



## Always In The News, Never News

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The trouble in Iran is like the Ravel's bolero, but only in part: always the same tune, but fewer variations. And a very basic binary structure. Today they give a little, tomorrow nothing. Yesterday it was nothing, but the day before yesterday was pretend-to-give a little. Or, it can all happen in 24 hours, a week or ten or twelve days. Never total immobility. Never return to the same starting point. They always move a step ahead. With the speed of geologic evolution, they gradually advance toward their objective while the rest of the world, at least the part that concerns us, moves farther and farther from its own.

Their goal is the bomb. They want it and they want it and they want it. This will immunize the regime, destined to become increasingly unpopular due to its internal corruption and economic incompetence. Ahmadinejad's economic policy would flunk him out of any freshman class. Beyond perpetuating the Islamist system, the bomb would give them the regional supremacy this 1,000 year old nation thinks it deserves –the oldest, the most ancient and cultured. No one should underestimate the nationalist elements in the regime and its ability to make the demands of the Is-

lamic revolution coincide with patriotic interests.

And no one should ever forget geography. They have a major nuclear neighbor to the north, Russia. Another to the southeast in Pakistan.

Nor can anyone ignore history. They have spent centuries at odds with the Arabs, who they view with disdain, though this does not exclude clandestine collaborations. At the beginning of their revolution they suffered a long, cruel war in which Saddam had the backing of the other Arab nations, having always considered Irak a bulwark against the Persian threat.

All of this lies behind Teheran's nuclear ambitions, but none of it makes those ambitions any less dangerous. Iran has spent 20 years lying to make its ambitions reality. They did things that would have been legitimate under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which they signed, if they had done them in the light of day and under the watchful eye of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna –the organization charged with ensuring compliance with the treaty. Twenty years of lying makes you think. It also removes all credibility when they

say their goals are solely civil, technological and scientific.

Iran has managed to make sure nobody believes it. And this even after the distressing experience with Saddam -he said he didn't have the bomb, but did everything possible to make the world believe he was lying. Is it possible the

Ayatollahs don't want the bomb, as they say, but that they too are acting to make us believe they are trying to fool us? People disagree over the immediacy and size of the threat, but no one is contemplating such a twisted hypothesis.

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