

Almost to Consortiumnews' Goal

From Editor Robert Parry: Thanks to the generosity of our readers we are getting close to our modest goal of \$25,000 for our summer fund drive. Yes, it has taken a while but we are now only about \$5,000 short.

So, if you can, please help get us over our target. Your donation may be tax-deductible since we are an IRS-recognized 501-c-3 tax-exempt non-profit.

You can donate by credit card online or by mailing a check to Consortium for Independent Journalism (CIJ); 2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201. (For readers wanting to use PayPal, you can address contributions to our account, which is named after our e-mail address: "consortnew @ aol.com").

Or, you can buy one of my last four books through the Consortiumnews' Web site or my latest book, *America's Stolen Narrative*, through Amazon.com, either in paper or the e-book version. A portion of each sale will go toward our goal.

Or, for only \$34, you can get the trilogy that traces the history of the two Bush presidencies and their impact on the world. The three books *Secrecy & Privilege*, *Neck Deep* (co-authored with Sam and Nat Parry) and *America's Stolen Narrative* would normally cost more than \$70.

To get the books for less than half price and help us meet our fundraising goal just go to the Web site's "Donate" button and make a \$34 "donation" using Visa, Mastercard or Discover. We will read a donation of that amount as an order for the trilogy.

If your mailing address is the same as your credit card billing address, we will ship the books to that address. If your mailing address is different, just send us an e-mail at consortnew@aol.com and we will make the adjustment. For U.S. orders, we will pay for the shipping. (For non-U.S. orders, add \$20 to defray the extra cost.)

You can also take advantage of this special offer by mailing a check for \$34 to The Media Consortium; 2200 Wilson Blvd.; Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201. Or you can use our Paypal account, "consortnew @ aol.com." Just make sure you include your mailing address in the message.

Again, thanks for your support.

Robert Parry is a longtime investigative reporter who broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for the Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s. He founded Consortiumnews.com in 1995 to create an outlet for well-reported journalism that

was being squeezed out of an increasingly trivialized U.S. news media.

Iran's Rouhani Confounds Neocons

Official Washington's still-influential neocons are still hoping they can sabotage progress toward a U.S.-Iranian rapprochement and thus keep open the option of war but the reasonable tone of Iran's new president Hassan Rouhani is making the neocons' job trickier, as ex-CIA analyst Paul R. Pillar explains.

By Paul R. Pillar

The op ed from Iran's President Hassan Rouhani in the *Washington Post* should be read carefully on at least four levels.

The first is as one measure of the overall earnestness and seriousness with which the current leadership of Iran is approaching relations with the United States and with the rest of the outside world. Can you find an unreasonable phrase anywhere in the piece? I can't.

The second is as a contrast with what we had become accustomed to hearing under the eight-year tenure of Rouhani's predecessor. The contrast is so sharp one would never guess, if we did not already know it was so, that such pronouncements were coming from successive presidents of the same country, separated not by a coup or revolution but instead by a peaceful election.

Rouhani's piece in the *Post* adds to the numerous other indications over the past several weeks that his election marks a profound change in attitude and approach in Tehran.

Third, Rouhani's statements about what Iran wishes to do on issues of high concern to both it and the United States is consistent with what any dispassionate and well-reasoned analysis would arrive at as necessary to facilitate resolution of these issues. On the nuclear question, any resolution will have to recognize, and provide assurances to the West of being limited to, a "peaceful nuclear energy program."

On the more pressing issue of the Syrian war, Rouhani's statement of his government's "readiness to help facilitate dialogue between the Syrian government and the opposition" should be acted upon, both because Iran already is a player, for better or for worse, in the Syrian situation and because working together in addressing the Syrian situation can have beneficial

spillover effects in dealing with the nuclear question and other issues.

Fourth, the article contains sage advice about other aspects of the American approach to foreign policy, including on matters that do not directly involve Iran. As with Vladimir Putin's recent missive, Americans ought not to need foreign presidents to point out truths about their own policies and approach toward the world, but they are truths nonetheless.

Among Rouhani's observations that are too often forgotten, or never appreciated in the first place, in American discourse is that the world is for the most part not a zero-sum place and that dealing with other nations involves simultaneous competition and cooperation. He correctly observes that a unilateral approach that "glorifies brute force and breeds violence" does not solve shared problems such as terrorism and extremism.

He notes that too often "security is pursued at the expense of the insecurity of others, with disastrous consequences." A glaring example of this in the Middle East that does not directly involve Iran but is condoned by the United States comes readily to mind. Perhaps the most trenchant of Rouhani's observations is:

"We and our international counterparts have spent a lot of time, perhaps too much time, discussing what we don't want rather than what we do want. This is not unique to Iran's international relations. In a climate where much of foreign policy is a direct function of domestic politics, focusing on what one doesn't want is an easy way out of difficult conundrums for many world leaders. Expressing what one does want requires more courage."

This aptly describes how some foreign policy issues, certainly including the Iranian nuclear issue, get addressed in the United States. One of the biggest deficiencies in American discourse about that issue is that it goes little beyond declarations of how badly we don't want an Iranian bomb, with almost no sense of what we do want other than to hurt Iran and no vision for the future other than, by implication, perpetual hostility.

The new Iranian administration has opened a door to a better relationship, and one better for the United States, about as widely as such doors ever are opened. The United States would be foolish not to walk through it.

Paul R. Pillar, in his 28 years at the Central Intelligence Agency, rose to be one of the agency's top analysts. He is now a visiting professor at Georgetown University for security studies. (This article first appeared as a blog post at The National Interest's Web site. Reprinted with author's permission.)
