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USADI Commentary

Appeasement of Mullahs in Iran: Dangerous and Ineffectual

The European Union's blatant appeasement of the terrorist regime ruling Iran is deplorable and the nuclear "grand bargain" it has offered Tehran could very well have strategic and regional security repercussions.

Striking similar to the Neville Chamberlain's initiative in 1938 to placate the Nazi Germany, the EU's "dream offer" to Iran will only embolden the mullahs to demand even more concessions from the EU and continue their rogue behavior.

Yesterday, the second round of talks with Iran ended with Tehran's rejection of the core demand of the EU's proposal: the immediate and indefinite halt to uranium enrichment. Tehran's tactic of prolonging the so-called diplomatic track was in full display when its nuclear point man Hossein Moussavian told reporters, "Iran could take months to agree to the EU request since the offer was riddled with ambiguities and must be more balanced." It should come as no surprise that an Iranian diplomat present at the talks said, "the negotiations were very constructive for Iran."

Following their now familiar pattern, the regime leaders and its senior officials, speaking with many voices, feed the international media with contradictory statements, never authoritatively or decisively taking a clear stance.

Increasingly confident in light of the EU's stance, Tehran has hardened its position in the nuclear brinkmanship it has waged on the world and in recent weeks it has announced the operation of new nuclear-related facilities. Now, Tehran appears to be in the driver's seat. As such, EU's reckless approach has bolstered Iran's nuclear arms program.

The Washington-based Nonproliferation Policy Education Center (NPEC) warned this week that the nuclear technology the EU has offered Iran could indeed help it make an atomic bomb, not prevent it.

The EU's appeasement of an innately outlaw regime will not defuse the serious nuclear threat posed by Iran. It would also have catastrophic consequences for U.S. security and regional stability by unwittingly facilitating Tehran's nuclear drive.

Engagement is an inherently dangerous policy when it comes to dealing with terrorist, totalitarian states like Iran for it would encourage them to continue their behavior and demand even more concessions when they see their outlaw conduct is economically and politically rewarded.

It was just last year that the EU's Big-3, France, Germany, and Britain, were trumpeting their nuclear agreement with Iran as sign of success for use of diplomacy in dealing with rouge states.

That was a year ago. During this period there was no shortage of talks or leniency in dealing with Tehran. Still, Tehran continued its campaign of cheat-and-conceal, violating the word and spirit of the agreement and has had plenty of time to push its clandestine nuclear weapons program forward and from all indications is very close to the point of nuclear no return.

Intrinsically and structurally incapable of real change, the mullahs' regime lacks long-term stability and legitimacy. Ensuring its permanence has been the driving force of its domestic and foreign policy since coming to power in 1979.

Contrary to the contention of Tehran's apologists in the EU, Iran's two-decade long nuclear drive is not a part of a defensive doctrine to deal with a "dangerous neighborhood" or "legitimate security concerns" in the aftermath of the Iraq war. It is a core component of Tehran's strategy of survival and expanding its fundamentalist Islam elsewhere. It stems from the depraved and rogue nature of the regime.

As quoted in the *Middle East Defence News* of July 22, 1991, Iran's powerful former president, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, told a gathering of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps in October 6, 1988, that "We should fully equip ourselves both in the offensive and defensive use of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapon. From now on, you should make use of the opportunity and perform this task."

No doubt Iran represents a clear and present danger to world's peace and security. The ever-shrewd Europeans may have their commercial or geopolitical interests in mind for not wanting to break their bridges with the mullahs. However, the specter of a nuclear-armed Iran – the most active state sponsor of terrorism – is far too ominous to let appeasers in the EU formulate policy toward Tehran.

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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EU nuke offer could help Iran get arms

VIENNA, Oct 25 (Reuters) - The nuclear technology the European Union has offered Iran could help it make an atomic bomb, not prevent it, a Washington-based think-tank warned.

The EU's "Big Three" -- France, Britain and Germany -- have offered Iran reactor fuel and help developing light-water reactor (LWR) technology if Tehran stops uranium enrichment, a process which can be used to make nuclear arms.

"LWRs no longer should be considered to be safe for any nation that might divert the reactor's fresh lightly-enriched fuel or the plutonium-laden spent fuel to make bombs," Henry Sokolski, head of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center (NPEC), wrote in the introduction to a 62-page report.

Sokolski, a former U.S. Pentagon official, said the report was prepared by "national authorities on nuclear chemistry, commercial nuclear power reactors, and nuclear weapons designs".

The United States believes Iran's nuclear program is a front to make atomic weapons and has criticized the EU trio and Russia for engaging Iran on the issue. Instead it wants Tehran reported to the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions.

LWRs use low-enriched uranium. Although this cannot be used to fuel uranium-based weapons, which need very highly-enriched uranium, the used fuel contains bomb-grade plutonium, which can be separated from the other chemicals and used in weapons.

Sokolski said the EU was wrong to assume that such activities could not be hidden from the U.N. nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran hid its nuclear programme from the IAEA for nearly two decades.

"Nations can chemically separate out -- reprocess -- the plutonium contained in spent reactor fuel in relatively affordable facilities that can be quite small, as little as 65 square feet, and therefore be easily hidden," Sokolski said.

Sokolski said under present IAEA inspection procedures, a country determined to divert fuel for weapons had ample opportunities to do so.

He said the IAEA does not conduct real-time camera monitoring of fresh or spent fuel storage sites, but reviews tapes every 90 days. The IAEA plans to extend the review interval to one year from 90 days were unwise, Sokolski added.

The Washington Times

October 27, 2004

Group discloses secret nuke effort

PARIS -- The Iranian opposition group that exposed the nation's covert nuclear weapons program two years ago said yesterday that supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has ordered the effort to continue in secret.

The opposition group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), also disclosed the existence of what it said is a new uranium enrichment facility in central Iran that is nearing completion.

Speaking to reporters in Paris yesterday, Mohammad Mohaddessin, chairman of the NCRI's Foreign Affairs Committee, said the Iranian regime is "playing a double game" with Europe.

"Khamenei has ordered his regime to not only continue the enrichment of uranium, but to buy time and accelerate the project in order to make the bomb as quickly as possible," Mr. Mohaddessin said.

"Khamenei has ordered his diplomats and his negotiators to prolong the negotiations as much as possible, possibly by between eight and 12 months, which is exactly the time needed to complete the bomb," he said.

The Bush administration and European powers have branded the NCRI a terrorist group, mainly because its military wing was sheltered by Saddam Hussein at bases in Iraq, from which it launched attacks in Iran.

The group, however, gained credibility in August 2002 by exposing another secret uranium enrichment facility being built underground in Natanz, 150 miles south of Tehran, and a heavy water production facility at Arak, about 120 miles southwest of Tehran.

That exposure triggered the current nuclear standoff with Iran, by forcing the Islamist regime to open these sites to the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Mr. Mohaddessin said that while the regime was negotiating with Europe, it was also putting the finishing touches on a major site that would be needed to produce large quantities of enriched uranium.

The site, located in Isfahan in central Iran, would convert uranium oxide, called "yellowcake," into uranium hexafluoride gas, a stage prior to enrichment.

He said a test center for centrifuges had been constructed with "utmost discretion" near the site, and that between 120 and 180 centrifuges will be installed there...