

## iPod, iPad or iRan?

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**People were waiting with baited breath. News crews and reporters from around the World swarmed the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts on January 27, 2010 in San Francisco as Steve Jobs introduced the new Apple iPad. Where does it leave us when the new iPad trumps the news over our Nations security?**

As I am sure you heard this week, Apple introduced its new iPad. It's only a half-inch-thick; it weighs 1.5 pounds and has a touch screen that is 9.7 inches diagonally. It's available with 16, 32 or 64 gigabytes of flash memory storage, and has Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity built in. It has a battery that lasts 10 hours and can sit for a month on standby without needing a charge. Wow.

You know what is really sad? I knew all that with out any research, it's all I (and anyone else) heard about on Wednesday if they turned on any news channel.

A new electronic gadget for all, I understand it's a big deal, but so is the ongoing tragedy in Haiti. I haven't seen much coverage on that either as it seems that it has all but disappeared from the news lately as well. What is going on with Iran's nuclear ambitions? Did Iran just fall off the map, just wishful thinking on my part?

According to a study released by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press in July 2006, on an average day, 81 percent of Americans access news. On a typical day... 57% of

Americans watch TV news while only 40% of Americans read a newspaper. So, what type of news are those 57% actually seeing?

The Associated Press writer Vladimir Isachenkov reported on Thursday January 28, 2010 that "Russia still considers Iran a valuable customer for its weapons, a top arms trade official said Thursday, issuing a reassuring message to Tehran despite recent indications of Moscow's support for tougher Western sanctions. Anatoly Isaikin, the head of the state arms trader Rosoboron export, said no international agreements bar Russia from selling weapons to Tehran. The statement marked another step in a delicate diplomatic game Moscow has been playing in a hope of maintaining good ties with Tehran without angering the West. Russia signed a 2007 contract to sell the powerful S-300 air defense missiles to Tehran, but so far has not delivered any. No reason has been given for the delay, but Israel and the United States strongly objected to Iran obtaining the long-range missiles, which would significantly boost the country's air defense capability. Isaikin dodged a question if and when Russia could fulfill the contract, but he emphasized Russia's right to provide Iran with weapons. *"There are no formal bans which would bar the delivery of any types of weapons to Iran,"* he said at a news conference, adding that *"Russia's arms trade with Iran isn't covered under current U.N. sanctions."*

On January 20, 2010 William Tobey of Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs wrote *"With Washington preoccupied by health care reform, Haiti, and the Massachusetts Senate race, three significant developments on the Iran nuclear issue have gone largely unnoticed: the six major powers failed to agree on a new round of sanctions instead, a German company agreed to a massive new contract with Iran and Tehran formally rejected the International Atomic Energy Agency's nuclear fuel deal."*

On January 18, 2010 the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace reported "that after sending a lower-ranking representative to talks between the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, plus Germany, China vetoed a fourth round of sanctions against Iran's disputed nuclear activities. Iran, meanwhile, hailed the indecision over further sanctions as a sign of *"rationality."*

Since Iran's clandestine nuclear program was uncovered in 2003, is there really any doubt that Iran wants to develop a nuclear weapon as opposed to only wanting to produce electric power? Is there really any doubt, since it is a known and documented fact that Iran supports, funds, arms and trains Hezbollah and Hamas that if Iran manages to produce a nuclear weapon that it would eventually end up in the hands of terrorists? Lastly, and most importantly, is there really any doubt that any terror organization would hesitate to use a nuclear weapon against the

United States or any of its citizens anywhere worldwide? The mighty midget Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, can't seem to open his mouth without saying something about "wiping Israel off the map" and it is well documented that Iranian weapons have been used to kill American troops in Iraq. Does one really have to be a rocket scientist to connect the dots here?

In November 2001, Osama bin Laden made a chilling pronouncement to Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir: *"al Qaeda had access to nuclear weapons and would not hesitate to use them."*

Michael Scheuer, who once headed the CIA's bin Laden unit, said in August 2006, bin Laden has been given permission by a young cleric in Saudi Arabia authorizing al Qaeda to *"use nuclear weapons against the United States ... capping the casualties at 10 million."*

Journalist Peter Bergen, who was probably the first Western television journalist to interview Osama bin Laden back when few Americans knew of the terrorist leader, has been investigating the nuclear ambitions of the al Qaeda network prior to 9/11. In an interview with the National Geographic News on October 11, 2002, Bergen suggested some nuclear material found its way into al Qaeda's hands. *"Osama bin Laden almost certainly acquired some [low-grade] materials, nuclear waste," he suggested, "the kind a dirty bomb would use. I don't for a second doubt that they have those materials. Bin Laden's statements have been a pretty reliable guide to his actions."*

One only has to remember 9/11 or any other of the 14,744 terrorist acts that have been committed by radical Muslims since 9/11, to know that any terrorist group would be dancing in the streets screaming "Allah akbar" if a nuclear weapon were to make into their hands.

Where are the journalists? Why am I not seeing any of this latest news on Iran on any of my local news broadcasts or on any of the cable news networks for that matter? I read the papers. Okay, I read the papers on the internet, but I read them nonetheless. I also read a multitude of websites, but what about the 57% of those people who rely on the TV news for daily goings on? Why does it seem that our TV reporters are as blind as those in our administration? It would appear that our TV reporters suffer from the same rose colored glasses syndrome as the percentage of the American public. People tend to have this attitude that if we pretend it doesn't exist, it can't hurt us. The stories that our TV news finds to be news worthy makes me think of the quote from the classic movie Animal House, "Fat, drunk and stupid is no way to go through life, son". I am by no means implying that the American public is fat, drunk or stupid, however, by relying on only one source for news and information would be the equivalent, to letting Tim

Geitner do your tax return.

Iran is playing a game of cat and mouse with the whole world, the problem is that the mouse in this case has been avoiding any real sanctions or consequences for years while developing secret underground uranium-enrichment facilities in both Natanz and Qom and possibly other sites that have yet to be uncovered. The Bushehr site has a nuclear power station. The Isfahan site is a Uranium conversion plant. The Arak site is a Heavy water plant. All the ingredients needed to manufacture a nuclear weapon. Hello? Really? Do we need to draw a picture here? Some intelligence experts (including Israel whose intelligence community is arguably the best in the world) feels that Iran may have upwards of a dozen such sites. The Natanz site now has 5,000 centrifuge machines, and a stockpile of 1,400 kilograms of low enriched uranium according to US intelligence and as far as the Qom site, it is still anyone's guess if the plant is operational. It is believed to have a facility for 3,000 centrifuges for the enrichment of uranium. Is the world going to just continue to play games with trying to get sanctions that all countries can agree upon or attempt to get Iran to sit down for "talks", while they get ever closer to building a nuclear weapon? This is no game. This is a life and death reality which will have a dire and massive impact, both on and for, generations to come if they achieve their goal.