

THE FIRST FOURTH GENERATION WORLD WAR

Steve Soto posts an email exchange with Sam Gardiner that strongly supports a point I've been making.

A major piece of what I was being told was shocking. Iran and Syria were involved in the planning for the hostage takings. I was even told where and when their planning meeting took place. An individual with former connections to the CIA told me the current situation is all about the Iranian nuclear program. I was skeptical of that explanation until I heard Zalmay Khalilzad, the US Ambassador to Iraq, on CNN late in the day. He said, "It is about the Iranian nuclear program."

In other words, Iran did not wait for the US preemptive strike. It conducted its own.

To understand why I think Iran actually gains by this, I need to make clear how I suspect Iran's leaders calculated their risk and reward. Many have assumed that Iran's cost-benefit analysis weighed status quo in the Middle East and the prospect of a deal at the UN, versus implication in a regional war with Israel. If the Iranians had believed this to be the case, they would never have intervened in this confrontation (and understand, I am convinced they pre-empted an Egyptian cease fire; other claims are tough to measure because of the politics involved). I strongly suspect the Iranian cost-benefit analysis weighed certain war against the US on the US' terms versus war not on the US' terms.