

Iran: Be Afraid, Be Very Afraid #3

by Hugh Fitzgerald



A few days after a spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry had claimed that Israel was trying to claim credit, "as it always did," for attacks which it very likely had nothing to do with, Iran changed its story. For even the Iranians found they could no longer spout such obvious nonsense, and a few days later admitted that Israel was almost certainly involved in the Natanz attack.

Iran on Tuesday had called for action against Israel following the damage to the Natanz facility. "This method Israel is using is dangerous, and it could spread to anywhere in the world," government spokesman Ali Rabiei said during a press conference.

He added: "The international community must respond and set limits to these dangerous actions by the Zionist regime."

In Tehran's topsy-turvy moral calculus, the nuclear bombs Iran is trying to build are not "dangerous actions." It's the attempt by Israel to prevent the mad-dog regime in Tehran from acquiring those bombs that is "dangerous." Few will agree.

His comments came as Iran appeared to publicly acknowledge on Tuesday that last week's fire at Natanz was not an accident...

Does the right hand know what the left hand is doing? Not in Iran, where the official news agency IRIB first reported a blast, which blast was then denied by a member of the Parliament, who in turn was contradicted by the mayor of a

town close to the blast, who claimed that there had been an explosion, but that it was at a factory that filled gas cylinders, which contradicted the first reports that suggested the target had been a power plant.

On Tuesday, an explosion reportedly damaged a factory south of Tehran. According to Iranian media reports, two people were killed and three were injured in the blast at the Sepahan Bresh factory in the Kahrizak district.

The area's governor said human error was to blame for the incident.

Yes, "human error." There's been a lot of that going around Iran in the last two weeks. So far, "human error" has caused enormous damage in seven separate incidents.

An explosion also reportedly damaged a power plant in the Iranian city of Ahvaz last Saturday. A few hours later, the Islamic Republic News Agency said a chlorine gas leak at a petrochemical center in southeast Iran sickened 70 workers.

A week before the Natanz blast, an explosion was felt in Tehran, apparently caused by an explosion at the Parchin military complex, which defense analysts believe holds an underground tunnel system and missile production facilities....

The seven incidents were the result of Israel's determination both to slow down Iran's nuclear project by destroying the new centrifuge plant at Natanz, and to destroy the ballistic missile factory, and the development of nuclear warheads for intermediate-range ballistic missiles, at Khojir. And the five other attacks? Power plants, chemical factories, all of them very close to, and possibly part of, known military sites. Aside from Natanz and Khojir, these other cyberattacks appear to have been carried out to make sure Iran learned its lesson: don't mess with us. We can wreak havoc all over the place, and

there's nothing you can do about it. This is a sample. A very small sample.

Many countries can breathe easier because of Israel's spectacular recent successes in Iran. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, and Jordan are among those in the immediate neighborhood who are pleased with the damage Israel has inflicted on the Islamic Republic. In Europe, too, there must be many leaders, including those who have been scolding Israel for its "annexation" plans, who are filled with relief that Iran's malignant nuclear plans have now been delayed by at least two years. A lot can happen in those two years, including further Israeli advances in cyberwarfare, for another rinse-repeat series of attacks on Iran, and the possible crumbling of the Iranian regime from widespread popular protest.

The Israelis have proven their worth yet again to their Arab allies. Why would those allies want to weaken Israel, by preventing it from extending its sovereignty over part of the West Bank? Discount what their leaders feel they must say for public consumption. They need Israel to be able to conduct its attacks on Iran, and Iranian-backed forces in Syria and Lebanon, without having to worry overmuch about threats from Palestinian terrorists. Those seven separate attacks, at Natanz, Khojir, Tehran (two sites), Shiraz, and Ahvaz (two sites) have just demonstrated why, for commonsensical Arabs, and for many others too, in Europe and North America, Israel is the gift that keeps on giving – *Con sprezzatura*.

First published in