

Editorials give mixed reaction to Hans

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By BEN J. PLASTINO
Post-Register political editor
and
The Associated Press

Editorials from Idaho's largest daily papers have given mixed reaction to Hansen's Iranian trip, the majority indicating disapproval.

The state's second largest newspaper, the Idaho Falls Post-Register, was likely the most favorable, generally commending his self-proclaimed "mission of mercy" in seeking

to free the 49 American hostages.

The Post-Register noted Hansen scored successes in being able to visit and talk to some of the hostages where others, including high government emissaries, have failed.

The paper's political editor, Ben J. Plastino, also was generally laudatory in what Hansen sought to do, but his column and the paper's editorial cautioned that some of Hansen's statements in behalf

of the Iranian terrorists and against the deposed pro-Western shah could have disastrous effect.

The editorial also noted that in contrast with most of his other foreign trips to Nicaragua, Panama, Taiwan and Bolivia, Hansen this time sided with the insurrectionists, who are bitter foes of the United States and lean toward Soviet Russia.

The editorial concluded "Hansen has been basking in

*Cont. reverse
side*



AP Wirephoto

Hansen at Iran

TEHRAN, Iran — Congressman George Hansen, R-Idaho, talks with newsmen outside the U.S. embassy here after he had met

with some of the 49 American hostages held by armed Iranian students inside. He said they were well, but anxious.

the limelight and he performed a service. But, George, isn't it about time you came home?"

Twin Falls paper

"Hansen's trip has not only turned into appeasement of terrorism but into foolish grandstanding," said the Twin Falls Idaho Times-News. "Only a few days before his surprise mission, Hansen was calling for impeachment of President Carter because he had not taken strong or decisive action. The congressman has now walked into the camp of international criminals, making offers and receiving nothing in return but encouragement to stay and continue playing into their hands. We consider Hansen's impulsive headline grabbing a humiliating affront to Idahoans and all Americans. Get the hell out of there George."

The Idaho Statesman of Boise, the state's largest paper, editorialized that "Only time will tell if Congressman Hansen's 'unofficial' visit to Iran . . . will lead to the hostage's release, accomplish little, or foul up official negotiations.

"It would be easy to say that his motives are self-serving, but Hansen has shown personal courage and seems to have a genuine interest in helping the imprisoned Americans . . . Two weeks ago Hansen was calling for the impeachment of President Carter unless the president took a strong stand against the Iranians. At least now Hansen has dumped the predictable rhetoric in favor of positive action."

The Idaho State Journal in Pocatello editorialized that "it

would be easy to accuse . . . Hansen of grandstanding in his recent attempt to open communications with Iran's Khomeini regime and students who still hold 49 Americans hostage. But whatever his motivation, Hansen perhaps deserves more congratulations than rebuke on this occasion. "By traveling to Tehran and exposing himself to a certain amount of risk — after all, one never really knows how a mob is going to behave — Hansen has demonstrated a personal commitment to freeing the hostages, not just to getting re-elected . . .

"Moreover, Hansen seems at least to have accomplished something . . . At the very least, there has been some dialogue . . ."

The Lewiston Idaho Morning Tribune said: "If citizen Hansen can meddle unchallenged in so treacherous a situation as Iran's first step toward war with us, then why not other idealist Americans? If Hansen can run off uninvited and unauthorized to tell the Iranians what he thinks American foreign policy is and should become, then Jane Fonda can do the same.

"And so can Richard Nixon. And so can the president of the AFL-CIO, the president of the American Legion, the mayor of Cleveland, the Roman Catholic bishop of Spokane, the chairman of the Idaho Potato and Onion Commission, and the boxboy at your neighborhood supermarket. And so can you. Everyone is secretary of state, with a do-it-yourself foreign policy."