International Options to Counter the Iranian Nuclear Threat

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Islamic Republic of Iran presents an enigmatic and confounding series of challenges for the international community, particularly for the United States and Israel. While the Iranian populace exhibits the most pro-Western sentiment of any nation in the Muslim world, the fundamentalist Iranian regime publicly regards the United States and Israel as its greatest enemy. Iran's Supreme Leader and champion of the Iranian Revolution, Ayatollah Khomeni, "saw the world as a Manichean struggle between good and evil, with Iran standing as a champion of good … and the United States as the champion of all things evil" (Pollack et al. 2009, 3). Despite some views that this is simply ideological and nationalistic propaganda utilized to bolster the solidarity of the regime, Iran's hard-line leadership has been consistent in acting upon their professed beliefs, constantly working to undermine both U.S. and Israeli influence and interests throughout the Middle East. The current conservative regime, including Iran's recently re-elected president Mahmud Ahmadinejad, continues to devoutly adhere to Khomeni's philosophy. Even the more moderate Iranian leaders who have moved beyond the ideology of the Ayatollah still see the United States as a traditional rival in the Middle East and Southwest Asia, a region over which Iran hopes to reestablish regional hegemony.

These two camps are by no means united in their views or their approach to international relations and politics. The hard-liners frequently employ extremely aggressive and controversial policy measures, ranging from condemnation of the Arab-Israeli peace process to thinly veiled support to terrorist groups to attempts to subvert the governments of regional adversaries. At times the regime in Tehran has engaged in irrational and self-defeating action, including the hopeless 1988 attack of U.S. Naval forces in the Persian Gulf which left the Iranian navy decimated. In opposition to the ruling regime are their more moderate and pragmatic counterparts who attempt to take a more rational approach. This group has spearheaded several attempts at international cooperation, including in the immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001, when Iran offered assistance and subsequently worked closely with its traditional Western rivals. All of these attempts have either been reined in by hard-line opposition or have been

spurned by the West, as ultimately occurred in the above example when the Bush administration labeled Iran one of the three countries in the 'Axis of Evil' and ended the cooperation. Despite the differences of these two political groups, one issue that both the hard-liners and the moderates appear to be united on is Iran's right to pursue and own nuclear technology and perhaps nuclear weapons.

In the framework presented above, it is understandable why the international community has united, in words if not deeds, against Iranian possession of Nuclear WMD. Given Tehran's hostile rhetoric combined with its propensity for aggressive and sometimes irrational action, there is understandable fear that Iran might use such weapons against the U.S or Israel, either immediately or in a time of crisis. While this is the most dangerous scenario, most concerns about Iranian nuclear capabilities stem from the perceived likelihood that such a capability could exacerbate the threats that Iran currently poses to Western interests. Some pundits fear that Iran would arm their terrorist proxies with nuclear weapons, while others fear that Iran might use them to attack unfriendly governments of the Middle East; one such target could include Saudi Arabia, who as the champion of Sunni Islam and an ally to the United States poses a dual threat to Tehran (Pollack et al. 2009, 11). A more likely scenario might see an emboldened Iran, thinking itself safe from action behind its nuclear shield, exercise less restraint in its aggressive and destabilizing actions throughout the Middle East.

As a result of these fears, there has been widespread international consensus that the possession of nuclear weapons by the current Iranian regime will not be accepted. While the urgency of the situation was somewhat undermined by the 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate report that made the surprising assessment that Iran might not achieve nuclear weapons until 2010-2015, the underlying fears have not been assuaged. Despite United Nations Security Council Resolutions and global calls for Iran to abandon its drive for nuclear capabilities, Iran remains belligerent and continues to hold fast to the belief that it has the right to pursue such capabilities. The disagreements between Iran and the international community appear to be heading towards an inevitable collision. The 2007 National Intelligence Estimate on Iran's Nuclear Intentions and Capabilities offers the following assessment:

Our assessment that Iran halted the program in 2003 primarily in response to international pressure indicates Tehran's decisions are guided by a cost-benefit approach rather than a rush to a weapon irrespective of the political, economic, and military costs. This, in turn, suggests that some combination of threats of intensified international scrutiny and pressures, along with opportunities for to achieve its security, prestige, and goals for regional influence in other ways might – if perceived by Iran's leaders as credible – prompt Tehran to extend the current halt to its nuclear weapons program. It is difficult to say what such a combination might be.

This study attempts to identify what combinations of policy alternatives might produce such an outcome by examining alternative policy options.

Literature Review

There is an abundance of literature surrounding the threat of Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and potential ways to deal with this threat. An abundance of this writing is published daily in global publications, taking the form of blog postings, newspaper stories and editorials, and short magazine articles. The vast majority of this literature is non-scholarly in nature and typically contains either overt or thinly veiled political rhetoric; while such writing is undoubtedly valuable for informing the public, its lack of depth makes it irrelevant for the purposes of this research study. Taking the form of more scholarly and professional literature is a fairly large body of written on the legal, moral, and ethical implications of the Iranian nuclear program and any policy that seeks to deal with it. While such literature is important in its own right, this study makes no attempt to integrate Constitutional or International law, nor does it attempt to present any moral or ethical judgments. This body of literature, therefore, is also generally not considered.

There are, however, several categories of literature upon which this study is heavily reliant. First are the official policies, documents, and statements of the governments included examined in the study; these documents provide a sense of those countries' collective thoughts and feelings towards the Iranian threat and illuminate the veracity of different courses of action.

Second is a large body of scholarly and professional literature, typically peer reviewed professional journal articles, that specifically examines the nature of the Iranian threat and possible ways to contend with it. In addition to journal articles, there is also an assortment of full length books which provide more historical context and greater detail than is typical of journal articles. The volume of this literature, coupled with the lack of agreements amongst the experts who produced it, underscores both the importance and complexity of the Iranian nuclear issue. In addition to these sources, this study also draws upon the work of think tanks and quasi-governmental organizations. While many of these groups are politically affiliated, the detailed monographs and studies that they produce often drive subsequent policy and as such are an invaluable part of this study.

The document most important and relevant to the current debate on Iran is the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iran's Nuclear Intentions and Capabilities. The NIEs serve as the United States Intelligence Community's most authoritative judgments on matters of national security. This NIE was a reexamination of 2005 Intelligence Community Estimate which assessed with high confidence that Iran was determined to develop nuclear weapons in the face of international pressure, an assessment that reaffirmed the popular opinion of Iran as an international threat and pariah. The 2007 NIE, however, shockingly reversed that assessment, saying instead that Iran had halted its nuclear program in 2003 due to international pressure. It furthermore assessed that Iran could resume its nuclear program and could be technically capable of producing a nuclear weapon sometime during the 2010-2015 timeframe. The NIE assessed that dynamic policy options would have to be employed to prevent such an eventuality, but provided no insight into what those policies should entail. This NIE brought the Iranian threat into the geopolitical limelight and was the catalyst for the majority of the literature discussed below.

In response to the NIE, a host of Iranian, Middle Eastern, and International Security policy experts rushed to provide guidance on how the Iranian nuclear threat should be approached. Those recommendations took multiple approaches, ranging from specific and detailed policy options to long-term strategic theory. Much of the literature simply attempted to provide and unbiased framework to the current Iranian nuclear threat, providing broad historical and cultural context. One of the most renowned experts on Iranian and Middle Eastern affairs is

Gawdat Bahgat, who attempted to provide such context in his works, explaining that Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons stems from their inherent national security concerns. Bahgat provides historical examples for Iranian distrust of the West, particularly of the United States and Israel. He cites Western support of Iranian nuclear infrastructure under the Shah followed immediately by condemnation of the Islamic Republic's continued pursuit of such infrastructure as a clear double standard which only serves to motivate the conservative regime. Bahgat also makes repeated references to Iran's mistrust of the West stemming from "how foreign powers did nothing when Iraq was attacked by Iraq's chemical weapons during the war between the two nations" (Bahgat 2007, 8). He concludes that these experiences have taught Iran that they cannot rely on foreign nations and that they should develop indigenous national defense capabilities, including nuclear weapons. Bahgat briefly examines various policy options and recommends diplomacy possibly backed by sanctions, but he never systematically examines the possible effects of such policies.

Jenifer Knepper further examines the rationale for Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons, but rather than looking at external influences she concentrates on the strategic culture of Iran, focusing on the beliefs and assumptions that shape its decision making process. She holds that three key cultural elements drive Iranian pursuit of nuclear weapons: a belief in Iran's natural place as regional hegemon and leader of the Islamic world; a deep-seated belief that the United States wants to oppress and destroy that Islamic world; an extreme sense of vulnerability and insecurity, both internal and external. Knepper holds that a nuclear-armed Iran is unlikely to employ its arsenal offensively because doing so would jeopardize its political and strategic goals. She holds that Iran's drive for strategic weapons is a perfectly rational pursuit that is in accordance with its strategic culture; nuclear weapons are likely to solidify Iran as the de facto leader of the Muslim world, they will advance its desires for regional hegemony, and they will mitigate its security concerns.

In opposition to the relatively benign views on Iran presented by Bahgat and Knepper is a camp that views Iran in a much more negative light. Patrick Cronin, Director of London's prestigious International Institute for Strategic Studies, calls Iran a "pivotal security challenge" which is likely to be a "flashpoint for war, catalyst for nuclear proliferation, spoiler for alliance management, burden for weak regional security mechanisms, and a wild card in the deck of

major power relations and global institutions" (Cronin 2008, 147). Rather than blaming external or cultural factors for Iran's security concerns and its subsequent pursuit of nuclear weapons, Cronin instead focuses on Iranian recklessness and duplicity. Cronin examines Iranian history of nefarious behavior, ranging from its attempts to hijack the international flow of oil in the Persian Gulf to its role in the bombing of Khobar Towers to its current support of proxy terrorist groups. Cronin holds that this history indicates that nuclear weapons should not be allowed to proliferate to Iran. He discusses several ways to prevent this, but his views are constrained to U.S. diplomacy and do not integrate international views and options.

A broader perspective is presented by Turkish scholars Karacasulu and Karakir who attempt to present a more holistic view of the international community's attitudes towards the Iranian nuclear threat. Rather than focusing solely on American perspectives, Karacasulu and Karakir attempt to integrate those of Russia, China, and the EU-3 (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom). Their writing focused on the possibility of a consensus amongst the most powerful and influential members of the international community, comparing and contrasting each nation's policies and motivations. While they did find some common ground, Karacasulu and Karakir ultimately conclude that there is little chance for consensus and the Iranian debate will continue. While their work is invaluable in its examination of international concerns and motives and in identifying possible international courses of action, Karacasulu and Karakir stop at that point. They fail to examine the implications of competing and incompatible strategies toward Iran being simultaneously applied by different actors, an endeavor that this study plans to accomplish.

A number of scholars focus on the pursuit of a specific policy option designed to counter the Iranian threat. Two such scholars focus their studies on the feasibility and effectiveness of coercive sanctions against Iran. Michael Jacobsen highlights several reasons that traditional diplomacy is likely to fail with Iran, and then presents a thorough analysis culminating in a recommendation that financial sanctions are the "rare tools short of military force that we can use to exert leverage when traditional diplomatic options are exhausted" (Jacobsen 2008, 10). Dingli Shen, director of the Center for American Studies at Fudan University in Shanghai, presents a similar study on the likely efficacy of sanctions against the Iranian nuclear threat. While he ultimately advocates such a strategy, he is far less enthusiastic than Jacobsen, citing the

failure of sanctions in preventing North Korean nuclear proliferation. Additionally, both Jacobsen and Shen make the assumption that the international community would cooperate with and enforce such sanctions, an assumption disproved by the work of Karacasulu and Karakir.

In opposition to literature recommending policies of diplomacy and sanctions is a large volume of work recommending preemptive military action. Proponents of this policy option hold that there are too many question marks and risks with diplomacy and maintain that military action is the only way to guarantee that the Iranian nuclear threat is eliminated. This is the viewpoint of Patrick Clawson and Michael Eisenstadt of The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, who maintain that the international community should redouble their diplomatic efforts while planning for military preemption when those efforts inevitably fail. Tim Bakken, a professor of law at the United States Military Academy and Columbia Law School, holds that preemption is the only realistic and reliable option for the international community, saying of Iran, "the doctrine of self-defense cannot prevent a nuclear nation bent on terror from destroying a victim nation before the victim can respond defensively" (Bakken 2007, 83). He holds that the world community must adopt a doctrine of preemption to prevent inevitable nuclear conflict. Leonard Spector and Avner Cohen echo the sentiment of Bakken and take his argument one step further, arguing that the international community has already tacitly approved preemption as the new standard. In their examination of Israel's preemptive airstrike on Syria's nuclear reactor in 2007, Spector and Cohen note that there was absolutely no international backlash for the 'illegal' actions and that this could be construed as the beginning of a new international norm.

Many of the arguments for preemption stem from Israeli scholars who recognize the policy as one of Israel's only options. These scholars hold that unlike the rest of the international community, Iran poses an existential threat to the State of Israel and that Jerusalem cannot afford to chance the failure of diplomacy or sanctions. Whitney Raas and Austin Long present a detailed assessment of Israeli capabilities to successfully destroy Iran's nuclear program, concluding that as long as Israel possesses accurate intelligence it has the capabilities to cripple its targets. They admit that such a strategy might have negative international ramifications, but they fail to closely examine the implications of such negative reactions. Abdullah Toukan of the Center for Strategic and International Studies also examines the possibility of an Israeli strike against Iran, providing what is essentially a fully detailed unclassified target package. Toukan

systematically examines all of the military and logistical aspects of such a strike and echoes the assessment of Raas and Long that Israel would have a high probability of success. Toukan does examine the aftereffects of such an attack, but he focuses his efforts on the likely Iranian retaliation and also neglects the broader international implications.

In addition to works examining and advocating a singular approach to Iran, there is also literature that takes a comparative approach to competing policy options. Masoud Kazemzadeh of Sam Houston State University presents a thorough analysis of alternative policy options open to the United States, examining the strengths and weaknesses of twelve alternative courses of action. Kazemzadeh presents military, diplomatic, coercive, and subversive options, but rather than recommending a course of action he illustrates the inherent weaknesses of each and presents a fatalistic view of the future. Kazemzadeh does highlight the importance of the policy decisions to be made by Israel, Russia, China, and the EU, but he does not expound on what these options may be or what impact they might have. In a similar examination of Israeli options to counter the Iranian nuclear threat, Reuven Pedatzur presents an equally fatalistic viewpoint, concluding that "the chances are that a Middle Eastern model of MAD (mutually assured destruction) will be developed in the region" (Pedatzur 2007, 536). Pedatzur presents a list of seven competing Israeli policy options ranging from military strikes to unconcealed nuclear deterrence to mutual disarmament and inspection agreements with Iran. While Pedatzur argues for the logic of the latter, he concedes that such developments are unrealistic and concludes that open deterrence is the most likely outcome.

Similar to Kazemzadeh's and Pedatzur's work is a study presented by Mark Katz of George Mason University and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Professor Katz presents an overview of Russian-Iranian relations and policy options that are available to Moscow. Katz demonstrates that despite a shared hostility of the United States there are important differences between Russia and Iran, especially over the nuclear issue. Katz examines the possibilities that Russia might choose to either strengthen its ties with Iran or forego them altogether, either of which could have important strategic ramifications, but ultimately concludes that the contentious relationship will likely continue. Katz identifies aggressive Iranian action regarding their nuclear program as the one potential catalyst for drastic change, but he does not extrapolate on the likely direction or implications of such change. Robert Freedman of the

Strategic Studies Institute presents a similar assessment of the future of Russian-Iranian relationship but does allow greater probability for a fallout should either Putin or the current Iranian regime lose control of their respective governments. Freedman also believes that the possibility of a U.S. or Israeli attack against Iran could coerce Moscow into abandoning its Iranian partner, however Freedman does not expound on the implications of any of the non-military policy options available to the West.

Perhaps the most comprehensive and profound literature available on the Iranian threat is that produced in a quasi-official status by national think-tanks. This body of work bears close examination not only for its exceptional detail and quality, but also because the work of think-tanks is frequently relied upon by decision makers in the formulation of policy; the findings and recommendations of these products, therefore, carry significant weight. One such product was produced by the Institute for National Strategic Studies of the National Defense University; Judith Yaphe and COL Charles Lutes examine both U.S. and Israeli options as well as likely Iranian responses to those actions and present the bleak assessment the international community will likely have to settle for a policy of containment of a nuclear armed Iran. The RAND Corporation has also spent significant time and energy assessing the Iranian threat and ways to mitigate it, including a seminal conference report which incorporates the views of multiple Iranian experts with different views and backgrounds, including James Dobbins, Paul Pillar, Rey Takeyh, and Martin Indyk. The RAND Conference touched on a multitude of critical issues including U.S. policy options, an examination of competing Iranian and U.S. perspectives, and alternative futures stemming from these competing policy options. The findings of the conference members were much more optimistic than those of Yaphe and Lutes; the participants agreed that Iran might be willing to cooperate on the nuclear issue, that current economic pressure and sanctions are weakening Iran's resolve, and that further engagement and containment are preferred to confrontation. Despite the comprehensive nature of the conference proceedings, however, they focused only on the U.S. aspects of the Iranian problem and largely ignored the policy options and implications of the rest of the international community.

For the purposes of this study, the single most important analysis of the courses of action available to combat the Iranian threat is a collaborative analysis conducted by The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at The Brookings Institution. Led by Kenneth Pollack, Director of the

Saban Center, this paper provides a systematic analysis of U.S. policy options ranging from diplomacy to military confrontation to containment, providing in depth strengths and weaknesses for each option. Unlike most of the other literature on the subject, Pollack considers and partially integrates the policy options of other international actors into his analysis. Pollack's analysis, however, only gives an overview of the flaws and benefits of each course of action and no recommendation of which options are more or less likely. The paper also fails to examine the possibility or implications of incompatible options being simultaneously applied by multiple state actors.

While not comprehensive, the sources listed above comprise a wide basis of understanding regarding the issues surrounding Iranian nuclear proliferation. While all of the above literature provides valuable insight into the issue, all of it fails to provide a systematic and comprehensive predictive analysis of the future. While several of these works conduct in depth and detailed studies of the strengths and weaknesses of various policy options, they do so only from the perspective of a single international actor. By largely ignoring the possibility of multiple state actors simultaneously applying differing policies against the Iranian threat, it is likely that all of this literature has overlooked potentially important consequences and implications. This study intends to add to this body of literature by examining how the policies of multiple state actors interact with and affect each other, possibly identifying important synergies or incompatibilities amongst various courses of action. This study will further attempt to identify and analyze the second and third order effects of multiple states' attempts to affect the Iranian threat with competing policies.

Research Design

This paper is a qualitative study that attempts to systematically forecast how various countries might respond to the emerging threat of a nuclear armed Iran. This paper relies upon the methodology of the Lockwood Analytical Method for Prediction (LAMP) technique to examine and evaluate the relative likelihood of each set of actions. A summary of the steps of the LAMP methodology, as described by Lockwood and Lockwood (1993, 27-28) follows:

1. Determine the issue for which you are trying to predict the most likely future.

2. Specify the national "actors" involved.

3. Perform an in-depth study of how each national actor perceives the issue in question.

4. Specify all possible courses of action for each actor.

5. Determine the major scenarios within which you will compare the alternate futures.

6. Calculate the total number of permutations of possible "alternate futures" for each scenario.

7. Perform a "pairwise comparison" of all alternate futures to determine their relative probability.

8. Rank the alternate futures for each scenario from highest relative probability to the lowest based on the number of "votes" received.

9. Assuming that each future occurs, analyze each alternate future in terms of its consequences for the issue in question.

10. State the potential of a given alternate future to "transpose" into another alternate future.

11. Determine the "focal events" that must occur in our present in order to bring about a given alternate future.

12. Develop indicators for the focal events.

LAMP does not attempt to assign probabilities or otherwise definitively predict the future; indeed, Lockwood and Lockwood hold that "the probability of any given future will be constantly changing due to the potentially infinite possibilities for free will of the national actors to affect events" (1993, 12). Rather than masquerading as an omniscient crystal ball, LAMP attempts to determine the relative likelihood of multiple alternative futures, focusing on the actors' perceptions and the consequences of their actions. In addition to this, LAMP attempts to

identify focal events and key indicators with which to monitor and assess the progression of the situation over time.

Despite LAMP's strengths as an analytical method, however, it is not without fault. While Lockwood and Lockwood explain their disdain for the use of quantifiable probability, it absence can still undermine the final results. For example, it is conceivable that one future might clearly be much more probable than those with which it is compared. While it may indeed be impossible to precisely quantify whether that future is three, four, or five times more likely, LAMP only alerts the reader that it is more likely without trying to indicate any sense of scale or magnitude. In an example in which there are four possibilities ranked 1-4, a reader might logically assume that each has a respective likelihood of 40%, 30%, 20%, and 10%; if one is indeed much more or less likely, perhaps 70%, 11%, 10%, and 9%, LAMP does nothing to inform the reader of this and may leave him with a flawed understanding of the analysis. Another limitation, at least in the case of this paper, is the necessity to limit the number of actors and policy options to ensure manageability. Due to the multiplicative and exponential nature of steps 6 and 7 above, it is impractical to include all of the possible actors and their respective policy options. While this paper attempts to focus on the most likely and critical of each, some actors that might be relevant in reality are omitted from this study and some generalizations are required.

Another potential limitation of this study is its reliance on information and data that is likely imperfect, out of date, biased, or otherwise flawed. While this study relies almost exclusively upon existing scholarly journals, monographs, and books, these sources frequently present conflicting details and information and contradict each others' conclusions. Additionally, many of the authors exhibit clear political, ideological, or ethical bias in their work and several sources originate from institutions and think tanks affiliated with specific political opinions. In addition to these potential flaws, the conclusions drawn in this paper are further handcuffed by their requisite reliance upon unclassified information only; trying to predict the actions of a state without being privy to the secrets that will drive its decision-making process is a difficult endeavor. Potential bias on the part of the author can potentially compound the above flaws; the author is by no means a subject matter expert on Iranian affairs, and no external experts were interviewed or consulted to confirm the veracity of the study's assessments or

conclusions. Additionally, as a military officer it is possible that the author may have injected personal or professional bias into his analysis, particularly that concerning possible U.S. military action. Despite the potential shortcomings outlined above, however, this study makes every effort to maintain objectivity and to highlight and account for any inconsistencies.

Chapter 2: National Actors

This chapter incorporates step 2 of LAMP to identify the primary actors whose potential policy options are likely to have the greatest impact on the future of the Iranian nuclear weapons program. Additionally, a brief rationale explaining the choice of these actors will be provided. This chapter will also complete step 3 of LAMP, examining the national actors' strategic views and perceptions of the Iranian nuclear threat as well as their motivations and justifications for pursuing their respective objectives.

National Actors:

The three primary actors examined in this study are the United States, Israel, and Russia. Many other nations interact with Iran and are seriously impacted by the threat of a nuclear armed Iran; several other states were given serious consideration for inclusion in the study. Emerging superpowers such as China and India could potentially influence any Iranian nuclear scenario, as could competing regional powers such as Pakistan or Saudi Arabia. European Union nations, particularly the EU-3 (France, Germany, and Great Britain), are also likely to have some bearing on the outcome of any Iranian future. Ultimately, however, the United States, Israel, and Russia possess unique perspectives and historical precedents regarding Iran that make their inclusion more appropriate than these other options.

The United States

       In 2002, the U.S. National Security Strategy sought to update the historic international law that governed the accepted justification for the use of force in the absence of aggression. This precedent, established nearly two centuries ago in 1837 in a U.S. – British controversy known as the Caroline case, held that preemptive use of force was appropriate only "where the attack was imminent and only forcible action could forestall such attack." The National Security Strategy, in what would become known as the Bush Doctrine, highlighted the catastrophic potential of weapons of mass destruction, the willingness of rouge nations and terrorists to use them, and the relative ease of concealment of such weapons (Spector and Cohen 2008, 18). In a clear contradiction of the Caroline precedent, the Bush Doctrine declared that "the greater the threat, the greater the risk of inaction – and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively" (2002 National Security Strategy, 15). In an address to the press, then national security advisor Condoleezza Rice expounded upon the doctrine and cemented it into U.S. policy:

> The National Security Strategy does not overturn five decades of doctrine and jettison either containment or deterrence. These strategic concepts can and will continue to be employed where appropriate. But some threats are so potentially catastrophic – and can arrive with so little warning, by means that are untraceable – that they cannot be contained. Extremists who seem to view suicide as sacrament are unlikely to ever be deterred. And new technology requires new thinking about when a threat actually becomes "imminent." So as a matter of common sense, the United States must be prepared to take action, when necessary, before threats have fully materialized.
>
> But this approach must be treated with great caution. The number of cases in which it might be justified will always be small. It does not give a green light – to the United States or any other nation – to act first without exhausting other means, including diplomacy. Preemptive action does not come at the beginning of a long chain of effort.

The threat must be very grave. And the risks of waiting must far outweigh the risks of action (Spector and Cohen 2008, 18).

Rice's comments identify several different policy options available to the United States: diplomacy, deterrence, containment, and preemptive action. Each of these will be examined in more detail, sometimes with several variations, later in this paper. It is important to note, however, that these policy decisions are not made in a vacuum. Regarding the Iranian nuclear threat, the decision of which course of action to implement will not be based solely on the underlying merits of the specific policy. Any administration implementing policy will also have to consider the political ramifications of such action, both domestic and international; additionally, while in the midst of global financial uncertainty the economic implications also carry great weight.

In its first application, the Bush Doctrine foundered badly in Iraq; the U.S. led invasion was popularly justified as essential in order to destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs, programs that were found not to exist. The subsequent occupation of Iraq, coupled with a similar endeavor in Afghanistan, has proven extremely costly and has left much of the American populace skeptical and weary of war. Because of this, it might be difficult to rally the popular support needed for any additional application of the Bush Doctrine in Iran. This difficulty will likely be compounded by the international community's reluctance to commit to or endorse military action. While preemptive actions cannot be ruled out, given the current political realities it seems likely that any significant military action will require overt provocation from Iran.

Despite this, however, the United States government has remained consistently adamant that a nuclear armed Iran is unacceptable and has kept the option of military action on the table. Specific to the threat posed by Iran, in 2006 President Bush made it clear that Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapons would be unacceptable, explaining:

[T]he reason for this is that a nuclear armed Iran would present a grave threat to the security of the world. The possession of nuclear weapons will advance it towards the realization of its aim to destroy the State of Israel. The Iranian President has already said

that the destruction of Israel is an important part of his agenda, and this is simply
inconceivable (Pedatzur 2007, 517).

Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice further clarified the U.S. position when she stated,
"We do not intend to permit [Iran] to engage in technological development that can lead to
nuclear weapons … because no-one has faith in Iranians possessing nuclear technology"
(Pedatzur 2007, 517). Since coming into office, President Obama has been quick to pick up the
gauntlet on Iran, working with Secretary of State Clinton to open negotiations with Tehran in
attempts to encourage Iran to change its pattern of behavior. "In particular, the president has
made clear that he hopes to build an international consensus to impose much harsher sanctions
on Tehran should it refuse Washington's newly extended hand of friendship" (Pollack et al.
2009, 2).

An additional concern stemming from Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapons is the
potential effects that it will have on the continued proliferation of nuclear weapons, both in the
region and internationally. Henry Kissinger, an expert on nuclear issues as well as former
Secretary of State, holds that, "the strongest shock wave, the greatest danger, is that the
acquisition of nuclear weapons by Iran will open the floodgates to proliferation of nuclear
weapons to other countries. It will cause a chain reaction" (Pedatzur 2007, 520). This concern is
echoed by Henry Sokolski of the Strategic Studies Institute, who contends that if Iran is able to
successfully develop nuclear weapons 'legally' under the auspices of the Nuclear
Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), the entire global nonproliferation regime might come crashing
down. He holds that other nations, especially those threatened by Iran, including Iraq, Saudi
Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and Algeria would emulate the Iranian model and would also
abuse the intent of the NPT (Pedatzur 2007, 520). Essentially, Iranian acquisition of nuclear
weapons could be the catalyst that ignites a regional, or even global, nuclear arms race. Despite
its typical reservations against military action, the international community might be more likely
to support harsher methods if it believes that Iranian actions are likely to threaten the future of
nonproliferation. Indeed, Spector and Cohen note that "There may also be a growing
appreciation in the international community that military action can sometimes complement and
reinforce the [nonproliferation] regime" (Spector and Cohen 2008, 20).

Israel:

The majority of Israelis, including most of the Knesset (the Israeli parliament), perceive Iran as a bitter ideological enemy that represents an existential threat, determined to bring about the destruction of the Israeli state. The clear conclusion of such views is that Israel cannot live with a nuclear armed Iran because eventually Iran will seek to employ that capability against Israel. The perception that the Iranian nuclear threat is dangerous and imminent is reinforced by the public statements of Israel's most senior policy makers. Former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said in 2005, "Israel, and not only Israel, cannot accept a situation in which Iran will possess nuclear weapons, and we are making all the preparations required for situations of this kind" (Pedatzur 2007, 513). The chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Yuval Steinitz, summarized Israeli fears, saying, "The minute Iran turns into a nuclear power, a 'black curtain' will drop over Israel, the Middle East, and the entire free world" (Bahgat 2007, 28).

Israel's perception of the Iranian threat is based on a combination of the extreme anti-Israeli rhetoric and propaganda, the official Iranian policies regarding Israel as a mortal enemy, and Iran's open support of terrorism against the Israeli state. An example of such rhetoric was seen in the conservative daily *Kayhan*, affiliated with the Ayatollah Khamenai, in which an editorial called to "wipe Israel off the map. … There are many signs and portents indicating that 'the fateful day' is coming near" (Pedatzur 2007, 514-15). Regarding the nuclear program, former Iranian president Rafsanjani seemed to scoff at the idea of nuclear deterrence, saying "In a nuclear duel in the region, Israel may kill 100 million Muslims. Muslims can sustain such casualties, knowing that, in exchange, there would be no Israel on the map" (Pedatzur 2007, 516). More recently, Iran's current President Mahmud Ahmadinejad has made a series of sensational anti-Israeli comments that have reiterated the Iranian regime's hatred of Israel, including the now infamous statement that "Israel should be wiped out of the face of the world" (Pollack et al. 2009, 132).

This history, particularly the recent declarations of the Iranian President, has revamped Israeli public debate regarding military and alternative options. For many, these remarks serve

as proof of the existential threat inherent with a nuclear armed Iran and reinforce the need to take action to prevent such a threat from materializing. Preemption and prevention have been an important part of Israeli security posture since the state's inception. The two most relevant examples of such preemption are the stunningly successful attacks against the nuclear facilities of enemy states, the destruction of the Osiraq nuclear reactor in Iraq in 1981 and the destruction of Syria's al-Kibar reactor in 2007. Both of these attacks exemplify Israeli use of the Begin Doctrine, which was articulated two days after strike against Osiraq, when then Prime Minister Menachem Begin referred to the surprise attack as "anticipatory self-defense at its best" and justified it on both moral and legal grounds:

> We chose this moment: now, not later, because later may be too late, perhaps forever.
> And if we stood by idly, two, three years, at the most four years, and Saddam Hussein
> would have produced his three, four, five bombs. … Then, this country and this people
> would have been lost, after the Holocaust. Another Holocaust would have happened in
> the history of the Jewish people. Never again, never again! Tell so your friends, tell
> anyone you meet, we shall defend our people with all means at our disposal. We shall
> not allow any enemy to develop weapons of mass destruction turned against us. … This
> attack will be a precedent for every future government in Israel. … [E]very future Israeli
> prime minister will act, *in similar circumstances*, in the same way (Spector and Cohen
> 2008, 16).

The more recent destruction of the Syrian facility by Israeli aircraft demonstrates that Begin's promise has been kept and that his doctrine is still a legitimate policy option.

In fact, while the two attacks were very similar in their execution, the contrasting international reactions to the two attacks may serve to embolden further Israeli action against Iran. In the wake of the first attack against Iraq nearly thirty years ago, the international community was virtually unanimous in its condemnation of Israel's actions. In the United Nations, after 40 speeches criticizing Israel, the Security Council unanimously passed a resolution characterizing Israel's attack as a "clear violation of the UN charter and the norms of international conduct." In a dramatic contrast with the response in 1981, however, there was virtually no reaction to the nearly identical attack against the Syrian facility in 2007. Amazingly,

not a single Arab or Muslim government commented on the Israeli attack, much less pressed for any type of diplomatic or military retaliation (Spector and Cohen 2008, 16-17). Such silence may be reflective of the changed regional landscape that has replaced Israel with the disruptive influences of Iran and Syria as the primary regional threats. While silence does not constitute an endorsement, it nevertheless suggests that the international community may be more tolerant of the use of preemptive and preventative force. Taken to the extreme, Israel might interpret the reaction, or lack thereof, as tacitly expanding the right of preemption against clandestine nuclear programs, perhaps giving them a green light to do the same in Iran.

A second school of thought exists, however, that recognizes Iran as a complex state whose policy is influenced by a host of factors, it radical ideology being only one of them. This camp has supporters throughout the Israeli government and is supported by Israel's foreign intelligence agency, the Mossad. This small but influential group believes that "Iranian policies are motivated more by national interests and preservation of the regime than by ideology" (Pedatzur 2007, 514). They hold that the anti-Israeli rhetoric is simply a means of garnering influence and support throughout the Muslim world and a tool that helps the regime maintain its power and image. This group is also unanimous about the need to prevent a nuclear armed state of Iran, but they are less concerned with the existential threat and more so with the potential implications on regional balance of power. While this group does not rule out the use of force or decry the Begin Doctrine, it is appreciably more open to other policy methods, especially the imposition of prohibitive sanctions upon Iran.

To defend their unpopular position, this group points to historical inconsistencies that contradict the notion that Iran poses an existential threat to Israel. One such inconsistency lies in the fact that Iran has had weapons of mass destruction (chemical and probably biological weapons) since 1988 and has simultaneously supported anti-Israeli terrorist groups since then, yet it has never sought to mix the two or otherwise engage Israel with these weapons. This is almost certainly because Iran believes that Israel or the international community would dispense with the legalities of plausible deniability and would conduct massive retaliatory strikes. This inconsistency points to evidence that Iran is prudent and rational, and that it is averse to being the target of such attacks, and is thus deterrable (Pollack et al. 2009, 134).

Israel also recognizes that its strategic goals regarding Iran may no longer closely align with those of the United States and appears to fear that successful U.S. – Iranian diplomacy may undermine the aims of Israel. A draft of an Israeli National Security Council situation assessment, reported in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* in November 2008, "recommends close cooperation with the U.S. to prevent a deal between Washington and Tehran that would undermine Israel's interests" (Crail 2008, 61). Any U.S. policy that significantly strengthens its relationship with Iran is likely to be seen in Jerusalem as threatening and undermining to Israeli security concerns. Such a development may leave Israel feeling isolated and exposed and push them towards unilateral action.

Russia:

Unlike the Iranian Republic's contentious relationships with the United States and Israel, Russia has enjoyed a relatively cooperative and fruitful partnership with Iran. While Russia has endured some occasional friction with Tehran, Iran has emerged as Russia's most important ally in the Middle East. Russia alternated between supporting the two sides of the Iran-Iraq war, but by the end of the conflict it was leaning towards Iran. This relationship was solidified in 1989, when Iranian President Rasfanjani visited Moscow to enact several economic and military cooperation agreements including a major arms deal. This relationship grew even stronger after the 1990-91 Gulf War, which saw the United States provide both a security guarantee and massive amounts of weaponry to Saudi Arabia, Iran's chief regional competitor (Freedman 2006, 5-6). As a result of this perceived threat, Iran increased their orders of Russian weapons systems and also laid the groundwork for the construction of an Iranian nuclear power plant. United States' objections to the increased sale of weapons to Iran escalated to the threat of punitive sanctions against Russia, culminating with the 1995 Gore-Chernomyrdin Pact in which Russia was to cease selling arms to Iran. Despite U.S. objections, however, Russian President Vladimir Putin abrogated this agreement and resumed Moscow's close relationship with Tehran, resuming arms sales and restarting Russian construction of Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant (Freedman 2006, 1). In addition to the economic benefits of such deals, Russia was undoubtedly hopeful

that its backing of Iran would serve as a counterbalance to potential U.S. backed regional hegemony.

In addition to countering U.S. influence, there are several additional reasons for Russian cooperation with Iran. First, "Russia has been one of the leading countries in nuclear energy technology and was seeking to 'enhance its role as a global supplier'" and Iran's status under the NPT made it a perfect candidate (Karacasulu and Karakir 2008, 8). Additionally, Russia has never been overly concerned about Iranian human rights violations or its support to terrorism. Perhaps most importantly, however, are the enormous economic benefits that the Iranian relationship has yielded; over 300 Russian companies were involved in the building of Bushehr, culminating in over $2 billion per year in trade between the two countries including major oil production and exploration projects with GAZPROM, Russia's state owned oil company (Freedman 2006, 7). In return for Russian support, Iran has turned a blind eye to the Islamist struggle in Chechnya and has given Russia a free hand throughout the Caucasus and Central Asia. Russia's relationship with Iran is more than one of simple economic or political convenience – it provides Russia a strategic ally against what it views as an expanding threat, as seen in the following quote from the Russian newspaper *Segodnia*:

> Cooperation with Iran is more than just a question of money and orders for the Russian atomic industry. Today a hostile Tehran could cause a great deal of unpleasantness for Russia in the North Caucasus and in Tajikistan if it were really to set its mind to supporting the Muslim insurgents with weapons, money, and volunteers. On the other hand, a friendly Iran could become an important strategic ally in the future.

> NATO's expansion eastward is making Russia look around hurriedly for at least some kind of strategic allies. In this situation, the anti-Western and anti-American regime in Iran would be a natural and very important partner (Freedman 2006, 8).

As a result of its dealings with Iran, however, Russia has been the recipient of harsh criticism from the United States and its Western allies – it was this criticism combined with the threat of sanctions that led to the temporary moratorium on weapons sales mentioned above. Despite this, however, Russia generally maintained its partnership with Iran until two events caused friction that threatened to destroy the cooperative relationship. First was the aftermath of

the attacks on September 11th; Russian commitment to work closely with the United States in its War on Terror was not well received by Tehran and put tremendous strain on the relationship (Freedman 2006, 15). The second event that threatened to fracture the Russian-Iranian relationship was the astonishing revelation in 2002 that Iran was conducting a clandestine nuclear weapons program. "Russia was deeply disappointed with the Iranian attitude of not revealing this information earlier. As a result, Russia decided to slow down the completion of the Bushehr project pointing out technical shortcomings" (Karacasulu and Karakir 2008, 8). This development caused Russia to condemn the Iranian subterfuge and led to Russian endorsement of three UN Resolutions criticizing the regime for their actions.

Despite these events, however, the relationship between Russia and Iran seems to have healed over time, with Russia completing the Bushehr project and expanding its support of Iran's nuclear infrastructure, including offering to enrich uranium for Iran's nuclear fuel supplies. The Russians adamantly defend Iran's right to pursue nuclear power generation as guaranteed by the provisions of the NPT. They claim that there is no evidence indicating renewed Iranian pursuit of nuclear weapons and often cite the 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate as support for these claims. While these defenses of Iran clearly serve to maximize the economic and political interests of Russia, Moscow still demonstrates concerns regarding the intentions of Tehran. Despite its reservations, however, Russia protects Iran from the imposition of harsh international sanctions and "argues that cooperation with Iran makes it easier to monitor its program for the international community (Karacasulu and Karakir 2008, 13).

Chapter 3: Possible Courses of Action

U.S. OPTIONS:

<u>Diplomatic Options:</u>

There is recent precedent for successful diplomacy between Washington and Tehran, as evidenced by their bilateral agreements on issues regarding Afghanistan that were conducted between 2001 and 2003; these discussion were described by James Dobbins, an official U.S. participant in the discussions, as "perhaps the most constructive period of U.S. – Iranian diplomacy since the fall of the shah" (Pollack et al. 2009, 55).

Engagement:

Proponents of this strategy eschew the use of all sanctions and coercion (discussed below) and focus instead on accommodation and reassurance. They hold that the use of such 'sticks' will provoke a reflexive negative reaction from the Islamic Republic, even if that reaction is counter to Iranian self-interest. They hold that rather than threatening or otherwise attempting to coerce the Iranian regime into acquiescence that the United States ought to treat Iran in a friendly and reassuring manner, "offering Tehran a range of diplomatic, strategic, and economic inducements so attractive that the Iranians will gladly give up their problematic policies to secure these benefits" (Pollack et al. 2009, 43). Engagement is a long term strategy

that would attempt to systematically change Iranian perceptions of and hostile actions against the United States and her allies over a long period of time. By continuing to reinforce good behavior with rewards and by refraining from any threatening or otherwise coercive policies, regardless of Iranian action or compliance, the United States would demonstrate through actions its intent to allow Iran to thrive. "[M]any of Engagement's advocates contend that the only way profound change can come to Iran is if the United States backs off, removing the bugbear that the regime uses to justify its repressive controls" (Pollack et al. 2009, 43). Advocates of this policy point to the success of similar strategies adopted with China, where economic prosperity and the ensuing growth of a middle class has led to an erosion of the historic Communist ideology.

A policy of engagement, however, holds several potentially insurmountable risks. First is the possibility that the Iranian regime would construe such a policy shift as a vindication of their aggressive actions and might result in the reinforcement of such behavior. An administration adopting this policy would have to be willing to hold true to its tenants, even in the face of increased belligerence from Iran. This policy, especially in the event of increased Iranian action, would also carry the probability of huge political backlashes, from domestic opposition as well as from U.S. allies in the Middle East who would view such policies as threatening and undermining. It is possible that the long term nature of such a policy makes it untenable; the short timeframe of the United States' political cycle makes the planning and execution of such long term strategies extremely difficult. Finally, and most relevant to this research study, is the fact that a policy of engagement cannot guarantee that Iran will forsake their nuclear program and in many ways increases its likelihood. Even if Iran promised compliance, without complete transparency and the ability to inspect Iranian facilities there would be no way to verify the truthfulness of such claims.

Persuasion:

In opposition to a policy of Engagement consisting solely of carrots, many scholars advocate one that incorporates both carrots and sticks in what is essentially a policy of coercion. Proponents of this option argue that the imposition of universal sanctions, the metaphorical sticks, adopted and enforced throughout the international community has a high likelihood of

producing the desired change of behavior from Tehran. They argue that the costs of sanctions, limited to the loss of international trade and reduced oil outputs, pale in comparison with the potential costs in blood and treasure in the military options outlined below. Advocates of sanctions also identify several strong arguments for the use of sanctions over other options: weakness of Iran's economy; historic precedent; international political prudence.

The ruling regime draws the majority of its autonomy and power from the oil revenue that fills its state coffers; if this income were cut off, Tehran would face considerable difficulties maintaining this power. Oil accounts for close to 80% of foreign earnings, 60% of government revenues, and 30% of Iranian GDP (Kazemzadeh 2009, 50); the loss of such a large portion of the nation's wealth would be devastating to an economy that already struggles with both 30% inflation and unemployment and relies heavily on government subsidies of gasoline and staples. Sanctions would deprive the regime of the funding they rely upon to sustain their coercive practices and would quickly widen what are already cracks in the foundation of the government. In 2007, there were widespread riots after the price of gasoline was raised 20%, from 40 to 50 U.S. cents per gallon, indicating the preexisting level of discontent with the economic situation (Kazemzadeh 2009, 50). Effective sanctions would quickly force the regime to decide between their nuclear program and a popular uprising.

Second, as noted in the National Intelligence Estimate, Iran halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003. It did so largely in response to increasing international scrutiny and pressure, indicating that additional progress might be made by applying further pressures. On top of this, proponents of sanctions hold that it is almost a pragmatic requirement to attempt sanctions. They argue that any unilateral course of action by the United States would be vilified by the international community and could have serious economic and political repercussions, perhaps including increased fiscal and military support of Iran. Detractors of pursuing widespread sanctions point to the traditional opposition of sanctions by Russia and China and hold that these members of the U.N. Security Council would continue to impede progress. Even in the unlikely event that international consensus could be reached, the forging of such a coalition would likely be a long and arduous process that could allow Iran adequate time to achieve their goals. Because of this possibility, proponents also agree that any policy of persuasion should have clearly defined and articulated timelines for compliance, after which harsher methods must be

employed. While not perfect, by at least attempting to utilize the internationally approved mechanisms the U.S. would add legitimacy to any subsequent coercive options that were exercised unilaterally and would limit the negative fallout from such action.

There is historic precedent for the success of a policy of persuasion, as evidenced by similar approaches with Libya and Egypt, and there are also several corollary advantages to this policy. One advantage is the policy's low economic and military cost, and any expenditures are likely to be offset in the form of increased trade in the wake of a successful policy. A second strength is the likelihood of increased rapport with the nations, particularly Russia and China, with whom consensus must be built in order to execute a policy of persuasion. In order to achieve such consensus, however, it is likely that the United States will have to make "unpleasant compromises with third-party countries to secure their cooperation against Iran" (Pollack et al. 2009, 39). This reality will force the United States to prioritize its crusade against Iranian nuclear capabilities, likely at the expense of competing priorities in other aspects of its foreign policy.

Clean Needles

This diplomatic option differs from both of those above in that rather than trying to prevent or dissuade Iran from the acquisition of nuclear weapons, United States diplomacy should instead be accepting of and perhaps assist Iran in its pursuits. Some experts believe Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons is a perfectly rational course of action given the history and circumstances leading to that pursuit; these scholars believe that the dogmatic international rejection and hostility against Iran's pursuit of nuclear technology only serves to deepen the Iranian regime's resolve and that the constant saber rattling and drum beating exacerbate the potential risk involved. This camp holds that countries who acquire nuclear weapons without exception begin to behave with caution and moderation, and that Iranian acquisition of such weapons would ultimately lead to the same result. Ultimately, they believe that rather than spending invaluable time and resources trying to combat the inevitable, the U.S. should allow Iran to continue in their pursuits, and perhaps in some instances even provide assistance to that pursuit.

These experts explain Iranian nuclear ambition in two ways. The first is simply by looking at a map: Iran shares borders with the nuclear armed Pakistan; Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the Persian Gulf, currently house American forces clearly capable of easily dispatching the Iranian military; Israel possesses both conventional and nuclear forces capable of striking Iran; several traditional Iranian rivals, including Saudi Arabia, are also in league with the United States and presumably have the American nuclear umbrella protecting them. Amplifying Iran's concern over this dire geopolitical framework are the constant rhetoric and debate over preemptive military action or a movement for regime change, both actions accomplished by the U.S. with relative ease in Iraq and Afghanistan. Given these realities, it seems perfectly rational for Iranian leadership to pursue the proverbial ace in the hole, a nuclear trump card to be used as a deterrent preventing any action against Iran.

Second, given the historical precedents set by other nuclear powers, these scholars view Iran's renewed pursuit of nuclear weapons as perfectly reasonable and more than likely as stabilizing. One of the most vocal proponents of this theory is famed realist Kenneth Waltz, who is particularly outspoken on the issue. He points to the history of proliferation and notes that "it's been proven that without exception that whoever gets nuclear weapons behaves with caution and moderation" (Sagan, Waltz, and Betts 2007, 137). Pointing to a possible rationale for Iranian pursuit of nuclear weapons, Waltz again points to historic precedent: "If a country has nuclear weapons, it will not be attacked militarily in ways that threaten its manifestly vital interests. That is 100 percent true, without exception, over a period of more than 50 years" (Sagan, Waltz, and Betts 2007, 137).

Some critics question the validity of these historical precedents, saying that the radical theocracy of Iran bears no resemblance to the original nuclear powers and that Iranian ideology renders such comparisons null. One such critic, Scott Sagan, suggest that rather than looking at the monolithic governments of the cold war that the more recent example of Pakistan better highlights the dangers at hand. Sagan illuminates several dangers that emerged in Pakistan along with their nuclear program that might also apply to a nuclear Iran, focusing on the likelihood that nuclear weapons promote aggression. Sagan attributes the Kargil war, during which Pakistan attacked the Indian controlled Kashmir, ultimately escalating to nuclear brinksmanship between the two countries, to such aggression (Sagan, Waltz, and Betts 2007, 141). Waltz dismisses

these arguments as well, citing the deterrence of nuclear weapons as the factor that prevented Kargil from escalating into a much more dangerous and destabilizing full scale conventional war. While he concedes that skirmishes and conflict are inevitable, he holds that nuclear deterrence will ensure that these are contained (Sagan, Waltz, and Betts 2007, 142). To those who argue that Iran is too radical and irrational, he points out that "We never thought of the Soviet Union and Soviet leaders as being fine fellows … And we certainly never thought of the Chinese that way. But looking back at their behavior, when it came to avoiding conflict that might lead to the use of nuclear weapons, they became very responsible indeed" (Sagan, Waltz, and Betts 2007,143). Waltz summarizes his argument about the universal nature of deterrence and the irrelevance of the regime's rationality with the following statement: "Nuclear peace depends not on rulers and those around them being rational, but on their aversion to catastrophic risks" (Pedatzur 2007, 534).

Waltz and his contemporaries hold that rather than attempting to block Iranian admission into the nuclear club that the international community should pursue a 'clean needles' approach that maintains that the United States ought to provide technology and expertise to assist in safeguarding the weaponry and preventing unauthorized activation or detonation. Even those who would deter Iranian acquisition of these weapons agree that if such an outcome is inevitable that this approach makes the most sense. Scott Sagan points to the success of similar policies implemented with the Indians and Pakistanis and he acknowledges that such measures drastically enhance the security of their nuclear programs (Sagan, Waltz, and Betts 2007, 143). Such policies are also likely to have the corollary effects of increasing diplomatic dialogue and increasing trade, which in turn is likely to decrease contention between Iran and the United States. Ultimately, proponents of this option hold that by assisting Iran in their pursuit of nuclear weapons the United States will ensure the emergence of a more moderate and beneficial international actor.

Military Options:

Proponents of military action against Iran argue that the extremist nature of the regime ruling Iran and its proven ability to manipulate or stall attempts at diplomacy make any other
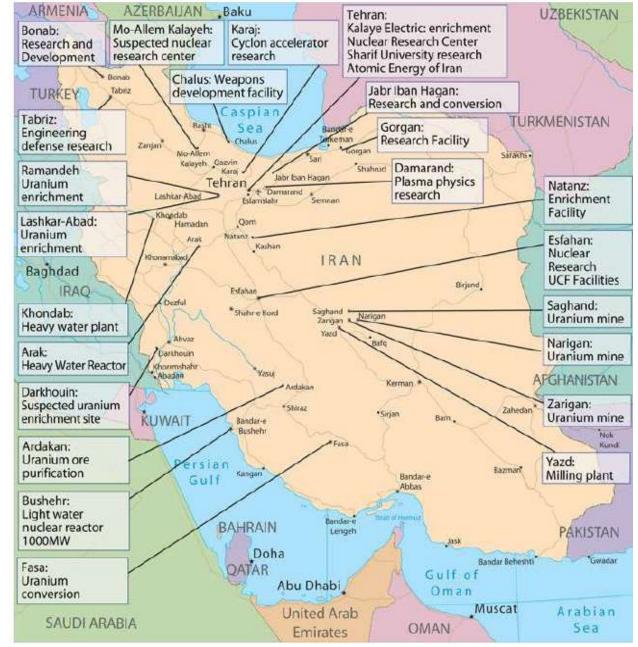
options unreliable or unrealistic. They also point out the difficulty in bringing so many international actors to consensus and the inherent time consuming nature of diplomacy makes it unpractical given the urgency of the Iranian nuclear threat. In addition, several point to "the central role of *shehadat-talabi* (martyrdom-seeking) in Shia belief system," the prominence of ultra-conservative elected officials, and the resurgence of apocalyptic threats and rhetoric as evidence that reliance upon traditional deterrence theory is not tenable with Iran (Kazemzadeh 2009, 39). If the limitations on diplomacy and deterrence are accepted, than the only way to ensure that Iran is unable to achieve its nuclear ambitions is to destroy its nuclear facilities using military power.

Proponents of military action also point out that force has the advantage of being completely under American control; unlike the diplomatic options discussed above, force requires neither the cooperation of international partners nor that of Iran. Additionally, advocates of military options hold that the chances of success are greatly enhanced because of the requisite dependence on America's most capable policy instrument, its unequivocally superior armed forces. The three most likely forms that such action might take are examined below.

Air Strikes:

Advocates of military action against Iran typically point to air strikes as the ideal strategy to deprive Iran of its nuclear capabilities and hold that such a strategy would greatly reduce, at least for some period of time, the threat posed by Iran to the United States and its allies. The goal of limited strikes would be to destroy all or much of Iran's nuclear program, which in addition to the obvious nuclear infrastructure would also likely include sites believed to be producing warheads or other nuclear weapons components. Such a strategy would also probably include attacks against the Iranian ballistic missile capabilities. If such attacks were successful, most scholars agree that Iran's ability to attain nuclear weapons would be delayed by several years, perhaps even by a decade or more (Pollack et al. 2009, 76).

Having witnessed the success of U.S. aerial campaigns against its neighbors to the east and west, Iran's leadership clearly understands how the United States might employ the same tactics against it. In response to this threat, Iran has spent considerable resources trying to diversify, hide, and protect its nuclear infrastructure, with many facilities in hardened concrete structures or buried deeply underground. Additionally, the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate assessed the likelihood that Iran would likely employ secret facilities if it were to pursue nuclear weapons (2007 NIE, 7). While it is beyond the scope of this paper to lay out all of the likely targets, the figure below highlights the most important ones and gives a sense of the geographic dispersion that U.S. forces would have to overcome.

Figure 1: Iranian Nuclear Facilities

Image extracted from Toukan, p. 22

Despite the difficulties outlined above, however, "America's massive air and naval forces are more than adequate to handle the military aspects of this option and are so able to accomplish the missions that there would be multiple ways in which they could do so" (Pollack et al. 2009, 83). There would likely be limited casualties, as Iran's antiquated air defense network is no match for the far superior U.S. forces. Surgical strikes of this nature would also be effective in

limiting collateral damage and the deaths of Iranian civilians. U.S. forces would not have to rely on external support for the success of such an operation; while the use of regional airbases and the granting of overflight privileges would be of great assistance, they are by no means prerequisites. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the U.S. has the ability to repeat such strikes time and time again; Iran would have to realize that subsequent attempts to rebuild their nuclear infrastructure would likely provoke the same response and outcome from the U.S.

While on the face this option seems to be relatively low risk and cost effective, there are several potential problems with surgical strikes. First, such strikes would do nothing to directly impact the regime and have the potential to rally popular nationalistic support around an otherwise unpopular and crumbling government, resuscitating what many believe is a dying regime. This development could reinforce the power and the ideological message of the regime and could create long-term negative ramifications throughout the region. Second, it is entirely possible that Iran has constructed covert sites about which the United States Intelligence Community is unaware. If this is the case, even if the U.S. were to successfully incapacitate known Iranian infrastructure, Iran might be able to transition almost seamlessly to these facilities; the possibility of this scenario makes it virtually impossible to definitively judge the results of such a strike. According to one unnamed senior U.S. official, "We do not have enough information about the Iranian nuclear program to be confident that you could destroy it in a single attack. The worst thing you could do is try and not succeed" (Fitzpatrick 2008, 37).

The most significant risk to precision strikes, however, is the wide range of possible retaliatory actions that would be open and available to Iran. The regime could attempt to attack oil shipments in the Persian Gulf and passing through the Strait of Hormuz, or could target the oil infrastructure of Western allies throughout the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and UAE). Such attacks could choke off a large portion of internationally traded oil, which at minimum would cause oil prices to skyrocket and would negatively impact the global economy, and at worst could cause a collapse of the global economy. Iran could also step up support for terrorist organizations to fight proxy wars against the United States and her allies, providing them with funding, training, and weapons that have heretofore been held back. The Iranian regime could additionally launch potentially devastating conventional attacks against U.S. forces currently stationed in the region or potentially against Israel, utilizing various measures up to and

including their Shahab-3 ballistic missiles which could cause huge numbers of indiscriminate casualties. Current Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei warned, "The Americans should know that if they assault Iran, their interests will be harmed anywhere in the world that is possible … The Iranian nation will respond with double the intensity" (Kazemzadeh 2009, 41).

While many scholars dismiss these threats of retaliation as a bluff or as counter to rational logic, some believe that a massive retaliation could be their best choice as failure to do so would create a losing dynamic for Iran. If Iran exercised restraint in the wake of U.S. attacks but continued to pursue their nuclear ambition by rebuilding their facilities, the United States could repeat their attacks ad infinitum. By retaliating in a spectacular fashion, however, Tehran could potentially turn a tactical loss into a long term strategic victory. Because of the existing quagmires in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Iranian regime may assume that the United States has neither the manpower nor the willpower to escalate conventionally in the wake of retaliation, and may therefore see the risks of such action as negligible. At minimum, such retaliation is likely to entrench the power of the regime, but ideally a massive retaliation might cause Americans to withdraw, which would in turn propel Iran to regional hegemony (Kazemzadeh 2009, 41).

Even those who dismiss retaliation from Iran as irrational or self defeating must admit that there is at least some possibility that Iran might adopt this course of action and that contingency plans for such an eventuality are called for. Many recommend that if the United States does decide to attack Iran through surgical airstrikes that we should do so with the aim of undermining Iran's political infrastructure and retaliatory capabilities in addition to their nuclear facilities. While this policy would call for a much greater commitment of resources and logistics and would likely be much harder to justify to the international community, such action is well within the capabilities of the U.S. military. This option would involve many more sorties targeting a much more diverse and numerous set of targets. An initial attack would likely target Iranian air defenses, followed by strikes against Iranian Command and Control facilities and retaliation capabilities such as their surface to surface missile units. After the Iranian threats were neutralized and air superiority achieved, U.S. forces could systematically target the Iranian nuclear facilities and infrastructure. Such a campaign might also target terrorist training facilities, conventional military assets, and any other facilities critical to the Iranian regime. Unlike the more limited surgical strikes above, a prolonged campaign would be greatly aided by

the support of surrounding countries (overflight, airbases and refueling) and would likely call for increased diplomacy (Pollack et al. 2009, 81). In addition to reducing the ability of Iran to retaliate in kind, there is also the possibility that such action might result in mass uprising with a high likelihood of overthrowing fundamentalist regime (Kazemzadeh 2009, 42). Scholars who advocate an expanded or prolonged bombing campaign argue that the chance to kill three birds with one stone (halt nuclear program, limit retaliation, overthrow regime) justifies the additional expense, both financial and political, of such operations. Despite the different tactics that air strikes may take, for simplicity this study treats all U.S. airstrikes, regardless of magnitude, as a single policy option for the United States.

Invasion:

This option, predicated on the assumption that the Iranian regime could withstand even prolonged bombing and could then carry out some form of retaliation against the United States, advocates a massive invasion of Iran. According to the Brookings Institution:

> The nationalistic chauvinism, ideological fervor, and political dysfunctions of the Islamic Republic, coupled with the long history of coercive air campaigns failing to live up to the claims of their proponents, seem to have produced a consensus that a coercive air campaign against Iran would likely fail. Simply put, it does not seem like the Iranian regime would be susceptible to the kind of pressure applied by coercive air power, and coercive air campaigns are notoriously bad at successfully compelling the target country to do what the attacking country wants (Pollack et al. 2009, 75).

Proponents of invasion also argue that the only way to ensure that the Iranian nuclear threat is eradicated is to verify the destruction of nuclear facilities with boots on the ground. They also hold that only through invasion and occupation will America be able to unearth and destroy any covert Iranian nuclear facilities. In addition to ensuring that the nuclear threat is dealt with, invasion also offers the added regional and global benefits that would come with regime change, including the ramifications for Iranian sponsored proxy groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

The invasion of Iran would be a relatively straightforward option for American military forces. As in the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, an invasion would likely be preceded by massive airstrikes similar to those outlined above, after which the invading forces would surge into Iran towards Tehran. Iran's conventional forces are nearly twice the size of those of Iraq in 2003, and they have the benefit of defending a country nearly four times as large, comprised primarily of easily defensible mountainous and desert terrain. Additionally, Iran has considerable experience with guerrilla warfare and may chose to engage U.S. forces via a protracted insurgency rather than meeting them in a hopeless conventional engagement. Furthermore, the distances that must be traversed to capture Tehran are as much as three times greater than the distance from Kuwait to Baghdad, implying considerably more difficult and vulnerable U.S. logistical considerations (Pollack et al. 2009, 63). Despite all of these hurdles, however, scholars are virtually unanimous in their assessment that an invasion force would be able to successfully topple the Iranian regime, and with it its nuclear program, in a matter of weeks, albeit at a much higher loss of life and material than were incurred in Iraq.

As American failures in Iraq and Afghanistan have underscored, however, the most critical issues to such a plan will arise after the initial invasion. It is beyond the purview of this study to examine all of the potential ramifications of such an action, but suffice it to say they are exceedingly arduous and complex. Indeed, after the frustrations and costs of these conflicts and the abortive crusade against Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, it would be difficult to imagine the widespread support that would be a political prerequisite for such an invasion. Even if such support were attained, it is likely that a unilateral U.S. invasion of Iran would antagonize much of the world and could potentially jeopardize and undermine strategic alliances and international cooperation on other foreign policy issues. Even in the unlikely event of Iranian provocation, it seems unlikely that the United States would choose this highly unpopular and expensive policy option as its first course of action. Invasion is nevertheless included in this study, however, because of the very real potential that other policy options might escalate to the point that the option of invasion becomes more likely and realistic.

Blockade:

If the United States is unable to convince the international community, notably Russia and China, to adopt comprehensive sanctions, or if it feels that the time and resources would be spent in vain trying to win such an argument, a blockade of Iran could potentially accomplish the same goals. This option presents a hybrid approach that incorporates the intent of sanctions and diplomacy while demonstrating the resolve of the United States, backed with a very real show of military force. While this option may be perceived as belligerent and vilified by the international community, it still falls short of the open aggression and acts of war exhibited by the other military options. Additionally, a blockade would be effective in crippling commerce in and out of Iran, and the effects of a blockade would likely be felt and seen much more rapidly than those of sanctions.

The implementation of a blockade has other potential advantages in addition to the economic stress that would be placed on the regime. Perhaps the greatest of these advantages is that it places the onus of action on the Iranian regime, which will be quickly forced to choose between two undesirable options. The regime will either have to suffer through the blockade and risk popular uprising from the masses, or it will have to attempt to break the blockade in order to resume commerce. In the latter option, Iran would become the open aggressor and would have to fire the opening salvo of what would likely be a futile action. Such action would constitute a *casus belli* and would provide the United States a legal pretext for military reaction, thereby legitimizing the military options outlined above. In addition to this, a blockade presents a tactical opportunity for U.S. forces to prepare for such military action. To enforce a blockade, the U.S. Navy and Air Force would have to increase their presence in the region, and ground forces in Iraq and Afghanistan would have to adjust their posture accordingly. In essence, a blockade gives the United States ample reason to reinforce and otherwise build up their forces in the region; this build up would be of obvious benefit if the situation did escalate to open military hostilities between the United States and Iran.

Containment:

It is fitting that this policy is presented last among U.S. policy options because it is, according to the Brookings Institute, "always America's last policy choice." Arguably,

containment is not a real option but is rather the culmination of the failure of all other policy methods. When a state proves too antagonistic or inflexible for diplomacy to succeed and when the options of coercion, both economic and military, are untenable, only then does the United States settle for a policy of containment (Pollack et al. 2009, 129). The reason that a policy of containment is so unpalatable is that it would almost definitely mean accepting an Iranian state with the technology and capability to manufacture weapons and accepting the probability of an Iranian nuclear arsenal. Rather than attempting to prevent these developments, containment treats them as inevitable and attempts to limit the potential negative effects of such developments by preventing Iran from gaining influence and power beyond its borders. Given the inherent problems and risks in each of the options discussed above, the United States may well have to resort to a policy of containment.

As with the containment of the Soviet Union, a policy towards Iran would attempt to keep it from making gains beyond its borders until the dysfunctions of the regime ultimately cause its downfall. Rather than containing overt conventional aggression, as was done with the Soviet Union, containment of Iran would instead focus limiting its power and influence abroad by denying Iranian tactics of subversion, support to terrorists and insurgencies, and assistance to regional revolutions and coups (Pollack et al. 2009, 135). In order to implement such a policy, the United States would have to employ a mix of military, economic, diplomatic, and counterterrorism pressures throughout the region, potentially extending its nuclear umbrella as a security guarantee to U.S. partners.

Despite the obvious compromise inherent with a policy of containment, it is not without some redeeming qualities. If the United States determines that all of the other options have prohibitive costs and consequences, it would be beneficial to immediately adopt a policy of containment. This would save the United States the time and resources that would be spent on those other options and it would also prevent the Iranian regime from using this time to strengthen its position and plans. Additionally, the United States would not have to choose between its Iran policy and other foreign policy issues, and would consequently not have to grant concessions to other countries. Containment would also be relatively inexpensive; the military already maintains a strong presence throughout the region, a presence that will likely be maintained indefinitely, so no additional military buildup would be required (Pollack et al. 2009,

141). While containment does require financial expenditures to Iran's neighbors, the amount to be spent pales in comparison to most of the other options. There is also the likely benefit of increased trade and relations with the regional countries with whom the United States would engage as part of its policy. In fact, despite the lack of any formal policy containment has essentially been the strategy of the United States towards Iran. The figure below highlights the regional countries in which the U.S. currently has a presence and helps explain Iranian paranoia:
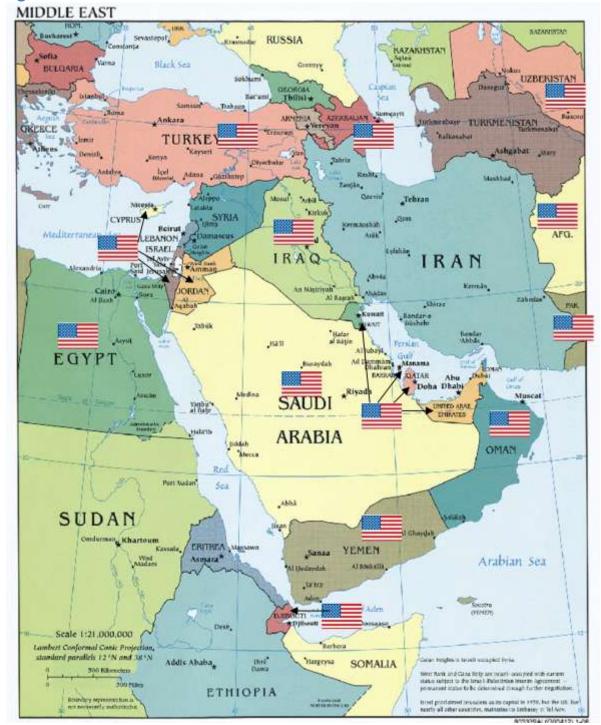
Figure 2: U.S. Presence in Middle East

Map Courtesy of http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east.html

Despite the potential advantages of containment, there are multiple significant drawbacks. The first is that it assumes that Iran can be deterred and that it will not act in a self-defeating manner. While there is some evidence to support this assumption, there are also

several examples of Iran acting in an irrational and reckless manner. Additionally, by tacitly allowing Iran to develop nuclear weapons capabilities a policy of containment could lead to regional nuclear proliferation and potentially a destabilizing nuclear arms race. Even if this were avoided in the Middle East, such an outcome could sound the death knell for the NPT and destroy the global nonproliferation regime; this could lead to negative consequences and nuclear proliferation in East Asia, South America, or Africa. Such a decision might also be viewed by Israel as a betrayal and cause them to act unilaterally against what they view as an existential threat, an action which would likely derail containment and lead to open hostility (Pollack et al. 2009, 142).

It may be noted that both the 'Containment' and the 'Clean Needles' options rely at least partially upon nuclear deterrence for their success and are therefore not entirely mutually exclusive. While the two options share this trait, they are quite different in their underlying theories; while Clean Needles treats Iran as an equal and may even provide assistance to their pursuits, Containment treats Iran in an adversarial manner and attempts to passively deny those pursuits and ambitions.

ISRAELI OPTIONS:

Israeli Preemptive Attack:

There has been much debate over the escalating hostility between Iran and Israel, particularly regarding how Israel might respond to the imminent threat of a nuclear armed adversary. Perceptions of reality, regardless of their accuracy, often dictate behavior or action, and the perception of Israeli leaders and decision makers is that Iran is developing nuclear technology that will ultimately be used against them. As previously discussed, Israeli leaders have repeatedly stated that they regard nuclear weapons in possession of the fundamentalist Iranian regime as an existential threat to Israel, and have indicated in no uncertain terms that Israel will use every means at its disposal to prevent such an occurrence.

Throughout its history, Israel has not hesitated to use preemptive force, as demonstrated by its successful aerial attacks against Iraqi and Syrian nuclear facilities. When considering

preemption of the Iranian threat, there is virtually unanimous consensus that the only viable option for Israel is a repeat of its use of IDF airstrikes. There have been several indicators that Israel has prepared for such attacks, including several major military exercises involving over 100 attack aircraft and aerial refueling tankers in what were apparently rehearsals for long range strikes (Spector and Cohen 2008, 20). An attack of Iranian nuclear infrastructure, however, would be much more complex and difficult than the two previous attacks. In addition to the increased distance from Israel, the Iranian facilities are geographically dispersed and are in some cases hardened to withstand conventional strikes. Some analysts feel that an attack would only be viable with logistical support and that any Israeli statements or threats otherwise are simply a bluff.

Most experts, however, agree that Israel could execute unilateral strikes against Iran with at least a moderate expectation of success. While Iran has taken steps to insulate its nuclear facilities from aerial attack, Israel has also taken steps to increase the effectiveness and lethality of its strike forces. Perhaps in preparation for the attack of hardened Iranian targets, Israel has purchased from the United States thousands of precision-guided "bunker buster" munitions, including 100 equipped with the 5000 lb-class BLU-113 penetrating warhead. To defeat hardened targets, multiple weapons would have to target the same point of impact to create a burrowing effect, a tactic confirmed the former commander of the Israeli Air Force, General Ben-Elyahu: "Even if one bomb would not suffice to penetrate, we could guide other bombs directly to the hole created by the previous ones and eventually destroy the target" (Raas and Long 2007, 18). To aid in this technique, Israel maintains dedicated elite units which specialize in laser target designation and real-time damage assessment; these units could potentially infiltrate the target zone prior to attack and greatly increase the probability of success (Raas and Long 2007, 17). As discussed in the U.S. Airstrikes option, Iranian air defenses are antiquated and pose little threat to the success of an Israeli attack. Abdullah Toukan of the Center for Strategic and International Studies has conducted an extremely detailed and plausible study of such an attack, accounting for Israeli assets and munitions, Iranian defenses, and probable attack routes and logistical concerns. He concludes definitively that Israel could reasonably expect to destroy or damage the majority of its targets (Toukan, Cordesman, and Burke 2009, 71). Ultimately, an Israeli attack does not appear to incur undue risk of failure and is likely to at least delay the Iranian development of nuclear weapons.

Even if Israel did not believe that it could successfully impact the Iranian program, however, it might still chose to conduct airstrikes. Such an attack, even one that failed to achieve its goal of destroying the Iranian nuclear program, would undoubtedly be viewed as being either encouraged or tacitly endorsed by the United States. It is extremely likely, therefore, that Iranian retaliation would target not only Israel but also U.S. forces and interests throughout the region. Such a result would represent a clear casus belli for the United States and would provide clear legal justification for immediate action against Iran. Several scholars discuss and even advocate such action, holding that this is the only likely way to legitimize U.S. intervention, which is the only method that can be assured of preventing Iranian nuclear weapons. While such a strategy would be ideal if Israel and America were united in its formulation, Israel might also pursue this option unbeknownst to the United States. It has already been noted that Israel fears the ramifications of diplomacy between Washington and Tehran; if Israel sees the Iranian situation developing in such a way, it may conduct such attacks *without* the blessing of the United States in hopes that Iranian retaliation would fracture such diplomacy and would force Washington to respond against Iran in kind. While such action might cost Israel a tremendous amount of political capital with its staunchest ally, Israel may see this as an adequate price to pay in exchange for maintaining regional status quo.

The climactic military confrontation outlined above is far from a foregone conclusion; many experts believe, albeit for a variety of disparate reasons, that the military options are not truly viable and that Israel has no other choice than to try to neutralize the Iranian threat through diplomatic means.

Israeli Diplomacy:

Dr. Trita Parsi of Johns Hopkins University presents a compelling case that Israel was indeed preparing for and fully intended to execute a preemptive strike in 2007. She contends that the 2006 summer war between Israel and Hezbollah forces in Lebanon was motivated by Israeli intent to preempt Iran:

With a potential future showdown with Iran in mind, Tel Aviv seemed to have sought an opportunity to neutralize Hezbollah and Hamas in order to weaken Iran's deterrence and retaliation capabilities. (The summer war was preceded by heavy Israeli bombing of Gaza.) Through these groups, Iran could bring the war to Israeli territory, a scenario that further accentuated Israel's vulnerability to asymmetric warfare. By preemptively attacking Hamas and Hezbollah, Israel could significantly deprive Iran of its ability to retaliate against the Jewish state in the event of [an] assault on Iran" (Parsi 2007, 81).

Dr. Parsi quotes Israel's deputy defense minister as saying with certainty, "War with Iran is inevitable. Lebanon is just a prelude to the greater war with Iran" (Parsi 2007, 82). The attempt to neutralize Hezbollah, however, did not go well; at the end of the 34-day war Hezbollah had achieved a spectacular success simply for surviving Israel's attacks and fighting them to a standstill. As a result of this mishap, the deterrence effect of Israel's heretofore invincible military was severely fractured, and the will of the Israeli public to continue fighting was eroded; this weakness was compounded by the surge in popular support for Hezbollah in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt. Rather than weakening Iran and setting the stage for a larger conflict as intended, the war achieved the opposite effect. Ultimately, this failed engagement may have forced Israel to abandon military options against Iran and forced them to resort to diplomacy and deterrence.

In an interview with the London *Sunday Times* last September, Israeli President Shimon Peres was dismissive of a preemptive attack, saying that "the military way will not solve the problem … such an attack can trigger a bigger war" (Crail 2008, 62). Despite the lack of a lasting peace in Gaza, Israel has made great strides towards stability and even friendship with most of its regional neighbors. While Israeli preemption against Iran would do little to anger these governments who share Israeli fear and suspicion of Iran, such attacks are likely to incite mass anti-Israeli uprisings amongst their populations. Were this to occur, it is likely that Israeli-Arab relations would rapidly deteriorate, perhaps even ending in open hostility. Such a development would simply swap one evil for another and clearly does not represent an ideal option for Jerusalem. Given the fact that preemption is not guaranteed to successfully eliminate the Iranian nuclear threat, it is possible that Israel could end up facing not one but two existential

threats simultaneously. Given this possibility, even if it is not likely, it is understandable why Israel would forego military action and resort to diplomacy.

In addition to this, Israel may not be willing to risk alienating its principal benefactor and ally. As discussed above, any Israeli military action is virtually guaranteed to have negative ramifications for the United States. Iranian retaliatory strikes are likely to target U.S. forces and interests and could embroil the United States in a conflict which it is not prepared to fight. Even if Iran does not retaliate in kind, America is likely be vilified by the international community for their 'involvement' in the attack. Such a development is likely to cost the United States tremendous political capital and will negatively impact their foreign policy agenda around the globe. Israel may also assess the possibility that the United States might turn its back on its ally in hopes of avoiding these troubles. If Washington felt itself betrayed by Israel and wanted to prove that they were not complicit, such a development is not out of the question. These potential complications with the United States underscore the rationale for Israeli diplomacy.

RUSSIAN OPTIONS

Russian Support of Iran:

As outlined in Russia's perceptions of the Iranian nuclear situation above, Russia views Iran as a fairly staunch ally. Russia derives a host of valuable benefits from its relationship with Iran, ranging from economic prosperity to influence and power in the Middle East to a strategic partner and buffer against the West. Russia has demonstrated a propensity for blocking U.S. and Western policy actions targeting Iran, both through its own counter-policies and through its UN Security Council veto power. Russia has publicly defended the legitimacy of the Iranian nuclear program, citing the rights afforded Iran as a signatory of the NPT. Despite clear indications that Tehran is indeed once again pursuing nuclear weapons, Russia has refused to comply with international wishes to apply more pressure against Iran.

Recent developments have done little to improve the chances that Russia might imminently change its policies on Iran. Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008 was vilified by the

international community and eroded much of the goodwill between Russia and the West. According to the Brookings Institution:

> "Israeli commentators note that the chances of securing Russian support for tough sanctions have diminished considerably since the 2008 war in Georgia. Russia has a stronger interest in keeping good ties with Iran, another power in the Caucasus, and less interest in appeasing American and European concerns about Iran. Since Israel is a strong supporter of Georgia, Russia may also feel it should pay Israel back by moving closer to Tehran" (Pollack et al. 2009, 94).

In addition to the geopolitical developments, the current global recession is likely to weigh heavily upon Moscow's decision making. Russia's economy is largely dependent upon the exportation of natural resources and oil, both of which have seen drastic declines in price with the worldwide economic downturn. At a time when Russia's economy is struggling, it seems unlikely that it would be in favor of voluntarily foregoing the profits of its arms and nuclear deals with Iran.

Perhaps most important in Russian consideration is the fact that Iran appears to be the only bastion of Russian influence in a critical part of the world. While the U.S. clearly still faces challenges in the Middle East, it can claim virtually all of the stable and prosperous nations of the region as at least nominal allies. Where once the United States maintained only a toehold of influence through Israel, it can now boast strong relationships with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq, Afghanistan, and several other nations. Russia, meanwhile, has only the besieged state of Iran to represent its power and influence. Based on historic precedent, it seems unlikely that Russia would allow the United States and its allies to completely dominate such a critical area. Such a development would clearly be viewed as undermining and antithetical to Russian strategy. "Thus, it can be argued that Russia's policy is in pursuit of the most effective means of maximizing its national interest and establishing Russia as a respected international player, especially in the Middle East and Central Asia" (Karacasulu and Karakir 2008, 13).

Russian Support of West:

The most effective means of maximizing its national interest, however, does not necessarily have to coincide with the defense of Iran. While the benefits Russia gains from its partnership with Iran have been articulated, it is important to note that their relationship is principally one of convenience. Russia shares no bonds that link it closely to Iran; the two counties' ideologies differ radically, and as seen in Chechnya and elsewhere Russia is not overly sympathetic to Iran's fundamental religious views. Importantly, there are no binding agreements or treaties between the two nations that might tie Russia's hands in defending, either politically or militarily, the interests of Iran. All of these facts suggest the distinct possibility that Russia can be swayed from their opposition of Western action against the Iranian Republic.

Russia has always demonstrated a calculating rationality regarding its international diplomacy and actions. While it has frequently crafted its international strategy in an effort to check U.S. goals and interests, it has also abandoned this strategy and accommodated the United States when it was perceived to be in Russia's best interests. This can be evidenced by Russia's willingness to offer assistance and open logistical routes in support of the American campaign against Al-Qaida and the Taliban in 2001. Russia has also demonstrated a willingness to alter its policies and strategies in return for valuable Western concessions. This history of rationality and 'entrepreneurship' suggest that Moscow might forego their support of Iran in return for alternate economic and geopolitical considerations from the West. It is beyond the purview of this paper to investigate all of the potential policy alternatives that might entice Russian cooperation, but there are many possible issues which Russia might value over their Iranian ally. Some obvious examples of incentives that might compel Russia to cooperate include concessions on missile defense, Georgia, or Chechnya. Russia might feel even more inclined to accept such alternatives if it felt that the U.S. and its allies were likely to pursue unilateral action against Iran, the results of which would likely nullify the economic benefits of the Russian-Iranian relationship.

Furthermore, while action against Iran would likely cost Moscow its economic and strategic partner, such action could also lead to immense benefits for the Russia. As discussed, any of the coercive policy options available to the West (sanctions or military action) are likely to have a drastic impact on the price of oil, causing it to skyrocket instantly. This alone would be a huge boon to Russia, who as one of the world's largest exporters of oil would benefit greatly from the increased revenues. Additionally, it is probable that the production and exportation of

Iranian oil would be indefinitely taken off line, causing a drastic shortage in the world supplies and forcing importers to look elsewhere. In addition to the benefit of even higher prices that would result from such developments, Russia would be one of the only countries worldwide that could increase domestic production to fill this demand. The potential profits and long term trading partners that Moscow would realize from such a scenario would likely dwarf the loss of trade income associated with Iran. If Russia truly does seek to maximize its national interests, supporting Western action might not be out of the question.

Chapter 4: Iranian Scenarios

This chapter encompasses steps 5 of LAMP, identifying three competing strategic scenarios that will drive the decision-making process of the three national actors. These scenarios are not intended to be detailed prognosticators of the future Iranian political landscape; rather, these scenarios are intentionally vague, providing a general framework which is likely to influence the courses of action of the three primary actors. In the first scenario, Iran continues its recent behavioral pattern of tacit aggressiveness, hostile rhetoric and propaganda, and general bellicosity. In the second scenario, Iran abandons its aggressive behavior and adopts a policy of cooperation and diplomacy, seeking to foster economic and political relationships and stability. In the final scenario Iran adopts a hybrid of the first two, limiting their antagonistic actions and toning down their public rhetoric while maintaining a policy of ambiguity regarding their nuclear program. Each of these scenarios offers unique characteristics that would influence the state actors' decision-making, as examined below.

Scenario 1: Neighborhood Bully

As noted, Iran's recent history is replete with examples of openly hostile rhetoric and propaganda; national anti-American and anti-Israeli slogans abound, including "*Marg bar America* (Death to America) and *Marg bar Israel* (Death to Israel)" (Kazemzadeh 2009, 48). Tehran's hostility is not confined to vitriolic speech and writing, however; Iran is known to frequently act upon this sentiment. Iran is known to collaborate with insurgent and terrorist groups, providing financial and material support as well as intelligence and training. In return for this support, these groups wage proxy wars at the behest of the Iranian regime; Hamas and Hezbollah fight against Israeli interests, insurgent groups in Iraq and Afghanistan employ Iranian provided weapons against U.S. and Coalition forces, and Iranian backed organizations have tried to destabilize regional governments friendly to the West, such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan. Regarding their nuclear program, Iran continues to defy international pressure and refuses to comply with IAEA rules and regulations that mandate transparency and inspections. Indeed,

Tehran seems to flaunt these violations in the face of the international community and appears to be actively pursuing nuclear weapons capabilities. The theocratic Iranian regime is able to consolidate its power base, either through oppression, nationalism, or some combination of the two, and is free from the threat of internal strife. In this scenario, Iran continues to engage in these nefarious activities and is consequently further isolated from and vilified by the international community, particularly the United States and its allies. This dynamic creates a vicious cycle: the international community continually imposes 'punishment' for Iranian bad acts while Iran reacts to deepening isolation by continually lashing out against the international community with acts of belligerence.

Scenario 2: Reformed Good Neighbor

This scenario reflects a virtual antithesis of the above scenario; rather than continuing their antagonistic tendencies, the Iranian regime changes their national policy to one of cooperation and diplomacy. Iran recognizes the futility of continuing to provoke the international community and acknowledges that their past behavior is self defeating. Iran accepts that any military confrontation with Western forces will have a devastating and humiliating outcome, and it acknowledges the insidious effects that prolonged sanctions are having on its economy. This deteriorating economy exacerbates the frustrations of the Iranian populace and leads to increasing discontent and disgruntlement against the ruling regime. Faced with the increased likelihood of internal strife and the seeming inevitable outcomes of continued belligerence, the regime in Tehran opts for self preservation. In hopes of quickly buoying its foundering economy, Iran pursues a policy of diplomacy and cooperation. It curtails its support of insurgent and terrorist activity, and perhaps even provides intelligence to the West that helps combat these groups. Seeing the prosperity of other Western allies, Iran fosters international relationships by welcoming economic development and foreign investment activity. For its nuclear program, Iran abandons its policy of mystery and evasion and agrees to adhere to the rules prescribed by the NPT, welcoming IAEA inspections and assistance in providing a working nuclear power infrastructure without the means to develop nuclear weapons. In opposition to the

first scenario, this one would be characterized by a virtuous cycle in which trust, transparency, and cooperation would build upon each other.

Scenario 3: Neighbor Behind Drawn Shades

In this scenario the Iranian regime pursues a hybrid of the first two scenarios in hopes of mollifying the international community's anger and allaying its most immediate and critical concerns. In this scenario, Iran would begin to rein in its open hostility and aggression in an attempt to demonstrate reform and a willingness to change, thereby appeasing at least some of the international community. They will use these concessions, however small they might be, in an attempt to fracture any international coalition or consensus against Iran, pointing to the possibility of continued and more meaningful reform and cooperation in the future. Iran will compromise on minor issues in order to increase their credibility and standing within both the Middle East and the wider international community. All the while, the Iranian regime will maintain its autonomy and employ the time bought through the above diplomacy to strengthen its position and to execute its plans. None of the concessions given up would be so great that they could not be easily reversed, and Iran would at least have the ability to revamp their aggression if desired. Regarding their nuclear program, Iran would exercise a policy of ambiguity, allowing just enough transparency to satisfy the IAEA and the international community without becoming fully compliant. It would continue to dwell in the grey areas of the NPT, claiming that their nuclear technologies were solely for power generation while still implementing the capabilities to manufacture a nuclear arsenal. If this course of action is well executed, it will be virtually impossible to determine if Iran is truly moving towards moderation and cooperation, or if it is secretly pursuing its hard-line policies. Such confusion would inevitably create differing opinions and would likely prevent any cohesive action against Iran, which in turn would clearly benefit Iran. The effects of this course of action are compounded by Iran's ability to continue such ambiguity for as long as they see fit, buying them time to potentially complete their nuclear infrastructure and join the nuclear club.

Chapter 5: Most Likely Futures

This chapter completes steps 6-9 of LAMP; it first calculates all possible futures that could stem from the distinct possibilities outlined above, and then ranks the likelihood of these futures within the context of each strategic scenario by conducting pairwise comparisons.

Alternate Futures:

Lockwood and Lockwood provide the following guidance for calculating the total number of alternate futures under LAMP, accounting for each actor's policy options (1993, 38):

$X^Y=Z$, where X is the number of policy options, Y is the number of actors, and Z is the total number of alternate futures. Because X is not consistent (the United States has 7 options vs. 2 for Russia and Israel), additional calculations are required, yielding the 28 total possible alternative futures: 2^2 (Israel and Russia) x 1^7 (USA) = 4 x 7 = 28.

Pairwise Comparisons:

Each alternate future is compared against every other future to determine which alternative is more likely, with the more likely future receiving a 'vote' which is tallied in the table below. After completing the pairwise comparisons for each alternate future, the future with the most votes has the highest relative probability. Because the probability of each future is affected by the scenario in which it will occur, this process must be completed three times (one for each of the above scenarios); this could yield three different 'most likely futures', one for each scenario. The tables below show the results of the pairwise comparisons for each future.

Table 1 – Pairwise Results for Scenario 1: Neighborhood Bully

Alternate Future #	U.S. Option	Israel	Russia	# of Votes
1	P	PA	W	25
2	P	D	W	27
3	P	PA	I	23
4	P	D	I	17
5	E	PA	W	11
6	E	D	W	9
7	E	PA	I	10
8	E	D	I	8
9	CN	PA	W	7
10	CN	D	W	5
11	CN	PA	I	6
12	CN	D	I	4
13	A	PA	W	26
14	A	D	W	22
15	A	PA	I	24
16	A	D	I	21
17	I	PA	W	3
18	I	D	W	1
19	I	PA	I	2
20	I	D	I	0
21	B	PA	W	18
22	B	D	W	15
23	B	PA	I	16
24	B	D	I	14
25	C	PA	W	20
26	C	D	W	13
27	C	PA	I	19
28	C	D	I	12

P = Persuasion   PA = Preemption   W = West
E = Engagement   D = Diplomacy   I = Iran
CN = Clean
Needles
A = Airstrikes
I = Invasion
B = Blockade
C =Containment

Table 2 – Pairwise Results for Scenario 2: Reformed Good Neighbor

Alternate Future #	U.S. Option	Israel	Russia	# of Votes
1	P	PA	W	12
2	P	D	W	14
3	P	PA	I	13
4	P	D	I	15
5	E	PA	W	18
6	E	D	W	26
7	E	PA	I	19
8	E	D	I	27
9	CN	PA	W	16
10	CN	D	W	22
11	CN	PA	I	17
12	CN	D	I	23
13	A	PA	W	4
14	A	D	W	6
15	A	PA	I	5
16	A	D	I	7
17	I	PA	W	0
18	I	D	W	2
19	I	PA	I	1
20	I	D	I	3
21	B	PA	W	8
22	B	D	W	10
23	B	PA	I	9
24	B	D	I	11
25	C	PA	W	20
26	C	D	W	24
27	C	PA	I	21
28	C	D	I	25

P = Persuasion	PA = Preemption	W = West
E = Engagement	D = Diplomacy	I = Iran
CN = Clean Needles		
A = Airstrikes		
I = Invasion		
B = Blockade		
C =Containment		

Table 3 – Pairwise Results for Scenario 3: Neighbor Behind Drawn Shades

Alternate Future #	U.S. Option	Israel	Russia	# of Votes
1	P	PA	W	24
2	P	D	W	19
3	P	PA	I	27
4	P	D	I	21
5	E	PA	W	22
6	E	D	W	16
7	E	PA	I	25
8	E	D	I	17
9	CN	PA	W	14
10	CN	D	W	12
11	CN	PA	I	15
12	CN	D	I	13
13	A	PA	W	6
14	A	D	W	4
15	A	PA	I	7
16	A	D	I	5
17	I	PA	W	2
18	I	D	W	0
19	I	PA	I	3
20	I	D	I	1
21	B	PA	W	10
22	B	D	W	8
23	B	PA	I	11
24	B	D	I	9
25	C	PA	W	23
26	C	D	W	18
27	C	PA	I	26
28	C	D	I	20

P = Persuasion   PA = Preemption   W = West
E = Engagement   D = Diplomacy   I = Iran
CN = Clean
Needles
A = Airstrikes
I = Invasion
B = Blockade
C =Containment

Rank Alternate Futures

The completed pairwise comparisons from above are now ranked from most likely to least likely based on the total number of votes received. Again, there is one table for each scenario.

Table 4 – Rank-ordered futures for Scenario 1: Neighborhood Bully

Alternate Future #	U.S. Option	Israel	Russia	# of Votes
2	P	D	W	27
13	A	PA	W	26
1	P	PA	W	25
15	A	PA	I	24
3	P	PA	I	23
14	A	D	W	22
16	A	D	I	21
25	C	PA	W	20
27	C	PA	I	19
21	B	PA	W	18
4	P	D	I	17
23	B	PA	I	16
22	B	D	W	15
24	B	D	I	14
26	C	D	W	13
28	C	D	I	12
5	E	PA	W	11
7	E	PA	I	10
6	E	D	W	9
8	E	D	I	8
9	CN	PA	W	7
11	CN	PA	I	6
10	CN	D	W	5
12	CN	D	I	4
17	I	PA	W	3
19	I	PA	I	2
18	I	D	W	1
20	I	D	I	0

P = Persuasion   PA = Preemption   W = West
E = Engagement   D = Diplomacy   I = Iran
CN = Clean Needles
A = Airstrikes
I = Invasion
B = Blockade
C = Containment

Table 5 – Rank-ordered futures for Scenario 2: Reformed Good Neighbor

Alternate Future #	U.S. Option	Israel	Russia	# of Votes
8	E	D	I	27
6	E	D	W	26
28	C	D	I	25
26	C	D	W	24
12	CN	D	I	23
10	CN	D	W	22
27	C	PA	I	21
25	C	PA	W	20
7	E	PA	I	19
5	E	PA	W	18
11	CN	PA	I	17
9	CN	PA	W	16
4	P	D	I	15
2	P	D	W	14
3	P	PA	I	13
1	P	PA	W	12
24	B	D	I	11
22	B	D	W	10
23	B	PA	I	9
21	B	PA	W	8
16	A	D	I	7
14	A	D	W	6
15	A	PA	I	5
13	A	PA	W	4
20	I	D	I	3
18	I	D	W	2
19	I	PA	I	1
17	I	PA	W	0

P = Persuasion   PA = Preemption   W = West
E = Engagement   D = Diplomacy   I = Iran
CN = Clean Needles
A = Airstrikes
I = Invasion
B = Blockade
C = Containment

Table 6 – Rank-ordered futures Scenario 3: Neighbor Behind Drawn Shades

Alternate Future #	U.S. Option	Israel	Russia	# of Votes
3	P	PA	I	27
27	C	PA	I	26
7	E	PA	I	25
1	P	PA	W	24
25	C	PA	W	23
5	E	PA	W	22
4	P	D	I	21
28	C	D	I	20
2	P	D	W	19
26	C	D	W	18
8	E	D	I	17
6	E	D	W	16
11	CN	PA	I	15
9	CN	PA	W	14
12	CN	D	I	13
10	CN	D	W	12
23	B	PA	I	11
21	B	PA	W	10
24	B	D	I	9
22	B	D	W	8
15	A	PA	I	7
13	A	PA	W	6
16	A	D	I	5
14	A	D	W	4
19	I	PA	I	3
17	I	PA	W	2
20	I	D	I	1
18	I	D	W	0

P = Persuasion   PA = Preemption   W = West
E = Engagement   D = Diplomacy   I = Iran
CN = Clean Needles
A = Airstrikes
I = Invasion
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Analysis of Most Likely Futures

This section will briefly analyze the most likely futures for each scenario, looking at the combination of policy options for each future and the likely outcome with regard to the Iranian nuclear program. Examining all of the probabilities for each scenario is beyond the purview of this study, especially since doing so would take on extremely unlikely futures and would also yield vast amounts of redundancy. By examining the three most likely futures this study hopes to present the reader with the most relevant and significant alternatives.

Most Likely Futures in Scenario 1: Neighborhood Bully

1. Alternate Future #2 (U.S. Persuasion; Israeli Diplomacy; Russian Support of West)

In all three of the most likely futures, continued and increased hostility and belligerence from Tehran effectively undermine Iran's relationship with Russia. Regardless of whether Moscow is enticed by Western concessions and incentives or if it simply ceases to see the utility of continuing its close affiliation with the pariah state, Russia changes its historic policy of protecting Iran and instead chooses to support action against its former ally. With the support of Russia, the United States is able to garner international consensus to implement harsh international sanctions against Iran. Despite its concern over increased Iranian bellicosity, Israel recognizes the importance of these developments and decides to follow the lead of its benefactor and adopts a policy of diplomacy, fully supporting the call for sanctions.

Iran initially attempts to fortify itself within its borders and weather the storm; it is initially able to engender strong nationalistic support for the regime and against its Western oppressors. Iran attempts to accelerate its nuclear program in hopes that the successful production of nuclear weapons might be sufficient to intimidate the West into foregoing their sanctions. It is not long, however, until the effects of the sanctions, particularly the loss of its oil revenues, begin to be seen and felt throughout Iran. As the economy worsens both unemployment and inflation steadily rise, which consequently cause a spike in the crime rate a

sense of unrest among the Iranian populace. The lack of availability of refined fuel which Iran typically imports further cripples the economy and puts a strain on Iran's power infrastructure that results in brown- and black-outs throughout the country. As the populace is increasingly unable to depend upon the government to provide basic staples and necessities, the unrest grows into riots and perhaps rebellion. Tehran, facing the probability of a popular revolution, ultimately agrees to Western stipulations and demands; regarding its nuclear program, it agrees to cooperate fully with the IAEA and offers complete transparency.

2. Alternate Future #13 (U.S. Airstrikes; Israeli Preemption; Russian Support of West)

In this future, both Washington and Jerusalem fear the ramifications of inaction given the increased threats and hostility emanating from Tehran. Despite Russian support, the U.S. and Israel realize that it will take considerable time to organize and implement sanctions and even more time for the effects of sanctions to be realized. Fearing that Iran might be able to surge effort on its nuclear program and successfully manufacture nuclear weaponry, both the U.S. and Israel agree that more immediate action is required. Accordingly, the two nations collaborate on comprehensive air strikes targeting Iranian nuclear infrastructure. The two countries work closely together to fuse an accurate intelligence picture and create an inclusive target list that will result in maximum damage to Iranian capabilities. The Israeli Defense Forces are armed with advanced American munitions and are provided logistical support (aerial refueling and forward airbases) that greatly improves the range and lethality of their attacks on targets in east-Iran, leaving U.S. forces free to concentrate on more remote or better protected facilities.

The massing of Israeli and American forces, along with the careful planning and coordination of the strikes, is devastating to the Iranian nuclear infrastructure. In addition to the widely known facilities, the joint work of the Israeli and U.S. Intelligence Communities is able to identify and target covert facilities. As a result of these attacks, Iran's nuclear program, including the redundancy of its covert facilities, is shattered, delaying the likelihood of any significant advances towards nuclear weapons by at least seven to eight years. Moreover, while there is some negative fallout against the U.S. and Israel, the international community is largely accepting and in some cases laudatory of their actions. This response, or lack thereof, from

abroad lends tacit approval to the attack and indicates to Tehran that such attacks might be repeated in the future. Because of the prohibitive costs associated with restarting its program, coupled with the likelihood of repeated attacks, Iran decides to forego its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

3. Alternate Future #2 (U.S. Persuasion; Israeli Preemption; Russian Support of West)

This future presents a hybrid of the first two alternatives. With the endorsement of Russia, the United States is able to garner international support for coercive sanctions. In the face of these sanctions, Iran continues to ratchet up its anti-Western and anti-Israeli threats and rhetoric. Israel takes these threats quite literally and considers that in the face of upcoming sanctions that the Iranian regime might act irrationally or out of desperation. As above, Jerusalem fears that the imposition and effects of the sanctions are likely to take an inordinate amount of time, time that Iran could use to complete a nuclear weapon or to employ conventional and non-conventional assets against Israel. Unwilling to sit idly by in the face of such threats, Israel decides to unilaterally preempt the threat.

Because the action is unilateral, Israel does not have the advantage of material and logistical support that it enjoys in the alternate scenario above. Because of the limited size of the IDF, the Israeli attack is constrained to a limited target set. While the facilities that are targeted are successfully bombed and destroyed, the overall impact of the attacks is far less than in a joint U.S. – Israeli attack, setting back the Iranian nuclear program by only two to three years. Additionally, because of the limited scope of the attack only high profile facilities are targeted, leaving any covert facilities that Iran may have intact and operational. Despite its lack of participation, the international community views the U.S. as complicit and support for comprehensive sanctions is badly damaged. Moreover, because of the apparent subterfuge involved the attacks are widely vilified, costing both the U.S. and Israel large amounts of political capital and putting a huge strain on the relationship of the traditional allies. Iran is able to capitalize on this international discord by pushing to rebuild its relationship with Russia and seeking other potential benefactors. It also believes that future attacks are unlikely and so resumes its aggressive push for nuclear capabilities.

Most Likely Futures in Scenario 2: Reformed Good Neighbor

1. Alternate Future #8 (U.S. Engagement; Israeli Diplomacy; Russian support of Iran)
2. Alternate Future #6 (U.S. Engagement; Israeli Diplomacy; Russian support of West)

The outcome of both of these futures is remarkable similar, with the only difference being who Russia decides to support. In both of these futures, Iranian efforts to cooperate and demonstrate good will and behavior are well received by the West. In response to this drastic change in character, the United States quickly seizes the opportunity to embrace the strategic and economic potential of a positive relationship with its former adversary. The U.S. is quick to invest in the Iranian economy, pushing massive amounts of capital and investment in hopes of a similar positive outcome to those achieved under similar circumstances elsewhere in the world. As in the past, the U.S. is quick to embrace and nourish the burgeoning relationship.

While Israel is leery of possible deception on the part of the Iranian regime and is not thrilled with the U.S. embracing Iran as a strategic partner, it has little choice but to accept the change. The ideological change of heart is not constrained solely to Iran; the disappearance of the traditional radical mouthpiece also weakens anti-Israeli rhetoric throughout the entire Middle East. Additionally, the lack of Iranian material, intelligence, and economic support is quickly seen in the demise of its radical proxy groups which are no longer able to wage effective campaigns against Israel. All of this combines to improve Israel's regional stability and security and allows Jerusalem to focus on further strengthening relationships with its surrounding Arab states.

Who Russia supports in this case is largely semantics, as the ultimate outcome remains fairly consistent either way. Russia is more likely to support Iran in this case for two reasons. First, Iranian acceptance of IAEA inspections and willingness to work with other countries in legitimate pursuit of nuclear power is extremely appealing to Moscow, who hopes to become the market leader in exporting such technology. Second, Russia will want to maintain its relationship with Iran as it is still the only Russian foothold in the Middle East, and also to counter the strategic goals of the U.S. Russia could, however, shift its allegiance to the West if it

is able to get valuable concessions to do so. If Russia sees Iran changing its complexion, it may realize that Iran no longer needs a protector and consequently could try to play both sides of the fence. Either way the outcome for Iran's nuclear program remains the same: Iran works with the international community and provides the IAEA and other agencies complete access and transparency. In return, Iran is able to pursue legitimate nuclear technology as provided for under the NPT.

3. Alternate Future #28 (U.S. Containment; Israeli Diplomacy; Russian support of Iran)

This future differs significantly from the two previously outlined. Under this alternative, the U.S. is not so quick to accept Iranian change at face value. Iran's proven history of political manipulation and duplicity leads to U.S. suspicion and caution. Despite Iran's willingness to endure inspections and its claims of transparency, Washington still regards Iran as a likely enemy. While Tehran's change of face effectively rules out any U.S. coercive policy options, Washington is hesitant to treat Iran as a new friend. Additionally, the U.S. is hesitant to alienate its Middle Eastern allies such as Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan by embracing their traditional enemy. Recognizing that Russia is in league with Iran, the U.S. attempts to further its own interests by expanding its influence with all of Iran's traditional enemies in a strategy of containment. While such a policy could backfire and cause Iran to regress, a policy of containment is essentially a test to ensure that Iran's actions are genuine.

For its part, Israel is thrilled with these developments. It is the beneficiary of all of the positive changes stemming from Iran's rehabilitation (same changes as previously outlined), but it does not have to worry about a changing paradigm that might see the U.S. embrace Iran as an ally. Indeed, the U.S. policy of containment is ideal for Israeli security as it aligns the goals and policies of Jerusalem with those of Riyadh, Amman, Cairo, and other regional nations. Continued Russian support of Iran also plays to Israeli goals, as that relationship may reinforce the need for containment and further entrench the policy.

In addition to the aforementioned reasons, Russia is likely to maintain its support for Iran in a scenario where the U.S. is exercising containment. Moscow hopes that such loyalty will be rewarded if Iran does pass muster with the West, giving Russia primacy if and when Iran's economy does welcome foreign investment. If this does not happen quickly, in the interim Iran

will need a trade partner and will have resumed need for arms and infrastructure deals, both of which would benefit Russia.

Most Likely Futures in Scenario 3: Neighbor Behind Drawn Shades

The alternate futures under this scenario were by far the most difficult to gauge as it is hard to predict the state actors' reactions to the ambiguous policies of Iran. For simplicity and consistency, the analysis of the possible alternatives will once again be limited to the three judged most likely. It is important for the reader to understand that there was very little difference between any of the top twelve alternatives; a more thorough exploration of all twelve alternatives is recommended prior to any policy decisions.

1. Alternate Future #3 (U.S. Persuasion; Israeli Preemption; Russian support of Iran)

Under this scenario, the lack of conclusive evidence of Iranian wrongdoing effectively prohibits the U.S. from pursuing any of its coercive military options. Despite the lack of definitive proof, however, there are enough indicators to keep Iran in the crosshairs of U.S. diplomacy. Accordingly, the U.S. pursues the most coercive option at its disposal, that of comprehensive sanctions. The same ambiguity that prevents U.S. support of military action raises enough questions throughout the international community that it is virtually impossible to enact comprehensive sanctions. This difficulty is exacerbated by continued Russian support and protection of Iran.

While the international community waits for decisive evidence of Iranian wrongdoing, Israel begins to get more and more concerned. Convinced that Iran is once again manipulating the international system in order to buy time to complete its nuclear program, Israeli fears continue to grow. Seeing the continued lack of action from the United States and the unlikelihood of such action materializing soon, Israel ultimately decides to act in its own interests and launches preemptive attacks against Iran. The results are similar to those discussed in Option #2 in Scenario #1 – limited success resulting in Iranian nuclear pursuits being delayed two to three years. While there is no consensus to destroy in this case, there is still political

fallout against both Israel and the United States, Russian support for Iran is redoubled, and Iran is emboldened to accelerate its program.

2. Alternate Future #27 (U.S. Containment; Israeli Preemption; Russian support of Iran)
3. Alternate Future #7 (U.S. Engagement; Israeli Preemption; Russian support of Iran)

Both of these alternatives are similar to the one discussed immediately above. In both cases, Russian support of Iran exacerbates the international indecision caused by Iranian ambiguity. Under the first alternative, the United States tacitly concedes to the inevitability of the Iranian nuclear program and simply attempts to limit the threat through deterrence and a policy of containment. Under the second, the U.S. attempts to dissuade Iran from their nuclear program by offering incentives and concessions under a policy of engagement. Such a policy, however, has no built in mechanisms for inspection and verification. If Iranian ambiguity is truly indicative of change, a policy of engagement might entice Tehran to accelerate and embrace such change in order to reap additional benefits.

Under both of these alternatives there is no direct action being conducted to actively dissuade Iran from pursuing nuclear weapons. Because of Israel's history and culture, it is likely to view Iranian ambiguity in a much more negative light than the rest of the international community, and it is unlikely to lower its guard in the face of such ambiguity. Because both containment and engagement allow for the possibility or even probability, of Iranian nuclear armament, Israel ultimately decides to take preemptive action; the result of this action models that discussed in Alternate Future #3.

Chapter 6: Focal Events, Indicators, and Transpositions

This chapter will complete the final three steps of the LAMP process by identifying focal events, indicators, and possible transpositions of the most likely futures. Focal events are developments which identify the increased likelihood of a particular future; these are general and broad trends or events that might be used by analysts to isolate and identify the emergence of an alternate future. While the focal events are broad and focus on the bigger picture, their associated indicators attempt to be much more precise and specific. The indicators act as a layered analytic tool which provides specific criteria that point to the emergence of a particular focal event. Focal events and indicators will be examined for each of the most likely alternatives identified above. The final section discusses the possibility that the emergence of one of the alternate futures may morph from its original form into one of the alternative futures; this is the final step of LAMP and is known as transposition.

<u>Focal Events and Indicators</u>

Focal Events for Scenario 1: Neighborhood Bully

1. Alternate Future #2 (U.S. Persuasion, Israeli Democracy, Russian support of West)
    a. Shift in International Landscape: The international community recognizes the danger posed by an increasingly belligerent Iran and puts aside their differences to reach a consensus on dealing with the threat.
        i. Increased Public International Discussion and Debate: Increased concern over Iran will likely be evidenced by a noticeable increase in public discourse on the topic. This could take many forms, ranging from public statements of key governmental leaders to speeches at the United Nations to policy recommendations by academics and think tanks. Regardless of the form increased debate and discussion is an indicator.

ii. Concessions to Russia and China: If the United States and the West are seen granting policy incentives or concessions to the two countries who most oppose action against Iran, it could be indicative of a tit-for-tat agreement whereby Russia and China agree to discontinue their opposition. Concessions of more significance are stronger indicators; a concession to Russia on the contentious issue of missile defense, for example, is a stronger indicator than a mutually beneficial trade agreement.

b. Change in U.S. Political-Military Landscape: The U.S. populace, growing increasing war weary in the wake of Iraq and Afghanistan, does not support further military action in the region. This is reinforced by a reduction in the size of U.S. forces and cuts in defense spending.

i. Election of a moderate administration and politicians: America elects an administration which campaigns on a platform of reform and international engagement and promises of reduced conflict.

ii. Drawdown of U.S. forces: The United States commits to a handover of responsibility in both Iraq and Afghanistan and accordingly begins to systematically withdraw forces from the region. This would clearly indicate that imminent action against Iran is unlikely.

c. Continued Economic Downturn: The current economic woes continue to worsen, ultimately pushing the world into a global depression that forces countries to tend to internal concerns and leaves limited resources for external interventions.

i. Continued Rising Unemployment and Inflation: With the continued worsening of domestic economic conditions, Western governments are forced to commit the bulk of their resources to combat economic woes. This in turn leaves limited resources and funds for foreign policy, making the inexpensive option of sanctions against Iran the most likely course of action.

ii. Decreased Government Revenues Lead to Lower Defense Budgets: Because of the deteriorating economic conditions, Western governments are faced with the dilemma of having to spend more money on their

domestic issues while having lowered revenues. In order to free up more funds, they enact deep cuts in military spending; this in turn decreases the likelihood of any major military action, leaving sanctions as the most likely course of action.

2. Alternate Future #13 (U.S. Airstrikes, Israeli Preemption, Russian support of West)

   a. Shift in the International Threat Perception of Iran: Events transpire that unite the international community's perception of Iran as dangerous and irrational, leading to acceptance of and support for direct intervention.

      i. Intelligence that Iran is Nearing Nuclear Threshold: New intelligence emerges that illuminates the state of the Iranian nuclear program as being more advanced than previously thought. This intelligence reveals continued Iranian duplicity and also shows that time is of the essence, making time-consuming diplomacy much less appealing.

      ii. Aggressive Iranian Behavior: Iranian acts of aggression and hostility continue to alienate the international community, including its traditional partners (Russia and China). Such aggression could take many forms, including continued ties to terrorism throughout the Middle East and Europe or an increase in subversive ideological rhetoric. Any number of actions could exacerbate the threat perception of Iran and could lead to increased calls for preemption.

3. Alternate Future #1 (U.S. Persuasion, Israeli Preemption, Russian support of West)

   a. The focal events and indicators for this alternative will closely mirror those discussed above in Alternate Future #2. Unique focal events and indicators for Israel's action are discussed below.

   b. Increased Iranian Sponsored Attacks against Israel: A resurgence of hostile action against Israel by Iranian backed organizations, likely including Hamas and Hezbollah, leads to calls for retaliation and interdiction.

   c. Continued Divergence between Washington and Jerusalem: Israel continues to see U.S. policies as being counter to its own. Feeling increasing isolated and

unsecure, Israel chooses to act in its own interests rather than hoping that U.S. policies will pan out.

Focal Events for Scenario 2: Good Neighbor

1. Alternate Future #8 (U.S. Engagement, Israeli Diplomacy, Russian support of Iran)
2. Alternate Future #1 (U.S. Engagement, Israeli Diplomacy, Russian support of West)

As in the analysis of these two alternative futures, the focal events and indicators of each are remarkably similar. Rather than being redundant, the two options are discussed jointly below.

    a. Strengthening of International Economy: With a resurgence in the economy, the international community is eager to find new investments and trading partners. Iran is eager to participate in the global prosperity and is anxious to leverage its reformed behavior into economic opportunity.

        i. Re-emergence of global economic growth increases demand for oil: As economic conditions improve the global demand for oil skyrockets. Increased demand precipitates the need for relationships with oil exporters such as Iran and pushes nations and corporations to partner with Iran. Also, increased Iranian oil revenues lead to increased Iranian spending, further strengthening the growth of international partnerships.

        ii. Iran welcomes direct foreign investment: As international credit markets thaw, governments and financial institutions look to put huge sums of money to work. Iran attempts to model the economic success of the BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) by likewise welcoming foreign investment through investor friendly policies.

    b. Iranian Compliance with IAEA and NPT: Iran foregoes its policies of subterfuge and ambiguity and adheres to international non-proliferation guidelines, welcoming IAEA inspections and transparency.

      i. Iran Outsources Nuclear Energy Infrastructure: Iran has consistently rebuffed international offers of nuclear assistance. Iran changes this policy and welcomes the help of the international community, indicating that Iran does not have any nefarious or clandestine intentions.

      ii. Iran Offers Nuclear Transparency: Tehran agrees to unconstrained international inspections of its nuclear infrastructure. It welcomes the support and assistance of the IAEA in expediting peaceful nuclear power generation.

  c. Iranian Regime Change: Oppressive and poor economic conditions and increasing discontent with the current regime lead to its overthrow. The international community jumps at the chance to test the diplomatic waters and engages the new government.

      i. Continued Internal Economic Deterioration – Already high unemployment and inflation rates continue to rise, resulting in an increasingly disenfranchised population base. Iran is unable to sustain the economic subsidies that prop up the economy, exacerbating already poor conditions.

      ii. Anti-regime demonstrations: Rising discontent with the policies and draconian measures of the Iranian regime lead to increased numbers of demonstrations. In response to continued oppressive responses, the frequency and severity of these demonstrations continues to rise.

      iii. Rise of legitimate political opposition: The pro-Western and anti-regime sentiment exhibited by the Iranian youth percolates into the political system, resulting in the rise of a popular counter-party to Iran's conservative theocracy. As this political opposition gains traction, the radical policies of the current regime morph into more moderate and pro-Western policies.

3. Alternate Future #1 (U.S. Containment, Israeli Diplomacy, Russian support of Iran)

  a. Strengthening of Iranian-Russian and Iranian-Chinese Relationships: While Iran does temper its bad behavior and opens its nuclear program for inspection, it

retains its disdain for the West and pursues stronger partnerships with Russia and China.

    i. Iran Implements Protected Trade Agreements: As in the above alternatives, Iran seeks out investment and mutually beneficial trade agreements, but it does so only with Russia and China and intentionally excludes the West from participating. This results in the U.S. seeking to strengthen its economic ties with surrounding states in hopes that the benefits accorded to its strategic rivals will be limited.

    ii. U.S. regional allies oppose U.S. participation. The United States' strongest allies in the region (Israel, Saudi Arabia, Jordan…) are all traditional enemies of Iran. Despite Iran's changed behavior, these nations view any U.S. relationship with Iran as undermining to their interests and threaten to sever their relationships with the U.S. if it pursues a relationship with their enemy. This convinces the U.S. to sit on the sidelines, pushing Iran towards Russia and China and creating de facto containment.

b. West Demands Reconciliation and Atonement: While the West welcomes the change in Iran's behavior, it is not willing to reciprocate until Iran proves that its actions are legitimate and not a stratagem. It calls for statements and actions that Iran is unwilling to deliver, leaving the two sides in an awkward and uncomfortable standoff.

    i. Continued Suspicion of Iranian Motivations: Deep seeded suspicion of the Iranian regime persists in the West, particularly within conservative circles in the United States and Israel. While Iran's change in behavior is enough to stave off coercive policy options, it cannot overcome the historical opposition.

    ii. West Demands Proof of Motives: In order to verify Iranian motives, the west calls for Iran to publicly renounce and apologize for its prior bad acts. The west also demands that Iran reveal information about the proxy terror organizations which it backed. Iran is unwilling to comply with these demands, leaving the two sides at a standoff.

Focal Events for Scenario 3: Neighbor Behind Drawn Curtains

1. Alternate Future #3 (U.S. Persuasion, Israeli Preemption, Russian support of Iran)
2. Alternate Future #8 (U.S. Containment, Israeli Preemption, Russian support of Iran)
3. Alternate Future #8 (U.S. Engagement, Israeli Preemption, Russian support of Iran)

Once again, these three scenarios share similar focal events and indicators. All three share Israeli Preemptive Attacks and Russian support of Iran as likely policy options, and while the U.S. exercises different policy options the focal events are consistent for all three futures. For simplicity and to prevent redundancy, the focal events and indicators for all three alternative futures are discussed concurrently below.

    a. Israel steps up its preparation for action: Continued inaction by the international community does not sit well with Israeli leadership. Concerned that none of the United States' possible policy options will successfully deter Iran from nuclear weapons, Israel continuously advocates action and readies its own forces.

        i. Israeli Saber Rattling: Israel increases the frequency and severity of its calls for international action. Israeli officials publicly lobby the U.S. and other governments to take action and they condemn Iranian policy and action.

        ii. IDF Prepares for War: The Israeli Defense Forces continue to exercise long range attack plans. They also begin to stockpile advanced munitions, both domestically produced and those purchased from the U.S.

        iii. Israel Prepares for Retaliation: Israeli first responders conduct emergency reaction and mass casualty drills in anticipation of Iranian retaliation. Defensive forces are massed in preparation of Hamas and Hezbollah strikes; alternatively, Israel could mount an offensive against these groups hoping to mitigate that threat.

    b. The United States is either unwilling or unable to consider military options. The political climate, either by choice of the administration or due to limited resources, prevents any serious consideration of military action against Iran.

       i. U.S. government makes public promises to refrain from further military action or vows not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Unwilling to renege its promises, the administration must resort only to diplomatic actions.

      ii. Overstretched military is unable to commit resources to Iran. This could be the result of several events. The situation could worsen in Iraq or Afghanistan, requiring a commitment of forces to those fights. Alternatively, a new conflict could arise elsewhere that pulls forces away from the region and makes a fight with Iran unfeasible.

  c. Iranian manipulation of international community leads to lack of consensus: Iran skillfully plays the international community against itself, offering just enough promise of reform to prevent consensus and ensure inaction.

       i. Iran allows limited inspections: The regime allows limited inspections of its most well known and public nuclear infrastructure. This is enough to assuage the concerns of some countries, but the lack of complete transparency convinces others that Iran is maintaining its duplicity.

      ii. Iran grants concessions to Russia and China: Iran attempts to ensure the continued protection of Russia and China by offering both economic and political incentives and concessions.

     iii. Iran attempts to incite trouble elsewhere: Iran attempts to shift the attention of the international community by creating a more pressing problem for it to deal with. Iran activates proxy groups to cause trouble elsewhere in the region, perhaps by sowing discontent and inciting revolution or perhaps by stepping up direct action against Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

While this examination of focal events and indicators attempts to illuminate the most likely of each, it is impossible to present a holistic and comprehensive list. With the infinite ways in which the future could unfold, it is possible that events currently viewed as irrelevant could actually be of great importance in determining the future. Additionally, it is possible that indicators from competing focal events could arise at the same time, lending credence to competing hypotheses of the future. As discussed earlier in this paper, it is impossible to definitively or precisely predict the future, but this list of focal events and indicators should at

least be beneficial in narrowing down the possibilities. Even a correct determination of the most likely alternative, however, does not guarantee that the future will unfold as predicted. The discussion below will examine how one future might morph into a drastically different future, limiting the utility of even correct assumptions and analysis.

Transpositions

Rather than attempting to identify the most likely transpositions for each individual alternate future, this section will take a more general approach. As is evident from the pairwise comparisons and the subsequent rankings, some futures and policy options are consistently determined to be unlikely regardless of the underlying scenario. This consistency may suggest that these options and their corresponding futures are irrelevant and should therefore be removed from the study. It is important to realize, however, that these options are only irrelevant when considered as the primary policy options. While they may never be the first or even the second choice, there is a much higher probability that these undesirable options might come into play as contingency plans in the event that the primary option does not produce the desired result. This morphing from one alternative future to another is what LAMP terms transposition; the outcome of such transposition can be a dramatic divergence from the desired endstate of policy options, and so must be considered carefully when implementing policy.

One policy option that continuously ranked low in all three scenarios was the U.S. implementation of the 'Clean Needles' policy. Despite the cogent arguments of Waltz and his fellow Realists, it is unlikely that the United States would ever opt for a policy that embraces and potentially even assists a nation acquire nuclear weapons. Such a policy goes against all historic precedent and would undermine the non-proliferation efforts that the United States has helped champion. The U.S. would probably not consider such an approach with a valued ally, let alone an adversarial nation often considered rouge and irrational. It is conceivable, however, that the United States might shift its policy to Clean Needles given the proper circumstances. If any of the other policy options failed and saw Iran successfully join the nuclear club, the United States might forego or amend its original policy and adopt that of Clean Needles. This is especially likely under any future that includes either Containment or Engagement, as both of these options

openly allow Iran to pursue its aims without any coercive consequences. Indeed, Clean Needles policy has been implemented in the past; after failed attempts to prevent India and Pakistan from joining the nuclear club, the United States has subsequently offered both nations technology and expertise to assist in the management and safeguarding of their respective nuclear inventories. In addition to this, the successful development of nuclear weapons by Iran would also likely lead to a policy of Containment (as discussed above, Clean Needles and Containment are not mutually exclusive) in hopes of limiting the effects of such a development.

Another potential transposition is the potential for Israel to shift from a policy of diplomacy to one of preemption. It has already been discussed how Israel has the ability to execute a unilateral attack against Iran without much notice or preparation. While Israel is likely to support diplomacy to a point, it is unlikely to stake its existence solely upon the efforts of the international community. If diplomacy appears to be taking too long or if there is a sudden change in the threat perception of Iran, Israel can quickly abandon diplomacy and take matters into its own hands.

Likewise, the consideration of the U.S. choosing to adopt a policy of Invasion seems unlikely to the point of absurdity. In the current geopolitical climate, with the U.S. Military already over tasked and stretched thin, it is extremely unlikely that Washington intentionally would pursue this option. There is a distinct possibility, perhaps even a likelihood, that this policy could be used as a countermove to Iranian action or retaliation in the aftermath of one of the other policy options. As discussed, Iran might conceivably lash out against the U.S. if sanctions or a blockade were threatening the existence of the regime. In addition to this, in any of the alternate futures in which Israel launches preemptive strikes (½ of all scenarios) the U.S. is likely to be viewed as complicit; in all of these scenarios, it is likely that Iran will attempt to retaliate in kind against both Israel and the United States. Given the provocation of Iran, the U.S. might choose to counter by adopting the Invasion option. At a minimum, any future which results in Iranian action against the United States is likely to transpose whatever U.S. option is in place to one of Airstrikes.

As can be seen, the possibility of transposition creates the potential for dramatic changes in policy and has potentially cataclysmic ramifications. It is possible that through transposition

the desired endstate of a policy option could morph into its antithesis, leading from desired goodwill to open warfare. The implications of transposition create important considerations for planners and policymakers. While consideration of only the most likely futures is adequate for an academic exercise such as this one, in reality the potential for transposition should require that every possible alternative is considered and planned for.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

None of the policy options presented in this paper will serve as a panacea to the Iranian nuclear threat; indeed, all of them are rife with risks, costs, and potentially unforeseen 2nd and 3rd order effects. Unfortunately, the pitfalls incumbent in these policy options reflect the complex and treacherous nature of dealing with Iran and cannot be avoided. This study has utilized LAMP to illuminate the most likely futures and their potential consequences, but in some ways it has solicited more questions than it has answered. In identifying focal events and indicators, this study has attempted to provide an azimuth and signposts for the monitoring and additional study of the Iranian nuclear threat. Each of those signposts, however, likely calls for a complete study in and of itself. The LAMP methodology utilized throughout this study attempts to provide a layered analysis of the problem, however these are simply the first few layers of an incredibly complex problem. This study identified a dozen or so focal events, each with two to three indicators; analysts monitoring those focal events and indicators will undoubtedly identify additional topics and events that also need monitoring. As the onion is peeled back, more and more questions arise; not only do these questions need to be answered, but all of these answers then need to be fused into a comprehensible and holistic product. This paper has attempted to start the process, but to truly illuminate the future much more analysis is required.

Ultimately this study sought to identify which combination of policy options might prompt Iran to abandon its nuclear weapons policy. Several such combinations have been identified and analyzed, but as noted each of these futures is based upon the assumptions and limited understanding of the author. It is the recommendation of this study, prior to acting to bring about the most desirable futures, that the assumptions and hypotheses put forth by the author be validated by experts in Iranian and Middle Eastern affairs. It is also important to keep in mind the possibility of even the most benign future to transpose into a much less desirable one. The effects of these transpositions can be effectively mitigated by branches and sequels, but without careful contingency planning the effects are potentially catastrophic.

A final recommendation of this study is that it be continuously revamped, updated, and expanded. As noted, restricting the study to the policy options of only three international actors puts potentially unrealistic constraints on the outcome of the most likely futures. Those looking for a more comprehensive or detailed understanding of how to contend with the Iranian nuclear threat should consider adding additional actors to this study if and how the futures might be changed. At a minimum, prior to implementing any definitive course of action the policy options of China, the EU-3, and the Gulf Cooperation Council should be studied for their effects on the current understanding. Additionally, conclusions of this paper are based upon data and information that is quickly out of date and obsolete. It is critical that the study and its assumptions be regularly updated to account for any changes in the actors' perceptions or policy options. Even a seemingly insignificant occurrence can create a shift in the paradigms upon which this study is designed; therefore these occurrences must be regularly injected into the methodology. It will take diligence and attention to detail to deter Iran from joining the nuclear club; the expansion and monitoring of this LAMP study could be a key tool in achieving that goal.

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