

AMSPECBLOG

## Don't Worry, A Nuclear Iran Would Be No Worse Than The USSR!

By John Tabin on 2.4.10 @ 6:32PM

What a bizarre post by the Cato Institute's Christopher Preble. He snidely attacks Charles Krauthammer for suggesting that Iran launching a mouse into space is connected to the Islamic Republic's quest to build nuclear weapons, as if this is self-evidently ridiculously. Even if Krauthammer's phrasing ("if you can put a mouse into space, you can put a nuke in New York, in principle") is too strong, it is counterintuitive at best to argue that building rockets for a space program has nothing whatsoever to do with building rockets for warheads. But Preble doesn't even attempt to make that argument. Instead, he veers off into rehashing arguments about how JFK successfully demagogued the (non-existent) "missile gap" in the wake of Sputnik.

Then comes the really weird part. Krauthammer contends that "our policy of negotiating is a complete embarrassing failure" and that "our only hope on the nuclear issue or any other is a revolution and to help that revolution ought to be our task." Preble responds:

Would Krauthammer contend that Eisenhower's refusal to overthrow the Soviet regime in 1958 was "an embarrassing failure?"

I don't think the overthrow of the Soviet Communists was a realistic possibility in 1958, but surely if it had been it would have been a horrible tragedy if we'd missed the opportunity. You'd have to be a monster to argue otherwise. Maybe Preble thinks Khamenei is as secure in his job as Khrushchev was (I would vigorously dispute that contention), but he seems to assume that the *only* problem with a nuclear Iran is that it might use its nukes. The Soviet Union used its nuclear umbrella to conquer its neighbors, fund communist insurgents around the world, and oppose American interests whenever feasible, not to mention kill tens of millions of its own citizens. If the case against supporting a revolution in Iran is that the Islamic Republic won't be any worse than the USSR, that's not remotely comforting.

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