
From: Emily L Blout <eblout@niacouncil.org>
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 11:52 AM
To: 'Ortman, Matt (Voinovich)'
Subject: RE: Meeting request for June 9 on Iran sanctions

Great! See you on Monday at noon.

Emily

From: Ortman, Matt (Voinovich) [mailto:Matt_Ortman@voinovich.senate.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 2:37 PM
To: Emily L Blout
Subject: RE: Meeting request for June 9 on Iran sanctions

Hi Emily – I can do 12:00 pm on Monday, June 9. We are in 524 Hart. See you then?

Matt

From: Emily L Blout [mailto:eblout@niacouncil.org]
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 1:18 PM
To: Ortman, Matt (Voinovich)
Subject: RE: Meeting request for June 9 on Iran sanctions

Thanks Matt. Can you do 12 or 1:30 on Monday? If not, lets schedule something for Tuesday or Friday.

Emily

From: Ortman, Matt (Voinovich) [mailto:Matt_Ortman@voinovich.senate.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, June 03, 2008 4:57 PM
To: eblout@niacouncil.org
Subject: RE: Meeting request for June 9 on Iran sanctions

Hi Emily – I would be glad to meet with you about S. 970. How is 3:30 p.m. on Monday, June 9?

Thank you.

Matt Ortman

Legislative Aide – Foreign Affairs
Office of George V. Voinovich
United States Senator
524 Hart Senate Office Building
p (202) 224-7975

From: Emily L Blout [mailto:eblout@niacouncil.org]
Sent: Friday, May 30, 2008 2:35 PM
To: Salo, Jeannie (Voinovich)
Subject: Meeting request for June 9 on Iran sanctions

Dear Jeannie,

My name is Emily Blout and I am Legislative Director for the National Iranian American Council. I am writing on behalf of myself and representatives from the Cato Institute, USA Engage, and the American Conservative Defense Alliance to request a meeting to discuss pending sanctions legislation targeting Iran (S.970).

We are very concerned about a number of provisions in this bill and would like to discuss the policy implications of additional unilateral sanctions at this sensitive time. We would also like to suggest alternatives to the current legislative and policy approach toward Iran.

I am therefore requesting a meeting on Monday, June 9. If this date does not work, please let me know what day and time works for you.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. I look forward to setting up a time to meet.

Sincerely,

Emily Blout

Legislative Director
National Iranian American Council
1411 K Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
Dear Jeannie, Dear Jeannie,
main: 202 386 6325
cell: 202 290 8309

["Promoting Iranian American Participation In American Civic Life"](#)

From: Tamari, Shai <Shai.Tamari@mail.house.gov>
Sent: Friday, September 19, 2008 2:07 PM
To: Emily L Blout
Subject: RE: It was good talking to you! Per our conversation...

Emily,

Thank you so much for all this info! I'm sure it'll come in handy. I hope you're weekend won't consist of too much work.

Have a great weekend and as you don't have much of a social life, perhaps making friends with your room-mates won't be such a bad idea, just a thought...J

Shai.

From: Emily L Blout [mailto:eblout@niacouncil.org]
Sent: Friday, September 19, 2008 4:16 PM
To: Tamari, Shai
Subject: It was good talking to you! Per our conversation...

Shai,
I'm glad we had a chance to talk. I'm excited that Jim has brought you on board. I'm sure you do incredible things! Per our conversation, here are some contacts for groups working on the Iran issue. (While I could give you a million names, these guys really know their stuff.)

Jake Colvin, USA engage, jcolvin@nftc.org, 202 464 2025 (trade policy)
Mike Amitay, Open Society Policy Center, mamitay@osi-dc.org, 202 721 5625 (Middle East policy)
Justin Logan, Cato Institute, jlogan@cato.org, (202) 216-1470 (Iran sanctions, Middle East policy)

Also, here is a run-down on the Mujahedin-e Khalq (referred to as the MEK or MKO).

--- The United States, the EU, Canada, Iran, and Iraq currently list the MEK as a [terrorist organization](#). The organization was founded on a commitment to advance their Marxist, Islamist ideology through armed struggle. The MEK is responsible for a number of assassinations and violent attacks in Iran and Iraq over the past few decades.

---Termed a Marxist cult by [Ervand Abrahamian](#), the [MeK and its political arm, the National Council for Resistance in Iran](#), operates in the US through various front groups such as [Committee for Support of Referendum in Iran](#) and the Council for a Democratic Iran.

--- During his UN speech prior to the Iraq War, President Bush suggested that the MEK was one of the international terrorist organizations under Saddam Hussein's patronage; evidence found during the invasion of Iraq corroborated that belief. According to a 2007 State Department report, "the MEK received millions of dollars in Oil-for-Food program subsidies from Saddam Hussein from 1999 through 2003" and this money directly "supported planning and executing future terrorist attacks." ([Country Reports on Terrorism](#)).

--- After the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the MEK's presence in Iraq has been largely confined to Camp Ashraf. Nonetheless, their ongoing terrorist activities have killed Americans serving abroad and according to the State Department, MEK members "maintain the capacity and will to commit terrorist acts in Europe, the Middle East, the United States, Canada, and beyond."

--- A report by Hadi Ghaemi of the Human Rights Watch titled "[Human Rights Abuses inside the MKO camps](#)," collected testimony from twelve former members of the MEK, who cited "physical and physiological abuses with MEK camps."

Again, it was great talking with you. Have a great weekend and keep in touch!

Emily

From: Jake Colvin <jcolvin@nftc.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2008 3:34 PM
To: 'Trita Parsi'; 'Lauren Coletta'; 'Lynn M. Kunkle'; 'Carah Ong'; 'Michael Ostrolenk'; 'Ira Shorr'; 'John Isaacs'; 'Mike Amitay'; 'Marie Rietmann'; 'Jim Fine'; 'Ifriedman@peacenow.org'; 'David Culp'
Cc: 'Babak Talebi'; smalaklou@niacouncil.org; eblout@niacouncil.org
Subject: RE: Re transpartisan coalition

Since Trita mentioned us by name, I wanted to give just a couple of thoughts. First of all, the work that has gone into this effort has been tremendous, and Carah in particular should be commended for keeping an unwieldy group together and moving forward. I wanted to mention two of our concerns about signing onto any coalition, which I think feeds into some of what Trita mentioned below regarding the composition of this particular coalition and further outreach:

1) We are always interested in knowing the composition of current support. If there are no other business associations on, or other like-minded organizations like CATO (or if they make up a small minority), we often hesitate to sign on. I realize there is a chicken and egg problem here.

2) We favor some control on membership prospects. If anyone can sign up to be part of the coalition, it makes us nervous. We are more likely to sign up to something when we are confident that there is a gatekeeper that will prevent associations or individuals who could harm the credibility of the coalition from signing up. A gatekeeper can also preserve balance between progressive/centrist/conservative elements.

I tend to think that this is most effective if it is truly transpartisan, and I am happy to see how I might reach out to CATO or others in the future and see if we might all jump at the same time.

Jake

From: Trita Parsi [mailto:tparsi@niacouncil.org]
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2008 4:40 PM
To: 'Lauren Coletta'; 'Jake Colvin'; 'Lynn M. Kunkle'; 'Carah Ong'; 'Michael Ostrolenk'; 'Ira Shorr'; 'John Isaacs'; 'Mike Amitay'; 'Marie Rietmann'; 'Jim Fine'; 'Ifriedman@peacenow.org'; 'David Culp'
Cc: 'Babak Talebi'; smalaklou@niacouncil.org; eblout@niacouncil.org; 'Trita Parsi'
Subject: Re transpartisan coalition

To all our campaign friends,

As you all know, over the past five months, Carah, Mike, Ira, and the other organizers have worked diligently to give direction to the coalition's efforts and the campaign. Thank you for your dedication and hard work. NIAC has been honored to be involved in every step along the way. Because we care about the coalition and our partners, we would like to propose that we take a step back to make the coalition more fully trans-partisan.

I am writing to you in the spirit of making sure we do everything possible to reach our collective goal - changing the policy of the United States on Iran. To do so, building a trans-partisan coalition is key.

We need to recognize that a trans-partisan effort has to be truly trans-partisan in the sense that the coalition needs to have a good balance of groups on the right, center and left. We cannot just be trans-partisan in name.

As we've continued our campaign-planning, events on Capitol Hill (such as the NIE) have provided a real shift in the dynamics of the debate. We can capitalize on these developments if moderate and conservative organizations and members of Congress embrace the campaign. Without that support, NIAC fears that the campaign's efforts will be met with unfortunate failure.

In order to bring on board Senators like Feinstein et al we must show them that this campaign will provide the bi-partisan and trans-partisan support that they need (politically) to take a courageous stance on the issue. At this point, even those who should be our natural allies, organizations like USA*Engage, are reluctant to endorse or embrace our message. This should give us pause and prompt us to take a step back and potentially revise our approach.

I am not an expert on how to build trans-partisan coalitions. But I am quite impressed by the efforts of Michael at Reuniting America.

My sense after having observed their efforts is that to build these larger coalitions, one needs to start from scratch. Instead of presenting groups on the right with pre-written statements hoping they will sign on, these groups should be involved from the earliest possible stage and have a chance to participate in the creative process. In other words, they should be able to have input in the campaign's statement and overall messaging. Presenting groups with what can be perceived as a fait-accompli, I fear, will reduce our chances of successfully expanding our list of partners.

This, of course, also means that we must be ready to do some compromising and at times potentially soften/toughen our message or avoid addressing certain aspects of this issue in which agreement can't be found. But it's worth the price, because a trans-partisan coalition that doesn't have a good balance of participants is likely not going achieve what we all hope it should.

An example of this outreach was demonstrated when Grover Norquist offered his support but did not sign-on. He exemplifies not just a powerful voice in the Republican Party, but also an important figure that can provide trans-partisan legitimacy to our efforts. I think it is critical that we do whatever can be done to get him to sign on, especially since his full involvement would give our efforts a tremendous credibility boost.

If our decisions are driven by the current political realities, I believe that we have a window of a few months in which we can reinforce our efforts to open the coalition to groups on the right – which then includes renegotiating some of the language on our campaign statement to make it possible for them to say "Yes!"

The up side to taking a step back is significant, I believe. We all represent organizations that have limited budgets, resources and time. This effort and idea is, in my view, simply too good not be done in a way that maximizes our chances of success. None of us want to launch this campaign and then see it fail to receive the media attention it deserves, or fail to create the political momentum it clearly has the potential to achieve.

To this end, I strongly urge our group to postpone the launch plans and reinvigorate existing efforts to get a more balanced coalition in place, even if it requires that we tweak our message. I understand, of course, that it is unfair to increase the already exhausting workload of Carah and others, and I volunteer NIAC's time and resources to help reach out to groups on the right (granted, of course, that we don't present them with a fait-accompli).

Again, I want to thank everyone for their time, dedication and persistence!

Sincerely,
Trita Parsi, PhD
President

National Iranian American Council
1411 K ST Ste 600
Washington DC 20005

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Email: tparsi@niacouncil.org
web: www.niacouncil.org

From: Carah Ong <cong@armscontrolcenter.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2007 8:54 AM
To: Chelsea; Mossadegh Project; eblout@niacouncil.org; TeteA28@aol.com; sue@unitedforpeaceandjustice.org; vicente@aidemocracy.org; Ishorr@PSR.org; Kfuchs@Peace-Action.org; marceline@aidemocracy.org; lzand@forusa.org; btalebi@niacouncil.org
Cc: selzam@studioselzam.com; santi@justforeignpolicy.org; Kevin Martin; patrick mcelwee; Robert Naiman
Subject: RE: Draft Kinzer Iran Tour Targets
Attachments: Iran Initiatives 2.doc

I think all of those cities are good choices. Has anyone reached out to Friends Committee on National Legislation and Women's Action for New Directions? They may also have chapters in these cities. Are there other organizations with chapter groups who should be involved (like American Friends Service Committee and World Council of Churches)? At the Iran meeting yesterday, it was suggested that we also involve religious groups in our efforts, perhaps we should also bring in Jessica Wilbanks at Faithful Security as she has been working with religious leaders and organizing elements of the religious community.

I also want to suggest linking up with CATO Institute because they have been doing a speaking tour on a "Grand Bargain" with Iran all this year (see attached list of Iran Initiatives for more info). After Chris Preble's presentation at the Iran meeting yesterday, there seemed to be broad consensus that we should have a cross-country tour as a public education effort on Iran. I propose that we organize all of the groups working on Iran to get behind this tour and make it "THE" speaking tour.

There is no need to reinvent the wheel and Stephen Kinzer is an excellent resource as the centerpiece. It would also be good to involve CATO in organizing as I'm sure they have made connections with groups across the country and they could also offer suggestions since they have done this sort of organizing. They're speakers could also be part of the tour. I mentioned the Kinzer Tour to Chris Preble yesterday and he thought it would be great to link up. Also, CATO is working with AID on the speaking tours.

I'm still awaiting a response from Shirin Ebadi about whether she might be willing to be a speaker at certain stops. She thinks her Green Card will come through by February.

All of our military generals (General Gard, General Johns, General Hoar, Col. Hauser, etc.) are also willing participate if they're schedules allow once the dates have been finalized and I will be delighted to help finalize their participation.

On the legislative front, over the next couple of weeks I'm working to get a new bipartisan bill on diplomacy introduced into both chambers, which I think will be a better option than trying to pick one of the bills calling for Congressional authorization. I will keep everyone informed as this effort progresses.

All the best,

Carah

-----Original Message-----

From: Chelsea [mailto:chelsea@justforeignpolicy.org]
Sent: Friday, November 09, 2007 5:34 PM
To: Mossadegh Project; eblout@niacouncil.org; TeteA28@aol.com; sue@unitedforpeaceandjustice.org; vicente@aidemocracy.org; Ishorr@PSR.org; Carah Ong; Kfuchs@Peace-Action.org; marceline@aidemocracy.org; lzand@forusa.org; btalebi@niacouncil.org
Cc: selzam@studioselzam.com; santi@justforeignpolicy.org; Kevin Martin; patrick mcelwee; Robert Naiman

Subject: Draft Kinzer Iran Tour Targets

Hello,

I'm happy to finally send you a draft list of target cities for the Kinzer Iran tour. The below cities are listed because we felt that they are strategic places to bring the message. However, we do not know if there is local group support in all of them. The real determination of going to a place will be if we can find organized local groups to make it happen. Thanks to Peace Action and Physicians for Social Responsibility, we have an indication of that in some of the places. If you have chapters in any of these places or know of great groups there, we would love to work with them on a tour stop. Of course, if you think we missed an important location or have other ideas, please feel free to share them.

As for dates, we think that starting after Super Tuesday (Feb 5th) will be better for us in terms of not competing in the media with the primaries.

Stephen is still working on clearing his schedule at that point, so it is not yet confirmed.

I look forward to your feedback.

All the best,
Chelsea

Kinzer Iran Tour Target Cities

First Tier - Best Options:

+Los Angeles, CA

+Chicago, IL

+Washington, DC

+San Francisco, CA

+Maine

+Manchester or Concord, NH

+Columbus or Cincinnati, OH

+Albuquerque, NM

+St. Paul/Minneapolis (Rochester backup), MN

+Sarasota, Tampa, Port Charlotte (maybe also Tallahassee or Miami), FL

+Fort Collins, Loveland (Denver backup), CO

+Reno or Carson City, NV

+Omaha, NE (if we can get Hagel to speak)

+Somewhere in VA outside of the DC area (if we can get Webb to speak)

Second Tier - Other Good Places:

+Seattle, WA

+Raleigh (Durham), NC

+Baltimore, MD

+Portland (Salem), OR

+Baton Rouge or New Orleans, LA

+Rochester, NY

+Pittsburgh, PA

+Urbana/Champaign, IL

+Green Bay, WI

+Bloomington, IN

Just Foreign Policy

www.justforeignpolicy.org

202.448.2898

From: Babak Talebi <btalebi@niacouncil.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2007 1:03 PM
To: 'Babak Talebi'; 'Jake Colvin'; mostolenk@libertycoalition.net; 'Trita Parsi'
Cc: 'Chris Preble'; 'Doug Bandow'; 'Ivan Eland'; 'Larry Madison'; 'Marcus Epstein'; 'Philip Giraldi'; 'samah Norquist'
Subject: Update on US-Iran mtgs and plans for Thursday
Attachments: R meetings.doc

Hello everyone,

We had our first set of meetings regarding US-Iran issues on Tuesday with three offices and had a variety of experiences ranging from the abysmally uninformed staffer in Rep. Burton's office, to the astoundingly supportive and engaging experience we shared with Michael Hare in Rep. Boustany's office. We also had a lengthy and informative meeting with Sen. Coleman's staffer who was engaged, challenging, and none-the-less productive.

Our itinerary for Thursday is a bit more ambitious with six meetings scheduled starting at 9:30am in Rep. Chabot's office (129 Cannon). Thus far, I have confirmations from Jake, Mike, Trita, and myself but would like to also hear back from others who wish to attend.

Regards,

Babak Talebi
(202) 460-5680 Cell
(202) 719-8076 Office
(202) 719-8097 Fax

National Iranian American Council (c/o OAI)
2801 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007
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"Promoting Iranian American Participation In American Civic Life"

-----Original Message-----

From: Babak Talebi [mailto:btalebi@niacouncil.org]
Sent: Friday, May 25, 2007 1:42 PM
To: 'Jake Colvin'; mostolenk@libertycoalition.net; 'Trita Parsi'
Cc: 'Chris Preble'; 'Doug Bandow'; 'Ivan Eland'; 'Larry Madison'; 'Marcus Epstein'; 'Philip Giraldi'; 'samah Norquist'; 'Babak Talebi'
Subject: touching base and 1-pager for Iran meetings

Friends,

Attached you will find two documents. The first is our one-pager intro which Jake has put together, if you have any comments or wish to include your logo please email him by COB today.

The second, is our current meeting schedule, we have a light day on this coming Tuesday, though we will be starting at 9:15 with a meeting to touch base. Please review the Meeting schedule (3 days – May 29, May 31, and June 7). And email me back with your availability to attend the meetings. We don't all have to attend every single one, so if you wish to pick and choose, that is fine.

I look forward to hearing back from each of you and to working closely with you all to help prevent an unnecessary conflict and hopefully stem the tide on these unproductive proposed sanctions.

Regards,

Babak Talebi
(202) 460-5680 Cell
(202) 719-8076 Office
(202) 719-8097 Fax

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-----Original Message-----

From: Jake Colvin [mailto:jcolvin@nftc.org]
Sent: Friday, May 25, 2007 12:20 PM
To: 'Trita Parsi'; 'Babak Talebi'; 'Michael Ostrolenk'; 'Ivan Eland'
Subject: 1-pager for Iran meetings

All,

Attached is a draft two-page handout to provide to offices prior to our meetings. One page contains some of the key messages that we discussed yesterday, and the second page contains a list of important quotes from Administration and Congressional officials on sanctions proposals. This is my attempt at a draft – I'd welcome any comments or edits you might have. I thought we might put our logos at the top of the document. If that is acceptable to you, please send me your logo and I can put it at the top and create a pdf of the final document. (Alternatively, we can either leave it blank or I can put it on USA*Engage letterhead).

I know it is short notice, but I was hoping to have your logos and any comments by COB today.

Also, I am compiling a few documents to include in a small package of handouts for our guests. So far, I have a very useful op-ed from Ivan, the op-ed that Carah and I did for the SF Chronicle, and the business community letter we released last week. If you have anything else to add, please send along.

I believe I'm forgetting some folks on this. Babak – can you forward to anyone I have missed?

Jake Colvin
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