

1980

Correspondence

Recommended Citation

Correspondence, 14 INT'L L. 563 (1980)

<https://scholar.smu.edu/til/vol14/iss3/11>

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Dear Editor:

Mr. Carter committed an unbelievable series of fiascos vis-a-vis Iran.

First. He failed to condition his consent to the creation of the United Nations Factfinding Committee on release of the hostages and their safe exit from Iran. Instead of employing this simple negotiation technique, in exchange for something the Iranians greatly wanted, he eagerly signed first without any such protective stipulation, hoping naively that everything would work out all right.

Second. Having missed that early and easy chance, Mr. Carter could have invoked the centuries-old international doctrine of retaliation in kind by impounding the Iranian diplomats in their Washington, D.C., embassy and giving them the same treatment as accorded our hostages by Iran, while looking to the early exchange of hostages. Instead of engaging in this justifiable retaliation which the nations of the world would have approved, Mr. Carter rushed all of the Iranian diplomats home. He thus gave up tremendous bargaining power that could quickly have resolved the crisis.

Third. After winning the unanimous World Court judgment that the seizure was illegal under international law, Mr. Carter chose to go it alone instead of asking the U.N. Security Council, representing all of the many nations in the U.N., to enforce the judgment under Article 94 of the United Nations Charter.

Fourth. Having missed all of these opportunities, and under heavy criticism, Mr. Carter then, in desperation and in violation of representations to our allies, made an abortive military invasion of Iran and a rescue attempt which most experts agree had little or no chance of success, at least not without very heavy loss of life. This military invasion was a flagrant violation of international law, and not justified retaliation, as the impoundment of the Iranian diplomats in the Washington, D.C., Iranian embassy would have been. Indeed the illegal invasion, which made the U.S. a highly culpable violator of international law, comparable to the Iranians' own violation, could have triggered an unwanted war.

ALFRED J. SCHWEPPE
Seattle, Washington

For nine years Chairman of the
American Bar Association's
Committee on Peace and Law,
dealing with international matters

