

# F.A.S. PUBLIC INTEREST REPORT

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## FAS Initiates Scientific Dialogue With Islamic Republic of Iran

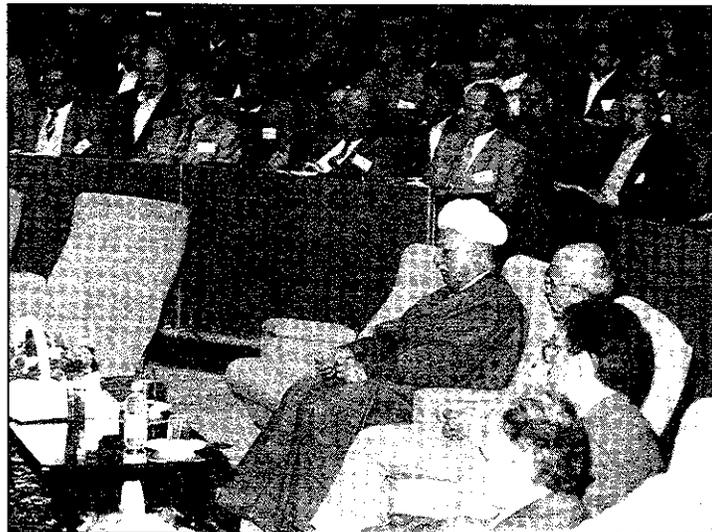
In the week December 11-18, in a successful effort to open a scientific dialogue with Iran, FAS sent a scientific delegation to a Congress on Non-Renewable Energy Sources in Tehran. This appears to be the first scientific delegation sent to Iran in the twenty years since the Islamic revolution in 1979. The effort was reminiscent of FAS's success in 1972 sending a first American scientific delegation to China after two decades of isolation of its scientific community.

The delegation was composed of FAS Vice Chairman Robert McCormack Adams whose work as an archeologist in Iran and Iraq in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s was highly relevant. Adams, who was the chief executive of the Smithsonian Institution for ten years, and who Chaired the Social Sciences Division of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) seemed perfectly chosen to enter into the "Dialogue of Civilizations" called for by Iranian President Muhammad Khatami.

### Iranian-American Professor Joins FAS Team

A second member of the delegation was the distinguished Iranian-American Massoud Simnad, a

member of the National Academy of Engineering and a Professor at the University of California at San Diego. Professor Simnad, 70 years of age, left Iran at age 5 and has been an American citizen for 40 years. But his knowledge of Iran, and his family and professional relations there made him an ideal scientific and cultural guide.



Adams (second row on left), former Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani (with turbin).

### FAS Secures An Invitation

The delegation's visit was negotiated and organized by FAS President Stone who had located Professor Simnad some years ago and asked him to assist FAS in opening scientific communications with Iran. Simnad, who has been appointed to the Board of Trustees of the FAS Fund, had earlier assisted FAS in arranging a 1994 meeting in Vienna with

representatives of the Atomic Energy Commission of Iran.

Negotiations to send this delegation to Iran began in the Spring and approval was secured from the highest levels of the Iranian executive branch, including the foreign ministry. Difficulties arose, however, in getting an institution to issue the invitation. In the end, a courageous Department head of Amir-Kabir University, Hamid Modarrass,

would need the approval of his University President and the Ministry of Education and that this was not easy to arrange.

On the advice of an Iranian-American professor at the University of Illinois, Ali Mansoori, FAS sponsored the "Second International Non-renewable Energy Sources Congress (INRESC '98)" [i.e., coal, gas and oil] and secured invitations for the delegation to attend its meeting. Massoud Simnad was already scheduled to give a plenary address and Stone and Adams attended as representatives of a sponsoring organization. Professor Mansoori, who was Chairman of the international scientific community organizing the Congress, had planned to help the delegation during his attendance but fell ill with the flu and never arrived. In his absence, Professor Modarress welcomed the delegation and worked ceaselessly to make it comfortable and to help it understand Iranian life in the best possible way.

### Americans Under Attack in Iran

The delegation's arrangements were complicated by turmoil in Iran. Three weeks before the Congress opened, on the weekend of November 21-22, a bus with American businessmen was attacked and the visitors badly frightened. The police failed to arrive either to defend the businessmen or, the next day, to escort them to the airport. That same weekend, a married couple who led a small opposition party were killed in their home. Shortly thereafter, demonstrations in three cities broke out defending the attacks on the Americans and the demonstrators issued a press release saying that the next American delegation would be treated "more severely".

### FAS FUND

The Federation of American Scientists Fund, founded in 1971, is the 501 (c)(3) tax-deductible research and education arm of FAS.

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Current war and peace issues range from nuclear war to ethnic conflict and from nuclear disarmament to arms sales; sustainable development issues include disease surveillance, climate modification, poverty, food security and environment. FAS also works on human rights of scientists and on reductions in secrecy.

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Clearly the Khatami Government, which won election in May 1997, with 70% of the vote, was under pressure from extreme conservatives who were ruthless in their determination to prevent any felt opening to the West. Nonetheless, believing in the importance for humanity, for Iran and the United States, of scientific dialogue, the FAS delegation decided to persist.

On arrival, the Congress Secretary, A. Haghtalab, showed very real nervousness about our delegation and the problems it might produce for him, as the Secretary who, formally, had approved the visas. As it became clear that our delegation was fitting in with the Congress well, and perhaps after reassurances from his superiors, he became more relaxed.

At the Congress, Stone and Adams were able to make contributions to the discussion using the general knowledge of energy policy each had acquired. The papers provided at the Congress were, on the whole, very narrowly technical and, we were told, papers raising political issues had been discouraged. This provided some difficulties at the end of the Congress when, evidently, higher authority had asked what the conclusions of the Congress were concerning non-renewable energy sources--conclusions for which the Congress had not been designed to provide a basis. A hastily convened rump group--to which all three FAS representatives were invited--sought to fill the gap. FAS urged a second meeting at which energy policy experts would be invited to address the broader issues.

### **Iranian-Americans Trained in the U.S.**

Perhaps the most startling aspect of Iranian-American scientific relations is the extent to which Iranian scientists have been trained in the United States--not only before the Islamic Revolution of 1979 but also after it. Everywhere at the Congress we met scientists trained in California, Illinois, Oregon and, of course, fully familiar with American customs and ways and, as far as we could tell, very comfortable talking to American scientists.

When Iranian scientists complained that the U.S. Government fingerprinted and photographed them on entry to the United States, one FAS delegate rejoined: "The important fact is that America is training such a large fraction of Iranian



Haghtalab, Adams, Stone and Simnad

scientists"--and this was conceded. In addition to this training, Iranian-American scientists are traveling freely in Iran and contributing to scientific exchange but doing so on Iranian passports. The Iranians, who take a very ethnic view of citizenship, treat these American citizens as Iranian citizens and, indeed, deny the validity of dual citizenship. Accordingly, such Iranian-Americans are denied, by the Iranian Government, any protection from the American Government, or its interest's office, if they are arrested.

Nevertheless, however arranged, they represent a kind of scientific exchange that has been on-going. This was not the situation with China in 1972 or Russia in the 1960s when contacts were slight. In the case of Iran, quite a few Iranian-American professors like Mansoori or Simnad exist who can help tie the two scientific communities together. They represent a very valuable resource. At the Congress, we found a few other Iranian-Americans attending but no Americans who were not Iranian, i.e., none who seem to have gotten visas in American passports and none who represented a delegation.

### **Obstacles to Meetings**

Notwithstanding the difficult political circumstances in Tehran at the time of our meeting, there was interest in speaking to us from people outside the Congress. The delegation visited the Petroleum Research Institute. One distinguished conservative Parliamentarian, who was a scientist, Dr.

Mohammad Javad Larijani, sought to schedule a meeting as did a Deputy-Minister of the Education Ministry. A panel discussion was held at Amir-Kabir University, with two scientists, on problems of scientific exchange--with another one scheduled for Saturday, December 19. But the former two meetings seemed to have been squelched, either by second thoughts or higher authority, as was another promising possibility of speaking to the Chairman of a Committee on the Dialogue of Civilizations.

At this point, on December 17, the U.S. bombing of Baghdad began. Adams was planning to leave on December 18 in any case. Stone and Simnad decided to return with him rather than risk a week with no appointments. There was, also, the chance of some kind of incident against Americans catalyzed by the bombing.

During the visit, other considerations intruded. Iranian writers were disappearing, one a week, and it was evident that some extremists had a list of writers which they were seeking to destroy. FAS considered,

#### **FAS Initiative on Non-Interference; Writers Threatened in Iran**

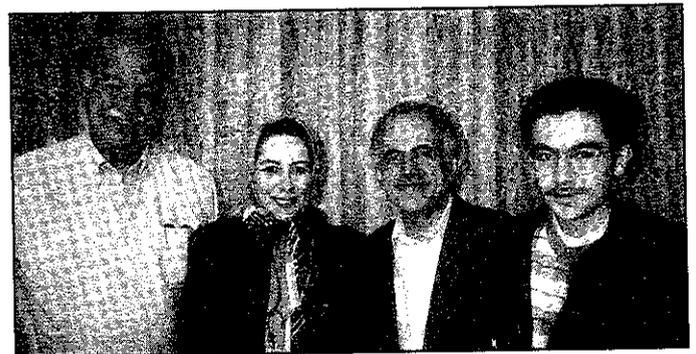
In a December 8, 1998 letter to Iranian President Khatami from FAS Chairman Carl Kaysen, FAS said it believed in non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and hoped for a "return by all countries to traditional diplomatic norms". In a reference to the U.S. overthrow of Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadeq in 1953 and other activities, FAS said "as a contribution to that goal [of normal relations], we take this opportunity to express regret over past actions of our government that intervened in Iran's affairs."

January 1 reports from Iran suggest that seven person arrested for the killing of five activists and writers included three high ranking officials of the security forces and four high ranking officials of the revolutionary guards. By January 5, the Iranian Intelligence Ministry admitted that rogue Iranian intelligence officers were responsible and it appeared that an internal struggle over whether to try them might have been resolved in favor of a trial.

and drafted, a statement indicating that scientific exchange could not be maintained in an atmosphere of writer murders. But before this could be sent to higher authority in Iran, arrests were made and statements issued by conservatives opposing the murders. These arrests were much encouraged, incidentally, by a Washington Post editorial, and other foreign criticism, which was commented upon in the press as showing that the murders were destroying the good name of Iran.

#### **FAS Continues Fight for Iranian Scientists**

FAS plans to continue its work in strengthening the flow of scientists between both countries in non-weapons related fields. In this connection, we became aware of the concerns of U.S. visa officers that Iranian scientists might not, once admitted, be willing to return home--a constant problem with immigration from many countries. But in helping two Iranian scientists establish their bonafides in this regard, FAS learned that Iranian scientists who are sent to study here on Iranian Government money are required to sign documents that would turn their homes over to the Iranian Government if they did not return. FAS is trying to document this fact with a view to advising the U.S. Government that the Iranian Government is even more determined to ensure the return of Iranian scientists and better prepared to assure it than is the U.S. and, accordingly, that U.S. visa officials could presume, in these cases of Iranian Government sponsorship, that the non-return assurance aspect of admission was effectively fulfilled. □ *-JJS*



Adams and the Modarress Family: Nazzi, Hamid and Ali

## CIA Cites FAS Webpage in Opposing FAS Lawsuit

*Steven Aftergood*

As part of its campaign to challenge unnecessary secrecy, FAS recently filed suit against the CIA seeking declassification of the intelligence budget *request*. This ongoing lawsuit has provoked considerable interest in and out of government.

In 1997, FAS successfully sued the CIA for disclosure of the total intelligence budget, a hefty \$26.6 billion for 1997. Following the new precedent, the CIA last spring disclosed the budget total of \$26.7 billion for 1998. But CIA refused to declassify the amount it had requested, a figure that is essential to public participation in budget deliberations.

Although disclosure of the intelligence budget request is widely favored by national security experts, the CIA is vigorously opposing the FAS lawsuit. Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet submitted a 15 page declaration against disclosure of the budget request figure. It is "extraordinary" for an agency head to intervene this way in a FOIA lawsuit, according to attorney Kate Martin of the Center for National Security Studies, who is representing FAS.

The Washington Post reported on the FAS lawsuit and the Tenet declaration on Christmas Day, noting a "concern among anti-secrecy advocates that the nation's top intelligence officer is trying to reverse his own recent moves toward greater openness."

### Washington Post Supports FAS Position

A Washington Post editorial on December 28 defended FAS's position: "The budget request, on its

face, should be less threatening to national security than the amount of the expenditures [which has been disclosed]. At the same time, it is a critical figure in any public policy debate about the intelligence budget, because it involves pending public policy questions, rather than merely describing expenditure levels already fixed."

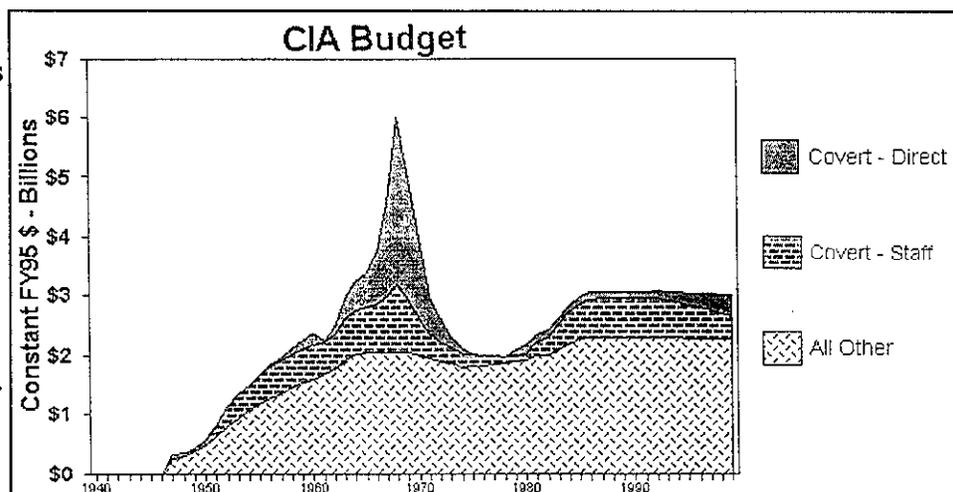
In a peculiar twist, Mr. Tenet attached to his declaration a page from the FAS web site which provides an estimate of CIA spending over the last several decades, prepared by staffer John Pike. In a memo filed with the court, CIA attorneys wrote that "[This document] serves as an example of the kind of detailed budget analysis that foreign government intelligence services are also able to perform."

"Repeated disclosures of either the budget request or budget appropriation could provide more data with which to test and refine" such an estimate, Mr. Tenet argued.

That may be true. But it is still a long way from anything that could be called "damage to national security," which is the only basis for withholding such information from the public. As the Washington Post declared, "The government's unwillingness to disclose the budget request smacks of reflexive government secrecy and of an unreadiness of the agency to subject itself to the most rudimentary public accountability. The CIA should reconsider."

The Tenet declaration, a brief rebuttal, and the text of the FAS lawsuit may be found on our web site at <http://www.fas.org/sgp/foia/tenet1298.html>. □

This chart, which appears on the FAS webpage, was submitted to the Court by Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet.



## LIGHTENING STRIKES TWICE BEFORE THE FAS ANNUAL MEETING

Two FAS officials unexpectedly secured very high offices in November.

### Rush Holt Elected to Congress

Rush Holt, 50 years old, is a physicist and former assistant director of the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory. A 1970 graduate of Carleton College, he later taught physics at Swarthmore for eight years. His political experience includes working in Congress for Congressman Bob Edgar as an adviser on science, defense and education and working in the State Department during the Bush Administration on arms control. A Quaker, he had long been interested in FAS's activities on disarmament and peace. His father, a one-term Senator from West Virginia had been elected at the age of 29 and was only seated after he turned 30.

His campaign to represent the district containing Princeton University showed very considerable political acumen and long hours in fund raising and other necessary activities. \$700,000 was raised for his primary and election campaigns. It was capped by a decision to broadcast to the District a recording of his opponent, Michael Pappas, singing, on the House floor, "Twinkle twinkle, Kenneth Starr, now we know how brave you are". The net result was a narrow win by 5,000 votes--a win so narrow that, based on misreported totals from part of the district, the New York Times misreported the outcome and asserted that he had lost. He is now the second physicist in Congress and the only one who represents the Democratic Party.

At the annual meeting, introducing Holt, FAS President Stone said "In three decades of watching the U.S. scientific community, I have never seen another scientist better equipped to represent the American scientific community in Congress. Rush has the intellect, the integrity, the personality, the energy and the political smarts necessary to be the perfect model of a democratic Congressman and as a scientist he can make very special contributions to Congress. If the scientific community can help his district supporters keep him in Congress, Rush will make a real contribution to our country."



Rush Holt speaks to the guests of the annual dinner.

### Morton H. Halperin is Selected to Receive the FAS 1998 Public Service Award and Later is Appointed Director of Policy Planning at State

Morton Halperin's career is briefly summarized in the citation printed below. At the FAS annual meeting, where he received the Public Service Award, a message from Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara remarked that "Mort's outstanding intelligence and the forthright expression of his views--particularly on nuclear matters--both while I was Secretary and since--have been of invaluable assistance".

And a message from Paul C. Warnke said: "I know of no one who was able to maneuver more adroitly on the whole range of Defense Department issues from arms control to the Vietnamese war".

A month later, in an elegant swearing-in ceremony at the Department of State, Secretary of State Albright called Halperin a "big-picture kind of guy". She noted that he had been the "youngest Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense ever at the time". "Simply put", she said, "as they might say in the Brooklyn neighborhood where he grew up, Mort knows from policy planning."

In response, Mort responded that he had wanted to be a foreign service officer since he was twelve and had written to State to see if he could have the age limit of 21 waived when he was graduating from High School at age 16. Now, at age 60, he has his chance. □

—JJS

## FAS Annual Public Service Award Citation For Morton H. Halperin--Role Model for the Public Policy Activist

*Morton H. Halperin remains, at age 60, the child prodigy he once was. After skipping two years of high school, and zooming through Columbia and Yale he co-authored with Thomas C. Schelling the seminal arms control work Strategy and Arms Control and began a distinguished three-decade campaign for those goals by urging, already in 1960, no-first-use of nuclear weapons.*

*At age 28, he had edited or co-edited a dozen books on related subjects and, as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Arms Control, held the protocol rank in the Pentagon of a three-star general. There he helped draft key speeches on the ABM and orchestrated the return of Okinawa to the Japanese. By 1969, he was organizing the National Security Council staff for Henry Kissinger. Mort early showed very unusual administrative skills, a penetrating sense of what could be expected of individuals and institutions, and an ability to manipulate events. The rising star of his generation, he seemed a future national security adviser.*

*His characteristic courage and personal independence intervened. He resigned from the White House over the secret bombing of Cambodia and, in the course of his lawsuit against illegal wiretapping, turned his attention to national security and civil liberties, directing the Center for National Security Studies for 17 years and the Washington office of the ACLU for 8. There he had*

*the skills, standing, and energy to cut legislative deals between the Executive Branch, the Legislature and his principled constituency--no small feat. He had become an acknowledged and outspoken expert not only on arms control but on human rights, on civil liberties, on bureaucracy and on foreign policy. He was, also, for all intents and purposes, practicing law without a license.*

*Despite the heavy baggage of years of opining on the hottest of issues, he dared to accept the President's nomination, in 1993, to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Democracy and Peacekeeping--a position widely believed to have been crafted for his special talent. In the resulting tumult, he acquitted himself forcefully and eloquently, against a massed assault from the right, in an unprecedented nine-hour Senate confirmation hearing. Later, in a White House stint as a Special Assistant to the President, he received a letter of commendation by President Clinton for his service with regard to Haiti and Cuban*



Carl Kaysen Provides Halperin with a plaque reading:

A Role Model for the Public Policy Activist

Academically Precocious  
Intellectually Incisive  
Administratively Talented  
Morally Courageous  
Eloquent in Speech  
Physically Indestructible.

*migration.*

*In incredible recent developments, Mort has been appointed Director of the Policy Planning Staff of the Department of State--a tribute to the rare indispensable skills he possesses for making the government machine work. Thus continues the checkered career of a Grandmaster of the Game. □*

## Did India Test an H-bomb?

*M. V. Ramana and Frank von Hippel*

On May 12, the day after India's test of a "thermonuclear device," Fund Chairman Frank von Hippel said, during an interview on National Public Radio's evening-news program, "All Things Considered", the 10-20 kiloton yield estimated by U.S. seismologists seemed low for a true two-stage device. He suggested that India might have tested a "boosted primary," i.e. a light-weight fission device whose yield was enhanced by the fusion of a few grams of deuterium and tritium, rather than a true two-stage thermonuclear explosive. A few days later, at a press conference on May 17, Dr. R. Chidambaram, chairman of India's Department of Atomic Energy, stated categorically that India had tested a 43-kiloton thermonuclear bomb with two stages.

In September, US seismologists came out with published analyses in "Science" and "Seismological Review Letters" suggesting that the yield was in the range of 10-15 kilotons. In response, Indian scientists from the Bhabha Atomic Research Center published two papers (<http://www.barc.ernet.in>) claiming that their studies confirmed the initial Indian yield estimate. They argue that U.S. seismologists underestimated the yield of the test because of destructive interference effects with the seismic signals from a simultaneous 15 kiloton test. This analysis has been reviewed and rejected by the U.S. seismologists.

In late November, Mark Hibbs a leading

nuclear-industry journalist reported that "analysts at the Z Division of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. . . based on classified data, have now concluded that the second stage of a two-stage Indian hydrogen bomb device failed to ignite as planned. As a result of the apparent failure, U.S. official sources said, the Indian government is under pressure by the Department of Atomic Energy. . . to test an H-bomb again."

### Article in the "The Hindu" Touches a Nerve

This report stimulated us to write an opinion piece for "The Hindu," one of India's leading newspapers, arguing that if the first test failed, it provided India with an opportunity to reconsider its decision to join the thermonuclear club (<http://www.hinduonline.com/daily/981223/05/05232523.htm>). In response, we received a personal communication from Chidambaram through an intermediary rejecting "the outrageous lie that the Department of Atomic Energy has asked for more thermonuclear tests because the May 11 one failed."

Stay tuned! □

*M. V. Ramana, a physicist, is a Visiting Research Fellow at Princeton University. Frank von Hippel is Professor of Public and International Affairs there and Chairman of the FAS Fund.*

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