

Israel Primed for Strike Against Iran

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

When the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) passed a resolution Sept. 17, setting a Nov. 25 deadline to resolve open issues about Iran's nuclear program, and calling for Iran to immediately halt all activities related to uranium enrichment, the Rubicon was crossed, at least for Tehran. Iran made known that it would not allow any foreign interference in its nuclear program, and pledged to proceed—with or without the IAEA. President Mohammad Khatami himself issued a statement, saying: "We will resist the exorbitant demands of the great powers. What has happened in the past few days on the nuclear issue is a sign of the moral decadence of the world and the pre-eminence of force and hypocrisy in international relations."

Khatami demanded that the international community "acknowledge our natural and legal right and open the path for understanding . . . so we can accept comprehensive international supervision and we can continue our path to acquire nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. . . . Otherwise, we will continue on this path, even if the result is cutting off of international supervision."

Speaking later at a parade marking the beginning of Sacred Defense Week in Iran (on the anniversary of the Iran-Iraq war), Khatami said: "We have made our choice and it is now the turn of others to chose."

The same point was driven home by the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization (IAEO), Gholamreza Aqazadeh, and by Hassan Rowhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC). Rowhani rejected as illegal the demand in the IAEA resolution. Iran could accept a suspension of uranium enrichment only "through negotiations," he said. Enrichment is permitted under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Rowhani said, and Iran has suspended the enrichment of uranium, but not all support activities, as a voluntary measure to build confidence with the IAEA.

The IAEA resolution showed "no clear distinction between voluntary and obligatory measures," Aqazadeh said. "In addition to that, calling upon a member state to suspend or stop activities, such as enrichment, uranium conversion, as well as the construction of a research reactor planned to produce radioisotopes for medical, agricultural, and industrial purposes, which are in no way prohibited in the agency's statute and NPT, will undermine the credibility of the IAEA."

Speaking on Sept. 21, from Vienna where the IAEA is based, Aqazadeh pledged that Iran would continue to cooper-

ate with the IAEA; but he emphasized that Iran, which has reached a certain level of expertise in nuclear technology, would not give it up. "Currently, the Uranium Conversion Facility (UCF) is on stream for injecting uranium gas into the centrifuges for enrichment. Iran completely possesses the technology to manufacture every part of the centrifuges in Natanz," he said.

Although the position of the Bush Administration, as represented in Vienna by Undersecretary of State for Arms Control John Bolton, has been uncompromising, in its hard-line demand that the Iran dossier should be referred to the UN Security Council, others in U.S. foreign policymaking circles urged caution. Robert Einhorn, a former assistant undersecretary of state for non-proliferation during the Clinton Administration, told Agence France Presse Sept. 21, "If the U.S. administration would show it was prepared to put carrots on the table and not only sticks," it would have a better chance of garnering support from Russia, China, and the European Union—which favor a dialogue approach—in the event Iran were to reject a reasonable offer.

Israeli Propaganda Gears Up

In Israel, meanwhile, preparations for a strike against Iran's nuclear facilities appeared to move into high gear. On Sept. 18, the *Jerusalem Post* reported that Mossad director Meir Dagan, a well known flunky of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, prepared the climate of opinion, by claiming that Iran could have nuclear weapons by 2005. It was the first time in 18 years, that a chief of the foreign intelligence agency, Mossad, had briefed the Knesset's Defense and Foreign Relations Committee. Dagan told the parliamentarians the Israeli argument that Iran's missile capability threatened Europe as well, and he asserted that Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant was "too large" for producing electricity, and was also being built to enrich uranium along with a project at Kashan. Such a project, Dagan claimed, could produce enough enriched uranium to produce ten bombs a year.

Plans for an Israeli strike against Bushehr have been aired in the public domain increasingly over the past year. One problem raised by military experts, has been that of precision targetting. As if on cue, that problem was solved when, on Sept. 21, the United States announced it would sell Israel 5,000 "smart bombs," with which it could target Iran. The bombs include those that have satellite guidance systems, allowing their release a good distance from the target. Among the bombs are 500 one-ton bunker busters that can penetrate 2 meter-thick cement walls—like those on a reactor's outer containment walls.

The sale, which carries a price tag of \$319 million, was made known to Congress a few weeks ago. The cost is to come out of U.S. military aid allocations to Israel. At the same time, Israel has been demanding delivery of two German submarines, class 212, capable of firing nuclear-tipped cruise missiles.

Ready, and armed, Israel could attack at any time.

STORM OVER ASIA

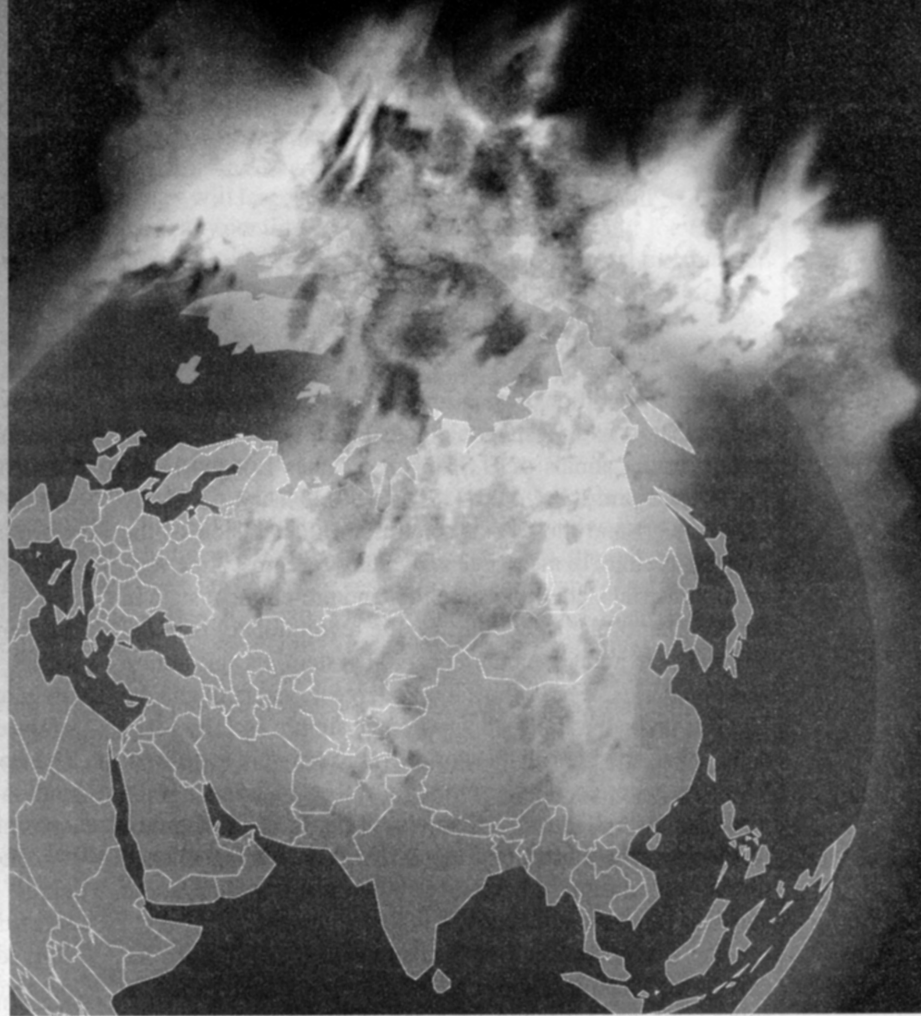
Like no other video ever produced! Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. points the way from strategic disaster, to a global Renaissance in the new millennium.

In this feature-length video, produced in 1999, LaRouche presents a comprehensive picture of the current world strategic and financial crisis, and the policy of statecraft required to deal with it effectively.

This is a challenging presentation, not the kind of "bite-sized" slogans that pass for politics in Washington these days.

We confront an enormous strategic danger. Russia, China, and other Eurasian nations are the targets of mercenary terrorist forces, deployed under the direction of the British oligarchy, with the aim of bringing about the disintegration of the nation-state. If Russia, a weakened but still well-armed power, is pushed to the wall, the military consequences are incalculable. And yet, as the global financial system disintegrates before our eyes, the neo-conservative lunatics are pushing their conflict with Eurasia beyond the point of return.

LaRouche counterposes to this lunacy, a brilliant foreign policy for the United States. "Our interest," he states, "is to bring into being on this planet, a hegemonic community of perfectly sovereign nation-state republics, which share that commitment to defense of the general welfare, which is the cornerstone of our Federal Constitution."



2 hour, 40 minute video **\$50**

Order #EIE-99-015

Shipping: \$3.50 first item; \$.50 each additional item.

Order from

EIR News Service, Inc.

P.O. Box 17390 Washington, D.C. 20041-0390

OR Order by phone, toll-free: **888-EIR-3258**

OR Send e-mail with Visa or MasterCard number and expiration date to: **eirns@larouchepub.com**

Visa, MasterCard accepted