

Jitka Štěpánková  
M.A. Dissertation Evaluation  
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Title of Dissertation: ***Attitude of the Bush Administration to the Iranian Nuclear Program: From Theory to Practice***

Jitka Štěpánková has chosen the policy of the Bush administration towards Iran and its nuclear program as the topic of her M.A. dissertation. This issue is important because the matter still has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the international community. Nuclear proliferation by rogue states such as Iran represents a threat to global security and must be taken seriously. Therefore, young scholars like Jitka need to tackle this very sensitive question. The work is well referenced, properly structured, and sticks to the point. I am pleased with the length because the treatise is neither too short, nor too lengthy. It contains an Introduction, three main chapters, and a Conclusion. In the following paragraphs, I will offer my critique of the dissertation's individual aspects.

In the Introduction, Jitka clearly spells out the content of the main chapters. The overview of the literature is excellent and Jitka explains well the overall structure of the dissertation, which involves the views of scholars (Chapter 1), the position of the Bush administration (Chapter 2), and a contrast between recommendations and actual policy (Chapter 3). It is obvious from the Introduction what Jitka's reasoning is and this is praiseworthy.

Chapter 1 represents an overview of what major scholars have written about the issue of Iranian nuclear proliferation. There has been an active debate about whether the Iranian quest for a nuclear capability is more dangerous than not and there has also been some debate as to the security of Iranian nuclear facilities.

Overall, Jitka discusses scholars' views on the effectiveness of economic sanctions, diplomacy, and possible military intervention. The chapter is balanced and it is evident from the footnotes that Jitka has gone to great lengths to discuss as many sources as possible.

In Chapter 2, Jitka analyzes the evolution of Bush administration policy towards Iran and its nuclear program. She rightly points to the famous "axis of evil" speech, in which Iran was clearly defined as a rogue state. The matter is approached once again from the perspectives of economic sanctions, diplomacy, and possible military action against Iran. Jitka correctly states that the Bush White House enacted measures that went against the recommendations of scholars. The argumentation is sound and supported by the best possible sources of information.

Chapter 3 pits recommendation versus policy. Jitka attempts to make a judgment about whether the Bush administration or the scholars were correct in their ideas concerning how to deal with Iran. Jitka very meticulously scrutinizes the arguments of both sides and arrives at the conclusion that the Bush administration pursued the correct policy despite the fact that Iran has not been deterred to this day from its quest to build a nuclear weapon.

The Conclusion summarizes Jitka's main arguments. She repeats her opinion that the Bush administration's approach (tightening of economic sanctions) was and continues to be preferable to the lofty notions of high-minded (my comment) "security scholars."

This dissertation is of superior quality. The only minor criticism I have is that there are many grammatical and usage errors. Nevertheless, I recommend an **excellent** mark.

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