

## Bombed If You Do, Bombed If You Don't

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The latest National Intelligence Estimate has been greeted by a mixture of relief and alarm. As I have been saying all along, Iran indeed poses no quantifiable imminent nuclear threat to us or her neighbors. It is with much alarm, however, that we see the administration continue to ratchet up the war rhetoric as if nothing has changed.

Indeed nothing has changed from the administration's perspective, as they have had this latest intelligence report for some time. Only this week has it been made known to the public. They want it both ways with Iran. On the one hand, they discredit the report entirely, despite it being one of the most comprehensive intelligence reports on the subject, with over 1,000 source notes in the document. On the other hand, when discrediting it fails, they claim that the timing of the abandonment of the weapons program, just as we were invading Iraq, means our pressure must have worked, so we must keep it up with a new round of even tougher sanctions. Russia and China are not buying this, apparently, and again we are finding ourselves on a lonely tenuous platform on the world stage.

The truth is, Iran is being asked to do the logically impossible feat of proving a negative. They are being presumed guilty until proven innocent because there is no evidence with which to indict them. There is still no evidence that Iran, a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, has ever violated the treaty's terms – and the terms clearly state that Iran is allowed to pursue nuclear energy for peaceful, civilian energy needs. The United States cannot unilaterally change the terms of the treaty, and it is unfair and unwise diplomatically to impose sanctions for no legitimate reason.

Are we to think that Iran hasn't noticed the duplicitous treatment being received by so-called nuclear threats around the globe? If they have been paying attention, and I think they have, they would see that if countries do have a nuclear weapon, they tend to be left alone, or possibly get a subsidy, but if they do not gain such a weapon then we threaten them. Why wouldn't they want to pursue a nuclear weapon if that is our current foreign policy? The fact remains, there is no evidence they actually have one, or could have one any time soon, even if they immediately resumed a weapons program.

Our badly misguided foreign policy has already driven this country's economy to the brink of bankruptcy with one war based on misinformation. It is unthinkable that despite lack of any evidence of a threat, some are still charging headstrong into yet another war in the Middle East when what we ought to be doing is coming home from Iraq, coming home from Korea, coming home from Germany and defending our own soil. We do not need to be interfering in the internal affairs of other countries and waging war when honest trade, friendship, and diplomacy are the true paths to peace and prosperity.

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