

LETTERS



Distortions and Deceptions

We have just become aware of a distortion of our words by Hooshang Amirahmadi in his article "Terrorist Nation or Scapegoat?" [Vol. 10 #6, Sept-Oct. 1994]. On page 28, Mr. Amirahmadi discusses as follows an article we wrote for *Foreign Affairs* in its "America and the World, 1993":

Daniel Pipes and Patrick Clawson present Iran as the callous party in these relations [with Islamic movements in the Middle East]. Its real aim is not to help the groups but to use them toward its "satanic objectives" of overthrowing reactionary Arab regimes, exporting the Islamic revolution, disrupting the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, murdering leaders of its opposition, blackmailing the West or blasting its holdings, taking hostages, hijacking planes, and destroying Israeli or Jewish targets. If you asked why would Iran undertake such senseless terrorist acts and how would such acts achieve their national or ideological interests, the authors would possibly say such questions never arise for an "irrational" and "outlaw" extremist regime.

The placing of the words "satanic objectives," "irrational," and "outlaw" in quotations clearly implies that we used these terms in the *Foreign Affairs* article. Nowhere in our article do we use any of these four words (except "satanic," which appear once, in the title of Salman Rushdie's novel). Mr. Amirahmadi's false ascription of these words to us is a dishonest and immoral act.

In addition, Mr. Amirahmadi's long litany of charges against the government in Tehran is his, not ours. Nowhere in the article, for example, do we take up the subject of blackmail or the destruction of Jewish targets. He

has falsely put these words in our mouths.

We demand an apology for these deceptions from Mr. Amirahmadi on behalf of the readers of *Middle East Insight*, its editors, and ourselves.

Daniel Pipes

Patrick Clawson

Middle East Quarterly
Philadelphia, PA

Amirahmadi Responds

As the editorial staff of *Middle East Insight* have acknowledged, it was an error on their part that led to the attribution of the words "satanic," "irrational" and "outlaw"—along with the paragraph in which these terms appear—to Daniel Pipes and Patrick Clawson. The article I had submitted to *Middle East Insight* had not in any way attributed these terms or the paragraph to these two authors.

Having spent years climbing academic ranks, and as reflected in my numerous publications, I am well versed in the intricacies of attribution in academic and journalistic writing. One would have expected Mr. Pipes and Mr. Clawson to have shown more sensitivity and spared the readers of this worthy publication of the charged word "deception."

I am pleased, nonetheless, that Mr. Pipes and Mr. Clawson wish to dissociate themselves from the views and terminology expressed in the paragraph they cite. I look forward to working with them toward an unbiased understanding of Iran in these sensitive times.

Hooshang Amirahmadi

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Dr. Amirahmadi's article was edited down from a substantially longer piece. The paragraph cited above was originally two separate paragraphs which were combined—erroneously bringing a series of anonymous attributions under the heading of Messrs. Pipes and Clawson's Foreign Affairs piece. The final version of the article was, however, submitted to Dr. Amirahmadi for his approval. —Ed.