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Cato on Iran's green wave and Obama's response

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The libertarian Cato Institute voices approval of Obama's measured handling of the green wave revolution going on in Iran right now. The United States hand in this process must be very delicate. The despotic leadership in Iran would like nothing more than to blame "the great satan" America for the popular uprising (indeed they are attempting to do so daily along with trying to pin blame on the British as well).

The green wave is about the Iranian people becoming tired of the cheap and false lip service given to democracy by ruling mullahs. The stolen election ripped that falsehood away and exposed the existing Islamacist leadership as little more than cheap frightened thugs.

From today's weekly dispatch:

Obama's
Cool
Response to
Iranian
Politics
Appropriate

As the voices of protest to the Iranian election grow louder, many have called upon President Obama to use bolder rhetoric when speaking about the elections in Iran. Last week, [Charles Krauthammer](#) and [Paul Wolfowitz](#) opined in *The Washington Post* that Obama's reaction has not been nearly enough. Cato foreign policy expert Christopher Preble disagrees, saying that [Obama's calculated reaction is appropriate](#):

The louder the neocons become in their braying for a free and fair counting of the election results, the less likely it is to occur. In their more candid moments, a few are willing to admit that they would prefer Ahmadinejad to Mousavi.

...It is possible to view President Obama as a more credible messenger, given that he opposed the Iraq war from the outset and has shown a willingness to reach out to the Iranian people. Perhaps a full-throated, morally self-righteous, public address in support of Mousavi's supporters might have tipped the scales in the right direction.

It seems more likely, however, that Obama's patient, measured public response to recent events is well suited to the circumstances. As the president said earlier this week, Americans are right to feel sympathy for the Iranian protesters, and we should all be free to voice our sentiments openly. But it is incumbent upon policymakers to pursue strategies that don't backfire, or whose unintended consequences don't dwarf the gains that we are trying to achieve. In many cases, the quiet, private back channel works well. And if we discover that there is no credible back channel to Iran available, similar to those employed in 1986 and 1991, then we'll all know whom to blame.

Cato scholar Justin Logan says that [the U.S. government should stay silent on Iran](#):

President Obama should keep quiet on the subject of Iran's elections. At least two pernicious tendencies are on display in the Beltway discussion on the topic. First is the common Washington impulse to "do something!" without laying out clear objectives and tactics. What, after all, is President Obama or his administration supposed to do to "support protesters" in Iran in the first place? What would be the ultimate goal of such support? Most importantly, what is the mechanism by which the support is supposed to produce the desired outcome? That we are debating *how America should intervene in Iran's domestic politics* indicates the sheer grandiosity of American foreign policy thought.

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