

nor is nuclear energy an economic choice for Iran. So what is the motive?

It should not be a revelation to anyone that Iran is seeking to acquire nuclear weapons.

In 1991, Ayatollah Mohajerani, one of Rafsanjani's deputies, clarified the need to obtain nuclear weapons. "Since the enemy has nuclear facilities," he said, "Islamic countries must be armed with the same capacity."

In 1989, Rafsanjani underscored the need to obtain an atomic arsenal, stressing that "Iran cannot overlook the reality of nuclear strength in the modern world." Nuclear arms, in the Tehran mullahs' view, are "the most important strategic guarantee" of their survival.

For this reason, I introduced the Iran Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act. The bill will eliminate the use of U.S. taxpayer dollars to the International Atomic Energy Agency to provide assistance to Iran for the completion of the Bushehr plant. The U.S. believes that the completion of the Bushehr plant could provide Iran with substantial expertise to advance its nuclear weapons program. It is ludicrous for the U.S. to support a plant—even indirectly—which could pose a threat to the United States and to stability in the Middle East.

Beyond, Iran's nuclear weapons development program, there is substantial evidence of its efforts to develop other weapons of mass destruction.

Last year, Satellite reconnaissance of the Shahid Hemat Industrial Group research facility, not far south of Tehran, had picked up the heat signature of an engine test for a new generation of Iranian ballistic missiles, "each capable of carrying a 2,200-lb. warhead more than 800 miles," within strategic range of Israel.

In January, a senior Clinton administration official told the Associated Press that "Iran's purchase of Russian missile technology is giving Iran an opportunity to 'leap ahead' in developing new weapons" and according to a CIA report, Iran remains the largest illicit buyer of conventional weapons among 'pariah' states, buying an estimated \$20 million to \$30 million worth of U.S. military parts in 1997.

After the cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq War in 1988, Tehran stepped up its efforts to produce an indigenous chemical and biological arsenal. Thanks to equipment and technology legally or illegally imported from abroad, the Tehran regime is presently able to produce a series of biological and chemical weapons. Defense Secretary Cohen has expressed concern that Iran may have produced up to 200 tons of VX nerve agent and 6,000 gallons of anthrax.

Tehran's unrelenting quest for nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles clearly attests that the clerical regime has no intention of moderating its behavior. Appeasement by the West will only provide the mullahs with more room to maneuver. We need a comprehensive policy, that both protects us from the current threat and safeguards our future interests in that part of the world.

Firmness is the only means of deterring Khatami and the clerical regime from their quest for an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. We must make it clear, especially now when the mullahs may well be on their last legs, that we support the kind of progress towards democracy and genuine reform promised by the democratic opposition.

IRAN: HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS
PERSIST

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 1998

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, over the past year, I have listened with interest to promises of moderation and reform from Iran, but after a year of Mohammad Khatami's tenure as president, I cannot but help to conclude that the current regime continues to be one of the major violators of human rights and proponents of terrorist activities around the world. The only policy that can be successful vis-a-vis Iran is a policy of firmness. Firmness, however, will only prove effective when it is coupled with support for the establishment of democracy in Iran.

On May 21st, I had the honor of hosting a gathering at which a number of my esteemed colleagues as well as experts on Iran and the region addressed various aspects of the question. In urging the administration to pursue a policy in favor of the Iranian people and their resistance, the speakers emphasized that the U.S. should not make the same mistake made during the Shah's time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the remarks I prepared for this briefing for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

I would like to thank every one of you for participating in this event today. I believe it is very important that we keep our focus on the issue of human rights. Not long ago, I watched a video tape smuggled out of Iran by the Mojahedin Opposition Movement. It showed for the first time actual scenes of people being stoned to death in Iran. Four individuals were brought out, buried up to their waists, and stoned to death in the most cruel, gruesome and painful scene I have ever witnessed in my life. And this still goes on in Iran, officially. Since the election of Iran's new president, the government has announced the stoning of 7 people, four of them women.

Tens of thousands of Iranians have been executed for their political beliefs since 1981. My question is, what is our administration doing about these ongoing rights violations? What have we done to relieve the suffering of the Iranian people?

I believe our policy must be very firm about condemning human rights violations in Iran, and about supporting advocates of democracy, such as Maryam Rajavi. Change will come to Iran, but not from the current regime. We will not get anywhere by cuddling repressive dictators.

THE SITUATION IN IRAN

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 1998

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, the Iranian government under President Mohammad Khatami remains a brutal and oppressive regime. Despite words of moderation and conciliation, the Iranian government continues to actively and aggressively sponsor international terrorism. It continues to brutally oppress the Iranian people. In today's Iran there is still no freedom of the press. Under the Khatami government, there is still no freedom of religion or

freedom of speech. Human rights abuses continue unabated.

On May 21st, a number of my colleagues in Congress held a press briefing in the Rayburn Building to discuss the prospects for change in Iran, and how U.S. policy should be shaped to encourage democracy and freedom in Iran. While I was unable to attend the briefing, I did release a written statement. In addition to Members of Congress, other distinguished experts participated in the briefing, including former U.S. Ambassador James Akins, who served in our nation's Foreign Service with great distinction from 1956 to 1976. Ambassador Akins spent much of his career in the Middle East in such places as Syria, Lebanon, Kuwait, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. He is the author of numerous articles about the Middle East. He is now an international and economic consultant. I would like to insert into the RECORD the written remarks I prepared for the briefing, as well as the remarks made by Ambassador Akins.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR., BRIEFING ON "U.S. POLICY OPTIONS & PROSPECTS FOR CHANGE IN IRAN", MAY 21, 1998

As we approach the one-year anniversary of Mohammad Khatami's election as President of Iran, it is appropriate to assess how much Iran has changed over the past year, and how U.S. policy should be shaped to encourage democracy and freedom in Iran. While President Khatami has spoken quite differently than his predecessor, Iran's actions both domestically and internationally, have not materially changed.

Iran still supports international terrorism. Iran continues to deny its people basic freedoms and human rights. Iran continues to treat its women like cattle.

There is chaos and conflict throughout the government. One thing is clear—President Khatami may have—may have—good intentions, but his good intentions have not yet resulted in a change in Iran's behavior internationally or internally.

Yet, our State Department continues to grope, hope and search for moderates in the Iranian regime. Our State Department continues to pursue a flawed policy of appeasement. When will the State Department learn that the moderates in the regime they are so desperately searching for, don't exist!

It's time for the State Department to recognize and support those Iranians inside and outside Iran who are struggling on behalf of a democratic and free Iran—including the Iranian Resistance.

The State Department's refusal to recognize the Resistance, and their labeling the Resistance as a terrorist organization is a travesty! Such a policy of appeasement and weakness plays right into the hands of the terrorist strongmen ruling Iran.

Let me repeat: there are no moderates in the Iranian government. Goodwill gestures from the U.S. will be perceived by the Iranian regime as a sign of weakness. Such gestures will achieve little, and will only embolden the Iranian mullahs to continue their non-stop campaign of terror and repression.

Contrary to the hopes of the Clinton Administration, Khatami's election last May has not resulted in any changes in Iran's domestic or foreign policies. Iran still poses a grave threat to U.S. security and world peace. Iran's ongoing support for terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hizbollah continues to threaten the Oslo Accords and other initiatives to establish a lasting peace in the Middle East.

Khatami's election has not halted or diminished Iran's efforts to expand its arsenal