



# 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 and the Bomb

*The Globe and Mail, August 25.* A senior official said yesterday that Iran has cleared up all the questions surrounding its nuclear program. Unfortunately, the official was from Iran. The rest of the world has serious and growing doubts about Tehran's contention that its nuclear activities are purely peaceful. The International Atomic Energy Agency is still investigating how traces of enriched uranium that could be used for bomb-making found their way to Iranian nuclear sites, where they were detected by inspectors. The agency would also like to know why Iran is so interested in sophisticated centrifuges that can speed up the production of weapons-grade uranium. Iran has not been reassuring in either case. Given its record of nuclear cheating over many years, the international community cannot take it on faith that Iran's intentions are innocent. This is a totalitarian regime whose criminal and mendacious nature has been cruelly revealed in the case of Zahra Kazemi, the Iranian-Canadian photojournalist murdered after being arrested by authorities in Tehran. Its decision to push ahead with uranium enrichment despite the rising concern about its nuclear program only confirms its contempt for international rules. Unless Iran takes meaningful steps to show its nuclear program is peaceful, the IAEA should refer the case to the United Nations Security Council and put Iran on notice that the world will not stand by as it develops nuclear weapons.

### Iran may have bomb in 3 years

*Sunday Times, Aug. 22* - Iran has warned British officials that it could produce enough enriched uranium in a year for a nuclear weapon, significantly raising the stakes in its stand-off with the West. The claim was made during talks late last month between Iran and Britain, France and Germany but has only just come to light.

According to a high-ranking Washington diplomat, Tehran said that it was only months away from producing enough fissionable material for a bomb if it chose to, and only three years from making the device itself....It would signify that Iran is prepared to pull out of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty which obliges it to refrain from developing nuclear weapons, and implies that Tehran is at least two years closer to having the capability to build a nuclear bomb than many experts thought... The National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), an opposition group, was the first to reveal the existence of two suspicious nuclear sites - a heavy water plant at Arak in central Iran and a partly buried site at Natanz capable of housing 50,000 centrifuges for enriching uranium. Farid Soleimani, a member of the foreign affairs council of the NCRI, said Iran had nuclear capability far in advance of what it had publicly admitted.

### Iran must comply with international laws

*U.S. Department of State, White House Report, Aug. 19* - The United States continues to focus on the need for Iran to comply with



their international obligations, White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan told reporters Aug. 19 in Crawford, Texas....

When asked about a statement by Iranian Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani, hinting that Iran may launch a pre-emptive strike to protect its nuclear facilities, McClellan responded, "The Iranians say a lot of things. But what the Iranian government needs to do is end its pursuit of nuclear weapons. That's what our priority is when it comes to Iran." "Germany, France and the British are making it very clear to the Iranians, as well," he said, "They need to fully comply with their international obligations and abide by what they said they would do."

### **Time to deal with Tehran's nuclear ambitions**

**Investor's Business Daily, Aug. 20** - Tehran is warning it might hit the U.S. with a preemptive strike to protect its nuclear facilities. Surely this should remind us why we need a strong leader in Washington to keep rogue states from getting out of hand.

The nuclear clock is ticking. The civilized world has about three years, maybe less, to deal with Iran's atomic ambitions. After that, according to international intelligence, Iran will be a member of the nuclear club. The prospect makes us shudder... The prospect of our taking out Iran's nuclear capability by razing the Bushehr atomic power plant has strong appeal, though it couldn't be taken lightly... That doesn't mean we should avoid a confrontation, even if old friends like the French won't back us up. Iran's threats remind us of what we're dealing with in that part of the world and why we're fighting a war against terrorism. And let's not forget the role Tehran played in fomenting insurgents in Iraq, or the 9-11 panel's conclusion that Iran has links to al-Qaida.

### **Iran sanctioned if it does not live up to commitments on nuclear program**

**Voice of America, Aug. 21** – Afsheen Molavi, member of the New American Foundation in Washington says: "Referring Iran's case to the Security Council might cause the Islamic Republic to refrain from following up on nuclear weapons program. This issue has to be put forward to the Security Council so that Iran's reaction would become clear. Sanctioning Iran's economy will be a devastating strike. Iran has a young population... These people need jobs. The unemployment rate is 15 percent. Some independent economy experts estimate Iran's unemployment rate to be almost 25 percent... Because of all this, imposing sanctions against Iran's economy might produce results."

## Meddling in Iraq

### **Tehran leaders laud Najaf insurgents**

#### **Rafsanjani admires resistant "youngsters" of Najaf**

BBC Monitoring, *Aug. 23* -The chairman of the Expediency Council, speaking at a ceremony marking World Mosques' Week, has said: Saddam's regime, with a vast army of several million, a jaysh al-sha'bi [people's army in Arabic], collapsed in the face of a comprehensive attack. But the holy city of Al-Najaf is still standing with the resistance of a number of youngsters. The chairman of the Expediency Council added: If America turns all the towns into ruins, these people will turn up elsewhere and these deeds will leave a great disgrace in history for Washington.



### **Iran's bottom line helped by Iraqi chaos**

AFP *Aug. 22, Tehran* - Iran may want peace for Iraq, but the instability plaguing its war-ravaged neighbor is, for now, suiting the Islamic oil power's bottom line just fine.

Concerns about the violence in Iraq and unabated demand sent New York's main oil contract soaring above 49 dollars a barrel Friday for the first time -- and racing towards the symbolic 50-dollar mark."Given the increased revenues from crude exports, hiking oil prices will be to the benefit of Iran," Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh acknowledged last week...

The markets have shown particular alarm at activities by Shiite Muslim militiamen -- who Iraq's defense minister has accused Iran of aiding -- notably an attack on an oil pipeline and the torching of the offices and warehouses of the Southern Oil Company.

### **Muslims must use their might to counter US attack in Najaf**

*Mehr news agency, Aug. 21* – The Scholars Community of Qom's Religious Seminary issued a declaration, demanding all Muslims around the world to use all their might to counter US attacks on the sacred places (Najaf). The declaration reads in part: "We all look on to the zealous Muslim youth in Iraq and other Islamic countries to once again give their historical lesson to the invaders and throw them out of their land with disappointment.

### **Detained Iranian reporters engaged in sabotage operations in Iraq**

*Al-Raqib weekly, Aug. 21* - A high ranking Iraqi security official said: "Security agencies will soon reveal full details of the arrest of four Iranians who claimed to be reporters. The truth is that these four individuals were spying and sabotaging Iraq. Mustafa Hossein Daryan and Mohammad Rostam are still being interrogated. Supreme Security Agencies in Iraq will disclose complete details of investigations as well as the documents, passports, identification cards and other papers on Tuesday, September 24. The discovered documents and identification cards show that these individuals are reporters but they also have other documents and identification cards such as passports with alias names and checks from Iranian banks with large sums of money. The documents discovered from the four Iranians made the Iraqi police more suspicious and compelled the police to interrogate them and check their identification cards more attentively. It was thus found out that they actually were officials of the Iranian government."

### **Teheran two-times Straw by backing both sides**

*Daily Telegraph - Aug 21, 2004, By Anton La Guardia* The past fortnight in Najaf marks the end of the affair between Britain and Iran. British officials accuse Teheran of infidelity with Moqtada al-Sadr and of breaking its vow over nuclear weapons.

The question now is whether the sides maintain a cold but cordial relationship for the sake of their wider interests, or head for a dangerous divorce. The estrangement is a blow for Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, who has courted Teheran with passion despite warnings from American hardliners that it would all end in disaster. The breakdown happened over the summer. British officials who only weeks ago refused to accept US accusations that Iran was helping Iraqi insurgents no longer bother to hide their anger. The crisis over Iran's nuclear programme also came to a head over the summer, when Iran reneged on its agreement with three European countries - Britain, France and Germany - to suspend all uranium enrichment-related activity. Enrichment can be used to make either fuel for power stations, or fissile material for atomic weapons. The governing board of the International Atomic Energy Agency is due to discuss its next move in Vienna next month. The US, accusing Iran of trying to make nuclear weapons, wants it to be reported to the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions. In retrospect, Iran's brief detention of eight British Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel on the Shatt al-Arab waterway in June was the first sign of serious trouble. British officials at the time played down any link to the nuclear question. But it is probably no coincidence that the servicemen were held on the same day that Hassan Rowhani, the Iranian official charged with handling the nuclear crisis, wrote to the "EU 3" to announce that Iran would resume making and testing uranium enrichment centrifuges. On Wednesday the Iranian defence minister, Rear Adml Ali Shamkhani, said that the presence of US forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, far from being a threat to Teheran, meant the US troops were now "hostage" to Iran. One possibility is that Iran is supporting the Shia uprising to demonstrate this assertion - threatening to kill off the Iraqi interim government if Teheran is pushed too hard on the nuclear question. British officials say it is impossible to prove "there is an Iranian bullet in British casualties". But Sadr's Mahdi army has undoubtedly made an effort to intensify its campaign in the British-controlled sector. Basra, which has been

relatively quiet, has seen the deaths of four British soldiers since the end of June. Soon after becoming Foreign Secretary, Mr Straw seized on the September 11 attacks to try to transform Iran from a "rogue" regime into a friend of the West. He visited Iran five times in two years, so often that Iranian dissidents mocked him as "Ayatollah Straw". But nobody in the Foreign Office now expects another trip.

### **Mullahs fear a democratic neighbor**

VOA TV, Farsi edition, *Aug. 18* – Moqtada Sadr is Kazem Al-Hosseini Al-Haeri's lackey in Iraq. He is a cleric who lives in Iran and is close to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, leader of the Islamic Republic. Iraqi Defense Minister Hazim Shaalan says Iran-made weapons have been discovered in the hands of criminals who have obtained them via the Iranian border. Adnan Al-Zarouqi, governor of Najaf, says it is clear that Iran supports Al-Sadr's group. Ahmad Al-Rahim, member of the research institute the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington says the clerical regime in Iran intends to halt the shift toward democracy in Iraq and take measures to deviate it. Mr. Rahim says these measures include strengthening Moqtada Sadr, Iran's ideological ally, and the Hezbollah terrorist group. Hezbollah is the product of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and is now present in Iraq, where it recruits. Iran wants to create an unstable and unbalanced situation in Iraq. It doesn't want to have a democracy as its neighbor. It fears that if the Iranian people see it, they might demand democratic reforms even more powerfully.

## Exporting terrorism

### **Tehran's Terror**

New York Post Online, *Aug. 23* - Despite the 9/11 commission's findings of extensive Iranian-al Qaeda collaboration, intelligence officials continue to suffer from failures of imagination on Iran — insisting that because Sunni and Shia Islamists cannot cooperate, the links between al Qaeda and Iran, along with its proxy Hezbollah, are insubstantial... Iran and al Qaeda shared the goal of using terror to push the U.S. out of the Middle East, and Iran enabled al Qaeda by sharing its expertise. This is support for terrorism, clear and simple. And until Iran is recognized as the world's leading sponsor of terrorism and held accountable, the U.S. risks another tragic "failure of imagination."

### **Iran uses Syria to pass arms to terrorists, US Senator charges**

Radio Farda, *Aug. 20* - The Islamic government uses Syria as a hub for transporting weapons to anti-Israeli fighters of the Hezbollah in Lebanon, US Senator Tom Lantos, a member of the Senate foreign relations committee, told reporters in Amman, Jordan on Wednesday. We know that Iran transports arms to terrorists in southern Lebanon through the Damascus airport, Lantos said. One cannot claim to be fighting terrorism while supplying the terrorists. Lantos called for more control over the Syrian-Iraqi border in order to block the supply routes for terrorists.

### **Tehran regime warns U.S., Israel on pre-emptive strikes**

Daily Telegraph, *Aug. 19* - Iran warned America and Israel last night that it was ready to launch pre-emptive strikes to stop them attacking its nuclear facilities. Ali Shamkhani, the Iranian Defence Minister, said the presence of American forces in Iraq and Afghanistan was not a threat to Teheran. On the contrary, American soldiers were now "hostages" to Iran....In the latest outburst, Mr Shamkhani told the al-Jazeera satellite television network: "We will not sit (with our arms folded) to wait for what others will do to us. "Some military commanders in Iran are convinced that preventive operations which the Americans talk about are not their monopoly."America is not the only one present in the region. We are also present, from Khost to Kandahar in Afghanistan; we are present in the Gulf and we can be present in Iraq."

## Iranian talk of an attack on America

*The New York Sun, Aug. 18* - There are growing indications that Iran may be planning an attack on American soil. These indicators are not secret - they appear in speeches, newspaper articles, TV programs, and sermons in Iran by figures linked to the supreme leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and other government officials, all discussing potential Iranian attacks on America, which will subsequently lead to its destruction.... The secretary general of the Guardian Council, Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, appeared on Iran's Channel 1 TV on June 4 and said, "Every Muslim and every honorable man who is not a Muslim must stand against the Americans, English, and Israelis, and endanger their interests wherever they may be." When he added "They must not have security," thousands in the audience repeated chants of "Islam is victorious, America will be annihilated." On June 25, Mr. Jannati also led prayers and promised, "Anyone who confronted the revolution, the Imam [Khomeini], and our dedicated people eventually collapsed. America is the last one, and Allah willing it will collapse...".



## Deteriorating conditions of human rights

### Girl, 16, hanged in public in Iran

*Iran Focus, August 20. On Sunday, August 15*, a 16-year-old girl in the town of Neka, northern Iran, was executed. Atefeh Sahaleh was hanged in public on Simetry Street off Rah Ahan Street at the city center. The sentence was issued by the head of Neka's Justice Department and subsequently upheld by the mullahs' Supreme Court and carried out with the approval of Judiciary Chief Mahmoud Shahrudi. In her summary trial, the teenage victim did not have any lawyer and efforts by her family to recruit a lawyer was to no avail. Atefeh personally defended herself. She told the religious judge, Haji Rezaii, that he should punish the main perpetrators of moral corruption not the victims. The criminal judge personally pursued Atefeh's death sentence, beyond all normal procedures and finally gained the approval of the Supreme Court. After her execution Rezai said her punishment was not execution but he had her executed for her "sharp tongue".

### 27.3 % of Iranian people want regime change

*Fars News Agency, Aug. 21* - According to an opinion poll among 4,301 individuals on May 21, 64.8% of those queried demanded reform, another 27.3% demanded fundamental change of the present conditions and 7.9 per cent defend the status quo and the current conditions in the country.

### Political prisoner sentenced to execution

*Radio Farda, Aug. 21* - According to a statement issued by the Komele Organization, Mr. Ismael Mohammadi, a political prisoner and a Kurd, is sentenced to execution by the 32<sup>nd</sup> branch of the High Court of Cassation. Ismael Mohammadi who is 38 years old is from Bokan and has a wife and five children.