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# FLAME HOTLINE

Facts & Logic About the Middle East

January 09, 2018

## The U.S. should stand up for Iranian protestors and against the Iranian dictatorship.

Dear Friend of FLAME:

You've no doubt seen the news reports on the anti-government protests in Iran—which should be triggers for us pro-Israel advocates. Bear with me for a moment, as I explain why and how.

This week's Torah portion is the start of Exodus—*Shemot*—which begins with Moses' birth, his rise through Pharaoh's administrative ranks and his receiving God's request to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.

A podcast commentary I heard on this portion noted that God didn't outright *order* a reluctant Moses to leave Egypt, but sought to *persuade* him. The commentator concluded that a lesson of the portion is, "God will point the way to us, but if we don't do it ourselves, it won't happen." In other words, "Ya gotta want it."

In all of life's endeavors, we have to be clear on what we want to happen, and we must—through focus and determination—make it happen ourselves. That's what the Jewish people have done with Israel. As Israel founder Theodor Herzl famously said, "If you will it, it is no dream."

Obviously, there will be no revolution in Iran unless the people will it—with great focus, determination and action. We Americans, who stand much to gain from the overthrow of the Iranian dictatorship, can only help the Iranian people if we truly will it, too. Which highlights a critical potential flaw in President Trump's foreign policy.

Mr. Trump is long on bold, even rash pronouncements—many of which express support for Israel and opposition to Iran—but he often seems to be short on follow-through strategies.

For example, we very much like Trump's declaration that Jerusalem is the true and only capital of Israel—but when will he actually move

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**YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH...**

**We Must Stop Iran Now**

Iran, the greatest source of global terror, threatens the U.S., Israel and most of the world. It will soon acquire nuclear weapons. How can we stop this outlaw regime?

The Islamic Republic ranks as the world's most heinous nation, now adopting aggressive military campaigns in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and China. It is working openly to develop conventional, ballistic missile and nuclear arsenals in defiance of UN resolutions.

**What are the facts?**

Iran is on the march—to acquire weapons of mass destruction, destroy Israel and to become the most powerful nation in the Middle East. Iranian forces and their allies are carrying a brutal campaign to wipe out the Jewish People's homeland, worldwide, Syria and Lebanon in the Mediterranean Sea. Iran demands the complete eradication of the Jewish People and the Palestinian terror group Hamas in Gaza. Iran will not allow a nuclear Israel. Iran has become the most violent, dangerous, imperialistic nation in the world.

Iran is in the midst of its latest war against the 2016 Iran Nuclear Deal. Despite reports to the contrary, the deal is in compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)—by which it agreed with China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany—that it will not build, test or export the U.S. or international nuclear energy agency—the IAEA—nuclear weapons. It is reported that Iran has made at least 12,000 centrifuges with the IAEA, which will produce the Islamic Republic's nuclear arsenal. Iran will contribute to the development of nuclear weapons.

In fact, none of the IAEA reports since 2015 states that Iran has complied with the deal's provisions, which require it to suspend all work on all Iranian military centrifuges. Rather, centrifuges used for the JCPOA agreement, who must declare a "judgment" on whether or not Iran is in compliance. U.S. President Donald Trump has "suspended" the deal, asserting the "Iranian regime" has violated the agreement. He has also urged Congress to decide whether to renege on the agreement or not. But will Congress do the job?

Iran is reportedly developing a large-scale ballistic missile in violation of a UN resolution. Iran also openly claims to deploy long-range missile capabilities of delivering nuclear weapons. Indeed, Major-General Mohammad Ali Jafari, Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, asserts, "The range of our missile is 2,000 km. We have the ability to hit any target 2,000 km away. It is sufficient because the Americans are in 2,000 km radius of our country." So, you see, Iran's long and missile's nuclear arsenal, including Israel, which has already made Iran a national enemy. It is the intention of U.S. Security Council Resolution 2251, which authorized the United States and others to use force to enforce sanctions related to Iranian efforts of developing nuclear weapons.

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the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem? Does he really *want* it?

Likewise, we like the President's tweets criticizing the Iranian kleptocracy and supporting the protestors, but will he—and Congress—put teeth in that support by funding opposition groups and increasing sanctions on the Islamic Republic? Do they really want it?

Which brings us to this week's FLAME *Hotline* featured article—on why the U.S. and other Western nations should swing into action, opposing Iran vociferously and materially on the world stage. The article's author, Natan Sharansky, served nine years as a prisoner in a Soviet Gulag for his human rights activities. He is Chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

Speaking as a persecuted dissident who knows whereof he speaks, Sharansky urges U.S.—despite contrary editorials in the *New York Times*—to step up and put our money where our mouth is. Do we really want it?

My friends, we had better want it, because Iran is the greatest enemy of the United States, and it's the greatest enemy of Israel, threatening to destroy the Jewish state daily. We must support regime change in Iran with all our power.

I hope you'll forward this short, simple, compelling email to friends, family and fellow congregants to help them understand why Americans should urge the President and Congress to exert all possible effort to derail the Islamic Republic.

I hope you'll also quickly review the P.S. immediately below, which describes FLAME's latest *hasbarah* campaign to urge the President and U.S. Congress to back up their rhetoric on Iran with definitive action. I hope you agree with and will support this message.

Best regards,

Jim Sinkinson

President, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid editorial *hasbarah* messages placed in media nationwide every month: The dire threats from Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah, the injustice of BDS, Palestinian anti-Semitism and more. If you support a bold voice that tells the truth about Israel in American media, please donate now.

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## FLAME'S WEEKLY HOTLINE E- NEWSLETTER



FLAME's Hotline e-newsletter keeps you up to date on the most important pro-Israel advocacy issues and features our choice of the week's most informative and thought-provoking article on Israel and the Middle East. If you only subscribe to one pro-Israel news service, make it the FLAME Hotline.

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P.S. As you know, Iran has become the largest state sponsor of global terrorism and the most dangerous enemy of the U.S. What's worse, the Islamic Republic continues to spread its jihadist tentacles throughout the Middle East, and now has armed forces on Israel's borders in Syria and Lebanon. No wonder FLAME has created a new editorial message—"[We Must Stop Iran Now](#)"—which is about to start running in mainstream magazines and newspapers, including college newspapers, with a combined readership of some 10 million people. In addition, it is being sent to every member of the U.S. Congress and President Trump. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider giving a donation now, as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate now](#). Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Trump stay focused on—and take actions against—Iran's threat to our country, Israel and the entire world.

As of today, more than 15,000 Israel supporters receive the FLAME Hotline [at no charge](#) every week. If you're not yet a subscriber, won't you join us in receiving these timely updates, so you can more effectively [tell the truth about Israel](#)? Just go to [free subscription](#).

## **The West should stop dithering and show its support for the protesters in Iran**

By Natan Sharansky *Washington Post*, January 3, 2018

**In recent days, Iranian citizens from various places** and diverse walks of life have taken to the streets in protest against their clerical rulers. Outside of Iran, meanwhile, we have seen experts in the world's most powerful capitals insisting that their leaders should not get involved. The usual argument is that external support for the protesters will only harm their cause by tainting it with endorsement from the West.

As an opinion piece in the *New York Times* recently put it, the best way for the U.S. government to help the Iranian protesters is to "Keep quiet and do nothing."

Fortunately, President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu have already shown themselves unwilling to follow this advice. Even so, it is vital to understand why failing to support the protesters at this critical juncture would constitute a moral and strategic mistake—one of potentially historic proportions.

**Consider what happened in 2009, when Iranians came out in large numbers** to denounce their country's rigged presidential election. The response they received from the American government was decidedly tepid. The priority of then-President Barack Obama was to reach an agreement with Tehran over its nuclear program, and he and his advisers feared that they would alienate the regime by vocally supporting its detractors.

Yet subsequent events have proved these views completely wrong. This policy of non-interference discouraged protesters and reinforced the regime at the very moment when the opposite could have led to genuine change.

My experiences as a political prisoner and my decades of involvement with democratic dissidents around the world have shown me that all democratic revolutions have some elements in common. It is the drive of ordinary citizens to free themselves from government control over their thought, speech and livelihoods—to shed the burden of having to conform in public despite their private misgivings and grievances against the regime—that has propelled dissidents and revolutionary movements around the world, from Communist Russia to the Arab Spring to today's Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Any regime that refuses to respect its citizens' most basic rights**, and especially the right to think and speak freely, can maintain its power only by intimidation and force. While some true believers may genuinely accept these official dogmas, others—I call them "double-thinkers"—question their government but are too afraid of retribution to publicly speak out against it. For these people, fear of the harsh consequences of dissent makes all the difference between silent critique and open protest.

Dissidents know the penalties of speaking out but are compelled more by the desire for freedom than by fear. They are willing to brave the consequences, including the loss of their livelihoods, physical freedom and even their lives, to gain the liberty to speak their minds. Revolutions take place when enough people simultaneously cross that fateful line between silent questioning and open dissent, between cowering in fear and standing up for freedom. Once they do so, the regime can no longer contain the upsurge of opposition and must either begin to liberalize or collapse.

This is why a policy of silence on the part of world leaders is so misguided. What matters to Iranians debating whether to cross this

decisive threshold is how much they dislike their *own* government, as well as their knowledge that the free world—those who share the basic principles for which they are fighting—stands behind them in their moment of truth.

**The last time Iran stood on the brink of such a change**, the Obama administration's policy implicitly told Iranians that the United States did not stand behind them. By assuring Iran's rulers that he preferred the status quo to any policy that would weaken or destabilize the regime, the president took the wind out of the protesters' sails and gave courage to their oppressors. What could have been a moment of genuine liberalization gave way instead to another brutal government crackdown.

Now that history is repeating itself, the free world has a chance to avoid making the same mistake. Our leaders must not be misled by the argument that publicly siding with Iran's dissidents will give the regime an excuse to blame the protests on foreign meddling or crack down even harder on dissidents. The government in Tehran will do these things no matter what, since a regime as threatened as Iran's is right now will take any steps in its power to deflect and suppress opposition.

Yet, world powers should go even further than this. They should warn Tehran—and thereby reassure protesters—that it must respect its citizens' rights if it wishes to continue receiving benefits from their countries. Articulating a clear policy of linkage would put pressure on the regime to make genuine changes and give hope to protesters that their sacrifices will not be in vain.

**It is time for all those who value freedom to state clearly** that the Iranian people—like all people—deserve to be free, and that when they fight for this right, those of us who already enjoy it will stand unequivocally by their side.

The logo for FLAME, featuring the word "FLAME" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letter "A" is stylized with a flame icon integrated into its top curve.

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