

Mr Stephen Pritchard  
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13.6.07

Dear Sir

Your article, *MI6 probes UK link to nuclear trade with Iran*, Observer 10.6.07, by Mark Townsend, your crime correspondent, is alarming not only in its absence of care in journalistic duty to the public but also because it propagates lies and distortions similar to those that paved the way to the bloodbath in Iraq.

The article alleges Iran's complicity in the illegal transfer of **“weapons grade uranium”** originating from Russia to Sudan and **“destined” for Iran** for use in its **“nuclear weapons programme”**, using an anonymous source throughout, offering no supporting evidence or indicating any attempt at substantiation. The article starts with an incriminating headline and first paragraph - ***“apparent attempt to sell black-market weapons-grade uranium to Iran and Sudan, the Observer can reveal”*** -, totally unsupported in the body of the article, as is the case with numerous incriminating references to Iran throughout the article.

Despite stating in the pen-ultimate paragraph that ***“although the level of involvement, if any, of the governments in Khartoum and Tehran in the alleged nuclear plot is unclear”***, the author continues to conclude with the supposed ***“circumstantial evidence”*** that a Sudanese delegation visited Iran's uranium conversion facility in February, while the East African country reportedly recently signed a mutual defence co-operation pact with Iran, allowing Tehran to deploy ballistic missiles in Sudan!

This propaganda piece follows up the article of 22<sup>nd</sup> March by Simon Tisdall splashed across the Guardian's front page entitled **“Iran's secret plan for summer offensive to force US out of Iraq”** in which Tisdall claimed Iran's complicity with Al-Qaeda and Sunni Arab Militias in Iraq to wage war against the coalition forces, basing his evidence almost entirely on unsupported allegations from anonymous US officials.

This black propaganda about Iran's involvement in illegal procurement of enriched uranium and its collaboration with Al-Qaeda are almost exact repetition of now discredited stories about the transfer of uranium from Niger for Iraq's ***“nuclear weapons programme”***, the Iraqi regime's ***“45 minutes capability”*** to strike European cities, and its complicity with ***“Al-Qaeda”***.

You must be well aware that, despite accusations by the proponents of war against Iran, no evidence has been offered to substantiate claims of Iran's collaboration with Al-Qaeda and the arming of the insurgents in Iraq. Equally so, intensive inspections of 2700 person hours by the International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors have failed to offer a shred of evidence of a ***“nuclear weapons programme”*** in Iran.

I expect an acknowledgement and apology in your paper for this dangerous misinformation and an investigation into its origins.