

—Slug:.....COMM-0859.opin.letter.000_cunningham-cook
—Contributor.....Matthew Cunningham-Cook
—Contributor email.....m.cunninghamcook@gmail.com
—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers
—Format.....LETTERS - Opinions - Letters to the Editor
—Dateline.....San JosÃ©, Costa Rica
—Article Number:.....43409



Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Disputing narratives on Iran — and the costs of U.S.
2 policy

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

3

####END SUBHED####

4 TEXT BODY:

RE: "The threat from Iran is real" [Response, March 18]:

####BEGIN TEXT####

5 Mark Berman left out a big disclosure: that he has
6 represented the state of Israel as an attorney, according to his
7 [biography](#). It's a basic expectation of integrity when commenting
8 on issues in a newspaper to disclose any conflicts of interest one
9 might have. It's something that I as a professional journalist have
10 always done.

11 Berman also gets a great deal of facts wrong. The seizure
12 of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran was because the United States
13 refused to hand over the Shah, who had run a vicious regime of
14 torture that included mass torture of dissidents, with the torturers
15 trained by the CIA.

16 The United States was far too obsessed with anti-
17 communism to pay any attention to Iranian human rights,
18 especially after overthrowing secular nationalist Mohammed
19 Mossadegh in 1953, replacing him with autocratic rule by the
20 Shah, who earlier was accountable to the country's parliament.

21 The Shah absolutely deserved to face justice for his
22 torture regime. That he was coddled by the Carter administration
23 is forever a stain on the U.S.

24 The Reagan campaign almost certainly made an arms-
25 for-hostages deal at the U.S. embassy, delaying the release. The
26 hostages were released the day he was inaugurated. Then the
27 U.S. provoked Saddam Hussein into invading Iran and sold arms
28 to both sides in a war that killed as many as one million people.

29 Describing Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthis as a
30 "network" would be a significant exaggeration. They all have
31 different aims and different power bases. There is no evidence to
32 suggest that they are "proxies" of Iran, especially Hamas, who
33 historically opposed Hezbollah and Iran's interests in Syria,
34 aligning it with Israel and the United States.

35 Hamas, for what it's worth, was also functionally a
36 creation by Israel — a fact that nearly all advocates for Israel's
37 interests in the Middle East conveniently choose to ignore.

38 In January 2020, Iran fired missiles at the U.S. in
39 response to the assassination of one of its top generals. If a top
40 general was assassinated by Iranians, the U.S. response would be
41 overwhelming. The hawks would be demanding a nuclear
42 response. All throughout this time the U.S. has had vicious
43 sanctions on Iran that hurt ordinary Iranians far more than the
44 IRGC.

45 That Berman complains about Iran *allegedly* attempting
46 assassinations after the U.S. and Israel just decapitated the entire
47 Iranian government is just laughable in the extreme.

48 The way to prevent foreign powers from influencing the
49 U.S. is to stop having a deranged foreign policy driven by people
50 who are so eager to send other people's children to war.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

51

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

52

0

####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

####BEGIN LINKS####

53

####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

####BEGIN VIDEO####

54

####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

####BEGIN LOGLINE####

55

####END LOGLINE####

