



Power Struggle within Israel's Security establishment

Should Israel attack Iran's nuclear installations? Over this question, a fierce dispute flared up among Israel's security establishment. In the beginning of the year, the former chief of the Israeli Mossad, Meir Dagan, was a lone voice in the wilderness. He called an Israeli attack "the stupidest thing I have ever heard". Slowly but surely, opposition by reasonable people amongst Israel's political and military establishment started growing, the more alarmist Benjamin Netanyahu's and Ehud Barak's rhetoric towards Iran became. Particularly inclined were Netanyahu's historical comparisons between Nazi-Germany and the current Iranian leadership.

There is hardly anybody among the serious political analysts in Israel who see the phantom Iranian civilian nuclear program as an "existential threat" to Israel. All the expertise of the 17 U. S. intelligence agencies, the IAEA reports and others leave no doubt that Iran does not peruse a nuclear program that will lead to a nuclear bomb. Even the hardliners in Israel and their belligerent neoconservative supporters in the United States can only warn the public of Iran's possible "nuclear capability" that does not mean anything at all. Even if Iran's leadership would decide to go nuclear they still lack the launcher system to carry a nuclear device. This means, Iran is light years away to be an "existential threat" to Israel, not to speak to the world as propagandists' tries to pretend. Beyond that, the Iranian leadership has not decided to build a nuclear bomb. They have religious and ethical reservations that the West should take serious. Out of racist prejudices, the West defames this religious statement by the supreme religious authority, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, by insinuating that he would deceive the public. Aren't the Western politicians the ones who are misleading their constituency all the time?

What got the Israeli government so infuriated is the fact that more and more former intelligence people, military men and even a former prime minister are speaking out against an Israeli attack on Iran. The latest opposition voice came from the former head of the Israel Shin Bet, Yuval Diskin. In a meeting with residents of the city of Kfar Sava on Friday, April 27, 2012, Diskin said that Netanyahu and Barak are not worthy of leading the country. How dangerous both are for world peace shows the following: "I don't believe in either the prime minister or the defense minister. I don't believe in a leadership that makes decisions based on messianic feelings." He named both the "two messianics". Translated into political language, i .e. Both behave irrational. And he continued saying: "Believe me; I have observed them from up close ... They are not people who I, on a personal level, trust to lead Israel to an event on that scale and carry it off. These are not people who I would want to have holding the wheel in such an event. They are misleading the public on the Iran issue. They tell the public that if Israel acts, Iran won't have a nuclear bomb. This is misleading. Actually, many experts say that an Israeli attack would accelerate the Iranian nuclear race." Some henchmen of the Israeli government were ready for battle and implied Diskin personal frustrations about of not being promoted to head the Israeli spy-organization Mossad. Letting these political gimmicks aside, the following question is still important to ask: How can it be that high ranking security people served over many years "irrational leaders" so servilely?

Even the current chief of staff of the IDF, General Benny Gantz, in an interview with the Israeli daily "Haaretz" in an Independence Day interview stated that the diplomatic and economic sanctions are bearing fruit. And in contrast to the alarmism spread by Netanyahu and Barak he said:" The military

option is the last chronologically but the first in terms of its credibility. If it's not credible it has no meaning. We are preparing for it in a credible manner. That's my job, as a military man." And Gantz added: "Iran is going step by step to the place where it will be able to decide whether to manufacture a nuclear bomb. It hasn't yet decided whether to go the extra mile."

The most important opponent of an attack on Iran is Meir Dagan. Few weeks ago, on "60 minutes" he admitted as the first high-ranking Israeli from the security establishment that the Iranian leadership acts rationally. It's „not exactly our rational, but I think he (Ahmadinejad L. W.) is rational". The Iranian leadership takes all "implications of their actions" into account before they decide. Among Western pundits and media people, the Iranian leadership is considered "crazy". At a conference, sponsored by the right-wing Israeli newspaper "Jerusalem Post" in New York on April, 29, 2012, Dagan supported Yuval Diskin by saying, as a "friend" he "spoke his own truth". And he added: "Diskin is a very serious man, a very talented man, he has a lot of experience in countering terrorism" and he "talked about a matter that is close to his heart." He also criticized both behind "close quarters and on many occasions" before he left office. Environmental Protection Minister Gilad Erdan, who also attended the conference, had the thankless task defending Netanyahu and Barak. He did not just cut an unfortunate figure, but Dagan had accused him even of lying, while Erdan accused Dagan of sabotaging Netanyahu's efforts of halting Iran's nuclear aspirations. Also the former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and the former IDF chief, General Gabi Ashkenasi, attended the conference, and they did not defend convincingly the government's position.

Iran's civilian nuclear program poses no threat to any country, and everybody knows it. The Iranians should feel threatened by Israel and the United States. Looking at their military might and their spending for deadly weaponry is frightening. The U. S. spends for its military machineries more than all the 193 Members of the United Nations combined. And Israel's defense budget surpasses that of Iran by 10 to 1. Who are the countries that pose an "existential threat" to world peace? Didn't the German Nobel laureate Guenter Grass ask the right question about Israel's threat to world peace? Already in 2004, an opinion poll conducted by the European Union revealed that two third of the European public considered Israel the greatest threat to world peace, followed by North Korea, Iran and the United States!

The power struggle between Israel's security establishments should tell the international public that an attack on Iran's civilian nuclear program would be highly dangerous and politically irresponsible. Despite the belligerent rhetoric, the U. S. and Israel are already fighting a cyber war and a war on sanctions against Iran. How come, that despite knowing better, the public is led astray by two Israeli "messianics"?

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