
Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Tonkin? Trump warns Iran it will 'suffer greatly' if it does 'anything'

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Blame for the "sabotage operations" that damaged four oil tankers off the coast of the UAE has been placed at the feet of "Iran or Iran-backed proxies," courtesy of anonymous "US officials" breathlessly quoted by MSM.

Anonymous officials are an integral part of a good casus belli. Their deeds should be heroic enough that merely fact-checking their story reflects badly on the journalist attempting it. What kind of cynical reporter would question the bravery of "Curveball," the informant who spilled the beans about Saddam Hussein's *"mobile biological weapons laboratories,"* sealing the doom of a million Iraqis with the Weapons of Mass Destruction myth? Yet credulous reporters are once again repeating the conclusions of an anonymous official without asking how he arrived at them.

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With meters-wide holes in the side of each ship, there were no injuries or deaths – not even a drop of precious oil leaked from the tanker vessels "sabotaged" in the Persian Gulf. The nature of the "attack" dovetails with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's overly broad criteria for a "swift and decisive response." An attack by Iran "or its proxies" on "US interests or citizens" was all it would take to bring the wrath of Uncle Sam crashing down on Tehran, and here, as if on cue, Iran (or its proxies!) supposedly has blown a hole into the side of a ship destined to bring oil to the US.

If Iran were so rash as to risk such a conflict, they would probably seek to do some real damage. But such seemingly suicidal acts are a dime a dozen in the run-up to US wars. Syrian President Bashar Assad supposedly attacked his people with chemical weapons just days after then-US president Barack Obama announced his infamous "*red line*," warning Assad not to use chemical weapons lest he experience the full force of democracy, American style.

Israel's Mossad was reportedly the source of the tip that Iran was planning some kind of attack on the US in the first place – a vague yet "*credible threat*" that provided an ideal rationale to deploy the USS 'Abraham Lincoln' carrier group, a bomber task force, a battery of Patriot missiles, and potentially up to 120,000 troops to the CENTCOM region, even though the source themselves admitted the warning was "*unclear*."

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The media mouthpieces who sold Americans the wars in Libya, Syria, Iraq, and Yugoslavia don't seem to be putting too much effort into selling the idea of a war with Iran as a coherent narrative. Aside from Pompeo's constant repetitions of the '#1 sponsor of terror' canard, there is suspiciously little mythmaking going on – no babies being thrown from incubators, no Viagra-fueled rape brigades marching through Tehran. The media has been busy smearing Venezuela with stories that grown men and women are fighting each other for the last zoo animal to eat, and stealing gold fillings out of corpses, but the stories about Iran are positively half-baked.

Even the US president doesn't seem to know what's going on, other than that he's supposed to be rallying the troops. "*I'm hearing little stories about Iran. If they do anything, they will suffer greatly*," he told reporters.

Which is exactly the problem. How can they help but do "*anything*?" Meanwhile, by placing billions of dollars off Iranian waters and daring all comers to attack, knowing it will be blamed on Iran, the US has created a situation almost guaranteed to trigger war.