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Why is Bush only going after Iran's nuclear program?

by Mohamed Elmasry
(Friday May 26 2006)

"Given the opportunity, Israel would fight its neighbors to the last American."

"I'm not worried about Brazil trying to get nuclear weapons," said American Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice last April before a visit to that country. "Brazil wants a civil nuclear program, and I think that we should help countries develop nuclear energy for civilian purposes, but so that they don't create nuclear weapons."

But why are you not including Iran, Ms Rice?

Both Iran and Brazil are signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the multinational agreement that seeks to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. Brazil's program is far more advanced than Iran's, so why is the Bush administration going after Iran's nuclear agenda, but not that of Brazil?

Both countries treat their nuclear program as a state secret, just as any other nation. Both say they have no intention of developing nuclear bombs and both they make the valid point that with concerns over rising oil prices and greenhouse gas emissions, there is an increasing interest in nuclear power generation.

The Brazilian nuclear program includes a 1300-MWe Angra 3 reactor; there are plans to build another new 1300-MWe plant, plus two Brazilian-designed 300 MWe plants, at a total cost of \$6.1 billion.

Brazil has agreed to have its nuclear facilities inspected by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nation's watchdog organization, based in Vienna, Austria.

In 2004, when Brazil and the IAEA began discussing inspections, they reached a deadlock (But you did not hear about it in the mass media.)

Brazil argued that it needed to protect the proprietary aspects of its program and the IAEA had accepted some of its conditions. But negotiations dragged on for months. Some observers have speculated that

Brazil's program has "the potential to produce highly enriched uranium - enough for up to six bombs a year," according to one estimate.

Mohamed Elmasry is a professor of electrical and computer engineering at the University of Waterloo and national president of the Canadian Islamic Congress. He contributed this article to [Media Monitors Network \(MMN\)](#) from Ontario, Canada.

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Nevertheless, last year the IAEA gave official approval to Brazil's first uranium centrifuge enrichment cascade, which is now in operation.

Iran, like Brazil, has the international right under IAEA and the national determination to gain the know-how to develop and maintain a self-sufficient nuclear energy industry.

Brazil's nuclear program dates back to the end of World War II. In the 1950s, Brazil and the United States signed a nuclear cooperation agreement and Brazil received two research reactors. In 1971, Brazil bought its first power reactor from the U.S. Then in 1975 Brazil and West Germany signed a multibillion-dollar agreement that included a total of eight 1300-Mwe reactors as well as the transfer of a complete fuel-cycle industry.

Although Iran had two nuclear reactors built under the Shah and is only trying to reactivate them, the Bush administration has targeted Iran's nuclear program while leaving that of Brazil alone. And the reason for this disparity of treatment is Israel.

Israel benefits greatly from every confrontation, military and otherwise, between the U.S. and surrounding countries in the region.

Given the opportunity, Israel would fight its neighbors to the last American.

Israel is currently the only Middle Eastern country with nuclear bombs. As such, it poses a real and continuing threat, not only to its neighbors but also to world peace. It is willing to use these bombs any time it feels like it, with or without the blessing of the Americans.

Knesset Member Efraim Sneh (Labor), who had served in intelligence-related jobs in the Israeli army declared:

"[I]t is still possible to prevent Iran from developing its nuclear bomb. This can be done, since Iran threatens the interests of all rational states in the Middle East. We should therefore do all we can to prevent Iran from ever reaching nuclear capability. Israel cannot possibly put up with the nuclear bomb in Iranian hands. If the Western states don't do what is their duty, Israel will find itself forced to act alone and will accomplish its task by any means considered suitable for the purpose."

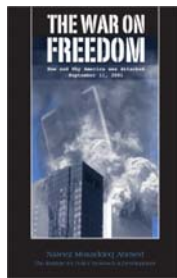
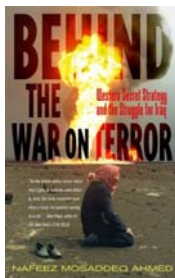
Sneh continues: "If, despite all our precautions, we are confronted with an Iran already in possession of nuclear installations and in mastery of launching techniques, we would be better off if the explosive charge of the Israeli-Arab conflict is by then already neutralized through signing peace treaties with states located in our vicinity - concretely with Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians. We would also be better off if, until that time, we succeed in building alliances with Middle Eastern states interested in fighting Islamic fundamentalism. It would be good for us if all sane states of this region unite to resist all forces of radicalism."

In other words, Israel as the warmonger could launch a nuclear strike at Iran in the foreseeable future. And world peace would be shattered for decades to come.

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