

USADI Dispatch

A publication of the U.S. Alliance for Democratic Iran

Volume 1, No. 50

Thursday, October 14, 2004

USADI Commentary

Wages of Appeasement

For more than two decades the "realists" in the foreign policy establishment have had a huge, and in retrospect negative, influence on the US policy toward Iran. The perilous nuclear brinkmanship Iran has waged on the world is a direct consequence of the appeasement policy.

Vacillating between engagement and containment, formulating policy based on the notion of cultivating "moderates" or "pragmatists" and ignoring Tehran's role in the bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983 and the Khobar Towers in Riyadh in 1996 have contributed to Iran becoming a clear and imminent danger to regional peace and our security.

In the view of many of these "realist" policy experts, the United States' "hostile" attitude toward the Iranian theocracy and not the depraved terrorist nature of the regime account for Tehran's despicable conduct. They devote a great deal of their time to justify Tehran's rogue behavior, its human rights abuses, nuclear weapons drive and sponsorship of terrorism.

Now that Tehran is hell-bent on developing the A-bomb, many of these "realists," rather than acknowledging the failure of their wrong-headed approach, are again proffering a new round of engagement to reach a nuclear "grand bargain" sweetened with lots of "incentives" for Tehran. However packaged, such a deal would amount to no more than appeasing the fundamentalist rulers of Iran.

Meanwhile, the "authoritative interlocutors" of such a nuclear grand bargain are busy with the public execution of Iranians including teenage girls. According to official Iranian media, more than 120 people have been executed since January. The heinous execution of 16-year-old girl in August drew international outrage. Reports from Iran say that the clerical regime is planning to stone to death a 13-year-old girl on the charge of adultery when in fact she was a rape victim.

In a now familiar response to its critics, Tehran on Wednesday accused the European Union countries of committing "blatant human rights violations" and said it "expects European countries to take positive actions towards improving human rights."

On the Iraq front, Tehran has increased its subversive campaign against the nascent Interim Iraqi government and the US-led coalition forces. Iraq's national intelligence chief Mohammed al-Shahwani told reporters that Iran had used its embassy in Baghdad to assassinate his Ministry's staff. He said that following raids on Iranian safe houses in Baghdad, his Ministry has uncovered a "treasure trove" of documents linking Iran to the killing of Iraqi intelligence agents by members of the Badr Corps, which is affiliated with the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI).

Earlier this week, the *Washington Times* quoted Ayatollah Jalal Ganje'i, a prominent Iranian dissident affiliated with the Paris-based National Council of Resistance of Iran, as saying that up to 800 clerics and theology students from Iran are in the process of infiltrating Iraqi cities in time for the holy month of Ramadan.

"The religious leaders, dispatched by the Islamic Propaganda Organization, plan to use the holy month to propagate militant Islamic views, he said, with the goal of strengthening Iraqi political groups whose philosophy and aims coincide with those of Iran's theocratic regime," Ganje'i told the *Washington Times*.

Iranian officials are cunningly trying to extract as much concessions as they can from the G-8 countries on the eve of their meeting to discuss Iran's nuclear weapons program. Reuters quoted a Western diplomat as saying that Iran "might be willing" to give up its uranium enrichment capabilities in exchange for an "assurance of the status quo" in Iran meaning no international support for the campaign of Iranian people against tyranny. We must call their bluff and firmly reject these dirty ploys. The clerical regime has unwittingly revealed that its Achilles' Heel is "regime change." This is exactly what we must pursue in order to have any leverage in dealing with Iran's nuclear intransigence.

With Iran working round-the-clock to destabilize Iraq, the likelihood of democracy flourishing in that country is quite remote so long as the big neighbor to the east remains in the hands of fundamentalists. Similarly, the threat of a nuclear-armed, theocratic Iran would subside only when a democratic and secular government is established in Iran.

After a quarter century of ruling Iran with an iron fist, the fanatical clerics are not about to abandon what has kept them in power so far: repression at home and crisis making abroad. No amount of concessions and incentives would dissuade the mullahs. We must abandon the notion of engagement and all of its aliases, including a "grand bargain" or "direct dialogue," and unambiguously throw our diplomatic and political weight behind the Iranian people's two decade of struggle against the clerical regime.

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.

1201 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20004
Tel: 202-661-4675, Fax: 202-318-0402, E-mail: dispatch@usadIran.org

New York Sun (Editorial)

October 13, 2004

Rewards for Iran?

The press is full of trial balloons with respect to proposals for Europe or America to offer "incentives" for Iran agreeing to stop work on a nuclear weapon. The New York Times reported yesterday that "The package would lift a ban on exports to Iran of certain badly needed civilian aircraft parts, without which its fleet of civilian airliners has been virtually grounded."

One of the lessons of September 11 is that civilian aircraft in the hands of terrorists can do considerable damage. This is a point so obvious that it is painful to have to point it out. On what grounds does an officially designated terrorist regime get help from their target countries in flying civilian airliners? If the Europeans who are negotiating with the Iranians do not grasp this essential point, certainly the people of New York do.

Beyond that, it will be important in considering any proposed deal with Iran to focus on the fact that Iran's nuclear ambitions are not at the heart of America's dispute with Tehran. After all, India, Pakistan, Israel, and France all have nuclear weapons and America has full diplomatic and economic relations with them.

There are a host of other issues on the table with Iran: its human rights record that includes executing a Canadian journalist, jailing student dissidents, and persecuting Jews, among others; its financial and logistical support for radical Islamist terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah that engage in suicide bombing attacks in Israel that kill Americans and Israelis; its harboring of Al Qaeda terrorists; and its aid to anti-American forces in Iraq.

Even were a deal reached in which the Iranians promised progress on all those fronts, there is no guarantee that the Iranians would not cheat on such a deal. Iraq cheated on its United Nations-supervised oil-for-food and disarmament arrangement. North Korea cheated on the nuclear disarmament deal that it cut with an overly credulous Clinton administration.

Count us as skeptical that America or its allies should send nuclear fuel or civilian airplane parts or anything else useful to Iran - other than aid to its democratic opposition - so long as the regime there is aiding and harboring terrorists and oppressing internal opposition...

Voice of America

October 13, 2004

Human Rights Violations on the Rise in Iran

An Iranian-American human rights group says the Iranian government has stepped up its campaign against pro-democracy dissidents, women and minorities with the staging of some 120 public hangings, and the arrest and imprisonment of more than 40 journalists.

Members of the National Coalition of Pro-Democracy Advocates say that in the past year, the Islamic fundamentalist regime has been taking extreme measures to silence reform efforts.

The non-profit group cites as evidence of the government's tactics an Amnesty International report of the public execution of a 16-year-old girl for "acts incompatible with chastity." Atefeh Rajabi was reportedly hanged in the Northern city center of Neka on August 15.

Iranian authorities have also detained journalist and rights advocate Emadeddin Baghi and seized his passport at Tehran airport. As a result, Mr. Baghi is unable to come to New York this week to accept an award for civil courage.

Haydar Akbari is president of the National Coalition. He says human rights violations have increased since Iran's Islamic hardliners won control of the 290-member parliament by a landslide in the February 2004 elections.

"They closed the whole atmosphere of freedom regarding even the freedom of clothing and scarves, freedom of music, CDs, DVDs," he said. "The atmosphere is totally different from last year. Since January, more than 100 people were openly hanged, and many journalists, many writers, many intellectuals have been imprisoned and tortured."

Mohammed Alafchi, president of the New York Iranian-American Association, says that as the United Nations' General Assembly begins its sessions, his organization is trying to bring media attention to the escalation of human rights abuses.

"The hardliners are grabbing all the powers from all different parts of the country and they are consolidating their powers, and they are stepping up their campaign against any freedom that people have," he added.

Last November, a key United Nations committee approved a Canadian-drafted resolution rebuking Iran for human rights abuses, including torture, suppression of free speech and discrimination against women and minorities.

VOA was unable to get a response to the coalition's charges from the Iranian mission to the United Nations. But in the past, spokesmen for the Iranian government have routinely rejected such criticism, saying it fully supports the human rights of its citizens.