

IRAN: Rising Power and Deepening Internal Repression

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Remarks by Reza Kahlili

I want to first thank everyone here at the Heritage Foundation specially our host, Mr. James Philips for putting together this important event. It is a great pleasure and an honor to be here today specially alongside such dignified speakers.

Let me start by giving you a bit about my background. I was born and raised in Tehran. Studied here in the US in the 70s and returned to Iran after the Islamic revolution in 1979. There with the request of my friend, I joined the revolutionary guards using my expertise in helping with the infrastructure and training.

However just a few months after that, I realized that the country was headed to a wrong direction and that the clerics who had promised not to interfere in the politics were now consolidating power and enforcing the very radical Islamic laws.

It was not just the people of Iran who misread the true intentions of Ayatollah Khomeini and the clerics, so did the Western leaders. Khomeini had disclosed to associates that he had three goals for Iran: One was to remove the monarchy and overthrow the Shah, then establish an Islamic State and last to pass on the flag of Islam to the last Shiite Messiah, Imam Mahdi. So in effect the inception of the Islamic regime in Iran was based on a messianic belief.

Khomeini showed the same belief in his speeches, one famous one in which he claimed that there will be war until the end of time and until Islam conquers the world / and one of the very first orders he issued to the Guards, specifically to Mr. Ahmad Vahidi then the Chief intelligence officer of the guards, who is now the Defense minister and also wanted by the Interpol for the Jewish community center bombing in Argentina, was to take the fight to the Americans and Israelis and pave the way for the glorification of Islam.

While expanding their forces into the region in exporting the revolution as they called it, at home the clerics called themselves representative of Allah on earth and called anyone opposing them as Mohareb, an enemy of God, tens of thousands were executed and executions continue to this day where according to reports from Iran over two hundred Iranians have been executed in just the first four months of this year.

It was in the 80s that I decided to come to US and seek help. I had witnessed first hand the horrors the clerics were bringing upon the people of Iran. Iranians were subjected to amputation as the punishment for stealing, lashing for not adhering to Islamic Hejab, stoning for adultery, and execution by hanging from cranes for speaking against the clerics. The newly formed Revolutionary Courts ordered the killing of peaceful demonstrators and raping of teenage girls prior to execution as they believed virgin girls will go to heaven so they wanted to deny them that reward .

And so I came to US with the hope of making the leaders of America aware of the nature of this cruel

regime and make them understand that the Islamic fanatics in Iran will not only be a danger to the Iranians but that they will be a danger to global stability and America's national security.

One thing lead to the other and I accepted to become a spy for the CIA in the revolutionary Guards.

In the ensuing years despite all the reports I had sent reflecting the terrorist activities of the guards and their intentions for the region and the world, I was frustrated to see that appeasement and negotiation was the choice of Western leaders in dealing with the fanatics in Tehran.

The West failed to understand the ideology of the Iranian leaders, consistently believing that at some benefit or cost, there can be an opening and that ultimately there will be a change of behavior on the part of the leaders of Iran. It is obvious now that after 32 years, all these attempts have failed. Most recently the outreach by President Obama who turned his back on millions of Iranians who took to the streets in the aftermath of the fraudulent Presidential elections of 2009. This is while thousands of Iranian youth have been murdered by the criminals in Iran.

The irony is that our leaders still fail to understand this ideology and are puzzled why carrot and stick does not work with these people.

Let me be clear that the Islamic fanatics ruling Iran believe with every cell in their body that it is their calling to glorify Allah and they take it literary from the Quran " deceive thy enemy until such time you are strong enough to destroy them", or " Jihad on infidels until there are no more and all are believers of Allah". We have to take them for what they say and have been saying for over three decades which has been Death to Israel and Death to America.

As many of you might know, I recently revealed their secret documentary "The Coming is Upon Us" in which they clearly show their plans for the world and the destruction of Israel. Their belief is based on centuries old hadiths by prophet Mohammad and his descendants which describes the very circumstances needed for the end of time and the re-appearance of last Islamic Messiah. The documentary also shows the current events in the region as a clear sign that the coming is very close.

The revelation of this documentary in the West and the coverage it got / started an irreversible rift among Iran's leadership. As I disclosed then the movie was made with the collaboration of Ahmadinejad's office, specifically with the help of Rahim Mashaei, President's chief of staff and top adviser and ever since the senior clerics in Qom and the hardliners opposing Ahmadinejad, have harshly complained claiming that now the enemy (the West) is using this video to weaken the Islamic Republic of Iran by showing the inside intimacies of their sacred beliefs to the world. They also complained that Mashaei is trying to empower Ahmadinejad beyond the supreme leader and diminish the role of the clerics.

In the movie, though Ayatollah Khamenei is portrayed as that mythical figure, Seyyed Khorassani, who passes the flag of Islam to Imam Mahdi, The Shiites 12th Imam, but also Ahmadinejad is portrayed as the mythical figure, Shoeib ebn Saleh, the Islamic commander who conquers Jerusalem triggering the coming itself.

By comparing Ahmadinejad as that figure, it would mean that Ahmadinejad must remain in power for such an event to take place and the Presidential terms is meaningless and so the objection of clerics and those in command supporting Khamenei is that there can't be two commanders and there is only one who will lead the movement and that's the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei.

The infighting took an explosive turn with the dismissal of Minister of Intelligence, Heidar Moslehi by

Ahmadinejad and the ensuing restatement of the minister by the supreme leader. Ahmadinejad wanted control of the Intelligence Ministry and access to the vital information which could be used against his opponents to consolidate power in the upcoming Parliamentary elections. In the following days, many hardline clerics announced that not obeying the supreme leader would not be tolerated, adding that obeying him is mandated by Allah.

Over the course of last few week, the hardliners with the backing of Khamenei, have arrested 25 people loyal to Ahmadinejad and Mashaei. Among those arrested is the cleric Abbas Amirifar, the prayer leader of the presidential palace. He has been charged in connection with the production of the movie.

In response, the Ahmadinejad supporters, which include many in the Revolutionary Guards and Basij, warned the hardliners (supporters of Khamenei) that there will be blood and that neither Ahmadinejad nor Mashaei will allow this attack without responding.

And as I reported recently Ayatollah Khamenei has ordered Mohammad Ali Jafari, the Chief commander of the Guards to prepare plans for Guards' ground forces to coordinate efforts with the Basij militia in such a fashion as to prepare for possible clashes that would lead to a preemptory crisis and in such case to be ready to take control of the entire country, all governmental offices, ministries and presidential administration — and most importantly — purge Ahmadinejad sympathizers within all the ranks.

The Revolutionary Guards, however, fear that clashes between the supporters of Khamenei and those of Ahmadinejad would pour out to the streets of Tehran, sparking a renewal of the Green Movement and populist anti-regime protests.

All this has led to concerns among the revolutionary guards leadership, as dissent has been growing among their forces ever since the 2009 uprising and the ensuing brutal suppression where many of guard forces refused to participate in attacking the Iranian people. Now, however, there is also a known and irreparable rift between the hardliners, some of whom have clearly split loyalties — some loyal to Khamenei, while others are supporters of Ahmadinejad. The division in the Revolutionary Guards is now worst it has ever been, many despise the system as a whole, others are sympathizers of the Green Movement, another group backs Ahmadinejad while yet another group supports Khamenei.

I also received news a few days ago that Ahmadinejad's team has declared that significant event is about to take place in the coming weeks empowering them even more as they believe per centuries old hadith that Imam Mahdi, Shiites 12th Imam will make his secret descend and at that time no deputies will be needed therefore the position of the supreme leader is null and void as orders will come directly from the Imam himself.

With the failure of President Obama's approach on both negotiation and sanctions, Iran's relentless pursuit of the nuclear bomb, its progress in their missile delivery program, rift growing within the leadership, the dissent among the Guards and the possibility of drawing Israel and America into an unwanted war to consolidate power by one of the two factions in Iran, it is of utmost importance for our leaders to take necessary steps in support of the Iranian people and provide the needed help for an overthrow of this regime, nuclear bombs in the hands of the fanatics in Iran will pose the gravest danger in the 21st century and a direct threat to global stability and our national security.

A new regime in Iran will transform the world: Much of worldwide terrorism will end; Iraq and Afghanistan will become much more stable where we could start withdrawing our forces; Lebanon will become more independent without the influence of Hezbollah; Israel will be more secure and there will finally be hope for peace between Israel and Palestinian leadership. We will witness positive effects

throughout Central Asia and Latin America without Iran's influence, and finally, no more appeasing China and Russia over Iran.

It's simple. All we need do is support the Iranian people with their aspirations for freedom and democracy. Do not appease their leaders. Do not negotiate with them.

I urge President Obama and the Congress to consider the following actions:

Provide support to pursue the Iranian leaders through legal channels for crimes against humanity, for rape, for torturing and murdering Iranian citizens, for genocide against religious minorities, for involvement in international terrorism and for killing American soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Help establish direct channels of communication with the Iranian people to provide information to the masses and to promote freedom and where they could communicate with the outside world without the fear of prosecution.

Ask our allies within European Union to cut diplomatic ties to a minimum.

Refuse airspace to Iran Air and ports to ships to and from Iran.

Help deport all Iranian agents in Europe who work out of Iranian Consulates, shipping lines, airlines, banks, mosques, Islamic cultural centers. We already know who they are.

The current regime is already showing signs of coming apart. Help widen that crack. Help embolden Iranians to take their country back. They are looking for your support.

Thank you and God Bless.