

A NEW 'NAWROOZ' FOR THE WORLD?

British Iran Sanctions Ploy Could Send Region into Chaos

by Hussein Askary

March 25—In Southwest Asia, the British behave like a poisonous snake hiding under a big stone in the middle of a field. When the farmer comes to remove the stone, unaware of the snake underneath, it bites him. The stone in this case is the U.S. under several recent catastrophic administrations: big, dumb, and useless; a destructive element at worst and obstructive one at best; making itself the object of hatred of many frustrated nations, even when it seemingly is not doing anything.

Extremely dangerous and silly games are being played in and around Iran and all over Southwest Asia, games that can lead by miscalculation to a global conflict beyond anybody's imagination!

1. The silliest suggestion for a policy is to impose new economic sanctions on Iran, as a "compromise," a less dangerous option than for the Israelis to launch an air strike against Iran's nuclear facilities! Many naive Americans and Europeans believe this is the lesser evil in this situation. New sanctions, no matter what they are labeled (as proposed now against the institutions run by the Revolutionary Guard), are considered a war declaration by the leadership and people of Iran, maybe worse than a war.

2. Another illusion is harbored by the Iranian leadership (and believed by a majority of the people), namely that the Israeli threats are mere psychological warfare to force Iran to compromise its commitment to its nu-

clear program; and that neither Israel nor the U.S.A. is capable of striking against Iran. Therefore, the Iranian government, they believe, should pursue a hard line in any negotiations with the international community on the nuclear program.

3. A third illusion, equally silly and with more dangerous ramifications, is the attempt to manipulate Russia and China to stop their economic cooperation with Iran, and to join the drive for sanctions to block the Iranian nuclear program. Russia and China are not only two of Iran's closest allies, but also two of the Four Powers Lyndon LaRouche has designated as the leaders for an exit from the present hell of global economic collapse and war (the other two being India and the United States). This will split the major powers whose collaboration now is of existential significance for civilization, and crucial for defusing many of the Eurasian conflicts created by British geopolitics. Creating a wedge between the U.S.A. and Russia/China is also part of the financial warfare launched by the British-steered Inter-Alpha banking group to replace LaRouche's Four-Power strategy with one that replaces the U.S.A. with a financially inflated Brazil in the "BRIC" strategy (Brazil, Russia, India, and China), to divert the world from a real solution for the financial crisis, into an even larger financial bubble.

These points will be illustrated below.

How the British Snake Works

One example which poetically summarizes these points and describes how the British snake is at work, was presented by a British official this week. Nicolas Hopton, Deputy Director of British Foreign Office's International Security Directorate, gave a press conference in the capital of Brazil March 22, where he emphasized that fresh sanctions on Iran are necessary to prevent "more dangerous" scenarios such as an Israeli strike on Iran. Hopton said that Britain views sanctions as the only leverage that could force Iran to negotiate over its nuclear program. The government of Brazil, a current member of the UN Security Council, has not been willing to support such a policy.

"This is about trying to encourage Iran to engage in a real dialogue. Since 2006, we've been trying to have a real dialogue, and the Iranians have been playing games," Hopton said. It was actually Tony Blair and the British who were manipulating the different parties to prevent a serious dialogue, by coming up with new demands every time the 5+1 group (the Five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany) came closer to an agreement with Iran, such as in late 2005, when Blair, as rotating European Union chairman, demanded that Iran abandon its program for enrichment of uranium; and the Iranians, in a typical British-manipulated knee-jerk reaction, temporarily stopped cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), creating an international crisis.

To scare the Brazilians and other undecided or skeptical parties, Hopton stressed: "Either you have a preemptive Israeli strike—and they're very serious when they talk about that possibility—or you have a situation where Iran should get a nuclear weapon."

So, like *Othello's* treacherous Venetian Iago, the British show concern for everyone's safety and well-being, and offer to help everyone!

To look more credible and neutral in the eyes of Iran and other Muslim nations, the British Foreign Office is involved in a phony diplomatic "crisis" with Israel on



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A celebration of Narwooz, the Persian New Year, in San Jose, Calif.

the background of an Israeli intelligence hit squad's use of British passports in the assassination in Dubai earlier this year of a Palestinian Hamas leader.

U.S. President Barack Obama made his intention to cover for the British snake dangerously clear, when he sent a threatening message to the Iranian nation on the occasion of the Iranian New Year (*Nawrooz*) on March 20. He distanced himself from last year's promises of pursuing diplomatic relations, putting all the blame on the Iranian leadership: "You have refused good faith proposals from the international community.... They [Iran's leaders] have turned their backs on a pathway that would bring more opportunity to all Iranians, and allow a great civilization to take its rightful place in the community of nations. Faced with an

extended hand, Iran's leaders have shown only a clenched fist." Obama concluded with the threat: "Finally, let me be clear: We are working with the international community to hold the Iranian government accountable because they refuse to live up to their international obligations."

President Obama misleadingly stated that Iran had the right to nuclear power, but only if it adhered to international obligations. Iran has been a signatory of the non-proliferation treaty and has been cooperating with IAEA inspectors for years. It is Iran's right to nuclear technology which has been the target. The Iranian nation—the government, the opposition, and the people—are united on this issue, regarding it as a sacred feature of national sovereignty, where no compromise will be allowed.

However, different proposals regarding the Iranian right to enrich uranium have been considered negotiable by the Iranians. On the other hand, any suggestions of economic sanctions against the nation are considered by the Iranian people as an attempt to commit mass murder against them. The Iranian people still remember the images of millions of starving and dying Iraqi children in the 1990s, as a result of economic sanctions imposed by the international community, allegedly against

the regime of Saddam Hussein.

It is here, where President Obama's and the U.S. State Department's attempts to pursue sanctions as a milder option than "having Israel bomb the Iranian nuclear installations," become a trap.

Cheap Snake-Oil Salesmen

During her trip to Saudi Arabia in late February, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was reportedly discussing with the Saudi leadership the proposal (coming from the British puppets' faction in the Saudi kingdom) to offer China cheap Saudi oil as compensation for the oil China imports from Iran, if China would support sanctions. Not only was this silly proposal rejected by the Chinese, it was considered a provocation. The Anglo-Saudis have been engaged in a proxy war against Iran through spreading sectarian (Wahhabi/Shi'a) terror in the whole of Southwest Asia from the borders of India to North Africa (see Ramtanu Maitra, "New British Prescription for Permanent War in the Islamic World, *EIR*, Feb. 26, 2010).

The Chinese interest in Iran is not merely in oil. China is involved in massive economic cooperation agreements around infrastructure development and trade—not only in Iran, but also in Iraq. The current Iraqi government is a close ally of Iran, and the Iranians have a great deal of influence in Iraq through political, economic, and religious channels. This extends to Iran's relations with Syria and Turkey, two of the key countries in any peace settlement, and in security and economic agreements in the whole region.

China also considers this whole region as part of its future development strategy of the Eurasian Land-Bridge. Beijing has recently announced its intention to work especially with Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey to build high-speed railway routes to connect East and Southeast Asia with Europe. India, Pakistan, Turkey, and Iran are also negotiating railway and gas pipeline routes to be built in that area of traditional British geopolitical intrigues.

Therefore, for China to accept such a cheap deal would be strategic suicide. The U.S. proposal also shows the Chinese leadership that the United States, the major world power they want to collaborate with, is not a serious and reliable partner. In November 2009, China stopped a resolution calling for sanctions against Iran in the Security Council. There is a new round of speculation on whether China will use its veto against the newly proposed sanctions. China has no good reason to sup-

port any policy coming from a dying trans-Atlantic empire.

On March 23, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang expressed China's efforts to promote "a solution for the Iranian nuclear issue through peaceful dialogue and diplomatic means." China's position on this issue is clear, Qin said, noting that Beijing would safeguard the international nuclear non-proliferation system, and peace, security, and stability in the Middle East. "We are not only making communication with the United States, but also maintaining contacts with Russia and all other parties concerned," Qin said.

Russia is alleged in media reports to be supporting "smart sanctions" against Iran. The Russian position on sanctions has been more byzantine than the Chinese, with different officials making contradictory statements, or making statements that could be interpreted in different contradictory ways. When Hillary Clinton was in Moscow March 17-19, the Russians made things even more complicated.

In his press conference with Secretary Clinton, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said: "As President Medvedev put it on numerous occasions, sanctions are never beneficial, but there are some instances where they are impossible to avoid, and the Iranian case might be one of such instances. And as President Medvedev also mentioned on a number of occasions, and he reaffirmed today, that sanctions must be smart. They must not be aggressive. They must not paralyze the life of the Iranian state. They must not degrade the humanitarian situation and the country. They must not be targeted against the population, but rather against those people that are in charge of the decision-making process, and that are identified already in position on the international arena."

The day before, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin made a statement at a meeting on the nuclear industry in the southern Russian city of Volgodonsk, expressing Russia's commitment to follow through its agreements to build and start up the first Iranian nuclear power plant at Bushehr. "The first power-generating unit will be launched as early as this Summer," said Putin, confirming Iranian official announcements that July would be the date.

In response to this statement, Lavrov, during his press conference with Clinton, defended Russia's involvement in Iran's nuclear power program, saying: "Bushehr plays a special role in maintaining the IAEA's presence in Iran, in ensuring that Iran is complying with



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Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, during a visit to the nuclear power plant in Volgogradsk, Russia, on March 18 (shown here), affirmed that the Russian-built nuclear plant at Bushehr, Iran will start up this Summer.

its non-proliferation obligations.”

Russia received the contract to build the Iranian reactor in 1995 from the German company Siemens, which had the contract in the 1970s; but construction was stopped due to the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88).

The Russian byzantine moves are based, according to a Middle East observer, on the assumption that they do not have to openly oppose the sanctions, and can avoid a clash with the U.S. and other Western powers, anticipating that China would either obstruct or veto the sanctions resolution at the UN Security Council—i.e. leaving the “dirty work” for China to do. However, such tactics can lead to uncalculated consequences, when the Iranians respond to the Russia double-edged position with rage. For example, in a rage fit, caused by a Russia pilot’s involvement in a fatal aircraft crash in the Iranian airport at Meshhed last Autumn, President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad ordered all Russia pilots working in Iran to leave within two months!

Iran’s Internal Dynamic

Driving recently through the busy streets and highways of Tehran, 22 years after the end of the war with Iraq, and 31 years since the Revolution, it feels a bit like a scene from an Akira Kurosawa movie, “Dreams: The Tunnel.” Huge posters of martyrs standing still on both sides of the road with fading, sad faces covered with the ashes of time, holding their guns, looking with alertness forward, guarding the heap of sand in front of them labeled “Warfront Against the Zionists and Enemies of

the Revolution,” waiting endlessly for the enemy battalions to charge.

You wonder: When will their officer cry “at ease,” and order those dedicated martyrs/soldiers to scatter to their eternal destiny to rest in peace?

It is this permanent anticipation of an assault on the nation and the revolution which has kept the nation hostage, preventing both economic and political progress. From without, the British Empire, with its lackeys in the United States, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, is forcing this permanent revolution/permanent state of war. From within, the images of the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution and

the eight-year war with Iraq are being used by an elite which is losing contact with an ever-growing young population, and also losing contact with reality.

The conservative faction, with Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on the one hand, and President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad on the other, has built a massive base of followers among the poor, who are sentimentally and economically reliant on the memories of the revolution and the war. Families of martyrs, the handicapped, and other victims of the war receive monthly salaries, free food supplies, and medical care. This section of society is deeply religious and can easily be persuaded that demands for political reform automatically mean changes to the cultural and religious foundations of society.

This element became obvious in the turmoil that followed the Presidential elections in June 2009, when reformist opposition leaders and candidates MirHossein Musawi and Mahdi Karrubi disputed the results that gave a second term to incumbent President Ahmedinejad. When protest demonstrations were launched by supporters of the opposition candidates, they were met with an iron fist by supporters of the conservative faction in the Baseej militia and Revolutionary Guard. Unfortunately, British-inspired elements infiltrated these demonstrations, and provocations were staged through the burning of cars and attacking of Baseej offices. The British hand in these developments was made clear (see article by this author, “British-Directed Coup in Iran Exposed,” *EIR*, July 3, 2009); however, the government and its supporters mixed everybody into one bag, in-

cluding the legitimate opposition forces and the provocateurs.

The conservative faction was preempting a different process that has been in the making for years. Calls for revival of the political system and development of the state, not under the control of the clergy (a strict rule of *Velayati-Fagih*, or “government of the learned leader”), to a constitutional republic with clear separation of powers and a transparent electoral process, were growing actually among sections of the top political elite and clergy. This would have meant that the religious institutions would take an observer’s and moral instructor’s role, rather than being directly involved in government, as has been the case since the 1979 revolution. Some argue that this was the actual intention of Ayatollah Khomeini and other clerics such as Akhund Mohammad Kazem Khorasani, and his student Ayatollah Hossein Na’ini, two of the leaders of the constitutionalist movement at the beginning of the 20th Century. This would also mean the demilitarization of society, dissolving the militias, and turning the army and Revolutionary Guard into pure military organizations serving the nation, and not one faction or the other.

However, for several years, the opposite has been taking place. The Baseej were gradually replacing even the police and security institutions, and the army and Revolutionary Guard were becoming politicized, and even taking over larger and larger chunks of the economy. The *Bunyads*—economic and financial institutions, were also gaining political and economic power over the elected government’s institutions. This led to two governments and two systems within the nation, obstructing the reorganization of society, and economic, social, and political reconstruction processes.

The conservatives, who were comfortable on top of the “shadow government,” were threatened by the demands for reforms from within. They needed a provocation to stamp out the reform movement, and it came with the Presidential elections and what followed. The leaders of the reform movement were forced into silence under threat of accusations of treason and heresy! It is not publicly known what compromises and settlements were made to keep a lid on the conflict for the time being, because the different parties are both parts of the revolutionary establishment. The reformists were also people who helped start the revolution and build the Islamic Republic. Some of them were Presidents,

such as Ali Hashemi Rafsanjani and Mohammad Khatami.

However, the quiet atmosphere will not last for long, especially when the issue of sanctions heats up. The government has been able to balance between harsh economic realities, political and social turbulence, and threats by foreign powers, with heavy government subsidies for food, fuel, and health care, mixed with continuous sentimental religious/political festivals and celebrations, where self-sacrifice and martyrdom are glorified. The permanent threat from the Anglo-American/Israeli/Saudi front gives legitimacy and power to the internal permanent emotional and socio-economic mobilization.

It is a depleting process in a society where 70% are youth who want a future. Most of the population was born after the Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. Unlike what President Obama and the BBC believe, the majority of those youth are not ready to betray their nation for a rock-and-roll song and a torn pair of pants. Their sense of identity as citizens of an ancient nation, a power in history, and their aspiration for scientific-technological progress are mighty. They will not accept any compromise on their right to obtain and use nuclear technology, and will be united against any sanctions, whether smart or stupid. Let’s leave the Iranian household business for the Iranians to deal with.

Some smart video-game strategist might argue that the sanctions will deplete the hard-line government’s ability to buy its support in the population, and will weaken its institutions. The answer to that is that removing government subsidies will affect the poorest, who might revolt against their government if it fails to direct their hatred against you, but the outcome will be chaos, worse than what we have witnessed in Iraq. Chaos in Iran will have ramifications in all of South-west Asia, and even larger parts of the world. This is the objective of the British Empire, which wants to live off the crumbs that remain after that destruction of civilization! Anybody in the United States, Europe, or South-west Asia who supports this policy, or even naively thinks that this is a lesser evil, will have to live with the responsibilities and consequences for the mass murder that will follow.

A happier world of collaboration among independent, sovereign nations is nigh at hand, when the Empire crumbles. Just make sure you are not standing under its bedroom roof, serving its whims, when that happens!

Nawrooz Mubarak!