Enough Already: The Case for Ending Iran Sanctions

By Vance Trefethen

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A wise man once said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Our current sanctions policy on Iran dates back to before a lot of the people in this room were born. But year after year the policy fails and even makes things worse. Please join us as we affirm that The United States should significantly reform its policy toward one or more countries in the Middle East.

OBSERVATION 1. Our DEFINITIONS

**Significant**: “large enough to be noticed or have an effect” (Merriam-Webster Online Dict. 2014 <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/significant>)

**Policy**: “a high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body” (Merriam-Webster Online Dict. 2014 <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy?show=0&t=1402599657>)

**Middle East** is defined contextually in our evidence, where experts use the term to include the country of Iran.

OBSERVATION 2. INHERENCY, or the conditions of the Status Quo.

One simple fact: US economic sanctions on Iran. The US has been sanctioning Iran since 1979.

Kenneth Katzman 2014. (Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) 7 May 2014 “Iran Sanctions“ <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS20871.pdf>

U.S. sanctions have been a major feature of U.S. Iran policy since Iran’s 1979 Islamic revolution, but U.N. and worldwide bilateral sanctions on Iran are a relatively recent (post-2006) development. Many of the U.S. sanctions reinforce U.N. and multilateral sanctions put in place in recent years by European and some Asian countries. Successive Administrations have sought to ensure that U.S. sanctions do not hamper cooperation with key international partners whose support is needed to isolate Iran. The objectives of U.S. sanctions have evolved over time. In the mid-1980s, U.S. sanctions were intended to try to compel Iran to cease supporting acts of terrorism and to limit Iran’s strategic power in the Middle East more generally. Since the mid-1990s, U.S. sanctions have focused increasingly on persuading or compelling Iran to limit the scope of its nuclear program to ensure purely civilian use. Since 2006, and particularly since 2010, the international community has joined U.S. sanctions in pursuit of that goal.

OBSERVATION 3. We change this with our PLAN, to be implemented by Congress and the President.

1. All US economic sanctions against Iran are canceled.
2. The US discontinues support for and vetoes any UN Security Council economic sanctions on Iran’s nuclear program
3. Enforcement of current sanctions is canceled and the plan takes effect the day after an Affirmative ballot.
4. Funding through existing budgets of existing agencies. Net reduction in federal spending, since we cancel the need for law enforcement and detection of sanction violators.
5. Affirmative speeches may clarify as needed.

Now let’s see why this is the right policy in

OBSERVATION 4. The JUSTIFICATIONS

JUSTIFICATION 1. Sanctions fail. Sanctions are unlikely to block Iran’s nuclear program. We need to use diplomacy instead.

Prof. Steve Hanke 2013. (Professor of Applied Economics at The Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute in Washington) On the Failure of the Iranian Sanctions, Feb 2013 <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/failure-iranian-sanctions>

Conventional wisdom holds that the sanctions will “work” by imposing such severe economic hardship that the Iranian regime will be forced to abandon its nuclear program. Even if we assume, for the sake of argument, that this is possible, how long will it take? Consider Cuba, where the Castro government has retained power, despite U.S. sanctions, for over 50 years. Well, one might argue that Cuba has not faced the same inflation problems that now confront Iran. Fine. But, Zimbabwe has. Indeed, sanctions and severe hyperinflation (the world’s second worst case) have failed to dislodge Robert Mugabe after 33 years in power. In light of this, it seems highly unlikely that sanctions will succeed in forcing Iran to abandon its nuclear program before it is able to develop a nuclear weapon. Even conservative estimates give Iran two years, at most, before it has enough fissile nuclear material to construct a nuclear weapon. Regardless of the rhetoric coming out of Washington and Brussels, the West is clearly beginning to recognize that reality. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has taken note and initiated talks with Iranian officials. The U.S. and E.U. have also quietly begun to lay the groundwork for a diplomatic solution. While the collective punishment delivered by the sanctions has been devastating, it has ultimately failed to deter the Iranian regime from developing nuclear capacity. Instead, it has generated a great deal of resentment. Given the rotting situation in Iran, and the time horizon for Iran to develop nuclear capabilities, it seems that the interests of all concerned are converging on a diplomatic solution. Indeed, it is the only viable option left.

JUSTIFICATION 2. Human rights. Sanctions give the Iranian regime an excuse for oppression

Prof. Joy Gordon 2013. (professor of philosophy at Fairﬁeld University. She received a J.D. from Boston University School of Law and a Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale University) CRIPPLING IRAN: THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE TACTIC OF DELIBERATE AMBIGUITY, GEORGETOWN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Vol. 44 <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/law-journals/gjil/recent/upload/zsx00313000973.PDF>

The sanctions have also triggered greater oppression by the regime, reducing the space for dissent and democratic opposition. The International Civil Society Action Network noted that the sanctions and threat of war allow the state to invoke 'a state of emergency' and in so doing suppress critics and voices of dissent.

JUSTIFICATION 3. Middle East stability.

Dr. Kenneth Waltz 2012. (PhD; Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and senior research assistant of the Columbia University  ) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” July/Aug 2012 FOREIGN AFFAIRS <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137731/kenneth-n-waltz/why-iran-should-get-the-bomb>

In 1991, the historical rivals India and Pakistan signed a treaty agreeing not to target each other's nuclear facilities. They realized that far more worrisome than their adversary's nuclear deterrent was the instability produced by challenges to it. Since then, even in the face of high tensions and risky provocations, the two countries have kept the peace. Israel and Iran would do well to consider this precedent. If Iran goes nuclear, Israel and Iran will deter each other, as nuclear powers always have. There has never been a full-scale war between two nuclear-armed states. Once Iran crosses the nuclear threshold, deterrence will apply, even if the Iranian arsenal is relatively small. No other country in the region will have an incentive to acquire its own nuclear capability, and the current crisis will finally dissipate, leading to a Middle East that is more stable than it is today.  For that reason, the United States and its allies need not take such pains to prevent the Iranians from developing a nuclear weapon. Diplomacy between Iran and the major powers should continue, because open lines of communication will make the Western countries feel better able to live with a nuclear Iran. But the current sanctions on Iran can be dropped: they primarily harm ordinary Iranians, with little purpose.

JUSTIFICATION 4. Humanitarian Harm. Sanctions hurt the common people, not the rulers.

Prof. Joy Gordon 2013. (professor of philosophy at Fairﬁeld University. She received a J.D. from Boston University School of Law and a Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale University) CRIPPLING IRAN: THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE TACTIC OF DELIBERATE AMBIGUITY, GEORGETOWN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Vol. 44 <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/law-journals/gjil/recent/upload/zsx00313000973.PDF> (brackets in original)

Far from targeting the Iranian regime and the military, the sanctions are harming the political opposition to the regime, as well as women and other vulnerable groups. Medicines for chronic illnesses such as asthma, multiple sclerosis, and cancer are often no longer affordable, and sometimes cannot be found, even at very high prices. In January 2013, the Guardian reported on "the crisis [the sanctions] triggered in the Iranian pharmaceutical market, and the impact that it has had on millions of Iranians with chronic health problems." Although U.S. and European companies are theoretically permitted to sell medicines to Iraq, because of the banking restrictions, it is difficult to find any banks that will handle the financial transactions.

JUSTIFICATION 5. Evasion. Our enemies and even our allies bypass the sanctions and trade with Iran

*Dr. Ted Galen Carpenter 2012. (PhD in US Diplomatic History; senior fellow for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute) Iran Sanctions Leakage 23 Mar 2012* <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/iran-sanctions-leakage>

Finally, sanctions have an especially anemic record of success without comprehensive international cooperation. That aspect also raises serious doubts about the effectiveness of the Iranian sanctions to this point and going forward. China and Russia have a long record of foot-dragging about imposing sanctions on Tehran, and both countries retain important economic links with Iran despite the tightening international restriction. Beijing’s reluctance to go along with the policy Washington favors is understandable. Iran is a significant supplier of energy to China’s voracious economy, a factor that is already important and will become more so as the Chinese economy continues to grow. An anti-American Iran also serves as a brake on U.S. hegemony in the oil-rich Persian Gulf. The other major oil producers in the region, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the small Gulf states, are all close U.S. allies or are at least under significant U.S. influence. Iran’s role as a counterweight makes both Moscow and Beijing extremely wary of going along with Washington’s anti-Iranian agenda. But the leakage in the sanctions system is not confined to the actions of Russia and China. Even key U.S. allies such as Japan and several European Union countries have not entirely severed their commercial links to Iran.

2A Evidence: Iran Sanctions

OPENING QUOTE / NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY CRITIQUE

Believing the myth that “sanctions work” leads us down a perilous path in US foreign policy

Dr. Trita Parsi 2014. (masters degree in economics; PhD in international relations; ethnic Iranian whose family escaped persecution in Iran when he was a child) « No, Sanctions Didn’t Force Iran to Make a Deal » 14 May 2014 FOREIGN POLICY <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/05/14/sanctions_did_not_force_iran_to_make_a_deal_nuclear_enrichment>

Yet the myth that sanctions produced the current diplomatic breakthrough persists. Lawmakers continue to argue for more sanctions, even though such action would cause the talks to collapse, claiming that since sanctions brought Iran to the table, more sanctions will give the United States even more leverage. If the myth of the sanctions success prevails, American foreign policy will be led down a perilous path. A false and dangerous blueprint for dealing with proliferators and international disputes in general will emerge: Forget diplomacy, never compromise, impose sanctions, threaten war -- and hope for the best.

INHERENCY

Congress committed to sanctions – and sanctions reduce Iran’s incentive to negotiate with the US

Justin Logan 2013. (director of foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute; master’s degree in international relations, Univ of Chicago ) 19 Sept 2013 On Iran, Would U.S. Take “Yes” for an Answer? <http://www.cato.org/blog/iran-would-us-take-yes-answer>

A central, if not the central, problem is that the American foreign policy community has failed to lay out any conceivable way Iran could satisfy Washington other than immediate suspension of all uranium enrichment with no serious sanctions relief in return, which nearly everyone agrees isn’t going to happen. Congress seems to have two speeds on Iran policy these days: sanctions and asleep. Congress regularly piles on more sanctions to Iran, some painful, some symbolic, because it’s the easy thing to do politically, and no one seems willing to spend the political capital to provide Iran with a realistic offramp by which Tehran could lessen the pain and save face. Unfortunately, Congress’ actions and rhetoric have given the Iranians good reason to fear that our real policy in Iran is regime change, which can’t augur well for a deal.

Sanctions go well beyond targeting Iranian nuclear program

Prof. Joy Gordon 2013. (professor of philosophy at Fairﬁeld University. She received a J.D. from Boston University School of Law and a Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale University) CRIPPLING IRAN: THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE TACTIC OF DELIBERATE AMBIGUITY, GEORGETOWN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Vol. 44 <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/law-journals/gjil/recent/upload/zsx00313000973.PDF>

Given the many ways that the measures of the United States and its allies have broadly targeted Iran's shipping, financial transactions, and energy sector, it is unsurprising that the effects of the sanctions go well beyond simply depriving Iran of the means to produce nuclear weapons. A number of foreign companies have severed their commercial ties with Iran, even where their business activities had no relation to nuclear proliferation, Iran's military or the IRGC, or human rights violations by the regime, but were simply participating in Iran's civilian economy.

US participation in UN sanctions goes beyond what’s required and harms the economy and population

Prof. Joy Gordon 2013. (professor of philosophy at Fairﬁeld University. She received a J.D. from Boston University School of Law and a Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale University) CRIPPLING IRAN: THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE TACTIC OF DELIBERATE AMBIGUITY, GEORGETOWN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Vol. 44 <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/law-journals/gjil/recent/upload/zsx00313000973.PDF>

If the member states implemented only the explicit and mandatory provisions of the resolutions, then the effects, for the most part, would have been limited to interfering in Iran's development of nuclear weapons. If the member states had implemented the voluntary provisions only to the extent that there were reasonable grounds to believe that cargo or financial transactions or other activities were in fact contributing to Iran's nuclear weapons program, then the sanctions would not have impacted Iran's economy as a whole. However, invoking the language of "vigilance" and "enhanced monitoring," the United States and its allies imposed measures that are so far reaching as to affect Iran's economy on a structural level, doing broad and indiscriminate harm to the economy and the population.

US has sanctioned Iran since 1979

Prof. Joy Gordon 2013. (professor of philosophy at Fairﬁeld University. She received a J.D. from Boston University School of Law and a Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale University) CRIPPLING IRAN: THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE TACTIC OF DELIBERATE AMBIGUITY, GEORGETOWN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Vol. 44 <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/law-journals/gjil/recent/upload/zsx00313000973.PDF>

Since the Iranian revolution of 1979, the United States has imposed economic sanctions on Iran. This was criticized by many, including U.S. allies, as extraterritorial—in that it interfered with Iran’s commercial relations with third countries. In 2006, in response to Iran’s development of its nuclear capacity, the United Nations Security Council (Security Council) imposed additional sanctions. Under Article 25 of the U.N. Charter, any measures imposed in accordance with Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter are binding upon all member states. During this time, the United States has greatly expanded its measures against Iran, primarily through two statutes, the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (CISADA) and the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (ITRSHA), as well as through a series of executive orders, and by placing informal pressure on other nations and international institutions. These measures go well beyond those authorized by the Security Council resolutions, and have broad, indiscriminate effects on Iran’s economy, family remittances, education of Iranians abroad, and the availability and cost of imported goods. They also affect Iran’s energy sector, and consequently the cost and availability of transportation, as well as manufacturing in general. The United States has largely been alone in imposing measures on Iran and other nations that are extensive and indiscriminate. The use of broad trade sanctions with a blanket impact on the civilian population was criticized extensively in the 1990s, giving rise to the “smart sanctions” movement.

“The JPOA (Joint Plan of Action) reduced sanctions on Iran” – Response: It’s only a limited, temporary reduction, lots of sanctions still remain

US Dept of the Treasury 2014. “Frequently Asked Questions Relating to the Temporary Sanctions Relief to Implement the Joint Plan of Action between the P5 + 1 and the Islamic Republic of Iran” 20 Jan 2014 <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/jpoa_faqs.pdf>

Except for the limited, temporary, and reversible relief provided pursuant to the JPOA, all U.S. sanctions with respect to Iran, including financial sanctions, sanctions pertaining to the purchase of Iranian crude oil, and sanctions on investment in Iran’s energy and petrochemical sectors, remain in effect with respect to U.S. and non-U.S. persons. The relief provided in the JPOA only pertains to conduct and transactions fully completed during the JPOA Period, and, with limited exceptions, involves only certain sanctions on non-U.S. persons not otherwise subject to section 560.215 of the Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations, 31 C.F.R. part 560 (ITSR) (hereinafter “non-U.S. persons not otherwise subject to the ITSR”), as described in more detail in these FAQs. U.S. persons and U.S.-owned or -controlled foreign entities continue to be generally prohibited from conducting transactions with Iran, including any transactions of the types permitted pursuant to the JPOA, unless licensed to do so by OFAC.

JUSTIFICATIONS

Iran sanctions unlikely to cause Iran to abandon its nuclear program

Dr. Ted Galen Carpenter 2012. (PhD in US Diplomatic History; senior fellow for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute) Iran Sanctions Leakage 23 Mar 2012 [*http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/iran-sanctions-leakage*](http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/iran-sanctions-leakage)

Relying on sanctions to pressure Iran to relinquish its nuclear ambitions is preferable to the reckless proposals of hawks who seemingly can’t wait to bomb that country. But proponents of sanctions are being too optimistic about the efficacy of their strategy. The odds are that economic pressure will not cause Iran to abandon its nuclear program. It is time to start thinking about a “Plan C” to deal with the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran.

“Sanctions got moderate Rouhani elected” – Response: Only 2% said sanctions were key to voting for Rouhani

Dr. Trita Parsi 2014. (masters degree in economics; PhD in international relations; ethnic Iranian whose family escaped persecution in Iran when he was a child) « No, Sanctions Didn’t Force Iran to Make a Deal » 14 May 2014 FOREIGN POLICY <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/05/14/sanctions_did_not_force_iran_to_make_a_deal_nuclear_enrichment>

The Tehran University/University of Maryland poll also directly refutes the idea that sanctions got Rouhani elected: Only 2 percent of Rouhani's supporters listed the lifting of sanctions as a reason for supporting him. Twice as many -- 4 percent -- voted for him because he was a clergyman. Seven percent cited his ability to fix the economy. A later poll by Zogby International revealed that three out of the five most important issues to the Iranian electorate pertained to civil liberties, while a whopping 96 percent reported that sanctions were worth it in order to retain the country's enrichment right.

“Sanctions made Iran negotiate” – Responses: Sanctions did not motivate Iran’s negotiations and did not get Rouhani elected.

Dr. Trita Parsi 2014. (masters degree in economics; PhD in international relations; ethnic Iranian whose family escaped persecution in Iran when he was a child) « No, Sanctions Didn’t Force Iran to Make a Deal » 14 May 2014 FOREIGN POLICY <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/05/14/sanctions_did_not_force_iran_to_make_a_deal_nuclear_enrichment>

That myth -- promoted by officials in President Barack Obama's administration as well as powerful lawmakers like Sen. Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) -- is that crippling sanctions brought the Iranian regime to its knees, forcing it to rush to the negotiating table to beg for mercy. In this narrative, the breakthrough in nuclear talks is credited to the Obama administration's unprecedented economic pressure, which has essentially locked Iran out of the international financial system. And like JFK before him, Obama did not compromise with Iran. The mythical gold standard was met. Except it wasn't. Sanctions are neither the reason for the breakthrough, nor the impetus behind the government of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's openness to talks. They also did not get Rouhani elected. The idea that the United States has the ability to engineer the outcome of elections in a country that is thousands of miles away, with which it has no trade, where it has had no diplomatic presence for 35 years, and where only a handful of current U.S.

Sanctions are not driving Iran’s willingness to negotiate with the US

Dr. Trita Parsi 2014. (masters degree in economics; PhD in international relations; ethnic Iranian whose family escaped persecution in Iran when he was a child) « No, Sanctions Didn’t Force Iran to Make a Deal » 14 May 2014 FOREIGN POLICY <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/05/14/sanctions_did_not_force_iran_to_make_a_deal_nuclear_enrichment>

Equally questionable is the argument that sanctions brought Iran to the negotiating table -- or even that they are the driving force behind Rouhani's appetite for diplomacy. Such claims ignore the fact that the team around Rouhani has had a long history of pursuing a more conciliatory policy towards the West, including on the nuclear issue. Rouhani headed Iran's Supreme National Security Council, the equivalent of the U.S.'s National Security Council, in 2001, when Tehran helped Washington topple the Taliban in Afghanistan.

“Sanctions motivate Iran to negotiate with the US” -- Response: Iran was helping the U.S. during the G.W. Bush administration, then we imposed more sanctions and the cooperation ended

Dr. Trita Parsi 2014. (masters degree in economics; PhD in international relations; ethnic Iranian whose family escaped persecution in Iran when he was a child) « No, Sanctions Didn’t Force Iran to Make a Deal » 14 May 2014 FOREIGN POLICY <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/05/14/sanctions_did_not_force_iran_to_make_a_deal_nuclear_enrichment>

According James Dobbins, who served as President George W. Bush's envoy to Afghanistan in the months after the 9/11 attacks, Iran provided crucial intelligence as well as military and political support to the United States -- long before any of the current sanctions were imposed. Later, it was Rouhani's current foreign minister, Javad Zarif, who coordinated with Dobbins to secure support for the new post-Taliban constitution in Afghanistan. The Iranians hoped that their assistance in Afghanistan would open a new chapter in U.S.-Iran relations, but Bush was not interested. Instead, he included Iran in his "axis of evil," effectively killing the collaboration in Afghanistan.

Sanctions fail generally and they will fail in Iran. Elites can insulate themselves from the effect of sanctions

*Dr. Ted Galen Carpenter 2012. (PhD in US Diplomatic History; senior fellow for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute) Iran Sanctions Leakage 23 Mar 2012* <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/iran-sanctions-leakage>

Second, the historical record shows that sanctions fail more often than they succeed. That is especially true when they are designed to compel a target regime to abandon a high-priority, high-prestige objective. The issue is not whether sanctions inflict pain on the general population in that country. Measured in that fashion, the tactic always works, since ordinary people—especially the poorest, least powerful—do suffer, often badly. The real issue, though, is whether the country’s economic and political elites are so discomfited and weakened that they are willing to capitulate regarding the issue in dispute. It is rare that elites cannot insulate themselves from the impact enough to avoid having to make unpalatable concessions. Moreover, even elites will endure considerable pain to avoid giving up a high-priority policy. And there is little question that the nuclear program is an extremely high-priority goal for Iran’s political elite.

Sanctions haven’t blocked Iran from getting nuclear technology

Kenneth Katzman 2014. (Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) 7 May 2014 “Iran Sanctions“ <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS20871.pdf>

A related issue is whether sanctions have weakened Iran strategically. One aspect of that question is whether sanctions have prevented Iran from acquiring needed technology or skills for its nuclear program or its missile or advanced conventional weapons programs. Some U.S. officials have asserted that sanctions have complicated Iran’s efforts to acquire key materials and equipment for its enrichment program.68 On March 16, 2014, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Non-Proliferation Vann Van Diepen said Iran was still “very actively” creating front companies and engaging in other activity to conceal procurements, and that Iran’s procurement activities had not changed since the JPA was agreed to. Sanctions did not prevent Iran from developing more advanced centrifuges and expanding its uranium enrichment program, as widely noted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Sanctions haven’t stopped Iran from arming bad guys abroad

Kenneth Katzman 2014. (Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) 7 May 2014 “Iran Sanctions“ <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS20871.pdf>

Sanctions do not appear to have materially reduced Iran’s ability to arms militant movements in the Middle East and the Syrian regime. Iran’s arms exports contravene Resolution 1747, which bans Iran’s exportation of arms. Extensive Iranian support to Syrian President Bashar Al Assad is continuing, by all accounts. Some press reports, quoting the U.N. panel of experts, say Iran has been exporting arms to factions in Yemen and Somalia. Other reports indicate Iran continues to try to arm Palestinian Islamist factions in the Gaza Strip and it has sought to supply arms to radical Shiite factions in Bahrain, according to DNI Clapper in January 2014.

US sanctions don’t contain incentives for Iran’s good behavior

Malou Innocent 2012. (masters degree in International Relations, Univ. of Chicago; foreign policy analyst at Cato Institute ) 1 Aug 2012 The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy with Iran <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/limits-coercive-diplomacy-iran>

Today, the West demands that Iran “stop, shut, and ship”: stop enrichment, shutter Fordow, and ship the 20 percent stockpile — this despite the NPT, to which Iran is a signatory, allowing for peaceful enrichment. Moreover, as the National Iranian American Council’s David Elliot and the Brookings Institution’s Suzanne Maloney observe, Congress passed sanctions that are not conditional on Iranian behavior. Demanding Iran’s complete capitulation for no relief from sanctions is a maximalist position with zero chance of success. Extrapolating from the case of Libya’s dismantlement of its nuclear program, Duke University Professor Bruce W. Jentleson and doctoral candidate Christopher A. Whytock find that one of the most crucial aspects of coercive diplomacy is that there are clear benefits to cooperation and that those benefits are realized when the coerced state cooperates.Similarly, Jonathan B. Schwartz, deputy legal adviser to the Department of State, argued from his personal capacity that reciprocity is critical to any sanctions regime.

**Iran already has capability to build a bomb – no agreement or military strikes can stop them.**

**Cordesman, Gold and Coughlin Schulte favor Iran sanctions, but even they admitted in 2014:**

Anthony Cordesman, Bryan Gold and Chloe Coughlin-Schulte 2014. (Cordesman - Chair in Strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies;  served as national security assistant to Senator John McCain of the Senate Armed Services Committee and as civilian assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense. He is also a former director of intelligence assessment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Gold - Research Intern, Burke Chair in Strategy at Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Coughlin-Schulte -  Intern at Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).) “Iran – Sanctions, Energy, Arms Control, and Regime Change“ Jan 2014 <http://csis.org/files/publication/140122_Cordesman_IranSanctions_Web.pdf>

There is no way of knowing how much weapons design data Iran has acquired from Pakistani or other sources, or whether it has carried out tests of nuclear designs using non-fissile materials at facilities like Parchin, but it certainly faced no technical barriers to covertly designing nuclear devices, bombs, and warheads. In short, Iran came as close to the point of nuclear “break out” as a nation could without actually producing weapons grade material or actually showing it could detonate some form of fissile event. It is unclear that any agreement (or any preventive strikes) can halt important aspects of Iran’s nuclear weapons design efforts.

Sanctions harm the general population of Iran: increase unemployment and create shortages of medicine

Prof. Joy Gordon 2013. (professor of philosophy at Fairﬁeld University; J.D. from Boston Univ School of Law and Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale Univ) CRIPPLING IRAN: THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE TACTIC OF DELIBERATE AMBIGUITY, GEORGETOWN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Vol. 44 <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/law-journals/gjil/recent/upload/zsx00313000973.PDF>

In August 2012, the U.N. Secretary-General reported that the sanctions imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran have had significant effects on the general population, including an escalation in inflation, a rise in commodities and energy costs, an increase in the rate of unemployment and a shortage of necessary items, including medicine. A number of Iranian non-governmental organizations and activists have expressed concerns about the growing impact of sanctions on the population and have noted that inflation, rising prices of commodities, subsidy cuts and sanctions are compounding each other and having far-reaching effects on the general population. They report, for instance, that people do not have access to lifesaving medicines. Furthermore, since the sanctions extend to banking transactions, many foreign banks have stopped doing business with the Islamic Republic of Iran altogether, which has made it considerably difficult for Iranians to transfer funds and for private business to obtain lines of credit. The sanctions also appear to be affecting humanitarian operations in the country. Even companies that have obtained the requisite license to import food and medicine are facing difficulties in finding third-country banks to process the transactions. Owing to payment problems, several medical companies have [stopped) exporting medicines to the Islamic Republic of Iran, leading to a reported shortage of drugs used in the treatment of various illnesses, including cancer, heart and respiratory conditions, thalassemia and multiple sclerosis.

Iranian patients are dying from lack of medicine due to sanctions

Siamak Namazi 2013. (*Dubai-based business consultant and a former Public Policy Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars* ) “Blocking Medicine to Iran” NEW YORK TIMES 1 March 2013 <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/02/opinion/blocking-medicine-to-iran.html?_r=0>

Patients in Iran are dying of treatable diseases because of shortages in life-saving medicines. The past year has been nothing short of catastrophic for the Iranian health-care sector: Imports from American and European drug makers in 2012 were down by an estimated 30 percent since 2011, and they continue to fall. Over the past three months, I led a group of independent business consultants with expertise in Iran to evaluate the problem. After conducting extensive interviews in Tehran and Dubai with Iranian importers and manufacturers of pharmaceuticals and medical equipment and their Western counterparts, we concluded that even though in theory the sanctions regime imposed on Iran by the United States and the European Union is supposed to allow humanitarian trade, in reality it impairs the delivery of drugs and medical equipment to Iran.

Sanctions hurt the common people, but not enough to start riots, and they don’t hurt the ruling elite

WASHINGTON POST 2013. (journalists Joby Warrick and Anne Gearan) 17 Mar 2013 “Despite sanctions’ toll on Iran, U.S. sees no shift in nuclear behavior “ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/despite-sanctions-toll-on-iran-us-sees-no-shift-in-nuclear-behavior/2013/03/17/d23b3b6a-8dad-11e2-b63f-f53fb9f2fcb4_story.html>

“The Iranians look at sanctions in terms of popular unrest,” said Ray Takeyh, a former Obama adviser on Iran. “If there are not people on the streets, sanctions aren’t biting.”  
Adjusting to sanctions  
As it has in the past, Iran has proved adept at adjusting to the economic restrictions imposed by the West. Although oil sanctions have cut deeply into exports, Tehran has sold enough oil — within and outside the bounds of the sanctions — to maintain basic services and preserve the affluent lifestyles of the ruling class and business elite, analysts say.

Sanctions devastate the population and don’t increase security for anyone

Prof. Joy Gordon 2013. (professor of philosophy at Fairﬁeld University; J.D. from Boston Univ School of Law and Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale Univ) CRIPPLING IRAN: THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE TACTIC OF DELIBERATE AMBIGUITY, GEORGETOWN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Vol. 44 <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/law-journals/gjil/recent/upload/zsx00313000973.PDF>

While neither the Security Council nor national sanctions explicitly state that their intent is to undermine food security or access to health care and education, these measures in fact compromise every sector of the economy and public services that are directly or indirectly necessary for well-being in a modem society, including electricity and transportation. The United States, the Security Council, and the like-minded nations" may invoke security as the reason for their policies. But from Weimar Germany to present-day Iraq, we should by now know that devastating an entire people, whether by bombs or by the relentless degradation of daily life, does not in the end bring greater security for anyone.

Big economic powers bypass sanctions and trade with Iran

*Dr. Ted Galen Carpenter 2012. (PhD in US Diplomatic History; senior fellow for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute) Iran Sanctions Leakage 23 Mar 2012* <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/iran-sanctions-leakage>

At a minimum, those factors suggest that New Delhi will continue to be a reluctant, unreliable participant in the sanctions system. Indeed, the Obama administration just excluded India (as well as China) from the list of countries that have reduced their oil imports from Iran sufficiently to be exempt from Washington’s own sanctions. Leakage from a sanctions system is quite substantial whenever two of the top economic powers in the world are not fully on board. That certainly seems to be the case with the current sanctions against Iran.

SOLVENCY / ADVOCACY

Now is key time to stop US sanctions: They’re increasing repression and alienating the Iranian people from America

Azadeh Shahshahani & Setareh Ghandehari 2013. (Shahshahani - attorney; Director, National Security/Immigrants' Rights Project, ACLU of Georgia; President, National Lawyers Guild. Ghandehari – attorney; Co-Chair of the National Lawyers Guild Iran Subcommittee) It's Time to End the U.S. Sanctions Inflicting Pain on the Iranian People 25 June 2013 HUFFINGTON POST <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/azadeh-shahshahani/its-time-to-end-the-us-sa_b_3498961.html>

The U.S. must seize upon the [election of reformist-backed Rowhani as the new Iranian President](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/16/world/middleeast/iran-election.html?hpw&pagewanted=print" \t "_hplink)and immediately lift all sanctions against Iran. While the U.S. government claimed on June 3 that it is [still open to "a diplomatic solution](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=188403328" \t "_hplink)," this new round of sanctions demonstrates that diplomacy is not the intention. Sanctions against Iran are not designed to bring about a peaceful resolution to a disagreement among nations. In a recent report issued by the [Iran Project](http://theiranproject.org/" \t "_hplink), former U.S. diplomats and Iran experts urge the Obama administration to rethink its Iran policy, recognizing that sanctions may in fact be leading to "an increase in repression and corruption," and "sowing the seeds of long-term alienation between the Iranian people and the United States."

Abandoning rigid sanctions is the first step and last chance for peaceful resolution

Malou Innocent 2012. (masters degree in International Relations, Univ. of Chicago; foreign policy analyst at Cato Institute ) 1 Aug 2012 The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy with Iran <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/limits-coercive-diplomacy-iran>

Evidence suggests that effective sanctions on Iran will prove difficult not because of Iran, but because of the intransigent approach of the sanctioning states. Talks are ongoing. Nevertheless, the diminishing returns of economic warfare and international ostracism could lead us down a dangerous path to conflict. To take a twist on an old saying, if goods do not cross oceans, bombs will. If restricting trade accomplishes little, then failure will galvanize hawks who seek to reckon with Iran militarily. Although Iran has not yet decided to build, test, and deploy nuclear weapons, what it has done is learn the technical and industrial capabilities needed to develop them. Tehran’s knowledge of the nuclear fuel cycle is a major reason why a military strike would prove fruitless; not only would an attack spur Iran to reconstitute its nuclear program but also show to the world that it had a compelling reason for doing so. The limits of coercive diplomacy are fast approaching. Abandoning rigid sanctions and rethinking the incentives needed for compliance would be the first step and the last chance for a peaceful resolution.

DISAD RESPONSES

“Iran builds a nuke” – Response: Even US government admits Iran is not building nuclear weapons

Pepe Escobar 2012. (journalist) 27 July 2012 “Why Iran sanctions are doomed to fail” CBS NEWS <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/why-iran-sanctions-are-doomed-to-fail/>

Let's start with red lines. Here it is, Washington's ultimate red line, straight from the lion's mouth.  Only last week Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta said of the Iranians, "Are they trying to develop a nuclear weapon? No. But we know that they're trying to develop a nuclear capability. And that's what concerns us. And our red line to Iran is do not develop a nuclear weapon. That's a red line for us." How strange, the way those red lines continue to retreat.  Once upon a time, the red line for Washington was "enrichment" of uranium. Now, it's evidently an actual nuclear weapon that can be brandished. Keep in mind that, since 2005, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei has stressed that his country is not seeking to build a nuclear weapon. The most recent National Intelligence Estimate on Iran from the U.S. Intelligence Community has similarly stressed that Iran is not, in fact, developing a nuclear weapon (as opposed to the breakout capacity to build one someday).

Sanctions increase nuclear risk

Dr. Kenneth Waltz 2012. (PhD; Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and senior research assistant of the Columbia University) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” July/Aug 2012 FOREIGN AFFAIRS <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137731/kenneth-n-waltz/why-iran-should-get-the-bomb>

Punishing a state through economic sanctions does not inexorably derail its nuclear program. Take North Korea, which succeeded in building its weapons despite countless rounds of sanctions and UN Security Council resolutions. If Tehran determines that its security depends on possessing nuclear weapons, sanctions are unlikely to change its mind. In fact, adding still more sanctions now could make Iran feel even more vulnerable, giving it still more reason to seek the protection of the ultimate deterrent.

Iran nuclear threat is exaggerated: They are not irrational and will not use nukes in a suicidal foreign policy

Dr. Kenneth Waltz 2012. (PhD; Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and senior research assistant of the Columbia University) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” July/Aug 2012 FOREIGN AFFAIRS <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137731/kenneth-n-waltz/why-iran-should-get-the-bomb>

One reason the danger of a nuclear Iran has been grossly exaggerated is that the debate surrounding it has been distorted by misplaced worries and fundamental misunderstandings of how states generally behave in the international system. The first prominent concern, which undergirds many others, is that the Iranian regime is innately irrational. Despite a widespread belief to the contrary, Iranian policy is made not by "mad mullahs" but by perfectly sane ayatollahs who want to survive just like any other leaders. Although Iran's leaders indulge in inflammatory and hateful rhetoric, they show no propensity for self-destruction. It would be a grave error for policymakers in the United States and Israel to assume otherwise.

“Iran becomes more aggressive if they get nukes” – Response: The opposite will happen; countries become less aggressive after acquiring nukes

Dr. Kenneth Waltz 2012. (PhD; Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and senior research assistant of the Columbia University) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” July/Aug 2012 FOREIGN AFFAIRS <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137731/kenneth-n-waltz/why-iran-should-get-the-bomb>

Nevertheless, even some observers and policymakers who accept that the Iranian regime is rational still worry that a nuclear weapon would embolden it, providing Tehran with a shield that would allow it to act more aggressively and increase its support for terrorism. Some analysts even fear that Iran would directly provide terrorists with nuclear arms. The problem with these concerns is that they contradict the record of every other nuclear weapons state going back to 1945. History shows that when countries acquire the bomb, they feel increasingly vulnerable and become acutely aware that their nuclear weapons make them a potential target in the eyes of major powers. This awareness discourages nuclear states from bold and aggressive action. Maoist China, for example, became much less bellicose after acquiring nuclear weapons in 1964, and India and Pakistan have both become more cautious since going nuclear. There is little reason to believe Iran would break this mold.

“Iran would give nukes to terrorists” – Response: They would get caught, and no incentive to do it anyway

Dr. Kenneth Waltz 2012. (PhD; Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and senior research assistant of the Columbia University) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” July/Aug 2012 FOREIGN AFFAIRS <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137731/kenneth-n-waltz/why-iran-should-get-the-bomb>

As for the risk of a handoff to terrorists, no country could transfer nuclear weapons without running a high risk of being found out. U.S. surveillance capabilities would pose a serious obstacle, as would the United States' impressive and growing ability to identify the source of fissile material. Moreover, countries can never entirely control or even predict the behavior of the terrorist groups they sponsor. Once a country such as Iran acquires a nuclear capability, it will have every reason to maintain full control over its arsenal. After all, building a bomb is costly and dangerous. It would make little sense to transfer the product of that investment to parties that cannot be trusted or managed.

“Iran nukes would trigger regional nuclear proliferation” – Response: Historically disproven. We’ve had nukes in the Middle East since the ‘60s without proliferation occurring

Dr. Kenneth Waltz 2012. (PhD; Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and senior research assistant of the Columbia University) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” July/Aug 2012 FOREIGN AFFAIRS <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137731/kenneth-n-waltz/why-iran-should-get-the-bomb>

Another oft-touted worry is that if Iran obtains the bomb, other states in the region will follow suit, leading to a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. But the nuclear age is now almost 70 years old, and so far, fears of proliferation have proved to be unfounded. Properly defined, the term "proliferation" means a rapid and uncontrolled spread. Nothing like that has occurred; in fact, since 1970, there has been a marked slowdown in the emergence of nuclear states. There is no reason to expect that this pattern will change now. Should Iran become the second Middle Eastern nuclear power since 1945, it would hardly signal the start of a landslide. When Israel acquired the bomb in the 1960s, it was at war with many of its neighbors. Its nuclear arms were a much bigger threat to the Arab world than Iran's program is today. If an atomic Israel did not trigger an arms race then, there is no reason a nuclear Iran should now.

If Iran got nukes, they would be deterred by self-preservation. They will not invite nuclear retaliation upon themselves

Dr. Kenneth Waltz 2012. (PhD; Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and senior research assistant of the Columbia University) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” July/Aug 2012 FOREIGN AFFAIRS <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137731/kenneth-n-waltz/why-iran-should-get-the-bomb>

Although Iran's leaders indulge in inflammatory and hateful rhetoric, they show no propensity for self-destruction. It would be a grave error for policymakers in the United States and Israel to assume otherwise.  Yet that is precisely what many U.S. and Israeli officials and analysts have done. Portraying Iran as irrational has allowed them to argue that the logic of nuclear deterrence does not apply to the Islamic Republic. If Iran acquired a nuclear weapon, they warn, it would not hesitate to use it in a first strike against Israel, even though doing so would invite massive retaliation and risk destroying everything the Iranian regime holds dear. Although it is impossible to be certain of Iranian intentions, it is far more likely that if Iran desires nuclear weapons, it is for the purpose of providing for its own security, not to improve its offensive capabilities (or destroy itself). Iran may be intransigent at the negotiating table and defiant in the face of sanctions, but it still acts to secure its own preservation.

“Iran gets a nuke” – Turn: That would be good, not bad. Historically, nukes create greater stability

Dr. Kenneth Waltz 2012. (PhD; Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and senior research assistant of the Columbia University) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” July/Aug 2012 FOREIGN AFFAIRS <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137731/kenneth-n-waltz/why-iran-should-get-the-bomb>

The third possible outcome of the standoff is that Iran continues its current course and publicly goes nuclear by testing a weapon. U.S. and Israeli officials have declared that outcome unacceptable, arguing that a nuclear Iran is a uniquely terrifying prospect, even an existential threat. Such language is typical of major powers, which have historically gotten riled up whenever another country has begun to develop a nuclear weapon of its own. Yet so far, every time another country has managed to shoulder its way into the nuclear club, the other members have always changed tack and decided to live with it. In fact, by reducing imbalances in military power, new nuclear states generally produce more regional and international stability, not less.

Anti-nuclear sanctions are counterproductive because Iran getting nukes would be more likely to restore stability to the Middle East

Dr. Kenneth Waltz 2012. (PhD; Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and senior research assistant of the Columbia University) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” July/Aug 2012 FOREIGN AFFAIRS <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137731/kenneth-n-waltz/why-iran-should-get-the-bomb>

The past several months have witnessed a heated debate over the best way for the United States and Israel to respond to Iran's nuclear activities. As the argument has raged, the United States has tightened its already robust sanctions regime against the Islamic Republic, and the European Union announced in January that it will begin an embargo on Iranian oil on July 1. Although the United States, the EU, and Iran have recently returned to the negotiating table, a palpable sense of crisis still looms.  It should not. Most U.S., European, and Israeli commentators and policymakers warn that a nuclear-armed Iran would be the worst possible outcome of the current standoff. In fact, it would probably be the best possible result: the one most likely to restore stability to the Middle East.

“Iran gets and uses nukes” – Response: New trends and evidence prove otherwise

Justin Logan 2013. (director of foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute; master’s degree in international relations, Univ of Chicago ) 19 Sept 2013 On Iran, Would U.S. Take “Yes” for an Answer? <http://www.cato.org/blog/iran-would-us-take-yes-answer>

To be fair, however, the Washington debate has moved decidedly in the direction of common sense since the Iran nuclear issue first heated up in 2006. The intelligence community, in 2007 and 2011, concluded that Iran has not yet taken the decision to push for a nuclear weapon, and that Iran’s calculus on this matter was responsive to external events, including U.S. policy. And mainstream commentary has inched away from assertions that suicidal mullahs would launch unprovoked nuclear strikes at Israel. Claims that Iran would give nuclear weapons to terrorists have faded. And the argument that a nuclear Iran would precipitate a cascade of nuclear proliferation has faced steady opposition from academic researchers and now a sharp blow from the Center for a New American Security, an establishment think tank.

Lots of barriers to Iran deploying a functioning nuclear weapon

Anthony Cordesman, Bryan Gold and Chloe Coughlin-Schulte 2014. (Cordesman - Chair in Strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies;  served as national security assistant to Senator John McCain of the Senate Armed Services Committee and as civilian assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense. He is also a former director of intelligence assessment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Gold - Research Intern, Burke Chair in Strategy at Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Coughlin-Schulte -  Intern at Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).) “Iran – Sanctions, Energy, Arms Control, and Regime Change“ Jan 2014 (the word “possible” is misspelled in the original; it should be “possibly”) <http://csis.org/files/publication/140122_Cordesman_IranSanctions_Web.pdf>

There is no way that Iran could possible conceal a major weapons production and deployment program under the terms of the interim agreement. Iran also faces serious problems in creating such a force. For all the talk of how quickly Iran could acquire enough fissile nuclear warheads and bombs, Iran would also assume massive risks if it tried to deploy actual bombs and warheads without a series of detectable nuclear tests. It would have to risk arming its missiles and aircraft with implosion weapons of unpredictable safety and yield, and North Korean, Indian, and Pakistani tests have shown just how uncertain the results can be even in carrying out static tests of such devices.

Iranian leaders are not suicidal, they will not engage in self-destructive behavior, they can be deterred

Paul Pillar 2012. (teaches in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University and was the national intelligence officer for the Near East and South Asia from 2000 to 2005; 28 years as intelligence analyst with CIA) WASHINGTON MONTHLY Mar/Apr 2012, We Can Live with a Nuclear Iran <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/marchapril_2012/features/we_can_live_with_a_nuclear_ira035772.php>

Newt Gingrich speaks in a similar vein about how Iranian leaders are suicidal jihadists, and says “it’s impossible to deter them.” The trouble with this image of Iran is that it does not reflect actual Iranian behavior. More than three decades of history demonstrate that the Islamic Republic’s rulers, like most rulers elsewhere, are overwhelmingly concerned with preserving their regime and their power—in this life, not some future one. They are no more likely to let theological imperatives lead them into self-destructive behavior than other leaders whose religious faiths envision an afterlife.

We can manage Iran’s nuclear weapons just like we did with China

Paul Pillar 2012. (teaches in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University and was the national intelligence officer for the Near East and South Asia from 2000 to 2005; 28 years as intelligence analyst with CIA) WASHINGTON MONTHLY Mar/Apr 2012, We Can Live with a Nuclear Iran <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/marchapril_2012/features/we_can_live_with_a_nuclear_ira035772.php>

Throughout history, it has always been worrisome when a revolutionary regime with ruthless and lethal internal practices moves to acquire a nuclear weapon. But it is worth remembering that we have contended with far more troubling examples of this phenomenon than Iran. Millions died from forced famine and purges in Stalin’s Soviet Union, and tens of millions perished during the Great Leap Forward in Mao Tse-tung’s China. China’s development of a nuclear weapon (it tested its first one in 1964) seemed all the more alarming at the time because of Mao’s openly professed belief that his country could lose half its population in a nuclear war and still come out victorious over capitalism. But deterrence with China has endured for half a century, even during the chaos and fanaticism of Mao’s Cultural Revolution. A few years after China got the bomb, Richard Nixon built his global strategy around engagement with Beijing.

Iran unlikely to attack Israel with nuclear weapons

Dr. Ariel Ilan Roth 2009. (Ph.D in international relations from The Johns Hopkins University and Associate Director of National Security Studies at the Johns Hopkins University’s Krieger School of Arts and Sciences), November 24, 2009, “The Root of All Fears,” Foreign Affairs, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65692/ariel-ilan-roth/the-root-of-all-fears>

“Most observers believe that Israel’s preoccupation with Iran’s nuclear program stems from the fear that Iran would either use a nuclear weapon against Israel or give the bomb to one of its direct proxies, most likely Hezbollah. Given Tehran’s open hostility toward Jerusalem, such foreboding makes sense. But such a scenario is highly improbable. Tehran’s profound dislike of the Jewish state notwithstanding, it is unlikely to attack Israel with a nuclear weapon because Israel’s atomic arsenal is orders of magnitude larger than whatever infant capability Iran could muster in the foreseeable future. Moreover, Israel is believed to possess a secure submarine-based second-strike capability that could devastate Iran.”

Iran won’t supply Hezbollah with nukes to attack Israel

Dr. Ariel Ilan Roth 2009. (Ph.D in international relations from The Johns Hopkins University and Associate Director of National Security Studies at the Johns Hopkins University’s Krieger School of Arts and Sciences), November 24, 2009, “The Root of All Fears,” Foreign Affairs, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65692/ariel-ilan-roth/the-root-of-all-fears>

“Nor would Iran readily supply Hezbollah with atomic weapons. No nuclear state has ever turned over its most prized military asset to a subsidiary actor or surrendered its exclusive control over a weapon that it worked so hard to obtain. More important, if Hezbollah were to acquire and use a nuclear weapon against Israel, there would be no doubt about the weapon’s provenance and Iran would immediately face devastating retaliation. An attack on Israel, in other words, would mean the end of Iran.”

Iran is a rational actor and its foreign policy goals are not advanced by attacking Israel with nukes

Dr. Ariel Ilan Roth 2009. (Ph.D in international relations from The Johns Hopkins University and Associate Director of National Security Studies at the Johns Hopkins University’s Krieger School of Arts and Sciences), November 24, 2009, “The Root of All Fears,” Foreign Affairs, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65692/ariel-ilan-roth/the-root-of-all-fears>

Although many analysts question the rationality of the Iranian regime, it is in fact fairly conservative in its foreign policy. Iran has two long-range goals, achieving regional hegemony and spreading fundamentalist Islam, neither of which will be achieved if Iran initiates a nuclear exchange with Israel.

Israel raises the “Iran nuke threat” to distract from other issues

Paul Pillar 2012. (teaches in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University and was the national intelligence officer for the Near East and South Asia from 2000 to 2005; 28 years as intelligence analyst with CIA) WASHINGTON MONTHLY Mar/Apr 2012, We Can Live with a Nuclear Iran <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/marchapril_2012/features/we_can_live_with_a_nuclear_ira035772.php>

As for Israel, it is impossible to ignore how much, in American politics, the Iran issue is an Israel issue. The Netanyahu government’s own repeated invocation of an Iranian nuclear threat has several roots, including the desire to preserve Israel’s regional nuclear weapons monopoly, the usefulness of having Iran stand in as the region’s “real problem” to divert attention from the festering Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and simple emotion and fear.

Mossad Chiefs say: Iran nuke would not threaten the existence of Israel

Paul Pillar 2012. (teaches in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University and was the national intelligence officer for the Near East and South Asia from 2000 to 2005; 28 years as intelligence analyst with CIA) WASHINGTON MONTHLY Mar/Apr 2012, We Can Live with a Nuclear Iran <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/marchapril_2012/features/we_can_live_with_a_nuclear_ira035772.php>

Former Mossad chief Meir Dagan described the idea of an Israeli air strike on Iranian nuclear facilities as “the stupidest thing I have ever heard.” Another former Mossad head, Efraim Halevy, and the current director of the service, Tamir Pardo, have both recently denied that an Iranian nuclear weapon would be an existential threat to Israel.

Nuclear proliferation in the Middle East wouldn’t damage US interests

Paul Pillar 2012. (teaches in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University and was the national intelligence officer for the Near East and South Asia from 2000 to 2005; 28 years as intelligence analyst with CIA) WASHINGTON MONTHLY Mar/Apr 2012, We Can Live with a Nuclear Iran <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/marchapril_2012/features/we_can_live_with_a_nuclear_ira035772.php>

Ever since John F. Kennedy mused that there might be fifteen to twenty-five states with nuclear weapons by the 1970s, estimates of the pace of proliferation—like estimates of the pace of Iran’s nuclear program—have usually been too high. Furthermore, it’s not clear that any of this would cause substantial and direct damage to U.S. interests. Indeed, the alarmists offer more inconsistent arguments when discussing the dynamics of a Middle East in which rivals of Iran acquire their own nuclear weapons. If, as the alarmists project, nuclear weapons would appreciably increase Iranian influence in the region, why wouldn’t further nuclear proliferation—which the alarmists also project—negate this effect by bestowing a comparable benefit on the rivals?

The more nuclear weapons spread the less they can be used

Josh Hammer 2010. (International Relations theorist, with expertise in terrorist ideology, American foreign policy, and war / conflict resolution; Master's of Science degree in International Politics from the University of Edinburgh; Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations from the George Washington University) April 14 2010, "Archives for April, 2010," Foreign Policy Association <http://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2010/04/14/in-support-of-nuclear-proliferation/>

“In fact, there are many instances where nuclear proliferation can help increase international stability. Before nuclear weapons, there existed a more classical structure of state-state relations. A strong nation in proximity to weak nations often had dire consequences; most commonly war. Nuclear weapons have equalized that balance of power. Once obtained, they essentially make any nation ‘un-attackable’. The risks associated with attack are simply too great. Because of that stark fact, nuclear weapons can, and will, only be used on countries that do not possess a similar capability. The more these weapons spread, the less they can be used.”