Informed Comment

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Contents

About This Document

This Informed Comment is patterned after Juan Cole's model of commenting on current affairs regularly.

1 071205: Evolution of the "No Iran War" Message to "Talk To Iran"

I watched Bush's press conference in full on CSPAN last night (Dec 4, 2007).

Aside from being totally incompetent, the man is visibly on the verge of a psychological melt down. And, clearly he has not yet even recognized the amount of blood that he has accumulated on his hands. In my book, Bush is the most corrupt American president. It is only his incompetence that has limited the damage. Yet, he was even re-elected! Which says something about the American character.

As far as avoiding a war goes, at least for this round we owe it to the Generals and Admirals. They understood that messing with Iran will be very costly for the Bully and the military did its part this time.

Like all other large entities, the Military-Industrial-Congresional complex has its own internal dynamics. The American Regime is not monolithic.

I never really thought that the "No Iran War" message should be the main focus. My choice of messages were:

1. Don't Mess With Iran – See my letter to Senator Patty Murray
2. Talk To Iran – I have TalkToIran.org registered

After this NIE, the "No Iran War" camp needs to reevaluate. The Admirals did the work but we all can celebrate. After that, I encourage the camp to stay at it with the "Talk To Iran" message. Box the crazies and rob it in their face while they are down and insist on the "Talk To Iran" message.

Juan Cole's informed comment today are in line with the above and he says it better than I can.

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http://www.juancole.com/
Informed Comment
December 5, 07
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As Americans your challenge should not be to avoid the du jour war, instead you should move past your Imperial and Colonial era.

The Iranian revolution of 1979 was the very first time that one of the American neo-colonies became truly independent. Almost 30 years later, Americans needs to grasp that reality.

The Arab world has been trying to follow that Iranian pattern of struggle for independence for a long time. Yet hardly any American (the likes of Chalmer Johnson excepted), is willing to see the likes of 9-11 as an American Imperial and Colonial by-product.

This of course also includes seeing a colonizer with plenty of blood on his/her hands each time that any American federal tax payer looks in the mirror.

Having recognized Iran as an independent people, – not your subjects whom you expect to obey – you need to "Talk To Iran". With respect.

Respectfully Yours,

2 061009: Not Reading Nafisi in Seattle

The first time I heard of "Reading Lolita in Tehran" was at a dinner party over looking Lake Washington in Seattle.

A coquettish young Iranian who has been in Seattle since the revolution (1978) was showing off her latest reading: Reading Lolita in Tehran. She had with her a copy of the book and was recommending it to all. I borrowed her copy and paged through it. Based on that quick scan, I formed the opinion that this is another case of a confused and lost Iranian producing rubbish which is best ignored.

That particular dinner party was full of feminist Iranian pseudo-intellectuals, so I kept my opinion to myself and did not say a word. Besides, I was their guest and had eaten their bread and salt.

A couple of weeks later, I saw Azar Nafisi being interviewed on PBS/NPR. I watched the whole interview and confirmed that my initial impressions of her as a confused and lost Iranian were correct. Additionally, it became clear that she is very much enjoying being a tool of the mainstream American media amplifying an image of Iran which fits the Empire's agenda. The situation was not as grim as "Not Without My Daughter", but very much in the same category.

Then a few months ago I read Hamid Dabashi's views on the same. Dabashi is spot right on and he really captures it all.

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http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2006/797/special.htm

  Native informers and the making of the American empire

  Lacking internal support or external legitimacy,
  writes Hamid Dabashi*, the US empire now banks on
  a pedigree of comprador intellectuals, homeless
  minds and guns for hire
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Then we discover that even the cover of that book has been doctored.
http://chronicle.com/free/v53/i08/08a01601.htm

We know that Ms. Nafisi did not choose or crop the cover photo. But, Dabashi adds, "to me, the cropping of Iranian culture that is done inside is even more insidious, and that is her writing."

So, what are we Iranian-Americans to do with the rubbish that the likes of Nafisi produce and mainstream American media promotes? I want to be on record for "Not Reading Nafisi in Seattle".

3 Persian/Farsi Web Tools

3.1 Behnevis – Pinglish

http://www.behnevis.com

3.2 Yekruz

http://www.lib.washington.edu/neareast/yekruz/y1.htm

4 Persian/Farsi Linux Tools

4.1 Persian/Farsi Fonts

/opt/public/osmt/bin/luePersian.sh

4.2 Persian/Farsi Tex

apt-get install arabtex