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Facts & Logic About the Middle East

March 10, 2020



Iran is a Mess . . . Which Creates Strategic Opportunities for Israel

Dear Friend of FLAME:

The Islamic Republic of Iran has solidified its position as the greatest threat to the world with a confluence of belligerent policies and awesomely bad judgment. It is a financial mess, a social mess, a diplomatic mess, a governance mess and, now, a health mess.

But the confluence of a tragic epidemic and the current Iranian reality also presents a special opportunity for Israel and America to rein in Iran's nefarious and lethal activities in the Middle East.

The budding coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic was originally a nasty and probably mishandled factor in China. But, while all the world was busy isolating China to prevent the spread of the virus, Iran's government of mullahs decided—in order to cultivate desperately needed China trade—that it would accelerate its commerce and tourism with that Asian behemoth.

The result—surprise, surprise!—is that Iran is now the secondary epicenter for COVID-19 transmission. Its mortality rate for COVID-19 far surpasses China's. The only real questions are whether Iran's government is under-reporting the true number of detected cases, or if Iranians are incubating and transmitting a more lethal version of the virus.

The smart money is on the Iranian theocrats' continued suppression of information, which could be crucial to the world's strategies in battling the epidemic.

After some lame attempts from Teheran to pin the COVID-19 crisis on the Great Satan (America) and the Little Satan (Israel), the mullahs returned to a crisis posture—especially with the spreading disease afflicting many of their own at the top of Iranian society and power structure.

The closed nature of mullah-run Iranian society makes it nearly impossible for outsiders to get a clear view of the COVID-19 situation there. Key social media—Facebook, Twitter—have been shut down for over a week. This suppression

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YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH...
Aid to Israel Makes the U.S. Safer
 U.S. aid to Israel is really not aid at all. The \$5.8 billion sent annually to Israel is an investment in our own country's security, returning many times its cost.

What are the facts?
 Several thousand professors have proposed withholding U.S. aid to Israel unless it allows more to support a Palestinian state, such as opening to Israeli housing in Judea, Samaria, the West Bank, and Gaza. This proposal ignores the real purpose of U.S. aid to Israel and undermines the legitimacy of Israel's settlement in a Palestinian state project.

A lot of confusion helps explain the document. Consider that the U.S. currently spends \$1.27 billion a year on military operations and aid for Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. Compare that amount with the overwhelming other American sources for its \$3.8 billion investment in Israel.

U.S. aid is not support Israel's day-to-day military operations, but rather are largely used to purchase high-tech armaments, such as U.S. manufactured F-35 stealth fighters, and to develop, with the U.S. new advanced weapons systems, such as Iron Dome, Arrow, and David's Sling missile defenses. Note that fully 50% of the U.S. investment in Israel must be spent to purchase U.S. military hardware and support U.S. military personnel serving in the Israeli Defense Force.

The national aid funds that threaten Israel also threaten U.S. interests—these include Iran, Syria, and U.S.-disputed territories in the West Bank, Gaza, Golan Heights and West Bank. Remember that Israel destroyed both Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons factory in Iraq in 1981 and a nuclear facility in Syria in 2007. Recall that Israel has attacked groups of American nuclear energy ships in the Persian Gulf and off the coast of Somalia in recent years. In Syria and Lebanon more than 200 times in recent years, Israeli jets have been flying in and out of the Assad airbase. No nation—other than the United States—has ever attacked the United States.

Our ally Israel is ranked the 8th most powerful nation globally. Israel is a democracy and a free society. Israel is not only America's strategic Middle East ally, it is also one of our strongest allies.

All the U.S. troops need to be stationed in Israel. While U.S. troops have been fighting for it, the Israeli state also collaborates with the U.S. on the 50,000+ soldier reserves, which have both extensive military and intelligence training. Israel is also a world leader in cybersecurity and intelligence gathering, providing the U.S. a pipeline that is classified as a top priority.

Information about Iran, Syria, Russia, of Qaddafi, Hezbollah and Hamas. Israel reveals to the U.S. to monitor Iranian nuclear weapons operations using the Negev sites, and has over Israeli agents penetrated Iran's nuclear warhead in Tehran, taking documents that proved Iran cheating on the 2015 nuclear deal.

Israel serves as a part of call for U.S. troops, ships, aircraft and intelligence operations. Strategically located on the Mediterranean and Red Seas, Israel guards critical sea lanes used for international shipping and military activities. As U.S. Representative Steve Rothman (R-N.J.) stated, "For almost 20 percent of what the U.S. spends on Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan this year, Americans can take pride in the services our investment in aid to Israel."

Those who seek to link Israel with a Palestinian state is misguided.
 U.S. investment in Israel to continue a Palestinian state, make a fundamental mistake. First, it would be foolhardy for the U.S. to provide aid to a state that is not a democracy. Second, the Palestinian state of their government offices of aid for Israel since 2001, as well as their refusal to negotiate with Israel since 2015. U.S. aid to Israel is not responsible for their mistreatment.

U.S. aid to Israel dramatically helps U.S. and is not subject to the negative Middle East and reserves Israel can support U.S. interests in the region. Indeed, our investment in Israel is not a waste of money—over 100% of the cost for aid to U.S. aid. Thus, an Israeli state U.S. investment in Israel and Palestinian state is misguided. U.S. aid to Israel helps government our own security. For the sake of our own general safety.

This message has been published and sent to by
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FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid

of information is akin to the media blackouts during the popular uprisings after the past two Iranian elections.

Iran entered the COVID-19 era already suffering a set of self-inflicted economic problems. The sanctions-easing rewards bestowed on Teheran by the 2015 nuclear agreement with America and Europe were revoked by President Trump in 2018. Those renewed sanctions cut deeply into Iran's chances for prosperity.

Thanks to its reckless jihadi policies intended to control the Middle East, Iran has ruined its own society and economy in countless ways. Last year, Iran's GDP was down 9.5%. Iran's currency, the *rial*, has experienced 40% or higher inflation in the past couple of years. With its status now certified as a principal disseminating center of COVID-19—and the desperate isolation/quarantine maneuvers its rulers have now been forced to undertake—the Iranian economy is likely to sink even faster in 2020 and beyond.

It is now stretched thin on massive imperialistic expenditures and obsessive focus on assaulting Israel throughout the Middle East and abroad. As a result, Israel has a sad-but-real window of opportunity to act against Iran and the Iranian proxies that encircle it.

The lethal aid and widely deployed military units that Iran has sent into Syria, Lebanon and Gaza will be stretched thin as the mullahs back home struggle to cope with the health crisis—and the economic/civil discontent it rekindles—at the expense of foreign adventures.

As if to ensure that Iranians remember the regime's brutality in squelching dissent, the "Butcher of Teheran," Mohammad Haj Abolghasemi, who was in charge of the brutal and sadistic repression of Iranian dissidents during those anti-government riots, became one of the early fatalities associated with COVID-19. The Iranian public rejoiced when news of his demise leaked out.

Nonetheless, Iran seems to be pursuing its nuclear-weapons program full-blast and unrelenting in its other *jihadi* export efforts. This week, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Grossi, issued a report admonishing Iran about its covert nuclear activities.

According to the IAEA, Iran's denial of IAEA's right to inspect three purported critical Iranian nuclear sites is "curtailing the ability of the Agency to do its work." The hidden sites were first exposed in the trove of secret Iranian nuclear-program documents pirated two years ago by Israel's Mossad.

With the necessary distraction of the mullahs afforded by the health crisis in Iran, Israel may have unexpected opportunities to derail Iran's quest for nuclear weapons.

Throughout the Middle East, virtually every significant insurgency and terrorist activity seems to continue to be a product and beneficiary of Iran's Revolutionary Guard. Hizbullah and Hamas are still Iranian proxies, bent on the destruction of Israel. Their budgets are no doubt under review in cash-strapped Teheran.

With decreased Iranian support for its foreign adventures with Hizbullah, Hamas and others, Israel may find new opportunities to attack and minimize these rocket threats on its borders.

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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In discussions with friends, families and colleagues, we encourage you to point out that the deep pockets and perfidy of Iran has focused on Israel. Iran has acted as an enabler of the spread of the COVID-19 virus, but this tragic pandemic crisis may contain opportunities to confront the main provocateur of so many other miseries in the Middle East.

In addition, I hope you'll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to visit FLAME's lively [new Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new *hasbarah* campaign—outspokenly describing Israel's critical strategic value to America.

Best regards,

Ken Cohen
Editor, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. Many uninformed Americans—including some politicians—believe that foreign aid to Israel is a mistake. The anti-Semites believe Jews are extorting money from U.S. taxpayers or that Israel “doesn’t need the money.” These opinions, of course, are mistaken. U.S. aid to Israel is no gift: It’s a wise investment that repays American taxpayers many times over—in fact delivering more benefits than most other U.S. foreign aid. That’s why FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called “[Aid to Israel Makes the U.S. Safer](#)” I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based paid editorial, which will run in coming months in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. It lays out the many contributions Israel makes to U.S. security that far exceed their relatively modest cost. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Pence 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 realistic policies in relation to Israel, the Palestinians and the entire Middle East.

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