

Iran and Nuclear Jazz

By [Edward W. Miller](#)

Global Research, January 23, 2006

23 January 2006

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

Coastal Post, February 2006

Iran and its new president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad recently notified the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) that Iran was resuming its research into nuclear fuel .(Assoc.Press, 10 Jan. 2006) Iran then removed its seals on its nuclear research facilities, allowing work to resume despite warnings from some Western countries re: “ nuclear ambitions” The United States promptly rebuked Iran for the move, calling it a step toward creating the material for nuclear bombs The deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Mohammad Saeedi, told reporters at a press conference that officials of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had authorized the seals’ removal. Iranians had actually taken off the seals “in the presence of IAEA inspectors.” Saeedi stressed that Iran was not resuming the production of nuclear fuel, a process that would involve uranium enrichment. “What we resume is merely in the field of research, not more than that,” he said

Almost one year earlier, to pacify Washington and its Zionist ally Israel, in February, 2005 Russia and Iran had signed an agreement to supply fuel to Iran’s new nuclear reactor in Bushehr. Under the deal Iran was to return spent nuclear fuel rods from the reactor, designed and built by the Russians. This arrangement had been made to satisfy the demands of the IAEA, which had been under tremendous pressure from the US and Israel to prevent Iran from recycling its own atomic fuel.

Despite these assurances, all hell broke out in paranoid Washington and Tel Aviv. The mood was reminiscent of the months preceding the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, the word “Iraq” being replaced by “Iran”. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Iran had “crossed the threshold” “I would hope that seeing the very powerful reaction of the international community, Iran would now take a step back and look at the isolation that it is about to experience,” Writer Gordon Prather (antiwar.com 10/1/2005) characterized the Washington response thus: “ Condi .and the neo-crazies all running around in circles of diminishing radius screaming something about the IAEA Board having found Iran to be in non-compliance....”nonsense.”

Meanwhile, speaking in a joint press conference with conservative German Chancellor Angela Merkel, President George W Bush said a nuclear Iran was unacceptable and singled out Israel for special US concern. “I want to remind you that the current president of Iran has announced that the destruction of Israel is an important part of their agenda, and that’s unacceptable,” Bush said. “And the development of a nuclear weapon, it seems likely to me, would make them a step closer to achieving that objective,” he added.

A number of influential US lawmakers joined the foray: Republican Senator Lindsey Graham told Fox News Sunday that military intervention shouldn’t be ruled out while Senator John

McCain, told CBS television's Face the Nation that "the military option is the last option but cannot be taken off of the table."

Pro-Israel organisations lobbied for a more hard-line position against Tehran. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the American Jewish Congress the American Jewish Committee The Brookings Institution, — whose Middle East program is increasingly pro-Israel -. The Saban Centre on Middle East Policy the American Enterprise Institute, and the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, an offshoot of AIPAC advised by former US Middle East Envoy Dennis Ross. and finally, William Kristol, editor of the neo-conservative Weekly Standard, entitled his column: "And now Iran."

In the midst of this international bru ha ha, on October 7th, 2005 Doctor Mahamoud El Baradei and his IAEA were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. As writer Stephen Zunes | noted (December 13, 2005) this award came with a strong political message:

The IAEA and Dr. El-Baradei have, in the words of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, exemplified the principle that the threat of nuclear weapons proliferation "must be met through the broadest possible international cooperation." 1 Indeed, the choice of the Norwegian Nobel Committee—was at least in part meant to challenge the dangerous unilateral policies of the Bush administration.

Other comments followed:

From the Mideast: JIDDA — Arab News , Oct. 8: "As head of the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog ... [Mohamed El Baradei] has had a tough time, not simply in the agency's dealings with North Korea and Iran, but from the Americans, who opposed his reappointment ... His sin in Washington's eyes was that, as America prepared to invade Iraq, he said clearly he did not believe that Saddam's regime still had nuclear weapons."

TOKYO — The Asahi Shimbun (Center-left), Oct. 8: "While the Nobel Prize can be taken as a pat on the back for the I.A.E.A. and its work to date, the honor should also be viewed as a way to seek international cooperation to eliminate the agency's weaknesses so as to bolster the inspection system ... The N.P.T. allows five nations — the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia — to possess nuclear weapons, but strictly prohibits others from doing so." (From writer Phyllis Bennis; * TomPaine.com; October 12, 2005)

The Nobel Peace Prize is rarely just about peace. It's almost always as much about making a diplomatic point .. In awarding the prize to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, and its director-general Mohamed el Baradei, the political point was open and clear. It was the Nobel Committee's slap in the face to the Bush administration's unilateralism, its undermining of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and especially its war in Iraq.

From the Zioist left: Jacob Laksin | October 12, 2005 "In keeping with the Nobel committee's penchant for making a political statement by honoring critics of American foreign policy, this year's Nobel Peace Prize ridiculously went to Mohamed El-Baradei, the Egyptian barrister-turned-bureaucrat, whose decision to oppose a U.S.-led overthrow of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship won him the international Left's enduring adoration. El-Baradei will share the prize with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the hapless UN nuclear watchdog whose successes on the nuclear proliferation front have been most conspicuous by their absence."

Iran's basic intent to reprocess its own atomic reactor fuel, represents an intelligent economic approach to its energy needs. As the radioactive rods in atomic reactors become less effective, they may be removed, their active fusion materials sorted out and the remaining UR235 reprocessed and returned to the reactor. The waste is discarded. Paying someone else to do this may not be cost-effective. For a time, before President Jimmy Carter stopped the program, the US was shipping much of its depleted atomic fuel to France for reprocessing. The program was restarted, only to be halted again by Clinton. Today, the almost 100 atomic reactors in the US are fuelled, half by specially-refined native uranium ore, which we as a country are fortunate to be blessed with and half by low-enriched-uranium (LEU), processed by a US company: USEC Corporation., which signed a 20-year contract with the former Soviet Union to extract highly-enriched uranium (HEU) from its former nuclear warheads and fabricate this into nuclear fuel for atomic plants worldwide.

Iran, which lacks native radioactive mineral wealth, needs to extract as much power as possible from the fuel it buys from Russia. Thus reprocessing is, in the long run, economically their wiser choice.

Both Washington and Tel Aviv are making fools of themselves by creating this atomic bru ha ha. The Security Council's permanent members all have atomic weapons. Pakistan and India, likewise. Israel has over 200 atomic-armed missiles, but has never signed the NPT Treaty nor joined the IAEA. She depends on US backing to maintain her uncooperative and threatening nuclear stance.

Thirty years ago, during the Nixon administration, our Zionist bullfrog, Kissinger, then Secretary of State, met with Iran's minister, Hushang Ansary in March, 1975 and signed a \$15 Billion economic agreement which included " the construction of eight large nuclear power plants which were to provide Iran with some eight thousand megawatts of electricity." (THE EAGLE AND THE LION BY James A. Bill pg 204). I spoke with my friend J.A. Bill today. He thinks both the Japanese and Soviets assisted with the construction and that only two of the plants eventually reached their megawatt output.

Also of historical interest: a report from Haaretz from BBC (8/6/ 2005) notes that "documents from the British Archives in the late 1950's show that the United Kingdom sold Israel 20 tons of heavy water, a substance to produce nuclear bombs, at a price of L1.5 Million. The sale was made without the knowledge of Harold Macmillian's government. " It was also kept secret from the United States which had refused to supply Israel with heavy water unless it was given a guarantee that it would be used " for peaceful use only.: "That heavy water, bought from Norway in 1956, was shipped from a British port to Israel. Officials presented it as a deal between Norway and Israel."

Of recent days, threats from Washington, London and Tel Aviv to bring Iran before the UN Security Council for economic sanction are losing international support. Both China and Russia, who have strong commercial links with Iran are backing away. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said: "Sanctions are in no way the best, or the only, way to solve the problem." The Chinese Foreign Minister favored "patience" (www.theaustralian.news.com 1/18/2006)

On January 19 2006 20:07 Mohamed El Baradei, the head of the UN's nuclear monitor, turned down a request by the European Union to issue a far-reaching condemnation of Iran's nuclear program when the agency's board meets in extraordinary session. His decision could weaken US-European efforts for a speedy referral of Iran to the UN Security Council.

The director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has informed Tehran it has until the end of next month to give his inspectors improved access to documents and sites.

Some Americans may remember that eight years ago on January 7th, 1998 in an interview broadcast to the U.S. by CNN, Iran's then President Mohammed Khatami reached out his hand in friendship to an American public, who were impressed by his openness and erudition Khatami, did not mince words over the U.S.' role in the 1953 CIA-led coup that overthrew Iran's duly-elected government and reinstated the Pahlavi monarchy or Washington's threats against foreign companies investing in Iran's industry. Had Washington responded in kind, cancelled our embargo threats and supported Khatami's economic programs and his push towards a more secular Iran, the Iranian people might well have re-elected that mild and charismatic intellectual. Instead we are facing off with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, ex-mayor of Tehran and Iran's new president, who promises his people: " a modern, advanced, powerful and Islamic nation". Those Americans who disliked Ahmadinejad's outspoken comments regarding Israel and Washington's pre-emptive wars in Iraq and Afghanistan might tell their Representatives in Washington to stop bullying Iran.

The Golden Rule has always been good economic as well as good political policy.

Americans might also consider that a threatened Iran might retaliate against the West by raising its oil price at the well, thus guaranteeing economic downturns in the US as well as throughout the EU nations. Hopefully, cooler heads will prevail.

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