

MEK MAKES DESPERATE NEW IRAN NUCLEAR ACCUSATION, REUTERS YAWNS

With the world anticipating real progress at the next round of P5+1 talks set to start next week in Geneva, the MEK is getting desperate. Because they appear to only want a violent regime change in Iran, talk of actual diplomacy is their worst nightmare. Today, Reuters reports on the latest wild accusation tossed out by the MEK using the “umbrella” organization of the National Council of Resistance of Iran:

An exiled Iranian opposition group said on Thursday it had information about what it said was a center for nuclear weaponisation research in Tehran that the government was moving to avoid detection ahead of negotiations with world powers.

Reuters clearly was unmoved by the accusation, as they immediately pointed out that NCRI is biased and politically motivated. However, even in pointing out the bias of NCRI, Reuters perpetuates a myth that has been disproven:

The dissident National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) exposed Iran’s uranium enrichment facility at Natanz and a heavy water facility at Arak in 2002. But analysts say it has a chequered track record and a clear political agenda.

Uhm, yes. Having your major group spend decades on the list of terrorist organizations (before eventually buying their way off the list and registering as a lobbying group) would indeed qualify as “a chequered track record”. But Reuters insists on repeating the falsehood that

the NCRI and MEK were responsible for exposing the underground enrichment site at Natanz. That myth has been thoroughly debunked by Jeffrey Lewis:

The debate about whether Iran has constructed a clandestine centrifuge program drives me nuts.

You mean other than the one we already found?

And by *we*, I mean the United States—or at least its intelligence community. As I understand the sequence of events, the United States—knowing full well that Iran had a clandestine centrifuge program—watched Iran dig two MASSIVE HOLES near Natanz (see the big picture), then ratted the Iranians out to the IAEA. About the same time, someone leaked that information to an Iranian dissident group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), which then released the second-hand dope in a press conference where they got the details wrong.

Lewis goes on to cite multiple independent sources to confirm that the intelligence community, not the NCRI, was responsible for discovering the Natanz facility. [It is also instructive to note the role ISIS played in the charade of promoting NCRI responsibility.]

Aside from that major error on attribution of the discovery of Natanz, Reuters was so unmoved by the newest ploy from NCRI that they didn't even rewrite today's article very much from the last wild NCRI accusation in July (the link here is to CBC carrying the Reuters story):

But analysts say it has a mixed track record and a clear political agenda.

But in that July story, Reuters went further in linking that accusation to a desire to derail

diplomacy:

The latest allegation comes less than a month after the election of a relative moderate, Hassan Rouhani, as Iran's new president raised hopes for a resolution of the nuclear dispute with the West, and might be timed to discredit such optimism.

Yes, the MEK clearly sees diplomacy as the real enemy. That article also rehashed the abject failure of an accusation NCRI and MEK made in 2010:

In 2010, when the group said it had evidence of another new nuclear facility, west of the capital Tehran, U.S. officials said they had known about the site for years and had no reason to believe it was nuclear.

It would appear that NCRI and MEK need to step up their acts. They have reached a level of incompetence that is barely worthy of rewriting the standard dismissal that Reuters keeps on file.