Sailors, Video and International Relations

Description

Neptunus Lex and his commenters are on it. I added my two cents to the basic post titled Code of Conduct. Go over there and read the good words from a man who had the possibility, but never the â€œpleasure,â€• of being the guest of the military of a not so friendly to us nation to help frame some of the issues surrounding the incident of hostage taking by the Iranians that takes â€œabove the foldâ€• status in our media right now.

Here were my thoughts which I posted in his comments section:

> Several issues come to mind with this incident:
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> While the Ã¢â‚¬Å“WestÃ¢â‚¬Â• will realize that much of her statement most likely was coerced in one way or another, the Ã¢â‚¬Å“showÃ¢â‚¬Â• is not just to us. It was like Khadaffi launching 2 SA-5s in March Ã¢â‚¬Ëœ86 at our planes patrolling over the Gulf of Sidra: They were launched without benefit of the tracking radars being energized (which, by ROE, would have allowed the SEAD guys to ask no more questions before expending ordnance) so from a practical standpoint, they had no chance of striking a target (it being a semi-active homing weapon), unless a Naval Aviator decided to consciously fly into the ballistically projected pathÃ¢â‚¬Â¦No, it was about an Arab showing his great defiance of the Great Satan to his Arab brothers. They did have footage of the SA-5s rocketing off their launchers, so, he Ã¢â‚¬Å“saved faceÃ¢â‚¬Â• and was a hero for a bit.
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> In that case, it certainly also gave leadership pause: Was it a hostile act if the weapon had an almost zero probability of hitting one of our units? Yes, we were scratching our heads for a while, but not long before the A-7s with HARM were granted permission to launch on any RADAR emissions (which they got to do). But, I digressÃ¢â‚¬Â¦
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> The video of her speaking is to show the Arab world that Iran can take on the Western world, and despite the threats that got her to talk, which that culture most certainly knows all too well, that point will be dismissed and Iranian leadership has once more shown how weak the Ã¢â‚¬Å“WestÃ¢â‚¬Â• is, as they can make us Ã¢â‚¬Å“talkÃ¢â‚¬Â• and we even have women to defend us. Big brownie points over there for the leadership.
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> Another thought come to mind about some letter or article in Proceedings I read many, many years ago, from a Naval Officer stationed in a mostly USAF joint command. He commented that everyone came to him to get naval questions answered and his admonition was to not think too much of your not so broad based naval experiences. He said he was (I believe, but old age my have caused the loss of detail) an aviator, so he said it was incumbent upon him to call old shipmates/classmates/other commands more clued in if he got questions about things like submarine capabilities. Good counsel, especially when you

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> understand people make decisions based on what your respond with.
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> How does this play in? An Ordinary Seaman telling the world they most certainly had entered Iranian territorial waters? I donÃ¢â‚¬â„¢t think she may have been privy to the exact positional data to make sure an assessment, particularly with the international relations implications. But, back to the first point: The rest of the world, except some of us, donÃ¢â‚¬â„¢t realize that ordinary seaman, as good sailors as they may be, are not involved in the navigation operations of a vessel. All the world knows is itÃ¢â‚¬â„¢s a Ã¢â‚¬Å“professional,Ã¢â‚¬Â• and therefore, the statement is validÃ¢â‚¬Â¦.
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> I saw the scarf yesterday and it just made me think of dogs peeing on the fence post. Sorry about the base reference, but itÃ¢â‚¬â„¢s about Ã¢â‚¬Å“markingÃ¢â‚¬Â• territory, which is really about stating whoÃ¢â‚¬â„¢s more powerful and she got to be the analogous fence post in this larger international affairs flap.
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> Anyhow, we live in interesting timesÃ¢â‚¬Â¦

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The reference to the Gulf of Sidra operations in 1986 are provided in more detail in my serial posting A Journey into History, where I discuss the cruise that culminated in the bombing of Libya. I was there. The link is to Part I.

Update 3/31/2007: What did I tell you? Itâ€™s not about anything other than showing how great â€œtheyâ€• are to their Islamic brothers (not mentioning sisters here, because those are just property to them).
Update 4/1/2007: Rich Lowry says the â€œmoveâ€• has bigger implications than I imagined.

And a final new thought: Are the Brits being given Bibles and meals prepared especially for them, based on the diet they are used to in the UK, or are they being held without such luxuries? Iâ€™m sure no MSM reporter will consider finding out, for they may have to rethink their positions on GTMO.

Update 4/4/2007: Iran to release the Britons held in Iran. Nice move. And the President of Iran is â€œpardoningâ€• them for their trespasses. Another poker chip on the table in the Middle East.

> Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says 15 British naval personnel captured in the Gulf will be freed.
> He repeated allegations that the British sailors and marines â€œinvadedâ€• Iranian waters, but said they would be freed as a â€œgiftâ€• to Britain.
> [â€¦]

Interesting turn of events. Leave your own territorial waters, enter those of another sovereign nation, take, by force military members of a third nation, lie about navigational data to the World, then â€œpardonâ€• military members for a non-incursion into your sovereign nationâ€™s territorial waters. Can someone explain why the rest of the world bows and scrapes and and thinks the Iranian Government is acting in some compassionate manner towards Her Majestyâ€™s 15 sailors and marines?

In another time, the incursion of one nationâ€™s military forces into the territory of another nation, with a specific, pre-planned operation to capture hostages (Iâ€™m not afraid of that word) from an allied, supporting nationâ€™s military would have evoked a swift, and brutal military engagement. Yes, Thatâ€™s right. One military attacked another. This isnâ€™t diplomacy, itâ€™s war, in accordance with the internationally recognized Laws of War. But that time seems to be past.

In another time, it was claimed that the use of force was the failure of diplomacy (I donâ€™t agree with that view â€“ military force is but one of the tools of diplomacy, used when itâ€™s appropriate, not the diplomatic move of last resort), but as of recently reported news, it seems some would say the use of diplomacy is the failure of military force. That also is not true, but it will be preceived this way.

This buys Mahmoud Ahmadinejad points with his Islamic/Arab brothers (no sisters) for future propaganda to feed to the US/western worldâ€™s media outlets showing how he is a big enough man to solve a potential military face off by forgiving the trespassers (he might want to watch out, itâ€™s beginning to sound pretty New Testament like to me). And, I predict, as the next election gets closer, we may even see the DNC use this as a model for how presidents should respond to aggression.

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Remarkable! Cause the incident by design, let the tensions mount, then at the last moment, stand up and tell the world youâ€™re the bigger man and forgetting itâ€¦

Score another win for the actors on the Worldâ€™s stage. Iâ€™m not missing anything, am I?

Tracked back @: Thrid World County, stikNstein

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