Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Thomas Williams for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF THOMAS J. HARRINGTON FOR OVER FORTY YEARS OF SERVICE TO LOCAL 33 OF THE UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS AND JOINERS OF AMERICA

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of a man whose professional life has been dedicated to improving the lives of working men and women in Massachusetts and across our nation. Tommy Harrington is a remarkable labor leader with a long and illustrious career in the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Massachusetts.

Tommy joined the Carpenters Apprenticeship Program in 1966 after graduating from Boston Trade High School. During his tenure, he held several prestigious positions in Carpenters Local 33, the Massachusetts State Council of Carpenters and the New England Regional Council of Carpenters. In 1989, after twenty-three years in the field as a carpenter and Union Steward, he became a Business Agent for Local 33. In 1990, he was elected President of the Massachusetts State Council of Carpenters, an office which he held until 1993. Following this esteemed position, he became the Business Manager of Local 33 and was elevated to the position of Financial Secretary.

In September of 2001, Tommy reached the pinnacle of his career when he achieved the position of Executive Financial Secretary-Treasurer of the New England Regional Council of Carpenters. Tommy's personal integrity, hard work and determination illustrate the best qualities of those who serve the working men and women of this country.

Although he has held many of the most official positions in Local 33, Tommy is best known for the personal relationships he cultivated with the men and women he worked with on a daily basis. Anyone who has had the privilege to call Tommy a colleague or friend knows that he is one of the most thoughtful, caring and compassionate individuals, always putting the safety and welfare of his union carpenters and their families first.

Tommy has also set an example as a model citizen. His civic involvement can be seen in the numerous causes he has actively supported. Tommy has worked tirelessly on behalf of the pine Street Inn and Rosie's Place volunteering his time and energy. He has participated in charity events for organizations like the Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston and the South Boston Health Center.

Despite his various accomplishments, as his friend I can honestly say that the title that Tommy has always been most proud of and which he cherishes most, is the title of husband and father. Tommy has had the enormous pleasure and tremendous good fortune to be married to his wife Ginny for over thirty-five years. They are the proud parents of two lovely and adoring daughters, Heather and Cindy.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with Tommy Harrington's family, friends and brothers and sisters of labor to thank him for forty years of remarkable service to the American Labor Movement. I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating Tommy's distinguished career and wishing him good health and God's blessing in all his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DADE CITY WOMEN'S CLUB BUILDING

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I am unable to be with you for the 80th anniversary celebration of the Historic Dade City Women's Club Building. I know that you have worked long and hard to make this a successful event, and today's ceremony is clear proof that your efforts were successful. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the celebration because I have to vote in Congress in Washington, DC.

For nearly 100 years, the Women's Club has played a leading role in the Dade City community. From city beautification efforts, to educational seminars, to helping meet the needs of area residents during times of war, the Women's Club has many achievements of which to be proud.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the construction of the current Women's Club historic building. Since 1926, the clubhouse has been a meeting place for thousands of Pasco County women. Today, the site is used as a community center for area residents, in addition to being the home of the Dade City Women's Club.

A building with so much history within its walls, in 1985 the clubhouse was designated as an historical site by the Pasco Historical Society. In 2003 was added to the prestigious National Register of Historic Places. Generations of Pasco County women have called this building home, and today's anniversary celebration is a fitting testament to its beauty, longevity and historic value to the entire Dade City Community.

Although I was unable to attend the 80th anniversary celebration, I appreciate the Women's Club's continued support and commitment to the residents of Dade City. Keep up the good work and know that you have my thanks for improving the lives and economy of Pasco County residents.

RECOGNIZING BYRON DEVLIN FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Byron Devlin, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 633, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Byron has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Byron has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Byron held the principal leadership position of Senior Patrol Leader and has actively supported the ministry of Heartland Presbyterian Center.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Byron Devlin for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONDEMNING THE REPRESSION OF THE IRANIAN BAHA'I COMMUNITY AND CALLING FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF IRANIAN BAHA'IS

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD.

[From Time Magazine, Sept. 17, 2006]

WHAT WOULD WAR LOOK LIKE?

(By Michael Duffy)

The first message was routine enough: a ''Prepare to Deploy'' order sent through naval communications channels to a submarine, an Aegis-class cruiser, two minesweepers and two mine hunters. The orders didn't actually command the ships out of port; they just said to be ready to move by Oct. 1. But inside the Navy those messages generated more buzz than usual last week when a second request, from the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), asked for fresh eyes on long-standing U.S. plans to blockade two Iranian oil ports on the Persian Gulf. The CNO had asked for a rundown on how a blockade of those strategic targets might work. When he didn't like the analysis he received, he ordered his troops to work the lash up once again.

What's going on? The two orders offered tantalizing dues. There are only a few places in the world where minesweepers top the list of U.S. naval requirements. And every sailor, petroleum engineer and hedge-fund manager knows the name of the most important: the Strait of Hormuz, the 20-mile-wide bottleneck in the Persian Gulf through which roughly 40% of the world's oil needs to pass each day. Coupled with the CNO's request for a blockade review, a deployment of minesweepers to the west coast of Iran would seem to suggest that a much discussed—but until now largely theoretical—prospect has become real: that the U.S. may be preparing for war with Iran.

No one knows whether—let alone when—a military confrontation with Tehran will come to pass. The fact that admirals are reviewing plans for blockades is hardly proof of their intentions. The U.S. military routinely makes plans for scores of scenarios, the vast majority of which will never be put into practice. ''Planners always plan,'' says a Pentagon official. Asked about the orders, a second official said only that the Navy is

stepping up its ''listening and learning'' in the Persian Gulf but nothing more—a prudent step, he added, after Iran tested surface-to-ship missiles there in August during a two-week military exercise. And yet from the State Department to the White House to the highest reaches of the military command, there is a growing sense that a showdown with Iran—over its suspected quest for nuclear weapons, its threats against Israel and its bid for dominance of the world's richest oil region—may be impossible to avoid. The chief of the U.S. Central Command (Centcom), General John Abizaid, has called a commanders conference for later this month in the Persian Gulf—sessions he holds at least quarterly—and Iran is on the agenda.

On its face, of course, the notion of a war with Iran seems absurd. By any rational measure, the last thing the U.S. can afford is another war. Two unfinished wars—one on Iran's eastern border, the other on its western flank—are daily depleting America's treasury and overworked armed forces. Most of Washington's allies in those adventures have made it clear they will not join another gamble overseas. What's more, the Bush team, led by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, has done more diplomatic spadework on Iran than on any other project in its 5½ years in office. For more than 18 months, Rice has kept the Administration's hard-line faction at bay while leading a coalition that includes four other members of the U.N. Security Council and is trying to force Tehran to halt its suspicious nuclear ambitions. Even Iran's former President, Mohammed Khatami, was in Washington this month calling for a ''dialogue'' between the two nations.

But superpowers don't always get to choose their enemies or the timing of their confrontations. The fact that all sides would risk losing so much in armed conflict doesn't mean they won't stumble into one anyway. And for all the good arguments against any war now, much less this one, there are just as many indications that a genuine, eyeball-to-eyeball crisis between the U.S. and Iran may be looming, and sooner than many realize. ''At the moment,'' says Ali Ansari, a top Iran authority at London's Chatham House, a foreign-policy think tank, ''we are headed for conflict.''

So what would it look like? Interviews with dozens of experts and government officials in Washington, Tehran and elsewhere in the Middle East paint a sobering picture: military action against Iran's nuclear facilities would have a decent chance of succeeding, but at a staggering cost. And therein lies the excruciating calculus facing the U.S. and its allies: Is the cost of confronting Iran greater than the dangers of living with a nuclear Iran? And can anything short of war persuade Tehran's fundamentalist regime to give up its dangerous game?

ROAD TO WAR

The crisis with Iran has been years in the making. Over the past decade, Iran has acquired many of the pieces, parts and plants needed to make a nuclear device. Although Iranian officials insist that Iran's ambitions are limited to nuclear energy, the regime has asserted its right to develop nuclear power and enrich uranium that could be used in bombs as an end in itself—a symbol of sovereign pride, not to mention a useful prop for politicking. Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has crisscrossed the country in recent months making Iran's right to a nuclear program a national cause and trying to solidify his base of hard-line support in the Revolutionary Guards. The nuclear program is popular with average Iranians and the élites as well. ''Iranian leaders have this sense of past glory, this belief that Iran should play a lofty role in the world,'' says Nasser Hadian, professor of political science at Tehran University.

But the nuclear program isn't Washington's only worry about Iran. While stoking nationalism at home, Tehran has dramatically consolidated its reach in the region. Since the 1979 Islamic revolution, Iran has sponsored terrorist groups in a handful of countries, but its backing of Hizballah, the militant group that took Lebanon to war with Israel this summer, seems to be changing the Middle East balance of power. There is circumstantial evidence that Iran ordered Hizballah to provoke this summer's war, in part to demonstrate that Tehran can stir up big trouble if pushed to the brink. The precise extent of coordination between Hizballah and Tehran is unknown. But no longer in dispute after the standoff in July is Iran's ability to project power right up to the borders of Israel. It is no coincidence that the talk in Washington about what to do with Iran became more focused after Hizballah fought the Israeli army to a virtual standstill this summer.

And yet the West has been unable to compel Iran to comply with its demands. Despite all the work Rice has put into her coalition, diplomatic efforts are moving too slowly, some believe, to stop the Iranians before they acquire the makings of a nuclear device. And Iran has played its hand shrewdly so far. Tehran took weeks to reply to a formal proposal from the U.N. Security Council calling on a halt to uranium enrichment. When it did, its official response was a mosaic of half-steps, conditions and boilerplate that suggested Tehran has little intention of backing down. ''The Iranians,'' says a Western diplomat in Washington, ''are very able negotiators. ''

That doesn't make war inevitable. But at some point the U.S. and its allies may have to confront the ultimate choice. The Bush Administration has said it won't tolerate Iran having a nuclear weapon. Once it does, the regime will have the capacity to carry out Ahmadinejad's threats to eliminate Israel. And in practical terms, the U.S. would have to consider military action long before Iran had an actual bomb. In military circles, there is a debate about where—and when—to draw that line. U.S. intelligence chief John Negroponte told TIME in April that Iran is 5 years away from having a nuclear weapon. But some nonproliferation experts worry about a different moment: when Iran is able to enrich enough uranium to fuel a bomb—a point that comes well before engineers actually assemble a nuclear device. Many believe that is when a country becomes a nuclear power. That red line, experts say, could be just a year away.

WOULD AN ATTACK WORK?

The answer is yes and no.

No one is talking about a ground invasion of Iran. Too many U.S. troops are tied down elsewhere to make it possible, and besides, it isn't necessary. If the U.S. goal is simply to stunt Iran's nuclear program, it can be done better and more safely by air. An attack limited to Iran's nuclear facilities would nonetheless require a massive campaign. Experts say that Iran has between 18 and 30 nuclear-related facilities. The sites are dispersed around the country—some in the open, some cloaked in the guise of conventional factories, some buried deep underground.

A Pentagon official says that among the known sites there are 1,500 different ''aim points,'' which means the campaign could well require the involvement of almost every type of aircraft in the U.S. arsenal: Stealth bombers and fighters, B–1s and B–2s, as well as F–15s and F–16s operating from land and F–18s from aircraft carriers.

GPS-guided munitions and laser-targeted bombs—sighted by satellite, spotter aircraft and unmanned vehicles—would do most of the bunker busting. But because many of the targets are hardened under several feet of reinforced concrete, most would have to be hit over and over to ensure that they were destroyed or sufficiently damaged. The U.S. would have to mount the usual aerial ballet, refueling tankers as well as search-and-rescue helicopters in case pilots were shot down by Iran's aging but possibly still effective air defenses. U.S. submarines and ships could launch cruise missiles as well, but their warheads are generally too small to do much damage to reinforced concrete—and might be used for secondary targets. An operation of that size would hardly be surgical. Many sites are in highly populated areas, so civilian casualties would be a certainty.

Whatever the order of battle, a U.S. strike would have a lasting impression on Iran's rulers. U.S. officials believe that a campaign of several days, involving hundreds or even thousands of sorties, could set back Iran's nuclear program by 2 to 3 years. Hit hard enough, some believe, Iranians might develop second thoughts about their government's designs as a regional nuclear power. Some U.S. foes of Iran's regime believe that the crisis of legitimacy that the ruling clerics would face in the wake of a U.S. attack could trigger their downfall, although others are convinced it would unite the population with the government in anti-American rage.

But it is also likely that the U.S. could carry out a massive attack and still leave Iran with some part of its nuclear program intact. It's possible that U.S. warplanes could destroy every known nuclear site—while Tehran's nuclear wizards, operating at other, undiscovered sites even deeper underground, continued their work. ''We don't know where it all is,'' said a White House official, ''so we can't get it all.''

WHAT WOULD COME NEXT?

No one who has spent any time thinking about an attack on Iran doubts that a U.S. operation would reap a whirlwind. The only mystery is what kind. ''It's not a question of whether we can do a strike or not and whether the strike could be effective,'' says retired Marine General Anthony Zinni. ''It certainly would be, to some degree. But are you prepared for all that follows?''

Retired Air Force Colonel Sam Gardiner, who taught strategy at the National War College, has been conducting a mock U.S.-Iran war game for American policymakers for the past 5 years. Virtually every time he runs the game, Gardiner says, a similar nightmare scenario unfolds: the U.S. attack, no matter how successful, spawns a variety of asymmetrical retaliations by Tehran. First comes terrorism: Iran's initial reaction to air strikes might be to authorize a Hizballah attack on Israel, in order to draw Israel into the war and rally public support at home.

Next, Iran might try to foment as much mayhem as possible inside the two nations on its flanks, Afghanistan and Iraq, where more than 160,000 U.S. troops hold a tenuous grip on local populations. Iran has already dabbled in partnership with warlords in western Afghanistan, where U.S. military authority has never been strong; it would be a small step to lend aid to Taliban forces gaining strength in the south. Meanwhile, Tehran has links to the main factions in Iraq, which would welcome a boost in money and weapons, if just to strengthen their hand against rivals. Analysts generally believe that Iran could in a short time orchestrate a dramatic increase in the number and severity of attacks on U.S. troops in Iraq. As Syed Ayad, a secular Shi'ite cleric and Iraqi Member of Parliament says, ''America owns the

sky of Iraq with their Apaches, but Iran owns the ground.''

Next, there is oil. The Persian Gulf, a traffic jam on good days, would become a parking lot. Iran could plant mines and launch dozens of armed boats into the bottleneck, choking off the shipping lanes in the Strait of Hormuz and causing a massive disruption of oil-tanker traffic. A low-key Iranian mining operation in 1987 forced the U.S. to reflag Kuwaiti oil tankers and escort them, in slow-moving files of one and two, up and down the Persian Gulf. A more intense operation would probably send oil prices soaring above $100 per bbl.—which may explain why the Navy wants to be sure its small fleet of minesweepers is ready to go into action at a moment's notice. It is unlikely that Iran would turn off its own oil spigot or halt its exports through pipelines overland, but it could direct its proxies in Iraq and Saudi Arabia to attack pipelines, wells and shipment points inside those countries, further choking supply and driving up prices.

That kind of retaliation could quickly transform a relatively limited U.S. mission in Iran into a much more complicated one involving regime change. An Iran determined to use all its available weapons to counterattack the U.S. and its allies would present a challenge to American prestige that no Commander in Chief would be likely to tolerate for long. Zinni, for one, believes an attack on Iran could eventually lead to U.S. troops on the ground. ''You've got to be careful with your assumptions,'' he says. ''In Iraq, the assumption was that it would be a liberation, not an occupation. You've got to be prepared for the worst case, and the worst case involving Iran takes you down to boots on the ground.'' All that, he says, makes an attack on Iran a ''dumb idea.'' Abizaid, the current Centcom boss, chose his words carefully last May. ''Look, any war with a country that is as big as Iran, that has a terrorist capability along its borders, that has a missile capability that is external to its own borders and that has the ability to affect the world's oil markets is something that everyone needs to contemplate with a great degree of clarity.''

CAN IT BE STOPPED?

Given the chaos that a war might unleash, what options does the world have to avoid it? One approach would be for the U.S. to accept Iran as a nuclear power and learn to live with an Iranian bomb, focusing its efforts on deterrence rather than pre-emption. The risk is that a nuclear-armed Iran would use its regional primacy to become the dominant foreign power in Iraq, threaten Israel and make it harder for Washington to exert its will in the region. And it could provoke Sunni countries in the region, like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, to start nuclear programs of their own to contain rising Shi'ite power.

Those equally unappetizing prospects—war or a new arms race in the Middle East—explain why the White House is kicking up its efforts to resolve the Iran problem before it gets that far. Washington is doing everything it can to make Iran think twice about its ongoing game of stonewall. It is a measure of the Administration's unity on Iran that confrontationalists like Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld have lately not wandered off the rhetorical reservation. Everyone has been careful—for now—to stick to Rice's diplomatic emphasis. ''Nobody is considering a military option at this point,'' says an Administration official. ''We're trying to prevent a situation in which the President finds himself having to decide between a nuclear-armed Iran or going to war. The best hope of avoiding that dilemma is hard-nosed diplomacy, one that has serious consequences.''

Rice continues to try for that. This week in New York City, she will push her partners to get behind a new sanctions resolution that would ban Iranian imports of dual-use technologies, like parts for its centrifuge cascades for uranium enrichment, and bar travel overseas by certain government officials. The next step would be restrictions on government purchases of computer software and hardware, office supplies, tires and auto parts—steps Russia and China have signaled some reluctance to endorse. But even Rice's advisers don't believe that Iran can be persuaded to completely abandon its ambitions. Instead, they hope to tie Iran up in a series of suspensions, delays and negotiations until a more pragmatic faction of leadership in Tehran gains the upper hand.

At the moment, that sounds as much like a prayer as a strategy. A former CIA director, asked not long ago whether a moderate faction will ever emerge in Tehran, quipped, ''I don't think I've ever met an Iranian moderate—not at the top of the government, anyway.'' But if sanctions don't work, what might? Outside the Administration, a growing group of foreign policy hands from both parties have called on the U.S. to bring Tehran into direct negotiations in the hope of striking a grand bargain. Under that formula, the U.S. might offer Iran some security guarantees—such as forswearing efforts to topple Iran's theocratic regime—in exchange for Iran's agreeing to open its facilities to international inspectors and abandon weapons-related projects. It would be painful for any U.S. Administration to recognize the legitimacy of a regime that sponsors terrorism and calls for Israel's destruction—but the time may come when that's the only bargaining chip short of war the U.S. has left. And still that may not be enough. ''[The Iranians] would give up nuclear power if they truly believed the U.S. would accept Iran as it is,'' says a university professor in Tehran who asked not to be identified. ''But the mistrust runs too deep for them to believe that is possible.''

Such distrust runs both ways and is getting deeper. Unless the U.S., its allies and Iran can find a way to make diplomacy work, the whispers of blockades and minesweepers in the Persian Gulf may soon be drowned out by the cries of war. And if the U.S. has learned anything over the past 5 years, it's that war in the Middle East rarely goes according to plan.

[From antiwar.com, Feb. 11, 2005]

IRAN WAR DRUMS BEAT HARDER

(By Jim Lobe)

Despite the Bush administration's insistence that, at least for now, it remains committed to using diplomatic means to halt Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program, war drums against the Islamic Republic appear to be beating more loudly here.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice assured Europeans on her trip this past week that Washington does indeed support the efforts of France, Britain, and Germany (EU–3) to reach a diplomatic settlement on the issue. However, she also made it clear that Washington has no interest in joining them at the negotiating table or extending much in the way of carrots.

And her consistent refusal to reiterate former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage's flat assertion in December that Washington does not seek ''regime change'' in Tehran has added to the impression that the administration is set firmly on a path toward confrontation.

Whether the administration is pursuing a ''good cop/bad cop'' strategy—in which Washington's role is to brandish the sticks and the EU–3 the carrots—remains unclear, but the voices in favor of an ''engagement'' policy are being drowned out by crescendo of calls to adopt ''regime change'' as U.S. policy.

The latest such urging was released here Thursday by the Iran Policy Committee (IPC), a group headed by a former National Security Council staffer Ray Tanter, several retired senior military officers, and a former ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

The 30-page document, ''U.S. Policy Options for Iran'' by former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer Clare Lopez, appears to reflect the views of the administration's most radical hawks among the Pentagon's civilian leadership and in the office of Vice President Dick Cheney.

It was Cheney who launched the latest bout of saber-rattling when he told a radio interviewer last month that Tehran was ''right at the top of the list'' of the world's trouble spots and that Israel may strike at suspected Iranian nuclear sites even before the U.S.

The study echoes many of the same themes—mainly support for the Iranian exiled and internal opposition against the government—as another policy paper released by the mainly neoconservative Committee on the Present Danger (CPD) in December, but it is also much harsher.

Both papers favored military strikes against suspected nuclear and other weapons facilities if that was the only way to prevent Tehran from acquiring nuclear weapons, and endorsed ''regime change'' as U.S. policy.

But the CPD paper, which had the influential backing of former Secretary of State George Shultz, called for a ''peaceful'' strategy that involved elements of both engagement and nonviolent subversion similar to that pursued by Washington in Poland and elsewhere in Central Europe, particularly during the 1980s.

The latest report does grant a role for ''carrots'' in achieving a delay in Iran's nuclear ambitions and even in regime change, although the IPC's members expressed greater skepticism that the EU–3 talks will be effective or even desirable.

''Negotiations will not work,'' said Maj. Gen. (ret.) Paul Vallely, chairman of the military committee of the neoconservative Center for Security Policy, who described the Iranian regime as a ''house of cards.''

Instead, the IPC's main emphasis is on more aggressive actions to bring about the desired goals, including military strikes and active efforts to destabilize the government, in major part through the support and deployment of what it calls ''indisputably the largest and most organized Iranian opposition group,'' the Mujahedin e-Khalq (MEK)—an idea that many Iran specialists here believe is likely to prove exceptionally counterproductive.

''[A]s an additional step [in a strategy of destabilization],'' the paper states, ''the United States might encourage the new Iraqi government to extend formal recognition to the MEK, based in Ashraf [Iraq], as a legitimate political organization. Such a recognition would send yet another signal from neighboring Iraq that the noose is tightening around Iran's unelected rulers.''

The MEK fought on Iraq's side during the Iran-Iraq war and has been listed as a ''terrorist group'' by the State Department since 1997 as a result of its assassination of U.S. officials during the Shah's reign and of Iranian officials after the Revolution.

However, it has long been supported by the Pentagon civilians and Cheney's office, and their backers in Congress and the press as a possible asset against Iran despite its official ''terrorist'' status.

Indeed, there have been persistent reports, most recently from a former CIA officer,

Philip Giraldi, in the current edition of the American Conservative magazine, that U.S. Special Forces have been directing members of the group in carrying out reconnaissance and intelligence collection in Iran from bases in Afghanistan and Balochistan, Pakistan, since last summer as part of an effort to identify possible targets for military strikes.

After bombing MEK bases in the opening days of the Iraq invasion in March 2003, the U.S. military worked out a cease-fire agreement that resulted in the group's surrender of its heavy weapons and the concentration of about 4,000 of their members, some of whom have since repatriated voluntarily to Iran, at their base at Ashraf.

The State Department, which was then engaged in quiet talks with Iran about dispersing the group in exchange for Tehran's handing over prominent al-Qaeda members in its custody, clashed repeatedly with the Pentagon over the MEK's treatment.

After State was forced by the White House to break off its dialogue with Tehran following al Qaeda attacks in Saudi Arabia, allegedly ordered from somewhere on Iranian territory, the administration determined that MEK members in Iraq should be given Geneva Convention protections.

The IPC now wants the State Department to take the MEK off the terrorist list, a position backed by several dozen members of Congress who have been actively courted by the group and believe that a confrontation with Iran is inevitable.

''Removing the terrorist designation from the MEK could serve as the most tangible signal to the Iranian regime, as well as to the Iranian people, that a new option is now on the table,'' according to the report.

''Removal might also have the effect of supporting President Bush's assertion [in his State of the Union address] that America stands with the people of Iran in their struggle to liberate themselves.''

But most Iran specialists, both inside and outside the government, who agree that the regime is deeply unpopular, also insist that Washington's endorsement of the MEK will actually bolster the regime in Tehran.

''Everybody I've ever talked to in Iran or who have gone to Iran tell me without exception that these people are despised,'' said Gary Sick. who handled Iranian policy for the National Security Council under former President Jimmy Carter.

When they invaded Iran from Iraq in the last year of the Iran-Iraq war, according to Sick, who teaches at Columbia University, they had expected to march straight to Tehran gathering support all along the way.

''But they never got beyond a little border town before running into stiff resistance. It was a very ugly incident. They had a chance to show what they can do, and the bottom line was nothing very much. I've seen nothing since then to change my estimate,'' he said.

[From the New Yorker, Apr. 17, 2006]

THE IRAN PLANS

(By Seymour M. Hersh)

The Bush Administration, while publicly advocating diplomacy in order to stop Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapon, has increased clandestine activities inside Iran and intensified planning for a possible major air attack. Current and former American military and intelligence officials said that Air Force planning groups are drawing up lists of targets, and teams of American combat troops have been ordered into Iran, under cover, to collect targeting data and to establish contact with anti-government ethnic-minority groups. The officials say that President Bush is determined to deny the Iranian regime the opportunity to begin a pilot program, planned for this spring, to enrich uranium.

American and European intelligence agencies, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (I.A.E.A.), agree that Iran is intent on developing the capability to produce nuclear weapons. But there are widely differing estimates of how long that will take, and whether diplomacy, sanctions, or military action is the best way to prevent it. Iran insists that its research is for peaceful use only, in keeping with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and that it will not be delayed or deterred.

There is a growing conviction among members of the United States military, and in the international community, that President Bush's ultimate goal in the nuclear confrontation with Iran is regime change. Iran's President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has challenged the reality of the Holocaust and said that Israel must be ''wiped off the map.'' Bush and others in the White House view him as a potential Adolf Hitler, a former senior intelligence official said. ''That's the name they're using. They say, 'Will Iran get a strategic weapon and threaten another world war?' ''

A government consultant with close ties to the civilian leadership in the Pentagon said that Bush was ''absolutely convinced that Iran is going to get the bomb'' if it is not stopped. He said that the President believes that he must do ''what no Democrat or Republican, if elected in the future, would have the courage to do,'' and ''that saving Iran is going to be his legacy.''

One former defense official, who still deals with sensitive issues for the Bush Administration, told me that the military planning was premised on a belief that ''a sustained bombing campaign in Iran will humiliate the religious leadership and lead the public to rise up and overthrow the government.'' He added, ''I was shocked when I heard it, and asked myself, 'What are they smoking?' ''

The rationale for regime change was articulated in early March by Patrick Clawson, an Iran expert who is the deputy director for research at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and who has been a supporter of President Bush. ''So long as Iran has an Islamic republic, it will have a nuclear-weapons program, at least clandestinely,'' Clawson told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 2nd. ''The key issue, therefore, is: How long will the present Iranian regime last?''

When I spoke to Clawson, he emphasized that ''this Administration is putting a lot of effort into diplomacy.'' However, he added, Iran had no choice other than to accede to America's demands or face a military attack. Clawson said that he fears that Ahmadinejad ''sees the West as wimps and thinks we will eventually cave in. We have to be ready to deal with Iran if the crisis escalates:'' Clawson said that he would prefer to rely on sabotage and other clandestine activities, such as ''industrial accidents.'' But, he said, it would be prudent to prepare for a wider war, ''given the way the Iranians are acting. This is not like planning to invade Quebec.''

One military planner told me that White House criticisms of Iran and the high tempo of planning and clandestine activities amount to a campaign of ''coercion'' aimed at Iran. ''You have to be ready to go, and we'll see how they respond,'' the officer said. ''You have to really show a threat in order to get Ahmadinejad to back down.'' He added, ''People think Bush has been focused on Saddam Hussein since 9/11,'' but, ''in my view, if you had to name one nation that was his focus all the way along, it was Iran.'' (In response to detailed requests for comment, the White House said that it would not comment on military planning but added, ''As the President has indicated, we are pursuing a diplomatic solution''; the Defense Department also said that Iran was being dealt with through ''diplomatic channels'' but wouldn't elaborate on that; the C.I.A. said that there were ''inaccuracies'' in this account but would not specify them.)

''This is much more than a nuclear issue,'' one high-ranking diplomat told me in Vienna. ''That's just a rallying point, and there is still time to fix it. But the Administration believes it cannot be fixed unless they control the hearts and minds of Iran. The real issue is who is going to control the Middle East and its oil in the next ten years.''

A senior Pentagon adviser on the war on terror expressed a similar view. ''This White House believes that the only way to solve the problem is to change the power structure in Iran, and that means war,'' he said. The danger, he said, was that ''it also reinforces the belief inside Iran that the only way to defend the country is to have a nuclear capability.'' A military conflict that destabilized the region could also increase the risk of terror: ''Hezbollah comes into play,'' the adviser said, referring to the terror group that is considered one of the world's most successful, and which is now a Lebanese political party with strong ties to Iran. ''And here comes Al Qaeda.''

In recent weeks, the President has quietly initiated a series of talks on plans for Iran with a few key senators and members of Congress, including at least one Democrat. A senior member of the House Appropriations Committee, who did not take part in the meetings but has discussed their content with his colleagues, told me that there had been ''no formal briefings,'' because ''they're reluctant to brief the minority. They're doing the Senate, somewhat selectively.''

The House member said that no one in the meetings ''is really objecting'' to the talk of war. ''The people they're briefing are the same ones who led the charge on Iraq. At most, questions are raised: How are you going to hit all the sites at once? How are you going to get deep enough?'' (Iran is building facilities underground.) ''There's no pressure from Congress'' not to take military action, the House member added. ''The only political pressure is from the guys who want to do it.'' Speaking of President Bush, the House member said, ''The most worrisome thing is that this guy has a messianic vision.''

Some operations, apparently aimed in part at intimidating Iran, are already under way. American Naval tactical aircraft, operating from carriers in the Arabian Sea, have been flying simulated nuclear-weapons delivery missions—rapid ascending maneuvers known as ''over the shoulder'' bombing—since last summer, the former official said, within range of Iranian coastal radars.

Last month, in a paper given at a conference on Middle East security in Berlin, Colonel Sam Gardiner, a military analyst who taught at the National War College before retiring from the Air Force, in 1987, provided an estimate of what would be needed to destroy Iran's nuclear program. Working from satellite photographs of the known facilities, Gardiner estimated that at least four hundred targets would have to be hit. He added:

I don't think a U.S. military planner would want to stop there. Iran probably has two chemical-production plants. We would hit those. We would want to hit the medium-range ballistic missiles that have just recently been moved closer to Iraq. There are fourteen airfields with sheltered aircraft. . . . We'd want to get rid of that threat. We would want to hit the assets that could be

used to threaten Gulf shipping. That means targeting the cruise-missile sites and the Iranian diesel submarines. . . . Some of the facilities may be too difficult to target even with penetrating weapons. The U.S. will have to use Special Operations units.

One of the military's initial option plans, as presented to the White House by the Pentagon this winter, calls for the use of a bunker-buster tactical nuclear weapon, such as the B61–11, against underground nuclear sites. One target is Iran's main centrifuge plant, at Natanz, nearly two hundred miles south of Tehran. Natanz, which is no longer under I.A.E.A. safeguards, reportedly has underground floor space to hold fifty thousand centrifuges, and laboratories and workspaces buried approximately seventy-five feet beneath the surface. That number of centrifuges could provide enough enriched uranium for about twenty nuclear warheads a year. (Iran has acknowledged that it initially kept the existence of its enrichment program hidden from I.A.E.A. inspectors, but claims that none of its current activity is barred by the Non-Proliferation Treaty.) The elimination of Natanz would be a major setback for Iran's nuclear ambitions, but the conventional weapons in the American arsenal could not insure the destruction of facilities under seventy-five feet of earth and rock, especially if they are reinforced with concrete.

There is a Cold War precedent for targeting deep underground bunkers with nuclear weapons. In the early nineteen-eighties, the American intelligence community watched as the Soviet government began digging a huge underground complex outside Moscow. Analysts concluded that the underground facility was designed for ''continuity of government''—for the political and military leadership to survive a nuclear war. (There are similar facilities, in Virginia and Pennsylvania, for the American leadership.) The Soviet facility still exists, and much of what the U.S. knows about it remains classified. ''The 'tell'—'the giveaway'—was the ventilator shafts, some of which were disguised,'' the former senior intelligence official told me. At the time, he said, it was determined that ''only nukes'' could destroy the bunker. He added that some American intelligence analysts believe that the Russians helped the Iranians design their underground facility. ''We see a similarity of design,'' specifically in the ventilator shafts, he said.

A former high-level Defense Department official told me that, in his view, even limited bombing would allow the U.S. to ''go in there and do enough damage to slow down the nuclear infrastructure—it's feasible.'' The former defense official said, ''The Iranians don't have friends, and we can tell them that, if necessary, we'll keep knocking back their infrastructure. The United States should act like we're ready to go.'' He added, ''We don't have to knock down all of their air defenses. Our stealth bombers and standoff missiles really work, and we can blow fixed things up. We can do things on the ground, too, but it's difficult and very dangerous—put bad stuff in ventilator shafts and put them to sleep.''

But those who are familiar with the Soviet bunker, according to the former senior intelligence official, ''say 'No way.' ''

You've got to know what's underneath—to know which ventilator feeds people, or diesel generators, or which are false. And there's a lot that we don't know.'' The lack of reliable intelligence leaves military planners, given the goal of totally destroying the sites, little choice but to consider the use of tactical nuclear weapons. ''Every other option, in the view of the nuclear weaponeers, would leave a gap,'' the former senior intelligence official said. '' 'Decisive' is the key word of the Air Force's planning. It's a tough decision. But we made it in Japan.''

He went on, ''Nuclear planners go through extensive training and learn the technical details of damage and fallout—we're talking about mushroom clouds, radiation, mass casualties, and contamination over years. This is not an underground nuclear test, where all you see is the earth raised a little bit. These politicians don't have a clue, and whenever anybody tries to get it out''—remove the nuclear option—''they're shouted down.''

The attention given to the nuclear option has created serious misgivings inside the offices of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he added, and some officers have talked about resigning. Late this winter, the Joint Chiefs of Staff sought to remove the nuclear option from the evolving war plans for Iran—without success, the former intelligence official said. ''The White House said, 'Why are you challenging this? The option came from you.' ''

The Pentagon adviser on the war on terror confirmed that some in the Administration were looking seriously at this option, which he linked to a resurgence of interest in tactical nuclear weapons among Pentagon civilians and in policy circles. He called it ''a juggernaut that has to be stopped.'' He also confirmed that some senior officers and officials were considering resigning over the issue. ''There are very strong sentiments within the military against brandishing nuclear weapons against other countries,'' the adviser told me. ''This goes to high levels.'' The matter may soon reach a decisive point, he said, because the Joint Chiefs had agreed to give President Bush a formal recommendation stating that they are strongly opposed to considering the nuclear option for Iran. ''The internal debate on this has hardened in recent weeks,'' the adviser said. ''And, if senior Pentagon officers express their opposition to the use of offensive nuclear weapons, then it will never happen.''

The adviser added, however, that the idea of using tactical nuclear weapons in such situations has gained support from the Defense Science Board, an advisory panel whose members are selected by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. ''They're telling the Pentagon that we can build the B61 with more blast and less radiation,'' he said.

The chairman of the Defense Science Board is William Schneider, Jr., an Under-Secretary of State in the Reagan Administration. In January, 2001, as President Bush prepared to take office, Schneider served on an ad-hoc panel on nuclear forces sponsored by the National Institute for Public Policy, a conservative think tank. The panel's report recommended treating tactical nuclear weapons as an essential part of the U.S. arsenal and noted their suitability ''for those occasions when the certain and prompt destruction of high priority targets is essential and beyond the promise of conventional weapons.'' Several signers of the report are now prominent members of the Bush Administration, including Stephen Hadley, the national-security adviser; Stephen Cambone, the Under-Secretary of Defense for Intelligence; and Robert Joseph, the Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

The Pentagon adviser questioned the value of air strikes. ''The Iranians have distributed their nuclear activity very well, and we have no clue where some of the key stuff is. It could even be out of the country,'' he said. He warned, as did many others, that bombing Iran could provoke ''a chain reaction'' of attacks on American facilities and citizens throughout the world: ''What will 1.2 billion Muslims think the day we attack Iran?''

With or without the nuclear option, the list of targets may inevitably expand. One recently retired high-level Bush Administration official, who is also an expert on war planning, told me that he would have vigorously argued against an air attack on Iran, because ''Iran is a much tougher target'' than Iraq. But, he added, ''If you're going to do any bombing to stop the nukes, you might as well improve your lie across the board. Maybe hit some training camps, and clear up a lot of other problems.''

The Pentagon adviser said that, in the event of an attack, the Air Force intended to strike many hundreds of targets in Iran but that ''ninety-nine percent of them have nothing to do with proliferation. There are people who believe it's the way to operate''—that the Administration can achieve its policy goals in Iran with a bombing campaign, an idea that has been supported by neoconservatives.

If the order were to be given for an attack, the American combat troops now operating in Iran would be in position to mark the critical targets with laser beams, to insure bombing accuracy and to minimize civilian casualties. As of early winter, I was told by the government consultant with close ties to civilians in the Pentagon, the units were also working with minority groups in Iran, including the Azeris, in the north, the Baluchis, in the southeast, and the Kurds, in the northeast. The troops ''are studying the terrain, and giving away walking-around money to ethnic tribes, and recruiting scouts from local tribes and shepherds,'' the consultant said. One goal is to get ''eyes on the ground''—quoting a line from ''Othello,'' he said, ''Give me the ocular proof.'' The broader aim, the consultant said, is to ''encourage ethnic tensions'' and undermine the regime.

The new mission for the combat troops is a product of Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's long-standing interest in expanding the role of the military in covert operations, which was made official policy in the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review, published in February. Such activities, if conducted by C.I.A. operatives, would need a Presidential Finding and would have to be reported to key members of Congress.

'' 'Force protection' is the new buzzword,'' the former senior intelligence official told me. He was referring to the Pentagon's position that clandestine activities that can be broadly classified as preparing the battlefield or protecting troops are military, not intelligence, operations, and are therefore not subject to congressional oversight. ''The guys in the Joint Chiefs of Staff say there are a lot of uncertainties in Iran,'' he said. ''We need to have more than what we had in Iraq. Now we have the green light to do everything we want.''

The President's deep distrust of Ahmadinejad has strengthened his determination to confront Iran. This view has been reinforced by allegations that Ahmadinejad, who joined a special-forces brigade of the Revolutionary Guards in 1986, may have been involved in terrorist activities in the late eighties. (There are gaps in Ahmadinejad's official biography in this period.) Ahmadinejad has reportedly been connected to Imad Mughniyeh, a terrorist who has been implicated in the deadly bombings of the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, in 1983. Mughniyeh was then the security chief of Hezbollah; he remains on the F.B.I.'s list of most-wanted terrorists.

Robert Baer, who was a C.I.A. officer in the Middle East and elsewhere for two decades, told me that Ahmadinejad and his Revolutionary Guard colleagues in the Iranian government ''are capable of making a bomb, hiding it, and launching it at Israel. They're apocalyptic Shiites. If you're sitting in Tel Aviv and you believe they've got nukes and missiles—you've got to take them out. These

guys are nuts, and there's no reason to back off.''

Under Ahmadinejad, the Revolutionary Guards have expanded their power base throughout the Iranian bureaucracy; by the end of January, they had replaced thousands of civil servants with their own members. One former senior United Nations official, who has extensive experience with Iran, depicted the turnover as ''a white coup,'' with ominous implications for the West. ''Professionals in the Foreign Ministry are out; others are waiting to be kicked out,'' he said. ''We may be too late. These guys now believe that they are stronger than ever since the revolution.'' He said that, particularly in consideration of China's emergence as a superpower, Iran's attitude was ''To hell with the West. You can do as much as you like.''

Iran's supreme religious leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, is considered by many experts to be in a stronger position than Ahmadinejad. ''Ahmadinejad is not in control,'' one European diplomat told me. ''Power is diffuse in Iran. The Revolutionary Guards are among the key backers of the nuclear program, but, ultimately, I don't think they are in charge of it. The Supreme Leader has the casting vote on the nuclear program, and the Guards will not take action without his approval.''

The Pentagon adviser on the war on terror said that ''allowing Iran to have the bomb is not on the table. We cannot have nukes being sent downstream to a terror network. It's just too dangerous.'' He added, ''The whole internal debate is on which way to go''—in terms of stopping the Iranian program. It is possible, the adviser said, that Iran will unilaterally renounce its nuclear plans—and forestall the American action. ''God may smile on us, but I don't think so. The bottom line is that Iran cannot become a nuclear-weapons state. The problem is that the Iranians realize that only by becoming a nuclear state can they defend themselves against the U.S. Something bad is going to happen.''

While almost no one disputes Iran's nuclear ambitions, there is intense debate over how soon it could get the bomb, and what to do about that. Robert Gallucci, a former government expert on nonproliferation who is now the dean of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown, told me, ''Based on what I know, Iran could be eight to ten years away'' from developing a deliverable nuclear weapon. Gallucci added, ''If they had a covert nuclear program and we could prove it, and we could not stop it by negotiation, diplomacy, or the threat of sanctions, I'd be in favor of taking it out. But if you do it''—bomb Iran—''without being able to show there's a secret program, you're in trouble.''

Meir Dagan, the head of Mossad, Israel's intelligence agency, told the Knesset last December that ''Iran is one to two years away, at the latest, from having enriched uranium. From that point, the completion of their nuclear weapon is simply a technical matter.'' In a conversation with me, a senior Israeli intelligence official talked about what he said was Iran's duplicity: ''There are two parallel nuclear programs'' inside Iran—the program declared to the I.A.E.A. and a separate operation, run by the military and the Revolutionary Guards. Israeli officials have repeatedly made this argument, but Israel has not produced public evidence to support it. Richard Armitage, the Deputy Secretary of State in Bush's first term, told me, ''I think Iran has a secret nuclear-weapons program—I believe it, but I don't know it.''

In recent months, the Pakistani government has given the U.S. new access to A.Q. Khan, the so-called father of the Pakistani atomic bomb. Khan, who is now living under house arrest in Islamabad, is accused of setting up a black market in nuclear materials; he made at least one clandestine visit to Tehran in the late nineteen-eighties. In the most recent interrogations, Khan has provided information on Iran's weapons design and its time line for building a bomb. ''The picture is of 'unquestionable danger,'" the former senior intelligence official said. (The Pentagon adviser also confirmed that Khan has been ''singing like a canary.'') The concern, the former senior official said, is that ''Khan has credibility problems. He is suggestible, and he's telling the neoconservatives what they want to hear''—or what might be useful to Pakistan's President, Pervez Musharraf, who is under pressure to assist Washington in the war on terror.

''I think Khan's leading us on,'' the former intelligence official said. ''I don't know anybody who says, 'Here's the smoking gun.' But lights are beginning to blink. He's feeding us information on the time line, and targeting information is coming in from our own sources—sensors and the covert teams. The C.I.A., which was so burned by Iraqi W.M.D., is going to the Pentagon and the Vice-President's office saying, 'It's all new stuff.' People in the Administration are saying, 'We've got enough.'"

The Administration's case against Iran is compromised by its history of promoting false intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. In a recent essay on the Foreign Policy Web site, entitled ''Fool Me Twice,'' Joseph Cirincione, the director for nonproliferation at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, wrote, ''The unfolding administration strategy appears to be an effort to repeat its successful campaign for the Iraq war.'' He noted several parallels:

The vice president of the United States gives a major speech focused on the threat from an oil-rich nation in the Middle East. The U.S. Secretary of State tells Congress that the same nation is our most serious global challenge. The Secretary of Defense calls that nation the leading supporter of global terrorism.

Cirincione called some of the Administration's claims about Iran ''questionable'' or lacking in evidence. When I spoke to him, he asked, ''What do we know? What is the threat? The question is: How urgent is all this?'' The answer, he said, ''is in the intelligence community and the I.A.E.A.'' (In August, the Washington Post reported that the most recent comprehensive National Intelligence Estimate predicted that Iran was a decade away from being a nuclear power.)

Last year, the Bush Administration briefed I.A.E.A. officials on what it said was new and alarming information about Iran's weapons program which had been retrieved from an Iranian's laptop. The new data included more than a thousand pages of technical drawings of weapons systems. The Washington Post reported that there were also designs for a small facility that could be used in the uranium-enrichment process. Leaks about the laptop became the focal point of stories in the Times and elsewhere. The stories were generally careful to note that the materials could have been fabricated, but also quoted senior American officials as saying that they appeared to be legitimate. The headline in the Times' account read, ''Relying on Computer, U.S. Seeks to Prove Iran's Nuclear Aims''.

I was told in interviews with American and European intelligence officials, however, that the laptop was more suspect and less revelatory than it had been depicted. The Iranian who owned the laptop had initially been recruited by German and American intelligence operatives, working together. The Americans eventually lost interest in him. The Germans kept on, but the Iranian was seized by the Iranian counter-intelligence force. It is not known where he is today. Some family members managed to leave Iran with his laptop and handed it over at a U.S. embassy, apparently in Europe. It was a classic ''walk-in.''

A European intelligence official said, ''There was some hesitation on our side'' about what the materials really proved, ''and we are still not convinced.'' The drawings were not meticulous, as newspaper accounts suggested, ''but had the character of sketches,'' the European official said. ''It was not a slam-dunk smoking gun.''

The threat of American military action has created dismay at the headquarters of the I.A.E.A., in Vienna. The agency's officials believe that Iran wants to be able to make a nuclear weapon, but ''nobody has presented an inch of evidence of a parallel nuclear-weapons program in Iran,'' the high-ranking diplomat told me. The I.A.E.A.'s best estimate is that the Iranians are five years away from building a nuclear bomb. ''But, if the United States does anything militarily, they will make the development of a bomb a matter of Iranian national pride,'' the diplomat said. ''The whole issue is America's risk assessment of Iran's future intentions, and they don't trust the regime. Iran is a menace to American policy.''

In Vienna, I was told of an exceedingly testy meeting earlier this year between Mohamed ElBaradei, the I.A.E.A.'s director-general, who won the Nobel Peace Prize last year, and Robert Joseph, the Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control. Joseph's message was blunt, one diplomat recalled: ''We cannot have a single centrifuge spinning in Iran. Iran is a direct threat to the national security of the United States and our allies, and we will not tolerate it. We want you to give us an understanding that you will not say anything publicly that will undermine us.''

Joseph's heavy-handedness was unnecessary, the diplomat said, since the I.A.E.A. already had been inclined to take a hard stand against Iran. ''All of the inspectors are angry at being misled by the Iranians, and some think the Iranian leadership are nutcases—one hundred percent totally certified nuts,'' the diplomat said. He added that El Baradei's overriding concern is that the Iranian leaders ''want confrontation, just like the neocons on the other side''—in Washington. ''At the end of the day, it will work only if the United States agrees to talk to the Iranians.''

The central question—whether Iran will be able to proceed with its plans to enrich uranium—is now before the United Nations, with the Russians and the Chinese reluctant to impose sanctions on Tehran. A discouraged former I.A.E.A. official told me in late March that, at this point, ''there's nothing the Iranians could do that would result in a positive outcome. American diplomacy does not allow for it. Even if they announce a stoppage of enrichment, nobody will believe them. It's a dead end.''

Another diplomat in Vienna asked me, ''Why would the West take the risk of going to war against that kind of target without giving it to the I.A.E.A. to verify? We're low-cost, and we can create a program that will force Iran to put its cards on the table.'' A Western Ambassador in Vienna expressed similar distress at the White House's dismissal of the I.A.E.A. He said, ''If you don't believe that the I.A.E.A. can establish an inspection system—if you don't trust them—you can only bomb.''

There is little sympathy for the I.A.E.A. in the Bush Administration or among its European allies. ''We're quite frustrated with the director-general,'' the European diplomat told me. ''His basic approach has been to describe this as a dispute between two sides

with equal weight. It's not. We're the good guys! ElBaradei has been pushing the idea of letting Iran have a small nuclear-enrichment program, which is ludicrous. It's not his job to push ideas that pose a serious proliferation risk.''

The Europeans are rattled, however, by their growing perception that President Bush and Vice-President Dick Cheney believe a bombing campaign will be needed, and that their real goal is regime change. ''Everyone is on the same page about the Iranian bomb, but the United States wants regime change,'' a European diplomatic adviser told me. He added, ''The Europeans have a role to play as long as they don't have to choose between going along with the Russians and the Chinese or going along with Washington on something they don't want. Their policy is to keep the Americans engaged in something the Europeans can live with. It may be untenable.''

''The Brits think this is a very bad idea,'' Flynt Leverett, a former National Security Council staff member who is now a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution's Saban Center, told me, ''but they're really worried we're going to do it.'' The European diplomatic adviser acknowledged that the British Foreign Office was aware of war planning in Washington but that, ''short of a smoking gun, it's going to be very difficult to line up the Europeans on Iran.'' He said that the British ''are jumpy about the Americans going full bore on the Iranians, with no compromise.''

The European diplomat said that he was skeptical that Iran, given its record, had admitted to everything it was doing, but ''to the best of our knowledge the Iranian capability is not at the point where they could successfully run centrifuges'' to enrich uranium in quantity. One reason for pursuing diplomacy was, he said, Iran's essential pragmatism. ''The regime acts in its best interests,'' he said. Iran's leaders ''take a hard-line approach on the nuclear issue and they want to call the American bluff,'' believing that ''the tougher they are the more likely the West will fold.'' But, he said, ''From what we've seen with Iran, they will appear superconfident until the moment they back off.''

The diplomat went on, ''You never reward bad behavior, and this is not the time to offer concessions. We need to find ways to impose sufficient costs to bring the regime to its senses. It's going to be a close call, but I think if there is unity in opposition and the price imposed''—in sanctions—''is sufficient, they may back down. It's too early to give up on the U.N. route.'' He added, ''If the diplomatic process doesn't work, there is no military 'solution.' There may be a military option, but the impact could be catastrophic.''

Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, was George Bush's most dependable ally in the year leading up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. But he and his party have been racked by a series of financial scandals, and his popularity is at a low point. Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, said last year that military action against Iran was ''inconceivable.'' Blair has been more circumspect, saying publicly that one should never take options off the table.

Other European officials expressed similar skepticism about the value of an American bombing campaign. ''The Iranian economy is in bad shape, and Ahmadinejad is in bad shape politically,'' the European intelligence official told me. ''He will benefit politically from American bombing. You can do it, but the results will be worse.'' An American attack, he said, would alienate ordinary Iranians, including those who might be sympathetic to the U.S. ''Iran is no longer living in the Stone Age, and the young people there have access to U.S. movies and books, and they love it,'' he said. ''If there was a charm offensive with Iran, the mullahs would be in trouble in the long run.''

Another European official told me that he was aware that many in Washington wanted action. ''It's always the same guys,'' he said, with a resigned shrug. ''There is a belief that diplomacy is doomed to fail. The timetable is short.''

A key ally with an important voice in the debate is Israel, whose leadership has warned for years that it viewed any attempt by Iran to begin enriching uranium as a point of no return. I was told by several officials that the White House's interest in preventing an Israeli attack on a Muslim country, which would provoke a backlash across the region, was a factor in its decision to begin the current operational planning. In a speech in Cleveland on March 20th, President Bush depicted Ahmadinejad's hostility toward Israel as a ''serious threat. It's a threat to world peace.'' He added, ''I made it clear, I'll make it clear again, that we will use military might to protect our ally Israel.''

Any American bombing attack, Richard Armitage told me, would have to consider the following questions: ''What will happen in the other Islamic countries? What ability does Iran have to reach us and touch us globally—that is, terrorism? Will Syria and Lebanon up the pressure on Israel? What does the attack do to our already diminished international standing? And what does this mean for Russia, China, and the U.N. Security Council?''

Iran, which now produces nearly four million barrels of oil a day, would not have to cut off production to disrupt the world's oil markets. It could blockade or mine the Strait of Hormuz, the 34-mile-wide passage through which Middle Eastern oil reaches the Indian Ocean. Nonetheless, the recently retired defense official dismissed the strategic consequences of such actions. He told me that the U.S. Navy could keep shipping open by conducting salvage missions and putting minesweepers to work. ''It's impossible to block passage,'' he said. The government consultant with ties to the Pentagon also said he believed that the oil problem could be managed, pointing out that the U.S. has enough in its strategic reserves to keep America running for sixty days. However, those in the oil business I spoke to were less optimistic; one industry expert estimated that the price per barrel would immediately spike, to anywhere from ninety to a hundred dollars per barrel, and could go higher, depending on the duration and scope of the conflict.

Michel Samaha, a veteran Lebanese Christian politician and former cabinet minister in Beirut, told me that the Iranian retaliation might be focused on exposed oil and gas fields in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. ''They would be at risk,'' he said, ''and this could begin the real jihad of Iran versus the West. You will have a messy world.''

Iran could also initiate a wave of terror attacks in Iraq and elsewhere, with the help of Hezbollah. On April 2nd, the Washington Post reported that the planning to counter such attacks ''is consuming a lot of time'' at U.S. intelligence agencies. ''The best terror network in the world has remained neutral in the terror war for the past several years,'' the Pentagon adviser on the war on terror said of Hezbollah. ''This will mobilize them and put us up against the group that drove Israel out of southern Lebanon. If we move against Iran, Hezbollah will not sit on the sidelines. Unless the Israelis take them out, they will mobilize against us.'' (When I asked the government consultant about that possibility, he said that, if Hezbollah fired rockets into northern Israel, ''Israel and the new Lebanese government will finish them off.'')

The adviser went on, ''If we go, the southern half of Iraq will light up like a candle.'' The American, British, and other coalition forces in Iraq would be at greater risk of attack from Iranian troops or from Shiite militias operating on instructions from Iran. (Iran, which is predominantly Shiite, has close ties to the leading Shiite parties in Iraq.) A retired four-star general told me that, despite the eight thousand British troops in the region, ''the Iranians could take Basra with ten mullahs and one sound truck.''

''If you attack,'' the high-ranking diplomat told me in Vienna, ''Ahmadinejad will be the new Saddam Hussein of the Arab world, but with more credibility and more power. You must bite the bullet and sit down with the Iranians.''

The diplomat went on, ''There are people in Washington who would be unhappy if we found a solution. They are still banking on isolation and regime change. This is wishful thinking.'' He added, ''The window of opportunity is now.''

INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY,
September 12, 2006.

Hon. PETER HOEKSTRA,
Chairman, House of Representatives, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC.

SIR: I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Staff Report of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Intelligence Policy, dated 23 August 2006, entitled ''Recognizing Iran as a Strategic Threat: An Intelligence Challenge for the United States'', contains some erroneous, misleading and unsubstantiated information.

The caption under the photograph of the Natanz site on page 9 of the report states that ''Iran is currently enriching uranium to weapons grade using a 164-machine centrifuge cascade''. In this regard, please be informed that information about the uranium enrichment work being carried out at the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant (PFEP) at Natanz, including the 3.6% enrichment level that had been achieved by Iran, was provided to the IAEA Board of Governors by the Director General in April 2006 (see GOV/2006/27, paragraph 31). The description of this enrichment level as ''weapons grade'' is incorrect, since the term ''weapon-grade'' is commonly used to refer to uranium enriched to the order of 90% or more in the isotope of uranimum–235. The Director General's April 2006 report, as well as all of his other reports on the implementation of the safeguards in Iran, are posted on the IAEA's website at http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/IaeaIran.

The first bullet on page 10 states that ''Iran had covertly produced the short-lived radioactive element polonium–210 (Po–210), a substance with two known uses; a neutron source for a nuclear weapon and satellite batteries''. The use of the phrase ''covertly produced'' is misleading becasue the production of Po–210 is not required to be reported by Iran to the IAEA under the NPT safeguards agreement concluded between Iran and the IAEA (published in IAEA document INFCIRC/214). (Regarding the production of Po–210, please refer to the report provided to the Board of Governors by the Director General in November 2004 (GOV/2004/83, paragraph 80)).

Furthermore, the IAEA Secretariat takes strong exception to the incorrect and misleading assertion in the Staff Report's second full paragraph of page 13 that the Director of the IAEA decided to ''remove'' Mr. Charlier, a senior safeguards inspector of the IAEA, ''for allegedly raising concerns about Iranian deception regarding its nuclear program and concluding that the purpose of Iran's nuclear programme is to construct weapons''. In addition, the report contains an outrageous and dishonest suggestion that such removal might have been for ''not having adhered to an unstated IAEA policy barring IAEA officials from telling the whole truth about the Iranian nuclear program''.

In this regard, please be advised that all safeguards agreements concluded between a State and the IAEA in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons require the IAEA to secure acceptance by the State of the designation of IAEA safeguards inspectors, before such inspectors may be sent to the State on inspection (INF–CIRC/153 (Corr.), paragraphs 9 and 85). Under such agreements, each State has the right to object to the designation of any safeguards inspector, and to request the withdrawal of the designation of an inspector, at any time, for that State (http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Docments/Infeircs). Accordingly, Iran's request to the Director General to withdraw the designation of Mr. Charlier authorizing him to carry out safeguards inspections in Iran, was based on paragraph (a)(i) of Article 9 and paragraph (d) of Article 85 of Iran's Safeguards Agreement. I should also like to note here that Iran has accepted the designation of more than 200 Agency safeguards inspectors, which number is similar to that accepted by the majority of non-nuclear weapon States that have concluded safeguards agreements pursuant to the NPT.

Finally, it is also regrettable that the Staff Report did not take into account the views of the United Nations Security Council, as expressed in resolution 1696 (2006), which inter alia, ''commends and encourages the Director General of the IAEA and its secretariat for their ongoing professional and impartial efforts to resolve all remaining outstanding issues in Iran within the framework of the Agency.''

While it is unfortunate that the authors of the Staff Report did not concult with the IAEA Secretariat stands ready to assist your Committee in correcting the erroneous and misleading information contained in the report.

Yours sincerely,

VILMOS CSERVENY,
Director, Office of External Relations and Policy Coordination.

[From washingtonpost.com, Sept. 14, 2006]

U.N. INSPECTORS DISPUTE IRAN REPORT BY HOUSE PANEL

(By Dafna Linzer)

U.N. inspectors investigating Iran's nuclear program angrily complained to the Bush administration and to a Republican congressman yesterday about a recent House committee report on Iran's capabilities, calling parts of the document ''outrageous and dishonest'' and offering evidence to refute its central claims.

Officials of the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency said in a letter that the report contained some ''erroneous, misleading and unsubstantiated statements.'' The letter, signed by a senior director at the agency, was addressed to Rep. Peter Hoekstra (R-Mich.), chairman of the House intelligence committee, which issued the report. A copy was hand-delivered to Gregory L. Schulte, the U.S. ambassador to the IAEA in Vienna.

The IAEA openly clashed with the Bush administration on pre-war assessments of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Relations all but collapsed when the agency revealed that the White House had based some allegations about an Iraqi nuclear program on forged documents.

After no such weapons were found in Iraq, the IAEA came under additional criticism for taking a cautious approach on Iran, which the White House says is trying to building nuclear weapons in secret. At one point, the administration orchestrated a campaign to remove the IAEA's director general, Mohamed El Baradei. It failed, and he won the Nobel Peace Prize last year.

Yesterday's letter, a copy of which was provided to The Washington Post, was the first time the IAEA has publicly disputed U.S. allegations about its Iran investigation. The agency noted five major errors in the committee's 29-page report, which said Iran's nuclear capabilities are more advanced than either the IAEA or U.S. intelligence has shown.

Among the committee's assertions is that Iran is producing weapons-grade uranium at its facility in the town of Natanz. The IAEA called that ''incorrect,'' noting that weapons-grade uranium is enriched to a level of 90 percent or more. Iran has enriched uranium to 3.5 percent under IAEA monitoring.

When the congressional report was released last month, Hoekstra said his intent was ''to help increase the American public's understanding of Iran as a threat.'' Spokesman Jamal Ware said yesterday that Hoekstra will respond to the IAEA letter.

Rep. Rush D. Holt (D–N.J.), a committee member, said the report was ''clearly not prepared in a manner that we can rely on.'' He agreed to send it to the full committee for review, but the Republicans decided to make it public before then, he said in an interview.

The report was never voted on or discussed by the full committee. Rep. Jane Harman (Calif.), the vice chairman, told Democratic colleagues in a private e-mail that the report ''took a number of analytical shortcuts that present the Iran threat as more dire—and the Intelligence Community's assessments as more certain—than they are.''

Privately, several intelligence officials said the committee report included at least a dozen claims that were either demonstrably wrong or impossible to substantiate. Hoekstra's office said the report was reviewed by the office of John D. Negroponte, the director of national intelligence.

Negroponte's spokesman, John Callahan, said in a statement that his office ''reviewed the report and provided its response to the committee on July 24, '06.'' He did not say whether it had approved or challenged any of the claims about Iran's capabilities.

''This is like prewar Iraq all over again,'' said David Albright, a former nuclear inspector who is president of the Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security. ''You have an Iranian nuclear threat that is spun up, using bad information that's cherry-picked and a report that trashes the inspectors.''

The committee report, written by a single Republican staffer with a hard-line position on Iran, chastised the CIA and other agencies for not providing evidence to back assertions that Iran is building nuclear weapons.

It concluded that the lack of intelligence made it impossible to support talks with Tehran. Democrats on the committee saw it as an attempt from within conservative Republican circles to undermine Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who has agreed to talk with the Iranians under certain conditions.

The report's author, Fredrick Fleitz, is a onetime CIA officer and special assistant to John R. Bolton, the administration's former point man on Iran at the State Department. Bolton, who is now ambassador to the United Nations, had been highly influential during President Bush's first term in drawing up a tough policy that rejected-talks with Tehran.

Among the allegations in Fleitz's Iran report is that ElBaradei removed a senior inspector from the Iran investigation because he raised ''concerns about Iranian deception regarding its nuclear program.'' The agency said the inspector has not been removed.

A suggestion that ElBaradei had an ''unstated'' policy that prevented inspectors from telling the truth about Iran's program was particularly ''outrageous and dishonest,'' according to the IAEA letter, which was signed by Vilmos Cserveny, the IAEA's director for external affairs and a former Hungarian ambassador.

Hoekstra's committee is working on a separate report about North Korea that is also being written principally by Fleitz. A draft of the report, provided to The Post, includes several assertions about North Korea's weapons program that the intelligence officials said they cannot substantiate, including one that Pyongyang is already enriching uranium.

The intelligence community believes North Korea is trying to acquire an enrichment capability but has no proof that an enrichment facility has been built, the officials said.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 15, 2006.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS,
Chairman, Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: According to the Washington Post (''U.N. Inspectors Dispute Iran Report by House Panel,'' September 14, 2006), the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) conducted a prepublication review of a House Intelligence Committee staff report on Iran which has come under scrutiny for making false, misleading and unsubstantiated assertions about Iran's nuclear program.

In the article, a spokesperson for the DNI confirmed that the agency did review the report prior to its publication. Yet, the final committee staff report ''included at least a dozen claims that were either demonstrably wrong or impossible to substantiate,'' including the gross exaggeration that the level of uranium enrichment by Iranian nuclear plants has now reached ''weapons-grade'' levels of 90 percent when in reality the correct enrichment level found by the International Atomic Energy Agency was 3.6 percent. (Letter from IAEA Director of External Relations and Policy Coordination Vilmos Cserveny to Chairman Peter Hoekstra, September 12, 2006.)

The publication of false, misleading and unsubstantiated statements by a House Committee is regrettable, but the role of the DNI raises important questions:

(1) Was the text of the report given to DNI for review identical to the text later released to the public by the Committee?

(2) Did the DNI recognize those claims made in the report that were wrong or impossible to substantiate at the time DNI conducted its prepublication review?

(3) During its review, did DNI also note the same false, misleading and unsubstantiated statements as those deemed by the IAEA in its letter to the Committee to be wrong or impossible to substantiate?

(4) In its response to the Committee, did DNI state the inaccuracies it found, and seek correction or clarification of those parts of the prepublication report?

(5) Did the DNI approve the report, in spite of false and exaggerated claims made in the report?

There are troubling signs, which this Subcommittee has attempted to investigate, that the Administration is leading the U.S. toward a military conflict with Iran.

In June, our Subcommittee held a classified members briefing, at my request, to investigate independent reports published in the New Yorker magazine and the Guardian that U.S. military personnel have been or are already deployed inside and around Iran, gathering intelligence and targeting information, and reports published in Newsweek, ABC News and GQ magazine, that the U.S. has been planning and is now recruiting members of MEK to conduct lethal operations and destabilizing operations inside Iran.

Unfortunately, neither the Department of State nor the Department of Defense chose to appear for the classified briefing. Nearly three months later, the Subcommittee has been unable to question State or DOD directly on those reports. However, this Subcommittee was briefed by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and I believe that the Subcommittee should use its oversight authority to compare the statements and information provided to Members about Iran's nuclear program at the briefing, with information provided to the House Intelligence Committee for their report.

These are precisely the sort of questions this Subcommittee is designed to pursue. The latest report implicating DNI passivity or complicity in embellishing the danger of the Iranian nuclear program should be aggressively investigated by our Subcommittee immediately. We cannot and must not permit this Administration to build a case for war against Iran on falsehoods and pretext. We have seen similar patterns with the twisting of intelligence to create a war against Iraq and we must not let this happen again. I ask that the Subcommittee invite the DNI to appear immediately before the Committee. It is imperative that our questions be answered in an expeditious manner.

Sincerely,

DENNIS J. KUCINICH,
Ranking Minority Member.

CONGRATULATING SPELMAN COLLEGE ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to join with my colleagues in congratulating Spelman College on the occasion of its 125th anniversary.

One of our country's most distinguished colleges, this historically Black college for women founded in 1881 by Harriet E. Giles and Sophia B. Packard in Atlanta, Georgia, was ranked this year by U.S. News & World Report as being among the top 75 Best Liberal Arts Colleges.

Since its inception, Spelman College has provided women with access to education since the post-Civil War era, promoting academic excellence in the liberal arts and developing the intellectual, ethical, and leadership potential of its students. As a member of the Atlanta University Center (AUC) consortium, Spelman students enjoy the benefits of a small college while having access to the faculty and physical resources of five other historically black institutions.

Spelman College has grown from its roots as the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, to become one of the Nation's most prominent institutions of higher learning promoting both academic excellence and leadership development.

Spelman's steadfast commitment to preparing black women for service and leadership is clearly evident in the more than six generations of Spelman women who have reached the highest levels of academic, community, and professional achievement.

Spelman's most notable alumnae include Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund; Ruth A. Davis, director general of the U.S. Foreign Service; Aurelia Brazeal, U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia; and Alice Walker, Pulitzer Prize winning novelist.

Spelman can well be proud of its achievements and exemplary service not only to its students, but to the City of Atlanta. May this outstanding college enjoy many more years of continued success.

TRIBUTE TO SISTER KATHRYN SCHLUETER

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an exceptional constituent and community leader, Sister Kathryn Schlueter, CSJ, of Southampton, New York, who has dedicated herself to Catholic education on Long Island for nearly 40 years.

Sister Kathy, as she is affectionately known, joined the Sisters of Saint Joseph in 1963. After graduation from Brentwood College with a Bachelor of Science in Education in 1967, she began her teaching career at the Saint Patrick School located in Smithtown, Long Island. Sister Kathy subsequently received her Masters in Educational Administration from Hofstra University in 1977 while continuing her teaching career at the Sacred Heart Academy in Hempstead, Long Island.

In 1987, Sister Kathy arrived on the east end of Long Island as Principal of Our Lady of the Hamptons Regional Catholic School in Southampton where she has worked faithfully to improve the quality of that institution for the past 20 years.

Under Sister Kathy's diligent stewardship, Our Lady of the Hamptons Regional Catholic School has been designated as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education and has received further accreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. As Our Lady of the Hamptons prepares to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary as a Regional Catholic School, Sister Kathy should be recognized as the driving force behind its success.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of New York's First Congressional District, I express our sincere appreciation to Sister Kathy for her extraordinary commitment to excellence in education. We wish her continued success and happiness in the years to come.

CONGRATULATING SPECTROLAB ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague BRAD SHERMAN (CA–27) to pay tribute to Spectrolab, a subsidiary of the Boeing Company, on its 50th anniversary and to celebrate the delivery of its two millionth solar cell. We are honored to represent many of Spectrolab's employees and are proud of their great accomplishments.

Spectrolab is the world's leading manufacturer of space solar cells and solar panels. Throughout the years, Spectrolab solar cells and solar panels have powered more than 500 satellites and interplanetary missions, including the Spirit and Opportunity rovers, which are still exploring the surface of Mars. Also, all of the solar panels on spacecraft on Mars are manufactured by Spectrolab.

In 1956, Spectrolab was founded by a group of engineers who began providing high-quality optical filters and mirrors for government systems. In 1958, Pioneer 1 carried the company's first body-mounted solar panels into space. Shortly thereafter, Explorer 6 was the first satellite to use Spectrolab' s solar arrays, and Spectrolab's first solar cell panel was placed on the moon by Apollo's mission in 1969. Galaxy 111C, the world's highest capacity satellite, launched on June 15, 2002 carrying the latest solar cell technology developed and manufactured at Spectrolab. Its contributions to the space industry cannot be overstated.

Spectrolab is well respected in its industry and has received a myriad of well deserved accolades. NASA's George M. Low Award for Supplier Quality and Excellence was given to Spectrolab in 2004. Also, Spectrolab's multijunction cells were inducted into the Space Technology Hall of Fame by the United States Space Foundation that same year.

Currently, Spectrolab scientists are working to build and test solar cells for concentrator systems that may one day generate inexpensive and renewable electricity for America's cities and towns. Their expertise in space photovoltaic products earned Boeing the contract to build solar concentrator cells for a leading renewable energy company.

Spectrolab's product portfolio includes terrestrial concentrator solar cells and panels, searchlight systems, solar simulators and photodetector products. More than 90 percent of all law enforcement aircraft and helicopters worldwide use Spectrolab's Nightsun searchlights.

It is with pleasure and gratitude that we salute Spectrolab for its extraordinary accomplishments over the past fifty years.

TERRORIST ATTACKS ON 9/11

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, it has been more than five years since the terrorist attacks of September 11. In looking back, we have