



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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Iran's Nuclear Ambitions

Act on Iran. Now!

Intellectualconservatives.com *September 30 by Hedayat Mostowfi*- Mohammed Khatami, the so-called reformist and pro-Western Iranian president, announced last week that the Islamic Republic will continue enriching uranium in defiance of a resolution adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that demanded Iran stop all nuclear-related activity. Once again, the international community has failed to convince mullahs to curb their nuclear procurement through dialogue. Meanwhile Iran has gained valuable time to continue its efforts to obtain the A-bomb. This must be a big blow for the policy makers who are in the favor of a "Grand Bargain" strategy and who have been aimlessly prescribing engagement and dialogue with the tyranny in Iran for more than twenty-five years. In fact, those European countries and those in the United States who endorse the appeasement policy are partially responsible for the catastrophic outcomes of giving the mullahs of Iran time to work toward the realization of their dangerous ambitions. Iran has been the major sponsor of global terrorism for a quarter century. From sponsoring terrorist groups in the Middle East to bombings of Khobar and Buenos Aires and fueling the insurgency in Iraq, it is not difficult to imagine how Iran would use or distribute its nuclear weapons. It is a mystery that while countries with much lower risks to world stability have been confronted, the mullahs in Iran have been spared. The Iranian leaders have used a variety of tactics to circumvent decisive international action. They use the insurgency in Iraq to weaken the coalition forces and to divert attention from their plans. They offer lucrative trade contracts to their European partners in return for political concessions. They use everything in their power to silence dissent at home and abroad. Inside Iran, they use executions, inhumane punishments and severe abuse of human rights. Abroad, they have so far killed 450 exiles. After the European Union began engaging Iran under the cloak of "critical dialogue," the mullahs demanded the blacklisting of Iran's main opposition group, the People's Mujahedeen of Iran (MEK), effectively restricting the activities of their opponents outside the country. Ironically, the MEK and its affiliated organizations were the key source of information that shed bright lights on Iran's clandestine nuclear weapons program two years ago. Today's chaos in Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East could be explained in the context of a policy of mollifying the mullahs in Tehran, who have realized that either for pure economic reasons or political considerations, the West is willing to turn a blind eye on their excesses at home and sponsorship of terror abroad. The world has always limited itself to two options when considering what to do about the Iranian danger: appeasement or military action. Both are misguided. The former has proven futile in the past decade and the latter ignores the role the Iranian people and the organized opposition could play in bringing about regime change in that country. The fact is that Iran is perhaps the only country in the world today where the overwhelming majority of its citizens (ninety-four percent according to a government poll two years ago) oppose the clerics. This explains why tens of thousands of Iranians have been imprisoned, tortured or executed by the current government. Unfortunately, Europe's policy of all carrot and no stick has impeded efforts by Iranians and dissident forces to unseat the regime in Tehran. If the West is seriously concerned about Iran's mischief in Iraq, nuclear intransigence, and sponsorship of terror, it has no choice but

to reach out to Iranian opposition groups who are seeking to replace the current regime with the secular, democratic government. As a first step, Europe and the U.S. should remove the MEK from their list of terrorist Organizations. The group's designation several years ago was politically motivated and designed to placate the Iranian theocracy. Parallel to working with Iranian dissident groups, the West must refer Iran's nuclear dossier to the United Nations Security Council for the adoption of sanctions in order to thwart its nuclear ambitions. These initiatives would weaken the Iranian regime from inside and outside and give the Iranian people the hope and power to topple the mullahs. The world would be a better and safer place without the turbaned tyrants in Iran. The clock is ticking for Iran and our indecisiveness is the key to achieve nuclear weapons. Act firmly on Iran, now!

Hedayat Mostowfi is the Executive Director for nationwide Committee in Support of Referendum in Iran.

Iran launches Shihab with nuke warhead design

Middle East Newsline, Sep. 28, London - Iran has launched a Shihab-3 intermediate-range missile with a nuclear warhead design. Western intelligence sources said the Iranian Defense Ministry has redesigned the original Shihab-3 warhead to accommodate nuclear weapons. The sources said the new warhead was smaller and designed as a bottle-neck in a throwback to U.S. and Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles of the 1960s. The new Shihab-3 warhead was seen on Iranian television during a report on the Shihab-3 on Aug. 11. The sources said the Shihab warhead was changed from a conical design to that resembling a baby bottle. The sources said the reentry vehicle of the new Shihab-3 design resembled the Soviet-origin SS-9. The SS-9 was a 1960s liquid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile launched from a silo and which contained a nuclear warhead.



Iran's nuclear no-return point by November



The Associated Press, Sep. 28 - National Security Adviser Maj.-Gen. (res.) Giora Eiland was quoted Monday by the Maariv daily as saying Iran will reach the "point of no return" in its

nuclear weapons program by November, rather than next year as Israeli military officials said earlier. Concern about Tehran's nuclear development intensified last week when Iran's Vice President Reza Aghazadeh said Iran has started converting raw uranium into the gas needed for enrichment, an important step in making a nuclear bomb.

Spend on nukes? Iran should tend to its poor first

Straits Times, Sep. 28 - Is Iran - with oil-export revenues of more than US\$30 billion expected this year - on its way to producing nuclear weapons that would threaten not only neighbouring Middle East enemies such as Israel but also European nations?

Indeed, should it be allowed to do so? With growing unemployment among its young, and rising social tensions, can Iran afford to pursue the development of a nuclear arsenal?

And even with proven crude oil reserves of more than 130 billion barrels, and daily production of some 4.2 million barrels, can Iran - a nation of 70 million overwhelmingly poor people - afford to live off its oil revenues if imports, already at US\$32 billion now, keep rising each year?

The oil industry is not generating the volume of jobs required to alleviate Iran's reported unemployment rate of 16-17 per cent. Among those younger than 30 years of age, the jobless rate may be even higher. Inflation - usually a key indicator of economic health - is running in excess of 17 per cent annually.





Deliberately "ambiguous" over missiles

Agence France Presse, Sep. 27, Tehran - Iran said Monday it was being deliberately ambiguous over its missile capability, currently a topic of intense speculation following fresh tests and the introduction of a

"strategic" device. On Saturday, Defence Minister Ali Shamkhani told state-run television that the Iranian army has taken delivery of a new "strategic missile" and that the weapon, unnamed for security reasons, was successfully tested last week. "Mr. Shamkhani intentionally spoke in an ambiguous way and we want this ambiguity to remain," government spokesman Abdollah Ramezanzadeh told reporters when asked to elaborate on what this "strategic missile" was...

Nothing short of overthrowing the regime will prevent Iranian nukes

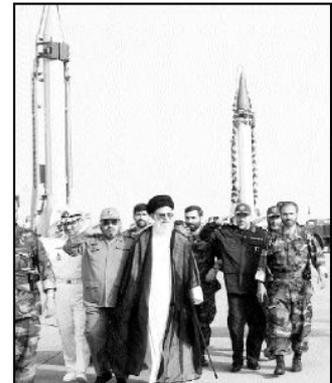
Wall Street Journal, Sep. 27, by Henry Sokolski - Can the U.N. close nonproliferation loopholes before the mullahs get nukes?... Call it a legal loophole or, as Iranian officials insist, an inalienable right, the only way either Iran or the supporters of this view can imagine getting Iranians to stop their nuclear brinkmanship is to sit down with them, treat them as equals, and cut a deal that addresses their concerns. Iran wants a larger voice to set oil prices (Iran's oil minister last week insisted that Iran deserved to chair OPEC)....

What should we do? First, recognize that Iran is already too close to making bombs for us ever to rest easy. It would be nice if we could precision-bomb or appease Iran out of its nuclear capabilities but, short of overthrowing the regime, neither is likely to produce lasting results. Iran has too much invested and hidden and too many scientists salted away for mere bombing or bribing to cap their nuclear ambitions.

Mr. Sokolski is executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center and co-editor of "Checking Iran's Nuclear Ambitions" (U.S. Army War College, 2004).

Ready to confront U.S. militarily

United Press International, Sep. 27 - Maj. Gen. Rahim Safawi, commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, said Monday his country is ready to confront U.S. pressure, including military. In an interview with the London-based Saudi daily al-Hayat, monitored in Beirut, Safawi said although the United States is deeply involved in Iraq, it is expected to increase its political and diplomatic pressure on Iran in the next two months. "We advise the Americans and the Europeans to beware of Iran regional weight and capacity and to recognize its rights and importance in the region," Safawi said. "We are ready to confront any pressures against us, be they political, economic and even military."



Bush says "all options on the table" regarding Iran

Dow Jones, Sep. 26, Washington - U.S. President George W. Bush said "all options are on the table" in terms of blocking Iran from developing nuclear weapons but reiterated his first choice is to find a diplomatic solution to the issue. In regards to that, Bush urged the international community to put more pressure of Tehran not to become a nuclear power. Bush made the comments on Fox News Channel's The O'Reilly Factor in an interview. The full interview will be broadcast each in segments on Monday through Wednesday. Asked whether he would consider using military force to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear power, Bush said, "let me try to solve it diplomatically first. All options are on the table, of course, in any situation. But diplomacy is the first option." Bush said the U.S. would not allow Iran to become a nuclear power. "No, we've made it clear, our position is that they won't have a nuclear weapon," Bush said.

Meddling in Iraq and export of terrorism

British PM warns Tehran against meddling with its neighbors

The Observer, Sep. 26, London - In a wide-ranging interview with The Observer on the eve of Labour's annual party conference in Brighton, the Prime Minister made clear he would stand his ground. He also warned Iran not to meddle with its neighbour, denouncing as 'completely unacceptable' reports of it helping Moqtada al-Sadr's rebel militia. Insisting the conflict was driven largely by foreign agitators not Iraqis, Blair delivered a veiled threat to Iran to stay out of it, urging 'firmer action' by Syria and Iran to prevent insurgents crossing their borders. Blair refused to rule out ever fighting another war alongside Bush, but he stressed there were other ways to resolve issues with Iran: 'We don't intend to go around starting conflicts all over the world, but you know, the fact is I do believe that this global terrorism is the central security threat facing our time.'

Mullahs funded Istanbul bombings

Al-Adhwa weekly, Sep. 25, Iraq – According to *Asharq Al-Awsat* daily, Adnan Arsuzo, one of the suspects [involved in the Istanbul explosions] who has received a life term in prison admitted that \$150,000 had been allocated for the explosion, \$50,000 of which was provided by Europe and \$100,000 by Iran... The explosions were carried out on two buildings, the British consulate and a branch of Britain's HSBC Bank, killing 61 people and injuring 400.

Iraqi Defense Minister repeats his charges on Iranian meddling, says has figures to prove

Fars news agency, Sep. 22 – While repeating his previous accusations against Iran, the Iraqi interim government's Defense Minister said, "Following Iraqi Deputy PM Barham Saleh's visit to Iran, Tehran has cut down its meddling in the internal affairs of Iraq." In an interview with *Al-Hayat* daily published today, Hazem Shaalan claimed, "Some elements enter Iraq from Iran for pilgrimage in the holy sites. However, there are other people who endeavor in acts of sabotage and in smuggling." He noted that dozens of people have been arrested and a number of car bombs and vehicles containing considerable amounts of Hashish and other material that are banned in Iraq have been seized. The Defense Minister of the Interim Iraqi Government said: "I don't want to name some groups, especially because the Iraqi PM is planning to visit Tehran soon after returning from Washington." He said, "Those arrested have been turned over to the Multi National Forces." Shaalan repeated his past charges against Iran and claimed, "This issue (Iranian meddling in Iraq) can be proved with figures. He added, "After Iraqi deputy PM Barham Saleh's visit to Iran, they have cut down their meddling in the internal affairs of Iraq." He said the number of people infiltrating through the border has decreased and such interferences have become limited to sensitive centers in government organizations of Iraq.

Appalling human rights situation in Iran

Pro-democracy protest in Iran gains momentum

Reuters, Sep. 26, Tehran - A rare pro-democracy protest in Tehran gained momentum late on Sunday with hundreds of cars pouring onto the streets, blaring horns and provoking an appearance from hardline vigilantes, witnesses said. A Reuters witness saw dozens of cars near Valiasr Avenue, the tree-lined street that cuts the city north to south, repeatedly honking their horns. Another witness on a footbridge further down Valiasr saw more than 300 cars.



Earlier in the day, motorists tooted horns in support of what they perceived as a demonstration. A witness said scores of people had been chanting "freedom," clapping and handing out pastries. He said police had used their batons to push people from the scene.

International Moral Court censures rights situation in Iran

PR Newswire, Sep. 25, Paris - The International Moral Court on Iran concluded its initial three-day session in Paris today and issued its decision in relation to gross and systematic violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. [The following resolution was adopted unanimously by the Court:] The International Moral Court, ... Concludes, prima facie, that there is sufficient material evidence to determine that gross and systematic violations of international human rights standards have taken place, and are still being perpetrated in the Islamic Republic of Iran. These violations concern, in particular, the civil and political rights, minority rights, torture and other inhumane treatments such as stoning, amputations, and rape. It will be for a court of law to determine if these findings constitute a crime against humanity... Also calls upon governments, in their dealings with the Islamic Republic of Iran, to insist upon strict observance of human rights standards.

289 executions in Iran since 2002

Agence France Presse, Sep. 22 - According to reports in Iran's main newspapers and other media monitored by AFP, at least 68 people have been executed in Iran since January 1.

Amnesty International reported at least 108 executions took place in 2003 and 113 in 2002.

Feature

Two Islams face off

The Washington Times

Washington Times, September 27 by Jalal Ganje'i

Thirty-five years ago, when in a jurisprudence course in Najaf, Ayatollah Khomeini boasted that Khoms (a religious tax equivalent to one-fifth on property or income) from Baghdad's Bazaar was adequate to run the affairs of the Islamic world, he wanted to affirm that assuming power on his part cost very little but benefited the public at large. However, no one, not even me, attending his course as a student at the time, had any idea that some day Khomeini's covetous design on Baghdad, not to mention Tehran, would emerge as the principle foreign policy objective of the theocracy that he erected a few years later. Several years after, as Khomeini's despotic views became more evident, I chose to disassociate myself from him. That meant I had become an infidel and Khomeini sentenced me to death in absentia. My classmates in Najaf then and the power brokers in Tehran now are trying their utmost to exploit the crisis in Iraq to realize Khomeini's dream not only to give the regime in Tehran some permanence, but also to impose their fundamentalist reign on Iraq. That prospect would represent a catastrophe for the civilized world and Muslims across the globe. The Iranian experience is a case in point. Since the onset of Khomeini's rule, the face-off between two Islams came to the forefront of Iranian political landscape. The mullahs were challenged by tolerant and democrat Muslims who rejected fanaticism. Khomeini realized that the tolerant Islam was the antithesis to his brand of Islam, prompting him to shun the democrat Muslims, namely the People's Mujahideen, the main Iranian opposition movement. The vast majority of the 120,000 people executed in Iran in the past quarter century were members and sympathizers of this group. From day one, the fundamentalists in Iran found the export of crisis and expansion as the only way to counteract their popular illegitimacy. Article 11 of Iran's Constitution stipulates, "All Muslims are one nation and the Islamic Republic of Iran is duty bound to rest its general policy on the unity of Islamic nations and undertake efforts to realize the political, economic and cultural unity of the Islamic world." Owing to many historical factors, including a majority Shiite population, Iraq was the most strategic target. Despite an eight-year war, Khomeini failed to make his dream of "liberating Jerusalem via Karbala" come true. He died in 1989, but his disciples have followed suit. Subsequent to the

Iraq war, the clerics saw a window of opportunity. Months before the fall of Saddam Hussein, the clerics devised a two-pronged strategy under the guidance of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. One was to expand seemingly benign charities, clinics and health-care centers. The other was to spread clandestine armed cells in order to deliver military blows to the coalition forces and be in position to fill the vacuum of power quickly in case the United States left Iraq. Four agencies -- the Revolutionary Guards, the Ministry of Intelligence and Security, the state radio and television, and the clergy network -- have been coordinating their meddling in Iraq. The West has mistakenly tried to minimize the scope of Iran's meddling. The reality on the ground depicts an entirely different story. Thousands of Iranian operatives have already crossed into Iraq. The mullahs have also sent tens of thousands of weapons and millions of dollars to that country. "Iranian intrusion has been vast and unprecedented since the establishment of the new Iraqi state. The Iranians have penetrated the country's sensitive centers and set up many intelligence and security centers in Iraq," warned Iraqi Defense Minister Hazem Shaalan in an interview with the Arabic language daily Asharq Al-Awsat on July 20. If the mullahs were to succeed, not only the people of Iraq, but also other regional states would fall victim to religious fascism. The policy of appeasing Tehran by ignoring its egregious human-rights abuses, drive to procure nuclear weapons and sponsorship of terror has been a dismal failure. The West even kowtowed to Tehran's biggest demand: blacklisting the People's Mujahideen. This policy has only strengthened the most anti-Western and extremist faction of the ruling theocracy, while disarming of the People's Mujahideen has been the biggest help to the mullahs in advancing their goals in Iraq. It is now time for decisiveness against Tehran. The fate of Iran and Iraq are intertwined as never before. The vision of a stable, tranquil Iraq without a halt in Tehran's meddling is naive and a recipe for disaster, since it would hand the entire region over to the fundamentalists on a silver platter. Conversely, the mullahs' defeat in export of fundamentalism to Iraq would deprive it from a strategic lever and profoundly impact the developments in Iran and beyond. Everyone, including the Iranian and Iraq people as well as tolerant Muslims would be the main beneficiaries.

Ayatollah Jalal Ganje'i, a prominent dissident ayatollah based in Paris, is chairman of the Committee on Religious Freedom in the National Council of Resistance of Iran. Several members of his family, including his son, have been executed by the clerical regime.