OMNI

IRAN NEWSLETTERS, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019
MEDIA/ADG REPORT IRAN
CRITICISM OF US EMPIRE


COMPILED BY DICK BENNETT FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE, JUSTICE, and ECOLOGY


http://omnicenter.org/donate/

Local action in Fayetteville, Arkansas toward stopping Iran war and US imperialism, OMNI held weekly peace protests every Saturday at 11 A.M. in front of Washington County Courthouse during June-August. This newsletter continues that protest and over 30 newsletters denouncing US belligerence against Iran. If you oppose war: be engaged with OMNI and send items for its newsletter, and If you have suggestions for the Saturday protests contact Abel Tomlinson: abeltomlinson@gmail.com

CONTENTS SEPTEMBER 17, 2019, #32
Mainstream Media
--“Creating a Climate for War With Iran. “ GREGORY SHUPAK IN FAIR. https://fair.org/home/creating-a-climate-for-war-with-iran/
Mainstream Media outlets are creating a climate for a US military attack on Iran by hyping the idea that Iran is an imminent threat to peace, by failing to offer evidence that calls the US’s accusations against Iran into question, by amplifying warmongers’ voices, and by naturalizing America’s supposed right to spy on every country on earth.

NADG Reporting 9-15 Strikes on SA Oil Installations
Locked and Loaded! Trump 9-16

Iranian Carrier at Galveston

Art’s 5 Columns v. War
REPORTING THE 9-15 STRIKES ON SAUDI OIL INSTALLATIONS
[To give the international reporters the benefit of the doubt, they struggle to make their reports coherent despite Pres. Trump’s shifting statements. But in general the owners of the MM like the D-G do not oppose the 9 wars, the longest war, the $trillion Pentagon budget, and all continue erroneously to call the Pentagon the Department of Defense. Dick]

3 D-G articles 9-17.
Trump says it “looks like” Iran bombed Saudi Arabia, but he “stressed that military retaliation was not yet on the table.,” he would “like to avoid” a military conflict!, and he “emphasized his interest in diplomacy.” [A huge difference in tone from yesterday.]
D-G Staff. “Oil Prices Skyrocket after Attacks.” (9-17-19, 1A, 6A).
Prices “surged the most on record.”
Saudi Arabia’s Foreign Ministry “said Iranian weapons were used in the attacks on Saudi Aramco, while the U.S. blamed Iran for the attacks.” [Another big difference.]
Meetings possible only if US “stops economic terrorism and returns to the nuclear deal.”
“The Houthis rebels in Yemen, who receive support from Iran, claimed responsibility for the strikes, but the Trump administration has accused Tehran of being behind the attack.” [Did the Iranians attack or only supply weapons which Yemen then used for their attack? And why doesn’t the newspaper mention US support of SA as it does regarding Iranian support for Yemen? Support? All of the bombs? Or fuel? Or technicians? We are talking evidence for war here.]

LOCKED AND LOADED

“U.S. Weighs Response to Attack on Saudi Oil. Officials Say Photos Point to Iran as Culprit.” (9-16). [Is this an accurate title for this newspaper article, which contains several topics? That is, the headline editor decided what to emphasize.--D]

Drone attacks on Saudi Arabian oil production and energy supplies.
Houthi (Shi’a) Yemen rebels (allies of Shi’a Iran) claim responsibility.
US intelligence declares Yemen couldn’t be launch site. [Therefore must have been Iran?]
President Trump tweets: “we know the culprit [Iran], [we] are locked and loaded,” and are awaiting verification from SA. “All options…on the table.”

Iran calls US claims “maximum lies.” Revolutionary Guard repeated it “cld strike US military bases across the Mideast.” [This would be the headline in Iran.]

Secretary Pompeo directly blames Iran [with dubious logic]: “There is no evidence the attacks came from Yemen,” therefore Iran.

US, allies, and UN say Iran supplies Houthis with drones.

Iran denies allegations.

Iraqi PM denies Iraqi origin of attacks.

Houthis leader Muhammad al-Bukhaiti again claims Houthi responsibility.

Iran “kept up its threats.” Iran ready to counter-attack if attacked by US—“vessels, air bases, troops.” If a few weak Houthis can wreak such damage, imagine what Iran can do.

US Sen. Lindsey Graham “suggested retaliatory strikes” on Iran’s refineries because of their “misbehavior.”

Report trails off with speculation over whether Trump and Iranian President Rouhani will meet during the UN General Assembly with “no conditions.”

Locked and Loaded
Stephen Miles, WIN WITHOUT WAR

Dick - we could be HOURS away from a major U.S. military attack on Iran.

Trump says the U.S. military is ‘locked and loaded’ in reaction to attacks on a Saudi oil installation.
Administration officials are anonymously doing a full-court PR press to justify military action by circulating selectively ‘declassified intelligence’ images.

What happens in the next hours and days is CRITICAL.

We are in a race against time to stop a needless, costly, and destructive war with Iran, and our team has dropped everything to pile pressure on Congress to use their constitutional power to stop this nightmare scenario from unfolding -- and while we ramp up as fast as we can, we can’t afford to fall flat financially.

Three months ago we came within MINUTES of U.S. missiles raining down on Iran -- stopped only by a last-minute change of heart by Trump. It makes the situation right now even more terrifying.

And make no mistake about the potential consequences of a U.S. military strike: Iranian officials have ALREADY made that clear, with military commanders bombastically declaring they’re ready for ‘full-fledged’ war, and media outlets highlighting the ability of Iran’s missiles to reach U.S. forces.

When John Bolton got fired, it seemed like we might be moving away from the brink of war. The problem is that Trump’s war cabinet is full of hardline hawks, like Mike Pompeo who has been using this weekend’s attacks in Saudi Arabia to push harder than ever for a war with Iran.

The truth is that being yet again on the brink of war with Iran is the result of a tireless march towards conflict by the Trump Administration. From its unflinching support for the horrific Saudi-UAE war in Yemen to walking away from the historic and successful Iran nuclear agreement, the Trump Administration has taken one step after another, always towards war.
We are in the fight of our lives to stop another catastrophic and unnecessary war, and we are using every tactic at our disposal — from Congress to the media. And so I need to ask for your support:

**Can you make an emergency $15 donation to help Win Without War stop Trump and his war cabinet starting war with Iran?**

These are scary times, and the place I gather most strength from in times like these are activists like you, and the rest of the Win Without War community, who are pressing day after day to stop Donald Trump from dragging us into another terrible war of choice.

Thank you for working for peace, Stephen, Amy, Kate, and the Win Without War team

---

**Satire “Iranian Carrier Prowls Outside US’s Reach. Ship in Position to Act If Necessary.” Iranian AMERETAT REPORTER (August 24, 2019).**

Aboard Iranian Ship Zana Izad in the Gulf of Mexico.

The 1,500 men aboard the conventionally-powered Zana Izad do not venture near US ports at Corpus Christi, Galveston, and New Orleans, despite a warning from President Hassan Rouhani ’s national security adviser that the warships are in the Gulf of Mexico “to send a clear and unmistakable message” to the US to steer clear of Iranian interests in the region.

The Ships have carried out the order of its commander in chief to counter the US in the Gulf but in the least provocative way. Just where to station the Zana Izad is a decision made by the Iranian Navy’s 1st Fleet, which has its headquarters in Havana, Caracas. (The Fleet has one carrier, a heavy cruiser, several destroyers, and support ships.) The fear is that sending its Fleet into the Gulf right when Iran has turned up the heat on Washington, could provoke exactly the kind of conflict the Iranians want to avoid.

“Anytime a foreign Fleet moves close to shore, and especially into confined waters, the danger to the ships goes up significantly, particularly with the US” said Farzad Kazim, a retired Revolutionary Guard admiral. “It becomes vulnerable to nuclear submarines (both power and weapons), shore-launched cruise missiles, and bombings by planes both from shore and ships—the US has 11 nuclear-powered aircraft carriers around the world”).

“We can reach the US from here easily,” said Admiral Kazim, commander of the carrier strike group, on the bridge of the Zana Izad. Five levels below, aircraft purchased from Russia were catapulting off the flight deck and headed toward the US, but they would make sure to stay away from the 12-mile border that encompasses US airspace. To threaten US ports, the warplanes would fly above Mexico, not over the US.

[The much longer report from Helene Cooper I hope you read or will read. It unintentionally shines a light on the illegal and dangerous world war-threatening behavior of the US today near the coast of Iran. Helene Cooper, *The NYT.* “U.S. Carrier Prowls Outside Iran’s Reach. Ship in Position to Act If Necessary.” *NADG* (August 24, 2019). –Dick]**
Approaching yet another U.S. war

Perhaps it’s time to slow down and think

It’s hard to believe we’re back again at the brink of disaster. Weren’t Vietnam, Iraq, Libya, and Syria (just to mention a few) sufficient to teach us a lesson? The Trump Administration, egged on by supposed allies Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Israel, created this conflict by tearing up a perfectly good nuclear weapons agreement, erecting a warlike economic barricade around Iran, and threatening economic warfare against any nation daring to violate our edict. We seem determined to push Iran until war breaks out.

Our dictatorial actions bring real suffering to 81 million Iranians: During the past year the value of their currency plummeted 60 percent, inflation is up 37 percent, while food and medical costs have soared 50 percent. Thus we have already attacked Iran diplomatically and economically, with more to come.

The Administration expects Iran to come to the table and negotiate their own defeat in the forty-year war between the Saudi-backed Sunni Islamic tribes and the Iran-backed Shiite Islamic tribes. I doubt Iran will comply.

What do we expect Iran to do? If they do nothing, our sanctions will crush them. Our threats make negotiation impossible. We’ve backed them into a corner from which they can only lash out by, for example, sabotaging shipping through the Gulf of Hormuz. We are on the road to escalation and a war that will dwarf those in Iraq and Syria.

A little history: Iran is home to one of the oldest continuous civilizations, with settlements dating to 7000 BC. The Persians, whom some scholars call the “first historical people,” unified Iran as a nation and empire in 625 BC.

Jumping to modern times: At the end of World War II, Shah (“King”) Mohammad Pahlavi ruled Iran in what was supposed to be a constitutional monarchy along the lines of today’s Jordan, Morocco, or Kuwait. But the shah gradually assumed dictatorial powers.

In 1951, his Prime Minister Mohammed Mosaddeq received sufficient support to nationalize the British-owned oil industry. In 1953, a popular uprising supporting Mosaddeq forced the shah into exile. But Mosaddeq was soon arrested in a coup organized by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency with active support from Great Britain. The shah was re-installed as ruler of an undemocratic autocracy from 1953 through 1978. Shah Pahlavi allowed a consortium of foreign companies to run Iran’s oil facilities, splitting profits with Iran but not allowing Iran to audit their accounts or have a vote on consortium affairs.
Economic conditions remained poor and domestic resistance emerged in 1963. Leftist and Islamic religious resistance was violently repressed by the shah’s internal security service. The resistance smoldered and finally broke out into large demonstrations under the leadership of Ayatollah (“Shiite religious leader”) Ruhollah Khomeini and others in 1978, sending the shah again into exile. The revolution was victorious in 1979 when the entire Iranian people overwhelmingly approved a referendum to adopt a populist, nationalist, strongly Shiite Islamic Constitution with Ayatollah Khomeini as Supreme Leader.

Khomeini ruled during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War, when Iraq’s Sunni Islamic dictator Saddam Hussein launched a surprise attack in hopes of defeating the fledgling government. Iran lost between 500,000 and 1,000,000 civilians and soldiers, including 100,000 victims of Iraq’s chemical weapons. International agencies have unanimously confirmed that Iran never used chemical weapons. Iraq was financially backed by Egypt, the Sunni nations of the Persian Gulf, the Soviet Union, USA, France, Britain, Germany, and China.

On his deathbed in 1989, Khomeini appointed a “council of elders” which then named Iran’s president, Ali Khamenei, as the next Supreme Leader. The transition was smooth, and Khamenei has ruled during a succession of elected presidents, including at least one (Mohammad Khatami, two-term president during 1997-2005) whom Khamenei opposed. The current president, Hassan Rouhani, was elected in 2013 with a vote of 19 million out of 37 million votes cast.

In 2015, following 12 years of diplomatic negotiations involving Iran, USA, UK, France, China, Russia, and Germany, European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini hailed a “decisive step”: a comprehensive agreement limiting Iran’s nuclear program. During the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald Trump vowed to abandon this nuclear deal. As president, he announced U.S. withdrawal from the agreement on May 8, 2018.

Two lessons emerge: Iran has suffered at the hands of the U.S. and other nations intent on its oil riches. And Iran is more democratic than most Mideast nations, far more so than our ally Saudi Arabia.

We need to end our economic blockade and return to the Iran nuclear deal.

References: NWADG 19.6.19-1 (the effects of our sanctions)

Art Hobson, ahobson@uark.edu
NWA Times, 23 July 2019

**Will North Korea and Iran renounce nukes?**

Being realistic in a dangerous era

Between Iran and North Korea, nuclear weapons have been in the news these past few weeks. Civilization faces at least two existential threats, nuclear war and climate disruption. Climate disruption is more certain, but nuclear war remains all-too-possible.
The USA, far and away the world’s most over-armed nation, bears the major historical responsibility for the global nuclear threat. We started the nuclear arms race with the world’s first fission bomb test in 1945, followed by the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, the only wartime uses of nuclear weapons. We first tested the world’s first fusion bomb, potentially thousands of times more powerful than fission bombs, in 1952.

Our military expenditures for 2018 totaled $649 billion. The military spending of the next seven contenders (China, Saudi Arabia, India, France, Russia, United Kingdom, Germany), totaled $609 billion in all, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

I am proud to have spent a sabbatical at SIPRI in 1985, studying arms control. Physicists invented the bomb and I am delighted that many physicists now work to consign it to history’s ash heap. As one example, I was part of a group of ten physicists who published an arms control book titled The Future of Land-Based Strategic Missiles (American Institute of Physics, New York, 1989). I co-edited the book and wrote four chapters, three of which were later published in the international journal “Science and Global Security.” It’s a topic I’ve followed closely all my professional life.

There are nine nuclear weapons nations. Together with their year of nuclear acquisition and current number of separately-targetable nuclear warheads, these are: United States (1945, 6450), Russia (1949, 6490), United Kingdom (1952, 215), France (1960, 300), China (1964, 280), Israel (probably 1966, 80), India (1974, 130), Pakistan (mid 1980s, 140), North Korea (2006-2013, 25).

In 1970, the United-Nations-sponsored Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) entered into force. Today all nations are parties to the treaty except for South Sudan and four nuclear powers (India, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan) which were non-nuclear when the treaty was established but then acquired nukes in violation of the treaty. The purposes of the treaty are to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and achieve nuclear disarmament. The treaty’s central idea is that non-nuclear states agree not to acquire nuclear weapons while nuclear states agree to share peaceful nuclear technology and to pursue the elimination of all nuclear arsenals.

The four non-complying nuclear powers have their own “deterrence” rationales: India and Pakistan deter each other, Israel deters hostile Mideast nations, and North Korea deters the USA and its allies. Iran is currently threatening to acquire nuclear weapons to deter the USA, Saudi Arabia and other Sunni nations.

Americans must understand that we are not the only nation that feels it needs a nuclear arsenal to prevent enemy attack. We still surround ourselves by 6,500 nuclear weapons, far more than “needed” and enough to destroy civilization many times over. Other nations also have their fears. Certainly North Korea and Iran fear the supremely powerful USA—fears justified by our attacks on Vietnam, Iraq and Libya among others. President Obama negotiated a remarkable nuclear deal with Iran requiring them to refrain from nuclear weapons in return for relief from crushing sanctions. President Trump’s foolish violation of that treaty produced the expected Iranian countermoves: Increased uranium enrichment, and the expected re-opening of a plutonium-producing reactor. Enriched uranium and plutonium are the two key fission weapon fuels.

It’s good that Trump gets along with North Korea’s Chairman Kim Jong Un, but I doubt good vibes are going to be enough to re-assure Kim that policy advisors John Bolton and Mike Pompeo will not attack a non-nuclear North Korea, or that some future U.S. president would not attack. He knows he needs nuclear weapons for deterrence.
Threats and crushing sanctions are not the way to peace with Iran or North Korea. We need to remove our hostile sanctions on Iran and return to compliance with the nuclear deal. We need to accept a nuclear-armed North Korea just as we have accepted a nuclear-armed India, Pakistan, and Israel. I think Kim would accept an agreement allowing North Korea a treaty-limited nuclear arsenal similar to Israel’s. And we need to seriously negotiate with the Russians to greatly reduce both superpowers’ mountain of nuclear warheads, as both nations promised to do when we signed the NPT.

You can help: Join the weekly demonstrations against war with Iran at the Washington County Courthouse, Saturdays eleven to noon.

Notes:

Art Hobson, ahobson@uark.edu, NWA Times, 13 August 2019

Will nukes be used in Iran?

America needs a peace movement

War tensions build daily in the Persian Gulf. President Trump’s historic and disastrous decision to violate the Obama-era nuclear deal negotiated by Iran, European Union, China, France, Russia, UK, Germany and the U.S. unleashed a can of worms that’s all too likely to lead to conflict and even nuclear war.

We have waged economic war on Iran, demanding surrender. While railing against a non-existent Iranian nuclear weapon, we have accepted a nuclear-armed Israel in violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We are helping Saudi Arabia develop nuclear weapons and we threaten Iran with nuclear attack (see below). Iran cannot tolerate this situation and they are not going to give up. Their only option is to push back.

It’s easy to understand why Iran, not to mention North Korea, might want nuclear weapons: To deter the threat of U.S. attack as occurred against Iraq, Libya, and Syria. It's instructive to contrast Trump’s relative restraint regarding North Korea’s very real nukes with his violent histrionics against Iran which lacks such weapons and was abiding by the nuclear deal.

In July 2018, Trump responded to an Iranian statement by tweeting “NEVER, EVER THREATEN THE UNITED STATES AGAIN OR YOU WILL SUFFER CONSEQUENCES THE LIKES OF WHICH FEW THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE EVER SUFFERED BEFORE.” Last May, Trump threatened the “official end” of Iran in a U.S.-Iran war. In June, he said “I’m not looking for war and if there is, it’ll be obliteration like you have never seen before. ...You (Iran) can’t have nuclear weapons.” During the current buildup against Iran, we have sent four nuclear-weapons-capable B-52 bombers to the region.

In a July 25 American Conservative article titled “Did Trump just threaten to attack Iran with nukes?” former intelligence officer and nuclear weapons inspector Scott Ritter notes the following recent pronouncement by Trump about the Afghan war: “I could win that war in a week. I just don’t want to kill 10 million people. ...If I wanted to win that war, Afghanistan would be wiped off the face of
the earth, it would be gone. It would be over in, literally, in 10 days.” This boast can only be a reference to nuclear weapons use. As Trump himself implies, nobody is considering this route in Afghanistan. So why did he say it? Ritter suggests, and I heartily agree, that it must be understood as a warning to Iran.

Tactical nuclear weapons are quite plausible, and perhaps defensible from a strict military viewpoint, against Iran. Iran is probably impossible for the U.S. to defeat with any combination of conventional forces. At least half a million ground troops—the number we had in Vietnam at that war’s apex—would be needed, and it would be endless. Iran’s nuclear facilities would be a major U.S. objective. But the Fordow nuclear fuel enrichment plant, buried deep within a mountain and perhaps 80 meters underground, is probably invulnerable to conventional bombs—even the 5,000-pound “bunker-buster” that the B-2 Stealth bomber can deliver.

Iran’s Arak nuclear power plant, which can produce plutonium for nuclear weapons, was closed in accordance with the nuclear deal, but now Iran is re-opening it. Israel has bombed Mideast reactors twice before. There is a high risk Israel will bomb Arak before the reactor turns on and thus becomes radioactive.

Nuclear weapons use against Iran could indeed destroy its weapons sites, even including Fordow, and “win” a war. It would also open the way for other nuclear-armed nations such as Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea to use their nuclear weapons, and for additional nations such as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Taiwan, and the United Arab Emirates, to develop nuclear weapons.

Indeed, our strongest Mideast ally and Iran’s arch-enemy, Saudi Arabia, is edging toward nuclear weapons. According to the July 30 Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, a U.S. Congressional committee report raises questions about whether the White House is willing to place profits above the objective of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, and “exposes how corporate and foreign interests are using their unique access to advocate for the transfer of U.S. nuclear technology to Saudi Arabia.” The Trump administration has approved seven applications for U.S. companies to sell nuclear power technology and assistance to Saudi Arabia. Lawmakers have expressed concerns that the Saudis could develop nuclear weapons.

America needs an antiwar movement. Trump is vulnerable to public antiwar pressure. You can help. Join me and many others in a peaceful law-abiding demonstration against war with Iran, every Saturday, 11 to noon, at the Fayetteville courthouse.

Refs:
• https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/iran-s-main-nuclear-facilities.
• NWADG, 30 July 2019, page 4, “Senate override fails on arms-sale vetoes.”
• https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-strike/iran-nuclear-sites-may-be-beyond-reach-of-bunker-busters-idUSTRE80B0WM20120112
The consequences of nuclear weapons are horrendous, but the science is fascinating. To prevent the horror, citizens must learn some of the related science.

Our familiar world is made of atoms. There are only 118 chemically different types of atoms or “elements.” Atoms are made of a tiny central nucleus containing two kinds of particles, namely protons and neutrons, and of smaller lighter electrons moving roughly in circles around the nucleus.

Each atom’s “chemistry” (the atoms with which it will combine) is determined by its number of electrons, which is equal to its number of protons. This keeps each atom “electrically neutral” because electrons and protons are “oppositely electrified,” electrons negative and protons positive. The elements are numbered according to their number of protons (or electrons). For example, number 1 is hydrogen, with one proton in the nucleus. Elements number 92 and 94, uranium and plutonium, are central to nuclear power and nuclear weapons.

Nuclear weapons and nuclear reactors for peaceful energy are highly significant nuclear technologies. One significant link between them is that both can be fueled by uranium, plutonium, or hydrogen. The energy they produce comes from either “fissioning” (splitting) uranium or plutonium nuclei, or “fusing” (joining together) hydrogen nuclei.

The world’s first nuclear reactor was based on uranium fission. It turned on in 1942 as part of the secret Manhattan Project to build a nuclear bomb during World War II, a project driven by fear of a German nuclear bomb. Indeed, Germany was working in that direction, but their research never achieved a working reactor, much less a bomb.

Fission reactors and bombs are based on a “chain reaction.” If a sufficient amount (called a “critical mass”) of uranium is assembled, and if the assembly is then showered with neutrons, the neutrons will enter a small fraction of the uranium nuclei, causing those nuclei to fission into roughly two parts plus two or three extra neutrons. These neutrons are key to the chain reaction: They go on to enter other nuclei, which then fission, emitting more neutrons, and so forth. This chain of reactions will fission (split) a significant fraction of the trillion trillions of assembled uranium nuclei, each fission releasing a relatively large (on the atomic scale) amount of energy. The huge energy release can produce electric power in reactors or explosions in bombs.

During 1944 and 1945, at a laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico, an international team of scientists constructed the world’s first nuclear weapons: one uranium bomb and two plutonium bombs. The uranium bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan on August 6, 1945. One plutonium bomb was tested in New Mexico in July 1945 and the other fell on Nagasaki, Japan on August 9, 1945. The Hiroshima blast had a “yield” (a truly ironic term) equivalent to 12,000 tons of TNT. Afterward, 140,000 lay dead. By 1950, the death toll had reached 200,000—50 percent of the city’s population. The Nagasaki bomb had a yield of 22,000 tons of TNT. It killed 70,000 outright and 140,000 total by 1950.
I wept while writing that paragraph. Why must humans do this to each other? Today, such devices, having yields similar to the Hiroshima bomb, are called “tactical nuclear weapons” and come in the form of land mines, air-dropped bombs, and rocket-launched missiles for battlefield use. As I discussed three weeks ago, the U.S. has hinted at using nuclear weapons against Iran. They would probably be of the “tactical” variety.

Regarding fusion: Fusion reactors are at least 50 years in the future, but hydrogen fusion bombs have unfortunately been around since they were first tested by the United States in 1952. H-bomb fuel is a special naturally-occurring form of hydrogen containing one proton and one or two neutrons in the nucleus. Their yield typically runs up to one million tons of TNT, hundreds of times larger than fission bombs. The U.S., Russia, China, France, U.K. and probably North Korea have these monsters, as “deterrence” to prevent other nations from using their H-bombs.

One such bomb can destroy, for example, Detroit or San Francisco. They work by first detonating a fission bomb and then, within the same bomb casing, employing the powerful x-rays emitted from the fission reaction to quickly heat hydrogen to millions of degrees, high enough to “fuse” hydrogen nuclei together to form helium (whose nucleus comprises two protons and two neutrons).

Note the paradox of deterrence: All nations could prevent other nations from using nukes by banning nukes, yet nine nations have nukes.

Art Hobson, ahobson@uark.edu, NWA Times, 24 September 2019

**Will Iran get the bomb?**

Trump turns lemonade into lemons

It's a tragic paradox that the primary reason nations obtain nuclear weapons is fear of other nations’ nuclear weapons. This was even true of the world’s first nuclear power. The U.S. “Manhattan Project” to build the bomb was driven by our fear of a non-existent Nazi bomb. In fact, the Germans had a World War II nuclear program but they lacked the resources and the broad spectrum of scientific talent to get it off the ground. The Soviet Union then built their nuclear weapons because of their fear of U.S. military (including nuclear) power, and the world was off to the nuclear weapons race track.

The most recent addition to the nuclear club, North Korea, probably built its nuclear arsenal because of fears of US-engineered regime-change of the type launched against Vietnam, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and to some extent Afghanistan where our war against al-Qaeda has degenerated into interference with an internal civil war, much as in Vietnam.

In order to end this competition, the international Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was adopted by nearly every nation in the world. Nevertheless, there are today nine nuclear-weapons nations, including five (US, Russia, UK, France, China) that had the bomb prior to the NPT's adoption in 1970, and four (Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea) that got the bomb after 1970 in violation of that treaty. Under the treaty, the non-nuclear nations are expected to abstain from nuclear weapons while the nuclear nations are expected to work toward nuclear disarmament. 184 nations have abided by their non-nuclear pledge, but the five original nuclear nations and the four NPT violators have failed to honor the NPT's goal by failing to seriously pursue nuclear disarmament.

With many powerful enemies, chiefly the USA, nuclear-armed Israel, and very rich Saudi Arabia, Iran has plenty of reasons to desire nuclear weapons. They have probably had a nuclear weapons program in the past: The United Nations charged Iran with being out of compliance with its NPT obligations because of suspected nuclear weapons activities during the early 2000s.
In 2015 Iran along with the five permanent UN Security Council members (China, France, Russia, UK, USA) plus Germany and the European Union, signed the “Iran nuclear deal.” Iran agreed to eliminate its stockpile of medium-enriched uranium, reduce its stockpile of low-enriched uranium by 98 percent, and reduce by two-thirds the number of its gas centrifuge enrichment devices for 13 years. For the next 15 years, Iran agreed to only enrich uranium up to about 4 percent (usable in reactors but not useful for bombs which require greater than 80 percent enrichment), and not build any “heavy-water facilities” (useful for producing bomb-grade plutonium). For 10 years, all uranium enrichment is limited to a single facility using older-style centrifuges. In return, the other signatories promise Iran will receive relief from punishing nuclear-related sanctions. In May 2019 the International Atomic Energy Agency certified that Iran had maintained and continued to maintain the main terms of the deal.

The nuclear deal was a real bonus for the planet, and had the potential to preclude an Iranian nuclear arsenal. The primary argument against it was its time-limitations, but there was every prospect of extending the treaty’s time durations provided Iran was treated with international respect and permitted to develop its economy free of punishing sanctions.

But in May 2018 President Trump turned this sweet lemonade back into lemons. He announced U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, and in November 2018 U.S. sanctions came back into effect in order to force Iran to end its support for militant groups and its development of ballistic missiles. There is little prospect that Iran will obey either command, but they might be lured back negotiations if Trump offered the promise of removing sanctions in return for an extension of the time limitations to, say, 25 years. I have always disagreed with those who are overly concerned about these time limitations, because I think it’s clear that Iran desires nuclear weapons primarily because it fears the USA, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, and that a modest amount of good will over time will go far to remove these fears.

Current developments in the Mideast are not encouraging for those who seek a more peaceful world. A war against Iran could quickly turn extremely ugly and even nuclear. It could not be “won” without putting hundreds of thousands of U.S. boots on the ground to defeat this huge, well-armed, and largely unified nation.

Ref: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_program_of_Iran

End Art’s columns.

TO PROTESTERS: CONGRESSMAN WOMACK’S REPLY TO OUR PETITION

You might recall my acquiring your signature on a petition to AR/’s congressional delegation deploring our country’s belligerence against Iran (since “1953, when the CIA helped engineer a coup. . .overthrowing [the] democratically elected Iranian government,” and forcing on the people of Iran the brutal Shah; Bacevich, America’s War for the Greater Middle East, 13). So far, only representative Womack has replied to me.

The purpose of such a petition to such a warmonger is to discover his rationalizations to enable us better to oppose him and elect a peace maker. For those of you who have not heard back from the congressman, here’s a snippet:

“I believe we should do our best to avoid armed conflict with Iran, and any other nation for that matter. However, if Iran continues to act contrary to established international norms by, among other things, sponsoring terrorist organizations, attacking international shipping, and seeking to destabilize the Middle East, we must do what is necessary to uphold the international order that has helped avoid great power conflict since World War II.”

The beginning and ending poles of this sophistical paragraph are personal self-righteousness and national exceptionalism. But its heart is not commission but omission. As noted above, the US not Iran overthrew the government of the other. The US not Iran has repeatedly violated the UN Charter (read Chapter 1, Article 2, especially Section 4). The US not Iran is the perpetrator of a global War of Terrorism. The US not Iran has destabilized the Middle East. The evidence for these claims is legion.
That is why we must study US history critically. The following statement provides an introduction:

“America has constructed a vision of an ‘axis of evil’, a hostile, inimical perversion, endemic and hiding not just within a few nations but in communities spread across much of the world. Terror, terrorism, and terrorists have become one single, simple, indistinguishable scourge of all humanity. . . .” (Sardar and Davies, Why Do People Hate America? 13). From this warped perception comes the US mainstream media, a congressman like Womack, a public that voted him in office, and the war on Iran,

Dick

A few more readings corrective of the US military-corporate-mainstream media-congressional-executive pro-war bias:

--Inside Iran book by Medea Benjamin (Code Pink founder).

--Douglas Waitley. The War Makers. (US initiated or provoked its wars.)


Compiled by Dick Bennett, Building a Culture of Peace, Justice, and Ecology.

http://omnicenter.org/donate/

What’s at Stake: “In a world convulsed by violence and unbelievable brutality the lines between ‘us’ and ‘the terrorists’ have been completely blurred. We don’t have to choose between imperialism and Terrorism; we have to choose what form of resistance will rid us of both. What shall we choose? Violence or nonviolence? –Arundhati Roy (sent to me by Don Timmerman of Casa Maria Catholic Worker Community, in its newsletter Casa Cry)

See previous Iran Newsletters.

PUT FOLLOWING AT END OF #32

CONTENTS: OMNI’S IRAN NEWSLETTER #31, July 25, 2019


Continuation of Analysis of Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette Reporting Iran, July 19-23 by Dick Bennett

Published Commentary on US Imperialism

Vijay Prashad, Iran’s right to have a nuclear energy program.
Prashad, The US invasion of Afghanistan brought not peace but 18 years of death and starvation, and the present peace talks which omit the present government are unlikely to produce amity.

David Vine’s book, *Base Nation.* American military bases encircle the globe. More than two decades after the end of the Cold War, the U.S. still stations its troops at nearly a thousand locations in foreign lands. *Base Nation* shows that the worldwide network of bases brings with it a panoply of ills—and actually makes the nation less safe in the long run.

“Stop Imperialist Warfare” by Abel Tomlinson
Imperialist warfare is not only military assault or CIA covert operations, but also economic warfare such as sanctions.

Oliver Stone.  Stop Relentless War.

https://popularresistance.org/we-must-stop-our-nations-push-for-relentless-war/

Contents of #30

MORE


END IRAN NEWSLETTER #32, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

OMNI Peace Newsletter | OMNI Facebook | OMNI Website

Dick Bennett

(479) 442-4600
2582 Jimmie Ave.
Fayetteville, AR 72703