

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: sbwhoep [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2010 8:42 AM
To: H
Subject: H: Iran. Sid
Attachments: hrc memo iran 021710.docx

B6

CONFIDENTIAL

February 17, 2010

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: Iran, Saudi

Had dinner last night (Tuesday, February 16) with Joschka Fischer. We had an interesting conversation on Iran and Saudi Arabia, among other things. (As you know Fischer is now director of the Nabucco pipeline project.) On Iran, harsh, targeted sanctions are absolutely necessary, but are most effective diplomatically when always coupled with an offer to negotiate. The iron fist in the velvet glove approach achieves several objectives: According to Fischer's intelligence, Ahmanijehad wished some negotiated settlement but was blocked. The regime has splits at the top. Perhaps true, perhaps not. But constantly pushing negotiations alongside sanctions puts additional pressure on internal divisions, whatever they are. Extending an open hand while brandishing a stick closes diplomatic and political room to maneuver for Iran. Its refusal to accept the open hand justifies application of the stick. Even when sanctions are enforced it always remains useful to say another way is open. The damage done to Iran is therefore the result of its own choice. This approach also aids the opposition. A purely condign sanctions strategy can contribute to the regime's will to punish and tighten repression. Talking of regime change, of course, undermines the cause of regime change. It is a gift to the regime. The opposition is a new factor in the Iran equation that must be taken into account on the political and moral level. Pushed to the wall, the regime may feel compelled to repress, which might involve thousands or tens of thousands of political killings. On Saudi Arabia, Fischer points out that if Iran develops nuclear weaponry the Saudis already have their own bomb. The Saudis invested in Pakistan's nuclear weaponry partly for this eventuality; that's their bomb in reserve.