

What Is America's Mission Now?

Informing Iran, "The U.S. is watching what you do," Amb. Nikki Haley called an emergency meeting Friday of the Security Council regarding the riots in Iran. The session left her and us looking ridiculous.

France's ambassador tutored Haley that how nations deal with internal disorders is not the council's concern. Russia's ambassador suggested the United Nations should have looked into our Occupy Wall Street clashes and how the Missouri cops handled Ferguson.

Fifty years ago, 100 U.S. cities erupted in flames after Martin Luther King's assassination. Federal troops were called in. In 1992, Los Angeles suffered the worst U.S. riot of the 20th century, after the LA cops who pummeled Rodney King were acquitted in Simi Valley.

Was our handling of these riots any business of the U.N.?

Conservatives have demanded that the U.N. keep its nose out of our sovereign affairs since its birth in 1946. Do we now accept that the U.N. has authority to oversee internal disturbances inside member countries?

Friday's session fizzled out after Iran's ambassador suggested the Security Council might take up the Israeli-Palestinian question or the humanitarian crisis produced by the U.S.-backed Saudi war on Yemen.

The episode exposes a malady of American foreign policy. It lacks consistency, coherence and moral clarity, treats friends and adversaries by separate standards, and is reflexively interventionist.

Thus has America lost much of the near-universal admiration and respect she enjoyed at the close of the Cold War.

This hubristic generation has kicked it all away.

Consider. Is Iran's handling of these disorders more damnable than the thousands of extrajudicial killings of drug dealers attributed to our Filipino ally Rodrigo Duterte, whom the president says is doing an "unbelievable job"?

And how does it compare with Gen. Abdel el-Sissi's 2012 violent overthrow of the elected president of Egypt, Mohammed Morsi, and Sissi's imprisonment of scores of thousands of followers of the Muslim Brotherhood?

Is Iran really the worst situation in the Middle East today?

Hassan Rouhani is president after winning an election with 57 percent of the vote. Who elected Mohammed bin Salman crown prince and future king of Saudi Arabia?

Vladimir Putin, too, is denounced for crimes against democracy for which our allies get a pass.

In Russia, Christianity is flourishing and candidates are declaring against Putin. Some in the Russian press regularly criticize him.

How is Christianity faring in Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan?

It is alleged that Putin's regime is responsible for the death of several journalists. But there are more journalists behind bars in the jails of our NATO ally Turkey than in any other country in the world.

When does the Magnitsky Act get applied to Turkey?

What the world too often sees is an America that berates its adversaries for sins against our "values," while giving allies a general absolution if they follow our lead.

A day has not gone by in 18 months that we have not read or heard of elite outrage over the Kremlin attack on “our democracy,” with the hacking of the DNC and John Podesta emails.

How many even recall the revelation in 2015 that China hacked the personnel files of millions of U.S. government employees, past, present and prospective?

While China persecutes Christians, Russia supports a restoration of Christianity after 70 years of Leninist rule.

In Putin’s Russia, the Communist Party is running a candidate against him. In China, the Communist Party exercises an absolute monopoly of political power and nobody runs against Xi Jinping.

China’s annexation of the Paracel and Spratly Islands and the entire South China Sea is meekly protested, while Russia is endlessly castigated for its bloodless retrieval of a Crimean peninsula that was recognized as Russian territory under the Romanovs.

China, with several times Russia’s economy and 10 times her population, is far the greater challenger to America’s standing as lone superpower. Why, then, this tilt toward China?

Among the reasons U.S. foreign policy lacks consistency and moral clarity is that we Americans no longer agree on what our vital interests are, who our real adversaries are, what our values are, or what a good and Godly country looks like.

Was JFK’s America a better country than Obama’s America?

World War II and the Cold War gave us moral clarity. If you stood against Hitler, even if you were a moral monster like Joseph Stalin, we partnered with you.

From Winston Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech in 1946 to the

end of the Cold War, if you stood with us against the “Evil Empire” of Reagan’s depiction, even if you were a dictator like Gen. Pinochet or the Shah, you were welcome in the camp of the saints.

But now that a worldwide conversion to democracy is no longer America’s mission in the world, what exactly is our mission?

“Great Britain has lost an empire,” said Dean Acheson in 1962, “but not yet found a role.”

Something of the same may fairly be said of us today.

Patrick J. Buchanan is the author of a new book, “Nixon’s White House Wars: The Battles That Made and Broke a President and Divided America Forever.” To find out more about Patrick Buchanan and read features by other Creators writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators website at www.creators.com.

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Last Updated: Monday, Jan 08, 2018 14:12:40 -0800

Fire Bell in the Night for the Ayatollah

As tens of thousands marched in the streets of Tehran on Wednesday in support of the regime, the head of the Revolutionary Guard Corps assured Iranians the “sedition” had been defeated.

Maj. Gen. Mohammad Ali Jafari is whistling past the graveyard.

The protests that broke out a week ago and spread and became

riots are a fire bell in the night for the Islamic Republic.

The protesters denounced President Hassan Rouhani, re-elected last year with 57 percent of the vote, for failing to curb inflation or deliver the benefits he promised when Iran signed the nuclear deal.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, commander in chief and head of state, in power three decades, was also denounced, as were Iran's interventions in wars in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Gaza and Yemen.

In 2009, the uprising of millions in Tehran was driven by middle-class rage over an election stolen by the populist President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. This past week's protests began in the working class, in what might be called Iran's "fly-over country."

The protesters were Red State and Tea Party types, demanding their own version of "Come Home, Iran" and "Iran First!"

The charge against Rouhani is that he has failed to deliver the good times promised. Against the ayatollah and the mullahs, the charge is that what they have delivered – power and wealth to the clerics, social repression, foreign wars – are not what the Iranian people want.

The greater long-term threat of the protests is to the Islamic regime.

For if the protests are about people being denied the freedom and material goods the young enjoy in the West, the protesters are demanding what theocracies do not deliver. How could the ayatollah and the mullahs, who restrict freedom by divine law, accept democratic freedoms without imperiling their own theological dictatorship?

How could the Republican Guard surrender its slice of the Iranian economy and end its foreign interventions without

imperiling its reason for being – to protect and promote the Iranian Islamic revolution?

Half of Iran's population is 31 or younger. This new generation was not even born until a decade after the Revolution that overthrew the Shah.

How does a clerical regime speak to a people, 40 million of whom have smartphones connecting them to an outside world where they can see the freedom and prosperity they seek, but their government cannot or will not deliver?

The protesters are also telling Rouhani's "reformers," in power now for five years, that they, too, have failed.

Rouhani's dilemma? To grow Iran's economy and improve the quality of life, he needs more foreign investment and more consumer goods. Yet any surge in material prosperity Rouhani delivers is certain to undermine the religious faith undergirding the theocratic regime.

And as any transfer of power to the elected regime has to come at the expense of the clerics and the Guard, Rouhani is not likely to get that power.

Thus, he and his government are likely to continue to fail.

Bottom line: The Islamic Republic of Iran was not established to create a materially prosperous and socially free society, because, in the ayatollah's theology, such societies, like the USA, are of the devil and corruptive of the people.

Social freedom is irreconcilable with Iranian theocracy.

And Iranian hard-liners, clerical and military, are not going to permit protests demanding Western freedom and material goods, to cause them to commit what they believe would be ideological suicide.

Yet the U.S. and President Trump also face a dilemma.

If as Trump says, we wish the Iranian people well, how do we justify scraping the nuclear deal in which Iranians have placed so much hope, and reimposing the sanctions that will restore the hardships of yesterday?

How does America proclaim herself a friend of the Iranian people, if we are trying to persuade Europeans to abrogate the nuclear accord and reimpose the sanctions that impoverish the Iranian people?

Will we urge the Iranians to rise up and overthrow their regime, as we did the Hungarians in 1956, which resulted in their massacre by Soviet tanks sent into Budapest? Ike's response: He sent Vice President Nixon to greet the surviving Hungarian patriots fleeing across the Andau Bridge into Austria.

After Desert Storm in 1991, George H.W. Bush urged Iraqis to rise up against Saddam Hussein. When the Shiites did rise up, they, too, were massacred, as our Army from Desert Storm stood by in Kuwait.

If there is an Iranian uprising and it results in a Tiananmen Square slaughter in Tehran, do we really want the U.S., which would not likely intervene to save the patriots, held morally accountable?

The Iranian protests suggest that the Islamic Revolution, after 40 years, is failing the rising generation. It is hard to see how this is not ominous news for the Iranian regime.

As it was not on the side of the Soviets, time is not on the side of the ayatollahs either.

We need not go to war with them. Time will take care of them, too.

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Last Updated: Thursday, Jan 04, 2018 15:09:32 -0800