

## Our World: ElBaradei's nuclear policy

Caroline Glick , THE JERUSALEM POST

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The UN's International Atomic Energy Agency Director Muhammad ElBaradei is a man of dubious integrity. In 2005 he was vaunted to the heights of the international stratosphere when he received the Nobel Peace Prize. The Nobel committee extolled him for his "efforts to prevent nuclear energy from being used for military purposes." Yet the facts indicate that the opposite is true. In his five-term tenure at the IAEA, ElBaradei has used his power to facilitate the proliferation of nuclear energy for military purposes. This he has done by working to prevent responsible states, like the United States, from taking action to prevent rogue states from pursuing nuclear weapons.

Take Iraq for example. Right up to the US-British invasion of Iraq in March 2003, ElBaradei consistently maintained that he either couldn't tell if Iraq was or was not pursuing nuclear weapons, or that he could see no evidence that Saddam Hussein was pursuing nuclear weapons. Indeed, just before the war, in an effort to scuttle US-British efforts to convince the UN Security Council to pass a new resolution approving the use of force against Saddam Hussein's regime, ElBaradei reported to the Security Council that Iraq had abandoned its nuclear weapons program.

Then, in October 2004, with the still-same object of denying international legitimacy to US operations in Iraq, ElBaradei indirectly acknowledged his previous mendacity. He announced that since the invasion, equipment and materials that could be used to make nuclear bombs had disappeared from Iraq.

As he told it, in the aftermath of the US-led invasion, entire buildings related to Saddam's nuclear weapons programs had been dismantled without any record being made of their contents. High precision "dual use" items such as milling machines, electron beam welders, and high strength aluminum all turned up missing.

Suddenly, the same ElBaradei who had insisted that Iraq had no nuclear program warned, "The disappearance of such equipment and materials may be of proliferation significance." In the months ahead of the US-led invasion - months which ElBaradei spent buying time for Saddam by prolonging inspections that could be relied on to never end conclusively - then prime minister Ariel Sharon warned that satellite imagery had shown large truck convoys of suspicious materials moving from Iraq to Syria. Former IDF chief of General Staff Maj.-Gen. (res.) Moshe Ya'alon later reiterated Sharon's claims.

US AIR FORCE intelligence operative David Gaubatz, who was sent to Iraq between March and July 2003 to search for nuclear, chemical and biological installations found four suspicious, reinforced, underground sites in southern Iraq around Nasiriyah and Basra. For reasons that remain to be examined, the US failed to inspect the sites. Medical examinations of Gaubatz and his team taken after their site visits showed that they had been exposed to high levels of radiation.

As Melanie Phillips reported in the British Spectator in April, Gaubatz stated that he subsequently learned from CIA, British and Iraqi intelligence agents that the sites were stripped by Iraqi, Syrian, and Russian operatives

who moved their contents to Syria.

In a move exposing his own cynical refusal to take seriously the threat posed by nuclear proliferation, ElBaradei ended his October 2004 warning regarding the disappearance of the Iraqi nuclear equipment by asking anyone with information about the whereabouts of Iraq's nuclear program to give his office a telephone call.

In November 2006, the IAEA again expressed concern regarding the Iraqi nuclear program whose existence it had denied ahead of the US-British invasion. This time, it decried the administration's posting of certain captured Iraqi documents on the Internet. Those captured documents included Iraqi nuclear bomb designs that could be useful for other states working to build a nuclear arsenal.

WHILE DISMISSING as non-threatening Iraqi, Iranian, Libyan and Egyptian nuclear activities, ElBaradei has repeatedly expressed deep concerns about one Middle Eastern country's nuclear program. In July 2004 ElBaradei paid a visit to Israel. At the time he visited, Iran was defying his call to end its uranium enrichment activities and Western intelligence agencies believed that Iran would achieve a nuclear break-out capacity within a year.

ElBaradei used his visit as attempt to place Israel in the same category as Iran and insisted that Israel open its Dimona nuclear site to IAEA inspection and control. The next month, during a home visit in Cairo, ElBaradei proposed convening a conference on establishing a "nuclear-free zone" in the Middle East whose aim would be Israeli dismantling of its presumptive nuclear arsenal.

Indeed, ElBaradei has been unrelenting in his attacks against Israel. Over the weekend he gave an interview to Austrian television in which he harshly criticized the US decision to increase its military assistance to Israel by \$30 billion over the next ten years claiming that the assistance could lead to a regional arms race.

Since Iranian opposition forces first exposed Iran's illicit nuclear weapons program in August 2002, ElBaradei has been Iran's primary international defender. Knowingly acting in breach of the IAEA's charter, ElBaradei used his office to repeatedly stall US bids to refer Iran's nuclear program to the Security Council.

The IAEA charter stipulates that in the event that there is any evidence that a state signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is acting in a non-transparent manner regarding its nuclear activities, that state must be referred to the Security Council. In spite of the fact that since its nuclear program was first exposed Iran has been consistently behaving in a non-transparent manner, ElBaradei took four years to refer Iran to the Security Council. His determined and illegal defense of Iran bought the mullahs four years to develop their program without fear of UN sanctions or military action against it.

Last August, the IAEA sent a letter to US Representative Peter Hokstra, then chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence condemning a committee report that concluded that Iran's nuclear program is military, not civilian. The report further alleged that the IAEA was working to prevent any conclusions from being drawn about the nature of Iran's program in order to prevent international action from being taken against it.

The IAEA's assault on the Congressional report is part and parcel of ElBaradei's insistence that the US take no concerted action against Iran's program. To this end, he works diligently to demonize American voices calling for Iran to be prevented - by force of arms if necessary - from becoming a nuclear power.

IN AN interview with the BBC in May, the man who is charter-bound to prevent nuclear proliferation had an

interesting take on his international role. ElBaradei said, "I have no brief other than to make sure we don't go into another war or that we go crazy into killing each other. You do not want to give additional argument to new crazies who say 'Let's go and bomb Iran.'"

ElBaradei, who claims that Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapons is preferable to any nation taking action to militarily prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, has consistently sought to demoralize Iran's foes and potential victims by claiming that the cat is already out of the bag so any attempt to stop Iran is doomed to fail. In the same interview with the BBC, ElBaradei claimed that military strikes would be worthless because you cannot "bomb knowledge." And it isn't only military force that ElBaradei opposes. He also opposes sanctions. After a meeting in February with Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani, in which Larijani repeated Iran's refusal to end its uranium enrichment activities in spite of UN Security Council sanctions, ElBaradei condemned not Iran, but the use of sanctions.

In his words, "Our experience without exception is that sanctions alone do not work and in most cases radicalize the regime and hurt the people who are not supposed to be hurt.... [S]anctions have to be coupled at all times with incentives and a real search for a compromise based on face-saving, based on respect."

TODAY BARADEI and his IAEA are in open conflict with the US. In a move to preempt US efforts to pass a third sanctions resolution against Iran in the Security Council next month, ElBaradei acceded to a new "framework" agreement with the Iranians last week. In three rounds of talks that have taken place since last month, Iran agreed to give the IAEA some answers to some undefined questions about its nuclear program that it has refused to answer for the past five years. It also allowed IAEA inspectors to enter its heavy water plutonium production facility in Arak - a largely insignificant concession since the plant won't be operational for two years.

Gleefully extolling this great "breakthrough," IAEA spokesmen have announced that in ElBaradei's report to his board of governors and to the Security Council next month, he will use this meaningless agreement as an excuse to block a third sanctions resolution from being passed.

It is clear where all of this is leading. By undermining coercive diplomatic steps aimed at stopping Iran's nuclear program without war, ElBaradei is leading the international community to one of two inevitable futures. Either Iran will acquire nuclear weapons - as he no doubt hopes it will, or force will have to be used to prevent it from acquiring those weapons.

In the event that Iran is attacked, as his duplicitous behavior ahead of the US-led invasion of Iraq demonstrates clearly, that war will be launched and fought against the backdrop of international condemnation led by ElBaradei and his nuclear proliferating supporters at the IAEA, the Nobel Peace Prize Committee and the UN. And if, instead it is Iran that drops the bomb, well, ElBaradei will say, Israel had it coming to it, and so did the American "crazies."

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