ask why this might be happening, in light of the facts that we do know.

These facts suggest two interpretive frameworks: a foreign war as a mechanism to destroy democracy at home; and a foreign war as an element of personal corruption by the president of the United States.

From the United States, the most plausible angle of view is domestic politics, not foreign policy. Wars are a tool of undermining and undoing democracies. Given that we have multiple examples of this from both modern and ancient democracy, and given the behavior of Trump and his allies in general, this must be an interpretive method for these attacks.

The relationship between foreign war and domestic authoritarianism can take two basic forms: 1) we must all rally because there is a war and everyone who oppose the war is a traitor; 2) we must hold elections under specific conditions favorable to the party in power. This is [utterly predictable](#) and should be easy to halt and indeed to reverse.

The American propaganda about our foreign policy motivations is impossible to believe as such. But it does lead us, indirectly, to the second possible interpretive framework: personal corruption.

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The claim that Iran was about to build a nuclear weapon [has not been established](#). It is all the odder as a justification for war given that this administration has already claimed many times to have destroyed the Iranian nuclear weapons program.

The second American propaganda point is that the regime must be changed. This too is very strange, since opposition to regime change wars was supposed to be a core tenet of MAGA.

But who might be directly interested in Iranian regime change? Who has given it more thought than Washington? Insofar as there was any sort of foreign policy involved here, I suspect that it was that of countries that the Trump administration considers to be its allies in the region.

The basic structural feature of regional politics is a rivalry between Iran on the one side and Gulf Arab states plus Israel on the other. Given that this structural feature is a far more durable element of politics than the wavering and contradictory statements of the Trump administration, it is a good place to start. And where does it lead?

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Gulf Arab states who oppose Iranian power have generated extremely generous packages of compensation for companies associated with Trump personally and with members of his family. The United Arab Emirates [invested](#) in a family firm. The [Saudis](#) have provided numerous de facto gifts. And sometimes the gifts have been simply gifts. The Qataris gave Trump a [jet](#). The [list](#) is very long.

And now — we are using military force to take the side of precisely the countries who have enriched Trump and his family. This backdrop must at the very least be stated in the reporting of the war. Along with the subversion of democracy, personal corruption provides a second interpretive framework.

None of this is a defense of the murderous regime in Teheran. The Iranian government has been engaged in the mass murder of peaceful protestors. The scale of that [slaughter](#) has not really sunk in. One can certainly imagine ways of addressing Iranian authoritarianism and corruption. We could combine a patient campaign of pressure and sanctions with support for the opposition and proposals to help address growing ecological problems such as the horrifying [lack of water](#) that stands behind much of political opposition in the country. Unfortunately, nothing like this is on offer, or could be on offer, from the Trump administration. All that it has to offer is its own authoritarianism and corruption.

A war is a time when we will be told not to ask questions. But a war is actually when questions must be asked. And they must be asked in light of what we already know. The presumption created by the surrounding evidence is that this war could very well be about (1) subverting US democracy, (2) enriching the president, or both. These are presumptions, not proof — but they provide the solid lines of inquiry as we learn more about the war.

War does not create a clean slate where suddenly we have to believe the absurd just because a leader says it. On the contrary, war provides the

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Freedom to Dream Freedom to Dream 1d ...

This is the point. It's not about principles or strategy, it's about the acceleration of Trump and his cronies use of government as leverage for financial gain.

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Derek Smith Derek's Chapbook 1d Edited ...

Come on mothers throughout the land
Pack your boys off to old Iran
Come on fathers, and don't hesitate
To send your sons off before it's too late
And you can be the first ones in your block
To have your boy come home in a box
And it's one, two, three
What are we fighting for?
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn
Next stop is old Iran

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- Apologies to Country Joe and the Fish - "I Feel Like I'm Fixin' to Die Rag" - 1965

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