

Operation Day

Thirteen

The January 2026 Riots in the Words of
Foreign Analysts

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Report Outline

This report offers an analysis of the January 2026 riots in Iran through the comments of a number of prominent foreign university professors, media figures, journalists, and independent analysts. The lines and between the lines of all the content examined on the one hand, and the pattern of publishing content that encouraged and incited the riots on the other, indicate a large-scale security project –in the media and on the streets—aimed at overthrowing the government in Iran.

There is no doubt that the designers and instigators of this American-Zionist sedition, who in 1953 succeeded in overthrowing Iran's democratically elected government—to restore the monarchy of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi through a coup—are now, as the President of Serbia said, dreaming to repeat the same old version from 73 years ago. In an interesting speech Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, considered the recent unrest in Iran to be the work of Mossad and the CIA and recommended reading the books “All the Shah’s Men” and “Operation Ajax” to better understand the situation in Iran, because, according to him, “what is happening in Iran today is the activities of Mossad and the CIA, which are carrying out exactly the same version of what happened 73 years ago, and are seeking to repeat the Velvet Revolution in Iran.”

Many political activists have explained this issue and stated on various platform that the United States and the Israeli regime are simply seeking to appoint a henchman in Iran and that what is of least importance to them is the lives of the Iranian people. In this regard, Ervand Abrahamian contends that the goals of this security project go beyond the military-political collapse of the government, but rather aim at the destruction of the State.

An Abnormal Pattern

A notable point about the extensive digital campaign that covered the January unrest is the analysis of data related to tweets published by accounts inciting unrest. By analyzing the data related to these accounts, Al Jazeera News Network concluded that this digital campaign did not originate organically from within Iran and was driven by foreign networks—mainly accounts affiliated with the Mossad. In this regard, Al Jazeera points to the unusual pattern of content distribution; meaning that 94 percent of the content (out of 4370 posts) was retweeted previous tweets and that new content was very scarce. Moreover, although the number of accounts that produced original content was fewer than 170 accounts, they managed to reach more than 18 million users!

The discourse spearheaded by these account portrayed developments inside Iran as a “moment of collapse” and relied on sharp binaries: “The People vs. The Regime”, “Freedom vs. Political Islam” and “Iran vs. The Islamic Republic. Israel’s direct

involvement in highlighting Pahlavi has been quite obvious based on the analysis of social media accounts and public statements by regime officials. Posts published by regime officials were also quickly spread by this campaign. Another notable point was the description of the situation as an ideological war. The materials published by this campaign suggested that the fundamental issue was the struggle of the Persian people against an Islamist regime! All of this spin was also done with the ultimate goal of paving the way for foreign intervention in Iran and calling on the United States and the Israeli regime to invade Iran.

In general, the main themes of all the content that encourages and incites unrest and chaos can be summarized as explaining the direct presence of foreign intelligence and security services in Tehran, distorting reality, using old versions of coups in other parts of the world in different periods, encouraging violence and paving the way for foreign interference, using cover organizations, and transitioning from Iranophobia to counter-Iranism, which are addressed in this report. The content under review was published in the same time period as the unrest in our country.

Direct Presence of Foreign Intelligence and Security Operatives on the Streets

Some current and former officials in the United States and the Israeli regime—fuming and venting over Iran-related matters in the past—have been brimming with joy for the unrest in Iran—hardly showing any restraint in speaking their mind and outlining their plots, directly speaking of the presence of Mossad forces on the streets of Tehran. Some other former security officials have also spoken openly about the involvement of Mossad, the CIA and the British intelligence service (MI6) in the unrest. In this regard, the Reuters news agency has confirmed that CIA agents are working in Iran. Also, a report from the Wall Street Journal has been highlighted, which refers to the creation of an “Iran Mission Center” within the CIA, which was established in 2017 and began operating with the aim of wreaking chaos and unrest in the country.

The hand of foreign services in the recent unrest has been so obvious that Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan stated that “the role of Mossad in the Iranian protests is obvious.” He asserted that “Mossad is clearly interfering in the recent developments in Iran and they themselves do not deny this in any way. We have witnessed Israel’s attempt to change the nature of the protests in Iran. However, despite all this, we hope that the Iranian government will soon resolve its internal challenges and not allow foreign elements to interfere in its internal affairs.”

John Kiriakou, a former CIA officer, takes stock of the facts and says: “Israeli officials have confirmed that the Mossad agitators have positioned themselves as people dissatisfied with the situation among the Iranian demonstrators. Israeli newspapers even brag about this.” He says in a video interview:

John Kiriakou

This morning, an Iranian living here told a close friend of mine that they are constantly hearing reports of thousands of people being killed, which is not true at all and that this has not happened. The demonstrations have been limited and on a small scale. Yes, some have lost their lives. Some have been killed by the police and others by the demonstrators themselves. But the important point is that –Israeli officials have confirmed it today—Mossad agents are also among the demonstrators, and the Israelis are actually bragging about it in their papers, and Mike Pompeo tweeted that the Israelis are also involved. They are setting fire trucks on fire; They go to fire stations and set fire to them with Molotov cocktails so that when they burn the buildings to incite people to riot, there is no one to put out the fire. This is actually one of the Israeli tactics, and it is a very famous one, by the way.

In one of the first reactions from a former senior US administration official, Mike Pompeo—who has spared no effort in expressing hostility towards the Iranian people and infamously sought to starve the Iranian people through sanctions—openly spoke about the presence of Mossad agents alongside protesters in the streets in a post he published on X. Pompeo’s remarks—who served as CIA director before taking over as US Secretary of State—have attracted considerable attention in foreign policy circles.



Mike Pompeo 
@mikepompeo

...

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...

[@realDonaldTrump](#) [@SecRubio](#) [@CIADirector](#)

11:31 PM · Jan 2, 2026 · 3.3M Views

Commentary on the unrest was not limited merely to American security officials. Alastair Crook, in a video interview, expressed surprise at the level of violence displayed by the small group of protesters. A former British intelligence officer, MI6, and the Foreign Office, he believes the level of violence is intended to pave the way for military intervention. He believes the protests in Iran began organically but were hijacked by outside armed groups, including the MEK and Kurdish militants.

Alastair Crooke on The Cradle

One of the surprising things about this was the extreme violence of a small group of insurgents. For example, they would go to a gathering place—in fact, they would receive the order to go there from the NGOs and those who were in command of the operation—and they would grab one of the people who was just standing in the corner and just watching the events, and they would beat him to death! There were women standing around the team, filming the whole thing and shouting: “Go on! Beat him! Kill him! Burn him!” Of course, this would cause a larger crowd to gather, and more people would gather and say: “Kill him! He’s a dangerous person!” Naturally, the security forces would arrive and at that very moment, they would be shot at. If you were in this situation and you were shot at—it’s only in the movies that you know exactly where the bullet came from—you never know where it came from. You just know that a shot has been fired. The result is that the security forces also shoot back at the person they think is the one who started the incident, but the bullets hit ordinary people and there is a riot.

This is all by the playbook. Then they attack buses with full force—a group of twenty or thirty people suddenly attack a bus and destroy it; they attack mosques, libraries, government buildings and banks, and they burn banks to create the atmosphere they want and to show that the government is losing control of the situation, so if foreign intervention is accepted by the United States or Israel, then the ground is ready.

The 1953 Coup on Steroids

In another notable interview by a former US military official, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson describes the recent unrest as a coup of August 1953 on steroid, empowered with the help of US and Israeli technology.

Lawrence Wilkerson on Judging Freedom Podcast

Trump is a killing machine. What they are doing is—I mean mainly the Mossad along with the CIA and MI6, who have Trump’s support and money—they are acting as if it were Iranian citizens who are killing other citizens, burning down places, and looting. The situation today is exactly the same as in 1953 and the coup against Mossadegh, aided and abetted by advanced technology provided largely by the United States and Israel. That is the whole story of these “protests” in Iran. There are certainly genuine protests, there is no doubt about it; inflation is high and bread is not cheap, and if you are an ordinary Iranian, you can hardly make ends meet, but as much as the government has angered the people, the sanctions have played an equally important role—which, in my opinion, is the main cause of the Iranians’ problems. Well, what we did was we sent the latest version of Kermit Roosevelt to Iran, and we failed, and now we’re looking at the consequences of that failure. God knows what happens next.

The involvement of foreign services in the recent unrest has not escaped the attention of many. Some prominent academic figures, such as Jeffrey Sachs, have also

commented on this issue. According to him, the unrest in Iran is the same pattern of intelligence services that has been used in the past.

Jeffrey Sachs on Judging Freedom Podcast

It's by the Playbook. We are watching a regime change operation being carried out in Iran, the goal of which is to overthrow another government. This is, of course, a particular form of warfare, one that the CIA and Mossad have used repeatedly in recent decades, and this style of warfare is now familiar to everyone. The method is to create chaos, bring people to the streets, cause casualties, and use this space inside the country to incite a coup, and if that doesn't work, claim to be protecting the people and intervene directly, which is what Trump threatens to do or announces he intends to do every few hours. We are seeing regime change operations being carried out right before our eyes. I must emphasize that these actions are deeply illegal and immoral. Those who claim that America should determine who rules where cause great loss of life, violence, and economic destruction, and create long periods of instability. Often, these actions lead to wars that drag on for years and that—as we have seen with Afghanistan and Iraq—can cost the American economy hundreds of billions or even trillions of dollars.

In an interview with Al Jazeera, Columbia University professor Hamid Dabashi argued that Mossad agents are trying to divert attention from the genocide in Gaza by infiltrating the ranks of legitimate protesters in Iran.

Hamid Dabashi on Aljazeera

What we are seeing in Iran today is a protest that is rooted and motivated by Israel. Mossad agents are hiding among the protesters on the streets of Tehran. This point was also made by former CIA Director Mike Pompeo in his New Year's message to Iranians, and I quote here: in this message, he said, among other things, that "Mossad agents stand with the Iranians." In addition, in recent days, Israeli flags have been seen on several occasions with protesters in Tehran. What does this mean? Therefore, when we look at the current developments in Iran, we must be very careful and distinguish between legitimate protests by Iranians against their government due to economic issues and the imbalance between the dollar and the rial on the one hand, and protests incited by Israel for its own sinister goals on the other. So, why is Israel interested in Iran? The answer is simple: to distract attention from the ongoing genocide of Palestinians in Gaza and the continued usurpation of Palestinian lands in the West Bank.

In another interview, Douglas McGregor, a retired US Army colonel, also points to evidence both inside and outside the US that corroborate the involvement of the three intelligence services of the US, the UK and the Israeli regime. According to him, the killing of people and police was part of the instructions for carrying out this joint intelligence operation.

Douglas Macgregor on SKIM INVERSION SHOW

We are witnessing a situation that lacks any strategic planning, thinking, or

Douglas Macgregor on SKIM INVERSION SHOW

preparation before its execution. Everything is impulse-driven and on the spur of the moment; Trump wakes up and decides to do this or that, and his cabinet members are scurrying around trying to carry out the order. If you ask what actually happened? I think we thought there was an opportunity inside Iran to really disrupt the regime, or even bring it down. This was also because of the protests that occurred in Iran for economic reasons and the sharp fall in the value of the rial. What initially started in Iran were completely legitimate protests due to economic conditions. Then the unrest became a joint CIA/Mossad/MI6 operation.

What they did was bring thousands of Starlink terminals and large amounts of money into Iran, which in such a situation could certainly attract some to this operation. Now we have a lot of evidence, both outside and inside the United States, that some armed individuals in the crowd were ordered to shoot directly at the police, in order to provoke the police to return fire. This was done in the hope of causing deaths, thereby further worsening the situation. They did all of this, and it failed.

Regime Change in Four Steps

One of the most prominent figures who has spoken about the US effort to overthrow the Islamic Republic of Iran is John Mearsheimer, a renowned professor of international relations. He has described the unrest in Iran as a classic example of a four-stage regime change operation.

John Mearsheimer on DANIEL DAVIS DEEP DIVE SHOW

What is happening in Iran is a classic example of regime change, largely driven by the US and Israel. When the protests first started and we were looking at the sensational stories in the Western media, they showed a large number of people inside Iran who were deeply unhappy with the regime; that it was mismanaged; and that it was time to overthrow it, not just protest! From a Western perspective, such a story makes perfect sense; who here is happy with the regime that is in Iran? That was the story that was being told in the West. Now, I think it is clear that this story is not accurate. What we are seeing in Iran is a direct result of the CIA and Mossad's instructions for regime change.

Let me explain what I mean. We basically have a four-part strategy, and the use of the U.S. military is the fourth step of that! But first, let me introduce you to the first three parts of that strategy.

The first step is to impose sanctions on a country, destroy their economy, and do everything we can to deeply upset the core of society in that country, because it is the people who are suffering. We punish the people with these sanctions; just as we did in Venezuela, just as we did in Iran. Let's not forget that when it comes to these people protesting, they are protesting a terrible economic situation. So, who is causing this terrible economic situation?

John Mearsheimer on DANIEL DAVIS DEEP DIVE SHOW

The United States of America is causing this. That's step one!

In step two, we decide to incite protests somewhere along the way and pour gasoline on the fire of people's anger; Just like we did in Iran in late December last year. Now there is all the evidence. A famous article was written in the Jerusalem Post the day after the Iranian protests, leaving no doubt that Mossad was deeply involved in the developments that were taking place in Iran. You can also see the comments of President Trump, former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, which clearly indicated that America was involved from the very beginning—in the form of fanning the flames of the protests. Also, note that when the Iranians cut off the internet and blocked telecommunications services, the protesters turned to Starlink systems! It was discovered that there were 40,000 Starlinks in Iran! Who do you think provided them with these devices? Of course, we know the answer to that question. So the second step was to incite and spread the protests, the final stop of which is revolution and regime change.

The third step in this process is to create a disinformation campaign to convince everyone in the West that these are domestic protests and that America and Israel have nothing to do with it, and that the protesters are noble patriots and that America should support them. In addition, this disinformation campaign also sends the message inside Iran that the regime is done for, that the protests are on the rocks, and that the regime is unable to contain or stop them; this time it is different! What we are doing is creating the necessary momentum inside Iran with this disinformation campaign.

Then we come to the fourth step; which is the entry of the American and possibly Israeli military into the situation when the unrest has reached a certain level. We attack all kinds of infrastructure and personalities inside Iran and deliver the coup de grace and finish the regime off. This operation is completely in line with their working principles. The exact same version was in Venezuela.

Let me make one final point: this operation failed in Iran.

From hijacking the protest to inverted reality

The protests that took place in parts of Tehran's bazaar in early January against inflation and exchange rate fluctuations were quickly hijacked by foreign security agencies—specifically the Mossad and the CIA—, using their immense resources to spin narratives in cyberspace, to try to control the narrative, and ultimately to change the nature of this social change and turn it into a platform for violent subversive actions. In this regard, Mr. Roshan Saleh, the news editor of the 5pillarsuk.com website and author of the book “Confessions of a Muslim Journalist,” revealed part of this campaign a post on X.



Roshan M Salih

@RmSalih

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The CIA/Mossad regime change plot in Iran, fully backed by Western mainstream media, led to the deaths of thousands of people.

What began as peaceful protests were hijacked by armed insurrectionists who rioted, looted and murdered. The authorities struck back killing many of the CIA/Mossad operatives. And no doubt innocent civilians were also killed in the battle.

The blame for this must mainly be put on the United States and Israel, who instigated an armed uprising despite the fact that the vast majority of Iranians want nothing to do with foreign-backed regime change.

The attempted coup has been defeated for now and America has held off on military action because it knows it has little chance of success. The Iranian government is internally strong, enjoys wide support and will not fall without prolonged foreign military intervention and an unpredictable Syria-type civil war.

Shame on all those who provoked and supported an uprising with no chance of success. You have blood on your hands too.

6:38 PM · Jan 17, 2026 · 19.4K Views

In this regard, a former CIA officer, Larry Johnson, in an online news interview, described the recent unrest as an intelligence operation aimed at paving the way for a US military invasion of Iran and pointed out the following interesting points:

Larry Johnson on The INTEL Roundtable

We are facing the failure of the joint CIA-Mossad operation that began on December 28. In this atmosphere, Volodymyr Zelensky meets with Trump, just 24 hours before Trump meets with Netanyahu! The security agencies—knowing that this would lead to anti-government demonstrations—had implemented a plan to collapse the Iranian currency. Of course, there are those who say, no!!!! How could the CIA do such a thing?!!! Just so you know, George Soros did the same thing to the British economy a few years ago! So, if one person, Soros, can do such a thing to the economy the size of Brits, it is not surprising that the security agencies, with the support of the US Treasury, can do the same thing to Iran, and they

Larry Johnson on The INTEL Roundtable

did, and it led to protests. Meanwhile, the Western media was also saying that these developments were organic and that these are the people who have risen up against the oppression of the mullahs.

This story is nonsense! Because the security agencies had already deployed the Starlink terminals, thanks to Elon Musk, and these terminals did not just fall from the sky! No! These devices were purchased through the security agencies and distributed among people associated with these institutions inside Iran. There are also numerous groups in Iran: from the Kurds to the MKO and Baluch groups. In this way, they found a group of people who had problems with the government and provided them with this equipment, in addition to weapons, ammunition and money, and then the attack operation began, which continued until late last Thursday, when Iran, with the help of Russia, took control of the situation and, using electronic warfare and disrupting the Internet, took the Starlink systems out. As soon as Starlink were down, the coordination and operational capacity of these elements was also lost. Then the Iranian security forces moved in and put an end to the incident. All this planning by the Western security agencies was to hit the peak of violence by Thursday and end with a US military strike, because by this point [according to their calculations] the Iranian regime has become so discredited that it will collapse with this attack. All this was disrupted and that was the reason why Trump backed down from the attack. Of course, they have no intention of ending the attack on Iran! This will happen, probably in late February or March!

The trivialization of intelligence operations

Another line of action, as exemplified by the New York Times, was to trivialize complex security and intelligence operations. For example, the outlet claimed in a report that a ragtag network of activists, computer programmers, and engineers managed to penetrate Iran's digital wall and—using thousands of Starlink systems secretly smuggled into Iran—released images of security forces shooting in the streets and families searching for bodies. This style of reporting, and the reduction of a complex operation to spontaneous actions, has caught the attention of some journalists on X. Jeremy Loffredo responded to the New York Times report in a sarcastic post:

The New York Times

Yet a ragtag network of activists, developers and engineers pierced Iran's digital barricades. Using thousands of [Starlink satellite internet systems](#) that they had quietly smuggled into the country, they got online and spread images of troops firing into the streets and families searching for bodies.

"This is the most severe internet shutdown that we have experienced," said [Ahmad Ahmadian](#), an exiled activist who was also involved in smuggling the satellite internet systems into Iran. "Starlink is a lifeline."

Encouraged by the success, [Mr. Ahmadian said](#), he helped build a [smuggling network](#). Clustering on Telegram channels and other online platforms, merchants sold Starlink units and coordinated delivery routes through the United Arab Emirates, Iraqi Kurdistan, Armenia and Afghanistan.

The roughly 50,000 Starlink terminals now in Iran are hidden on rooftops and discreet locations. Developers have built tools so a Starlink connection can be shared, turning a single terminal into a gateway for others farther away.



Jeremy Loffredo

@loffredojeremy

...

The New York Times refers to the National Endowment for Democracy [CIA] backed tech-bros who built a “smuggling network” to bring thousands of DOD/ SpaceX Starlinks into Iran as a “rag tag group”

The New York Times

Yet a raging network of activists, developers and engineers pierced Iran's digital barricades. Using thousands of Starlink satellite internet systems that they had quietly smuggled into the country, they got online and spread images of troops firing into the streets and families searching for bodies.

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NED | NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY
SUPPORTING FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD

2023 DEMOCRACY AWARD—TRAILBLAZER: NETFREEDOM

Published on November 8, 2023 by Communications Staff

Watch on

NetFreedom Pioneers (NFP) is a technology nonprofit that develops innovative solutions to information. Repressive regimes often restricted access to critical information to towards confronting this barrier to democracy. These new solutions require technical activists, technology experts, and local experts to pioneer new methods and tools to circumvent censorship in the world's most challenging environments such as North Korea, Iran, and Cuba.

5:37 PM · Jan 16, 2026 · 159.6K Views

A Recipe for All Seasons of Chaos

Other activists and writers have highlighted another point about the recent unrest and its coverage by the mainstream media, comparing it to developments in previous decades. Among them, one can mention the comparison of reporting on Tiananmen Square in 1989 and Tehran in 1995. Nuri Vitaci has published the following article in this regard:

Tiananmen Square, 1989

Western disinformation sources release fake report saying 10,000+ peaceful protesters killed by government

Home govt says central protest area was peaceful, but several hundred were killed in clashes elsewhere

Western media prefers fake report, circulates that narrative widely

Eyewitnesses deny western report, say significant portion of violence was started by people among protest groups

Later, historians conclude fake report of massacre came from western sources, while home govt report and eyewitnesses were telling the real story

Tehran, 2026

Western disinformation sources release fake report saying **12,000+** peaceful protesters killed by government

Home govt says central protest area was peaceful, but several hundred were killed in clashes elsewhere

Western media prefers fake report, circulates that narrative widely

Eyewitnesses deny western report, say significant portion of violence was started by people among protest groups

Later, historians **will** conclude fake report of massacre came from western sources, while home govt report and eyewitnesses were telling the real story

Inciting Violence, Setting the Stage for Foreign Military Intervention

The CIA and Mossad's digital campaign to incite and encourage unrest has had two fundamental goals: encouraging armed violence against security forces at home on the one hand, and inciting public opinion, thereby preparing the ground for foreign intervention on the other. In one of the first clear examples of armed intervention inside the country, Euronews Farsi reported, "a representative of the Kurdistan Freedom Party claimed in an interview with the Associated Press that the party's armed wing, the Kurdistan National Army, has played a role in the ongoing protests in Iran through financial support and armed operations to defend the protesters." In a similar article,

published by the online magazine The Cradle, Kurdish separatist militias have claimed responsibility for attacking security forces during the unrest.

What has clearly exposed the conspiracy from the American networks is a report published by a CBS reporter. In this program, the network's reporter, who was present in the mountainous areas bordering our country in Iraqi Kurdistan, prepared a report on Kurdish terrorist groups. It is interesting to note the text of this television report and the effort of this American network to portray people who are openly wearing military uniforms as tolerant:

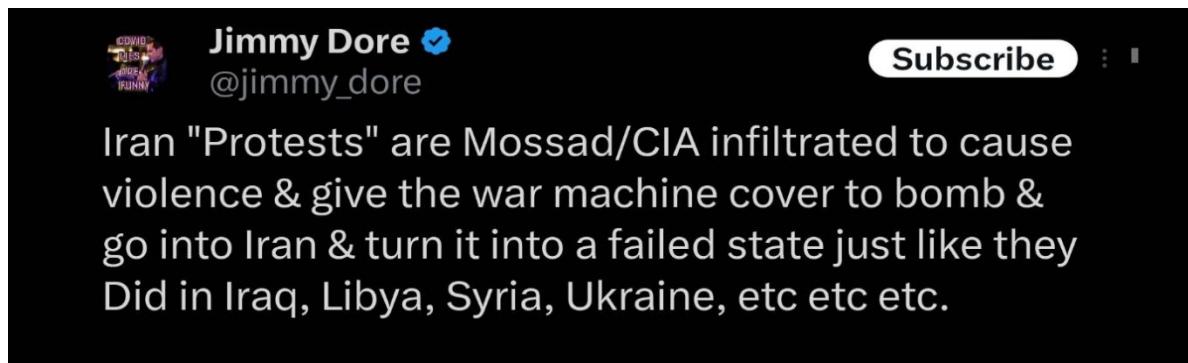
CBS News

Today we have come to northern Iraq, a mountainous region about 30 miles from the Iranian border, to meet with an unlawful, armed Iranian opposition group. The group is called the Democratic Party of Kurdistan of Iran. Many of the members of the group are women [The report shows a woman with a nose patch, signifying a recent nose job surgery] and they are ready for the day when the regime is overthrown. Their dream is a democratic Iran [A woman with a smiling face appears in the picture.]

They represent the Kurdish ethnic minority, which makes up about 10 percent of Iran's population. According to Siran Gargouli, one of the group's commanders, despite the horrific violence, the recent demonstrations in Iran have given them hope because they have shown that the regime can be overthrown—especially with international help. Of course, there is a big question mark about international help. Trump has been threatening to strike Iran hard for days, but yesterday he said he had received assurances that the killings in Iran was going to stop and that there would be no executions; he also said he would monitor the process.

Of course, we are also monitoring this process and what is happening in Iran, and one of the things we are following is the extent to which these protests have weakened the Iranian regime.

This conspiracy did not go unnoticed by other observers and reporters. California-based journalist Jimmy Dore wrote in a post on the X:

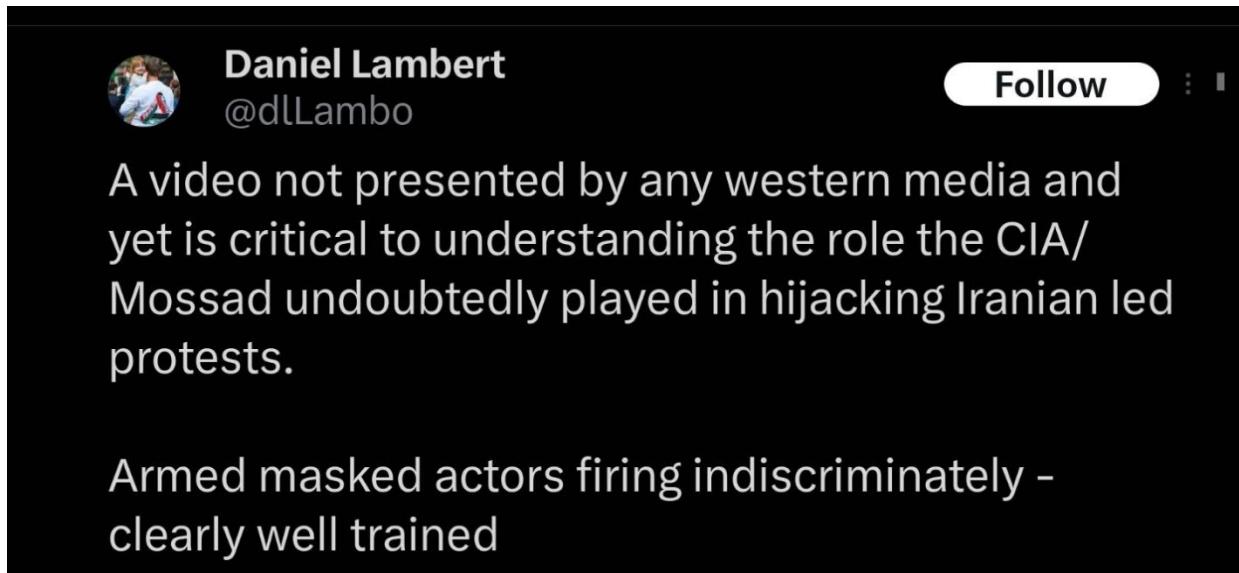


Jimmy Dore 
@jimmy_dore

Subscribe

Iran "Protests" are Mossad/CIA infiltrated to cause violence & give the war machine cover to bomb & go into Iran & turn it into a failed state just like they Did in Iraq, Libya, Syria, Ukraine, etc etc etc.

Other accounts have made similar points, citing various videos showing the presence of trained gunmen among ordinary people. Daniel Lambert, a former UN diplomat and political activist, writes on X:



Daniel Lambert
@dlLambo

A video not presented by any western media and yet is critical to understanding the role the CIA/Mossad undoubtedly played in hijacking Iranian led protests.

Armed masked actors firing indiscriminately - clearly well trained

The prominent role these individuals played in the violence has quickly become a focus for observers. In interviews with ordinary people who witnessed the riots, the Financial Times reported that:



Megatron 
@Megatron_ron

NEW:

 The Financial Times interviewed people who witnessed the recent riots in Iran:

"There were groups of men in black clothes, agile and quick. They'd set one dustbin on fire, then move onto the next target.

Some of them [men dressed in black] looked like commandos. They were definitely organized, but I don't know who was behind them."

Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: Front Organizations

Another prominent trend among the published materials and active analysts in this field has been the close relationship of many so-called non-governmental organizations, human rights organizations, think tanks, etc. with security institutions, specifically the CIA and Mossad. In other words, the one link in all of this analysis has been these two security institutions—a topic that has been well-noted by activists and observers in this field. One of the independent news networks, Mint Press News, has paid attention to this point by publishing a post on X:



MintPress News 
@MintPressNews

 Protests in Iran have gripped the world's attention. But many of the sources corporate media use for supposedly expert inside information on the action are quietly funded by the CIA cutout organization, the National Endowment for Democracy.

A new MintPress investigation by [@AlanRMacLeod](#) exposes a network of Western-based NGOs pushing some of the most extreme coverage that are quietly being funded by the US national security state.

One function of these organizations is spinning narrative, and the most important tool they have is playing with numbers and creating fake statistics. Manar Adli addressed this issue on Mint Press News and explained the dimensions of such a campaign in a video post.

Mnar Adley | MintPress News

The corporate Western media outlets publish and repeat figures of mass arrests and casualties distributed by the Iranian diaspora. But we at this news agency have traced all this news to one active human rights source, HRANA, which is a branch of the Iranian Human Rights Agency. According to our investigations, HRANA is funded by a CIA subsidiary, the National Endowment for the Defense of Democracies (NED). They have become the main source for some of the most sensational claims—such as the shocking death toll—in the Western media. In the past week alone, their figures have been repeated by CNN, the Wall Street Journal, NPR, ABC News, Sky News, and the New York Post. Even independent liberal commentators have repeated these figures as fact. But what they never acknowledge is the funding pipeline that connects these human rights activists to the CIA.

The pro-democracy NGO (HRANA) describes itself as independent, but its headquarters are not in Iran but in Fairfax, Virginia. The group's website states that it is not political, and even claims that it does not accept financial contributions from political groups or governments, but it acknowledges that its main sponsor is the National Endowment for the Defense of Democracies—a foundation set up by the CIA to covertly do what the CIA once did openly. The Iranian Human Rights Activists Group is not the only NGO to make headlines in Western news. Another organization that is often cited is the Abdolrahman Boroumand Center for Human Rights. Its director is Roya Boroumand. Although the center is also reluctant to disclose its financial affiliation, they have also been supported by the National Endowment for the Defense of Democracies. A press release from the National Endowment for Defense of Democracies in 2024 listed the Boroumand Center as a partner organization that the foundation awarded its director, Ms. Boroumand, with the 2024 Guler T. Boucher Medal for Democracy. The statement also said that the foundation is proud to support the Boroumand Center's work toward what it described as "a democratic future for Iran."

So, when major Western media outlets present these organizations as neutral, and use them to justify the escalation of the situation, the Western narrative of sanctions, and regime change and pressure, remember that their reports of alleged human rights violations, inflated casualty figures, and mass arrests are repeated by Western media outlets in order to create the artificial consent necessary for regime change and to psychologically manipulate the Iranian diaspora.

From Iranophobia to Counter-Iranism

If we look at the developments of the last decade through the lens of Western journalism, we can easily see the Western dominance of Iran-related narratives in the media space; a dominance that is transitioning from the Iranophobia of previous decades into a form of counter-Iranism. Iranophobia can be considered a complementary aspect of Iran's securitization project, which reduces the costs of any action against Iran and facilitates the persuasion of public opinion for Western warmongers.

In this context, Scott Ritter, in an interview with Jimmy Dore, explains the issue of spreading hatred of Iran well. According to Ritter, the deep State in the West is fueling hatred of Iran. He describes this Iranophobic narrative as follows:

Scott Ritter on Jimmy Dore Show

We blame Iran for the bombing of the US Marine Corps base in Beirut, which killed 241 soldiers and crew. Iran supported Shiite insurgents in Iraq in 2004 and 2005, which killed 600 or 700 American soldiers. Of course, we [Americans] don't like to admit that we invaded and occupied Iraq, and that the Iraqis have the right to defend themselves. We're just saying that Iran caused the deaths of these soldiers. The American people have been conditioned and programmed to believe anything negative about Iran. And that's why these NGOs are successful in cyberspace, repeating the same lie over and over and over again; it's really like Joseph Goebbels said, repeat the same lie over and over again, and people often believe it.

You and I are dealing with the same people; We work with security people who ask these same questions. But they are not representative of the majority of the American people; the majority of the American people work two jobs to make ends meet, and when they come home at night they are tired and worn out and don't have the time to investigate deeply. That is why they have become prisoners of the news media. The majority of the news media has either become the servants of the deep State or repeat the same secret government agenda.

That is the message that the majority of Americans are getting. I hope they see this show and realize that all this stuff they are seeing on the news is nothing but lies. But if we bomb Iran tonight, it will be too late. It is too late, because Americans are going to die in this war and our economy is going to suffer! We have to stand up against this war. We should have done something to stop it before it got to this point. Unfortunately, we couldn't, because too many Americans believe the nonsense that is being spread by the deep State through the media they control.

In another interview, Roger Waters, appearing on Morgan Pierce's show, points out that the problem is that Iran is standing up to the West and is the only country left on the list of seven countries that America intended to destroy. He says in this interview:

Roger Waters on Morgan Piers Show

I am philosophically very close to the Iranian people, and this is something that you have neglected. The entire Iranian people are completely united in their opposition to foreign interference in the internal affairs of their country. Of course, this opposition also includes opposition to all the sanctions against Iran that have caused this huge inflation.

[Morgan Pierce: Why do you think Iran is being sanctioned?]

Because the last country is the same list that Paul Wolfowitz and Wesley Clark at the US Department of Defense once defined. This list includes countries that America intends to destroy in order to take over the world. Iran is the last country standing, and they have destroyed the other six; there were seven countries on this list.

[Morgan Pierce: Of course, the reason for the sanctions on Iran is that there is no question that Iran is the main sponsor of terrorist organizations throughout the Middle East. From the Houthis to Hezbollah to Hamas]

Roger Waters on Morgan Piers Show

[Laughing and sarcastically adding]: Their actions in Palestine! What nonsense are you talking about? Freedom fighters in every country are terrorists in another country!

In an interview with the BBC, Ervand Abrahamian analyzed our country's foreign policy and convincingly showed that the main problem lies in Washington and that the Islamic Republic of Iran has shown the necessary flexibility in its foreign policy. He presents this analysis that the US government, under pressure from Israel, seeks the destruction of Iran, not simply the fall of the government. He says in this interview:

Yervand Abrahamian on BBC Farsi

You present the issue as if the Iranian government is behind the scenes and can do whatever it wants. In general, the issue is more complicated than these words. Iran has been flexible in its foreign policy and the main problem is in Washington.

[Farnaz Ghazizadeh: Do you mean in the last few years, not, for example, in the last twenty years?]

Even in the past, during the presidency of Mr. Rafsanjani and Mr. Khatami, Iran approached the United States, and it was the United States that did not want to talk and set the condition that Iran not have a nuclear program. The situation changed when the US position changed and agreed to a nuclear program on the condition of verification, and Iran also accepted.

But then it was the US government that withdrew from the agreement; therefore, we have to see what the motivation of the Trump administration and Israel is now? Are they really seeking to adjust Iran's behavior? Or are they seeking to destroy the government or even Iran itself? My understanding is that the Trump administration, under pressure from the Israelis, is seeking to destroy Iran, not just the government, but the State!

Five Decades of Misunderstanding

Other analysts and media figures have widened their analytical lens beyond recent developments to a deeper reality about Washington's policies toward Tehran. Colonel Thorne, a retired U.S. Army officer, has pointed out that after 45 years of sanctions, threats, assassinations, cyberattacks, proxy wars, and diplomatic isolation, the Islamic Republic of Iran is still standing on its own two feet and is not willing to surrender to the United States.

Colonel Thorne

There is a truth about Iran that no one in Washington is willing to admit. After 45 years of sanctions, threats, assassinations, cyberattacks, proxy wars, and diplomatic isolation, the Islamic Republic of Iran is still standing, refusing to kneel to American demands. To me, this means only one thing: that we have a fundamental problem understanding the reality we

Colonel Thorne

are facing. Because if you have applied maximum pressure for half a century and the subject of pressure is still on its feet, your strategy probably didn't work; maybe your assumptions about the effects of pressure on the subject's submission are wrong; maybe Iran is not going to collapse just because we wish it to.

But instead of learning from 45 years of strategic failure, we continue to double down on the same wrong path and expect different results. This is not strategy at all, but the application of madness to foreign policy, and it is opening the door to a global conflict that, once started, no one will be able to control.

Let me tell you something about Iran's strategic culture that most Americans don't understand. We are dealing with a civilization that has survived Mongol invasions, Ottoman expansionism, British colonialism, Soviet pressure, and American sanctions for longer than most countries have existed. The Iranians don't think in terms of quarterly incomes and election cycles, but about centuries and civilizational survival! When we talk about regime change, what Iranians understand is not simply a policy that will change with the next administration; they treat it as an existential threat to their civilization that—regardless of the cost—requires total resistance. When we sanction them, they don't see the sanctions as economic pressure that leads to rational compromise; they see the sanctions as a military seige and they adopt a siege mentality.

That's why economic pressure hasn't worked. That's why diplomatic isolation hasn't worked. That's why campaigns of terror and war haven't worked. Because you can't force a civilization to give up its independence under pressure; you can only force them to choose between surrender and total resistance.