

The International Luxembourg Forum  
on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe



# Solving the Iranian Nuclear Problem by Force: Scenarios and Ramifications

Vladimir Dvorkin and Alexei Arbatov, eds.



2008

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## Contents

Introduction \_\_\_\_\_ 4

### I

**The United States' capability to execute airborne operations against Iran** \_\_\_\_\_ 9

First scenario \_\_\_\_\_ 9

Grouping of resources and manpower that may be employed for military operations in the first scenario \_\_\_\_\_ 9

Preparing for operations \_\_\_\_\_ 13

The start and possible course of operations \_\_\_\_\_ 14

Expected results and the aftermath of operations per the first scenario \_\_\_\_\_ 18

Second scenario \_\_\_\_\_ 22

### II

**Israel's capacity to execute missile and bomb strikes against targets in Iran** \_\_\_\_\_ 26

### III

**Iran's possible response to the solution of its nuclear problem by force** \_\_\_\_\_ 30

The political/ideological and moral/psychological milieu in the Islamic Republic of Iran \_\_\_\_\_ 30

Iran's response to the use of force \_\_\_\_\_ 35

### IV

**Probable Responses in the Muslim World** \_\_\_\_\_ 40

Anticipated Responses in Individual Countries and Regions \_\_\_\_\_ 42

Conclusions \_\_\_\_\_ 46

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## Introduction

Over the last several years the international community has viewed the possibility of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons as not merely one of the greatest threats to nuclear nonproliferation, but as a potential hazard of actual nuclear weapons application in regional military confrontations, including unpredictable escalation beyond the region's borders and thus catastrophic consequences.

Suspicions of Iran's undeclared nuclear activities, including separation of plutonium and laser enrichment of uranium, have existed since the mid 1970s, but it became possible to confirm these activities only in 2003, when IAEA inspectors visited uranium enrichment plants in Natanz and a heavy water production facility in Arak. During the first stage inspectors identified six serious pieces of evidence of activities of which the IAEA had not been informed, including the export of natural uranium from China, the use of uranium hexafluoride for testing centrifuges, the experimental laser enrichment of 30 kg of metallic uranium, the separation of plutonium from irradiated uranium targets, and others.

In 2005 the IAEA Board of Governors passed a resolution asserting that Iran had violated its obligations per agreements on guarantees dated 15 May 1974, and in 2006 the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1696, specifying its readiness to take measures in case the IAEA's demands were not met. The UN Security Council's main demand was that uranium enrichment processes be halted. In connection with the refusal of Iran's leadership to comply with these demands, in 2006 the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1737, which introduced sanctions prohibiting the delivery of equipment and technologies to Iran that could be used to enrich uranium and chemically recycle spent nuclear fuel, as well as stipulating that the accounts of companies implicated in the acquisition of nuclear technologies be frozen.

Subsequent UN Security Council resolutions 1747 and 1803 gradually intensified the sanctions, while Iran's leadership remained adamant in its refusal to comply with the demands. Meanwhile, new information continued to appear on nuclear weapons development, including the discovery of documents on a

technology for manufacturing metallic uranium hemispheres adapted from Shehab-3 type ballistic missile reentry vehicles for nuclear warheads, etc.

Iran's evidently intensifying decisiveness to continue its uranium enrichment and plutonium separation programs is particularly alarming. The Iranian leadership's emphatically negative reaction to UN Security Council resolution 1803, along with the announcement that the number of centrifuges in Natanz was increasing from 3 000 to 9 000, testify to the need to adopt more decisive steps in order to ensure that Iran will comply with the demands with which it has been presented.

On one hand, barring more severe sanctions as a means of pressuring Iran and declaring the necessity to resolve the issue using exclusively diplomatic methods simply encourage the Iranian leadership's tendency to drag its feet during negotiations. As a result, Iran continues to expand its potential to enrich uranium and take advantage of cooperation with the IAEA as a tool for pressuring the UN Security Council and the international community.

On the other hand, there now exists a general understanding that gradually tightening sanctions in subsequent UN Security Council resolutions will prove fruitless — especially since adopting new resolu-

tions of this type has become more problematic in light of a sharp deterioration of relations among Security Council members following the armed confrontation between Russia and Georgia. This has been confirmed in debates within the Security Council in September 2008, which ended with Russia and China refusing to support new sanctions against Iran. It was possible then to adopt only a new resolution confirming the requirements of previous Security Council resolutions. The present situation may explain South Korea's demarche announcing the restoration of that country's nuclear facilities, and it is entirely possible that the Iranian leadership is taking advantage of the situation to continue its nuclear programs unimpeded.

In 2007 the United States intelligence community published a report asserting that the development of nuclear weapons in Iran was halted in 2003. However, detailed analysis of this document can lead to a paradoxical conclusion. First of all, it contains no reference to specific facts confirming this conclusion, and everything is based on conjecture and inferences. Second of all, the report testifies that Iran's leadership deceived the IAEA and the international communities on a significantly larger scale when it asserted that the country was never host to the development of nuclear weapons. Third and finally, the sus-

pension of nuclear weapon development may relate to the fact that the principal stages of nuclear weapons development have already been completed, including the construction of a nuclear warhead, a reentry vehicle, and corresponding bombs.

This supposition is based not only on the availability of nuclear weapons design, but also on information available on Iraq's nuclear warhead development projects.<sup>1</sup> In the most recent such design, the warhead has a mass of 415–868 kg and a diameter of 600–650 mm. It contains a neutron initiator, a core made of highly-enriched uranium (15–18 kg), a natural uranium reflector (100–250 kg), iron cladding (50–200 kg), an explosive substance (250–500 kg), and other apparatus. There is no reason to believe that Iranian design organizations could not create similar structures. Furthermore, a small quantity of weapons-grade uranium, sufficient for one warhead (15–18 kg), could certainly have been acquired on the nuclear materials black market, and therefore it is undoubtedly possible that Iran already has one or more experimental warheads.

Iran already has Shehab-3 type ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear charges, and their range is constantly growing. The first version of the missile, a copy of the North Korean Nodong-1 missile,

<sup>1</sup> *The Iraqi Nuclear bomb, iraqwatch.org.*

was capable of delivering a 1000-kg payload a distance of 1500 km. By reducing the useful load to 500 kg, the missiles' range increases by approximately 500 km. Nodong-1 missiles were manufactured utilizing a Scud-like technology, which served as the basis for assertions about Iranian missiles' possible range. These calculations did not take into consideration the fact that Iranian specialists had gone significantly further than Scud technologies and had replaced the Nodong-1 four-engine cluster with a single, powerful engine that they had developed themselves. This raised the flight range for the aforementioned warhead to 2200–2300 km. As a whole, the idea that such countries as North Korea and Iran are capable of having only missiles based on Soviet Scud-type technologies is false. We remind our readers that the USSR had developed mid-range missiles with nuclear warheads with a range of up to 5000 km by the late 1950s. It would be a dangerous error to suppose that such technologies are still unavailable to others.

Thus, efforts to bring the Iranian nuclear crisis under control have come to a dead end, and this periodically leads to the emergence of forecasts of the problem being resolved by force. Such suppositions are based on the concept that using military might may be a lesser evil than letting Iran create nuclear weapons

and subsequently distribute them within the region and beyond.

In general, collective acts of force in cases of obvious nuclear threats to international security are mentioned in Article 52 of the UN Charter. However, it would have been unrealistic to expect the UN Security Council to adopt a corresponding resolution before the armed conflict in South Ossetia, and since that conflict it has become even less realistic. In these conditions it is entirely possible that the United States, Israel, and a number of other states will use force, unauthorized by the Security Council, for the purpose of forcing Iran to halt proscribed nuclear activities and relinquish full control over all nuclear power generation in Iran.

It would be impossible to predict the entire range of repercussions from the use of force without analyzing possible military operations against Iran, taking into consideration Iran's probable responses, as well as the reactions of the entire Muslim world. But such an analysis is necessary primarily for the reason that regardless of however narrow the coalition of states that take part in the operation may be, overcoming its consequences, as the experience of the war in Iraq has demonstrated, will require the combined efforts of the entire international community.

The realistic scenarios of a military operation against Iran are very limited. The base scenarios are reviewed below. Their characteristics (duration, intensity of strikes) may vary within certain boundaries, but this will not noticeably impact the consequences.

**First** scenario: missile and air strikes, limited in time (2–5 days) and scale, on critical nuclear infrastructure sites, missile installations, anti-aircraft defense facilities, airports, naval bases, and main military leadership and communications sites. Armed hostilities may be initiated only by the United States and Israel, or by the armed forces of those two countries working in concert. It may happen that hostilities are initiated by Israel, but Israel will not manage to prevent a palpable response from Iran, and the United States armed forces will become involved subsequently.

**Second** scenario: missile and air strikes on a set of targets expanded beyond those included in the first scenario and lasting several months. The strikes gradually intensify over time (similar to the war in Yugoslavia). These military operations may be performed by the armed forces of a limited coalition of states.

**Third** scenario: following the example of the invasion of Iraq, ground forces may invade the territory of Iran.

Another (fourth) scenario periodically arises: a color revolution replacing the current regime; however, the grounds for realizing such a project in the foreseeable future are too weak. In any case, the time required to prepare such a scenario substantially exceeds the estimated time needed for Iran to create nuclear weapons.

The first two scenarios are reviewed below, since the third one seems practically impossible, not simply because the United States lacks the necessary resources, which are presently being used in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also as a result of the hard lessons learned from the occupation of Iraq.

The first two chapters of this brochure evaluate the military potential of the USA and Israel and the possible outcome of military operations, as well as Iran's probable responses. The last two chapters present the political, economic, and humanitarian results of military operations and their impact on the condition of the countries of the Greater Middle East and adjacent states.

This study was performed within the framework of the Luxembourg Forum on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe. The views and assessments of its authors reflect their own point of view and may not coincide with the position of the Luxembourg Forum.

## I The United States' capability to execute airborne operations against Iran

### First scenario

In the first scenario, a sudden, mass missile and bomb strike on Iran's nuclear infrastructure and its critically important military sites may be inflicted by a group of American forces concentrated in the Persian Gulf zone and other adjacent regions, without shifting or deploying other forces.<sup>2</sup>

The operation must focus on the maximum reduction of the Iranian military's capability of striking Israel and US forces in the Gulf, as well as its ability to block the Strait of Hormuz.

#### ***Grouping of resources and manpower that may be employed for military operations in the first scenario***

At present the United States possesses six multipurpose aircraft carrier groups in the conflict zone.<sup>3</sup> Each group includes 10–12 ships of various classes, including an attack carrier. The total number of personnel in each group is 12,000–15,000.

The naval grouping may contain up to forty cruise missile carriers, nuclear submarines, and about 1000 sea-launched cruise missiles.

Over 5000 people are located on board each aircraft carrier, including both aircrew and flight officers, as well as eighty warplanes.

The aircraft carriers USS Nimitz, USS Kitty Hawk, USS Constellation, and USS Abraham Lincoln are deployed in the Persian Gulf, and the USS Harry S. Truman and USS Theodore Roosevelt are located in the Mediterranean Sea.

<sup>2</sup> [iraq.newsru.ru/article/59.html](http://iraq.newsru.ru/article/59.html) — 22k.

<sup>3</sup> *A grouping of US, UK, and Iraq forces. NEWS.ru.*

Besides the aircraft carrier itself, a standard aircraft carrier group includes two cruisers, a frigate, 3—4 destroyers, two nuclear submarines, and several support ships.

Certain multipurpose aircraft carrier groups contain three amphibious assault ships with an expeditionary marine battalion (composed of 2200 marines) on board.

The aircraft carriers serve as the base for airborne squadrons containing F/A-18 Hornet, F-14 Tomcat, and EA-6B Prowler electronic warfare aircraft.

Most of the combat support ships are equipped with the Aegis Combat System. They can carry Tomahawk cruise missiles with an approximate range of 1000 km and an accuracy of up to six meters.

Royal Navy of the United Kingdom: 17 combat ships, including the HMS Ark Royal aircraft carrier and 4000 marines.

Coalition air forces include over 700 warplanes.

Parts of the group are deployed:

In Saudi Arabia: 9000 US troops.

Air bases: Prince Sultan Air Base in Al Kharj.

In Qatar: 8000 US troops.

Air bases: Al Udeid Air Base, As Saliyah Army Base, US CENTCOM forward headquarters where general leadership of military operations in Iraq is conducted.

In Kuwait: 140,000 US troops, 12,000 British troops. Air bases: Ahmed Al Jaber Air Base, Ali Al Salem Air Base.

Bahrain: 5000 US troops, headquarters of the Fifth Fleet of the US Navy.

In Oman: 3000 US troops.

In Turkey: 5000 US and UK troops.

Air base: İncirlik Air Base.

In Jordan: 3000 US troops.

Air bases: Mafraq, Azraq, Safawi, Ruysheed.

Strategic B-2 and B-52 bombers are deployed on the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

According to *The Atlantic Monthly*, during an improvised war game simulating an Iranian war scenario, military airfields were provisionally activated even in Georgia and Azerbaijan. However, those airfields need to be modernized before US Air Force aircraft can land on them. It has been proposed to allocate \$700 million for this purpose. Specific air force facilities in Azerbaijan men-





tioned in the scenario could be used in a war with Iran as a northern base of operations. This includes airfields in Baku, Sumqayıt, Qaraçala, Kürdəmir, Gəncə, Dəllər, Naxçıvan şəhəri, Lənkəran, and Yevlax.

Analyzing American resources and manpower in the Persian Gulf zone and in the Near and Middle East makes it possible to conclude that an air force grouping consisting of ten air wings and groups of over one thousand airplanes, over forty cruise missile carriers, nuclear submarines, and about one thousand sea-launched cruise missiles could be created for military operations against Iran according to the first scenario. Up to forty Patriot, Improved Hawk, and Shain-2 anti-aircraft guided missile defense systems, some of which will cover Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, will defend the groups from air strikes.

The American Air Force's strategic B-2A bombers deployed at the forward air base in Diego Garcia (Chagos Archipelago, Indian Ocean) may be used to strike Iran's nuclear infrastructure sites and its critically important military facilities. B-52 strategic bombers from the RAF Fairford forward air force base in the United Kingdom could also participate by following a route mapped out in 2003 that crosses over the Baltic Straits zone, Danish, Polish, Hungarian, and Romanian

airspace, the Black Sea water territory, and further across Turkish and Iraqi airspace.

Obviously, the bombers' flight missions will be directed, adjusted, and reprogrammed for other targets from the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia. Information on the redeployment of some resources and manpower to this air base appeared in the mass media in early February, which confirms the likelihood of strategic bombers being employed.

In the future, Trident II D-5 fleet ballistic missiles with non-nuclear warheads, together with other resources, including bunker buster bombs, may be used to destroy Iran's nuclear infrastructure and facilities. Trident II strategic ballistic missiles, which remain a component of America's nuclear triad, are already being re-equipped with non-nuclear warheads in keeping with the new Prompt Global Strike (PGS) strategy. This strategy involves using non-nuclear weapons fired from great distances and within tight time frames — within one hour after the order is issued — to destroy poorly accessible targets protected by air defense systems.<sup>4</sup> However, the missiles will not be deployed in the near future.

<sup>4</sup> Yury Kotenok. "SShA gotovyat 'khirurgicheskiy' udar po Iranu" ("USA Preparing Surgical Strike against Iran"), *utro.ru*, 3 April 2007.

It will be possible to deflect an attack involving such missiles during their final trajectory section only by means of missile defense systems capable of intercepting high-speed ballistic targets. Iran currently has no such resources.

Thus, the American military might concentrated in the Persian Gulf and adjacent regions is entirely sufficient to destroy most of the most important nuclear and military facilities in Iran within the first few days of the onslaught.

### ***Preparing for operations***

In all likelihood, the United States has been preparing military operations and various detailed action plans against Iran for a long time. This is primarily evident from the composition and size of the naval and aviation grouping within the supposed military theater zone, which clearly does not correspond to the scale of military operations in Iraq.

As we know, intelligence data about one's opponent serves as the basis for planning and preparations for any military operation. In the case of Iran, completeness of information on Iran's nuclear infrastructure and facilities and its military is of prime importance, because the course and result of US Navy and Air Force operations depend on it. There can

be little doubt that the Pentagon has been collecting and analyzing all information supplied by the intelligence community extensively and thoroughly, and we may be confident that most of the stationary facilities that will be destroyed during the first phase of operations have already been determined.

The territory of Iran is constantly monitored by a grouping of American reconnaissance satellites that not only determine facilities subject to strikes and their exact coordinates, but also track all movement in their vicinity in real time.

Based on the above, we may affirm that the United States has all of the necessary information to prepare for an air/missile strike against Iran. This is confirmed by Russian intelligence data as well, which according to an RIA Novosti announcement dated 30 March testify that the American military has practically completed preparations for possible military operations against Iran, determined a list of potential targets on Iranian territory, and worked out operation plans during maneuvers.

The suddenness factor has special significance for the success of the operation. If the United States is preparing an operation using only those forces already present inside the Persian Gulf zone without augmenting them, there will be practi-



cally no external signs of preparation for a strike. In order to mask its true intentions and the time frame set for the start of operations, the Pentagon has most likely planned a misinformation campaign whose main components are “leaked secret plans” that appear in the mass media, contradictory statements by top military officials and civil administration representatives, special misinformation programs in broadcast television, etc. This information attack is aimed not only at operatively masking plans for a future military campaign, but also at creating a constant psychological impact on the Iranian leadership.

The information war against Iran is at its high point, and a key component of it is ensuring that preparations for a sudden military incursion are kept secret.

### ***The start and possible course of operations***

Judging by the behavior of Iranian leaders, it will not be necessary to search for a serious reason to make the decision to use military force, since Iran has been executing a policy meant to provoke the use of force against it. The specific casus belli could be an anticipated staunch refusal to halt its nuclear program and cooperate with the IAEA, provocative military exercises and threats to use its missiles against Israel,

evidence discovered of military and financial assistance to the Shiite Mahdi Army fighting US forces in Iraq, etc.<sup>5</sup>

The US may issue the Iranian leadership a severe ultimatum 2–3 hours before the start of operations. The probability that the Iranian leadership will accept the terms of the ultimatum is very insignificant, and the operation will begin according to plans.

It is likely that military operations against Iran will follow the sequence tested by the United States during two wars in the Persian Gulf, the Balkan operation, and operations in Afghanistan, although other, unexpected options are also possible.<sup>6</sup>

The initial stage of operations may begin with the launch of cruise missiles from the air and the sea, which will herald the first, most intense air incursion.

The main cruise missile targets will be identified air defense facilities, communications hubs, military command offices, missile and artillery positions, military airfields, na-

<sup>5</sup> Yu. Baranchik. *SShA protiv Irana. Istinnye predposylki vozmozhnogo voennogo konflikta* (“USA against Iran. The Real Premises for a Possible Military Conflict”), *Tsentraziya*, 5 July 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Leonid Galin, Alexander Sokolov, Vladimir Novichkov. *VVS SShA v voine v Persidskom zalive* (“The US Air Force at War in the Persian Gulf”), *Ugolok neba*. 2004.

val bases, and places where military units are deployed. In essence, this will be the beginning of a disarming strike aimed at minimizing Iran’s capacity to respond. Since nearly all of the above-mentioned strike targets (except for mobile missile launch installations and air defense facilities) are stationary, many of them will be destroyed or rendered inoperable. At the same time (or several minutes earlier) an electronic warfare operation using equipment present within the grouping and aimed at suppressing communications channels and disrupting the Iranian military leadership will be conducted.

The cruise missile strike against air defense sites and electronic warfare operations will disorganize the military leadership and prepare conditions favorable for execution of the first air incursion.

The air incursion will consist of at least three echelons. The first echelon will be composed of EA-6B Prowler electronic warfare aircraft and attack aircraft based on the multipurpose aircraft carrier groups’ aircraft carriers. This echelon must begin acting immediately after the first missile strike is completed. Its task will include seeking out and destroying onshore air defense facilities and planes (including those that are airborne at the time) that remain after the first cruise missile strike. It will be especially important to seek

out and destroy air defense facilities covering nuclear infrastructure and facilities.

Iran’s air defenses and fighter aircraft are the weakest link in its military, and therefore, just as in the first and second Iraqi campaigns, Iran’s air defenses and air forces will be practically destroyed by the cruise missile strike and the actions of the first echelon of the US Air Force incursion. Some part of the mobile air defense facilities may be preserved, but it will not be capable of covering the nuclear infrastructure and facilities and forces from enemy air attacks. Destruction of Iran’s air defenses and air force will remove nearly all barriers to implementing plans for the missile air strikes included in the first scenario.

The second attack echelon will be composed of an airborne unit of fighter aircraft, bombers, and battle aircraft based on the multipurpose aircraft carrier groups’ aircraft carriers and air bases in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and possibly Turkey. Their main tasks will be to continue the disarming strike which began with the launch of the cruise missiles. The main objectives of the incursion will be supplementary reconnaissance and incapacitation of missile launch installations and artillery positions, naval ships, and military infrastructure and facilities. Special attention will be paid to disabling artillery

and missile positions and warships (primarily light speedboats carrying missiles and submarines) capable of blocking the Strait of Hormuz with fire and destroying commercial and military ships in the Strait and in the Persian Gulf. Part of the incursion may be directed at destroying Iran's aboveground nuclear infrastructure and facilities, communications, etc.

The third echelon of the first incursion, besides a US Air Force unit (battle planes and fighter/bombers) located within the region, will include B-2A strategic bombers launching at the forward air base in Diego Garcia (Chagos Archipelago, Indian Ocean) and strategic B-52 bombers from the RAF Fairford forward air force base in the United Kingdom. Part of the strategic bombers will be equipped with bunker buster bombs and missiles meant to strike nuclear facilities located in concrete bunkers underground.

The third echelon will take action immediately after the second, in order to keep the enemy from having time to prepare its air defense facilities to deflect attacks by strategic bombers that must start before the beginning of the operation in order to arrive on time at the place where the third incursion echelon is to gather.

The task of the battle planes and attack bombers will be to provide aerial cover for strategic bombers,

engage in supplementary reconnaissance, and destroy military facilities that remain after the second incursion echelon.

The chief targets of the strategic bombers will be nuclear facilities and infrastructure.

During the first and subsequent incursions a reconnaissance group supporting the operation must monitor the results of missile and air strikes in real time in order to adjust their actions in a timely manner.

It is obvious that a sudden missile strike and the first mass air incursion will inflict substantial damage on Iran's military. Its possible responses will be severely limited, and continued strikes will bring the army's combat effectiveness into question.

It is entirely possible that after the first incursion the Americans will repeat their ultimatum, and will wait for a while for a response. It is also probable that the Iranian leadership will agree to comply with the ultimatum's demands in order to make the incursions stop and shift to negotiations about peace terms in order to maintain the regime, since further escalation of the conflict may lead to its liquidation, with catastrophic consequences for the country. Everything depends on who will take charge within the Iranian government at this critical juncture: the

moderate or the radical wing of the country's clergy. If there is no response to the ultimatum, then the incursions may resume within two or three hours.

During the first day of operations two or three more aerial incursions may be executed from bases in the Persian Gulf region. Based on the experience of previous wars, carrier-based aircraft from the Gulf multipurpose aircraft carrier groups and aircraft from airfields around Iran may perform 3—4 sorties during the first two days, and thereby maintain the strike density set by the first, most intense incursion. The intensity of the incursions will drop over the following days. Aviation will act mainly in the form of individual air groups performing missions against newly surveyed targets and aimed at impeding Iran's military from responding. Unmanned surveillance and strike and reconnaissance aircraft and precision weapons systems deployed in Iraq and on ships within the multipurpose aircraft carrier groups will be utilized extensively. The combined application of all intelligence resources will make it possible to subject regions in which retaliatory actions by the Iranian military may originate to total monitoring in real time. This mainly includes the Iranian coast, regions where missile launch facilities are situated, and places where military units are deployed.

The main task in the following days of the operation will be to destroy the infrastructure of Iran's nuclear complex. In order for a strike meant to neutralize Iran's nuclear program to be successful, it must be directed not simply at the uranium enrichment plant in Natanz, but at other key sites, as well. This includes the heavy water reactor in Arak, the nuclear research center in Esfahan, the factory that produces the yellowcake needed for uranium enrichment in Ardakan, and the uranium mine in Savand.

The Iranians are already preparing to deflect an attack on their nuclear sites, the most important of which are surrounded by air defense systems and are buried deep underground. In particular, key components of the uranium enrichment plant in Natanz are located at a depth of 18 meters and are protected by a two-meter-thick concrete layer. The nuclear research center in Esfahan is no less well-protected.<sup>7</sup>

The air defense systems protecting the nuclear complex and Iran's aviation will clearly be destroyed in the first days of the operation; however, effective obliteration of

<sup>7</sup> I. F. Bocharov. *Stimulyator yadernoy programmy Tegerana. Iran stremilsya bezopasit' sebya ot vozmozhnogo voennogo napadeniya SShA* ("The Stimulus for Tehran's Nuclear Program. Iran Tried to Insure Itself against a Possible Military Attack by the USA"), *NEWSru.com*, 14 March 2008.

the nuclear facilities themselves will require substantial effort and time. When necessary, B2 bombers based in Missouri, USA, will be deployed.

As has been done during all recent military conflicts involving the United States, an information operation will be conducted. It will involve all types of information weapons capable of incapacitating the country's military and civil information infrastructure, as well as specialized ammunition designed to cause Iran's power system to break down. The United States' overwhelming information superiority will make it possible not only to disrupt all types of electronic communication and command and control systems in the country, but also to exert psychological pressure on the population and military personnel. All civil radio and television stations will be suppressed, and they will be replaced with television programs prepared by American psychological operations specialists. This will result in the disruption of state and military authority. Misinformation in the electronic media will engender chaos and panic among the population. The experience gained by the United States in two wars in the Gulf, Panama, Haiti, and the Balkans makes it possible to speak of the great contribution — which in a number of cases will prove decisive — made by information operations toward the success of these

military campaigns, and Iran will be no exception.

The United States' military operations per the first scenario end with the destruction of the infrastructure of Iran's nuclear complex and its most important military sites.

### ***Expected results and the aftermath of operations per the first scenario***

As a result of the US operation the infrastructure of Iran's nuclear complex will be destroyed, and the possibility of retaliation against the American grouping in the Gulf and Israel will be reduced to a minimum. The further course of events in the conflict will be defined by the political decision made by Iranian government authorities and religious leaders. There are two basic political decisions possible.

The first is to acknowledge defeat, submit to the demands of the American ultimatum, and open negotiations regarding the terms for further resolution of the conflict.

The second is to call the country's people to a "holy war" against the American aggressor.

At first, a decision by Iran's leadership to acknowledge defeat in the





military conflict with the United States may appear acceptable for the purpose of maintaining the existing political regime and the country's economic potential. After operations per the first scenario are complete, all the elements of Iran's national infrastructure will be defenseless against US aviation and missiles. A continuation of bombing and missile strikes will lead the country to economic collapse and heavy civilian losses. However, in spite of all the apparent negative consequences of continuing the conflict, it is unlikely that such a decision will be acceptable for the Iranian leadership, primarily for reasons of domestic politics.

Most of the country's population will perceive capitulation as a disgrace and deep national humiliation, threatening a loss of authority for Iran's spiritual leaders and placing the very existence of the regime under question. The decision to capitulate will be perceived negatively by most of the clergy and army and will inevitably lead to a social schism, and possibly to political chaos and civil war. Taking advantage of the weakened central government, separatist movements in the country's Kurdish and Azerbaijani regions will mobilize, threatening Iran's territorial integrity. It is obvious that such prospects will not satisfy Iran's spiritual leaders, and most likely they will call the peo-

ple to a total war against the United States.<sup>8,9</sup>

It is entirely possible that Iran will begin retaliation on a limited scale during the course of operations per the first scenario and will continue its military operations after the scenario is completed. It is possible that some part of the country's remaining cruise and ballistic missiles will be used to strike ships in the US naval grouping in the Gulf and Israel. We may suppose that launch of those missiles will inflict insignificant damage upon strike sites, since, first, they are insufficiently precise in their targeting, and second, it is very likely that they can be intercepted by air defense and missile defense systems.

Total monitoring over the coast using all types of surveillance and the capacity to quickly terminate targets as they appear using unmanned attack aircraft and armaments from the ships in the multipurpose aircraft carrier groups will make it virtually impossible for any remaining Iranian torpedo and missile boats and submarines to attack them.

<sup>8</sup> "Diya pobedy nad Iranom ponadobitsya desyatiletnyaya okkupatsiya" ("Victory over Iran will Require a Ten-Year Occupation"), *Utro.ru*, 15 November 2007.

<sup>9</sup> Vladimir Ivanov, Viktor Myasnikov. "V SShA i Irane vzyvayut k voynе. Vashington delaet stavku na krylatye rakety, a Tegeran — na dvadtsatimilionnoe opolchenie" ("US and Iran Call for War. Washington Counts on Cruise Missiles, While Tehran Counts on a 20-Million-Strong Militia"), *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie*, 17 January 2007.

However, in spite of the American military's claims that they will not permit the Strait of Hormuz to be blocked, it is improbable that the US military could actually prevent such a blockade during the first operation.

First of all, it will be impossible to prevent the Strait, whose width ranges from 30 to 100 kilometers, from being mined by small vessels and fishing boats, since it is impossible to monitor all of their activities.

Second, The South Iranian mountains extend along the northern coast of the Persian Gulf, making it possible to create hidden and well-protected artillery and missile positions

and moorings for missile and torpedo boats and submarines along the Strait. We may suppose that some of these forces will be preserved during air operations, and they will be used primarily against commercial vessels. Even if only one vessel is sunk and mining of the strait is declared, navigation will stop because the risk will be too great.

The greatest danger is from strikes against the oil and gas infrastructure in the Persian Gulf and the gas and oil resources of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Iraq, which, when combined with a blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, will provoke a severe world energy crisis.

## Second scenario

The strategic goals of the operation are the same, but the main tasks will be as follows:

- Organizing permanent observation over the country's territory and important military, industrial, and transportation sites for the purpose of taking necessary action in keeping with the unfolding situation in real time;
- Reconnaissance and destruction of artillery positions, navy ships,

and other armaments that may be used to strike the US grouping of forces in the Gulf and its allies, as well as to block the Strait of Hormuz;

- Neutralizing Iranian ground forces and preventing them from penetrating Iraq and Afghanistan;
- Destruction of military infrastructure and facilities remaining after the first operation;

- Destruction of the country's transportation system;
- Destruction of key industrial sites;
- Destruction of the communications system, radio and television broadcasting, and state management centers;
- Support, including military support, for separatist movements in the country's Kurdish and Azerbaijani enclaves.

It is obvious that in implementing the second scenario the Americans will try to take advantage of the Yugoslav experience of "coercive peace operations." While executing a constant information campaign, they will systematically — mainly by aircraft — strike the civil, industrial, and transportation infrastructure, which will entail tangible human losses, since unlike the operation in the Balkans, it is unlikely that any humanitarian considerations will be taken into account in this case. "The character of this war will be completely different from the Iraq war. No show-casing of democracy, no 'nation-building', no journalists, no Red Cross," opines former German intelligence officer Paul Levian.

The idea of a "coercive peace operation" comes from the fact that there is a threshold of economic damage and losses incurred by the popula-

tion at which point further resistance would risk a national disaster. Thus, a political juncture arises at which the government must make the decision to capitulate.

In order to remove the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, the Americans will employ all of their resources and manpower to suppress missile and artillery positions and will try to invade the entire northern coast of the Strait through amphibious and aerial landings. Despite possible losses, they will be compelled to do this because there will be no other way to solve the problem of unblocking the Strait.

Incursions on the civil, industrial, and transportation infrastructure will be executed constantly during a 24-hour period by small groups of attack planes, battle planes, and bombers.

It is most likely that the first targets of the incursions will be transportation infrastructure and facilities, including civil airfields, railway and motor bridges, major transportation hubs, and sea and river ports. As a result of the air strikes, air and railway transportation will be fully paralyzed over the course of several days, as will motor traffic in the mountainous regions. Under the regular air incursions and round-the-clock surveillance by unmanned aircraft it will be impossible for navigation to continue, and export of Iranian oil will cease.



Considering the dimensions and peculiarities of the territory of Iran, we may assert that disabling the transportation infrastructure will result in the significant paralysis of the country's economy, and many regions will become isolated from one another. Problems will arise with the food supply to urban populations and the army, as well as with supplies of fuel and other essential commodities.<sup>10</sup>

If after the transportation infrastructure is destroyed the regime does not capitulate, then a wave of strikes against industrial sites will be launched.

<sup>10</sup> [iraq.newsru.ru/article/59.html](http://iraq.newsru.ru/article/59.html) — 22k.

After the country's air defenses have been completely destroyed, Iran's industrial potential will be defenseless before air incursions and cruise missile strikes. We may suppose that selective destruction of industrial sites will begin, which will primarily focus on enterprises producing arms and military hardware, and then chemical plants and oil refineries. The next in line will be the machine-building and steel industries. If Iran's authorities remain defiant, then the country's industrial potential can be fully annihilated over the course of several weeks.



## II Israel's capacity to execute missile and bomb strikes against targets in Iran

In case strikes against Iran's nuclear and military infrastructure are conducted by Israel alone, the first scenario would be the most likely outcome, i.e. a short-term operation for the purpose of damaging a relatively restricted list of targets.

The Israeli Air Force and air defense forces number 36,000 personnel (after mobilization the number could rise to as high as 57,000).<sup>11</sup> The basis of its organizational structure consists of air bases, each of which is subdivided into three squadrons, together with several links of auxiliary airplanes and helicopters.

### The composition of the Israeli Air Force<sup>12</sup>

According to certain sources, there are 22 aerial squadrons consisting of 446 fighter planes (about 250 Kfir airplanes

are in storage). According to data from the London Institute for Strategic Studies, the Israeli Air Force numbers 800 fighter planes, 628 of which are in inventory, while the other 172 are in storage.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the air force has at its disposal ten RF-4E reconnaissance aircraft, six Falcon distant early warning aircraft, 37 surveillance and electronic warfare aircraft, three base patrol aircraft, 17 transport aircraft, 20 communications aircraft, 75 battle trainer aircraft, 30 trainer aircraft, three tanker aircraft, 133 warplanes, eight antisubmarine aircraft (five according to Granovsky), and 150 assault helicopters.<sup>14</sup> The chief air bases in Israel are: Ramat David, Tel Nof, Sde Dov, Hatzor, Hatzetim, Bikat Uvda, Mitzpe Ramon, Palmachim, Tell Milch, Lod.

In terms of preparedness and extent of equipment Israel's Air Force compares with that of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. In terms of numbers, its fleet of warplanes and helicopters is the fourth

<sup>11</sup> Anatoly Tsyganok. *Okonchatel'noe reshenie siriyskogo voprosa. Rukovodstvo Izrailiya gotovitsya k novoy "Shestidnevnoy voyne"* ("The Final Solution to the Syrian Question. Israel's Leadership Prepares for a New Six-Day War"). NG-NVO, 1 December 2006. [http://nvo.ng.ru/concepts/2006-12-01/1\\_siria.html](http://nvo.ng.ru/concepts/2006-12-01/1_siria.html).

<sup>12</sup> Society for Research on Jewish Communities, 2005. <http://www.eleven.co.il/print.php?id+=11734>.

<sup>13</sup> O. Granovsky. *Pilotiruemaya aviatsiya Izrailiya ("Israel's Manned Aircraft")*. *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie*, [http://www.waronline.org/IDF/Articles/air\\_force-1.htm](http://www.waronline.org/IDF/Articles/air_force-1.htm).

<sup>14</sup> A. Alexeyev. *Voенно-vozdushnye sily Izrailiya ("The Israeli Air Force")*. *Zarubezhnoe voennoe obozrenie*, 2002, No. 2.-p.27.

The number of Air Force planes of various models

Original name	Israeli name	Quantity
F-15A-D Eagle	Baz ("Falcon")	72
F-15E Strike Eagle	Raam ("Thunder")	25
F-16A/B Fighting Falcon	Netz ("Hawk")	110
F-16C/D Fighting Falcon	Barak ("Lightning")	138
F-16I Fighting Falcon	Saar ("Storm")	120 planes should be ready before 2008
F-4E Phantom II and F-4E-2000 (Phantom 2000)	Kurnas ("Hammer")	140
A-4H/N, TA-4H and TA-4J Skyhawk	Ayit	175; 118 of which are in inventory, while the other 57 are in operational storage
Kfir-C2/TC2/C7/TC7/CR	Kfir ("Lion Cub")	140; 25 of which are in inventory, while the other 115 are in operational storage

in the world, following the United States, Russia, and China.

The latest reinforcement, begun in 2003, will be complete in 2008 with the delivery of 102 F-16I fighter/bombers. There are plans to follow this with the purchase of 25–40 F-22 Raptor fighter aircraft. After 2012 Israel will supplement its fleet with F-35 Lightning II fighter/bombers. In terms of battle experience, Israel's pilots compare with and even surpass their colleagues from the world's leading countries.

The operational inventory of Israel's national air defenses includes 116 antiaircraft guided missile batteries: 28 antiaircraft missile batteries, 77 HAWK batteries, three Patriot bat-

teries, and eight Stinger batteries. Air defenses include 73 F-15 Eagle fighters, including the A-38, B-8, C-16, and D-11 variants. Two squadrons are equipped with F-15 Eagle fighters. Their main base airfields are Lod, Hatzetim, Ramat David, and Eilat.<sup>15</sup>

There are three Arrow (Hetz) missile defense batteries and 12 Arrow-2 launch installations with 144 missiles. The Arrow missile defense batteries are situated near Tel Aviv, south of Haifa and near the Dimona nuclear research center.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, it is expected

<sup>15</sup> Anatoly Tsyganok. *Okonchatel'noe reshenie siriyskogo voprosa*, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> Anatoly Tsyganok. *Siriyskaya karta v arabo-izrail'skom konflikte ("The Syrian Card in the Arab-Israeli Conflict")*. Institut Blizhnego vostoka, <http://www.iimes.ru/rus/stat/2006/16-11-06.htm>.



that the US is planning the additional deployment of Patriot anti-aircraft missile complexes around the territory of Israel, in particular, in Jordan and Turkey. The results of joint training sessions for interaction between the Hetz and Patriot launch installations to intercept ballistic missiles testify to the preparedness of the Israeli army to resist a missile strike from Tehran.

The navy includes 6500 personnel, three corvettes, four submarines, two Ashdod assault landing ships, fourteen missile boats, 36 patrol boats, and forty auxiliary vessels. The navy's resources have permanent bases in the Mediterranean in Haifa, where up to 70% of the Israeli navy's ship stock is concentrated, and in Ashdod and Eilat on the Red Sea.<sup>17</sup>

According to expert assessments, three or four nuclear warheads are produced each year in nuclear reactors in Dimona, Yavne, and Nahal-Sorek. The reactor in Dimona is the most powerful, producing up to 40 kg of plutonium.<sup>18</sup> According to various estimates, Israel's total quantity of nuclear weapons ranges

<sup>17</sup> *Vooruzhennyye sily i voennaya ekonomika stran Azii i severnoj Afriki. / Informatsionno-analiticheskiy spravochnik ("The Armed Forces and Military Economy of the Countries of Asia and North Africa: an Informational/Analytical Handbook")*. Moscow: IV RAN, 2002, p. 32.

<sup>18</sup> *Yadernoe i termoyadernoe oruzhie i sredstva dostavki oruzhija massovogo porazheniya ("Nuclear and Thermonuclear Weapons and Means of Supplying Weapons of Mass Destruction")*. [www.nationalsecurity.ru/maps/worldnuclearwarheads.htm](http://www.nationalsecurity.ru/maps/worldnuclearwarheads.htm) • 52 KB.

from 100 to 200. It may deliver nuclear munitions using F-15, F-16, and Kfir aircraft, as well as Jericho-1, Jericho-2, and Zeev missiles, and 203-mm howitzers.<sup>19</sup>

In order to accomplish the objectives of the operations, several flight routes will be the most probable for Israeli aircraft. The first route and apparently the main one lies across Jordan and Iraq. The second route crosses Syria and Turkish Kurdistan for a strike against nuclear cycle enterprises in the Tehran region and on the Caspian Sea coast. A third route is possible over the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea to targets in Northwestern Iran.

Overcoming Iranian air defenses will require 20 airplanes with various purposes: from jamming aircraft to fighter/bombers with anti-radar missiles and other air-to-ground armaments for the fight against Iran's air defenses, with the intent of providing attack aircraft with access to strike targets.<sup>20</sup>

Strikes will be made using mostly air-to-ground missiles. They will primarily consist of American-pro-

<sup>19</sup> *Anatoly Tsyganok. Siroyskaya karta, op. cit.*

<sup>20</sup> *I. Novikov. Otsenka vozmozhnosti vooruzhennykh sil Izrailya i SShA po naneseniyu udarov po yadernym ob'ektam Islamskoy respubliki Iran ("Assessing the Capacity of Israel's and America's Armed Forces to Strike the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Facilities")*. Institut Blizhnego vostoka. <http://www.iimes.ru/rus/stat/2004/30-01-04.htm>.

duced Harpoon anti-ship missiles modified for air-to-ground use — the same missiles that were used to strike Iraqi military and industrial sites during the first Gulf War. Like the new AGM-142A Popeye guided missiles developed in Israel and the AGM-84E Slam air-to-ground missiles (a variant of the Harpoon anti-ship missiles) developed in America, these missiles have television and infrared target-seeking devices. Since these missiles' engagement range is from 40 to 150 km, Israeli pilots in any case will have to invade Iranian air space and enter the zone covered by Iran's air defenses.

In assessing the possibilities for air strikes against Iranian targets, the geography of Israel and Iran must be taken into account, which creates objective obstacles for the Israelis. In particular, the issue at

hand is how tactical fighters loaded for combat will traverse a distance of 1500 km, penetrate the enemy's air defense system, strike the target, and then return to their bases.<sup>21</sup>

Jericho mid-range ballistic missiles could also be used, but that would depend on how much Israel can guarantee those missiles' flight precision.<sup>22</sup> One means of improving their precision could be using something like the guiding system utilized in American Pershing-2 missiles (targeting using terrain contour maps) or by using a GPS navigation system.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Izrail'skiy yadernyi potentsial kak predvestnik apokalipsisa na Blizhnemвостоке ("Israeli Nuclear Potential as a Harbinger of the Apocalypse in the Middle East")*. RIA Novyi region — Moscow, 17 January 2007. <http://content.mail.ru/arch/22131/1379498.html>.

## Iran's possible response to the solution of its nuclear problem by force

In order to objectively analyze potential responses by the government authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and that country's population as a whole to hypothetical acts

of force by the United States and/or Israel against Iran, it is expedient to first examine Iran's political/ideological and moral/psychological milieu.

### The political/ideological and moral/psychological milieu in the Islamic Republic of Iran

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the establishment of strict Shiite rule in the country, the dominance of a unified state ideology was forcefully asserted. Shia Islam in its fundamentalist form became that ideology — Khomeini's pan-Islamic neo-Shia Islam.

The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran secures this fact in law. Basic law declares that absolute power over the world belongs to God (Allah), and all aspects of life are subjected to religious norms. In other words, for contemporary Iran Islam in its Shiite form is broader

and deeper than a faith, a religion, an ideology; it is a way of life. Furthermore, Islam in its ideological role within the Islamic Republic has essentially become the linchpin of Iranian statehood, without which the entire system of clerical power would collapse. In no other country in the world (except perhaps the Vatican) does religious dogma, purposefully transformed into an official ideology, play such a key institutional role as in the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is completely obvious that in order to preserve and secure the Islamic regime in Iran, the country's clerical leadership directs its chief efforts at creating hu-

man material capable of cementing the Islamic state and thereby retaining its power.

Therefore, having seized power in 1979, the Shiite clergy defined one of its objectives as the conversion to Islam of all society through the forced expansion of the religious sphere of influence into positions that in other societies are held by ideology, while simultaneously turning them into a weapon for political struggle. The process of conversion to Islam was conducted, to put it bluntly, by Bolshevik means. As Iran's political and religious figures declare, "our ideology is the same as our religion, and our religion is the same as our policy." Thus, the boundaries between religious and political/ideological work to a large extent have been blurred and now represent a unified process.

In order to conduct the intensive and effective ideological indoctrination and moral/psychological conditioning of the Iranian population, an extensive system for influencing and manipulating public opinion and monitoring ideologically and politically suspect members of society and military servicemen has been created and is functioning quite effectively. This system comprises a number of state ideological bodies active in all aspects of Iranian social life. They include the Office of the Supreme Leader, the Council for Leadership and Coordination of

Religious and Political/Ideological Work, the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, the Ministry of Islamic Orientation and Culture, and the Council of Guardians — in essence, political commissars. Furthermore, all security services contain extensive political and ideological bodies. The state's purposeful use of the mass media for agitation and the propagation of ideological principles must also be noted. Furthermore, the government has established extremely strict control over the media, which has already led to the closing of dozens of publications and the arrest of many journalists. There is a prohibition on private and independent television and radio.

Such state control existed in the economic sphere as well, especially before the 1990s. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 the Iranian economy evolved actively in the direction of a centralized model of development and intensifying state intervention. This is explained by the fact that the Islamic socioeconomic doctrine of *tawhid* economy, based on principles declared in the Koran and Sharia law, served as the basis of economic policy in Iran. Some of the key principles were acknowledging the government's right to intervene in economic life and restricting freedom of economic activity pursuant to numerous Muslim proscriptions (in particular, usury, etc.). In re-

cent years a process of economic reform and modernization has been underway; however, state influence remains substantial. The oil and gas industry, petrochemicals, and most heavy industry as a whole are state owned. All economic sectors that relate somehow to defense, and naturally the defense industry itself, are completely controlled by the state through the Defense Industry Organization of the Ministry of Defense and Military Support.

Through the purposeful actions of punitive, ideological, agitation and propaganda bodies in Islamic Iran, all real opposition to the regime has been practically liquidated. We remind our readers that during the first years of mullah rule in Iran, people who disagreed with the regime were physically destroyed. Millions of Iranians who would not accept Islamic principles for various reasons were forced to emigrate. Remaining dissidents were subjected to the powerful impact of the government's entire punitive and ideological structure.

However, it must be noted that since the Iran-Iraq war ended and the leader of the Islamic Revolution and creator of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini, died, the regime has begun to evolve. A gradual process of liberation from the country's totalitarian heritage and strengthening of democratic elements has been observed in political and economic life. This process

became especially vigorous with the commencement of Mohammad Khatami's presidency in 1997 (and his repeat election victory in 2000). It should be specially emphasized that all of the positive changes in Iran that occurred during Ayatollah Khatami's presidency did not affect the character of governmental authority or the state. They took place within the regime; i.e. the means, methods, procedures, forms, and ways of enforcing power changed. As it were, the political regime was slowly turning away from the strict totalitarianism of the times of Ayatollah Khomeini toward a specific — and naturally restricted by the political and ideological dogmas of Shia Islam — Islamic democracy.

However, first of all, this positive (in the human sense) process in Iran did not affect the innate nature of the state itself. Second, all of the positive tendencies that appeared during the rule of the two former presidents of the Islamic Republic of Iran — Ayatollah Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and especially Ayatollah Mohammad Khatami (1989—2005) — which could potentially have created the foundation for a future real opposition, were destroyed or curtailed through the efforts of the current president, the radical fundamentalist Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

At present nearly all serious political forces that are discontented with the

existing state of affairs in the country do not resist the Islamic regime directly, but rather oppose specific figures and groups within the establishment. All opposition activity in Iran, though sometimes it may be severe and even cruel, is contained within the framework of the existing Islamic regime, without any aspiration to subvert its foundation laid by Ayatollah Khomeini. The domestic political struggle in Iran is concerned with establishing the best (according to the opinion of individual political forces) means of achieving the chief objective: transforming Iran into the region's superpower. In other words, it revolves around tactical nuances within the general political course.

Furthermore, all clerics strive to preserve the inviolability of the regime's ideological constants. Thus, influential neo-liberal parties adhere to a softened form of Khomeinism. Groups occupying Islamic positions but promoting major steps in domestic political reform (e.g., for abolition of the *Velayat-e faqih* system) are distinguished by their small numbers and do not play a tangible role in Iranian social and political life. As for opposition forces demanding the overthrow of the Islamic regime and restoration of the monarchy or a pro-Western liberal system, their role, weight, and influence is so small and insignificant, that to consider them at present in an analysis of the domestic political milieu in Iran would hardly be

appropriate. It is possible here to speak of the hopes of young people (who account for 70% of the Iranian population) and educated people (there are many of them in contemporary Iran, as well) for a certain liberalization of the Islamic regime within the framework of the current state structure.

Certain American analysts, e.g. the well-known international commentator Joseph Kellard, suppose that “young Iranians are actively fighting for the creation of a new state in which there will be no room for clerics.” Based on this assertion they conclude that Washington will easily subvert the unpopular mullahs. But Iran is completely different from Yugoslavia under Slobodan Milosevic. The stunning victory of the orthodox Khomeinist Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in the 2005 presidential election and his supporters' and confederates' success in the recent parliamentary elections in March 2008 show that revolutionary ideology and populist rhetoric still enjoy support among a significant number of the population, especially in rural areas.

Incidentally, Iran's President Ahmadinejad and most of his supporters are not clerics, but veterans of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard who were too young in the first years of the revolution to gain preferences and are now aiming to achieve power. Being even more zealous Khomein-

ists than Khomeini himself, they go all out in utilizing his teachings in their political struggles. It is still unknown which is better: moderate Ayatollahs or radical engineers.

At present opponents of liberalizing the theocratic regime in Iran have a powerful backing in the form of the radical youth. In particular, the most conservative group of the ruling clergy, Ansar-e Hezbollah, has youth sections in nearly all of the country's universities. Their social base consists of the lower castes of society, which cannot help being impressed by the populist character of President Ahmadinejad's policies. These are the people who served as an effective weapon for the conservatives in their struggles against the reformist movement in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Note that radical fundamentalist Islamic organizations, unlike their opponents, demonstrate uniformity and cohesion.

It is expedient to pay special attention to three factors that secure the theocracy's relative stability. First of all, as the American sociologist and Iranian studies scholar Dariush Zاهدی writes, the current regime to a large extent reflects the interests of the bazaaris, a class of Iranian society that remains influential. If the Pahlavi monarchy tried to modernize this traditional class, the clerics, many of whom bear familial ties to the bazaaris, try to preserve it. As a result,

for example, the powerful Islamic Association of Tehran Shops acts in unison with the conservatives during election campaigns to the Majlis and also struggles against excessive liberalization of the national economy (one of the chief conditions for the demise of extremist ideology).

The second factor is the specific political culture of Iranian society. As Shiites the Iranians have a commitment to the ancient tradition of following the role model (marja taqlid), which, speaking in European political science terms, has an unambiguously negative impact on liberal party-building.

Finally, a substantial obstacle on the way to spreading dissident attitudes is the international status of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The escalation of the Iranian-American and Iranian-Israeli conflicts forces Iranians to rally around the ruling elite and view their own liberals, in which so much hope is invested by the West, as traitors to the people's interests.

A significant role in this equation is played by national psychology. The current Islamic Republic of Iran is heir to one of the world's ancient civilizations, the great Persian empire, which had conquered over half of the ancient world. In the spiritual/religious sense Iran has been the world center of Shia Islam for the past six centuries. Under the influ-

ence of these basic historical factors, a mentality has formed over many centuries of proud, uncompromising Iranian Shiites who defend their interests against multitudinous enemies, whose numbers by now have grown substantially. The Persian national psychology, representing an alloy of great power imperial nationalism and Shiite exclusiveness, has now become a political factor. The agitation, propaganda, and ideological structures of Shiite power in the Islamic Republic of Iran take

advantage of the peculiarities of the Iranians' national psychology to form an atmosphere of unity and cohesion within the nation in the face of an external threat.

The moral and political potential created by clerics over the thirty years of the Islamic Republic of Iran's existence (along with purely repressive measures) secures the stability of the Velayat-e faqih Islamic regime and cements all cracks that occur in its foundation.

## Iran's response to the use of force

Missile and bomb strikes against Iranian nuclear and military sites according to the first scenario may at first seem to be sufficiently effective. It is worth recalling Israel's effective obliteration of the Iraqi nuclear research reactor in Osirak in the summer of 1981. Fourteen Israeli Air Force planes stopped, if not buried entirely, Saddam Hussein's projects to create an Iraqi nuclear bomb.

However, the condition of the erstwhile Iraqi and present Iranian nuclear programs and military-industrial potentials are incommensurate, and key sites of Iran's nuclear infrastructure are quite well protected, as reviewed above. Yet another factor

relates to moral and psychological peculiarities.

As related above, a climate of state-ideological unanimity has taken shape in Iran. This situation facilitates ideological indoctrination of the country's population in a direction that benefits the regime. This involves both general philosophical tenets and specific, largely political issues.

The latter include propaganda for Iran's nuclear program. It is notable that before 2002 (before the secret existence of the Iranian nuclear program was revealed) the agitation and propaganda structure of the

Islamic Republic of Iran concentrated attention on the construction of a nuclear power plant in Bush-ejr. Furthermore, the propaganda understated to the greatest possible extent Russia's role in implementing the project.

After 2002, when the whole world became interested in the Iranian nuclear program, the ideological institutions of the Islamic Republic of Iran undertook steps within the country to glorify Iran's accomplishments in nuclear physics and in advanced science in general.

In connection with the harsh criticism directed by the international community at certain aspects of Iran's nuclear program, and especially since a series of anti-Iranian resolutions have been passed by the UN Security Council, Iranian propagandists who work for their own people have excluded clarification of the essence of this criticism from their arsenal. No one in Iran speaks about how the basic claims by the UN Security Council and the IAEA against Iran relate to the active creation of an industrial infrastructure for uranium enrichment inside the country, which in essence is a dual-purpose system. Tehran agitators do not concern themselves with such trifles. They present the matter as if forces antagonistic to the Islamic Republic under the leadership of the United States and Israel are envious of the great

achievements of advanced Iranian science and do not wish Iranian scientists to master the fruits of state-of-the-art advanced technologies. The propaganda emphasizes the intent to deprive Iran of its sovereignty in the sphere of all modern sciences, so that in the near future the great Iranian people will crawl to their enemies on their knees and beg for help.

It must be noted that over five or six years the regime's ideologues have achieved good results. Iran's current nuclear program has by now become a nationwide program for Iranians. It is a symbol of the country's independence and an object of national pride.

No one in Iran at present dares oppose the nuclear program: from illiterate peasants to the political elite. However, certain representatives of the Iranian establishment who have access to more objective information and possess respective knowledge are most probably prepared for dialogue with the international community and for certain compromises. This primarily relates to proponents of a pragmatic or liberal political course.

But in general, a wave of nuclear chauvinism has already swept over all of Iran.

Therefore, based on the present moral and psychological climate in

Iran, we may assert that any attempts against the country's "nuclear sovereignty" will only lead to the nation rallying around the powers that be. It will create conditions in which they can manipulate mass consciousness even more successfully.

Furthermore, limited (spot) missile and bomb strikes against Natanz and other nuclear and military sites will be completely ineffective for influencing the atmosphere in the country. In terms of the trade-off between effectiveness and negative consequences, the negative consequences will clearly outweigh the effectiveness of such measures.

An explosion of hatred toward the United States and Israel will rock Iran. The punitive bodies of the Iranian government will be given a green light to "neutralize" dissidents remaining in the country, as well as ostensible "agents of the West and international Zionism" and liberals. Furthermore, this explosive process will spread throughout the entire region and the entire Muslim world. The political positions of the United States and its allies will drop to a minimal level.

What will the United States and the anti-Iranian coalition get in return from implementing the first scenario? In the best case for them, operations at several sites that have been subjected to bombing will be suspended for a relatively insignifi-

cant duration. In this case, the Iranians will be prepared for additional material and financial sacrifices and a sharp decline in living standards (which will now be justified after the strike) for the sake of quickly resurrecting the country's nuclear potential. Furthermore, to this end (accompanied by the total propaganda and political and ideological indoctrination of the population by the regime) petrodollars or petroeuros from state financial sources, so-called Islamic funds (bonyads), resources "voluntarily" relinquished by the population, and the free labor of basiji or the underpaid labor of "volunteers" will be utilized. It will not take too long to restore several of the nuclear facilities that are destroyed. Furthermore, such a mobilization of the government will remain after restoration work is completed, which will be justified by the threat of new strikes. This will lead to a sharp intensification of Iran's entire nuclear program and will ultimately reduce the time needed for Iran to reach the point of launching full-scale nuclear weapons development.

Thus, actions under the first scenario in all possible outcomes will have a negative effect. In its scale the wave of protests and anti-Americanism throughout the world will be incomparably stronger than the damage to Iran's nuclear infrastructure. In other words, one-time strikes, without bringing long-term results,

will simply further inflame Iranians' patriotic feelings, secure their unity with the country's leadership, and extend their sense of belonging to a great Islamic Iranian people oppressed by imperialists and Zionists. Furthermore, Iran has Quds special operations forces that are well prepared for sabotage activities and whose numbers include suicide subdivisions.

Other repercussions may include military operations per the second scenario.

There can be little doubt that if it is possible to provoke the Islamic Republic of Iran to acts of aggression, then execution of the Yugoslav scenario will become more or less legitimate in the eyes of Western society. An act similar to the hostage-taking of British Navy sailors in spring 2007, only on a greater scale, may become a convenient pretext for unleashing the conflict. Considering the anti-Iranian rhetoric of French President N. Sarkozy, as well as the aspiration of military circles in the United Kingdom to exact revenge, Washington may count on understanding, if not assistance, from leading European countries.

At the same time, it must be borne in mind that the Iranian Revolutionary Guards are capable of organizing terrorist attacks against American land and naval forces deployed in the Persian Gulf region.

Sorties by clandestine groups directed by Iran's special services will force Washington to take adequate measures to neutralize them. Washington will be further compelled to undertake large-scale operations to decapitate the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, which apparently control Iran's nuclear programs directly. But it will be extremely difficult to carry out such an operation within the framework of the second scenario.

The impossibility of military operations per the third scenario, i.e. an invasion of ground forces into Iranian territory, is explained not simply by the causes noted earlier (depletion of the resources of the US and its allies in Iraq and Afghanistan), but also by the unacceptable losses of military personnel due to the enemy's military might, which significantly exceeds the power of Saddam's Iraq. It is sufficient to note that the number of Iran's combined regular armed forces (the regular Army and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards), which are distinguished by high discipline and devotion to the theocratic regime, exceeds all of the region's armed forces and is one of the highest in the world (approximately 900,000). Besides the regular armed forces, military operations against the occupiers will involve the Basij Resistance Forces. That means millions of reservists with military training who have been subjected to extremely rigorous moral and psy-

chological indoctrination, and who are ready to die.

The fourth scenario, a colored revolution, i.e. support for Iranian oppositionist groups for the purpose of subverting the theocratic regime, looks utopian, since it will not achieve the intended result in the short term, no matter how powerful the opposition to the theocracy may become. The problem, however, is complicated by the fact that such an opposi-

tion does not really exist in Iran, as we have discussed in previous sections.

Therefore, enormous financial, material, and political/ideological resources and a carefully developed action plan will be required in order to implement this scenario. Furthermore, the program will last several years, if not decades, which will be fully sufficient for the present Iranian leadership to create nuclear missiles.



## IV Probable Responses in the Muslim World

In general, the Muslim world will respond extremely negatively to a strike against Iran, which is quite predictable. and this is what the USA will be preparing for in advance.

The response will be fairly uniform if either the USA or Israel starts military operations under the first scenario. Which one of them does so will be of no critical difference to the Muslim world. In both cases there will be official condemnation of the anti-Iranian actions. A wave of demonstrations including assaults on US embassies and those of its allies will sweep through the Muslim world.

An emergency meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference will convene to issue a resolute condemnation, and so on.

Such actions will not immediately rile the Muslim street; moreover, the ruling regimes will make efforts to break the wave of protests, which will threaten to destabilize them. Radical Islamist groups will probably fail to find an instantaneous response unless they prepare for it in advance.

Consequently, operations under the first scenario could turn out to be a sort of painful pinprick, but it would not lead to severe, long-term consequences. (It is appropriate here to recall the weak Muslim response to the Israeli strike against Iraq's nuclear facilities.)

Military operations by the USA under the second scenario will continuously fuel the negative energy of the street and give America's adversaries an opportunity to act more thoroughly and systematically prepare various protest actions.

The Islamic governments will show solidarity with such street protests, although just as in the first scenario, they will try to contain them. All these events will destabilize the internal situation and contribute to the growing influence and popularity of radical Islamic groups, who would not hesitate to take advantage of the opportunity.

Islamic radicals, including the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as various Al-Qaeda affiliates, will commit terrorist attacks against the organizers of the strike against Iran and their allies. However, given that the USA

and Israel will have taken preventive measures, one should not rule out the likelihood that such attacks will occur where they would be easier to organize. Therefore, they may happen in Muslim countries whose governments are considered to be American allies.

First and foremost, Baghdad and other Iraqi cities will be the optimal targets for Islamic avengers. Cairo, Istanbul, Riyadh, Kabul, and Pakistani cities could also be hit.

As for Europe, single attacks may strike those countries who do not support the US strategy for Iran, but whom the Muslims consider to be associated with anti-Muslim insults. France, Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, and Denmark may feature among such countries.

Acts of retribution will be perpetrated by international Islamist organizations with participation by or upon the initiative of Iranian special services.

A protracted war, such as the one in Iraq, will result in generally similar consequences. Terrorist attacks will become regular and will vary in intensity. In a sense, both sides will grow accustomed to the situation.

There will be no internationalization of the war. Emergence of foreign volunteer units on its fronts is hardly possible. However, involve-

ment of mujahideen from neighboring states, as well as from Europe, is quite probable.

A protracted war in Iran could bring certain benefits to the Persian Gulf countries, primarily Saudi Arabia, because it will weaken its key regional rival for an extended period of time, and in addition, drain some of the radicals out of the country. (One may assume that Saudi authorities would turn a blind eye to such migration).

This begs the question about the impact this war could have on Shia-Sunni differences. It is possible that these disagreements could initially recede into the background but resume after a while.

A large-scale operation and protracted war would make a target out of US and allied military facilities. Suicide bombers would perpetrate terrorist attacks against them.

Moreover, one can point to a specific location where such attacks will be practically inevitable: the Strait of Hormuz. In addition to Iranian professionals, other extremist groups will target it. Finally, a strike against Iran under any of the scenarios will completely discredit the notion of democratization in the Muslim world. A confrontational ideology based on the clash-of-civilizations thesis will come to dominate relations between the Muslim and Judeo-Christian worlds.



In terms of international politics, consequences may include a mass withdrawal of some Muslim states from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and a launch of nuclear programs in some of these nations with a view to acquiring their own nuclear deterrent against the USA and Israel. The scenario will become even more probable if the unprecedented rise of Islamism overthrows some of the moderate pro-Western regimes and radical Muslim leaders seize power.

## ***Anticipated Responses in Individual Countries and Regions***

### **The Middle East**

An attack by Israel would elicit the toughest response: mass protests and terrorist attacks. All Islamist groups, including Hamas, will launch them. But the Shia Hezbollah will be particularly active.

A similar response will follow a rapid strike by the USA. However, in this case one should expect Hamas to be less active, because its moderate political wing has been trying to maintain normal relations with Israeli authorities.

If the operation stretches over several days, it will be marked by equally long protests and a series of terrorist

acts involving Hamas. The negotiations process between Palestine and Israel will come to a complete stop.

A protracted war will complicate the regional situation, but not qualitatively change it. The war will proceed in parallel to the Middle East conflict, but it is unlikely that a direct and rigid interdependence between the two will arise. Moreover, a war-ridden Iran wouldn't be in a position to offer significant assistance to Hezbollah.

The Palestinian-Israeli talks will resume after a while, irrespective of the state of affairs in Iran.

### **Iraq**

A first scenario strike by Israel and the USA will provoke the consequences as described in the rest of the Muslim world. The Iraqi government will condemn the military solution as such but refrain from ardent criticism of either the USA or Israel.

A multiple-day operation will exacerbate the internal situation, cause Shia protests in the South and instigate Sunni Muslims to take action. As usual, the latter's actions will be chaotic, but they will continue primarily to target American forces and local administrations.

At this point, the consequences of a protracted war appear to be un-

predictable. In any case, we should not rule out a coup d'état attempt by pro-Saddam forces and Islamists. Iraqi Shiites will display a mixed response to the protracted war. On one hand, they will show solidarity with their religious brethren — this applies primarily to local Shiite radicals — but on the other hand, it is unlikely that the Iraqi Shiite community will be prepared to fully engage in the Iran-US conflict.

Propped up by the US, the Iraqi government will do its utmost to sustain the integrity of the country.

### **Turkey**

Over the last few years the Turkish leadership has developed a stable relationship with Iran, so it will condemn any action against this country. Turkey will most probably refuse to make its military bases available to the US. Complications with Israel should not be ruled out if Israel does not deliver the strike. The least irritating option for Turkey will be a first scenario strike, because it will be easier to ignore than a multiple-day operation.

Most of Turkish society will be indifferent to the conflict with Iran because it could have no impact on Turkey's relationship with Europe or the Kurdish problem. Turkish generals will respond positively to a strike against Iran because they have long warned about a potential Turkish Khomeini.

Radical Turkish Islamists are not likely to become active either, because they have no intrinsic anti-American or anti-Israeli bias.

But a protracted war will force Turkey to deal with potential general tensions along its border, an influx of Iranian Kurds, and complications in neighboring Iraq, which could have a boomerang effect in Turkey itself.

The protracted war may energize Islamic extremists, who will sooner or later show solidarity with Iran.

### **Afghanistan**

The Afghan government will have a relatively moderate response to first or second scenario military actions by either the USA or Israel. They are unlikely to cause a large wave of protests in a society tormented by its own problems.

The new Taliban will commit terrorist attacks in response to the US and Israeli actions. In case of a brief escalation they will limit themselves to two or three additional acts of revenge against coalition forces.

A protracted war could gradually destabilize the situation in Afghanistan, weaken President Hamid Karzai, and by the same token, strengthen the new Taliban. Let us recall that Iran and Afghanistan concluded agreements over the last

few months on joint actions against terrorists (the new Taliban), and the Afghan regime is not interested in a weakening of Iran.

### **Pakistan**

Pakistan will respond negatively to any strike against Iran. Despite complicated relations between the two countries, Islamabad and Tehran have always agreed on a variety of issues, including the Iranian nuclear program.

A strike against Iran under any scenario could provoke passionate Muslim protests or even a civil war, fraught with the most negative consequences. A protracted war in Iran could cause equally protracted instability in Pakistan.

A prolonged war could cause geopolitical chaos spilling over into Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan, and affecting Pakistan. Furthermore, any forecast of its consequences in the macro-region should assume that a uniform Islamist front could appear, stretching from Iraq to Pakistan. It is premature to talk about coordinated actions between its participants, but attempts at joint actions are very likely.

### **Azerbaijan**

This nation will probably respond dispassionately; its leadership could cautiously deplore the events, but it

would not point fingers at guilty parties. We must not rule out the possibility that President Ilham Aliyev could unofficially authorize local Muslims to conduct anti-American rallies.

Two circumstances will be of particular concern for Baku: first, the potential spread of radical Islamic sentiments and solidarity with Iran, and second, an influx of refugees from Iran, which could upset the domestic situation. However, these two circumstances will manifest themselves only in the case of a protracted war.

### **Central Asia**

The regional powers that be will ignore both Israeli and US military actions, but they will certainly express their concern about the events. Iran is not a significant economic or political partner with any of them. Tajikistan is the only exception, having multifaceted relations with Iran. But the Tajik leadership will not align with Iran.

The Muslim opposition is too weak to cause people to take to the streets; it can only distribute pamphlets.

But Central Asia is afraid of a protracted war, which could destabilize its southern borders and push tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of refugees into the region. Securing national borders will become a top

priority. Moreover, a protracted war will make Islamic radicals more influential.

If the war stretches over many months, Tajik volunteers, along with people from other countries, would fight on the Iranian side and make up the backbone of the Islamist opposition when they returned home.

On the other hand, some of the Central Asian regimes, such as Uzbekistan and Kirgizstan, could tactically act as American allies by suppressing pro-Iranian radicals and preempting Iranian rebel camps (“recreational camps”).

Muslims in Russia will respond extremely negatively, which is fully in line with the official policy of Moscow. But this response will have certain nuances reflecting both official foreign policy concerns and relations between the government and the Muslim community.

Should Israel deliver the strike, the negative Muslim response will be restrained because Moscow does not wish to allow its relations with Israel to worsen.

In case of American strikes, Muslims will be more vocal in their solidarity with the global ummah. Muslims will enjoy access to national Russian TV channels, while their

anti-American criticism will be fully aligned with the official line.

In case of a protracted war, anti-American criticism will persist and become commonplace. Under such circumstances, the Kremlin will control its intensity, allowing it to attenuate or become more vocal.

It is possible that just as in the first weeks of the conflict in Iraq, Muslims in the Northern Caucasus will be willing to fight against the American aggressor. Let us recall that Dagestan alone had up to 6000 people willing to go to Iraq. One could speculate that the Iranian cause could inspire thousands of volunteers willing to help their Iranian religious brethren.

But not a single one of them will be allowed to leave for Iran.

Islamic radicals in Russia will voice threats against the USA and Israel. But their actions with respect to Iran will be limited. Moreover, Russian special services will most probably give (first and foremost) the Israelis and the Americans an advance warning, availing themselves of the opportunity to demonstrate solidarity in the common cause of combating terrorism. This way Moscow could show ideological solidarity with Islamic radicals, but in reality it would play along with Israel and the USA.

# Conclusions

1. The Iranian nuclear crisis has been showing an obvious trend towards continued escalation, with no constructive solutions to this dire international issue in sight at this point in time. This is explained both by the rigid stance of the Iranian leadership, which ignores the UN Security Council resolutions urging it to terminate uranium enrichment processes and provide convincing evidence of the absence of military nuclear programs, and by the failure of the leading powers, including the permanent members of the UN Security Council, to reach agreement on how to exert substantial influence on the Iranian leadership by applying sanctions that would be impossible to ignore.

Moreover, unless the Russian obstruction of tougher sanctions is driven only by the worsening relations with the West in the aftermath of the Russian-Georgian military collision and recognition of Abkhazian and South Ossetian independence, there may be a rational reason for Russia's position: tougher sanctions against Iran would not make it submit to the demands of the UN Security Council Resolutions; instead, they would further restrict the activities of IAEA inspectors in that country.

The current situation (the Additional 1997 Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has not been ratified by Iran) allows Iran to pursue its uncontrolled nuclear operations, which many experts believe to be closely linked to military programs. Iranian scientific research and engineering potential is sufficiently advanced to complete all the work on nuclear warheads and medium-range ballistic missiles, including continued improvements in firing range and precision.

These conditions dramatically exacerbate the threat that the stability of the general nuclear nonproliferation regime would explode and a regional nuclear conflict with catastrophic consequences would break out.

2. Lack of political and diplomatic solutions to the Iranian nuclear problem prompts repeated forecasts of various use-of-force scenarios. A detailed analysis of these options demonstrates that two of them could be viewed as realistic:

First scenario: missile and bomb strikes, limited in time and scale, against critical nuclear infrastructure facilities, missile units, air defense

facilities, air fields, naval bases, and key command, control, and communications nodes;

Second scenario: a protracted air campaign with a growing intensity of strikes aimed at destroying an extended range of targets beyond the first scenario (modeled on the war in Yugoslavia).

Since the UN Security Council will not authorize the use of force against Iran in the current environment, military action may be initiated by the USA together with some of its European allies or by Israel. Regardless of this, either the USA or Israel will take the initiative and launch the military operation, and the armed forces of both countries and their closest allies will subsequently continue the operations.

3. Any appraisal of US military capabilities in the Persian Gulf, Mediterranean and adjacent areas will show that the six deployed air carriers and ground-based aviation units (totaling over 1000 airplanes) should be able to conduct operations under the first scenario without prior redeployment of forces. The naval group numbers some 40 cruise missile carriers (in excess of 1000 high-precision cruise missiles). B-2A strategic bombers from the forward air base in Diego Garcia and B-52s from the Fairford Air Base can bomb nuclear infrastructure and facilities and military sites.

The operation could commence with the launch of cruise missiles from air and sea against air defense sites, command and communications sites, missile and artillery positions, military airfields, naval bases and army units. The mission of at least three subsequent air raids will entail the electronic suppression of air defense, command and communication sites, and the destruction of air defense and air force sites, missile launch silos, artillery units, and navy ships, including those that can block the Strait of Hormuz, as well as other elements of the military infrastructure. Special attention will be paid to the destruction of the fortified nuclear infrastructure.

The operation could destroy most of the Iranian nuclear complex and reduce its capabilities for a retaliatory strike against American forces and Israel to a minimum.

Military actions under the second scenario could start when Iran refuses to comply with the ultimatum's demands. A larger range of targets will be subjected to missile and air strikes than in first scenario. Additional objectives of the operation may include the neutralization of Iranian ground troops to prevent them from entering Iraq and Afghanistan and the destruction of the nation's transportation system and major industrial facilities.

As a result, the economy will be paralyzed to a large extent, and sup-

plies of food, fuel and other essential goods to urban populations and the military will be disrupted. Should the Iranian authorities remain intransigent, the country's industrial potential could be destroyed in a matter of weeks.

4. If Israel alone strikes against the Iranian nuclear and military infrastructure, then the first scenario should be given primary consideration. Under the second scenario Israeli armed forces may participate selectively in coordination with the USA.

The air force numbers some 800 combat aircraft and over 200 auxiliary planes, including reconnaissance aircraft, electronic warfare aircraft, air-to-air refueling planes, and communications, transportation, and other aircraft.

The air defense includes 116 anti-aircraft rocket batteries and over 70 fighter planes. The Israeli anti-missile defense numbers some 200 interceptor missiles of various types.

The sequence of air strikes will most likely be similar to that assumed for the US Air Force. At least three flight paths are considered in order to accommodate the distances between Israeli air bases and targets in Iran.

5. Relatively rapid missile and rocket strikes and air bombings under the first scenario aimed at knocking out and destroying nuclear infrastruc-

ture sites and a number of military facilities will be seen by all strata of Iranian society as a flagrant violation of the nation's nuclear sovereignty and proof of aspirations by hostile international forces, primarily the USA and Israel, to stop the scientific and technical development of the Islamic Republic, etc. The climate of like-mindedness that has been built in Iran will cause the nation to rally around the powers that be and create conditions for an even more successful manipulation of the masses. A powerful surge of hatred toward the USA and Israel could spill over into the whole region.

The Iranians will accept new material and financial sacrifices and a dramatic deterioration in the quality of life in order to rapidly restore the nation's nuclear capabilities. Funds from the government's financial sources and the so-called Islamic funds (bonyads), as well as "voluntary" donations from the population, along with the free labor of the basiji and low-wage "volunteer" labor, will be used. This mobilization of the regime will persist after the reconstruction. No less important is that Iran will expel IAEA inspectors and most probably withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

6. If the "Yugoslav scenario" is implemented, resulting in the destruction of the transportation, industrial and social-cultural infrastructure

of the country, amidst the ensuing chaos and outbreaks of discontent the government may be ultimately forced to accept the ultimatum's demands in order to save the regime.

But we must keep in mind that the Iranian Revolutionary Guards are capable of organizing large-scale terrorist attacks against the US Army and Navy deployed in the Persian Gulf region.

Sorties by saboteur groups controlled by Iranian special services will require adequate countermeasures. This in turn will require an operation to behead the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, which also appear to exercise direct control over the Iranian nuclear programs. But making such an operation successful under the second scenario will be extremely challenging.

7. Use of force under the third scenario, i.e. a military invasion of Iran, is problematic because of the depleted resources of the US and its allies in Iraq and Afghanistan and the risk of unacceptable casualties. The manpower of the Iranian regular armed forces, including the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, who are characterized by high discipline and loyalty to the theocratic regime, exceeds that of all the armed forces in the region and is one of the largest internationally (over nine hundred thousand people). In addition to the regular armed forces, the basiji resistance forces will take part in

combat operations against the occupiers. These are millions of militarily trained reservists who have passed tough morale training and who are ready to face death.

8. The fourth scenario, a color revolution, i.e. assistance to opposition groups in Iran with a view to overthrow the theocratic regime, looks utopian because it will not deliver the desired outcome in the acceptable timeframe no matter the strength of the anticlerical opposition. The problem is exacerbated by the virtual absence of such opposition in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Therefore, this scenario would require very significant financial, material and political/ideological resources and a carefully developed action program. This program will span many years, if not decades, which will give the current Iranian leadership sufficient time to build a nuclear missile capability.

9. The overall response of the Muslim world to a strike against Iran will be extremely negative and practically uniform, irrespective of who starts military actions under the first scenario: the USA or Israel.

It will be fairly similar whether the USA or Israel initiates military actions under first scenario. Which one of them does so will make no critical difference in the eyes of the Muslim world. In both cases there will be

official condemnation of the anti-Iranian actions. A wave of demonstrations, including assaults on US embassies and those of its allies, will sweep through the Muslim world.

However, the ruling regimes will make efforts to break the wave of protests, which will threaten to destabilize them. Radical Islamist groups will probably fail to find an instantaneous response.

Consequently, operations under the first scenario could turn out to be a sort of painful pinprick, but they will not lead to severe, long-term consequences.

Military operations under the second scenario will continuously fuel the negative energy of the street and give adversaries an opportunity to act more thoroughly and systematically prepare various protest actions.

Islamic radicals will commit regular terrorist attacks against the organizers of the strike against Iran and their allies. We should not rule out the likelihood that such attacks will occur where they would be easier to organize, including in Muslim countries whose governments are considered to be American allies. Suicide bombers will perpetrate terrorist attacks against US and allied military facilities.

As for Europe, single attacks may strike those countries that do not

support US policy toward Iran but are associated with anti-Muslim insults. France, Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, and Denmark may feature among such countries.

A protracted war, such as the one in Iraq, will result in similar overall consequences. Terrorist attacks will become regular and vary in intensity.

Finally, a strike against Iran under any of the scenarios will completely discredit the notion of democratization in the Muslim world. A confrontational ideology based on the clash-of-civilizations thesis will come to dominate relations between the Muslim and Judeo-Christian world.

10. Neighboring countries will exhibit different responses to military actions in Iran. The Middle East will see mass protests and terrorist attacks involving all Islamist groups, including Hamas (particularly if Israel starts the military operation), as well as Hezbollah. A protracted war will further complicate the situation. The negotiations process between Palestine and Israel will come to a complete stop.

The Iraqi government will condemn the military solution but refrain from ardent criticism of either the USA or Israel. A protracted operation will cause the internal situation to flare up and lead to Shiite protests in the

South and attacks by Sunni Islamists against American forces and local administrations. The Iraqi Shiite community will most probably become involved in the US-Iran conflict.

The Turkish leadership will condemn any action against Iran, and it could refuse to make its military bases available to the US. The least irritating option for Turkey will be a first scenario strike, because it will be easier to ignore than a protracted operation.

Most of Turkish society will be indifferent to the conflict with Iran because it could have no impact on Turkey's relationship with Europe or the Kurdish problem. Radical Turkish Islamists are not likely to become active, either, because they have no intrinsic anti-American or anti-Israeli bias. But a protracted war will force Turkey to deal with potential general tensions along its border, an influx of Iranian Kurds, and complications in neighboring Iraq, which could have a boomerang effect in Turkey itself.

The Afghan government will respond relatively moderately to military actions under the first or second scenarios. A protracted war could gradually unsettle the situation in Afghanistan, weaken President Hamid Karzai, and strengthen the new Taliban. Iran and Afghanistan have made agreements over the last few

months on joint actions against terrorists, and the Afghan regime is not interested in a weakening of Iran.

Pakistan will respond negatively to any strike against Iran. Despite complicated relations between the two countries, Islamabad and Tehran have always agreed on a variety of issues, including the Iranian nuclear program. A strike against Iran under any scenario could provoke passionate Islamist protests or even a civil war fraught with the most negative consequences.

Azerbaijan's response will be dispassionate. Its leadership could cautiously deplore the events, but it will not point fingers at guilty parties. Baku will be primarily concerned about a potential spread of radical Islamic sentiments and solidarity with Iran, as well as an influx of refugees from Iran, which could unsettle the domestic situation.

Leaders of Central Asian nations will respond relatively impassively to the military operation, expressing concern about the events. Iran is not a significant economic or political partner for any of them, except Tajikistan, whose relations with Iran are more multifaceted. But Central Asia is afraid of a protracted war, which could destabilize its southern borders and bring tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of refugees. Securing national borders will become a top priority.

On the whole, a prolonged war could cause geopolitical chaos spilling over into Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan, and affecting Pakistan. Furthermore, any forecast of its consequences in the macro-region should assume that a uniform Islamist front could appear, stretching from Iraq to Pakistan.

In general, Muslims in Russia will respond extremely negatively, which is fully in line with the official policy of Moscow. Should Israel deliver the strike, the negative Muslim response will be restrained, because Moscow does not intend to worsen its relations with Israel. American strikes will elicit a much more vehement response. In case of a protracted war, anti-American criticism will continue in managed doses under the Kremlin's guidance.

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Thus, US and allied military actions against Iran without authorization from the UN Security Council could set back the country's nuclear program for an extended period of time or destroy it completely. However, such actions will entail the most severe consequences, including a sharp surge in terrorist activity

across the whole region and in many European countries, flows of thousands of refugees, an unpredictable spiraling of energy resource prices, and other equally hard-to-predict consequences of chaos in the region and beyond. It should not be ruled out that the war could also destabilize Pakistan and other countries in the region, promote an unprecedented rise of Islamic radicalism and a mass withdrawal of regional countries from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and cause some of them to launch military nuclear programs in order to acquire their own nuclear deterrent against the USA and Israel. This will irreversibly undermine the nuclear nonproliferation regime.

If the USA and its allies consider these consequences to be an acceptable price to pay for eliminating the threat of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons and destroying the nonproliferation regime, then the international community should prepare for an unprecedented consolidation of its efforts to counter terrorism, prevent a humanitarian disaster in the region and beyond, and spend unpredictable volumes of its resources to restore socioeconomic conditions in countries affected by the war.