

TO THE PHONES: STOP THE GULF OF TONKIN, IRAN EDITION

[NB: Check the byline, thanks. /~Rayne]

Some crazy bullshit happened last evening, probably while our fearless Agent Orange Chaos was under the influence of anti-anxiety medication/two scoops/Hannity's fluffery:

President Trump approved military strikes against Iran in retaliation for downing an American surveillance drone, but pulled back from launching them on Thursday night after a day of escalating tensions <https://t.co/Icup7tUDl9>

– NYT At War (@NYTimesAtWar) [June 21, 2019](#)

This is like a half-assed [Gulf of Tonkin event](#), a deliberately staged precursor to war. The Gulf of Tonkin was the rationale for the Vietnam War which resulted in 58,318 dead and 303,644 wounded U.S. military personnel and nearly 4,000,000 total dead, along with billions in defense expenditures.

It's not like we haven't seen other similar bullshit lies leading us into war, and some of the key lies propelled by the same news outlet quoted above, written by NYT's Judith Miller. NYT has clearly prepped itself for more of the same – just look at the specialty Twitter account it set up called "NYTimesAtWar."

We're being dragged into a wholly unnecessary war because other non-US factions want to use our military for their ends. We have total shit for soft power right now because Trump doesn't believe in diplomacy unless he's conducting it with some other Big Authoritarian Man^[™]. He will definitely trash anything the previous administration negotiated as part of the JCPOA (read: something a black man did). Trump's also

pliable depending on when he's approached and by whom – like this propaganda by Fox News yesterday catching him first thing in the morning when he watches television, conditioning his responses for the day:

This is what Donald Trump saw on Fox and Friends this morning. If it does not concern you, it should.

pic.twitter.com/gg445ncTr9

– Renato Mariotti (@renato_mariotti)
[June 20, 2019](#)

And again today, after the attack last night was canceled, Fox News is again beating the drum for war and tacitly questioning Trump's manhood:

Brian Kilmeade: "They blow up 4 tankers and we do nothing. When they blow up our drone that costs \$130 million and we do nothing. We know it's not going to end there. So at some point, in the Middle East, no action looks like weakness, and weakness begets more attacks."

pic.twitter.com/fl6kLVnLe0

– Bobby Lewis (@revrrlewis) [June 21, 2019](#)

Who else was working on Trump's head all day yesterday, pushing this bullshit narrative based on manufactured evidence?

Thankfully the House has [finally voted this Wednesday to end the 2001 Authorization to Use Military Force](#) (AUMF) which has been used to support all manner of military action against real and claimed terrorist threats:

The House of Representatives voted today to repeal the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF). Presidents have used the AUMF to justify never-ending wars that lack Congressional approval.

This is the first time in nearly 18

years that a chamber of Congress has repealed this law. The measure, sponsored by Rep. Barbara Lee (CA), was included in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act (H.R. 2968). Designed to take effect eight months after being signed, Congress would need to pass a new AUMF or the administration would need to remove military personnel from current conflicts during that time.

Prescient timing, or no? Whatever the case, if factions within the Trump administration were going to rely on the 2001 AUMF to execute their attacks on Iran, the support is gone in the House.

This is where YOU come in. The Senate hasn't voted on the Defense Appropriations Act including the rescindment of the 2001 AUMF; it could be stalled once again on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's desk. Stalled or not, the Senate needs to hear from its constituents about this absurd run up to war – denounce this incompetent attempt at launching war without adequate Congressional approval and ask for an investigation into whatever happened last evening to launch an attack without a legitimate AUMF and then reversed the attack mid-flight. This behavior is irrational and only more likely to trigger events the American people have no desire to see happen.

If you need another briefing and a script for making your calls to your senators, visit @Celeste_pewter's [TinyLetter page](#).

Congressional switchboard: (202) 224-3121

Do call your House reps and praise them if they supported the rescindment and admonish them if they didn't. They need to know constituents are paying close attention.

The really scary/aggravating part of last night's near-miss was that fossil fuel corporations can't be happy about this. If they aren't happy and they weren't consulted, who's

running our foreign policy besides [a guy responsible in no small part for hundreds of thousands of unnecessary deaths in the Iraq War](#) and another [Christianist doofus too stupid to realize he's being used as a pawn](#) by other non-Christian geopolitical forces?

This is an open thread.