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## **Iranian Reform?**

With recent outrages perpetrated by Iran, the world's political storm is intensifying. The conflict seems mainly due to the authoritarian establishment's long being used to getting its own way suddenly being confronted by a simple "No!". Shocking.

Iran's dictatorial priesthood has suffered a huge hit and there are millions of ordinary Iranians suffering oppression. When does a natural opposition to massive intrusion prompt the movement to reform the "ayatollahs"?

It could be soon as more Iranians notice the success of popular uprisings in England and America.

Protesting too much in-your-face and in-your-wallet government has been the nature of popular uprisings. Driven by ordinary folk, bereft of or refusing guidance by intellectuals. Startling, but that has been the way they have worked. The last successful one brewed up in the late 1980s and took down the Berlin Wall and eventually Communist governments. Similar conditions in the past have provoked similar uprisings and they date back to Ancient Egypt.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/503481?seq=1>

This extensive history was behind this writer's essay "American Spring". Published on July 4, 2016 it asked the question about a popular uprising being successful as in Europe in 1989, or would it be put down as with the Prague Spring of 1968? The rhetorical answer was in "Flyover Country" language "You bet!".

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/e0699e7eef6139dc5c778b7e166f4700?AccessKeyId=501599158EAC448E160E&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

While constantly condemned and harassed America's "Spring" is gradually gaining and should prevail in the November election.

And as seen from Europe to Hong Kong popular uprisings have become, well, popular.

Saudi Arabia is trying to reform, but recent attempts in Iran have be brutally quelled.

It is worth reviewing the mechanism of popular uprisings. In 1975 this writer was impressed by papers published by astronomer Barbara Bell on popular uprisings in Ancient Egypt. A cooling trend would diminish food production to the point of shortages. Of course, the governing classes lived the good life and ordinary folk suffered. However, the palace guards were not of the governing classes, but were of the people. When push came to shove, the palace guards laid down their spears. And food distribution became more democratic. On the political side such uprisings forced dynastic changes.

It was nice to have the playbook on uprisings when protests erupted in Eastern Europe in the 1980s. Especially in late 1989 when the border guards laid down their machine guns.

Germans insisting on going cross border shopping was the foundation of that popular uprising.

The condition going into such uprisings is that it takes a lot of will to impose authority on a 24/7 basis. With this the public endures a continuous complacency in the face of unrelenting intrusion and taxation.

And then, like a huge reversal in the financial markets the action changes. Authoritarians falter and the oppressed public senses it and begin to defy formerly formidable governing structures. And in a relatively brief time the political climate heads to reform.

Within this fearful respect for the institutions of power suddenly changes to scorn for the “idiots” in charge.

A brutally murderous and priestly governing class in Iran has lost a lot of face lately. The elimination of a powerful general who was a terrorist is significant in a potential decline of authority. The hit instructs that any leader in the murderous government is vulnerable to modern weapons. Not to overlook advice from Iranians in high places who advised where the general was.

The priesthood’s response with some rockets was, perhaps, intentionally weak. And then there was the destruction of a Ukrainian airliner. It doesn’t matter if it was a confusion in the “fog of war”, it is an immense and irrevocable blunder. And will be seen by many ordinary Iranians as such.

In the current Western World, the media are the palace guards, fortunately without machine guns. And they cannot lay down their keyboards but they can reform themselves from being cheerleaders for increasingly desperate authority. At some point blind acceptance of the status quo could evolve to honest criticism. Especially when the leaders are seen as losers.

In Iran, the palace guards are formally called the “Iranian Revolutionary Guard”, and in disgust with their losing leaders – could lay down today’s equivalent of spears.