



Iranians Break Open the Seals

Posted by [Stuart Staniford](#) on January 11, 2006 - 8:28pm

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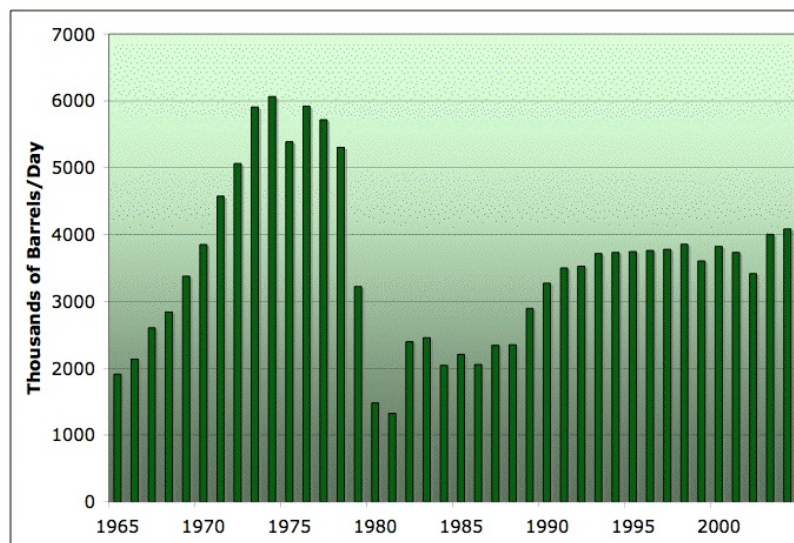
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Things keep slowly ratcheting up with Iran. The [NYT reports](#) that:

Iran broke open internationally monitored seals on at least three of its nuclear facilities on Tuesday, clearing the way for uranium enrichment activities that Europeans and Americans say are a crucial step toward making a nuclear weapon. [...] the United States and its European allies condemned the action and stepped up a campaign to persuade the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency to refer Iran to the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions, perhaps by the end of the month.

"The Iranians have behaved so remarkably badly, it's hard to believe that the international community will do anything other than put them in front of the ultimate court of international public opinion," a European diplomat said, referring to the Security Council. "That is where the Iranians are heading." The official did not want to be identified by name or country to preserve a united front with his European colleagues. President Jacques Chirac of France criticized Iran's action as a grave error, and the new German foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, said Iran was sending "very, very disastrous signals."

But who is going to put sanctions on who? Last time Iranian oil production dropped sharply, it created the worst oil shock the world has seen.



Iranian Oil Production. Click to enlarge. Source: [BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2005](#).



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