

# Dealing With Iran\*

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\*By Lawrence G. Potter

# About Iran

- Long & rich history & heritage of science, arts, & literature
- Mostly Shi'a branch of Islam
- Known as Persia until 1935
- After that as Iran (under the Shah)
- Popular movement ousted the Shah in 1950
- CIA overthrew Mosaddeq in 1953 & restored the Shah

# About Iran

- Islamic republic in 1979 in a popular revolution (Ayatollah Khomeini- supreme leader- Sayyid Ali Khamenei)
- Theocratic Republic
- 53 American held hostage for 444 days
- Presidents with varying attitudes toward the US: Rafsanjani, Khatami, & Ahmadinejad
- Land is the size of Alaska
- Population is about 68 Mil (28% under age of 15)
- Oil is the main source of revenue

# Iran Today

- President Bush Axis of Evil
- Iranian President Ahmadinejad is openly challenging the west and Israel
- There was a point in time (around 1999-2003) when it seemed a growing moderate reform movement was going to blossom
- In 2005 conservative clerics became the dominated force in politics

# Iran Today

- High unemployment rate
- High rate of drug use
- Youth culture and challenges to authority (2/3 of populations the under the age of 35)
- Reformist press was stopped/controlled
- Nuclear ambitions

# US Policies: Past & Present

- US support of the Shah
- Iran support to Hamas & Hezbollah
- US support of Iraq during the Iraq-Iran war (dual containment)
- Gulf War (Desert Storm)
- 9/11
- Axis of Evil
- Afghan war
- Iraq war
- Election of President Ahmadinejad
- Raising tensions over nuclear ambitions

# Time for a New Approach?

- A policy of containment & punishment vs. a policy of incentives and rewards?
- Commercial & cultural ties?
- Military option (by US and/or Israel)?
- Negotiation or confrontation?
- Stable Iran = stable region?

# References

- My web site for this series has many useful links which you may view at your leisure:

<http://adel.cs.westga.edu/leagueofwomenvoters/>

- After today, please do not hesitate to contact me with questions
- Thoughts & Questions?
- Thank you!