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Published: 13/12/2006 12:00 AM (UAE)

Nuclear hypocrisy at work in Israel

Gulf News

Three years after the invasion of Iraq, there are weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. But wait, where are the international inspection teams, the UN resolutions, and list of sanctions? When it concerns Israel, double standards are the norm. As far back as 1968, the CIA realised that Israel had nuclear weapons. It was the great unmentionable in Washington and not just because of embarrassment. The US, by its own legislation, is forbidden from issuing economic assistance to any country with a clandestine nuclear weapons programme. But feigned ignorance is no longer an option.

Israel's Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, has confirmed that Israel has a nuclear weapons programme, ending decades of wink-wink denial. Nor is this just one weapon, as deadly as that potentially would be. It is estimated that Israel has approximately 200 such devices, composing a sizeable arsenal designed to intimidate. But no word from Washington, no threats of attack, not cutback on the level of funding. Not even a word or whisper of condemnation from America. The issue is far more serious than witnessing the rank hypocrisy at work. Nuclear weaponry does not ensure peace, nor were they ever intended to. If they did, then their proliferation would make the world a much safer place than it is. The North Korean leader would be in line for a peace prize, instead of international condemnation.

There is little chance of America exerting its influence on Israel to dismantle the nuclear weapons, though if it were to happen it would go some way towards restoring Washington's tattered image. Instead we will witness more of Washington turning a blind eye to its client state. American foreign policy

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officials believe that Israel is entitled to have this weaponry, which reveals the paucity of their knowledge about Middle East affairs.

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