2012

Iran; A Nuclear Super Power? Understanding Nuclear Ambitions

Lindsey Sera
CUNY City College

Iran: A Nuclear Super Power?
Understanding Nuclear Ambitions

Lindsay M. Sera

February 2012

Master's Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Relations at the City College of New York

Advisor: Dr. Jean Krasno

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Abstract

Iran is a nation in flux, with a history of political strife and revolution. The ever-changing political atmosphere in the nation has made Iran an unpredictable political actor. It is a nation coping with a new governing system, just a few decades out from a revolution from the reign of the Shah of Iran. The fall of reformism has left the nation politically isolated from the international community. Iran is a nation on the brink of nuclear weapon capabilities and with strained relations there is little comfort in sight for an amicable solution. The conservatives of today's Iran seek independence from the dominance of outside powers. In that regard, the acquisition of a nuclear weapon capacity would offer a symbol of power and independence from today's international community that distrusts Iran's unpredictable political atmosphere. According to the thinking of Iran's leadership, obtaining a nuclear weapon would force the international community to see Iran as a military equal and even a regional hegemon, offering the prestige and distance from the major powers that Iran desires in order to govern as it pleases.

Introduction

In a world with increasing proliferation of nuclear weapons, ethical conflicts over the dissemination and creation of this advanced weaponry have sparked a heated debate in the international community. In the last 60 years over 128,000 nuclear weapons have been produced by the United States, Russia, Great Britain, France, India, Pakistan, China, Israel and North Korea and 27,000 weapons are estimated to be operational today.[1] Currently, approximately 15 nations are suspected of having enough highly enriched uranium to create a nuclear warhead.[2] Iran, one nation at the center of this discussion, has been suspected in recent years of being on the brink of obtaining its first nuclear weapon. Heightened security concerns may be at the forefront of Iran's defense policies, as several nuclear weapon states have emerged in its vicinity in recent decades.[3] Should the international community allow a non-nuclear state to develop a nuclear weapon? This research seeks to examine the Iranian nuclear program. How did the nuclear program of Iran originate and develop and what are the consequences of a successful Iranian nuclear program to the international community, the Middle East and Iran? Utilizing Iran as a backdrop, what then are the implications to security policy around the world? This research is composed of three chapters, which examine the Islamic Republic of Iran, why nations pursue nuclear weapons and Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In order to understand Iran's nuclear motivations, we must first understand the Iranian political process and beliefs. Examining the history of Iran will help to establish a context in

[1] Joseph M. Siracusa, *Nuclear Weapons: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), xiii.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Iran's International Posture after the Fall of Bagdad," *Middle East Journal* 58 (2004), 193.

which to examine the development of Iran's governing system and its relation to the citizens and the international community. Through exploring the political process and beliefs of Iran, greater clarification is achieved as to how the government interacts with the people and other states. Further, a foreknowledge of modern political events will be essential to establishing a foundation in which to understand Iran's motivations for nuclear weaponry. Providing this background will establish a firm foundational knowledge and confirm initial assumptions about the political sphere of Iran and its place within the international community.

Iran, arguably an up and coming super power in the Middle East, is a nation whose economy is dependent on oil reserves and relations are strained with much of the outside world.[4] Iran's rich history, which dates back three thousand years, contributes to the complex government and culture many scarcely understand today.[5] The Islamic Republic of Iran is ruled by a theocracy or theocratic republic.[6] A theocracy is a state government, which perceives God as its supreme civil power. Leaders of Iran govern according to their religious beliefs and God. The inhabitants of Iran identify not only via their religion but also through language, ethnicity and most importantly nationality. No one group truly identifies as ethnically Iranian, though groups establish their identity based on language. Languages groups include Iranian, Turkic and Semitic. Those who identify as Iranian by way of their language primarily speak Farsi, which is understood by over half of Iran's population.[7] Understanding a nation by examining its political

[4] Christopher de Bellaigue, "Iran," *Foreign Policy* 148 (2005), 18.
[5] Elton L. Daniel, *The History of Iran* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), xi.
[6] Iran. *CIA World Factbook.* Web. 01 April 2011. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html>.
[7] Daniel, *The History of Iran,* 13.

system and people will help to establish that nation's motivations, in this case for nuclear weaponry.

In chapter 2, I examine why states pursue nuclear weaponry. In order to do so, a brief history of nuclear weapon technology, including an understanding of how each current nuclear nation state came to acquire its arsenal and why its leaders feel the Bomb is essential to their defense framework.

In order to understand the spread of nuclear weaponry the intent and ambitions of a nation is examined, as it is integral to decoding Iran's motivations. What effect has nuclear proliferation in South Asia had on Iran? With the nuclear proliferation of South Asia, which is in the vicinity of Iran, what influence has the nuclear programs of India and Pakistan had on Iranian security policy? The increased proliferation in this region could spur a nuclear arms race, one in which Iran may not want to sit idly by.

Though deterred through sanctions by Japan and the United States in the late 1990s, India and Pakistan's nuclear programs remain. This region will help set some precedent as to how to deal with the current situation with Iran. Also, looking to Indian and Pakistani relations will provide some insight to a country's need to maintain its defenses thus gaining an understanding behind the ambitions of Iran to build the Bomb.

In chapter 3, I answer three core questions to establish knowledge of the Iranian nuclear program. First, what are its origins and sources? Essentially, how did the program begin and since develop? Second, what is the current status of the program and its current goals? Finally, I wish to examine the consequences of the program for Iran and the Middle East? Will Iran, as a nuclear power, instigate a Middle East nuclear arms

race or even worse nuclear warfare? What will become of the already strained foreign relations, specifically with the United States and Israel?

Much of what is known about Iran's nuclear program is shrouded in speculation due to the Iranian government's attempts to hide its efforts in obtaining nuclear technology. It begs the question: If Iran simply sought nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, why do they feel the need to hide their practices?[8] Evidence collected by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) suggests that Iran is not merely pursuing a nuclear program for improved energy capabilities. Iran proceeded to make changes to its nuclear enrichment program without reporting it to the IAEA as well as attempts to conceal its method of procuring materials.[9] In 2003, IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei reported that Iran had violated the NPT by not reporting its uranium enrichment program. Iran is currently found to be in non-compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) for not reporting the status of its nuclear program.[10] Though these issues of non-compliance exist, the IAEA has been unable to find hard evidence to date that proves Iran's ability to weaponize its nuclear technology. This is due, in large part, to the Iranian government not allowing access to its facilities. Due to Iran's evasiveness, the UN Security Council demanded Iran suspend all enrichment programs, though it disobeyed the 2006 UN Security Council resolution and continued its program.

What does a successful nuclear program in Iran mean for the world? What has the debate been between prevailing experts on nuclear weaponry and proliferation? What are some of the good and bad consequences of the program? Most importantly, central to

[8] Daniel, *The History of Iran,* 18.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.

the debate: should Iran be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon? There are several conflicting arguments among experts for and against.

This research provides an understanding of the development of the Iranian nuclear program and assesses the international community response to date. What are the prevailing recommendations for dealing with a nuclear Iran going forward? Do nations and organizations wish to prevent or promote the success of the program and/or ensure its safety? The international response and method of approaching the issues presented by the Iranian nuclear program are vital to international security and stability. Is there a practical solution? What methods will countries or international organizations take on in order for the international community to be satisfied with their security? What options lie in the hands of the international community? Must they pursue sanctions, a diplomatic effort, monitoring by the NPT or IAEA?

An initial survey of the literature points to numerous options, from the threat of force to diplomacy, deterrence or sanctions. Some theorists believe that only force would be necessary to cause Iran to back down from its nuclear ambitions. Others believe the threat of force or force itself is a doubtful outcome. It may very well cause Iran to back down but it could also have the adverse effect making Iran back out of the NPT thus eliminating the ability to monitor the program.[11] Current efforts to safeguard the situation include continued efforts to carry out IAEA inspections, all of which Iran has not agreed to, and encouraging cooperation with the NPT.[12] In March 2008, at the UN Secretary-General's address to the 11th Summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Ban Ki-moon called for a peaceful resolution and continued communication

[11] de Bellaigue, "Iran," 20.
[12] Adam Tarock, "Iran's Nuclear Programme and the West," *Third World Quarterly* 27 (2006), 662.

between Iran and the IAEA. Until a peaceful solution is reached, some members of the international community are distrustful of Iran's intentions.

For my hypothesis, I will argue here that Iran will act in its best interests, according to the perception of its leadership, to protect its power, prestige, and independence within the international community. I will argue that the pursuit of a nuclear weapon capacity will offer Iran the prestige it seeks and act as a bargaining chip in the international political power structure. In conclusion, I argue that the sanctions and the use of, or threat to use, force will be unproductive, and that diplomacy is the best process by which to bring Iran into compliance with the NPT.

CHAPTER ONE
Politics and Culture in Iran

Iran is a complex and diverse nation. Home to a growing population of over 77 million, it is the 18th largest country in the world.[13] With unprecedented levels of urban and economic growth for the war torn region, Iran is surging to potentially become a superpower of the Middle East. Iran's rich history, diverse culture and intricate government structure are foreign to most Western understanding, leaving many to misunderstand this unique country. To gain perspective on this isolated and little understood nation, one must take the steps to learn about and understand Iran.

The History of Iran

In the past two centuries Iran has struggled to reconcile the compatibility between Islam and democracy. In the early 19th century, Mostashar Dowleh argued, in his work *Yek Kalameh* (One Word) that a secular democracy was in deed compatible with Islam. For Dowleh, "One Word" meant democracy or the rule of law would bring order to Iran.[14] By the turn of the twentieth century, enlightened religious leaders and secular intellectuals led Iran through the Constitutional Revolution. They aimed to secure, what we would consider in modern terms, a constitutional democracy that allowed for representation under the government. Supporters of the revolution sought freedom from a tyrannical king and independence from foreign control. By 1906, the first parliament

[13] "Iran," CIA World Factbook, Accessed April 1, 2011, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html.
[14] R. K. Ramazani, "Ideology and Pragmatism in Iran's Foreign Policy," *Middle East Journal* 58 (2004), 554.

was established, however not within a constitutional democracy but a monarchy, thus preserving the power of the Qajar Dynasty, which had been in power since 1794.[15]

Though the enlightened fought for democracy, Reza Khan overthrew the weakening Qajar Dynasty in 1925, declaring himself Shah of Iran (king). During the rule of Reza Shah, lasting from 1925 to his death in 1941, and followed by his son Muhammad Reza Shah (1941-1979) domestic and foreign policy decisions lacked any democratic ideals. Preserving national interest dominated policy during this time, surviving British and Russian occupations.[16] Muhammad Reza Shah famously set the goal of making Iran into a "Great Civilization" but was more concerned with creating a greater dynasty than managing the one already before him. The Shah sought the solution to his grandiose goal, by reaching out to the international community, most prominently the United States, in an effort to arm Iran. For the Shah, armament would lead to Iran becoming a super power in the world. Iran became one of the United States predominant arms purchasers. Not only did the United States gain a Persian Gulf watchdog but Iran also gained the benefits of having a super power's support.[17]

By the mid-1970s, political unrest soared. The people sought revolution for a system focused not on humanity but military advancement. Though poverty and strife prevailed among his people, the Shah was infamous for spending lavish amounts of money on his own desires. The people did not want a monarch focused solely on personal and national interest but a leader focused on the interests of the Muslim community. The Shah, desperate to retain his power, abused generous US resources to suppress the political uprising. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini spoke out against the

[15] Ramazani, "Ideology and Pragmatism in Iran's Foreign Policy," 554.
[16] Kaveh Bayat, "The Ethnic Question in Iran," *Middle East Report* 237 (2005), 42.
[17] Ramazani, "Ideology and Pragmatism in Iran's Foreign Policy," 554.

Shah's increasing dependence on the United States and stating any foreign agreements would insure, "the enslavement of Iran."[18] Khomeini sparked the Islamic Revolution, which sought to recreated Iran in the image of an "Islamic world order" for the benefit of its people. Foreign policy and governing would not be based on the West or East but on Islam. With the success of the Islamic Revolution, the fall of the monarchy, Ayatollah Khomeini became the founder and the first Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran.[19]

The Iranian Identity

During the vast four millennia of Iranian history, the nation has been host to numerous diverse ethnic and religious groups. Anyone who dares make sweeping generalizations about Iranian society or culture simply has not taken into consideration the development of Iranian identity.[20] Iran is home to over 77 million individuals[21], comprised of a diverse range of ethnic groups, languages, dialects and belief systems.

Several languages are considered to be Iranian languages including Persian, Kurdish, Luri, Gilaki, Mazandarani, Tat, Balochi and Talish.[22] According to current Central Intelligence Agency data, 70% of the Iranian population speaks one of these Iranian Languages.[23] Another 27% speak Turkic languages including Turkish, Azeri and Turkmen.[24] A very small percentage, approximately 3% speak Semitic languages such as

[18] Ramazani, "Ideology and Pragmatism in Iran's Foreign Policy," 554.
[19] Ibid., 555.
[20] Sekandar Amanolahi, "A Note on Ethnicity and Ethnic Groups in Iran," *Iran & the Caucasus* 9 (2005), 37.
[21] "CIA World Factbook: Iran."
[22] Bayat, "The Ethnic Question in Iran," 42.
[23] "CIA World Factbook: Iran." Comprised of Persian and Persian dialects (58%), Kurdish (9%), Luri (2%) and Balochi (1%).
[24] Ibid. Comprised of Turkic and Turkic dialects (26%) and Turkish (1%).

Arabic, Hebrew and Assyrian.[25] Under Chapter II, Article 15 of the Constitution declares the official language of Iran is Persian, however it permits the use of regional and tribal languages in the media, as well as their teachings in school. Specifically, Article 16, outlines that Arabic must be taught from elementary grades through high school to ensure that the Qur'an and other Islamic texts are comprehended

What makes one Iranian? Many scholars have tried to apply mechanical factors to identify which ethnic group an individual would belong to. Scholars have often tried to impose societal structures of majorities and minorities in order to classify sects of the Iranian population. Often Iranian identity was signified by an individual's Persian ancestry. Some experts considered Persians to be individuals who spoke Farsi and not a dialect of Persian or any Iranian dialects related to Persian.[26] Transversely, researchers counted those who spoke Farsi and did not have origins with an Iranian ethnic group, for instance Arabs, as Persian. These hard-line approaches to ethnicity in Iran proved misleading and inaccurate. In fact, historically, most ethnic groups in Iran, regardless of their origin, language or religion were collectively considered Iranian. Ethnicity in Iran is typically determined by one's cultural background and rarely by physical characteristics.[27] When defining one's identity as an Iranian, language and religion are the determining factors. An estimated 98% of the population is Muslim (89% Shia and 9% Sunni) while the remaining 2% are comprised of various religious faiths including

[25] "CIA World Factbook: Iran." Comprised of Arabic (1%) and Other (2%).
[26] Farsi is the local name of the Persian language in Iran, and is sometimes used in English instead of the word Persian when referring to the language
[27] Ethnic groups such as Persian-speaking Gypsies, Turkmens and a small population of Africans do display these physical markers. Amanolahi, "A Note on Ethnicity and Ethnic Groups in Iran," 38-39.

Judaism, Zoroastrianism, The Bahá'í Faith and Christianity.[28] Today, an estimated 85% of the population of Iran is considered to be Iranian.[29] Some Iranian ethnic groups include Persians, Lurs, Baluches and Tats. The remaining population is comprised of mostly of individuals of Arab and Turkmen ancestry.[30]

Government Structure

Iran has a complex and unusual political system, which combines the theocratic tradition of Islam with democracy. After the Islamic Revolution, the basis for the political system was written into the 1979 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Constitution outlines the form, foundation, goals and principles by which the state should be run. Article 1 declares the form of government in Iran is that of an Islamic Republic. Article 2 defines the principles by which the Islamic Republic of Iran should be founded on. These beliefs include: the belief in only one God, that God is just, and an understanding of His divine nature should be fundamental in the writing of law. Article 3 of the Constitution lists numerous goals or standards for governance that the new Islamic Republic should uphold. These include supporting good morals based in faith, fighting all forms of vice and corruption and ensuring social and political freedoms under the law. Further state goals outlined under Article 3 include the elimination of imperialism and foreign influence as well as despotism, autocracy and monopoly. Overall, Article 3 seeks to emphasize a movement towards positive liberty.[31]

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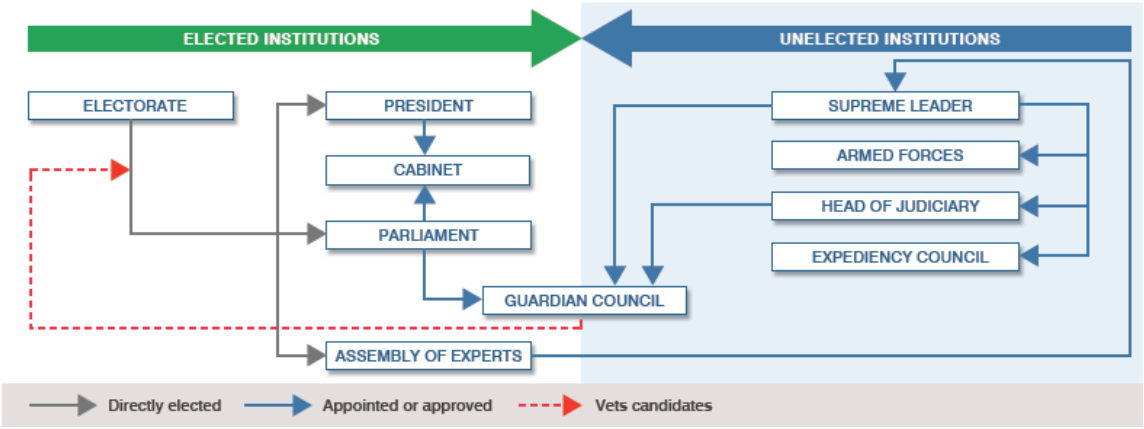
[28] "CIA World Factbook: Iran."
[29] Please see Appendix I for a full list of ethnic groups in Iran. Amanolahi, "A Note on Ethnicity and Ethnic Groups in Iran," 37.
[30] "CIA World Factbook: Iran."
[31] Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Established 24 October 1979. Ratified 28 July 1989.

The political system of Iran is very complex but can be broken down into two categories: elected institutions and unelected institutions (please see *Figure 1*). The electorate, are comprised of Iranian citizens over the age of 18. As of 2009, approximately 50% of voters were under the age of 30. Voter turnout in Iran hit an astounding high in the 1997 presidential election, with 80% of eligible voters turning out to vote, concluding in the overwhelming victory for reformist President Mohammad Khatami. The majority of the turnout was attributed in large part to women and the youth of Iran.[32]

Figure 1 (Source: BBC World News)[33]



The president of Iran is elected to four-year terms, allowing no more than two consecutive terms. The constitution describes the president as second in command of the nation and subject to the authority of the Supreme Leader. The president, as the head of the executive branch, is charged with upholding the constitution and ensuring it is implemented to the fullest extent of the law. The president chooses his cabinet members,

[32] "Guide: How Iran is ruled," BBC World News, accessed April 1, 2011, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8051750.stm.
[33] Ibid.

who serve him in upholding his official duties, however they must be approved by parliament.[34]

The electorate cannot only elect the president but also members of parliament or the Majlis. The 290 members of the Majlis serve four-year terms. The members of parliament have the power to introduce and pass laws. They may also summon or even impeach ministers or the president. Though the Majlis may pass a bill, the Guardian Council must approve it. While the reformists held a majority of the Majlis in 2000 by the 2004 Majlis election they had lost power to the conservatives. As of 2008, the current Chairman of Parliament, Ali Ardashir Larijani, was the former chief nuclear weapons advisor to the Supreme National Security Council.[35]

The Assembly of Experts is a body of 86 elected clerics who are charged with appointing the Supreme Leader, as well as monitoring his performance and may remove him if he is deemed incompetent. The experts who make up the assembly are elected for an eight-year term and are only eligible if they are clerics or ordained members of the Islamic religion. The members of the assembly meet on average twice a year in the holy city of Qom, where they are based, but meetings have also taken place in the capital city of Tehran and Mashhad. The assembly, which is currently ruled by conservatives, is due for reelection in 2014.[36]

The Guardian Council is the most powerful body in the Iranian government. Currently controlled by conservatives, the council consists of six theologians whom are appointed by the Supreme Leader and six jurists whom are nominated by the judiciary and approved by parliament. The electorate of Iran only has indirect influence over half

[34] "Guide: How Iran is ruled."
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.

of this governing body via parliamentary approval of the jurists. Council members are appointed to six-year terms on an overlapping basis so that only half of the membership at one time is in flux. The council has to approve any and all bills passed through parliament. If the council deems that the bill is not consistent with Islamic law the council has the power to veto the bill. The council also may bar any candidate who wishes to run as a candidate for parliament, the presidency or the Assembly or Experts. This authoritative ability to vet all electoral candidates was used readily in the 2005 election where only six of 1,000 hopefuls were allowed to run, all conservatives. Reformist attempts to protest the council's vetting powers proved unsuccessful. It was only until Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei stepped in and allowed two reformists candidates to run for president did the reformers make any headway. All female candidates were barred from running for any electoral office.[37]

The role of Supreme Leader, was first written into the new 1979 constitution by Ayatollah Khomeini, who felt the government needed a leader positioned at the top of the political structure. Khomeini became the 1st Supreme Leader of the newly independent Islamic Republic of Iran. The current Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has been in power since 1989. While the Assembly of Experts does have the power to appoint a new Supreme Leader at any time, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is only the second Islamic leader to hold this office. The Supreme Leader serves several purposes within the government system. He appoints the head of the Judiciary, the six theologians of the Guardian Council, the commanders of all of the armed forces, Friday prayer leaders and

[37] "Guide: How Iran is ruled."

the heads of any radio and TV station. The Supreme Leader also confirms the legitimacy of every presidential election.[38]

The Supreme Leader appoints the Head of the Judiciary. Currently the head of the judiciary is Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi. He reports to the Supreme Leader and has a close relationship with him and President Ahmadinejad. The judiciary itself nominates six members of the Guardian Council and ensures that Islamic law is enforced. Never independent of religious or political influence, the Iranian judicial system often defines legal policy based on Islam or Sharia Law, law that is based on the teaching and texts of the Islamic faith.[39]

Formed after the revolution, the Revolutionary Guard, alongside regular forces, make up the armed forces of Iran. The Supreme Leader appoints all commanding officers of the Revolutionary Guard and army. These commanders report to the Supreme Leader only. The Revolutionary Guard, initially formed to protect the leaders and people from resistance during the revolution, now has a powerful presence in many Iranian institutions. The Revolutionary Guard is charged with maintaining the volunteer militias or Basij, which have a branch in every Iranian town, serving as everything from community organizers to auxiliary police.[40]

The Expediency Council is an advisory board for the Supreme Leader. The members, appointed by the Supreme Leader, are often prominent and powerful social, political and religious leaders. The current chairman of the council is former President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. The council's main function is to resolve disputes between the Majlis and the Guardian Council. The Supreme Leader, in October 2005, expanded

[38] "Guide: How Iran is ruled."
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.

the role of the Expediency Council, to include "supervisory" powers over all government branches. Of all the branches of government in the Iranian political system, it is somewhat ambiguous how much power or effect the Expediency Council can have on policy. Some experts indicate the expansion in power provided by the Supreme Leader may strengthen former President Rafsanjani's influence in the Iranian government.[41]

The Rise and Fall of Reformism

For the first decade of the revolution, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini and the Islamic Republican Party maintained an elite power structure, which dictated much of Iran's domestic politics. Iran was left with a revolutionary political framework. After the death of Khomeini in 1989, the political sphere of Iran was left to grow and expand. With growing competition between promising political parties and figures, Iran's people now had the chance to take part in the political process. This new political landscape provided the needed momentum for reformism to emerge.[42]

Reformism rose to prominence during the presidency of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, President of Iran from 1989 to 1997, which marked significant change to Iranian foreign policy and strategy. President Rafsanjani policies emphasized the importance of national sovereignty and territorial integrity. While Rafsanjani would be considered conservative by today's standards, he was revolutionary for his time seeking to improve foreign relations for Iran and reconstructing the nation following the devastating Iran-Iraq war. One notable breakthrough for Rafsanjani was while he still was Speaker of the Majlis, just prior to his election, he was able to broker long-term economic and trade agreements with the USSR. Tehran had been making attempts since

[41] "Guide: How Iran is ruled."
[42] Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, "The Pluralistic Momentum in Iran and the Future of the Reform Movement," *Third World Quarterly* 27 (2006), 669.

the early 1980s with no success yet Rafsanjani struck a major breakthrough with a $15 billion (USD) deal with the Soviet Union.[43]

During the Rafsanjani presidency, he left a legacy of social and economic development. President Rafsanjani met the call of urgency after the Iran-Iraq war to reconstruct Iran. He not only encouraged policy-makers to focus on all areas of national interest but to begin to integrate Iran into the global economy. State-Leaders alongside Rafsanjani expanded trade opportunities, attracted investments and development of state infrastructure through improving state-to-state relations. Iran began to gain its footing in the global economy taking advantage of mutually beneficial relationships Rafsanjani built during his presidency. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Rafsanjani reached out to nearby Muslim states as well as considering relations with other nearby powers including China, Europe, India and Russia. Rafsanjani and many other Iranian policy-makers feared dependence on a super power and prided themselves on being a self-reliant. For that reason, they excluded themselves from any relations with the United States, even looking for ways to make US policy makers frustrated with their ongoing agreements with Muslim neighbors.[44]

Rafsanjani's presidency concluded in 1997 and many political parties emerged under the reformist movement including the Organization of the Islamic Republic's Mojahedin and the Solidarity Party. At the forefront of the reformist movement was the Islamic Iran Participation Front (IIPF).[45] In 1997, Muhammad Khatami, a moderate clergyman was elected as President of Iran. In a shocking election, an overwhelming

[43] Edmund Herzig, "Regionalism, Iran and Central Asia," *International Affairs* 80 (2004), 504.
[44] Ibid., 505.
[45] Adib-Moghaddam, "The Pluralistic Momentum in Iran and the Future of the Reform Movement," 667.

majority voted to elect the obscure Khatami, over the favored speaker of the Majlis, Ayatollah Natiq Nuri.[46] Over the coming years, contemporary Iranian reformism emerged stronger than ever. Iran's reformists put society first when approaching political policy. Policy makers believed in a political process in which a strong society would lead to a strong state. Reformism was now firmly upheld by an increasingly politically diverse civil society.[47]

This new population of intellectuals, activists and students were now able to come forward and have their voice heard. While they could not directly create or determine political policy, they generated a dialogue for change. With the advent of modern communication made possible via the Internet, this highly educated portion of the population was able to examine other cultures and political systems. Improvements to socioeconomic structure, education and mass communication provided the freedom for some Iranians access to the Internet and satellite television. This circulation of ideas offered many Iranian citizens an ability to look past the word of the state and come to their own informed opinions and conclusions. However, the monopolization of Iranian politics seemed impervious to the power of disseminating ideas and beliefs into the Iranian population spurred by this new form of mass communication.[48]

Contemporary Iranian intellectuals including Abdol-Karim Soroush and Mohammad Mojtahed Shabestari heavily influenced Khatami and many of the prominent reformists during this time. For the first time in the political sphere, Islam was being

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[46] Cyrus Masroori, "The Conceptual Obstacles to Political Reform in Iran," *The Review of Politics* 69 (2007), 171.
[47] Adib-Moghaddam, "The Pluralistic Momentum in Iran and the Future of the Reform Movement," 667.
[48] Adib-Moghaddam, "The Pluralistic Momentum in Iran and the Future of the Reform Movement," 669.

interpreted with a critical and philosophical eye and this attracted many young clerics. The interpretations advocated by Soroush and Shabestari provided support to reformist thought separate from that of state leaders or officials. They were able to penetrate the Iranian people, their culture and belief system in a way that the political leaders could not. This outside rhetoric from Iranian intellectuals helped to increase the momentum in the reformist movement by encouraging involvement and attention to their cause. So not only did intellectuals contribute to the growing movement but so did the expanding network of allies in the form of professional unions, grassroots advocacy campaigns and NGOs. In essence, this gave way for contemporary Iranian reformism, which gave people a voice. It helped to de-monopolize the political process and led to an astounding change in the Iranian political system: the pluralistic movement.[49]

The political goals of Khatami and the IIPF were now dependent on the participation of the public and their support. This would ultimately be their downfall. The surge of pluralism in Iran during this time saw the competition between power and public demands soar. *Third World Quarterly* author Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, explains that now, "…state policies have to be 'sold' to an audience that is no longer obliged to 'buy' from one source."[50] This puts a greater responsibility in the hands of the political official. He is now responsible to his constituency as their opinion *matters*. The opinion of that constituency could provide support and their support may translate into a vote at an upcoming election. Their votes could provide the maintenance of that elected official's power. Not only were state officials being held to a higher standard but so were state institutions. They were under and enormous amount of pressure to produce results

[49] Adib-Moghaddam, "The Pluralistic Momentum in Iran and the Future of the Reform Movement," 668.
[50] Ibid.

for the newly tuned-in public. The pressures felt both by the politicians and institutions led to an increasingly competitive political atmosphere and a step back from reform to more simplified and direct policies in order to meet the growing status quo.[51]

The reformist base Khatami helped to build reelected him in 2001 by an even greater majority than before.[52] In November 2003, just before the upcoming election for the seventh Majlis, the IIPF and Khatami knew they were losing their strong hold. In a strategic communiqué, they advised party members that there was evidence that the country had reached "a turning point in the reforms movement."[53] Several signs alarmed IIPF leaders: massive delays in reformist legislation, the youngest generation of Iran had lost faith in the reform parties and many reform candidates were barred from running in the upcoming Majlis election.[54] By February 2004, the conservatives regained power of the Majlis and in August of 2005, with the election of conservative Tehran mayor, Mahmood Ahmadinejad, it was clear that the reformists had lost all decision-making power within the Iranian political system.[55]

Many factors can be considered when examining the fall of the reform movement in Iran. Political theorists and even conspiracy theorists have hypothesized about the movement's demise and the stark turn to a conservative government system harkening back to the times of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini. Cyrus Masroori, author of "The Conceptual Obstacles to Political Reform in Iran," outlines several of these hypotheses. One of the most widely speculated theories was that the elections were fixed

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[51] Adib-Moghaddam, "The Pluralistic Momentum in Iran and the Future of the Reform Movement," 668.
[52] Masroori, "The Conceptual Obstacles to Political Reform in Iran," 171.
[53] Adib-Moghaddam, "The Pluralistic Momentum in Iran and the Future of the Reform Movement," 665.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Masroori, "The Conceptual Obstacles to Political Reform in Iran," 171-172.

or that there were electoral irregularities especially in the 2005 presidential election. Reformist candidate, Mahdi Karrubi, was adamant in the months following elections that tampering existed. While no evidence to date has proven Karrubi's claims, one can examine the known facts about past elections in Iran. First, irregularities in Iran's elections are a regular part of their operation. Further, if one wanted to take advantage of these irregularities or cause these irregularities, much could not be substantiated given the historical outcome of previous elections. There was conjecture about election irregularities during the 1997 election of President Khatami. Although, at the time, the Ministry of Interior, which oversees the elections, was controlled by the conservatives and had the desire to "fix" the election been present, it could have easily been accomplished. Khatami in fact won that election with an astonishing 70% of the vote.[56] Finally, while the Guardian Council did bar some reform candidates from the Majlis elections in 2003, there is no evidence of the Council's interference in that year's city councils elections, in which the reformers saw great defeat, nor the election of conservative Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as mayor of Tehran that same year.[57]

Another hypothesis claims that it was the reformers' apathy towards the economic and social concerns of their constituency and their support was won over by conservatives like Ahmadinejad, thus causing their downfall. While the reformers were left in a pressure filled political atmosphere given the growing civil society, the conservatives record for economic reform, including Ahmadinejad refutes this. During his campaigns for mayor of Tehran and President of Iran, economic issues were never central to his platform. If economic issues were at all brought up during either of his

[56] Masroori, "The Conceptual Obstacles to Political Reform in Iran," 172.
[57] Ibid.

campaigns, Ahmadinejad statements on these issues were often unclear and not specific. In fact, as mayor of Tehran, Ahmadinejad had a poor record of maintaining economic stability and garnered little success with his policies. If economic issues were at the forefront of the voter's mind going into the elections, presidential candidates such as reformer Mahdi Karrubi, who had promised sixty dollars in assistance per month to every Iranian adult, he should have won the vote. Instead, Karrubi placed third in the election, receiving 700,000 fewer votes than Ahmadinejad.[58]

Another prominent hypothesis after the elections argued that voters were simply tired of the reformers' message and goals for Iran. The people of Iran wanted a change so they cast their votes against the reformers. This seemed plausible with the change of the Majlis to conservative power in 2003 and the election of conservative President Ahmadinejad in 2005. Some claimed Ahmadinejad won over the people because he was an "outsider" and not the clergymen voters were protesting against. He was in fact the first layman to be elected since 1981, however his ties show he was not much of an outsider at all. Shortly after the revolution, he was a commander in the Revolutionary Guard, a kind of ad hoc military created in the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution. He even served as a governor of the province Ardabil. As mayor of Tehran, he had wide-ranging contacts and support from many clergy and at the very least had the implied support of Ayatollah Khamenei, Supreme Leader of Iran since 1989. Also, had voters been searching for a laymen as their leader, it was not evident in the election results as four other laymen who ran garnered less votes than the clergymen who came in behind Ahmadinejad, Rafsanjani (who tried to regain his former presidency) and Karrubi. Finally, had the voters really wanted an "outsider" their votes would have gone to

[58] Masroori, "The Conceptual Obstacles to Political Reform in Iran," 172.

candidate Mustafa Mo'in. While his experience included serving as the minister of higher education in former President Khatami's cabinet, he had no significant ties to any clergy regime.[59]

What did cause the fall of the Reformer movement? Voter apathy. Many of the voters who turned out in 1997 and 2001 to elected President Khatami simply did not show up to the polls in 2005. According to the Ministry of Interior during the first round of elections or in Western terms, the primary, 37% of eligible voters did not cast their ballot. An estimated 17% were said to have stayed home in order to boycott the election due to their dissatisfaction with the failures of Khatami's cabinet. *Sharq* Newspaper reported in a 2002 poll, that if the election were to take place the next day, 22.5% would vote for a reformer more progressive than Khatami. The people were dissatisfied that Khatami's presidency was unable continue reforms in an expeditious manor. Had just half of that 17% cast their vote equally to reformer candidates Karrubi and Mo'in, Ahmadinejad would not have been eligible for the final round of voting. However, in the second round, with Ahmadinejad and Karrubi remaining, over 40% of eligible voters stayed home. A large part of the success of Khatami in 1997 and 2001 was his ability to mobilize the youth, intellectuals, university students and women of Iran to come out and vote to reform Iran.[60] In his second term, voters lost their faith in Khatami due to declining results and delayed legislation made difficult by the shift in the Majlis and conservative clergy interference.[61] With a loss of trust in their government to perform,

[59] Masroori, "The Conceptual Obstacles to Political Reform in Iran," 173.
[60] Ibid., 174.
[61] Adib-Moghaddam, "The Pluralistic Momentum in Iran and the Future of the Reform Movement," 665.

voters grew apathetic and without the support of the educated layperson to support a reformer candidate, Ahmadinejad won.[62]

The Neo-Conservative Approach

The fall of the reformist movement in Iran gave way to a restructuring of governance in Iran. By February 2004, the conservatives marked their first victory claiming two thirds of the Majlis.[63] In the coming months and years the conservative majority grew in power culminating in the election of conservative president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005.

The Iranian people had once placed great hope in the reformist movement and with trepidation they watched the fall of the movement. The promise of liberation by their dear government, as recently as 2002, rapidly turned their optimism for development to one of dismay as the legitimacy of the government's authority was called into question. The government now stands as a power that is not only omnipresent but also omnipotent.[64] For the people of Iran, is comes as a comfort and yet a frightening force. While Iranian citizens are dependent on their government for military protection, they are left to fear a growing fragile economy and increasing social problems.[65]

In the wake of the 2005 presidential election, two factions emerged promoting ideal state models for the future of Iran: one promoting a bureaucratic and authoritarian regime, the other fighting for a democratic republic. The first school of thought would like to capitalize on the remnants of bureaucracy left over from the monarchy in order to impose an authoritarian order. The second wishes to encourage a republican order and

[62] Masroori, "The Conceptual Obstacles to Political Reform in Iran," 173-174
[63] Morad Saghafi and Kaveh Ehsani, "The New Language of Iranian Politics," *Middle East Report* 233 (2004), 16.
[64] Saghafi and Ehsani, "The New Language of Iranian Politics," 20.
[65] Ibid.

ensure the equal rights of citizenship. In this model, officials of the state are elected by popular vote as a means to ensure that the authority of the government is used to reconfigure the state by the will of the people.[66]

The means by which these approaches to governance are applied also differ. The bureaucratic/authoritarian approach would be enforced by the military in a top down fashion. The hope is that by returning to an authoritarian system, much like the one overthrown during the Iranian revolution of 1979, they would develop a stable Iran and thus an approving international community would follow. However, partisans to this modern day bureaucratic regime likely come from a far more complex motivation. This mode of governance would enable many political leaders in Iran to not only secure their power but wealth within the growing Iranian government.[67]

A minority still fights for the democratization of the Iran as the neo-conservative power rises. Those fighting for the democratization of Iran are focused on advocating for a more transparent and viable political atmosphere. They hope to achieve this through eliminating redundant structures within the Iranian political system, which subjects Iranian citizens, including women, religious minorities and secularists, to an oppressive rule of law. However, the inability of the reform movement to maintain elected office and mobilize the popular support of a struggling people has left many lay activists calling for a secularization of the state. Theorists believe that it will take a sustained and lengthy struggle for the citizens of Iran to reemerge as an active political populace. Without

[66] Saghafi and Ehsani, "The New Language of Iranian Politics," 23.
[67] Ibid.

earnest support for democratization from the people, the movement will remain unviable.[68]

Domestic and Foreign Policy Obstacles

Iran has a complex set of regional circumstances and domestic tensions that often dictate the government's unpredictable and elastic approach to domestic and foreign policy. An increasingly discontent Iranian population frequently requires leaders to intertwine the domestic and international goals of the nation. Preserved by their constitution, the Iranian government holds tightly to an increasingly nationalist and territorial attitude. Much of the discontented citizens reside amongst the youth of the nation, emboldened by the technological age, and desperate to see the development of their country and greater opportunity in reaching out to the international community.[69]

Several factors contribute to the unpredictability of policy-making in Iran. Six variables impact Iran's policy-making system, which reside in its complex constitutional and institutional government. The first, and probably the most impeding, is the intricate network of checks and balances among the numerous competing governmental bodies. The inefficient government structure leads to a breakdown in communication, increased competition and divergent goals among political officials.

The impact of the complex government structures is illustrated by the leading power structures in Iran. Political power in Iran is not centralized nor simple, rather it is spread out among five political bodies. The Presidency is arguably the most efficient stage for the promotion and debate of domestic policy, as the National Security Council supports the holder of this office. Other bodies that have considerable input into the

[68] Saghafi and Ehsani, "The New Language of Iranian Politics," 23.
[69] Ehteshami, "Iran's International Posture after the Fall of Bagdad," 180.

domestic and/or foreign policy of Iran include the Majlis, the Council of Guardians and the Expediency Council. However, the Expediency Council, which resolves disputes between competing agencies, has the unique opportunity to promote their interests in both domestic and foreign policy matters. Given the wide scope of the Expediency Council's function as the mediator to all political offices, it has been known, since the mid-1990s, to utilize its power to hold significant influence on every aspect of policy. Among just these four political bodies, they all express and convey the interests of the nation in different ways.[70]

The Supreme Leader is by far the most powerful political figure in Iran. While many interests are articulated throughout these other institutions or agencies, the Leader has the attention national and world audience, and a means to carry out his interests as Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Guards Corps (the *Pasdaran*, Iran's provisional military). Often times, the statements of the Leader do not coincide with or even approve of the actions of other branches of government. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei was known for criticizing former President Khatami for many of his domestic policy decisions. Those under the Leader also confound Iran's foreign policy stance. A prominent example of this occurred in 1996 when Brigadier General Mohammad Baqer Zolqadr, head of the Joint Staff Command of the Revolutionary Guards Corps, proclaimed the United States an enemy of Iran and their forces were not, as suspected, focused on regional threats, but their military efforts were focused on countering "US threats."[71] While the opinion of Genreal Zolqadr was broadcasted internationally, it was not necessarily the opinion of other prominent political officials or the Iranian

[70] Ehteshami, "Iran's International Posture after the Fall of Bagdad," 182.
[71] Ibid., 183.

government. This "balance" of power causes impairment to the expediency of policy-making as well as contributing to an ambiguous domestic and international image.[72] The complex government structure of Iran creates an unclear representation of their policy. The numerous power figures chiming in can often distort official policy or practice and even discredit the value of government statements. All of this has an impact on the efficiency of policy-making.

The second issue, which can impact policy-making in Iran, is inter-agency rivalries and political factions. Political factionalism affects nearly every aspect of policy-making in Iran. These feuds directly affect policy decisions. Rivalries between individuals and factions can severely impact foreign policy decisions. As the government arena in Iran becomes more closely censored, competition to promote ones position is critical. These factions and individuals have widely divergent proposals and approaches to domestic and foreign policy. For example, reformists often promote the restoration of relations with the United States whereas the conservatives have been known to refer to the United States as "Satan" and consider it treasonous to consider any level of diplomacy. Prominent political and religious figures can often muddle the field. An individual can endorse a faction or groups can often promote their beliefs by declaring their allegiance to political and religious leaders like Ayatollah Khomeini, often quoting the person and promising to follow their teachings faithfully. This can offer legitimacy to their cause but also confusion to the larger picture of domestic and foreign policy.[73]

Another aspect, which can effect policy creation, is fighting amongst political factions. This fighting not only can take place among domestic entities but on the foreign

[72] Ehteshami, "Iran's International Posture after the Fall of Bagdad," 183.
[73] Ibid.

stage as well. Attacks among rival groups can seek to discredit their opponent, which ultimately pollutes the debate or even halts progress. These domestic squabbles then become foreign policy liabilities.[74] A prime example is evident in the ambiguous means of engagement to restore relations with the United States. In an environment where factions are attempting to discredit the word of the opponent in order to cut off their lines of communication while, racing to open channels of communications by stealing the opposition's momentum, it can be a confusing and treacherous field to navigate. The ability to conduct foreign policy relations becomes fragmented. Outsiders, like the United States, often find great difficulty in determining genuine proposals for debate and political grand standing to jockey for power.[75]

Fourthly, since the 1990s, Iran has moved towards an economy-focused decision-making scheme when it comes to foreign policy. Foreign policy in Iran during this time shifted focus to political economy as Iran's oil laden economy was beginning to grow. The 1990s brought the desire to incorporate increased economic relations with the outside world including foreign investment and foreign trade agreements. At this time Iran had a desperate domestic need to free Iran's population from poverty, this need led to the domestic policy and foreign relations of Iran to blend together. As the country increased their dependence on their sole commodity, oil, the more the country lost control over its future. Iran was now vulnerable to the influence of the world stage and the associated pressures.[76] In the aftermath of these economically motivated foreign policy decisions, Iran's politicians are left competing for control over the riches these investment

[74] Ehteshami, "Iran's International Posture after the Fall of Bagdad," 183.
[75] Ibid., 184.
[76] Ibid.

agreements can bring, often pitting individuals, factions and even government bodies against one another.[77]

The fifth variable that affects domestic and foreign policy decision-making is the restlessness of the Iranian public. Though politicians often seek first to serve their interests they must also balance those goals with the demands of the electorate. The current state of affairs in Iran is one of agitation and despair, riddled with poverty, joblessness and waning political freedoms. The people have increasing expectations of their government. Politicians face increasing pressure to improve conditions for the people of Iran, to promise a better future and increase their connection to the outside world, which many feel is the key to improving conditions.[78]

Finally, Iran wishes to clutch onto its autonomy even if that means forsaking beneficial foreign policy relations. Foreign relations can often lead to a means of prosperity, however that often comes at a price: reduced independence. Partnerships typically come with underlying expectations and Iran has been reluctant to lose its autonomy in exchange for, what some Iranians feel, would be Western-domination. Iran doesn't currently have any substantial alliances that would offer the support and security provided by foreign aid. While Iran has made minimal efforts to establish relationships with Syria and Russia, both countries show little commitment to support Iran and risk their own interests. While Iran claims to prize its independence, it comes at a price. Iranians continually miss out on opportunities for their basic needs to be met and the

[77] Ehteshami, "Iran's International Posture after the Fall of Bagdad," 185.
[78] Ibid.

improvement of their socio-economic status. With little foreign policy strategy being considered, Iran is becoming increasingly isolated from a global political arena.[79]

[79] Ehteshami, "Iran's International Posture after the Fall of Bagdad," 186.

CHAPTER TWO
Why Nations Pursue Nuclear Weapons

The nuclear weapon, a devastating weapon of mass destruction, creates an explosion many thousands (possibly millions) of times more powerful than a conventional explosive. To put this to scale, a 1 kiloton nuclear weapon is equal to 1,000 tons of TNT.[80] A nuclear explosion is catastrophic; temperatures reach higher than any conventional bomb creating excessive thermal energy, emitted in the form of heat and light. Energy this volatile is capable of creating considerable devastation over a large area. A 150 kiloton nuclear bomb would produce an aftershock of 20 pounds per square inch immediately destroying everything within fourth-tenths of a square mile.[81] Those who survive the initial blast will suffer severe skin burns and the explosion would start fires across the impact site. Nuclear explosions cause incredibly dangerous radioactive fallout, which lasts only for a few seconds, but the remaining effects can last years. This damaging radioactive fallout is unique to nuclear weaponry. In fact, 85% of the nuclear weapon produces thermal energy and the air blast or shock wave accompanies the explosion. The other 15% is an energy release in the form of radiation. After the initial blast, 5% of this energy, those first few seconds, puts out a concentrated level of intense gamma rays. The remaining 10% is a delayed and slowly released radiation.[82] If the devastation of the initial blast was not catastrophic enough, the radiation left behind will cause contamination, cancer and birth defects for survivors and future generations. Given the capabilities for mass destruction, which is held within this weapon, why would a nation pursue nuclear weapons?

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[80] Siracusa, *Nuclear Weapons: A Very Short Introduction*, 6.
[81] Ibid., 7.
[82] Ibid., 6.

The Genesis of the Bomb

On August 6, 1945, the first atomic bomb was deployed destroying Hiroshima, Japan during World War II. The uranium-based weapon utilized the splitting of atoms or nuclear fission to create the explosive force, which equaled 20,000 tons of TNT. The origins of this horrific event began with the Manhattan Project. President Franklin D. Roosevelt received communication on October 11, 1939, from Wall Street economist and unofficial advisor, that scientist Albert Einstein had discovered vital information in his recent research. Einstein wrote to the President that his research uncovered, "…that it may become possible to set up a nuclear chain reaction in a large mass of uranium, by which vast amounts of power and large quantities of new radium-like elements could be generated," leading "to the of construction of bombs, and it is conceivable – though much less certain – that extremely powerful bombs of a new type may thus be constructed."[83] Einstein emphasized that the race was on with the Nazi government, as their research was undoubtedly concluding similar findings, and it was likely that this new weapon could materialize, "in the immediate future."[84] Due to the fear that Nazi Germany might close to developing fission-based weapons, the race to be the first to develop the technology began. President Roosevelt, a week later wrote back to Einstein, informing him that an exploratory committee to study Uranium was underway. The Manhattan Project was born, with the efforts of over 65,000 workers and many of the most influential scientific minds including American theoretical physicist Julius Robert Oppenheimer.[85] On July 16, 1945, the Manhattan Project, code-name "Trinity"

[83] Siracusa, *Nuclear Weapons: A Very Short Introduction*, 12.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid., 13.

culminated in the first explosion of an atomic bomb at a test site in Alamogordo, New Mexico.[86]

In the coming decades nuclear weapon technology proliferated. In 1949, the United Kingdom received intelligence, made public by then British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, that the former Soviet Union had detonated an atomic bomb.[87] The United Kingdom, who in part, partnered with the United States during the Manhattan Project, followed suit in 1952 with its first test and in 1957 testing a 200-300 kiloton thermonuclear weapon, this time utilizing hydrogen and the process of nuclear fusion.[88] There are now two volatile forms of nuclear weapons, those that utilize nuclear fusion, a reaction in which the atomic nuclei "fuse" or join together and those that utilize nuclear fission in which the atom is split. A thermonuclear weapon or H-Bomb is a much more sophisticated weapon to design than the atomic bomb. In little more than a decade, the United Kingdom had developed a Bomb 10 times more powerful than that of the weapon used on Hiroshima, equivalent to 200,000 tons of TNT. Today, nine known countries possess nuclear weapons. Following the United Kingdom, France and China performed its first tests in 1960 and 1964 respectively. Other known nuclear powers include India (1974), Pakistan (1998), North Korea (2006) and though they have not publically acknowledged nuclear weapons possession, Israel (1979).[89]

Why Do Countries Pursue Nuclear Weapons?

The nuclear arms race is fueled by one thing: power. This power takes many forms: military, political and economic. One commonality among states is almost all

[86] Siracusa, *Nuclear Weapons: A Very Short Introduction*, 19.
[87] Ibid., 40.
[88] Ibid., 59.
[89] Ibid., 40-60.

wish to pursue power in order to increase its standing in the international community. William Epstein, former Director of the UN Disarmament Division of the United Nations Secretariat, explains that increased power means that a nation can decrease its dependence on the world. The goal, Epstein says, is "…to increase the freedom of action."[90] Epstein explains a nation's freedom of action is dependent on the level of power acquired. Further, Epstein acknowledges that nations will pursue power, whether military, political or economic, in various ways, however he explains, "…some states view nuclear proliferation as a means to this end."[91] Many nations may perceive going nuclear as a means of securing power and prestige. For these states, obtaining nuclear weapons means a stable economic future and international influence.

For each nation the decision to go, or not go, nuclear is unique. Having the answer as to why a nation would or would not go nuclear is imperative to international security and foreign policy efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation.[92] For each there are incentives and disincentives to going nuclear which are predicated upon any number of external or internal factors. Similar to William Epstein, Scott D. Sagan, Caroline S.G. Munro professor of Political Science at Stanford University, proposes a theoretical framework about why states decide to build nuclear weapons. This includes, "the security model," which asserts that states pursue nuclear weapons to strengthen and build their military security. Next, "the domestic politics model," under which the production of nuclear weapons is a political pawn used as a tool to advance a nation's interests.

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[90] William Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 430 (1977), 17.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Scott D. Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," *International Security* 21 (1997), 54.

Finally Sagan argues that in, "the norms model," nuclear weapons are produced in order to conform to the normative symbol of achieving modernity.[93]

Military security is one of the primary talking points when a nation assesses whether or not to go nuclear. According to neorealist theory, our international system operates on an anarchical model in which a nation's sovereignty and security is attended to in a self-reliant manner.[94] Given the immensely destructive nature of nuclear weapons, discussed earlier in this research, any nation that has an interest in maintaining its security must address the challenges accompanying nuclear weapons. According to Epstein, a defense based military structure remains the customary measure and argues that this will remain unless there is another satisfactory method of ensuring security.[95] Sagan explains that under "the security model" gaining access to a nuclear deterrent is one mode of defense. Obtaining this nuclear deterrent is matter of balance and it can be done in one of two ways. First, developed nations who have the monetary means can choose to establish this balance by developing their own nuclear weapons. Second, less developed nations or weak states could balance their security measures by joining an alliance with a nuclear power, thus gaining the ability to use nuclear retaliation as a threat via its ally. The relative credibility of this alliance could prove to be a tipping point in the decision to build the bomb, though it may be a nation's only legitimate means of protection from nuclear attack.[96]

A nation must examine the factors proposed by Epstein and Sagan to determine whether or not to pursue nuclear weapons. If the incentives can outweigh the

[93] Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," 55.
[94] Ibid., 57.
[95] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 17.
[96] Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," 57.

disincentives for going nuclear and in the absence of another satisfactory solution, going nuclear may be perceived as the preferred defense measure. Some nations may perceive the disincentives to outweigh the incentives to go nuclear. The desire for security in this case is over ridden by the fear of inciting a nuclear holocaust, reliving the tragedy of another Hiroshima or a multitude of such attacks. Many view nuclear weapons negatively as a weapon of mass destruction and regard it as an unnecessary means of reaching successful conclusion to a conflict.[97]

William Epstein lays out five incentives for going nuclear that contributes to military defense. First, a country may choose to go nuclear to obtain military superiority over an adversary or potential enemy. This was all too evident in cases like the United States against Japan and Germany in World War II. In this case, the United States decision to go nuclear and ultimately use the Bomb saw the conclusion of one of the worst wars in world history. Another incentive to go nuclear is the desire to prevent enemy attack. Nations could surmise that with nuclear capabilities, they would be able to maintain superiority over the enemy thus deterring a potential attack. The third incentive Epstein points out is that a nation may wish to achieve an effective deterrent against a hostile nuclear power. Epstein explains this could be the case with the NATO nuclear powers when examining potential nuclear aggressors such as Pakistan, North Korea and Iran. Further, a nation may wish to go nuclear to ensure that they obtain nuclear capability before the enemy. This would provide a sense of security in that the nuclear option would at least be the before an enemy chose to use it first. Finally, Epstein underscores military independence as a big incentive for going nuclear. A nation would

[97] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 18.

not have to rely on any other nation or nuclear super power to defend them in a conflict. This would garner prestige and greater freedom of action, which is the ultimate goal.[98]

For a country not to go nuclear, positive alternatives would be necessary to ensure a stable security structure. These positive alternatives or disincentives would require a definitive means of security. The necessary provisions to guarantee a nation's security could be allocated in a few ways. Epstein explains one positive guarantee would include aiding a country threatened with a nuclear attack. A military alliance is one example of how this could be carried out. Such alliances are present today, such as NATO, the Five Power Defense Arrangements (FPDA) and European Union (EU), the members of which have sworn commitments to defend other member states. For example the FPDA, signed in 1971, which includes the nuclear capable United Kingdom (1952), is a five-member military alliance that primarily is committed to protecting Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore from threats or external aggression. Due to safeguards like these, non-nuclear members of these alliances have no urgent need to go nuclear due to being under the safety of a military alliance.[99]

Another factor that would provide disincentive to go nuclear, would be establishing assurances that nuclear power states would promise not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons on states that did not have nuclear weapons. During the negotiations for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) this concept was held at great importance but was never officially written into the treaty. While the five nuclear weapon states party to the treaty have provided assurances that they would not use their nuclear arsenal against a non-nuclear state party to the treaty, as long as they were not

[98] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 18.
[99] Ibid., 20.

subject to a conventional attack in which the non-nuclear state held an alliance with a nuclear state.[100] To date, these undertakings have not been formerly written into the treaty leaving this disincentive little to no clout in the reasoning to not go nuclear.[101]

A third option, in place of going nuclear, includes an alternative security measure in which the nuclear powers must commit to and fulfill their obligations under the NPT. These obligations include achieving a greater level of nuclear disarmament and halting the nuclear arms race. At the time of the NPT's conception, it was hoped that the disarmament efforts would provide a method of indirect security for the international community. Though the world has seen disarmament of over 100,000 nuclear weapons in the last 60 years, there are still over 27,000 operational today.[102] Epstein states, in order to truly halt the nuclear arms race, "Only drastic nuclear disarmament…would reverse the nuclear arms race [and] serve to provide any real incentive against nuclear proliferation."[103]

An additional measure that would lessen the desire to go nuclear is the guarantee of possessing a conventional arsenal. This supply of arms would ensure that a country could protect itself against a possible attack. The final disincentive Epstein points out is the availability of an allied police force supplied by the UN Security Council. The UN police force would serve to defend a nation unable to ward off a conventional or nuclear attack. Epstein proposes that this privilege be revoked via military sanction should a country go nuclear and if a member of the NPT violates the commitment to the treaty. If the UN police force could organize to such an extent it would provide a viable deterrent

[100] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 20.
[101] Ibid., 20-21.
[102] Siracusa, *Nuclear Weapons: A Very Short Introduction*, xiii.
[103] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 21.

for going nuclear. As of October 2009, 12,646[104] United Nations Police were deployed and over 90,000 UN-mandated military peacekeepers in over 16 peacekeeping operations around the world.[105] Though the use of UN Police and military peacekeepers have assisted many countries in need of security assistance and development, Epstein says extensive involvement of the UN would be a remote if not an implausible goal to deter a nuclear attack or proliferation.[106]

Political prestige is a goal of many nations to enhance its power and standing in the world. The acquisition of nuclear weapons could aid in this effort. Epstein explains, nations who have a nuclear arsenal often have greater influence when assessing foreign policy matters and the interests of that nation are at the top of international debates.[107] Epstein offers six incentives for going nuclear and the benefits it would provide a nation's political prestige.

First and foremost, going nuclear could secure a nation's power status. Epstein sites examples like the United Kingdom, France, China and India as nations who pursued nuclear weaponry as a means to maintain power. Iran, Epstein points out, would be a prime example of a country that wishes to achieve greater power through the acquisition of nuclear weapons.[108]

Places of power can take many forms in the international community, acquiring one or many of these coveted positions could sway a nation to pursue nuclear arms. Epstein explains it is incredibly attractive to developed nations or larger countries to go

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[104] The Center on International Cooperation, *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2010* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2010), 9.
[105] Ibid., 4.
[106] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 21.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid., 22.

nuclear, as it would assure them top placement on some of the most influential international forums. Another reason to go nuclear is a more localized incentive. For a smaller or more remote nation, the political prestige gained by going nuclear could assist in enhancing their power within a region or specific grouping of states. Whether a seat in the international forum or power over ones region, the political power that comes with nuclear capabilities is an alluring incentive.[109]

A nation may wish to go nuclear to change or improve its perceived image in the international community. Going nuclear could enhance a nation's inferiority in the international community. The acquisition of nuclear weapons would help could bring about a better standing amongst the international hierarchy. Further, going nuclear could prove to diminish discriminatory factors, which damage the image of the nation. This would only apply if the nation played by the rules, meaning they proceed by abiding by all international safeguards when pursuing their nuclear activity. Finally, going nuclear could give the impression political independence in the international community and specifically towards existing nuclear powers. Going nuclear in this case would demonstrate a resistance to the demands or pressures of the nuclear powers and thus an image of political autonomy.[110]

According to Sagan's "domestic politics model" political prestige is controlled by three kinds of political actors. These domestic actors directly evaluate their government's stake in nuclear technology. They encourage or discourage governments from pursuing nuclear weapons. While pursuing or not pursuing the Bomb may serve the national interests of a state, it is more likely that it will serve the political prestige and

[109] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 22.
[110] Ibid.

interests of an individual political actor. First, these political actors consist of the state's nuclear energy establishment, which includes officials from civilian reactor facilities and state-run laboratories. Next, military professionals are also influential in these talks. These individuals can include leaders of the air force or navy interested in nuclear propulsion. Finally, politicians in governments in which a political party or a majority of its public are proponents for or against going nuclear can influence this decision-making process. The three groups that Sagan points out are most power if a coalition is formed and the groups ban together. In this case, the may have significant direct or indirect political power over their nuclear weapons program.[111]

Once the military and political considerations are taken into account, the economic incentives and disincentives must be examined. While in close relation to the political considerations, economic considerations affect not only developed countries but developing countries as well. For developing countries especially, nuclear technology can be a positive factor in boosting its economy. Specifically, nuclear energy, which is a cheaper energy source, could be an integral part in a nation's infrastructure and thus benefiting the country's economic position in the world and improve the standard of living for its people. Peaceful uses of nuclear technology, like nuclear energy, could also serve to educate countries on important safety procedures and precautions. Some countries however could be interested in the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the potential military benefits of gaining aspects of nuclear technology. Whether or not they have true intentions to go nuclear, many countries, including Iran, feel that acquiring this nuclear energy technology will give them the option to go forward with a nuclear weapons program if it is deemed beneficial or time to begin developing the program

[111] Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," 64.

further.[112] Sagan points out, "Some fifty-seven states now operate or are constructing nuclear power or research reactors, and it has been estimated that about thirty countries today have the necessary industrial infrastructure and scientific expertise to build nuclear weapons on a crash basis if they chose to do so."[113]

Epstein emphasizes that countries like India and Iran, believe going nuclear could increase their economic power and prestige. With this rise in their economic power, the gap between themselves and rich nations would shrink, thus making its acquisition of advanced nuclear technology an enticing incentive to build their economy in the short term and plan for their military future. Epstein explains that it is generally accepted that once a nation's nuclear energy industry is developed and established, the transition to going nuclear would be a very low cost endeavor as much of the cost would have already been absorbed in creating the nuclear energy infrastructure. For example, in 1974, India's first nuclear test explosion test, which was conducted underground, was estimated to cost only $250,000. This is considerably less than the less effective modern conventional weapons we are more familiar with. While the cost of developing nuclear technology is expensive, the actual cost of manufacturing nuclear warheads is relatively cheap, costing only tens of thousands of dollars. Most countries feel this is not only a cheaper alternative than conventional arms but also more effective for military security. Creating the warheads is only one component of building a nuclear arsenal. Countries wishing to pursue a more sophisticated array of nuclear arms and delivery systems would have more challenging and expensive economic burdens.[114]

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[112] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 22.
[113] Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," 56.
[114] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 22.

One of the most vital incentives to going nuclear is reaching a level of economic independence. Nuclear capability for nation's seeking to go nuclear view it not only as economic independence but a militarily and politically freeing as well. Many countries are dedicated to joining the new world order brought about by nuclear technology. Nations may view going nuclear as a gateway to reaching this elite status.[115]

Economic disincentives to going nuclear are not often discussed, according to Epstein, as the economic prestige likely to follow is all too alluring. However, those who wish to forgo obtaining or building nuclear arms may do so for the following reasons. First, a nation may be satisfied purely by the economic gains of obtaining nuclear energy. If a nation can guarantee that its supply of nuclear fuel is secure in order to continue to power their reactors and this is the primary source of energy for its nation, this would create economic confidence. On the other hand if the supply of nuclear fuel was contingent on the nation not going nuclear and the nation knew going nuclear would result in losing nuclear energy assistance, the nation may not risk the economic fallout to proceed.[116]

Other economic disincentives are similarly imposed by the actions of other international actors. If a country wished to pursue nuclear energy to strengthen its economy but would not be assisted in developing necessary nuclear facilities nor access to the necessary supplies unless it agreed to become a party to the NPT or agreed to restrict itself to nuclear energy and abide by safeguards. This was the case with Libya and South Korea. Epstein explains, both nations became parties to the NPT in order to obtain the nuclear reactors necessary to begin nuclear energy production. However

[115] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 23.
[116] Ibid.

encouraging this might sound to some, observers have argued that countries like these only sign on to the NPT to obtain the technology necessary so they could acquire nuclear weapons.[117] In fact, there is a clause in the NPT, the "supreme national interest" clause, which allows signatories to the treaty to provide three months notice to legally withdraw and pursue its nuclear interest independent from the restraints of the treaty.[118]

Under Sagan's "norms model," the importance of understanding the nuclear technology decision-making process is vital to gaining perspective on nuclear proliferation. According to this model, state behavior and national security interests are not under the control of domestic actors but rather state behavior and security policy is influenced by norms. These norms consist of shared viewpoints about the legitimacy and suitability of actions taken in international relations. Little is understood about the development of norms surrounding going nuclear and what Sagan calls "nuclear symbolism."[119] What we do know is that under "the norms model" modern institutions and organizations often resemble each other, within the field of sociology this is referred to as institutional isomorphism. Neoinstitutional theory does not attribute these similarities to competition or a logical learning process but that institutions simply mimic each other. The roles, rituals and routines are not developed by individual or institutional interest but are shaped by the roles, rituals and routines establish by social actors. Decisions under this model are based upon not only rational thought but also socially acceptable habits and routines, which have embedded themselves into the social environment. These norms help to establish an acceptable framework and behaviors for this social environment by legitimizing certain behaviors and dismissing others as archaic

[117] Epstein, "Why States Go - And Don't Go – Nuclear," 24.
[118] Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," 55.
[119] Ibid., 73.

and irrational. From this sociological perspective, military functions and weapons arsenals are more of a matter of modernity. Just as a modern state believes it must have institutions like Olympic teams, airlines and flags, an advanced military structure is part of what is perceived necessary to be legitimized as a modern state.[120] Sagan explains:

> The sociologists' arguments highlight the possibility that nuclear weapons programs serve symbolic functions reflecting leaders' perceptions of appropriate and modern behavior. The political science literature reminds us, however, that such symbols are often contested and that the resulting norms are spread by power and coercion, and not by the strength of ideas alone. Both insights usefully illuminate the nuclear proliferation phenomenon.[121]

Human nature affects how we effectively examine our approach to problems and the world around us. Gaining a perspective on nuclear decision-making requires a broad lens, which examines the nuances of social and political behavior closely. When the realities of nuclear weapons thrust into the awareness of humanity, the result is denial or defensive avoidance due to the anxiety brought about by the confrontation. Denial is not only a normal but apt response to dealing with nuclear threats. It is our nature to accept that one can do little to resolve something that potentially will occur. It is not until the threat is imminently life threatening, that we are face to face with danger, does it enable us to take action.[122]

Jerome D. Frank, late Professor of Psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins University Medical School, explains when humans are faced with inconceivable danger, un-matched to former experience, they will reach to familiar solutions to overcome it. Frank emphasizes that this can cause a grave disparity between our objective reality and what is really perceived. Today's national leaders are primarily rooted in the reality of dealing

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[120] Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," 74.
[121] Ibid., 75-76.
[122] Jerome D. Frank, "Nuclear Arms and Prenuclear Leaders: Sociopsychological Aspects of the Nuclear Arms Race," *Political Psychology* 4 (1983), 396.

with conventional weaponry. As such, Frank says leaders prefer to focus their energy on negotiations and deterrence, utilizing war as a last resort. To cope and prepare for the "prenuclear game," as Frank refers to it, state leaders sought to build a more powerful arsenal than the opponent. This effort serves to reassure them, intimidate potential and actual adversaries and maintain loyalty to protecting their allies.[123]

In today's post-nuclear age, traditional strategy will not work. Harold Brown, former United States Secretary of Defense once wrote, "Comprehensive military supremacy for either side is a military and economic impossibility."[124] Frank echoes this assumption explaining that national leaders continue to deny reality by only examining nuclear warfare in a limited and favorable manner. Leaders would assume, Frank asserts, that a nuclear war would come to a traditional resolution, such as one side or another winning or being ahead in the war game. This illustrates how our preconceived notions of the relation between strength and weaponry have crumbled. What we perceive, the aforementioned, and what is reality is not the same. Weapons of mass destruction such as a nuclear warhead trump this scheme. There is not a point where *more* weapons equate to a stronger or more secure nation.[125] The reverse is in fact true. While it is human nature to believe in our strength and security, the reality is when nations decide to go nuclear, everyone must face this weapons threat.

Iran: Incentives and Disincentives for Going Nuclear

In the mid-1970s, speculation began that Iran could be motivated to build nuclear weapons. This began when the Shah of Iran introduced various programs to modernize

[123] Frank, "Nuclear Arms and Prenuclear Leaders: Sociopsychological Aspects of the Nuclear Arms Race," 397.
[124] Ibid., 398.
[125] Ibid.

its infrastructure, develop its economy and investments and build a more sophisticated military force. As the Shah popularized these goals, many of which were aided by US involvement, the West's view of Iran became one of an up and coming power in the Persian Gulf region. Encompassing the growing norm of the time, the Shah proposed the new official name of the country be: The Empire of Iran.[126]

Iran is intent on protecting its oil reserves, which serves as its economic lifeline. It held this as a priority during the rein of the Shah as well as today.[127] As of 2006, Iran's crude oil reserves were at 137 billion barrels. This equates to 11.6% of the world's total reserves, these figures are remarkable making Iran not only a target of a volatile regime change but economic opportunists as well. Beyond oil reserves, Iran has approximately 15.3% of the world's total natural gas reserves.[128]

Iran's economy is dependent on oil and natural gas to fuel its economy and economic development, thus making nuclear technology an alluring investment and a very appealing economic incentive. If natural energy reserves could be saved for oil and gas consuming countries, Iran would be able to secure their most vital commodity and develop their economy in exponential ways. Not only could they stabilize oil prices for the international economy, thus increasing commodity consumption, they could also assure a higher level of employment as the demand for energy and their commodity increased.[129]

Iran's nuclear program, at one time, had extensive encouragement and assistance from the West but it has long since withdrawn due to its complicated history. Since the

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[126] Richard K. Betts, "Incentives for Nuclear Weapons: India, Pakistan, Iran," *Asian Survey* 19 (1979), 1063.
[127] Ibid., 1064.
[128] Tarock, "Iran's Nuclear Programme and the West," 650.
[129] Ibid.

revolution in Iran, it has been ruled by an immensely complex political system. Before the revolution, a more Western form of government ruled Iran, which was more trusted and supported by the West. Once perceived as a rising Persian Gulf power, the West now saw a group of "mad and irrational mullahs."[130] This has forced Iran into a sort of regional isolationism. Forced now to deal with the remaining Third World countries and to be ruled by opportunist individual political actors whom seek power. They are left not with political prestige but have been labeled a military threat by much of the West and under the present leadership an "evil" state.[131] Iran's relationship with the superpowers, which is now strained, was once a reason to forego nuclear weapon development due to the security surrounding the alliance. Iran must face a future of self-reliance and depend solely on its own developments for military security. In 1979, Richard K. Betts, director of the International Security Policy Program at Columbia University and a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, warned if Iran was forced into isolationism, the world would see a Xenophobic Iran, "…shift toward nuclear weapons."[132]

[130] Tarock, "Iran's Nuclear Programme and the West," 651.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Betts, "Incentives for Nuclear Weapons: India, Pakistan, Iran," 1066.

CHAPTER THREE
The Iranian Nuclear Program

Iran's pursuit of developing nuclear technology extends back to the inception of the first nuclear bomb. For decades following the Second World War, Iran benefited from its relationship with the West to acquire the technology to create its first nuclear fuel cell. Iran's relations with the United States and leading European nations in the 1960s and 1970s, helped Iran amass a substantial stake in the technological field of nuclear science. After the fall of the Shah and the dramatic political changes to the political structure in Iran, relations with the West deteriorated whilst efforts to develop nuclear technology continued. In 2002, Iran's significant advancements in nuclear technology became apparent to the West, causing political strife, especially with the United States.[133] The prevailing view among Iranian scientists and clerics who have been involved in the nuclear program for several years is that Iran should indeed have nuclear technology and even weapons.[134]

Acquiring Nuclear Technology

Iran takes a great deal of pride in its scientific developments and technological abilities. Much of this advancement is owed to its previous strategic relations with the West and more specifically the United States. The former Shah of Iran helped to establish Iran's foreign relations with the West setting in motion steps that elevated Iran to a major Middle Eastern power. This relationship began as far back as December 1943 when then United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, along with Winston Churchill and Josef Stalin, met in Tehran to strategize against Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany.

[133] Mustafa Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," *Middle Eastern Studies* 43 (2007), 223.
[134] Mustafa Kibaroglu, "Good for the Shah, Banned for the Mullahs: The West and Iran's Quest for Nuclear Power," *Middle East Journal* 60 (2006), 207.

After the end of World War II, Western Allies saw the importance of strengthening the "Northern Tier." During the October 1947 Pentagon Talks on the Middle East, between the United States and Britain, Iran was recognized as having great strategic and military importance for the region. The US emphasized Iran's strategic value due its extensive oil reserves, which was of primary importance for the West, as well as the nation being of use in the effort to contain the expanding Soviet Union. US policy promoted Iran's shift to Western ideals in order to achieve these goals. The Shah of Iran was all too pleased to reap the benefits of the generous and powerful allies of the West. The Shah's foreign relation dealings continued thereafter with each successive US President until the end of his reign.[135]

By 1950, the assessment of Iran's political status was alarming. The nation was in a weakened economic state and the social structure was crumbling. In 1951, the Majlis began to pressure the Shah to take action to ensure Iran's economic and social future. Iran had to cash in and nationalize its oil industry and begin exporting its reserves. Iran's oil industry, previously controlled by the British, was transformed by then Prime Minister Mossadeq, who took radical steps to secure Iran's stake in its oil industry creating the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Britain's response was to shut down the oil refinery, remove workers, and launch an international boycott of Iranian oil. The situation in Iran continued to deteriorate rapidly, thus prompting the Truman administration to respond. The administration feared that Iran, in its weakened state, would fall into communist hands. They immediately took steps to ensure Iran's military, economic and scientific future. The administration believed, to prevent the spread of communism to Iran, aid was

[135] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 223.

imperative to assist them in becoming more self-sufficient but this was not without conditions.[136]

In the years following this burgeoning relation with the US, the Shah was hailed as the savor of the nation. His power was stronger than ever and faith in the parliament and prime minister to govern waned. By August 1953, the Shah was able to garner enough support to sign a firman or royal order, to dismiss Prime Minister Mossadeq. This redistribution of favorable Western power in Iran, secured US assistance to help develop Iran's infrastructure, and in return the US had a more secure presence in the Northern Tier.[137]

President Dwight Eisenhower continued the Truman administration's objects. In addition to continuing technical and economic assistance, the Eisenhower administration made military aid and training a necessity. The goal was to improve the morale of the Iranian military, as well as strengthen allegiance to the Shah, as well as reducing the number of government leaders, which could pose a dissenting political viewpoint, and weaken the pro-West reign of the Shah. Eisenhower also refocused the efforts to secure the Northern Tier. In June 1953, US Secretary of State John F. Dulles recommended that a multilateral regional security structure would indeed assist in the containment of the Soviet Union. By February 1955, Turkey and Iraq signed the Baghdad Pact and later that year Great Britain and Pakistan became signatories. While the US did not join the Pact, Iran was enjoying the benefits of its increasing strategic importance. US ties to Iran increased after the Suez Canal crisis in 1956, which marked great political victory for the Soviet Union. The "Eisenhower Doctrine" now authorized the US President, "to aid non-

[136] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 224.
[137] Ibid.

communist Middle Eastern nations threatened by armed aggression from any country controlled by international communism" as well as the assurance that the US would "use armed forces to assist any such nation or group of nations requesting assistance."[138] The Suez Canal crisis marked a critical point in US policy towards the Middle East and cemented its dominance in the regions, specifically with Iran.[139]

During this time, when the US increased its aid to Iran, in order to maintain control of the Northern Tier that Iran no only required economic and military aid, but also technological aid as well. This aid included nuclear science technology. The US Congress adopted the Atomic Energy Act in June 1946, which prevented any American cooperation with other nations. As a part of the Eisenhower administration's desire to assist Iran's nuclear technology development, amendments had to be made. In 1953, President Eisenhower made his "Atoms for Peace" speech before the United Nations General Assembly introducing the idea of sharing nuclear technology for peaceful means and paving the way for such assistance to take place. By 1954, amendments were in place to secure nuclear technology development in Iran. After over two years of negotiation and in an effort to further safeguard this knowledge exchange, the US and Iran signed the Agreement for Cooperation Concerning Civil Uses of Atoms in 1957. Following the agreement, in 1959, the Shah established the Nuclear Research Centre at Tehran University. During this time, the research was primarily limited to post-graduates who wished to learn about and research basic nuclear science. After further talks with the US, the Shah purchased a 5 megawatt (MW) thermal research reactor for the Centre. It was not until September 1967 that the American Machine and Foundry supplied the

[138] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 225.
[139] Ibid., 224.

Centre with 5 MW thermal reactor and its necessary fuel. Thereafter, the US also provided Iran with more sophisticated laboratories, including a radioisotope production unit, a vital tool in nuclear techniques. [140]

With the technological infrastructure in Iran established in the 1960s, by the early 1970s Iran saw steady growth in its technology industry. Iranian students, in the hundreds, began attending universities in Western Europe, as well as in the United States, to pursue scientific studies. Training programs abroad began developing Iran's future technicians and nuclear scientists. The returning generation of scientists then helped to develop Iranian universities nuclear research and technology departments. By 1974, the Shah announced an ambitious nuclear power program. He set a goal of obtaining a 23,000 MW nuclear power capacity within 20 years.[141] By the mid-1970s, Iran was often provided as an example of a nation that might be motivated to develop nuclear weapons to prove the capabilities of their state, to garner prestige.[142] The Shah was determined to usher in a new era: The Empire of Iran. With the countries growing economic and military development, modernization, technological advances and strengthening relations with the United States, Iran was prized to become the dominant power in the Middle East.[143]

Iran had a license to go forth with acquiring nuclear technology due to numerous culminating events from the previous decade. First, Iran was one of the first signatories of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT), signing in July 1968 and ratifying it before the Majlis in February 1970. During the same period, in March 1969,

[140] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 225.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Betts, "Incentives for Nuclear Weapons: India, Pakistan, Iran," 1063.
[143] Ibid.

the Agreement between the United States and Iran on the Cooperation Concerning Civil Uses of Atoms of 1957 was renewed for a ten-year period. The first official announcement regarding Iran's use of nuclear technology was made in December of 1972 by Iran's Ministry of Water and Power, when intentions to build nuclear reactors were revealed. The Ministry announced it was beginning a feasibility study to determine the ability to construct a fully functional nuclear power plant in Southern Iran.[144]

During the Kennedy administration the Shah increased pressure on the United States continuing to appeal for military assistance and technology. During the Shah's April 1962 visit to Washington, to meet with President Kennedy, he stressed that Iran was in danger due to "external threats" from the Kurds in Iraq to the Soviets in Afghanistan. He insisted on increased assistance from the US for Iran to feel secure in its defenses. President Kennedy did not agree, he asserted that "Iran's forces were adequate to feel secure, but Iran's problems were internal and that reforms were needed."[145] Later that same year, the Shah relented, continuing to emphasize external threats to his country, this time expressing concern of Egyptian control of Iraq and the Arab Federation centered in Cairo. He saw the Arab Federation as posing a threat of developing a "new imperialism" in the Middle East. Again, President Kennedy dismissed the Shah's concerns, as well as denying his request that "there be prestocked in Iran [US] military equipment sufficient for two or three divisions for possible future use in a mutual defense effort."[146]

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[144] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 226.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid., 227.

The Shah, under intense pressure to reform Iran, launched the "White Revolution" in 1962. The program sought to improve economic and social conditions through large-scale investments to create a heavy industrial infrastructure, such as petro-chemical plants, metallurgy, steel and coal. These improvements would be necessary for the advancement of the economic and social development of Iran. Impressed with the success of the "White Revolution" and the potential future of the industrial improvements, the Shah wrote President Johnson in January 1964. He insisted that "the five-year Military Assistance Program approved in 1962 [was] inadequate for requirements of the changing situation in the area," and if his demands were not met he was "prepared to turn elsewhere."[147] President Johnson replied to the Shah emphasizing that "the program was practical and adequate and that a substantial Arab threat to Iran was unlikely."[148] By the summer of 1965, the Shah turned to the Soviet Union for increased military assistance.

More than a decade had passed of heavy reliance on the United States for military and economic assistance. The Shah, in talks with the American Ambassador about his recent trip to Moscow, asserted that "Iran would have to stand on its own feet militarily and economically," and voiced criticism of Iran's relationship with the US, explaining he viewed it as "endless wrangling over economic aid and US resistance to providing more military to Iran, even on a cash purchase basis." The Shah made it clear that he was no longer willing to accept US contentions that his country was not under external threat and that he intended to acquire military equipment and technology to meet the security needs

[147] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 227.
[148] Ibid.

of Iran. He was willing to abandon a favorable relationship with the United States in order to be prepared militarily.[149]

The American Ambassador to Tehran noted "the Shah was tired of being lectured to by American officials on the priority of Iran's economic progress over the development of its military potential."[150] As a result of the American Ambassador's efforts, the 1964 Military Assistance Program, under President Johnson, began to be revised. The US agreed to offer Iran sophisticated military assistance in exchange for Iran's commitment that the military equipment and technology would not be compromised.[151]

President Nixon's historic visit to Tehran, in May 1972, was a major breakthrough in the US-Iran cooperation in the nuclear technology field. When compared to his predecessors, President Nixon was more inclined to satisfy the Shah's demands, in due part to the dramatic changes in the Middle East. It was both the United States and Iran's interest to secure the Persian Gulf in order to subdue growing Arab radicalism encouraged by the Soviets.

Later known as the "Twin Pillar" policy, President Nixon's visit to Iran established a partnership of near equals. The president advised his staff to "assure the Shah that the US envisioned Iran carrying a large share of the responsibility for security of the Persian Gulf."[152] With the passing of mere months, the military enhancements in Iran amounted to over $2 billions dollars.[153] The increasing scale of Iran's military

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[149] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 227.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid., 228.
[153] Ibid.

advancements began to concern US Department of Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger. He expressed concerns that an open-ended policy towards military assistance in Iran may not serve the long-term interests of the United States. By this time, Iran had contracted to purchase $9.1 billion dollars in US weapons, equipment, training services and support. Schlesinger further explained that, "extensive acquisition of military material, based on limited absorptive capacity may lead to failure and ultimate recrimination against the US, deserved or not."[154] Essentially, Schlesinger felt the US had to strike a balance between appeasing the Shah's every desire as to not limit US flexibility, however complete withdraw of military support would risk loosing a strategic political opportunity in the Middle East.[155]

Following President Nixon's visit to Iran, a subsequent visit by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger spurred the signing of the "US-Iran Nuclear Cooperation Agreement." Many researchers, those who support and oppose Iran's nuclear aspirations, feel this agreement gave the Shah free rein to embark on any and all nuclear projects.[156] The Shah, under the pressure of many external political threats to his monarchy, consistently asked each succeeding United States President to enter into more extensive agreements to ensure the security of Iran, including his pursuits for greater nuclear technology. The Shah had to produce security for his nation or risk his power.

Nuclear Technology and Revolutionary Iran

The Islamic Revolution of February 1979 brought the sudden halt of the transfer of nuclear science and technology to Iran from the United States and Europe. After the

[154] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 228.
[155] Ibid., 229.
[156] Ibid., 226.

revolution the return of Ayatollah Khomeini, there was an immediate need to establish a new order in the country. However, in September 1980, Saddam Hussein launched a large-scale attack against Iran bringing about the Iran-Iraq War. The Islamic Revolution also caused a drastic change in Iran's security and foreign policy matters. Then after the infamous hostage crisis at the US Embassy in Tehran, the US had finally ceased to view Iran as an ally. This breakdown in relations resulted in hostility between parties. The US refused to continue to assist Iran in the nuclear field. Not only that, they pursued a campaign of ensuring no other countries transferred nuclear technology to Iran. The radical shift in policy towards Iran's nuclear development showed the US unwilling to form a relationship with the Iman as had been foster with the Shah for decades.[157]

Revolutionary Iran's ideology toward foreign policy was Imam Khomeini's slogan "neither East, nor West, only the Islamic Republic [of Iran]." In the beginning years of the revolution, all things Western were rejected. According to Iranian scholar, Dr. Haleh Vaziri, "Ayatollah Khomeini's return from exile to Tehran on 1 February 1979 ushered in a brief but intense anti-modernization phase in Iran's domestic and foreign policies."[158] Clerics rejected the Shah's ambitious plans to industrialize Iran and advance military capabilities. They also reduced oil exports and impeded the work of many nuclear scientists halting Iran's nuclear projects.

Once the impact of the revolution settled, the clergy actually reinstated many nuclear projects. There were a few reasons for this. The Iran-Iraq War brought to light the need for modern military technology. After severe attacks on many of Iran's ports

[157] Kibaroglu. "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 233-234.
[158] Ibid., 234.

and oil refineries along the Persian Gulf, clerics felt the threat of weapons of mass destruction could have made a difference in the war. Dr. Vaziri explains:

> The first four or five years of the Iran-Iraq War shocked the clerics into realizing the value of modern military technology. The use of such technology – and perhaps even nuclear weapons capability – would have deterred Iraq's initial aggression against the Islamic Republic and flouting of the international laws of war conduct. From the clerics' perspective, the Reagan administration not only had opposed their hegemonic aspirations but also allied with the Iraqi Ba'ath [in the effort] to defeat Iran. Had the Islamic Republic possessed nuclear weapons capability, the US may have thought twice about interjecting its navy into the Persian Gulf and engaging Iranians.[159]

The severe energy crisis following the revolution was another reason why top Iranian leaders sought to resume Iran's nuclear projects. The construction of nuclear plants was now a prominent goal. The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), originally dissolved by the new leadership, was restored, with a new president, in order to resume construction on the Bushehr nuclear power plant.[160]

In the early 1980s, though initially Ayatollah Khomeini was apprehensive about resuming Iran's nuclear programs due to concerns about becoming dependent on foreign technology, President Rafsanjani received the Imam's blessing to go forward. Iranian leaders began by looking for other potential suppliers, other than the US and Europe, such as Pakistan, Argentina, Span, Czechoslovakia, China and the Soviet Union. In 1984, the Esfahan Nuclear Research Centre was opened. By 1987, Iran signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with Pakistan. Per the agreement, 39 Iranian nuclear scientists and technicians would have the benefit of advanced training at Pakistani nuclear facilities, reactors and laboratories. Following that same year, Iran acquired $5.5 million dollars worth of uranium enriched to 20 percent from Argentina and also procured

[159] Kibaroglu. "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 234.
[160] Ibid., 234-235.

training for Iranian scientists at the prestigious Jose Balaserio Nuclear Institute. Iran even approached Swedish firms to assist in the completion of the Bushehr power plant. Despite tireless efforts to resume the work on nuclear projects, Iran was unsuccessful in restarting any of its programs.[161]

It was not until China and Russia stepped in that Iran was able to procure viable assistance to resume its nuclear projects. In 1991, Iran and China announced that a supply agreement had been reached. China would supply Iran with a 20 MW research reactor. With further Chinese assistance, Iran was able to construct fuel fabrication and conversation facilities at Esfahan. By September 1992, President Rafsanjani began negotiations with Chinese President Zeming for the procurement of one or two additional 330 MW (electric) reactors from China. With a tentative agreement to buy one reactor from China, the Iranian Defense Minister announced the purchase during his trip to Beijing. The announcement led to protests in the United States against the Chinese government, which resulted in the postponement of the sale.[162]

Once supply avenues with China stalled, Iran was left with one remaining major supplier: Russia. Iran had previously held talks with Russia in the late 1980s and had even agreed to cooperate in the nuclear field. President Rafsanjani took the initiative to begin talks with Gorbachev about assistance with the Bushehr power plant build. With the fall of the Soviet Union, discussions were delayed. It was not until Boris Yelsin rose to power as President of the Russian Federation that negotiations continued. On January 8, 1995 the Russian Minister of Atomic Energy (Minatom), Viktor Mikhailov, along with the President of the AEOI, Dr. Reza Amrollahi, signed a Nuclear Cooperation Accord in

[161] Kibaroglu. "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 235.
[162] Ibid., 235.

Tehran, along with a Russian company Zarubezhatomenergostroy. Russia and Iran agreed to work together to complete the construction on the Bushehr nuclear power plant. Further, Russia arranged to train AEOI's engineers and technicians, as well as 10-20 post-graduate students annually at Russian universities. This was an invaluable success to Iran, who aggressively pursued training in more advanced nations to ensure their scientists and engineers were highly qualified.[163] Dr. Asadullah Sabouri of the AEOI reports on the state of the program:

> [T]he first reactor at the Bushehr nuclear power plant is scheduled to start operation in December 2006 with 300 Iranian engineers and 400 technicians running the reactor. Thanks to close cooperation with Russia and the IAEA, Iran's regulatory infrastructure is enhanced, in the areas of reviewing safety reports, seismic hazard evaluation, reviewing design documents, establishment of quality management systems, and the physical protection of the plant.[164]

The Russia-Iran nuclear agreement would ultimately cost nearly $1 billion USD.[165]

Advancement and Burgeoning Political Conflict

Iran's scientific development and expertise in the nuclear field is astounding. Today, Iran has amassed an elite force of nuclear scientists, initially trained in Western countries; more are being trained in Russia, China and Pakistan. Under both the Shah, and the Imam, it was clear that Iran's goal was to possess a complete nuclear fuel cycle. Reports seem to show that Iran has already managed to achieve this. Iranian ambassador to the IAEA, Ali Ashgar Soltanieh noted, "Iran's nuclear activities in uranium ore processing, uranium conversion and enrichment as well as heavy water production,

[163] Kibaroglu. "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West,", 236.
[164] Ibid., 235-236.
[165] Ibid., 236.

research reactor designing and manufacturing centrifuge machine are the result of research and development."[166]

In the 1990s, the Clinton administration imposed sanctions on Iran when it intensified its efforts to expand and develop its nuclear program. President Clinton imposed congressional measures to ban all US trade with Iran. By 1996, Congress passed and Clinton signed a bill imposing sanctions on foreign companies who invested more than $40 million annually in Iran's gas and oil industry.[167] The "dual containment" policy the administration utilized attempted to prevent Iran from acquiring the technology and scientific capability to build a nuclear weapon. The policy had little effect. One of the reasons the Clinton administration sanctions against Iran failed was due to lack of foreign support. European allies, with the exception of the United Kingdom, were reluctant to adopt what they felt were aggressive policies to "contain" Iran. The reluctance of European Allies to follow suit was due in part to the lack of hard evidence that Iran had plans to build nuclear weapons.[168]

The Clinton administration stated, in the late 1990s, that it was willing to enter into talks with Iran, as long as three key areas could be addressed: the sponsorship of terrorism, the sabotage of the Arab-Israeli peace process and most importantly, the development of nuclear weapons. The administration made the mistake of offering little in return for Iran's cooperation in the talks and a vague promise that economic and diplomatic relations would be restored. This left little flexibility for either side. Iran

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[166] Kibaroglu. "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West,", 236.
[167] Robin Wright and Shaul Bakhash, "The U.S. and Iran: An Offer They Can't Refuse?" *Foreign Policy* 108 (1997), 127.
[168] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 237.

responded that it would not react in a meaningful way to the promise of easing of sanctions.[169]

Relations between the US and Iran changed significantly with the discovery of Iran's work with sensitive nuclear technologies. In August 2002 when the US Representative Office of the National Council of Resistance of Iran disclosed top-secret intelligence that nuclear projects in Iran, namely the uranium enrichment facility in Natanz and the heavy water production plant in Arak, proved alarming due to the advanced technology required to sustain such sophisticated scientific endeavors. The US was concerned that these facilities may not be used for peaceful purposes. The materials and technology Iran now possessed could be utilized to produce weapons-grade fissile materials such as the highly enriched uranium Ambassador Soltanieh noted his country was capable of. These materials are necessary in the manufacturing of a nuclear weapon.[170]

The United States made it clear that Iran's choice to build undisclosed uranium enrichment facilities in Natanz was a serious indication of the nation's secret plans to build nuclear weapons. The US asserted that this was a violation of Article II of the NPT, which states that nations will not receive, manufacture or acquire nuclear weapons or receive any assistance in doing so. The United States argued that due to this indiscretion, Iran should not be entitled to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, under Article IV of the NPT. Subsequently, the US requested that Iran give up its uranium enrichment activities. In addition to this, the US wanted Iran's nuclear dossier to be transferred from the Board of Governors of the IAEA to the United Nations

[169] Robin Wright and Shaul Bakhash, "The U.S. and Iran: An Offer They Can't Refuse?" 130.
[170] Ibid.

Security Council (UNSC) so that punishment could be assessed for violation of its NPT obligations. Iranian officials denied they had any intention to build nuclear weapons and that they did not violate their NPT obligations. However, leaders did acknowledge that they had failed to report progress on some of their nuclear programs to the IAEA in a timely manner. Authorities also insisted that they did not "violate" IAEA's safeguard regulations, it was simply a "failure" of the nation's complex bureaucracy. [171]

In October 2003, the IAEA played a critical role in initiating dialogue about Iran's nuclear program. They requested the Iranian government sign the Additional Protocol by the end of the month due to the discoveries of its undocumented facilities. The IAEA is charged with ensuring the detection and diversion of significant quantities of fissile material for both peaceful and military uses in the non-nuclear-weapons states that are party to the NPT. In order for the IAEA mandate to function, they must have unobstructed access to pertinent sites in countries that are suspected of wrongdoing, including Iran.

IAEA Director General Mohammed El Baradei, along with a group of inspectors, began to frequently carry out inspections in designated and suspected locations in Iran. These locations included nuclear facilities, power plants and even military bases. In a series of published reports of the inspectors' findings, the IAEA states that, "Iranian practices up to November 2004 resulted in many breaches of Iran's obligations to comply with its Safeguards agreement, but good progress has been made since that time in Iran's

[171] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 237.

correction of those breaches and the Agency's ability to confirm certain aspects of Iran's declaration."[172]

In November 2003, the United Kingdom, France and Germany (EU-3) visited Tehran in order to seek diplomatic solution to the ongoing dilemma. The EU-3 and Iran met periodically to come to a solution to the confrontation between Iran, which asserts its rights to use highly enriched uranium for civilian nuclear reactors and the US, which claims that Iran could soon become a *de facto* nuclear-weapons state and insisted that Iran abolish its uranium enrichment programs. Through these diplomatic talks, the EU-3 and Iran agreed, on a voluntary basis, to extend Iran's yearlong suspension. The terms of included the suspension of enrichment related and reprocessing activities. Most importantly, Iran would continue to be suspended from the manufacturing and importing of gas centrifuges and its components as well as suspending work on plutonium separation. The diplomatic talks emphasized that this was not a legally binding agreement and that Iran still had rights as a signatory of the NPT, and that those rights could be exercise without discrimination. The EU set an example for its longstanding policy of seeking a diplomatic means for the resolution of international problems rather than resorting to sanctions, threats or military force. Unfortunately, the US saw this as a "waste of time" and that the EU had simply allowed Iran more time in order to build nuclear weapons.[173]

The June 2005 election of Mahmoud Ahmedinejad to the office of the Presidency not only increased the conflict between Iran and the US but it spread to other European countries. This escalation in the degree of confrontation between Iran and the

[172] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 237.
[173] Ibid., 238.

international community led the IAEA to issue a resolution on February 4, 2006 that began the process of taking Iran's dossier to the United Nations Security Council.[174]

[174] Kibaroglu, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West," 239.

CONCLUSION
How To Proceed

Iran has notoriously evaded monitoring by the IAEA and compliance with NPT regulations, and many scholars argue that sanctions and threats of force have done little to deter Iran's plans.[175] Sanctions would likely cripple the economy of Iran but to what end and at what point could we truly put them in place, once a weapon is created and tested? This hardly speaks to deterrence if done after the fact. I do believe there is a common ground in which we can ensure the safety of the international community while allowing Iran to establish its defense system. The only acceptable avenue is diplomacy. At the 2008 G8 summit in Japan in 2008, G8 leaders emphasized the necessity of diplomacy with Iran:

> We express our serious concern at the proliferation risks posed by Iran's nuclear programme and Iran's continued failure to meet its international obligations. We urge Iran to fully comply with UNSCRs 1696, 1737, 1747 and 1803 without further delay, and in particular to suspend all enrichment-related activities. We also urge Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA, including by providing clarification of the issues contained in the latest report of the IAEA Director General. We firmly support and cooperate with the efforts by China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States supported by the High Representative of the EU to resolve the issue innovatively through negotiation, and urge Iran to respond positively to their offer delivered on June 14, 2008. We also commend the efforts by other G8 members, particularly the high-level dialogue by Japan, towards a peaceful and diplomatic resolution of the issue. We welcome the work of the Financial Action Task Force to assist states in implementing their financial obligations under the relevant UNSCRs.[176]

The evidence in this research has shown that Iran will act in its best interest to preserve its power, sovereignty and prestige within the international community. The existing conservative regime will continue to dominant perceptions and policy creation

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[175] de Bellaigue, "Iran," 20.
[176] "G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit Leaders Declaration," G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit, accessed 5 December 2011, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/doc/doc080714__en.html>

indefinitely. Iran pursuit of a nuclear weapons arsenal will provide Iran the prestige it seeks and act as a bargaining chip in the international political power structure. Nuclear weaponry is a means of achieving undeniable independence from outside powers. Iran, acting in its own interest, will obtain the supplies and technology necessary to build a nuclear weapon in order to be seen as a powerful military force and a regional hegemon, free of the international political powers it distrusts. The use of sanctions have been unproductive and unsuccessful, as will the use of, or threat to use, force be damaging to diplomatic solutions. Iran must be respected as a sovereign nation with the rights afforded to them under the NPT.

The chance of Iran using its nuclear weapon is very unlikely. They would risk crippling economic sanctions and the marring what little relation they have with the European Union and other Arab countries.[177] Sam Nunn, cochairman and chief executive officer of the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), suggests several hypothetical scenarios the international community should be aware of, learn from, and protect against. Scenario 1, a terrorist attack with a nuclear weapon: in this scenario, a nuclear warhead, which is poorly guarded, is stolen and used against a perceived enemy.[178] In scenario 2, a terrorist is able to attack using a dirty bomb. A dirty bomb is a radiological weapon, which could kill dozens and spread radioactive material around the blast area, thus making the area "dirty." The materials could be obtained through insider help or stolen from a poorly secure industrial or medical facility.[179] Scenario number 3 is an accidental or unauthorized nuclear strike. This scenario, while hypothetical, speaks to the concerns of

[177] de Bellaigue, "Iran,"18.
[178] Sam Nunn, "The Race between Cooperation and Catastrophe: Reducing the Global Nuclear Threat," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 607 (2006), 44.
[179] Ibid., 45.

miscommunication or the break down of existing infrastructure causing an unintended attack.[180] In scenario 4, and potentially the most likely, we would see a sharp increase in the development of nuclear weapons and the number of states who are capable of making them.[181] These dangers outlined in Nunn's work are a few of the concerns in the debate over Iran's nuclear program going forward. These dangers emphasize the need for peaceful negotiations between Iran and the international community.

US sanctions have frozen the diplomatic process with Iran. The hostility between the US and Iran will likely continue, each considers the other "Satan" (America) or "Evil" (Iran). With such stark perceptions, there is little room for peace and certainly no room for compromise in what has become a battle of wills. If both sides were somehow able to come to terms with their differences, the United States must take the first step. As the stronger political force, the US would have less to lose should the talks go south. The Clinton administration's attempts at diplomacy failed because the US did not offer enough incentives, such as lifting economic sanctions. The US must also overcome Iranian leaders who bitterly oppose rapprochement with Washington. Iran and the United States must at least make an effort to reach an understanding of the other's security issues so there is simply no need for the use of or threat to use nuclear weapons.[182]

Engagement with Iran is composed of enormous obstacles.[183] In 2006, a group of 50 British and American experts in nuclear security, political science and former diplomats issued a statement to encourage diplomacy between the US, European Union and Iran:

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[180] Nunn, "The Race between Cooperation and Catastrophe: Reducing the Global Nuclear Threat," 46.
[181] Ibid., 47.
[182] Tarock, "Iran's Nuclear Programme and the West," 647.
[183] Robin Wright and Shaul Bakhash, "The U.S. and Iran: An Offer They Can't Refuse?" 136.

> The US and EU have to recognize the limits of their influence and their threats, and that diplomacy and creative compromise on all sides are the only acceptable choice. The current EU/US…makes rigid demands on Iran, without adequate treaty authority appears discriminatory and is likely to strengthen he Iranian government's resolve to pursue nuclear technology and weapons technology. Threats to refer Iran to the UN Security Council for punitive action lack credibility and do not have sufficient international support...The half-truths and manufactured fears used to build support against Iran must not be employed again to demonize Iran.[184]

There must be a realistic approach to Iran, one that does not seek to force change upon Iran through military action, sanctions or support of oppositions groups. Instead, it is best to offer Iran an opportunity to become a functioning member of the international community. This approach can be supported through diplomacy, the lifting of US sanctions, respecting its sovereignty and supporting its accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Iran is the largest economic market outside the WTO.[185] While the challenges of engagement are daunting, there is a higher risk in making no effort to defuse what has become one of the world's most volatile relationships.[186]

[184] Tarock, "Iran's Nuclear Programme and the West," 661.
[185] Ibid., 663.
[186] Robin Wright and Shaul Bakhash, "The U.S. and Iran: An Offer They Can't Refuse?" 136.

Appendix I

Ethnic Groups in Iran[187]

Ethnic Groups	Language	Dialect of Iranian?	Religion
'Persian' (Persian-speaking groups)	Farsi (Persian)	Yes	Islam (Shi'a)
Arabs	Arabic	No (Semitic)	Islam (Shi'a)
Armenians	Armenian	No (Indo-European)	Christianity
Asuris (Assyrians)	Assyrian or New Aramaic	No (Semitic)	Christianity
Azaris	Azari Tukish	No (Turkic)	Islam (Shi'a)
Baluches	Baluchi	Yes	Islam (Sunni)
Brahuis	Brahui	No (Dravidian)	Islam (Sunni)
Gabrs (Zoroastrians)	Gabri	Yes	Zoroastrianism
Gilakis	Gilaki	Yes	Islam (Shi'a)
Gurans/ Avromani	Gurani/Avromani	Yes	Islam (Extreme Shi'a)
Hazaras	Hazaragi or Dari	No (Persian dialect)	Islam (Shi'a)
Iranian-speaking groups in Isfahan and Kashan provinces	Local Iranian dialects	Yes	Islam (Shi'a)
Kalimis (Jews)	Judeo-Persian	No (Persian dialect)	Judaism
Koulis/Gypsys	Gypsy/Persian	No (Indo-Aryan)	Islam (Shi'a)
Kurds	Kurdish	Yes	Islam (Shi'a)
Laks	Laki	Yes	Islam (Shi'a)
Laris	Lari	Yes	Islam (Shi'a/Sunni)
Lurs (Lors)	Luri	Yes	Islam (Shi'a)
Mandaeans	Mandaic or Arabic	No (Semitic)	Mandaean religion
Mazandaranis	Mazandarani	Yes	Islam (Shi'a)
Qashqais	Turkic dialect	No (Turkic)	Islam (Shi'a)
Semnanis	Semnani	Yes	Islam (Shi'a)
Talishis	Talishi	Yes	Islam (Sunni/Shi'a)
Tats	Tati	Yes	Islam (Shi'a)
Turkic-speaking groups	Turkic dialects	No (Turkic)	Islam (Shi'a)
Turkmens	Turkmen	No (Turkic)	Islam (Sunni)

[187] Amanolahi, "A Note on Ethnicity and Ethnic Groups in Iran," 39-40.

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