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2013 **Jitka Štěpánková**

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Attitude of the Bush Administration to the Iranian nuclear program: From Theory to Practice

Diplomová práce

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Autor práce: **Jitka Štěpánková**
Vedoucí práce: **PhDr. Jan Bečka, Ph.D**.

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Abstrakt

Íránský jaderný program představuje problém již mnoho let. Ačkoliv režim v Teheránu formálně nepřiznal, že usiluje o vytvoření jaderné zbraně, a toto nařčení popírá, mezinárodní společenství z postupu íránské vlády usoudilo, že snaha získat jadernou zbraň je opravdu jejím cílem. Spojené státy americké zareagovaly na vývoj íránského programu a snažily se jej buď omezit, nebo zastavit úplně. Bushova administrativa nebyla v tomto ohledu výjimkou. Ač se v průběhu let 2001 - 2009 v přístupu k Teheránu mnohé změnilo, jaderný program nadále postupoval a dodnes představuje velké nebezpečí. Otázku, jak nejefektivněji přistupovat k režimu a docílit toho, aby Írán nukleární zbraň nezískal, si kladli nejen američtí politici, ale i badatelé, odborníci a analytici. Tato práce porovnává koncepty navrhované akademickou komunitou s reálnou politikou praktikovanou Bushovou administrativou a zjišťuje, že se oba postupy poměrně lišily. Zatímco převážná část akademiků doporučovala administrativě ustoupit od ekonomických sankcí a agresivní rétoriky operující s možností vojenského zásahu, americká vláda sankce proti režimu naopak zpřísňovala a dále zvažovala možnosti intervence. Jelikož Írán nadále pokračuje ve svém programu, dá se usoudit, že přístup nedosáhl zamýšlených výsledků. Přinesl ovšem alespoň dílčí pozitivní vývoj (například získání podpory mezinárodní komunity) a proto se nedá jednoduše odsoudit jako naprosté selhání. Pro správnost postupu Bushovy administrativy hovoří i fakt, že současný americký prezident nadále pokračuje v Bushem nastavené politice.

Abstract

Iranian nuclear program has presented a problem for many years. Even though the regime in Tehran has not formally announced its quest to develop nuclear weapons and

has actually denied such accusations, the international community concluded from the actions of the regime that the development of nuclear weapons is the ultimate goal of Tehran. The United States reacted to the course of events and tried to limit the program or stop it altogether. The Bush Administration was not an exception in this regard. Even though the attitude towards Iran changed during 2001 - 2009, the nuclear program progressed further and still presents a great danger. Not only politicians but also academics, experts and analytics were trying to answer the question how to curb the program most effectively. This thesis analyzes and compares concepts of scholars with the actual policy practiced by the Bush Administration and finds out that both approaches vary quite significantly. While the majority of scholars recommended the administration to limit the economic sanctions and refrain from aggressive rhetoric concerning the possibility of military action, the American government tightened the sanctions and sustained the option of intervention. Since Iran still continues with its nuclear program, it can be asserted that the policy did not bring the desired fruits. However, it contributed to certain positive developments (the support of the international community) and therefore cannot be totally denounced. Correctness of the approach of the Bush Administration is also confirmed by the policy of the current administration, which has not significantly changed the set course.

Klíčová slova

Spojené státy americké, Írán, jaderný program, Bushova administrativa, vědecká komunita, doporučení, politika, diplomacie, vojenský zásah

Keywords

The United States of America, Iran, nuclear program, Bush administration, scholars, recommendations, policy, diplomacy, military action

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V Praze dne 31.7.2013 Jitka Štěpánková

Poděkování

Na tomto místě bych ráda poděkovala vedoucímu diplomové práce panu PhDr. Janu Bečkovi PhD. za důvěru, kterou mi projevil, podporu, kterou mi ochotně nabídl a rady, které mi poskytl.

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Jméno:
Jitka Štěpánková

E-mail:
ji.stepanko@centrum.cz

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Svatava Raková

Vedoucí práce:
Jan Bečka

V čem se oproti původními zadání změnil cíl práce?
Jelikož se výrazněji změnil název práce a celý její obsah, změnil se samozřejmě i její cíl. Jak už napovídá název, práce se bude zabývat přístupem Bushovy administrativy k otázce íránského jaderného programu. Práce bude mít za cíl porovnat přístup vědecké komunity a Bushovy administrativy k nukleárnímu programu země a bude rozdělena do třech částí. První bude shrnutím několika teorií a navrhovaných postupů při řešení íránského jaderného programu. Druhá kapitola bude vycházet z konkrétní politiky Bushovy administrativy - bude reflektovat konkrétní kroky a zhodnotí jejich úspěšnost. Třetí kapitola by měla být komparací navrhovaných strategií a reálné politiky a úvahou nad tím, jaká taktika by měla být v praxi nejefektivnější. Závěry by mohly vést k určitému doporučení pro Bushovy nástupce.

Jaké změny nastaly v časovém, teritoriálním a věcném vymezení tématu?
Teritoriálně je téma vymezeno na oblast Íránu a také USA, časově pak na období administrativy prezidenta George W. Bushe (2001-2009).

Jak se proměnila struktura práce (vyjádřete stručným obsahem)?
Úvod
Přístup vědecké komunity k nukleárnímu programu Íránu
Přístup Bushovy administrativy k nukleárnímu programu Íránu
Teorie v. praxe
Závěr

Jakým vývojem prošla metodologická koncepce práce?
Původně měla být práce koncipována jako analýza role nukleárních zbraní v americké zahraniční politice. Cíl práce se ale změnil, a proto došlo také ke změně metodologické koncepce. První dvě kapitoly budou analyzovat konkrétní politiku vůči nukleárnímu programu (ať už tu doporučovanou nebo tu uvedeou do praxe), hlavní důraz však bude kladen na komparaci přístupů vědecké komunity a Bushovy administrativy.

Které nové prameny a sekundární literatura byly zpracovány a jak tato skutečnost ovlivnila celek práce?
Iran Sanctions and Regional Security: Hearings on H.R., Day 1, Before the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 110th Cong. 9 (2007) (statement of Philip H. Gordon, Senior fellow for American foreign policy at the Brooking Institution).
Bush, George W., "Remarks at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies

and a Question-and-Answer Session," April 10, 2006, The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=71903, (accessed June 15, 2013).
Coping with Iran: Confrontation, Containment, or Engagement? A Conference Report, James Harting Dobbins, Sarah Kaye, Dalia Dassa, (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2007), 106.
Dunn, David Hastings, "'Real men want to go to Tehran':
Bush, pre-emption and the Iranian nuclear challenge," International Affairs 83, No. 1, (January 1, 2007): 31-32, http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=7f9ec4e3-85d0-498c-8eae-edeb7d34ce35%40sessionmgr111&hid=113 (accessed May 25, 2013).
Corera, Gordon. Shopping for Bombs: Nuclear Proliferation, Global Insecurity, and the Rise and Fall of the A.Q. Khan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
Cook, Alethia H., and Roshandel, Jalil. The United States and Iran: Policy Challenges and Opportunities. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009.

Charakterizujte základní proměny práce v době od zadání projektu do odevzdání tezí a pokuste se vyhodnotit, jaký pokrok na práci jste během semestru zaznamenali (v bodech):
- odklon od původního tématu
- nové téma práce: stále se bude zabývat nukleárními zbraněmi, ale v jiném kontextu, časovém a teritoriálním vymezení

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Introduction

Ever since George W. Bush assumed the presidential office in 2001, he and his team faced an important task – to solve the threat of nuclear proliferation posed by progressing Iranian nuclear program. Americans had been following the issue for many years and watched it with mix of fear and distrust since they believed that the program was not directed to the peaceful research of nuclear energy, rather that it was pursuing the objective of developing nuclear arms.

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East was problematic not only because of the doubtful intentions of Iranian undemocratic regime but it was also linked to the strategic balance, stability, and security of the whole region and consequently peace in the world. American administrations have proclaimed that Iran equipped with the nuclear weapons was "unacceptable" and tried to find the right policy which would persuade Tehran to change its attitude and curb its nuclear program. However, even though the Islamic Republic faced pressure from the United States ever since the revolution in 1979, it was not willing to bow to the requests and continued its nuclear advancements while breaching provisions of the NPT.

How to limit the nuclear program and prevent nuclear weaponization of another country became a question not only for politicians but also for the scholars, experts and analysts who regularly provided recommendations to the Bush Administration which they believed to be the most effective in regard to Tehran. Scholars criticized the administration for its actions and promoted theirs, often contradictory, ideas. For example experts would have wished the economic sanctions to be lifted and military action to be abandoned. In fact, the Bush Administration tightened the economic sanctions, persuaded the international community to impose set of others and kept the military option opened.

This paper maps approaches of both, scholars and officials in the Bush Administration, assesses them and evaluates different attitudes to find out the most effective way of limiting Iranian nuclear program. In order to do that, it relies on secondary sources when appraising the ideas of scholars and experts and on primary sources when reviewing the actual policy of the Bush Administration. To the contrary of most of the essays written about the topic, this thesis is based on thorough analysis and comparison of the approaches, rather than following approach of only one side (either

the government or the scholars). As such, it lays some fundamental questions in front of the reader.

Which approach would be the most suitable and feasible? Would be some of the ideas of scholars even practicable and viable? Did the Bush Administration deserve such harsh criticism from the experts or should it be rather praised for some, even partial, success throughout the years? And can the current American administration do something to improve the situation?

The author of this paper believes that the approach of the government (especially the one of the President Bush's second term) was the most effective one even though she realizes the limitations of success of the administration's policy.

Methodology, Outline and Literature

This paper is divided in three chapters which are further divided in subchapters. First part is an analysis of the approach of scholars to the Iranian nuclear program, the second one of the approach of the Bush Administration and the last chapter compares both attitudes and assesses whether the recommendations of academic community or the actual policy of the Bush Administration might have been more effective and might have brought significant progress to the issue of nuclear proliferation and stopped or limited the Iranian nuclear program. In order to make the results more apparent, each chapter is divided into three subchapters by the same policies possible with regard to Iran. Subchapters focus on economic sanctions, diplomacy and military action.

First chapter is based primarily on the analysis of the secondary literature written by scholars, academics and experts and also on the transcripts of conferences concerning Iranian nuclear program organized throughout 2001-2009. It concentrates on three different approaches towards Iran and recommendations given to the Bush Administration. The chapter confronts and compares different views of the experts and comes up with the summary of opinions shared by the most of the respected writers and speakers.

Second chapter is founded on thorough analysis of the primary sources – speeches delivered by the administration officials, primarily by the American President

George W. Bush and documents written or approved by the government. Chapter again assesses three different policies towards Iran and evaluates actions by the government in their respect. It also follows the development of American policy towards Iran and pursues the change of attitude throughout the years, especially after Condoleezza Rice became the Secretary of State and partially silenced the hawks in Washington calling for regime change. Since the second part is based on the primary sources it provides interesting contrast to the ideas and assertions of scholars and journalists who tried to interpret single components of the administration's policy.

Last part is a synthesis of the two previous chapters and compares approaches and recommendations of scholars with the actual policy of the Bush Administration. The paper then explores the degree of similarity between the approaches and investigates which of the theories or actual policies might have been more effective in curbing the Iranian nuclear program. The third chapter appraises the policy of the Bush Administration and since the issue still persists and the threat of the Iranian nuclear program still stands, it suggests some improvements of the policy to the current administration of President Obama.

As mentioned above, vital literature for this paper constitutes of both, secondary literature and primary sources. Speeches by the President Bush from various occasions delivered throughout his two terms map in detail his opinions and ideas and mostly disapprove assertions of journalists regarding the military action. It is quite clear that American president preferred diplomacy in coping with Iran and even though he might have considered some military action, it never represented the main approach towards Iranian nuclear program. He, however, was very particular about leaving all options of approaches towards Tehran opened, since Bush and his administration (including Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice) considered limiting of American possibilities as a mistake. Bush also often emphasized the essential cooperation of the international community and contributed to the promotion of the issue in the international arena. Other important primary sources are testimonies of political officials or experts during the Congressional hearings reviewing the issue of Iranian nuclear program.

Ideas of the scholarly community are best represented by writings and conferences. Experts are usually members of think thanks and non-governmental institutions and lecture on the most prestigious universities. For example Ray Takeyh is

an Iranian-American Middle East scholar whose career list contains working for the U.S. Department of State, lecturing at the Georgetown University and activities of a Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. Adam Tarock is a research fellow at the University of Melbourne and he both writes and lectures on the topic. Daryl G. Kimball, Executive Director of the Arms Control Association (nonpartisan organization), organizing some of the conferences about the issue, writes extensively on the issue of nuclear proliferation and he is recognized as "one of the ten key individuals whose ideas will help shape the policy debate on the weapons proliferation."[1]

Apart from ideas of individual scholars, this paper proceeds also from a book *The United States and Iran: Policy Challenges and Opportunities* written by Alethia H. Cook and Jalil Roshandel, scholars from the Department of Political Science on the East Carolina University. Their monograph published in 2009 describes in detail without bias relations between the two countries and discusses the biggest issues representing the greatest hurdles in better mutual understanding and cooperation. Authors also formulated range of recommendations for the American administration in order to improve the relations.

Another important publication for this paper is a piece written by the experts of the RAND Corporation Lynn E. Davis, Jeffrey Martini, Alireza Nader, Dalia Dassa Kaye, James T. Quinlivan and Paul Steinberg *Iran's Nuclear Future: Critical U.S. Policy Choices* in 2011. It assesses possible approaches towards the Iranian nuclear program and evaluates their effectiveness, feasibility, advantages and disadvantages. Since the paper resulted from cooperation with the American Air Force, it extensively deals with the possibility of the military attack. The objective of the book is not to conclude with some recommendations, rather to provide decision makers with analytical framework which would help them while planning the next political step.

This paper also draws from the *BBC* documentary *Iran and the West* produced by Norma Percy. "Nuclear confrontation" was a name of the last part of the documentary series and it offers the audience perspectives of the main actors of the nuclear negotiations and discussions. It features Iranian officials, including former President Mohammad Khatami and Ali Larijani, former Secretary of the Supreme

[1] "Daryl G. Kimball," *Arms Control Association*, Accessed July 19, 2013, http://www.armscontrol.org/about/dkimball.

National Security Council, European diplomats including John Sawers, Political Director of the British Foreign Office and Javier Solana, former High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of EU and also American officials including Richard N. Haas, president of the Council on Foreign Relations and Director of Policy Planning for the US Department of State and Hillary Mann, member of the U.S. Delegation to the UN. The documentary provides unique set of experience, thoughts and considerations of people who were directly involved in the debates and closest to the political reality of the issue at hand thus serves as a source which could not be easily substituted by scholarly articles or books.

1. Approach of Scholars

"Iran poses the most serious threat to Washington's interests and to the security of its allies in the Middle East,"[2] wrote Adam Tarock as early as 1996. Even though he expressed his belief that this view was exaggerated, he predicted that the relations between Iran and the United States were "likely to turn from hostility into active, perhaps even military, confrontation."[3] It took ten years, and newspapers[i] were filled with articles speculating about the Pentagon drawing up plans for possible military strike and were warning about possible military action[4] by the US against one of its most serious threats to the security not only in the Middle East but in the whole world.

The issue went from one which was rather overlooked both by the administration and the scientific community to the number one concern in the American foreign policy. Possibility of Nuclear Iran became a nightmare for the diplomats, politicians and scholars. After ten years of turbulent international relations and dramatic changes on the international scene after the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, the nuclear program of Iran arose as one of the biggest challenges to international peace and to the security of the United States itself.

Scholars logically redirected their attention to the issue. At first, some doubted the intentions of Iran as they were presented by the Bush Administration which accused the local regime of trying to produce weapons of mass destruction. They rather believed the regime in Tehran, constantly repeating that it seeks nuclear energy only for the peaceful civilian purposes thus pursuing its "inalienable right… to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes…"[5] guaranteed by Article IV to signatories of the NPT. Iran argued that the United States used a double measure while revising nuclear programs of other countries. While those were, according to Iran, breaching the safeguards of the NPT without any clash with the Bush Administration, Tehran was in the viewfinder of the administration in Washington even though it signed

[2] Adam Tarock, "US-Iran relations: heading for confrontation?," *Third World Quarterly* 17, No. 1, (1996): 164, accessed March 10, 2013, http://ehis.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=139c4631-565a-457e-a2b5-286d30fee1fc%40sessionmgr114&vid=2&hid=110.
[3] Tarock, "US-Iran relations,"165.
[4] Paul Kerr, "Reports Grow That U.S. Plots Strike Against Iran," *Arms Control Today* 36, (May 2006), accessed June 25, 2013, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2006_05/IranReports.
[5] Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, International Atomic Energy Agency, April 22, 1970: 3, http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Infcircs/Others/infcirc140.pdf.

the Additional Protocol in 2003, providing International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) broader access to the nuclear sites, better conditions for investigation of their claims and possibility of detailed scrutiny of the nuclear program. Teheran hoped that its concessions to the IAEA and similar measures would have dispelled fears in the international community about the regime's intentions. The international community was alarmed by the Iranian opposition group's revelation about the secret nuclear facilities in 2002. The broader access of the IAEA however brought more questions than answers and therefore failed to provide the long awaited security guarantees. Its result was actually quite the contrary. Although Iran's nuclear activities were not violating NPT commitments or the IAEA obligations, concealment of these activities was a significant breach of rules. The United States criticized Iran for its secrecy in proceedings and persuaded IAEA, under significant pressure, to proclaim the country to be in non-compliance with its security measures leading to mistrust, fear and consequently punishment by the international community through the Security Council of the United Nations.

Iran was later recognized by the majority of the scientific community as the "only state known to be actively seeking nuclear weapons"[6] and therefore a country presenting a security threat to among others the United States. Some scholars including John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt argued that Iranian effort did not pose a direct threat to the vital interests of the U.S. and therefore should not raise the greatest worries of American foreign policy and should not be placed on the top of Secretary of State's agenda. They believed that the threat to the US was not direct but derived through its commitment to Israel and other allies in the Middle East and that the decisions and actions of the Bush Administration were highly influenced by the Israel lobby in the country.[7]

Others, including Arshin Abid-Moghaddam, Chair of the Centre for Iranian Studies at SOAS, University of London, argued that the neo-conservatives in the Bush Administration artificially manufactured conditions for war and they were prepared to

[6] George Perkovich, "Bush's Nuclear Revolution: A Regime Change in Nonproliferation," *Foreign Affairs* 82, No.2, (March/April 2003): 3, accessed May 4, 2013, http://ehis.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=a333c60a-44e9-477d-9b21-9298227749ec%40sessionmgr104&vid=2&hid=26.

[7] John J. Mearsheimer, Stephen M. Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Middle East Policy* XIII, No. 3, (Fall 2006): 30-32, accessed May 4, 2013, http://ehis.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=0b15d6f6-68f1-4ce8-a5a0-f6d5437088b5%40sessionmgr4&vid=4&hid=2.

change the regime in Tehran by military action under the claim of pre-emptive action against the development of nuclear weapons.[8] Washington was also, according to Tarock, using the nuclear program as a "pretext for achieving its long-cherished objective – replacing the regime."[9]

Most of the scholarly community, however, recognized the threat of nuclear Iran to be real,[ii] especially after Mahmoud Ahmadinejad became the president of Iran in August 2005. Even though the real political power did not lie solely within his hands and political decisions were at least influenced by the religious leaders, Ahmadinejad became a symbol of Iranian politics and views in the democratic world. Inflammatory rhetoric and his provocative statements have outraged people around the world and contributed to the perception that the Middle Eastern country has sinister intentions. Scholars, professors and representatives of various think thanks started to give speeches and lectures and devoted articles and even books to describe the issue. They suggested how the American government should proceed in the situation and avoid nuclear weaponization of another state which would have endangered the whole concept of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), stability in the region and peace around the world. The problem was that even though everybody had the same ultimate objective - to avoid all of the above - almost all of the speakers and writers differed in their recommendations and the best possible solutions of the crisis. Scholars mostly criticized the government's actions but when it came to the point when they could have offered an advice to the politicians, some of them repeated vague or impractical ideas. Summarization of the various recommendations of the community of scholars is represented in a study done by the RAND Corporation. The only possible way for the administration according to various authors, studies and projects was to raise costs of the nuclear program for Iran, deny the benefits of it and provide incentives for the Middle Eastern country to abandon its quest.[10]

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[8] Arshin Abid-Moghaddam, "Manufacturing War: Iran in the Neo-conservative Imagination," *Third World Quarterly* 28, No. 3 (2007): 646, accessed May 7, 2013, http://ehis.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=73a806b2-d502-4dc1-8f23-0c7a48df8a01%40sessionmgr104&vid=2&hid=117.

[9] Adam Tarock, "Iran's Nuclear Programme and the West," *Third World Quarterly* 27, No. 4 (2006): 662, accessed June 9, 2013, http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=98b6f619-5ea4-4d0e-9e50-ef403778f6f2%40sessionmgr10&hid=25.

[10] Lynn E. Davis, Jeffrey Martini, Alireza Nader, Dalia Dassa Kaye, James T. Quinlivan and Paul Steinberg, *Iran's Nuclear Future: Critical U.S. Policy Choices*, (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2011), 152.

Raising costs, providing incentives and denying benefits Iran

Raising costs (economic sanctions), providing incentives (diplomacy) and denying benefits (military action) of the nuclear program and development of nuclear weapons might be possibly an effective concept. If a certain country would have possessed a leverage, which would persuade Iran to stop pursuing the current path, the problem would have been over. However, as it seems no single country or even the international community as a whole posses such a leverage to persuade the regime in Tehran to abandon nuclear program or is willing to fully implement the measures which might be effective in resolving the issue.

The problem is that whatever incentives the international community would have given Iran in order to stop the program, the drivers to further pursue the nuclear program are currently more persuasive than the effort of international community. The hope is that there is a certain point at which the costs become so high for Iran, that it would have come to the decision to abandon the program itself. There were quite a few incentives, which could have affected the decision making in Tehran, but the American government has tried many of them in the past 30 years and the time period was not marked by any remarkable progress in its effort. What the experts in general are suggesting is not a new concept, nothing brand new. But since the international environment, the regimes in both countries and the perception of people are changing, the same measures, applied in a better way might have produced different results.

1.1 Economic sanctions

One of those measures is economic sanctions. American foreign policy widely used them already in 1998, according to Richard N. Haas as a "proportionate response to challenge in which the interests at stake are judged to be less than vital."[11] It is an alternative way to communicate with the targeted regime, even without the establishment of direct diplomatic relations. They provide the government a tool to satisfy domestic political demand but also serve as a way to articulate its disagreement with the policy of the regime at hand. Wide use of sanctions, however, does not guarantee their effectiveness. Nevertheless, Deputy Secretary of Treasury Robert Kimmitt in 2007 commented on the importance of the economic sanctions in American

[11] Richard N. Haas, Introduction to *Economic Sanctions and American Diplomacy*, ed. Richard N. Haas, (New York: The Council on Foreign Relations Book, 1998), 2.

foreign policy and proclaimed, that since 9/11, role of the Treasury Department "have evolved…and the world of finance now plays a critical role in combating international security threats."[12]

Patrick Clawson asserts that the sanctions have both economic and political impact.[13] While Iran might have run into economic difficulties as a result of the sanctions, political cost of sanctions might have been higher than the economic one. Since Iran is one of the biggest producers of oil, the country is able to react to the changes of economic development and situation due to its high revenues from almost ever growing prices of oil. For example, Iran was able to redirect its trading ties from Europe to Asia (mostly China, Pakistan) and also convert its foreign capital from dollars to currencies used in Asia.[14] Furthermore, economic sanctions should punish those in the leadership roles in Iran, who make decisions, and should not affect ordinary people who have nothing to do with the issue. However, this effort was not very successful and the economic restrictions affected common citizens who perceive the sanctions not as a way how to force the regime into compliance with its international security obligations but how to punish the Muslims - contrary to the initial idea that people would have recognized that the country suffers because of bad decisions of its own government and would have demanded a reprieve from the state.

American economist and analyst of the Middle East situation Clawson observed that firm US policy towards Iran might have triggered some nationalist backlash mostly due to the Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad who brilliantly used tactics of propaganda, campaigning and canvassing and persuaded the majority of Iranian population that economic sanctions are a punishment by the United States of the "proud people" of Iran. The Iranian president simply connected the nationalistic pride not only with the issue of economic sanctions but with the issue of the nuclear program.

Therefore, the political benefit which the United States might have hoped for turned out to be a political backlash instead since most of the people have identified U.S. economic sanctions negatively and believed that the most powerful country

[12] Peter Crail, "U.S. Wields Financial Sanctions Against Iran," *Arms Control Today* 38, (November 2008), accessed March 21, 2013, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2008_11/Iran_sanctions.
[13] Patrick Clawson, "Iran," in *Economic Sanctions and American Diplomacy*, ed. Richard N. Haas, (New York: The Council on Foreign Relations Book, 1998), 92.
[14] "U.S. Wields Financial Sanctions Against Iran," *Arms Control Today* 38, (November 2008), accessed March 21, 2013, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2008_11/Iran_sanctions.

punished Iran for being disobedient. Also Kayhan Bayzegar, scholar lecturing on the Harvard University and Director of the Institute for Middle East Strategic Studies, believes that Ahmadinejad mastered the propaganda and therefore was able to "build unprecedented public support for his nuclear policy."[15] His assumption is supported by various surveys conducted by groups such as the Terror Free Tomorrow, RAND Corporation or World Public Opinion.[iii] For Iranians, the nuclear energy is simply a matter of national pride, solidarity and technological advancement, and is supported by most of the population. A 2008 survey done by the Terror Free Tomorrow revealed that 89% of Iranians favored development of nuclear energy. Even though the number supporting development of nuclear weapons was significantly lower (52%), it still constituted a majority of the population.[16]

Etel Solingen, President of the International Studies Association lecturing at University of California, suggests that the current Iranian president was not successful in this issue only within the borders of his own country, but his persuasive speeches reached and convinced a number of people abroad (especially in the Islamic countries in the Middle East) where he "skillfully broadened his allure."[17] Ahmadinejad portrayed Iran as the only defender of the Palestinian cause, fighting against Israeli occupation and American oppression and linked the nuclear issue to the cause of justice and equality within the Islamic world.

Positive reactions of the Islamic populations and their support of the Iranian nuclear program nevertheless differed from the reactions of official governments of those countries. People praised the criticism of Western interference and the double standard of the Bush Administration but the regimes were afraid that should Iran possess a nuclear weapon, it would have increased its role in the Persian Gulf area and might have even endangered security of other countries in region.[18] This effect was clearly seen in the US Embassy cables leaked to the public by *WikiLeaks* and published

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[15] Kayhan Barzegar, "The Paradox of Iran's Nuclear Consensus," *World Policy Journal* 26, No. 3, (Fall 2009): 24, accessed June 29, 2013, http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=cc162f05-b628-4603-af74-c32e21131ba2%40sessionmgr112&vid=4&hid=128.

[16] "Polling Iranian Public Opinion: An Unprecedented Nationwide Survey on Iran," *Terror Free Tomorrow*, (2008): 2, 30, accessed July 16, 2013, http://www.terrorfreetomorrow.org/upimagestft/TFT%20Iran%20Survey%20Report.pdf.

[17] Etel Solingen, *Nuclear Logics: Contrasting Paths in East Asia and the Middle East*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 169.

[18] Frederic Kaye Wehrey, Jessica Dalia Dassa Watkins, *Iraq Effect: The Middle East after the Iraq War*, (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2010), 26-30.

by *The Guardian*. According to the conversations of American officials with representatives of these countries, the United Arab Emirates in 2006 declared its support for action preventing nuclear Iran and the Saudi King two years later even urged the U.S. to attack Iran.[19]

Many scholars debated not only the political but also the economic effectiveness of such sanctions. Some assert that the sanctions are unproductive since they were not able to persuade Iran to change its way. Daryl G. Kimball for example points out that the sanctions are not effective since their implementation progresses slower than the actual nuclear program[20] and Cook and Roshandel claim that the economic sanctions have opposite effect since they "led them [Iranians] to be more confrontational and defiant.[21] Spokesman of the Iranian foreign ministry Hamid Reza Asefi also downplayed the effectiveness of sanctions in 2005 when commenting on the negotiations with Great Britain, Germany and France: "We have been subjected to sanctions in the past. In the short them, it has put us under pressure, but in long term, it has helped our economy to flourish."[22]

There were, however, signs that the Iranian economy dramatically worsened during the years of the Bush Administration and that the point of collapse had been quickly approaching. For example in 2005 Iran's stock market declined by 30% following the resolution of the IAEA to refer the issue of Iranian nuclear program to the UN Security Council.[23] Some experts were arguing that "for the first time in 30 years…Washington has found a tangible way how to pressure Iran."[24] Even Iranians themselves saw the economic problems of their country as the most pressing issue which had to be dealt with.

Some scholars, however, believe that vigorous sanctions against the Middle Eastern regime worsened the situation. They would have preferred the United States to

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[19] "10/4/2006: Abu Dhabi favors action to prevent a nuclear Iran," *Guardian*, April 10, 2006, accessed May 28, 2013, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/59984.
and "20/4/2008: Saudi King Urges US Strike on Iran," *Guardian*, April 20, 2008, accessed May 28, 2013, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/150519.
[20] Daryl G. Kimball, "Time to Rethink U.S. Strategy on Iran," *Arms Control Today* 37, (November 2007), accessed May 7, 2013, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007_11/focus.
[21] Alethia H. Cook, Jalil Roshandel, *The United States and Iran: Policy Challenges and Opportunities*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 142.
[22] Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, 181.
[23] Ibid, 184.
[24] Cook, Roshandel, *The United States and Iran*, 131.

loosen the economic sanctions and show Iran some of the benefits, which the country would have enjoyed if it had stopped its program. This "carrot" would not have only helped Iranian economy and would have enabled the country to modernize itself and its technology, but it would have shown the civilian population that the regime stands in front of a choice - either to continue with its policy and therefore force the international community to punish the regime or to cooperate with it and win some incentives and benefits. The truth is that even when presidency in Tehran was in hands of reformer Khatami, the government was not willing to give up its nuclear program or enrichment for concessions offered by E-3. Former Iranian President only stated that although ending enrichment would be "completely unacceptable" Iran would provide any objective guarantees of peaceful uses of enrichment requested by E-3 or AIEA.[25] Since the nuclear issue had been already so well connected with the national pride and prestige, each concession would have been probably seen negatively and probably even insulting. Barzegar argues that since Ahmadinejad succeeded in cultivating support from various groups within Iran and the backing of the establishment even more by his propaganda, he made a deal with the US "unimaginable."[26]

1.2 Diplomacy

The regime in Tehran was therefore in a problematic situation. The majority of the population would have wished to have the nuclear program and remain a proud country not bending before the world powers. At the same time, however, this majority of the population would have liked the economic situation to improve and Iran to stay out of any conflict. Deputy Head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization Assadollah Saburi clearly articulated the position of the Iranian leadership in 2003: "We do not want to increase our commitment in the face of sanctions that are currently imposed"[27] Iran was simply not willing to make concessions before the international community and especially the United States. Yet most of the offers promising some benefits to Iran required concessions on its side as a prerequisite. This deadlock was the major issue

[25] Asli Ü. Bâli, "The US and the Iranian Nuclear Impasse," *Middle East Report*, No. 241: Iran: Looking Ahead (winter, 2006): 17, accessed June 12, 2013, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25164759.
[26] Barzegar, "The Paradox of Iran's Nuclear Consensus," 22.
[27] Ray Takeyh, "Iran's Nuclear Calculations," *World Policy Journal* 20, No. 2, (summer 2003): 25, accessed June 10, 2013, http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=318b7c19-b3a6-498b-88bf-1c1fdf6c1056%40sessionmgr114&hid=128.

which had to be solved in order for any change in the situation to rake place. The diplomatic solution was therefore very limited, a situation which was enhanced even more by the factual nonexistence of direct diplomatic relations. It was not, however, applicable only to the issue of the economic sanctions but it had ramifications for other decisions as well. Should the United States rescind demand of no enrichment or should it allow Iran to progress with its work on its nuclear program within the boundaries set up by the NPT?

United States and its allies were afraid that if they offered benefits to the Iranian regime, it would have taken advantage of it and would have progressed with the nuclear program even further without any restrictions. The international community already faced such a decision before, when it allowed the regime in Pchjongjang to progress with its nuclear program within the NPT safeguards and even with help from various countries. North Korea happily accepted such an offer. However, when it overcame most of the difficulties of creating nuclear energy, it withdrew from the NPT and progressed even further. Nowadays the regime in Pchjongjang asserts that it enjoys the status of a nuclear armed country since it was able to master the development of the nuclear weapon with unwilling help of international community. Both, the international community and Iran took their own lessons from the North Korea's behavior. Thus for many politicians and experts, North Korea was the most alarming example of what might have happened should the international community follow the same path in the case of Iran.[28]

Even though distrust and doubts persisted in American-Iranian relations and the government in Washington was not willing to take a chance of offering the Islamic regime any concessions without some tangible promises by Iran, the majority of scholars believe that the diplomatic option was the most viable one and should be further explored by the Bush administration. Journalist and a speechwriter David Frum for example harshly criticized President Bush for outsourcing Iran diplomacy to Britain, France and Germany (E-3).[29]

[28] Gordon Corera, *Shopping for Bombs: Nuclear Proliferation, Global Insecurity, and the Rise and Fall of the A.Q. Khan*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 304.
[29] David Frum, "Bush's Legacy," *Foreign Policy* 168, (September/October 2008): 34, accessed May 4, 2013, http://ehis.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=31a31622-5ff2-4939-97dd-fafa14a15fa8%40sessionmgr15&vid=2&hid=23.

Bowen and Kidd would have liked to see incremental strategy of engagement with Iran starting with the establishment of direct diplomatic relations,[30] which might have enabled some meaningful dialogue between the two countries without any mediator. Also scholars participating in a conference organized by the RAND Corporation in August 2007 called "Coping with Iran: Confrontation, Containment, or Engagement?" recommended the Bush Administration to refrain from negative rhetoric about Iran and to act more friendly towards the country.[31] They believed that since Iran might have been unsure about its own security, a friendlier approach from the international community and mostly from the United States might have persuaded the regime about willingness for negotiations and might have dispelled the fear of armed attack and removal of the current regime. Kayhan Barzegar argues that when Iran is threatened from outside, "experience has shown that the Iranian leadership slams the door on negotiations."[32] Rather than to talk about the need to change the regime in Tehran and bring more democracy to the country, Washington should have focused its attention on the single issue: curbing the nuclear program.

The United States had, as speakers on the conference organized by Arms Control Association "Iran's Nuclear Program and Diplomatic Options to Contain It" believe, still enough power to persuade Iran not to follow its chosen path.[33] The government in Washington could have offered the Middle Eastern country various benefits (including membership in WTO, prospect of Iranian-US/EU agreement for increased trade and investments, possibility of providing light-water reactors, assurance of supplies of fuel, loosening of economic sanctions, halting the ban on providing aircraft parts), which would not have only improved the economic situation of the country but it would also have promoted its national prestige. For that, however, there would have had to have been some willingness in the White House and Congress. Up to that point, American leaders mostly denounced Iran, but the scholars would have liked to see some positive approach. In other words, there should have been some "carrots" together with the "sticks" when negotiating with a regime such as the one in Tehran.

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[30] Wyn Q. Bowen, Joanna Kidd, "The Iranian Nuclear Challenge," *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 80, No. 2, (Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: March 2004): 275, accessed: January 12, 2013http://www.jstor.org/stable/3569241.

[31] Coping with Iran: Confrontation, Containment, or Engagement? A Conference Report, James Harting Dobbins, Sarah Kaye, Dalia Dassa, (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2007), 106.

[32] Barzegar, "The Paradox of Iran's Nuclear Consensus," 29.

[33] "Iran's Nuclear Program and Diplomatic Options to Contain It," (conference by Arms Control Association, Washington, D.C., December 4, 2007), accessed May 25, 2013, http://www.armscontrol.org/events/20071204_Iran_Transcript.

Iran, however, doubted the good intentions of the United States and saw each (of not very numerous) offers as a trap. One of the reasons Iran did not trust Washington was the perceived double standard which the Bush Administration was using when evaluating nuclear programs of other countries. Iran for example vigorously disapproved of U.S. support to Israel or to the Indian nuclear program. Jarrod Hayes argues that the real reason for the Bush Administration to sign a nuclear deal with India in 2006 was a striking difference in identity, way of thinking and values between the two countries.[34] While India considers itself as the "largest democracy" and worked to gain the trust of the United States, Iran diminished its own trustworthiness in the eyes of the U.S. by its covert actions, operations and buildup of new nuclear facilities and also by its confirmed involvement in attacks against the American forces in Iraq.[35] This argument, however, did not alter the approach of Iran which has been denouncing the approach of Bush Administration further even though the administration came up with interesting offers to Iran, which were worth considering.

The perception of mistrust was unfortunately mutual so when Iran offered some concessions to the three European countries leading negotiations – namely Great Britain, Germany and France, they discarded them with the consent and based on advice of the United States since they perceived them as a trap. Mark L. Haas noted that "the greater the ideological differences dividing decision makers in different states, the higher their threat perceptions and thus the greater the likelihood of hostile relations developing." [36] He observed such behavior in context of the relations of Iran and the United States and believed that both of the countries assumed the worst of intentions and feared subversive impact of the other on their society. Therefore Haas considered solution through negotiations under the then-present conditions unlikely.

Apart of that, Haas also called for a clear perception of the distinction between Iranian conservatives and reformers which the Bush administration failed to take into account and which might have been used during the negotiations. While the conservatives were very strictly persuaded that nuclear program of the country must

[34] Jarrod Hayes, "Identity and Securitization in the Democratic Peace: The United States and the Divergence of Response to India and Iran's Nuclear Programs," *International Studies Quarterly* 53, (2009): 977, accessed January 31, 2013, http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2009.00565.x/pdf.
[35] George W. Bush, "Remarks to the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies," March 13, 2006, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed June 15, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=65356.
[36] Haas, "Ideology and Iran's American Policies," 435.

continue at all costs, some of the reformers believed that the program should be sacrificed for the right economic price. For example, an opportunity for Iran to be engaged in the international trade system would have been happily accepted. Iran had actually not been part of the most important international economic organization – the WTO - even though it had an imminent interest to be part of it (Tehran hoped to attract FDI, loans and create free trade zones). Thus the United States should have exploited this fact and offered Iran to be part of the world trade organization. Iran applied to the organization already in 1996 but due to the blocking power of the US, its application was not considered until 2001.

Ray Takeyh claims that the normalization of relations as a means of regulating Iranian power was "not the most viable option, but the only realistic one."[37] Reestablishing diplomatic relations and negotiations about the nuclear program might have brought a change to the Iranian behavior but the talks had not produced any results. Since the nuclear program was still progressing and the development surprised and terrified the international community, calls for a more radical solution started to appear more and more often.

The international community might not have been worried that Iran was developing nuclear weapons to use them intentionally, but it was definitely worried that Iran's acquisition of such a weapon would trigger the world's first multiparty nuclear arms race. Middle Eastern countries would have strived to have the same technology as their neighbor and to eliminate the window of vulnerability as soon as possible. Motivation of Iran could have been, as a matter of fact, an example of such a behavior with respect to Israel's possession of a nuclear weapon and its and American military superiority. According to the IAEA, such signs in the region were already visible. Egypt was, for example, reported as possibly trying to develop its own nuclear bomb.[38]

Kofi Annan, the then General Secretary of the United Nations, warned during the Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change in 2004 that "We are approaching a point at which the erosion of the non-proliferation regime could have become irreversible and

[37] Ray Takeyh, "The Iran Puzzle," *American Prospect* 18, No. 6, (June 2007): 48, accessed May 7, 2013, http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?sid=b6ff48eb-aefe-494c-825a-a451eb804691%40sessionmgr114&vid=1&hid=128&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=poh&AN=25293174.

[38] Graham Allison, "Global Challenges of Nuclear Proliferation," in *Nuclear Proliferation: Risk and Responsibility*, ed. Graham Allison, Hervé de Carmoy, Thérèse Delpech, Chung Min Lee (Washington D.C.: The Trilateral Commission, 2006), 13.

result in a cascade of proliferation."[39] For Anan, Iran was just a perfect example, together with North Korea, of a country which directly challenged the system and the world peace and security.

Political scientists were not so much afraid of the nuclear bomb in the hands of Iranian regime, but rather of the scenario that the weapon would not be fully under control of the leaders and might be used accidentally, without permission from the regime or sold to the third party or stolen by a third party (terrorist groups, hostile undemocratic governments). Another Harvard scholar Graham Allison was alarmed by the prospect of another nuclear country and warned about the "nuclear adolescence" of the states which might have gained nuclear weapons. For him the Persian country presented a "black box" with multiple centers of power and competing security structures and its rogue element constituted a crucial challenge to the principle of nuclear proliferation and prevention of nuclear terrorism.[40] Therefore possession of a nuclear weapon by the Iranian regime became unacceptable not only to politicians, but also to the scholarly community which was not influenced by the demonization of the country, its opinion being rather based on a realistic estimate of the country and its regime.

1.3 Military Option

The situation in the Middle East had been rapidly worsening and specific plans for a solution had not yet appeared. Washington and its allies were not willing to make any concessions because they were afraid that it would have led to deterioration of the situation and crossing of the nuclear threshold by another state. On the other hand, Iran had a valid argument for development of nuclear weapons since it believed that possession of nuclear weapons would have worked as a deterrent for the international community and assurance that the regime would not be attacked by foreign countries (lesson from the North Korean example). Argument of deterrence was once again double-edged. Should Iran have a nuclear weapon it would have become a greater security threat to other countries, including the United States and Israel. Also, other

[39] Ramesh Thakur, "Poised on the nuclear precipice," *Sydney Morning Herald*, April 8, 2013, accessed July 16, 2013, http://www.smh.com.au/comment/poised-on-the-nuclear-precipice-20130407-2heq9.html.
[40] Allison, "Global Challenges of Nuclear Proliferation," 13.

countries in the Middle East would have perceived their own insecurity in the light of a new nuclear state in the region and would have striven to obtain a nuclear weapon of their own. Many scholars, including Wade L. Huntley and Kenneth Pollack believe that the nuclear arms race in the Middle East would have become a painful reality and would have critically endangered the whole concept of the nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, hurting, due to different regional situation, "the NPT regime more deeply than did North Korea's action."[41]

The international community thus demanded that Iran stops enriching uranium, which might lead to development of the nuclear bomb. Since Tehran ignored such calls, it tried to persuade the regime by other means. Allison suggested that the Bush Administration should introduce some credible military threats to destroy facilities before they could have become fully operational.[42] He did not recommend an actual attack but sought the threat of it as an addition to an offer of some benefits to Tehran. Also Michael Eisenstadt in his presentation at a conference expressed a support for the military threat and appreciated the government for keeping the military option on the table.[43] Moreover, the authors of the study *Iran's Nuclear Future* believe that Iran might have been dissuaded from the development of the nuclear weapons by military pressure and recommended to more visibly demonstrate military capability of the United States in the region and to communicate to Iran that possession of nuclear weapons would not have brought the country more security, rather that it would have increased risks fot the regime.[44]

The perception of vulnerability of the regime might have increased its motivation and actually sped up process of the development of nuclear weapons which would, on the other hand, have raised alarm within the international community and might have forced world leaders into more active solution of the crisis. The situation was aptly described by Gary Sick, an American academic and analyst of Middle Eastern

[41] Wade L. Huntley, "Rebels without a Cause: North Korea, Iran and the NPT," *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 82, No. 4 (July, 2006): 732, accessed June 9, 2013, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3874155.
[42] Allison, "Global Challenges of Nuclear Proliferation," 19.
[43] Michael Eisenstadt, "Powerful Drivers, Risks, and Possible Outcomes" (paper presented on Conference Coping with Iran: Confrontation, Containment, or Engagement?, Washington D.C., March 21, 2007): 34, accessed March 26, 2013, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/conf_proceedings/2007/RAND_CF237.pdf.
[44] Davis, Martini, Nader, Kaye, Quinlivan and Steinberg, *Iran's Nuclear Future*, 27.

affairs, in an interview in 1995, when he asserted that "There's nothing from the outside that's nearly as threatening to it [Iran] as its own behavior at various times."[45]

The argument of perceived vulnerability of the Iranian regime constituted the majority opinion in the scholarly community, which to the contrary of the above mentioned respected scholars, absolutely denounces not only the military attack itself, but also any kind of mention made about it. For example Ray Takeyh, David Hastings Dunn, Barzegar and many others argue that one of the most important and significant drivers of the Iranian nuclear program was the perceived threat from the United States and one of the lessons learned from North Korea example once the regime had nuclear weapons Americans abstained from mentioning the regime change. Although the Washington government helped Iran, in a way, with the removal of Saddam Hussein from Iraq, the deployment of even more American soldiers to the region surrounding Iran created new worries for Tehran. While reporters in the U. S. have been speculating about a pre-emptive military action by the United States or Israel, Iran itself showed signs that it was truly afraid of attack from abroad. Mr. Khatami for example said that "they [USA] tell us that Syria is the next target, but according to our reports, Iran could have well followed.[46] Insecurity of the regime which was reflected in its behavior was nonetheless not the only argument against the military option.

Cook and Roshandel perceive weaknesses of the military option to far outweigh its strengths. They believe that any kind of military action would have increased Iranian public support for the government and have created the rally-round-the-flag effect.[47] Moreover Iran would have been inclined to retaliate against the enemy and could have badly hurt not only the forces of the United States but also critical infrastructure in the region and American allies, notably Israel. It is more than probable that the regime would have engaged in an asymmetric warfare and even though the American military strike would not have resulted in a direct conflict, casualties would have been significant. According to official Islamic News Agency (IRNA) Khamenei said that should any military attack occur, Iran would have retaliated against "US aggression" by damaging the US interests worldwide "twice as much" as any military strikes.[48] Iran

[45] "Open wounds: An Interview with Gary Sick," by J. Javid, *Iranian*, December 1995, accessed July 12, 2013, http://iranian.com/Jan96/Features/OpenWounds.html.
[46] Takeyh, "Iran's Nuclear Calculations," 23.
[47] Cook, Roshandel, *The United States and Iran*, 135-136.
[48] Kerr, "Reports Grow That U.S. Plots Strike Against Iran."

could have also attacked Israel which might have encouraged Arab countries to join the fight or disrupted oil shipments from the Persian Gulf area.

Even though Iran could not have compared with the military capability of the United States, any hostility or open conflict which might have emerged from the tension would definitely have had significant impact on American forces, allies and the international scene. Also, since Iran built some of its nuclear facilities underground and disguised them as buildings for other purposes, the military attack could not have guaranteed destruction of all nuclear facilities despite possible intelligence and air support from Israel. Ali Larijani himself warned that any military strikes by the U.S. and possibly Israel would have failed to stop the nuclear program because "Iran would have responded by starting covert nuclear activities."[49]

Should the United States consider an attack it would have to also consider the fact that the know-how was already present in Iran and no matter how effective the bombs would have been, they would not be able to completely destroy it. Even the targeted killing of scientists would not help, since Iran cooperated with nuclear specialists from other countries including Pakistan and already possessed the instruction manuals and directions. Therefore the nuclear program, even if the attack would have been successful and would have destroyed all of the facilities and equipment, would not have ceased to exist rather it would have been only delayed. Any kind of military strike was thus not a short-term solution to the crisis. It would have offered the United States and the international community more time, but it would not have guaranteed that the same situation would not have repeated several years later. All these arguments were used by scholars when arguing against the military attack.

Speakers in the conference about Iran in 2007 condemned the military option. David Albright wished the military option to be taken off the table since he believed it would have been increasingly unnecessary and counterproductive and Joseph Cirincione even said that the Bush Administration was persistent in an "illusion that it might work."[50] Also another conference devoted to the nuclear program of Iran concluded that none of the speakers favored preemption, even though James Dobbins noted that it

[49] Ibid.
[50] "Iran's Nuclear Program and Diplomatic Options to Contain It."

remained to be an option.[51] For David Hastings Dunn the United States should not refrain only from the military action against Iran but also from any military threats. [52] He claims that the threats were a failure since they were not clearly articulated, concrete and there was "no attractive option available to the U.S. to disarm Iran, to persuade it to relinquish them [nuclear weapons] voluntarily, or to effect regime change and to establish a more benign government." Dunn further asserts that since Iran recognized the relativity of the threats, it perceived them as empty gestures without any meaning or importance.

Most of the scholars wished to see the government discard the military option, any kind of threat of military option and even to offer Iran and its regime some security guarantees and the possibility of creation of a regional security group. Nasr and Takeyh went further and suggested that Washington should move toward a new regional security system which would have featured all local actors and the United States and which would have "rested on treaty pledging inviolability of the region's borders, arms control pacts, a common market free zones and mechanism for adjusting disputes."[53] Addressing Iran's security concerns by engaging it with regional structure seemed like a good idea to Bowen and Kidd who found historical parallels in examples of Argentina and Brazil which both abandoned their nuclear program as a result of an enhanced regional security situation and process of democratization. Therefore both scholars suggested promotion of confidence among the states in the Gulf region and the Middle East and gradual building of Iran into the security structure.[54] No matter how they condemned the military option, the participants at the conference in 2007 did not believe that the provision of security guarantees to Iran would have been sufficient and would have changed Tehran's behavior. David Ochmanek asserted that some feeling of security would have weakened incentives of Tehran to acquire nuclear weapons but

[51] James Dobbins, Conclusion to *Coping with Iran: Confrontation, Containment, or Engagement? A Conference Report*, (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2007): 67, accessed July 16, 2013, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/conf_proceedings/2007/RAND_CF237.pdf.

[52] David Hastings Dunn, "'Real men want to go to Tehran': Bush, pre-emption and the Iranian nuclear challenge," *International Affairs* 83, No. 1, (January 1, 2007): 31-32, accessed May 25, 2013, http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=7f9ec4e3-85d0-498c-8eae-edeb7d34ce35%40sessionmgr111&hid=113.

[53] Vali Nasr, Ray Takeyh, "The Costs of Containing Iran: Washington's Misguided New Middle East Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 87, No. 1, (January/February 2008), accessed May 1, 2013, http://ehis.ebscohost.com/eds/detail?sid=668189f1-49b0-4b90-a688-dd48275f0d61%40sessionmgr4&vid=2&hid=1&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1lZHMtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=poh&AN=28018926.

[54] Bowen, Kidd, "The Iranian Nuclear Challenge," 274.

historically such a guarantee would not have been credible.[55] Kenneth Pollack believed that the guarantee would not have met Iranian expectations and instead of guarantees he recommended a security forum in the Persian Gulf.[56]

Expert community believed that the U.S. should show some willingness to negotiate and offer Tehran assurances instead of threatening it with possible military scenarios and historical precedents of preemptive actions. This approach could have opened the door for future cooperation with Iran, since the regime might have ceased its aggressive policy when reacting to less hostile adversary inclined to negotiations. In that case, the Iranian public could have also reduced the pressure on the leadership of the country and might have demanded resolution of the crisis while preserving a face of proud nation not bending under pressure and wishes of others. Results of such an approach could have theoretically been very positive, but pessimism about its outcome and feasibility prevailed.

Recommendations?

The community of scholars, even though it was wildly criticizing the Bush Administration for its approach, was not united in its opinion, recommendations and assertions, as the suggestions of individual scholars varied. Nor could have been such unity expected. There were too many people who offered their view that it would not be possible for them all to speak with one voice. Nevertheless, some trends, although often contradictory, could be observed very clearly. With regard to the economic sanctions, the majority of scholars would have been happy to see either easing of the sanctions or their improvement and intensification. The sanctions should have been targeted so they would have affected the leadership in Iran and not the public, plus they should not have been applied only by the United States, or they should be lifted.

Concerning the diplomatic negotiations there was a unique agreement between the scholars, since the absolute majority suggested the government to improve its diplomatic relations by establishing direct diplomatic ties and to participate fully in the negotiations. Iran should be placed in a position in which the weight of decision would have lied with its own leadership. That would have helped the Iranian public to revise

[55] Question and Answer Session, (Conference Coping with Iran: Confrontation, Containment, or Engagement?, Washington D.C., March 21, 2007): 34.
[56] Question and Answer Session, 35.

the perception of the United States and would have burdened the regime with demand for action. The readiness of Washington to yield should be, however, limited. The Bush Administration was not advised to step back from all its demands but rather to offer some incentives to Iran promising cooperation and forthcoming relations.

A military option, as a way to deny the benefits of the nuclear weapons, was considered by the majority of scholars a non-viable and unwise path. Actually, from all of the above mentioned possibilities, the military attack was determined to be the worst one. The government in Washington ought to opt out from a consideration of a military attack and even refrain from any military threats. To the contrary, security assurances ought to be offered for the Persian country and regional security system suggested to the Persian Gulf area.

2 Approach of the Bush Administration

The effort to curb Iranian nuclear energy program was not anything new for the American administration. The issue was raised already in the 1950s, when Iran announced its attempts to produce nuclear energy but the counter measures were not adopted until the Iranian Revolution in 1979. The strategy, which the new Bush Administration employed towards Tehran, was very similar to the one which was applied by the previous governments. Michael Eisenstadt, on panel discussion of the Arms Control Association in January 2003, argued that the nonproliferation policy of the administration thus far "has been marked more by continuity than change over the policies of its predecessors."[57] That however presented a problem since the Iranian nuclear program progressed dramatically and relations between the two countries did not improve. Ray Takeyh claims that the Bush Administration inherited the situation, but according to his words, it "quickly proceeded to make it worse."[58]

The American president declared a national emergency with respect to Iran in March 2001, since he believed that "the crisis constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Iran…, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on March 15, 1995, has not been resolved…. For these reasons, I have determined that I must continue the declaration of national emergency with respect to Iran necessary to maintain comprehensive sanctions against Iran to respond to this threat."[59] Yet, Iran cooperated with the United States in the war against terrorism. Tehran helped Washington with stabilizing the situation in Afghanistan, allowed U.S. to join existing coalition against Taliban and even though Iran undoubtedly pursued its own interests (strengthening its own influence in the region at the expense of Pakistan), its cooperation with the West significantly helped with the establishment of the government in Afghanistan.[60] A new dimension of relations, when Iran was willing to help US to cope with terrorists in the Middle East, brought hope that the relations could

[57] Michael Eisenstadt, "Countering The 'Axis of Evil': Assessing Bush Administration Policies Toward Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, (panel discussion by Arms Control Association, Washington, D.C., January 13, 2003), accessed June 15, 2013, http://www.armscontrol.org/events/axisofevil_jan03.
[58] Takeyh, "Iran's Nuclear Calculations," 27.
[59] George W. Bush, "Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran," March 13, 2001, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed June 15, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=45809.
[60] Trita Parsi, "The Price of Not Talking to Iran," *World Policy Journal* 23, 4, (winter 2006): 12, accessed March 23, 2013, http://ehis.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=a620aded-3260-4981-82f8-cda7c2f7a1ae%40sessionmgr14&vid=2&hid=26.

have improved so that the two countries could re-establish their formal diplomatic relations disrupted in 1979 that have not been restored ever since. It would have allowed the governments of both countries to develop meaningful dialogue with the possibility of discussing crucial issues, including nuclear energy.

The opposite was, however, true. The American President Bush appeared in front of the nation to deliver his State of the Union Address on January 29, 2002. His speech contained a part in which he named three countries – North Korea, Iraq and Iran - and proclaimed that "States like these and their terrorist allies constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger... In any of these cases, the price of indifference would have been catastrophic."[61]

After mutual cooperation and seemingly promising development of relations between Iran and the United States, this speech represented a surprising blow to the efforts leading to any further improvement. By that speech, President Bush promised to be more active in seeking disruption of a nuclear program in Iran, which of course was contrary to the intentions of Iranian leaders. In January 2002, the United States stood almost alone in the quest to stop Iranian nuclear program. President Bush presented that speech almost eight months before the National Council of Resistance of Iran, a political opposition group, revealed the existence of two undeclared nuclear facilities in Iran - Natanz and Arak - to the public. The international community was not very concerned about the program by that time and many European countries (including Germany, France and Russia)[iv] actually cooperated with Tehran in nuclear matters in the long term. Therefore, when Bush delivered his speech, his clamping of Iran together with North Korea and Iraq came as a surprise and earned rather reserved response from the European allies. President Bush commented on his speech retrospectively in 2006 and admitted that he "got out a little early on the issue by saying, "axis of evil." But I meant it. I saw it as a problem."[62] Gordon Corera in his book argues that even though the public did not know about the two concealed nuclear facilities, "every site that was revealed by the Iranian opposition…was already known to the British and American

[61] George W. Bush, "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union," January 29, 2002, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed June 15, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29644.
[62] George W. Bush, "Remarks at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies and a Question-and-Answer Session," April 10, 2006, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed June 15, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=71903.

intelligence."[63] This was also confirmed by Gary Samore, who was in charge of non-proliferation in the White House until the beginning of 2001. Samore said, that "it was not publicly known as it was secret information but it was shared among the close allies that work on this issue."[64]

President Bush, according to his words, perceived a threat and decided to address the issue. In the months following his speech, Bush discussed the Iranian nuclear program for example with Prime Minister of Israel Ariel Sharon and Russian President Vladimir Putin and committed himself to bringing the topic in front of the broader international audience. Bush believed that the program should be stopped and he was determined to work on achieving that goal with his administration. Moreover Bush continued in the policy of his predecessors who more or less disagreed with the regime in Tehran and wished its change. The 43rd president of the United States set a difficult goal for himself – to come up with such a policy towards Iran that the country itself would have abandoned its nuclear program and if possible have arranged a change of the current regime. Policy of the United States for the next several years was therefore marked by efforts to raise the cost of the nuclear program through economic sanctions, diplomatic efforts (no matter how limited) and threats of military attack symbolized by the typical assertion that "all options are on a table."

2.1 Economic Sanctions

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Bush Administration inherited a policy of economic sanctions against Iran, which had been implemented ever since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Sanctions were, however, not sufficient to alter the policy of the Persian country and therefore had to be modified to assure their effectiveness. National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) published in December 2002 acknowledged that "Sanctions can be a valuable component of our overall strategy against WMD proliferation. At times, however, sanctions have proven inflexible and ineffective," and promised to "develop a comprehensive sanctions policy

[63] Corera, *Shopping for Bombs*, 81.
[64] Ibid, 81.

to better integrate sanctions into our overall strategy and work with Congress to consolidate and modify existing sanctions legislation."[65]

Throughout the years of the Bush Administration, policy of economic sanctions was really altered. At the beginning of the Bush years, sanctions were very limited and they did not affect the whole society. The most significant change came with the Executive Order 13382 signed by the President on June 29, 2005. It basically supplemented the Executive Order signed after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, which froze the assets of terrorists and their supporters. The order of 2005 added the proliferators of WMD and also their supporters and financially isolated them. The order also prohibited "all transactions between the designees and any U.S. person, and freeze any assets the designees may have under U.S. jurisdiction."[66] By doing this, the American government skillfully discouraged the private sector from doing business with Iran,[v] imposed sanctions on Iranian banks and threatened the private sector with secondary sanctions should it be involved with Iranian proliferation activities. Another set of sanctions was approved in 2006 and 2007. According to a report for the National Foreign Trade Council written in 2008, normalization of the relations with Iran and liberalization of regime's economy would increase Iran's total trade by almost $61 billion annually.[67]

The problem was that the United States stood alone in this effort and therefore Iran was able to supplement the resulting economic losses in different areas and with different trading partners. The foremost goal of the Bush Administration was therefore to win support for a policy of economic sanctions worldwide, possibly from all important actors and a majority of members of the United Nations, specifically the members of the Security Council. American officials understood that should the United States be the only country forcing Iran to comply with its international obligations by economic pressure, Iran, which has, according to the CIA, the fifth largest proven

[65] The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (2002): 5, accessed May 23, 2013, http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-wmd.pdf.
[66] Executive Order No.13382, (June 29, 2005), *U.S. Department of State*, accessed July 18, 2013, http://www.state.gov/t/isn/c22080.htm.
[67] "Normalization of Economic Relations: Consequences for Iran's Economy and the United States," Report prepared for the National Foreign Trade Council, Dean A. DeRosa, Gary Clyde Hufbauer, (2008): 1, accessed July 17, 2013, http://www.nftc.org/default/trade/NFTC%20Iran%20Normalizaton%20Book.pdf .

reserves of crude oil and third largest reserves of natural gas in the world,[68] would not have had a problem to cope with the pressure by redirecting its trade to other partners. With time, the White House was able to win international support for the cause and was able to implement sanctions not only as a single country but as a part of a bigger community through the United Nations Security Council, and played important role in persuading countries of the European Union to implement their own sets of sanctions. The unity of international players was believed to be crucial in forcing Iran into compliance. Washington finally succeeded with its effort on December 23, 2006 when the Security Council of the United Nations voted unanimously in favor of economic sanctions against Iran.[vi] President Bush commented on the success during a press conference almost two months later. He said it "is a good progress. It is a good first step. There's a lot of work to be done to make sure that the commitments made in this agreement become a reality, but I believe it's an important step in the right direction."[69]

Emphasis on making the sanctions more effective and winning broader support for them, which would have allowed for a more thorough and complex pressure on Iran, marked the entire period of the two Bush Administrations. It convinced the international community about the positive outcomes of such sanctions and about necessity to implement them. Even though Russia and China, permanent members of the Security Council of the UN, were cooperating with Iran and had had historically good ties with the Persian country, they both came to the conclusion that Iran should not be allowed to possess nuclear weapons and voted for the punishment of Tehran's policy. They, however, tried to moderate the sanctions so they would not have done such harm to their partner country. Nonetheless, in 2007 the UN Security Council voted again unanimously in favor of sanctions and expanded their scope even more, although negotiations regarding those sanctions were longer and more difficult. According to Professor Emeritus and Director of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control Gary Milhollin, who testified before the House Committee on International Relations in

[68] "Iran," Central Intelligence Agency, (last modified July 10, 2013), accessed July 17, 2013, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html.
[69] George W. Bush, "The President's News Conference," February 14, 2007, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed June 15, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=24507.

2006, the international support for sanctions was fundamental, therefore worth the persuasion.[70]

Even though the implementation of sanctions could have been seen as a success of the Bush Administration, it was not enough for the critics in Congress.[vii] A hearing before the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in 2007 showed that certain representatives would have imagined better and more striking results of American policy. Mr. Sherman (D-CA) criticized efforts of the government and noted that the world was not serious about the sanctions which could have been proven by its gifts sent via World Bank loans to Iran.[71] Philip H. Gordon, senior fellow for American foreign policy at the Brookings Institution, delivered his prepared statement to the subcommittee and partially defended the administration. He asserted that winning support for isolating Iran is very difficult, endorsed the work of American officials in the Security Council and pleaded with them not to give up upon it.[72] Another expert testifying during the hearing named Ilan Berman, Vice president for Policy at the American Foreign Policy Council, appreciated the efforts of the government and praised targeted financial measures against the wealthy minority and unilateral sanctions forcing companies and financial institutions to end their cooperation with Iran. He, however, believed that there was greater potential for exploiting these measures and that the administration should follow that path more thoroughly.[73]

Apart from the economic sanctions themselves, communication with the Iranian population with respect to implementing sanctions and continuing efforts to persuade the international community about the necessity to introduce sanctions within the UN SC was perceived as crucial. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the acceptance and

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[70] *United States Policy toward Iran – Next Steps: Hearings on H.R., Day 2, Before the Committee on International Relations*, 109th Cong. 75 (2006) (statement of Gary Milhollin, Director of Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, accessed March 20, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-109hhrg26438/pdf/CHRG-109hhrg26438.pdf.

[71] *Iran Sanctions and Regional Security: Hearings on H.R., Day 1, Before the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 110th Cong. 7 (2007) (statement of Brad Sherman), accessed June 10, 2013, http://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=487528.

[72] *Iran Sanctions and Regional Security: Hearings on H.R., Day 1, Before the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 110th Cong. 9 (2007) (statement of Philip H. Gordon, Senior fellow for American foreign policy at the Brooking Institution), accessed June 10, 2013, http://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=487528.

[73] *Iran Sanctions and Regional Security: Hearings on H.R., Day 1, Before the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 110th Cong. 15-18 (2007) (statement of Ilan Berman, Vice president for Policy at the American foreign policy Council), accessed June 10, 2013, http://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=487528.

understanding of Iranians in general did not reach very high nor positive levels so far as the American policy was concerned. President Bush therefore decided to launch a radio broadcast, which was meant to explain the American policy to the public and which might have improved the overall opinion of Iranians about the intentions of the United States and about the country itself. According to Arshin Abid-Moghaddam, the U.S. State Department established an "Iran Desk" and "Iran watch units" in Dubai and other embassies in the Middle East.[74] And the Washington Post informed that the government appropriated $75 million to a program aimed at "expanding broadcasting into the country funding nongovernmental organizations and promoting cultural exchanges."[75][viii]

This radio project Voice of America[ix] was launched in December 2002 and during the first radio remarks President Bush communicated to the Iranian public that "if Iran respects its international obligations and embraces freedom and tolerance, it will have no better friend than the United States of America…"[76] Therefore even though the government did not have any official diplomatic ties with Iran, it was trying to communicate, if not with the leadership, then with population of the country. The U.S. was hoping not only for change of mind of the Iranian public, but also consequently in a change of the regime in the country as a result of civil disobedience invoked by the population.

After the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as the Iranian president in June 2005, this hope basically evaporated. The conservative politician was able to mobilize the majority of the population and swept the streets to his own side. All in all, the radio broadcasting proved to be insufficient in supporting the American efforts and the most viable option how to curb the nuclear program of the Persian country required the concerted effort of the free world with the United States playing the leadership role while staying in the shadow of all events and situations. Therefore Bush aimed efforts of the administration at persuasion, pressure and sometimes lobbying in order to win the international community for the common cause – to prevent the Islamic regime from gaining capability and all facilities necessary to master the full nuclear cycle crucial for

[74] Abid-Moghaddam, "Manufacturing War," 647.
[75] Peter Baker and Glenn Kessler, "U.S. Campaign Is Aimed at Iran's Leaders," *Washington Post*, March 13, 2006, accessed May 2, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/03/12/AR2006031201016.html.
[76] George W. Bush, "Radio Remarks to the People of Iran," December 21, 2002, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed March 5, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=64835.

development of nuclear weapons. Washington especially insisted on stopping enrichment of uranium by the country.

2.2 Diplomacy

Since the United States did not have any official direct diplomatic relations with Iran, negotiating was difficult and the White House basically designated three European countries – Great Britain, Germany and France (E-3) - to be the mediators demanding suspension of enrichment and a return to honoring international obligations. Even though Iran showed interest in direct talks between Tehran and Washington in 2003, American officials rejected the suggestion, arguing that the United States would have come to one table with Iran only if the country would have made concessions in respect to Washington's requests – notably to stop with uranium enrichment. The nuclear program of Iran, however, did not present the only problem the White House had with the country. It often criticized Tehran's support for terrorist organizations, most notably Hamas and Hezbollah, and it denounced the regime's involvement in Iraq – delivering weapons ammunition and supporting local guerilla groups. When asked why the Americans did not join the E-3 in engaging Iran during an interview with European journalists in 2005, President Bush explained that "They [Iranians] just need to do what the free world has asked them to do…Give up … weapons program...They know what they need to do,"[77] in order for that to happen.

Even though the U.S. did not participate in the main meetings, it was still a part of the IAEA Board, negotiated with the Iranian ambassador in the UN and was in contact with the European countries participating in the meetings and advised them on the proceedings. That, however, complicated the situation because even though the European countries would have been willing to offer Iranians certain concessions and European negotiators actually flew to Washington to consult this option, the United States blocked their proposal and insisted on the original preconditions. Its role was denounced also by Iranians since it viewed European states only as puppets without any real power during the negotiations. Former Iranian President Khatami, who was perceived as reformist, told to the Europeans that there "was a great pessimism in Iran.

[77] George W. Bush, "Interview with European Print Journalists," February 18, 2005, *The American Presidency Project,* accessed July 17, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=73724.

The hard-liners think America wants to deny us our rights and Europe is walking in step with America. The more time you waste, the stronger they get."[78] Even though the negotiations lasted for many months, the E-3 and Iran could not reach any agreement. European countries demanded suspension of enrichment, but Tehran was not willing to abandon it. The first round of the negotiations ended up as a total failure. Later, E-3 offered Iran to have 20 running centrifuges for research, regardless of the opinion of the British diplomat Savers who thought it would be "extremely dangerous."[79] Iran at first agreed to the offer but later requested to have no limitations on centrifuges and dropped the preliminary signed deal.

Despite the fact that Europeans and Americans had different opinions about how should negotiations with Iran be led and managed, the international community agreed on the most important thing – the ultimate goal: preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon and forcing it to meet its obligations to the world and to the IAEA. President Bush repeated numerous times that the goal was not supported only by the United States, but it was demanded by the world. "Iran must comply. It's – the free world expects Iran to comply… We believe they will when the free world comes together."[80]

The administration assumed that further isolation of Iran from the international community would have brought the desired fruits. Rather than engaging the Persian country in a dialog, negotiations and offering it some incentives, the American government supposed that international pressure, not the incentives, would have forced Iranians into cooperation. That opinion changed only after Condoleezza Rice became the Secretary of State in January 2005. Rice had been very moderate when commenting about Iran in her previous statements and she distanced herself from the opinion of the hawks in the administration. When she came to the office of Secretary of State, Rice placed Iran on top of her agenda. The U.S. voted in May 2005 in favor of the application of Tehran into WTO as a forthcoming gesture to Iran for its negotiations with E-3. Iran thus became observer member of the organization. A year later, at the end of May 2006, Rice announced that "We are agreed with our European partners on the

[78] Norma Percy, "Iran and the West: Nuclear Confrontation." *BBC Two Document*, 59:02. Airdate February 21, 2009, accessed July 17, 2013, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNaHcknkbOI.
[79] Ibid.
[80] George W. Bush, "The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders," June 25, 2003, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed 17, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=63370.

essential elements of a package containing both the benefits if Iran makes the right choice and the costs if it does not. We hope that in the coming days the Iranian government will thoroughly consider this proposal."[81] Her speech was revolutionary not only by the fact that the United States offered incentives to Iran but it was marked also by the realization that the regime change, which the Bush Administration strived for, was not a viable option. Rice was seeking a change of behavior of the regime rather that the change of the regime itself.

Pursuit of regime change directly affected the policy of the Bush Administration up to this speech. Even the broadcasting of Voice of America aimed at change of the leadership in Iran and the speeches of President Bush, and other officials including John Bolton (from 2001-2005 the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security and then the U.S. Ambassador to the UN) and Vice President Dick Cheney clearly articulated wishes for democratization of the country. Washington repeatedly expressed its support for the people of Iran, including during the earthquake in 2002, asserting that America was striving to befriend the population but never failing to mention that regime change was crucial to any potential friendship. Such claims, if expressed under different circumstances, would not have created such horror, but since they appeared in the context of the National Security Strategy of 2002 alongside the possibility of preemptive military strikes and emphasizing democratization of countries together with the invasion of Iraq, many of those proclaimed statements raised fears in Tehran about the true intentions of the American government.

Those fears heightened especially after the Bush Administration discussed and a year later in 2006 signed a deal with India, which promised cooperation on nuclear issues. President Bush argued, that "America and India are united by deeply held values. India is a democracy that protects rule of law and is accountable to its people…The bill will help keep America safe by paving the way for India to join the global effort to stop the spread of nuclear weapons."[82] The White House together with the Congress thus expressed trust in India and hoped that it would help the U.S. not only in the fight against terrorism and nuclear proliferation (due to its promises and commitments

[81] Condoleezza Rice, "Press Conference on Iran," May 31, 2006, *U.S. Department of State Archive*, accessed July 17, 2013, http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/67103.htm.
[82] George W. Bush, "Remarks on Signing the Henry J. Hyde United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act of 2006," December 18, 2006, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed June 12, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=24403.

resulting from the deal) but also that it would responsibly take advantage of possibilities of nuclear energy. However the only possible explanation of the situation according to Iranian leadership and governmental critics was that the main American objective was not to prevent nuclear proliferation as claimed on regular basis, but, by putting pressure on Tehran regarding its nuclear program, to achieve regime change in the Persian country. Had the American government truly been against the proliferation of WMD, it would have logically discarded such a deal as the one mentioned above and tried to prevent the existence of the nuclear program in India as well.

Therefore when Nicolas Burns, State Department Political Director, openly admitted in 2006 that "That policy [regime change] had failed. We had tried regime change, we had advocated regime change, we had a very threatening posture towards Iran for a number of years. They didn't produce any movement whatsoever,"[83] it came as a relief to many people and raised hopes that the Iranians would agree to cooperate with the United States since it made concessions and changed one of its leading objectives. The opposite was, however, true. After weeks of negotiations, Iran ignored this call and decided to continue with its policy together with the nuclear program. Such a result brought great disappointment of hopes about peaceful solution to the nuclear crisis and came as a blow to the policy of willingness in the United States. Even though President Bush repeatedly expressed that he favored a diplomatic solution over the military one and that diplomacy had not yet failed, and described plans for an attack on Iran as "wild speculations"[84] and a "simply ridiculous"[85] idea, hypotheses about military actions were still appearing.

2.3 Military option

American politicians in the House of Representatives were so alarmed by the media speculations that they requested the President and the Secretary of State to provide the House documents relating to strategies and plans either designated to cause regime change or for the use of military force against Iran. Mr. Henry Hyde (R-IL) from

[83] Percy, "Iran and the West."
[84] Bush, "Remarks at the Paul H. Nitze School."
[85] George W. Bush, "The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders in Brussels," February 22, 2005, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed May 28, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=73725.

the Committee on International Relations did not agree with the request and wrote an adverse report arguing that "The administration has given absolutely no indication that military strikes or actions to facilitate a regime change are presently being considered. In contrast, the Administration's commitment to a diplomatic solution is evident."[86]

Diplomacy was always the preferred way of the Bush Administration, but it never forgot to mention the possibility of military action, should Iran fail to comply with its international obligations. For example, American Senator John McCain (R-AZ) proclaimed during an interview that "There is only one thing worse than the US exercising a military option. That is a nuclear-armed Iran."[87]

The administration preferred to leave the threat of military action present. The President and also the Secretary of State often voiced that "all options are on the table" when asked what would have happened should the Iranian leadership ignore the call of the international community. The military option stayed on the table for the two terms of the Bush presidency. It was an option of last resort, as Condoleezza Rice claimed, but "The President is not going to take any of his options off the table, temporarily or otherwise. I don't think you really want the American President to take his options off the table."[88] It would not have been strategic for the White House to fail to mention the military option, as the American President is right to have all possibilities at hand. If Bush had admitted that he would not resort to the military option, it would have weakened his position. In other words, it simply had to be out there.

Yet Bush repeatedly and clearly expressed that diplomacy was the most important approach for him in coping with Iran. However, journalists and some politicians did not believe him after the experience with Iraq and the content of NSS. The President was desperate to make a distinction between the two cases but it did not work. Journalists often pointed out the similarity between the situation in Iraq and in Iran but President Bush tried to discard such comparisons and repeatedly explained that "on all issues [I] will try diplomacy first and exhaust diplomacy." He also asserted "the doctrine of prevention is to work together to prevent the Iranians from having a nuclear

[86] Comm. on International Relations, H.R. Rep. No. 109-526, at 3 (2006) (Adverse Report of Henry Hyde submitted together with dissenting views), accessed June 2, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRPT-109hrpt526/pdf/CRPT-109hrpt526.pdf .
[87] "Senators: Military last option on Iran," *CNN*, January 16, 2006, accessed June 16, 2013, http://edition.cnn.com/2006/US/01/15/iran.congress/.
[88] Rice, "Press Conference on Iran."

weapon. I know here in Washington prevention means force. It doesn't mean force, necessarily. In this case, it means diplomacy."[89]

On paper, in the National Security Strategy, pre-emption remained an option. In addition, some government officials did not display confidence in a diplomatic solution and publicly proclaimed their preference for military action. These factors caused major hurdles in media communication regarding a peaceful and diplomatic solution to the crisis. Use of force was, even if formally not favored, still possible. As a reminder of that, two U.S. carriers were staged in the Persian Gulf.[90] Notion of threat heightened especially in times when some information about military planning or consideration leaked to the public. But any military plan does not mean that some kind of action is actually seriously planned. Journalist Gerard Baker admitted that "The political line-up has been transformed…even the hawks in the Vice-President's office are far from convinced of the likely efficacy of pre-emptive strikes to take out Iran's NP."[91]

Nevertheless, the assurances that the military attack would not happen never truly outweighed the fear that it would. Since the regime in Tehran was paranoid, it might have been constantly frightened that the attack could come any second. The White House never articulated a direct threat or did not establish under which circumstances an attack would have become a reality but the lingering possibility might have been worse for the Persian country than a clearly formulated threat. The red line of the nuclear program had been changing, and was sometimes confused. President Bush for example in April 2004 said that "…the development of a nuclear weapon in Iran is intolerable, and a program is intolerable."[92] A few months later, however, Bush made a distinction between the nuclear program and nuclear weapons and when IAEA Board of Governors in February 2006 voted to report Iran to the UN SC, the American President said that the free world "is not about denying the Iranian people the benefits of civilian

[89] Bush, "Remarks at the Paul H. Nitze School."
[90] R. Nicolas Burns, "How the U.S. Government Views Iran" (paper presented on Conference Coping with Iran: Confrontation, Containment, or Engagement?, Washington D.C., March 21, 2007): 61, accessed May 28, 2013, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/conf_proceedings/2007/RAND_CF237.pdf.
[91] Gerard Baker, "Read my lips – no attack on Iran," *Times*, April 28, 2006, accessed July 17, 2013, http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/columnists/article2613877.ece.
[92] George W. Bush, "Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at the Newspaper Association of America Convention," April 21, 2004, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed June 14, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=64509.

nuclear power… Sole purpose in this vote is to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by the regime."[93]

However neither the sanctions approved by the Security Council, nor those approved solely by the United States, not even threats of military attack, nor the attempts at diplomatic negotiations and solutions changed the posture of the Islamic Republic regarding the nuclear issue. The nuclear program in Iran experienced further progress and reached the levels which President Bush has always denounced. The policy of the United States failed.

[93] George W. Bush, "Statement on the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors Vote To Report Iran to the United Nations Security Council," February 4, 2006, *The American Presidency Project,* accessed June 14, 2013, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=65121.

3 Recommendations v. Actual Policy

The nuclear program of Tehran has posed a real threat not only during the Bush Administration. The menace lasts even today and still engages officials, politicians and scholars. It does not matter whether the existence of the nuclear program of Iran has posed a direct threat to the United States or whether the threat has been derived through its relations with Israel and other allies in the region – it affects the entire world (danger to NPT, possible nuclear arms race, nuclear accident, terrorists…). No matter if direct or derived, the threat was real and had to be addressed.

The Bush Administration addressed the nuclear crisis of Iran differently than it was advised to by the community of scholars. Which approach would have been better and what policy would have persuaded Iran to act responsibly and adhere to its commitments to the international community is very difficult to say. Iran still proceeds with its nuclear program and neither the Bush Administration, nor the current Obama Administration nor the international community has found an effective way to cope with the nuclear proliferation and the threat that Tehran might have developed its own nuclear weapon.

The approach of the Bush Administration was rather criticized than appreciated not only because it did not follow various recommendations but because the actual policy did not transfer into any tangible result. The truth is that Tehran did not stop with the nuclear program, but Bush's policy achieved important advancements and brought the attempted goal a little closer. American officials recognized that the pressure of the United States was not sufficient when dealing with a regime such as the one in Tehran and that the pressure had to emerge from the international community. This approach allowed the American government to stress that the request to stop enriching uranium was not solely the whimsy of the White House but rather a wish of the free world. The approach won praise for its effort to curb the Iranian nuclear program and to prevent further nuclear proliferation.

Observation of the current policy of American President Obama suggests that the approach towards Iran during presidency of George W. Bush might not have been as bad as suggested, since the policy has not significantly changed even though Obama suggested during his campaign in 2007 that he would talk to Iran without any preconditions and offer it some incentives. Nowadays the United States has still

proclaimed development of nuclear weapons by Iran as "unacceptable," insisted that the Islamic Republic should stop with enrichment, raised the issue in the international arena and talked about the possibility of military action. The current administration also continues with the economic sanctions against the regime and even tightens them. Economic pressure actually became the main diplomatic tool of the foreign policy spectrum which President Obama has used in respect to Iran. Even though there are signs that the economy of the Middle Eastern country is in a bad shape, critics stress out that Iran has still not changed its policy.

3.1 Economic sanctions

A policy tool with doubtful effectiveness – that is how one could describe the economic sanctions. Even though their implementation during the Bush Administration changed behavior of companies from the United States and from other countries, notably allies, it did not change the behavior of Iran. Rather than backing down under the economic pressure, Tehran was still holding its head up and not giving up. To the contrary – progress of work accelerated and Iran came closer to its goal. Moreover the regime was able to transform the issue of economic sanctions into a powerful tool of propaganda and to stir up hostility towards the United States even more among the people. For this reason it seems that the economic sanctions as they were established were not working. The government in Washington should have either strengthened the sanctions even more and assured full cooperation of other countries in the Security Council of the United Nations (notably Russia and China, which would have been very difficult and complicated), abandoned some sanctions as an incentive or lift them all.

Even though the Bush Administration was able to win broad support for the sanctions in the international arena, allies of Tehran in the SC were careful to agree only to sanctions, which were not hurting their mutual cooperation, and therefore blunted the provision to which most of the free world would have agreed. Sanctions were therefore rather mild and enabled Iran to redirect its interests to other countries instead of cutting it off from the international aid for good. This observation is not valid only for sanctions implemented through concerted international effort but also for those implemented by the United States only. Even today, secondary sanctions of the present administration in Washington (those which prevent cooperation of international companies with Tehran)

are not affecting every country. They omit, for example, China, which is now very active in trading with Iran.

What the Bush Administration might have underestimated with regard to the economic sanctions was the public image of the United States in Iran. It was trying to communicate with the population through radio programs, but such communication has been only one-sided and could have only very problematically assured any kind of feedback. What would have been probably more effective is the additional communication via internet. Internet and the new media proved to be very important in today's world and might have served as a better and more effective communication channel. Potential of the internet and the desire of Iranians for change were clearly seen after the presidential elections in 2009, when people protested on the streets against manipulated results of the voting. The protests were even nicknamed "the Twitter revolution" since protesters relied on Twitter and other social media to communicate among themselves and to call and organize various events.[94] The United States could have exploited the potential of internet earlier and it might have even explained to the population of Iran their actions and the reasoning behind the sanctions. According to statistical data, the number of internet users in Iran skyrocketed between 2000 and 2002 from 250,000 users to more than 5,500,000 people.[95] Moreover Iran has high strata of young educated people who are struggling due to the bad economic situation. Those people might have been the target of American messages (in the times when the internet was not checked so thoroughly by censors). Were the United States been more active in this regard, it might have imparted better information to the population of the Islamic Republic and it also could have gotten a better impression of what the situation in the country was like.

If the United States would have, on the other hand, abandoned the economic sanctions, or at least some provisions of it, it would have created more space for negotiations. For example, Washington could have canceled the trading sanctions on civilian aircraft parts since it is not directly linked to the nuclear program and according to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) working paper, the poor technical upkeep of the airplanes began to pose danger to safety of the passengers

[94] "Editorial: Iran's Twitter revolution," *Washington Times*, June 16, 2009, accessed March 23, 2013, http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/jun/16/irans-twitter-revolution/.
[95] "Iran: Internet usage, broadband and telecommunications reports," Internet World Stats, accessed July 17, 2013, last modified December 11, 2012, http://www.internetworldstats.com/me/ir.htm.

travelling on boards.[96] This gesture, together with other concessions, might have produced some, even though limited results. Also, since the past lessons showed that economic sanctions do not prevent the development of nuclear weapons by determined regimes, but rather raise cost of it, it might have been worth the try. It is clear that solution of the nuclear crisis had to be based on concessions of both sides, the Americans and Iranians and therefore required a proactive approach by both countries. Any attempt, any sign of willingness to compromise, might have helped the situation.

3.2 Diplomacy

Step made by the Bush Administration regarding the end of stubborn blocking of Iranian application to the WTO is therefore perceived very positively. Iran should have a chance to enter the organization and the United States was the only country vetoing its attempt. Even though Iran can, as an observer country, draw loans for the country and therefore bypass the economic sanctions imposed on it in a way, it had a right to be part of the international economic community. It was the biggest economy outside of the WTO (after 2001 when PRC entered the organization) and if one would look on the list of members and their economic performance, Iran surpassed many of them. Since Washington decided to approve the application for further processing, it also took out the criticism by Iran about the double standard of the White House. For example, Myanmar was subjected to economic sanctions by the United States due to its undemocratic regime, but it enjoyed membership in the WTO since 1995 and Pakistan joined the organization the same year.

Feeling of the double standard was however more affected by the negotiations of the Bush Administration with India. Even though Washington acted as a protector of the NPT and stressed the importance of elimination of the threat posed by the nuclear weapons, it not only proclaimed its objective of improving and strengthening its own nuclear stock but it also negotiated a nuclear deal with India. This deal rightfully annoyed Tehran and harmed prospects of negotiations. White House followed different interests when negotiating the deal, including the help of New Delhi with the war

[96] "The Safety deficiencies arising out of the United States Sanctions against the civil aviation of the Islamic Republic of Iran" (working paper, ICAO, Economic Commission, Assembly – 36th Session, September 20, 2007), accessed July 18, 2013, http://legacy.icao.int/icao/en/assembl/a36/wp/wp275_en.pdf.

against terrorism and strategic balancing in Asia, and ignored the diplomatic impact of nuclear issue at hand. Its assertion that India won its right for help of the U.S. in regards with nuclear energy by its democratic values not only alarmed Tehran about possibility of forced regime change but it also failed to explain why Washington did not mind that India was not an NPT signatory and that it concealed its nuclear program from the world.

It must be, however, noted that at the time when this deal was signed, India already possessed nuclear weapons and therefore the agreed nuclear assistance of the United States did not help the development of nuclear weapons in any way. Iran, by contrast, was in a different situation – the country has still not had crossed the nuclear threshold and such a step by it might have been prevented. Thus it is logical that the United States approached India differently than Iran. However it would have been wise to refrain from any provocation of Tehran. The Iranian regime has tried to find every single issue at hand which might have even indicated some misconduct or unfairness by the United States and was ready to exploit it for its own good. It might have been better to try to refrain from providing all those possibilities, thus limiting any criticism, any excuse and any pretext for Tehran.

Tehran, for example, argued that if Washington was so afraid of proliferation it would not have assisted India with its nuclear program. India did not sign the NPT, unlike Iran, which even agreed to the Additional Protocol (and later, under Ahmadinejad, abandoned it), and gained not only approval by the American government but also its support. Iran on the other hand helped the U.S. with its efforts to establish a government in Afghanistan and also engaged in the war against terrorism but failed to gain any benefits from its willingness and support. The steps of Washington had been therefore greatly criticized and perceived as discrimination of Iran. When Ahmadinejad spoke publicly about the evil intentions of the U.S. he did not forget to mention actions regarding India by the Bush Administration and it served well in proving his point. Longtime critic of the U.S.-India cooperation Zbigniew Brzezinski in his op-ed in the LA Times also condemned the approach of Bush Administration: “The recent US decision to assist India’s nuclear program, driven largely by the desire for India’s support for the war in Iraq as a hedge against China has made the US look like a selective promoter of nuclear weapons proliferation. This double standard will

complicate the quest for a constructive resolution of the Iranian nuclear problem."[97] Even though the situation of the nuclear issue with regard to India was very different than the one of Iran, Tehran skillfully used it to win more support. Should have the Bush Administration been more cautious, it might have spared itself the negative perception and criticism it gained after signing the deal.

One of the most often lambasted features of diplomacy was, however, the American rhetoric. Scholars usually did not approve harsh criticism of the Islamic republic and would have welcomed a more positive approach and an effort to establish direct diplomatic relations. The State of the Union Address presented by President Bush in 2002 was seen as completely wrong and inadequate. According to most scholars,[x] branding Iran in this way and associating it with the other two countries was a major mistake, which caused the administration diplomatic setback and complicated further cooperation with Tehran. Former President of the Islamic Republic Khatami condemned the speech and said that it damaged the relations and that they became even worse in comparison to the time of the Iranian Revolution.[98] According to Dunn, the speech symbolizes a lost opportunity for the United States – supposedly one might have even perceived some signs of pro-American outlook in the Iranian foreign policy before it and therefore the "axis of evil" speech came to Tehran as an unpleasant surprise which doomed reformists in the country who tried to promote a positive approach to the United States. People in Iran recognized that even if the regime would be friendlier towards the United States, America would still remain reserved and hostile. Also according to Trita Parsi, the moderates in Iran were severely weakened after the country's inclusion in the Axis of Evil,[99] and Dunn who did not deny that the Bush Administration's assessment was justified, saw the President's speech clearly resulting in "strengthening considerably of position of conservative nationalists in Iran, culminating ultimately in the election of a new and hardline president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad."[100]

Scholars blamed Bush for closing a window of opportunity for improvement of the relations with Tehran and for not using the cooperation of the two countries in

[97] Zbigniew Brzezinski, "American debacle," *LA Times*, October 9, 2005, accessed January 12, 2013, http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/opinion/la-oe-brzezinski9oct09,1,7725665.story.
[98] Percy, "Iran and the West."
[99] Parsi, "The Price of Not Talking to Iran," 12.
[100] Dunn, "'Real men want to go to Tehran,'" 22.

Afghanistan for further progress in the relations. Iranian President Khatami was not only willing to cooperate with the United States but also negotiate with the White House. Even though this assertion was true, many scholars forgot the motivation behind such a behavior. Iran did not cooperate with Washington because it would have imminent interest to help the United States – it had imminent interest to take advantage of the situation and strengthen its position in the Middle East. Involvement in the talks with Afghanistan guaranteed it more influence in the country and weakening of other adversaries in the region.

Despite Khatami giving the impression that he would be ready to help the United States in other areas, Iran, in the meantime, progressed with its nuclear program and after the invasion of Iraq, equipped local militant groups so they would be more effective in killing Americans and allies deployed there.[101] Deliveries of weapons and provided trainings to combatants were proven by the Bush Administration and publicly announced. The question obviously is why should the United States be friendly towards a country which was hurting it behind its back, telling lies about it and concealing development of weapons of mass destruction? As noted before, governments in Washington, London and Tel Aviv knew about the secret facilities and also about the connection of Tehran to Pakistan network of A.Q. Khan – notorious nuclear dealer. Leadership of the Islamic Republic was closely cooperating with the network and cut numerous deals with it from 1987 onwards, including sales of technical designs and samples of centrifuges P-1 and advanced centrifuges P-2 necessary for development of nuclear weapons.[102] If George W. Bush had information about secret nuclear facilities in Iran and the nuclear sales, he could have understandably chosen not to trust Iranian representatives and their claims about the peaceful nuclear program. The most often criticized Axis of Evil speech would be therefore fully comprehensible in this context.

Politics and steps of the Bush Administration influenced the political situation within Iran and it would be unrealistic to say that the actions of the administration did not provoke any kind of reaction in Tehran. But it is highly exaggerated to claim that Iran turned more conservative because of one speech delivered by the President of the United States and that it continued with the nuclear program for the same reason. Iranians sought nuclear program for more than fifteen years already when the speech

[101] Percy, "Iran and the West."
[102] Corera, 59-81.

was delivered and during this time did not show any signs that they would have stopped with it. More realistic assessment is that President Ahmadinejad was elected thanks to his economic program and promises of economic revitalization of the country, not because the majority of population was so invested in the nuclear program of the country. According to polls, 80% of Iranians were willing to provide IAEA full inspection rights and guarantee the international community not to develop or possess nuclear weapons in return for outside economic aid.[103] The State of the Union Address might have raised fears of the government about military action against it but it did not cause the decision to start nor to proceed with the nuclear development.

3.3 Military option

The already mentioned paranoia of the Iranian leadership played a significant role in its decision making and therefore might have complicated any diplomatic attempts. Ali Larijani, who was the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council and as such led the negotiations regarding the nuclear program, himself admitted that after the offer from the United States government in 2006 which sought engagement of Iran, direct talks with Tehran and promised great benefits to the country in exchange for suspension of enrichment, "Some [men in structure of power] thought this was a trap, a trick."[104] The deal was not concluded and prospect of reestablishment of diplomatic relations did not materialize.

However it was important that the United States abandon the goal of a regime change. Proclamations about it only irritated Iran and bolstered its motivation to get the nuclear weapon as a deterrent. Ray Takeyh, for example, believed that it was the United States, which literally drew Iran into the process which might have possibly led to the production of nuclear weapons. Takeyh explained the idea by pointing out that one of the major drivers for the Iranian nuclear program is the feeling of insecurity, which was enhanced by the encirclement by American forces after the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Also Bowen and Kidd believed that ever since the Iraq invasion and the change of National Security Strategy counting on pre-emptive strikes, the sense of insecurity in Iran skyrocketed. Not only was the country literally encircled by the American ground

[103] "Polling Iranian Public Opinion," 5.
[104] Percy, "Iran and the West."

forces, navy and allies where U.S. bases were stationed, but American officials, including politicians in the foremost positions started to drop hints about possible military action against Iran and media speculated about the military plans of invasion. Adam Tarock believed that the USA was to blame for the situation in the Middle East since it was "projecting its imperial power arrogantly, aggressively and destructively"[105] and Wehrey and Watkins asserted that the Iran's interest in nuclear program stemmed from possibility of "consolidating its regional stature as well as its interests in bolstering its deterrent capabilities to avoid a military attack from the US.[106]

Truth is that Tehran might have perceived itself vulnerable under the then-present circumstances and might have been forced by its own fear to proceed with the nuclear deterrent. Famous phrase "all options are on the table," however, became just a saying used to comfort not only American citizens but also allies – notably Israel. President Bush could not retreat from the assertion, because Iran would translate it as American weakness and as a permission to proceed with the nuclear program. However since President Bush repeatedly proclaimed that the diplomatic option was the one desired and since the administration realized the growing dissatisfaction of the population with war in Iraq and Afghanistan, the chances that the President would have started another unpopular war with high casualties appeared almost impossible. Empty threats by contrast might have strengthened the position of Iran which must have perceived the impotence of Americans to act.

But even though Iran might have viewed the United States itself as helpless, and get even more ignorant and impertinent as a result, it could not have been at peace at all. The White House was not in fact the only power base talking about the attack. Israel perceived Iranian nuclear weapon as a direct existential threat and approached it as such. Tel Aviv repeatedly asserted that it would not tolerate nuclear bomb in the hands of Iranians and called for military action against the facilities. In case of Israel those threats could not have been perceived as empty since the country already engaged in such an attack and destroyed nuclear reactor in Osirak, Iraq in 1981. Rumors had it that the United States, as the most advanced and probably closest friend of the country, would have taken part in the attacks.

[105] Tarock, "Iran's Nuclear Programme and the West," 645.
[106] Wehrey, Watkins, *Iraq Effect*, 26.

None of those events helped the negotiations. Iran was even more paranoid about its own security and therefore had bigger motivation to proceed with its work. However at least some provision restraining Iran from doing whatever it would have wished to must have been adopted and the threat of military attack was a viable one. The United States rightly abandoned its wish to topple the local regime (it was causing unnecessary stress) but on the other hand, it rightly left possibility of military action open.

Suggestion of scholars to introduce regional security system appears to be unrealistic and based on hopes rather than real situation in the Middle East. Many actors in the area have had long lasting disputes with other countries in the region. The Middle East encompasses countries with one of the most complicated foreign relations with their neighbors in the world and one of the most flourishing diversity of religions, languages, interests, economic backgrounds and history. To find a common ground for a security system, which would satisfy all worries, requests and needs of the individual countries would have been very difficult. Moreover, a common regional security system, which should have been overseen by the United States, which has been perceived quite negatively in the region, seems unimaginable and could not be feasibly implemented.

Conclusion

Question, what is the best and the most effective tactics when dealing with the Iranian nuclear program, have engaged politicians and scholars for many years. This paper analyzed and compared approaches of the Bush Administration with the one of scholars. It found out that between the recommendations and the actual policy existed great differences, and that the Bush Administration followed often completely different political options and diplomatic paths than the once which were suggested to it by the community of experts.

Especially with regard to the economic sanctions chose American government opposite direction. It did not only keep the sanctions already placed on Tehran, but actually even tightened them and worked hard to persuade the international community represented in the United Nations to adopt similar measures resulting in introducing sets of sanctions by the Resolution of the Security Council of the United Nations. Other significant diversification of the approaches could be detected in respect to the military option. Even though the scholars would have wished the Bush Administration to refrain from talks about the military action and to abandon the intervention for good, President Bush insisted on keeping it in place, despite his often suggestions that the diplomatic option was the preferred policy of the United States.

Evaluation and analysis of ideas of the scholars showed that some of their proposals were not viable and not practicable in reality. For example, plan to create regional security system overseen by the United States seemed unrealistic since interests of countries in the region of the Middle East vary wildly and since the perception of the government in Washington is not constituted of only positive feelings. Other recommendations of scholars were problematic as well. Experts suggested that the Bush Administration should lift the sanctions, offer Iran renewal of diplomatic relations and refrain from military actions. In that case, the United States would be left with no leverage against the regime in Tehran and could hardly influence the development of the nuclear program. If the United States took those measures, Iran would perceive Washington as vulnerable and it might have even encouraged it to speed up its progress.

Therefore, the author believes that the actions of the Bush administration were suitable the situation and even though they did not force Iran to change its behavior, it registered partial success in dealing with the issue.

Shrnutí

Íránský jaderný program představuje pro Spojené státy americké hrozbu. O její omezení, nebo úplné zamezení se snažilo už několik administrativ a ani ta prezidenta Bushe tomu nebyla výjimkou. Již od počátku své vlády musel George W. Bush řešit, jaké kroky vzhledem k neustále postupujícímu íránskému jadernému programu podniknout a jaká opatření přijmout nebo zavrhnout.

Stejnou otázku si ale ve Spojených státech nekladli jen politici, ale i akademikové. Jejich názory a následná politická doporučení mapuje první kapitola, která vychází především ze sekundárních zdrojů. Zabývá se názory expertů a analyzuje jejich přístup k jednotlivým politickým krokům – především k zavedení ekonomických sankcí, k možné diplomacii a jednání na nejvyšší úrovni a také k vojenské alternativě řešení problému.

Druhá kapitola se podrobně věnuje jednotlivým politickým krokům, které byly reálně přijaty Bushovou administrativou a zavedeny do praxe. Kapitola zjišťuje, že americká vláda v podstatě zavedla v několika ohledech do své politiky přímý opak toho, co jí doporučovali experti.

Jestli byl takový postup správný nebo jestli by bylo efektivnější přistoupit ke změnám navrhovaných akademiky, zjišťuje třetí kapitola. Ta porovnává oba přístupy a zkoumá je v kontextu situace na Blízkém Východě. Výsledkem je vyhodnocení přístupu Bushovy administrativy jako účinnější politiky vůči Iránu a jeho snaze o další vývoj nukleárního programu země.

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[iv] Germany started with the construction of Busher nuclear power plant in Iran and Russia continued with it after Germany abandoned the project due to the possibility of Iranian quest for nuclear weapon. It is possible that for example Austria and Switzerland provided Iran some assistance. See Bowen, Wyn Q., and Kidd, Joanna. "The Iranian Nuclear Challenge." *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 80, No. 2, (Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: March 2004): 257-276. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3569241.

[v] Patrick Clawson claimed that the sanctions caused loss of profits on trade and investments to the American companies and reduced U.S. export. He, however, believed that the indirect cost of the sanctions was greater since they increased concentration of world oil production in the Gulf States and disabled to U.S. to diversify its oil sources. And Richard Hass argued that sanctions can be expensive for American business, farmers, and workers since they reduce revenues of American companied and individuals. The loss of sales, opportunities and partnerships should be according to Hass, noted when considering sanctions. See *Economic Sanctions and American Diplomacy*, ed. Richard N. Haas, (New York: The Council on Foreign Relations Book, 1998).

[vi] Sanctions banned supply of nuclear-related materials and technology to Iran, and froze assets of key individuals and companies related to the nuclear program.

[vii] For example after the speech of Ahmadinejad in the UN in January 2006 during which he advocated eradication of Israel there was a bipartisan support for immediate diplomatic action regarding Iran's nuclear activities. Senators also agreed that the military action had to remain an option. Support for the administration's policy however varied during the times. Republican Senator Chuck Hagel for example voted against the sanctions on Iran once. For more information see: Samuel Cutler, "Setting the Record Straight On Hagel, Iran Sanctions," *Al Monitor*, January 24, 2013, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/01/chuck-hagel-iran-defense.html.

[viii] Despite the sanctions, cultural exchange continued (in a limited way) between the two countries in apolitical areas such as education, science, health, environment, sport and art. For more information see Ramin Asgard and Barbara Slavin, "US-Iran Cultural Engagement: A Cost Effective Boon to US National Security," *Atlantic Council: Iran Task Force*, 2013, http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/403/sac130627usiranculture.pdf.

[ix] According to "VOA-TV Gains Large Audience in Iran," VOA-TV reached 12%, Radio Farda (joined project by VOA and Radio Free Europe) 7% and VOA Persian Radio 2% of adult audience in Iran in 2003 (based on telephone survey of 1 000 Iranians) "VOA-TV Gains Large Audience in Iran,"

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[x] See Ray Takeyh, “Iran’s Nuclear Calculations,” *World Policy Journal* 20, No. 2, (summer 2003), http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=318b7c19-b3a6-498b-88bf-1c1fdf6c1056%40sessionmgr114&hid=128 and David Hastings Dunn, “’Real men want to go to Tehran’: Bush, pre-emption and the Iranian nuclear challenge,” *International Affairs* 83, No. 1, (January 1, 2007): 19-38, http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=7f9ec4e3-85d0-498c-8eae-edeb7d34ce35%40sessionmgr111&hid=113.