

Is Obama Redistributing Power?

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***Forerunner*, "WorldWatch," May-June 2015**

Among the most distressing news this year has been the direction of the ongoing negotiations over Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons. Despite signing the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1968—during the reign of the shah—Tehran has coveted weapons of mass destruction at least since the founding of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. However, it was not until the 1990s, under Supreme Leader Ali Hosseini Khamenei, that the Shiite Muslim nation took significant steps to develop and expand its nuclear capabilities, turning to Russia and China for assistance.

Since then, Iran has been incrementally adding to and upgrading its abilities to mine and process uranium, as well as to convert and enrich plutonium. In 2000, Pakistani help in the form of centrifuge technology enabled the Iranians to begin constructing industrial-scale enrichment facilities, and it was not until a couple of years later that Western powers were made aware of their progress. From that time, the world's leading nations have pressured Iran to curtail or surrender its nuclear ambitions.

At every turn, it seems, Iran has been able to work the international system to further its aims. It has been so skillful that it stands on the threshold of joining the five "official" nuclear powers: the United States, United Kingdom, Russia, China, and France. Based on International Atomic Energy Agency data, the December 2014 Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control report found that Iran could produce enough weapons-grade uranium for a single nuclear warhead in just under two months. While its negotiators are prolonging talks in Geneva, Iranian nuclear scientists are well on their way to making those negotiations meaningless.

Diplomats, led by American Secretary of State John Kerry, believe they have secured Iranian acceptance of a set of restrictions that will halt Iran's bomb-making ability at a year away from completion for at least a decade. However, realizing how Tehran has been able to advance their nuclear scheme while under sanctions, there are significant doubts that they can ensure Iranian adherence to an agreement. A major sticking point is that Iranian officials, including Ayatollah Khamenei, have promised to limit or even block access to sensitive military sites and nuclear scientists. Iran also wants international sanctions lifted quickly, while Western nations desire a mechanism that will "snap back" appropriate penalties if the Iranians breach the agreement.

Knowing the history of both Iran and the devious path of its nuclear ambitions, critics of the negotiations—particularly American conservatives and the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—are befuddled about why the Obama administration has complied so readily with Iranian delays and demands. Despite the administration's denials, it appears that it is actually facilitating Tehran's procurement of a bomb. But how could any rational person back any plan that puts nuclear weapons in the hands of a rogue nation like Iran, which is likely to use them to advance its radical Shiite Islamist agenda?

Some ascribe a personal motive for President Obama's enthusiastic support of the negotiations, that is, his personal antipathy for the Israeli Prime Minister, who is adamantly against any concessions to Iran. His office requires Obama to rise above his personal feelings to perform his duties for the nation. His peevish reactions to Netanyahu's visit to America and his speech to Congress, however, indicate that animosity may be a factor.

Yet, that is too simplistic. More likely, Obama's eagerness for an agreement with Tehran lies in his stated goal: to fundamentally transform America. He seems to be working against U.S. interests abroad because he wants to reduce American influence. Having signaled that the United States has for too long dictated to and policed the rest of the world, he appears to have taken it upon himself to return much of that power to the nations. This policy played out in the Benghazi fiasco: By not intervening to save American lives, he restricted U.S. power. He has followed this timid, hands-off policy throughout the Middle East especially.

How, then, would allowing Iran to go nuclear advance his aims? It would immediately expose the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a sham, and several nations already with the technology to produce nuclear weapons would likely accelerate their programs or declare their capabilities (perhaps Israel, Germany, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, India, etc.). In addition, it would force Sunni Saudi Arabia to join the nuclear club, as would Turkey and maybe Syria and Egypt. The Islamic State would certainly try to get its hands on a bomb. With a dozen or more countries armed with nuclear weaponry, the playing field, as Obama may see it, would be more level, and the United States could no longer dictate to the rest of the world as it has.

He likely perceives this potential multi-polar world as a more just scenario than the present one dominated by a superpower. To him, the supremacy of a solitary hegemon is "unfair," the hallmark term of his presidency. As he has worked to redistribute wealth through his domestic policies, his foreign policy seems designed to redistribute power, the currency of international relations, to the nations that have long lacked it.

One of God's curses for disobedience reads, "I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you . . ." (Leviticus 26:17). Has America reached the point of "those who hate you shall reign over you"? A president who works against the best interests of the country he governs fits the description.

Within the context, God provides the solution: returning to Him in repentance. Do Americans have the spiritual resolve to turn to God before it is too late?