

## Iran denies knowledge of missing U.S. man

*by UPI*

WASHINGTON - The Iranian government has officially assured the United States it does not know the whereabouts of a former federal agent who went missing in the country.

Iran informed the United States through Swiss diplomatic channels Wednesday that has no information regarding the location of Robert Levinson, a private investigator and former agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation who lost communication with the United States in March while in Iran, the Financial Times reported Friday.

Sean McCormack, a U.S. state department spokesman, said the department has confirmed that Levinson was in Iran at the time he went missing.

Associates of Levinson have expressed fears that Iran may be holding him hostage as retaliation for the United States arresting five Iranian officials in northern Iraq in January.

Dawud Salahuddin, a U.S. fugitive living in Iran since 1980, told the Financial Times that Levinson had met with him to arrange contacts with Iranian authorities to discuss issues related to illegal cigarette smuggling.

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