

# From Protest to Terrorism: How Peaceful Gatherings Turned to Violent Terrorism



*Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Vienna  
January 2026*

► The protests in Tehran began as peaceful gatherings to express economic grievances. However, these demonstrations were infiltrated and hijacked by externally-backed terrorist elements, resulting in a violent turn of events that included widespread destruction of public property and tragic loss of life among both civilians and law enforcement personnel.



■ This assessment is supported by analysis from multiple regional security experts and official statements, which have been widely circulated in international media and social platforms. **The available information indicates that the escalation was not spontaneous but part of a pre-orchestrated conspiracy by foreign actors, particularly the United States and the Israeli regime, to destabilize Iran's internal security.**

Douglas Macgregor— former senior Advisor to the US Secretary of Defence:

**“The protests [In Iran] started over real economic pain”. Then it turned into a CIA–Mossad–MI6 operation—money, Starlink, provocation, even pushing crowds to fire on police to escalate violence. It all played out and it failed.”**



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Col. Lawrence Wilkerson—Secretary of State Colin Powell's Chief of Staff (2002-05):

**“What they've been doing, Mossad principally, CIA and MI6, all backed by Donald Trump, what they've been doing in Iran is acting as if they were Iranian citizens and killing Iranians..”**



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Col. Lawrence Wilkerson: “What they've been doing, Mossad principally, CIA and MI6, all backed by Donald Trump, what they've been doing in Iran is acting as if they were Iranian citizens and killing Iranians..”



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Jeffrey Sachs— American economist and professor at Columbia University

**“Create chaos. Push people into the streets. Provoke BLOODSHED. Call it ‘protecting democracy.’” Professor Jeffrey Sachs says this is the CIA/Mossad regime-change playbook and we’re watching it happen in real time [in Iran].**



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Larry Johnson—ex-CIA Officer:

**The chaos in Iran was NOT an organic uprising, but a calculated CIA–Mossad intelligence operation, using a deliberately engineered currency crash to spark protests, which Iran ultimately crushed.**

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Ex-CIA Officer Larry Johnson on Iran:

The chaos in Iran was NOT an organic uprising, but a calculated CIA–Mossad intelligence operation, using a deliberately engineered currency crash to spark protests, which Iran ultimately crushed.

He's right.



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John Mearsheimer—American political scientist and international relations scholar

**“What is happening in Iran is straight out of the US-Israeli regime change playbook”.**

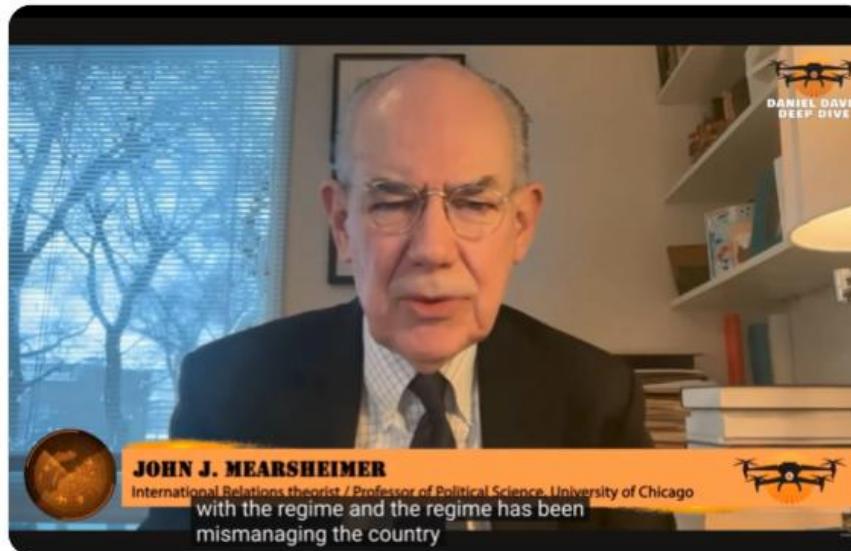


Thomas Fazi   
@battleforeurope

...

“What is happening in Iran is straight out of the US-Israeli regime change playbook”.

Five-minute masterclass by John Mearsheimer on the attempted — and so far failed — US-Israeli overthrow of the Iranian regime.



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Cenk Uygur— a Turkish-American left-wing political activist, media host:

**“Israel and America does not want democracy in Iran. What they want instead is a puppet leader. So they will bring in the former Shah, a king, a dictator, who will do everything that Israel wants”**

 Sulaiman Ahmed  
@ShaykhSulaiman

...

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Alastair Crooke— former British diplomat and the founder and director of the Conflicts Forum

One surprise in this was the extreme violence of this small group of rioters. So they would go to a place where a crowd was collecting, you know a crowded place, they would be told to go there, they would be instructed by the NGOs and others who were controlling the operation. They would go there and then they would pick on someone, a bystander, not someone involved or anything else, and they start beating them. And they beat them really severely. And around them a part of this team were women who would film it all, and their role was to shout, “go on, kill him, kill him, burn him!” And of course, this attracted more crowds. As people were watching this poor man being beaten and attacked, and somewhere in the background, a shot would be fired at the security forces, and if you’ve been under fire, I think at times, you know, it’s only in the films, you know exactly where the shot has come from. In real life, you just hear the noise and you know that a shot has been taken near to you. So the security force then shoot back, at whom they assume to be the instigators. But they hit ordinary people and then they have a riot. And so this is how they’ve done that. And then additionally, very violently attacking buses, a whole group of them would be 20, 30, would suddenly come out and smash a bus. They would go into a mosque, they would go to libraries, they would go all to government- to banks, and they would set fire to banks, to create an atmosphere. The point of this was to show that the establishment was losing control, and that therefore, if there was an intervention by America or Israel that would have something to feed on. <https://x.com/TheCradleMedia/status/2011787955527172240>

John Kiriakou—former CIA Officer:

**“There's confirmation from the Israelis that these are Mossad agitators [Disguised as Iranian Protesters]. They're bragging about it in the Israeli papers.” “Mike Pompeo posted on Twitter that it's the Israelis...”**

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Tamir Morag— a correspondent for Israel's Channel 14 news

**Tonight we published in the main edition of Channel 14: Foreign elements are arming the protesters in Iran with live weapons, and this is the reason for the hundreds of dead among the regime's people. Anyone is free to guess who we're talking about.**



תמייר מורה Tamir Morag

@Tamir114

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Mike Pompeo— former US Secretary of State

**The Iranian regime is in trouble. Bringing in mercenaries is its last best hope. Riots in dozens of cities and the Basij under siege —Mashed, Tehran, Zahedan. Next stop: Baluchistan. 47 years of this regime; POTUS 47. Coincidence?**

**Happy New Year to every Iranian in the streets. Also to every Mossad agent walking beside them ...**



Mike Pompeo   
@mikepompeo

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**Mossad Farsi** account on X:

**Let's come out to the streets together. The time has come. We are with you. Not just from afar and verbally. We are with you in the field as well.**



**Mossad Farsi**   
@MossadSpokesman



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Let's come out to the streets together. The time has come.  
We are with you. Not just from afar and verbally. We are with you in the  
field as well.

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