

USADI Dispatch

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USADI Commentary

Congressional Trip to Iran: Appeasement of Terror

"Now is a good time," Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) told the Associate Press last week when explaining the timing of his joint initiative with Rep. Bob Ney (R-OH) to send a congressional delegation to Iran, on February 11, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the mullahs' rise to power.

One cannot but wonder why it is now a "good time" to revive the failed policy of "engagement" towards Iran, "the most active state sponsor of terrorism." Domestic terror, suppression of political dissent and public executions are still common place in Iran. Politically, the clerical regime has been plagued by the deepest political crisis of its lifetime. Regardless of its outcome, the factional feuding over the upcoming sham election would unquestionably undermine the regime further. One Khatami aide observed recently that the ruling establishment's "safety valves" on the brewing popular dissent had been cast aside.

On the foreign policy front, spreading the Islamic fundamentalism, expanding influence in Iraq and procuring nuclear weapons continue unabated. There is now more evidence of Tehran's quiet infiltration into Iraq for terrorist activities. Just a few days ago an Iranian operative was arrested in Iraq while attempting to plant a roadside bomb. Meanwhile an Iranian diplomat was arrested in Nigeria taking surveillance photos of the Israeli embassy and other sensitive compounds there.

The Congressional trip to the "heartland" of Islamic fundamentalism was announced following a dinner reception for Javad Zarif, Iran's UN Ambassador. Rep. Ney and Sen. Specter co-hosted the event. Mr. Zarif was reportedly among the students who took over the US Embassy in Tehran in 1979. This blatant "appeasement" of theocracy in Iran seriously undermines our war on terrorism.

The Tehran visit coincides with the arrival in Tehran of dozens of Middle Eastern terrorist organizations to plan their future course of action. The overture is an insult to those who fell victim to Tehran's terrorism, including the American servicemen killed in 1983 bombing of US Marine barracks in Beirut and in 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers in Riyadh. Moreover, Tehran is desperately trying to use the Congressional visit to legitimize its loathed and isolated regime. The Iranian people feel affronted when "appeasers" of the mullahs disguise their mollifying of one of "the most dangerous" regimes of our time at the expense of the secular democracy movement in Iran.

Diplomatic overtures towards Iran's ruling theocracy run counter to the call by President Bush in support of Iran's secular democracy movement. Messrs. Specter and Ney, the long-time proponents of conciliation toward Tehran, should pay head to the demands of millions of Iranians: holding an internationally monitored referendum for regime change in Iran. It is time for overtures towards the Iranian people and not their oppressors.

Nigeria Holds Iran Diplomat as Spy

JERUSALEM - An Iranian diplomat is in Nigerian police custody on suspicion of spying on the Israeli embassy and other sensitive compounds in the capital Abuja, Israeli security sources said Monday.

They said the Iranian was arrested on Jan. 23 when staff reported him "staking out" the embassy. Although he carried no credentials, police discovered he was a diplomat, they said.

"A digital camera was found in his possession, with surveillance pictures of the embassy and several other international and local official buildings in the capital," a senior Israeli security source said.

The independent Nigerian Guardian newspaper said the buildings the suspect had photographed included the Nigerian National Petroleum Corp towers, the British Council, the Defense Ministry and army headquarters.

Reuters, February 2, 2004

Iraq: Two Men Placing Bomb Held

BAGHDAD - Iraqi police Monday caught two men, believed to be an Iranian and an Afghan, placing a roadside bomb near the capital's main Doura refinery, a U.S. commander said.

With a refining capacity of 110,000 barrels of oil a day, Doura produces much of the gasoline, heating oil and cooking gas supplies for Baghdad.

Brig. Gen. Martin Dempsey, commander of the 1st Armored Division, told a news conference the two men were taken into custody by Iraqi policemen who caught them placing a roadside bomb.

Dempsey, whose division is in charge of Baghdad, said "initial indications are that one is an Iranian and one is an Afghan. We have to first develop that through interrogation and try and determine what that means."

Associated Press, February 2, 2004

The US Alliance for Democratic Iran (USADI), is an independent, non-profit organization, which aims to advance a US policy on Iran that will benefit America's interests, through supporting Iranian people's aspirations for a democratic, secular, and peaceful government, free of tyranny, fundamentalism, weapons of mass destruction, and terrorism. The USADI is not affiliated with any government agencies, political groups or parties.

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The Seventh Level: Americans appeasing evil

Sorry to say, I haven't reread Dante's "Inferno" for some years, but I still remember his description of a very low and extremely unpleasant level of hell that houses traitors. Surely abject appeasers of evil qualify for the same treatment, and we must note grimly that three prime candidates have recently come forward to swell the ranks of that overheated realm: Senator Joe Biden of Delaware (D.), Senator Arlen Specter (R.), of Pennsylvania, and Congressman Bob Ney of Ohio (R.).

All have undertaken to "improve relations" between the United States and the theocratic fascist regime of Iran. Specter announced over the weekend that congressional staffers would soon go to Tehran in the first stage of the appeasement program. After supping in Washington with the Iranian ambassador to the U.N. at a dinner helpfully facilitated by the State Department, Specter proclaimed that Iran had "helped us in the fight against al Qaeda and in the Afghanistan situation. I don't think we have given them sufficient credit. They deserve credit." And since "They are showing some signs of wanting to improve relations. Now is a good time."... Senator Specter has long labored for better American relations with Middle Eastern tyrannical regimes... Ney and Biden have reportedly received campaign contributions from pro-Tehran Iranian-American groups, and Biden has been outspokenly critical of President Bush's repeated criticism of the mullahcracy....

Over and over again for the past several months, some of our most celebrated officials, from Secretary of State Colin Powell and his loyal deputy Richard Armitage, to State Department spokesmen, have enthusiastically gushed over vague hints that the Iranians were prepared to hand over al Qaeda terrorists who, it was said, were "being held in Iran. The Iranians officially announced their desire to cooperate with the United States, then quickly attacked America as a satanic force. The same has happened with regard to "better relations;" some leaders speak as if they welcome it, others declare it out of the question....

Did Specter, Ney, and Biden — and the deep thinkers at State who sponsored the appeasement — happen to notice that, at the very moment they were kissing up to the mullahs, the leaders of some 30-plus terrorist organizations were converging on Tehran for their annual powwow? Is this the sort of helpfulness of which Senator Specter oozed enthusiastic?

If the Specter/Ney/Biden efforts to "improve relations" were simply acts of folly by men who don't know better, one might laugh them off. But they have serious consequences, as our diplomats — who actively encouraged the representatives' acts of appeasement — must realize. The Iranian people overwhelmingly hate the regime, and look to Washington for encouragement and support to carry out a democratic revolution, and therefore the mullahs try to create opportunities to convince the people that the Bush administration in fact approves of the regime itself. Any warm statement from a famous American is a body blow to the democratic opposition, and a balm to the mullahs, just as every critical word from President Bush has encouraged the people, and weakened the tyrants...

Excerpts from an article by Michael Ledeen, Resident Scholar in the Freedom Chair at the American Enterprise Institute

FrontPageMagazine.com

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Sex Slave Jihad

A measure of Islamic fundamentalists' success in controlling society is the depth and totality with which they suppress the freedom and rights of women. In Iran for 25 years, the ruling mullahs have enforced humiliating and sadistic rules and punishments on women and girls, enslaving them in a gender apartheid system of segregation, forced veiling, second-class status, lashing, and stoning to death.

Joining a global trend, the fundamentalists have added another way to dehumanize women and girls: buying and selling them for prostitution... Some may think a thriving sex trade in a theocracy with clerics acting as pimps is a contradiction in a country founded and ruled by Islamic fundamentalists. In fact, this is not a contradiction. First, exploitation and repression of women are closely associated. Both exist where women, individually or collectively, are denied freedom and rights. Second, the Islamic fundamentalists in Iran are not simply conservative Muslims. Islamic fundamentalism is a political movement with a political ideology that considers women inherently inferior in intellectual and moral capacity. Fundamentalists hate women's minds and bodies. Selling women and girls for prostitution is just the dehumanizing complement to forcing women and girls to cover their bodies and hair with the veil.

In a religious dictatorship like Iran, one cannot appeal to the rule of law for justice for women and girls. Women and girls have no guarantees of freedom and rights, and no expectation of respect or dignity from the Islamic fundamentalists. Only the end of the Iranian regime will free women and girls from all the forms of slavery they suffer.

By Dr. Donna M. Hughes, a Professor and holds the Carlson Endowed Chair in Women's Studies at the University of Rhode Island