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As we all know only too well, the United States and Israel would hate to see Iran possessing nuclear weapons. Being "the only nuclear power in the Middle East" is a great card for Israel to have in its hand. But — in the real, non-propaganda world — is USrael actually fearful of an attack from a nuclear-armed Iran? In case you've forgotten ...

In 2007, in a closed discussion, Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said that in her opinion "Iranian nuclear weapons do not pose an existential threat to Israel." She "also criticized the exaggerated use that [Israeli] Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is making of the issue of the Iranian bomb, claiming that he is attempting to rally the public around him by playing on its most basic fears." [1](#)

2009: "A senior Israeli official in Washington" asserted that "Iran would be unlikely to use its missiles in an attack [against Israel] because of the certainty of retaliation." [2](#)

In 2010 the *Sunday Times* of London (January 10) reported that Brigadier-General Uzi Eilam, war hero, pillar of the Israeli defense establishment, and former director-general of Israel's Atomic Energy Commission, "believes it will probably take Iran seven years to make nuclear weapons."

Early last month, US Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta told a television audience: "Are they [Iran] trying to develop a nuclear weapon? No, but we know that they're trying to develop a nuclear capability." [3](#)

A week later we could read in the *New York Times* (January 15) that "three leading Israeli security experts — the Mossad chief, Tamir Pardo, a former Mossad chief, Efraim Halevy, and a former military chief of staff, Dan Halutz — all recently declared that a nuclear Iran would not

pose an existential threat to Israel."

Then, a few days afterward, Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak, in an interview with Israeli Army Radio (January 18), had this exchange:

**Question:** Is it Israel's judgment that Iran has not yet decided to turn its nuclear potential into weapons of mass destruction?

**Barak:** People ask whether Iran is determined to break out from the control [inspection] regime right now ... in an attempt to obtain nuclear weapons or an operable installation as quickly as possible. Apparently that is not the case.

Lastly, we have the US Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, in a report to Congress: "We do not know, however, if Iran will eventually decide to build nuclear weapons. ... There are "certain things [the Iranians] have not done" that would be necessary to build a warhead. [4](#)

Admissions like the above — and there are others — are never put into headlines by the American mass media; indeed, only very lightly reported at all; and sometimes distorted — On the Public Broadcasting System (PBS News Hour, January 9), the non-commercial network much beloved by American liberals, the Panetta quote above was reported as: "But we know that they're trying to develop a nuclear capability, and that's what concerns us." Flagrantly omitted were the preceding words: "Are they trying to develop a nuclear weapon? No ..." [5](#)

One of Israel's leading military historians, Martin van Creveld, was interviewed by *Playboy* magazine in June 2007:

**Playboy:** Can the World live with a nuclear Iran?

**Van Creveld:** The U.S. has lived with a nuclear Soviet Union and a nuclear China, so why not a nuclear Iran? I've researched how the U.S. opposed nuclear proliferation in the past, and each time a country was about to proliferate, the U.S. expressed its opposition in terms of why this other country was very dangerous and didn't deserve to have nuclear weapons. Americans believe they're the only people who deserve to have nuclear weapons, because they are good and democratic and they like Mother and apple pie and the flag. But Americans are the only ones who have used them. ... We are in no danger at all of having an Iranian nuclear weapon dropped on us. We cannot say so too openly, however, because we have a history of using any threat in order to get weapons ... thanks to the Iranian threat, we are getting weapons from the U.S. and Germany."

And throughout these years, regularly, Israeli and American officials have been assuring us that Iran is World Nuclear Threat Number One, that we can't relax our guard against them, that there should be no limit to the ultra-tough sanctions we impose upon the Iranian people and their government. Repeated murder and attempted murder of Iranian nuclear scientists, sabotage of Iranian nuclear equipment with computer viruses, the sale of faulty parts and raw materials, unexplained plane crashes, explosions at Iranian facilities ... Who can be behind this but USrael? How do we know? It's called "plain common sense". Or do you think it was Costa Rica? Or perhaps South Africa? Or maybe Thailand?

Defense Secretary Panetta recently commented on one of the assassinations of an Iranian scientist. He put it succinctly: "That's not what the United States does." [6](#)

Does anyone know Leon Panetta's email address? I'd like to send him my list of United States assassination plots. More than 50 foreign leaders were targeted over the years, many successfully. [7](#)

Not long ago, Iraq and Iran were regarded by USrael as the most significant threats to Israeli Middle-East hegemony. Thus was born the myth of Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction, and the United States proceeded to turn Iraq into a basket case. That left Iran, and thus was born the myth of the Iranian Nuclear Threat. As it began to sink in that Iran was not really that much of a nuclear threat, or that this "threat" was becoming too difficult to sell to the rest of the world, USrael decided that, at a minimum, it wanted regime change. The next step may be to block Iran's lifeline — oil sales using the Strait of Hormuz. Ergo, the recent US and EU naval buildup near the Persian Gulf, an act of war trying to goad Iran into firing the first shot. If Iran tries to counter this blockade it could be the signal for another US Basket Case, the fourth in a decade, with the devastated people of Libya and Afghanistan, along with Iraq, currently enjoying America's unique gift of freedom and democracy.

On January 11, the *Washington Post* reported: "In addition to influencing Iranian leaders directly, [a US intelligence official] says another option here is that [sanctions] will create hate and discontent at the street level so that the Iranian leaders realize that they need to change their ways."

How utterly charming, these tactics and goals for the 21st century by the leader of "The Free World". (Is that expression still used?)

The neo-conservative thinking (and Barack Obama can be regarded as often being a fellow traveler of such) is even more charming than that. Listen to Danielle Pletka, vice president for foreign and defense policy studies at America's most prominent neo-con think tank, American Enterprise Institute:

The biggest problem for the United States is not Iran getting a nuclear weapon and testing it, it's Iran getting a nuclear weapon and not using it. Because the second that they have one and they don't do anything bad, all of the naysayers are going to come back and say, "See, we told you Iran is a responsible power. We told you Iran wasn't getting nuclear weapons in order to use them immediately." ... And they will eventually define Iran with nuclear weapons as not a problem. [8](#)

What are we to make of that and all the other quotations above? I think it gets back to my opening statement: Being "the only nuclear power in the Middle East" is a great card for Israel to have in its hand. Is USrael willing to go to war to hold on to that card?

1. Haaretz.com (Israel), October 25, 2007; print edition October 26 [1](#)
2. *Washington Post*, March 5, 2009 [2](#)
3. "Face the Nation", CBS, January 8, 2012; [see video](#) [3](#)
4. *The Guardian* (London), January 31, 2012" [4](#)
5. ["PBS's Dishonest Iran Edit"](#), FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting), January 10, 2012 [5](#)
6. *Reuters*, January 12, 2012 [6](#)
7. <http://killinghope.org/bblum6/assass.htm> [7](#)
8. [Video of Pletka making these remarks](#) [8](#)

