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Go ahead, Bibi - drop the bomb

By Pepe Escobar
7/6/2009

BANGKOK - Iran's newly empowered administration of the "mullahtariat" is already reaping what it sowed. As far as the iron cross triumvirate - Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, President Mahmud Ahmadinejad and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) - is concerned, the foreign-orchestrated (as the regime describes it) "green revolution" has been smashed. But another light of the "green" variety now looms in the (gloomy) horizon.

As far as the leadership in Tehran is concerned, the unclenched fists of the Barack [Obama](#) variety remain - at least for the moment - unwelcome. As Khamenei once again made it clear early this week, "The leaders of arrogant countries, the nosy meddlers in the affairs of the Islamic republic, must know that no matter if the Iranian people have their own differences, when you enemies get involved, the people ... will become a firm fist against you."

Then top IRGC commander, Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari, laid down the (new) iron fist law underneath the mullahtariat in unmistakable terms. The IRGC has literally taken over Iran, and not only in terms of security. This means "a revival of the [1979] revolution and clarification of the value positions of the establishment at home and abroad". What Iran and the world are now seeing is "a new stage of the revolution and political struggles, and all of us must fully comprehend its dimensions".

'Tonal differences'

Right in the middle of the "new stage of the revolution" stepped infamously loquacious US Vice President Joe Biden. Biden told ABC TV, "Israel can determine for itself - it's a sovereign nation - what's in their interest and what they decide to do relative to Iran and anyone else." And it does not matter whether the US agrees or not. Biden was careful to add, "There is no pressure from any nation that's going to alter our behavior as to how to proceed." This behavior - a reference to Obama's new "unclenched fist" policy towards Iran - is "in the national interest of the United States, which we, coincidentally, believe is also in the interest of Israel and the whole world."

So Biden basically said two things. One: Obama's unclenched fist policy stays, regardless of the new iron-fist nature of Iran's mullahtariat. Two: if Prime Minister Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu's government wants to attack Iran's nuclear installations, it's their business, there's nothing Washington can do about it. The first assertion (drenched in wishful thinking) may be essentially true. The second one is nonsense. The fact that legions of US [pundits](#) felt obliged to reach Sisyphean heights to extol the "independence of US policy-making" from Israel when it comes to Iran speaks for itself.

Critically, Biden was as ambiguous as it gets. He did leave a "green light" blinking - refusing to "speculate" on whether or not Israel would be granted overflight rights in Iraq - from the US, and not the "sovereign" Iraqi government - to attack Iran.

The fact remains that Bibi's government does not need a green light from Washington to attack Iran - regardless of the White House and the Office of the [Vice President](#) having to go into frantic turbo-spin mode about "tonal differences" to quell green-light speculations. As unclenched fists go, Israel and Iran now seem to be locked in a cage match - regardless of Obama's self-styled "refereeing" positioning.

Any intended or non-intended Biden-White House move to apply pressure on Tehran via an implicit, impending Israeli attack will cut no ice in Tehran. The regime is very much aware how the Israel lobby - in the US and the West in general - has evolved a very sophisticated campaign over the years to turn [Iran's nuclear program](#) into a global threat, and to depict the Tehran leadership as the new face of Nazism.

The regime anyway knows it can count on the support of both Russia and China. And they also know how Israel's whole strategic doctrine is based on the fact it's the only (undeclared) nuclear power in the Middle East, and determined to remain so. And this is where nuclear power meets [emigration](#). Emigration is the engine of the Zionist project. One just needs to search the Israeli press for the past few months to find the Israeli establishment itself stating it quite obviously: the real risk of a supposed Iranian bomb is not the threat of destruction, but to reduce the emigration of Jews to zero.

The Obama administration seems to have realized that it's impossible to prevent Tehran from acquiring a nuclear capability by force. It also seems to have realized that to keep the illusion of a [military](#) option on the table amounts to a bald-faced lie. But that all leaves out of the box the real, supreme consequence of Iran becoming a nuclear power, at least in the eyes of the Iranian leaders: it would be the end of the American threat over the country. If pressured and cornered, Tehran, with the IRGC controlling the nuclear program, would go all the way. Israel, in this big picture, is just a minor detail.

Two inescapable facts won't leave the table. One: Iran's inalienable right to master the full, civilian nuclear cycle. Two: the only possible road map for a solution, which lies in the Obama administration persisting in unclenching its fist, trying to normalize relations with Iran, and trying to participate in the country's development along with Russia, China and India.

There's no evidence Tehran is ready to accept the possibility - at least not yet. But they won't go away - as they have just proved, and the US and the European Union must imperatively meet them at the table. Imperfect as it is, with no tonal differences, this is the only, feasible green light at the end of the tunnel.