



# Biting Sanctions: An Effective Strategy Against the Islamic Republic of Iran, or a Devastating Burden on Its Citizens

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Biting Sanctions:  
An Effective Strategy Against the Islamic Republic of Iran,  
or a Devastating Burden on Iranian Citizens?

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A Thesis in the Field of Legal Studies  
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## Abstract

Despite an emerging global pandemic, the Trump administration has not relented in its efforts of imposing economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran. This thesis takes a look at who bears the greatest burden of these sanctions: The Iranian government, or its citizens. The history of the country is also examined, with particular attention paid to the record of foreign interference in the Iranian nation's domestic affairs.

Key Words: Iran, economic sanctions, JCPOA, global pandemic, INSTEX

## Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents – Fatameh Elahe Golyaei and Fereydoun Mehran-Razy.

It is in great part due to your efforts that I have never forgotten about Iran.

Thank you.

## Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank my ALM research advisor, Dr. Donald Ostrowski. I will be eternally grateful for your guidance. My gratitude also goes to my thesis coordinator Gail Dourian, Dr. Doug Bond, Asieh Namdar, Hooman Majd, Bita Eghbali, Firoozeh Hoorfar, Bahman Kalbasi and Enzo – all of whom have contributed to this process with their invaluable advice, their encouragement, or both – for which I will always be thankful. Lastly, I would like to thank my thesis director, Professor Payam Mohseni, thank you for your direction and assistance throughout this process.

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## Chapter I Introduction

*Yes, my sin — my greater sin and even my greatest sin is that I nationalized Iran's oil industry and discarded the system of political and economic exploitation by the world's greatest empire...With God's blessing and the will of the people, I fought this savage and dreadful system of international espionage and colonialism...I am well aware that my fate must serve as an example in the future throughout the Middle East in breaking the chains of slavery and servitude to colonial interests.* - Mohammad Mossadegh<sup>1</sup>

These words were spoken by the former Prime Minister of Iran at his trial on December 19, 1953, in defense of charges made against him for treason.<sup>2</sup> Decades later, a young woman by the name of Marjane Satrapi would chronicle her childhood and adolescence in Iran during the years just before and after the Islamic Revolution in an illustrated autobiography. Recounting a conversation with her father regarding the unrest that had become the norm in their surrounding environment, Marjane recalled his observation, “As long as there is oil in the Middle East, we will never have peace.”<sup>3 4 5</sup>

Beginning in the early twentieth century, Iran – or as it was then known, Persia – came under the scrutiny of foreign powers (namely: Russia, Great Britain, and the United States) due to the vast amounts of crude oil known to be in the country’s southwest territories.<sup>6</sup> This was the era of the Second Industrial Revolution, and the demand for petroleum products in the manufacturing and freight industries was rapidly growing. Western powers soon began to put the

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<sup>1</sup> “49<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary of Dr. Mohammad Mosaddegh.” Iran Review (n.d.): n/a.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York City, NY: Pantheon Books / Random House (2004): 15.

<sup>4</sup> Miriam Shabafrouz describes this as the *resource curse* (2009, p. 9).

<sup>5</sup> Shabafrouz, Miriam. "Iran's Oil Wealth: Treasure and Trouble for the Shah's Regime - A Context-Sensitive Analysis of the Ambivalent Impact of Resource Abundance." SSRN Electronic Journal, (2009): 9.

<sup>6</sup> Shuster, W. Morgan. *The Strangling of Persia*. New York: The Century Co. (1912): 260.

wheels in motion in order to gain control of Iranian oil supplies.<sup>7 8 9</sup> By the time Prime Minister Mossadegh came to power in 1951, the Iranian people had reached a general consensus regarding what they wanted for their country's future: Democratically elected leaders, the nationalization of their country's oil, and to prevent the further influence of foreign powers over their country's assets, resources, and elected officials.<sup>10</sup>

In retribution for Mossadegh's nationalization of Iranian oil, Great Britain's first order of action was to levy sanctions; this included an embargo of medications, leading to a shortage of essential drugs for Iranian citizens.<sup>11 12 13</sup> Next, the British government employed various tactics of coercion: Threats of military force, further economic pressure, and the intimidation of foreign companies so as to deter them from working with Iranian oil refineries.<sup>14</sup> Subsequently, the United States began issuing threats to Iran: In 1952, President Eisenhower temporarily issued an order for suspension of military aid. Yet again in 1953, Eisenhower issued another warning to Iran, demanding the country's leaders come to a resolution with Western powers regarding access to

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<sup>7</sup> Ehsani, Kaveh. "The Social History of Labor in the Iranian Oil Industry: The Built Environment and the Making of the Industrial Working Class (1908-1941)" (2014): 6, 7, 13-18.

<sup>8</sup> Everest, Larry. *Oil, Power and Empire: Iraq and the U.S. Global Agenda* (2004): 87-88.

<sup>9</sup> "U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA)." Glossary - U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) (n.d.): n/a.

<sup>10</sup> Kinzer, Stephen. *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror*. Hoboken, NJ: J. Wiley & Sons (2003): 37-40, 76-80, 82, 91-93.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>12</sup> Milani, Abbas. *The Persian Sphinx: Amir Abbas Hoveyda and the Riddle of the Iranian Revolution*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: Mage Publishers, 2001: 121-122.

<sup>13</sup> Hufbauer, G.C., Schott, J., & Elliott, K.A. (2007). *Economic sanctions reconsidered* (3rd ed., Expanded ed.). Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics: 14-15.

<sup>14</sup> Kinzer (2003): 115.

Iranian oil reserves or risk losing monetary aid from the United States.<sup>15</sup> Despite pressure from Western powers, public opinion was on Mossadegh's side, and in August 1953 the Shah was forced to seek exile in Europe. The United States and Great Britain staged a coup d'état – often referred to as Operation Ajax; this joint effort by the British MI6 and the American CIA forced Mossadegh out of power and reinstated Mohammad Reza Pahlavi as the Shah of Iran.<sup>16 17</sup> While far from nationalized in the post-Mossadegh era under the Shah, Iranian oil profits were never again under the complete control of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.<sup>18 19 20</sup> Sanctions would not be imposed on Iran again until after the Islamic Revolution in 1979; this year also marked the second time in history that Iran's oil was nationalized.<sup>21 22</sup>

This chapter presents my inquiries and research with regard to economic sanctions on Iran, specifically those imposed after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. The first part deals with introducing the research problems and hypothesis, as well as outlining the implications and consequences of the subject matter. The second part – the research methodology section – addresses the reasoning and judgement meant to uphold and advocate for my theories.

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<sup>15</sup> Efimenco, N. Marbury. "An Experiment with Civilian Dictatorship in Iran; The Case of Mohammed Mossadegh." *The Journal of Politics* 17, no. 3 (1955): 390-406.

<sup>16</sup> *Coup 53*, 2019: n/a.

<sup>17</sup> Kinzer (2003): 162 – 185, 193.

<sup>18</sup> Heiss, Mary Ann. "The United States, Great Britain, and the Creation of the Iranian Oil Consortium, 1953-1954." *The International History Review* 16, no. 3 (1994): 515.

<sup>19</sup> Perry, Jane and Carey, Clark. "Iran and Control of Its Oil Resources." *Political Science Quarterly* 89, no. 1 (1974): 152.

<sup>20</sup> Kinzer (2003): 196.

<sup>21</sup> Jones, Geoffrey. "National Iranian Oil Company." International Directory of Company Histories. Encyclopedia.com, (2019): n/a.

<sup>22</sup> Aghazadeh, Mahdiah. "A historical overview of sanctions on Iran and Iran's nuclear program". *Journal of Academic Studies*, 14(56), (2013): 140-142.

## Research Problem and Hypothesis

The key points addressed in the research problems for this thesis address whether economic sanctions have impeded or barred Iranian citizens from gaining access to humanitarian goods. To some extent, the imposition of economic sanctions on Iran is a rather recent phenomenon. Scholars are still examining the long-term impacts of sanctions on the general Iranian population. Quantitative research (regarding other topics) has been carried out inside the country in recent years.<sup>23</sup> However, research inside the Islamic Republic is difficult to carry out, as an OFAC license has recently become mandate, and for foreign academics – a difficult-to-obtain visa with a lengthy screening process is necessary.<sup>24</sup> Thus, there exists a gap in the research and study of the clear-cut impacts that sanctions have left on the civilian population of Iran.

Scholars of Iranian Studies, International Relations, and Foreign Policy have a range of theories regarding sanctions generally, and thus are of different persuasions regarding sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran: Some believe that it is a practical alternative to war, while others believe that sanctions are actually a form of political warfare whose most dire impacts are experienced first and most severely by the general population, and particularly the most vulnerable citizens.<sup>25</sup> The research problems are designed to target two key issues. The first issue: Do economic sanctions on Iran – by the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations – result in a lack of humanitarian goods for Iranian citizens? That is, do economic sanctions by

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<sup>23</sup> EXAMPLE: Harris, Kevan, and Daniel Tavana. "Voter Behavior and Political Mobilization in Iran: Findings from the Iran Social Survey." *European Middle East Research Group*, January 2018: n/a.

<sup>24</sup> "Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations 31 C.F.R. Part 560 GENERAL LICENSE G Certain Academic Exchanges and the Exportation or Importation of Certain Educational Services Authorized." Office of Foreign Assets Control. Treasury Department of the United States of America, n.d.: n/a.

<sup>25</sup> Hovi, Jon, Robert Huseby, and Detlef F. Sprinz. "When Do (Imposed) Economic Sanctions Work?" *World Politics* 57, no. 4 (2005): 479-99.

foreign powers carry full or partial culpability for the scarcity of humanitarian goods that Iranian citizens experience? The second issue: If economic sanctions are only partially to blame for the lack of access to humanitarian goods experienced by Iran's citizens, how could the issue could be alleviated by Iran's domestic government? By this, I mean: Can the Iranian government find a way to counterbalance the lack of medical goods produced by sanctions? Could a domestic infrastructure be built in order to ensure Iranians who are in need of medical goods are less vulnerable to shortages brought on by economic sanctions?

The relevance of my research ties back to a class I took at Harvard with Dr. Paul Farmer – one phrase changed my way of thinking about access to healthcare as I had perceived it up until that point: *Healthcare is a human right.*<sup>26</sup> Humanitarian goods and adequate healthcare are not bargaining chips, nor are they a privilege, and should be non-negotiable, regardless of political hostilities or conflicts. Economic sanctions are obsolete weaponry, left over from a bygone-era; arsenal whose practical use and suitability, even when best utilized and executed, often falls short of the intended mark.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Farmer, Paul. "Who Lives and Who Dies." *London Review of Books* 37, no. 3 (2015): 17-20.

<sup>27</sup> Hufbauer, Gary. "Economic Sanctions." *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting (American Society of International Law)* 92 (1998): 332-333.

## Research Methodology

The main objective of the research methodology section is to analyze and clarify the rationale and reasoning in support of, or countering, my hypothesis. Going into its fourth decade, the Islamic Republic of Iran has dealt with an ever-changing onslaught of sanctions from the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations. While the state itself has managed to weather the financial burdens and strengthen its political prowess in the region – despite the economic strains placed on it by outside powers – the average Iranian citizen is often left to bear the brunt of medicinal shortages, forced to track down scarce medical exports and pay exorbitant prices for the vital pharmaceutical goods they require.<sup>28 29</sup> I hypothesize that economic and banking sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran (employed by the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations) significantly obstruct the average Iranian citizen's access to humanitarian goods.

In order to examine my hypothesis, I will be using an analytical approach often referred to as a mixed-method research strategy, whereby I will study and assess both qualitative and quantitative records and documents. For my primary sources and documents, I will be using search engines, such as HOLLIS, Google Scholar, Factiva, and Lexus Nexus – these will give me access to historical documents, primary sources, books, secondary sources of literature, journal articles, and newspaper articles. Subsequently, I will be supplementing my primary research with speeches, podcasts, and social media posts by world leaders on platforms such as Twitter. While I can conduct my research in both English in Persian, my greatest research limitation is that I cannot –

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<sup>28</sup> Asia News Monitor Staff. "United States/Iran: Envoy: US Sanctions Targeting Most Vulnerable People in Iran." *Asia News Monitor* (Bangkok), 2019: n/a.

<sup>29</sup> Aloosh, Mehdi. "How Economic Sanctions Compromise Cancer Care in Iran." *The Lancet Oncology* 19, no. 7 (2018): E334.

for reasons of time-constraints and feasibility – travel to Iran in order to conduct further research. Despite the fact that I would not need to obtain a visa to travel to Iran, I would still need to obtain an OFAC license in order to conduct research inside the country, and the obtainment of such a document is circuitous and time-consuming. Nonetheless, with the World Wide Web, and various social media platforms, a great deal of information can still be obtained with regard to this topic. The subsequent overviews of each chapter will map out my approach for researching this thesis and will lay out my methodology in greater detail.

Chapter two is the Literature Review and will detail the various aspects of sanctions in theory. The aim of this chapter is to define sanctions, examine sanctions in theory, and look at both sides of the argument. After giving a brief overview of the history of sanctions and particularly how they have been implemented by the United States – the chapter is an examination of reasonings from both sides – those that are pro-sanctions, and those that are anti-sanctions. The chapter, thus, is a compilation of both pro- and anti- sanctions arguments juxtaposed against the history of sanctions and how effectively they have been used as a deterrent.

Chapter three is broken down into three parts: Iran before the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iran during the Islamic Revolution of 1979, and Iran immediately after the Islamic Revolution of 1979. The section on Iran pre-1979 will also examine the era of Prime Minister Mossadegh who first nationalized Iran’s oil industry, and the 1953 coup. The section on Iran post-1979 will review the Iran Hostage Crisis. The chapter leads up to this particular moment and highlights how the Iranian citizenry spent the better part of the twentieth century resisting the presence of foreign influence inside their country and over their country’s assets, particularly Iranian oil reserves.

Chapter four, entitled “The Political Power Structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran” is a chapter that has been under constant revision, as result of the ceaseless developments taking place in and around Iran. Yet, despite adjustments that had to be made to this chapter, the outline for the section remained virtually unchanged. This is somewhat reflective of the power structure currently in place in Iran: Specific parties hold an undeniable amount of influence and power inside the country and remain ostensibly unaffected despite regional and global tensions taking place around them. The chapter takes a more in-depth look at Iran’s political factions, and the country’s military branches.

Chapter five looks at sanctions in practice, and the various consequences and incentives of sanctions for Iranian and U.S. politics. The first part of the chapter, however, looks at the consequences of sanctions from the angle of humanitarian dimensions. That is, how sanctions impact Iranian citizens, particularly those who are seeking medical care inside the country. Using qualitative and quantitative data, I will assess how sanctions impact the health of a society, and whether they have led to unavailability or deficiencies in humanitarian goods for Iranian citizens. The second part of this chapter looks at the consequences of sanctions with regard to Iranian politics. The third part of this chapter looks at the incentives of sanctions from the angle of Iranian politics. The final part of this chapter looks at how the sanctions of impacted Iran’s ability to deal the emerging global pandemic.

Collectively, all five chapters are centered around assessing whether economic sanctions have led to a shortage of humanitarian goods for Iranian citizens. Each chapter is meant to tie in with the others by determining how Iran and foreign powers have arrived at this point in history and how political decisions have impacted the lives of Iranian citizens.



## Chapter II.

### Literature Review

*[Economic sanctions are an] ...action taken by one country or group of countries to harm the economic interest of another country or group of countries, usually to bring about pressure for social or political change. Sanctions normally take the form of restrictions on imports or exports, or on financial transactions. They may be applied to specific items or they may be comprehensive trade bans. There is considerable disagreement over their effectiveness. Critics point out that they are easily evaded and often inflict more pain on those they are designed to help than on the governments they are meant to influence.*<sup>30</sup>

In the modern era, the notion and practice of “internationally authorized economic sanctions” began with the League of Nations, an organization that was the brainchild of President Woodrow Wilson. Sanctions placed by the League only succeeded when placed on minor powers, however;<sup>31</sup> between 1935-1936, sanctions placed on Italy by the League in an attempt to persuade its government to remove armed forces from Abyssinia, for example, were met with failure.<sup>32</sup> In the 1950s, years after the League of Nations was dissolved, Great Britain continued the practice by sanctioning Iran after Prime Minister Mossadegh nationalized the country’s oil. Yet, sanctions on their own were ineffective in persuading Mossadegh or the Iranian population to give up sovereignty over their oil reserves.<sup>33</sup> Eventually, Great Britain and the United States were forced

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<sup>30</sup> Law, Jonathan. "Economic Sanctions." *A Dictionary of Business and Management*, 2016, A Dictionary of Business and Management: n/a.

<sup>31</sup> i.e., Greece, Paraguay, and Bolivia

<sup>32</sup> Hufbauer (1998): 330-333.

<sup>33</sup> Hufbauer, Schott, Elliott, (2007): 14-15.

to overthrow Mossadegh's government in an orchestrated coup in order to reinstate the ousted Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, so as to regain control of Iranian oil supplies.<sup>34 35 36</sup>

Despite the League of Nation's volatile success rates with sanctions, the United Nations adopted the practice in the 1960s, voting to impose them on Rhodesia and South Africa.<sup>37</sup> The determination on whether sanctions should be imposed by the United Nations is made by a fifteen-member committee; sanctions are imposed if there is a majority vote, and if there is no veto from any of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) – often referred to as the P5 – the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, France, and China. Up until 1990 – which marked the end of the Cold War – Rhodesia and South Africa remained the only nations to be sanctioned by the United Nations.<sup>38 39 40</sup> According to a report written in 2009 by Daniel Halberstam and Eric Stein, however, the United Nations has since increased what it terms its “peacekeeping budget...twenty-fold since 1989” and the authors add that “the number of vetoes

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<sup>34</sup> Kinzer (2003): 37-40, 76-80, 82, 91-93, 110, 198-199.

<sup>35</sup> Milani, 2001: 121.

<sup>36</sup> Gottemoeller, Rose. "The Evolution of Sanctions in Practice and Theory." *Survival* 49, no. 4 (2007): 99-110.

<sup>37</sup> Hufbauer (1998): 333.

<sup>38</sup> “What Are Economic Sanctions?” Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations (n.d.): n/a.

<sup>39</sup> Halberstam, Daniel, and Eric Stein. "The United Nations, the European Union, and the King of Sweden: Economic Sanctions and Individual Rights in a Plural World Order." *Common Market Law Review* 46, no. 1 (2009): 14.

<sup>40</sup> Addis, Adeno. "Economic Sanctions and the Problem of Evil." *Human Rights Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (2003): 574.

in the Security Council is at an all-time low.”<sup>41 42 43</sup> One of the strategies used by the United Nation’s peacekeeping mission is claiming an area of authority “over the behavior of non-State actors even when they are unconnected to any governing regime, [in order] to regulate their behavior through the imposition of sanctions that freeze the individuals’ assets.”<sup>44</sup>

One of the most prevailing examples of the misuse of economic sanctions by the United Nations is perhaps those which were imposed on Iraq, beginning in 1990.<sup>45</sup> Despite imposing economic sanctions on Iraq, the United Nations established a method by which the country could ostensibly request concessions for humanitarian use. The Iraqi was required to file for the exemptions via the United Nation’s 661 Committee.<sup>46</sup> However, as author Joy Gordon explains “the committee adopted procedures that systematically impeded approval of any goods, even those that were clearly both permissible and urgent...The United States played a critical role in every aspect of this process.”<sup>47</sup>

The 661 Committee’s meetings were not open to the press and transparent reports were not required by the United Nations, thus leading to a lack of unawareness by the general public due to the underreporting and a lack of accountability for the committee.<sup>48</sup> In effect, the measures and

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<sup>41</sup>Halberstam, Stein (2009): 14.

<sup>42</sup> “Changing Patterns in the Use of the Veto in the Security Council.” Changing Patterns in the Use of the Veto in the Security Council (n.d.): n/a.

<sup>43</sup> Elliott, Kimberly Ann. "The Sanctions Glass: Half Full or Completely Empty?" *International Security*. 23, no. 1 (1998): 51-52.

<sup>44</sup> Halberstam, Stein (2009): 14-15.

<sup>45</sup> Gordon, Joy. *Invisible War: The United States and the Iraq Sanctions*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010: 47 – 53.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 47-48.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 48.

practices adopted by the 661 Committee resulted in gratuitously increased regulations and the loss of virtually all feasible means of access to humanitarian goods for Iraq's general population. In March 2000 – approximately a decade after sanctions were first imposed on Iraq by the United Nations – Anupama Rao Singh, a UNICEF official who had worked in Iraq made a personal bid to the 661 Committee with regard to the humanitarian crises taking place inside the country.<sup>49</sup> Singh stated “that 25 percent of children in south and central governorates suffered from chronic malnutrition, which was often irreversible, and 9 percent from acute malnutrition...the child mortality rate was ‘alarming,’ noting that children under five had gone from 56/1,000 prior to sanctions to 131/1,000 in the 1990s.”<sup>50</sup> Ultimately in 2003, despite the punitive, unwavering sanctions imposed by the United Nations on Iraqis for over a decade – the United States decided that sanctions had failed. The Bush administration, backed by the U.S. Congress, surmised that the only practical solution was to “attack” Iraq in order to rid the country of Saddam Hussein and restore stability to the nation.<sup>51</sup>

Under the United Nation's Charter, Chapter VII, the coalition is afforded far-reaching authority with regard to the actions it chooses to take against a nation or entity. For many analysts, there is growing consternation about whether essential tenets and beliefs of the United Nations – such as the pursuit of human rights for all – are in peril for the sake of the organization's resolve

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<sup>49</sup> Gordon (2010): 44-56.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 167-170.

that its decrees and dictates are acted upon.<sup>52 53 54</sup> Scholars Daniel Halberstam and Eric Stein have written about the growing concern around the UN's powers under Chapter VII, stating "the UN's development of economic sanctions against States, for example... [we've found] that the Security Council has a record of almost complete failure to consider international law standards."<sup>55 56 57</sup>

Created in 1992, the European Union (EU) is a twenty-eight-member alliance that does not currently have collaborative armed forces; thus, sanctions are presently the most efficient foreign policy weapon at the EU's disposal. Member-countries of the EU are also permitted to levy sanctions separate from the coalition within their sovereign domain.<sup>58</sup> The Council on Foreign Relations states that the "European Union imposes sanctions (known more commonly [in the EU] ...as restrictive measures) as part of its Common Foreign and Security Policy."<sup>59</sup> In order for sanctions to be approved, the Council of the European Union must reach unanimous consensus. In less than three decades, the EU has imposed sanctions more than thirty times. Experts have assessed that the EU's decision to impose wide-ranging sanctions imposed on IRI in 2012 was a

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<sup>52</sup> "Chapter VII of the Charter of United Nations: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression." United Nations. United Nations. Accessed November 5, 2019: n/a.

<sup>53</sup> Halberstam, Stein (2009): 14-16.

<sup>54</sup> Reisman, W. M., and D. L. Stevick. "The Applicability of International Law Standards to United Nations Economic Sanctions Programmes." *European Journal of International Law* 9, no. 1 (1998): 1-3, 100-105.

<sup>55</sup> Halberstam, Stein (2009): 15.

<sup>56</sup> Damrosch, Lori F., and Council on Foreign Relations. *Enforcing Restraint: Collective Intervention in Internal Conflicts*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993: 274.

<sup>57</sup> Addis (2009): 599 – 612.

<sup>58</sup> Council on Foreign Relations (2019): n/a.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., (2019): n/a.

defining moment for the coalition, which had hitherto restricted their sanctions policies on the country to corporations or exclusive entities.<sup>60 61 62 63</sup>

Currently, the United States holds the record as the country that has imposed and is presently levying the highest number of sanctions worldwide.<sup>64</sup> In the United States, Congress's passing of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) in 1977 was an attempt to narrow and define the Presidential powers that had been granted to the office under the scope of the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 (TWEA).<sup>65 66 67</sup> Under the TWEA, beginning with administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Presidential powers were expanded to grant the right to declare a state of emergency without defining either its length of time or its limitations – most significantly, without the direction and guidance of Congress – and without presenting applicable rules of law.<sup>68</sup> The enactment of the IEEPA in 1977 was in reaction to a Senate investigation four years prior that had found four declared emergencies from previous Presidential administrations

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<sup>60</sup> Council on Foreign Relations (2019): n/a.

<sup>61</sup> Council of the European Union: "...the body that represents EU Leaders" (CFR, 2019)

<sup>62</sup> "European Union Restrictive Measures (Sanctions) in Force (Regulations Based on Article 215 TFEU and Decisions Adopted in the Framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy)." *EUROPEAN COMMISSION Service for Foreign Policy Instruments*, July 7, 2016: 2-3, 23-36.

<sup>63</sup> "Changing Patterns in the Use of the Veto in the Security Council." Changing Patterns in the Use of the Veto in the Security Council. (n.d.): n/a.

<sup>64</sup> Council on Foreign Relations (2019): n/a.

<sup>65</sup> Casey, Christopher A., Dianne E. Rennack, Ian F. Ferguson, and Jennifer K. Elsea. "The International Emergency Economic Powers Act: Origins, Evolution, and Use." *Congressional Research Service* R45618 (March 20, 2019): 1–64.

<sup>66</sup> Coates, Benjamin A. "The Secret Life of Statutes: A Century of the Trading with the Enemy Act." *Modern American History* 1, no. 2 (2018): 151-72.

<sup>67</sup> *Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917* 106, no. 40 (1917): 1–44.

<sup>68</sup> Coates (2018): 161-163.

that were still active.<sup>69</sup> <sup>70</sup> In order to begin curbing Presidential sanctioning powers, Congress dissolved the outstanding emergencies with the National Emergencies Act (1976). The following year, Congress passed the IEEPA in an attempt to curb the powers of the Office of the President with regard to imposing sanctions and declaring a state of emergency without Congressional approval.<sup>71</sup> <sup>72</sup>

While on its face, the IEEPA was intended to place limitations on Presidential powers – diminishing the authority previously afforded to the Office by the TWEA by allowing the President to issue a state of emergency exclusively for crises instigated beyond the borders of the United States without approval from Congress – the new law restored many of the original statutory framework from the TWEA’s section 5(b).<sup>73</sup> Thus, the IEEPA left Presidential powers nearly unchanged, and “while presidents could no longer invoke the Trading with the Enemy Act during peacetime, they could now rely on the IEEPA for nearly all the same powers.” Granted, the IEEPA blocked the President from seizing foreign assets, stipulated that the administration in power “could not target purely domestic transactions, [and] had to consult with Congress before issuing new declarations of emergency.”<sup>74</sup> <sup>75</sup> However, since their inception, the IEEPA guidelines have

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<sup>69</sup> (a) 1933: critical banking situation, stockpiling gold; (b) 1950: the Korean War; (c) 1970: postal workers strike; (d) 1971: U.S. financial crisis

<sup>70</sup> “Report of the Special Committee on the Termination of the National Emergency - United States Senate.” *Emergency Powers Statutes* 93-549 (November 19, 1973): 1–16.

<sup>71</sup> “National Emergencies Act.” *50 U.S.C. § 1601-1651* Pub.L. 94-412, no. 90 (1976): n/a.

<sup>72</sup> “International Emergency Economic Powers Act.” *95th United States Congress, 50 U.S.C. Ch. 35 § 1701 Et Seq* Title II, Pub.L. 95-223, no. 91 Stat. (1977): n/a.

<sup>73</sup> Coates (2018): 166-170.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>75</sup> Giraud, John P. "Waging Economic Warfare: The Sanctions Power under the Constitution." *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics* 19, no. 4 (1987): 953-956.

had limited success with respect to reeling in Presidential sanctioning powers. Less than a decade after Congress first voted in the law, the Supreme Court overruled countless cases brought before the court on the grounds of an overreach of Presidential executive power, citing the IEEPA as evidence.<sup>76 77</sup> It should be noted, that while the TWEA was used with a certain degree of restraint, the IEEPA has since been utilized by Presidents with striking unconcern for the magnitude of their actions. For example, as of February 2018 the Trump administration has imposed “twenty-eight active sanctions programs, nearly all based at least in part on national emergencies declared pursuant to the IEEPA.”<sup>78 79 80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> (a) *Dames & Moore v. Regan* (1981); (b) *INS vs. Wald* (1983); *Regan v. Wald* (1984)

<sup>77</sup> Coates (2018): 170.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 170-171.

<sup>79</sup> Thronson, Patrick A. "Toward Comprehensive Reform of America's Emergency Law Regime." *University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform* 46, no. 2 (2013): 737-787.

<sup>80</sup> Lobel, Jules. "Emergency Power and the Decline of Liberalism." *Yale Law Journal* 98, no. 7 (1989): 1385-1433.



## Arguments in Defense of Sanctions

*A nation boycotted is a nation that is in sight of surrender. Apply this economic, peaceful, silent, deadly remedy and there will be no need for force. It is a terrible remedy. It does not cost a life outside the nation boycotted, but it brings pressure upon the nation that, in my judgment, no modern nation could resist.* Woodrow Wilson <sup>81</sup>

Advocates of sanctions policies often begin their rationalization with one particular premise: They are a far less detrimental alternative to military conflict. <sup>82</sup> <sup>83</sup> Other scholars argue that administrations and alliances are usually aware that the likelihood of sanctions inducing a nation into acquiescence are improbable, but that they “resort to sanctions more likely...for their symbolic effects: simply put, crises erupt, and governments have to react.” <sup>84</sup> <sup>85</sup> For instance, when armed conflict is not practical (or public opinion is strongly opposed), but a country or alliance deems it necessary to counter a government’s conduct, sanctions afford a nation the publicity of appearing proactive, commanding – the victor. One particular example is the Iran Hostage Crisis: As President Carter’s administration scrambled to negotiate in order to get American embassy staff back on U.S. soil, sanctions provided the general public with a salve, as “US officials during the hostage crisis knew that the American people [would not] be satisfied for long with meetings at

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<sup>81</sup> Heine-Ellison, S. "The Impact and Effectiveness of Multilateral Economic Sanctions: A Comparative Study." *The International Journal of Human Rights* 5, no. 1 (2001): 83.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>83</sup> Lopez, George. "In Defense of Smart Sanctions: A Response to Joy Gordon." *Ethics and International Affairs* 26, no. 1 (2012): 135-146.

<sup>84</sup> Lindsay, James M. "Trade Sanctions as Policy Instruments: A Re-Examination." *International Studies Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1986): 170.

<sup>85</sup> Mayall, James. "The Sanctions Problem in International Economic Relations: Reflections in the Light of Recent Experience." *International Affairs 1944-1995* 60, no. 4 (1984): 632.

the White House.”<sup>86 87 88 89</sup> Perhaps sanctions are an effective public relations instrument for satisfying the domestic audience, but the question remains: How long can an administration appease the general public by way of imposing sanctions, and how far are they willing to go?

Certain scholars credit sanctions with being an effective deterrent for hindering a nation’s nuclear ambitions. Frequently, this theory breaks down the impact of sanctions as restraints on a state into three phases: “The first phase – imposition of economic cost”; “the second phase – conversion into political coercive pressure”; and “the third phase – the creation of zone of possible agreement.”<sup>90 91</sup> In the first phase, sanctions are meant to impose a financial drain on a country’s economy. Thus, in this phase, a number of scholars believe that the extensiveness of sanctions imposed is vital. Correspondingly, the more trade-dependent a country’s economy, the more it will suffer if imports and exports are prohibited. Another key aspect to imposing economic sanctions: The collaborated effort and cooperation of a nation’s key commerce allies.<sup>92</sup> Chantal de Jonge Oudraat’s research corresponds: She sets forth a sanctions strategy wherein the more economically vulnerable and dependent on exports a nation, the more effective the outcome of imposing

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<sup>86</sup> Lindsay (1986): 170.

<sup>87</sup> Jordan, Hamilton. *Crisis: The Last Year of the Carter Presidency*. New York: Putnam, 1982: 37.

<sup>88</sup> Addis (2009): 593-594.

<sup>89</sup> Jacobson, M. “Sanctions Against Iran: A Promising Struggle.” *The Washington Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (2008): 69-88.

<sup>90</sup> Clawson, Patrick. "Could Sanctions Work Against Tehran?" *Middle East Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (2007): 13-20.

<sup>91</sup> Kim, Inwook, and Lee Jung-Chul. "Sanctions for Nuclear Inhibition: Comparing Sanction Conditions between Iran and North Korea." *Asian Perspective* 43, no. 1 (2019): 95-98, 100-103.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 95-98, 100-103.

sanctions.<sup>93 94</sup> Letzkian's and Souva's analysis also parallels these models: They assess the advantages of multilateral sanctions compared to those of unilateral sanctions and conclude that the latter are more effective in bringing about economic adversity, and thereby lead to the sanctioned country's cooperation; they contend that a country targeted with multilateral sanctions has more prospects for finding substitute trade partners. Letzkian and Souva reason that the diminution of alternate commerce allies is a key function of multilateral sanctions which inflicts a tougher financial burden on the sanctioned country.<sup>95 96 97 98 99</sup>

The second phase – “conversion into political coercive pressure” – asserts that states learn to absorb economic sanctions. Scholars concede that “the determination of whether to capitulate to economic sanctions is essentially a political and not an economic decision,” and give the example of sanctions imposed on Iraq for the duration of the 1990s, which did not on its own bring

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<sup>93</sup> De Jonge Oudraat, Chantal. "Making Economic Sanctions Work." *Survival* 42, no. 3 (2000): 115-118.

<sup>94</sup> Allen, Susan Hannah. "The Determinants of Economic Sanctions Success and Failure." *International Interactions* 31, no. 2 (2005): 120.

<sup>95</sup> Kim, Lee (2019): 99.

<sup>96</sup> Dashti-Gibson, Jaleh, Patricia Davis, and Benjamin Radcliff. "On the Determinants of the Success of Economic Sanctions: An Empirical Analysis." *American Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 2 (1997): 608-18.

<sup>97</sup> McLean, Elena V., and Taehee Whang. "Friends or Foes? Major Trading Partners and the Success of Economic Sanctions." *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2010): 429-430.

<sup>98</sup> Hovi, Huseby, Sprinz (2005): 481.

<sup>99</sup> Letzkian, David, and Mark Souva. "An Institutional Theory of Sanctions Onset and Success." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, no. 6 (2007): 850.

about regime change or obedience from Saddam Hussein.<sup>100 101 102</sup> In the third phase, the authors discuss the “creation of [a] zone of possible agreement” – it is here that the possibility for negotiations between the sanctioned country and those that have imposed sanctions begins. By agreeing to curb the behavior that has provoked other nations, the sanctioned country can negotiate – both for an agreed-upon nuclear program, for instance, and for removal of sanctions.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Kim, Lee (2019): 100.

<sup>101</sup> Drezner, Daniel W. "Sanctions Sometimes Smart: Targeted Sanctions in Theory and Practice." *International Studies Review* 13, no. 1 (2011): 98.

<sup>102</sup> Ang, Adrian U-Jin, and Dursun Peksen. "When Do Economic Sanctions Work?: Asymmetric Perceptions, Issue Salience, and Outcomes." *Political Research Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (2007): 137-138, 143.

<sup>103</sup> Kim, Lee (2019): 101-103.

## Arguments Against Sanctions

*[The] assumption would be that human beings somehow need violence to be kept in line; if not the personal type, then of the structural variety...On the contrary, this would be a highly pessimistic view of the human condition. Johan Galtung*<sup>104</sup>

Sociologist Johan Galtung classifies sanctions as a form of structural violence, a term he describes as “a more systematic approach [which] can be obtained by looking at the target; the human being...for one thing is to destroy the machine (the human body) itself, another to try to prevent the machine from functioning.”<sup>105</sup> Deterrence of the optimal performance of a society, then, is what Galtung demarcates as the objective of structural violence, which can take on the form of sanctions. The author goes on to describe how such an objective can be accomplished, giving several examples: “the denial of *input* (sources of energy in general, air, water, and food in the case of the body), and denial of *output* (movement).”<sup>106</sup> While structural violence is much more insidious than direct violence, it can be just as detrimental.<sup>107</sup> Galtung considers why sanctions have become a preferred foreign policy weapon: At first glance they appear to be nothing more than a passive form of diplomacy, because they do not require armed conflict. Since the general perception of sanctions is that no direct injury or harm is being inflicted on innocents, governments can often avoid the backlash of public opinion. Yet, as Galtung points out, while sanctions may not instantaneously kill scores of innocent civilians such as is often seen in conventional warfare, they often intend to weaken a population and eventually lead to “slow but

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<sup>104</sup> Galtung, Johan. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 180-181.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 174-175.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 174-175.

<sup>107</sup> Galtung, Johan. "Cultural Violence." *Journal of Peace Research* 27, no. 3 (1990): 293-295.

intentional killing through malnutrition and lack of medical attention, hitting the weakest first, the children, the elderly, the poor, the women.”<sup>108 109 110</sup>

Dr. Paul Farmer echoes Galtung’s ideas with regard to structural violence;<sup>111</sup> he concedes that adversities are indeed a part of the human experience, yet he also states that “not all suffering is equal, in spite of the pernicious and often self-serving identity politics that suggest otherwise.”<sup>112</sup> Farmer points out that modern society’s current trend towards taking a self-centered approach with regards to world matters has resulted in the obscuration of the afflictions experienced by the most vulnerable and defenseless citizens of the world. He cites the World Health Organization, that has recently acknowledged poverty as “the world’s greatest killer...[and] the world’s poor are the chief victims of structural violence – a violence which has thus far defied the analysis of many seeking to understand the nature and distribution of extreme suffering...the poor are not only more likely to suffer; they are also more likely to have their suffering silenced.”<sup>113</sup> Farmer is of the belief that

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<sup>108</sup> Galtung (1990): 293.

<sup>109</sup> Galtung, Johan, and Tord Höivik. "Structural and Direct Violence: A Note on Operationalization." *Journal of Peace Research* 8, no. 1 (1971): 73.

<sup>110</sup> Eriksson, M. (2016). *Targeting Peace: Understanding UN and EU Targeted Sanctions*. Taylor and Francis: 11-13

<sup>111</sup> Farmer, Paul E, Bruce Nizeye, Sara Stulac, and Salmaan Keshavjee. "Structural Violence and Clinical Medicine (Policy Forum)." *PLoS Medicine* 3, no. 10 (2006): 1686.

<sup>112</sup> Farmer, Paul. "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below." *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts* 3, no. 1 (2009): 25.

<sup>113</sup> Farmer (2009): 25.

the expunging of past atrocities is quite possibly one of the most prevailing explanations for the repeated utilization of structural violence.<sup>114 115</sup>

In a 1998 article, *Why Economic Sanctions Still Do Not Work*, Robert Pape asks and attempts to answer: “How effective are economic sanctions not as a complement to force but as a stand-alone foreign policy instrument?”<sup>116</sup> Pape determines that there is scant genuine data to back up the claim that economic sanctions are capable of attaining extraordinary success as a stand-alone foreign policy tool. For this reason, he states that – unless the state has virtually definite proof that sanctions will have a successful outcome – there is no other circumstance under which sanctions should be imposed. Labelling sanctions as an “American way of war,” Pape describes the adverse effects of economic sanctions on civilian populations, detailing how they “often inflict significant human costs on the populations of target states, including on innocent civilians who have little influence on their government’s behavior...[for example,] international economic sanctions on Iraq since 1990 have led to the deaths of as many as 567,000 Iraqi children.”<sup>117</sup>

The burdensome effects of sanctions to a country’s economy are an intended and often acknowledged blow; yet, sanctions can also generate long-term ecological damage on the environment. For instance, the health of children born in countries under sanctions are often adversely afflicted by the deteriorated state of sanitation in their surroundings; this, as a result of

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<sup>114</sup> Farmer, Paul. "An Anthropology of Structural Violence 1." *Current Anthropology* 45, no. 3 (2004): 308-315.

<sup>115</sup> Christie, Daniel J. "Reducing Direct and Structural Violence: The Human Needs Theory." *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 3, no. 4 (1997): 323-25.

<sup>116</sup> Pape, Robert. "Why Economic Sanctions "Still" Do Not Work." *International Security* 23, no. 1 (1998): 69-70.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 76-77.

inadequate imported goods or devices necessary to manufacture hygienic goods. The unavailability of ingredients and supplies necessary to ensure the sanitation of the country's water supply can also lead to major health issues, particularly for children and the elderly. Pollution and poor air quality can be another concerning dilemma in sanctioned countries, due to a shortage of new vehicles and spare automobile parts, resulting in respiratory issues, such as asthma and bronchitis. Evidence gathered by various researchers demonstrates that the extent of damage created by these environmental problems are immense, oftentimes resulting in long-term health issues for the populations living under sanctions.<sup>118 119 120 121 122</sup>

One concerning issue for many scholars is the foremost rationalization used by countries and alliances for imposing sanctions: Human rights. With regard to the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stands in as justification for its enforcement of human rights around the world.<sup>123</sup> The document does not hold any legal grounds on its own; yet it holds emblematic significance – representative of values the members of the United Nations aspire to uphold – and thus has laid the groundwork for numerous settlements and accords between its

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<sup>118</sup> Petrescu, Ioana. "The Humanitarian Impact of Economic Sanctions." *Europolity - Continuity and Change in European Governance* 10, no. 2 (2016): 209.

<sup>119</sup> Garfield, Richard, and Sarah Santana. "The Impact of the Economic Crisis and the US Embargo on Health in Cuba." *American Journal of Public Health* 87, no. 1 (1997): 16-18.

<sup>120</sup> Garfield, Richard. *The Impact of Economic Sanctions on Health and Well-Being*, 1999, Policy File: 12-19.

<sup>121</sup> Gibbons, Elizabeth, and Richard Garfield. "The Impact of Economic Sanctions on Health and Human Rights in Haiti, 1991-1994." *American Journal of Public Health* 89, no. 10 (1999): 1501.

<sup>122</sup> Kandela, Peter. "Effects of Sanctions on Iraq's Health Professionals." *The Lancet* 349, no. 9059 (1997): 1153.

<sup>123</sup> "U.N. Charter: Universal Declaration of Human Rights." *United Nations - General Assembly Resolution 217a*, (1948): n/a.



signatories. Indeed, many analysts reason that its bridge-building effect is due to the fact that countries rely – perhaps if only in good faith – on other signatories’ acceptance of an agreed-upon standard of human rights practices. Yet, the declaration itself does not incorporate specific texts offering tools of implementation for its philosophies, and neither have the agreements that used this statement as their key underpinning principle.<sup>124 125</sup>

Deeming itself the arbiter of universal human rights standards, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights unites its signatories under the assumption that they have collectively reached a mutual understanding regarding human rights standards and practices. Yet, each country’s outlook, interpretation, and the magnitude they place on particular criteria as dictated by the declaration varies.<sup>126</sup> The absence of clearly defined rules and regulations for implementation leaves vast margin for error, thus requiring pressure from a compelling party that a certain standard of human rights be upheld. For the United Nations, this compelling party has often been one of its powerful signatories, and certainly the one with the most military might – the United States.<sup>127</sup>

Typically, the United Nations’ first step in attempting to bring a country under compliance is to impose unilateral and targeted sanctions. As Stephen P. Marks explains, when sanctions are imposed on a particular country, the standard justification given is that “there is a higher purpose

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<sup>124</sup> Stirling, Patricia. "The Use of Trade Sanctions as an Enforcement Mechanism for Basic Human Rights: A Proposal for Addition to the World Trade Organization." *American University Journal of International Law and Policy* 11, no. 1 (1996): 14-17.

<sup>125</sup> Wall, C. (1998). Human Rights and Economic Sanctions: The New Imperialism. 22, 578-580.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 582.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 581.

that justifies the regrettable but unavoidable civilian suffering.”<sup>128</sup> Since the mid-1990s, there have been numerous reports of the deleterious effects of sanctions on the health and well-being of the general public. Not only does the health of the general public suffer as a result, but countries under sanctions have a higher percentage of unemployment, essential supplies are difficult to attain and costly, and there is often a general deterioration in academic institutions.<sup>129</sup> Thus, many analysts have argued that the imposition of sanctions on general populations action goes against the United Nation’s own Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and that the United Nations’ sanctions policies must be reconsidered in order to take the welfare of general populations into greater consideration.<sup>130 131 132 133 134</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Marks, S. (1999). Economic Sanctions as Human Rights Violations: Reconciling Political and Public Health Imperatives. *American Journal of Public Health.*, 89(10), 1510.

<sup>129</sup> Wall (1998): 592 – 611.

<sup>130</sup> Farmer (2009): 25.

<sup>131</sup> Christie (1997): 323 – 325.

<sup>132</sup> Pape (1998): 69 – 70.

<sup>133</sup> Addis (2009): 618.

<sup>134</sup> Chan, Stephanie. "Principle Versus Profit: Debating Human Rights Sanctions." *Human Rights Review* 19, no. 1 (2018): 48-49.

## Conclusion from Literature Review

*We are aware that another gigantic wall is being constructed in the Third World, to hide the reality of the poor majorities. A wall between the rich and the poor is being built, so that poverty does not annoy the powerful and the poor are obliged to die in the silence of history.* Pablo Richard <sup>135 136</sup>

While scholars may not agree on whether sanctions are an effective or ineffective foreign policy tool, many can agree that they cause serious injury to the health and welfare of a country's general population. Proponents of sanctions often insist that "the decision to impose sanctions is that the political gain will outweigh the human pain."<sup>137</sup> However, sanctions on their own do not have a strong record for bringing states to the point of compliance.<sup>138</sup> The most prominent effects of sanctions have been to endanger the health, educational, and economic stability of a country's general population.<sup>139 140 141 142</sup>

The subsequent chapters of this thesis will examine the historical background for modern-day Iran and Iranian politics, as well as how sanctions impact Iranian citizens. The current political structure of Iran was formed by a revolution that began in the late 1970s, which is where the next chapter begins.

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<sup>135</sup> Farmer (2009): 25.

<sup>136</sup> Nelson-Pallmeyer, Jack. *Brave New World Order: Must We Pledge Allegiance?* Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1992: 14.

<sup>137</sup> Marks (1999): 1510.

<sup>138</sup> Pape (1998): 69-70, 76-77.

<sup>139</sup> Petrescu (2016): 209.

<sup>140</sup> Garfield, Santana (1997): 16-18.

<sup>141</sup> Garfield (1999): 12-19.

<sup>142</sup> Kandela (1997): 1153.

## Chapter III.

### Iran, 1979: Before, During, After

*[A]n American sociologist has argued that the Iranian Revolution contained far more popular participation — especially in the form of street protests — than any other political upheaval, including the French and Russian Revolutions. Ervand Abrahamian* <sup>143 144</sup>

#### Iran and All the Shahs that Left: The Lead-Up to 1979

Iranian dissatisfaction with monarchic rule can be traced back to well before the turn of the twentieth century. In 1896, Nasir al-Din Shah was assassinated outside a mosque by Mirza Reza Kermani, a supporter of Sayyed al-Din Afghani – a religious scholar considered to be one of the most prominent advocates of Pan-Islamism in the nineteenth century, and an early sponsor of the Islamic Modernism movement. Interrogated for several days before his execution, Kermani provided his justifications for assassinating the Qajar king:

*This is what injustice begets. [We live under] untrammelled tyranny, unchecked oppression...They take a lump-sum [for] a rascal and hand him the title deed of an entire town or province, the livelihood and the property and the land and the dignity of its people. ...Everybody knows these [things]. They just don't dare say it loud.* <sup>145 146 147</sup>

The death of Nasir al-Din Shah did not cause great mourning amongst the citizens of what was then known as Persia, however; Iranians remembered monarch for his legacy of leaving their country “dominated by foreigners, and plagued by widespread unemployment, crippling inflation,

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<sup>143</sup> Abrahamian, Ervand. "The Crowd in the Iranian Revolution." *Radical History Review* 2009, no. 105 (2009): 15.

<sup>144</sup> Kurzman, Charles. *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004: 121.

<sup>145</sup> Vaezinejad, Mehrdad. "Fear, Loathing and Zulm in Iran." *History Today*, January 15, 2018.

<sup>146</sup> Kinzer (2003): 33.

<sup>147</sup> Shuster (1912): xvii

and serious food shortages.”<sup>148</sup> Muzaffar al-Din Shah succeeded his father to the Qajar throne; equally unconcerned about the welfare of his subjects, in 1901 he struck a deal with British investor William Knox D’Arcy that would forge Iranian history for over a century: The agreement granted D’Arcy the “special and exclusive privilege to obtain, exploit, develop, render suitable for trade, carry away and sell natural gas [and] petroleum.”<sup>149</sup> In short, Muzaffar had sold off his country’s rights to their own domestic oil reserves.

Yet, events leading up to this specific moment in history indicated that the citizens of Persia were unlikely to quietly accede the sovereignty of their nation’s natural resources to a foreign power. As Kinzer explains, “the political consciousness of Iranians had grown enormously. Their belief that God requires leaders to rule justly, a central tenet of the [Shi’ite] doctrine, led many to embrace the ideals of popular sovereignty that were coursing through society. By the time the twentieth century dawned, some had even begun to doubt the very principle of monarchy.”<sup>150</sup> Just four years after Muzaffar al-Din Shah struck a deal with D’Arcy, Iranians demanded a *Majles* (parliament) with real authority – and not merely a committee of advisors to the king. Less than a year after their protests began, the Iranian people emerged victorious: On October 7, 1906, the *Majles* gathered in Tehran for their first meeting. Less than three months later, Muzaffar al-Din Shah died, with his son Mohammad Ali Shah Qajar ascending to the throne.<sup>151 152</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Kinzer (2003): 33.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 33-34.

<sup>151</sup> Shuster (1912): xviii, xxi-xxii

<sup>152</sup> Kinzer (2003): 34-37.

Obstinately opposed to the *Majles*, “Mohammad Ali Shah began a campaign of terror and violence against the *Majles*.”<sup>153</sup> In June 1908, the Shah arranged for several rounds of coordinated attacks: First, paid-off squads were instructed to protest in the streets of Tehran, demanding the dissolution of the *Majles* and the Constitution; next, the Cossack Brigade attacked the building in which the *Majles* assembled. Demonstrations erupted across the country in condemnation of the Shah’s intimidation tactics against the *Majles*. By July 1909, Mohammad Ali Shah Qajar had lost control of Persia; driven out of his royal palace and into hiding at the Russian consulate, he made arrangements to go into exile.<sup>154</sup><sup>155</sup> That same year, his twelve-year-old son, Ahmad, ascended to the throne; Ahmad Shah would be the last of the Qajar Dynasty to rule over Persia.<sup>156</sup><sup>157</sup>

By 1917, British influence in Persia had greatly intensified, and with the creation of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company – a byproduct of the deal D’Arcy had struck back in 1901 – Britain embarked on the exploitation of what Winston Churchill referred to as “a prize from fairyland beyond our wildest dreams”: Effectively unchecked access to colossal amounts of Iranian oil.<sup>158</sup> Two years later, the British levied the Anglo-Persian Agreement on Ahmad Shah; the contract essentially placed total control of the country in Britain’s hands, as it meant that they “assumed control over [Persia’s] army, treasury, transport system, and communications network.”<sup>159</sup> The

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<sup>153</sup> Kinzer (2003): 37.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 36-38.

<sup>155</sup> Minucheher, Pardis. "Sur-i Israfil in Exile: Modern Definitions of Monarchy." *Iranian Studies* 42, no. 3 (2009): 408.

<sup>156</sup> “Qajar Dynasty.” Iran Chamber Society: n/a.

<sup>157</sup> Kinzer (2003): 38.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 39.

contract had two consequences: Depriving Persia of any remaining independence, and in turn spurring the nation's citizens to organize and pursue their intention for self-rule.<sup>160</sup>

It was during these uncertain times that, in 1921, a new personality emerged on Persia's political scene: Reza Khan. A member of the Cossack Brigade, Reza was not an admirer of the Qajar court; this "made him a logical tool for the British, who...wanted a stronger central government."<sup>161</sup> Reza Khan aided the British in overthrowing Ahmad Shah's prime minister so as to replace him with one they had hand-picked: Sayyed Zia Tabatabai.<sup>162</sup> On February 20, 1921, Reza Khan and the Cossack Brigade arrived in Tehran, apprehending Ahmad Shah's prime minister and all members of his cabinet. Reza Khan demanded Tabatabai be named prime minister, and for himself, he demanded the role of commander of the Cossack Brigade; the last Qajar Shah yielded without opposition.<sup>163</sup> Three months after the coup, Reza Khan released Tabatabai from his duties, and forced him into exile. Two years later, after the fourth Majles concluded, Reza Khan had Ahmad Shah name him prime minister and convinced the king to embark on a European tour. In 1926, Ahmad Shah sent word that he intended to return to Persia. The Majles decided to take action: Pronouncing "the Qajar dynasty dead, [they] offered the Peacock Throne to Reza [Khan]."

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<sup>160</sup> Kinzer (2003): 40.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 40-41.

<sup>162</sup> Wynn, Antony. "Soldiers, Shahs and Subalterns in Iran: Opposition, Protest and Revolt 1921-1941." *Asian Affairs* 43, no. 1 (2012): 117.

<sup>163</sup> Cronin, Stephanie. "Popular Protest, Disorder, and Riot in Iran: The Tehran Crowd and the Rise of Reza Khan, 1921-1925." *International Review of Social History* 50, no. 2 (2005): 169.

<sup>164</sup> Kinzer (2003): 42.

<sup>165</sup> Cronin (2005): 169.

Initially, Reza Khan's aim was to reshape the political structure of Persia, following the example of Turkish president Kemal Atatürk who had dissolved the Islamic caliphate and sultanate, reforming his country into a republic. The religious factions of Persia were scandalized by such a notion, however, and ultimately persuaded Reza Khan to maintain the Imperial State of Persia. On April 25, 1926, Reza Khan ascended to the Peacock Throne of Persia, rebranding himself Reza Shah Pahlavi. With military precision, Reza Khan the commoner reinvented himself "prime minister, army commander, and effective head of the resurgent [Persian] state."<sup>166</sup> <sup>167</sup> In his fifteen years as monarch, Pahlavi I attempted to modernize the state, never quite developing the dexterity required for balancing the cultural and historical heritages of the nation with his personal visions for the country's future. One of his attempts at reinvention included its official retitling: In 1935, Reza Shah announced that his country would no longer be known as *Persia*, but rather *Iran* – the name domestically used by citizens of the country.<sup>168</sup>

Paradoxically, Reza Shah's tactics for rebranding Iran as a cosmopolitan nation were considered by many to be both archaic and regressive in nature. Reza Shah was a dictator, and the foreign powers that had installed him to rule over Iran quietly acknowledged this patently obvious fact.<sup>169</sup> <sup>170</sup> <sup>171</sup> Bearing particular disdain for tradition, he banned the veil for women, ethnic attire for all tribes for both sexes, prohibited the custom of Shi'ite processions in remembrance of

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<sup>166</sup> Kinzer (2003): 41-42.

<sup>167</sup> Zirinsky, Michael P. "Imperial Power and Dictatorship: Britain and the Rise of Reza Shah, 1921–1926." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 24, no. 4 (1992): 647, 656-657.

<sup>168</sup> Kinzer (2003): 44.

<sup>169</sup> Sabahi, Houshang. *British Policy in Persia: 1918-1925*. 1st ed. Routledge, 2015: 185.

<sup>170</sup> Zirinsky (1992): 659.

<sup>171</sup> Kinzer (2003): 43.



martyred Imams – and pronounced that these regulations were to be enforced using brute force, if necessary. The Shah’s zeal for modernization did not appear to extend further than updating the attire of his countrymen and infusing the nation with technological advancements; publications were suppressed and highly monitored, unionization of workers was forbidden, and resistance factions were jailed, executed, or forced into exile. Deeming nomadic clans an outdated hindrance left over from the past and unsuited for the contemporary nation he envisioned, he had entire tribes forced into impoverished encampments where thousands died.<sup>172 173 174 175 176 177 178</sup>

By the early 1930s, Fascists were rapidly gaining power in Europe.<sup>179</sup> Certain scholars believe that despite Reza Shah’s declared stance of neutrality when World War II began – he quietly sided with the Third Reich; thus, hundreds of German agents were discreetly permitted to continue operations inside the country. Others contend that the Iranian attitude towards German presence inside the country was far more nuanced: Possibly concerned about their Soviet neighbors’ post-war regional intentions, Iranian officials anticipated a German victory and thus expected their [unspoken] German ally to reward their loyalty with protection against Russia in

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<sup>172</sup> Zirinsky (1992): 657-658.

<sup>173</sup> Saeidi, Elahe, and Amanda Thompson. “Using Clothing to Unify a Country: The History of Reza Shah’s Dress Reform in Iran.” *International Textile and Apparel Association (ITAA) Annual Conference Proceedings* 70 (January 1, 2013): 1–2.

<sup>174</sup> Houchang E. Chehabi. "Staging the Emperor's New Clothes: Dress Codes and Nation-Building under Reza Shah." *Iranian Studies* 26, no. 3/4 (1993): 209-229.

<sup>175</sup> Keshavarzian, Arang. "Turban or Hat, Seminarian or Soldier: State Building and Clergy Building in Reza Shah's Iran." *Journal of Church and State* 45, no. 1 (2003): 103-107.

<sup>176</sup> Etehadieh, Mansoureh (Nezam Mafi), and Kaveh Bayat. "The Reza Shah Period: Document Collections Recently Published in Iran." *Iranian Studies* 26, no. 3/4 (1993): 423-424.

<sup>177</sup> Kinzer (2003): 44.

<sup>178</sup> Cronin (2005): 201.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

the post-war era.<sup>180</sup> The Allies, who suspected Hitler's aim was to use Iran as a headquarters from which to attack the Soviet Union via Iran's northern border, sequestered key regions throughout the country; they then demanded Reza Shah break diplomatic relations with Germany and allow Allied forces to occupy his country for the duration of the war. Reza Shah declined the Allies' requests; on September 16, 1941, Reza Shah Pahlavi abdicated. The next day, Reza Shah's twenty-one-year-old son Mohammad Reza ascended to the Peacock Throne, becoming the second Pahlavi Shah of the Imperial State of Iran.<sup>181 182 183</sup>

At the time of his enthronement, the Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi had spent just three years outside the sheltered world of boarding schools and military academies. The young Shah obediently took his orders from the Allied forces: "Much food was diverted from civilian to military use. Trucks and railroads were used mainly for military purposes. Prices rose...and poor harvests left many people hungry."<sup>184</sup> The Allies also mined vast quantities of oil and built several military headquarters, which were used for various tactical procedures around the region. All the while, the Iranian population's quality of life was not only interrupted but also notably diminished. Over the course of the 1940s, dissent broke out in various parts of the country; sometimes over the price of bread, other times due to Leftist uprisings. Eventually, protestors began to question the legitimacy of the *Majles's* elections. Each time, conflict was brutally quelled by the Imperial

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<sup>180</sup> Bakhsh, Shaul. "Britain and the Abdication of Reza Shah." *Middle Eastern Studies* 52, no. 2 (2016): 321.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 326-329.

<sup>182</sup> Kinzer (2003): 44-45.

<sup>183</sup> Ettehadieh, Bayat (1993): 426.

<sup>184</sup> Kinzer (2003): 64.

Iranian Gendarmerie who were significantly assisted in their efforts by the American forces who had stayed behind upon the request of Allied leaders.<sup>185</sup>

Finally, the Iranian nation's discontent came to a head on October 13, 1949: Mohammad Mossadegh, a member of the *Majles*, invited any Iranian who sought fair elections for the *Majles* to congregate in front of his home. Thousands of Iranians showed up, gathering in Mossadegh's front yard, and then followed him to the gates of the Shah's royal palace where the elder statesman gave a speech avowing that he would not move from his position until the young monarch agreed to hold impartial elections for the *Majles*. After three days, the Shah finally relented, conceding to approve new elections for the *Majles*.<sup>186 187</sup> Perhaps at the time, Iranians considered the Shah's agreement to hold new elections a momentous victory. In retrospect, however, it became a foretelling footnote to the consequential and far-reaching moments in Iranian history that were on the horizon: Mohammad Mossadegh had captivated an entire nation, and just two years later, he would be elected Prime Minister of Iran. On the day of his election, Mossadegh did not hesitate in his attempts to take the fate of his country into his own hands,<sup>188 189 190</sup>

*Sensing the power he held at the moment, Mossadegh said that he would serve...only if the Majlis also voted to approve...the nationalization of Anglo-Iranian [oil]...The Majlis approved it unanimously...The unthinkable had now happened. Mossadegh, the symbol of Iranian nationalism and resistance to royal power, had suddenly arrived at the pinnacle of power.*<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 64-68.

<sup>186</sup> Kinzer (2003): 64-70.

<sup>187</sup> Limbert, John W. *Iran: At War with History*. Routledge Library Editions: War and Security in the Middle East. Taylor and Francis, 2016: 88-89, 92-96.

<sup>188</sup> Balaghi, Shiva. "Silenced Histories and Sanitized Autobiographies: The 1953 CIA Coup in Iran." *Biography* 36, no. 1 (2013): 72.

<sup>189</sup> Abrahamian, Ervand. "The 1953 Coup in Iran." *Science & Society* 65, no. 2 (07, 2001): 185-187.

<sup>190</sup> Kinzer (2003): 69-82.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 82.

Mossadegh's election and *Majles's* vote to essentially terminate the operations of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company would have dealt a grievous blow to Britain. A 1951 *New York Times* article estimated that Iranian oil wells were grossing approximately \$500,000,000 annually for the British Government, and that its loss would be "a severe blow to the British economy."<sup>192</sup> Almost immediately, Britain began putting the wheels in motion to overthrow Mossadegh's government.<sup>193</sup> In the summer of 1952, the United States and Britain contrived a scheme to persuade the Shah to endorse two royal orders (*firmons*): One would terminate Prime Minister Mossadegh from his position; the subsequent declaration would appoint General Fazlollah Zahedi his succeeding Prime Minister. Yet, Britain and the United States had not prepared for the pattern of events that would soon unfold, thereby thwarting the two superpowers' meticulously organized coup: Confrontations between the Shah and Mossadegh were customary. What rattled the Shah were the occasions when Mossadegh could sway the nation's loyalty into his corner. In July 1952, Mossadegh tendered his resignation to the monarch, on the grounds that the Shah had refused to expand his powers as Prime Minister. The resignation sparked national outrage: For three days, the Iranian people held public demonstrations, calling for the return of Prime Minister Mossadegh.

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<sup>192</sup> Carmical, J.H. "Article 10 -- No Title." *New York Times (1923-Current File)* (New York, N.Y.), 1951: 107.

<sup>193</sup> Israeli, Ofer. "The Circuitous Nature of Operation Ajax." *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 2 (2013): 248-251.

On July 22, 1952, the Shah capitulated to public pressure with Mossadegh being restored to his position, and the expertly devised plot of the world's two superpowers thwarted.<sup>194 195 196 197</sup>

Undeterred, Britain and the United States soon began planning what would eventually become known as Operation AJAX. Beginning in May 1953, the Central Intelligence Agency and the British MI6 initiated a propaganda operation that was meant to disparage and slander Mossadegh and his administration. By late summer, Prime Minister Mossadegh realized that the American and British administrations were strategizing to overthrow his government; on August 4, 1953, he held a vote, requesting that the *Majles* be disbanded. Nine days later, the Shah – yet again under pressure from the British and American governments – signed a royal order terminating Mossadegh as Prime Minister. Two days thereafter, Operation AJAX stumbled into a sputtering start: Mossadegh had been tipped off and ordered the arrest of coup collaborators; General Zahedi went into hiding. The next day, on August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1953, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi went into exile, first flying to Baghdad and then to Rome. Two days later, dissatisfied by the outcome of the attempted overthrow, the Central Intelligence Agency sent word to Tehran instructing agents to suspend their campaigns. Yet on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1953, Iranian newspapers published the Shah's royal orders dismissing Prime Minister Mossadegh; by late afternoon, the tide had turned in favor of the foreign powers and the exiled monarch. General Zahedi emerged from hiding, leading the movement against Mossadegh; by evening, Mossadegh's government had been overthrown. Four days later, the Shah returned to Iran to reclaim his throne, and General

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<sup>194</sup> Ross, Albion. "Mossadegh Makes Bid to Keep Post" *New York Times (1923-Current File)* (New York, N.Y.), 1952.

<sup>195</sup> Risen, James. "Key Events in the 1953 Coup." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 2000: n/a.

<sup>196</sup> Etges, Andreas. "All That Glitters Is Not Gold: The 1953 Coup against Mohammed Mossadegh in Iran." *Intelligence and National Security* 26, no. 4 (2011): 501.

<sup>197</sup> Kinzer (2003): 134-141.

Zahedi was named Prime Minister. Mohammad Mossadegh served three years in prison; after his release, he was confined to the town of Ahmadabad until his death.<sup>198 199 200 201</sup>

Just months after Operation AJAX, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) resumed operations; yet, Britain would never again hold the absolute monopoly over Iranian oil reserves that it had possessed prior to Mossadegh's twenty- six months as Prime Minister. Five years before Operation AJAX, Iran had shared just 18% of its oil profits, with AIOC taking the remaining 82% of earnings. One year after the coup, an international consortium was formed: AIOC was given 40% of dividends; another 40% of dividends was distributed between five American companies – Standard Oil of New Jersey, the Socuny-Vacuum Oil Company, the Texas Company, Standard Oil of California, and the Gulf Oil Corporation; the remaining 20% of dividends was allocated to Royal Dutch/Shell and Compagnie Française de Pétroles. Iran was promised 50% of the oil profits, paid to the country as income taxes. The Shah and Prime Minister Zahedi had to accept this deal on good faith, as Iran's auditors were barred from reviewing the records of oil revenues, and Iranians were prohibited from joining the consortium's board of directors.<sup>202 203 204 205</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Kressin, Wolfgang K., and Air Force Inst Of Tech Wright-Patterson Afb Oh. *Prime Minister Mossadegh and Ayatullah Kashani from Unity to Enmity: As Viewed from the American Embassy in Tehran, June 1950-August 1953*, 1991: 70-81.

<sup>199</sup> Risen (2000): n/a.

<sup>200</sup> Abrahamian (2001): 203-214.

<sup>201</sup> Kinzer (2003): 150-195.

<sup>202</sup> Shabafrouz (2009): 9.

<sup>203</sup> Kinzer (2003): 195-196.

<sup>204</sup> Etges (2011): 502-503.

<sup>205</sup> Heiss (1994): 518-535.

Upon returning to power in 1953, the Shah developed a method of monocratic governing system that became his trademark until his exile in 1979. Two years after the coup, he ousted Prime Minister Zahedi from his position; he also gave other key players in the coup important stations in government, ensuring none would be a serious contender for his crown. In the years that followed Operation AJAX, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi gradually declined into a detached autocratic ruler; unteachable until the eleventh hour, he was disengaged from his citizens, and thus unaware of the frustrations of the average Iranian. The Shah set out to create his own secret agency in order to forcefully suppress any opposition. The monarch believed that such an agency would bolster the influence of his government by way of shadowing dissenters and crushing radical activists. Created three years after Operation AJAX with assistance from the Israeli Mossad and the Central Intelligence Agency, SAVAK (*Sāzemān-e Ettlā'āt va Amniyat-e Keshvar*, translation: National Organization for Security and Intelligence) was officially ratified as a government organization by the *Majlis* in 1957.<sup>206 207 208 209 210</sup>

A decade after Operation AJAX – and despite the brutal suppression tactics of the Shah’s SAVAK agency – Iranians took to the streets yet again. The exact day is now so entrenched in Iranian history that it is simply referred to by the date on the Iranian calendar on which it took place: *15 Khordad* (June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1963). The uprisings were due in part to the Shah’s plans for what he

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<sup>206</sup> Limbert (2016): 100-103.

<sup>207</sup> Kinzer (2003): 196.

<sup>208</sup> Keddie, Nikki R., and Richard Yann. *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*. Updated ed. New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 2006: 134.

<sup>209</sup> Shannon, Matthew. “Contacts with the Opposition”: American Foreign Relations, the Iranian Student Movement, and the Global Sixties.” *The Sixties* 4, no. 1 (2011): 4-5.

<sup>210</sup> III. *Political/Intelligence Issues H. The U.S. and Human Rights in Iran*, 1980, Digital National Security Archive - DNSA: Document Records (unstructured): 3.

had termed his *White Revolution*, and a clash that ensued between Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and the monarch. Determined to modernize his country “the Shah wanted to identify himself with ‘progress’ and what was understood as ‘anti-feudalist’” – thus launching what he termed his *White Revolution* – the specific color ascribed because the monarch was certain this would be a peaceful reformation of Iranian society.<sup>211</sup> Viewing the development of industrialization as the aspect most important to the reinvention of Iran into a modern and innovative nation, the Shah was eager for the Iranian population to rapidly convert their outlook to his match his stance on the matter.<sup>212</sup> Unconcerned with those who voiced resistance, he “characterized them as either reactionary (*black*) or subversive (*red*)...[and] identified them with ‘Ahriman’ the Zoroastrian devil.”<sup>213</sup>

One key group opposed to the Shah’s *White Revolution* was the clergy in Qom, who openly stated their disapproval for his plans with regard to land reforms. Heretofore, the clergy had not been a chief anti-Pahlavi opposition group; however, the monarch had provoked this faction when – under the pretense of property reorganizations – he announced his policies to seize mosque lands.<sup>214</sup> <sup>215</sup> <sup>216</sup> Determined to face his antagonists head-on, the Shah made a public declaration in Qom: The monarch asserted in the holy city that the clergy’s opposition was proof that they were more

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<sup>211</sup> Ansari, Ali M. "The Myth of the White Revolution: Mohammad Reza Shah, 'Modernization' and the Consolidation of Power." *Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 3 (2001): 12.

<sup>212</sup> Bill, James A. "Modernization and Reform from Above: The Case of Iran." *The Journal of Politics* 32, no. 1 (1970): 31-40.

<sup>213</sup> Ansari, Ali M. "The Myth of the White Revolution: Mohammad Reza Shah, 'Modernization' and the Consolidation of Power." *Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 3 (2001): 17.

<sup>214</sup> Tashan, Seyfi. "The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran." *Journal of Third World Studies* 23, no. 1 (2006): 68.

<sup>215</sup> Amineh, M.P., and S.N. Eisenstadt. "The Iranian Revolution: The Multiple Contexts of the Iranian Revolution." *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 6, no. 1-3 (2007): 131-132.

<sup>216</sup> Muhājir, Nāṣir., and Mehrdad Vahabi. "The Islamic Republic of Iran and Its Opposition." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 31, no. 1 (2011): 114-115.



deceitful and traitorous than his “black”, “red”, and even *Tudeh* (Communist) foes. On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1963, Khomeini denounced the Shah’s *White Revolution*, listing the variety of ways by which the Ayatollah estimated Pahlavi had dishonored the nation, desecrated the Iranian Constitution, and submitted to the will of Western powers. Four days later, the Shah held a public vote in order to demonstrate that he had the backing of the Iranian population; the Shah’s *White Revolution* emerged the winner, having won 5.6 million votes for his plans, against 4.1 million who voted against it. Buoyed by emerging the victor of the popular vote, the Shah and his SAVAK agency considered the show of support as a credible justification for imposing harsher punishments on the Shah’s clergy opposition in Qom. On March 22, 1963, the SAVAK cracked down on protestors at the Feyziyeh School in Qom, killing scholars and demonstrators.<sup>217 218 219 220</sup>

Khomeini’s condemnation of the Shah months prior had been an indication of imminent turmoil: Hostilities came to a head on June 3, 1963.<sup>221 222</sup> Recognized as *Ashura*, the tenth day of *Muharram* honors the day which *Husayn Ibn Ali* – grandson of the Prophet *Mohammad* – was martyred; *Ashura* is also considered one of the most significant dates of the Shia calendar.<sup>223 224</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Lehr Wagner, Heather. *The Iranian Revolution*. Milestones in World History. Chelsea House, 2010: 38-46.

<sup>218</sup> Avery, Peter, William Bayne Fisher, G.R.G. Hambly and C. Melville. *The Cambridge History of Iran*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1991): 280-281, 446.

<sup>219</sup> Singh, Manjit and D.P. Singh. *Violence: Impact and Intervention*. 1st ed. New Delhi, India: Atlantic, 2008: 77-78

<sup>220</sup> Koya, Abdar Rahman. *Imam Khomeini: Thought, Life, and Legacy*. Islamic Book Trust, 2009: 32.

<sup>221</sup> Amineh, Eisenstadt (2007): 132.

<sup>222</sup> In this particular year, this day commemorated *Ashura* on the Shia calendar.

<sup>223</sup> Babaei, Habibollah. "Unity and Identity after Ashura in Islamic History." *Kom: časopis Za Religijske Nauke* II, no. 1 (2013): 97-111.

<sup>224</sup> Duckett, Bob. 2013. "The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought." *Reference Reviews* 27 (6): 45.

<sup>225</sup> Perhaps hoping to summon the Iranian nation's deeply rooted Shia sentiments, Ayatollah Khomeini chose this precise occasion to condemn the Shah yet again. Selecting the Feyziyeh School for his sermon – he addressed a crowd that overflowed into the courtyards of Feyziyeh, the Dar al-Shifa seminary, the shrine of Fatima al-Ma'sumah, and Astana square – the cleric compared the Shah to *Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyā*: The Caliph whose supporters assassinated *Husayn Ibn Ali* as he was traveling to Kufa to lead a rebellion against *Yazid*. Condemning the Shah as a wretched lackey of Western powers, Khomeini cautioned that if the monarch did not stop kneeling before his foreign masters, the Pahlavi rule would ultimately end, and the people would rejoice over his banishment. The speech ignited the fervor of Khomeini's devotees in Tehran, where a *Muharram* procession of approximately one-hundred thousand Iranian citizens paraded past the royal palace, yelling slogans such as “Death to the Dictator!” and “God save Khomeini!” Less than

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<sup>225</sup> Cornell, Vincent J. *Voices of Islam*. Praeger Perspectives. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2007: 111-112.

forty-eight hours later, Khomeini was arrested in the middle of the night and transported to Qasr Prison in Tehran.<sup>226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234</sup>

As news of Khomeini's arrest began to circulate on June 5, 1963, protests broke out in several cities in condemnation of his detention. Demonstrators were met by soldiers in army tanks; riots broke out in Tehran, where protestors ambushed the SAVAK headquarters, police stations, and buildings belonging to various bureaus of the government. After martial law was declared, the Shah ordered Major General Oveissi to subdue the protests using force if necessary. Six days later, the protests were finally quelled; between two hundred to three-hundred and eighty people were killed or injured during the week of demonstrations. Khomeini was sentenced to house arrest after spending almost three weeks in Qasr prison. Released on April 7, 1964, Khomeini immediately returned to Qom. Six months later, Khomeini was publicly criticizing the Shah yet again for what he considered to be blatant gestures of deference to the United States. The Shah had agreed to grant diplomatic immunity to American armed forces in Iran; Khomeini considered this a sign of

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<sup>226</sup> Alikhani, Hossein. *Sanctioning Iran: Anatomy of a Failed Policy*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2000: 12.

<sup>227</sup> Isaloo, Amin Sharifi. *Power, Legitimacy and the Public Sphere: The Iranian Ta'ziyeh Theatre Ritual*. Contemporary Liminality; 2. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017: 85.

<sup>228</sup> "Ayatollah Rouhollah Mousavi Khomeini (Imam Khomeini)." *Historic Personalities of Iran: Ayatollah Khomeini*. Iran Chamber Society: n/a.

<sup>229</sup> Avery, Peter, William Bayne Fisher, G.R.G. Hambly and C. Melville (1991): 281, 448.

<sup>230</sup> "Nineteen Years on Departure of Islamic Republic Founder." *Alahed News*, April 6, 2008: n/a.

<sup>231</sup> Hiro, Dilip. *Iran Under the Ayatollahs (Routledge Revivals)*. London: Routledge, 2011: 47.

<sup>232</sup> Singh (2008): 78-82.

<sup>233</sup> Moin, Bager. *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah*. 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. ed. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2000: 104-106.

<sup>234</sup> Brogan, Patrick. *World Conflicts*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 1989: 246

the Shah's obsequiousness to his Western overlords. On November 4, 1964, weeks after his denunciation of the Shah, Khomeini was arrested by the SAVAK, then taken to Mehrabad Airport in Tehran and sent to Turkey; he would remain in exile for fifteen years.<sup>235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242</sup>

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Less than a year later, on April 10, 1965 – in what would later be referred to as “*The Marble Palace Plot*” – a drafted soldier of the Imperial Guard opened fire on the Shah outside of his offices at the Marble Palace in Tehran.<sup>244</sup> Despite the Crown's best attempts to paint this latest act of dissent as a Leftist plot, it was obvious that the central source of discontent among Iranian youth was the lack of civil rights.<sup>245</sup> As James A. Bill wrote less than a decade before the Islamic Revolution regarding the fifteen men that had been arrested, “The point here is...that they were considered to be an active opposition [, a] threat to the existing system. What cannot be overlooked

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<sup>235</sup> Moin (2000): 111-113.

<sup>236</sup> Brogan (1989): 247.

<sup>237</sup> Iran Chamber Society, Khomeini (n/a): n/a.

<sup>238</sup> Fadaee, Simin. *Social Movements in Iran: Environmentalism and Civil Society*. Iranian Studies. Taylor and Francis, 2012: 55.

<sup>239</sup> Hiro (2011): 48-49.

<sup>240</sup> Ansari (2001): 20.

<sup>241</sup> Singh, Singh (2008): 87.

<sup>242</sup> Chehabi, Houchang E. "Religion and Politics in Iran: How Theocratic Is the Islamic Republic?" *Daedalus* 120, no. 3 (1991): 69-91.

<sup>243</sup> Amirahmadi, Hooshang, and Nader Entessar. *Reconstruction and Regional Diplomacy in the Persian Gulf*. London; New York: Routledge, 1992: 183.

<sup>244</sup> Milani, Abbas. *Eminent Persians: The Men and Women Who Made Modern Iran, 1941-1979: In Two Volumes*. 1st ed. Syracuse, N.Y.: New York, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press; Persian World Press, 2008: 255-256.

<sup>245</sup> Bayani (2011): 762.

is that [they] averaged 27 years of age, were all members of the professional middle class and half of them were either teachers or students".<sup>246 247</sup>

In 1967 and 1968, university students in Tabriz and Tehran held mass demonstrations in which “politico-ideological considerations were the key irritants, and indications of this were voiced throughout the demonstrations.”<sup>248</sup> Around the same time, Iranian students abroad were beginning to voice their opposition to Shah’s policies and autocratic rule back in Iran. Overseas resistance movements by Iranian students attempted to place emphasis on the human rights abuses being inflicted on Leftists and anti-monarchists by the Shah’s SAVAK agency – both inside Iran and abroad. In their meetings, the students also discussed and considered alternatives to the political system of monarchy in Iran and endeavored to sway US legislators into retracting their sponsorship of the autocratic Shah’s unquestioned unchallenged authority over their homeland.<sup>249</sup>

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The Shah’s official trips to America – in August 1967, June 1968, and October 1969 – will remain historically interconnected with the most provocative and widely-covered anti-Pahlavi student protests outside Iran. The overseas efforts at organizing by Iranian students in the late-1960s were certainly the forerunner to the protests that began to emerge in Iran during the 1970s, thus making them some of the most impactful student-led demonstrations of their generation.<sup>251252</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Bill (1970): 29.

<sup>247</sup> Bill (1988): 175.

<sup>248</sup> Bill (1970): 29.

<sup>249</sup> Shannon, Matthew. "American-Iranian Alliances: International Education, Modernization, and Human Rights during the Pahlavi Era." *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 4 (2015): 662-664.

<sup>250</sup> Shannon (2011): 2, 4-5.

<sup>251</sup> Shannon (2011): 2.

<sup>252</sup> Singh, Singh (2008): 82.

Domestically, Iranian newspapers were sharply critical of America's ongoing war in Vietnam. Generally, the Shah tolerated the Iranian media's anti-Vietnam stance, as he assumed doing so would create the impression of impartiality with regard to his American benefactors and placate the educated upper middle-class citizenry. In fact, these anti-Vietnam articles which the Shah allowed ultimately worked against him, as they opened the Iranian public's eyes to the atrocities of war and gave the nation a broader perspective into the harms of Western intervention.<sup>253</sup>

The 1960s and early 1970s also happened to be a time of remarkable economic growth for Iran under the Pahlavi regime. Having what he believed to be an unfailing alliance with the United States government – a country that had emerged from World War II as the foremost global superpower – the Shah cultivated particularly close diplomatic ties with the Nixon administration. The relationship was mutually beneficial: The Nixon administration cleared the way for the Shah to strengthen the weaponry stockpile of the Iranian armed forces; for its part, Iran had long been facilitating both Johnson's and then Nixon's continued war in Vietnam.<sup>254</sup> By 1972, the Shah was spending twice as much as Saudi Arabia and three times as much as Iraq on military equipment. During the Nixon presidency, the Shah's yearly arms deals with the United States multiplied sevenfold. The accumulation of arms made Iran the unchallenged superpower of the region – a

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<sup>253</sup> Bill, James A. *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988: 179.

<sup>254</sup> Shannon (2011): 6.

position the Shah had been aiming for since Britain had initiated its withdrawal from the Persian Gulf.<sup>255 256 257 258 259 260</sup>

By May 1973, the Shah had essentially succeeded in dissolving the consortium agreement that he had been persuaded to join after Operation AJAX in 1953. This meant that the leading international oil enterprises saw their role in Iran greatly diminished to that of outworkers who facilitated in the manufacturing and commerce of Iranian oil and were compensated by the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC). Following the Arab-Israeli war in 1973, oil prices skyrocketed. Moreover, with Iran at the helm of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) during the oil price revolution of 1973-1974, Iran's oil industry experienced a sharp increase in profits with the annual income surging to approximately \$25 billion dollars. Between 1973 and 1978, Iranian oil manufacturing increased at a swift pace, going from three million barrels daily in 1973 to doubling their productivity to six million barrels daily just five years later. Yet, the Shah was advised that in the long-term, overburdened oil fields would result

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<sup>255</sup> Posnett, Edward. "Treating His Imperial Majesty's Warts: British Policy towards Iran 1977-79." *Iranian Studies* 45, no. 1 (2012): 131.

<sup>256</sup> Alvandi, Roham. "Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah: The Origins of Iranian Primacy in the Persian Gulf\*." *Diplomatic History* 36, no. 2 (2012): 345-349, 353-371.

<sup>257</sup> Von Eggert, Konstantin. "The Tragedy of the Last Shah: Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and the Dead End of Enlightened Authoritarianism: Gholam Reza Afkhami, The Life and Times of the Shah (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 740 Pp." *Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security* 17, no. 1 (2011): 115-116.

<sup>258</sup> Bill (1988): 179.

<sup>259</sup> Shannon (2011): 6.

<sup>260</sup> Amirahmadi, Entessar (1992): 183.

in difficulty to extract petroleum, and this was perhaps one reason why the monarch had initiated developments of nuclear energy for Iran.<sup>261 262 263 264 265 266 267</sup>

However, by 1973 and until the Shah's exile in 1979, the Iranian economy no longer advanced at the pace it had in the prior decade. The national economy had become excessively dependent on Iranian oil revenues, and in the meantime the remaining branches of revenue experienced a downturn. Additionally, there were reports of serious misappropriation of funds and corruption by the Royal Family and agents of the Royal Government.<sup>268</sup> The agricultural industry declined for a variety of reasons: One reason was that oil revenues were used to finance the purchase of imported produce and dairy; another key cause was that the rural workforce was moving to larger cities in pursuit of better employment prospects. In 1976, a census showed that just one-third of the Iranian workforce was employed in the agricultural industry; two decades prior, a census had shown that fifty-six percent of Iranians were working in the agricultural field. Furthermore, Western powers fell into an economic slump that greatly curtailed their spending by

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<sup>261</sup> Clawson, Patrick, and Michael Rubin. *Eternal Iran: Continuity and Chaos*. The Middle East in Focus. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2005: 79-81.

<sup>262</sup> Alvandi (2012): 345-349, 353-371.

<sup>263</sup> Von Eggert (2011): 115-116.

<sup>264</sup> Bill, James A. *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988: 179.

<sup>265</sup> Rubin, Barry. *The Middle East: A Guide to Politics, Economics, Society and Culture*. Routledge, 2012: 193.

<sup>266</sup> Serafy, Salah El. "The Oil Price Revolution of 1973-1973" *The Journal of Energy and Development* 4, no. 2 (1979): 273-90.

<sup>267</sup> Shannon (2011): 6.

<sup>268</sup> Milani (2011): 336-337.



1976; the Shah's lack of foresight hurt his national budget and a number of projects he had underway for the country.<sup>269 270</sup>

In December 1976, at a meeting in Qatar with the other members of OPEC, Saudi Arabia announced that it would not agree to raise its prices of oil. Shaykh Ahmad Zaki Yamani, the Oil Minister to Saudi Arabia, stated that – should other members opt to raise oil prices again – his country would compensate for the impact left on international markets by dropping the price of oil his country sold to global buyers. Saudi Arabia never effectively overflowed the oil industry with cut-rate oil; however, the two-tiered pricing structure that OPEC adopted as result was implemented for most of 1977, thus sending significant shockwaves throughout the Iranian economy. By January 9, 1977, the Shah and the Royal Government were forced to acknowledge that Iran's economy was flagging.<sup>271</sup> Taking “out a \$500 million-dollar emergency loan from US and European banks,”<sup>272</sup> the Shah and his Cabinet set out to do damage control.

By the summer of 1977, manufacturing and construction contracts had dropped by almost fifty percent, and the inflation rate was estimated to be approximately thirty-five percent. Cutbacks were made on governmental expenditures, which resulted in a smaller job market, a decrease in incomes, and a deficit in energy, foodstuffs, and building materials. Budget cuts to influential leadership factions – such as the mullahs – resulted in a sharp spike of unemployment for young

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<sup>269</sup> Clawson, Rubin (2005): 79-81.

<sup>270</sup> Rubin (2012): 192.

<sup>271</sup> Cooper, Andrew Scott. "Showdown at Doha: The Secret Oil Deal That Helped Sink the Shah of Iran." *The Middle East Journal* 62, no. 4 (2008): 567-569.

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.*, 567.

blue-collar workers employed by these groups.<sup>273 274 275 276</sup> “Foreign correspondents in Tehran during this period remarked on the large numbers of young, unemployed males walking around the streets of Tehran.”<sup>277</sup> These young men had left rural communities in hopes of better opportunities in the city and were quickly becoming disillusioned. In 1977 and 1978, the Iranian national income grew by only three percent. The unexpected spread of nationwide unemployment, coupled with diminishing oil profits, and the sudden slashes to funding of powerful factions of Iranian society whose backing of the Shah may have encouraged the nation’s confidence in the Royal Government and seen them through the economic downturn further intensified the rising tensions inside the country.<sup>278 279 280</sup>

Mounting economic woes, along with decades of public discontent that had never been properly addressed laid the groundwork for what finally manifested into the Islamic Revolution of 1979.<sup>281 282</sup> As Andrew Scott Cooper noted, Iran’s revolution shared “similarities with two other great revolutions: France in 1789 and Russia in 1917. All three upheavals were preceded by fiscal

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<sup>273</sup> "Iran Reports Exports of Oil Decline 34.7%." *New York Times (1923-Current File)* (New York, N.Y.), 1977.

<sup>274</sup> "Iran's Cabinet Agrees On \$500 Million Loan to Narrow Its Deficit." *Wall Street Journal (1923 - Current File)* (New York, N.Y.), 1977.

<sup>275</sup> Milani (2011): 384.

<sup>276</sup> Cooper (2008): 589-591.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, 590-591.

<sup>278</sup> Cooper (2008): 590-592.

<sup>279</sup> Clawson, Rubin (2005): 79-81.

<sup>280</sup> Rubin (2012): 192.

<sup>281</sup> Clawson, Rubin (2005): 79-81.

<sup>282</sup> Rubin (2012): 192.

crises.”<sup>283</sup> <sup>284</sup> Of Iran’s thirty-eight million total population at the time, eleven percent joined in the nationwide protests and demonstrations; another similarity shared with the French Revolution, where nine percent of the population joined in protest against the Crown, and the Russian Revolution, where seven percent of the populace revolted against the monarchy.<sup>285</sup> <sup>286</sup>

Ervand Abrahamian noted that “nineteenth century European revolutions often started in opera houses; the Iranian Revolution can be said to have begun in poetry-reading sessions.”<sup>287</sup> In fact, the sessions took place after seven months of open letters being distributed around the country by human-rights activists, academics, prosecutors, and members of the media – all condemning the Shah’s autocratic rule and monopolistic control over the country’s economy.<sup>288</sup> <sup>289</sup> That same year, between October 10<sup>th</sup> and October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1977, the Goethe Institute organized a poetry reading. This was a frequent event at the Institute, with this event having one significant distinction from past readings: The Goethe Institute had previously co-sponsored the event with the government-backed Literary Society of Tehran (*Anjoman-e Adabi-e Tehran*), yet 1977 was the first year that they would co-sponsor the event with the Writers’ Association of Iran (*Kanun-e Nevisandagan-e Iran*) – a circle of scholars well-known for their Leftist ideals.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Cooper (2008): 568.

<sup>284</sup> Ashraf, Ahmad, and Ali Banuazizi. "The State, Classes and Modes of Mobilization in the Iranian Revolution." *State, Culture and Society*1, no. 3 (1985): 19.

<sup>285</sup> Milani (2011): 394.

<sup>286</sup> Amineh, Eisenstadt (2007):135.

<sup>287</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 16.

<sup>288</sup> Maloney, Suzanne, and Keian Razipour. “The Iranian Revolution-A Timeline of Events.” Brookings. Brookings, February 7, 2019: n/a.

<sup>289</sup> Amirahmadi, Entessar (1992): 185.

<sup>290</sup> Chehabi, Houchang E. “Goethe Institute.” Encyclopædia Iranica. RSS, December 15, 2001: n/a.

Founded in 1968, the Writers' Association of Iran had been ordered to disband in 1970; yet, under the Shah's most recently appointed Prime Minister – Jamshid Amuzegar – a strategy of leniency had been implemented with regard to divergent partisan factions, thus the Association's assemblies were permitted to convene. The readings – that eventually came to be known as the “Ten Nights” (*dah shab*) – were held at the German Cultural Institute on Pahlavi Avenue. Despite weather conditions, each night drew large crowds who came to listen to some of the most imminent Iranian intellectuals of the era (many of whom had been blacklisted by the government) lecture about free speech, discrimination, the suppression of artistic creativity, and authoritarianism. In spite of a strictly enforced media ban, Tehran's youth began to take notice of the meetings and by the tenth night, thousands were in attendance. Law enforcement ordered the assembly to disperse; resisting orders, the crowd became unruly which eventually resulted in the arrest of fifty attendees. The remaining assembly gathered in Arya-Mehr University, staging an impromptu sit-in in order to call for the release of fifty attendees who had been arrested; this marked the first of many conflicts between Iranian citizens and the Shah's armed forces.<sup>291 292 293 294 295</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Chehabi (2001): n/a.

<sup>292</sup> Karimi-Hakkak, Ahmad. "Protest and Perish: A History of the Writers' Association of Iran." *Iranian Studies* 18, no. 2-4 (1985): 209-211.

<sup>293</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 16.

<sup>294</sup> Sullivan (1981): 146.

<sup>295</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 5-6.

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1977 – four days after the close of Goethe House’s “Ten Nights” event – Mostafa Khomeini, the older son of Ayatollah Khomeini died in Najaf, Iraq. Soon, the Shah’s SAVAK forces were linked by supporters of Khomeini with the death of his son. On January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1978, a newspaper linked to the Shah’s Imperial Court – *Ettela’at* – retaliated by publishing an article accusing Khomeini of being Indian by birth and a spy of the British. By January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1978, the provocative article had reached the city of Qom, triggering a chain reaction of protests in the streets which then led to demonstrations at seminaries, and ultimately provoked riots. The central bazaar of Qom was forced to close; by the end of the day, between five to nine men were dead as a result of the riots.<sup>296</sup> Forty days after the *Ettela’at* riots, the city of Tabriz held a *chelleh* – an Islamic mourning ceremony traditionally held forty days after the death of a Muslim – for the nine men who had been killed in Qom. Once the *chelleh* ceremony concluded, angry mourners initiated an impromptu protest, burning down buildings that were linked to foreign companies and the Imperial Crown. The army was sent to suppress the protestors; another six people were killed in the hysteria that ensued in Tabriz that day. Yet another forty days passed, with the city of Yazd holding *chelleh* for the protestors who had been killed in Tabriz; once again, demonstrations took place after mourning ceremonies concluded, and another twenty Iranian citizens were killed when armed forces attempted to quell the unrest.<sup>297 298</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Abel-Hirsch, Hannah, and Abbas. “The Iranian Revolution • Abbas • Magnum Photos.” Magnum Photos, February 1, 2019: n/a.

<sup>297</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>298</sup> Buchan, James. "The Iranian Revolution of 1979." *Asian Affairs* 44, no. 3 (2013): 421-422.

Over the next year, demonstrations intensified in five phases, each one associated with a *chelleh*; in this case, the *chelleh* were for those killed in anti-Pahlavi-régime protests. Demonstrations with turnouts in the thousands soon began taking place, particularly on significant dates of the Islamic calendar such as *Eid-al-Fitr* (“The Day of Sacrifice”) which fell on September 4, 1978, and *Muharram* (literal meaning: “Banned”; one of four holy months in the Islamic year in which combat is forbidden) which fell on December 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 1978. Almost half the population of Tehran came out for the peaceful *Muharram* protests, shouting chants that criticized the Shah and his forces, and proclaimed Khomeini the true leader of Iran.<sup>299 300 301 302</sup>

Between the *Eid-al-Fitr* protests on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1978, and the *Muharram* protests in December of that same year, there had been several non-religious demonstrations that proved to be particularly pivotal: Just four days after the *Muharram* protests – September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1978 marked what eventually came known as *Black Friday* (*Jom’e’ye Seeyah*). On the previous day, the Shah had declared martial law; the next morning, protestors in Tehran defied orders to stay indoors. Ignoring the Shah’s decree, crowds in Tehran were beginning to assemble when troops overseen by General Gholam Ali Oveissi surrounded protestors in downtown Tehran’s Jaleh Square. The justification given for firing directly into the crowd at Jhaleh Square was that the protestors had taunted the soldiers of the Imperial Guard.<sup>303</sup> By the end of *Black Friday*, approximately two-hundred Iranians were killed in Jaleh Square.<sup>304 305 306 307 308</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 6-9.

<sup>300</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 13.

<sup>301</sup> Moin (2000): 196.

<sup>302</sup> Graham, Robert. *Iran: The Illusion of Power*. Berg Publishers Ltd./Routledge, 1980: 238.

<sup>303</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 10.

The Imperial Guard's tactic of opening fire on Jaleh Square in order to terrorize the masses into permanent retreat had backfired. Protestors were undeterred, persistent in their dissent against the Shah's forces, and unrelenting in their efforts to organize. Demonstrators graffitied the sides of buildings with revolutionary slogans and held rallies in public areas in cities nationwide. Gathering on university campuses, and even the grounds of *Behesht-e-Zahra* ("Zahra's Paradise") – a vast cemetery just outside of Tehran – where "both places were transformed into large sanctuaries where political groups held impromptu daily meetings...openly [selling] newsletters, books, cassettes, posters, and cartoons."<sup>309</sup> The act of provocation by the Shah's forces added another political element to the demonstrations,

*Not only [polarizing] the situation but also shifting the balance of power within the opposition...[shifting] the center of gravity away from Shariatmardi and the more moderate opposition, who favored the 1906 constitution, toward Khomeini and the more radical groups, both secular and religious, who called for the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic.*<sup>310</sup>

The *Black Friday* clashes also sparked nationwide strikes across virtually all industries and vocations: From small business, media, transportation, academia, to manufacturing plants, and most consequential of all – the oil workers' strike.<sup>311</sup> Prior to the strike of oil workers in Abadan, the Shah and his government had been determined to hold off protestors until their demonstrations

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<sup>304</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 23.

<sup>305</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>306</sup> Sullivan (1981): 161-162.

<sup>307</sup> Buchan (2013): 423-424.

<sup>308</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>309</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 24.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>311</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 33-35.

eventually wended down. However, the oil workers' strike wrought a crucial blow against the Pahlavi régime – in effect overwhelming the Iranian economy, subsequently incapacitating the state.<sup>312 313</sup> Forty days after *Black Friday*, national strikes across the entirety of Iran brought the country's economy to a standstill.<sup>314 315 316</sup>

November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1978 became known as the *Day Tehran Burned*: When a drafted soldier placed his firearm on the sidewalk and ran to the side of university demonstrators, the Shah's Imperial army officers fired point-blank at the young soldier. Rioting broke out across the university's entire campus, and then reached out into surrounding streets. By the next day, demonstrators were setting fires in the central thoroughfares of Tehran in order to impede the passage of the Imperial Guard's tanks through the city's streets.<sup>317 318</sup>

Just two days later, on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1978, the Shah finally addressed the Iranian public: Appearing on national television, the monarch spoke directly to the protestors, "I heard the voice of your revolution...as the Shah of Iran as well as an Iranian citizen, I cannot but approve of your

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<sup>312</sup> Jafari, Peyman. "Reasons to Revolt: Iranian Oil Workers in the 1970s." 84, no. 1 (2013): 195.

<sup>313</sup> Milani (2011): 395.

<sup>314</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 24.

<sup>315</sup> Milani (2011): 395.

<sup>316</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 11-13.

<sup>317</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 25.

<sup>318</sup> Steinzova, Lucie, and Stuart Greer. "In Pictures: Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution." Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty. Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, February 12, 2019: n/a.



revolution.”<sup>319 320 321 322</sup> The monarch went on to acknowledge that his government had taken note of past failures and ensured the nation that there would not be a recurrence of previous mistakes.

In a bid to regain the confidence of the general public, the Shah took action:<sup>323</sup>

*[Dismissing General] Oveissi...[arresting] sixty senior officials including his prime minister of twelve years and the director of SAVAK; [he] lifted censorship; promised free elections; [and] released more political prisoners, including Ayatollah Taleqani.*<sup>324 325</sup>

Yet, the Shah’s attempts at reassuring protestors by publicly suppressing the SAVAK triggered an unforeseen dilemma: The diminished confidence and determination of his own Imperial Guardsmen.<sup>326</sup> They were now faced with an undeniable fact: Anyone, not just protestors, could face imprisonment by the Shah’s régime – even those who had served his government. Morale was also depleted by another harsh reality: As the protestors started to number in the hundreds of thousands, soldiers were sometimes forced to face their own family members in the streets. Despite the military’s best efforts to avoid such confrontations, soldiers rapidly grew weary of cracking down on fellow citizens who were asking for basic human rights.<sup>327 328 329</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>320</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 26.

<sup>321</sup> Buchan (2013): 425.

<sup>322</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>323</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 10-11.

<sup>324</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 26.

<sup>325</sup> Buchan (2013): 425.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid., 424-425.

<sup>327</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 26.

<sup>328</sup> Sullivan (1981): 215.

<sup>329</sup> Danopoulos, Constantine P., and Cynthia Ann. Watson. *The Political Role of the Military: An International Handbook*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996: 14.

December 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 1978 marked *Muharram* on the Islamic calendar. Just days after a press conference at the White House in which President Carter stated that it was for the Iranian people to decide who would lead their country, nationwide protests broke out in Iran yet again.<sup>330</sup> Organized in the home of the newly-released Ayatollah Taleqani, the *Tasu'a* and *Ashura* rallies were allied with a host of opposition factions: “The extended family had links...with university students...the Liberation Movement...the National Front, the Writers’ Association, the Society of Bazaar Merchants and Guilds...the Mojahedin...[and] the Marxist guerilla organization.”<sup>331</sup> In observance of the Islamic decree in which there was to be no bloodshed or violence in *Muharram*, protest organizers urged all those marching in the demonstration to do peacefully, with “processions...accompanied by clerics atop minibuses who discouraged the use of ‘provocative slogans’ via loudspeakers. The [first day] passed without bloodshed.”<sup>332</sup>

The next day – *Ashura* – drew an even bigger crowd; reassured by the previous day’s peaceful gathering, the Iranian population took to the streets as never before. In Tehran alone, it was estimated that approximately two million people joined in the *Ashura* protests of 1978. The second day of protests was mixed: While it had a far more assertive and forceful atmosphere than the previous day’s demonstrations, the *Ashura* marches in Tehran were broadly cohesive and nonviolent. There emerged a balance of solidarity and interconnectedness between protestors and general Iranian society; and yet on the other side of the scale – a determined intensity compelling the masses to publicly express their frustrations and opposition to the Shah and his régime,

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<sup>330</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>331</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 27.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid., 27.

*Shopkeepers distributed sweets and water. Florists gave out carnations so that demonstrators could hand them to the soldiers...civil servants threw pictures of the Shah out of buildings, so that the crowds could tear them apart...the regime was losing control of the streets.* <sup>333</sup>

Despite appeals from organizers for peaceful marches, *Ashura* demonstrators boldly called out chants against both the Shah and the United States. Millions of Iranian citizens now demanded for the Shah to leave Iran and for Ayatollah Khomeini to return. From his exile in Paris, Khomeini declared that the demonstrations were the Iranian public's "referendum" bringing the Pahlavi rule to an end. <sup>334 335 336</sup>

The Shah's trademark pattern of sinking into indecision, particularly during a crisis, led to his implementation of startlingly impulsive policies with regard to the demonstrations, the national economy, and a range of other aspects of government which necessitated prompt action and positive results. <sup>337 338</sup> Khomeini used each catastrophic outcome to campaign against the Shah: He was unworthy of Iranian citizens, an autocratic ruler, unfit to govern Iran. In the same breath, the exiled Ayatollah would deliberately emphasize how he yearned for Iranians to have a democratic government, representative of their values and principles. Even before the *Muharram* protests of 1978, there had been trepidations about the future of Iran with the Shah at the helm. <sup>339</sup> By late autumn and into early winter of 1978, there were indications that the allegiance of Iran's

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<sup>333</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 23.

<sup>334</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>335</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 27.

<sup>336</sup> Buchan (2013): 425.

<sup>337</sup> Posnett (2012): 130, 136-137.

<sup>338</sup> Sullivan (1981): 190.

<sup>339</sup> Amirahmadi, Entessar (1992): 183-185.

military to the Shah was flagging: “Commanders complained that the Shah was bereft of purpose, suggesting...that such a crisis would never have happened under Reza Shah.”<sup>340</sup>

In late October 1978, British Prime Minister James Callaghan’s team conveyed that after careful analysis, they could find no viable course of action that could preserve the continuity of the Shah’s régime. The British Prime Minister’s team then decided to “[inform their] Foreign Office that they should start thinking about reinsuring.”<sup>341</sup> By early November 1978, talks had begun between the British and American Embassies with regard to the political future of the Iranian nation and what, if any, steps their two countries should take. After careful deliberations, Britain and the United States concluded that another Operation AJAX-style coup would not serve in their best interests. The two governments determined that in order to avoid a total collapse of the Iranian nation – wherein the Soviet Union could potentially attempt to make a grab for power – American officials should establish communication with popular political resistance factions.<sup>342</sup><sup>343</sup><sup>344</sup> Eventually, US officials were able to make contact with Khomeini through French attachés; after extensive interviews, the Americans walked away satisfied that “there was clearly no hint of clerical despotism.”<sup>345</sup><sup>346</sup><sup>347</sup><sup>348</sup>

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<sup>340</sup> Milani (2011): 393.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid., 393.

<sup>343</sup> Posnett (2012): 132-134.

<sup>344</sup> Sullivan (1981): 145.

<sup>345</sup> Milani (2011): 387, 394.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid., 394.

<sup>347</sup> Sullivan (1981): 199

<sup>348</sup> Randjbar-Daemi, Siavush. "Building the Islamic State: The Draft Constitution of 1979 Reconsidered." *Iranian Studies* 46, no. 4 (2013): 644.

In the lead-up to his eventual role as the first Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Khomeini was already beginning to exhibit the signs of a shrewd statesman. When interviewed by American officials in France, the cleric did not disclose particulars regarding his actual philosophies. From his compound in the suburbs of France, Khomeini gave more than one-hundred interviews; not once did he make any reference to the *velayat-e-faqih* (“Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist over the People”).<sup>349</sup> <sup>350</sup> <sup>351</sup> <sup>352</sup> Citing the ancient sagas of the Shi’ite Muslim sect, he bonded together various resistance factions – Marxist, Nationalist, Islamist – essentially organizing them under their collective ancestry and heritage: The Shi’ite belief in the self-sacrificing minorities’ divine calling to resist against tyrannical rule in pursuit of the greater good.<sup>353</sup> <sup>354</sup> <sup>355</sup> <sup>356</sup> <sup>357</sup> Khomeini’s recorded messages were copied onto cassette tapes and dispersed by the thousands across Iran.<sup>358</sup> In his communications with the masses, Khomeini ensured widespread appeal of his elegiac orations by primarily focusing on protestors: Uplifting their

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<sup>349</sup> Milani (2011): 394.

<sup>350</sup> Fotini, Christia. *Ayatollah Khomeini in Exile in France.*, 2006.

<sup>351</sup> Rizvi, M. Mahtab Alam. "Velayat-e-Faqih (Supreme Leader) and Iranian Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis." *Strategic Analysis* 36, no. 1 (2012): 113.

<sup>352</sup> Chehabi (1991): 71-73.

<sup>353</sup> Gholizadeh, Shadi, and Derek W. Hook. "The Discursive Construction of the 1978–1979 Iranian Revolution in the Speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini." *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 22, no. 2 (2012): 177.

<sup>354</sup> Amirpur, Katajun. "Ayatollah Khomeini and the Anatomy of the Iranian Revolution: Toward a Theory of Prophetic Charisma." *Iranian Studies* 51, no. 5 (2018): 809-812.

<sup>355</sup> Abrahamian, Ervand. *Khomeinism: Essays on the Islamic Republic*. Berkeley: University of California, 1993: 16-17.

<sup>356</sup> Dabashi, Hamid. *Theology of Discontent*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006: 16-17.

<sup>357</sup> Amineh, Eisenstadt (2007): 143-144.

<sup>358</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 6.

demonstrations and likening their rallies to a sacred and spiritual calling. The astute cleric would then supplement his communications by incorporating subtle references to political ideas, making certain that these minor digressions were thoroughly democratic in premise and nature.<sup>359 360 361</sup>

In fact, since his first published work in 1944 (*Kashf al-Asrar*, or “Secrets Unveiled”) and well into the 1960s, Khomeini had stipulated that the selection and rule of political leaders should be dictated by *Allah* (God); he criticized the modernized and cosmopolitan Iran that both Pahlavi monarchs had envisioned; and he persistently pushed for *sharia* law to be the foremost decree employed by the nation's magistrates.<sup>362 363 364</sup> Khomeini's interpretations were regarded as stringent and dogmatic “even in the annals of [Shi'ite] theology...and [were] espoused by only a handful of ayatollahs.”<sup>365 366</sup> Facilitating Khomeini in constructing a public persona as an enigmatic visionary without a shred of political ambition: The Shah's decades-long ban on the printing and distribution of Khomeini's written works inside Iran.<sup>367 368 369</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> Imam Khomeini speech in Paris\_ France – Persian [English Translated]: n/a.

<sup>360</sup> Sullivan (1981): 140-141, 166.

<sup>361</sup> Starkey, Brigid. "Islam, Culture and Revolution - the Case of Iran." *Journal of Developing Societies* 6, no. 1 (1990): 94.

<sup>362</sup> Milani (2011): 392-395.

<sup>363</sup> Abdul Hakim, Sudarnoto. "Islam and Government: An Analytical Review on Khomeini's *Kashf Al-Asrār* and *Wilāyat Al-Fāqih*." *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 8, no. 1 (2018): 166-169.

<sup>364</sup> Hossainzadeh, Nura. "Democratic and Constitutionalist Elements in Khomeini's Unveiling of Secrets and Islamic Government." *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21, no. 1 (2016): 29-32, 39.

<sup>365</sup> Milani (2011): 39.

<sup>366</sup> Chehabi (1991): 73-74.

<sup>367</sup> Amirpur (2018): 809-12.

<sup>368</sup> Milani (2011): 394.

<sup>369</sup> Imam Khomeini's Viewpoint on Islamic Education (تربیت اسلامی از منظر امام خمینی س): n/a.

In December 1978, the United States began backtracking on what had heretofore been decades of virtually unwavering support of the Iranian monarch. The first public indications of a shift in US-Iran relations were discernible at a White House press conference in early December 1978. Questioned about the recent uprisings in Iran, and accusations of human rights abuses made against the government of the Shah, President Carter discreetly affirmed that,

*There have been abuses...incarcerations of people without formal charges and trial under the Shah's Government that [we do not find] acceptable...the Shah [has moved] toward democratic principles...we personally prefer that the Shah maintain a major role, but that is a decision for the Iranian people to make.* <sup>370 371</sup>

In Iran, the head of President Carter's special task force, George Ball, wrote "[the Shah's] regime is coming apart...the United States should pressure [him] to give up much of his power and bring about a responsible government that...meets the needs of the Iranian people [and] the requirements of our own policy."<sup>372</sup> As the Pahlavi regime began to crumble, President Carter sent General Robert Huyser on a special mission to Iran. There, General Huyser met with General Philip Gast, who was the "Military Assistance and Advisory Group chief in Tehran." Generals Huyser and Gast – operating in collaboration with the Iranian military – began initiating channels of communication with Ayatollah Khomeini's inner circle.<sup>373 374 375 376</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>371</sup> "Excerpts from President's Meeting with Reporters." *The New York Times*. n.d.: n/a.

<sup>372</sup> Milani (2011): 395.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid., 393.

<sup>374</sup> "Lieutenant General Philip C. Gast." U.S. Air Force > Biography Display. U.S. Air Force: n/a.

<sup>375</sup> Sullivan (1981): 228, 251.

<sup>376</sup> Amirahmadi, Entessar (1992): 189-191.

From his exile in Neauphle-le-Château, France, Khomeini had begun to quietly assemble what would eventually be known as his Revolutionary Council (*Šūrā-ye enqelāb-e eslāmī*) in Tehran: Trustworthy collaborators, some of them his former students – all of them clerics.<sup>377</sup> A smaller set from within the Revolutionary Council were in communication with US Ambassador William H. Sullivan at the American Embassy in Tehran.<sup>378 379 380</sup> Intent on fully grasping Khomeini’s political aspirations for Iran, Sullivan interviewed the Revolutionary Council regarding the cleric’s political thoughts and ideologies. Khomeini’s inner circle used each meeting as an opportunity to assure the American diplomat that the cleric was anti-Communist, as well as pro-democracy. Eventually, the Revolutionary Council persuaded Ambassador Sullivan that the Ayatollah’s government would be one established on the foundation of democratic principles.<sup>381</sup> Thus, in late 1978 the American Embassy in Tehran began “planning for an Iran without the Shah, but also concluded that Khomeini was keen on establishing a democracy in Iran. The United States began facilitating Khomeini’s rise to power.”<sup>382 383 384</sup>

On January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1979 – just five weeks after the *Ashura* protests, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi boarded a flight with his wife, Empress Farah Pahlavi, and left Iran for the last time. Prior

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<sup>377</sup> Majd, Hooman. *The Ayatollah Begs to Differ: The Paradox of Modern Iran*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York: Doubleday, 2008: 157.

<sup>378</sup> Sullivan (1981): 248.

<sup>379</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 15.

<sup>380</sup> Randjbar-Daemi (2013): 644-645.

<sup>381</sup> Milani (2011): 386-387, 395.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*, 394.

<sup>383</sup> Sullivan (1981): 189, 214-216, 222-223, 224-226.

<sup>384</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 14-15.



to his departure, he named Shahpour Bakhtiyar the prime minister of Iran.<sup>385 386 387</sup> As Khomeini had predicted less than two decades prior, the Iranian people took to the streets to celebrate the Shah's final departure from Iran. *Ettela'at* – the newspaper that had disparaged Khomeini in its pages just twelve months prior – published what has since become the most recognized headline of that day with the brusque caption, “*Shah Raft*” (“The Shah Left”). In his endeavor to modernize Iran, the Shah had fabricated a pseudo-utopia. Stepford-esque in its setup, Pahlavi's Iran looked like a modern nation, but operated like an autocratic state.<sup>388</sup> Outsiders saw a Middle Eastern country with all the contemporary trappings of the West. For Iranian citizens, however, the shadow of the SAVAK always loomed large, and the population felt constantly scrutinized by the state.<sup>389</sup> Moreover, the societal rifts between the working classes and the upper echelons of Iranian culture remained widely prevalent. The working classes felt deprived – not just of opportunity – but of inclusion in their own country's cultural, artistic, and academic spheres.<sup>390</sup> In the end, “the battering ram that brought down the regime was formed mostly of young urban men from working and lower-middle class families. They, more than anyone else, formed what Khomeini heralded as Iran's *mostazafen*: the dispossessed, the downtrodden, and the wretched of the earth.”<sup>391 392</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> Milani (2011): 418.

<sup>386</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>387</sup> Katouzian, Homa. "The Iranian Revolution at 30: The Dialectic of State and Society." *Middle East Critique* 19, no. 1 (2010): 44.

<sup>388</sup> Levin, Ira. *The Stepford Wives; a Novel*. 1st Ed.] ed. New York: Random House, 1972.

<sup>389</sup> Abel-Hirsch, Abbas (2019): n/a.

<sup>390</sup> Starkey (1990): 90.

<sup>391</sup> Pace, Eric. "Shah, Seeking Modern Society, Built Police State and Offended Moslem Faithful." *New York Times (1923-Current File)* (New York, N.Y.), 1980.

<sup>392</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 33.

## 1979 and Beyond: The Islamic Revolution & Iran Hostage Crisis

Two weeks later, on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini arrived in Mehrabad Airport after fifteen years in exile. Yet again, *Ettela'at*'s succinct headline managed to capture the general mood of the day, stating the “*Imam Has Arrived*”.<sup>393 394</sup> Khomeini had been banished for being a revolutionary and returned to a revolution – one of his own making, no less. Immediately upon arrival in Tehran, Ayatollah Khomeini requested to be taken to *Behesht-e-Zahra* cemetery so that he could pay his respects to those that had fallen in Jaleh Square on *Black Friday*. After praying over the graves of the *Black Friday* victims, Khomeini announced to the Iranian citizens and media who had gathered to witness his arrival that Shahpour Bakhtiyar’s “government [was] illegitimate, the monarchy [was] terminated, and [declared] himself the true voice of the people with the right to appoint a new prime minister...and avowed that final victory will not come until foreign influence is terminated.”<sup>395 396 397 398</sup> Three days after his arrival in Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini appointed Mehdi Bazargan prime minister.<sup>399</sup> On February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1979, Shahpour Bakhtiyar attempted to declare martial law on the entire nation; in retort, Khomeini released a statement in

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<sup>393</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 28.

<sup>394</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>395</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 29.

<sup>396</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>397</sup> Markham, James M. Special to The New York Times. “Ayatollah Steps Up Pressure on Regime to Bow Out in Iran” *New York Times (1923-Current File)* (New York, N.Y.), 1979.

<sup>398</sup> Apple Jr., R.W. Special to The New York Times. “Khomeini Threatens to Arrest Bakhtiar If He Stays in Post.” *New York Times (1923-Current File)* (New York, N.Y.), 1979.

<sup>399</sup> Amirahmadi, Entessar (1992): 191.

which he instructed Iranians to disregard Bakhtiyar's orders and protest the illegitimate prime minister's administration.<sup>400 401</sup>

To an outside observer, what transpired next must have seemed to be a bizarre nightmare turned reality. Yet, to those acutely aware of what Iranians had been forced to endure in decades prior, it was patently obvious that the echoes of Operation AJAX were reverberating through the streets of Tehran: Resembling soldiers called to battle, Iranian citizens responded to Khomeini's rallying cry and filled the capital city's streets in droves, with some citizens opting to camp out in the thoroughfares to ensure their side emerged victorious. Khomeini was determined not to allow the misstep that resulted in Mossadegh's overthrow to be the reason for his own downfall: In 1953, Mossadegh had publicly instructed his followers to not take to the streets for marches or rallies; it was specifically at this stage that the tide turned in favor of the Shah, and the Iranian military – in coordination with the British MI6 and the American CIA – had overthrown Mossadegh's democratically elected government.<sup>402</sup> Skeptical of the Imperial Guard and suspicious that they might organize a coup, Ayatollah Khomeini commanded his supporters to block the streets of Tehran in order to hinder any such efforts by the highly trained armed forces. Crowds of Iranian citizens went one step further, raiding the Imperial supplies of artillery that had been stockpiled by the Shah for decades. Within hours, the streets of Tehran were filled with civilians carrying AK-45s. The next day, the Imperial Guards declared their stance as neutral in Tehran's political street wars between the two rival prime ministers and their supporters.<sup>403</sup> By the end of the day on

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<sup>400</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 30.

<sup>401</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>402</sup> Amirahmadi, Entessar (1992): 182-183.

<sup>403</sup> Danopoulos, Watson (1996): 214.

February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1979, Bakhtiyar's government had collapsed, and the last prime minister appointed by the Shah eventually escaped to France. <sup>404</sup> <sup>405</sup> <sup>406</sup> <sup>407</sup> <sup>408</sup>

Three days after Bakhtiyar's government collapsed, on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1979, the American Embassy in Tehran was besieged by crowds of anti-Western demonstrators. Ibrahim Yazdi, the interim Foreign Minister of the provisional government, intervened and ejected the protestors. On March 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, 1979, Iranian citizens were asked to join in a nationwide referendum; the only question on the ballot was whether or not Iran should become an Islamic Republic. <sup>409</sup> Just over a month later on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1979, the *Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps* (IRGC) was created by a mandate stipulated by Ayatollah Khomeini. <sup>410</sup> That summer, on August 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 1979, Iranians participated in a national election to nominate an eighty-eight-seat committee known as the *Assembly of Experts*, appointed in order to ratify the recently redrafted outline of the Iranian constitution. <sup>411</sup> As a result of boycotts by various political factions, voter participation was lower

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<sup>404</sup> Abrahamian (2009): 30-31.

<sup>405</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>406</sup> Katouzian, Homa. "The Iranian Revolution at 30: The Dialectic of State and Society." *Middle East Critique* 19, no. 1 (2010): 45.

<sup>407</sup> Ibrahim, Youssef M. Special to The New York Times. "Scores Dead in Iran as Military Groups Clash Over Regime." *New York Times (1923-Current File)* (New York, N.Y.), 1979.

<sup>408</sup> Ashraf, Banuazizi (1985): 17-18.

<sup>409</sup> Ramazani, Ruohollah K. "Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran." *Middle East Journal* 34, no. 2 (1980): 181.

<sup>410</sup> Literal translation: "Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution." Commonly referred to as *Sepah*; also known as *Sepâh-e Pâsdârân-e Enghelâb-e Eslâmi*.

<sup>411</sup> Ramazani (1980): 181.

than the nationwide referendum held earlier in the year.<sup>412 413</sup> Two months later, on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 1979, the *Assembly of Experts* ratified an updated constitution, modeled after Ayatollah Khomeini's standards as stipulated in *velayat-e-faqih*.<sup>414</sup> On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1979, the Shah was allowed entry into the United States for hospitalization and treatment of his cancer; Ayatollah Khomeini denounced President Carter and his administration for permitting the exiled Shah entry to the United States.<sup>415 416</sup>

November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1979 marked the beginning of the Iran Hostage Crisis: University demonstrators in Tehran took over the American Embassy for the second time, taking fifty-two members of the consular staff hostage. Stephen Kinzer described the general sense of dismay of felt by those outside of Iran,

*Westerners...especially Americans, found this crime not only barbaric but inexplicable...almost none of them had any idea of the responsibility the United States bore for imposing the royalist regime that Iranians came to hate so passionately...hostage-takers remembered that when the Shah fled into exile in 1953, CIA agents working at the American embassy had returned him to his throne. Iranians feared that history was about to repeat itself.*<sup>417</sup>

While the students' takeover of the American Embassy did not initially receive whole-hearted backing from Ayatollah Khomeini, the new leader of Iran quickly acknowledged the possible advantages. Soon, Khomeini was calling the embassy seizure "Iran's Second Revolution" and

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<sup>412</sup> Also known as: *Majles-e khobregân-e rahbari*. Literal translation: *Assembly of Experts of the Leadership or Council of Experts*.

<sup>413</sup> Randjbar-Daemi (2013): 661-662.

<sup>414</sup> Chehabi (1991): 74-81.

<sup>415</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>416</sup> Amirahmadi, Entessar (1992): 193-194.

<sup>417</sup> Kinzer (2003): 202-203.

came to use it to the full benefit of his coalition.<sup>418</sup> Two days after the Iran Hostage Crisis was instigated, the leaders of the provisional government submitted their resignations in disapproval, relinquishing unchallenged power of the newly formed government to Khomeini and the Revolutionary Council. Ayatollah Khamenei who later succeeded Khomeini as Supreme Leader, did not initially support the Hostage Crisis, but once the student activists gained the support of Imam Khomeini, he asserted that, “We are not liberals like...Mossadegh, whom the CIA can snuff out.”<sup>419 420 421</sup> It was patently obvious that almost three decades after Operation AJAX, Iranians were still struggling with the overthrow of the democratically elected PM Mossadegh by foreign proxies.

On November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1979, the United States suspended all assets and properties of the Central Bank of Iran and the Iranian government. Three weeks later, on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1979, the newly formed government held another national referendum, this time for the recently created constitution under the *Assembly of Experts*; approximately seventy-five percent of the Iranian constituency participated, and the majority voted in favor of the new constitution.<sup>422 423</sup> Four months later, on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1980, the United States officially severed diplomatic relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. That summer, on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1980, the Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi died in Cairo, Egypt. Less than two months later, on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1980, Saddam Hussein

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<sup>418</sup> Amirahmadi, Entessar (1992): 194.

<sup>419</sup> Kinzer (2003): 203.

<sup>420</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>421</sup> Chehabi (1991): 85.

<sup>422</sup> Ramazani (1980): 182, 184-204.

<sup>423</sup> Saffari, Said. "The Legitimation of the Clergy's Right to Rule in the Iranian Constitution of 1979." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 20, no. 1 (1993): 65-66.

attacked Iran, igniting the longest conventional war of the twentieth century; the conflict would last eight years and result in hundreds of thousands of lives lost for both countries.<sup>424</sup> On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1981, the Iran Hostage Crisis came to an end after four-hundred and forty-four days.<sup>425</sup> The United States' sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran have never been entirely lifted since being imposed after the Iran Hostage Crisis.<sup>426</sup>

### Conclusion from Chapter Three

Foreign interference in Iran is an issue that the typical observer of history is marginally aware of, but the true scope and complexity of Western intrusion and intervention in Iranian domestic politics and affairs is profoundly disquieting. Iran's history in the past century is so inexplicably intertwined with interferences from extraterritorial influences that one is often left speculating how the country would have progressed – the peace and stability its people could have potentially experienced – had their fate been truly their own to shape and determine.

How does this impact the issue at hand? Sanctions are meant to hurt, to bring about capitulation; they were imposed by Great Britain when Iran first nationalized its oil, and again after the Iran Hostage Crisis. One other common trend with regard to the Iranian citizenry: It has been exceptionally challenging for Western powers to precisely identify this population's temperament and political stance, particularly post-Islamic Revolution. The modern Iranian population will unify behind the Islamic Republic one day, and seventy-two hours later – protest against the same government.

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<sup>424</sup> Kinzer (2003): 203.

<sup>425</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>426</sup> Aghazadeh (2013): 140-142.

The population of Iran persistently fought for the removal of corrupt monarchs, going so far as to put their lives on the line. At every turn – when their rights have been infringed upon – Iranians have risen up, organized, and endeavored to regain their sovereignty. These citizens have done so – not for glory or the promise of any acclaim – but often with the realization that their actions could come at the expense of their livelihoods, perhaps their lives, and quite frequently with the imminent risk of imprisonment and torture. Not once, but repeatedly over the span of generations, Iranian citizens have endeavored to build a true democracy. Oftentimes, the outcome has fallen short of their efforts and expectations, but that does not in any way diminish the significance and impact of their undertakings.



## Chapter IV.

### The Internal Dynamics of Iran

*“The political structure of the IRI is not constructed like a canopy, in which removing the central pole causes it to collapse; rather, it is built on many independent, rival, parallel columns of power that hold the system together.” - Dr. Kazem Alamdari <sup>427</sup>*

#### The Political Power Structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The 1979 Islamic Revolution brought about the end of monarchic rule in Iran, created the Islamic Republic of Iran, and ushered in an unprecedented governmental system that incorporated various facets from the country’s cultural, social, religious, and historical landscapes. Officially, the political power configuration of the IRI is structured to position the Supreme Leader as not just symbolic leader of the revolution, but also as the key person in government with a central role in decision-making for the nation. After the Supreme Leader, the power pyramid formally falls into one of four other categories: The two branches of the Iranian armed forces, the clerical organizations, the republican institutions, and the religious establishments. In many cases the Supreme Leader has absolute power – able to declare a war – but also, to dismiss high-ranking officials such as the head of the state radio and television, or the supreme commander of the IRGC.

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<sup>427</sup> Alamdari, Kazem. "The Power Structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Transition from Populism to Clientelism, and Militarization of the Government." *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 8 (2005): 1299.

<sup>428</sup> Billini, Gabriela, and Stephanie Lester. "Media Guide: Iran's Government Structure." American Iranian Council. American Iranian Council, August 1, 2017: n/a.

<sup>429</sup> Rakel (2009): 33-35, 37.

## *Velayat-e-Faqih*

While the political foundations of the 1979 Constitution are based on the 1906 Iranian Constitution, the IRI's governmental system is also deeply-rooted in the Shia Islamic political ideology known as *velayat-e-faqih* (or, Absolute Governance of the Jurist). In the *velayat-e-faqih* model of governance, Shia clergy hold both religious authority and political power, and thus function both as the state's religious leaders and play central roles in government – with major state issues subject to the approval of the Supreme Leader or *vali-e faqih* (also known as guardian Islamic jurist). Furthermore, the *faqih* (or, Supreme Clerical Leaders) are meant to provide *velayat* (guidance) for the populace, and in so doing ensure the continuation of the nation's Islamic identity.<sup>430 431 432 433 434</sup>

### The Islamic Republic of Iran's Armed Forces

The IRI's armed forces are divided into two main groups: The traditional military, which was restructured in 1979; then there is also the Revolutionary Guard (also known as the IRGC, or *Sepah*), a division founded in 1979 and charged with the duty of protecting the Islamic Revolution. Both branches are required to report to the Supreme Leader. Many members of the Iranian

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<sup>430</sup> Rigi, Jakob. "Iran at the Crossroads of Democracy and Dictatorship." *Focaal* 2012, no. 63 (2012): 129-45.

<sup>431</sup> Katouzian, Homa. "Problems of Political Development in Iran: Democracy, Dictatorship or Arbitrary Government?" *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 22, no. 1-2 (1995): 5-20.

<sup>432</sup> Rakel, Eva Patricia. "Power Structures and Factional Rivalries in The Islamic Republic of Iran." In *Power, Islam, and Political Elite in Iran. A Study on the Iranian Political Elite from Khomeini to Ahmadinejad*. Vol. 18. International Comparative Social Studies (2009): 32-46.

<sup>433</sup> Aarabi, Kasra. "What Is Velayat-e Faqih?" Institute for Global Change, March 19, 2019.

<sup>434</sup> Ramazani (1980): 181-182.

Parliament, as well as high-ranking officials in other areas of government are former members of the IRGC. As such, it is widely speculated that the IRGC is a powerful and influential presence in a range of social, political, cultural, and commercial arenas currently inside Iran. Since it is the branch of military entrusted with the preservation of the Islamic Revolution, the IRGC is considered to be a crucial organization in the Iranian political power structure, despite the fact that it is considerably smaller and not as well-equipped as the country's traditional armed forces.<sup>435 436</sup>

### The Islamic Republic of Iran's Clerical Organizations

The IRI's clerical organizations fall into one of two classifications: Groups with no official rank, but with ties to the Supreme Leader, or one of three consultative organizations, which are: The Expediency Council (*Majma-e Tashkhis-e Maslahat-e Nezam*), the Guardian Council (*Shora-ye Maslahat-e Nezam*), and the Expediency Council (*Majles-e Khobregan*). Founded in 1988, the Expediency Council was created in order to act as an intercessor between the Iranian Parliament (*majles*) and the Guardian Council, and when called upon – provide counsel to the Supreme Leader. Thirty-one members are assigned to the Expediency Council, all of whom are selected by the Supreme Leader. The Council of Guardians is a twelve-member assembly of legal experts that has final approval and review of the candidates for the Iranian Parliamentary and Presidential elections, and the elections of the Assembly of Experts, the Iranian Parliament, and the Office of the Presidency of the IRI. As this is a panel of legal experts, half of the associates are civil legal scholars, recommended by the Supreme Judicial Council and selected by the Iranian Parliament; the remaining half of legislative specialists are selected by the Supreme Leader, and are experts in

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<sup>435</sup> Billini and Lester (2017): n/a.

<sup>436</sup> Rakel (2009): 37-38.

Islamic canon law. Another crucial responsibility of the Guardian Council is their appraisal of all legislation passed by the Iranian Parliament in order to ensure its constitutionality and compliance with Islamic canon law. Should a majority of the council find that a specific law does not pass muster, it can either be struck down or sent back to Iran's Parliament for modification. There are eighty-eight appointed seats in the Assembly of Experts, which are elected by the Iranian population for an eight-year term. Each member of the Assembly of Experts must be approved of by the Guardian Council, and it is this group of advisors that are charged with the responsibility of appointing and dismissing the IRI's Supreme Leader.<sup>437 438</sup>

### The Islamic Republic of Iran's Republican Branches

The IRI's republican branches consist of three primary government divisions – the legislative (or, the Iranian Parliament, *majles*), the executive (or, President of the IRI), and the judiciary. Members of Iran's Parliament are up for election every four years and are voted into office by the Iranian voting population. Since 1989 when the office of Prime Minister was removed in the IRI, the President formally holds the position as head of government, second only to the Supreme Leader. Nevertheless, the IRI Presidential powers do not extend to foreign policy, nor does this office hold any official authority over the country's armed services. The judicial branch also comprises three subdivisions: The Supreme Court, the Supreme Judicial Council, and the lower courts. Eligible candidates for the positions of prosecutor general and chief justice must have attained the status of *mujtahid* (an official interpreter of Islamic law) with an expertise in Shi'ia Islamic canon law.

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<sup>437</sup> Rakel (2009): 33-35.

<sup>438</sup> Etheredge, Laura. "Council of Guardians." Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., February 18, 2016.

Since its revision in the aftermath of the revolution of 1979, the Iranian Constitution now requires all courts to base their final verdicts on Islamic canon law.<sup>439 440 441</sup>

### The Islamic Republic of Iran's Religious Establishments

Religious foundations in the IRI serve a fundamental purpose and are deeply interwoven into the economic and political cultures of the nation. There are three central religious foundations in the country, all of whose directors are chosen by the Supreme Leader; these are: The Imam Reza Foundation (*Bonyad-e Astan-e Quds*), the Foundation for the Oppressed and Disabled (*Bonyad-e Mostazafan va Janbazan*), and the Martyrs' Foundation (*Bonyad-e Shahid*). Exercising influence and sway over considerable expanses of the national budget, religious foundations are delegated with the responsibility of the preservation and continuation of the Shi'a-Islamic values and attitudes of the 1979 revolution. These organizations answer directly to the Supreme Leader or his local emissaries, hold no public accounts, are exempted from filing taxes, and have no official legal status. The foundations have also enriched the Iranian cultural landscape and are responsible for the founding of numerous academic institutions across Iran, funding for the publication of academic journals and books, financial backing for film projects, and the organization of art and book festivals. In fact, the religious foundations' authority over the cultural landscape of Iran is one of the key reasons for their significance in the domestic politics of the country.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>439</sup> Rakel (2009): 36-37.

<sup>440</sup> Afary, Janet, and Khosrow Mostofi. "Justice." Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., May 2020.

<sup>441</sup> Oxford Islamic Studies Editors. "Mujtahid." Oxford Islamic Studies Online, n.d.

<sup>442</sup> Rakel (2009): 33.

## Conclusions from Chapter Four

The Iranian political apparatus seems to be multi-layered with different factions of power at play. It is not an accident that this chapter is the shortest of the thesis; the Iranian political system is notoriously opaque. One reason is sanctions, and the breakdown of diplomacy that they inevitably cause. A major consequence of sanctions is a multi-directional chain reaction of after-effects, one of which manifests in academia and the inevitable restrictions imposed on international researchers. Currently, academic research inside Iran requires an OFAC license that is not easily attainable. Thus, the research of the Iranian political system is considerably limited. Yet, it is important to analyze and understand the information that is available, as it provides great insight into the power structure of the IRI. The Islamic Republic is a government that has been able to attain regional power, despite being sanctioned virtually since its inception, and having to endure the longest conventional war of the twentieth century.

## Chapter V.

### Sanctions in Practice: Iran, the U.S., and the United Nations

*The Iranian people are known for adhering to their undertakings. We have been tested by history. We are an old civilization. We've been tested by history. We haven't aggressed upon any country for two-hundred and fifty years. This is a history that I am proud of.*<sup>443</sup>

Mohammad Javad Zarif,  
Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran

### Sanctions Imposed on Iran by the United States

Following the takeover of the American Embassy in Tehran by student militants which was the instigation for the Iran Hostage Crisis, the United States imposed sanctions on the IRI.<sup>444</sup> For the duration of the Iran-Iraq War, the United States implemented the strategy of sweeping sanctions on the Iranian population.<sup>445</sup> Despite the release of U.S. Embassy hostages on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1981, the Reagan administration imposed even harsher sanctions on the IRI than that of the Carter administration for the next eight years.<sup>446</sup> <sup>447</sup> One dramatic step taken during the Reagan administration was by the State Department in 1984, when it was announced that the Islamic Republic of Iran was to be officially entered into the United States' list of state sponsors of

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<sup>443</sup> Curry, Ann. "Full Interview with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif." NBCNews.com. NBCUniversal News Group, June 11, 2015: n/a.

<sup>444</sup> Setayesh, Sogol, and Mackey, Tim K. "Addressing the Impact of Economic Sanctions on Iranian Drug Shortages in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action: Promoting Access to Medicines and Health Diplomacy." *Globalization and Health* 12, no. 1 (2016): Globalization and Health, June 8, 2016, Vol.12(1): 2-3.

<sup>445</sup> Carter, President Jimmy. "Executive Order 12170 - Blocking Iranian Government Property." *National Archives and Records Administration*, National Archives and Records Administration, 14 Nov. 1979.

<sup>446</sup> Reagan, Ronald. "Executive Order 12613--Prohibiting Imports from Iran." National Archives and Records Administration. National Archives and Records Administration, October 29, 1987.

<sup>447</sup> Clawson, Patrick. "U.S. Sanctions." *The Iran Primer*, Iran Primer, 11 Oct. 2010: n/a.

terrorism.<sup>448 449</sup> As a result of this new designation, the economic sanctions that had originally been placed due to the Iran Hostage Crisis accrued and intensified over the next decade.<sup>450 451 452</sup>

In 1992, the U.S. Congress approved the approved the *Iran-Iraq Arms Nonproliferation Act of 1992* – four years after a ceasefire agreement had been reached between Iran and Iraq. This act banned the conferral of equipment or supplies that could deliberately or significantly aid the IRI’s development of advanced combat weaponry.<sup>453 454 455 456</sup> Three years later, on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1995 – after the IRI announced that it had signed a \$1 billion dollar contract with the American oil company Conoco – President Clinton issued an Executive Order 12957 calling for additional sanctions imposed on the IRI, citing the Iranian government’s public continued opposition to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. These supplementary sanctions placed further checks and

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<sup>448</sup> “State Sponsors of Terrorism - United States Department of State.” *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State: n/a.

<sup>449</sup> Maloney, Razipour (2019): n/a.

<sup>450</sup> Aghazadeh (2013): 140.

<sup>451</sup> Davenport, Kelsey. “Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran.” Arms Control Association: n/a.

<sup>452</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 2.

<sup>453</sup> Berman, Rep. Howard L. “H.R.5434 - Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992 ...” *Congress.gov*, 18 June 1992: n/a.

<sup>454</sup> Hardy, Roger. “Middle East | The Iran-Iraq War: 25 Years On.” BBC News. BBC, September 22, 2005: n/a.

<sup>455</sup> Aghazadeh (2013): 140.

<sup>456</sup> Davenport, Kelsey. “Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran.” Arms Control Association: n/a.



limitations on commerce with the IRI and narrowed the trade agreements that would be lawfully acceptable with the Iranian oil industry.<sup>457 458 459 460</sup>

Just two months later, in May 1995, Clinton would expand these sanctions in order to cover a comprehensive embargo on all commerce and exchange with the IRI with Executive Order 12957.<sup>461 462</sup> In a letter addressed to Congressional leaders, President Clinton explained his reasoning for his Additional Economic Sanctions on Iran Executive Order, affirming that,

*The entry into or performance of a United States person or a guaranty of another person's performance in a contract that includes any responsibility for the development of petroleum resources located in Iran was prohibited...because of Iran's continuing support for international terrorism, and...efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction.*<sup>463</sup>

Less than one year later – on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1996 – the U.S. Congress authorized the *Iran-Libya Sanctions Act*, or the *Iran Sanctions Act* (ILSA).<sup>464 465</sup> This undertaking by the U.S. government fined both American and foreign financiers whose ventures in the Iranian energy

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<sup>457</sup> Clawson, Patrick. "U.S. Sanctions." *The Iran Primer*, Iran Primer, 11 Oct. 2010: n/a.

<sup>458</sup> Clinton, President William. "Executive Order 12957 - Prohibiting Certain Transactions with Respect the Development of Iranian Petroleum Resources." *Govinfo.gov*, Federal Register, 15 Mar. 1995.

<sup>459</sup> Aghazadeh (2013): 141.

<sup>460</sup> "Iran Profile - Timeline." BBC News. BBC, January 6, 2020: n/a.

<sup>461</sup> Clinton, President William. "Executive Order 12959 - Prohibiting Certain Transactions with Respect to Iran." *Govinf.gov*, Authenticated U.S. Information - G.P.O., 6 May 1995.

<sup>462</sup> Katzman, Kenneth. *CRS Report for Congress - The Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA)*, vol. RS20871, 20 July 2001, pp. CRS-1-CRS-6.

<sup>463</sup> Aghazadeh (2013): 141.

<sup>464</sup> Gilman, Rep. Benjamin. "H.R.3107 - Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996." *Congress.gov*, Congress.gov, 19 Mar. 1996.

<sup>465</sup> Katzman, Kenneth. "The Iran Sanctions Act (ISA)." CRS Report for Congress. October 12, 2007: n/a.

commerce division surpassed twenty-million dollars in one year and was considered by many to explicitly target and weaken the IRI's leading source of revenue. <sup>466 467 468</sup>

During the administration of George W. Bush, a string of guidelines was released placing holds on the properties of entities and corporations believed to be aiding the IRI's nuclear program, backing of militant groups, or aiding the IRI's military operations in Iraq. In 2006, the *Iran, North Korea and Syria Nonproliferation Act* significantly increased presidential power, allowing the imposition of sanctions regulations. President Bush's administration created a branch in the Treasury Department which actively levied sanctions policies – chiefly pursuing the IRI — paying more attention than ever before to the established but infrequently-implemented U.S. sanctions protocols of previous administrations. <sup>469 470</sup>

In October 2007, the U.S. announced that it was levying sanctions on the IRI for its support of radical factions in the Middle East and abroad. Since the first round of sanctions initially imposed by the U.S. on the IRI nearly three decades prior, this new wave of sanctions was the strictest yet – breaking ties with close to thirty IRI-based businesses believed to have connections to the IRI's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC); this new wave of sanctions also dissolved all financial dealings with the IRI's three core banking institutions. In 2008, the U.S. Government created an agency within the Treasury Department in order to forcefully prosecute corporations or

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<sup>466</sup> Aghazadeh (2013): 141-142.

<sup>467</sup> Davenport, Kelsey. "Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran." Arms Control Association: n/a.

<sup>468</sup> Clawson, Patrick. "U.S. Sanctions." *The Iran Primer*, Iran Primer, 11 Oct. 2010: n/a.

<sup>469</sup> 109th Congress. "Public Law 109–353: Iran, North Korea and Syria Nonproliferation Act." *Govinfo.gov*, Govinfo.gov, 13 Oct. 2006.

<sup>470</sup> Clawson, Patrick. "U.S. Sanctions." *The Iran Primer*, Iran Primer, 11 Oct. 2010: n/a.

entities indicted with illegally exporting ammunitions and weaponries to the IRI, making over thirty arrests between 2008 and 2010. Furthermore, the U.S. government levied sanctions on overseas persons and companies, for example Russian and Chinese firms who had been found to be aiding the IRI with their advancement of their missile program. In June 2010, President Obama signed into law a new round of unilateral sanctions on the IRI – known as the *Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act* (CISADA) of 2010 – this time targeting the country’s finance and energy sectors.<sup>471 472 473</sup>

Less than two years later, *Section 1245 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012* published on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 and then in January 2012, with the passing of the *Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012*, the 112<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress imposed sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran the primary banking institution known to hold the IRI’s oil export incomes.<sup>474 475 476</sup> The IRI retaliated by warning that it held the power to close passage for oil conveyance of other ships via the Strait of Hormuz. Months later, in June 2012, the U.S. formally banned the fulfillment of transactions with IRI banks. While seven major customers of

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<sup>471</sup> Gordon, Joy. "Smart Sanctions Revisited." *Ethics & International Affairs* 25, no. 3 (2011): 315-35.

<sup>472</sup> Obama, President Barack, and U.S. Congress. "Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act (CISADA) of 2010." *Treasury.gov*, Treasury.gov, June 2010

<sup>473</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 3.

<sup>474</sup> Clawson, Patrick. "U.S. Sanctions." *The Iran Primer*, Iran Primer, 11 Oct. 2010: n/a.

<sup>475</sup> U.S. Congress. "Section 1245 of the National Defense Authorization Act." *Treasury.gov*, Treasury.gov, 31 Dec. 2011.

<sup>476</sup> Ros-Lehtinen, Rep. Ileana, and 112th Congress. "H.R.1905 - Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012." *Congress.gov*, Congress.gov, 13 May 2011.

Iran's oil were given immunity from this decree, they were also required to decrease their purchases of Iranian oil in exchange for being included in the exclusion.<sup>477 478 479</sup>

Regardless of the political party holding power, various U.S. administrations have repeatedly reiterated that sanctions programs have several aims: To persuade the IRI to cease its funding and support of extremist factions as well as brutal régimes; to stop or at the very least curb the IRI's campaigns for uranium enrichment; to restraint or avert the IRI from building nuclear weaponry; and to prevent the IRI from obtaining advanced military arsenal. Each administration has also refuted that their aim has been to weaken the Iranian citizenry via the imposition of economic sanctions and highlighted the fact that loopholes have been specifically created for the import of humanitarian goods. However, with each new wave of sanctions, the average Iranian oftentimes faces greater difficulty obtaining either basic medications or life-saving drugs.<sup>480 481</sup>  
<sup>482 483</sup> Despite a step towards stabilized diplomatic ties during the Obama administration and the settlement of the JCPOA between the IRI and the P5+1, mutual compliance between the IRI and the U.S. quickly unraveled with the Trump administration's decision to pull out of this deal. In

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<sup>477</sup> Clawson, Patrick. "U.S. Sanctions." *The Iran Primer*, Iran Primer, 11 Oct. 2010: n/a.

<sup>478</sup> Aghazadeh (2013): 137-60.

<sup>479</sup> "U.S. Department of the Treasury." Treasury Designates Iranian State-Owned Bank for Facilitating Iran's Proliferation Activities: n/a.

<sup>480</sup> Aghazadeh (2013): 139 - 148.

<sup>481</sup> Davenport, Kelsey. "Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran." Arms Control Association: n/a.

<sup>482</sup> Pajooh, Fariba. "New U.S. Sanctions Will Make Iranians Sicker." *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* 37, no. 4 (2018): 17.

<sup>483</sup> Farzanegan, Mohammad. "Effects of International Financial and Energy Sanctions on Iran's Informal Economy." *The SAIS Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 1 (2013): 13-36.

2018, the Trump administration hit Iran with two waves of sanctions: The first one on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018, and the second, more significant wave of sanctions on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018.<sup>484 485 486</sup>

### Iran, the U.S. and OFAC

The U.S. justification for expanding sanctions on the IRI has consistently been that this was means to an end: The end, in this case, being to coerce the IRI to end its nuclear program and cease funding for radical factions. A major concern – particularly in light of the dire consequences of UN sanctions on the Iraqi population’s health – has been the formation and continuation of a channels of commerce for humanitarian imports to Iran.<sup>487 488</sup> Overseen by the *United States Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000* (TSRA), an imperative prerequisite for exporters intending to sell humanitarian goods to Iranian companies has been to apply for a permit issued by the *Office of Foreign Assets Control* (OFAC). In fact, rigorous prerequisites for shipping certification have made humanitarian exports to Iran organizationally challenging, particularly due

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<sup>484</sup> “Iran Profile - Timeline.” BBC News. BBC, January 6, 2020: n/a.

<sup>485</sup> Tollefson, Jeff. "US Exit from Iran Nuclear Deal Endangers Research." *Nature* 557, no. 7705 (2018): 287-88.

<sup>486</sup> Davenport, Kelsey. "Trump Faces Resistance on Iran Sanctions." *Arms Control Today* 48, no. 7 (2018): 27-28.

<sup>487</sup> Gordon (2010): 47-56.

<sup>488</sup> Katzman, Kenneth. "Iran Sanctions \*." *Current Politics and Economics of the Middle East* 6, no. 4 (2015): 658.

to the fact that these exports require explicit categorization that must be determined by the *Bureau of Industry and Security* (BIS) under *Export Administration Regulations* (EAR).<sup>489 490 491 492 493</sup>

In October 2012, OFAC published newly amended plans that altered virtually all of the preceding *Iranian Transactions Regulations*, renaming them the *Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations* (ITSR); these plans outlined and defined the *Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010* (CISADA) provisions, and served in strengthening U.S. sanctions on the IRI by freezing assets held by the country's financial and governmental establishments outside the country. In the amendments, OFAC's authors conceded that there were humanitarian worries with regard to the sanctions being imposed on the IRI, and thus the laws had been revised with the aim of facilitating exports for pharmaceutical merchandises and medical equipment. Consequently, OFAC added a supplementary category for general license which explicitly permitted commerce for a vast range of pharmacological supplies and prescription drugs by authorizing substances that had previously required a TSRA license in order to be transported under general license. Pharmaceutical exports have been categorized into two specific categories: EAR99 drugs require a general license and thus are frequently considered to be

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<sup>489</sup> Hosseini, Seyed Alireza. "Impact of Sanctions on Procurement of Medicine and Medical Devices in Iran; A Technical Response." *Archives of Iranian Medicine* 16, no. 12 (2013): 736-38.

<sup>490</sup> Katzman (2015): 663-664.

<sup>491</sup> "§7201 - Title 22: United States Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000." *Treasury.gov*, 28 Oct. 2000.

<sup>492</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 2, 5-6.

<sup>493</sup> Gross, Robin. "Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) - Export Administration Regulations (EAR)." *Export Administration Regulations (EAR)*, Bureau of Industry and Security.

permissively endorsed for export; Non-EAR99 drugs require ancillary export controls in order to attain an export license and thus are more challenging to export.<sup>494 495 496 497 498</sup>

In July 2013, OFAC significantly expanded its list of critical pharmacological necessities, issuing plans and suggestions for the sales and export of pharmacological equipment and prescription drugs. This revision of OFAC's list resulted in the release of assets for transactions in pharmacological dealings by foreign banks that had frozen the IRI's oil revenues and were previously barred from doing business with the country due to economic sanctions restrictions. Amendments to the *Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations* (ITSR) initiated official authorization of and certification for commerce of humanitarian goods designated under a specific cataloging of pharmacological exports to the IRI by American business or entities.<sup>499 500 501</sup>

Yet, under OFAC's newly amended 2013 measures, numerous critically essential humanitarian exports did not meet the requirements needed to qualify for legal commerce to the IRI. Under the *Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000* (TSRA), "medicine"

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<sup>494</sup> "Resource Center - Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (TSRA) Program." *Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (TSRA) Program*, U.S. Department of the Treasury.

<sup>495</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 3-5.

<sup>496</sup> Office of Foreign Assets Control, Treasury. "Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations." *Federal Register*, 5 Nov. 2018.

<sup>497</sup> Obama, President Barack, and U.S. Congress. "Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act (CISADA) of 2010." *Treasury.gov*, Treasury.gov, June 2010.

<sup>498</sup> Hosseini (2013): 736-38.

<sup>499</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 4-5.

<sup>500</sup> "Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations 31 C.F.R. Part 560 GENERAL LICENSE G Certain Academic Exchanges and the Exportation or Importation of Certain Educational Services Authorized." Office of Foreign Assets Control. Treasury Department of the United States of America, n.d.

<sup>501</sup> "Guidance Relating to the Lifting of Certain U.S. Sanctions Pursuant to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Implementation Day." *U.S. Department of Treasury*, U.S. Department of State, July 2013.

and “medical devices” were categorized under section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, which designated over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs, as well as various medical devices as EAR99-classified; this designation was meant to make such goods easier to sell and transport to the IRI. The medications classified as Non-EAR99 include particular biochemical products and medical goods – such as personal protective equipment, operational ambulances, automobiles outfitted with medical testing equipment, and commercial sanitation equipment for disinfection. The rationalization for regulating Non-EAR99 classified drugs was that the action was required in order to guard against their transference to areas known to be assisting the IRI’s nuclear proliferations programs. A chief medical export that fell under the Non-EAR99 classification: Vaccines, which are not easily exported to the IRI, with the reasoning given that they could potentially be used to construct biological arsenals, such as poisons. However, research into drug shortages inside Iran indicated that seventy various kinds of medications which fall under the EAR99 category (and thus should be uncomplicated to acquire) were either unavailable or scarce; these medications made up 96% of drug shortages inside Iran, as compared to the other 4% of drugs that fall under the non-EAR99 category.<sup>502 503 504 505</sup>

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<sup>502</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 10-14.

<sup>503</sup> “Resource Center - Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (TSRA) Program.” *Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (TSRA) Program*, U.S. Department of the Treasury.

<sup>504</sup> “Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act 21: U.S. Code § 321 - Title II, Chapter 9.” *fda.gov*, U.S. Food & Drug Administration, 29 Mar. 2018.

<sup>505</sup> Guidance Relating to the Lifting of Certain U.S. Sanctions Pursuant to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Implementation Day.” *U.S. Department of Treasury*, U.S. Department of State, July 2013.



## Iranian Nuclear Ambitions

In December 2002, it was reported that satellite pictures had discovered two sites of nuclear activity in Iran – one in the city of Natanz, located in the province of Isfahan; the other, in the city of Arak, located in the Markazi province. That same month, the IRI consented to physical inspections of both locations by an International Energy Agency. In a bid at transparency, President Mohammad Khatami released a statement on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003 stating that the Iranian nation intended to manufacture atomic energy domestically for use in prospective nuclear plants. Less than two weeks later, on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) officially began its inspections of Natanz and Arak.<sup>506</sup>

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the IAEA requested that the IRI enforce what it termed Additional Protocol as stipulated in the Non-Proliferation Treaty.<sup>507 508</sup> Just over a month later, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the official IAEA report was released wherein it was stated that upon inspecting both nuclear plants in Iran the agency discovered enriched uranium developed in higher quantities than amounts required for noncombatant use.<sup>509</sup> On September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the IAEA presented the IRI with the target date of October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2003 in order to demonstrate that it had no plans to create atomic weaponry.<sup>510</sup> Ten days before the proposed deadline, on October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003, the IRI

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<sup>506</sup> “Iran Chronology of Events.” Security Council Report: n/a.

<sup>507</sup> International Atomic Energy Agency. “Model Protocol Additional to the Agreement(s) Between State(s) and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards.” IAEA, September 1997: n/a.

<sup>508</sup> “Strengthening Measures under the Additional Protocol | IAEA Non-Proliferation Treaty.” IAEA - International Atomic Energy Agency. IAEA, December 7, 2016: n/a.

<sup>509</sup> Director General, IAEA. “Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran.” IAEA - International Atomic Energy Agency. IAEA, November 26, 2003: n/a.

<sup>510</sup> Director General, IAEA (2003): 2-3.

communicated its decision to comply with the IAEA, agreeing to stricter investigations of its nuclear sites by the United Nations and the discontinuation of its uranium enrichment projects by signing onto the Additional Protocol terms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.<sup>511</sup> On November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the IAEA determined that there was no indication of a nuclear weapons program in Iran's nuclear facilities.<sup>512 513</sup>

Just over a month later, on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the IRI officially entered the arrangement that it had agreed to with the IAEA, signing onto the Additional Protocol of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.<sup>514</sup> Then after a round of investigations in June 2004, the IAEA found producing highly enriched uranium in Iran's nuclear facility sites; the Agency criticized the IRI for not upholding its end of the agreement, and for its non-compliance. On November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2004, Iran arranged to stop the greater percentage of its uranium enrichment program under the terms of the Paris Accord, in exchange for European aid and collaboration at diplomatic levels, and in the fields of commerce, and noncombatant nuclear research endeavors.<sup>515</sup> Less than a month later, on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2004, negotiations between the IRI and the EU+3 commenced.<sup>516</sup> In the summer of 2005, the IRI declined the EU+3's collaboration offer, and then announced that they had restarted their uranium

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<sup>511</sup> IAEA, September 1997: n/a.

<sup>512</sup> Director General, IAEA (2003): 4.

<sup>513</sup> "Iran Chronology of Events." Security Council Report: n/a.

<sup>514</sup> Calma, D. "Iran Signs Additional Protocol on Nuclear Safeguards." IAEA. IAEA, December 17, 2003. <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/iran-signs-additional-protocol-nuclear-safeguards>.

<sup>515</sup> Crail, Peter, and Mario L. Sobrado. "IAEA Board Welcomes EU-Iran Agreement: Is Iran Providing Assurances or Merely Providing Amusement?" NTI: Building a Safer World, December 1, 2014: n/a.

<sup>516</sup> Dukata, David J., and Kenneth Katzman. *Flames of War*: 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Nova Science Publishing, Inc., (2007): 19.

conversion efforts at the Natanz research site located in Isfahan, maintaining that their undertakings were aimed at civilian use.<sup>517 518</sup>

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2005, an IAEA decree established that the IRI was breaching the terms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Additionally, the IRI's nuclear undertakings had raised flags with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), with the IAEA proposing that certain nuclear agendas being pursued by the IRI fell under the expertise of the UNSC. The mandate proposed that the IAEA Director General should follow up with another detailed summary, indicating that IAEA advisors would review the statement subsequently and decide whether to send a report to the UNSC.<sup>519 520</sup> On November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Russia (with the backing of the United States and the EU) made an offer to the IRI, suggesting that the regime pursue its uranium enrichment projects in Russia; the IRI turned down the offer from Russia.<sup>521</sup>

The following month, the IRI rebuffed requests to recommence talks with the EU+3. The newly elected President Ahmadinejad once again vetoed Russia's suggestion, later stating that he would reassess his decision. On January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the IRI reopened the IAEA seals on the Natanz nuclear research site in Isfahan and affirmed its objective to commence uranium enrichment; this step was taken after attempts at a meeting between UN inspectors in Vienna and the Iranian

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<sup>517</sup> Dukata and Katzman (2007): 19-20.

<sup>518</sup> "Iran Chronology of Events." Security Council Report: n/a.

<sup>519</sup> "IAEA: Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran." *International Atomic Energy Agency*, Iaea.org, 24 Sept. 2005.

<sup>520</sup> Dukata, Katzman (2007): 19.

<sup>521</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

delegation proved unsuccessful.<sup>522</sup> Three weeks later – at a meeting in London, UK – the EU+3, U.S., Russia, and China settled that the IAEA must report the IRI’s non-compliance to the UNSC.

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### Sanctions Imposed on Iran by the United Nations

In February 2006, weeks after the IAEA’s majority vote determining that an account of the IRI’s non-compliance must be given to United Nations, the Iranian government restarted their nuclear enrichment program and openly warned that they were ready to revoke their endorsement of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. On March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the UNSC unanimously approved a presidential statement (subtler in tone and less critical than a Council resolution), wherein it was requested that the IRI halt its nuclear activities. The UNSC’s presidential statement gave Iran a thirty-day deadline and stated that if the IRI did not comply within the given time, the Security Council would consider additional steps. The next day, the IRI announced its rejection of the UNSC’s presidential statement, reiterating that their country was within its rights to nuclear enrichment for use in noncombatant projects, and restated that they were ready to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty.<sup>525 526 527</sup>

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<sup>522</sup> Dukata, Katzman (2007): 20.

<sup>523</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>524</sup> “Iran Chronology of Events.” Security Council Report: n/a.

<sup>525</sup> “Iran Chronology of Events.” Security Council Report: n/a.

<sup>526</sup> Dukata, Katzman (2007): 20-21.

<sup>527</sup> Gordon, Joy. "Crippling Iran: The U.N. Security Council and the Tactic of Deliberate Ambiguity." *Georgetown Journal of International Law* 44, no. 3 (2013): 973.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the IAEA's report stated that the IRI had not conformed to the UNSC's presidential statement; the matter was reverted to the UNSC for consideration, wherein the United States requested an official ruling under the U.N. Charter Chapter 7. This resolution was pursued by the United States because it would dictate the IRI's accordance to non-proliferation and permit retributive actions – for example, economic sanctions – in order to impose acceptance of the Council's restrictions. By May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006, Russia and China's continued reluctance to the U.S.'s proposal resulted in hindering the passage of the resolution. Instead, it was agreed the P5 plus Germany should make attempts to re-engage the IRI, presenting to them both the incentives of compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the possible fallouts of continued nuclear enrichment.<sup>528 529</sup>

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, the P5 plus Germany met with the EU representative Javier Solana in order to agree upon both the stimulus package and potential sanctions that would be presented to the IRI to compel its compliance with their request for the country's termination of all uranium enrichment. Five days later, Javier Solana presented the proposal in Tehran, yet the proposed sanctions were ostensibly not delineated to the IRI at this specific meeting. On July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the UNSC employed Resolution 1696 under Article 40 of the United Nations Charter, requesting that the IRI cease its uranium enrichment activities.<sup>530 531</sup> The IRI announced that they would respond to the P5 plus Germany's offer by August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006.<sup>532</sup> On the proposed deadline, the IRI

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<sup>528</sup> Dukata, Katzman (2007): 20-21.

<sup>529</sup> Gordon (2013): 973.

<sup>530</sup> "Resolution 1696: Non-Proliferation." *United Nations Security Council: Non-Proliferation - Non-Proliferation of Weapons*, July 31, 2006: n/a.

<sup>531</sup> "Chapter VII of the UN Charter: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression." Charter of the United Nations. United Nations: n/a.

<sup>532</sup> Dukata, Katzman (2007): 20-22.

presented a twenty-one-page response to the offer that had been presented in Tehran by Solana. Over the course of the next few months, various meetings took place, between the EU representative, Javier Solana and the IRI's Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Ali Larijani; between the P5 plus Germany – first in London and then in Paris – to outline a revised resolution, and then to deliberate key adjustments after Russia's recommendations for removal of numerous sanctions implementations.<sup>533</sup>

On December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2006 – in response to the IRI's nonperformance of the stipulations laid out in Resolution 1696 – with the UNSC voted unanimously to implement Resolution 1737 under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. The resolution reiterated the fundamental requirements of Resolution 1696, demanding that the IRI stop all uranium enrichment as well as allow for inspections by the IAEA. The decree also imposed sanctions on the IRI for the sales of all goods related to weaponry and munitions, froze the resources and assets of all citizens known to be involved with the IRI's nuclear enrichment program, and sanctioned the instruction or education of any Iranian nationals in all subjects that would further the advancement of the IRI's nuclear ambitions.<sup>534 535</sup>

Three months later, on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the UNSC unanimously approved Resolution 1747 under Article 41 of the United Nations Charter. The UNSC's reason for this latest resolution was due to the IRI's non-compliance with resolutions 1696 and 1737. This latest resolution reiterated the measures stated in 1747, and added a few new restrictions, including: restrictions on the movement of sanctioned individuals, which the UNSC required to be reported to 1737

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<sup>533</sup> "Iran Chronology of Events." Security Council Report: n/a.

<sup>534</sup> Davenport, Kelsey. "Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran." Arms Control Association: n/a.

<sup>535</sup> Gordon (2013): 973.

Committee should they enter areas known to be associated with the IRI's nuclear enrichment program; the freezing of assets for twenty-eight new private citizens the UNSC had identified as individuals with ties to the IRI's nuclear program; the resolution also asked countries not to global financial organizations to decline any requests from the IRI's governmental institutions for credits, advances, or monetary aid – save for the exception of humanitarian requirements or necessities.<sup>536</sup>

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One year later, on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008, the United Nations Security Council voted for the implementation of additional sanctions on the IRI with the adoption of Resolution 1803 under Chapter VII of the UN Resolution. Yet another decree imposed by the UNSC as a result of the IRI's refusal to terminate its nuclear enrichment activities, this latest resolution amplified all previously imposed sanctions by calling on all states to avert any financial transactions with commercial institutions having any ties to Iran, in case the assets were being used to develop the IRI's nuclear enrichment program. Furthermore, Resolution 1803 required the examination and appraisal of all Iranian cargo transporters (such as ships or airplanes) that were believed to be transferring sanctioned goods.<sup>538 539 540</sup>

The UNSC imposed its sixth round of sanctions on the IRI approximately two years later, on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – with the adoption of Resolution 1929 under Chapter VII of the UN Resolution – yet again, calling for the cessation of all nuclear pursuits and endeavors. Under these latest

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<sup>536</sup> “Resolution 1747.” IAEA. United Nations Security Council, March 24, 2007: n/a.

<sup>537</sup> Gordon (2013): 973.

<sup>538</sup> “Chapter VII of the UN Charter: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression.” Charter of the United Nations. United Nations: n/a.

<sup>539</sup> Davenport, Kelsey. “Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran.” Arms Control Association: n/a.

<sup>540</sup> “Resolution 1803 (2008).” IAEA. United Nations Security Council, March 3, 2008: n/a.

resolutions imposed by the UNSC, the IRI was now prohibited from financing in uranium mining, nuclear or missile technology in other countries. Additionally, the UNSC imposed a wide-ranging restriction on the sales of weaponries, stipulating that equipment such as attack helicopters, combat tanks, bulletproof combat vehicles, missiles or warships were not to be sold to the IRI. The resolution restated that states should restrict their transactions with banking or commercial establishments in the IRI. <sup>541 542 543 544</sup>

### Sanctions Imposed on Iran by the European Union

Between 2006 and until 2010, the European Union (EU) essentially restricted its sanctions on the IRI to those levied by the United Nations (UN). One major step taken outside of measures imposed by the UN was in 2009, when France – with the support of the United Kingdom – publicly recommended substantial economic sanctions, specifically on the IRI’s oil industry sector. This specific action by France was not only unsuccessful, but also reignited longstanding rifts within the European Union. <sup>545 546 547</sup>

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<sup>541</sup> “Chapter VII of the UN Charter: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression.” Charter of the United Nations. United Nations: n/a.

<sup>542</sup> Davenport, Kelsey. “Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran.” Arms Control Association: n/a.

<sup>543</sup> “Resolution 1929 (2010).” IAEA. United Nations Security Council, July 9, 2010: n/a.

<sup>544</sup> “Security Council Tightens Restrictions on Iran’s Proliferation-Sensitive Nuclear Activities, Increases Vigilance Over Iranian Banks, Has States Inspect Cargo | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” United Nations (n/d): n/a.

<sup>545</sup> Alcaro, Riccardo. “Betting on Perseverance: Why the Double Track Approach Is Still the Best Way to Deal with the Iranian Nuclear Conundrum.” *Instituto Affari Internazionali*, October 2010, 5-8.

<sup>546</sup> Nougayrède, Natalie. “Paris Et Londres Veulent Accroître Les Sanctions Européennes Contre L'Iran.” *Le Monde.fr. Le Monde*, January 19, 2009.

<sup>547</sup> Parsi, Trita. *A Single Roll of the Dice: Obama’s Diplomacy with Iran*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012, 10-15.



On July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010, the EU – independent of the UN and the United States – levied its first of three rounds of progressively broad and far-reaching economic sanctions on the IRI. This first round of autonomous sanctions on the IRI by the EU required governmental injunctions on the launch of any new branches of IRI-linked banks in the EU; embargoes on commerce with the IRI; a requisite that any trade or dealings having to do with Iran that went above the amount of €40,000 would require prior approval; and the a sanction on the buying, selling, or dealing of IRI régime or bank bonds. The prevailing drive behind the first round of EU sanctions was to target the IRI’s gas and oil markets, with embargoes placed on any venture or speculation into these sectors by members of the EU, or the equipping of essential machinery, materials, funding or any support for the purpose of distillation, manufacturing, or study of liquified natural gas.<sup>548 549</sup>

The second round of sanctions levied on the IRI by the EU were officially declared on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012. These sanctions enacted restrictions on the shipping, securing, and importation of Iran’s oil, a freeze placed on estates held by the Iranian Central Bank in the EU, and an embargo on the transfer of strategic machinery and mechanisms to the IRI’s petrochemical division. An addendum added to this second set of sanctions was the prohibition assigned to commerce with IRI in precious metals, as well as diamonds. Furthermore, this round of EU sanctions barred the insurance of transport for Iran’s oil, which resulted in substantial repercussions for the international oil market, due to the fact that they constrained foremost tanker fleets from being able to ensure underwriting for the transmission of Iranian oil.<sup>550 551</sup>

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<sup>548</sup> “International Iran Sanctions Database.” United Against Nuclear Iran: n/a.

<sup>549</sup> Gordon (2013): 973.

<sup>550</sup> “International Iran Sanctions Database.” United Against Nuclear Iran: n/a.

<sup>551</sup> Arnsdorf, Isaac. Bloomberg.com. Bloomberg, January 27, 2012: n/a.

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the EU placed its third round of sanctions on the IRI. The most crucial theme of this round was the embargo levied on the IRI's gas imports; this was in actuality a public relations strategy, as the EU had hitherto purchased no gas from the IRI, nor was there any basis or groundwork in place for gas imports. This round also barred the dissemination or transference to the IRI of semi-finished metals, as well as graphite; the provision or establishment of software incorporating engineering practices; a prohibition on dealings between IRI-based banks and the EU – excluding instances wherein prior permission is given; embargoes on the delivery of strategic naval machinery and mechanisms for upkeep, repair, or construction; sanctions the assembly of oil tankers for the IRI. <sup>552 553 554 555 556</sup>

#### Economic Sanctions and Medical Shortages Inside Iran

Economic sanctions have blocked financial transactions inside Iran's various commercial markets and have contributed to the significant destabilization of the nation's health sector. Pharmaceutical corporations operating inside Iran are constantly confronted with an unpredictable set of challenges, their primary source of consternation oftentimes being how to maintain constant, reliable access to channels of pharmacological vendors overseas. A study conducted by the Woodrow Wilson Center assessed that – owing to the series of sanctions levied on the IRI preceding the JCPOA – the export of pharmacological supplies into the IRI had diminished by

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<sup>552</sup> "International Iran Sanctions Database." United Against Nuclear Iran: n/a.

<sup>553</sup> Gordon (2013): 973.

<sup>554</sup> Papademetriou, Theresa. "European Union: Renewed Sanctions Against Iran." Library of Congress: n/a.

<sup>555</sup> "Security Council Tightens Sanctions Against Iran over Uranium Enrichment | UN News." United Nations. Accessed April 28, 2019: n/a.

<sup>556</sup> "Security Council Tightens Restrictions on Iran's Proliferation-Sensitive Nuclear Activities, Increases Vigilance Over Iranian Banks, Has States Inspect Cargo | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." United Nations. Accessed April 28, 2019: n/a.

thirty-percent; furthermore, between 2011 and 2013, the export of medical goods from the United States into Iran had dropped by half – going from \$31.1 million to \$14.5 million two years later.<sup>557</sup>

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Due to increasing economic sanctions that have greatly hindered banking with foreign companies, various Iran-based businesses have begun re-routing their dealings through banks outside their home country, primarily those based in Turkey. Patients with rarer ailments – such as multiple sclerosis, hemophilia, and thalassemia – are often most at-risk, as the medications required to treat these disorders are oftentimes the most challenging to attain inside Iran. Cancer is another leading cause of death inside Iran, with various forms of prescriptions drugs (such as

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<sup>557</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 3-12.

<sup>558</sup> Laub, Zachary. "International Sanctions on Iran." *Council on Foreign Relations*, Council on Foreign Relations, 15 July 2015.

<sup>559</sup> Pajooh (2018): 17.

<sup>560</sup> Namazi, Siamak. "Sanctions and Medical Supply Shortages in Iran." *Woodrow Wilson Center*, Feb. 2013.

<sup>561</sup> Butler, Declan. "Iran Hit by Drug Shortage: Sanctions Cause Increasing Shortfall in Medicines and Vaccines." *Nature* 504, no. 7478 (2013): 15-16.

<sup>562</sup> Hosseini (2013): 736-38.

<sup>563</sup> Shahabi, Shohreh, Hooman Fazlalizadeh, Jennifer Stedman, Linus Chuang, Ahmad Shariftabrizi, and Regina Ram. "The Impact of International Economic Sanctions on Iranian Cancer Healthcare." *Health Policy* 119, no. 10 (2015): 1314.

those required for chemotherapy) are oftentimes the most difficult to acquire inside Iran. <sup>564</sup> <sup>565</sup> <sup>566</sup>

<sup>567</sup> <sup>568</sup>

Due to OFAC restrictions, and economic sanctions that have blocked Iranian companies' from buying either Non-EAR99 and EAR99 category medical goods, Iranian citizens have found themselves unable to acquire prescriptions that had formerly been realistically obtainable. A new market for medical goods has also emerged inside Iran: A black market for medications and prescription goods, with prices of drugs being inflated – sometimes selling for twice or three times as much as their going rate in pharmacies. Furthermore, Iranian pharmaceutical companies have had to look for alternative sources in order to fulfill the demand for various forms of medications. This has resulted in Iranian companies seeking out trade partners in India and China, whose product quality does not match that of Swiss and American medical firms. Pharmaceutical companies in Iran are left at a crossroads: Attempt to produce high quality medical goods while still meeting the government's price cap – which inevitably means losing a large profit margin; or,

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<sup>564</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 3-5.

<sup>565</sup> “Turkey's Halk Bank Will Continue Managing Iran Trade.” *Eghtesad Online*, 10 Aug. 2019.

<sup>566</sup> Badawi, Tamer. “The Economic Turn in Turkish-Iranian Relations.” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 12, 2020.

<sup>567</sup> Karimi, Mehran, and Sezaneh Haghpanah. "The Effects of Economic Sanctions on Disease Specific Clinical Outcomes of Patients with Thalassemia and Hemophilia in Iran." *Health Policy* 119, no. 2 (2015): 239-43.

<sup>568</sup> Shahabi, Fazlalizadeh, Stedman, Chuang, Shariftabrizi, and Ram (2015): 1309-318.

find cheaper sources for medical exports – which results in lower quality pharmaceutical products for the Iranian market.<sup>569 570 571 572 573</sup>

Just twenty-four months before the JCPOA was signed, pharmacies in major Iranian cities began to close due to major drug shortages. Internally, Iranian pharmaceutical companies have attempted to make up for the loss of imported medical goods by generating domestic products of similar quality. By 2015, Iranian pharmaceutical manufacturers were manufacturing ninety-six percent of the generic drugs in Iran, with their chief requirement on imported raw goods and Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) in an attempt to synthesize the multifaceted prescription drugs available outside Iran.<sup>574 575 576 577</sup>

Each new wave of sanctions on the IRI has contributed to the subversion of the Iranian pharmaceutical industry. Two months after the Trump administration's second wave of sanctions hit Iran, the Iranian medical industry began to feel their impacts, with the lack of medical supplies coming in from foreign companies, medicinal shortages being reported by customers, and yet another wave of pharmacies being closed across the country. Various US administrations – both

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<sup>569</sup> Ghorbani Dastgerdi, Hamidreza, Zarinah Binti Yusof, and Muhammad Shahbaz. "Nexus between Economic Sanctions and Inflation: A Case Study in Iran." *Applied Economics* 50, no. 49 (2018): 5316-334.

<sup>570</sup> Gorji, Ali. "Sanctions against Iran: The Impact on Health Services." *Iranian Journal of Public Health* 43, no. 3 (2014): 381-82.

<sup>571</sup> Pajooch (2018): 17.

<sup>572</sup> Namazi (2013): 1-9.

<sup>573</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 4-10.

<sup>574</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 3-9.

<sup>575</sup> Butler (2013): 15.

<sup>576</sup> Gorji, Ali. "Sanctions against Iran: The Impact on Health Services." *Iranian Journal of Public Health* 43, no. 3 (2014): 381-82.

<sup>577</sup> Shahabi, et. al (2015): 1311-1315.

Republican and Democrat – have made claims that the sanctions imposed on the IRI are meant to hurt the regime, and not the people of Iran. Stringent banking sanctions, and constant reminders by the US government that retributive actions will be taken against any foreign banks or businesses discovered to be dealing in commerce with businesses inside the IRI have made the acquisition of essential humanitarian goods virtually impossible for the average Iranian consumer. A major hurdle for Iran-based pharmaceutical firms: The complicated, often opaque, legal framework of sanctions policies – which involve a vast maze of checks and limitations on an ever-growing list of private citizens, Iran-based organizations, and Iranian industries. As already discussed, pharmaceutical firms operating inside Iran often have difficulty finding foreign companies willing to sell them goods: One key reason being that foreign companies are unsure about whether they are allowed to do business with Iran at all. Foreign banks, as well, are unclear on the sanctions policies, and after heavy fines that amounted in the millions of dollars were imposed on various financial establishments – such as Credit Suisse and Standard Chartered – for doing business with Iranian companies, many banks and businesses have decided to forgo the risk altogether. Perhaps the main drive behind imposing sanctions on the IRI is to eventually bring the regime in power under compliance, or at the very least to the negotiating table; yet, in fact it is average Iranian citizens, and Iran’s private sector that suffer the most severe blows, as they must deal with

immediate shortages which are often the direct result of strict and ever-expanding sanctions policies.<sup>578 579 580 581 582 583 584 585 586 587 588 589 590</sup>

### Deal or No Deal: The JCPOA Under President Obama and Sanctions in the Trump Era

When the IRI and the P5+1 finally came to an agreement back in July 2015, it was generally announced that sanctions restrictions would be lifted off of Iran when all parties had signed off on the JCPOA, or as it came to be known in the media – the Iran Deal. While the EU, U.S., and UN all signed on to lift nuclear-related sanctions, each group could still independently determine whether or not to remove sanctions they had independently imposed on the IRI. The U.S.

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<sup>578</sup> Butler (2013): 15.

<sup>579</sup> Setayesh and Mackey (2016): 5-14.

<sup>580</sup> Gordon (2013): 974-976, 981-1006.

<sup>581</sup> Kokabisaghi, Fatemeh. "Assessment of the Effects of Economic Sanctions on Iranians' Right to Health by Using Human Rights Impact Assessment Tool: A Systematic Review." *International Journal of Health Policy and Management* 7, no. 5 (2018): 374-93.

<sup>582</sup> Aloosh (2018): E334.

<sup>583</sup> Davenport (2018): 27-28.

<sup>584</sup> Pajooch (2018): 17.

<sup>585</sup> Katzman, Kenneth. "Iran Sanctions - CRS Report." *Congressional Research Service* RS20871 (2020): 1–100.

<sup>586</sup> Gorji (2014): 381-82.

<sup>587</sup> Kheirandish, Mehrnaz, Varahrami, Vida, Kebriaeezade, Abbas, and Cheraghali, Abdol Majid. "Impact of Economic Sanctions on Access to Noncommunicable Diseases Medicines in the Islamic Republic of Iran/Impact Des Sanctions Economiques Sur L'accès Aux Médicaments Pour Le Traitement des Maladies Non Transmissibles En République Islamique D'Iran." *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal* 24, no. 1 (2018): 42-51.

<sup>588</sup> Ghorbani Dastgerdi, Hamidreza, Zarinah Binti Yusof, and Muhammad Shahbaz. "Nexus between Economic Sanctions and Inflation: A Case Study in Iran." *Applied Economics* 50, no. 49 (2018): 5316-334.

<sup>589</sup> "Guidance Relating to the Lifting of Certain U.S. Sanctions Pursuant to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Implementation Day." *U.S. Department of Treasury*, U.S. Department of State, July 2013.

<sup>590</sup> Gordon, Joy. "The Hidden Power of the New Economic Sanctions." *Current History* 118, no. 804 (2019): 3-10.

committed to removing existing nuclear sanctions, declaring that retracted sanctions would be suspended within eight years as long as the IRI stayed under IAEA compliance, and also promised to lift sanctions off of a stipulated list of private citizens who had been placed on sanctions lists. Yet, the U.S. did not lift banking sanctions on the IRI, electing instead to keep in place many sanctions that had been placed as far back as the Carter administration. Foreign banks have remained cautious of processing transactions that involved Iran-based companies. Thus, despite OFAC's explicit stipulations that EAR-99 regulatory medications are not to be restricted for import to the IRI, pharmaceutical companies based inside the country are rarely able to find foreign companies willing to risk processing Iranian orders.<sup>591 592 593 594 595</sup>

In May 2018, President Donald Trump officially withdrew the U.S. from the Iran Deal, restoring all energy, nuclear-related, and oil sanctions in two waves – first on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018, and then on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The sanctions barred both U.S. citizens and international citizens from conducting business transactions with Iran-based corporations, explicitly stating that all foreign citizens were banned from commercial dealings with businesses inside the IRI. The Trump administration stated the Iran Deal's sunset provisions allowed the IRI to continue its nuclear weapons program in the future. Endeavoring to salvage the Iran Deal, the U.K., Germany, and France created a trade system known as INSTEX; this exchange scheme was meant to assist in

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<sup>591</sup> Laub, Zachary, and Kali Robinson. "What Is the Status of the Iran Nuclear Agreement?" Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, January 7, 2020.

<sup>592</sup> CFR.org Editors. "The Return of U.S. Sanctions on Iran: What to Know." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, August 6, 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/return-us-sanctions-iran-what-know>.

<sup>593</sup> Gordon (2019): 3-10.

<sup>594</sup> Zarroli, Jim. "As Sanctions on Iran Are Lifted, Many U.S. Business Restrictions Remain." NPR. NPR, January 26, 2016.

<sup>595</sup> Katzman (2020): 1–100.



financial transactions between the EU and IRI-based companies looking to buy medical goods and nutritional supplies. In July 2019, the IRI surpassed the fixed restrictions placed on the country's permitted reserve of low-enriched uranium and re-launched their uranium enrichment program at higher levels of concentration. For their part, European guarantors of the JCPOA publicly restated their commitment to the Iran Deal, with the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy affirming that investors of INSTEX were in talks to use the trade system for oil transactions.<sup>596</sup> Then, in September 2019, the IRI expanded its uranium enrichment program by building new centrifuge; by November 2019, heavy water production had recommenced at the Arak site. On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, a U.S. drone strike assassinated the IRGC's Major General Qasem Soleimani, who was also commander of the IRGC's Quds Force.<sup>597 598 599</sup>

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<sup>596</sup> INSTEX was activated in March 2020 by the EU-3 at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>597</sup> Laub and Robinson (2020): n/a.

<sup>598</sup> Geranmayeh, Ellie. "Trump's Iran Sanctions: An Explainer on Their Impact for Europe." ECFR, September 12, 2018.

<sup>599</sup> Galbraith, J. "U.S. Drone Strike in Iraq Kills Iranian Military Leader Qasem Soleimani." *The American Journal of International Law* 114(2) (April 2020): 313–323.

## The Politics of a Pandemic: Panic, Power-Struggles, and PPEs

On February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – with the Iranian nation still reeling from the assassination of Maj. Gen. Soleimani, the accidental shooting down of Ukraine International Flight 752, and on the heels of the funerals, rallies and protests that followed – the IRI confirmed its first two cases of COVID-19 (also known as the novel corona virus) in the city of Qom. Just one week later, infections were on the rise, and spreading far beyond the city of Qom, where the first cases of Coronavirus infection in Iran had first been reported. Due to economic sanctions, the government had limited access to diagnostic kits for detecting those with COVID-19 infections. This in turn led to the rapid spread of the virus, most likely disproportionately impacting the most susceptible first – either as a result of underlying health conditions, or lower socio-economic status.<sup>600</sup>

By February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) operating under the Department of Treasury, issued General License No. 8, entitled *Authorizing Certain Humanitarian Trade Sanctions Involving the Central Bank of Iran*. This license was meant to ease the way for sales of humanitarian goods to Iran. However, this license did not permit the export of medical equipment on OFAC’s *List of Medical Devices that Require Specific Authorization*; included on this list: Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), Oxygen generators, decontamination showers and systems, air purifying and full-face mask respirators, as well as a variety of other laboratory and hospital equipment. At the outset of the outbreak, economic and banking sanctions impeded the IRI’s access to COVID-19 testing kits as well as essential medical equipment needed to fight against this highly infectious virus. Allowing humanitarian trade with the Central Bank of Iran was a constructive step in the fight against an emerging global pandemic, but it was a minimal

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<sup>600</sup> Al-Monitor Staff. “Fast-Spreading Coronavirus Pushes Iran Closer to Lockdown.” Al-Monitor, February 26, 2020: n/a.

gesture in comparison to years of sanctions meant to hurt the Iranian economy and infrastructure, and many restrictions on medical supplies were not lifted and still required special approval.<sup>601 602</sup>

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Despite appeals from Iranian officials to the general public to practice social distancing, and the cessation of public events and Friday prayers by late February 2020, the virus rapidly spread across Iran. Soon, a black market emerged inside the country for medical equipment and goods believed to defend against infection of the COVID-19 virus. The IRI took steps to halt the black market: In late February 2020, Iran's import tariff for protective masks was lowered from 55% to 5% and by early March 2020, Iranian authorities had confiscated twenty-seven million hygienic items, almost seven million face masks, ten million gloves, nine-thousand gallons of dialysis machine acid, and ten tons of disinfectant that were being sold at inflated prices.<sup>604</sup>

Western media outlets soon attempted to paint the IRI's announcement in late February as sign of a cover-up. In truth, testing kits had only just arrived from China on February 17<sup>th</sup>, just two days prior to the government's public announcement. One other reason for what seemed to be the IRI's late response to this rapidly spreading novel virus is that a shipment of the World Health Organization's (WHO) testing kits had been delayed due to U.S. sanctions restrictions that are meant to block or obstruct international cargo delivery to Iran. While this shipment eventually

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<sup>601</sup> Liu, Jennifer. "Treasury Issues General License No. 8 Regarding Certain Permitted Humanitarian Trade Transactions Involving the Central Bank of Iran." Trade and Manufacturing Monitor, March 11, 2020: n/a.

<sup>602</sup> General License 31 C.F.R. 560.530(a)(3): List of Medical Devices Requiring Specific Authorization. U.S. Department of Treasury, February 2, 2017: 1-2.

<sup>603</sup> Petti, Matthew. "Did U.S. Sanctions on Iran Help Coronavirus Spread Undetected?" The National Interest. The Center for the National Interest, February 28, 2020: n/a.

<sup>604</sup> Eqbali, Aresu, and Sune Engel Rasmussen. "Iran Battles Coronavirus-and the Black Market for Medical Supplies." The Wall Street Journal. Dow Jones & Company, March 1, 2020: n/a.

arrived in Iran by way of a commercial flight through Baghdad, the postponement came at a serious cost: The loss of valuable time that could have been utilized in early detection, a critical stage for flattening the curve in a pandemic. Just two days after the IRI's initial statement, Iran had seventeen confirmed cases with four patients succumbing to the virus soon after it was concluded that they had tested positive for COVID-19. Eight days after the public announcement about the first two detections of virus infection in Qom, the Iranian government issued orders for the closure of academic institutions across the country; non-essential businesses remained open, however they were also given orders to close just before the Iranian new year, in late March 2020.<sup>605 606</sup>

For its part, the Trump administration did not halt its attempts at isolating Iran both economically and politically at any point during the emerging global pandemic. Despite the U.S. Department of Treasury's attempt to ease trade of certain humanitarian goods, the U.S. State Department was unwilling to compromise, with one of their first acts being to rebuff requests to unfreeze Iranian assets so that the country could use the funds for payment of humanitarian goods which were to be purchased through the Swiss embassy. The unfolding of a global pandemic in the Eastern Hemisphere was not the first time that sanctions had impeded humanitarian goods from reaching Iranian citizens. Less than a year prior, Iran had suffered serious flooding; particularly hard-hit were the communities in rural towns and villages. While foreign aid had been offered to the IRI, the office of the IRI's Foreign Ministry announced that sanctions imposed by the U.S. created banking restrictions and thus international relief offered to Iran couldn't be accepted as all overseas bank accounts held by the Iranian Red Crescent had been closed. On March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020,

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<sup>605</sup> Ameli, Vira. "Sanctions and Sickness." *New Left Review*, no. 122 (2020): New Left Review, Mar/Apr 2020, Issue 122: 49-51.

<sup>606</sup> Kabir, Marmar. "Iran in the Time of Corona." *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* 39, no. 3 (2020): 16-17.

Iran requested a \$5 billion USD loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – the country’s first such request in six decades – in order to help in its fight against COVID-19. By this point, Iran was the hardest hit country in the Middle East by the COVID-19 virus, and one of three countries in the world with the highest number of infections; China and Italy were the other two countries. The Trump administration struck again, moving to block approval for the \$5 billion IMF loan which Iran had requested. <sup>607 608 609 610</sup>

Yet, as recent events have shown, no country in the global community is immune to the impacts of a worldwide pandemic: Once a virus has begun to spread, it does not recognize borders, OFAC licenses, or man-made walls. Refusing to acknowledge the suffering of one country’s population during a global pandemic does not make the problem go away; instead, it exacerbates the battle against the virus, and undeniably amplifies the threat of contagion. While Iran generates a vast array of pharmaceutical products domestically, companies are now struggling to locate the imported components and supplies necessary for manufacturing. One reason is U.S. sanctions: Since November 2018, when the Trump administration decided to reimpose secondary sanctions on Iran, the majority of international airlines, shipping and delivery companies have decided to refrain from commerce with Iranian companies. Another reason is that as the virus began to spread,

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<sup>607</sup> Karimi, Nasser. “Iran Says US Sanctions Impede Flood Rescue Operations.” The Washington Post. April 02, 2019.

<sup>608</sup> Kabir (2020): 16-17.

<sup>609</sup> Talley, Ian, and Benoit Faucon. “U.S. to Block Iran's Request to IMF for \$5 Billion Loan to Fight Coronavirus.” The Wall Street Journal. Dow Jones & Company, April 7, 2020.

<sup>610</sup> Ameli (2020): 54.

surrounding countries began to enforce limitations on travel, which inevitably led to delays in shipments of international freight deliveries.<sup>611 612 613</sup>

By late-March 2020, the EU-3 was bypassing U.S. banking sanctions, opting to use INSTEX for the first time in order to send humanitarian goods to Iran. A system such as INSTEX became necessary for trade with Iran because mounting U.S. sanctions have become so severe that the even the most basic pharmaceutical goods are virtually impossible for import into the country. The activation of INSTEX by the EU-3 was a significant step at a critical phase of the fight against COVID-19, and possibly aided the country in saving the lives of many thousands of Iranian citizens. Just two years prior, the notion of a state-owned European corporation created with the aim of easing trade with Iran was a far-flung theory – by March 2020, it was operational; INSTEX was a remarkable innovation for both Europe and Iran, as provides a buttress for all the parties involved against U.S. sanctions.<sup>614 615</sup>

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<sup>611</sup> Batmanghelidj, Esfandyar, and Abbas Kebriaeezadeh. “As Coronavirus Spreads, Iranian Doctors Fear the Worst.” *Foreign Policy*, March 3, 2020: n/a.

<sup>612</sup> Talley and Faucon (2020): n/a.

<sup>613</sup> Pilkington, Ed, “Mike Pompeo Insists US Sanctions Will Not Hurt Iranian People.” *The Guardian*. November 04, 2018: n/a.

<sup>614</sup> Al-Monitor Staff. “Europe Sends Medical Aid to Iran Using Sanctions Workaround.” *Al-Monitor Staff*, March 31, 2020: n/a.

<sup>615</sup> Rothwell, James, and Roland Oliphant. “Britain, France and Germany Bypass US Sanctions to Provide Iran with Medical Aid.” *The Telegraph*. Telegraph Media Group, March 31, 2020: n/a.

## Conclusions from Chapter V.

The IRI's nuclear enrichment program has become a serious point of contention between Iran, the U.S., the E.U., and the U.N. Yet, despite the increase of sanctions, the IRI has continued enriching uranium. Sanctions on their own have not managed to deter the IRI from pursuing a nuclear program, and in fact the Iranian government has determined that this endeavor should be pursued despite major blows to their economy. The reimposition of sanctions by the Trump administration and pulling out of the JCPOA during a time when the IRI was fully complying with the terms of the Iran Deal was disadvantageous to years of carefully built dialogue and diplomacy between the two countries. Despite social media and press releases to the contrary, the Trump administration's actions have not been in the slightest sympathetic to the Iranian population – particularly since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the country – this U.S. administration has in fact been counter-productive with regard to helping Iranians recover from one of the most severe eruptions of the virus in the world. Ultimately, the Trump administration's unwillingness to work with the IRI has led to other countries stepping to help the country attain the vital humanitarian goods that its populated needs during the ongoing pandemic. Thus, the Trump administration's reluctance to aid Iran during this crisis could eventually lead to the weakening of sanctions altogether.

## Conclusions & Suggestions

This thesis began in a completely different place from where it ultimately ended. As I write this conclusion, the world has not quite fully emerged from a global pandemic. Added to this is the fact that the National Guard has just moved into major cities across the United States, due to protests that broke out after the killing of an African American man at the hands of a police officer. If anything, this thesis and this year have both been lessons in how pain echoes – across decades, across borders, across racial lines, immigrant bans, and man-made walls that still try to divide us. Presently, the physical health of the entire world is symbiotically intertwined, perhaps as never before during the past century; when one country suffers an outbreak of COVID-19, other countries have begun to respond by not simply taking note but also by taking action. President Trump has repeatedly stood in front of the press and called this global pandemic a war, yet he fails to recognize that every war compels even the most powerful of countries to acquire allies, and that this war in particular requires a worldwide alliance.<sup>616</sup>

When President Woodrow Wilson advocated for sanctions in the 1930s, he highlighted what he believed to be one of its fundamental strengths: “It does not cost a life outside the nation boycotted.”<sup>617</sup> <sup>618</sup> Almost a century later, and Wilson’s theory regarding sanctions has been

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<sup>616</sup> Levenson, Eric. “Officials Keep Calling the Coronavirus Pandemic a 'War.' Here's Why.” CNN. Cable News Network, April 2, 2020: n/a.

<sup>617</sup> Hufbaeur (1998): 330-333.

<sup>618</sup> Heine-Ellison (2001): 83.



proven incorrect. The emergence of a global pandemic in a matter of months in the first half of 2020 is proof that when one country's population suffers, the reverberations are worldwide.<sup>619</sup>

A few crucial points that the Trump administration have thus far failed to recognize: Viruses do not recognize borders, nor apparently has this pandemic stopped spreading due to the boundaries created by man-made walls. The reason the current health crisis is referred to as a global pandemic is because it is just that: *global*. There is only way out of the existing international emergency: Together. Draconian sanctions imposed on the Iranian nation for decades have placed a strain on the health of the populace and the economic infrastructure of the country. While this might have been the intention, with the end-goal of bringing the Islamic Republic to the negotiating table, it has in-fact created a health crisis for the country's population. Under non-global pandemic conditions, the well-being of the Iranian population has been an ancillary worry of D.C.; but these are extraordinary times.<sup>620</sup>

With regard to the IRI and the U.S.: Upon researching the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution of 1979, it is plainly obvious that this was a population with a deep-seated anxiety about their hard-won democracy being once again toppled by outside forces. The presence of foreign actors in the affairs of their country seems to have left many Iranians anxious to ensure that no imperious extraterritorial influence would ever again be at the helm of power inside Iran. This was a country that had watched in horror just twenty-six years prior as their democratically elected Prime Minister was toppled from power by foreign interventionists. It comes as no surprise

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<sup>619</sup> Varela, Anna. "COVID-19 Transmission 'Webs' Show How We're All Connected." *Futurity*, April 14, 2020: n/a.

<sup>620</sup> Moran, Nuala. "'This Virus Does Not Respect Borders,' Says WHO Director General." *BioWorld RSS*. *BioWorld*, February 27, 2020: n/a.

that the Iranian citizenry attempted to ensure that their newly regained independence remained free from outside influence.

Ultimately, this era has confirmed that global health is more interconnected now than ever before. With the emergence of a virus that has spread through the entire globe in a matter of months, it is imperative to come to terms with the reality that we are a global community, and that the health of every nation, and in fact, every individual is contingent upon the well-being of society at large. Furthermore, the United States has to redraft and revise both its domestic and foreign policies; it has become abundantly clear over the decades, but particularly over the course of the past few months that American minority groups feel that their government is not working to their advantage, and that countries like Iran feel like they are constantly fighting against the intervention of America as a superpower.

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109<sup>th</sup> Congress. “Public Law 109–353: Iran, North Korea and Syria Nonproliferation Act.” *Govinfo.gov*, Govinfo.gov, 13 Oct. 2006, [www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-120/pdf/STATUTE-120-Pg2015.pdf#page=1](http://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-120/pdf/STATUTE-120-Pg2015.pdf#page=1).

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