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**THE INFLUENCE OF IRAN-CONTRA
AFFAIR ON U.S. RELATIONS WITH IRAN
UNDER REAGAN ADMINISTRATION**

**ВПЛИВ СКАНДАЛУ
«ІРАН-КОНТРАС» НА АМЕРИКАНО-
ІРАНСЬКІ ВІДНОСИНИ
ЗА АДМІНІСТРАЦІЇ Р. РЕЙГАНА**

Ключевые слова: *внешняя политика, внешнеполитический курс США, скандал «Иран-контрас», Иран, политика «сдерживания», администрация Р. Рейгана, стратегия обмена «оружия-на-заложников».*

Павлюк Олеся. Влияние скандала «Иран-контрас» на американо-иранские отношения при администрации Р. Рейгана.

В статье исследуются внешнеполитические подходы и средства налаживания двусторонних отношений Вашингтона и Тегерана и фактическое введение политики «сдерживания» США в отношении Ирана.

Учитывая возможности ИРИ по предоставлению влияния на ослабление антиамериканской политики радикальных экстремистских организаций на Ближнем Востоке, администрация Р. Рейгана попыталась установить неофициальный двусторонний диалог с умеренными представителями иранского руководства. После обнародования в США указанных тайных американо-иранских контактов и осуществление стратегии обмена «вооружение-на-заложников», в Соединенных Штатах разразился внутривластный скандал, связанный с незаконной продажей американского оружия в Иран. Чтобы компенсировать потери американском имиджа от дела «Иран-контрас», которая нанесла удар по доверию в США среди монархий Персидского залива, Р. Рейган трансформировал региональную политику в сторону проведения давления на ИРИ. Подтверждено, что наибольшим интересом США в ходе ирано-иракской войны рассматривался содействие как можно большему ослаблению соперниками друг друга, чтобы ни одна из ближневосточных стран не смогла стать гегемоном в регионе и помешать распространению американского влияния в Персидском заливе.

The greatest threat in the Persian Gulf region Reagan Administration saw in the Soviet Union influence, including because of military intervention in Afghanistan and its close ties with radical countries like Libya and Syria. The White House has focused its efforts In the Middle East at negotiations according a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt in 1978. Before the revolution in 1979 Iran was crucial to US interests in the Middle East. However, how the director of regional strategic programs of the Nixon Center and an expert in the National Security Administration under Reagan Administration J. argues, after the Islamic revolution, Iran became the periphery to US priorities in the region.

At the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war in September 1980 the US did not have an explicit position to counter either pro-Soviet Iraqi or anti-American Iran. Reagan Administration declared at the beginning of the war of neutrality, which reflects the strategic, economic and political interests of the United States, including the rejection of the sale of arms to both sides; supporting international efforts for mediation in resolving the conflict; maintaining securi-

ty of the Persian Gulf and against the spread of hostilities.

However, the Iranian theocratic elite concentrated its forces near theriver. Shatt al-Arab – the waterway on the border with Iraq. Fearing attack from Iran, which could threaten the weak oil-monarchies of the Persian Gulf, Jordan and even Israel, the United States revised its neutrality, preferring to back a more predictable Iraq in the Iran-Iraq war.

In early 1983 the United States also initiated the Operation Staunch – official plan aimed at cooperation with other countries to refuse to supply weapons to Iran, including equipment from the US to the Iranian soldiers who were trained and armed by the United States during their close cooperation with the Shah. For January 14, 1983 State Department instructed US embassies in the countries that could export arms to Tehran that they warned their governments to stop arms deliveries to Iran because of the great interest of the international community in achieving negotiations on ending the Iran-Iraq war.

Nevertheless, during his second term, Reagan administration decided to begin secret talks with

Iranian authority. This initiative, according to J. Kemp, was based on the mistaken belief that the Iranian regime included some “moderate” politicians who were ready to cooperate with the United States – at a time when others sought an alliance with the USSR.

Seeing the futility in implementing the policy of isolation regarding IRI in 1984, the administration of R. decided to review its foreign policy strategy towards Tehran. Thus Reagan suggested the establishment of political and economic relations with the “moderate” representatives of the Iranian government, which, in his view, could affect the softening of anti-American political course of Tehran, stop providing Iranian support to terrorist organizations in the Middle East, promote the cessation of Iran-Iraq war and to ensure that the IRI does not fall under Soviet influence.

In 1984 the CIA carried out the attempt to establish contact with Iranian “moderate” representatives. Thus, in November 1984 CIA agent T. Sheckley met in Hamburg with the former head of counter-intelligence of shah protection organization SAVAK M. Hashemi and he introduced him to M. Horbanifar, who then played an important role in the development of relations between the US and IRI, which became known as Iran-Contra or Iran-gate. M. Gorbaniifar, a former SAVAK officer, one time worked with the CIA, engaged in trade of arms and kept relations with official Tehran after the Islamic revolution. M. Horbanifar made it clear that he is ready to take on a mediating role in the negotiations between the US and IRI according the “exchange” of the US hostages at weapon.

To implement the plan of military supplies to Iran through official public decision-making process was impossible and the staff of the National Security Council and the CIA began to look ways that are more “informal”. Israel went at the forefront, and became the main channel for the implementation of US trade agreements with Iran. For political and legal reasons Israel could not supply weapons to a third country without obtaining prior permission from the government of the United States. In addition, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres wanted to have firm guarantees that the US will full te Israel’s arsenal of missiles after some of them Tel Aviv would supply in Iran. On the role of mediator between Israel and Tehran was invited M. Horbanifar. Soon he gave the Israeli side a list of weapons that needed to exchange for the release of American hostages from radical extremist organizations in Lebanon.

July 13, 1985 R. received from S. Peres message stating that Israeli agents in Iran can promote the liberation of all Americans trapped in Lebanon, if IRI receive 100 “TOW” missiles and it will serve as a pretext for the start of the US – Iran dialogue. After reading this message R. decided to launch a secret agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran. August 6, 1985 Robert McFarlane recommended US President to convene a meeting of the National

Security Planning Group (NSPG) as the official meetings of the National Security Council attended a large number of employees. R., trying to discuss such sensitive issues in private, ordered to convene NSPG. The planning team included Secretary of State J. Schultz, Defense Minister K. Weinberger, CIA Director W., Vice President G. Bush, Admiral and J. Poindexter and R. McFarlane. According to R McFarlane, a few days after the meeting NSPG, R. called him to tell about his agreement to sell weapons to Iran with the help of Israel and reimbursement of appropriate compensation to Israeli government.

August 30, 1985 the first batch of 100 “TOW” missiles were bounced to Iran. However, the release of the hostages did not happen. According to M. Horbanifar this was due to the fact that agreed to supply 500 missiles “TOW”, but was sent only 100. Israel agreed to transfer another 400 missiles. However, after September 14, 1985 in the Iranian city of Tabriz were delivered 400 American missiles “TOW”, only one American hostage was released the next day – priest B. Ware, captured in Lebanon by Shiite extremists. The White House were disappointed by the results of the first secret operation of exchange US weapon on hostages seized in Lebanon. In addition, any opportunities to expand American influence in Iran was not discovered and only one hostage was released.

Since the autumn of 1985 negotiations were restoring, at which the question of sending 80 anti-aircraft missiles “Hawk” from Israel to Iran via Portugal was discussed. Third part of weapons had to be taken to IRI in November 22, 1985. However, operation failed, as the Portuguese government has refused to give permission for landing in its territory Israeli aircraft loaded with missiles on board. In this regard, Washington has decided to smuggle anti-aircraft missiles “Hawk” in Iran on its own plane. The CIA had to get new permits from governments of third countries for flying of its aircraft over their territory.

In the end the cargo was supplied in Tebriz with three days lateness by one plane and has only 18 missiles. None of American hostages was released and Iran refused from the cargo. One of the reasons, why the missiles “Hawk” didn’t satisfied Teheran, was that they had Israeli labeling. This operation was first in Iran-Contra Affair, in which CIA took part directly that was conflicting to American legislation.

The main law that regulate the sale of weapon overseas is Control over Arms Export Act. It characterize the obligatory conditions, according which the US president can agree to re-export of American armament in third country (in this case from Israel to Iran). A list of conditions provides the written obligation of the third party not to sell this weapon to fourth country without appropriate permission from US government. White House didn’t receive any written obligations from Iran. Moreover R. obliged to inform Congress beforehand, if the

weapon costs more than \$ 14 million. Another law, under which the Irangate affair falls is National Security Act. According to its provisions the director of CIA and the heads of other foreign policy offices should in promptly inform the Senate Intelligence Committee about their activity. Any data on the covert supply of arms to Iran, which were carried out on the direct participation of the CIA, was not passed to the appropriate committees of Congress. Moreover, under the amendment "Hughes-Ryan" to the law on foreign aid, the CIA had no right to carry out any operations on IRI for as long as the president does not sign the so-called intelligence concluded regarding IRI. In late November 1985 the CIA urgently initiated the drafting of such conclusion of Intelligence Agency regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran, to give the appearance of legality of special services involvement in operations to supply weapons to IRI.

After such fiasco R. McFarlane resigned on November 30, 1985. December 4, 1985 Reagan appointed assistant to National Security Admiral J. January 2, 1986 Israel offered Washington to release 20 members of the group "Hezbollah" from their prison and sent in Iran 4000 "TOW" missiles in exchange for the release of all American hostages in Beirut. Reagan approved the plan and signed the conclusion of the intelligence regarding Tehran, which gave the green light to resumption of deliveries of American weapons to Iran Israel. This conclusion highlighted a number of US goals in the "deal" with Iran: assistance of coming to power more moderate government in IRI; receiving important intelligence information that can be obtained in another way, the intentions of the Islamic government in Tehran according its neighbors and supporting of international terrorism; the release of American hostages in Beirut.

In January 24, 1986 the American plan of operation called "Restore" was developed. It was assumed that it will begin by transferring US intelligence information about Iraqi armed forces to Iran. After that, the Ministry of Defense of the United States had to transfer 1000 "TOW" missiles to the CIA, which transported them from the United States to Israel, and from there to Iran. The next day Iranians had to facilitate the release of US citizens taken hostage in Beirut, after which Washington would organize the supply of another 3,000 missiles to the IRI. The first batch of 500 missiles was delivered in February 18, 1986, and the second – 500 missiles in February 27, 1986 but none of the hostages was released.

M. Horbanifar explained to the disgruntled American side that the first thousand missiles intended to restore confidence in the good intentions of the United States to Iran, which were blown up in November 1985. The US government announced a desire to start direct contacts with the Iranian leadership. M. Horbanifar promised to organize everything, but, in turn, handed the list prepared by the Iranian side, the need for procurement of spare parts

for missiles "Hawk" that Tehran really needed. M. insisted that senior Iranian officials agreed to accept the American delegation only if it personally bring with them the necessary spare parts. They agreed on the fact that a plane with a delegation from the US will be loaded the quarter of them. The rest would be taken after the release of the hostages. In May 25, 1986 a plane with an American delegation landed at the airport in Tehran. The same evening, negotiations began. However, a productive dialogue did not work, as from the Iranian side there were involved officials who did not have permission and status for the signing of the US-Iranian agreements.

Thus, the meeting that the United States conceived as a grand diplomatic "breakthrough" in US-Iranian relations turned to another great failure. In addition, in September and October 1986 Shiite extremists in Lebanon kidnapped three US citizen. Washington concluded that the main fault of the incident should be entrusted to M. who had no sufficient influence to force the Iranian leadership to abandon terrorist acts against Americans.

In November 3, 1986 about illegal US-Iranian relations became aware the international community. On this day in the Lebanese magazine "Al-Shira" were published the materials about the visit of the US delegation to the IRI. The source of sensational news "leak" may have been Iranian "moderate" leaders who understood that government Tehran will not forgive them agreements with the "Great Satan" and hastened to divert the blow from themselves. The message caused great resentment in the United States as a secret program of the arms supply to Iran, which was directed firstly by Israel, was implemented against the official policy of prohibition of weapons and transactions "Staunch". Money received from the sale of weapons to Iran, secretly were kept in Swiss banks to finance the Contras, anti-communist group in Nicaragua. Details of the Iran-Contra case was discovered in 1987 and became one of the biggest political scandals in US history.

Director of Center for Transatlantic Security, Head of the Middle East office in the National Security Council in the administration of J. Carter, R. Hunter believes that the strategy of sharing «arms-for-hostages» was important because of its significance for the Gulf region and US policy in strategically important regions. According to Lieutenant Colonel of US Marine Corps R. Bell, the supply of arms to Iran can be explained by two strategic considerations. Firstly, Israel, according to sources of the US government, first pointed the importance of the supply of arms to Iran, apparently acting on the basis of its long-standing "periphery policy", when it was trying to maintain good relations with the Iranian leadership. Secondly, it was strategically important for the US to improve relations with the Islamic Republic. Like his predecessors, President R. was concerned of the approach of the Soviet Union on American interests in the Middle East, and

after the invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviet Union could take a course on Iran, and eventually control of the Gulf region.

Later, after the scandal concerning the case Iran-gate in 1986 economic relations between the United States and IRI in 1987-1988 were significantly complicated. In October 29, 1987 President R. signed Executive order 12613, which highlighted that Iran has supported international terrorist organizations at the national level. Based on this Executive order, the United States introduced a ban on the import of goods of Iranian production. The ultimate goal of Washington was to make Iran to reduce the provision of financial aid to international terrorist organizations at the expense of export revenues. The White House has banned the import of Iranian goods of a total value of \$ 1 billion. American oil companies were also not allowed to import Iranian oil to the United States for consumption, but they were allowed to continue to buy Iranian oil for non-US markets through their foreign subsidiaries. The US sanctions on IRI forced Tehran to seek new economic partners. However, Iran has deliberately avoided the traditional, pre-revolutionary suppliers from Western Europe (Germany, France and the UK) and Japan. Iranian government deemed that the American political influence could hinder free trade between Iran and Japan or Western Europe. Thus, economic ties of Iran with the United States significantly reduced, and trade and economic relations with some European countries, Eastern Europe and Islamic countries came to the fore.

Thus, since the early 1980s the threat of security disbalance in the Middle East significantly increased, the Reagan administration gradually expanded US influence in the Gulf. The evolution of the president's foreign policy evidences about this processes. Continuing the Carter Doctrine, which declared the Gulf region a vital to US interests and approved the creation of a special military unit to protect them, R. implements the concept of "strategic consensus", which included the strengthening of US policy in the region of the Middle East and proclaims the Reagan Doctrine to achieve global impact of the US. Also, US President reorganizes, increases and improves the troops who had to respond to the hostilities in the Middle East region. Although R. saw in the spread of the Soviet Union the greatest threat, he also worried about intra-regional instability that could be used by the Soviet Union in its favor. Iran-Iraq war and scandal Iran-Contra were major challenges for the Reagan administration. To compensate for the loss of the American image because of the Irangate, which decreased US credibility among the monarchies of the Persian Gulf, R. transformed the regional policy in the direction of pressure toward IRI.

Reagan administration attempted to establish an informal bilateral dialogue with moderate representatives of the Iranian leadership, considering the possibility of IRI to influence the policy of anti-American radical extremist organizations in the Middle East. After re-

veance of these secret US-Iranian contacts in the United States exploded the internal political scandal involving the illegal sale of American weapons to Iran and support Contras in Nicaragua by this money. To compensate the loss of the American image from the Iran-Contra affair, which dealt a blow to US credibility among the monarchies of the Persian Gulf, Reagan transformed the regional policy in the direction of political pressure to IRI. Confirmed that the greatest interest in the US during the Iran-Iraq war was to promote the greatest weakening of two rival search other than none of the Middle Eastern countries could not become the leader in the region and prevent the spread of American influence in the Gulf. Thus, the possibility of the restoration of US-Iranian relations during the reign of R. were not fully realized.

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Павлюк Олеся. Вплив скандалу «Іран-контрас» на американо-іранські відносини за адміністрації Р. Рейгана. В статті досліджуються зовнішньополітичні підходи та засоби налагодження двосторонніх відносин Вашингтону та Тегерану і фактичне запровадження політики «стримування» США щодо Ірану.

Встановлено, що оскільки на початку 1980-х рр. значно зросла загроза порушення безпеки на Середньому Сході, президентська адміністрація Р. Рейгана поступово розширює вплив США у Перській затоці та реалізує концепцію «стратегічного консенсусу», яка передбачала посилення американської політики в регіон і проголошує «доктрину Рейгана» для досягнення глобального впливу США.

Враховуючи можливості ІРІ з надання впливу на ослаблення антиамериканської політики радикальних екстремістських організацій на Близькому Сході, адміністрація Р. Рейгана спробувала встановити неофіційний двосторонній діалог з поміркованими представниками іранського керівництва.

Після оприлюднення в США зазначених таємних американо-іранських контактів та здійснення стратегії обміну «озброєння-на-заручників», у Сполучених Штатах вибухнув внутрішньополітичний скандал, пов'язаний з незаконним продажем американської зброї в Іран. Щоб компенсувати втрати американському іміджу від справи «Іран-контрас», яка завдала удару по довірі до США серед монархій Перської затоки, Р. Рейган трансформував регіональну політику у бік проведення тиску на ІРІ. Підтверджено, що найбільшим інтересом США у ході ірано-іракської війни розглядалось сприяння якомога більшому послабленню суперниками один одного, щоб жодна з близькосхідних країн не змогла стати гегемоном у регіоні і перешкодити поширенню американського впливу у Перській затоці.

Наголошується, що 1980-ті рр. були нестійким періодом у відносинах між Сполученими Штатами та Іраном і пройшли через чотири етапи: байдужості, ворожості, співпраці і вкінці протистояння.

Ключові слова: зовнішня політика, зовнішньополітичний курс США, скандал «Іран-Контрас», Іран, політика «стримування», адміністрація Р. Рейгана, стратегія обміну «зброї-на-заручників».

Павлюк Олеся – викладач кафедри психології та соціології ВДНЗ України «Буковинський державний медичний університет», аспірант кафедри міжнародних відносин Чернівецького національного університету імені Юрія Федьковича. Коло наукових інтересів: зовнішня політика США, інтереси Сполучених Штатів на Близькому та Середньому Сході, самооцінка особистості, комунікативні здібності. Автор біля 40 наукових статей та публікацій, учасник міжнародних навчальних курсів, тренінгів та семінарів в Німеччині, Польщі, Росії, Молдові.

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