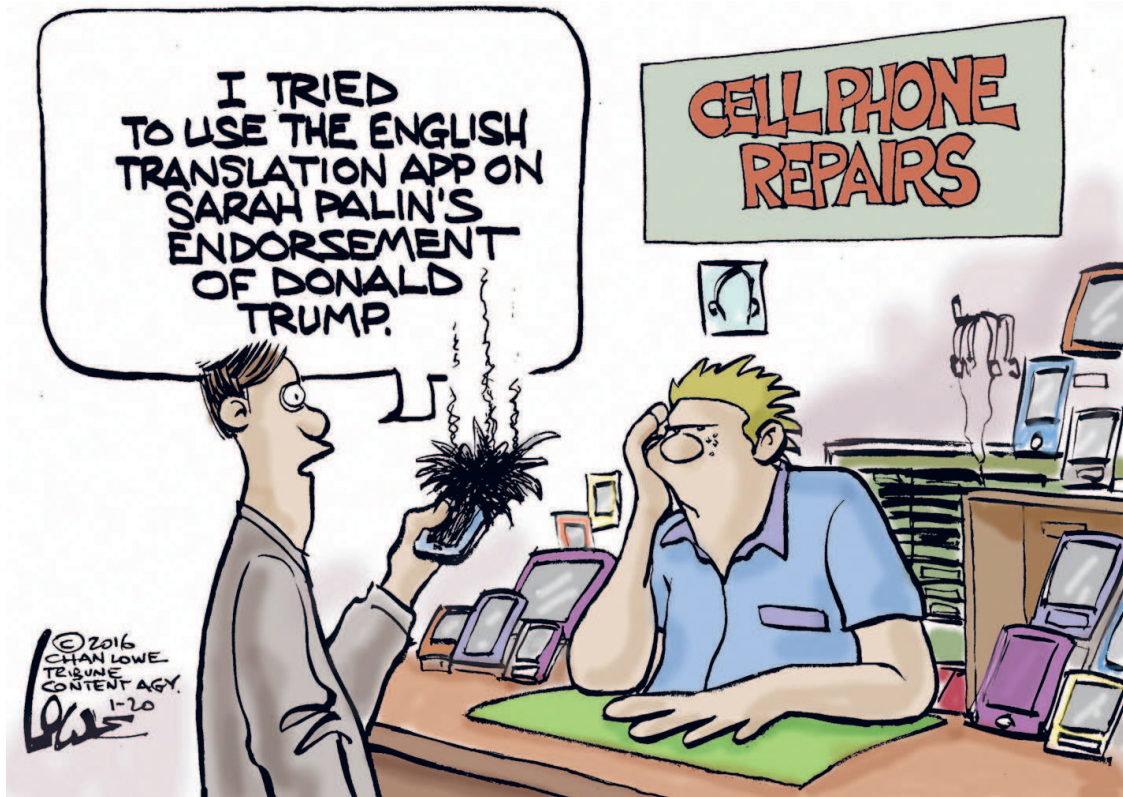


O P I N I O N



Rachel Marsden

American Voices

PARIS — Iran effectively rejoined the international community a few days ago, as longstanding U.S. and European sanctions were lifted and the country was granted access to \$32 billion of its previously frozen assets. It's the razing of the Berlin Wall all over again, as another country is opened up to the global market without any shots being fired.

But why isn't there nearly as much celebration over Iran's economic liberation as there was with the fall of the Soviet Union?

Russia even kept its nukes. In Iran's case, there's been much hand-wringing over the mere possibility it will develop nuclear weapons. Some argue that Russia isn't a rogue state but Iran is. I agree that Russia isn't a rogue state, but it was certainly portrayed as one during the Cold War era, which was rife with drills involving children hiding under their desks in the event of a Soviet nuclear attack. Could we consider the possibility that perhaps the hyperventilation and fear has been overplayed in both cases?

The difference in Western attitudes toward the Soviet glasnost and perestroika (that is, economic opening and restructuring) and today's Iran is that when the Soviet Union broke apart, there was a feeling that the communists had lost and the West had won. With Iran, there's a feeling that the Iranians are the winners, because apparently getting Uncle Sam's boot removed from your neck means that you've succeeded in screwing him over.

Why are some people so insecure as to always frame things in a binary win-lose paradigm? It's quite possible for Iran and the West to benefit equally from an economic détente.

Iran just participated in a prisoner exchange with the U.S., and last month it handed over its enriched uranium to Russia under terms of the nuclear deal with the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council plus Germany. The concept of face-saving is particularly important in Iranian culture.

How much more could be asked of Iran right now?

U.S. presidential candidate and international businessman Donald Trump, who's made it clear that he thinks the Iran deal is horrible, has expressed discontent that one of the first economic overtures Iran made after the lifting of sanctions was to Europe's aerospace consortium, Airbus, for 114 new commercial aircraft. The loser in that deal would be American competitor Boeing, which had lobbied against the tightening of sanctions on Iran.

Look, you can't act harshly toward a country for years, then demand that it do business with you — particularly in a free market. The whole idea of free trade is that you get to choose who you want to deal with.

Some people are already complaining that lifting sanctions and granting Iran access to previously frozen money will mean that it has more to spend on weapons and "exporting terrorism." But Iran doesn't throw its weight around anywhere except in the Middle East, which isn't exactly full of choirboys unequipped to fend for themselves.

Besides, the "exporting terrorism" fear hasn't stopped the sale of billions of dollars in U.S. and European military equipment to Saudi Arabia, a genuine exporter of terrorism. That country's support of the so-called "Syrian rebels" gave rise to the Islamic State terrorists, who are now being targeted most effectively by Russia, with critical assistance from ... Iran.

Misconceptions and double standards currently abound in the Iran situation, with hot takes by pundits and political candidates distorting the truth. I've even heard some say that U.S. President Barack Obama is "giving" the Iranians money, or that Iran will simply spend its newfound windfall on bombs or terrorists.

Maybe everyone should just give it a rest for a while and focus on trying to make some money.

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Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

Recently I had a larger propane tank installed, which required running a new gas line. I decided to do it legally so I had it inspected by the county. They charged me \$150 for a 10-minute inspection.

This defeats the whole purpose of inspections, because next time I will think twice before I call for an inspection. We pay substantial property taxes, and in my opinion it would benefit the general public if such inspections were done for no charge rather than revenue-producing fees.

Drew Berding

♦ ♦ ♦

To the Editor:

Say what you want about the knuckleheads out by Burns, but they do have a point. If, for example, the portion of forest around Sisters Country would belong and be managed by a

more local entity, maybe it would employ a few people AND some dollars would help fix the schools (why they don't budget for maintenance is a mystery to me).

But as it is, T2 (a logging company that is currently doing a job south of town) only gets to thin a little parcel here and there at the pleasure of the Overlords from the Cirque du Forest, if you would pardon my French.

And before you get yer knickers all in a bunch, let us discuss the pros and cons of thinning and responsible logging. We can do it, and sequester some carbon, or Mother Nature will "thin" it for us a la Pole Creek and release more pollutants than a fleet of VWs.

Maybe you're of the opinion that WE messed up the natural cycle fires; read the book about the Big Burn in 1910.

Or perhaps the school district can sell some land it has on Locust/Cascade to ODOT

See LETTERS on page 27

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Mostly cloudy 49/35	Rain 51/35	Rain 43/26	Chance snow shower 36/17	Mostly cloudy 34/17	Mostly cloudy 34/na

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