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(Mijas Pueblo, Spain)

Sidebar

National Intelligence Estimate: Iran's Nuclear Bomb

I The Warhead And (Possible) Unification. Is Iran a nuclear (“warhead”) threat? Much has been said and written on this dangerous topic. I need to write my “two cents” on the matter. Why? Because it is, in my opinion, a terminal issue for the unification of the Middle East and world peace. So, here are my views. Yes, Iran (patronized by President Vladimir Putin’s surging Russia) is a threat with and without “the bomb.” How do you (Mr. President and *next* President) deal with this perturbing problem? You confront the issue on diverse fronts. (1) The nations that love freedom must act within the consensus of the United Nations, and force diplomacy to the last “z” and never relaxing the use of power (military force and economic sanctions)—if the *weak* UN fails. (2) America, under President Bush’s leadership, should broker the unification of the Middle East, where Iran can join (become a full participant *without* the bomb), thus avoiding sanctions (*isolation*) and Russia’s “friendly” control. **ALERT:** Certainly, Israel will have a defining say on the matter: Iran must not have “the bomb.”

II NIE Report. Recently, US “intelligence” pointed out that in 2003 Iran had stopped the “warhead” program (development). Can (should) that “new light” be trusted? Israel questions the report. They are right to do so. It seems to me that fissile material continues to be developed at a rapid pace—leading to a future “warhead.” That is unacceptable to the US and Israel. That should be unacceptable to the free world. The NIE report (130 pages) contains a footnote (lawyers love to read footnotes where the text might suffer critical changes). In the report, the footnote to the opening sentence is paramount. The main text states: “We judge with high confidence that in the fall 2003, Tehran halted its nuclear weapons program.” The complex footnote states (I paraphrase): the suspension of the program applied only to the fabrication of “warheads.” So, fissile material development continues. See, International Herald Tribune, December 7, 2008, at p. 8. Once fully developed, the “warhead” follows. How close is Iran to a “warhead”? The report claims that Iran may be able to produce sufficient highly enriched uranium to build the “warhead” by 2009. It affirms: a “warhead” by 2015 (for sure). **ALERT:** In my opinion, this is a very dangerous play of words. What will Israel do? (See IV below.)

III Danger. The free world should not accept Iran’s “warhead” danger. On the issue of the “warhead,” the report does not tell us how advanced Iran was when it (allegedly) suspended the program. If they were well ahead in the development, once they obtain enough highly enriched uranium they can finish the “warhead” right under the noses of the free world. What happens next? How do we actually know that the “warhead”

program is actually on hold? Is Iran (undercover) still working on it? If I remember correctly, every member of the UN Security Council has voted to force Iran to *stop* the uranium enrichment program, but they continue the deadly program. There is no real enforcement. This, per se, is a danger to humanity.

IV Israel. Israel parts with the US on Iran intelligence. Israel maintains that Iran's intent is military, not civilian. (They are right!) Israel believes that Iran wants the bomb and has resumed its nuclear weapons program. (They are right!) Ephraim Sneh, a retired Israeli general, says: "I consider it a threat to the international community and an existential threat to my country." See International Herald Tribune, December 12, 2007, p. 8. So, Israel (it hopes with a friendly US at its side) will prevent Iran from developing the terrible bomb. Israel contends that the American intelligence report will make it harder to persuade Iran to stop ("it is a gift"). Many UN resolutions remain frozen. Hence, regional security is at risk. I imagine that Israel will enforce the resolutions "if" the Security Council does not. I am sure that Israel will not permit Iran to develop the deadly bomb. Indeed, Iran is playing with fire, and they will eventually get burned—they must not develop the bomb.

V USA. What should the US do facing the prospects of Iran's nuclear bomb? Will the Americans remain Israel's best friend? In my opinion, Iran's bomb is not a partisan political issue. (In the presidential debates, we need to hear the aspirants' and eventual nominees' views.) It will not be just President Bush's responsibility because this process will not be short. Fortunately, Bush has kept the pressure on Iran: (a) disclose all details of nuclear weapons, (b) stop enriching uranium, and (c) embrace freedom and justice. He tells the people that the US is not against them. The Iran problem will reach into the pockets (or the handbags) of the *next* American president. He or she must be clear and strong because distrust will prevail. Is the answer much better contacts with Iran (read, *normalization*)? Persuasion is a powerful device when the parties deal in good faith. (The US, Russia, and China had a positive effect [I think] on North Korea's nuclear program.) Iran may accept it, too, if they are willing to join the union of Middle East nations and escape sanctions (*isolation*). But if fanatics prevail (or Putin's Russia becomes an obstacle), persuasion will not have a positive effect.

Conclusion: Force the hand of Iran, immediately, by engaging in powerful and united (US, UK, Russia, China, France, and Germany) diplomacy (dialogue). I suggest that free world leaders (Bush, Brown, Merkle, Sarkozy, and others) address the people of Iran directly: Let them know the advantages of joining the West, of regional stability, and of obtaining freedom and justice (post-Ahmadinejad). President Bush (and his successor) must remain strong: Iran must stop supporting and exporting violence (terrorism) that diminishes regional stability. Iran must stop aspiring to have the nuclear warheads. Iran must join the families of liberty and justice. (That will trigger new, better relations with the US.) But if diplomacy fails, a powerful and united international action is warranted: economic isolation and a blockade. In the meantime, Israel anxiously waits on the sidelines ready to act (alone) as it deems proper for its homeland security. We live in troubled (dangerous) times. So, we need a calm but firm new strategic policy towards

Iran—one that convinces that nation that it is to their advantage to join the West and other free nations. It must happen.