

February 5, 2018 Monday 20 Shevat 5778
20:21 IST

THE JERUSALEM POST

Iran is being bullied

By Dr. Glen Segell Ezri Center for Iran & Persian Gulf Studies, University of Haifa
02/04/2018

When it rains it is not a drizzle, it is a flood! This is what is happening with news from Iran. This week Iran has told the world the reason that it needs missiles and is involved throughout the region. Iran and other nations are being bullied! Perhaps the truth is that Iran is the bully! One of most important features in addition to the reason is that the sources of the news are Iranian.

Firstly there is no doubt that now we can say “We knew it. Now we have proof”. Iran has responded to America’s plans to revamp its nuclear arsenal, largely in response to a perceived renewed threat from Russia. Iran Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the move brings humanity “closer to annihilation,” and on President Hassan Rouhani said it proved Iran’s own need for “defensive power.” Rouhani said Iran’s defense power is a deterrent, over which the country will never negotiate in the face of threats. He explained “Our national power is for peace, we gain power for deterrence. Deterrence is the same as dignified peace.”

This is in reference to Iran’s claims that it needs to continue developing its ballistic missile program and maybe nuclear weapons for the word deterrence is synonymous with nuclear affairs. Who told us the news about Iran’s nuclear deterrence this week? Tehran’s prosecutor-general Abbas Jafari Dolatabadi said a court has sentenced a suspect to six years in prison for relaying information on the country’s nuclear program to a US intelligence agent and a European country. Surely this means that there is a nuclear program and an Iranian judge has said so!

Secondly there is no doubt that now we can say “We knew it. Now we have proof”. Netanyahu and Putin met and agreed that Russia doesn’t want Iran in Syria and that the days are numbered for Iranian presence there. Netanyahu threatened an Israeli attack on Iranian and Hezbollah targets in Syria and Lebanon, so Russia sent its Security Council head Nikolai Patrushev to Israel. Nikolai Patrushev also met with Palestinian leadership.

Until now this we could only speculate why Iran has a regional involvement. Who told us the reason? The evidence comes from Ali Akbar Velayati, who advises Ayatollah Khamenei on international affairs. On regional involvement he informs “Iran has no intention to abandon the oppressed nations in the region...Our presence in Iraq, Syria, Palestine, and Lebanon is in coordination and with the consent of these countries’ governments. Also, if we are helping Yemen, this is our humanitarian responsibility.”

He didn’t stop there because he went down to basics. It is not just the other nations in the region it is also Iran. On missiles and nuclear weapons he informed it is all because of President

Trump and said “Throughout history, Iran has been the flag bearer both in civilization and culture and though you could bully Iran like this under its [former] monarch [the Shah], not now, though.”

So Iran feels bullied by America and this is why it needs a deterrence of missiles and nuclear weapons and because other nations are also bullied in the region Iran needs to protect them. This is what Iranian leaders have told us this week!

OK, not a bad explanation but what else has Iran been doing this week that proves that Iran is the bully. Iranian naval guards have seized four Indian fishing vessels for trespassing on the country's territorial waters in the Arvand waterway on the mouth of the Persian Gulf. So who is the bully now?

Ongoing the world could also ask about Iran bullying the ethnic minority Kurds, Baluchis, and Azeris in Iran! And the Baha'i, Turkmen, Christian, and Jewish communities! The Iranian constitution says that schools must teach their languages but is this implemented? Do they have government jobs? Are their regions not neglected by the state, resulting in above-average unemployment? Are there not land and property confiscations, restrictions on movement, and unlawful imprisonments of ethnic minorities? How many Sunni mosques are there in Iran? So who is the bully now?

So the bottom line is that this week Iran has provided the world with an important revelation. Iran has told the world the reason that it needs missiles and is involved throughout the region is because Iran and other nations are being bullied! The sources of the news are Iranian. Yet it is seems that Iran is the bully! Is it not the claim of all bullies to deny their actions? “Who me? I was just joking! See how he [Afghan refugee in Iran] cries from laughter and not pain?”

Copyright © 2014 Jpost Inc. All rights reserved •