

Iran's Exponential Nuclear Program

By [Todd Strandberg](#)

The never-ending concern over Iran's nuclear program has surged back into the headlines. A new report by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy says that Israel is seriously considering unilateral military action against Iran to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons.

The report noted that...

"Israelis see the option fading over the next one to two years, not only because of Iran's nuclear progress and dispersion of its program but also because improved Iranian air defenses, especially the expected delivery of the S-300 surface-to-air missile system from Russia, are seen by Israel seriously limiting its military options."

Another recent news report said that Iran now has enough low-enriched uranium to produce at least one nuclear weapon, and enough raw uranium to produce 30 nukes.

Despite all the turmoil from a recent parliamentary election, Israel's leaders remain focused on the threat. This weekend, Military Intelligence Major General Amos Yadlin told the Israeli cabinet that Iran had...

"crossed the technological threshold" and "hopes to exploit the dialogue with the West and Washington to advance toward the production of an atomic bomb." The key to nuclear bomb production is the enrichment process, in which the isotope uranium-235 is separated from uranium-238 in centrifuges. Natural uranium is 99 percent U-238 and less than one percent U-235. Reactor grade fuel only needs to be 4 percent U-235, while weapons grade material must be purified to 90 percent.

Iran currently has 6,000 centrifuges enriching uranium, and it will soon finish installing another group of 3,000 centrifuges in the next few months. Tehran's ultimate plan is to move towards large-scale uranium enrichment that will involve 54,000 centrifuges.

Now that Iran has a nuclear reactor in operation, it can also produce plutonium. The spent fuel rods from the reactor have the potential to yield enough plutonium for several atomic bombs. Despite being a nation rich in oil, Iran has decided to build several nuclear power plants. Years ago, I said this was evidence enough that the Iranians will use their so-called "peaceful energy program" to produce atomic weapons.

A huge problem with Iran's nuclear program is the lack of information. Many facilities in Iran have never been visited by nuclear inspectors. The intelligence

community can only make best-guess assessments of when Iran will have the bomb. The Iranians may have thousands of centrifuges the West doesn't know about.

The world needs to realize that Iran's nuclear program is growing at an exponential rate. In a few months, it could become unstoppable as it gains the capability of producing dozens of bombs.

The U.S. nuclear program is a good example of how quickly arms production can accelerate: In 1945, after the two nuclear bombs were dropped on Japan, the next bomb was not ready until later in the month of August. By June of 1946, America had a stockpile of nine nuclear weapons. By 1949, we had 200 A-bombs. By 1952, our nuclear arsenal had grown to 2,422.

It's doubtful that Iran will achieve the ability to produce thousands of nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, Iran only needs a few nukes to destroy the state of Israel. Nearly half of the Jewish population lives in three urban areas – Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa.

Israel is very reluctant to launch an attack. Iran now has hundreds of conventional missiles that can reach Israel. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard commander Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari said they would target Israel's nuclear plant in a counter-attack. Hezbollah forces in south Lebanon or Syria might also be drawn into the conflict.

A surprise attack on Iran could be what isolates Israel in the last days. The Bible says that when the Antichrist turns against Israel, no other nation will come to its aid. If nations are angry with Israel now because she decided to defend herself against Gaza rocket strikes, I can't imagine what will happen if Israel triggers a global oil crisis.

“For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city” (Zech. 14:2).

At some point, Israel's survival instinct will engage and its leaders will give the go-ahead for a strike. Benjamin Netanyahu is about to become Israel's next Prime Minister, and his hawkish stance on defense will certainly add to the drive for action.