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USADI Commentary

Tehran's Double-talk on WMD and Human Rights

Over the weekend, Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, in opening remarks at the international "ethics for co-existence" conference in Tehran, said opposition to WMD is necessary for the sake of "morality and ethics, to protect life and human rights, and for the sake of respecting life for all humanity everywhere." The mullahs' president, cut from the same cloth as the other turbaned demagogues of Iran's ruling regime, shamelessly uttered about ethics, human rights, respect for life and humanity all in one breath.

As the lame-duck Khatami was reciting his usual double-talk about weapons of mass destruction, new revelations last week shed more light on his regime's campaign of hide-and-cheat to advance the mullahs' nuclear weapons program.

The *Boston Globe* wrote that the clerical regime "has just completed a secret underground facility to enrich uranium using laser technology, and began a second, secret construction project at the same site earlier this month."

According to the *Globe*, Alireza Jafarzadeh, former Washington spokesman of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, now the head of the Strategic Policy Consulting firm in Washington, said, "The underground nuclear facility at the Parchin military complex, about 20 miles southeast of Tehran, was built recently under the supervision of the chief engineer of Iran's aerospace agency."

Also last week, Mohammad Saeidi, vice president of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, insisted that Tehran will pursue a full-scale nuclear program, from mining uranium, to enriching it and also building a heavy-water reactor which can produce plutonium, Agence France Presse reported from Paris.

Khatami's expedient comments on the development of weapons of mass destruction are as hollow as his crocodile tears for human rights and sanctity of life. He needs to be reminded of his regime's horrific human rights violations including systematic execution of juveniles and continued public hanging and stoning of women. Let's not forget that the mullahs' regime has also been appropriately called the most active state sponsor of terrorism since mid 1980's.

Last month, the State Department issued a damning report on Iran's human rights violations in 2004. It said, "The right of citizens to change their government was restricted significantly. Continuing serious abuses included: summary executions; disappearances; torture and other degrading treatment, reportedly including severe punishments such as amputations and flogging; poor prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; lack of habeas corpus or access to counsel; and prolonged and incommunicado detention. Citizens often did not receive due process or fair trials. The Government infringed on citizens' privacy rights and restricted freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, and religion".

On Iran's systematic use of torture, the report said, "Some prison facilities, including Tehran's Evin prison, were notorious for the cruel and prolonged acts of torture inflicted upon political opponents of the Government" such as "prolonged solitary confinement with sensory deprivation, beatings, long confinement in contorted positions,,, and severe and repeated beatings with cables or other instruments..."

The so-called life-friendly regime in Tehran has not just been busy working to deprive Iranians from life and human rights. The mullahs have been also relentlessly at work to rub Iraqis the chance of living under a secular and democratic government. According to a commentary in the *New York Times Magazine* last Sunday, "Estimated at many hundreds of millions of dollars per year, Iranian aid [to Iraq] has a low overhead and is buying Tehran influence in Shiite communities. Intelligence sources report that Iran's secret service and Revolutionary Guards have heavily infiltrated Iraq, with perhaps as many as 5,000 personnel... Iran operates on its own agenda in Iraq. Iran's goal is to have a government in Baghdad under strong Iranian influence."

The theocracy in Iran is a clear and present danger to Iranians, to Iraqis, and to the rest of the world. It is hell-bent on possessing nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as exporting its brand of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism.

Its desperate PR attempts to divert attention from its nuclear weapons program by holding conferences under hollow titles such as "ethics for co-existence" may charm its proponents in the EU capitals. But PR-savvy clerics are unlikely to influence the debate in Washington today about the roadmap that would be consistent with what millions in Iran are seeking: the ruling unseating of the clerical regime by the Iranian people and the democratic opposition.

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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Iran Stockpiling High-Tech Small Arms

VIENNA, Austria -- Iran is quietly building a stockpile of thousands of high-tech small arms and other military equipment -- from armor-piercing snipers' rifles to night-vision goggles -- through legal weapons deals and a U.N. anti-drug program, according to an internal U.N. document, arms dealers and Western diplomats.

The buying spree is raising Bush administration fears the arms could end up with militants in Iraq. Tehran also is seeking approval for a U.N.-funded satellite network that Iran says it needs to fight drug smugglers, stoking U.S. worries it could be used to spy on Americans in Iraq or Afghanistan -- or any U.S. reconnaissance in Iran itself...

Iran says it needs the satellite network, high-tech small arms bought on the European arms market and night-vision goggles, body armor and advanced communications gear through the U.N program to fight drug smugglers pouring in from neighboring Afghanistan.

But such high-resolution satellite imagery could reveal what U.S. troops in neighboring Iraq and Afghanistan are doing on the ground -- or that they could show the Iranians what the United States is seeing as it spies from outer space for evidence of illicit Iranian nuclear activity.

And with Iran suspected of backing insurgents in Iraq, Washington fears some of the equipment bought in Europe or delivered as part of the U.N.-backed anti-drug fight could be used against U.S. troops there, say Western diplomats here who are familiar with U.S. concerns.

Austrian officials with access to counterintelligence information told AP that Iranian diplomats in European capitals routinely focus on securing arms deals. Like the Western diplomats, the officials spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the case.

Just four months ago, U.S. and Austrian authorities arrested two Iranians in Vienna on charges of trying to illegally export thousands of sophisticated American night-vision systems for Tehran's military -- a powerful force in the region.

In a more recent -- and legal -- deal, Iran last month took delivery of hundreds of high-powered armor-piercing snipers' rifles with scopes from an Austrian firm, as part of a consignment for 2,000 of the weapons. Confirming the sale, Wolfgang Fuerlinger, head of Steyr Mannlicher GmbH, told AP that U.S. Embassy officials had expressed concerns the arms could make their way to Iraq for use against American troops.

Agence France Presse

March 27, 2005

Egyptian jailed for 35 years for spying for Iran

CAIRO - An Egyptian was jailed for 35 years by an emergency tribunal Sunday for spying for Iran and plotting to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in a sentence that cannot be appealed.

The court also sentenced former Iranian diplomat Mohammed Reza Doust to 25 years' imprisonment in absentia for being Egyptian Mahmud Aid Dabbus's handler.

Dabbus was sentenced to 25 years for "having plotted to assassinate the president of the republic and for spying and obtaining payments from a foreign country," said presiding judge Adel Abdel Salam.

He was sentenced to an additional "10 years for (sharing) intelligence with a foreign country with the aim of destabilizing in Egypt," said the judge.

The Egyptian was accused of giving Iran details about oil installations at the Saudi port of Yanbu, where six Westerners were killed in a shooting rampage in May that was blamed on Islamist militants.

Dabbus had worked at Yanbu, according to the prosecution, and was paid 150,000 dollars for his Saudi and Egyptian information and given an extra 10,000 dollars for the Yanbu details.

The former Iranian diplomat was sentenced for "taking part in a terrorist bid and an attempt to destabilize the Egyptian regime."

Doust worked at the Iranian interests section in Cairo but had been transferred before Dabbus was arrested at his home on the Suez canal in November.

"Dabbus sacrificed his country's interests for a fistful of dollars, allied himself with Satan and submitted himself to him," said Abdel Salam.

The trial has soured a slow detente between Tehran and Cairo, which broke off diplomatic relations following Iran's Islamic revolution of 1979.