

The Key to Peace In the Middle East Rests With The Iranian People

A Reckoning with the Past and a Call for Action

by [Amil Imani](#) (November 2023)



As protests in Iran persist, demanding greater freedom and a transition to democracy, the United States needs to [reflect on its past actions](#), particularly about Iran, and decide on a course of action. To clarify: The Iranian people have been yearning for change, and the United States must stand firmly

with them.

So, let us evaluate the [U.S.'s past and present policies toward Iran](#) with some practical advice for the current administration. We will also try to critically examine former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's role in the rise of Shiite Islam in Iran and praise President Trump's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal. Furthermore, let this serve as [a warning against supporting](#) groups like the Mujahidin Khalgh (MEK) while advocating for [support for secular Iranians](#) and condemning the Iran nuclear deal for its hidden perils.

The Iranian Uprising: A Cry for Freedom

Protests have been raging in Iran for over a year, ignited by the tragic death of [Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman](#), who was arrested for the perceived violation of Iran's strict hijab laws. The following protests have become a massive movement, demanding greater freedoms and a complete change in the country's leadership. Many protesters chanted, 'Women, Life, Freedom' –a famous rallying cry after nationwide protests erupted following Amini's death last year. As the world watches these brave Iranians struggle for a better future, it becomes abundantly clear that they support their cause more actively. Doing so is not just a matter of principle; it's a strategic imperative for regional peace and stability.

Encouraging International Support

The United States should lead the charge in rallying international [support for the Iranian protesters](#). Diplomatic pressure, economic sanctions, and targeted measures against Iranian officials and entities involved in repression, censorship, and prison abuses should be employed. By taking the lead, the [U.S. can encourage](#) its European allies and other

nations to join a unified front, sending a clear message to the Iranian regime.

A Democratic Movement in Iran

A popular democratic movement in Iran is desirable and necessary to bring about lasting change. The Islamic Republic's oppressive regime is incompatible with the aspirations of the Iranian people. Our responsibility is to aid in the [transition to a more democratic](#), representative government that respects the rule of law and individual rights.

Young Iranians, mainly the urban-educated Iranians, are among the most ardent believers in democracy worldwide. Many view America as the country with the best hope for spreading and protecting the high ideals of democracy. In a sense, many Iranians feel a closer affinity with a democratic Israel than all the neighboring Arab Muslim dictatorships. Although Islam was imposed on Iran some 1400 years ago, Iranians deeply value their ancient non-Arab identity and have never fully surrendered to the Arab culture. During the bloodletting war initiated by the late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein against Iran, all Arab states sided with the Butcher of Baghdad against Iran. Yet, Israel was the only Middle Eastern country that remained neutral and helped Iran in the struggle. We Iranians don't forget our friends, and we also remember our enemies.

Economic Measures

The United States should [reconsider sanctions](#) regulations that [impede Iran's interaction](#) with international financial institutions, as [such restrictions](#) may inadvertently harm the Iranian people. Instead, the U.S. should establish a fund

dedicated to [supporting the Iranian protest movement](#) and promoting economic stability in the country during this period of upheaval. It is good that the US has [imposed sanctions](#) on Iranian officials and entities connected to the repression of protests, censorship, and prison abuses.

Amplifying Support through Media

- The US should [utilize traditional and social media](#) to amplify and sustain support for the Iranian people.
- By publicly championing their cause, we ensure their struggle does not fade into obscurity.
- Publicizing their plight keeps the international community engaged and aware of the ongoing protests, which in turn exerts more pressure on the Iranian government to address the [demands of its people](#).
- [President Joe Biden](#) and other high-ranking officials should vigorously embrace traditional and social media to amplify and sustain their support for the Iranian people and remind demonstrators that the administration stands with them.

Facilitating Internet Access

Protesters in Iran rely heavily on the [internet](#) for communication and organization. The U.S. should take measures to [facilitate greater access](#) to the Internet for the Iranian people. This empowers them to organize more effectively and allows them to [communicate with the outside world](#), shedding light on the situation inside Iran and garnering international support.

The Obama Fiasco

When Obama went on his apology world tour, bad-mouthing the United States and singing the praises of Islam and internationalism, he showed vacillation and weakness at every turn. For one, he did not even find it in himself to voice his support for the brave Iranians against the rule of fascist mullahs in the 2009 Green Revolution.

The results: Thousands of democracy's best children of Iran were slaughtered, maimed, or imprisoned, and the Iranian mullahs are encouraged and have tripled their speed in the quest for their ultimate weapon, knowing full well that you neither can nor will do anything to stop them.

He failed to voice his support for the people. It implied that what was happening in Iran was a kind of family dispute best left to be settled by the Iranians themselves. A family feud indeed. One side of the "family" with legions of savages armed to the teeth, the Revolutionary Guard (IRGC) and their hired thugs, and the other side of the "family" defenseless civilians using their voices to plead their case. The Islamic rulers spared no heinous means in mercilessly silencing the people's representatives.

Today, the IRGC possesses an enormous power structure with influence over almost every aspect of Iranian life. Unlike the regular armed forces responsible for defending Iran's territory, the IRGC was explicitly designed to protect the Islamic revolution itself and eavesdrop on the regular military. Khomeini never trusted the regular army.

No nation provided even moral support for the Iranian people, while the savage mullahs and their thugs consolidated their rule of terror with impunity. The same scenario is recurring, and the world's silence is deafening while we are engaged in the Ukraine war.

Carter's Legacy and the Rise of the Islamic Terrorism

It is impossible to discuss Iran's tumultuous history without evaluating the role [of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter](#). His tenure oversaw a turbulent period in Iran's history, ultimately leading to the rise of Shiite Islam and the establishment of the Islamic Republic. Carter's actions, or lack thereof, are attributable to the birth of a regime that has caused [immeasurable death, suffering, and turmoil](#), particularly during the Iran-Iraq war. The heavy toll of hundreds of thousands of Iranian lives lost in that conflict is a painful reminder of the consequences of policies that failed to support the Iranian people.

As President Carter dithered, [Khomeini's influence](#) grew, and his message of Islamic revolution resonated with the Muslim population seeking an alternative to the Shah's regime. The Carter administration's failure to understand the dynamics of the Iranian opposition and its inability to support pro-democracy forces ultimately contributed to the [rise of the Islamic Republic](#).

The upheavals of 1979 shattered the existing order, and a turbaned charlatan that Jimmy Carter called a saint, Ayatollah Khomeini, skillfully steered the forces of change to promote his brand of totalitarian rule—a rule aimed at taking Iran backward to a primitive, violent, and misogynistic society.

Carter made a bone-headed decision some forty-five years ago. Both Iranians and Americans paid dearly and continue to pay.

The Trump Administration's Bold Move: Withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal

In stark contrast to Carter's legacy, [the Trump administration](#) made a crucial decision in May 2018, withdrawing from the Iran

nuclear deal and reinstating sanctions. This move was not merely an act of political bravado; it was a statement that the Iranian regime, with its history of deception, violence, and religious fanaticism, could not be trusted. It marked a turning point in U.S. policy toward Iran, reflecting an understanding of the true nature of the Islamic Republic.

The Iran Nuclear Deal: A Flawed Bargain

The [Iran nuclear deal](#), formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was touted as a diplomatic achievement that would prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. However, it had significant flaws. Under the JCPOA, Iran was allowed to continue [its nuclear program](#), albeit with certain limitations. While proponents argued that these restrictions would prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, critics rightly pointed out that it allowed Iran to maintain its nuclear infrastructure, setting the stage for a potential breakout once the restrictions expired.

Moreover, the deal did little to address Iran's destabilizing activities in the region. Iran supported proxy groups, such as Hezbollah, and incited [violence in neighboring countries](#). The influx of funds resulting from sanctions relief further emboldened Iran's aggressive regional behavior.

The Trump administration's [decision to withdraw from the deal](#) recognized these shortcomings and stated that the United States would not disregard Iran's destabilizing actions.

Beware of Cultish Groups: Rejecting the MEK

While we acknowledge the need to support the Iranian people, we must heed the [warnings of history](#) and avoid supporting groups like the [Mujahidin Khalgh](#) (MEK). We must discern our choices and not inadvertently back an organization that could

harm the people it claims to represent.

The MEK, considered a terrorist organization, has a dark militant history and a controversial reputation. While it claims to advocate for democracy and freedom in Iran, it has been criticized for its cult-like practices and [authoritarian leadership](#). Supporting such a group could have unintended consequences, potentially undermining the democratic aspirations of the Iranian people.

As we acknowledge the need to support the Iranian people, it is vital to heed the warnings of history and avoid supporting groups like the Mujahidin Khalgh (MEK). “The MEK is not a valid player on the Iranian political scene. They have no credibility in Iran,” [warns Ryan Crocker](#), former US Ambassador to Iraq.

I must strongly warn my fellow Americans not to repeat [President Jimmy Carter](#)’s monumental folly that brought the infamous Ayatollah Khomeini to power and birthed Islamist jihadism by standing behind [Maryam Rajavi](#), the leader of the notorious *Mujahidin-e Khalq* or (MEK), the most dangerous terrorist group that even abused and *murdered their members* for trying to defect or *escape* from *Camp Ashraf* in Iraq. It would be equivalent to betraying the ideals of America—the flag holder of freedom in the world.

Secular Iranians are our True Allies

The path forward lies in championing [the cause of secular Iranians](#), the United States’ best friends in the Islamic world. Their vision for [a democratic Iran](#), where individual rights and freedoms are respected, aligns with our values and interests. We must throw our full support behind them in their [quest for a brighter future](#).

The protests in Iran have revealed the Iranian people’s

unwavering determination for a better future in which they enjoy the [same rights and freedoms](#) that citizens of free nations often take for granted. It is our responsibility as the United States, a beacon of democracy and liberty, to support their aspirations.

While history contains valuable lessons, the present moment calls for a bold, resolute stance. We must rally behind the Iranian people, drawing from our past experiences to navigate the complex landscape of Iranian politics. By standing with the Iranian people in their pursuit of democracy and freedom, we can help pave the way for a [more peaceful Middle East](#).

The time for action is now, and the United States must seize the opportunity to be a force for good in Iran and beyond. In doing so, we can ensure that the tragic mistakes of the past are not repeated and that the Iranian people can finally achieve the freedoms they so desperately desire.

Final note

Once the Islamic regime is defeated, it would be the greatest thing since the fall of Soviet communism. It would subvert virulent Islamic ideology by creating a truly democratic, secular, strong nation in tandem with Israeli democracy in the heart of the Islamic Ummah. It would be an answered prayer just as much for the world as for Iranians.

[Table of Contents](#)

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