



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.

October 22, 2004

No. 127

Nuclear proliferation

Iran refuses to end uranium enrichment on eve of EU nuclear talks

Agence France Presse, Oct. 20, Tehran - Iran refused to give up on producing enriched uranium in defiance of the West and said dialogue was the only way to resolve the nuclear standoff, on the eve of talks with the EU's Big Three. The Islamic republic is ready to cooperate with the international community over its nuclear programme provided its "rights" are respected, President Mohammad Khatami said Wednesday. "We demand respect for our rights to have nuclear technology for civilian use and that no-one tries to deprive us of this," he said after a cabinet meeting. "We are ready to cooperate and believe that dialogue and negotiation are the only ways to reach an understanding." The Iranian Atomic Energy Organization chief was more blunt, warning that Tehran would reject a European proposal aimed at defusing the standoff if it did not respect its rights to master nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

"Civil nuclear technology... is one of the legitimate rights of any country. We do not accept any proposition which does not respect our rights," Gholamreza Aghazadeh said.

US frown on reported European nuclear offer to Iran

AFP, Oct. 20, Washington - The United States said it would be "concerned" by Iran's acquisition of any new nuclear technology, signaling opposition to a reported European offer to give Tehran a light-water reactor it proves it is not secretly developing atomic weapons. The State Department said the transfer of such technology would be problematic given Iran's past performance and failure to comply with international demands to come clean on details of its nuclear program, which the United States maintains is a cover for acquiring atomic arms.

"We have long had concerns about Iran's acquisition of nuclear capability, of nuclear technology, because for many years we have seen a confirmed pattern of noncompliance with safeguards," spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters. "We fundamentally have concerns about Iran acquiring more nuclear technology and capability."

New test of Shahab-3 missile

Reuters, Oct. 20, Tehran - Concerns about Tehran's nuclear ambitions have been heightened by its recent efforts to upgrade its medium-range ballistic missile the Shahab-3. Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani said Iran tested Wednesday an improved Shahab-3 with greater accuracy. Khatami said he did not know what the EU trio was proposing. However, U.S. and European officials say it contains an offer to help Iran build a new light-water nuclear power reactor and a guaranteed supply of reactor fuel in return for Tehran's pledge to give up uranium enrichment...The head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization Gholamreza Aghazadeh said Iran has already submitted its own proposal on how to resolve the dispute to the Europeans. "We are waiting for their reaction," he said.



Reining in Iran's nuke-program needs ingenuity

Los Angeles Times, Oct. 20, by Patrick Clawson, Washington

- Iran is known to be deploying long-range missiles that would be militarily useless unless equipped with a nuclear warhead. And it has insisted that it will continue to enrich uranium in defiance of a request by the United Nations to stop.



What's more, President Bush and Sen. John F. Kerry both have said an Iranian nuclear bomb would be unacceptable to the United States; Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's rhetoric is even tougher. Given all this, what are the prospects that US military force — or Israeli military force with tacit or public US backing — will be used to stop Iran's nuclear program? The first hope is that Iran's program can still be stopped via diplomacy. It is not out of the question that Iran will step back from its nuclear program — scaling it back and slowing it down, if not dismantling it entirely — if confronted by the international community with a stark choice: Penalties if the nuclear program continues, benefits if it is stopped. But such a choice, of course, is effective only if Iran believes that the penalties for proceeding will be serious — and it is hard to come up with a set of meaningful and plausible penalties that do not involve the military. Comprehensive sanctions like those imposed on Iraq seem unlikely. Who would propose banning Iran's 2.5 million barrels a day of oil exports when oil prices are so high? So is military force a realistic option? An air raid on Iran's nuclear facilities, similar to Israel's 1981 raid on Iraq's Osirak reactor, would face many problems. First, we probably do not know about all of Iran's many facilities. What we do know shows that Iran's nuclear program is physically dispersed and designed to be rebuilt after raids. We can hope that Iran would react to a raid by deciding that its nuclear program was not worth the cost, but if Iran decided instead to rebuild, then our raid might only slow the program by two years. Plus, if we struck, Iran could retaliate by laying mines in and around the Strait of Hormuz at the entrance to the Gulf. That could drive world oil prices even higher. And then there's the fact that we could end up paying a high price in international public opinion for a raid against Iran, jeopardizing the willingness of other governments to join with us in putting pressure on Iran. In other words, a raid on Iran's nuclear facilities might buy some time, but only at a considerable cost. An invasion of Iran is even less appealing than an Osirak-style raid. There is the obvious cost in lives and dollars, as well as the sobering lesson from Iraq about postwar stability. What America can do — both on its own and with allies — is to contain and deter Iran. Steps to this end could include increasing US military presence around Iran; putting nuclear weapons on US ships off Iran's coast; reinforcing the region's protection against missiles and extending an explicit nuclear umbrella to those threatened by Iran. None of these measures is as dramatic as an air raid, but as a package they could show Tehran that Iranians will be less secure if it pursues nuclear weapons. Containment and deterrence can be used to press Iran to accept a diplomatic solution, and they also enhance the ability of the US to apply military force later if need be. In short, there are a wide range of military options to step up pressure on Iran if we think creatively. We do not need to start by dropping bombs.

Khamenei urges stepped up nuke work

World Net Daily, Oct. 18 - Presidential candidate John Kerry's plan to provide Iran with the nuclear fuel it wants in exchange for a promise to forgo efforts to enrich the material for the development of weapons of mass destruction was rejected out of hand this weekend by the Shiite regime. Iran says it will reject any proposal to drop uranium enrichment...

Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has urged his country's weapons developers to step up work on making a nuclear bomb, a U.S. official recently said, according to Geostrategy-Direct, the global intelligence news service.

Mullahs to launch first spy satellite by spring

[Ha'aretz, Oct. 18](#) - Iran will launch its first spy satellite in March or April 2005, Uzi Rubin, head of the Defense Ministry department responsible for ballistic missile defense, predicted over the weekend...Iran is currently developing three satellites. Two are small, weighing 20 to 60 kg, and are expected to be launched mainly as a test. The third weighs 170 kg and will carry a telescopic camera for espionage purposes. That is the one that Rubin expects to be launched next spring.

International Front against Fundamentalist Mullahs

People Power, Iranian-Style

[The Wall Street Journal, Oct. 18, Commentary by Paulo Casaca, excerpts](#) -- Some in Europe and in the U.S. -- oblivious to the evident failure of years of "constructive engagement" with Iran that only strengthened the more radical faction of the theocratic clique -- insist on continuing on the same path. But Iran's mullahs are proven masters in the art of taking the carrot and asking for more. If we don't change course, we may end up with nothing better than a promise of compliance that Iran -- like North Korea in the 1990s -- could secretly break. This is precisely what Iran did when the "EU-3" foreign ministers visited Tehran last October and struck an agreement with the Iranian leaders to suspend uranium enrichment. We now know that the promise was never respected. The Iranian leaders' intransigence is to a large extent based on their perception of a widening gulf between the U.S. and Europe. This, Iranian strategists declare, creates a "security margin" for Tehran. They seem convinced that the trans-Atlantic divide will prevent any serious action against the Islamic Republic. The hard-line ayatollahs already ridicule the very idea of Security Council sanctions. In their view, trade rather than other concerns ultimately determine Europe's position on Iran, while the U.S. is bogged down in Iraq. This situation has provided Tehran with an exceptional window of opportunity that it hopes will be wide enough to take its nuclear weapons project beyond the point of no return. As long as the regime remains in power, Iran will continue to be a source of instability and terrorism. Europe has a grave moral and political responsibility to adopt a new, firm approach on Iran. The failure of past diplomatic and economic sanctions imposed on Iraq is no argument to foreclose the use of effective pressure against Iran, even though the current state of global oil markets would complicate any decision. But the West must start sending the right signals if its resolve is to be taken seriously in Tehran. It must stop sending trade missions to Iran, as both the U.K. and France recently did. And it must stop staging big diplomatic events to promote ties with the Iranian regime, as Germany did. There is, however, a much more effective way to obliterate the Iranian rulers' "margin of terror" -- what their "security margin" really means -- and that is to support the Iranian people's democratic aspirations. Western governments must speak out more forcefully in support of the millions of Iranians, particularly the young and women, who want to see a democratic, secular and pluralist government replace the current theocracy. It is my view, shared by more than 1,000 members of parliaments in Europe, that our first political step should be to end the international blacklisting of the mullahs' principal opposition movement -- the Iranian Mujahedeen. Many in the U.S. Congress and prominent voices in international law endorse the call. Senior U.S. officials confirm that an exhaustive, 16-month investigation by several U.S. government agencies, including the State Department and the FBI, has exonerated members of the Iranian Mujahedeen of terrorist charges. Officials on both sides of the Atlantic are on the record as saying that the only reason why the group was put on the U.S. terrorism list in the first place was to send a "goodwill gesture" to the Iranian regime. Let Iran's clerical rulers know that their "security margin" is history. That's the only way to save the world from cataclysmic options a few months, or years, down the road.

[Mr. Casaca, a Socialist Euro-MP from Portugal, is president of the European Parliament's delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.](#)

Exporting terrorism and Meddling in Iraq

Tehran's illegal TV, radio stations in Iraq

Al-Bo'ad Al-Rabaa, Oct. 18 - Iraq's national intelligence chief Mohammed al-Shahwani has accused 27 members of Iran's Baghdad embassy of espionage and using a Shiite group for an assassination campaign that has seen 18 intelligence agents killed since mid-September... He said two Iranians were arrested in a raid last month, one of whom directed an illegal television station. He explained that Iran runs five illegal radio stations that broadcast from Baghdad.

US warns Iran against any support for Zarqawi

AFP, Oct. 18 - The United States warned Iran against providing any type of support to Al-Qaeda-linked foreign militant Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi and his Tawhid wal Jihad (Unity and Holy War) group, saying such backing would be a "very, very serious matter." The State Department declined to comment on allegations of an Iran-Zarqawi link, first claimed last week by Iraq's interim national intelligence chief Mohammed al-Shahwani and then reported by Newsweek magazine, but said Washington remained deeply concerned about Tehran's activity in Iraq. "All I would be able to say (about the accusations) is that we have generally been very concerned about some of the reports of Iranian activity in Iraq," spokesman Richard Boucher said.

Following Zarqawi's footsteps in Iran

Newsweek, Oct. 17 - In the vice presidential debate, Dick Cheney said that after U.S. forces attacked Afghanistan seeking to roust Osama bin Laden, al-Zarqawi "migrated to Baghdad." But other U.S. officials say the Jordanian terrorist's contacts in neighboring Iran are probably more extensive than any dealings he had with Saddam. Sources close to Jordanian intelligence say al-Zarqawi has gone back and forth across the Iran-Iraq border since Saddam's regime fell. According to a Jordanian intelligence briefing made available to NEWSWEEK, al-Zarqawi crossed the Iranian border after being wounded in Afghanistan in late 2001, was treated, then stayed in an Iranian safe house in the same town as fugitive Qaeda leaders.

Demonstrations and protest in Iran

Students protested for improvement of food quality

News Network, Oct. 17, Iran - Students of Tehran's Melli University came out to the streets and blocked Velenjak Boulevard demanding improvement of food quality, especially during the holy month of Ramadan. Student protesters first gathered outside the Melli University's dormitory and then wen to the streets to block Velenjak Avenue, causing heavy traffic by setting fire to paper and wood.



Deteriorating conditions of human rights

Five more people executed in northern Iran

IranFocus Oct. 20, Tehran - Four men were hanged in the town of Sari in the northern province of Mazandaran on charges of armed violence. The men, identified only by their first names, Mohammad-Reza, Hamid-Reza, Hassan and Reza, were executed after the Supreme Islamic Court upheld the original judge's verdict. The chief prosecutor of Mazandaran province, Mohammad-Reza Foulad-Ameli, said the four men were part of a secret armed

group. They were arrested after a year-long surveillance operation by the security forces, he said. Another man was also hanged in the city of Qazvin. He was accused of murder. Courts in Mazandaran Province have increased issuing death sentences for those accused of a variety of crimes.

Student union leader sentenced to flogging, prison time

Iran Focus Oct. 20, Tehran, - The secretary of the student union of Azad University in Iran's Central province was sentenced to 40 lashes, one year in prison and fined one million rials in the town of Arak. Soroush Farhadian was charged with 'spreading false propaganda' against the regime. His sentence has reportedly been suspended. Farhadian had written about the extent of voter apathy during the election period of Iran's seventh Majlis. He had also been very vocal of the regime's press censorship.

Execution of a man and a woman

Aftab daily, Oct. 19, Iran – Iran's Supreme Court upheld the stoning sentence of a woman by the name of Sima and execution of a man by the name of Mohammad Reza.

Death for "apostasy against Islam"

Asia News, Oct. 18, Tehran - Hamid Pourmand is a Protestant minister of the Assemblies of God Church. He converted from Islam several years ago. Since September he has been held in prison at an undisclosed location and under Iranian law he can be put to death for "apostasy against Islam"... The September raid against the council of the Assemblies of God comes in the wake of several arrests of Christians in northern Iran in May and June. In July 1994, Mehdi Dibaj, another minister of the Assemblies of God Church who was also a convert from Islam, was killed after spending nine years in prison for refusing to abjure his Christian faith and return to Islam.

13-year-old's stoning sentence revoked

Radio Farda, Oct. 17 – Iran retreated from its stoning sentence of a 13-year-old girl in Marivan. According to an official news agency, the accused girl is sentenced to "prison with physical punishment."

Hanging of five people

Kayhan daily, Oct. 19 - Five people were hanged in Sari and Qazvin. Those hanged in the city of Sari were identified as Mohammad Reza, Hamid Reza, Hossein and Reza.



Feature

Iran ran away with the bomb

The Washington Times *Washington Times, Oct. 19, by Arnold Biechman* - Well, the talks and meetings will go on and on to the next Ramadan and the Ramadan after that and Iran will go on working on its nuclear arms program until it has the Bomb. There will be no deal with Iran no matter how costly nuclear bomb manufacture might be. With oil prices going through the roof, money is not a problem now or in the foreseeable future...Incentives? Hah. Iran is the second-largest producer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and holds 10 percent of the world's proven oil reserves and the second-largest (after Russia) natural gas reserves. Incentives? Hah. Iran earns an estimated \$900 million for every \$1 per barrel increase in the price of its oil. And with oil up in the \$50+ per barrel range, Iran is awash in cash and can do what it wants as bomb maker and bomb supplier. Incentives? The only incentives that might matter would be the threat of sanctions. Who has the will to push for sanctions? France, Germany? Hah. Who has the power, let alone the will, to enforce sanctions if they ever came to a Security Council vote? As far as I can see, it's all going Iran's way. Iran is stronger today

than a decade ago...Iran is today the dominant land power in the Middle East militarily and economically. As leader of Shi'ite Islam, Iran must be delighted at the war in Iraq. With its new missiles, Iran has shown it could project its power far from home, and not only by financing the Hezbollah terror squads. The Iranian people may be unhappy with the clerical dictatorship but there is little they can now do about it. Far more serious, Iran undertook its nuclear program in September 2002 under a decree of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and is on its way to being a nuclear power if not one already. And as far as I can see, nobody can stop Iran despite a resolution by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) adopted last September which called upon Iran "immediately [to] suspend all enrichment-related activities." According to an Iranian exile resistance group, Iran has secret sites all over the country engaged in nuclear activity. One secret site at Arak, about 154 miles southwest of Tehran, produces heavy water and plutonium. A sufficiently powerful heavy water reactor can be used to turn uranium into bomb-usable plutonium without requiring enrichment facilities. In Isfahan, there is the Center of Nuclear Research. There are other sites about which little is known. These plants are capable of producing three nuclear weapons a year. Iran seems unstoppable. It has lots of scientific talent at home and abroad for hire, lots of theological-imperial ambitions, lots of money, lots of eager sellers and money lenders in the European Union and in Russia. And that's how wars begin.

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