

Iran's VEVAK: Disinformation, Inc.  
By Professor Daniel M. Zucker  
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VEVAK learned its methodology from the Soviet KGB and many of the Islamist revolutionaries who supported Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini actually studied at Moscow's Patrice Lumumba Friendship University, the Oxford of terrorism. Documented Iranian alumni include the current Supreme Leader (the faqih) Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, under whose Velayat-e Faqih (Rule of the Islamic Jurisprudent) apparatus it has traditionally operated. Its current head is Cabinet Minister Hojatoleslam Gholam-Hussein Mohseni-Ezhei, a graduate of Qom's Haqqani School, noted for its extremist position advocating violence against enemies and strict clerical control of society and government. The Ministry is very well funded and its charge, like that of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (the Pasdaran) is to guard the revolutionary Islamic Iranian regime at all costs and under all contingencies.

From the KGB playbook, VEVAK learned the art of disinformation. It's not so difficult to learn: tell the truth 80% of the time and lie 20%. Depending on how well a VEVAK agent wants to cover his/her tracks, the ratio may go up to 90/10, but it never drops below the 80/20 mark as such would risk suspicion and possible detection. The regime in Teheran has gone to great lengths to place its agents in locations around the world. Many of these operatives have been educated in the West, including the U.K. and the United States. Iranian government agencies such as embassies, consulates, Islamic cultural centers, and airline offices regularly provide cover for the work of VEVAK agents who dress well and are clean shaven, and move comfortably within our society. In this country, because of the severance of diplomatic relations, the principal site of VEVAK activities begins at the offices of Iran's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York.

Teheran has worked diligently to place its operatives in important think tanks and government agencies in the West. Some of its personnel have been recruited while in prison through torture or more often through bribery, or a combination of both. Others are Islamist revolutionaries that have been set up to look like dissidents - often having been arrested and imprisoned, but released for "medical reasons". The clue to detecting the fake "dissident" is to read carefully what he/she writes, and to ask why this vocal "dissident" was released from prison when other real dissidents have not been released, indeed have been grievously tortured and executed. Other agents have been placed in this country for over twenty-five years to slowly go through the system and rise to positions of academic prominence due to their knowledge of Farsi and Shia Islam or Islamist fundamentalism.

One of the usual tactics of VEVAK is to co-opt academia to its purposes. Using various forms of bribery, academics are bought to defend the Islamic Republic or slander its enemies. Another method is to assign bright students to train for academic posts as specialists in Iranian or Middle East affairs. Once established, such individuals are often consulted by our government as it tries to get a better idea of how it should deal with Iran. These academics then are in a position to skew the information, suggesting the utility of extended dialogue and negotiation, or the danger and futility of confronting a strong Iran or its proxies such as Hizballah (Hezbollah). These

academics serve to shield the regime from an aggressive American or Western policy, and thereby buy more time for the regime to attain its goals, especially in regards to its nuclear weaponry and missile programs.

MOIS likes to use the media, especially electronic media, to its advantage. One of VEVAK's favorite tricks is setting up web sites that look like they are opposition sites but which are actually controlled by the regime. These sites often will be multilingual, including Farsi, German, Arabic French, and English. Some are crafted carefully and are very subtle in how they skew their information (e.g., Iran-Interlink, set up and run by Massoud Khodabandeh and his wife Ann Singleton from Leeds, England); others are less subtle, simply providing the regime's point of view on facts and events in the news (e.g., [www.mujahedeen.com](http://www.mujahedeen.com) or [www.mojahedin.ws](http://www.mojahedin.ws)). This latter group is aimed at the more gullible in our open society and unfortunately such a market exists. However, if one begins to do one's homework, asking careful questions, the material on these fake sites generally does not add up.

Let's examine a few examples of VEVAK's work in the United States. In late October, 2005, VEVAK sent three of its agents to Washington to stage a press event in which the principal Iranian resistance movement, the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MeK), was to be slandered. Veteran VEVAK agent Karim Haqi flew from Amsterdam to Canada where he was joined by VEVAK's Ottawa agents Amir-Hossein Kord Rostami and Mahin (Parvin-Mahrokh) Haji, and the three flew from Toronto to Washington. Fortunately the resistance had been tracking these three, informed the FBI of their presence in Washington, and when the three tried to hold a press conference, the resistance had people assigned to ask pointed questions of them so that they ended the interview prematurely and fled back to Canada.

Abolghasem Bayyenet is a member of the Iranian government. He serves as a trade expert for the Ministry of Commerce. But his background of study and service in the Foreign Ministry indicates that Bayyenet is more than just an economist or a suave and savvy businessman. In an article published in *Global Politician* on April 23, 2006, entitled "Is Regime Change Possible in Iran?", Bayyenet leads his audience to think that he is a neutral observer, concerned lest the United States make an error in its assessment of Iran similar to the errors of intelligence and judgment that led to our 2003 invasion of Iraq, with its less than successful outcome. However, his carefully crafted bottom line is that the people of Iran are not going to support regime change and that hardliner President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad actually has achieved greater popularity than his predecessors because of his concern for the problems of the poor and his fight for economic and social justice. To the naive, Bayyenet makes Ahmadinejad sound positively saintly. Conveniently overlooked is the occurrence of over four thousand acts of protest, strikes, anti-regime rallies, riots, and even political assassinations by the people of Iran against the government in the year since Ahmadinejad assumed office. So too, the following facts are ignored: the sizeable flight of capital, the increase in unemployment, and the rising two-figure rate of inflation, all within this last year. Bayyenet is a regime apologist, and when one is familiar with the facts, his arguments ring very hollow. However, his English skills are excellent, and so the naive might be beguiled by his commentary.

Mohsen Sazegara is VEVAK's "reformed revolutionary". A student supporter of Khomeini before the 1979 revolution, Sazegara joined the "imam" on his return from exile and served in

the government for a decade before supposedly growing disillusioned.

He formed several reformist newspapers but ran afoul of the hardliners in 2003 and was arrested and imprisoned by VEVAK. Following “hunger strikes”, Sazegara was released for health reasons and permitted to seek treatment abroad. Although critical of the government and particularly of Ahmadinejad and KhameneM, Sazegara is yet more critical of opposition groups, leaving the impression that he favors internal regime change but sees no one to lead such a movement for the foreseeable future. His bottom line: no one is capable of doing what needs to be done, so we must bide our time. Very slick, but his shadow shows his likely remaining ties to the MOIS.

Trita Parsi is another individual that serves the purposes of VEVAK. Claiming to be an exiled dissident by way of years spent in Sweden, Dr. Parsi managed to serve as foreign affairs advisor to Ohio's Congressman Bob Ney before going on to Johns Hopkins University for a PhD in International Relations. Formerly the director of the American-Iranian Council, and now the president of the National Iranian-American Council, Trita Parsi's task is to convince the United States that it is a mistake to consider military options or even regime change as a means of dealing with the Iranian nuclear threat. Parsi criticizes the US support of Israel and consistently says that dialogue with Iran is the only way to solve the crisis. Parsi also bends the truth over Iranian acts of conciliation towards the US, attempting to make Teheran appear “misunderstood” by the current administration. Trita Parsi serves the regime's interests as a consistent advocate of a policy of appeasement. That seems to be a strange attitude for a dissident to hold.

Smooth as glass is Dr. Vali Nasr, aka Dr. Sayeed Vali Reza Nasr, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, and the hottest commodity on the Iran commentators circuit today. Born in Iran, to the Iranian-American scholar Professor Sayeed Hossein Nasr with whom he has authored several classics on Shia doctrine and philosophy, Vali Nasr was reared in Scotland and the United States following the family's departure from Iran in 1979. Nasr's perpetual manta suggests that Iran and her Lebanese proxy Hizballah are too strong to oppose and so it is necessary for the United States and its allies to negotiate with both. In article after article, and repeated testimony before Congressional committees and the White House, Nasr beats the same drum: Iran is already too powerful for the U.S. to oppose because of its control of Iraq through the Shia militias and Lebanon through Hizballah; it would be better for this country to come to an accommodation with the current regime. It may be that Nasr has no connection to VEVAK, but it is curious as to why he never wavers from suggesting accommodation with a regime that caused his family's emigration from its homeland.

Unfortunately our intelligence system has been in shambles ever since a massive CIA foul-up in 1989 resulted in the destruction of our espionage network in Iran. On the other hand, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been busy since day one of its existence in planting its agents in strategic locations here and around the world. It is hoped that this brief essay sheds enough light on the subject that those who are charged with protecting our nation's security begin to take appropriate notice and action.

PS: Examination of the financial records, here and abroad, of the figures mentioned above, as well as telephone and internet logs might prove very interesting to the CIA, DIA, and FBI, as

well as the Treasury Department, although most VEVAK operatives are very good at covering their tracks.

Here are a variety of individuals and groups that serve the Islamic Republic of Iran as agents for disseminating VEVAK's program of disinformation.

Our first subject is Kam Zarrabi, a naturalized Iranian who came to the United States in 1956 to study at UCLA before returning to Iran to work in the oil industry for the Shah's government. Mr. Zarrabi left Iran in 1979 and claims to be non-religious. His writings are political and invariably suggest that Iran is not a threat to either the United States or Israel. In article after article Zarrabi suggests that the US should come to terms with Tehran and distance itself from Israel. In a shrewd attempt at masking their intentions, he attacks Vali Nasr and Ali Gheissari for their article in the December 13, 2004 New York Times entitled "Foxes in Iran's Henhouse". But despite this "attack" on the two Iranian academics, Zarrabi's bottom line is similar - the US should not confront Iran but rather come to an accommodation with the regime.

Like the traditional VEVAK agent, he tells the truth 80% of the time and bends it sideways or upside down about 20%. When he lies, he doesn't lack for hutzpah, the following being a good example of "reality according to Zarrabi: "Curiously, no mention has ever been made of the fact that not a single American has ever been killed, not even by mistake, by an Iranian anywhere in the world; while the same is not true of the Saudis, Egyptians, Israelis, Colombians, Iraqis, Afghans, etc, etc." ("Speaking of Tolerance", Asia Times Online, March 22, 2005) It seems that Mr. Zarrabi has conveniently justified himself by the fact that VEVAK traditionally covers its tracks by using proxies. He certainly is sidestepping the fact that Iran is supplying the arms, munitions, funding, training and direction to the Shiite militias in Iraq that are causing a high percentage of American military fatalities and casualties in Iraq, and have been doing so since late 2003. However, it seems that Zarrabi's memory has had a lapse; the following was published in Iran Focus on August 14, 2005: The attack [on the Marine barracks in Beirut] killed 241 U.S. service members. Two years ago, a U.S. federal court order identified the suicide bomber as Ismail Ascari, an Iranian national. In July 1987, Iran's then-Minister of Revolutionary Guards, Mohsen Rafiqdoost, said, "Both the TNT and the ideology which in one blast sent to hell 400 officers, NCOs, and soldiers at the Marines headquarters were provided by Iran".

If Mr. Zarrabi is not an employee of VEVAK, he must be a "true believer" as he is a good spokesman for the policy objectives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a fine apologist for the regime. However, as far as his commitment to a democratic Iran is concerned, that seems to be a different story.

Our next subject is Hooshang Amirahmadi, founder and president of the American

Iranian Council. Amirahmadi, born in Iran and completing his undergraduate studies in 1969 in Tabriz, continued his education in the US but maintained ties with his homeland, receiving scholarships from Tehran. The change in regimes did not seem to cause him problems as he has done economics research for the Islamic Republic's Ministry of Plan and Budget, published in Tehran in 1986 and 1991, as well as written for a variety of ministries in the early 1990s and served as consultant to the Center for Scientific Research and Middle East Strategic Studies, a

think tank in Tehran in 1994. Last year (June 2005) he returned to Iran to run as a candidate in the presidential elections, saying: "I have never done anything against the Islamic Republic of Iran", which however, did not stop his disqualification from candidacy by the Guardian Council because of his American citizenship.

Amirahmadi has consistently called for dialogue and accommodation with the regime, suggesting that it has been a belligerent American policy that rebuffed all of Tehran's overtures that is the cause of the present impasse with the Islamic Republic, and that it is only through constructive engagement that Iran can be transformed over time into a democracy. Like his less sophisticated compatriot, Kam Zarrabi, Amirahmadi blames Israel for the tensions between Tehran and Jerusalem, conveniently forgetting that it is Ahmadinejad, Khamenei, and Rafsanjani that have threatened to wipe Israel off of the map and not Olmert, Sharon or Netanyahu that threaten to send Iran back into the stone age. Again, it may be that Amirahmadi is not on the VEVAK payroll, but his lengthy history of service to the current regime and his longstanding avowed policy of reconciliation with the present regime indicate his being what used to be termed a "fellow traveler". When the regime's support of anti-American terrorism is so well documented, today such a position as Amirahmadi's seems to reveal to whom and where are his real loyalties and sympathies.

Iranian born, American reared and educated Karim Sadjadpour, based until late 2005 in Tehran, first as a journalist for National Geographic and for the past three years as an analyst for the International Crisis Group, a Brussels based international liberal think tank, is next on the list. Sadjadpour's frequent and long sojourns in Iran should cause us to ask how he is permitted by the regime to report about it without its approval. Remember, censorship and managed news is the order of business in the Islamic Republic of Iran. No one gets past the censor's red ink. Foreigners that offend the regime are invited to leave immediately if not preceded by a detour to prison, and don't receive return visas. But Karim doesn't offend the regime; he defends it by saying that the United States can only deal with Iran by opening up direct diplomatic relations with the regime and assuring Tehran that regime change is not on the agenda. By continually discrediting any of the opposition groups both in- and outside of Iran, Sadjadpour sets the equation as a binary choice between confrontation (including the possibility of use of the military) or diplomatic and economic engagement which he claims will help promote reforms and the development of democracy in Iran. I guess that our experience with China is not a relevant example for Sadjadpour, but in my book, more than thirty years of engagement with China has not done much in the way of democratizing that country. It has made China a burgeoning super-power that has surpassed Russia, but as for democracy, no such luck. Indeed, since Sadjadpour's May 18th testimony before the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, the limited attempts at engagement offered by Secretary of State Rice and the 5+1 have resulted in nothing but more belligerent and bellicose talk from Ahmadinejad and a total refusal to stop unclear enrichment. The regime has changed the signals on its front-man without informing him.

Our next subjects are Ardeshir and Eleanor Ommani, founders two years ago of the American-Iranian Friendship Committee. Ardeshir is an Iranian-American who has been in this country for decades but who returned to Iran during the 1979-1980 revolution as well as this past spring along with his wife Eleanor Ommani. Both the Ommani's political stances match the Tudeh (Iranian Communist) Party in that they support ultra-leftist workers' party political goals and yet

defend the Khamenei theocratic regime. In a recent article, Eleanor Ommani attacked leftist feminist Jennifer Fasulo for her op-ed that criticized Hugo Chavez's support for Iran as a sell out of women's rights. Defending the Venezuelan strong-man as a true socialist and friend of Castro, Ommani also defended the Islamic Republic in its treatment of women. Her defense of the IRI was one that would make Massoumeh Ebtekar ("Tehran Mary") proud.

Ms. Ommani tries to gloss over the fact that the IRI continues to practice stoning for the crime of adultery, calling it "the rare and out-dated practice of stoning". But as Ommani knows, this barbaric practice still takes place--a man and a woman were stoned to death just this past May in Mashad and another nine women and two men await such execution (according to the state-run daily "Rooz") - and stoning is enshrined in the IRI's law code (it applies to both genders, but as Moslem men are permitted polygamy, relations with an unmarried woman is not considered adultery). Citing statistics of Iran's successful birth control and family planning campaign as well as Iran's progressive laws concerning maternity leave, and the integration of female students into the educational system, Ommani attempts to paint a picture of Iran as a completely progressive society. Indeed, Iran has made great progress in these areas. However, she conveniently ignores or forgets that which she doesn't want to admit: Ahmadinejad has just begun a new campaign to once again substantially increase the Iranian population. Ommani also fails to mention that the IRI regards women's testimony in court as carrying only half the weight of that of a man, and that a similar ratio applies as to the value of a woman's life. So too, Ommani "forgets" that women have virtually no rights to their children in cases of divorce, or that women must receive the written and notarized permission of a male relative (husband or father) to be able to travel abroad. Ommani neglects to mention that all buses are segregated by gender (women sit in the rear), all Islamic prayer rooms strictly segregated, and that segregated instruction in schools and segregated seating at the universities is the way of the IRI. Ommani also neglects to mention that all medical treatment is strictly segregated, that women may not sing alone in public, or for that matter, be seen in public with a male who is not their relative. Ommani makes no mention of the strict enforcement of the hejab laws which require all women in Iran to be covered from head to ankle with only hands and face visible on pain of lashes (or imprisonment for multiple offenses).

Ommani also skips over the Shiite practice of "sigheh" ("mutaah") "temporary marriage"(many in Iran and abroad would term it a legalized form of prostitution) which permits men to take an unlimited number of temporary wives (for as short a period as an hour) but which is regarded as adultery if the woman is already married. Men may contract such "marriages" at any time, but women must wait three monthly cycles between such marriages to prove that they are not pregnant. Should the temporary husband die before the termination date of the marriage, the woman does not inherit from him. Ommani neglects to mention that the IRI reverted legally to the old Islamic view that girls are regarded as reaching majority age for the purpose of marriage at age nine, and may even wed earlier if both fathers give consent! Ommani also has conveniently overlooked the new law passed by the Majlis since Mahmoud Ahmadinejad became president that prohibits women from owning and running any business by themselves; all businesses, including restaurants, require a male partner in order currently to conform to the law.

Ms. Ommani demonstrates her "objectivity" when she portrays the IRI's terrorist proxy Hizballah, as the innocent victim of Israeli aggression. Eleanor: "fess up" - it's time to admit that you are an agent of a foreign government!

Ardeshir Ommani, like his wife Eleanor, has a distinct attitude of "workers of the world, unite!", which would seem to suggest that he be critical of the theocratic IRI regime which has not only refused to allow the bus drivers of Tehran to unionize, but also has arrested and imprisoned the group's leaders. The same story applies as regards the Mine and Industry Commission's anti-labor approach to the mine workers from eastern Tehran and Keraj. But this is not the case! Just like the old Iranian communist Tudeh Party which sold out on its socialist principles and backs the IRI regime, so does Ardeshir Ommani defend the IRI, describing it as a modern, independent nation fighting the imperialist United States! Like his wife, he claims that women are not debilitated (his words) in their social status in the Islamic Republic. He also defends the regime's nuclear program, calling it popular and the absolute right of the Iranian nation. Like his wife, he neglects the poll that found over two thirds of Iranians opposed to the expenditures involved in the current enrichment program. His opposition to the Iraq war should come as no surprise, but the fact that he fails to suggest that an immediate withdrawal will leave Iraq in even greater chaos demonstrates that he is following Khamenei's party line in order that Iran have a free hand in turning Iraq into a carbon copy of Iran. Shame on both the Ommanis for failing to admit that Iraqi women have suffered a reversal of their civil rights not because of the fall of Saddam Hussein but because the Iranian trained and supplied Shiite militias (SICRI's Badr Organization and al-Sadr's Justani al-Mahdi) have forcibly applied Sharia (Islamic law) upon the regions they control which includes almost all the southern half of Iraq. The Ommanis prove that the world is round: the far left comes and supports the fascist Islamist mullah regime of Tehran. Are the Ommanis paid by VEVAK? They know what is the truth as regards this question, but they definitely are helping VEVAK to do its job of disseminating disinformation.

Our next subject is an entire group, and especially its leaders. I refer to CASMII "the Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran" ([www.campaigniran.org](http://www.campaigniran.org)) which was founded by Professor Abbas Edalat in London on December 1, 2005, with a branch in the US headed by Rostam Pouzal and includes Behrad Nakha and Daniel M Pourkesali among its board-members. CASMII is connected to similar groups throughout Europe. Whereas military intervention in Iran may be proscribed by many in the United States and the wisdom and efficacy of sanctions can be debated for many hours, it is the support for the positions of the Islamic Republic of Iran that gives away the real identity of this group. It is a cleverly disguised front for the IRI and engaged in promoting VEVAK's disinformation campaign. Let's take a look at some of its "information". In an editorial entitled "Opposing Theocratic Repression in Iran or Playing into the Hands of US Warmongers?" from June 11, 2006, the anonymous writer at CASMII wrote:

"The US and Israel are intent to deprive Iran of its 'inalienable right' under Article IV of the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) to develop a civilian nuclear program -- a right which belongs collectively to the nation and which will benefit each individual. It is this 'inalienable right' which CASMII is striving to defend and which must be granted to Iran as a sovereign nation."

If such were indeed the case, the US would have worked to prevent the building of the nuclear plant at Busheir. It is the history of Iran's long clandestine nuclear research program (eighteen years of secrecy) coupled with Iran's lack of genuine cooperation with the IAEA in permitting full access to all sites that has driven

the US and EU concerns. Ahmadinejad's threats to Israel's existence have not done anything to help the matter either, however well they sit with his Pasdaran cronies. The CASMII editorial counters with the following statement:

• The west is accusing Iran of having a covert nuclear program, an accusation used by the US and Israel to justify sanctions and military intervention in Iran. However, hundreds of intrusive snap visits in three years by the inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency, when the Iranian government accepted to enforce IAEA safeguards well beyond the Additional Protocol, have failed to produce any shred of evidence of this. • The operative word in the above statement is found in the middle of the second sentence and is the word "when". When the IRI allowed IAEA inspections, it did not find clear evidence of military usage, but the inspections were not carried out at all times that the IAEA wanted to hold them. The editorial continues, giving away the real concerns of CASMII: "Today, we are witnessing a far graver interference: the threat of military action and regime change by the US neoconservatives who condemn the ~repressive regime" of a handful of "unelected clerics" in Iran and vow to support the Iranian people to liberate themselves from the "tyranny of the mullah."

Wow! If one condemns the repressive regime of a handful of unelected mullahs, vowing to support the Iranian people to liberate themselves from the tyranny of the mullahs, one must be the enemy! CASMII could hardly be clearer; its members don't want to see a regime change that would end the current Islamic government controlled by the mullahs!

The CASMII editorial, a commentary on the Iran Petition Letter of the "Campaign for Peace and Democracy", criticizes it, saying:

"However, by giving even more weight to an analysis of 'repression' in Iran and by calling for a regime change by the people of Iran when the US military attack is imminent your petition severely undermines its opposition to the warmongers and unwittingly aids the chorus in the western media in the prelude to a new war. Our foremost task in the west is to fight against the imperial aspirations of our own governments and in this effort we should not assist the imperial bandwagon in publicly condemning a sovereign country for lack of democracy when it could soon be facing a military attack by the US."

Did I read correctly? CASMII says: "We should not assist the imperial bandwagon in publicly condemning a sovereign country for lack of democracy." In other words, don't criticize the IRI, and certainly not for its dismal human rights record (the Islamic Republic of Iran has been condemned 52 times by the U.N. for its abuse of human rights). Who but a spokesman for the IRI would write such a line?

CASMII's republication of the pro-regime website Peyvand article by Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich, entitled "MEK, the West, and Iran" (November 1, 2006) and her cooperation with CASMII

leaders in writing articles demonstrate CASMII's role as propagandist for the IRI. Her article attacks the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK) in a manner that is only done by the regime, because only the regime has any real reason to fear the MEK. Sepahpour-Ulrich claims that the vast majority of Iranians hate the MEK, but the facts are otherwise. The MEK's disclosures of Iran's secret nuclear program and details of its missile program have only been possible because of the extensive cooperation of many ordinary Iranians within the country with members of the MEK to supply the necessary information for these revelations to take place. So too, the appearance of placards with the photos of the MEK leaders, Massoud and Maryam Rajavi, at anti-regime rallies in Tehran and other Iranian cities demonstrates the popularity of the MEK. Remember: to be caught with such a placard in hand is to receive a one way ticket to the notorious Evin Prison, and frequently an appointment with the gallows. And yet the placards appear.

CASMII, in its efforts to connect with the left-wing anti-war movement in this country and internationally, serves the purposes of the Islamic Republic which wants to remove American and British--indeed all Western--influence from the Persian Gulf region. Even more than the Ommanis, the members of CASMII are serving the interests of the Iranian regime. Their training and techniques indicate their familiarity with VEVAK. VEVAK's chief, cabinet minister Hojatolislam Gholam-Hussein Mohseni-Ezhei, must be very pleased with what they are trying to do for the regime.

Our final subject is Gary G. Sick. While not a direct agent of VEVAK, Sick has done more to assist the Tehran mullah government than any other non-Iranian American since Oliver North and Robert McFarlane. Dr. Sick, formerly at the NSC during the presidencies of Ford, Carter and Reagan, now is Adjunct Professor of International Affairs at Columbia University and chairs Human Rights Watch's Middle East Advisory Committee. Dr. Sick has consistently criticized US foreign policy for not dialoging with the IRI. Sick has suggested that dialogue will bring Tehran to modify its animosity towards this country and the West in general, and will also cause it to promote liberalization in the area of human rights and civil liberties. As the EU has been engaged in dialogue with the regime for decades without any apparent success "indeed Ahmadinejad's presidency witnesses a regression in these area" why should an Iranian-American dialogue fair any better? Sick has been recorded being interviewed by Iranian state television stating that he knows that the IRI's nuclear program is strictly "kosher".

His chairmanship of Joe Stork's HRW Middle East Advisory Committee produced the May 18, 2005, bogus report of human rights abuse among the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK) ("No Exit: Human Rights Abuses Inside the Mojahedin Khalq Camps") which was based on telephone interviews with known agents of VEVAK, several of whom claimed to be in Iraq "in MEK captivity" at times that they were known to be elsewhere. Amongst other proof of the salacious nature of the HRW report is the testimony of US Army officers in charge of Camp Ashraf who totally contradict the HRW report. Similar salacious reports were issued by HRW in 1992 and 1997, the 1997 report being tossed out by the UN special rapporteur for Iraq as "fictional". The 1992 report was answered by MEK leader Massoud Rajavi who invited Joe Stork and HRW to come to any of the MEK camps in Iraq to investigate "on site" for themselves; HRW never responded to Mr. Rajavi's invitation. HRW's February 15, 2006 review of the criticisms of last year's report • did nothing to correct its shoddy methodology; in essence, it was a self-appointed whitewash. For what it is worth, Daniel Pipes of the Middle East Forum had this to

say about Dr. Sick: "When commenting on America's dealings with Iran, Sick has often expressed sympathy with Tehran's oppressive, terrorism-sponsoring Islamic fundamentalist regime. While characterizing the Bush administration as 'belligerent', he lauds the Iranian government for being "meticulous in complying with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty". He also opposes allowing American victims of Iranian-sponsored terrorism to sue Tehran for damages."

Gary Sick has proven himself to be a friend of the regime. Without access to his financial records it's hard to tell why. But for someone who served in the NSC during the 1979-1981 444 day Tehran embassy hostage crisis, friendship towards the regime seems a strange position to take.

Update on Dr. Vali Reza Nasr: Baztab, the VEVAK website, carried an article by former Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC/Pasdar) chief Mohsen Rezai (now Secretary of the IRI's State Expediency Council) on October 26, 2006 praising Nasr's rise to prominence as an expert on Shiite political power. The article notes that both Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice have met with Nasr, but that Nasr's advice that the US should accept Iran as a regional power, and start negotiations and come to terms with Iran's leaders has not yet been accepted as yet. Rezai calls Nasr's policy recommendations as "realistic and inclusive" as they accord the Shiites more power, as opposed to Orientalist Bernard Lewis' approach that gave greater control to the Sunni with hopes to democratize Iraq and the region. Rezai's article has disappeared from Baztab in the last few days, but it seems that he feels Vali Nasr is doing a good job. Given Rezai's background and his current position in the regime, we should wonder why Nasr is receiving his approval. Looks like Vali is telling it just like Tehran wants it told.