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USADI Commentary

The Fellowship of Appeasement

Last Monday, in another attempt to promote the policy of appeasing Tehran, former secretary of state Madeleine Albright and six former foreign ministers of major European countries and Canada, co-authored an article in the Washington Post.

Recognizing that the European Union had ran out of "carrots" and that Tehran was not showing any sign of abandoning its nuclear weapons program, the authors insisted that the United States should express mail a few "carrots" to the EU to compensate for the latter's utter lack of diplomatic backbone to stand-up to the mullahs.

The authors, or more fittingly the fellowship of appeasement, pleaded for American "subtle signals" to Tehran as the latest round of nuclear talks between Iran and EU Big-3 began in Brussels that same Monday.

Having met under the auspices of the Aspen Institute, the authors wrote they had worked out some "new approaches on both sides of the Atlantic" to bring about a better "balance of carrots and sticks" to ensure that the temporary suspension of Iran's uranium enrichment would become a permanent one.

A few sentences later, it turned out that their "new approach" package was anything but new. It is more or less a rehash of the "grand bargain" idea floating around in Washington last summer: accepting Iran's right to a peaceful civilian nuclear energy program, supplying it with fresh reactor fuel, and US endorsement of recent EU nuclear accord with Tehran.

The crux of the approach, however, is that "Washington should put its full support behind this diplomatic effort and consider launching commercial and diplomatic engagement with Iran."

Apparently, the former foreign ministers have a very short memory and forgot that under their watch, the engagement fantasy with Tehran got nowhere.

Mrs. Albright's pistachio-caviar-carpet-apology diplomacy turned out to be a humiliating and futile exercise at engaging a corrupt and terrorist regime. A recent editorial in the state-controlled Iranian daily *Sharq*, rejoiced over Tehran exploiting Western overtures to the so-called reform. It said while the world was busy tangoing with Khatami, Iran was going full speed with its nuclear program.

Albright's State Department blacklisted Iran's main opposition the People's Mujahedeen in 1997 to assure the tyrants in Tehran that Washington had no interest in regime change. Shortly afterwards, Thomas Friedman wrote in the *New York Times* that "The Iranians will get the point: We've just made it illegal for Americans to support the Mujahedeen -- a group dedicated to overthrowing the Iranian Government." Clearly, this designation was not about terrorism, it was about trying a "new approach" toward mullahs.

Still, the more outrageous policy suggestion was that "disagreements over the nuclear question need not, for example, disrupt efforts to achieve cooperation on such matters as narcotics enforcement, Iraq, the fight against terrorism and peace in the Middle East." To proffer that the idea of US cooperating with Iran over Iraq and the fight against terrorism one must be either delusional or naive or both. Iranians are involved in fomenting the chaos in Iraq up to their eyeballs. Just listen to Iraq's interim president, the vice-president, and interior minister. On Wednesday, the Iraqi Defense minister Hazem Shaalan called Iran "Iraq's number one enemy" and said Tehran wanted "turbaned clerics to rule in Iraq."

How could one think of working with a regime that even Mrs. Albright's State Department classified as the "leading state sponsor of terrorism," and was involved in the murder of several hundred US servicemen in Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, and responsible for the 444-day occupation of US embassy in Tehran?

One wonders whether the co-authors were referring to Tehran's definition of the "fight against terrorism"; a thinly veiled reference to its demand from Washington and the EU to crackdown on Iranian oppositionists abroad.

Contrary to what the fellowship of appeasement wants us to believe, the more things have changed in Iran in the past twenty-five years, the more they have stayed the same. The core problem is this: Iran is ruled by a terror-sponsoring, theocratic tyranny, which thrives on fascist-like suppression of its own citizens and the export of terror and fundamentalism abroad. It is intrinsically and structurally incapable of change.

The solution is also as evident: The unseating of the ruling regime by the Iranian people and their resistance movement. To this end, Washington should part with its past record in Iran and side with the Iranian people. The first step would be to reject engagement and end the blacklisting of Iranian opposition groups.

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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The Washington Times (Editorial)

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Whitewashing Iran

In just the latest move that calls into question the seriousness of its efforts to learn the truth about Iran's nuclear weapons program, the International Atomic Energy Agency apparently withheld information suggesting that Iran had attempted to purchase large quantities of dual-use material (items with civilian and military uses) which can be used to detonate an atomic weapon.

... According to the news agency, a "non-U.S. diplomat" said that information about Iran's work with beryllium was included in an early draft of the IAEA report on inspections in Iran, but was taken out of the final report after Tehran objected. The information was also omitted from a report issued last month by the IAEA Board of Governors.

That same IAEA board rejected U.S. efforts to have Iran's behavior referred to the U.N. Security Council for action, opting instead for a weak alternative plan devised by Britain, France and Germany requiring that Iran freeze part of its nuclear program. This plan devised by the EU 3 specifies that the Iranian freeze is "non-binding" and "voluntary." In other words, Iran faces no meaningful penalties for ignoring the freeze whenever it chooses...

Publications such as the London Sunday Telegraph and Jane's International Defense Review reported that, in 1994, the United States prevented Tehran from purchasing beryllium in Kazakhstan. After the CIA learned that Iranian agents had visited a processing plant there, U.S. agents reportedly purchased the entire inventory. The beryllium — enough to produce 20 nuclear warheads — was transferred to the United States to be modified for nonmilitary uses. There have been subsequent published reports suggesting that Tehran continues to try to obtain beryllium.

Since it was forced to begin dealing with the issue last June, the IAEA has to its credit issued a series of reports showing that Iran has been cheating and concealing its nuclear program from public view for nearly 20 years. Our central criticism of Mr. Eibaradei had been his unwillingness to be sufficiently vigorous in holding Iran accountable for malevolent behavior that has been publicly documented...

FrontPage Magazine

December 14, 2004

The Mullahs' Killing Fields

A former political prisoner and the daughter of two slain parents vowed to make sure the voices of Iranians who have suffered under the Islamic fundamentalist regime heard. The two women said they stand by other activists who continue to be arrested, tortured, and executed in Iran for supporting freedom and democracy.

On the occasion of International Human Rights Day (Friday, December 10), the torture and execution of political prisoners in Iran was the focus of a briefing in New York hosted by the non-governmental organization Women's Freedom Forum. The treatment of women, especially women political activists, was featured.

The walls of the room were lined with documentary posters with names and photographs of men, women, and children who had been killed by the mullahs in Iran. A number of the photographs were family groups – mother, father, and two, three, four, five, even six children – that had been killed by the Iranian regime for their political activism.

The program included videos and photographs of trials, lashings and executions over the past 25 years. Some images were from the early days of the revolution, some from the late 1980s, and one photograph showing the hanging of a group of seven men in Zahedan just three days before the event on December 7, 2004. The victims are hoisted into the air by a crane in a public place in order to terrorize the population and suppress further resistance to the regime. Another Iranian-American pro-democracy non-governmental organization - The Committee in Support of Referendum in Iran - sends out news clippings on a regular basis that document the executions of men, women, and sometimes children, as the Iranian regime executes minors....

At the briefing, Farangis, a former political prisoner described her experience and treatment by Revolutionary Guards in three different prisons. She was born in 1959 in the southwestern Iranian city of Masjid Suleiman in Khuzistan province. She became a political activist after the revolution when she saw the nature of the regime that Khomeini was constructing. She now lives in the U.S. with her family.

The event concluded with Hajar, an 18 year old woman, whose father, a medical student, was killed by the Iranian regime when she was two years old and whose mother was killed by the Iranian regime when she was eight years old, saying that although she was a student with exams next week, she needed to be at the event to make sure the voices of her parents are heard. She did not want them to die in vain...

Excerpts from an article by Donna M. Hughes, Professor & Carlson Endowed Chair in Women's Studies at the University of Rhode Island.