

Washington Moves to Control Iran's Revolution

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It seems that President Obama has finally woken up. He now realizes that the U.S. friendly “color revolution” in Iran that he hoped for — and planned for — has gotten out of control. To the Democrat’s terrible regret, a real revolution is under way.

An extremely revealing article in the Wall Street Journal entitled “US Shifts Focus to Support Iran’s Opposition,” explains the U.S. government’s unpleasant wake-up call. The article is essentially a debate among state officials and other “experts” as to the Iranian movement’s strength, and whether or not it can be channeled to meet the needs of the U.S. government and the U.S. corporate interests it represents. The article states:

“...a number of Iran scholars in the U.S. said they have been contacted by senior administration officials eager to understand if the Iranian unrest suggested a greater threat to Tehran’s government than originally understood.”

And:

“American diplomats, meanwhile, have begun drawing comparisons in public between Iran’s current political turmoil and the events that led up to the 1979 overthrow of Shah Reza Pahlavi.”

The article also stated that “There’s realization now that this unrest really matters.” (January 10, 2010).

To the Democrats, this presents an urgent foreign policy re-shuffling: the U.S.-friendly leaders of Iran’s opposition movement — represented by their leader Moussavi — need to be strengthened, since their political approach is significantly more conservative than the still-radicalizing demands of Iran’s revolution, which already amounts to no less than a deep structural change in Iran’s political and economic life. The “official” Iranian opposition wants no such change; as such, they have stopped organizing demonstrations and have become mere spectators, watching events unfold that have already passed them by.

This was already the case in June, when The New York Times reported:

“People in the street have been radicalized, and I do not believe that most of them would today subscribe to Moussavi’s avowed platform.” (June 24, 2009).

Also from The New York Times:

“...Mr. Moussavi... meant only to be an instrument for making Iran a tiny bit better, nothing more... Now, like us, Mr. Moussavi finds himself caught up in events that were

unimaginable, each day's march and protest more unthinkable than the one that came before." (June 19, 2009).

It's now been seven months since this commentary, and the revolution has only become more resolute and militant. The initial shouts against voter fraud have evolved into demanding "death to the dictator", combined with threats against other sections of Iran's political superstructure. The "respectable" opposition seems like a dinosaur in this context.

But Obama is determined to re-energize the already-extinct "official" opposition. He hopes that by financially targeting the current political rulers — through sanctions and bank account freezes — that the U.S. friendly Iranian opposition will be strengthened, while toppling the existing regime.

This is a risky maneuver. The outcome could in fact strengthen the current regime, and help unite people against the economic attacks of a foreign enemy. But any open collaboration between Iran's opposition and the U.S. is also risky, since Iranians have a good memory of repressive U.S. interference in their country — when the C.I.A. organized the overthrow of the democratically elected Iranian government in 1953 — not to mention more recent examples of U.S. imperialist foreign policy in neighboring Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Wall Street Journal article is the first report of Iran's opposition openly proposing plans to help de-stabilize the current regime and signifies Washington's willingness to follow through.

It must be noted that Moussavi and other leaders of the U.S. friendly-section of Iran's opposition do not represent progress for Iran. These people are arch-conservatives who constitute a resolute section of Iran's repressive establishment. If they were to come to power, they would likely welcome U.S. business interests, while maintaining the repressive state apparatus used by the current regime, which is exactly why the U.S. wants them in power.

But the U.S. is walking a dangerous tightrope, since the energy of the revolution is more than capable of ruining all the U.S. plotting. Moussavi and his ilk are already in the process of being pushed aside. Real revolutions — unlike a U.S. "color revolution" — are not easily manipulated events; masses of suddenly-conscious people have high expectations that cannot be met by the corporate-controlled U.S. government.

If Obama were sincere about helping the people of Iran, he would leave the country in peace, instead of making threats and beating the war drum, a drum he's pounding in the exact same rhythm that Bush played in the march to war with Iraq.

Hands off Iran!

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