

AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
FOR
ENGAGING A NUCLEAR-CAPABLE IRAN

by

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Biography

Lieutenant Colonel Larry Adkins is a US Air Force space and missile officer assigned to the Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL. He graduated from Iowa State University in 1985 with a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree in Finance, and holds masters degrees from the University of Montana and the Air University. He earned his missile badge in 1990 and was a crew member at Malmstrom AFB and on board the National Airborne Operations Center where he was a strike advisor to the president. As a space operator he was stationed at Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, HQ Air Force Space Command, and United States Strategic Command.



Abstract

Today, few studies focus on how the international community should approach Iran once it crosses the nuclear threshold. David Kay, author of *The Iranian Fallout*, highlights what is missing from contemporary literature when he asks, “What policies will limit any advantage, political or military, that Iran might gain from nuclear weapons?” This paper presumes, Iran will produce a significant quantity of highly enriched uranium despite international efforts to the contrary, and second, Iran will have the national will and capability to develop and deliver a nuclear weapon.

The unknown variable is Iran’s desired end state. The regime could become more emboldened and threaten regional stability, or it can become a regional partner. The outcome depends on a variety of factors and the actions of the international community. From an American perspective, the United States should focus more of its near-term political effort on developing policies that provide regional stability and less time on policies and rhetoric provoking confrontation with a nuclear-capable Iran.

This paper posits a variety of motivations explaining Iran’s desire for an offensive nuclear capability. It then attempts to answer Kay’s question through an evaluation of possible solution sets available for employment assuming the United States will face a nuclear-capable Iran. The outcome of the evaluation is a proposed framework that will lead to stronger relationships and provide regional stability in the Middle East.

Introduction

Iran's perceived drive for a nuclear weapon is at the center of an international debate, a debate that has the world wondering whether another Middle East conflict will occur in the next decade. At the heart of the matter is Iran's announced plan to triple its capacity to produce highly enriched uranium (HEU). The international community views this increased production as Iran's next step in producing a nuclear weapon. Iran has countered these claims by contending its nuclear program is intended for peaceful purposes and arguing that its program is in compliance with international norms.¹

Today, most, if not all, literature focuses on how to prevent Iran from producing HEU, which could lead to weaponization. Few studies focus on how the international community should approach Iran once it crosses the nuclear threshold. David Kay, author of *The Iranian Fallout*, highlights what is missing from contemporary literature when he asks, "What policies will limit any advantage, political or military, that Iran might gain from nuclear weapons?"²

This paper examines this question by evaluating how and why the United States should adapt its policies to create a stable relationship with a nuclear-capable Iran. The presumption is, first, despite international efforts to the contrary, Iran will produce a significant quantity of HEU, and second, Iran will have the national will and capability to develop and deliver a nuclear weapon.

The unknown variable is Iran's desired end state. The regime could become more emboldened and threaten regional stability, or it can become a regional partner. The outcome depends on a variety of factors and the actions of the international community. From an American perspective, the United States should focus more of its near-term political effort on

developing policies that provide regional stability and less time on policies and rhetoric provoking confrontation with a nuclear-capable Iran.

This paper posits a variety of motivations explaining Iran's desire for a nuclear weapons capability. It then attempts to answer Kay's question through an evaluation of possible solution sets available for employment assuming the United States will face a nuclear-capable Iran. The outcome of the evaluation is a proposed framework that will lead to regional stability. However, we must first define the term *nuclear-capable* as it pertains to this discussion.

Discussion

Defining "Nuclear-Capable"

In 1967, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) defined a nuclear weapons state as "one which has manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device."³ Based upon this definition, there are only five nuclear weapon states – the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia and China. Since 1967, additional states have either tested nuclear weapons or are believed to have enough fissile material and the technological capability to build a nuclear weapon, and with these actions the line between nuclear states and nonnuclear states has blurred. For purposes of this study, the defining limit for when a state becomes nuclear capable is when it has a significant quantity of fissile material to make a weapon.

Jacques E.C. Hymans, author of *When Does a State Become a "Nuclear Weapon State"?* discusses this concept at length. Hymans presents the viewpoint espoused by noted nuclear weapons theorist Albert Wohlstetter who argues that if a nation state "might" have (the bomb), then they do have it. Wohlstetter saw the necessity of shifting the indicator of nuclear weapon state status from testing to the "accumulation of a significant quantity (SQ) of fissile material."⁴

Timely warning of conversion of an SQ into operational weapons is impossible; therefore, outsiders cannot help but treat a state that has an SQ as if it already had an operational weapons arsenal. In short, the decision to seek to acquire an SQ is tantamount to a decision to “go nuclear.”⁵ This change from testing/no-testing dynamic to the SQ/no-SQ question is the new “line in the sand” for what policy makers believe “is the last chance to catch the proliferant state red-handed before it becomes capable of a strategic surprise.”⁶

Iran’s Motivators for Nuclear Weapons

Iran seeks nuclear weapons for prestige, regional leadership, and deterrence of its neighbors and the United States.⁷ Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, along with Ahmadinejad, sees nuclear power as a symbol of national pride.⁸ They believe the possession of advanced technologies bestows a sense of prestige on Iran.⁹ To this end, they see the country’s nuclear program as “not just as an important aspect of the country's foreign relations, but increasingly as a defining element of its national identity.”¹⁰

Iran, with its long and illustrious history as a regional power broker, has always perceived itself as the natural Middle East leader; however, over the centuries, the once powerful empire fell to invasions and domination by the great powers.¹¹ To help regain a position of relative importance, the more conservative ruling elite, including President Ahmadinejad and the Revolutionary Guards, considers nuclear weapons a critical means of ensuring Iran's preeminence in the region.¹² In an ironic twist of fate, US policy may have accelerated Iran’s ascendancy as the regional leader.

The United States dispersed the Taliban (Iran’s enemy to the East) and within two years had quickly removed Saddam Hussein’s government (Iran’s enemy to the West).¹³ To Tehran, the outcome of these actions was immediately clear.¹⁴ Without a belligerent Iraq in the region,

the Iranians were able to imagine a sphere of influence extending to the “western banks of the Euphrates River,” not a “new Persian empire, but a Persian influence beyond its own borders.”¹⁵ With no hostile threats on its borders and a few nuclear weapons, Iran will have more freedom of action, and could once again have a powerful influence over the region. However, the regime still believes an obstacle is in its path: the United States.

Iran perceives the United States as a direct threat to its regional interests and ambitions.¹⁶ Increased tensions¹⁷ and the West’s continual rhetoric and interference¹⁸ into Iran’s internal affairs has given a powerful incentive to counter what the Iranian leadership believes is a real threat to the country and to the regime.¹⁹ Additionally, Iran speculates US military support to Israel along with military aid to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the Gulf Cooperation Council²⁰ is a means for “Washington to exercise leverage against the Islamic Republic.”²¹

Dr. John Mearsheimer, University of Chicago political science professor and author of *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, believes “any country that feels threatened by a dangerous rival has good reason to want a survivable nuclear deterrent.”²² Renowned international realist theorist Dr. Kenneth Waltz goes further saying, “There is no way to deter the United States other than by having nuclear weapons.”²³ If they are right, Iran will develop a nuclear weapon to deter the United States and others, because it “is extremely unlikely that any state would attack the homeland of a nuclear-armed adversary because of the fear that it would prompt nuclear retaliation.”²⁴

Establishing Red-Lines

Given the presumption that Iran has developed a nuclear capability, some authors believe America should focus on a policy of deterrence. For example, authors and members of the Council of Foreign Affairs, James M. Lindsay and Ray Takeyh, argue in their February 2010

Foreign Affairs article “After Iran Gets the Bomb,” that America should seek to influence Iranian actions by establishing clear red lines. Specifically, these lines of demarcation include no initiation of conventional warfare against other countries; no use or transfer of nuclear weapons, materials, or technologies; and no stepped-up support for terrorists or subversive activities.²⁵ If Iran decides to abide by these proposed international norms, they could “achieve the political and economic benefits that come with greater integration with the international community.”²⁶ Violation of these three “red lines” may result in increased international pressure and/or US retaliation by any and all means necessary, up to and including nuclear weapons.²⁷

Applying these pressures without a commitment to punish infractions is a “recipe for failure—and for a more violent and dangerous Middle East.”²⁸ Kenneth Pollack, former CIA analyst and author of *The Persian Puzzle*, follows this same line of reasoning and offers blockades, embargoes and increased military presence in the region as options to counter a non-abiding Iran.²⁹ All of these options are viable; however, the United States must now decide what policies it will employ in a region containing a nuclear-capable Iran. Kay’s question—“What policies will limit any advantage, political or military, that Iran might gain from nuclear weapons?”—provides a solid starting point for discussion.

Solution Set Evaluation

Some policy makers argue sanctions, regime change, and military action will limit any Iranian advantage. Other experts dispute these measures, stating these types of punitive policies create conditions for instability. Policies centered on open dialogue and engagement, they argue, create regional stability. The following evaluation of alternative strategy solution sets is in response to Kay’s question.

As previously discussed, the price for violating Lindsay and Takeyh's proposed prohibitions would be increased international pressure (e.g., sanctions and regime change) and US retaliation. However, are these options the best choices given today's strategic environment?

Sanctions may have "undermined Iran's economy and widened the divisions within the regime,"³⁰ but enforcement has always been spotty and may remain so due to considerable conflicts of interest.³¹ Additionally, there is considerable debate on the effectiveness of sanctions.

Recent reports indicate the UN Security Council will be unlikely to impose sanctions on a nuclear-capable Iran due to the veto power of Russia³² and China,³³ two of Tehran's traditional sympathizers. Moscow and Beijing have backed previous sanctions, but they did so reluctantly and only after working hard to dilute the measures.³⁴ If Russia and China do not join with Europe, Japan, and the United States, Pollack argues that any trade sanctions the United States and its handful of international partners impose on Iran could create a larger trade war.³⁵

Harsh financial sanctions may also promote, rather than deter, proliferation of nuclear technology, and they may increase human rights violations in Iran. Charles Ferguson, the former project director of the Independent Task Force Report on US Nuclear Weapons Policy, warns, "Should harsh financial sanctions be imposed, the country might feel compelled to sell its nuclear weapons and materials...that prospect has thus far been held off by China." Although this note is referring to North Korea, it highlights how financial sanctions can lead to an increase in nuclear proliferation.³⁶

Some authors believe broad-based sanctions harm the populace more than the elite. Lindsay and Takeyh argue sanctions punish the "disenfranchised" citizens, and have no effect on

the targeted population group.³⁷ More powerful sanctions may also lead to crackdowns on reformists and other dissidents within Iran who protest the resulting conditions.

Trita Parsi, president of the National Iranian American Council, believes heightened tensions, caused partially by increased sanctions, have enabled the Iranian government to “create a securitized environment inside the country in which fewer and fewer people are willing to speak out, in which more and more pro-democracy and human-rights advocates are finding their room for maneuver limited.”³⁸ These crackdowns are one reason for calls of regime change. However, some authors posit regime change is not in the best interest of the United States or the region. For example, Pollack argues regime change is a misguided strategy, because any United States backing of reformist movements within Iran will only stoke more anti-Americanism. Instead, he advocates America leading by example and sticking to its core principles of democratization, rule of law, religious tolerance, and respect for human rights.³⁹

In the RAND Corporation report, “Coping With a Nuclearizing Iran,” former Ambassador to the European Union, James Dobbins et al., agrees and points out that most methods of regime change (i.e., overt/covert) yield the opposite effect by perpetuating the current regime and strengthening more extreme elements.⁴⁰ Any military action to remove a sitting regime from power or an attempt to neutralize Iran’s nuclear capability will increase Iranian national unity and its determination to continue its nuclear program.⁴¹

Sanctions and calls for regime change could force Iran to cross the previously discussed red lines. The problematic red line for the international community would be if Iran decides to sponsor nuclear terrorism. Lindsay and Takeyh, along with Mearsheimer, do not believe state sponsorship of nuclear terrorism will occur.

Although Iranian sponsorship might allow organizations such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and other militant groups to “become more strident in their demands and bolder in their actions,” Lindsay and Takeyh believe Israel’s nuclear arsenal and considerable conventional military power, as well as US support for Israel, would “keep those actors in check.”⁴² Tehran, they argue, will “rattle its sabers and pledge its solidarity with Hamas and Hezbollah, but it will not risk a nuclear confrontation with Israel to assist these groups’ activities.”⁴³ Mearsheimer argues that states have strong incentives to distrust terrorist groups. A nuclear handoff, he asserts, is “not a serious threat” for a variety of reason. First, terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda “might turn on (nation states) someday,” and, second, “countries cannot control what terrorist organizations do, and they [the terrorist groups] may do something that gets their patrons into serious trouble.”⁴⁴

Thus, sanctions and regime change answer Kay’s question, but they are burdened with dangerous possibilities, which may force Iran to cross a red line. This would be a dangerous endeavor, since crossing any red line could provide ample reason to compel the United States to use military action -- a battle that could further destabilize an already volatile region. Therefore, crossing red lines by Iran coupled with any US or coalition military action is not a sound decision for maintaining regional stability.

What is needed is a process that will “lay the groundwork for the region’s future—one far different from either the past marked by conflict or the current path toward a regional conflagration.”⁴⁵ Kay suggests, “The United States should...build the economic institutions and polices that can create a future where war seems impossible.”⁴⁶ One possibility is for the United States to develop a diplomatic dialogue centered on engagement.⁴⁷ President Bush’s 2006 Iraq Study Group recognized this option as viable. Led by former Secretary of State James Baker, the

group acknowledged that dealing with Iran is “controversial,” but they advocated for actively engaging Iran in “diplomatic dialogue, without preconditions.”⁴⁸

While some authors argue engagement is nearly impossible because of distrust and misunderstanding, others submit that engagement yields information and creates better policy. Pollack gives two reasons why engagement is nearly impossible. First, he argues Iran is simply not ready for a meaningful relationship, and, second, America is unwilling to compromise on some issues. Both countries maintain these positions based on decades-old scars. For some in Iran, the United States has been the antagonist since 1953 when the CIA and others were instrumental in re-instating the shah to power. For American policy makers, the 1979 hostage crisis was the disembarkation point for trusting the Iranians any further.⁴⁹

Dobbins et al. agree diplomacy is unlikely to yield any type of breakthrough as long as the current regime is in power. However, they seem to hedge their bet by offering a solution for open dialogue. The prescription for engagement includes reliable channels of communication with the Iranian regime to “garner information, signal warnings, avoid unintended conflict, and be positioned to move on openings toward accord when and if one arises.”⁵⁰

School of International Affairs at Pennsylvania State University professor Flynt Leverett, and Council of Foreign Relations member, Ray Takeyh, offer opposing views to the too-difficult-to-do attitude. In his article, “Dealing with Iran,” Leverett argues, “Successful resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue requires a ‘grand bargain’ between the United States and Iran.” In his bilateral “grand bargain” framework, all differences are resolved as a package. He believes that “any incremental, issue-by-issue or step-by-step approach to engagement with Iran will fail.”⁵¹ Takeyh disagrees. In his book, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic*, he recommends that the United States should use direct negotiations to focus on those

“issues of critical importance—Iran’s nuclear program, its sponsorship of terrorism, and the future of Iraq.”⁵² Whereas Leverett wants to bundle issues together, Takeyh suggests three separate negotiating tracks because “progress on any one track should not be necessarily contingent on the others.” Takeyh’s argument is more sound than bundling, because as he says, “in actual practice, progress on any one of these issues is bound to have positive reverberations for the others.”⁵³

A precedent exists for engaging previously sanctioned nuclear-capable countries. According to Mustafa Akyol’s review of *Reset: Iran, Turkey and America's Future*,⁵⁴ Stephen Kinzer provides a comparison between US relations with Beijing in the 1970s and the relationship with Tehran today. Kinzer urges Washington to be bolder, that is, to launch “direct, bilateral, comprehensive, and unconditional negotiations” with Tehran. Nixon’s diplomatic breakthrough with communist China, he reminds readers, came at a time when Beijing was supplying weapons to North Vietnamese soldiers, who were using them to kill Americans. “Nixon did not make good behavior a condition of negotiation,” Kinzer notes. “He recognized that diplomacy works in precisely the opposite way. Agreement comes first; changes in behavior follow.”⁵⁵

Second, shortly after the United States began its offensive in Afghanistan, in 2001, the Bush administration lifted all of the nuclear-testing sanctions on India and some of the sanctions on Pakistan for their support to the Global War on Terror.⁵⁶

Finally, prior to Kim Jung Il’s death, the Obama administration wrestled with the possibility of engaging North Korea. Policy makers were concerned that pressure without any dialogue with North Korea would raise the risk of war.⁵⁷ Joel S. Wit, a former State Department negotiator with North Korea, argued there weren’t any other “tools in the toolbox” and the only

answer was re-engagement,⁵⁸ which is already part of the Obama administration's policy. The 2011 National Security Strategy (NSS) states, “The United States will pursue engagement with hostile nations to test their intentions, give their governments the opportunity to change course, reach out to their people, and mobilize international coalitions.”⁵⁹ The NSS continues with what the administration expects to accomplish through engagement, “We can create opportunities to resolve differences, strengthen the international community’s support for our actions, learn about the intentions and nature of closed regimes, and plainly demonstrate to the publics within those nations that their governments are to blame for their isolation.”⁶⁰ The following framework builds upon the NSS and provides a prescription for engaging Iran.

The Essentials for Success

First, the President and members of the administration must be consistent in its strategic communication and actions. This consistency has not always been present when advocating for nuclear non-proliferation. For example, during the Bush administration, halting Iran’s nuclear program seemed essential to halting a global rush to nuclear arms. At the same time, however, the administration entered into a deal with India to give it all the benefits of an established nuclear power without any attempt to roll back or limit its nuclear weapons program.⁶¹

Second, the consistent message must address the issues previously discussed that initially motivated Iran to produce nuclear weapons. For example, to fulfill the need for prestige and regional leadership, the administration should include Iran in direct negotiations on a variety of subjects such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and low-level diplomatic representation. These inclusions could increase Iran’s self-confidence and reduce its fears of being exploited by the United States.⁶²

The United States and Iran could find common ground on the future of Iraq and Afghanistan. Both countries have mutual interests for the establishment of peace and stability in Iraq. By working through the process together, it may provide opportunities for easing the current tension that exists in their troubled relations.⁶³ Iraq is one example where the United States and Iran may have a common vision. For example, Iran, dominated by a Shi'a government, would like to see a Shi'a-dominated Iraqi government. The United States would like to see a democratically elected government in Iraq, and, in theory, the main body of government would be elected from the Shi'a majority. In Afghanistan, the United States and Iran would both like to see that nation with a non-Taliban government. Finally, Iran seeks regional leadership and prestige by becoming a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO).⁶⁴ If a nuclear-capable Iran would abide by international norms and not cross any of the red lines previously mentioned, the United States could remove all barriers to access and lobby for Iran's entry into the WTO.

The United States must address Iran's fear of regime change to satisfy the leadership's need for a nuclear deterrent. First, the United States could accept the validity and survival of the Iranian revolutionary state.⁶⁵ Second, the Obama administration should emphasize political and economic reforms instead of (as Iran now perceives it) advocating regime change.⁶⁶ Finally, the United States could implicitly acknowledge Iranian interests in the Middle East. These steps could go a long way in convincing the Iranians that they are an equal player in the international game.⁶⁷

The fourth part of this framework may be the most difficult to define and implement—namely helping to restore Iran's lost pride, respect and dignity.⁶⁸ In her 2009 Army War College Strategy Research Project, "Discerning US Strategic Options for a Nuclear Iran," COL Patricia

Frost proposes a smart power strategy that integrates a variety of tools to demonstrate mutual respect for Iran and resolves to take action when US vital national interests (survival of allies) are threatened.⁶⁹ Frost's respect position is in line with Pollack's first-hand experiences. In *The Persian Puzzle*, Pollack describes how respect is hard for Iranians to define, but disrespect is easy to define as evidenced by how they felt about President Bush's "Axis of Evil" speech (i.e., the speech was disrespectful to Iranians).⁷⁰

Finally, to counterbalance the dire warning that Iranian organizations managing nuclear weapons will be weak and will be unable to prevent the weapons from being stolen or sold to others, the United States should offer Iran Waltz's "clean needles" approach to nuclear weapons.⁷¹ With this approach, Waltz believes the United States can proactively seek ways to help Iran develop safeguards such as personnel reliability programs, nuclear emergency search teams and other organizational fixes to reduce the risks.⁷²

Mershseimer proposes a similar solution. He suggests the United States should work with Iran to improve nuclear security on the "remote possibility that a terrorist would be able to get hold of a nuclear weapon." Taking this action would make the "slim possibility (i.e., terrorists or their friends taking advantage of political chaos in a nuclear-armed state and snatching a nuclear weapon) even more unlikely."⁷³

Kinzer provides sage advice worth repeating. He recommends that the United States avoid being emotional: "Do nothing that will make (the) partnership more difficult to achieve when conditions are right," and, if negotiations do begin, make "no concessions to Iran's regime that weaken Iranians who are persecuted for defending democratic values."⁷⁴

Recommendation

Iranian leadership has seen how the international community treated Saddam Hussein and Muammar Gaddafi after they attempted to produce weapons of mass destruction and then relinquished them or did not follow through with their efforts; therefore, we must assume Iranian leadership will focus on regime survival and will become nuclear-capable in the next five years. This capability does not necessarily mean they will be able to deliver a nuclear weapon in that time frame; it only increases the nuclear ambiguity⁷⁵ in the Middle East. What these developments mean is that the United States should focus more of its near-term political effort on developing policies that provide regional stability and less time on policies and rhetoric provoking confrontation with a nuclear-capable Iran.

Lindsay and Takeyh provide excellent red lines the United States can use to determine whether Iran is abiding by international norms. Although the answer to Kay's question—"What policies will limit any advantage, political or military, that Iran might gain from nuclear weapons?"—may easily be sanctions and regime change, this answer comes with some considerable costs. Sanctions may cause increased nuclear proliferation and may embolden the regime to suppress dissidents, and a failed military attempt at regime change would perpetuate the current regime, strengthen the more extreme elements, and further destabilize the region.

An alternative solution to the question is for the United States to reduce its diplomatic energy on sanctions and regime change, and to concentrate more time and effort on developing a strategic framework that enables engagement with Iran. The benefit of engagement is that it promotes democracy and human rights by reducing tension and opening dialogue.⁷⁶ It also allows for both sides to build trust and confidence in each other.

At first, the diplomatic dialogue may be between low-level diplomats without any preconditions or without the nuclear issue bundled with other areas of concern.⁷⁷ To build confidence and trust, these initial meetings should take place quietly with little fanfare.⁷⁸ The outcome of these meetings will open reliable channels of communication that may yield better information, which administration officials can use to create better policy, signal warnings, and avoid conflict.⁷⁹ This opening of communication will be the prelude to breaking down the barriers currently blocking high-level discussions.

This framework should embody the following attributes. First, it must deliver a clear and consistent nuclear non-proliferation message. One way to do this is for the United States to apply increased pressure on Israel to sign, ratify, and abide by the NPT. This action by the United States will send a clear and consistent message that it desires nuclear transparency in the Middle East. Second, the framework should acknowledge Iran's motivations for developing nuclear weapons, specifically addressing Iran's desire for prestige, regional leadership and reasons for wanting to deter the United States. Finally, the United States should assist Iran in safeguarding their nuclear weapons through programs, procedures and training that seek to prevent accidents and theft.

Conclusion

The departing chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, argued that the case for urgent action against Iran was "hyped."⁸⁰ If this is true, we must ask ourselves is the United States being pulled into a fight it should not be pursuing with an "all options are on the table" attitude? Looking back on history may provide some insight into where the United States and its regional partners are headed. Prior to 1914, European nations allied themselves through a network of agreements and ran headlong into a war that might have been

prevented had they stopped and looked at all of the options. Today, our regional partners may be dragging us down the path toward war. Our rhetoric and actions to date seem to indicate we are on that path. We must excuse ourselves from this journey and begin to engage Iran. Engagement is more difficult, will take more time, and the United States may lose on some issues. However, our change of course could lead to stronger relationships, provide regional stability in the Middle East, and keep the world from witnessing more bloodshed.



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Endnotes

(All notes appear in shortened form. For full details, see the appropriate entry in the bibliography.)

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1. Hague, *Iran's Nuclear Threat*
 2. Kay, *What's Missing*
 3. United Nations
 4. Hymans, *Nuclear Weapon State*, 167
 5. Ibid, 167
 6. Ibid, 168
 7. Fitzpatrick, *Iranian Nuclear Crisis*
 8. Kay, *What's Missing*
 9. Fitzpatrick *Iranian Nuclear Crisis*, 14
 10. Lindsay and Takeyh, *After Iran Gets the Bomb*
 11. Katzman, *Iran: U.S. Concerns*, 26
 12. Lindsay and Takeyh, *After Iran Gets the Bomb*
 13. Sick, *Iran's Strategic Concerns*
 14. Sanger, *The Inheritance*, 45
 15. Ibid
 16. Devlen, *Dealing or Dueling*, 66
 17. Drezner, *Will Sanctioning Iran Work?*
 18. Examples include:
 1. President Bush's State of the Union speech in 2002, which combined Iran with Iraq and North Korea into the "axis of evil," a policy of "preventive deterrence," and loose talk of regime change on the part of the United States. The Bush administration then followed up with the invasion of Iraq, and set in motion a dialogue that forced Iran to worry they were next on the United States "hit" list (Fitzpatrick, *The Iranian Nuclear Crisis*, 14).
Couple this with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's 2002 New York Post interview and you get a sense of why Iran is concerned with national survival. In the interview, Sharon said, "as soon as Iraq is dealt with, I will push for Iran to be at the top of the 'do' list . . . Iran makes every effort to possess weapons of mass destruction . . . and ballistic missiles . . . That is a danger to the Middle East and a danger to the world" (Brom n.d., *Is the Begin Doctrine*, 155).
 2. Recent attempts to sabotage Iran's uranium enrichment processes through the Stunt virus, which was designed to attack and disable thousands of first generation centrifuges at Natanz. Along with the virus, unidentified assailants have killed four Iranian scientists since 2007, and a fifth narrowly escaped death in an attempted car bombing (Warrick, *Iran's Nuclear Program*).
 3. Dianne Feinstein, US California Senator believes that without some discussions to force Iran to change its policies, the US is "on a collision course," and if we want to avoid the collision, we have to take action to avoid it. She rejected a call for covert ops, which is in direct opposition to Senator John McCain's stance on "severe sanctions" and US "covert activity" to undermine the current Iranian government. In addition, Mike Rogers, the top House Republican on intelligence issues, stated military force shouldn't be ruled

out as a response to an alleged Iranian assassination plot on US soil. Finally, presidential candidate Newt Gingrich, “Our goal should be the replacement of the Iranian dictatorship” (CPC Outreach Journal, San Francisco Chronicle, 18 Oct 2011).

19. Kay, *What's Missing*

20. The United States signed a ten-year military aid plan of \$30 billion for Israel and prior to that had announced a larger military aid package totaling almost \$80 billion for US allies Egypt and the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. (Newkirk, *Diplomacy and Hypocrisy*)

21. Ibid

22. Mearsheimer, *Imperial by Design*, 29

23. Sagan, et. al., *Nuclear Iran*, 137

24. Mearsheimer, *Imperial by Design*, 29

25. Lindsay and Takeyh, *After Iran Gets the Bomb*

26. Obama, *National Security Strategy*, 11

27. Lindsay and Takeyh, *After Iran Gets the Bomb*

28. Ibid

29. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, 414

30. Dobbins et al., *Coping*, xiv

31. A report by the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) attests to the difficulties inherent in maintaining a workable sanctions regime (Newkirk, *Diplomacy and Hypocrisy*).

32. In addition to key assistance to Tehran’s nuclear program (lectures and shared expertise on developing and testing an explosives package), Russia has warned that a military strike on Iran would be a “very serious mistake” with “unpredictable consequences” after Israel’s president said that an attack was increasingly likely (Spillius, *Russia warns*).

33. China depends heavily on oil exports from Iran to fuel its growing economy (The Telegraph, *Analysis*).

34. Ibid

35. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, 406

36. Ferguson, *Don't sanction*

37. Lindsay and Takeyh, *After Iran Gets the Bomb*

38. Sick, *Iran's Strategic Concerns*

39. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, 415

40. Dobbins et al., *Coping*, xvi

41. Newkirk, *Diplomacy and Hypocrisy*

42. Lindsay and Takeyh, *After Iran Gets the Bomb*

43. Ibid

44. Mearsheimer, *Imperial by Design*, 22

45. Kay, *What's Missing*

46. Ibid

47. Engagement, in this context, is the “active participation of the United States in relationships beyond our borders” (Obama 2010, *National Security Strategy*, 11)

48. Baker, *Iraq Study Group Report*, 50

49. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, 399

50. Dobbins et al., *Coping*, xxi

51. Levertt, *Dealing with Tehran*, 3

52. Takeyh, *Hidden Iran*, 222

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53. Ibid
54. Information and quotes pertaining to Kinzer's book is from a book review by Mustafa Akyol in the September/October 2010 edition of Foreign affairs (Akyol, *An Unlikely Trio*)
55. Quoted in Akyol, *An Unlikely Trio*
56. Wagner, *Bush Waives Nuclear-Related Sanctions*
57. Landler, *U.S. Considers*
58. Ibid
59. Obama, *National Security Strategy*, 3
60. Obama, *National Security Strategy*, 11
61. Kay, *What's Missing*
62. Devlen, *Dealing or Dueling*, 66
63. Ameri, *Configuration of the Region*
64. The General Council established a Working Party to examine the application of the Islamic Republic of Iran on 26 May 2005. The Islamic Republic of Iran submitted its Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime in November 2009. The Working Party has not yet met. Information found at <http://en.irantradelaw.com/difficulties-of-accession/56-external-difficulties/101-political-obstacles> on 10 Jan 2012.
65. Kay states, "Iran appears not to see or believe that the United States is willing to accept the validity and survival of the Iranian revolutionary state." The United States can begin to build trust by publicly accepting Iran's validity and survival as a state (Kay, *What's Missing*).
66. Baker, *Iraq Study Group Report*, 51
67. Devlen, *Dealing or Dueling*, 66
68. Quoted in Akyol, *An Unlikely Trio*
69. Frost, *Discerning U.S. Strategic Options*, 24
70. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, 396
71. Sagan, et. al., *A Nuclear Iran*, 143
72. Ibid
73. Mearsheimer, "Imperial by Design," 22
74. Quoted in Akyol, *An Unlikely Trio*,
75. This is term that reflects a policy that neither confirms nor denies the existence of nuclear weapons. As an example, it became clear in 1968 that the Israelis felt they could develop a nuclear device but would feel correct in claiming they had not "introduced" it so long as they had neither tested it nor made its existence public. Information found at <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v20/d349>
76. Sick, *Iran's Strategic Concerns*
77. Baker, *Iraq Study Group Report*, 50
78. Dobbins, *Negotiating with Iran*, 161
79. Ibid
80. Broad, Mazzetti and Sanger, *A Nuclear Debate*