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## Israel-Iran War Would Quickly Spread

By Jason Ditz

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Much of the talk of an Israeli attack on Iran makes it sound like a push-button operation. The Israeli government sends word, a few warplanes fly to Iran and bomb a few remote locations, and the whole thing blows over. This is, after all, what essentially happened in 1981 when Israel attacked the Osirak nuclear reactor in Iraq.

Yet an attack on Iran, if indeed it happens, is a much bigger matter, potentially involving weeks of bombings by Israel and inevitable retaliation by an Iranian government that has been preparing for decades.

The war would not be limited to Israel and Iran, but would have enormous global repercussions. President Obama has already conceded that, even if he prefers "diplomacy," he intends to commit the US "in lockstep" to whatever Israel decides.

This is part of the Israeli strategy. Israeli Vice Premier Moshe Ya'alon has urged the world to think of it as "Iran versus the West, the United States, Europe and so on." There is little doubt, however broad Iran's retaliation might be, that it would be Israel firing the first shot in this war.

Europe's role in any such war would seem to be entirely involuntary. Many predict that the ensuing oil price spike would bring the entire Eurozone into recession, probably drive Greece and Italy into default, and likely cripple the Euro as a viable currency.

Turkey appears to fear the consequences as well, saying such a war would "be a disaster." And Iraq, a close Iranian ally, would probably get the worst of it, experiencing virtually instant bankruptcy, many predict.

On the other hand, the Pakistani government is said to feel obliged to support Iran in its retaliation if war breaks out. Since US involvement on Israel's side is already a foregone conclusion, it would also likely mean an American war with Pakistan. Given China's close ties with Pakistan, this could rapidly extend the tensions east.