

Obama Moves to Fund Iranian Dissidents

Despite Claims of Not Meddling, US to Send \$20 Million to Opposition

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Despite President Barack Obama's persistent claims that the United States is not meddling in the post-election furore in Iran, the [administration is moving forward with plans to subsidize Iranian dissident groups to the tune of \\$20 million in the form of USAID grants](#).

The program is not new, and the [solicitation for the grant applications actually came under the Bush Administration](#). But with the deadline for submissions just four days away, the administration has a convenient excuse to subsidize opposition and dissident groups under the guise of promoting "the rule of law" in Iran.

The White House and the State Department both defended the program, insisting it did not run counter to the administration's pretense of neutrality. The administration declined to provide details of exactly which opposition figures it had been funding, however, citing "security concerns."

There is considerable criticism for this program, not just from the perspective of getting the US involved in the internal affairs of Iran, but also for the taint it places on various opposition groups and NGOs, whether they received any of the grant money or not.

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