



## Iran

-- Find out the why and how of Iran's current involvement in the Iraqi conflict... --

### **BACKGROUND:**

The area of land covered by modern day Iran has seen a large share of conquerors, empires and rulers. Persia and Babylonia were unified into the Persian Empire by Cyrus the Great in 549 B.C. Though Alexander the Great conquered Persia about two hundred years later, Persia did regain its independence after Alexander's death. The Persian Sassanian Empire established in 226 A.D. was a formidable rival to the Roman Empire. It remained until Islam swept into the region in 641. The Mongols arrived in the early 1200s and their rule persisted until 1502. The Safavid dynasty ruled until 1736 but its end ushered in two hundred years of decline for Persia.

Britain and Russia began to assert control over Persia in the 19th century. The defacto situation was formalized in a 1907 agreement between the two powers that divided Persia into specified "spheres of influence." After the First World War, Persia was independent -- but in reality, the country was still treated as a protectorate of Britain.

By 1921, the Soviet Union had given up all claims to Persian territory. That year, a military dictatorship was established by Reza Khan -- who then declared himself, Reza Shah Pahlavi, the first of what was to be a hereditary monarchy in 1925. The country became Iran in 1935.

During the Second World War, the British (with an eye on Iran's oil) occupied the country and forced Reza Shah to abdicate. His son, Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, took his place. In the early 1950s, the Shah was briefly ousted but returned in 1953, with the support of the US and British. The Shah was pro-Western, pro-progress and anti-communist. He was also repressive to his

people and used the secret police to keep dissent buried. The Shah was exiled in 1979 after widespread violence erupted provoked by the religious fundamentalist elements in the country.

The new government, led by austere Ayatollah Khomeini, was Islamic and totalitarian: thousands were executed as the new regime established itself. Militants took over the US embassy in 1979, holding over sixty Americans hostage for over a year. In an attempt to end the Lebanese hostage crisis, U.S. officials, who believed that Iranian-backed operatives of Hezbollah were responsible for the kidnappings, devised a covert plan. Iran was desperately running out of military supplies in its war with Iraq, and Congress had banned the sale of American arms to countries that it said sponsored terrorism, which included Iran. U.S. President Ronald Reagan was advised that a bargain could be struck -- secret arms sales to Iran, hostages back to the U.S. The plan, when revealed to the public, was decried a failure and anathema to the U.S. policy of refusing to negotiate with terrorists.

In August 1985, the first consignment of arms -- 100 anti-tank missiles provided by Israel -- was sent to Iran. Hundreds more were sent the following month. Three hostages were released as a result of the arms-for-hostages deal. Since the funds from the arms sales to Iran were secretly, and illegally, funneled to the U.S.-backed Contras fighting to overthrow the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, the episode became known as the "Iran-Contra affair." It would amount to the biggest crisis in Ronald Reagan's presidency.

In 1980, war broke out between Iraq and Iran. It raged for most of the decade and cost the lives of at least a half-million people and probably closer to a million. In 1989, Khomeini died.

Though Iran was no friend of the West, it tacitly supported the Gulf War against Iraq (its old enemy) by observing UN sanctions against Iraq

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and by grounding Iraqi planes that landed in Iran seeking haven from Allied bombing raids. Though a relatively 'moderate' government came into power in 1997, Iran remained deep in the grip of Muslim fundamentalism.

Now, Iran is entering another era of political and social transformation. The victory of the liberals over the long-ruling conservative elite in parliamentary elections in April 2000 has signaled a sea-change. President Mohammad Khatami's support for greater social and political freedoms has made him popular with the young - an important factor in electoral terms as over 50% of the population is under the age of 25. His liberal ideas have, however, put him at odds with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamene'i, and hard-liners reluctant to lose sight of established Islamic traditions.

In his first State of the Union address, U.S. President George W. Bush called Iran, Iraq, and North Korea an "axis of evil." "Iran aggressively pursues these weapons [of mass destruction] and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom," Bush said. The speech outraged some in Iran, sparking protests. It was condemned both by the clerical establishment and the reformers.

### **STORY:**

The United States on Wednesday warned countries it has accused of pursuing weapons of mass destruction, including Iran, Syria and North Korea, to "draw the appropriate lesson from Iraq."



John R. Bolton, U.S. undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, also appealed to Syria and other countries in the Middle East to open themselves up to "new possibilities" for peace in the region.

The US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has denied that Syria and Iran are Washington's next targets, even though he gave a tough warning to Tehran and Damascus to stop supporting terrorism last week. His colleague, Defence

Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, went even further by accusing the two countries of interfering in the war in Iraq.

Powell's latest comments follow a statement by the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, saying that the Americans had no plans to attack Syria or Iran. The secretary of state said nobody in the American administration had talked about attacking Iran or Syria. He dismissed as nonsense speculation that these two countries were the next targets for the US after Iraq. And he reiterated the official US policy that both Iran and Syria posed a problem by supporting terrorism and developing weapons of mass destruction.

Powell pointed out that there were different ways of handling these problems. His comments were designed to allay fear in the Muslim world that Syria and Iran could be invaded after the overthrow of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

### **SIGNIFICANCE:**

**OPPOSING VIEW:** Soon - my guess is within a matter of weeks - the Battle of Iraq will be over. Battle, not war. The American defeat of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein can only be understood as an early engagement in a much broader war against the Islamic axis.

This war began in Afghanistan against Al Qaeda and the Taliban regime. Then it moved on to Iraq, in the same way World War II flowed to Italy from North Africa. But it won't end in Iraq. Baghdad isn't Berlin. The fall of Saddam won't be the end of armed Arab and Islamic fascism any more than the fall of Benito Mussolini brought the defeat of European fascism.

American forces will be sandwiched between two enemies. To the east, Iran, a charter member of the Axis of Evil. To the west, Syria, a new volunteer. Both will have to be defeated before this war is over.

On Monday, according to an official Syrian newspaper (there is no other kind), the regime of Bashar Assad raised its hand for next by announcing its decision "to stand by the Iraqi

people, who are facing an illegitimate and unjustified invasion."

Assad was pushed into this decision by the Bush doctrine of "for us or against us." Assad can't be for America because his Baathist colleagues would promptly cut off his head. And so he's against. That explains why Syria has recently opened its border to Saddamite recruits heading for the front and why it has been acting as a conduit for Iraqi military resupply.

Syria is an inviting target for the U.S. Taking down the Assad government would rid the Middle East of an aggressive, anti-American fascist regime and also end Syria's occupation of Lebanon. That, in turn, would enable American forces to go after Hezbollah camps in the Bekaa Valley, just as they went after Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. Not only would that weaken international terrorism, but the U.S. hasn't forgotten that it was Hezbollah that murdered 241 American Marines in Beirut in 1983.

On Monday, Secretary of State Powell took a step toward the Battle of Syria by warning that the Damascus government "bears the responsibility for its choices and for the consequences." The word "consequences" wasn't accidental. It also appears in UN Resolution 1441 as a euphemism for military action.

Still, Assad could get a temporary reprieve. If he does, it will be thanks to Iran. This week, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice publicly called attention to the advanced state of Tehran's nuclear weapons program. Undersecretary of State John Bolton underscored the point, categorizing the Iranian effort as "of equal import" to the N Korean armament push.

If Iran is really as far along as North Korea, there could be nukes in the hands of the ayatollahs within a matter of months - with hundreds of thousands of American and allied troops next door in Iraq. The US has been waiting for the Tehran theocracy to fall of its own internal unpopularity, but US planners can't exercise such patience with a soon-to-be-atomic Iran.

## *And the Pulitzer Prize Goes To...*

### **BACKGROUND:**

In the latter years of the 19th century, Joseph Pulitzer stood out as the very embodiment of American journalism. Hungarian-born, an intense indomitable figure, Pulitzer was the most skillful of newspaper publishers, a passionate crusader against dishonest government, a fierce, hawk-like competitor who did not shrink from sensationalism in circulation struggles, and a visionary who richly endowed his profession. His innovative *New York World* and *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reshaped newspaper journalism. Pulitzer was the first to call for the training of journalists at the university level in a school of journalism.

And certainly, the lasting influence of the Pulitzer Prizes on journalism, literature, music, and drama is to be attributed to his visionary acumen. In writing his 1904 will, which made provision for the establishment of the Pulitzer Prizes as an incentive to excellence, Pulitzer specified solely four awards in journalism, four in letters and drama, one for education, and four traveling scholarships. In letters, prizes were to go to an American novel, an original American play performed in New York, a book on the history of the United States, an American biography, and a history of public service by the press. Pulitzer made provision for broad changes in the awards.

He established an overseer advisory board and willed it "power in its discretion to suspend or to change any subject or subjects, substituting, however, others in their places, if in the judgment of the board such suspension, changes, or substitutions shall be conducive to the public good or rendered advisable by public necessities, or by reason of change of time." He also empowered the board to withhold any award where entries fell below its standards of excellence. It could also overrule the recommendations for awards made by

the juries subsequently set up in each of the categories. Since the inception of the prizes in 1917, the board, later renamed the Pulitzer Prize Board, has increased the number of awards to 21 and introduced poetry, music, and photography as subjects, while adhering to the spirit of the founder's will and its intent.

More than 2,000 entries are submitted each year in the Pulitzer Prize competitions, and only 21 awards are normally made. The awards are the culmination of a year-long process that begins early in the year with the appointment of 102 distinguished judges who serve on 20 separate juries and are asked to make three nominations in each of the 21 categories. By February 1, the Administrator's office in the Columbia School of Journalism has received the journalism entries. In early March, 77 editors, publishers, writers, and educators gather in the School of Journalism to judge the entries in each category. Both the jury nominations and the awards voted by the board are held in strict confidence until the announcement of the prizes, a week after the meeting.

The formal announcement of the prizes are made by the president of Columbia University. Pulitzer bestowed an endowment on Columbia of \$2,000,000 for the establishment of a School of Journalism, one-fourth of which was to be "applied to prizes or scholarships for the encouragement of public, service, public morals, literature, and the advancement of education."

### **STORY:**

(AP)"Master of the Senate," Robert Caro's epic third volume of his Lyndon Johnson series, won the Pulitzer Prize for biography Monday. The fiction prize went to Jeffrey Eugenides for "Middlesex," a story of sexual and ethnic identity.

Caro, too, has known both success and controversy. He won the Pulitzer in 1975 for "The Power Broker," an often devastating chronicle of the mighty municipal builder Robert Moses. He has spent the past quarter century investigating Johnson, to great acclaim, strong sales and considerable abuse. The first two books, "The Path to Power" and "Means of Ascent," each won a

National Book Critics Circle award, but also led some commentators and Johnson aides to accuse Caro of hating his subject and distorting his life. Caro has insisted that he considered Johnson a creature of both ambition and benevolence and "Master of the Senate" emphasized his legislative genius in getting Congress, in 1957, to pass the first civil rights bill of the 20th century.

The fiction prize for "Middlesex" almost surely marks a milestone in Pulitzer history: the first book so honored to be narrated by a hermaphrodite, loosely defined as someone with both male and female sexual organs. Calliope Helen Stephanides is born a girl. As a teenager, she begins growing a mustache and otherwise turning more than "a little bit freakish." Eugenides got the idea for "Middlesex" after reading a book by French philosopher Michel Foucault that contained a memoir by a 19th-century hermaphrodite. "She could hardly describe the experience. She wrote around it," he told The Associated Press in an interview last fall.

In the drama category, voters bypassed three-time Pulitzer winner Edward Albee, a finalist for "The Goat," and chose the little-known "Anna in the Tropics," by Nilo Cruz. In the play, a cigar factory owner's daughter has an affair with a lector, a man hired to read to the workers while they toil. One of the books he reads is Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina," and the novel soon mirrors the action on stage. The general nonfiction prize went to "A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide," by Samantha Power, who has already won the National Book Critics Circle award.

And the prize for music went to "On the Transmigration of Souls," by John Adams, which the New York Philharmonic premiered. Adams' work is a tribute to victims, survivors and heroes of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. One of America's most successful classical composers, he has a history of taking on difficult subjects, including President Nixon's trip to China and the 1985 killing of a handicapped American Jew by Palestinian guerrillas aboard the cruise ship Achille Lauro.

**THIS WEEK IN HISTORY:**

April 14, 1865

*Lincoln Shot!*

At Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C., John Wilkes Booth, an actor and Confederate sympathizer, fatally wounds President Abraham Lincoln. The attack came only five days after Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered his massive army at Appomattox, effectively ending the American Civil War.

Booth, who remained in the North during the war despite his Confederate sympathies, initially plotted to capture President Lincoln and take him to Richmond, the Confederate capital. However, on March 20, 1865, the day of the planned kidnapping, the president didn't appear where Booth and his six fellow conspirators lay in wait. Two weeks later, Richmond fell to Union forces. In April, with Confederate armies near collapse across the South, Booth hatched a desperate plan to save the Confederacy.



Learning that Lincoln was to attend Laura Keane's acclaimed performance in *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theater on April 14, Booth plotted the simultaneous assassination of Lincoln, Vice President Andrew Johnson, and Secretary of State William H. Seward. By murdering the president and two of his possible successors, Booth and his conspirators hoped to throw the U.S. government into a paralyzing disarray.

On the evening of April 14, conspirator Lewis T. Powell burst into Secretary of State Seward's home, seriously wounding him and three others, while George A. Atzerodt, assigned to Vice President Johnson, lost his nerve and fled. Meanwhile, just after 10 p.m., Booth entered Lincoln's private theater box unnoticed, and shot the president with a single bullet in the back of his head. Slashing an army officer who rushed at him,

Booth jumped to the stage and shouted "Sic semper tyrannis! [Thus always to tyrants]--the South is avenged!" Although Booth had broken his left leg jumping from Lincoln's box, he succeeded in escaping Washington.

The president, mortally wounded, was carried to a lodging house opposite Ford's Theater. About 7:22 a.m. the next morning, he died--the first U.S. president to be assassinated. Booth, pursued by the army and secret service forces, was finally cornered in a barn near Bowling Green, Virginia, and died from a possibly self-inflicted bullet wound as the barn was burned to the ground. Of the eight other persons eventually charged with the conspiracy, four were hanged and four were jailed. With Lincoln's death, the possibility of peace with magnanimity died.

**WHO YOU NEED TO KNOW:***Abraham Lincoln*

The son of a Kentucky frontiersman, Lincoln had to struggle for a living and for learning. Five months before receiving his party's nomination for President, he sketched his life: "I was born Feb. 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families--second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks.... My father ... removed from Kentucky to ... Indiana, in my eighth year.... It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up.... Of course when I came of age I did not know much. Still somehow, I could read, write, and cipher."

Lincoln made extraordinary efforts to attain knowledge while working on a farm, splitting rails for fences, and keeping store at New Salem, Illinois. He was a captain in the Black Hawk War, spent eight years in the Illinois legislature, and rode the circuit of courts for many years. His law partner said of him, "His ambition was a little engine that knew no rest."

He married Mary Todd, and they had four boys, only one of whom lived to maturity. In 1858 Lincoln ran against Stephen A. Douglas for Senator. He lost the election, but from the debates he gained a national reputation that won him the Republican nomination for President in 1860.

As President, he built the Republican Party into a strong national organization. Further, he rallied most of the northern Democrats to the Union cause. On January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation that declared forever free those slaves within the Confederacy.

Lincoln never let the world forget that the Civil War involved an even larger issue. This he stated most movingly in dedicating the military cemetery at Gettysburg: "that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain--that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom--and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Lincoln won re-election in 1864, as Union military triumphs heralded an end to the war. In his planning for peace, the President was flexible and generous, encouraging Southerners to lay down their arms and join speedily in reunion.

## ENTERTAINMENT:



## Seven Pillars of Wisdom

By, T E Lawrence

Those who enjoyed David Lean's magnificent "Lawrence of Arabia" and picked this book up wanting to gain a deeper insight into T E Lawrence will be sorely disappointed if they expected to see the film reflected clearly in the book. True, the main incidents in the film are there in the book, albeit in a totally different context: it is obvious how freely Robert Bolt (and hence Lean himself) adapted Lawrence's account to make the film hang together more dramatically.

Many of the previous reviewers have commented that the book is a rewarding if demanding read, that it doesn't really "get going" until about 100 pages in, and that the constant shifts of scene and entrances and exits of characters are sometimes difficult to follow. All that is true - a friend of mine advised that Lawrence is easier to read about than to read. But the choppy nature of the narrative was inevitable when one considers the type of warfare Lawrence describes: hit-and-run guerilla action undertaken by (often mutually antagonistic) Bedouin tribes. Just as Lawrence's raiding parties would emerge at unexpected places out of the desert, so the reader must be prepared for the text to jump from location to location, event to event, and much of the text (particularly the first 100 pages) to be devoted to how Lawrence managed to muster support both from the Arabs and from the British.

There is memorable imagery throughout the book - for example - Lawrence's descriptions of how he dug his camel out of the snow, the descriptions of the Bedouins' eating habits, the non-romantic description of life in the desert (defecating camels, infestations of lice and so on). As well as the fact that Lawrence is a tortured soul: he both loves and despises the Bedouin; professes that he knew from the start that the British (and therefore he himself) were using the Arabs against the Turks and would not honor their promises after the War; is both proud (particularly of Allenby) and ashamed of the British; and is both spiritually and physically attracted to the Bedouin men, yet embarrassed by this.

It helps to have even a superficial knowledge of the Middle East campaigns in World War One: the danger of not having that overview is that one would tend to think that Lawrence's campaign was the pivotal factor in those campaigns rather than a contributory one (Allenby's campaigns are referred to only obliquely by Lawrence, even though in the later stages of the book he does emphasize the supportive role he was playing).

**FEATURE:**

# Civil War: The Road to War

## Part I

It began on April 12, 1861, when Confederate General P. G. T. Beauregard opened fire on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina, and lasted until May 26, 1865, when the last Confederate army surrendered. The war took more than 600,000 lives, destroyed property valued at \$5 billion, brought freedom to 4 million black slaves, and opened wounds that have not yet completely healed more than 125 years later.

The chief and immediate cause of the war was slavery. Southern states, including the 11 states that formed the Confederacy, depended on slavery to support their economy. Southerners used slave labor to produce crops, especially cotton. Although slavery was illegal in the Northern states, only a small proportion of Northerners actively opposed it. The main debate between the North and the South on the eve of the war was whether slavery should be permitted in the Western territories recently acquired during the Mexican War (1846-1848), including New Mexico, part of California, and Utah. Opponents of slavery were concerned about its expansion, they did not want to compete against slave labor.

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FACTORS:** By 1860, the North and the South had developed into two very different regions. Divergent social, economic, and political points of view, dating from colonial times, gradually drove the two sections farther and farther apart. Each tried to impose its point of view on the country as a whole. Although compromises had kept the Union together for many years, in 1860 the situation was explosive. The election of Abraham Lincoln as president was viewed by the South as a threat to slavery and ignited the war.

During the early 1800's, economic differences between the regions also increased. By 1860 cotton was the chief crop of the South, and it represented 57 % of all U.S. exports. The value of cotton, known as King Cotton, completed the South's dependence on the plantation system and its essential component, slavery.

The North was by then firmly established as an industrial society. Labor was needed, but not slave labor. Immigration was encouraged. Immigrants from Europe worked in factories, built the railroads of the North, and settled the West. Very few settled in the South.

The South, resisting industrialization, manufactured little. Almost all manufactured goods had to be imported. Southerners therefore opposed high tariffs, or taxes that were placed on imported goods and increased the price of manufactured articles. The manufacturing economy of the North, on the other hand, demanded high tariffs to protect its own products from cheap foreign competition.

Before the Civil War, the federal government's chief source of revenue was the tariff (neither personal nor corporate income taxes existed). The tariff paid for most improvements made by the federal government, such as roads, turnpikes, and canals. To keep tariffs low, the South preferred to do without these improvements.

The expanding Northwest Territory, which was made up of the present-day states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and part of Minnesota, was far from the markets for its grain and cattle. It needed such internal improvements for survival, and so supported the Northeast's demands for high tariffs. In return, the Northeast supported most federally financed improvements in the Northwest Territory.

As a result, although both the South and the West were agricultural, the West allied itself with the Northern, rather than the Southern, point of view. Economic needs sharpened sectional differences, adding to the interregional hostility.

*Look for more information in upcoming issues.*

*Quote of the Week:*

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you.... You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it.

-Abe Lincoln

*Fact of the Week:*

John Wilkes Booth broke his leg during his escape after shooting Abraham Lincoln.

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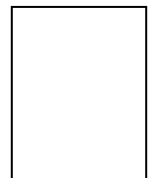
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