

USADI Dispatch

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USADI Commentary

Lessons of Iran for Iraq

There is no end to the appetite of Iran's tyrant rulers for blood and death.

Earlier this week, the mullahs' Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei stressed that "enemies of the Islamic Republic are trying to humiliate and diminish the value of martyrdom and the culture of jihad in the eyes of the youth, particularly students."

The official state news agency, IRNA, reported that Khamenei asked students to continue to promote the culture of jihad and "martyrdom" as "a source of national strength and foundation of pure worship."

Having depleted every bit of legitimacy at home, and abroad as a direct result of their increasing rogue behavior, the mullahs find themselves in the dire need of energizing their hapless ideological base with the promise of coming victories in Iraq and in the nuclear weapons campaign.

Meanwhile relentless recruiting of suicide volunteers which began last spring has continued and now in many Iranian cities government-sponsored groups are busy recruiting. According to news reports thousands of these suicide volunteers have already been dispatched to Iraq.

In recent days, several top officials of Iraq have been warning about Iran's escalating meddling in Iraq as the January 30 election grows closer. Iraq's Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari demanded that Iran refrain from interfering in his country's elections, and said "Iran is an important neighboring country ... It has influence over Iraq. But the decision to go to elections is an Iraqi decision, not an Iranian one." Zebari insisted "there's a regional intervention in Iraqi internal affairs".

In an interview with the Kuwaiti daily Al-Qabas, Iraq's Defense Minister Hazem Shaalan also scolded Iran and said that over a million Iranians had entered the country to pose as Iraqis in the upcoming January 30th elections. Shaalan accused the Iranian regime of "interfering (in Iraq) with money, guns, and intelligence".

"The number of Shiite Iranians who have entered the country is more than a million", he said, echoing remarks by Jordan's King Abdullah II who estimated the same figure in December and said that Tehran is attempting to create a "Shiite Crescent from Iran to Syria and Lebanon".

"We have intelligence indicating that Iran is sending fake families to Iraq, many of whom are based in Karbala, Najaf, Baghdad, Al-Amara, and Al-Kut; the documents are in our hands", he added.

Meanwhile according to a report by *Iran Focus* news site, Iranian agents are systematically kidnapping Iraqis for ransom in the southern Iraqi province of Missan and taking them to Iran.

Late last month, *Iran Focus* reported that the police chief in Iraqi holy city of Najaf, said that the commander of three terrorists arrested in connection with a car bomb that exploded in Najaf, had extensive connections to Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS). He said that intelligence for when and where to attack was given by an MOIS agent to the terrorist cells.

The more Iraqi political and security officials reveal the sinister campaign of the Iranian regime in Iraq, the better chance of lessening Iran's influence over the outcome of Iraq's upcoming election. Keeping silent about Iran's interferences in Iraq in the futile hope that Tehran would suddenly relinquish its two-decades long dream of establishing a client regime there, only emboldens the mullahs.

The terrorist tyranny ruling Iran has brought nothing but death, destruction, corruption, despair and misery to Iranians. Its bankrupt ideology and worldview could not survive in a democratic environment. Hence the firing squads, gallows and torture chambers to silence the voices of democracy in Iran. And what makes Iran's meddling in Iraq a huge threat is the terror and savagery their medieval ideology is exported with.

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@usadيران.org

The Washington Times

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Risks of appeasing Iran's mullahs

Iran's increasing meddling in Iraq and its defiance in its nuclear weapons program pose the greatest challenge to peace and security in Iraq and the whole Middle East, as we enter 2005. By sending thousands of Revolutionary Guards and intelligence agents into Iraq, as well as spending hundreds of millions of dollars to recruit mercenaries and enlist support among destitute and impoverished Iraqis, Tehran is hell-bent on steering the Jan. 30 elections in its favor.

Its proxies in that country, including the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), have put forward a united slate, hoping to gain a majority in the newly elected parliament, whose primary task is to draft Iraq's future constitution. The Iranian clerics have never been so close to realizing their decades-old dream of erecting a sister Islamic Republic in Iraq.

On the nuclear issue, the recent agreement brokered by France, Germany and the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union, has given Tehran all that it wanted and more. The Iranians have committed themselves to virtually nothing permanent...

In return, Iran received a host of incentives, including a light-water reactor as well as the promise of European technological expertise to advance its "peaceful" nuclear program. More importantly, it demanded and received a commitment from its European interlocutors not only to keep Tehran's arch-nemesis, the Iranian People's Mujahedeen, on the EU terror list, but also to fight its activities...

Claiming any attempt at firmness toward Tehran would be tantamount to starting an Iraqi-style war, the EU and its allies on the other side of the Atlantic argue conciliation is the best approach. This deliberately obscures the fact that facing up to the Iranian challenge need not involve a choice between war and appeasement. As the exiled opposition leader Maryam Rajavi said during an address to the European Parliament on Dec. 15, "No concession is going to dissuade the mullahs from continuing their ominous objectives. ... The equation of 'either a military invasion or appeasement' is an exercise in political deception. A third option is within reach. The Iranian people and their organized resistance have the capacity and ability to bring about change."...

Appeasement is not the way to contain or change this evil regime. Nor is it the path to avoid another war. A nuclear-armed fundamentalist regime will not spare the EU, either. Iran's missiles already can reach southern Europe...

By putting the People's Mujahedeen in its terror list, however, the EU has handcuffed itself. The EU should end the blacklisting of this antifundamentalist group, which provided some of the most critical information on Iran's nuclear weapons program and its intervention in Iraq.

For once, we should side with the millions in Iran whose cry is for freedom and regime change. A modern, secular and democratic Iran would not only be the key to regional peace and security, but also a long-term ally as we try to spread democracy across the Middle East and the world.

Excerpts from an article by Struan Stevenson, a Scottish Conservative member of the European Parliament and co-chairman of the Friends of Free Iran Interaroup in the European Parliament.

The Chicago Tribune

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Iran making the best of Iraqi elections

Washington - The Bush administration, already facing a relentless insurgency in Iraq, is preparing to confront what could be an equally daunting political challenge - the possible emergence from the Jan. 30 election of a pro-Iranian government dominated by Shiite fundamentalists.

... U.S. officials say Iran has given strong support to the two leading Shiite political parties in the United Iraqi Alliance, the electoral slate that most analysts expect to garner the greatest share of Iraqi votes in elections for a new national government. Tehran's support includes an estimated \$20 million for the current election for candidates from those parties - the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq and the Dawa Party - according to a State Department official....

Although an increase in strife after Shiite ascendancy would obviously affect the United States, the potential longer-term implications of an Iranian-leaning government installed in Baghdad are also weighing heavily on some American policymakers.

The State Department official who spoke about the issue suggested the only significant question now is how close to Iran a new Iraqi government will lean. "When you pay for something, you expect to get something in return," this official said of Iran's \$20 million. But this official and others also pointed hopefully to evidence that most Iraqis, including Shiites, have a pronounced sense of nationalism and are uneasy about the prospect of a strong alliance between Tehran and Baghdad, who were bitter enemies in a war fought from 1980 to 1988... U.S. officials also take solace in the results of an October poll showing that about 45 percent of Iraqis ranked Iran first when asked which foreign country was most likely to cause upheaval in Iraq...