

# THE SUDDEN CHANGE OF STORY ON IRANIAN EFPS

I know we're supposed to be focused on other stuff on IA Caucus Day (maybe I'll get around to it by prime time). But for the moment I wanted to call attention to this Noah Shachtman post, in which he links to a story in which the ever-reliable (ha!) Steven Boylan declares that Iran has stopped providing Iraq with EFPS.

"We are ready to confirm the excellence of the senior Iranian leadership in their pledge to stop the funding, training, equipment and resourcing of the militia special groups," Col. Boylan said. "We have seen a downward trend in the signature-type attacks using weapons provided by Iran."

In October, U.S. military officials began noticing a decrease in the supply of Iranian weapons and assistance, Col. Boylan added.

Though Boylan seems poised to declare that Eastasia is again our enemy, if circumstances so require.

"We are very much in the wait-and-see mode to see what happens," Col. Boylan said.

While Shachtman seems inclined to give Boylan the benefit of the doubt, he also notes that the dominant narrative on IEDs tends to be rather conveniently tied to larger geopolitical questions.

I'm inclined to take Boylan at his word – he's always been straight with me. But, the cynic in me can't help but note that the Iran connection was overplayed last winter. The EFPS that the U.S.

military displayed as evidence of Iranian machining struck some observers as hand-hammered ashtrays. The EFPs I saw in Iraq had a similar, home-made feel – and bore no mark of Iranian manufacture. At least two EFP factories have been found inside Iraq.

Since I'm more cynical and much less trusting of Boylan than Shachtman, I'd just like to emphasize that swing, particularly the timing of the swing back to the conclusion that ~~Eastasia~~ Iran is not arming Iraqi insurgents: October, about the time Bush was making his WWII comments and Putin was proclaiming a war on Iran to be a war on Russia. And one month before the NIE stating that Iran had given up its nukes program. And two months before Abdullah and Ahmadinejad started smooching secretly behind the back of the school.