

# Opinion / Editorial

## THE ENDSTATE INCOHERENCE WITHIN THE IRANIAN REGIME

By Bill Connor

The past two weeks have caused a great deal of whiplash to those following events in Iran. After almost 40 days of the Operation Epic Fury, the Iranian regime reached out to President Trump for a cease fire. Despite the today cease fire announcement, Iran fired missiles into Israel and Gulf states hours after the ceasefire went into effect. Parties then scheduled negotiations in Islamabad, Pakistan which were held last weekend. Before parties went into negotiations, Iran attempted to control the Strait of Hormuz and charge tolls. The marathon Iran way negotiations came up empty, as lead American negotiator, Vice President JD

Vance informed the world Iran would not agree to open the Strait and give up it's enriched nuclear material. Immediately after the failed talks, President Trump announced a blockade of Iran until the Strait was opened. The blockade caused an economic shut-down to Iran, and so on April 17, the Iranian foreign minister announced Iran was reopening the Strait and President Trump repeated the claim. Around a day after ships started moving through, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps leaders slammed the foreign minister and asserted the Strait was closed. What explains Iran's incoherence?

In many ways, what we are seeing with the confusing statements and actions by Iran are



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due to the success of Operation Epic Fury. During the five weeks of the air campaign, Iran's Navy and Air Force were destroyed. Iran's ballistic missile capability has been degraded significantly. Iran's radar, air defense, and command and control systems have been destroyed. Most importantly, the political and military leadership of Iran have been eliminated down to the third tier. The Iranian regime is in utter turmoil. Regime leaders are facing a situation in which they have to hold down around 85% of the Iranian population which wants the current regime gone. Those leaders are losing the economic ability to pay regime military and other government employees. The Iranian economy is laid waste, and current cash reserves are running out.

In normally functioning governments, the civilian political leadership controls the other executive functions, including the military. In America, for example, our military is imbued with the ethos that the military subordinates itself to civil leadership. In Iran, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is distinct from the regular Iranian military. The IRGC was established shortly after the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and was meant to be "operated beyond the bounds of the law and the judiciary. Answering to the Supreme Leader, it's command structure bypasses the elected president." <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/irans-revolutionary-guards> At the start of Epic Fury Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was severely wounded and has not been seen. By most reports, Mojtaba Khamenei is barely alive and bedridden. Whether or not he is actually able to communicate, the IRGC claims to be operating by his direction. This is the case in seemingly irrational actions, like closing the Strait and not agreeing to give up the nuclear enriched materials.

In addition to the shattering of regime leadership during the air campaign, the destruction of the regime's communications capability brought incoherence. After the regime claimed the Strait would be open after the pain of the US blockade, IRGC gunners fired on two Indian ships. Firing on Indian ships was the same kind of self-destructive action as the regime firing on neutral Gulf states during Operation Epic Fury. India was not an enemy of Iran and an trading partner. After the US Navy began mine clearing operations in the Strait of Hormuz IRGC elements almost initiated hostilities. The clearance operations involve US Navy destroyers which would have been able to obliterate IRGC targets around the Strait.

As I write this article, both sides are to meet together in Islamabad again tomorrow. President Trump has given an ultimatum that the regime must open the Strait and give up the 60% enriched Uranium, or he would reinitiate the bombing campaign. The difference with this bombing

# Family & Marriage

## What Really Matters



**Roger Rollins,**  
Family and Marriage Coalition

*"Our nation is in great peril because we have forgotten what we have done, and we have no idea who we are." - Ronald Reagan*

*"He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said." - Bible (John 1:23)*

The American Community Survey is an ongoing survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau that collects detailed information about the nation's people and housing. It covers over 40 topics, including education, employment, income, and housing conditions. You can find it online and search out the information for yourself. Tim Goeglein, in his latest book "What Really Matters," discusses the results of the survey. Following is the essence of some of the information coming from the survey.

The ACS has numerous statistics highlighting the fact that strong marriages make happy men and women. The survey finds married mothers between the ages of 18 and 55 have a mean annual household income of \$133,000, compared to \$79,000 for single, childless women in the same age bracket. In addition, 33 percent of these same married mothers reported they were "completely satisfied" with their lives. In contrast, only 15 percent of single and childless women felt the same way. About 60 percent of those single and childless women were more likely to report feelings of loneliness compared to married mothers. This suggests the bonds created through family and friends are very important, if not the most important factor in life satisfaction. In addition, Professor

John Darby at the University of Southern California documented how committed married men are happier, less self-absorbed, and more empathetic to others.

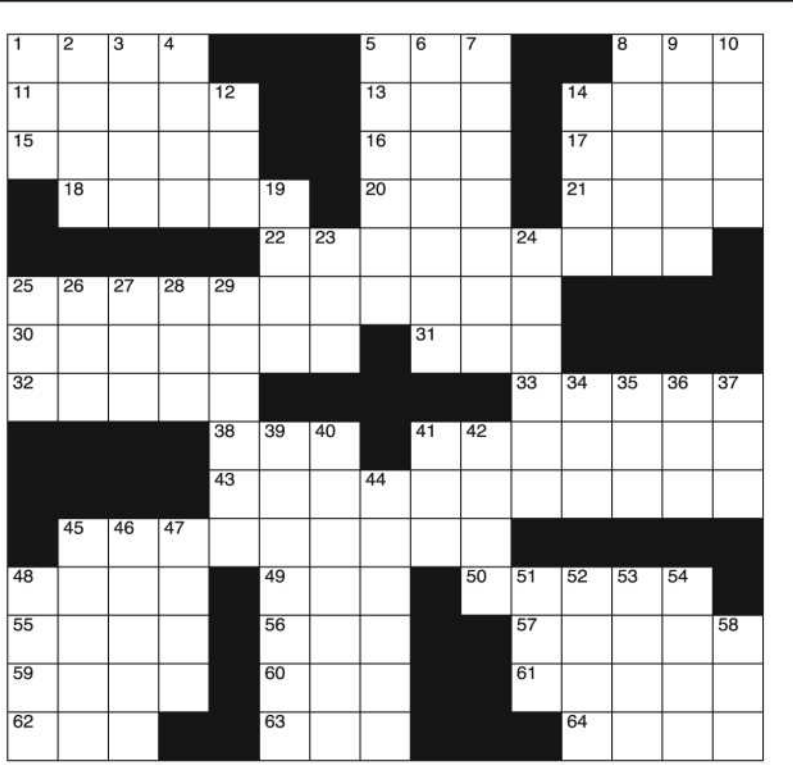
Tim Goeglein's book devotes it's six chapters to the importance of restoring, respectively, Marriage, Family, the American Male, a Well-Ordered Society, Faith, and the Importance of History. The first chapter focuses on marriage because his studies and many others note that strong marital unions are the foundation of both individual happiness and societal order. Given the solid results of the many studies, why is it that fewer than half of adult Americans are married today? Taking the six chapters in order, we see that marriages are disintegrating at an alarming rate. The definition of the family has been modified to satisfy the whims of our current society. The American Male is being effeminized and often ignored altogether. The Well-Ordered Society is hard to find. Our government and church leaders are often at odds with each other. Which tells us that our faith is also failing. Some of us may attend church and pray to God, but we place our trust in money and power, which are both very shaky. As for the importance of history, many of the school's history books have been rewritten to be "politically correct."

We can take three approaches to dealing with these issues. We can deny that there is a problem and join the world's "politically correct" approach. We can admit these issues exist but decide there is nothing we can do about it, or we can get involved in trying to change the direction we are headed. The complete title of Goeglein's book is "What Really

Matters: A Voice in the Wilderness or a Prophet Bearing Good News?" In other words, are we just going to complain or are we going to do something positive?

We still have that choice in this country today. Many places in the world don't have a choice. But we do. What can we do to make a difference? We can evaluate our actions relative to the six chapters in Goeglein's book: Marriage, Family, the American Male, a Well-Ordered Society, Faith, and the Importance of History. I would put Faith first, because without faith in God who loves and cares for us and has the perfect plan for this world, our families, and each of us individually, it falls back to us. If that happens, and it appears headed in that direction, ignore Goeglein's book.

Instead, follow Goeglein's suggestions and make the Bible the number one choice. Then make a difference in your world. Family and Marriage Coalition of Aiken (FAMCO) was created to provide resources for you to succeed in your marriage and families. Roger Rollins, Executive Director, FAMCO, 803-640-4689. Let us know how we can help.



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Egyptian bull-god
- 5. Romanian monetary unit
- 8. Will Ferrell holiday film
- 11. "It Ain't Half Hot Mum" actor
- 13. Error-related negativity
- 14. Volcanic crater
- 15. Boston Herald columnist Margery
- 16. True market value
- 17. Italian term for exchange rate
- 18. Informal loan clubs
- 20. Men's fashion accessory
- 21. Children's craft supply
- 22. Extra benefits
- 25. In an early way
- 30. A judge has one
- 31. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 32. Tractor unit
- 33. Defunct supercomputer developer
- 38. Promotional materials
- 41. A forgetful state
- 43. One who beheads
- 45. Photographers
- 48. Small, rich sponge cake
- 49. Clergy's vestment
- 50. Expressed pleasure
- 55. Abba \_\_, Israeli politician
- 56. Zero
- 57. Ancient Greek word for "earless"
- 59. Nigerian governmental area
- 60. Mild expression of surprise
- 61. Places to hang things
- 62. Keyboard key
- 63. Make a mistake
- 64. One-time president of Republic of Korea

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Bridge building degree
- 2. Expression of sorrow or pity
- 3. Large, stocky lizard
- 4. Romanian river
- 5. Communication
- 6. Stoats
- 7. Showcases
- 8. Bird of prey
- 9. King of Thebes
- 10. Cleaving tool
- 12. Large African antelope
- 14. Three are particularly notable
- 19. Meet one's needs
- 23. C. European river
- 24. Dictator
- 25. Indicates how much out of 100 (abbr.)
- 26. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 27. Consume food
- 28. Woman (French)
- 29. Scrape a surface
- 34. Green vegetable
- 35. Pacific Standard Time
- 36. Capital of Brazilian city
- 37. Paddle
- 39. Cause to become insane
- 40. Drier and flakier
- 41. Mimic
- 42. ESPN personality Kimes
- 44. One who moves slowly
- 45. Secret political clique
- 46. Behind the stem of a ship
- 47. Supernatural force
- 48. Sanctuary
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Grayish white
- 53. Engrave by coating
- 54. North Carolina university
- 58. Midway between south and southeast



is that it will involve US strikes against Iranian dual use power plants, oil facilities, and bridges. Hitting this critical infrastructure will set Iran back economically a decade or more. The regime will be far more vulnerable to an overthrow by the people of Iran, as the IRGC and Basij forces meant to suppress the population will be further decimated. The rational political leadership of Iran knows these realities, which explains their willingness to open the Strait of Hormuz and give up their nuclear and ballistic missile program. The problem is fragmentation of the communications and leadership of the IRGC. This is not expected to change.

The IRGC appears to be following the Nazis at the end of World War II and holding out to the bitter end and destruction despite reality of their hopeless position. The people of Iran will likely rise up against the IRGC and Basij forces. In the end, the 47 year reign of terror will be over for the people of Iran, the region, and the world. Let us hold to the words God spoke to Joshua facing the trials entering the promised land "Be strong and courageous, do not be terrified or afraid, for I the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

## SUDOKU

2			9		4			
	3		5	1				
			6		5			
		6		5				
	2							3
7			8	4				6
					6		5	
		3	6			9		
			7	2				8

Fun By The Numbers

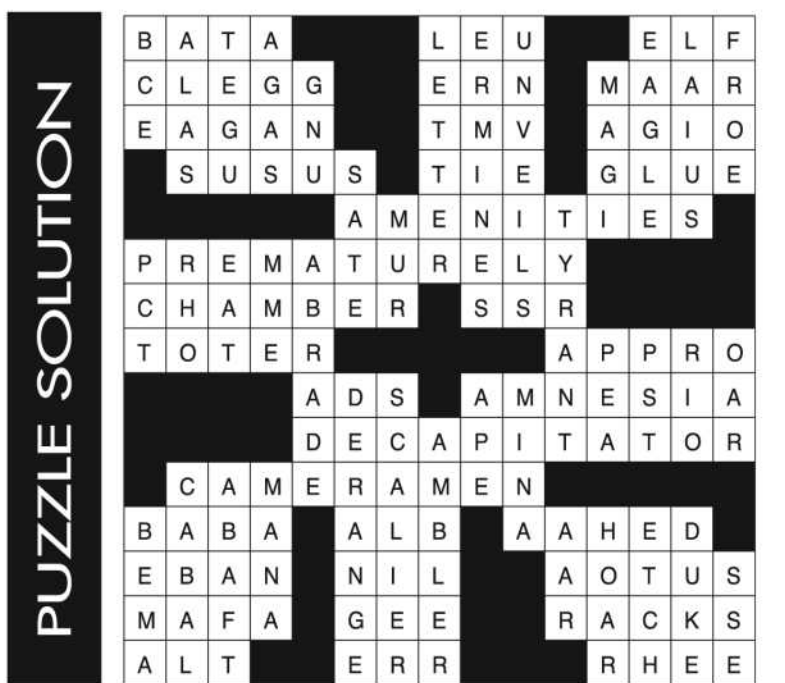
Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

### Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

6	1	9	5	7	2	7	2	4
5	7	3	6	8	4	2	9	1
8	4	2	1	3	6	7	6	5
6	6	9	2	4	3	9	2	2
7	5	1	8	4	4	8	4	3
9	2	4	7	1	6	5	8	3
3	8	6	6	2	5	7	1	4
1	9	8	4	6	7	3	5	2
4	3	7	2	5	1	8	6	9
2	6	5	3	9	8	1	4	7

ANSWER:



PUZZLE SOLUTION