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THE SKY IS NOT FALLING: REGIONAL REACTION TO A NUCLEAR-ARMED IRAN

by

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March 2006

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This thesis investigates the likely responses of Israel, the Arab Gulf States, and Pakistan to an Iran armed with nuclear weapons. A detailed examination of regional statements and media analysis shows that the region will likely not be further unbalanced. Instead, these states will pursue rational responses to diminish any Iranian threats.

This thesis argues that Israel will develop a mutually deterring relationship with Tehran. The Arab Gulf States will not yield to the temptation to develop domestic nuclear programs—instead they will continue to outsource state security needs. Pakistan, focused on India and lacking serious issues with Iran, will create an understanding to avoid conflict.

Iranian nuclear weapon acquisition will be universally unwelcome, but the United States can mitigate the negative impact by extending security guarantees to states requiring protection against a potentially more aggressive nuclear Iran.

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THE SKY IS NOT FALLING: REGIONAL REACTION TO A NUCLEAR ARMED IRAN

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I. OVERVIEW

A. INTRODUCTION

Evidence of Iran's desire to possess nuclear weapons grows regularly. These facts outline Tehran's extensive program and its efforts to keep the activities concealed. According to the National Council for Resistance in Iran, Tehran recently purchased blueprints for nuclear weapons from the Abdul Qadeer Khan proliferation network.[1] While the United States, Europe, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) struggle to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, recent proliferation cases, namely Pakistan and North Korea, suggest that states determined to build these weapons will ultimately be successful.[2] Like Pakistan and North Korea, Iran is motivated in much the same manner, as stated by former Iran's President Khatami in August, 1998:

> The strategic status of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the world and in the region and the Middle East, in particular, demands that we have a strong military capability. We will not ask for anyone's permission in order to strengthen our defense and military capabilities. Defending oneself and deterring others from committing aggression is the most important right of every country.[3]

According to this quote, there is no limit to what Iran will do to pursue security, no matter what outsiders think or do. In a region of frequent conflict, nuclear weapons will be the ultimate guarantor of Iran's security. The newly elected President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has reiterated Tehran's commitment to its nuclear program.

Both Professors Ahmad Ghoreishi and Feroz Khan of the Naval Postgraduate School contend that once Tehran has nuclear weapons, it will have the capability to assert its will over non-nuclear states.[4] The plethora of militarily weak states in the Arabian Gulf have no defense against a nuclear threat, except for intervention by the United

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[1] "Exiles: Iran Has Bomb Blueprints," *Associated Press*, 18 November, 2005. Taken from: http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,138824,00.html (Accessed 15 August 2005).

[2] Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons, A Debate Renewed* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003), 38.

[3] Kori N. Schake and Judith S. Yaphfe, *The Strategic Implications of a Nuclear-Armed Iran* (Washington: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, 2001), vii.

[4] From separate discussions with Professors Ghoreishi and Khan at the Naval Postgraduate School, fall, 2005.

States. Without U.S. protection, these states would be forced to either submit to Tehran or launch indigenous nuclear weapons programs. Moreover, if a nuclear-armed Iran became aggressive, asserting its will on the region, the global economy could be negatively affected through worldwide concern over continued free flow of oil from the Arabian Gulf.

Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons can further destabilize a historically unbalanced but globally vital region. Social, military, and economic issues play key roles in maintaining a balance that is critical to the world's economy. Regional regime stability, security among the states, and control over respective territory and national resources are vital to the status-quo. Adding Iranian nuclear weapons to this already stressful situation may prove perilous.

President George W. Bush has stated simply that "We've made it clear, our position is that they (Iran) won't have a nuclear weapon."[5] From this quote and the escalating rhetoric of the Bush Administration, an Iran with nuclear weapons is unacceptable to the security of the United States. At first glance, this situation seems to demand instantaneous American military intervention to render Iran a non-threat. Immediately following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Tehran behaved in an unpredictable and often volatile manner towards its neighbors. These actions took the form of attempting to export its Islamic fundamentalist revolution and supporting terrorists throughout the Middle East. While Tehran has moderated its actions, becoming a status-quo state following the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, the volatility of its past conduct implies that it cannot be trusted with nuclear weapons. Also, Tehran's possession of nuclear weapons could lead to a regional arms race in which nuclear weapons would rapidly proliferate and undermine global security. This spiraling instability could lead to a violation of the nuclear taboo that has prevented these weapons from being used in combat since 1945 by the new nuclear states that may lack the safeguards against accidental use. Finally, Tehran could expand its support to terrorists by providing them nuclear weapons. Addressing how to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons has

[5] "Bush: No Nuclear Iran on My Watch." *Associated Press*, 28 September 2004. Taken from: http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,133775,00.html (Accessed 15 September 2005).

been widely covered in academic writings, but little attention has been paid to the regional impact of Iran's nuclearization.

This thesis assesses the reaction of Iran's neighbors to its acquisition of nuclear weapons. It bypasses the debate of how to prevent Iranian acquisition and instead focuses upon how Israel, the Arab Gulf States, and Pakistan will respond to Iran's new capabilities. This thesis assumes that Iran will gain a small, secure stockpile of nuclear weapons. By studying the debate on the spread of nuclear weapons, the reasons Tehran desires them, how Iran's neighbors will react, and the overall impact upon U.S. interests, one sees that the situation is not as unstable as might be imagined. The United States must take steps, to deter Iran through establishing a coercive framework expanding America's regional security guarantees. This framework would limit the ability of Iran from behaving aggressively with its nuclear capabilities.

It must be stressed from the beginning that this is only an initial study of this topic with a rather narrow scope. Much has been written on the dangers and prevention of a nuclear-armed Iran, yet relatively little has been expressed on what the world would be like after Iran gains this capability. This thesis has attempted to exhaust the most current unclassified documents related to Iran's nuclear future. More extensive studies that rely on open-source and classified work must be conducted. Perhaps this work will provide the groundwork for such studies.

Ray Takeyh, of the Council on Foreign Relations assesses that a nuclear-armed Iran would not employ its weapons in conflict, but would instead use them to increase its security against threats from America and other states.[6] Since the inception of nuclear weapons over sixty years ago, these massively destructive weapons have shown that their greatest benefit is from the security gained from their possession, not their use. One need only look at North Korea to see the benefits these weapons offer to outlaw states. The international community has attempted unsuccessfully to bribe Pyongyang to halt uranium enrichment. Similarly, in Iran, each time there is a crisis in the region, oil prices rise, with the net effect of enriching the regime and rewarding its actions.[7] Instead of

[6] Ray Takeyh, "Iran Builds the Bomb," *Survival* 46 no. 4, (winter 2004-05), 53.

[7] "Oil Warning over Iran Nuclear Row," *BBC*, 16 January, 2006. Taken from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4616320.stm (Accessed 25 January 2006).

buying off or directly preventing a state from going nuclear, the United States should weigh the costs and dangers of enflaming a whole society against us, particularly in such a critical region as the Arabian Gulf.

This chapter asserts that a nuclear Iran may not be the security concern that it is commonly believed to be. Second, this chapter examines the debate between those who believe that the proliferation of nuclear weapons provides security and those who argue that it worsens the global security. Third, this chapter outlines the issues involved in Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons, showing the unique historical role Iran has played in the region. Finally, it outlines the structure and findings of each remaining chapter.

B. BACKGROUND

Significant tensions exist in the Middle East, ranging from potential civil war in Iraq to states dabbling with democratic reforms. Throughout this range of activity, the vital output of oil is what draws the attention of the world. In this uncertain environment, Iran has historically sought to be the regional arbiter of power. With this tradition and being the most militarily powerful state in the region, Iran has the opportunity and ability to influence the outcomes of nearly any regional issue. As Iran is the regional hegemon, understanding how it became capable of constructing nuclear weapons is worthy of study, for this will shed light on how Tehran intends to use them.

International concerns toward Iran have centered on IAEA violations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). As a NPT signatory, Iran pledged to not develop these weapons. Yet the NPT allows Iran to develop a full fuel cycle to benefit from nuclear power and research. This fuel cycle includes the enrichment of various radioactive elements for research purposes. Repeatedly Iran has stressed this point to justify its research activities, though it does not account for recent infractions. These infractions are at the core of the IAEA's concerns.

The secretive nature of Iran's nuclear enrichment activities implies nefarious intent and undermines repeated claims from Tehran that its nuclear program is for power generation. In 2004, the then U. S. Undersecretary of State for Non-Proliferation, John Bolton, raised concerns and stated that Iran's nuclear program was nearing the point of

self-sufficiency.[8] At that point, preventing Iran from producing nuclear weapons would be very difficult without attacking weapons production sites. The net result is that eventually Iran's nuclear weapons capability will be realized.

While those in the United States, Europe, and the United Nations (UN) who argue that Iranian nuclear weapons would be a destabilizing threat and must be prevented, little study has been done on how these weapons will impact the region. Any nuclear weapons that Tehran creates will most likely be employed in a deterrent role and not to be used against its neighbors in conflict. Iran has become, and will likely remain, a status-quo state. It works to avoid major military provocations, showing preference for working with governments over sub-state movements, a significant shift from the radical actions under Ayatollah Khomeini following the 1979 Islamic Revolution.[9] Although President Ahmadinejad has made inflammatory statements about Israel, these have not lead to conflict and certainly would not be worth risking nuclear destruction from Israel's alleged arsenal. An overview of the debate over further proliferation of nuclear weapons is needed to understand fully the reasons Iran's nuclear weapons might not be the cause for concern that many experts predict.

C. DEBATE SURROUNDING THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Owing to the vast destruction nuclear weapons can generate, they have ironically guaranteed security for the nations that possess them. Any attack against a nuclear state carries the risk of provoking a devastating response. Consequently, the benefits and dangers of nuclear weapon proliferation have been debated for decades. Perhaps the most debatable point is whether more nuclear states advance or weaken world security. Naturally, this issue remains moot. Yet, one must concede that the world has judiciously avoided the use of nuclear weapons for sixty years, suggesting the avoidance is

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[8] "Iran's Nuclear Program Nears Self-Sufficiency" *Summary of Iran Stories in Today's Broadcasts*, Radio Farda, 13 June 2004. Taken from: http://www.radiofarda.com/transcripts/topstory/2004/06/20040613_1830_0046_0434_EN.asp (Accessed 03 February 2006).

[9] Daniel Byman, Shahram Chubin, Anoushiravan Ehteshami, Jerrold Green, *Iran's Security Policy in the Post-Revolutionary Era* (Santa Monica: Rand, 2001), 100.

attributable to more than luck. Professor Jan Breemer of the Navy War College asserts that at some point, luck loses its random nature and reflects skill.[10]

1. Nuclear Optimists: "More May Be Better"[11]

Nuclear Optimists advocate a gradual increase in the number of nuclear states. They argue that a cautious increase does not correspond to an increased likelihood that nuclear weapons will be used. They further contend that this gradual spread is far better than if it were rapid or nonexistent.[12] Supporters point to over sixty years in which deterrence helped prevent nuclear conflict. According to Professor Kenneth Waltz of the University of California at Berkeley, "The world has enjoyed more years of peace since 1945 than had been known in modern history."[13] Indeed, there has been no general war in this period, in spite of a variety of confrontations that could lead to rapid escalation and conflict.[14] Instead nuclear weapons made nuclear war an unlikely possibility.[15]

Professor Waltz argues that if deterrence produces the ideal, then the opposite must be correct: not having a clear balance of terror preventing a misstep leads to uncertainty of action by a state. He states that defeated countries like Germany following World War II, which fought conventionally, will at the very worst survive with limited suffering. Nuclear deterrence assures a totality of defeat; therefore, no rational actor will risk destruction.[16] Instead of instability and uncertainty, nuclear weapons increase stability and certainty, making "miscalculation difficult and politically pertinent predictions easy."[17]

Despite this security, nuclear states must be cautious. Professor Waltz examines both superpowers and smaller unpredictable states. In all cases, nuclear weapons, with their extreme destructive power, induce caution.[18] Even at the height of its revolutionary

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[10] Conversation with Dr. Breemer, Summer of 2005.

[11] Sagan and Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, 3.

[12] Ibid., 17.

[13] Ibid., 4.

[14] Ibid., 5.

[15] Ibid., 17.

[16] Ibid., 9.

[17] Ibid., 9.

[18] Sagan and Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, 13.

zeal, an Iran with nuclear weapons would face the very real condition that if it employed its weapons, it would risk a devastating retaliation. Since the Iranian regime is now pursuing the status-quo, the possibility that Tehran would risk such destruction is highly unlikely.

Professor Waltz is not alone in his theory. Additional study has been made on the stabilizing effects of nuclear proliferation. Professor Peter Lavoy from the Naval Postgraduate School has predicted that nuclear weapons will prevent future wars between India and Pakistan.[19] Although these two states have had minor conflicts that risked escalation to nuclear warfare, nuclear weapons provided a safety net that helped prevent escalation to general war. Both Martin van Creveld of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and Shai Feldman of Brandeis University maintain a nuclear-armed Middle East will stabilize the Arab-Israeli conflict.[20] Israel will resist regional nuclear proliferation; however, as outlined in Chapter II, there is significant evidence showing direct military attacks against a state's nuclear program does not deter it. Quite the contrary, such attacks only further motivate states to pursue nuclear weapons.

There is a negative side to the Optimists' view. The states that gain nuclear weapons may force their neighbors into crash nuclear-weapons programs to achieve balance. This rapid proliferation could create a domino effect: In their haste to gain nuclear security, these states may not pay as close attention to command and control (C2) or security as states that have had decades to do so. It is necessary to define C2 for the purposes of this thesis: Professor Feroz Khan of the Naval Postgraduate School states that the purpose of C2 systems are to "prevent peacetime nuclear operations from leading to nuclear war, especially in crises, and to carry out in wartime the missions assigned to nuclear forces."[21] He further defines an effective system guaranteeing the following:

- Always function as directed and never when not directed

[19] Peter R. Lavoy, "Civil-Military Relations, Strategic Conduct, and the Stability of Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia" *Civil Military Relations and Nuclear Weapons* (Stanford Center for International Security and Arms Control, June 1994).

[20] Martin van Creveld, *Nuclear Proliferation and the Future of Conflict* (New York: Free Press, 1993); and Shai Feldman, *Israeli Nuclear Deterrence: A Strategy for the 1980s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 142-75 and 238.

[21] Feroz Kahn, "Nuclear Command-and-Control in South Asia during Peace, Crisis, and War," *Contemporary South Asia*, 14, no. 2 (June 2005), 164.

- Fool-proof safety from accidents and accidental launches
- A perfect system of accountability of nuclear and strategic materials
- A system to prevent unauthorized access to the site, tampering or use of strategic materials
- Assured retaliatory second-strike capability that the adversary must perceive as credible, which reduces the incentive to strike first during a crisis.[22]

The lessons of history and rationality may apply. Nuclear states, such as the former Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China (PRC), with their differing views of civil government and militaries, never employed nuclear weapons.[23] Though Iran is potentially more unstable than either of these, it would be forced to proceed cautiously or receive more severe destruction that it could dispatch.

2. Nuclear Pessimists: "More Will Be Worse"[24]

On the opposite side of the proliferation debate, Nuclear Pessimists, argue that civilization has avoided destroying itself through accidents, missteps, and outright luck. Pessimists contend that the more states that possess these weapons the more likely they are to be used, it is only a matter of time. Professor Scott Sagan of Stanford University advances two ideas to support this concept. First, it is the military itself that will, through its modes of operation, bring about "deterrence failures and deliberate or accidental war."[25] Second, the certainty of civilian control over the weapons will be put at risk. Dr. Sagan argues that the alternative for the uncertainty that comes from nuclear weapons could be replaced by deterrence through a hugely capable conventional bombing force.

The organizational model of how militaries operate is central to Dr. Sagan's argument. First, the majority of military officers are viewed as more likely to see war as likely and inevitable. From this basis, they are conditioned to be skeptical of any solution that does not include the use of force. Second, these officers are indoctrinated to have only a limited idea of what constitutes victory. This narrow scope of victory prevents the

[22] Kahn, *Nuclear Command-and-Control*, 169-170.

[23] Sagan and Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, 15.

[24] Ibid., 47.

military from seeing the steps necessary for post-conflict resolution. Instead they view only the defeat of the enemy as the end. Third, the officers are biased toward taking the initiative offensively and decisively and do not reflect on the aftermath. Fourth, the military does not possess the long-term considerations of a conflict, limiting its scope to the immediate objective. Finally, officers focus solely upon their job, making them short sighted in the effects of their decisions.

From these general organizational concepts, Professor Sagan specifically addresses the Iranian organizational structure of C2 for the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). With the IRGC's past history of acting beyond the scope of Tehran's orders, it is possible that when Iran gains nuclear weapons, these weapons will not be completely under the control of the Iranian government.[26] In such a situation nuclear weapons could potentially be used by forces that are more inclined than their political leaders to initiate a "better now than later" conflict.[27]

The negative side of the Pessimists debate is that it is based upon theory without a factual basis to support its ultimate conclusions. Certainly, there have been instances in which nuclear weapons have nearly been used in conflict, but the taboo against their use remains in place. There could be a nuclear war, intended or otherwise tomorrow; however, history, and the threat that if there was the consequences would be vast, argues against it. Nuclear conflict cannot happen through graduated steps—the weapons either have or have not been used. Theorizing about what might happen because of societal, organizational, or institutional standards is useful for adding additional security to ensure that accidents do not happen. On the other hand, these factors do not explain completely, with historical events to back them up, how the spread of nuclear weapons is inherently dangerous.

3. Who is Right?

In the case of Iran and its neighborhood, an argument can be made that Tehran's acquisition of nuclear weapons might help stabilize the region. When one accepts that Israel has possessed nuclear weapons for decades and Pakistan unveiled its capability in

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[25] Sagan and Waltz, The Spread of Nuclear Weapons, 47.

[26] Sagan and Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, 62.

[27] Ibid., 61.

1998, the region seems capable of gradually accepting new nuclear states. Since then, both nuclear states have dealt with serious conflicts and nuclear weapons have provided security. To gain an understanding of how Iran will use its nuclear weapons, one can look briefly at how these nuclear states have used their weapons for security.

For Israel, memories of the Holocaust will never diminish. The quote "Never Again!" is reportedly welded on the side of the first Israeli nuclear bomb.[28] These words summarize Israel's commitment to never allow a second Holocaust.

With India being Pakistan's one, and apparently only foe, Pakistan faces a conventionally superior enemy, in both numbers and sophistication of weapons. Nevertheless, to date, Islamabad's nuclear deterrent has proven suitable to defending that state from an otherwise more powerful enemy.

States acquiring nuclear weapons one at a time and with significant time between them may seem fraught with danger and uncertainty. However, Iran, as the most populous state in the region and the historical hegemon of the Arabian Gulf has lost its previous standing as regional arbiter to the United States. Detracting further from Iran's image, the United States has rapidly removed two bordering regimes. Tehran cannot help but notice the capabilities of America's armed forces and worry it could be next. This concern could lead Iran to behave irrationally, causing its decision making to become unstable. Nuclear weapons, with a clear C2 doctrine and regional deterrent relationships can garner Iran respect, domestic security, and the chance to add stability. Stability, for the purpose of this thesis, is considered to be the removal of the threat of conflict and its corresponding devastation.

D. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITUATION

Iran has been interested in nuclear weapons for nearly 50 years. A research program began with reactors provided by the United States to Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi.[29] These carried a back-door path to nuclear weapons for Iran. However, as was allegedly the case with Israel, the United States ignored the activities of one of its few

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[28] Walter D. Farr, *The Third Temple's Holy of Holies* (Air University: Maxwell Air Force Base, 1999), 15.

29 Sharon Squassoni, Iran's Nuclear Program: Recent Developments (Washington: Congressional Research Service 2005), 1.

friends in the region. The fact that Iran possesses huge petroleum and natural gas reserves did not seem to raise any serious concern as to why it needed to develop nuclear power for its energy needs. In spite of the long period of time Iran has worked toward going nuclear, it is only recently it has become a serious concern to the United States. This point in Iran's nuclear weapons program is exactly the wrong time for the United States to intervene. Estimates vary over how close Iran is to self-sufficiency in its production of nuclear weapons materials. Once self-sufficiency is reached, an entirely separate sanctions regime is needed, along with a multilateral approach to motivate Tehran to disavow these weapons. To date, the international community has only succeeded in motivating Iran to halt refinement temporarily. No indication exists that Tehran is seriously willing to disavow these weapons. This action is in spite of proclamations about nuclear weapons being contrary to Islam.[30]

1. Why Build a Bomb?

Understanding the reasons why Iran desires nuclear weapons aids in assessing how it will behave as a nuclear state. Nuclear weapons seem a natural extension of Iran's military policy, given its historical management of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The wholesale slaughter of the Iran-Iraq War is still fresh in the minds of all Iranians, particularly in light of America removing the Iraqi regime and occupying Iraq. Iran cannot help but fear a renewed conflict with Iraq upon America's withdrawal. One should expect that a counter to threats by neighboring states', real or imagined, would be sought. When one considers the cost-benefit ratio of nuclear weapons and Iran's severe economic problems, nuclear weapons provide stable, assured security at a fraction of the cost, making them highly attractive to Tehran.

Exploring the reasons Iran wants nuclear weapons helps one understand how its neighbors will react. Iran only reluctantly employed chemical weapons against Iraq in response to Baghdad's wholesale use of them. Iranian mullahs, citing religious teachings, were loath to violate what they believed were Islamic commands against such

30 "Fatwa Restrains Iran More on Nuclear Weapons Than Treaty: Negotiator." Associated Foreign Press, 12 April 2005. Taken from: http://www.spacewar.com/2005/050412130710.kizyij2s.html (Accessed 14 November, 2005). Iran's Supreme Leader, Khamanei, has asserted in a Fatwa (religious ruling) that nuclear weapons are counter to Islam.

weapons.[31] As a consequence of this ruling, all WMD programs in Iran were abandoned following the 1979 revolution.[32] As a result, the country was unprepared when Iraq initiated the use of chemical weapons, in spite of Baghdad's public statements announcing its intent to employ these weapons in July of 1982.[33]

Disinterest in Iran's suffering by the international community further motivated its pursuit of WMD. Initially, Tehran sought outrage from a variety of world bodies over the introduction of chemical weapons to the battlefield, citing Baghdad's membership in the Geneva Protocols of 1925 prohibiting their use. These concerns fell on largely unsympathetic ears, even when Tehran sent victims to the UN. The only response was a watered-down resolution that did nothing to inhibit the use of chemical weapons.[34] The resulting scores of casualties no doubt led the regime to adopt a "never again" attitude toward autonomy and a desire for self-sufficiency in being able to produce WMD indigenously. These lessons were enunciated by Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, prior to becoming Iran's President, in the Majiles (parliament), in October of 1988:

> With regard to chemical, bacteriological, and radiological weapons training, it was made very clear during the war that these weapons are very decisive. It was also made very clear that the moral teachings of the world are not very effective when war reaches a serious state; the world does not respect its own resolutions, and closes its eyes to the violations and all the aggressions which are committed on the battlefield. We should fully equip ourselves in the defensive and offensive use of chemical, bacteriological, and radiological weapons.[35]

Considering the statements and actions by Iran's new President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Tehran seems all the more likely to pursue these weapons.

2. Internal Uncertainty

In spite of demonstrations expressing widespread public support, not all Iranians desire to have nuclear weapons. There is growing public debate within the country over

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[31] Gregory F. Giles, "The Islamic Republic of Iran and Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons," in, *Planning the Unthinkable, How New Powers Will Use Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons*, ed. Peter R. Lavoy, Scott D. Sagan, and James J. Wirtz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 81.

[32] Ibid., 81.

[33] Dillip Hiro, *The Longest War: The Iran-Iraq Military Conflict* (London: Routledge, Chapman, & Hall, 1989), 86.

[34] Giles, *Iran and Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons*, 81-2.

[35] Ibid., 84.

this topic. Moderates inside the country look to states that have the means of assembling weapons on short notice. These moderates feel a hedging capability is sufficient to secure the state. Apparently, so far, Iran has maintained this course to the outside world, not declaring its intent to build nuclear weapons, but insisting, rightly so, that under the NPT it has the right to undertake enrichment and research activities.[36]

Unfortunately for those against Iranian acquisition, the state has an inflated sense of self-importance. Average Iranians believe their country is a regional power based on their religion, location, resources, and population. This view, however, does not mesh with reality, as stated by Michael Eisenstadt of the Washington Institute's Military and Security Studies Program:

> Most Iranians also believe that their country is a regional power by dint of geography, demography and resource endowments. There is a large gap, however, between the self-image and the aspirations of the regime, and the reality of Iran's military weakness.[37]

Just as Americans take pride in the Revolution of 1776, Iranians identify with Cyrus the Great from 559 B.C. believing their culture to be powerful due to its roots. Furthermore, Iranians believe they are the real leaders of the Muslim world, the historical arbiters of the Arabian Gulf. Regrettably, these assertions suffer from an acute gap between capabilities and aspirations. Given the profound financial problems that plague the regime, nuclear weapons are seen as the only means to bridge this gap without shattering the economy.[38]

3. Are Nuclear Weapons Needed?

The answer to whether or not Iran actually needs weapons provides insight toward how it will align its nuclear weapons policy. One needs only to consult a map to see that Iran is in a bad neighborhood. Pakistan, with its Sunni majority and nuclear weapons poses at least a minimal threat to Iran—in spite of the fact Islamabad would be unable to hold off India while attacking Iran, and there is nothing territorially that either could

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[36] Farideh Farhi, *To Have or Not To Have? Iran's Domestic Debate on Nuclear Options* (Washington: Nixon Center, 2001) 35-54. This paper is an excellent summary of all sides of the debate outlining each of the facets surrounding the pursuit of these weapons.

[37] Michael Eisenstadt. "Living with a nuclear Iran?" *Survival* 41, no. 3 (Autumn 1999), 125.

[38] Ibid., 126.

desire on the Baluchistan frontier that lies between them. Even though both nations are at odds over the future of Afghanistan, there is almost nothing that could lead to outright conflict. Turkey, as a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member with close ties to the United States and Israel, provides a potential avenue of approach for a preventative/preemptive strike on Iran's nuclear infrastructure, should Jerusalem launch such a strike. In addition, the United States has, in the past, stored nuclear weapons in Turkey, something that is likely not ignored by Tehran. Israel has the ability to attack Iran with ballistic and, potentially, sub-launched cruise missiles. This, in addition to Jerusalem's willingness to pursue its security at any cost, justifies Tehran's concerns. Iraq, currently under United States occupation pending regime stabilization, serves as an ever present reminder of the slaughter during the 80s; and even with the likelihood that Iraq's Shi'a majority will take power, hatred remains. In Afghanistan, a long hated rival of Iran under the Taliban, now has Coalition troops supporting Hamid Karzai. Iran is a traditional highway for smugglers of Afghanistan's opium crop, bringing clashes with drug traffickers every year.

This apparent encirclement of Iran enhances Tehran's paranoia, especially when other states are allowed to possess nuclear technology while Iran is not. The history of Iran being abandoned by the international community to stand alone against WMD provides sufficient justification, in Tehran's mind, for a nuclear program. In terms of facing punishment from the international community, the case of Pakistan is most applicable as a comparison to Iran. Islamabad went ahead with its nuclear activities in full knowledge of, and in spite of, international aversion to its tests. Today, Pakistan is a major non-NATO ally of the United States with economic and military aid being lavished upon it. This is hardly a deterrent from opposing international norms. Consequently, it is logical for modern Iran to follow a realist approach and attempt to balance threats, real or imagined, to its security. Nuclear weapons can level the playing field and bring security within the anarchic international system. Tehran's pursuit of nuclear weapons, however, ignores the fact that these supposed threats do not afford sufficient reason to attack Iran arbitrarily, nor would nuclear weapons necessarily provide security from Iran's perceived threats. External perception, however, is irrelevant, for Iran believes what it believes.

The ruling regime in Tehran seeks to maintain the regional status-quo. In recent times, the country again and again sought only to maintain the current state of affairs through defensive actions and mobilizations, not overt attacks. Far from seeking conflict, Tehran has striven to avoid appearing belligerent. Iran's relative neutrality in all three recent conflicts (DESERT STORM, ENDURING FREEDOM, and IRAQI FREEDOM) supports this. Nuclear weapons, given Iran's enemies nuclear capability and/or conventional superiority, offer passively balance these threats, with only moderate cost, without directly threatening them in return.

Weapons control is the largest cause for international concern. There are significant C2 issues that bring the region serious anxiety. These concerns focus on Tehran's institutional paranoia. Following the revolution, a number of ambiguous military organizations were created to oversee the actions of traditional armed forces. Most notoriously independent of these is the IRGC. The IRGC has a history of not following Tehran's dictates. Instead, it has operated for its own ends on a number of occasions. Professor Scott Sagan observes that the IRGC is prone to initiate operations beyond the relatively defensively minded central government in Tehran. This unpredictability is great cause for apprehension as Professor Sagan points out. The IRGC has a penchant for acting beyond the orders of Tehran, such as chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq War. These independent actions could lead to similar situations, if nuclear weapons were placed in the IRGC's control, and given its historical control of WMD, the control of nuclear weapons is likely to fall to the IRGC.[39] A lack of centralized C2 and the unlikely ability of the theocratic infrastructure to prevent the unintended use of such weapons by these irregular forces threatens regional stability. How this threat will be solved is not easily answered.

4. Atoms for Terrorists?

Owing to the unique nature of nuclear weapons, the question is regularly raised whether or not Tehran will allow an uncertain entity, such as the IRGC or Iranian sponsored terrorists, to gain access to nuclear weapons. This question misses the point that these weapons bring the potential of a catastrophic response on the part of any state they target. Imagine if Iran provided a nuclear weapon to one of its terrorist proxies,

[39] Sagan and Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, 62.

Hezbollah for example. If that terrorist group were to use that weapon to destroy a city in Israel, Jerusalem would immediately discern the supplier and not hesitate to remove the threat once and for all.

Tehran relies upon the IRGC to ensure regime survival. However, granting release authority to this lower echelon unit without an immediate threat is inconsistent with how C2 that such weapons require. Such an uncertainty of action with nuclear weapons invites gross instability. In fact, *not* possessing sound C2 over these weapons suggests a level of volatility that has not been seen in Iran for some time. Iran would likely keep these weapons close to home for regime survival, or at least in very secure locations. Turning even one weapon over to a terrorist organization─with Iran's relatively defensive stance─would be very unlikely. Had Tehran wanted to terrorize states in the region with WMD, they would only have had to arm terrorists with chemical or biological weapons. The possession of nuclear weapons holds a mystique and prestige, yet the consequences of misuse are tremendous. The costs of construction and the prestige that accompanies nuclear ownership in the international community are so significant that a state would not lightly place these weapons in the hands of unpredictable entities. Furthermore, these same reasons explain why Iran would ensure security over its precious arsenal, preventing them from falling into third-party hands. The fact that Tehran has not yet passed along WMD, lends weight to the argument that it will not change this policy for nuclear weapons.

E. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This thesis analyzes the reaction of key players in the region, the reaction of nuclear states, such as Israel and Pakistan, to a nuclear-armed Iran. Naturally, this situation carries with it serious, though separate, security issues to each. The two states' reactions will go far in determining the impact of a nuclearlized Iran upon regional security. Iran must step cautiously in its actions due to both states nuclear weapons. To be sure, these states will have to deal with the same, non-nuclear threats that Iran represents, but all parties involved will tread lightly in these affairs, avoiding nuclear brinkmanship.

In addition to a detailed analysis of Israel and Pakistan, this thesis considers the reaction of the Arab Gulf States in relation to a nuclear-armed Iran. Although Israel and

Pakistan are capable of deterring Iran by themselves with a deterrence understanding, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates have much to fear. This fear, on the other hand, need not cripple the militarily weaker states. This thesis argues Iran presents no critical nuclear threat to the region or the world. Deterrence between Iran and its neighbors will remove serious security obstacles and stabilize the region. Stability, for the sake of this thesis, is defined as the regional states, with the aid of the United States, being able to keep Iran relatively limited in its ability to disrupt the regional status-quo. This will be conducted through a regional deterrence relationship that even the fiercest revolutionaries in Tehran will understand. For Tehran, deterrence is not a difficult concept to understand: In return for nuclear adventurism, Iran risks nuclear destruction and the end of its bid for dominance over the Muslim world.

This thesis accepts the Nuclear Optimist point of view. A nuclear Iran, equipped with a clearly defined C2 structure, will not destabilize the Arabian Gulf Region. Iran cannot be stopped from constructing nuclear weapons. The more nations try to deter it from this course, the more Tehran is convinced of the need for these weapons, and the less likely it is to behave rationally. A better course for the United States to follow would be allowing Tehran its nuclear weapons, and use the resources that would have been wasted on preventing Iranian nuclearization to improve military ties in the region.

1. Israel

Chapter II addresses Israel's likely reaction to Iranian nuclear weapons. It must be stressed that no confirmed evidence exists that proves Israel possesses nuclear weapons.[40] Israel's historical relations with Iran have been fairly warm. The two are united in resistance to Arab hatred, the 1979 revolution notwithstanding. As the only state in history to launch a preventative strike, Israel must decide whether or not to strike Iran's program and deployment sites. Lack of intelligence, scattered locations, and uncertainty of 100 percent success will prevent a strike from being launched.

The likely outcome is that Israel and Iran will enjoy a more stable relationship through mutual deterrence. Iran's greatest reason for building nuclear weapons is to

[40] For the purposes of this thesis, it will be assumed that the claims of Mordechai Vanunu in October, 1986 are true and that Israel has, in fact, possessed nuclear weapons for decades. For a detailed report on Vanunu's assertions, see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mordechai_Vanunu (Accessed 31 October 2005).

counter those of Israel and the United States. With a secure stockpile of weapons, Tehran will be able to relax its concerns of being attacked. This stability could possibly encourage Palestinian statehood and end Iranian-sponsored terrorism in Israel. Some of the key issues that must be addressed are whether Israel will strike Iran's nuclear facilities, how nuclear weapons will impact Iran's support to anti-Israeli terrorists, and how mutual deterrence can develop between the two.

2. The Arab Gulf States

Chapter III addresses how Iranian nuclear weapons will impact issues between Iran and Arab states in the Arabian Gulf. Several of these states are capable of developing indigenous nuclear weapons program. This possibility counters the Nuclear Optimist school, for states must have time to consider the impact of their program. The Arab world has traditional pressed for a nuclear-free Middle East, yet in the face of a nuclear Iran, this will be difficult to maintain.

Traditionally, the Arab Gulf States have been militarily weak, particularly in the face of Iran and Iraq. With the destruction of the Iraqi military in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Iran is the preeminent power in the neighborhood. Only the United States' presence deters Iranian adventurism. All of the Arab Gulf States are dependent on outsiders providing security. Since 1971, this has been the role of the United States. In the face of a nuclear Iran, this role will probably increase. Ideally, Iraq will return to its previous position as the buffer between Iran and the other Gulf States, and Baghdad will remain a wild card, for with such military strength, Iraq could return to its oppressing ways. Key issues between the Gulf Arab States and Iran are nuclear proliferation by these states, the role of Islam in the region, Iranian support of Shi'a insurgents in each of the Arab Gulf States, economic problems, and geographic issues in dispute.

3. Pakistan

Chapter IV addresses how Pakistan will react to Iranian nuclear weapons. Pakistan's military, both nuclear and conventional, is primarily occupied with India. They are ill-suited to stand against an Iran that is developing close military and economic ties to India. This relationship between India and Iran reduces the likelihood that a conflict between Pakistan and Iran will ensue, since Islamabad can use its nuclear weapons to deter any belligerency.

Islamabad and Tehran continue to grow further apart, but nothing suggests that either is interested in conflict, especially with the potential for nuclear exchange. Instead Pakistan will likely tacitly accept Iran's becoming a nuclear state. This understanding requires a deterrent relationship in which both sides understand the risks involved. Key issues between Pakistan and Iran are the unfolding events in Afghanistan, growing ties between Iran and Indian, the involvement by the PRC, as well as C2 issues regarding their respective nuclear weapons.

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II. ISRAELI REACTION

A. INTRODUCTION

The Israeli fighters had flown for nearly ninety minutes in enemy territory, remaining at about 100 feet to avoid detection. Completely surprising the Iraqis, the eight F-16's delivered sixteen, 2,000-pound bombs, functionally destroying their target, thereby Israel rolled back Saddam Hussein's nuclear bomb program by three or four years. In terms of resources expended on the facility, the time lost by the Israeli attack far exceeded the financial cost of the facility. "Battlefields wax and wane in combat, but lost time is irreplaceable."[41] Having taken five years to assemble, the reactor was knocked out within ninety seconds. The day after the strike, Iraq was years away from creating a nuclear weapon.[42]

By executing Operation BABYLON, Israel effectively, albeit temporarily, destroyed Iraq's nuclear weapons production capability. The preventative strike was the culmination of years of overt and covert actions by Israel. Operations involving political, military, and diplomatic efforts were conducted in an effort to secure the Jewish State from Iraq prior to the attack. Though successful in delaying Iraq, these failed where BABYLON succeeded. The gain of time to prepare defenses was important to Israeli security; however, this attack would not stop Jerusalem's enemies from pursuing nuclear weapons.

Today, Israel understands that a similar operation against Iran would not be as easy to execute, nor will it gain as much time from the strike to continue development of defenses. Eliot Cohen of the Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University has stated: "The days of Osirak-type raids on a single, easily located, and above-surface nuclear facility are over. Secrecy, camouflage, deception and dispersion will make preemption a far more extensive and uncertain operation than ever

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[41] Milan N. Vego, *Operational Warfare* (Rhode Island: Naval War College, 2000), 47.

[42] Summary of Operation BABYLON from Peter Ford, "Israel's Attack on Osiraq: A Model for Future Preventative Strikes*?*" (Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School, 2004), 35-38.

before."[43] Similarly pragmatic, Ehsaneh Sadr, of the University of Maryland's department of Government and Politics, asserts that "it is necessary to consider whether the costs and opportunities associated with the emergence of a nuclear Iran might not be more tolerable than those associated with military action."[44]

The time gained by BABYLON did not remove the Iraqi nuclear threat-only Operation DESERT STORM completely stopped Iraq's program. The most significant development during the time gained was the Arrow anti-missile system. Although state-of-the-art, Arrow only offers protection against ballistic missiles and Israel remains open to other kinds of nuclear attack.[45] Considering this lack of certainty, Jerusalem probably has serious doubts about future strikes.

Israel's reaction to a nuclear Iran carries the greatest potential of conflict. This is based on Israel's past actions to ensure survival, its military capabilities, Iran's verbal threats, and Jerusalem's statement that a nuclear-armed Iran is "unacceptable."[46] Reemphasizing Israel's willingness to act against threats to Israel, acting Prime Minister Olmert stated: "Under no circumstances, and at no point, can Israel allow anyone with theses kinds of malicious designs against us [to] have control of weapons of destruction that can threaten our existence."[47]

This chapter examines how Israel could react to Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons. First, the chapter outlines the debate within Israel surrounding a nuclear-armed Iran. Second, the chapter evaluates each option Israel has, showing that a repeat of BABYLON is unlikely against Iran. The chapter also asserts that a mutually deterring relationship will likely be reached through a sub rosa understanding. Finally, this chapter assesses the impact of Israel's likely reaction on U.S. interests.

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[43] Heather Wilson, "Missed Opportunities: Washington Politics and Nuclear Proliferation," *The National Interest* Winter 1993/94 (December 1993).

[44] Ehsaneh I. Sadr, *The Impact of Iran's Nuclearization on Israel* (Washington: Middle East Policy, XII, Summer 2005, No. 2), 58.

[45] Ibid,. 58.

[46] "Tehran: Iran Would Accelerate Nuke Program If Attacked" *Reuters*, 02 June 2005. Taken from: http://www.haaretzdaily.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=536755&contrassID=1&subContrassID=8&sbSubContrassID=0&listSrc=Y (Accessed 04 November 2005).

[47] "Israel: Iran Must Not Acquire Nuclear Weapons," *CNN*, 17 January, 2006. Taken from: http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/meast/01/17/olmert.iran/ (Accessed 26 January 2006).

B. INTERNAL DEBATE

The gravity of a nuclear-armed Iran is being debated in Israel. Central to the debate is the possibility of a military strike similar to BABYLON. Issues in this debate include obstacles to a successful strike, the dubious benefits from such an attack, and the potential of Iran supplying nuclear weapons to terrorists. The shared history of Iran and Israel plays a role behind the scenes, along with Tehran's nuclear motives. The net assessment shows Iran, fearing retaliation, is unlikely to use nuclear weapons against Israel and thereby is not a threat to Israel's existence.

1. To Strike or Not to Strike

Israelis arguing against an attack focus on Iran's nuclear motives and that removing its capabilities would be difficult and ultimately unlikely to dissuade Iran from rebuilding them. A nuclear Iran would be the first enemy in Israel's history that possessed the capability to destroy the Jewish state. In spite of this capability, it is doubtful that Iran would choose to employ it, for with Israel's assumed nuclear capabilities, Iran would pay a heavy price for doing so. There is no indication that Tehran is willing to accept that level of destruction to eradicate Israel.

a. Not Worth the Trouble

There are three prime reasons against military action, as asserted by its opponents. First, Ephraim Kam of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies in Tel Aviv asserts that Iran's motive for nuclear weapons is defensive-deterrent in nature.[48] The weapons would provide state security, to be used only for regime survival. This suggests that by attacking, Israel would force Tehran into a use-or-lose situation. Second, American nuclear deterrence and conventional strength is fully capable of deterring Iran from attacking Israel. This assurance was reaffirmed by President Bush in 2003: "America is firmly committed to the security of Israel as a Jewish, state and we are firmly committed to the safety of the Israeli people."[49] Iran would think twice before striking Israel, given the United States' response. Finally, Iran's progress in terms of its nuclear production might also factor into Jerusalem's decision to strike. After initial construction

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[48] Ephraim Kam, *Curbing the Iranian Nuclear Threat: The Military Option* (Tel Aviv, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Strategic Assessment, 7, No. 3, December, 2004), 4. Taken from: http://www.tau.ac.il/jcss/sa/v7n3p2Kam.html (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[49] "Commitment to Israel 'Unshakable': Bush," *CBC*, 29 July, 2003. Taken from: http://www.cbc.ca/stories/2003/07/29/bush_sharon030729. (Accessed 21 February 2006).

of a handful of weapons, Israel may think Iran is still vulnerable to a preemptive attack. This period offers the greatest risk when one side (Israel) is ceding its nuclear monopoly while another (Iran) struggles to build a secure stockpile. Israel may decide that it has the opportunity to destroy Iran's capabilities prior to maturity. However, since Israel will likely not act before Iran goes nuclear, it is even more unlikely to act afterward, risking potential nuclear retaliation.

The prospect of Tehran providing nuclear weapons to terrorists is one of the debate's largest issues. As stated in Chapter I, no evidence exists that shows Iran intends to give nuclear weapons to such radical organizations. Iran's nuclear weapons will sustain its support of the status-quo and build security to balance outside threats.[50] This security and stability are not aided by supporting irrational actors who might misuse Iran's nuclear weapons. States historically have not borne the expense of acquiring nuclear weapons simply to sell or supply them to others. Finally, since Iran has never provided terrorists with WMD, suggests it will continue this policy, particularly in the case of nuclear weapons.

Perhaps the most telling reason not to attack Iran's nuclear sites is reflected by the actual results of the Osirak attack. Quite simply, the attack did not stop Iraq. As Sammy Salama and Karen Ruster of the Center for Nonproliferation Studies point out:

> Contrary to popular belief, it appears that Israel's attack on Osirak in June of 1981 did nothing to hinder Iraq's nuclear aspirations. Although it temporarily set back its capabilities, it served rather to reinforce and increase Saddam's desire for a nuclear arsenal. In fact, Iraqi nuclear scientist Imad Khadduri claims that Israel's preemptive strike against the French-built Tamuz Iraqi nuclear reactor, which was not really suitable for plutonium production anyway, had the exact opposite effect of the one intended: It sent Saddam Hussein's A-bomb program into overdrive and convinced the Iraqi leadership to initiate a full-fledged nuclear weapons program immediately afterwards.[51]

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[50] Byman, Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, *Iran's Security Policy*, 100-102.

[51] Sammy Salama and Karen Ruster, *A Preemptive Attack on Iran's Nuclear Facilities: Possible Consequences*, (Monterey: Center for Nonproliferation Studies, 2004). Taken from: http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/week/040812.htm#fnB28. (Accessed 06 November 2005).

Khidar Hamza, one of Saddam Hussein's leading nuclear scientists stated in an interview with CNN in February, 2003:

> Israel actually, what Israel [did] is that it got out the immediate danger out of the way. But it created a much larger danger in the longer range. What happened is that Saddam ordered us-we were 400-scientists and technologists running the program. And when they bombed that reactor out, we had also invested $400 million. And the French reactor and the associated plans were from Italy. When they bombed it out, we became 7,000 with a $10 billion investment for a secret, much larger underground program to make bomb material by enriching uranium. We dropped the reactor out totally, which was the plutonium for making nuclear weapons, and went directly into enriching uranium. They [Israel] estimated we'd make 7kg of plutonium a year, which is enough for one bomb. And they get scared and bombed it out. Actually it was much less than this, and it would have taken a much longer time. But the program we built later in secret would make six bombs a year.[52]

Based upon this evidence of the Iraqi response to BABYLON, a strike against an Iran is simply a case of sacrificing the future security of Israel for the present.

b. Necessary for Security

One principal argument exists to support attacking Iran: Any enemy with nuclear weapons is unacceptable to Israel. These supporters point out that Israel's future security will always be in question, should Iran gain the ability to destroy it. Israel should strike before it loses the opportunity to do so.

An Israeli attack would face a long list of challenges. First, Iran expects the attack and surprise will be difficult to achieve. Second, the sites are numerous and distant.[53] Third, the route to and from the targets would require some U.S. coordination, something America is unlikely to want to be involved in due to the likely outrage in the Muslim world. Fourth, Iran would likely recreate any facilities destroyed, building deeper to prevent future attacks from being effective. Fifth, the number and dispersal of the sites makes it difficult to strike and to assess success rapidly to determine the need for additional attacks. Any such delay gives Iran an opportunity to react with any surviving

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[52] Sammy Salama and Karen Ruster, *A Preemptive Attack on Iran's Nuclear Facilities: Possible Consequences*, (Monterey: Center for Nonproliferation Studies, 2004). Taken from: http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/week/040812.htm#fnB28. (Accessed 06 November 2005).

[53] To appreciate the dispersed nature of Iran's nuclear sites, see the map and references of each site at: http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/iran/nuke-fac.htm. (Accessed 26 January 006).

weapons. Sixth, even if all its nuclear weapons were destroyed, Iran could use chemical weapons to retaliate, wreaking havoc throughout Israel. Finally, significant intelligence gaps exist on the targets, so the Israelis could not be certain that all Iranian sites are accounted for.[54]

c. Fallout

The results of an attack must also be considered. Time would be the greatest benefit, if the strike went successfully. Iran would probably rapidly rebuild. Further, those in Iran who do not support nuclearization would likely shift their beliefs. Lastly, Israel would only be able to watch as Iran rebuilt its program, as there is little in the way of additional defenses the Israelis could develop.

Israel would face diplomatic repercussions aside from any Iranian retaliation. While neighboring Muslim states would be relieved that Iran was removed as a nuclear threat, the attack would be seen as a Zionist attack against the Muslim world. U.S. involvement, real or imagined, would lead to serious problems.[55]

2. Israeli/Iranian Issues

Iran and Israel have historically been something between acquaintance and adversary. Both states are non-Arab in a region of Arab states. Also, in a region dominated by Sunni Muslims, each is home to a minority religion. During the Iran-Iraq war, Israel provided arms to Iran, supporting what was then perceived as a distant threat. Because Saddam was seeking sophisticated WMD, Iraq was seen as the greatest threat to Israel at the time. This Israeli aid was also intended to buy safety for the Jews in Iran, which has significant Jewish communities in Tehran and Shiraz.[56]

Israel's military support for Iran did not make the two nations friends; animosity soared after the 1979 Islamic revolution. In 1982 a struggle ensued when Iran dispatched 1,500 IRGC troops to Lebanon to help Lebanese Muslims against Israel's invasion.[57]

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[54] Kam, *The Military Option*, 9-10.

[55] Ibid., 10.

[56] "The Iran-Iraq War, 1979 to 1988" *Jewish Virtual Library*. Taken from: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/arabs/iraniraq.html (Accessed 02 November 2005). Also, Sadr, *Impact of Iran's Nuclearization*, 61

[57] "Chronology, U.S.-Iran Relations, 1906-2002," *Frontline*. Taken from: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/tehran/etc/cron.html (Accessed 14 October, 2005).

Iran has supported Hezbollah, a terrorist group that operates from Lebanon, conducting regular rocket attacks against Israel with weapons, money, and troops. The two states have recently escalated their rhetoric, but there is no real reason to return to open warfare.

To this day, the two states remain intertwined. *The Economist* recently stated:

> It is an irony that Israel's president, Moshe Katzav, is in fact a Farsi-speaker born in Iran. Ditto Israel's defence minister, Shaul Mofaz, who is doubtless preoccupied nowadays with how to destroy Iran's nuclear programme. He is advised by Dan Halutz, Israel's former air-force commander and now chief of staff. Lieut-General Halutz was born in Israel, both his parents in Iran. They seem to have taught him a sense of humour. Asked how far Israel would go to stop Iran's nuclear programme, he replied: "two thousand kilometers."[58]

Sense of humor aside, this article articulates how close the two countries remain, in spite of recent inflammatory rhetoric. These ties should not be mistaken for friendship, yet there is common ground that both states share, paving the way for an understanding about Tehran's nuclear weapons.

a. Going Nuclear

Balancing Israel's alleged nuclear capabilities is Iran's key reason for nuclearization. The weapons will be used as part of a national policy centering on Israel, as outlined by Iranian Minister of Defense Admiral Ali Shamkhani:

> Iran's defense strategy is based on safeguarding Iran's territorial integrity and interests, preventing the creation of a strategic vacuum in the region, and working for regional integration…and deterring threats…. The main threat comes from *Israel* and [the United State] Iran's defense capabilities constitute part of the defense power of the Islamic countries and will only be used as a deterrent force in defense of the Islamic ummah (community).[59]

It is of no consequence that Israel has not publicly announced its nuclear capabilities; the Iranians are convinced that Israel is a nuclear state. According to the Federation of American Scientists, Israel has a large stockpile of weapons, somewhere

[58] "Family Feud," *The Economist*, 21-27 January 2006, 46.

[59] Schake and Yaphe, *Implications of a Nuclear Iran*, 2. Italics and parentheses added by author.

between one and two hundred, with varying levels of sophistication and delivery methods. 60 Iran remains within the NPT while Israel never signed it. Iran's President Khatami noted in 1998:

> It is ironic that those who are so concerned about saving humanity from nuclear weapons fully support *Israel* which is a nuclear power and is unwilling to join the NPT or accept IAEA safeguards, while leveling allegations against Iran, which has not even been able to complete its first nuclear power plant, which began before the revolution. These are all pretexts for imposing certain policies on Iran and the region and to create panic and mistrust. We are not a nuclear power and do not intend to become one. We have accepted IAEA safeguards and our facilities are routinely inspected by that agency.[61]

President Khatami had a valid point. Iran feels unfairly treated in the face of unjust punishments by the IAEA while Israel has been given a free pass by the international community. Iran naturally looks to its own devices for security, especially given its history with the international community's lax response toward Iraq's use of WMD against it.

Israel aside, nationalism and desire for prestige is perhaps a greater reason for Iran to seek these weapons. Nuclear weapons tie into what makes a state a great power. All permanent members of the United Nations Security Council have them. Economic powers such as Japan and Germany are latent states, possessing the ability to rapidly assemble them. Lastly, recent proliferators such as India, Pakistan, and North Korea have hardly suffered. Instead, these states enjoy recognition and reward. The sum of this leads Iran to believe it needs these weapons.

Realistically, it can be deduced that the immediate and specific threat to Israel from a nuclear-armed Iran is not significant, since nuclear states tend not to use their weapons. This theoretical discussion, however, does not mitigate the threat from the Israeli point of view. Jerusalem is unlikely to accept mere theory to prevent a second Holocaust. Hence it must do something. There is an array of options open, and history

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[60] "Israeli Nuclear Weapons," *Federation of Atomic Scientists*. Taken from: http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/israel/nuke/ (Accessed 17 October 2005).

[61] Shake and Yaphe, *The Strategic Implications of a Nuclear-Armed Iran*, 37-38. Italics added by author.

suggests that Israel will be cautious and hesitate committing to one option until events require it. Prior to outlining the options open to Israel, a study of the animosity between both states is warranted.

3. Issues with Iran

To Iran, Israel is an extension of the United States, thereby an enemy. American support to Israel transfers responsibility for actions by Israelis against Palestinians to the United States. Iran routinely uses this oppression of Muslims to arouse hatred toward both states. Recently President Ahmadinejad stated:

> The establishment of the Zionist regime was a move by the world oppressor (the United States) against the Islamic world. The skirmishes in the occupied land is part of a war of destiny. The outcome of hundreds of years of war will be defined in Palestinian land. As the Imam (Ayatollah Khomeini) said, Israel must be wiped off the map. The Islamic ummah (community) will not allow its historic enemy to live in its heartland. Anyone who signs a treaty which recognizes the entity of Israel means he has signed the surrender of the Muslim world. Any leaders in the Islamic ummah who recognizes Israel face wrath of their own people.[62]

This speech was predictable in its delivery on Al-Quds (Jerusalem) Day in Iran. It signaled a major shift within Iranian leadership. Ahmadinejad's predecessor, Khatami, had called for "dialogue among civilizations."[63] The perceived immorality of the West, in terms of political scandals, television, music, and other media, adds fuel to the fire. Indeed, the prime reason for the 1979 revolution was a refutation of all Western influence, led by the United States through its puppets, the Shah and Israel.[64]

Apparently, Ahmadinejad in his fiery rhetoric does not speak for all Iranians. Former President Khatami stated "those words have created hundreds of political and

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[62] "Ahmadinejad: Wipe Israel Off Map," *Al Jazeera*, 26 October, 2005. Taken from http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/15E6BF77-6F91-46EE-A4B5-A3CE0E9957EA.htm, (Accessed 31 October 2005). Terms in parentheses added by author.

[63] Ibid.,

[64] Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran, Roots and Results of Revolution*, (New Haven: Yale University, 2003), 188.

economic problems for us in the world." Khatami was proven correct by the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, delaying his trip to Iran in direct response to Ahmadinejad's statement.[65]

Ahmadinejad's speech, and subsequently escalating rhetoric, must be taken in context. It is so out of the mainstream in Iran that in making his remarks against the President's speech, Khatami's statement is the first time in over a quarter century there has been a rift over a major policy within the upper echelons of Tehran.[66] Similar fractures within Iranian society will likely emerge.

The kind of Iranian ideological outpouring that Ahmadinejad displays is a mask for realpolitk. Iran has repeatedly sacrificed its support to Muslims and exportation of the revolution for political gain.[67] Tehran ignores Russian actions against Chechen Muslims, the PRC's oppression of Uighar Muslims, and Indian acts against its Muslim populace. This is in return for support, such as intervening on the United Nations Security Council, military sales, and help completing the Bushehr nuclear power plant.[68]

Similarly, it is likely that, in the face of Israel's alleged nuclear weapons, Iran would further abandon the Palestinian cause for security. Tehran would be loathe to aggravate Jerusalem, potentially decreasing support to groups such as Hezbollah.

Israel's reaction to Ahmadinejad's statement was predictable. Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom stated: "We believe Iran is trying to buy time so it can develop a nuclear bomb. Iran is a clear and present danger."[69]

Israel is aware that Tehran's rhetoric is for the masses, having conducted similar campaigns. David Ivry, the planner of the Osirak strike stated: "You cannot eliminate an

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[65] "Annan Delays Iran Trip After Row" *BBC*, 04 November, 2005. Taken from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4408932.stm (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[66] Ali Akbar Dareini, "Ahmadinejad's Israel Remarks Split Iran," *Associated Press*, 31 October 2005. Taken from: http://www.phillyburbs.com/pb-dyn/news/93-10312005-562701.html (Accessed 31 October 2005).

[67] Byman, Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, *Iran's Security Policy*, 102.

[68] Michael Jasinski, *Russia's Nuclear and Missile Technology Assistance to Iran* (Monterey, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, 2004). Taken from: http://cns.miis.edu/research/iran/rusnuc.htm (Accessed 14 October 2005).

[69] "Ahmadinejad Remarks Spark Furor," *Al Jazeera*, 26 October 2005. Taken from: http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20051027/wl_afp/iranmideastisrael (Accessed 31 October 2005).

idea, a national will. But you can delay progress on a nuclear program with the appropriate military action. That is a valuable objective in itself."[70] Once both sides have nuclear weapons, rhetoric should decline to avoid mutual misperception. There is only one case of Iran specifically threatening Israel with nuclear attack.[71] This mutual vehemence would be moderated in the face of mutual deterrence. For, if either goes too far, they risk undesired escalation.

a. Conclusions from the Debate

It is unlikely that Israel will strike Iran, given the difficulties involved. Even if Israel does attack successfully, it will only buy time and reinforce the need for nuclear weapons in Iran. The larger question from this debate is over whether or not Israel needs to take action. Both nations are led by realists who will seek national security over irrational actions. The shared history and an understanding of the reasons Iran desires these weapons show that they understand the severity of this path and will probably not follow it.

C. OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO ISRAEL

In response to Iran's nuclear program, Israel has four courses of action: attacking the production and deployment sites, using covert means to eliminate Iranian technical programs and specialists, as it did in Iraq, opening back-channel communications with Tehran, or seeking broader security cooperation with the United States.[72] Predicting the course, Jerusalem will likely take requires an assessment of each option.

1. Preemptive Strike

Shortly after the 1981 attack against Osirak, then Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon stated Israel's intent toward emerging enemy nuclear states:

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[70] "Israeli Planner Says Don't Rule Out Osiraq-like Strike on Iran," *Pakistan Daily Times*, 01 June 2005. Taken from: http://www.infowars.com/articles/world/iran_israel_planner_says_dont_rule_out_osiraq_like_strike.htm (Accessed on 17 October 2005).

[71] Sadr, *The Impact of Iran's Nuclearization*, 64.

[72] Shake and Yaphe, *The Strategic Implications of a Nuclear-Armed Iran*, 40-41.

> Our determination is to prevent confrontation states from gaining access to nuclear weapons. Israel cannot afford the introduction of the nuclear weapon. For us, it is not a question of a balance of terror but a question of survival. We shall therefore have to prevent such a threat at its inception.[73]

This policy, though perhaps wise at the time, is outdated by the proven point that states that desire nuclear weapons will acquire them, no matter what the obstacles may be. Furthermore, it was made moot by the Pakistani tests in 1998, which led to the "Islamic" bomb. Iran will add a "Shi'a" bomb.

Exploring Israel's reaction to Pakistan's nuclearization helps one predict how it will view Iran's. Shortly before its 1998 tests, Islamabad was mindful of a possible Osirak-style strike at its Kahuta nuclear facility. Israel did not strike, however, allowing Islamabad to go nuclear. Pakistan's weapons, meant to deter India, do not present as serious a threat as Iran's, which are meant for Israel. Of course, Pakistan's instability could change its intent rather quickly, making it a very real threat to Israel. The fact that Israel allowed such a fundamentally unstable Islamic state to go nuclear without reaction suggests it could do the same for another nation.

Israel did not strike Pakistan because of U.S. intervention.[74] Communicating between Karachi and Jerusalem, Israel learned that the Pakistanis were not testing in response to it.[75] If Iran espouses more direct threats to Jerusalem, the effect could be similarly mitigated by reassurance from Washington. What form this would take is unclear. Clearly, Iran would think twice before risking devastation through miscommunication. The United States is constrained in its communications by not having relations with Iran. Great Britain, however could facilitate such a message.

Again, several issues can prevent Israel from striking. The key fact is that, even if Israel did manage to destroy all production and storage sites, it would only serve to confirm Iran's nuclear need. Tehran would probably rebuild its program in stronger

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[73] Sadr, *The Impact of Iran's Nuclearization*, 60.

[74] From discussion with Professor Feroz Hassan Khan, Brigadier General PKA (RET), Naval Postgraduate School, 14 October 2005.

[75] Ibid.,

facilities, for, given the high level of public support for becoming a nuclear state, it cannot afford offending its people by departing from the course of nuclearization.

2. Covert Action

Six separate covert actions, purportedly by Israel, were executed leading up to the BABYLON. These operations ranged from threatening letters to those involved in Iraq's program to a ground attack on the complex itself where a number of operatives were caught by the Iraqis.[76] These actions require an out-of-area operational capability into Iran that Israel would have difficulty achieving. As with the strike option, the number and location of Iranian sites and lack of hard intelligence would make this option difficult and dangerous. With Iraq, a number of these covert actions occurred outside Iraq, in the relatively easy-to-operate environment of Europe. A growing self-sufficient Iran would not offer this opportunity. Finally, there is always the possibility the operatives could be captured and identified, risking a vicious response by Iran against Israel.

3. Back Channel Understanding

Clearly, opening secret communications between two states with such enmity seems unlikely; however, it is in both Iran and Israel's interests to do so as Iran goes nuclear. First, the potential destruction resulting from misperception of nuclear intent demands some level of mutual understanding. Second, it is unlikely that Israel could destroy Iran's entire stockpile in a preemptive strike, inviting retaliation. Third, such an arrangement could include an understanding about support to Hezbollah and the establishment of a Palestinian state, allowing both to limit volatile rhetoric toward each other. Finally, removing the threat of destruction would ensure the security of both, removing in turn, mutual paranoia and the accompanying instability.

This course of action is not without precedent. Israel and Iran, during the mid-1980's, had a similar agreement. Such an arrangement would require some sort of "hot line," creating the greatest obstacle for Tehran, since it would constitute a tacit recognition of Israel as a state.[77] However this would be required as a necessity for Iran's increased security.

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[76] Ford, "Israel's Attack on Osiraq," 16-17 lists the covert methods Israel carried out against Iraq's program.

[77] Shake and Yaphe, *The Strategic Implications of a Nuclear-Armed Iran*, 40.

Having such an understanding with a nuclear state is also not without pattern for Israel. Jerusalem and Karachi have had relatively open, behind-the-scenes relations since both states were founded. These ties endured throughout Israel's unease over Pakistan's developing and eventually successful nuclear program.[78]

The chief concern between Israel and Iran are C2 procedures. Israel has, allegedly, possessed nuclear weapons for decades and probably has a clearly defined doctrine for the control and use of its weapons. Iran, would probably need to play catch-up. Considering the historic control of WMD by the IRGC, and its disposition to act without orders, this will cause great consternation in Israel.[79] Owing to the serious nature of these weapons, the deterrent value of retaliation by the Israelis will motivate Tehran to formulate a working policy. Obviously, deterrence can be a difficult proposition, but in fact it requires only a basic understanding that launching nuclear weapons against a nuclearlized enemy invites a similar response.[80]

4. Broader Security Guarantee

The United States is not likely to change its commitment to the security of Israel. As the sole superpower and ally to Israel, America is in a position to guarantee the security of Israel in the face of a nuclear Iran. This will not result in long-term stability, as discussed in Chapter III. Instead it is suited to ensuring security for the non-nuclear Gulf Arab States. Any sustained security between two nuclear states must be resolved by the two parties with only limited influence from outside. Furthermore, with Israel's historic demands to be in control of its own defense, it is uncertain how open Jerusalem would be to placing its security in the hands of an outsider.

Some measure of guaranteed security is possible. However, any American connection to a deterrent relationship between Iran and Israel will suffer from Israel having the United States in its corner. This would destabilize the balance, possibly

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[78] P.R. Kumaraswami, *Beyond the Veil: Israel-Pakistan Relations*, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 43. Taken from: http://72.14.203.104/search?q=cache:cIoZC2D172QJ:www.tau.ac.il/jcss/memoranda/memo55.pdf+kumaraswami+beyond+the+veil&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=1 (Accessed 26 January 2006).

[79] Sagan and Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, 62.

[80] Sadr, *The Impact on Israel*, 63.

providing Israel security where it may risk initiating an attack on Iran in the hopes of exploiting American security, destroying Iran before Tehran could respond.

D. IMPLICATIONS FOR UNITED STATES' INTERESTS

No matter the course decided, it will impact the United States' interests. If both Israel and Iran come to a mutually deterring agreement, there will be an easing of tensions. Should this happen, Iran will feel suitably secure to allow the addressing of domestic economic concerns. Nationalism will still demand nuclear weapons, but Tehran's intransigent policies would be eased.

Over time, Iran may gradually reassert itself in areas of interest to the United States: Iraq, the Arab Gulf States, as discussed in Chapter III, and Afghanistan. However, having dealt with this concern, and possessing nuclear weapons for security, Iran would not feel bound to intervene either directly or asymmetrically.

Eventually, the framework suggested between Israel and Iran may lead to an easing of economic sanctions against Iran and may allow U.S. contractors to aid in increasing Iran's oil output. This would ease concerns over the security needs of the flow of oil out of the Arabian Gulf, leading to a drop in the price of oil. This in itself aids U.S. interests, not only through lower prices, but the increased access to oil markets.

E. CONCLUSION

It is difficult to ascertain with any degree of certainty what will happen in the future; however, based upon historical actions, statements by national leaders, and likely alternatives, it is possible to eliminate unlikely options. According to this chapter, Israel's response to a nuclear-armed Iran will likely be a behind-the-scenes agreement of mutual deterrence. Animus shared since the 1979 Islamic Revolution is not relevant to the situation. Both will realize the potential of their destruction, if one attacks the other.

Following a careful study of the debate in Israel, military strikes, either by air or special operations, are mitigated through Tehran's dispersal of production and likely storage facilities. An increased security understanding with the United States, though useful, still places the security of Israel in the hands of an outsider.

The understanding between Israel and Iran will add to the overall stability in the region by removing one aspect of uncertainty that causes instability: the violent rhetoric

and threats of attack between Jerusalem and Tehran. Over time, this tie may lead to the removal of concerns in Israel over Hezbollah and concerns in Iran over the Palestinians. In the end, this may produce greater understanding between the two, instilling greater economic prosperity for Iran and Israel while also enhancing the economic and security interests of the United States. This outcome is predicted by Nuclear Optimists who feel more nuclear states may be better for global security. When Iran obtains nuclear weapons, it will be normal for Israel to be concerned; however, the stability that comes from a deterrent relationship will far outweigh secondary issues. Instead, both states will be able to focus upon other matters, having gained greater security.

III. GULF STATES REACTION

A. INTRODUCTION

The Arabian Gulf States entering a nuclear arms race with Iran is a situation unacceptable to the United States. This situation would carry the potential to plunge the region into brinksmanship analogous to the Cuban Missile Crisis. Iran's nuclearization threatens to undermine regional security more than Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Moreover, the rapid proliferation of nuclear weapons could potentially upset the global economy by interfering with the region's oil export. As Iran gains access to nuclear weapons, an assessment of the Arab Gulf States reaction is useful to help guide U.S. policy toward Iran.

The Arab Gulf States: Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates have said little about Iranian nuclearization. Its wait-and-see mentality has three causes. First, these states traditionally have formulated foreign policy in private, without transparency, announcing it only when deemed absolutely necessary. The Gulf Coalition Council (GCC) has shifted its attitude toward a nuclear Iran, but it has done so in a very limited manner. The Gulf States are likely to continue to avoid specifying a policy until no other course is available to them. Second, on a diplomatic level, the Arab Gulf States likely do not want to irritate Iran, complicating the current negotiations between Iran and the rest of the world. It would be better to have others solve the problem of a nuclear Iran than to become involved. Third, as partners in oil production and as neighbors, the Arab Gulf States have no interest in provoking Iran, which may in turn disrupt the status-quo that keeps these states among the richest in the world. Iran's past attempts to overthrow regional leaders is well remembered, and those states would prefer not to return to those days.

The debate on this issue takes two courses. On one hand, a nuclear-armed Iran is not a serious concern. There are already nuclear states within the region, and it is nothing new. In gaining nuclear weapons, Israel and Pakistan have not caused any further instability. Similarly, Iran also would not significantly impact the region. One of Israel's most prominent military historians, Martin van Creveld of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, has justified Iran's nuclear program in response to Israel's own nuclear status.

Van Creveld is on record stating that, in the face of Israel's increasing nuclear capabilities, through alleged deployment of nuclear equipped submarines to the region, Iran would be "crazy" not to try to develop a similar capability.[81] The other side of the debate depicts a nuclear Iran as a serious threat to regional security. Iran with nuclear weapons would potentially reenergize its aims to export its Islamic revolution and supplant regional regimes with those more in line with Tehran's vision of fundamentalist law. With nuclear weapons, Iran threatens to shift the balance of power within the Arabian Gulf in its favor, against the smaller and weaker Arab Gulf States.[82]

This chapter examines the reaction that the Arab Gulf States will likely have to a nuclear-armed Iran. This chapter scrutinizes the background of regional historical concerns about Iran. Second, the chapter describes the current Gulf States security apprehensions about Iran. Third, the chapter assesses the impact that a nuclear-armed Iran is likely to have regionally, including response options available to them. Finally, it outlines the likely impact these matters will have on U.S. interests.

B. BACKGROUND

The introduction of nuclear weapons to the region is not a new prospect. According to Professor Avner Cohen of the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland, Israel has, reportedly, possessed these weapons for decades–furthermore, Pakistan tested nuclear weapons in 1998.[83] According to Judith Yaphe and Colonel Charles Lutes of the National Defense University, adding another state to the list seems, on the surface, not to be an immediate concern to the GCC.[84]

However, the region has serious concerns over Iran's revolutionary past. All of the Gulf Arab States were impacted by Tehran's revolutionary zeal. Shortly after the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran began supporting terrorist groups that sought to overthrow Arab Gulf State governments and to replace with regimes ruled by Islamic fundamentalist

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[81] Khalid Amayreh, "Israel to US: Now for Iran," *Al Jazeera*, 29 August, 2004. Taken from: http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/03398F16-8119-4A21-83E4-D93E5F161B55.htm (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[82] Judith S. Yaphe, Charles D. Lutes, *Reassessing the Implications of a Nuclear Armed Iran* (Washington: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, 2005), 38.

[83] Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 1-7.

[84] Yaphe and Lutes, *Reassessing a Nuclear Iran* xii.

law.[85] In recent years, Tehran has worked to improve its public image, allaying its neighbors' fears of its earlier subversive activity. However, there is still much to concern the weaker Arab Gulf States. In light of President Ahmadinejad's speeches calling for the destruction of Israel and his insistence of Iran's nuclear rights, Tehran seems to have cast aside its desire to rejoin the mainstream international community.[86]

Tehran is aware of the potential alarm nuclearization brings, as stated by its Defense Minister, Admiral Ali Shamkani: "The existence of nuclear weapons will turn us into a threat that could be exploited in dangerous ways to harm our relations with the countries of the region."[87] This quotation shows that Tehran appreciates the potential for regional disturbance that nuclear weapons have. Appreciation, however, does not appear to cause Tehran hesitancy. Rather it seems to have increased determination to press ahead and diplomatically manage the political consequences as nuclear states have done before.

Iran's history shows it is willing to pursue whatever course its national security demands. The lead Iranian negotiator to the IAEA, Muhammad Larijani, has stated: "If our national interests dictate, we can go to the bowels of hell to negotiate with the devil."[88] Apparently then, there is no limit to how far Iran will go in pursuit of military and political supremacy over the Arabian Gulf region. It is this pursuit of greatness that has historically driven Iran to upset the balance in the region. Iran with nuclear weapons could continue this trend.

Regional states in this uncertain environment look for other sources of security. Domestic nuclear programs launched by these states to balance Iran's program are of chief concern to the United States. In pursuit of security, the region has circumvented its protector, the United States, in the past. The United States will need to expand its traditional role as provider of security to the regional militarily weak states particularly in the uncertain times that will surround the emergence of a nuclear-armed Iran.

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[85] U.S. Department of State, *Background Note: Iran*. Taken from: http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5314.htm (Accessed 26 January 2006).

[86] "Iranian President Calls Holocaust A 'Myth,'" *Associated Press*. Taken from: http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,178646,00.html (Accessed 26 January 2006).

[87] Ray Takeyh, "Iran Builds the Bomb," *Survival* 46 no. 4, (winter 2004-05), 57.

[88] Ibid., 58.

If the Gulf States were to embark on independent nuclear programs three dangerous side effects could emerge. First, Israel would become nervous at the rapidly increasing number of Arab nuclear states. Second, a rapid increase in nuclear-armed states may cause a regional arms race. Finally, with a number of programs being launched, security of the production facilities could possibly be weak, as the states may opt for speed of production over security and a well coordinated C2. This rash mindset could induce terrorists to seize fissile material or actual weapons. Such rapid proliferation of nuclear weapons could ignite the proverbial fall of nuclear dominoes, with states ill-prepared for the responsibilities of nuclear statehood. Therefore, the United States must deter Iranian threats, remain engaged with the region, and prevent any nations from launching crash programs. As Nuclear Optimists have stressed, stability from nuclear proliferation comes from the slow addition of nuclear states, not haphazard races for production.

None of the Arab Gulf States have a nuclear-weapons program. In fact, the opposite is true: these states historically have pressed for a nuclear-free Middle East. Fundamentally, they have attempted to urge Israel to disarm, but also hoped to limit Iran's program. Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah exemplifies this: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, like other countries in the region, rejects the acquisition of nuclear weapons by anyone, especially nuclear weapons in the Middle East region. We hope that such weapons will be banned or eliminated from the region by every country in the region."[89] Echoing him, the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR) based in the U.A.E. cites a nuclear-free region, coupled with the NPT as key to regional stability.[90] There is no serious concern of rapid proliferation in the region, even if these states decided today to launch a program, it would take years to produce results.

This status of nuclear-weapon programs in the region is a key component to further proliferation. Compared to Iran, the Arab Gulf States, have not yet initiated a

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[89] "King Abdullah on ABC's Nightline" aired on 14 October, 2005. Taken from: http://saudiembassy.net/2005News/Statements/TransDetail.asp?cIndex=560 (Accessed 15 November 2005).

[90] ECSSR article *Iran's Nuclear Predicament: A Regional Absence & Open Possibility*. Taken from: http://www.ecssr.ac.ae/CDA/en/FeaturedTopics/DisplayTopic/0,1670,322-0-4,00.html (Accessed 14 November 2005).

nuclear program. It is at this point, during a program's early stages when it is relatively easy to halt, either through diplomatic or military means. Since none of the Arab Gulf States have invested the resources to start a program, it is easier to prevent them from launching such programs through assurances of protection. Even if one of these states attempted to purchase weapons, it would face significant hurdles due to the consequences to the seller, if the sale were traced back to that state. Furthermore, that any state would be able to acquire enough weapons to deter Iran is improbable, and doing so would require revelation of that states' nuclear capability, raising serious questions from the IAEA.

The Arabian Gulf is a critical area of the world for U.S. security interests. In 2003, the region produced about 27 percent of the world's oil. The Arabian Gulf is home to over 57 percent of the world's oil reserves and accounts for 45 percent of the world's oil production capacity.[91] If the United States were to cease its involvement, some other state would step in, with potentially disastrous global results. No other country possesses the capability or the respect as a global power to fulfill the Arab Gulf States security needs. Even if a state did step forward to offer protection, the Arab Gulf States' would still feel required to balance Iranian threats. How the Arab Gulf States would react to Tehran's nuclear weapons is of vital concern to the United States. Any disruption at all to the flow of oil out of the region has immediate and serious economic implications for the industrialized world.

In response to a nuclear Iran, states in the region have three options: do nothing, join a nuclear umbrella, or acquire their own weapons. This chapter demonstrates that the likely course of action for these nations will be to expand security guarantees with the United States by joining a nuclear umbrella to offset Iran's nuclear weapons.

C. GULF STATES SECURITY CONCERNS

Historically, the Arab Gulf States have been weak in comparison to the militarily powerful Iran. Iran was spared colonization, but instead it was influenced by both Russia and Great Britain, each vying for control behind the scenes in Iran, and through this manipulation, helped shape Iran into a modern state. Starting in 1926 under Reza Shah

[91] Energy Information Agency, *Persian Gulf Factsheet*. Taken from: http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/pgulf.html#back (Accessed 15 November 2005).

Pahlavi, this took the form of modernization of Iran's army (a first in the Arabian Gulf region).[92] Iran's power has waxed and waned, reaching its peak with the last Shah, Reza Muhammad Pahlavi, who under the Twin Pillars policy, was able to buy any U.S. system, except for nuclear weapons.[93] Iran's physical features add to the stature of the country. The geographic size of Iran and its large population (nearly equal to the rest of the Gulf States combined), coupled with its oil reserves, virtually ensure that Iran will always be a key power in the region.[94] From this position of power, Iran naturally generates concerns to its much smaller neighbors. These issues center on Iran's regional hegemony, the GCC and its activities, and finally, the regional wild card that Iraq represents.

1. Iran's Hegemonistic Past

Striking fear into the heart of its Gulf neighbors is possibly Tehran's greatest skill. Centuries of regional struggle and interference by Iran have cemented this in the minds of regional leaders. Iranian civilization hearkens back over 2,500 years to Cyrus the Great in 550 B.C., annotated by evicting Arab invaders in 1506 A.D. and making the state home to the Shi'a sect of Islam.[95] To outsiders, these events of the distant past may seem trivial, but they are concerns of Arab Gulf State leaders. The U.S. removal of Iraq as a regional power is the most recent cause for regional concern. By removing Saddam Hussein and destroying Iraq's military, no state is remotely equal to Iran in the region.

Recent events continue to show the Arabian Gulf region remains a dangerous neighborhood. Enhancing this historical concern: the region has hosted three major conflicts in the past 25 years. These theater wars have seen the full scale use of chemical weapons, ballistic missiles, and asymmetric terrorist attacks. Though not alone in the use of these, Iran seems the most willing to employ them again.

Every Arab Gulf State has had to contend with Iranian-sponsored terrorist groups. These groups undermine the Sunni leadership of monarchical states and attempt to

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[92] Keddie, *Modern Iran*, 89.

[93] Randy B. Bell, *Expansion of American Persian Gulf Policy by Three Presidents*, taken from: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1990/BRB.htm (Accessed 14 November 2005).

[94] Taken from the CIA World Factbook, Iran http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ir.html.. (Accessed 14 November 2005).

[95] "Iran: History: Early History to the Zand Dynasty," *Infoplease*, taken from: http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0858893.html (Accessed 14 November 2005).

replace the royal families with Shi'a Muslim fundamentalist governments. Highlights of these efforts include: attempting to overthrow the government of Bahrain, embarrassing and delegitimizing the government of Kuwait, and embarrassing the House of Saud in Saudi Arabia. A nuclear Iran could reassert itself by reinvigorating these efforts.

The GCC has attempted to improve its military capabilities in the face of a powerful Iran. The Arab Gulf States have made massive purchases of military hardware. However, this is generally superficial in nature. The states, with almost limitless funds, can purchase the latest systems on the market, but high-tech novelties are virtually useless without massive support from outside states to maintain them and to train the military forces of the region. The only course of action open to the GCC and Iraq is to outsource state security needs. The United States has served as protector of these states since the 1971 British withdrawal from the region.[96] Without this protection, the Arab Gulf States could face the threat of conquest at the hands of ancient Persian enemies.

A much greater potential for conflict exists between Iran and regional non-nuclear neighbors than between Iran and Israel or Pakistan. This animosity is based on historical patterns of Persian influence in the Gulf, large Shi'a populations in Gulf Arab States, and the existence of other sources of turmoil and political disputes between these states and Iran. Indeed, Tehran has become a status-quo power, yet there is nothing that suggests it does not covet its neighbors' wealth, nor that it would not exploit nuclear weapons to secure regional dominance.

Under the Pahlavi Dynasty, Iranian regional hegemony was only a moderate concern to the United States and the region. During this time, as part of the Twin Pillars doctrine, Iranian desire for dominion was sated through the de facto recognition of its dominance by the United States as the power in the region.[97] With the fall of the Shah to Muslim fundamentalists and the subsequent ending of American support, Iranian expansionism and nationalism significantly increased.

Former commander of the IRGC, Mohsen Rezai, illustrates Iran's image of asserting itself regionally: "The building of the Shahab-3 missile is not in breach of the

[96] Bahrain is a classic example of this situation. See the history on the British Empire's roots in the Gulf at: http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/bahrain.htm.

peaceful policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which looks at détente and the establishment of peace and security in the region of the Persian Gulf against those who commit aggression against the rights of nations."[98] This quotation shows Iran's view of being able to speak for the entire region as its benevolent protector. The point of view espoused fails to recognize that the majority of the region does not identify closely with Tehran's leadership or its ideals.

2. Saudi Arabia

Understanding Saudi Arabia's unique role in the Arabian Gulf helps to frame issues that the Arab Gulf States have with Iran. Even though not direct engaged in public disagreement, Iran and Saudi Arabia eye each other warily over a host of issues. First, Saudi Arabia's key role as the leader of the Sunni sect of Islam regularly puts it at odds with the Shi'a in Iran. Second, the fact that Iranians are Persian, not Arabs, increases friction between the two states. Third, Saudi Arabia has regularly manipulated oil prices to benefit its powerful benefactor, the United States. Finally, Saudi Arabia, while appearing outwardly to be unconcerned with Iranian nuclear weapons, possesses the very real ability to develop its own nuclear weapons. Indeed, Riyadh has shown a propensity to act independently of America. Taken as a whole, these issues reveal that the region is very resistant to Iran's self-perceived role as arbiter of the region.

a Religion

One of the King of Saudi Arabia's many titles is "custodian of the two holy mosques" referring to Islam's two holiest sites, Mecca and Medina, location inside the kingdom.[99] Traditionally, he has enjoyed a central role as a key political leader to the world's 1 billion plus Muslims.[100] That is to say, the Sunni branch of Islam, accounting for the vast majority of all Muslims.

Iran regularly contests Saudi Arabia's claim to speak for all Muslims. Iran is currently the only Islamic country ruled by the Shi'a branch of Islam. Both sects view the other with varying levels of disdain. In some Islamic schools of thought, the other is

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[97] Yaphe and Lutes, *Reassessing a Nuclear Armed Iran*, 20.

[98] Kori N. Schake and Judith S. Yaphe, *The Implications of a Nuclear Iran*, 27.

[99] The Saudi Arabian Information Resource. Taken from: http://www.saudinf.com/main/b471.htm (Accessed 15 November 2005).

[100] Ibid.

not even viewed as being truly Muslim. This rift is based upon what each side holds to be important to Islam. To Sunnis, it is upholding the five pillars of Islam; to Shi'a, it is focusing on the actions of the martyrs and centers upon self sacrifice.[101]

In modern times, this animus has grown since the 1979 revolution in Iran. A number of incidents in which Iran has incited the Shi'as in Saudi Arabia to overthrow the monarchy have occurred. Most egregious were regular attempts by Iranian pilgrims to demonstrate against the House of Saud during the annual Hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca and Medina, occasionally becoming violent. The worst took place in July of 1987 when a group of Iranians rioted, leading to hundreds of deaths and injuries. When news of the riot reached Iran, it organized mobs to attack the embassies of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in Tehran where one diplomat was killed.[102] The Saudi government blamed Iran, accusing it of attempting to overthrow the regime. Riyadh will remember these acts for a long time to come, remaining in appearance friendly to Tehran as fellow Muslims, but remaining very wary of their actions.

There is, on the surface at least, some appearance of brotherhood between the two. Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah has stated: "Iran is a friendly country. Iran is a Muslim country. We hope that Iran will not become an obstacle to peace and security in Iraq. This is what we hope for and this is what we believe the Iraqi people want."[103] Based on this quote, while there are similarities that unite both sides, the Sunnis in power in Saudi Arabia are wary of losing ground to the Shi'a minority, possibly in Iraq.

This concern held by Saudi Arabia has moderated somewhat in recent times. Since Khomeini's death, Iran has restrained actions against Saudi Arabia. No longer does it actively incite branches of Islamic Jihad to overthrow the leaders of Arab Gulf States. These activities were one of the most important state policies in the Khomeini years. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, religious fervor motivating irrational action has become a mask for realpolitik in Iran. With the election

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[101] Hussein Abulwaheed Amin, *The Origins of the Sunni/Shia Split in Islam*. Taken from: http://www.islamfortoday.com/shia.htm (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[102] "Iranian Officials Urge 'Uprooting of Saudi Royalty," *The New York Times*, 03 August, 1987.

[103] "King Abdullah on ABC's Nightline" aired on 14 October, 2005. Taken from http://saudiembassy.net/2005News/Statements/TransDetail.asp?cIndex=560 (Accessed 16 November 2005).

of Mahmud Ahmadinejad as President, Iran still must work cautiously in the region to help deal with its domestic economic issues. Returning to the days of Khomeini, when it appeared Iran stood against the rest of the world, is not the answer, and Tehran knows it.

b. Persian Versus Arab

Iranians are not Arabs, like all of their regional Muslim brethren, instead they are Persian. This is significant in how Iranians are viewed within the Arabian Gulf region. Furthermore, Farsi is the spoken language of Iran, not Arabic. At first glance this seems inconsequential; however, Arabic is the language of the Koran. It is the tongue in which Muslims believe it must be read to receive the full meaning of its message. The split between Persian and Arab, combined with the former seeking to dominate the Gulf, only adds to Iran's alienation. In spite of Tehran's claims to speak for the Muslim world, it is viewed as an outsider. This is unlikely to ever change.

3. It is the Oil, Stupid

Religion may be central to Arabian Gulf identity and motives, but it is the oil that seizes the world's attention. How it has been managed historically has raised serious concerns globally. Since creating a partnership with the United States in 1944, Saudi Arabia has regularly manipulated its oil production to keep the price low.[104]

This price is a critical regional issue. With its serious economic problems, Iran desperately needs additional income to fulfill reforms promised by President Ahmadinejad.[105] Any reduction in prices is cause for concern in Tehran. The 1990 invasion of Kuwait came from a similar financial situation in Iraq. Iranian oil production today is two-thirds of what it was prior to the 1979 Revolution, only adding stress to the situation.[106] Due in large part to Iran's inability to access modern oil recovery technology, to maintain its fields efficiently, and its desire for independence, Tehran

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[104] Steven R. McDowell, "Is Saudi Arabia a Nuclear Threat," (Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School, 2003), 6.

[105] Mark Wolfensberger, "Tehran Mayor Ahmadinejad, Rasfanjani Promises Jobs," *Bloomberg*, 24 June, 2005. Taken from: http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000087&sid=ai._k5CBU9Ow&refer=top_world_news (Accessed 16 November 2005).

[106] Discussion with Dr. Robert Looney, Naval Postgraduate School, November 16, 2005. Also see http://www-personal.umich.edu/~twod/xray/alas/source/web/source/itd/Public/html/lsacell/web/lsacell/oil/research/teams/eu/gulf_exports.pdf#search='cordesman%20saudi%20arabia%20oil%20production', 47. (Accessed 21 November 2005).

needs all the income it can secure.[107] A telling example of its economic woes is Iran's unemployment numbers. Professor Robert Looney of the Naval Postgraduate School states:

> No mark of economic failure stands out as much as the country's (Iran) chronic unemployment. Between 1996 and 2000, 693,000 workers entered the labor market, while only 296,000 jobs were being created. Unemployment is somewhere between 15 and 25 percent, with a disproportionate share among urban youth. According to the World Bank, the creation of between 700,000 to 800,000 new jobs each year is needed to stabilize unemployment at an acceptable level. This would require a growth rate of roughly 6 percent. And the post-2000 oil boom has not come close to this growth rate.[108]

Clearly President Ahmadinejad faces an arduous task. The recent upsurge in oil prices has helped Iran somewhat, but not enough to overcome Iran's economic problems. Tensions over Iran creating nuclear weapons cause the price to spike, carrying a double-edged sword. Any regional nuclear threat by Iran could invite a serious response by outside states that are dependent upon Gulf oil, the PRC for example. These states could act unilaterally to secure oil production. Therefore, Iran must speak softly while carrying a big stick, to paraphrase President Theodore Roosevelt.[109]

4. Lack of Concern

Lead by Saudi Arabia, the Arab Gulf States seem unconcerned about a nuclear Iran. For a long time, these states have not viewed a nuclear-armed Iran as a greater threat than a non-nuclear-armed one. Further, the Arab Gulf States reject the premise that a nuclear Iran is a threat while a similarly armed Israel is not.[110] Instead, these states appear more concerned that America will drag them into a war with Iran over this, or some other issue.[111] Furthermore, the GCC criticizes the lack of contact between Tehran

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[107] Discussion with Dr. Robert Looney, Naval Postgraduate School, November 21, 2005.

[108] Robert Looney, "The Iranian Economy: Crony Capitalism in Islamic Garb," *Milken Institute Review*, First Quarter 2006.

[109] "Theodore Roosevelt Quotes," *Brainyquotes*, Taken from: http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/t/theodorero130674.html (Accessed 16 November 2005).

[110] Yaphe and Lutes, *Reassessing a Nuclear Armed Iran, 18-19.*

[111] Ibid., xii.

and Washington, which it believes to be the source of any potential conflict.[112] The Arab Gulf States will follow Saudi Arabia's lead and continue to do little on this issue.

5. Doubts of American Assurances/Pursuit of Self Defense

Saudi Arabia and America continue to have shared goals for regional security, in spite of 9/11 and its aftermath. Although both states made a solemn deal after World War II, neither side has always been a team player.

America, with its Christian roots and support of Israel, brings domestic problems to the House of Saud. The resultant hesitancy in conceding to the United States' desires has concerned the U.S. at times. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, the Saudis vacillated on allowing American troops into the kingdom, only after a direct briefing by then Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney to Saudi leadership was protection requested. Similarly, during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, Saudi Arabia declined hosting U.S. ground forces.

American support to Saudi Arabian military sales requests has been similarly hesitant. In light of Israeli interest groups making American arms transfers to Arab states difficult, the Arab Gulf States have occasionally looked to other suppliers. Frustrated by the prolonged fight between President Reagan and Congress to purchase Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) aircraft, the Saudi's sought to teach the United States a lesson.[113] Despite the eventual approval of the AWACS deal, the Saudis sought alternatives for its arms.[114]

The ultimate result of the AWACS deal was the PRC working its way into the Saudi's good graces. In the late 1980s, Saudi Arabia secretly purchased at least 50 CSS-2 intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBM) in a secret deal with the PRC.[115] This was in response both to the United States' denial of purchase of Lance missiles and frustration over previous delays in acquiring weapons.[116] Saudi Arabia's King Fahd stated to the

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[112] Yaphe and Lutes, *Reassessing a Nuclear Armed Iran*, 19.

[113] Mary E. Morris, "Issues of Engagement and the Course of Future U.S.-Saudi Relations, Post September 11," *ArabiaLink*, Taken from: http://www.arabialink.com/Archive/GWPersp/GWP2002/GWP_2002_11_10.htm#GWP4 (Accessed 16 November 2005).

[114] McDowell, *Saudi Arabia A Threat?* 14.

[115] Ibid., 9.

[116] Ibid., 16.

military that: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not tied to anyone and does not take part in any pact that forces upon it any sort of obligations. If things become complicated with a certain country, we will find other countries, regardless of whether they are Eastern or Western. We are buying weapons, not principles."[117] Based on this quote and subsequent Saudi actions, Riyadh has shown it is no longer willing to wait while Washington decides to support the kingdom. The missile sale set the stage for future military purchases outside the control of the United States. Unlike America, the PRC suffers no compunction from supplying Saudi Arabia with whatever it desires. Riyadh is now Beijing's primary source of oil and, according to Professor James Russell of the Naval Postgraduate School, over the next 20 years this relationship will only become more pronounced.[118]

6. The GCC at Large

Taking to heart the Arab proverb: "in the desert of life, the wise person travels by caravan, whereas the fool prefers to travel alone," the GCC was formed in the face of Iranian and Iraqi threats.[119] In light of the dangerous neighborhood in which they are located, the smaller, less populated Gulf States were sensible to band together, shortly after the 1981 start of the Iran/Iraq War. The objective of the GCC was originally to foster unity among Arabs in the Gulf region based upon their shared identity. [120] Security soon became the chief concern. The most pressing need was protection from the violence of the Iran/Iraq War and Iranian export of Islamic Revolution. These fears lead to the creation of mutual defense plans and a number of military organizations.[121]

Despite their advanced weapons systems, the GCC countries' military forces lack large populations to support powerful armed forces to counter those of Iran. As a result, the GCC has historically relied upon outsiders for protection. Operations DESERT

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[117] Josh Pollack, "Saudi Arabia and the United States, 1931-2002," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 6, No. 3 (September 2002), 84.

[118] James Russell, "Saudi Arabia in the 21st Century: A New Security Dilemma," *Middle East Policy*, XII, No. 3, (Fall 2005), 68.

[119] Arab proverb. Taken from: http://www.nato.int/issues/ici/ (Accessed 14 November 2005).

[120] Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf Secretariat General, "Introduction, The Concept and Foundations," Taken from: http://www.gcc-sg.org/Foundations.htm l (Accessed 16 November 2005).

[121] GlobalSecurity.org: "Gulf Cooperation Council." Taken from: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/gulf/gcc.htm (Accessed 14 November 2005).

SHIELD/STORM exemplifies this dependence. Fortunately for the region, the United States formed a coalition to remove Iraq from Kuwait. Without this intervention, Kuwait would not have likely been liberated. The resulting paradigm from Operation DESERT STORM was an ideal situation for the Gulf States: The United States kept Iraq under control; however, Iraq remained strong enough to hold off Iran. These actions by the United States kept both of the powerful states in the region at bay while the smaller states were able to exist in relative safety.

Following Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the United States seeks to stabilize Iraq. The end of the previous decade of relative regional security raises the questions about how the security of the GCC will be maintained now that the previous balance has been disrupted. Over the near- to mid-term, the need for access to oil will become vital. American involvement with the GCC is likely to increase as a result of this need. Similarly, GCC reliance upon U.S. security will also grow. These states will remain unable to defend themselves against Iran or Iraq.

The GCC countries have made limited statements individually about a nuclear Iran. The Secretary-General of the GCC, Abdel Rahman Attiya was quoted in the Saudi daily al-Watan saying, "Saudi Arabia and the other GCC countries can't find any justification for such nuclear activity, which poses great dangers for all the peoples in the Gulf Region. We are actually seeking to make the region free of weapons of mass destruction." He went on to state, "In view of the existing imbalance of powers in the region, certain GCC countries have worked out security arrangements with outside parties to restore a certain balance with neighbors who appear to have regional ambitions."[122] This statement of GCC reliance on outsiders for security shows its desire to continue outsourcing security. These states seem very satisfied with being protected by the sole remaining superpower.

7. Iraq

Following Operation IRAQI FREEDOM's regime change, Iraq became the regional wild card. No longer is there an air of predictability of Saddam Hussein holding off Iran with Gulf Arab States support. Rather, there is confusion and uncertainty with

[122] "GCC Wary of Iran Nuclear Activities" *United Press International*, 03 January, 2005. Taken from: http://www.iranfocus.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=1139 (Accessed 16 November 2005).

what shape Iraq will take. Although well founded, concern that Iran will control the emerging regime in Iraq is not as likely as popular opinion makes it out to be.

Iraq will likely be the first Arab state under Shi'a rule, assuming elections continue. It is a mistake, however, to presume that a Shi'a controlled Iraq will fall solely under the control of Iran. Traditionally the bulwark against the extremism of Iran, Iraq is no friend to Iran. The deep scars from the Iran/Iraq War remain. Indeed, the Iraqi generals who led the war against Iran were, in the majority, Shi'a.[123] Even today, the highest recognized Shi'a scholar in Iraq, Grand Ayatollah Sistani, has resisted overtures of friendship from Iran, despite being born and educated there.[124] It is unrealistic to presume a Shi'a Iraq would immediately become allied with Iran.

The removal of Saddam Hussein did little to mitigate the threat Iraq poses to the region. Iraq, still under United Nations Security Council resolutions forbidding WMDs, will likely never be able to develop them, but it will need to defend itself against Iran. To do this without WMD will require some kind of security guarantee or the development of a significant conventional military capability. An unfortunate consequence of this buildup is that any Iraq powerful enough to fend off Iran can threaten Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.[125]

The outlook appears somewhat promising for Iraq. Arab Gulf States are beginning to support the stabilization of the country. Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister has stated he is much less concerned about the possibility for civil war and has offered significant funds.[126] This funding suggests that Iraq's neighbors want to return to supporting Iraq to hold off Iran.

Future fence mending with the Arab world suggests that Iraq will emerge strong, no friend of Iran, and a supporter of Gulf security. Indeed Iraq must improve its income to support rebuilding efforts and a transition to whatever form of democracy the people

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[123] Lecture by Dr. Ahmad Ghoreishi, former President of Tehran University, at the Naval Postgraduate School, summer of 2005.

[124] Ibid.,

[125] Kenneth M. Pollack, "Securing the Gulf" *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2003).

[126] "Saudis Vow $1B to Rebuild Iraq," *Associated Press*, 13 November, 2005. Taken from: http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,175424,00.html (Accessed 16 November 2005).

pursue. To do this, Iraq would do well to remain outside the circle of Iran, which likely only seeks to keep Baghdad weak and in chaos.

D. IMPACT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

In a realist sense, Iran is creating a nuclear-weapons program to directly balance Israel's alleged capability. However, these weapons also appear to be meant to influence Iran's neighbors, by using the unspoken power they possess to intimidate. Iran's desires would be met potentially by employing nuclear weapons to devastate non-nuclear states. Iran, having developed its nuclear infrastructure over decades, has had the opportunity to consider the benefits of this kind of nuclear employment.

How will Iran's nuclear weapons impact the Arabian Gulf? This question raises serious questions over the direction of regional relationships in the future and the U.S. role. For the GCC, the greatest concern is that a nuclear Iran may become energized and may revisit its desire to export the revolution throughout the region. This course could cause serious problems for both the GCC and the United States. An assertive Iran with nuclear weapons could require the closure of American bases in the region, renew its efforts to export revolution, be more assertive on oil policy, and be meddlesome in Iraqi or Israeli/Palestinian affairs.[127] All of these possibilities pose serious threats to the Arab Gulf States, requiring hard choices.

1. Middle East "Kargils"

What would Iran actually do with its new arsenal? Nuclear weapons provide an unspoken power to their possessors over those that do not. Nuclear states have sought to use this power to attempt to gain concessions by nearing but not crossing the threshold of use. A clear example of a state operating beneath the nuclear threshold is the Kargil crisis of 1999. Along the line of control dividing Kashmir, between India and Pakistan, troops are evacuated from elevated locations during the winter. In 1999, Pakistan sought to gain territory by using the threat of nuclear weapons to prevent Indian dispute over the land seized. Over the course of the crisis, threats escalated with India and the land seized by Pakistan was returned.[128]

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[127] Yaphe and Lutes, *Reassessing a Nuclear Armed Iran*, 9.

[128] Timothy Hoyt, *Conflict in Kargil*. Taken from: http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/savirtualforum/PaperHoyt1.htm (Accessed 27 January 2006).

The result of this crisis would have been different if the land seized belonged to a non-nuclear state. Had India not possessed nuclear weapons, Pakistan's aggression would have been rewarded with the land seized. The Kargil example shows what Iran could possibly do below the threshold of using its nuclear weapons: seize territory from neighbors and defend it with nuclear threats. The seizing of a larger piece of the natural gas fields in the Arabian Gulf serves as an example. The seizure of such an area is hardly worth risking nuclear war. Hence, Iran would escape without censure. Another case of Iran's potential to push the boundaries of a deterrence framework concerns a group of islands that Iran seized from the U.A.E. in 1992. This action violated a prior agreement assuring shared control between Iran and the U.A.E.. At the time, the action inflamed Arab opinion and undermined Iranian efforts to improve Gulf relations.[129] With a nuclear threat, this dispute would be short-lived, likely dying in committee at the United Nations. This remains a viable possibility for a nuclear-armed Iran, yet it is unlikely that the regional states would simply stand by and let it happen. Contrarily, they would reach out for help from those who could support them. These supporting states, wanting no single actor to seize a large share of global oil reserves, would act accordingly.

2. Options Available to the Gulf States

In the face of a nuclear-armed Iran, the Gulf States and Iraq can choose from three clearly defined options. First, they can do nothing, hoping–behind the scenes–the situation will resolve itself. Second, they can establish, as a group or individually, a nuclear-security umbrella in a NATO-like deterrence scheme against Iran. Finally, they can acquire their own weapons through domestic programs or purchasing them from abroad. Of the three, the most likely course would be to maintain the status-quo: continuing to outsource their security.

a. Wait and See

The first option, doing nothing, can be compared to Saudi reluctance to seek outside help following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. United States troops were invited only through the motivation by then U.S. Secretary of Defense Cheney, who presented intelligence on the possible intentions of Iraq to invade.[130]

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[129] Eisenstadt, *Living With A Nuclear Iran?* 9.

[130] Biography of Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney. Taken from: http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/secdef_histories/bios/cheney.htm (Accessed 16 November 2005).

This tactic of doing nothing failed the Kingdom in 1990. However, with the likelihood that Iran's nuclear weapons will not be used, the Arab Gulf States could be hopeful of success. The GCC could decide that Iran would not risk the harsh reaction by the international community in the event it attacked. This is particularly true when the fallout of an attack could affect Iran itself.[131] Also, the Arab Gulf States could rest on the unspoken deterrence relationship that essentially exists today between the United States and Iran. For sure, this course offers uncertainty that could produce horrific results from a misunderstanding based on specifics left unsaid.

In the meantime, the Arab Gulf States would likely pursue a détente and engagement relationship with Tehran. This course of action would appear as appeasement. The net effect would only motivate Tehran to see how far it could push for concessions. Indeed, Iran has offered an alternative: support for a regional assembly and a nuclear-free zone in the Arabian Gulf, in return for the region ridding itself of ties to external powers.[132] The refuting of these outside ties would put the GCC right where Tehran wants it, for those ties are the only defense that stands between Iran and regional dominance.

b. Join Nuclear Umbrella

The second option, accepting some form of nuclear deterrent from outside states, is simply an extension of prior regional security practices. These states will likely never have a capable military force, particularly in the face of Iranian nuclear weapons. Whatever military power the Arab Gulf States have is the result of outside powers.

There has been talk within NATO of a Middle Eastern/NATO security relationship. Patterned upon the successful doctrine that worked in Europe throughout the Cold War, such an agreement would need to be modified to meet regional needs. A formal defense pledge would secure the Arab Gulf States protection from Iran.[133] The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), launched in June of 2004, began a relationship

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[131] Schake and Yaphe, *Implications of a Nuclear Iran*, 32.

[132] Roula Khalaf, "Iranian Nuclear Ambitions Worry Gulf Arab States," *Iran Focus*, 18 December, 2004. Taken from: http://www.iranfocus.com/modules/news/print.php?storyid=1027 (Accessed 14 November 2005).

[133] Kenneth M. Pollack, "Securing the Gulf" *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2003), 3.

between NATO and all the GCC states, save Oman.[134] Currently, the ICI is stalled. The threat to the Arab Gulf States has not materialized to motivate full implementation. This is not an immediate concern, and the mere existence of the ICI provides the basis for future security understandings as needs arises. ICI has the benefit of being a relationship beyond a simple unilateral agreement with the United States. Rather it is a multilateral one with a host of European nations. This puts all of NATO in the Arab Gulf States' corner.

The GCC does not actually desire this relationship fearing it as an act of colonialism. Joining one would delegitimize these regimes in the eyes of their populace.[135] Iran would exploit such an act. These reservations could rapidly change in the face of an aggressive, nuclear-armed Iran. Like Saudi hesitation in 1990, the Arab Gulf States could shift rapidly and allow a relationship to solidify.

c. Domestic Nuclear Programs

The third course of action available, namely the Gulf States developing their own nuclear programs, is a real, if distant, possibility. Most of the GCC states possess sufficient funds to launch nuclear weapons programs. History has also shown that states possessing the will can eventually obtain them. Such a rapid addition of nuclear states is an invitation for crisis.

The Saudis have, again, taken the lead in this endeavor. In spite of Riyadh's drive for a nuclear-free region, allegations have been made that Saudi Arabia provided Pakistan funding to support Islamabad's nuclear program.[136] Further, the two states may have concluded a secret agreement on nuclear cooperation.[137] According to the report, the nations agreed to exchange oil for nuclear knowledge.[138] This is a difficult road for Saudi Arabia to follow in the face of international restrictions, such as the NPT,

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[134]"Istanbul Cooperation Initiative," NATO Istanbul Summit, 28-29 June, 2004 webpage. Taken from: http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2004/06-istanbul/docu-cooperation.htm (Accessed 16 November 2005).

[135] Kenneth M. Pollack, "Securing the Gulf" *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2003), 3.

[136] Roula Khalav, Farhan Bokhari, and Steven Fidler, "Saudi Cash Joins Forces with Nuclear Pakistan" *Financial Times*, August 4, 2004.

[137] "Pakistan-Saudi Trade Nuclear Technology for Oil," *United Press International*, October 20, 2002.

[138] Ibid.,

but it has amply proven its intent to pursue its own goals as deemed needed. Riyadh's then Minister of Defense and Aviation, Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, now Crown Prince, put it this way:

> We are a nation working for peace but we reserve the right to defend our country. We work towards procuring the weapons necessary to protect our country and this makes up these weapons though live tests before we buy them, and we make a shield to protect the safety of the Holy Shrines and the security of our citizens.[139]

There is, however, no evidence that Pakistan has concluded a deal to provide Saudi Arabia with nuclear information or weapons. These allegations have been refuted by Pakistani individuals in a position to know the particulars.[140] Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter IV, Pakistan is unable to provide the kind of support that a new program would require. This is due both to international issues and commitments of resources to oppose Indian military superiority. Pakistan would likely be hesitant to upset a neighboring nuclear-Iran for a cause not supporting its own interests.

The further proliferation of nuclear weapons could set the stage for a large, multi-polar, regional nuclear deterrence network. It is difficult to speculate how Tehran, with its nuclear weapons, would react while a neighbor develops its own program targeted solely at Iran. It is clear how Israel would react to a series of crash fledgling programs. Owing to the relative vulnerability of programs at the initial stage, Jerusalem would likely seize the opportunity to limit the number of Arab nuclear states. Presently, it is too late for Israel to slow Tehran's program. This may not be so for others just starting nuclear research.

3. Likely Course of Action

In light of these variables, seeing the path that the GCC and Iraq will pursue is not difficult. While the Gulf Arab States may defer decisions depending on events, it will, in the end, seek increased security from the regions traditional guarantor: the United States. There really is no other workable alternative. All are signatories of the NPT (Iraq will

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[139] Shake and Yaphe, *Implications of a Nuclear Iran*, 28, Sultan Aziz is the current crown prince of Saudi Arabia. At the time of the quote he was overseeing the modernization of the Kingdoms military. See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sultan_bin_Abdul_Aziz for his biography.

[140] From a discussion with Professor Feroz Hassan Khan, Brigadier General PKA (RET), Naval Postgraduate School, 14 October 2005.

likely rejoin the treaty prior to U.S. withdrawal). As such, each of the states cannot easily pursue its own programs without consequences. Even if a state did launch a nuclear-weapons program, the absence of existing nuclear program would allow the international community plenty of opportunity to prevent that nation from advancing its efforts. This intervention could take the form of economic sanctions or military action.

Contrary to public opinion, America retains its credibility in the region. The United States has invaded and removed two regimes hostile to Iran. The speed and relative ease with which these were carried out is not lost on Tehran. Particularly in the case of Iraq where the United States, nearly on its own, defeated Saddam Hussein within months, a defeat Iran could not achieve in eight years. Any security commitment made by America, would be taken very seriously by Tehran. This is particularly true in light of President Bush's 2002 State of the Union address in which he declared Iran was a member of the Axis of Evil.[141] In spite of a collective hesitancy to support the United States, none of the Arab Gulf States can refute its capabilities.

Tehran realizes that using nuclear weapons against the United States or Israel would be suicide. This action along with a return to regional assertiveness is counter to Iran's recent historical character. It has been over 150 years since Iran invaded or attacked another country.[142] Instead it stood by, satisfied to watch from the sidelines. As a result, Tehran will be even more likely to act reasonably in the face of a nuclear deterrent. While publicly it will deride the declaration as an affront to regional peace and stability, internally, Tehran will be shaken by the thought of a nuclear attack and self-deterred from acting impulsively.

The Arab Gulf States have shown tacit acceptance of outsourcing security. The Emirates Center on Security Studies and Research has presented a study investigating Iran's progress and supports the United States' stance toward preventing a nuclear

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[141] President George W. Bush, "*The State of the Union,*" the White House, 30 January, 2002. Taken from: http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html (Accessed 18 November 2005).

[142] Yaphe and Lutes, *Reassessing a Nuclear Armed Iran*, 9.

Iran.[143] It focuses upon the United States as the natural leader against Iran's regional aspirations. Based on this assessment, one can deduce that when Iran gains these weapons, the Arab Gulf States would be amenable to America expanding its protection of the region to include nuclear deterrence.

E. IMPACT ON UNITED STATES INTERESTS

How will a nuclear-armed Iran impact United States interests in the Arabian Gulf Region? With the single exception of Homeland Security, the continued flow of oil out of the region is the greatest priority. A myriad of issues are involved in the region; yet, the introduction of nuclear weapons to Iran, grave as it may be, with the proper understanding should not threaten the regional balance.

American commitment to deterring Iran has been reemphasized regularly. In 1986, when then Vice President George H.W. Bush stated that in the event of an Iranian attack against our interests "We will not wait for an invitation to intervene."[144] Nor will America be alone. The United Kingdom has made it clear that the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and an attack on Kuwait will be cause for intervention. With the defeat handed Iran by the United States Navy during Operation PRAYING MANTIS and the downing of a civilian Airbus by an American Navy cruiser, Tehran takes these threats seriously and is wary of conflict with the United States.[145]

Since the end of the Iran/Iraq War, Tehran has sat back and watched all of the conflicts, contrary to its public bravado about militarily engaging the United States. During Operation PRAYING MANTIS, it all but stood by frozen while the United States Navy destroyed a number of oil platforms and an Iranian Naval gunboat with little real resistance. During Operation DESERT STORM, Iran declared its neutrality, doing nothing but to accept Iraqi aircraft into its airspace. Similarly, in Operations DESERT FOX, ENDURING and IRAQI FREEDOM, Iran stood by, waiting for the outcome.

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[143] Bishara Nassar Sharbel, "Bargaining with Iran at the Eleventh Hour," *Strategic Issues, Arab* Gulf, 24 November, 2004. Taken from: http://www.ecssr.ac.ae/CDA/en/FeaturedTopics/DisplayTopic/0,1670,335-0-2,00.html (Accessed 16 November 2005).

[144] Shireen T. Hunter, "After the Ayatollah," *Foreign Policy*, 66, Spring 1987, 88.

[145] Lecture by Dr. Ahmad Ghoreishi, former President of Tehran University, at the Naval Postgraduate School, summer of 2005.

This is not to say that there are not red lines that would force a nuclear Iran to react. The Rand Corporation suggests five reasons that would motivate Iran to act:

1. A threat to the religious rule of the mullahs
2. Open disrespect to Khomeini or for his legacy
3. Social reforms that threaten the existing view or equilibrium of society
4. Jeopardizing the unity or sanctity of the states
5. The Iranian government moving too closely to Israel or the United States.[146]

None of these are directly militarily related, but, they define the Iranian national identity that must be considered while formulating a strategy to deal with Iran.

But what intervention can be made against a nascent nuclear threat? Particularly in light of a region hesitant to accept United States involvement? Significant confidence building measures would need to be implemented to ensure that both the state being protected and Iran would know that any nuclear attack against one, or even the threat thereof, would lead to a similar retaliation by the United States. This would require unambiguous statements outlining the United States' resolve in the region, including nuclear deterrence.

A deeper involvement by the United States in regional security affairs will complicate the American military's role in the Arabian Gulf and raise the potential risks of a long-term presence. Such involvement will also challenge America to strengthen its regional deterrent capability and to reassure allies─without contributing to regional tensions.[147]

One aspect of these tensions would be where the nuclear weapons were placed in the region to deter Iran. Basing these weapons in countries in the region will cause problems for the very regimes they are meant to protect, and keeping them outside the region could cast doubts over American commitments. A clear and public outlining of this policy would be required, possibly revealing more about American strategy than it would like.

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[146] Byman, Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, *Iran's Security Policy*, 51-52.

[147] Eisenstadt, *Living with a Nuclear Iran?* 7.

There will be a side benefit to this nuclear protection. The threat that Iraq poses to its neighbors will be mitigated by the interdependence upon the United States' nuclear umbrella protection. Through Iraq may pose a threat to the GCC countries in the future, past history of American intervention, along with reliance upon the U.S.'s good graces for deterrence of Iran, will keep Tehran in line. Also, such a relationship will relieve Israeli concerns over additional weapons programs in the region. The result would likely be a reduction in threats against friendly states in the region and the securing of free access to regional oil supplies, resulting in greater stability throughout the region.

F. CONCLUSION

What will the Arab Gulf States reaction to a nuclear Iran be? In the face of historic actions, both recent and ancient, predicting with some clarity the regional response is possible. Gulf Arab States will seek an expansion of security ties with the United States to balance their needs against an Iranian threat.

Iran, as a status-quo power, will likely continue to avoid direct confrontation with the United States. Tehran will seek a peace dividend from these weapons and attempt to reduce its military forces in an effort to stabilize its economic woes. This will reduce regional tensions, as Iran will be less willing to risk confrontation.

Iran will rely on the traditional security created through the non-use of its nuclear weapons. Of course, there remains the possibility that Tehran will resume its post-revolutionary intransigence. More probably, however, with the United States or NATO directly involved in a clearly defined deterrent relationship with the Gulf States, Tehran will behave cautiously, as it has in the past with America.

Of key concern is what path the new government of Iraq will take. If the Shi'a majority emerges as the controlling power in the country, this event will be groundbreaking. Although regionally and historically significant, such an even does not mean immediate ties will emerge with Iran. Instead, Iraq will be preoccupied with reforming its post-Saddam infrastructure. The United States, as part of its commitment to regional security, offer guarantees that will alleviate the GCC's concerns over future Iraqi and Iranian intransigence. So long as there is a need for oil, the United States will seek security in the region.

The requirement of the United States to extend a deterrence umbrella over the region will be the most significant impact. This is necessary to prevent other nuclear powers, such as the PRC or India, from replacing American influence in the area. It is also necessary to prevent the states under the umbrella from undertaking nuclear weapons programs of their own. What shape this umbrella relationship will take is uncertain. It could range from a simple state-to-state understanding or a blanket deterrence program, such as an extension of NATO's protection. Regardless, given global reliance upon Gulf oil, and the United States' role as sole provider of sufficient security, this effort must be undertaken. The stability that is realized from extending a nuclear umbrella buttresses the view of the Nuclear Optimists: That the gradual increase in nuclear states surpasses either the absolute halt or rapid spread of this technology.

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IV. PAKISTANI REACTION

A. INTRODUCTION

Any future nuclear conflict is likely to take place in South Asia. Pakistan and India, although apparently at peace, have a history of violence rarely seen between two neighboring states. The shared animosity has escalated in both ferocity and destructive potential. This escalation started shortly after independence in 1947 with the first of several wars and shows no sign of reducing in destructive potential. Even more disconcerting, these crises have been occurring even more frequently in the past decade. In fact, one is hard-pressed to find three years of peace. Injecting a nuclear-armed Iran into the picture will add tension to an already strained situation.

In this mutually hostile environment, based upon the two protagonists' behaviors, one can see the potential for a nuclear Iran coexisting with its neighbors. If two nuclear, highly adversarial states such as India and Pakistan are able to avoid nuclear conflict through deterrence, the same is potentially true for Iran and its enemies. That there is no-where near the level of animosity between Iran and its enemies further supports the assertion that a nuclear-armed Iran will not use its weapons and will gain additional security through their non-use.

Considering this situation, Pakistan's reaction to Iran's nuclearization, compared to the rest of the region, is unlikely to generate conflict. Both states share factors that bring them together and, though there are potential contentions, none approaches a threat to either's national security that would provoke nuclear crisis.

As Iran's only nuclear neighbor, Pakistan will watch Tehran's actions intently. Despite cordial relations between the two states, there are conflicts. Both differ over regional issues, which are unlikely to produce any manner of conflict, but they are concerns that must be addressed. Even if the two states became vehement enemies, Pakistan's capabilities are seriously limited in ability to do anything about Iran, and Iran has little it could desire from Pakistan. Solely focusing on India and concerns over New Delhi's military superiority, Islamabad cannot afford to divert forces to contend with an

Iranian crisis. Sunni Pakistan is hardly pleased to see a nuclear, Shi'a Iran, but the only option available to Islamabad is to accept it and to enter an understanding with Tehran to avoid nuclear misunderstandings.[148]

This chapter addresses the question of how Pakistan will react to Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapons. This chapter also asserts Pakistan will be unable to interfere with Iran building a nuclear infrastructure. Further, when both states create a deterrent relationship, Islamabad will be able to shift its focus to other issues, essentially removing any threat to its national security from Iran through the inconceivable consideration of nuclear destruction. Pakistan will continue to monitor Iranian nuclear activities to ensure they are not a threat. So long as both understand the other's intentions, misinterpretation will be avoided.

Officially, Islamabad's stance is that Iran should not have nuclear weapons, but it is delicate in its statements. President Musharraf of Pakistan stated in January of 2006:

> Every country has the right to defend its security if its security is threatened. So, technically, I would say if Iran's security is threatened, then they have the right to go nuclear. Under the present circumstances, I don't think their security is threatened. Therefore, I presume they need not go nuclear,[149]

President Musharraf justifies Pakistan's possession of nuclear weapons, but he stops short of conceding that Iran has a legitimate threat to its survival, an India for example, necessitating nuclear weapons for the state's survival. In spite of this stance, Pakistan appears unwilling to prevent Tehran from nuclearization, or to react negatively once it does.

This chapter begins by examining the political situation in both states, exploring their policies toward one another. Second, this chapter looks at the various issues between Iran and Pakistan, assessing the level of concern each has. The chapter gauges if these issues could reach the threshold of nuclear exchange. Third, this chapter examines

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[148] Irfan Husain, "For Pakistan, Growing Unease with a Tehran Bomb," *The Daily Star, Middle East*, January 17, 2006. Taken from: http://www.iht.com/getina/files/303435.html (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[149] Lisa Bryant, "Musharraf Says Iran Should Not Have Nuclear Weapons," *Voice of American News*, 26 January, 2006. Taken from: http://www.voanews.com/english/2006-01-26-voa79.cfm (Accessed 30 January 2006).

Pakistan's ability to respond to such issues, by considering current and future issues facing Islamabad. Finally, this chapter assesses the impact of Pakistan's reaction upon U.S. interests.

B. ISSUES BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND IRAN

Seemingly in perpetuity, Pakistan has focused most, if not all, of its energies against India. This single-mindedness leaves Islamabad with little time, and fewer resources, to consider any other issue as more critical. Inequality remains the paradigm for conventional force structures between Pakistan and India, despite Islamabad's struggle to achieve parity with India's superiority in nearly every category of military hardware.[150] In response, Pakistan has naturally sought the security that nuclear weapons confer. The balance of Pakistan's forces have been aligned to threaten unacceptable levels of damage on India if one of Pakistan's red lines should be crossed. According to Professor Stephen P. Cohen of the Brookings Institution:

> Pakistan is now *less* able to handle the consequences of a major war (or significant natural disaster) that it was ten or twenty years ago. The confidence of core elites in the future of Pakistan is reduced, the economic situation more uncertain, and Pakistan's military position, despite the bomb, is less secure than it was then. Further, many of Pakistan's institutions, including the army, are weaker now. In brief, the shock of even a limited war or other major disaster would be greater than it would have been 10 years ago.[151]

Since Pakistan's founding in 1947, its relations with Iran have fluctuated. Both had very close relations in the days of the Shah, but the 1979 Islamic Revolution soured these with the rise of Khomeini.[152] Since then relations could not be considered close. Both states find commonality in cultural and religious ties, yet the continued paranoia of Shi'ites in Iran with the sustained prominence of Sunnis throughout the world is a very serious source of strife, difficult to alleviate.

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[150] Peter R. Lavoy and Major Stephen A. Smith, "The Risk of Inadvertent Nuclear Use between India and Pakistan," *Strategic Insights*, II, Issue 2 (February 2003). Taken from: http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/feb03/southAsia2.asp (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[151] Stephen P. Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 2004), 295.

[152] Shirin Tahir-Kheli, "Iran and Pakistan: Cooperation in an Area of Conflict," *Asian Survey* 17, no. 5, 474-483.

Any of a number of issues could spark a serious conflict between Pakistan and Iran, but these issues are not serious enough to cause conflict, much less cross the nuclear threshold. To understand Pakistan's reaction to Iran's nuclearization, one must understand each issue as perceived by each nation. First, since each supported opposing factions in Afghanistan, the future of that state is of great concern to both. Both Iran and Pakistan will watch very closely as Kabul progresses toward control and reconstruction. Second, C2 of each state's nuclear weapons requires study, as a misunderstanding of each state's respective nuclear doctrines could produce serious problems. Third, Iranian ties to Pakistan's nemesis, India, causes tension. Pakistan's continuing close ties to the PRC has long been a source of contention for India, which has been overstated at times. This issue remains a potential source of conflict. Finally, Pakistan's support of the American-led global war on terror (GWOT), and Iranian fears it is next on Washington's list after Iraq, are issues of contention. Accurately assessing what might happen if these nations reach the nuclear boundary is difficult, but based upon past incidents and recent moderation, perhaps the situation can safely be reduced to, at worst, the level of non-nuclear conflict.

1. Afghanistan

Since its founding, Pakistan's border with Afghanistan has been a source of struggle by proxy between Tehran and Islamabad.[153] In the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Pakistan became a conduit for support to the Mujahedin. Both states backed their respective sects of Islam in the civil war for control of the country after the fall of the Soviet-backed regime. Iran supported the Shi'a elements and the Northern Alliance and Pakistan's Interservice Intelligence Directorate (ISID), the Taliban. Due to the Taliban's distorted practices of Islam, its conquest of most of the country led to a downward spiral between Iran and Afghanistan. This animus culminated in an infamous 1998 incident in which the Taliban murdered seven Iranian diplomats in Afghanistan. The ensuing war of words between Iran and Afghanistan escalated nearly to conflict.[154] This conflict would have drawn Pakistan in because Islamabad sought to

[153] Tariq Mahmood, *The Durand Line: South Asia's Next Trouble Spot* (Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School, 2005) 51-53.

[154] Patrick Bergen, "Taliban Threatens Retaliation if Iran Strikes," *CNN*, 15 September, 1998. Taken from: http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/meast/9809/15/iran.afghan.tensions.02/ (Accessed 27 January 2006).

protect its interests.[155] Current tensions concerning Afghanistan center on an appropriate level (25 percent) of participation by Shi'as in Kabul.[156] India's improved relations with Afghanistan reduce Pakistan's influence over Kabul and help prevent the rise of another Taliban, which, prior to its removal in 2001, caused significant problems for India.[157] Lastly, stability along the Afghanistan/Pakistan border could arise, inducing a potential resurgence by Pashtuns (the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan) to create a formalized Pashtunistan, cutting off the western half of Pakistan.[158]

As serious as the above issues could potentially become, none comes close to causing a serious crisis between Iran and Pakistan that would foment military action. Both sides have an interest in a stable and reconstructed Afghanistan. Both sides are concerned about the future form the state will take. As such, there are no significantly divisive issues to warrant open conflict. Iran may fear for the safety and representation for the Shi'a minority, but no indication exists that they are in danger. Indeed, as mentioned in Chapter III, Iran has routinely ignored the suffering of Muslims in other nations in pursuit of its political ends. Overall, no indication exists that these concerns would escalate beyond fighting in Afghanistan to reach across the Iran-Pakistan border; much less a nuclear exchange.

2. India

Iran's friendly ties to India are a source of antagonism between Pakistan and both states. In the wake of recent peace initiatives with India, these concerns are relatively benign. Nevertheless, deep-seated suspicion will remain. Among the key issues are the final resolution on each state's claim toward Kashmir, continued terrorism within both states (perceived to be initiated by the other), the question over land ceded in 1964 to the PRC by Pakistan (land that India does not recognize), and shared mistrust that has seethed since independence.[159]

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[155] From a discussion with Professor Feroz Hassan Khan, Brigadier General PKA (RET), Naval Postgraduate School, 02 February 2006.

[156] Khawar Hussain, *Pakistan's Afghanistan Policy* (Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School, 2005), 48.

[157] Siddharth Srivastava, "India Reaches Out to Afghanistan," *Asia Times*, 30 August, 2005. Taken from: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/GH30Df01.html (Accessed 30 January 2006).

[158] Mahmood, *The Durand Line*, 26.

[159] CIA World Factbook, China. Taken from: http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ch.html (Accessed 02 February 2006).

The recent increasing goodwill between India and Pakistan balances these tensions.[160] President Musharraf's authorization to construct a pipeline from Iran, across Pakistan, to India, is the most significant example of peace breaking out.[161] Far from ending all animosity, the increasing interdependence could serve as a deterrent against conflict. As construction begins, scheduled for early 2006 with completion set for 2009, for no other reason than profit, this peace process will likely continue. There have been a variety of delays initiating the pipelines construction. Most prominent of these is U.S. pressure on India and Pakistan to end their support to avert Iran from gaining income. There is plenty of reason for all parties to support the pipeline, with an end result of increased flow of capital as well as much needed natural gas into the rapidly growing markets.

Iran's role is as a cog in the apparent efforts by India to encircle Pakistan—similar to New Delhi's efforts in Afghanistan. If Iran used its influence, along with India in Afghanistan, this would heighten feelings of Pakistan standing alone against a host of enemies surrounding it. This, in addition to concerns with India, serves as the greatest potential risk for nuclear exchange between states resulting from Iran's new weapons. Islamabad, conscious of New Delhi attempting to encircle it with allies, will view any alliance with Tehran as a serious threat.

Assuming the worst case in this situation, that the peace process degrades and both sides withdraw to their corners, Pakistan would feel much as it has in the past: alone and surrounded. Islamabad would feel compelled to act in a deterrent manner toward Iran's stockpile of weapons. Pakistan would essentially dig in and target both enemies with an accelerated weapons program to increase its stockpile to account for the targets in Iran and perhaps press for additional purchases of missile and aircraft to engage with a new nuclear adversary. Of course, there would also be significant effort to de-escalate on

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[160] "India, Pakistan: Peace Process Irreversible," *Voice of America News*, 18 April 2005. Taken from: http://www.voanews.com/bangla/2005-04-18-voa5.cfm?renderforprint=1&textonly=1&&TEXTMODE=1&CFID=6222172&CFTOKEN=49739271 (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[161] Nadeem Iqbal, "Pakistan Allays Indian fears on Iranian Gas Pipeline," *Asia Times Online*, 01 June, 2000. Taken from: http://www.atimes.com/ind-pak/BF01Df01.html (Accessed, 27 January 2006).

both sides. Also the international community would become involved, as it has in the past. In the end, none of the parties want nuclear war.

Realistically, Pakistan is stretched too thin to do much of anything against an emerging Iranian nuclear stockpile, be it friendly, moderately aligned with India, or adversarial. Islamabad could allow the United States to act against Iran by using Pakistani airspace as a route for attack, but the Pakistani population would react violently against this. Islamabad has been very cautious about allowing the United States to carry out military actions within Pakistan because of its public's aversion to Washington's actions. A recent example is the outcry against an American operation to kill Ayman Zawahiri, Al-Qaeda's number two man, within Pakistan.[162]

Pakistan's current focus on economic growth and deterrence of India, in spite of the recent turn toward better relations, would force Pakistan to accept Iran's new capabilities because they could not do anything substantive about it. Accordingly, an understanding of deterrence would be created between Pakistan and Iran. Neither state has anything that the other wants that is worth the risk of nuclear exchange. Iran will not seek to seize the relatively worthless desert region of Baluchistan, and it would be almost impossible for Pakistan to seize Iran's petroleum assets militarily.

There is evidence that Pakistan has been, if not endorsing of Iranian weapons, less than vigilant over its own nuclear technology. Reports of technology transfers from Pakistan to Iran aiding Tehran's reprocessing of highly enriched uranium through A.Q. Khan, the father of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, nuclear proliferation network surfaced in 2005.[163] This apparent ambivalence toward proliferation suggests that President Musharraf, and all of Pakistan, at least tacitly approves of A.Q. Khan's activities, although the government is forced by the international community to do something about it. A.Q. Khan can hardly be considered to have worked with the permission of his government, his lax punishment, simply being put under house arrest, that Islamabad is left open to speculation about just how concerned it is about a nuclear

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[162] "Pakistan: Four Foreign Terrorists Killed in U.S. Airstrike," *Associated Press*, 17 January 2006. Taken from: http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,181867,00.html (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[163] David Albright & and Corey Hinderstein, "Unraveling the A.Q. Khan and Future Proliferation Networks," *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2005. Evidence has come to light showing A.Q. Kahn's complicity in supporting nuclear proliferation to a number of countries including Iran and Libya.

Iran.[164] A.Q. Khan remains perhaps the greatest hero that state has ever had, second only to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founding father.[165]

3. C2

Investigating how Iran and Pakistan will manage their respective C2 systems indicate of how potentially stabilizing the addition of Iranian nuclear weapons will be. An effective C2 organization is the core of a credible deterrent structure.[166] With clear, established red lines for use and transparent security protocols, both would profit greatly from avoiding any misunderstanding. However this will take much work to establish a mutually deterring relationship─particularly in light of Iran's close ties to India.

Whereas Pakistan has hand-on training in following its C2 principles, Iran will be pressed to learn quickly. The serious nature of mishandling these weapons, along with the calculating nature of the regime in Tehran, little suggests it would not manage its weapons in a responsible manner.

As previously discussed in Chapter I, the IRGC will likely gain control over Iran's nuclear weapons. This is cause for concern, owing to its history of acting beyond the scope of Tehran's orders. However, as the mullahs must rely upon the IRGC for regime support, it is improbable that they would give the IRGC control of nuclear weapons without sufficient safeguards to avoid unauthorized use. Iran has some learning to do as it gains nuclear capabilities, but this need not be a major issue for regional security. Scholars have written countless studies on how exactly nuclear deterrence works between states. It should not be overly difficult for Tehran to integrate the lessons of sixty years of deterrence theorizing into its own nuclear C2 procedures.

Pakistan has the benefit of experience in exercising control over its weapons. Despite this, concerns remain. Pakistani weapons, for example, are probably not fitted with Permissive Action Links (PALS), which require a specific code to be entered prior

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[164] GlobalSecurity.org, *A.Q. Khan & Iran*, Taken from: http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/iran/khan-iran.htm (Accessed 27 January 2006). See also GlobalSecurity.org, *A.Q. Khan*, at: http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/pakistan/khan.htm.

[165] "Story of Pakistan: Timeline-Personalities," 01 June, 2003. Taken from: http://www.storyofpakistan.com/person.asp?perid=P009&Pg=4 (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[166] Rodney Jones, *Nuclear Command and Control Issues in Pakistan*, Presentation to Islamabad Council on World Affairs – Institute of Strategic Studies Seminar on Command and Control of Nuclear Weapons in South Asia, 1.

to detonation. This security feature ensures control over the weapons is maintained by those in government entrusted with nuclear release authority and not local ground commanders who may use them without permission. Lieutenant General Kidwai of the Strategic Plans Division, in charge of Pakistan's nuclear weapons, has stated that the state does not require PALS, owing to the disassembled nature of its weapons.

Pakistan's disassembled arsenal inherently provides stability, preventing rapid, potentially irrational and uninformed employment, by requiring a certain amount of time prior to their use. This lag time provides additional security by protecting against instant, potentially unnecessary use of the weapons. Concerns remain in Pakistan about Indian/Iranian ties—ties that have yet to manifest into a serious threat. In spite of Iran and India supporting each other with military aid, no indication exists that both are prepared to enter into a coordinated deterrence relationship against Islamabad that would mitigate Pakistan's nuclear security.

In the case of Iran and Pakistan's C2 issue, apprehension by outside states is justified, but not undue concern. The decades of construction have given Iran much needed time to prepare for the eventual acquisition of the weapons. This "nuclear learning," as Dr. James Wirtz of the Naval Postgraduate School calls it, allows for greater stability through intellectual, doctrinal, and political understanding.[167] Both the Pakistanis and Indians have, through their exchange of nuclear threats and brinkmanship, come to gain an in-depth understanding of just how far either could push a nuclear crisis. Similarly, Pakistan has formulated a national command authority, adding stability to its C2 program. Taken together, along with the inherent security that nuclear weapons provide, Islamabad is on the right pathway to enhance security through credible controls over its nuclear weapons. Iran would quickly follow, understanding that it has nothing to gain by tensions with Pakistan. Pakistan would not harbor serious concerns either, for just as Islamabad's weapons are not meant for Tehran, Tehran's will not be meant for Islamabad.[168] Even in a crisis where anxiety can cloud judgment, this basic understanding will prevent unintended nuclear use.

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[167] Wirtz, *Beyond Bipolarity*, 146-47.

[168] From discussion with Professor Feroz Hassan Khan, Brigadier General PKA (RET), Naval Postgraduate School, 26 January 2006.

4. THE PRC

India has been seeking to exploit Pakistani tensions with Iran and Afghanistan for decades. Similarly, Pakistan has used its relationship with the PRC to support its aims and to threaten India. In a relationship dating back to its independence, Pakistan has cultivated close ties with the PRC, seeking security guarantees, legitimacy, and access to relatively modern military hardware in an attempt to stave off India's superiority.

The hallmark of this bond is the ceding of land to the PRC in the Sino-Pakistan land agreement of 1963 in which Pakistan turned over nearly 5,200 square kilometers of land to the PRC. This land, part of the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir, cemented the already good relations between the two states. Though the PRC has provided high-tech weapons, most notably missiles, its role in directly intervening between Pakistan and India is virtually non-existent.[169] Instead, Beijing is satisfied in sustaining its interests through material, rather than human aid.

A perfect example of this is the PRC's support in developing the port facilities at Gwadar, Pakistan. As a developing country, the PRC requires huge amounts of energy supplies. In recent years, Beijing has sought to secure the ever shrinking amount of global petroleum production. Iran serves to fill part of this role: the PRC has financially backed the first phase of the development of Gwadar Port into an expanded site of transshipment of goods. Gwadar is not necessarily a military port, but its location at the mouth of the Gulf of Oman allows surveillance of this vital sea lane out of the Arabian Gulf. Future development and potential militarization of Gwadar furthers the PRC's interest to secure oil supplies.[170]

The continuing good relations between Pakistan and the PRC will serve as a source of irritation for India, its traditional rival. No indication exists that Iran, in acquiring nuclear weapons, would cause a conflict in any way over the good relations that Pakistan and the PRC have. Nor would it remove the irritation that the PRC causes

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[169] Center for Nonproliferation Studies, *China's Missile Exports and Assistance to Pakistan*. Taken from: http://cns.miis.edu/research/india/china/mpakpos.htm (Accessed 27 January 2006).

[170] Ammad Hassan, *Pakistan's Gwadar Port-Prospects for Economic Revival* (Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School, 2005), 3.

India. Iran has no territorial aspirations on the PRC's interests, nor would its economic interests be served by tensions between one of its largest customers and its neighbor.

5. Pakistan and the Global War on Terror (GWOT)

As a major, non-NATO ally, Pakistan has been a reluctant supporter of the removal of the Taliban and furtherance of Americas GWOT. This apprehension comes from several directions: fear of a strengthened Afghanistan that could potentially press for a radical shift to the Durand Line, an Iranian dominated Shi'a state, not to mention domestic issues supporting the very fundamentalist folk heroes that America is fighting. Historically, Pakistan is aware of the vacillating nature of U.S. support during times of need. As a result, Islamabad will remain wary of American assurances.

Though the future success of GWOT remains uncertain, some factors could ignite problems between Pakistan and Iran. Iran has announced that it has certain al Qaeda members in its country, reportedly under arrest. Their presence suggests that Iran could use them as a source of leverage over the United States.[171] Iran remains on the U.S. State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism and is a potential target in the future execution of GWOT. The government of Pakistan, not eager to be seen as supporting the United States against a Muslim nation, would likely not have a serious problem if America were to conduct some sort of operation to seize the al Qaeda members inside Iran.[172] How this would be managed in the face of an Iranian nuclear deterrent is uncertain, though the killing or capturing of these terrorists would not warrant an Iranian nuclear response. Nor is any action in GWOT that Pakistan supports likely to rise to the nuclear threshold. The followers of al Qaeda, being mostly Sunni and Saudi in origin (Iran's avowed spiritual enemy), are distasteful individuals to the regime in Tehran. Iran is unlikely to be supportive of handing over Muslims to American allied hands, and they certainly will not risk nuclear exchange over it.

C. IMPACT ON U.S. INTERESTS

As discussed above, Pakistan will have a relatively benign reaction to Iran's nuclearization. Pakistan will not welcome a rival to its claim as the only Muslim nuclear

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[171] Kenneth Katzman, *Iran: U.S. Concerns and Policy Recommendations*, (Washington: Congressional Research Service, 2005), 18.

[172] Kelli Arena and Elise Labbot, "Iran Admits Holding al Qaeda Operatives," *CNN*, 25 May, 2003. Taken from: http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/05/22/alqaeda.iran/ (Accessed 30 January 2006).

state. The fact that Iran is Shi'a will increase this discomfort throughout the mostly Sunni Muslim world; however, neither of these factors will place undue pressure on the relations, good or bad between Pakistan and Iran. Similarly, the impact on the interests of the United States will be marginal, compared to other issues covered by this thesis.

The United States depends upon Pakistan for access to Afghanistan and support for GWOT throughout the region. The addition of a nuclear Iran on its border may lead to Iran pressing Pakistan to limit or even to cease its support to GWOT. Nevertheless, Pakistan as a Major non-NATO ally will likely value its security relations with the United States over Iran's requests or pressure. Further, any attempt by Iran to influence Pakistan's relationship with the United States will be reacted to harshly by the latter.

However, Pakistan's support to the United States has limits. Because of internal political restrictions, Pakistan will not openly support military action against Iran's nuclear program. Pakistani involvement therein would invite threats to President Musharraf who already deals with internal dissent toward his policies supporting the United States. Furthermore, Islamabad depends on Iran for income. President Musharraf has asserted that Pakistan needs the planned pipeline. This action will continue in spite of the wishes of the United States to deny Tehran the income from it.[173]

Could the situation deteriorate to a nuclear crisis requiring the United States to intervene? Possibly, but this would run counter to how nuclear weapons have been historically used. Any adventurism that could lead to conflict would be diminished by the threat of a nuclear exchange. Therefore, the impact on the interests of the United States in Pakistan will be minor, limited to a reshuffling of priorities and strategic outlooks. Any issue between the Iran and Pakistan will be seriously curtailed by each country's inherent ability to respond with nuclear weapons and the lack of any serious issue that reaches that threshold.

D. CONCLUSION

Nuclear weapons represent a new level of warfare, raising the severity of miscalculation to an unacceptable level of loss. This forces state leaders to consider their

[173] Evelyn Leopold, "Musharraf Says Pakistan Needs Gas from Iran," *Reuters*, 26 January 2006. Taken from: http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20060127/india_nm/india234060 (Accessed 30 January 2006).

actions carefully in the face of nuclear-armed antagonists. The introduction of a nuclear Iran is bound to provoke significant tensions within the international community, but these need not be entirely negative.

What Professor Richard Lebow of Dartmouth University describes as the "long peace" was partially due to the stability that nuclear weapons bring.[174] Two belligerents who have these weapons and are ready to use them, knowing that if either does, it will spell disaster for both, have inherent peace of mind and a solution to their security dilemma. Deterrence is not terribly difficult to create, as Pakistan has learned. Once achieved, it provides stability, security, and as in Pakistan's case, significant economic benefit.

This chapter looked at Pakistan's reaction to Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. Fundamentally, while Pakistan will not be elated, it will tacitly accept it. First because there is very little that Islamabad could do to prevent Iran from acquiring them. Second, save for a fundamental shift of relations between India and Iran, there is no specific issue that is likely to lead to escalation and their use. Both have C2 issues for which perhaps each could support the other, leading to closer ties and an understanding of just what these weapons mean and how they are meant to be used.

Nevertheless, in the absolutely worst case scenario, were tensions to rise and Iran and Pakistan were to suffer a serious degradation in relations, the outcome would be even more certain. Nuclear weapons provide the ultimate guarantee of state security. The deterrence that evolves from mutual possession of nuclear weapons, assuming stable control mechanisms, in the end produces a safer, more secure situation. All of these points further support the arguments made by the Nuclear Optimists that the gradual spread of nuclear states will increase global stability by reducing the likelihood of conflict.

[174] Richard Ned Lebow, "The Long Peace, The End of the Cold War and the Failure of Realism," *International Organization*, 48, Issue 2, Spring 1994.

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V. CONCLUSION

A. SUMMARY: IS THE SKY FALLING?

This thesis surveys the scope of likely regional reactions to a nuclear-armed Iran. Although the prospect of not acting to prevent Tehran from possessing nuclear weapons is hard to accept, this thesis shows the impact will not have the far-reaching regional security consequences that are feared. For sure, some measure of reaction will be necessary to ensure that Iran does not become overly belligerent toward other states. Nonetheless, there is no need to irritate and to provoke an already paranoid Tehran. This is especially true since Iran will obtain nuclear weapons no matter what actions are taken against it. The focus should be on deterring Iran from misbehaving with its new abilities and preventing other nations from rapid proliferation. It must be stated that this thesis does not advocate appeasement. Iran will definitely acquire nuclear weapons, and what it does with them afterwards will be directly influenced by how Tehran is treated.

This thesis surveyed the states most immediately impacted by Iran's nuclearization, Israel, the Gulf Arab States, and Pakistan. This thesis also assessed the impact of this potential event and the reaction of those states. Based on these likely reactions, there is little to suggest that a nuclear Iran will seriously weaken the status-quo of the Arabian Gulf Region. The options available to each state or states runs the gamut of militarily striking Iran's nuclear infrastructure, acquiring nuclear weapons in response to Tehran's program, seeking outside help to counter Iran's capability, or simply doing nothing. The likely course of action of the states studied in this thesis suggests the end result will not be escalating belligerency that violates the nuclear taboo. Regional tensions may increase with Iran's revelation as a nuclear state, but these will fade with the creation of a stable deterrence framework. This stability will further support the Nuclear Optimist's argument that additional nuclear states prevent conflict and increase security, as will be seen through this new deterrent framework. Deterrence is a proven institution with over sixty years of radical international behavior to prove it is effective.

Israel will be very concerned at the prospect of its most vocal enemy gaining a nuclear capability. Yet this overlooks the fact that Pakistan, a relatively unstable Muslim nation, has possessed nuclear weapons for years without being a threat to Israel.

Jerusalem took military action to prevent Iraq from going nuclear; nonetheless, the merits of this operation, and the likely success of one against Iran, are dubious. Perhaps through a third party, the two states will enter into a mutually deterring relationship in which, if one attacks the other, the attacker will suffer an unacceptable level of damage in return. This understanding would increase stability between the two, as both would be reluctant to risk escalation.

Similarly, the Arab Gulf States will be anxious about Iran's new capability. None of these possesses nuclear programs, leaving them open to intimidation by the long hated Persian enemy. Differences between the two sides run deep and there is a history of shared animosity that spans millennia. The Gulf States will be tempted to launch nuclear programs of their own. Of course, initiating a program would be time consuming, and it would be relatively easy for the international community to detect and to eliminate. As an alternative to creating their own weapons, these states will require assurances on the part of the international community that Iran will not be allowed to interfere with their governments, as Tehran did following the 1979 Islamic Revolution. These states will likely continue their practice of outsourcing their security to world powers and expand it to contend with Iran's new capability.

A nuclear Iran concerns Pakistan, but it is very limited in its ability to respond. Preoccupied by its ongoing issues with India, Pakistan is unable to match Tehran's emerging capability militarily. Nor is there much reason for Islamabad to be seriously worried. Of the issues that the two nations are in contention over, none comes close to breaching the nuclear threshold. Islamabad's likely response to Iran's nuclearization would be simply to make its intentions and C2 procedures clear to avoid any miscommunication or misunderstanding.

Based upon the expected reaction of each of these states, the sky is clearly not falling with Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons. Although Tehran's behavior will shift, it will presumably not act in an overly provocative manner. Steps must be taken by the United States to ensure this, but in the end, a nuclear Iran will not equate to a volatile disruption of the current situation in the Arabian Gulf.

B. FINDINGS FROM THIS STUDY

This thesis suggests that there are reasons to be concerned about Iranian nuclear weapons, yet it is clearly not the crisis that many fear. Instead, the situation requires careful calculation of how this new capability will alter the Arabian Gulf region. Such considerations include:

- Though not an ideal circumstance, Iran will almost certainly gain the capability to build nuclear weapons.
- Iranian nuclear weapons will add a higher level of concern by all regional parties, but they are meant to add security, not overtly threaten its neighborhood. Tehran's nuclear weapons will not fundamentally shift the balance of power nor overly impact issues already of concern in the area. States in the region may lose some sense of security, as this thesis has shown, but each security dilemma can be resolved by either each nation's own capability or that of an outside power. The result will not be a net shift toward instability.
- Considering the historical control of WMD in the IRGC, Iran's nuclear weapons will likely be placed under the IRGC's control. This is cause for concern over Iran's C2 issues, but Tehran will appreciate the responsibilities that come from possession of these weapons and not allow those in possession of the weapons to act rashly. As the ultimate guarantor of Iran's regime survival, control will be kept on a tight leash. For as history has proved, nuclear weapons, with their extreme destructive power, induce caution, not irrational action.[175]
- Reflecting on the past denial of WMD to terrorist groups, Iran would unlikely change this policy with its acquisition of nuclear weapons.

C. ISSUES ARISING FROM FINDINGS

Based upon these findings, a number of issues beyond the scope of this thesis require consideration. The extent of these are far reaching and uncertain, but, no doubt, how they are addressed will be critical in the pursuit of U.S. security interests.

1. Iran's Emergence as a Nuclear State

The manner in which Iran emerges as a nuclear power will be critical as to how the region reacts. Following the Nuclear Optimist's approach of the gradual addition of nuclear states, ideally, Iran's capability will be relatively transparent. In spite of Tehran's reluctance to share its true nuclear intentions, the intelligence community should be able to predict accurately, within a reasonable timeframe, when Iran can be expected to

[175] Sagan and Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons* 13.

emerge with its new capability. With this knowledge, steps can be taken by the United States and international organizations to react in a controlled manner, reducing the likelihood of the region becoming thrown into uncertainty and panic. The day Iran acquires nuclear capabilities will be interesting, but not necessarily a crisis.

If Iran suddenly and unpredictably emerged as a nuclear power, the opposite may be true. If Tehran surprised the world with a nuclear test, the world would react with universal shock, leading to irrational decisions by heads of state. Those states in the Gulf, failing to have security guarantees from the United States, could initiate their own programs, seek to purchase weapons from abroad, crumble under Iranian demands, or in the worst case, have an outside state attempt to destroy Iran's nuclear infrastructure preemptively, inviting nuclear conflict in the region. Clearly, it is in Iran's interest not to allow such chaos to reign.

The impact that a nuclear Iran will have on the debate surrounding nuclear proliferation will provide additional input into which side of the argument is correct. The nuclear taboo will surely be kept in place, and Tehran will be able to enjoy an additional measure of security against its adversaries. As events unfold and states react to this new capability, the Nuclear Optimist's point of view will likely be upheld—since it is very unlikely that Iran will use its weapons, or that nuclear states will attack a nuclear Iran. The end result from Iran gaining nuclear weapons will be additional support for the slow, relatively controlled, proliferation of nuclear weapons.

2. Policy Implications

Iran's emergence as a nuclear state will have long reaching policy implications for the United States and the international community.

a. The NPT

Iran going nuclear while still within the boundaries of the NPT engenders significant concerns about the future of nuclear proliferation control. If the international community is unable to prevent signatories from adhering to the treaty, the treaty will be deemed essentially valueless. First, North Korea went nuclear, largely while under the NPT, next Iran following in its footsteps. The dam may very well burst if several other states follow Iran's example, particularly in response to the lack of international resolve to end Tehran's pursuit of nuclear weapons. Foreign policy must be amended to prevent

others from violating the treaty. It is too late for Iran, but this is not the case for most other nations, with appropriate enforcement.

b. U.S. Loss of Credibility

The United States has made it clear that a nuclear Iran is unacceptable. When Iran gains nuclear weapons, America will lose credibility world wide. This loss will reduce its ability to prevent other states from pursuing nuclear weapons. How this loss of international prestige can be regained is not immediately predictable.

c. Alliance Cohesion

The cohesion of alliances so carefully nurtured since World War II could weaken in the future. The United States has placed great emphasis upon forming coalitions to pursue its foreign policy, but unfortunately, loss of credibility through faulty intelligence leading to the invasion of Iraq will haunt America for years. Iran going nuclear against the stated policy of the United States could cause key allies to question the commitments of other policies by Washington D.C. Repairing this loss will take time and could severely undermine the ability of the United States to act as it would normally find support for. To avoid the negative impact upon alliances, the United States must act vigorously and wisely against Iran's emerging nuclear capability, leading the international community to ensure that Tehran does not use its newly gained weapons to threaten the status-quo in the Arabian Gulf region.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE U.S.

As the sole remaining superpower and guarantor of stability in the region since 1971, the United States cannot simply watch Iran and do nothing. Clearly a response is necessary, or Iran may behave irresponsibly with its weapons, and other states may find incentive to seek their own weapons. Preventative military strikes are a very difficult option, with serious concerns about their long-term success, and other options are also available to contend with Iran. Certain steps must be taken to motivate Iran to act rationally with its nuclear weapons.

A nuclear Iran will require greater involvement by the United States to secure the Arabian Gulf region. To prevent further proliferation, non-nuclear states must be given ample and unquestionable reasons why they should trust the security offered by the

United States. Without question, it must be the United States which acts, for no other state has the military power or prestige to elicit respect and adhesion to security guarantees.

At the appropriate time, the United States, possibly in concert with NATO, should offer blanket nuclear deterrence assurances, similar to those given to Western Europe throughout the Cold War, to the Arab Gulf States as well as to Israel and Pakistan, if deemed necessary. This agreement would assert that any nuclear attack by Iran would be considered an attack on the United States. Any such guarantee will require significant assurances of commitment. It may also require public statements that nuclear weapons will not be stored in Islamic countries, or possibly the basing of these in the region specifically, whichever will bring the most credibility. Such a structure would in effect remove the threat of Iran's weapons, allowing issues under the threshold of use to be managed as if they did not exist. Of key importance to this concept is that the deterrence framework be presented to Iran in a manner that is unambiguously clear to all levels of government.

Also, those states in the region that might be disposed to strike Iran's facilities must be prevented from doing so. Any attack on Iran's nuclear infrastructure will drive the regime to even greater levels of paranoia. The outcome, even if the attacks succeed would be to convince the regime in Tehran that nuclear weapons are required. In the end, nuclear proliferation is a fact. How it is managed will determine whether or not it adds or detracts from regional security.

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