

Title:

The Umbrella Of Nuclear Mushroom

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590

Summary:

Deliberations over the UN sanctions against North Korea or Iran for their nuclear programs bring to memory the League of Nations talk before the WWII. Was German refusal to pay reparations a casus belli? Re-militarization of Rhineland? Extensive military production? No single such issue is a casus belli. Politicians bogged down in details don't see the grand picture of the imminent war. Then and now.

The West demonstrated its impotence in the face of nuclear proliferation....

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Article Body:

Deliberations over the UN sanctions against North Korea or Iran for their nuclear programs bring to memory the League of Nations talk before the WWII. Was German refusal to pay reparations a casus belli? Re-militarization of Rhineland? Extensive military production? No single such issue is a casus belli. Politicians bogged down in details don't see the grand picture of the imminent war. Then and now.

The West demonstrated its impotence in the face of nuclear proliferation. China got nuclear weapons with impunity. Pakistan received a minor slap of sanctions. North Korean rulers sagged under the weight of sanctions: the Japanese refused to sell them melons. Sanctions against Iran would hardly include oil, and even so the mullahs can do without the oil for some time; yet rising price of oil will be blamed on the sanctions.

Ahmadinejad needs a rhetorical, not battlefield enemy. Iran will use the bomb to gain dominance in the Muslim world. That spells a development of the Shiite axis, huge discontent in the Arab world, and the arms race. Arab states will rush to develop nuclear weapons to be on par with Iran. The Arabs know that Iran won't attack Israel with nuclear weapons, but could well attack them. Central Asian countries will also be concerned because Iran includes them in its sphere

of dominance. They have oil money and Russian support against Iran, and will join the arms - probably, nuclear arms - race.

Iran will provide nuclear shield to Israeli enemies such as Syria or Hezbollah. When Muslim Brotherhood officially comes to power in Egypt and switches the policy to confrontation with Israel, Iranian nuclear protection will allow them to build up the Egyptian army in safety. Arab nuclear umbrella invalidates Israel's only viable military strategy, preemption. If Iran signs a mutual defense treaty with, say, Lebanon, Israel would be unable to operate against Hezbollah since, technically, every Israeli incursion in Lebanon is an aggression. Lebanon would be able to conduct an undeclared war against Israel, Egypt would mobilize and move its troops into Sinai, but Israel - concerned with Iranian nuclear protection - could do nothing.

Nuclear containment is a game of nerves. With Iranian nuclear warheads in Lebanon and Palestine, what would Israel do? Escalating, like Kennedy did in the Cuban missile crisis, is unlikely. Israel already lost her credibility when we did not stop the Iranian deployment of Zelzal-2 missiles in Beka'a. Iran will move its nuclear weapons in Lebanon under a mutual defense treaty, a clearly protective measure. Every reasonable person would agree that Iranian nuclear weapons defend Lebanon, not are intended for aggression. Israeli government won't act, as it didn't act against Egyptian, Libyan, Algerian, Moroccan, Pakistani, and Iranian nuclear facilities. Iran would win the war of nerves. Mutually assured destruction works against tiny Israel.

With sufficiently aggressive leadership, Iran could provide nuclear umbrella to any state willing to attack Israel. Iran could threaten nuclear retaliation against Israel if we attack enemy population centers or even anywhere deep in the enemy territory. Soviet Union successfully used that approach in 1973. It provided Egypt with SAM-5 anti-air missiles to limit Israeli operations to the front zone, and moved the missiles with nuclear warheads to prevent Israeli nuclear retaliation. Iran could use the nuclear umbrella to inhibit Israeli preemption, penetrating strikes, and generally any combat on the enemy territory. Bereft of Sinai, Israel lacks the territory of her own to conduct mobile defense. Iranian nuclear capability opens the way for the Muslim world to encroach on Israel by conventional means.