

We have often noted here the special role that New York Times reporter Michael Gordon plays in the national media. For years, he has served as a key conduit for government propaganda aimed at fomenting military aggression, then justifying it once it has begun. In many ways, he has probably been a far more effective tool of the militarists than the Fox News network.

But nonetheless, with Gordon's help, the narrative of the surge's "success" marches on. An anti-American cleric grants government troops permission to enter areas controlled by his militia – and this is ballyhooed as a triumph. Meanwhile, Gordon does not neglect his drumbeating duties in the push for war with Iran: the story is laced with unqualified references to mysterious "Iranian-backed militias" which, we're told, skulked away from Sadr City when al-Maliki flexed his muscles. Readers of the New York Times – and those disseminators of its conventional wisdom further down the media food chain – cannot be allowed to forget that Iraq is seething with perfidious Persia's evil agents, killing Americans in cold blood. Gordon actually shows some restraint in not ending every article with a stirring cry of "Furthermore, Iran delenda est!"

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