



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

Tehran's nuke program threatens entire region

Agence France Press, July 19 - Israeli politicians routinely say an Iranian atomic weapons capability would be a threat to Israel's very existence, but almost all admit that this time, the problem concerns the entire region, if not the world.... US analyst Joseph Crincione said that while "Iran's motivations go far beyond Israel, that's accurate as far as it goes, but Israel is part of the mix." Crincione, a non-proliferation expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington-based think tank, said that, "It is not unreasonable for Iran to expect they would become in 50 or 100 years a major power in the world."

Top cleric vows Iran's pursuit of the bomb at any cost

Agence France Press, July 16, Tehran - One of Iran's top ruling clerics vowed Friday that the Islamic republic will continue to pursue its controversial nuclear programme "at any cost" and is determined to become fully self-sufficient. "We are resolute. It is worth achieving it at any cost," said Jannati, who head the powerful Guardians Council -- a body that screens all of the Islamic republic's laws and candidates for public office. "Nuclear technology is the issue of the day, and neither our officials nor our people will give up this scientific growth," he said. "We are now begging Western nuclear know-how by importing what we lack in this field. Once we achieve the technology, we will no longer be in a position where we have to ask," he said.

Diplomats: Iran atomic shopping deepens bomb fears

Reuters, July 16 - Diplomats cited European customs information and intelligence gathered in the Middle East showing Tehran had tried to buy, among other things, high-speed switches that could potentially be used in a nuclear weapon and high-speed cameras the Iranians might use to test a nuclear explosion. "They appear to be working on the planning for a high-speed nuclear implosion device," the diplomat said, adding that Iran had also been experimenting with high explosive that would be appropriate for the core of a nuclear weapon. "A senior U.S. official told Reuters in Washington that these procurement efforts were part of an effort that has been going on for a long time. ``This is an ongoing procurement process. I fully believe that they're still at it, but I can't say that there is some new list that they're out buying right now," the official said....

Meddling in Iraq

IRAN USES HAMAS, HIZBULLAH IN IRAQ

[Middle East News Line 22 July 2004 WASHINGTON](#) - Iran has been using Hamas and Hizbullah as part of plans to impose Teheran's authority in Iraq. A report by the New York-based Hudson Institute said Iran has been sponsoring and cooperating with a range of Shi'ite insurgency groups in an effort to develop a power base in Iraq. The Shi'ites have been employed to work against U.S. interests and intimidate independent figures within the majority Shi'ite community in Iraq. "Following the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, the Iranian clerical dictatorship has mounted a covert effort to establish an allied Shi'a Islamist extremist regime in Iraq," the report, by senior fellow Constantine Menges, said. "Iran has been preparing to do this for many years and has recruited political, military, and covert agent assets among the hundreds of thousands of Shi'a Iraqis who fled Iraq and have lived in Iran for years."

The report said Iran has tried to dominate Iraq in several ways. Menges cited Iran's use of Iraqi Shi'ite clerics, the establishment of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, the cooperation with Shi'ite cleric Moqtada Sadr and the use of Hizbullah and Hamas for insurgency attacks on Iraq.

Iraq says it will hit at countries backing rebels

[Reuters, July 20, Dubai](#) - Iraq is ready to retaliate against countries it accuses of supporting violence wracking the country, the country's defense minister warned Tuesday.

Hazim al-Shaalan mentioned no countries by name but accused old foe Iran of "blatant interference..." "We are prepared to move the arena of the attacks on Iraq's honor and its rights to those countries," he was quoted as saying by the London-based Asharq al-Awsat newspaper.

"We've spoken to them and confronted them with facts and evidence, but none of them have taken any action to stop supporting terrorism in Iraq," he said. "They (Iranians) confess to the presence of their spies in Iraq who have a mission to shake up the social and political situation," the defense minister said. "Iranian intrusion has been vast and unprecedented since the establishment of the Iraqi state."

Ultimatum of Iraq's Defense Minister

[Al-Jazeera, July 15](#) -Iraqi Defense Minister: "We have announced the list of countries whose citizens have carried out terrorists acts. We want peace and security for the Iraqi people. If neighboring countries respect this, there is no problem. If not, we will transfer the events from the streets of Iraq to neighboring countries... The border is a real problem. We have teams in the border who are doing reconnaissance. We use the airplanes of the Multi National Forces to carry out reconnaissance."

Export of terrorism

The discovery of Iran

[National Review Online, July 19, Michael Ledeen](#) - The organizers of the Council on Foreign Relations special task force to promote the appeasement of Iran must be cursing their uncommonly bad luck.... Whatever chances they had of successfully advancing appeasement were shattered over the weekend, as some talkative source at the 9/11 Commission told the old media (notably Time and Newsweek) that there was new evidence documenting the longstanding relationship between al Qaeda and Iran... This is all very inconvenient for Haas, Brzezinski, and the others who keep

deluding themselves into believing that we can make a reasonable deal with the mullahcracy in Tehran. This is a very dangerous delusion....

Every time we come up with some devastating bit of information on Iran, we immediately follow it with "but that doesn't mean that the leaders knew about it, or that it was the actual policy of the regime." You find half of bin Laden's family and top assistants in Tehran? Not to worry, maybe the mullahs didn't know. You discover that that 9/11 band crossed Iran and were assisted by the border guards and customs officials? Not to worry, that wasn't necessarily the actual policy So why should the men in the blood-soaked turbans fret over the consequences of aiding and abetting yet another murderous assault against Americans?

Michael Ledeen, an NRO contributing editor, is most recently the author of The War Against the Terror Masters. Ledeen is Resident Scholar in the Freedom Chair at the American Enterprise

Why the U.S. should engage Iran

[United Press International](#), July 19 – Washington - A plan for "selective engagement" with Iran is a win-win strategy for the United States, former White House national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and former Central Intelligence Director Robert Gates agreed Monday.

"If the effort to start negotiations with Iran succeeds, that's a good start. If it fails, then by making the effort to engage with Iran along with our European partners, then we will be in a much better position to seek multilateral cooperation to bring sanctions against Iraq, or to set the stage for other options," Gates said...

Speaking at the Council of Foreign Relations in Washington Monday, after launching their report, "Iran: Time for a new approach," Gates and Brzezinski argued that the current U.S. policy of "passive antagonism" had failed to change Iran's behavior and had helped spur Iran's nuclear weapons program, and the United States should try a new approach...

The new CFR report, prepared by a special task force of the council that was chaired by Gates and Brzezinski, was condemned Monday by several Iranian exile groups and by organizations critical of the current Tehran regime as a return to appeasement.

"Appeasement in dealing with ideologically driven totalitarian regimes never works, more so in the case of Iran's theocratic regime which has displayed an increasingly belligerent behavior in recent months and reneged on its agreement with France, Britain and Germany to stop enriching uranium," said the U.S. Alliance for a Democratic Iran. "It did not work with Nazi Germany in 1938, and it will not work today."

"The latest evidence in the bi-partisan 9/11 commission report of links between Iran mullahs and al-Qaida network seriously brings into question the wisdom of considering Iran as a party to any meaningful 'dialogue,'" the USADI statement went on. "The mullahs ruling Iran are gratified to know that their brutal suppression of Iranians through arrest, torture and execution of dissidents; and stoning, hanging and flogging citizens in public is paying huge political dividends."

The USADI statement also took issue with the report's suggestion that the Iran regime is now "well-entrenched" and that U.S.-inspired efforts at regime change or democratization are unlikely to succeed. USADI also said that earlier efforts to engage Iran in the Clinton years had produced no meaningful political change.

CSRI Condemns the report by the Council of Foreign Relations Task Force on Iran

July 12, Washington -CSRI finds the report completely biased toward an appeasement policy and void of valid information on current political situation in Iran. As well, the report lacks analysis on outcomes of a similar policy by European governments for the past decade and why such a policy did not prevent Iran from expanding its dreadful network of terror all around the world and pursuing nuclear weapons.....

This report white washes Iran of all its terrorist activities, severe abuse of human rights, promoting and financing international terrorism, fueling insurgencies in Iraq and pursuing nuclear weapons. It suggests strengthening the tyrannical regime of Iran by engaging in negotiations, providing nuclear information and disbanding Iran's main opposition group. The task force report proposes a Russian Ruler policy with dire consequences to the United States and the world. Apart from escalating human rights abuse in Iran, such policies will only prove to Iran that terrorism and blackmailing can amplify their power. Such policies will give the necessary time to Iran to build its nuclear arsenal and start negotiations on its own terms. The Iranian government and the terrorist groups under its umbrella can achieve nuclear weapons by 2005 as a result of such appeasement policies. This is a grave danger to the world, which is highly underestimated in the Task Force report.....

The committee has to explain that why the United States should support the brutal regime of Iran, while promoting democracy in Iraq, Afghanistan and the rest of the world. This will cause great disappointment among the Iranian people towards the United States. Dr. Brzezinski should remember that perhaps similar recommendations led President Carter to claim Iran "Island of Stability", just several months before Shah's fall.....

Indeed this is the time to decide on a policy on Iran. The United States can choose an appeasement policy, already tried by the European countries and failed, which will lead in empowering the Mullahs of Iran and quite possibly a nuclear disaster for the world. Another alternative is to eliminate the source of terrorism and tension in the world, by supporting the movement of Iranian people for freedom and democracy and respect their will for a humanly life. The Mullahs face massive opposition from Iranian people who have an organized and willful resistance inside and abroad. These factors will overpower the Iranian regime, if the foreign governments stop supporting the Mullahs.

U.S. faces a crossroads on Iran policy

The Washington Post, July 19 - The Bush administration is under mounting pressure to take action to deal with Iran... The final report of the commission investigating the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, due Thursday, may further intensify the policy debate, as it says Iran let eight of the 19 hijackers transit through Iran from neighboring Afghanistan -- a claim Tehran does not deny... Since May, Congress has been moving -- with little notice -- toward a joint resolution calling for punitive action against Iran if it does not fully reveal details of its nuclear arms program. In language similar to the prewar resolution on Iraq, a recent House resolution authorized the use of "all appropriate means" to deter, dissuade and prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear

weaponry -- terminology often used to approve preemptive military force. Reflecting the growing anxiety on Capitol Hill about Iran, it passed 376 to 3....Increasingly alarmed over Iran's failure to come clean on its arms programs, Congress is becoming tougher... In an even more dramatic move, Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) plans to introduce an Iran liberation act this fall, modeled on the Iraq Liberation Act that mandated government change in Baghdad and provided more than \$90 million to the Iraqi opposition. The goals would be the same for Iran, including regime change, congressional officials said.



Argentines criticize investigation of '94 attack

The New York Times, July 19, Buenos Aires- With President Néstor Kirchner looking on, Argentine Jewish leaders on Sunday marked the 10th anniversary of a deadly anti-Semitic attack here by delivering blistering attacks on his predecessors and European institutions they say have blocked efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice...

Argentina has been thwarted in efforts to prosecute Iranian government officials it says organized the attack.

In a sharp speech, Abraham Kaul, the president of the community group, criticized Britain's refusal to allow the extradition of a former Iranian ambassador to Argentina who was indicted here last year, and also complained about a lack of cooperation in Switzerland in determining how the attack was financed. "They have betrayed us," Mr. Kaul said....In recent months, there has also been talk here of seeking "a Lockerbie solution," in which Argentina would relinquish some of its legal claims so that the accused Iranians could stand trial in a third country. But Iran, which threatened to "adopt appropriate measures" if Argentina did not revoke the indictments, has offered no indication it is interested in such a deal.

US sets sights on toppling Iran regime

The Times, July 16 - The US will mount a concerted attempt to overturn the regime in Iran if President Bush is elected for a second term. It would work strenuously to foment a revolt against the ruling theocracy by Iran's "hugely dissatisfied" population, a senior official has told *The Times*. The United States would not use military force, as in Iraq, but if "Bush is re-elected, there will be much more intervention in the internal affairs of Iran", declared the official, who is determined that there should be no let-up in the Administration's War on Terror. To what extent the official, known to be hawkish, was speaking for the White House was unclear, but his remarks are nevertheless likely to cause alarm in Europe. He hinted at a possible military strike against Iran's nuclear facilities, saying that there was a window of opportunity for destroying Iran's main nuclear complex at Bushehr next year that would close if Russia delivered crucial fuel rods...The official also stepped up the pressure on Britain, France and Germany to take a tougher line on Iran, voicing the disdain within the Administration for the Europeans' attempt to defuse the Iranian nuclear threat through diplomacy... Washington believes that the trio has been embarrassed by Iran's failure to hold good to a deal it struck with the Iranian regime last October...

Since then, some members of the Administration have begun referring in private to Britain, France and Germany as "the Tehran three", and to Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, as "Jack of Tehran". If the Europeans fail to get Iran to back down at a meeting this month, the US wants to close the gap between the rival diplomatic approaches and refer Iran to the United Nations Security Council.... The official

dismissed suggestions that Washington would hesitate to seek regime change in Iran, given the problems it has encountered in Iraq, and Colin Powell, a restraining influence as Secretary of State, will not be serving a second term.

Iran links to Al Qaeda

Reuters, July 16, Washington - Government sources told Reuters the commission report (investigating the Sept. 11 attacks) would discuss al Qaeda links to Pakistan and Iran and mention that some of the Sept. 11 hijackers transited through Iran on the way to the United States. Later on Friday, TIME Magazine reported on its Web Site that a U.S. official told the magazine the commission uncovered evidence suggesting between eight and 10 of the 14 hijackers involved in gaining control of the four aircraft used on Sept. 11 passed through Iran in the period from October 2000 to February 2001.

The senior official also told TIME the report will note that Iranian officials approached al-Qaeda leadership after the bombing of the USS Cole and proposed a collaborative relationship in future attacks on the U.S. But that offer was turned down by bin Laden because he did not want to alienate his supporters in Saudi Arabia, TIME reported.

The Iran factor

Newsweek, July 16 - In its report due next week, the September 11 commission will disclose new evidence suggesting Iranian government officials may have helped facilitate the terror attacks by providing Al Qaeda members with safe passage and "clean" passports as they traveled from Osama bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan through Iran, NEWSWEEK has learned. Citing a recently discovered December 2001 memo buried in the files of the National Security Agency, the commission report states that Iranian border inspectors were instructed not to place stamps in the passports of Al Qaeda fighters from Saudi Arabia who were traveling from bin Laden's camps through Iran, according to U.S. officials and commission sources familiar with the report. ...



A small group of al Qaeda operatives subsequently traveled to Iran and Hizbullah camps in Lebanon for training in explosives, intelligence and security.

Al Qaeda and the Iranian connection

The Rediff Special, July 16, Hamid Mir - I visited Iraq twice after the fall of Saddam Hussein and in April this year I was sure that pro-Iran Shia militants and Al Qaeda fighters were collaborating against the US in Iraq. ...The Iranians used the US indirectly against their old enemy Saddam Hussein and now they are using Al Qaeda against the US in Iraq. They are playing a classical double game, not only in Iraq but also in Afghanistan....

Very few people know that Al Qaeda was actually in contact with the Iranians even before September 11. It was March 1997 that I first interviewed Osama bin Laden in eastern Afghanistan for Daily Pakistan. In that interview bin Laden proposed an alliance between the Taliban and Iran because of their anti-US stance. ..After the interview I talked to some other Al Qaeda operatives present in the hideout. One of them told me, "We want a broad-based alliance against the US and that's why we are in touch with the Iranians since many years." Further investigation revealed that the main contact of Al Qaeda with Iran was Dr Ayman Al-Zawahiri. He and his comrades in the Jamaat Islamia had organised the assassination of Egypt's President Anwar Sadat in 1981 with the help of Iranian intelligence. When Osama bin Laden moved to

Sudan in 1994, al-Zawahiri re-established his old contacts with Iranian intelligence. Many Iranian officials and leaders of Hizbullah met the Al Qaeda leadership in Khartoum...

Affront to Justice



Iranian political prisoners marking 1999 crackdown with hunger strike: opposition group

Agence France Press, July 8, Paris - Political prisoners and some university students in Iran have started a hunger strike to commemorate 1999 campus protests that led to a violent crackdown by police, an opposition group based in Paris, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, said in a statement.



Detainees in the Evin prison in Tehran were staging the hunger strike "in protest against a new wave of suppression and widespread arrest of university students and youths in Iran," the statement said.

"Students at several universities throughout Iran have also joined the hunger strike in protest against the clerical regime's suppressive policies," it said.

It added that demonstrations showing solidarity with the Iranian students were planned for cities in Europe, North America and Australia.

On July 9, 1999, pro-democracy students clashed with police in Tehran and other cities in unrest sparked by a heavy-handed police and vigilante raid on a smaller dormitory protest over newspaper closures.

Officially, one student was killed and hundreds of others injured in the violence, which prompted a major regime crackdown on dissent in the Islamic republic's universities -- a main driving force behind the pro-democracy movement.

On each anniversary of the unrest, the regime has sought to prevent any gatherings from taking place. In the run-up to the anniversary last year, Iran was hit by a fresh wave of protests and some 4,000 people were arrested.

Deteriorating conditions of human rights

Three young men hanged in public

Iran National TV, July 19 – At 5:30 am Monday, July 19, two youth named Navab Davoodi, 19, and Mehdi Yazdani, 20, from Yazdanshahr were hanged in public at Vila Shahr intersection. They suffered much torture in prison. One of Navab Davoodi's inmates says Navab was hanged by his arms so long that they did not function anymore. In another development, Moussa Nouri was hanged in Khomeini Square in Dehloran, Ilam Province.

Iran stops trial of Kazemi's murderer



The New York Times, July 19, Tehran - Iran's judiciary on Sunday abruptly ended the trial of an intelligence agent charged with killing an Iranian-Canadian photojournalist and said a verdict would come later. Lawyers for the victim's family left the court in protest, saying the court had not heard their witnesses'

testimony..."It is clear that the person who inflicted the blow is free and the person who has not done so is standing trial and will later be acquitted, and the whole crime will be covered up," one of the lawyers, Muhammad Seifzadeh, told journalists outside the court on Sunday...On Saturday, Ms. Kazemi's mother, Ezzat Kazemi, testified in court that she had been forced to consent to a quick burial of her daughter. She said it was clear that her daughter was tortured because her breasts had been burned and a hand and foot had been broken.

Foreign diplomats prevented from going to Kazemi trial

[Al-Jazeera, July 18](#) - Iranian security officials prevented participation of foreign diplomats in the Zahra Kazemi murder trial. The diplomats had attended the court hearing the day before and were scheduled to participate again on Sunday. But Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Assefi announced that Iran is still opposed to the presence of Canadian observers in the Kazemi trial. He said: "It is an internal issue and has nothing to do with the Canadian Government."

Iran trial debacle angers Canada

[BBC World Service, July 18](#) - Ambassador MacKinnon was barred from Sunday's court hearing. Canada is recalling its ambassador to Iran after Tehran abruptly ended the trial of an intelligence agent accused of killing a Canadian journalist. Foreign Minister Bill Graham said Ambassador Philip MacKinnon would return to Canada after what he called a "flagrant denial of justice". Mr. MacKinnon was at Saturday's hearing but was barred from the second day. Lawyers for slain Iranian-born Zahra Kazemi said the trial was a farce and refused to sign the court record.

Lawyers for family of dead photographer accuse top Iran justice official

[Agence France Press, July 17, Tehran](#) - Lawyers for the family of Zahra Kazemi, a Canadian-Iranian photographer beaten to death in custody here, said in court Saturday that the man on trial for her murder was innocent and that the real killer may have been a top justice official. The team of four lawyers, headed by Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi, quoted witnesses as saying Kazemi was "hit on the head" by a senior judicial representative in Tehran's Evin prison immediately after her arrest.

Feature

More Bad News from Iran

Wall Street Journal (European Edition)- July 21, 2004 - Review & Outlook (Editorial)

Zahra Kazemi, a photojournalist from Canada, was arrested last June for taking pictures of Iranians protesting the imprisonment of advocates for reform in the theocracy. The mullahs accused her of being a spy and threw her into jail. After being interrogated and beaten she died.

Initially the mullahs claimed her death was the result of a stroke and tried to close the case. After international pressure they admitted she died from brain hemorrhage caused by the beatings and agreed to hold a trial. On Sunday -- just two-days into the trial -- it was farcically ended with the court announcing they'd give a verdict "sometime" in the future.

The beating and imprisonment of journalists are regular events in the theocracy -- it even has a special "press court" to hand out such punishments. But because she was a Canadian citizen, Ms. Kazemi's case brought unwanted attention. Yet the mullahs felt emboldened enough to simply cancel the trial. This is yet another example of overconfidence from Tehran.

Last month the International Atomic Energy Agency reported that Tehran was still not cooperating fully with inspectors. It said Iran was still building its nuclear program despite promises to halt it. In response to the ensuing international criticism, Iran's president calmly announced they'd continue anyway.

Then there were the British sailors. Claiming they'd strayed into Iranian waters, the mullah's held the eight sailors for three days and made them apologize humiliateingly on state television. After being released the sailors told British officials they'd been forced into Iranian waters.

Next there's Iran's support for international terrorism. Last month Iran moved beyond simply sponsoring terrorist groups, such as Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad, to recruiting for them -- the mullahs held a three-day conference encouraging volunteers to become suicide bombers. The head of their Revolutionary Guards also warned they were prepared to launch attacks -- suicide or missile -- against "29 sensitive sites in the U.S. and in the West."

U.S. President George W. Bush has repeatedly accused Iran of harboring al Qaeda leaders, and the U.S. 9/11 Commission report, due Thursday, is said to find that at least eight of the September 11 hijackers traveled freely through Iran just months before the attacks. Over the weekend Tehran effectively admitted that al Qaeda terrorists were active in Iran when Ali Yunesi -- the regime's intelligence minister -- announced on state television they had dismantled all al-Qaeda branches in the country -- meaning until then al Qaeda remained at large in Iran.

Home and abroad the theocrats are continuing to threaten and take the lives of others, and as the international community's only response are occasional words of condemnation, the mullahs are becoming more brazen in their actions.