

Important article please read NIAC and Trita's lies ...to Iranians and to Americans!

[NIAC and J Street: Lobbying and Lying](http://www.weeklystandard.com/weblogs/TWSFP/2009/11/the_lies_of_niac_and_j_street.asp)

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NIAC and J Street might seem at first an odd alliance. J Street is "pro-peace, pro-Israel" and NIAC is pro-engagement, pro-Iran. But J Street isn't all that pro-Israel, and NIAC will take any allies it can find in the fight against sanctions, so few and far between are such organizations in Washington. J Street director Jeremy Ben-Ami co-authored an op-ed with NIAC chief Trita Parsi making the (extremely unpopular in the Jewish community) argument against sanctions. **J Street invited Parsi to speak at their conference last month.** And the two groups have together constructed and embraced a narrative that explains away all the questions about their credibility and legitimacy as the work of the same nefarious right-wing conspiracy.

But follow the money and the tie that binds seems to be George Soros, who provides substantial funding to both groups. Also, Morton Halperin, one of the top men at Soros's Open Society Institute, sits on the boards of both J Street and NIAC. As Ben Smith reported Friday, **Soros pays the salary of the NIAC staffer who runs the Campaign for a New Policy on Iran.** Documents reveal that J Street participated in the discussions that determined the group's agenda.

And there's another thing the groups have in common: they've both been caught telling their supporters they've taken one position while lobbying behind the scenes for the exact opposite outcome.

Jennifer Rubin notes two **examples of this dishonest conduct.** J Street declared publicly that it would not lobby against passage of a resolution in the House of Representatives condemning the Goldstone Report. (Neither would J Street support the resolution, of course. The group's position was somewhere between oppose and support.) Yet this blog reported and Morton Halperin has not denied that either he or someone in his office was the author of a letter circulated to members of Congress and signed by Judge Goldstone. J Street, or at least one of its top advisers, was actively lobbying against the resolution and in support of Goldstone.

NIAC gets caught in a similar lie. Eli Lake's Washington Times report details NIAC's campaign to "create a media controversy," in the words of one NIAC staffer, in order to scuttle the appointment of Dennis Ross to oversee Iran policy. NIAC failed, but just last week NIAC put on its website a "Myths and Facts" page to set the record straight about the organization's work:

NIAC is not the only organization that is under attack. In fact, almost every distinguished American policymaker, intellectual and administration official that supports Obama's pro-engagement policy in the Middle East is being targeted. This includes:

* Ambassador Dennis Ross - Currently serving in the U.S. National Security Council...

So after trying to kill Ross's appointment in a secret and perhaps illegal lobbying campaign, the group touts Ross on its website as a "distinguished policy maker" who is the victim of neoconservative smears. Now we know that the **smears against Ross were being conceived and directed by the staff at NIAC**, and all the while NIAC was playing the victim.

Trita Parsi has charmed his way into the very heart of the "progressive left," and no progressive organization has been more easily or completely charmed than J Street. So what is a "pro-peace, pro-Israel" group doing allying itself so closely with a **man who is himself so closely allied with a Holocaust-denying regime that daily threatens the existence of the State of Israel?** And why is it that neither organization is able to represent in public the views that they so aggressively promote behind closed doors?

Posted by Michael Goldfarb on November 16, 2009 09:44 AM | Permalink

[Trita Parsi, the Iranian Regime's Man in Washington?](#)

Weekly Standard: Trita Parsi is not even Iranian-American to represent Iranian American!

http://www.weeklystandard.com/weblogs/TWSFP/2009/11/trita_parsi_the_iranian_regime_1.asp

Today the *Washington Times* [prints a blockbuster expose](#) on NIAC, the National Iranian American Council run by Trita Parsi that has long been suspected of acting as an unofficial, and unregistered, lobby for the Iranian regime. These suspicions seem to have been well founded. Here are the facts as reported by Eli Lake in a story that relies on thousands of emails and internal NIAC documents that were obtained by the *Washington Times* and have been independently reviewed by THE WEEKLY

STANDARD:

1. Trita Parsi claims to speak on behalf of Iranian-Americans, but he is not an Iranian-American. Parsi is not a U.S. citizen; he holds passports from Iran and Sweden. Parsi's allies claim his critics have unfairly questioned Parsi's loyalty to this country--or accused Parsi of dual loyalties. If Parsi's loyalties are divided (and it's not clear that they

are), then they are divided between Sweden and Iran.



2. In fact, the evidence suggests that Parsi's loyalties are not divided at all but lie entirely with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The *Times* reports that Parsi set up a group similar to NIAC in Sweden in 1997. The group's stated goal was to "safeguard Iran's and Iranian interests." That organization did not understand democratic reform as a core Iranian interest but rather sought to bolster the current regime by "the removal of U.S. economic and political sanctions against Iran, and the commencement of an Iran-U.S. dialogue."

3. Parsi is not registered as a foreign agent, but he seems to have engaged in the very activities regulated by the Foreign Agents Registration Act. In particular, Parsi arranged meetings between members of Congress and senior Iranian officials, including the regime's ambassador to the United Nations, Javad Zarif. Lake quotes former FBI deputy director Buck Revell, who says that "arranging meetings between members of Congress and Iran's ambassador to the United Nations would in my opinion require that person or entity to register as an agent of a foreign power; in this case it would be Iran."

4. Parsi, an Iranian citizen who aims to "safeguard Iranian interests" and who arranges meetings on behalf of Iranian officials, has consistently opposed any U.S. sanctions on Iran and more recently has advocated for U.S. acquiescence to Iran's enrichment of uranium. These are the same positions advocated by the regime in Tehran.

5. The unofficial European spokesman for Iran's Green Movement, which has been ruthlessly suppressed by the regime in Tehran, tells Lake that, "Trita Parsi does not belong to the Green Movement. I feel his lobbying has secretly been more for the Islamic Republic."

6. NIAC's own policy director, Patrick Disney, implicates Parsi in illegal activity in an email printed by the *Washington Times*. Disney writes that "Under this expansive view of 'lobbying,' I find it hard to believe Emily [Blout] and I devote less than 20 percent of our time to lobbying activity. I believe we fall under this definition of 'lobbyist.'"

These are the facts as reported by the *Washington Times*, but the emails also reveal financial ties between Parsi and an Iranian company with close ties to the regime. The emails suggest that Parsi's use of funds from the National Endowment for Democracy deserve close scrutiny, that he worked to dissuade dissidents from speaking out, and that he repeatedly attempted to intimidate the press to prevent these facts from seeing the light of day. But this isn't Iran, and the truth will come out.