

USADI Dispatch

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USADI Commentary

EU's Appeasement of Tehran Undercuts Trans-Atlantic Unity

It seems rather doubtful that President Bush's current European tour could bridge the trans-Atlantic gap with respect to Tehran's nuclear weapons program and the overall Iran policy. The EU's big-3, France, Germany, and Britain, would be naive to expect the United States to join the EU's fellowship of appeasement of Iran's ruling regime.

The EU's approach has appropriately been viewed by many in Washington as a Chamberlainesque appeasement of the mullahs, bolstering their tyrannical rule rather than dissuading them from continued suppression of dissent or advancing their nuclear program.

The EU has labored to explain away its approach in terms of a "realist" view of the Iran's political landscape, blaming its failure not on Tehran's continued belligerence but on Washington's refusal to join a charade billed as nuclear diplomacy with Tehran rulers. The effort has been futile judging from the firm tone and substance of remarks by the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during her European visit earlier this month.

The latest attempt at justifying EU's Iran policy came last week by a member of the French Senate in the International Herald Tribune. Mr. Jean François-Poncet wrote that the EU's big-3 are negotiating with the mullahs "not because of appeasement or weakness" but "because they believe that Iran aspires to escape from its economic and political isolation and is prepared to pay a high price to do so." This shows how flawed the EU's view of Tehran is. Iran's economic woes are due to endemic corruption running in all layers of the Tehran's officialdom not due to a lack of foreign trade. The country is flushed with money from higher oil-prices.

Rather than admitting to the futility of diplomatic negotiations with a regime, which is the "most active state sponsor of terrorism" and runs a reign of terror at home, Mr. Poncet opined that an agreement would be reached "only if the United States becomes involved in the process, directly or indirectly."

Unaware that there were by-partisan initiatives both in the US Senate and the House of Representatives to tighten the existing sanction regimes against the nuclear-craved Tehran, he then pleaded for "at least a partial lifting of the American embargo, which prevents Europe from delivering the equipment, notably the Airbus, and the advanced technologies that Iran wants."

The Europeans are using the pretext of helping Iran's economy to secure lucrative trade with mullahs. French dailies wrote this week that the Total-ELF-Fina oil giants had a net profit of \$11bn in 2004, the largest profit by any oil company in the world this year.

The EU should not expect Washington to accept this absurd logic, which only empowers a rogue regime to have better access to cash and technology to advance its nuclear weapons program, finance its terror network in the Middle East and improve its dreadful machinery of suppression at home.

The strategic choice by EU's big-3 in regards to policy toward Iran can be summed up thus: appease the mullahs; discount the democracy movement seeking regime change and blacklist and even suppress the democratic opposition abroad, as the French government did two weeks ago by canceling a would-be largest rally of anti-regime Iranians abroad.

Washington cannot be a party to this dangerous and shameful approach. Indeed, there are signs of a rude awakening in Washington to this danger. Acknowledging the past errors in U.S. foreign policy that viewed support for human rights in "distant lands" contrary to its interests, the President Bush stated in his inauguration speech last month that "America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one... Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation. It is the honorable achievement of our fathers. Now it is the urgent requirement of our nation's security, and the calling of our time."

The US Alliance for Democratic Iran (USADI), is an independent, non-profit organization, which aims to advance a US policy on Iran that will benefit America's interests, through supporting Iranian people's aspirations for a democratic, secular, and peaceful government, free of tyranny, fundamentalism, weapons of mass destruction, and terrorism. The USADI is not affiliated with any government agencies, political groups or parties.

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The Los Angeles Times

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Iranian Exiles Protest Tehran and Its Nuclear Agenda

BERLIN - More than 2,000 Iranian exiles from across Europe rallied in Berlin on Thursday to protest against Tehran's conservative Islamic government and criticize its nuclear ambitions as a dangerous pursuit that could lead to U.S. military intervention.

The demonstration quickly spun into a saga of legal maneuverings and conspiracy theories. Before the rally was to begin, Berlin authorities canceled it, saying it had been partly organized by an Iranian group linked to terrorism. A court overturned the ban, and protesters, many of whom had reportedly been detained for hours at airports and train stations, streamed through the rainy streets.

"The regime in Iran is terrified. The ruling clerics know these are their last days, and they tried to stop this democratic demonstration," said Shokrani Taheri, handing out fliers amid police officers at the Brandenburg Gate, where the march began. "Tehran has made deals with the governments of Europe. There's business and oil, and the Europeans don't want to lose them."...

Worried that their voices may be drowned out by international developments, Iranians in the diaspora are lobbying for the overthrow of the Tehran government through sanctions and support of internal opposition groups.

Some demonstrators complained that European negotiations with Iran had done little to improve the country's human rights record or derail its nuclear program. They said that although they opposed a U.S. military strike, they were encouraged by the tough language directed at Tehran by President Bush during his State of the Union address last week and by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice this week, although Rice has said that an attack on Iran is "not on the agenda" at this time.

"The European appeasement approach has been futile and counterproductive. It gives Iran only carrots," said Mitra Ghafranifar, who said she left Iran and settled in Germany 18 years ago, after her brothers were executed for sympathizing with groups seeking to topple the regime. "But at this time, the last thing Iranians need is an invasion by a foreign power. We don't want the mullahs to have justifications for cracking down on the people."

Kheirat Ahad stood amid the crackle of loudspeakers as the paint on placards ran in the drizzle. Like thousands of Iranians from across Europe, he spent his morning in confusion, being told the rally was on, then off, then on...

"We are against Iran's nuclear bomb project," said Ahad, who moved from Iran to Germany in 1991. "We are against European appeasement. We are against U.S. military intervention. The change must come from within Iran itself. This is what we are here to support."

Germany's Interior Ministry said the rally, organized by the National Council of Resistance of Iran, would help support another organization, the People's Mujahedin of Iran...

Western Europe, led by Germany, France and Britain, is attempting to persuade Iran to halt uranium enrichment, and they don't want their perceived endorsement of a rally by exiles to undermine negotiations. Last week, the French government banned a rally in Paris. The exiles then moved it to Berlin....

Newsweek

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Tehran: Guess Who's Trying to Infiltrate Iraq?

Fresh intel suggests that Tehran is trying to expand its influence over whatever government emerges in post-election Iraq. According to U.S. officials familiar with the latest intelligence, the Iranian government has been secretly directing its agents inside Iraq to plant themselves in influential positions throughout the Iraqi government—into agencies that handle economic affairs, like the ministries of Oil, Public Works and Finance, as well as departments like the Interior Ministry that handle national security.

The Iranians also are directing their agents to infiltrate Iraqi security agencies on the "working level" by taking jobs in regional or local government offices and particularly local police forces. According to the most pessimistic U.S. analysts, the ayatollahs' ultimate goal: "Taking over the government of Iraq." A less pessimistic view is that the latest intel merely shows an ongoing campaign of "classical espionage" by Tehran against Iraq.

U.S. government sources say a significant number of intel reports have recently documented the Iranian covert-action campaign and that the reports include internal Iranian government discussions about how Tehran's agents in Iraq are being deployed.

Many of the Iranian agents in question, the intel reports say, are members of the Badr Corps, a paramilitary affiliate of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), a political party with longtime Iranian ties that is one of the principal partners in the coalition of Shiite parties that won the largest number of seats in the new Iraqi constitutional assembly. U.S. analysts now believe the corps is riddled with agents controlled by Iranian intelligence. U.S. officials note that most of the parties and politicians who won biggest in last month's Iraqi elections have historical ties to Tehran.