

Give Diplomacy a Chance

According to early accounts, the Geneva talks on July 19 between Iran and the P5+1 (UN Security Council Permanent Five: the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France, plus Germany) did not achieve any dramatic breakthroughs on Iran's nuclear program and other regional security issues. The chief European Union negotiator, Javier Solana, told reporters afterwards that he will confer with Iran's chief negotiator, Saeed Jalili, in two weeks, at which point he expects a more definitive response from Iran over the P5+1 offer for comprehensive talks. "It was a constructive meeting, but still we didn't get the answer to our questions," Solana told reporters in Geneva, following the talks. Jalili called the talks "constructive and progressing."

One bright spot in the Geneva gathering was the presence of the U.S. State Department's number three diplomat, Undersecretary of State William Burns. His attendance, a break from the previous Bush Administration policy of non-participation in direct talks with Iran, marked the highest level official diplomatic engagement between Washington and Tehran since 1979.

Furthermore, days before the Geneva meeting, President Bush's National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley was in Turkey, conferring with top Turkish officials, just one day before Iran's Foreign Minister came to Ankara to meet with the same Turkish leaders. Washington sources close to the White House report to *EIR* that the Turkish government is functioning as a channel for communications between Bush and the Iranian regime.

For the moment, diplomacy has trumped the war party.

In this fragile context, Lyndon LaRouche has strongly urged all parties to keep the diplomatic track moving forward. Weeks before the Geneva gathering, LaRouche had issued a public statement, warning against imposing any artificial deadlines on the Iranians. LaRouche took careful note of the complex factional situation inside the Iranian leadership, and cited the November 2005 breakdown of talks between then-Russian President Vladimir Putin and then-Iranian negotiator Ali Larijani, as an example of the dangers of

trying to impose "red lines" and deadlines on the sensitive and complex talks.

On July 19, as the Geneva talks were underway, LaRouche reiterated: "Any time you can move this diplomatic process forward, it is a good idea to be patient, and let the talks proceed. Serious talk, in itself, is intrinsically useful," LaRouche said. "Keep it going, keep the doors open."

LaRouche noted the shift in the Bush Administration's position, and observed that "someone is working with [Secretary of State Condoleezza] Rice," and holding the war party faction, led by Vice President Dick Cheney, at bay—at least for the time being. It is clear, once again, that the U.S. military, including Defense Secretary Robert Gates, is playing a pivotal role in the anti-war effort.

Adm. Michael Mullen, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently traveled to Israel to confer with counterparts there, and, according to *EIR*'s sources in both nations, he delivered a strong warning that the United States will not condone any unilateral Israeli military strikes against Iran. In Israel itself, there is hardly a united front for war. Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi, the Israeli chief of staff, recently delivered a 45-minute report to the Israeli Cabinet, warning of the consequences of an Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear sites, particularly the enrichment facility at Natanz. Yet, hardliners in the Israeli Cabinet, including deputy prime minister and former defense minister Shaul Mofaz, are openly pushing for preventive Israeli strikes against Iran's nuclear program, and former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains Dick Cheney's staunchest ally in Israel, constantly spouting the line that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad "is Hitler."

Hardly anyone is even keeping tabs on what the British, of Sykes-Picot infamy, are up to, in all of these sensitive diplomatic maneuverings.

It is precisely at a moment like this, when the world economy is crashing, and when the danger of a catastrophic world war is greatest, that LaRouche's sage advice must be heeded.

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