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USADI Commentary

Mullahs' Many Faces of Terror

As the ideals of freedom and democracy are driving Iranians into daily confrontations with the ruling regime, Tehran rulers are intensifying a campaign of terror at home and abroad. From labor and student unrests to women challenging the misogynous mullahs, the regime is increasingly becoming encircled.

Last week, residents of the oil-rich southwestern city of Ahwaz and neighboring towns clashed with mullahs' security forces for more than six days. The intensity of the public's rage and the scale of the uprising forced the authorities to declare a de facto martial law in the province. According to eyewitness accounts, the state security forces shot and killed over sixty protesters, executing a number of young men in the streets.

Meanwhile, some 400 suicide volunteers declared readiness to conduct attacks on Americans in Iraq and targets in Israel. They were inspired by a fatwa from a senior cleric who sanctioned suicide missions. Grand Ayatollah Hossein Nouri-Hamedani, issued a religious decree in which he stressed "martyrdom operations" were permissible in the "occupied Islamic countries" as a weapon of war against modern armies.

The show of force was the latest by the Committee for the Commemoration of Martyrs of the Global Islamic Campaign (CCMGIC), which boasts to have enrolled 35,000 volunteers nationwide for possible attacks Against Western targets.

Mohammad Samadi, the organizer of the CCMGIC's event for recruiting suicide volunteers told Reuters that "America is definitely considered an enemy" and he encouraged volunteers to carry out suicide attacks against the enemies of "Islam". "We will not dispatch them anywhere ... they will locate the targets themselves," he added. According to the Associated Press, Samadi acknowledged that his group had already carried out suicide attacks inside Israel against military targets.

A senior Revolutionary Guards official Hassan Abbasi told a gathering in Tehran last year that, "Our main weapon is jihad... and through it, we are shaking the foundations of the infidels."

He added, "Reconnaissance has been done on 29 weak points in America and the West to prepare attacks on them. Our plans aim at 6,000 nuclear warheads in America, so that they would be blown up. By doing reconnaissance on their weaknesses, we will pass on the information to guerrilla groups and take action through them."

Subsequently, a major campaign in Iran was conducted to dispatch "Battalions of Suicide Bombers" to Iraq and it was reported that "tens of students from the University of Science and Technology in Iran" were sent to Karbala."

There have been ample reports about the increase in the number of Tehran-linked terrorist attacks in Iraq since last year. Iraqi officials have gone on the record to voice concern over Iran's destabilizing interference in Iraq, including the dispatch of terrorists, money, arms, and ammunition. More recently, the Iraqi daily, *Al-Mada*, reported, "The Police in Diyala Province arrested a network of terrorists funded by Iran and responsible for sabotage operations against government agencies, army officers, Iraqi police and government officials."

American and Coalition forces, Iraqi police and officials are not the only targets of Tehran's terrorists. The regime has also targeted the members of the Iran's main opposition group, the Iranian Mujahedeen (MEK) in Camp Ashraf in Iraq.

According to the USA Today, "Army Maj. Kreg Schnell, an intelligence officer in the Iraqi province that includes Camp Ashraf, said the CIA last year detained and questioned a man who appeared to be working for the Iranians and trying to apprehend MEK members. He was looking to see if it were possible "to snatch some of them (MEK) back as an example" to others, Schnell said. Last August, Schnell said, an Iraqi army patrol was approached by two Iraqis who said they were bounty hunting for members, offering \$400 a head.

Without question, Tehran has declared war on its own citizens and on peace and stability in the region. Daily public executions and brutal crackdown on the restive populace across the country are equally matched by the escalation in Tehran's terrorist campaign against Iraqis and Americans in Iraq.

Direct link between domestic suppression and use of terror abroad, once again makes the case for a US policy, which should recognize that only a free and democratic regime in Iran, brought about by the Iranian people and the organized opposition, could put an end the mullahs' reign of terror both at home and abroad.

The US Alliance for Democratic Iran (USADI), is an independent, non-profit organization, which aims to advance a US policy on Iran that will benefit America's interests, through supporting Iranian people's aspirations for a democratic, secular, and peaceful government, free of tyranny, fundamentalism, weapons of mass destruction, and terrorism. The USADI is not affiliated with any government agencies, political groups or parties.

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Radio Free Europe April 22, 2005 **Tehran Opposes U.S. Pro-Democracy Initiatives**

U.S. interest in Iranian domestic politics has increased recently. The State Department is looking for democratic organizations or activists to support, and Congress is considering legislation relating to Iran. Iranian opposition groups, meanwhile, are soliciting U.S. support...

Pursuant to a \$3 million Congressional appropriation, the U.S. State Department is soliciting proposals from "educational institutions, humanitarian groups, nongovernmental organizations, and individuals inside Iran to support the advancement of democracy and human rights," "USA Today" reported on 11 April...

Iranian state radio commented on 12 April that Washington already supports "isolated and rejected groups or elements" but that this only leads to embarrassment for the United States or these groups. It added that not only have U.S. efforts to cause "anarchy and domestic unrest" in Iran over the last 20 years failed, but they have in fact caused "increased public anger and hatred against America." The commentary concluded: "It seems that the American officials have thrown themselves in a fatal abyss by financing opposition Iranian groups."

Foggy Bottom is not the only place where people are thinking about Iran. Iran is of great interest on Capitol Hill, too.

Two Congressmen -- Bob Filner (Democrat, California) and Tom Tancredo (Republican, Colorado) -- chaired a 6 April Capitol Hill meeting of a "think tank" called the Iran Policy Committee, U.S. Newswire reported. Filner described the meeting as an effort by the Iran Human Rights and Democracy Caucus of the House of Representatives to learn more about Iran and to consider ways to confront it. Tancredo called for an end to the State Department's designation of the Mujahedin Khalq Organization as a terrorist group.

Radio Farda reported that the Middle East Subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives discussed legislation relating to Iran on 13 April in Washington, DC. The Iran Freedom Support Act (HR 282) defines its purpose as, "To hold the current regime in Iran accountable for its threatening behavior and to support a transition to democracy in Iran." The legislation calls on the White House to support pro-democracy forces that oppose the Iranian regime.

Opponents of the Iranian regime -- under the umbrella of the National Convention for a Democratic Secular Republic in Iran -- met in Washington on 14 April to demand U.S. support for their activities. Mujahedin Khalq Organization leader Mariam Rajavi addressed the event via a video link from France... Several U.S. legislators attended this event. Representatives Filner, Dennis Moore (Republican, Kansas), Ted Poe (Republican, Texas), and Tancredo were there, as were staff members of Kay Bailey Hutchinson (Republican, Texas) and James Talent (Republican, Missouri).

Not surprisingly, Tehran has reacted angrily to these developments. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on 14 April that U.S. statements about promoting democracy in Iran reveal that Washington has a specific timetable in mind, IRNA reported. Khamenei said anonymous "certain individuals" should not be allowed to help what IRNA termed an "interventionist conspiracy."...

The Wall Street Journal April 21, 2005 **Europe's Misspent Influence**

"Politics is about changing things," Javier Solana recently said, emphasizing that Europe has a leading role to play in promoting democracy in the world and particularly the Middle East.

Such rhetoric coming out of Europe begins to sound similar to President George W. Bush's own vision of a "Greater Middle East". Stressing the use of their "soft power," Europeans like to make the point that they have long championed reforms and democracy in the region.

Economic interests seemed to have been also the driving force behind the so-called "critical dialogue" with Iran . Once again in the name of promoting democracy and reforms (and against the pleading of Iranian dissidents), the EU improved its economic ties with yet another despotic regime in the Middle East. Of course, far from promoting reforms, the Mullahs have grown only more fanatical over the years. The only "positive" result of this exercise was that European companies landed lucrative oil and business deals along the way.

But despite this failure to encourage democratic change in Iran by embracing the Mullahs, Europe now insists that offering even more economic and political incentives will steer Iran away from producing nuclear weapons. As could have been expected from past experience, the months of talks have only uncovered one Iranian deception after the other and have done nothing to stop their nuclear program. ...

Excerpts from a commentary by Nir Boms, vice president of the Center for Freedom in the Middle East.