



IRAN TODAY & TOMORROW

WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN

The Committee in Support of Referendum in Iran (CSRI), a 501(c)(3), non-profit and independent group, is committed to advance change in Iran through an internationally monitored referendum as the only peaceful means to bring democracy and establish a secular and representative government in Iran.

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Nuclear proliferation

Iran Said to Smuggle Material for Warheads

A regime opponent in exile says Tehran is buying a ceramic with weapons applications. Timing of allegations before talks questioned.

Los Angeles Times *The LA Times* May 21 By Tyler Marshall and Sonni Efron
Times Staff Writers WASHINGTON —

Iran is smuggling a highly sensitive material that could be used to encase a nuclear warhead atop a missile, a prominent Iranian exile claimed Friday. Alireza Jafarzadeh, who helped spotlight previously unknown uranium enrichment sites in Iran nearly three years ago, said a source within the government provided evidence to him that Tehran's Defense Ministry "has in the past and continues to smuggle" the material into the country. The substance is a composite graphite material known as CMC, or ceramic matrix composite. Several nuclear materials experts emphasized Friday that although CMC is ideal for use on missiles with nuclear warheads, it also has roles unrelated to missiles. Some also questioned the timing of the allegations, with crucial talks between Iran and European diplomats about its nuclear program planned for next week in Paris. Jafarzadeh, who operates a Washington consulting firm, said in a telephone interview that the material was an essential part of an Iranian government drive to develop a nuclear weapon. He also said Iran had managed to produce small quantities of CMC domestically and allocated \$450 million last year to a program that could eventually make large amounts. There was no immediate response from the regime in Tehran, which insists that it is running a nuclear program for civilian energy purposes. The Iranian mission to the United Nations in New York did not return a telephone call seeking comment. The graphite material's characteristics — it's heat-resistant, lightweight and very strong — make it ideal for protecting a missile's payload during the re-entry phase of its flight, according to Gary Milhollin, director of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control. It also can be used for unrelated purposes, he said. International trading of CMC for use in nuclear weapons is banned under a voluntary agreement involving more than 30 nations that is known as the Missile Technology Control Regime. Ceramic heat shields are listed in the agreement as an item of the "greatest sensitivity." Opponents of Iran's government have made repeated allegations aimed mainly at exposing what they say is Tehran's determination to build a nuclear weapon. Although their initial claims were verified by the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency and led to an international effort to halt Iran's nuclear program, some recent charges made by regime opponents have proved false. The timing of the current claims led some arms control specialists and regional experts to view them with caution. "This timing is certainly no accident," said Cliff Kupchan, a Middle East expert at the Eurasia Group in Washington. "It seems to me to be a rather transparent attempt either to detonate or complicate next week's talks, on which the future of diplomacy could ride. "It's incumbent on the Iranians to refute these charges or demonstrate that the goal of these programs is not to develop a nuclear warhead," he said. Sig Hecker, a former director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, said in a telephone interview Friday that even if the claims that Iran had imported CMC were true, it would not necessarily mean the material was

intended for use in delivering a nuclear weapon. Ceramic matrix composites are often used in conventional weapons and armor, said Hecker, a leading metallurgist who has helped evaluate North Korea's nuclear capability. Although much of the recent international attention on Iran has focused on its nuclear program, the regime has worked to develop missiles that are, at least in theory, capable of delivering a nuclear weapon. The Shahab-3 medium-range missile, derived from a North Korean design, has a range of just less than 1,000 miles. In comments in November that raised eyebrows, then-Secretary of State Colin L. Powell said the U.S. had information that the Iranians "were working actively" on missile systems. "You don't have a weapon until you can put it in something that can deliver a weapon," Powell said at the time. "We are talking about information that says they not only have missiles but information that suggests they are working hard about how to put the two together." Milhollin said Friday that the characteristics of Iran's Shahab-3 missile make it better suited for delivering a nuclear payload than chemical, biological or conventional weapons. "CMC would better enable Iran to deliver a nuclear warhead over long distances," he said. He emphasized that CMC was not itself a nuclear material and Iran was not obligated to report its possession to the International Atomic Energy Agency. It "would likely have to be smuggled into Iran because no reputable manufacturer would fulfill such an order" from Tehran, he said. Richard H. Speier, a missile technology expert who helped negotiate the Missile Technology Control Regime, called allegations of Iran smuggling CMC "plausible." "They've been smuggling in all sorts of stuff for these programs," Speier said. "Virtually none of these proliferator countries can go it alone." Speier added that the importing of CMC to Iran could pose a serious proliferation threat. Jafarzadeh said Tehran had purchased an undetermined amount of CMC from countries that have mastered the technology to manufacture the material. The shipping was often organized through Iranian front companies located in third countries, he said. One of the companies he identified, Iranian-owned Gulf Resources Development Corp., located in the Jebel Ali free-trade zone of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, is on a U.S. watch list for possible illegal trading. Jafarzadeh said front companies were used mainly to purchase the CMC, much of which came from China. He said, however, that Chinese authorities had banned shipment in some cases when it was discovered that Iran was to be the final destination. "There were shipments stopped in the past two months," Jafarzadeh said. According to the Wisconsin Project's Risk Report, a database of suspect activities and sensitive equipment used for export control, CMC is also produced in France, Germany, India, Israel, Russia, Britain and the United States.

U.K. calls Iran's atom activities 'serious'

The New York Times [The New York Times, May 17](#) - Britain, one of the three European Union countries negotiating with Iran over its nuclear capability, has concluded that Iran is "quite serious" in threats to resume uranium enrichment activities that would trigger punitive international countermeasures, a senior British official said Monday. The British calculation was made public in advance of key meetings that could shape events leading to United Nations Security Council sanctions if Iran restarts nuclear activities suspended since November, as it is threatening to... "The Iranians are coming to terms with the fact that we are serious, we are genuine when we say that what we want is for them not to have an enrichment capability, not to pursue enrichment in Iran," the official said. At the same time, however, the official said, Iranian negotiators "are coming under more pressure to produce a solution," partly because of domestic political developments in Iran.

US again threatens to take Iran to UN Security Council

 [AFP, May 16, Washington](#) - The United States continued on Monday to threaten to refer Iran's nuclear program to the UN Security Council while expressing its support for talks between Tehran and European powers. "One of the options is definitely to go to the Security Council," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher. "That's something that, I'll remind you, we've supported all along and we haven't changed our position." However, he pointed out that Washington supported efforts by France, Germany and Britain aimed at securing guarantees that the Iranian nuclear program was not used to produce nuclear weapons. "We think it's time for the Iranians to come to terms and to comply with their desire," Boucher said. "We think it's time for the Iranians to demonstrate to the world that they're not going to develop nuclear weapons and to do so with objective guarantees, as the Europeans say."

Human rights abuse

Canada to limit Iran diplomatic contact



Associated Press, May 17, Ottawa - Canada will further limit diplomatic contact with Iran to back demands for justice in the death of a Canadian photojournalist, the Foreign Affairs Minister announced Tuesday. Canada won't recall its ambassador to Iran as they have done previously, but will limit contact between the two governments to three subjects, "the (Zahra) Kazemi case, Iran's human rights record and Iran's nuclear non-proliferation performance," said Pierre Pettigrew. Canada is campaigning to determine the cause of death of Kazemi, who died in 2003, several days after being arrested for taking photos of a demonstration outside a Tehran prison... Foreign Affairs Minister Pierre Pettigrew says the 54-year-old Kazemi was murdered. "We have decided to constrain our bilateral relations with Iran until Iranian authorities are prepared to deal with this affair in a serious and credible manner," Pettigrew said... Pettigrew told a government hearing that an Iranian appeals court heard submissions Monday from Kazemi family lawyers asking for a new investigation into the death. The court adjourned abruptly with no word on when the case might resume. "Yesterday's events illustrate once again that the Iranian justice system has neither the capacity nor the will to confront the perpetrators of the brutal murder of Zahra Kazemi," Pettigrew said. "Canada will not accept justice being denied."

Zahra Kazemi supporters protest in Toronto

Canadian Press, May 16, Toronto - About 60 Iranian-Canadians staged a raucous rally outside a downtown courthouse Monday to protest the Iranian government's handling of the case of slain Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi. Waving Iranian flags and holding Kazemi's cardboard portrait, the group gathered in front of Toronto's Old City Hall to protest the Iranian government and its perceived role in the death of Kazemi, who died two years ago while in Iranian custody. For nearly two hours, the protesters chanted, "Democracy, yes, mullahs no," and, "Down with Khatami" as they called for the ouster of Iran's president, Mohammad Khatami. "We want to raise awareness internationally for the people to know what women in Iran are going through," said Shanaz Fallah, director of the International Coalition of Women Against Fundamentalism.

Iranian Election

Offering a glimpse of public feeling, internal power struggle

Gulf news, May 18 - Within the next few days, Iran's ruling mullahs will decide whom to allow standing in next month's presidential election. Observers in Tehran believe that of the 400 or so hopefuls who registered to become candidates last week, only half a dozen may get official approval. The official candidates' list is established by the Council of the Guardians of the Constitution, a 12-man clerical body appointed by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei... The Iranian election is, nevertheless, important for at least two reasons. The first is that it offers the people an opportunity to give some indication of their feelings. One obvious way is boycotting the exercise. And this is what most opposition groups are aiming at... The second reason why the exercise is important is that it allows the public a glimpse of the power struggle among factions within the regime.... One question that Khamenei faces is whether the next president should be another mullah or one of his non-clerical advisers... Hat or turban or military cap, one thing is certain: Whoever wins the presidency next month will be in the camp of the hard-liners. The Islamic Republic has decided that this is not the time to risk any political reform.

With polling a month away, Tehran's conservative bazaar rejects whole system

The Guardian, May 17 - On the face of it, the bazaar should be friendly territory for Mr Rafsanjani, a mid-ranking cleric who was among the original revolutionary cadre that brought the Islamic regime to power in 1979. A sprawling city within a city in Tehran's rundown

southern quarters - far from the liberal attitudes of the affluent northern suburbs - its wealthy traders have been pivotal to Iran's political history as allies of the religious establishment. In 1979, they were crucial to the mass movement that overthrew the Shah, channeling funds to pro-Khomeini clerics and shutting the bazaar for prolonged periods as the beleaguered ruler clashed with opposition forces. If Mr. Rafsanjani and his allies are counting on the bazaaris' innate conservatism, they may be disappointed... Many say they will not vote, citing deep disappointment with the Islamic governing system. That is a concern for the senior figures who have repeatedly stressed the importance of a high turnout to bolster Iran's democratic credentials in the face of pressure over its nuclear programme. It is a personal blow to (former president) Mr. Rafsanjani that many traders pinpoint his first spell as president, when he introduced free-market reforms, as the root of many of today's ills. These are commonly identified as inflation, unemployment (unofficially put at around 25%), drug addiction, poverty and lack of provision for the poor. "I don't think anyone will vote for Rafsanjani," said Ali, 38, another textile trader in the bazaar. "During his first presidency, there was widespread poverty and his performance was weak. The only people who will vote in this election are those government employees who need the election stamp on their documents to keep their jobs.

Iranians condemn presidential election

BBC News, May 15 - More than 500 politicians and intellectuals in Iran have announced that they will not take part in the presidential election next month. In a statement, they said that the 17 June poll cannot be free and fair because Iran's Guardian Council was depriving people of free choice. The conservative Guardian Council has the powers of vetting the candidates... It said that "the people only have the freedom to choose from among those candidates chosen by the state". "People are being called to participate while many of the most important circles of power and the appointed people have complete control on all the avenues of executive power," the statement said.

Iran is pivotal

The Jerusalem Post, May 15, Saul Singer - Last month there were massive demonstrations and work stoppages in the oil-rich regions, centering around the city of Ahwaz. As Iran-watcher Michael Ledeen reports, "The demonstrators called for an end to the regime, scores of people were killed, and hundreds were beaten and arrested. On May Day, workers again demonstrated against the regime, this time in all the major cities. In Tehran, strongman and likely president-in-waiting Hashemi Rafsanjani was hooted down by the crowd, and pictures of him and Supreme Leader Khamenei were torn down and trampled." These events, largely ignored by the media, are more important than the bombs going off in Baghdad, the recent Palestinian elections, disengagement and practically everything else going on in the world today. They are the pivot on which the entire war against militant Islamism will turn. It is time we paid attention... Historian Bernard Lewis, who has not been starry-eyed about democratizing the Middle East, wrote in the current *Foreign Affairs*, "The main threat to the development of democracy in Iraq and ultimately in other Arab and Muslim countries lies not in any inherent social quality or characteristic, but in very determined efforts that are being made to ensure democracy's failure." Put a bit less delicately, this means that the prognosis for Iran and Iraq is linked and binary: Either both nations will be free, or Iran and its terrorist allies will succeed in bringing down Iraq's nascent democracy. On June 17, Iran is scheduled to have another "election." The people and the regime both know this will be a turning point... The regime knows that if it can survive this challenge, nothing will stop its quest for the ultimate regime insurance - nuclear weapons. The State Department has been trying to figure out how to spend million allocated by Congress to help opponents of the Iranian regime. But the first things to do don't cost money, they just require decisions. For starters, Bush has been reluctant to say (despite his "axis of evil" line), and Condoleezza Rice has denied, that regime change is administration policy. This reticence is duly noted both by the trigger-happy mullahs and by people deciding whether to risk themselves to oppose the regime. Second, Bush has yet to have a high-profile meeting with Iranian dissidents, or to endorse their push for a referendum on whether Iran should have an Islamic regime.

Human Right Watch's report

Human Rights Watch Report on the Iranian Opposition: A Reward for the Iranian Regime; A Penalty for the Iranian People

Prof. Raymond Tanter of the Iran Policy Committee

IPC May 19 -WASHINGTON- In a press release, Human Rights Watch announced that it has released a 28-page report titled, "No Exit: Human Rights Abuses Inside the MKO Camps." The report contains telephone interviews with 12 "former...(Mujahedin e-Khalq Organization-MEK) members." It considers their statements as "credible claims that they were subjected to imprisonment as well as physical and psychological abuses." But these "credible claims" are actually statements by agents of the **Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS)**. The Human Rights Watch press release also mentions the Iran Policy Committee (IPC): "On February 10, a think-tank co-chaired by retired U.S. military officers, (sic) the Iran Policy Committee, called for the removal of the (MEK) designation and for the U.S. government to actively support the group against the Iranian government." Joe Stork, Washington director of Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa division said, "The Iranian government has a dreadful record on human rights." "But it would be a huge mistake to promote an opposition group (Mujahedin e-Khalq) that is responsible for serious human rights abuses," said Stork. In reply to Stork, Professor Raymond Tanter of Georgetown University, a former White House aide and IPC co-chair said, "It is a humongous mistake for a human rights organization to promote the agenda of a rogue regime by taking at face value the claims of its intelligence agents." "All of the individuals cited in the Human Rights Watch report are agents of the Iranian regime's Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS), including Mohammad- Hossein Sobhani, and Farhad Javaheri-Yar." Tanter added that, "Tehran sent most of those interviewed by Human Rights Watch from Iran to Europe for the purpose of demonizing its main opposition, the MEK." Tanter, author of *Rogue Regimes*, helped manage U.S. policy toward Iran while on the National Security Council staff. Tanter conducts research at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy on options for Iran in light of its sponsorship of terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and dreadful record on human rights. Bruce McColm, a co-founder of IPC, former executive director of Freedom House, and former president of the International Republican Institute said: "The message of this report discredits the messenger-Human Rights Watch-more than its intended target-the MEK." McColm also said that, "Unfortunately, Human Rights Watch appears to have fallen for Tehran's disinformation campaign. Over the past several months, Iran has been aggressively peddling these sources to many groups in Europe, hoping someone would bite." McColm concluded that "The Human Rights Watch report lacks validity and is solely a compilation of allegations by former associates of an organization most feared by Tehran, who have long-served in an intelligence capacity for the regime by spreading its propaganda." IPC research has determined that Iran's disinformation goes out to a variety of western organizations, including Amnesty International, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as International Committee of the Red Cross. What further discredits the report is that there is no counter evidence, such as responses by the MEK to allegations, in the Human Rights Watch report. Clare Lopez, executive director of the IPC called the Human Rights Watch report a "counterattack and disinformation campaign by the Iranian regime." "The methodology used to prepare this report is stunningly uncharacteristic of any investigation, for its lack of balance, corroboration, and face-to-face interviews," Lopez added.

Moreover, the report fails to include the views of the United States military, which controls all MEK bases since April 2003. A Knight-Ridder correspondent visited MEK's Camp Ashraf in Iraq and wrote on March 18, 2005: "The U.S. military has investigated claims that the Mujahedeen were keeping people in Ashraf against their will, but found no solid evidence. As one senior U.S. military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, put it: 'I think they've been captured by ideas and dogma, but they are not prisoners. They are reasonably physically free to leave.'"

At the same time, the individuals cited in the Human Rights Watch report have all appeared on regime-sponsored websites over the past few months, and similar accusations have already been posted on these sites. "This is a bad news-good news situation," Tanter said. "The bad news is that Human Rights Watch has sacrificed its credibility by supporting a rights-violating

regime attempting to destroy its main opposition-the MEK; the good news is that the leaders of Human Rights Watch can view this situation as an opportunity to side with the Iranian people instead of with an authoritarian regime," Tanter concluded. The bottom line is that the Human Rights Watch report is a reward to the Iranian regime. Likewise, it is a penalty to the Iranian people because the report opposes U.S. policy of encouraging Iranian opposition groups to determine their country's future. The report helps Iran buy time to develop nuclear weapons, sponsor terrorism, and threaten the security of the United States. The report sides with the regime and punishes its victims. The Human Rights Watch report contrasts sharply with the 2005 Inaugural Address of President George W. Bush, who said, "The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands." And in the State of the Union Address, President Bush said to the Iranian people, "As you stand for liberty, America stands with you."

One-sided report of Human Rights Watch on the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran violates the right of defence, the most basic humanitarian right

Friends of a Free Iran *Press Release May 19,*

The Human Rights Watch in a report published on May 18, alleged that the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) mistreats its members. We were shocked to find out that the Human Rights Watch had not informed the PMOI regarding any of these allegations prior to publishing its report. This conduct of the Human Rights Watch is in clear violation of all well-established international standards and the basic right of defence. Whilst very serious allegations have been raised on the PMOI, no attempt was made to seek the PMOI's reply to these allegations. The report even does not make reference to written replies of the PMOI on these sorts of allegations that could be found on the site of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) and a number of other internet sites. It is an established procedure that all the UN raportures as well as investigators of respectable human rights organizations find themselves obliged to raise the issue with relevant parties and provide them an opportunity to rebuttal even in the cases involving indisputable flagrant violations of human rights. This report is distorted and devoid of any legitimacy. The report acknowledges that all of the interviews with the "witnesses" have been conducted over the phone. According to the report, some of these interviews have took place on May 6, i.e. less then two weeks prior to publication of the report, confirming the fact that the investigation has not gone through a due process of check and corroboration. The most basic impartiality has not been observed in preparation of this report, which reveals vividly its political nature. These indications, undermines the conduct of the Human Rights Watch as an independent human rights organization severely. It is worth noting that all the members of "Friends of a Free Iran" intergroup have constantly been subject of these allegations against of the PMOI. Some of these allegations were distributed among the members of the European Parliament by the Iranian Embassy. The members of the intergroup have sought and received explanations on the allegations on the PMOI, a member of the NCRI coalition, from the NCRI representatives on a number of occasions. On the other hand, two members of the Friends of a Free Iran, Mr. Paulo Casaca, its co-Chairman and Dr Andre Brie, visited the Camp Ashraf, where all the members of the PMOI are based, last year. They had the opportunity to meet and talk in person with a large number of them. The members of our intergroup have received on personal basis and as a group, elaborate rebuttals on these allegations based on facts and documents. These indications point out to the fact that the Iranian regime and its secret services are the main source of these allegations. We are also informed that various agencies of the U.S. government carried extensive investigations on the members of the PMOI based in Iraq. These investigations, led to recognition of the PMOI members based in Iraq as protected individuals according to the Fourth Geneva Conventions. The investigators also underscored the fact that there is no reason to prosecute even a single member of the PMOI. Thus, while expressing its concerns on the consequences of this report, the Friends of a Free Iran in the European Parliament urges the Human Rights Watch to retract from this report and would not allow that this report would be used as a ploy in the hands of Iranian regime to further suppress and to violate the Iranian people's rights. We also insist that Human Rights Watch meet us before making any such unfounded allegations on the Iranian Resistance.

Dr Alejo Vidal-Quadras Roca, First Vice-President of the European Parliament from Spanish People's Party

Struan Stevenson, Co-Chairman of Friends of a Free Iran, Vice-President of Christian Democrat-Conservatives Group and Leader of European Democrats in the European Parliament
Paulo Casaca, Co-Chairman of Friends of a Free Iran, President of EP Delegation to NATO, From Portuguese Socialist Party
Stephen Hughes, a senior Member of European Parliament from British Labour Party
Dr Bernat Joan i Mari, Vice-Chairman of EP Delegation to the EU-African Caribbean Pacific Joint Parliamentary Assembly, from Greens/European Free Alliance Group
Mogens Camre, Danish Member of European Parliament and Vice President of Union for Europe of the Nations Group (UEN)
Erik Meijer, Member of Parliament from Dutch Socialist Party

Iran's mullahs make a fool of Human Rights Watch

The British Committee for Iran Freedom Press Release May 19-The British Committee for Iran Freedom expresses its profound concern at the publication of a report by Human Rights Watch containing unsubstantiated allegations against the Iranian Resistance and the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI). Human Rights Watch has been made a fool of by the mullahs. It has accepted allegations over the telephone without asking the PMOI for comment. It is Human Rights Watch which is damaged, not the Iranian Resistance who seek the democracy and human rights the mullahs have stolen. This is no more than an attempt by the mullahs to take the spotlight off their nuclear development programme, their meddling in Iraq and their escalating abuse of human rights. Judging by the enthusiastic reception of the report by Iran's state-run media, the endorsement of mullahs' old-time allegations against their principal opponents can only have a negative impact on the deteriorating human rights situation in Iran. The British Committee for Iran Freedom calls on Human Rights Watch to retract this untenable report, which does not stand to scrutiny.

Lord Corbett of Castle Vale
Chairman,
British Committee for Iran Freedom