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Iran Test-fires Missile With 1,200-Mile Range

The announcement quoted Ahmadinejad's comments made during a campaign rally in Iran's northern town of Semnan, in the same province as the missile launch site. The president, who is regarded as a hard-liner on foreign policy, will face three challengers who advocate more moderate relations with the West in the June 12 presidential election.

"The Sejil 2 missile, which has an advanced technology, was launched today ... and it landed exactly on the target," IRNA quoted Ahmadinejad. "The defense minister [Mohammad Mostafa Najjar] told me today that we launched a Sejil-2 missile, which is a two-stage missile and it has reached the intended target," said Ahmadinejad.



Agence France Presse quoted Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon, who gave his reaction to the launch over Israel's public radio: "In terms of strategic importance, this new missile test doesn't change anything for us since the Iranians already tested a missile with a range of 1,500 kilometres [nearly 950 miles], but it should worry the Europeans." Ayalon added: "The Iranians are also trying to develop a ballistic missile with a range of 10,000 kilometres (6,250 miles) that could reach the coast of the United States."

On the same day, Ahmadinejad also professed disdain for western pressure put on Iran to curtail its nuclear enrichment program: "They [western governments] said if you don't stop, we will adopt [sanctions] resolutions.... They thought we would retreat but that will not happen. I told them you can adopt 100 sets of sanctions, but nothing will change."

Andrew Brookes, of the International Institute of Strategic Studies think-tank in London, provided his reaction to the Iranian launch to Reuters news service: "Every time they do it, it is in response to a particular event." This time, said Brookes, the Iranians responded to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to Washington this week, during which he has emphasized Israel's concerns about Iran with U.S. officials.

In Washington, reaction to the missile launch was somewhat low-key. Speaking to the House Appropriations Committee several hours after the test firing was announced, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said: "The information that I have read indicates that it was a successful flight test. The missile will have a range of approximately 2000 to 2500 kilometers." Gates seemed to downplay the significance of the test, stating, "Because of some of the problems they've had with their engines, we think, at least at this stage of the testing we think, its probably closer to the lower end of that range. Whether it hit the target that it was intended for, I have not seen any information on that."

White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs said in a briefing quoted by AP: "Obviously, we've seen reports. You all know the concerns that the president has about Iran's missile development programs ... and the strong belief that the pursuit of those programs does not strengthen the security of Iran but



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instead make them less safe." "Obviously, the president has been long concerned about it," continued Gibbs, who told reporters that the president and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had "both agreed on [May 18] that engaging the people and the leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran, something that hasn't been tried for the past many years, is something that makes sense."

Iran is quickly becoming the pariah of the Middle East. In today's parlance: *Iran is the new Iraq!* The most powerful individual in the country is not Ahmadinejad, however, but Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. (Under the 1979 Iranian constitution, the supreme leader is commander-in-chief of the armed forces, head of military intelligence and security operations, and has sole power to declare war or peace.) The current supreme leader, who assumed office in 1989, should not be confused with his predecessor, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini — leader of the 1979 Iranian Revolution that overthrew the Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Unfortunately, as with practically all militant governments that the United States and its allies struggle to contain, the Shiite theocracy called the Islamic Republic of Iran was brought into being largely through U.S. intervention and betrayal. The complete story of how this was accomplished is told by the masterful researcher-writer James Perloff in "[Iran and the Shah: What Really Happened.](#)"

As Perloff concluded:

What is the solution to modern Iran? Before listening to war drums, let us remember:

It was the CFR [Council on Foreign Relations] clique — the same establishment entrenched in the Bush and Obama administrations — that ousted the Shah, resulting in today's Iran. That establishment also chanted for the six-year-old Iraq War over alleged weapons of mass destruction never found. Therefore, instead of contemplating war with Iran, a nation four times Iraq's size, let us demand that America shed its CFR hierarchy and their interventionist policy that has wrought decades of misery, and adopt a policy of avoiding foreign entanglements, and of minding our own business in international affairs.

Our recent article, "[Afghans Deny Zalmay Khalilzad to Have Top Kabul Post](#)" traces the role of the CFR in mismanaging the devastating U.S. military operation in Vietnam, and discusses how an eerily similar scenario is coalescing for our operation in Afghanistan.

America will cease having enemies when we stop *creating* enemies (as we did first in Iran, and now in Iraq, by installing an Iranian-influenced pawn) and when we stop alienating half the world with an omnipresent military force worthy of imperial Rome.

It is time to heed the words of President John Quincy Adams: "America does not go abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own."

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