

IRAN VS. THE WEST: WILL THE WORLD CONTINUE TO WAIT?
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Which foreign policy response would you choose?

		Before disc. (Assume eng.)	After disc
Diplomatic engagement?	18	0	
Sanctions?		0	
Seek/Await Internal Revolt?		0	
Military Action?		0	
Restart Fuel Swap Talks?	3		7-9

What is meant by diplomatic engagement? The assumption is that all of the suggested responses are directed toward stopping Iran's development of nuclear weapons.

Does the world just sit around and wait for Iran to develop these weapons?

If I were Iranian, I would wonder why we can't have nuclear weapons if everybody else does.

During the Cold War, the fear that the other party might also use the weapons kept nations with such weapons from using them. If Iran developed nuclear weapons, wouldn't they fail to use them because they felt threatened by possible retaliation? Does the age of suicide bombers change all that, so that Mutual Assured Destruction would no longer work? But don't ascribe the suicide-bomber mentality to all Iranians.

Why should Iran trust us? The only time Iran had a democratic government, we got rid of it and had Mosaddeq executed, then installed the Shah. We encouraged Hussein against Iran. Then Bush's "axis of evil" statement fueled hard-line conservatives in Iran

The Palestine/Israeli conflict plays into Iran's hands. And the hostage crisis played into our fears.

Avoiding nuclear proliferation should be the goal of foreign policy. Obama believes that anti-proliferation policy should eventually result in the destruction of U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons. Do you think that we could get Israel to sign the non-proliferation treaty? The present non-proliferation treaty allows nuclear power; fuel swaps could close the loophole that would allow the development of weapons from the enrichment of nuclear fuel.

Why was it so easy for Pakistan to develop nuclear weapons? [According to a [2001 Department of Defense report](#), China has supplied Pakistan with nuclear materials and expertise and has provided critical assistance in the construction of Pakistan's nuclear facilities.] You can't stop anyone from developing nuclear weapons. Fuel is only one part of the problem. Plutonium is a byproduct of atomic energy and can be used to develop a nuclear bomb.

Is Israel creating a problem with its intransigence (i.e., continuing to build settlements)? Even if opposition parties took over in Israel, there'd be no diminution of its nuclear program.

North Korea is exporting nuclear technology. The Syrian nuclear plant was building for several years (with North Korean products and assistance) before it was detected and Israel took it out.

Brazil and Turkey have offered to handle a fuel swap with Iran. They thought it was a reasonable proposal and were astounded at U.S. opposition. Does Iran really need nuclear energy? Iran has a lack of refineries and a lack of foreign investment. In the long term, they can't rely on oil. Military action against Iran would make the price of oil explode.

What gives us the right to decide who could take part in nuclear talks?

Saudis are far more evil than Iran. Their Wahhabi form of Islam is extremely severe; they provide madrassa schooling; women are oppressed. It's a far more fervent religion than Iran's shi'a religion. Don't forget that most of the 9/11 terrorists were Saudis.

Does Iran support international terrorism? They do support Hezbollah and Hamas, but Hezbollah has announced that it has no intention of acts against the U.S. Hezbollah, Hamas and the Taliban are not international terrorists. They are very different from Al-Qaeda.

Israel supported us in overturning Afghanistan's Taliban regime.

None of these states in the region is democratic; we need to hold our noses and negotiate. A potential recipe for progress: Iran gains nuclear weapons, whereupon the other states in the region go nuclear. Would this create MAD in the area? Would that be helpful or more perilous? There is no evidence that the people of Iran are suicidal or inclined to terrorism.

If we removed our presence from Afghanistan and Iraq, it would make it easier to deal with Iran.

The U.S. has a simplistic Cold War stance on the nuclear issue. The destructiveness of nuclear weapons is a matter of magnitude. The World says war is okay as long as no nuclear weapons are used. Isn't this a case of selective proliferation?

A fuel-swap program is actually a band-aid until we can develop a long-term program.

Muslims are not synonymous with terrorists:

Indonesia is a democracy, and it has the largest Muslim population in the world.

The Koran forbids suicide or murder.

On the practical side, It's mechanically difficult to make a plutonium bomb.

Both the Koran and the Bible can be quoted for any position you want to take. In this country, some Christian fundamentalists have declared a fatwah on abortion doctors.

Iran is a huge country; instead of thinking of it as an enemy, we might think of it as a promising country that can be brought around. Should we remove or reduce sanctions? Recently, China and Russia have agreed to sanctions but Brazil and Turkey have refused to do so.

Aren't most of these problems caused by the U.S.? U.S. is always meddling in other countries' affairs. We promised North Korea a nuclear energy plant and reneged.

We have to move toward non-proliferation at all costs, with military actions. Military actions would be the match to light the fire, with terrible consequences for the world.

Would Iran's possession of nuclear weapons make nations sit down and negotiate seriously about nonproliferation?